

# People Places: Attributes that enable a Convivial Walk Trail in Diyatha Uyana, Kotte, Sri Lanka

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## Abstract

*Introducing 'green walk-trails' to urban environments in Sri Lanka has become a popular intervention in the recent practice of urban development. People have embraced these trails as they fulfil the need for breathing-places/lungs associated with open green areas. In addition to beautification of the urban fabric, walk-trails serve a larger purpose of offering urban residents the opportunity to relax, rejuvenate and achieve mental and physical wellbeing. In order to fulfil such objectives walk-trails need to be 'convivial' places. Conviviality is an all-encompassing concept that emphasises the importance of fine grain, local nuances and adaptability that is the root of a more humane approach to urban development that encourages positive social interaction. Conviviality is 'place-specific' and based on an amalgamation of Geographical, Physical and Sensorial attributes.*

*The objective of the study was to explore key attributes that contribute towards enabling a convivial walk-trail in the specific context of "Diyatha Uyana", Sri Lanka. Based on the theoretical framework established to analyse conviviality, the analysis was 'User-centred' and 'Place-centred' to explore the qualitative aspects in depth. The main data gathering technique of the study was through narrative-mapping which incorporated cognitive maps supported by a narration. Data gathered were analysed via content-analysis in order to come-up with necessary interpretations.*

*It was found that the sensorial experiences were generated by the specific geographical and physical attributes, the vitality and dynamism in the way they combined and enabled unique micro contexts within the overall place. This enables strong visual and non-visual perceptions of the place. Such perceptions are key motivating entities that attract people to a public place, which is a decisive factor in the successful usage of public places.*

**Key words:** conviviality, place-centered public spaces, green walk-trails

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## **Introduction - Convivial Public Space**

The word 'conviviality' is accompanied by numerous positive interpretations such as pleasantness, warmth and cordiality. Conviviality is a much needed quality in the public realm, specifically in recreational public places, where people feel warmly welcomed, belonged and where memories are made and cherished. Spaces with these qualities are recognized as people's places. According to Shaftoe (2008, p. 05) without convivial spaces, cities, towns and villages would be mere accretions of buildings with no deliberate opportunities for casual encounters and positive interactions between friends or strangers.

Accessible green spaces in the urban context while providing relief to the urban environment have special meaning to people and their experiences. Shaftoe (2008, pp. 11-28) elaborates that such public spaces are meant for people to meet, access the green, celebrate and relax as 'sociable animals'. These places can function as breathing places or 'lungs' in cities and as important spaces for leisure, to experience the positive physical and mental health benefits by doing so.

The study was an attempt to explore key attributes that enable a convivial walk-trail in "Diyatha Uyana", a green public space which is the first contemporary attempt in the country to create a designed walk trail in the rapidly urbanising context of Kotte.

## **Principals and Underpinnings**

Attributes that enable convivial green public spaces are wide and varied. Shaftoe (2008) expresses general attributes that contribute to successful public spaces and suggests that there is no single blueprint for a convivial space, but some common elements, which may be broadly categorized under the headings of Physical (including design and practical elements), Geographical (location), Sensorial (meaning how a space directly affects one or more of our five senses) Psychological (how the space affects our mind and spirit) and Managerial.

Considering the geographical attributes of Public places, aspects such as location, climate and topography fall under this category. The location of a particular place has a vital influence on its conviviality. The ambiance of a place can vary depending on the geographical location such as in coastal, hilly areas, with terrains, valleys, flat-land etc.

Climate of a context on the other hand determines the activities offered in a place. Shaftoe (2008, p. 60) notes that the 'micro-climate' of a certain place can be incorporated positively in order to create 'conviviality'.

Topography influences the conviviality of a place and has a strong impact on the perception of a place. <sup>1</sup>Layout, accessible routes, entry points and connections with the surroundings can be stated as the key factors under physical attributes of convivial places. The layout of a place acts as a catalyst of conviviality which determines its association with the surroundings and functions. It would be a fruitless effort no matter how exquisite and exotic the geographical location is, if a place could not be accessed easily. As Bently, Alcock, Murrain, McGlynn and

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<sup>1</sup>The vegetation of a tropical context is very different from a savannah or a coniferous hill-side. Also, the vegetation of a context which goes through all four seasons will have a unique impact on its conviviality.

