



## Punggol Promenade

# Poetic Speculation of the Rustic Waterfront

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1. Visitors at the event plaza basking in the magnificent glow of the sunset (Photo: Choo Meng Foo).

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“kampong” village atmosphere of bygone Punggol,  
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The realisation of Punggol Promenade has been a journey of discovery with fresh revelations on design for sustainability. Broadening perspectives toward the self-perpetuating nature of sustainability, it is crucial to rekindle emotional ties between man and the landscape, as it is through feelings of attachment that sets the impetus for custodianship in motion. Through a more human-centric rather than technology-driven approach, the architects LOOK Architects have strived to impart lyricism and poetry into design, placing nature within reach and enabling it to revolve around our lives.

The conception of the 4.9-kilometre public waterfront promenade arose from an awareness of the need to provide greater public accessibility to the island’s natural heritage—the infrastructural environment enhancement project was initiated under the Urban Redevelopment Authority’s, Parks and Waterbodies Plan, and Identity Plan, to tap into the potential of the coastline as a significant recreational destination for the population. To form part of the future groundbreaking Round Island Route envisioned to stretch for more than 150 kilometres around the entire Singapore as a continuous pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly green corridor, Punggol Promenade also plays an important role in engaging public interest and cultivating an appreciation for the environment.

One of the ways to establish public rapport involves imbuing a continuity of memory, by evoking the less tangible aspect of remembrance. Recalling the laid-back charm and affable “kampong” village atmosphere of bygone Punggol, design intervention is dealt in a sensitive manner to capture this charismatic quality. The palette of materials put together to conjure this ambience has been delicately harmonised. The earthy laterite trail, concrete ground pavers simulating the texture of natural timber, and oxidised steel wall panels cladding the envelop of public washrooms all speak of a shared visual language that conveys an appealing rustic character rarely encountered in the city. Hitherto little-known history bears its mark on Punggol Point, at which the arrival look-out deck exudes sobriety as a World War II memorial site, with its piercing sharp silhouette and stark chromaticity exhibiting an affecting severity. A poetic interlude intertwining shifting planes of time and space, as embodiment and reality melds with processes of refamiliarisation, individually unique narratives are pieced together for each person visiting the promenade.

Spontaneous activities that have previously appropriated the site are rehabilitated in the process of development to enrich experience and lend authenticity—anglers who have frequented the Punggol coastline will be able to enjoy their hobby at the new promenade, which has designated fishing platforms as extensions from the pedestrian footpath.



2 Plaza Section



3. The delicate composition of the event plaza relates comfortably to the human scale (Photo: Derek Swalwell).

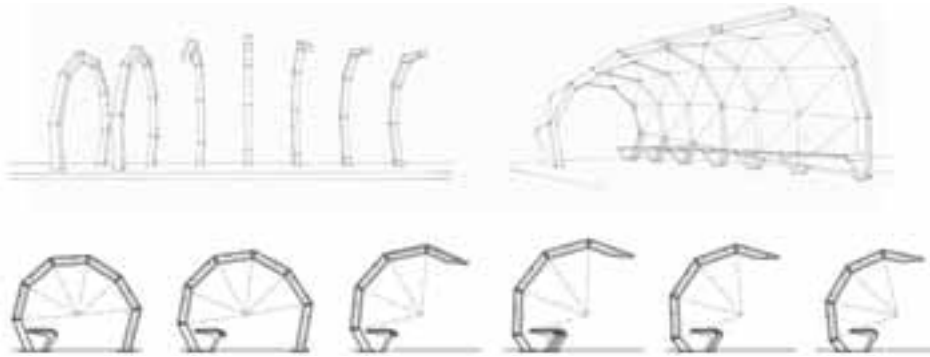
It is intriguing to see a manufactured material gain personality over time, and to witness this transformation add a dimension of intimacy.





4. The giant water lily pond poised idyllically next to the beach (Photo: Frank Pinckers).


5. Maritime references can be gleaned from the unique form of the arrival look-out deck (Photo: Derek Swalwell).



6 Rest Shelter Concept

Existing site conditions have been interpreted meaningfully and with precision to minimise disturbances to the existing biodiversity, which is demonstrated in the apt treatment of the existing stretch of embankment along the riverbank of Sungei Serangoon. While it is a natural habitat to thriving wildlife, the sloped embankment also prevents users from getting too close to the water edge; by projecting look-out decks over the embankment, it causes little disruption to the existing setting and at the same time creates a dramatic impact experientially, producing a gratifying sensation of lightly hovering above the water.

Boldness in approach is seized at opportune junctures to propel leading-edge design, to define a memorable experience for visitors and foster a close affinity between the user and place. Interspersed along the promenade are sculpturally shaped rest shelters offering respite from the tropical heat, as well as dynamically molded steel structures in aluminium cladding, whose swirling forms draw inspiration from the coastal context, emulating rolling sea waves and the geometry of a corkscrew shell. The external aluminium cladding is configured from a single triangulated module, which through calculated permutation adopts its distinctive form. Deliberate juxtaposition of this striking metallic sculpture against a backdrop of greenery is visually stunning and forms an indelible imprint on the memory. Through an extended period of exposure to elements of nature, the cladding develops a weathered patina; it is intriguing to see a manufactured material gain personality over time, and to witness this transformation add a dimension of intimacy.

When a visit to the promenade leaves us with poignant reminiscence of emotive and contemplative moments, a comforting sense of reconciliation with nature is inspired. One can seek solace at any time in vivid mental reconstructions of spatial and temporal narratives gathered: the seemingly infinite stretch of water and sky seen from Punggol Point, as the strong linearity of the stainless steel railing, sitting on black pigmented concrete plinths, coaxes the eyes towards the horizon; the inexplicable sight of a giant water lily pond poised by the beach; and seeing amber rays of the setting sun aglow on the reflective ceiling of the rest shelter. As the reciprocity in our relationship with the natural environment becomes increasingly clear, we can be further spurred on the imperative of sustainability. 

7. The aluminium-clad rest shelter juxtaposed against greenery is visually stunning (Photo: Frank Pinckers).

8. The sharp silhouette of the arrival look-out deck exudes a dominant presence over Punggol Beach (Photo: Frank Pinckers).

9. The main entrance at Punggol Point leads to the adjoining arrival look-out deck, water lily ponds, and event plaza (Photo: Derek Swalwell).

10. Perforated oxidised steel panels enveloping the public washroom exhibit a strong rugged character (Photo: Frank Pinckers).









11. The lushly vegetated edge of look-out decks, projected over the existing embankment, blends the structures into their surrounding natural landscape (Photo: Frank Pinckers).





12. The linearity of the stainless steel railing sitting on black pigmented prefabricated concrete plinths mirrors the horizontality of the landscape (Photo: Choo Meng Foo).