Smith (1985) argue, in order to become a responsive place, a place should be rich with 'permeability' and only such places can be termed as 'places for people'.

Similarly, activities that take place within a context express the vitality and dynamism of a locality and attract and encourage people to experience the same. Considering the sensorial attributes of public places, according to Dovey (2010) they have a direct association with the experience and perception of a location and could strengthen or dilute the conviviality of the same depending on their positive or negative influences. Primarily it is about how people understand a place based on stimulations of their senses. The 'richness' of a place is based on sense-experiences and when it comes to measuring the degree of responsiveness of a particular place, sense-experiences play a key role.

The interrelationship of place making and sense of a place of which the latter depends on stimulation of sensory cues and their impact on perceiving a particular place, is supported by Dovey (2009,) stating that sensation operates at a pre-reflective level, prior to cognition and meaning. Dovey (2009, p.25) also states that the encounter with a place is experienced before analysis can turn it into a proposition. Herrington (2009, p.114) elaborates on sensorial qualities of a landscape and states that sensorial experiences play a major role when it comes to perceiving a landscape three dimensionally. Furthermore, it is argued that landscapes should be intentionally designed in such a manner to communicate via a range of senses such as thermal comfort, smell, sound, taste and tactile sensation.

It is frequently stated that vision is the most dominant sense in terms of grasping information and probably the one most under our control. Shaftoe (2008, p.57) argues that when it comes to 'aesthetic qualities', both 'visual' and 'non-visual' attributes contribute to generate conviviality. Under 'Visual Richness' and 'Non-visual Richness' five senses are discussed namely, sense of vision, sense of smell, sense of sound, sense of touch and sense of movement. (Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlynn, & Smith, 1985, pp. 89-98)

The potential of creating movement via the sense of smell can be quite convincing as some aromatic sources could attract or distract and change the course depending on personal biases. The sense of hearing could influence the image of a place to be positive or negative. As Shaftoe states "The delight of hearing the rustling of the wind through trees and the sound of birdsong is a welcome antidote to the urban cacophony dominated by traffic noise." (Shaftoe, 2008, p. 61) When it comes to the sense of touch, it is practically proven how natural elements such as wind and sun can stimulate our sense of touch and how it can generate the sense of comfort. The feeling of warmth or coolness caused by the micro-climate, with variations in shelter and shade can affect wind chill and the degree to which the warmth of the sun can penetrate. (Shaftoe, 2008, p. 58) Moreover, the sense of touch could be stimulated via different textures.

Sense of motion is experienced through a series of kinetic experiences related with speed such as walking, running, cycling etc. Venturi, Brown and Izenour, (1977) explain how a surrounding is perceived differently by a motorist from the perception of a pedestrian. Forsyth and Krizek (2011, pp. 531-549) argue that there is a significant importance of experiencing the surroundings while cycling, as the perception of a cyclist is quite different from a pedestrian, motorist or transit-user. This particular difference is created due to the impact of movement and speed. It is evident that there is a significant impact of speed on the sequence of perception of any context. In addition to these senses, Shaftoe (2008, p. 61) states that the sense of taste also has its implications on a place.

Moreover, psychological attributes of a place are mainly evolved around feelings of people and can be highly subjective. These attributes may depend on factors such as social status, gender, age, past experiences and personal biases.

## **Method of study**

Based on the literature survey, a framework for defining conviviality in green public spaces could be specified as follows;

### **A. Geographical attributes**

- a. Location of the walk trail
- b. Climatic aspects of the zone
- c. Topography around the site (terrains, fauna, flora)

### **B. Physical attributes**

- a. Layout of the walk trail
- b. Accessible routes and entry points
- c. Visual and physical connections with the surroundings
- d. Variety of activities and experiences

### **C. Sensorial attributes**

#### **a. Sense of vision:**

- i. Natural elements and attractions that trigger progression or lingering (water, trees, terrains, animals)
- ii. Artificial objects that trigger progression or lingering
- iii. Activities and behaviour of people
- iv. Impact of natural and artificial lighting

#### **b. Sense of touch:**

- i. Natural stimulators of sense of touch (heat, wind)
- ii. Texture of horizontal boundaries of walk-trail (shade of trees, tents and huts, grass, sand, stones, pebbles, cement paving)
- iii. Texture of vertical boundaries of walk-trail (trees, walls, hedges)

#### **c. Sense of movement:**

- i. Impact of speed (variations of perception while resting, walking, running, skating and cycling)
- ii. Impact of activities or artificial elements (rowing, sailing, swimming)
- iii. Impact of movement of natural elements (wind, water, tree leaves)

#### **d. Sense of sound:**

- i. Sound of natural elements (water, wind, rustling of leaves, animals)
- ii. Sound of people
- iii. Sound of music
- iv. Sound of artificial elements

#### **e. Sense of smell:**

- i. Natural cues of smell (water, flowers, herbs)
- ii. Smell related to food items

#### **f. Sense of taste:**

- i. Food offered at the premises

The study is based on the sense perceptions of the place to derive the physical and geographical definitions that enable such perceptions, of the locality<sup>2</sup>. It is a qualitative study which is user centered based on structured questionnaires and narrative maps which are based on interviews and mental maps.

A pilot study was conducted based on a structured questionnaire to fine tune the approach of narrative mapping for an in-depth study. In the first stage a survey was carried out based on a questionnaire covering 50 samples falling under the age categories of 15-30, 31-50 and above 50. The difference of gender and the variations in socio-economic status were neglected for the purpose of focussing mainly on perception of users.

The questionnaire provided a strong base to the user category and general perception of the place in terms of sensorial qualities, functional appropriateness and accessibility. General inferences were interpreted on the physical geographical characteristics and the strong sensorial qualities of the place in order to direct a more detailed study on the conviviality and relationship between the defining components.

The 'Narrative Map' was a combination of a 'mental map' and an interview. The following procedure was followed in constructing the narrative map. A random sample of 50 people was selected where each of them was asked to draw a map of 'Diyatha Uyana' showing his or her journey from the starting point up to an end point, indicating favorite/ most memorable/ most enjoyed places. Thereafter, each participant was asked to explain the map, stating reasons for their preferences of the particular route and sensorial experiences along the way. For a better understanding and interpretation, the narration expressed various aspects of their sensorial experiences in relation to the physical and geographical definition of the place. Layout plans, cross sections, sketches and photographs were used to interpret the narration of the place more effectively.

## Diyatha Uyana



**Fig: 01** 'Diyatha Uyana'  
Source: SLLRDC

**Fig: 02** 'Diyatha Uyana'  
Source: SLLRDC

**Fig: 03** 'Diyatha Uyana'  
Source: SLLRDC

'Diyatha Uyana' situated in the heart of 'Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte', the capital of Sri Lanka, is a part of an urban development project initiated by the Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation. The site is orientated along the banks of 'Diyawanna Lake' which is a historic and scenic water body edged by wet-land green belts.

<sup>2</sup>Thus Psychological attributes defined by Shaftoe were not be considered in the study as they are highly subjective and strongly influenced by socio economic factors and personal biases of people and not necessarily place based.

It was initially identified as a solution for flooding around the particular area. It was also a responsive design solution to prevent wet-lands and marshes from becoming isolated dark corridors which could be breeding grounds for illegal and criminal activities. This precious natural environment was prone to reclamation by private owners and refilling in order to put up buildings which were endangering species of wet-land plants and animals. In addition to all these reasons, the city of Colombo and specially the area of 'Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte' was in need of open accessible green areas which could facilitate public interaction and recreation.

'Diyatha Uyana' is the first contemporary attempt in recent history of Sri Lanka to create a designed walk trail close to an urban environment. Within less than two years it has gained admiration and popularity from the public and has attracted people from all over Sri Lanka. It is warmly embraced by people and has now become a prominent recreational destination for people in of every socio-economic class in Colombo.

The layout of 'Diyatha Uyana' consists of a front square and a walk trail that runs through the marsh and along the water body. The front square is a vibrant space which facilitates a variety of public activities as out-door dining, lounging, flower and fish exhibitions and shopping. It includes a fountain, an aquarium, a food court and a set of rentable stalls which are captivatingly visible from the main road. The walk trail begins near the main road and runs along the edge of the water body, blends into the marsh, extends through a boulevard and opens-up to the front square.

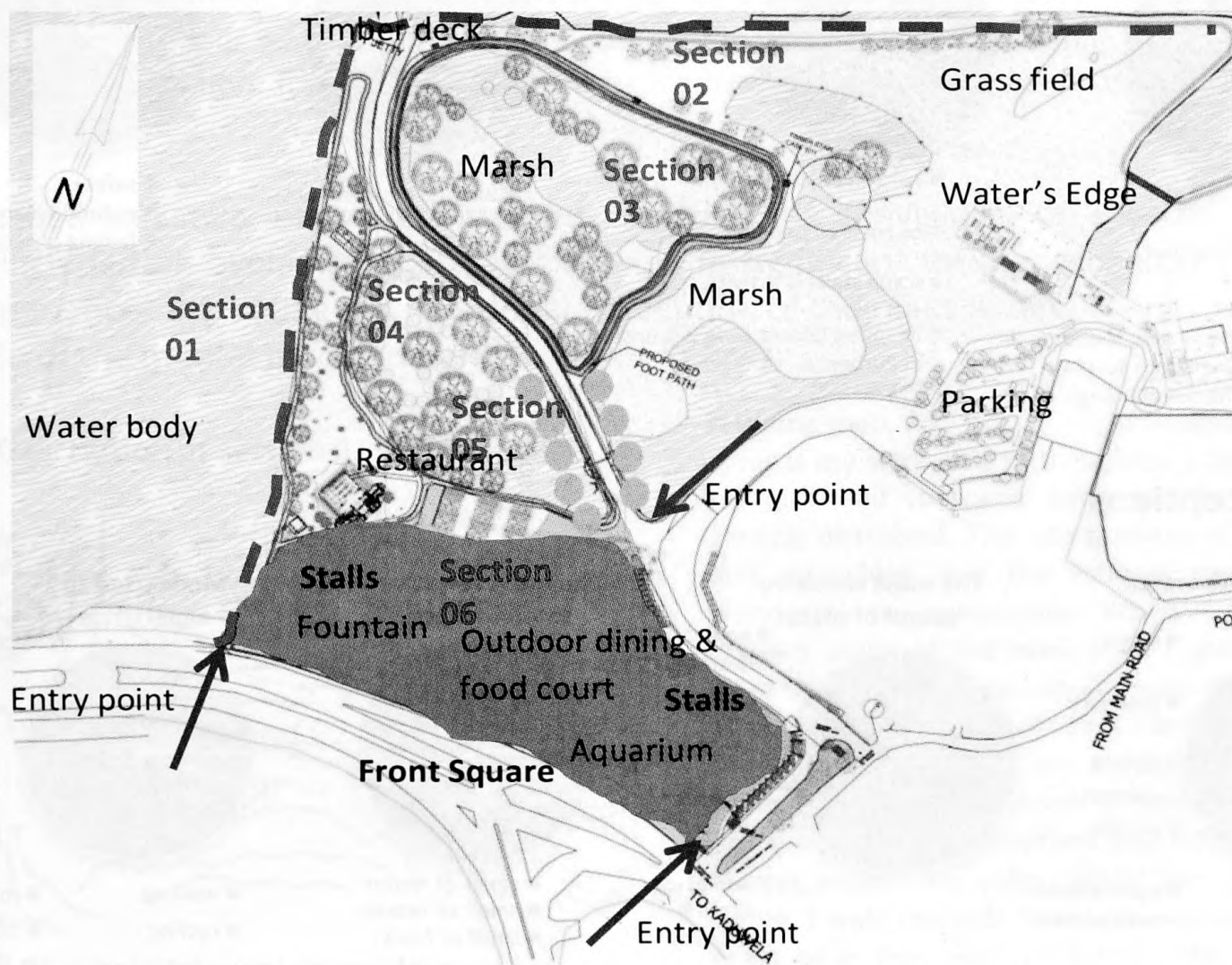


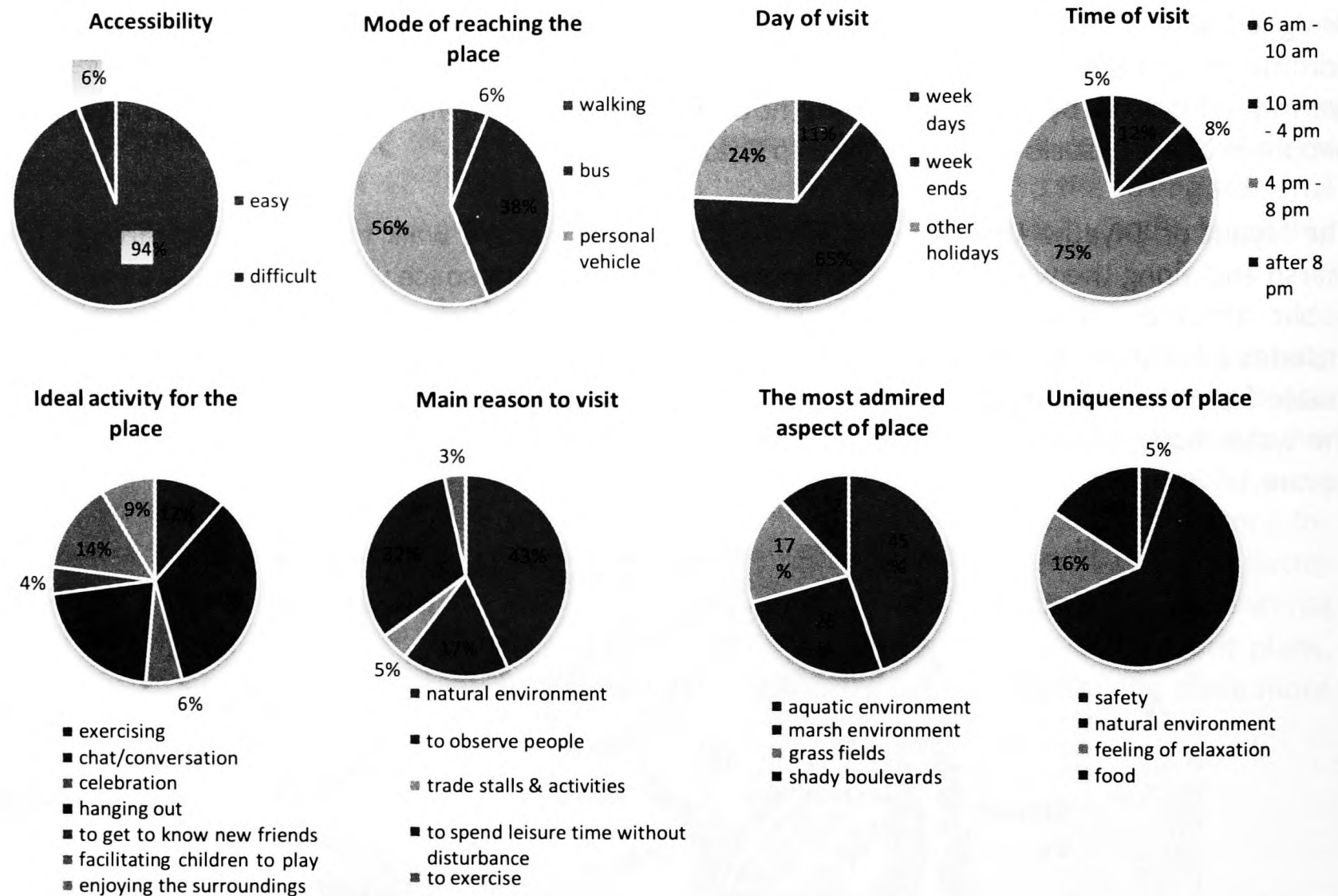
Fig: 04 layout of Diyatha Uyana  
Source: author

### Conviviality of Diyatha Uyana

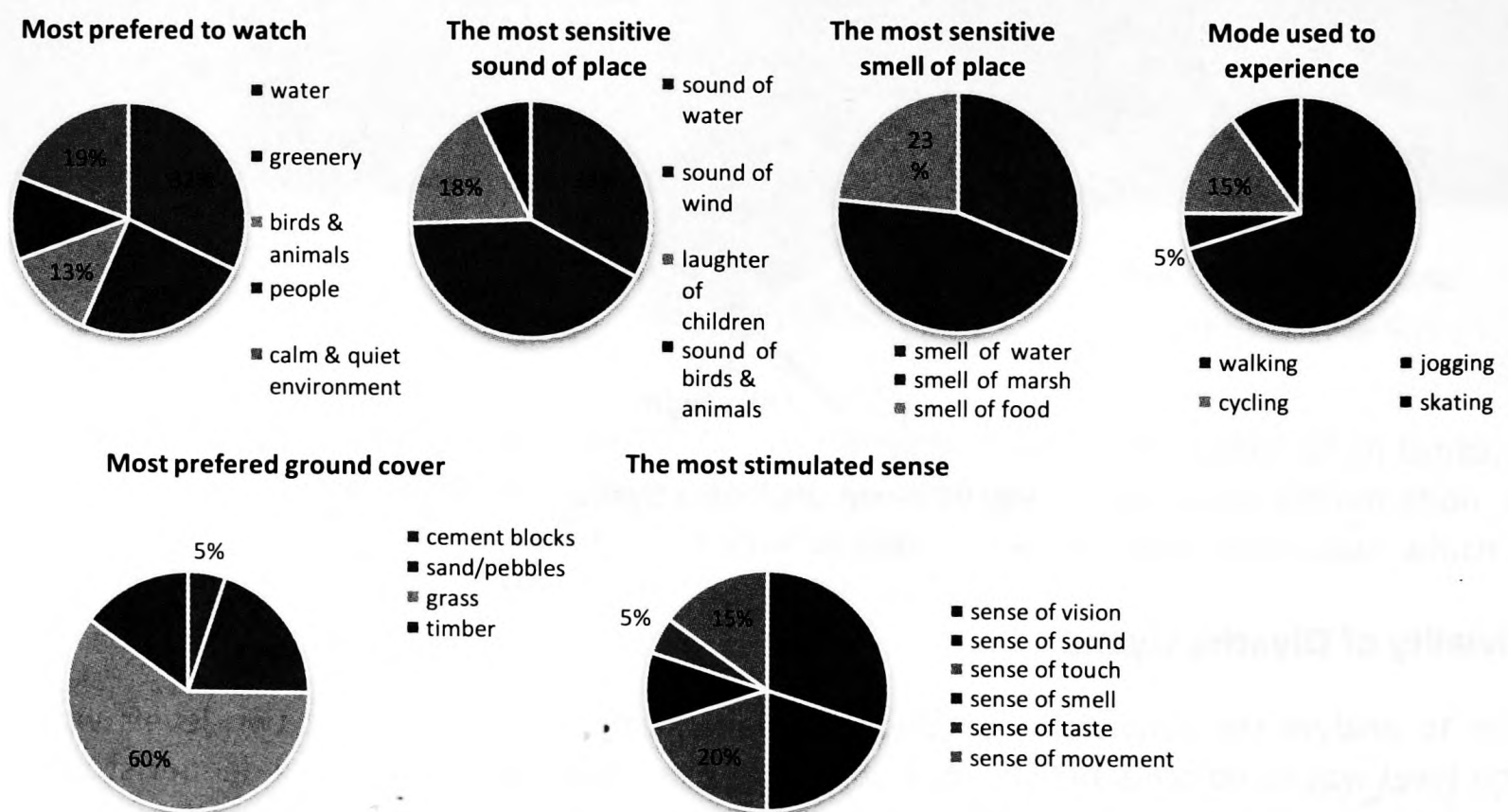
In order to analyze the conviviality of 'Diyatha Uyana', data was gathered at two levels where the first level was to obtain a holistic idea about the place and secondly to do a deeper study to find out the attributes that enable conviviality in each section of the walk-trail. The first level of data gathering was carried out as a survey based on a questionnaire.

Interpretation of data gathered through the questionnaire shows that this particular place is regularly visited by people who live quite a distance away from its location. So it voids the belief that recreational public places are mainly and regularly visited only by people living in close proximity. It was quite surprising to see that even foreigners preferred 'Diyatha Uyana' as one of the main attractions of Colombo. Mostly the visitors arrive as groups of friends and family to spend their leisure here. Some of the most important findings are given below;

### Background data



### Sense perceptions



For the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the detailed study on the narrative maps, the walk trail was sub-divided into six main sections based on their physical environment, natural elements, character etc. (Fig.4) This demarcation was supported by the people interviewed, as many had unconsciously sensed the place in a similar manner to make it easier to describe<sup>3</sup>.

**Section 01** starting from the main road up to the timber deck is demarcated by the water body on one side, and a seating area on the other side. It is a linear, almost straight walkway along the edge of the water. (Fig: 04)

**Section 02** starting from the timber deck spreads up to open green area in front of 'Water's Edge'. It forms a linear walk way perpendicular to section 01 demarcated by the narrower edge of the water body.

**Section 03** starts near the timber deck and spreads towards a different direction into the marsh. It is a walk way which runs through the marsh and is demarcated by the marsh from both sides. It ends opening up to boulevard.

**Section 04** is linked to section 03 near the timber deck and curves into the land side connecting to the boulevard. All the 3D arts are on the surface of this walk way.

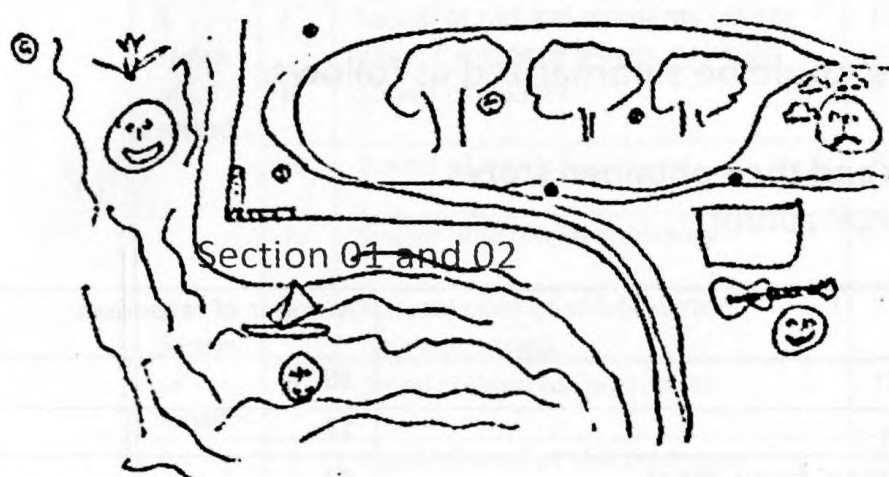
**Section 05** is the boulevard that starts from the end of section 04 and terminates at the front square area. It is shaded with trees on both sides. Section 03 also ends at a mid-way point in this section 05. Most of the roller skating and cycling activities happen here.

**Section 06** is the open front square which spreads out to a large area. It is different from all the other sections as it is not a linear walk way. The food court, outdoor dining area, fountain, aquarium and trade stalls are within this section. It is the catchment area from where people disperse to the connected walk trails

50 detailed narrative maps were studied to define the conviviality of 'Diyatha Uyana'. The narration included an explanation of the map stating significant loci (geographical and physical) in their experiences explaining their sensorial perception of the place in detail.

An example of the mental map and narration is as follows.

**Ex: 01 Description of section 01 and 02**



**Fig: 05** a 'mental map' drawn by a visitor  
Source: Author

**A young man, 25**

"This is my sixth visit to this place. I come here with my girlfriend to spend some quality time without getting disturbed. The atmosphere is quite relaxing and refreshing and the natural surroundings are wonderful to experience. When I arrive at the starting point of the walk trail, I walk as far away from the main road so I could avoid annoying sounds of vehicles. When certain that I am not disturbed by the chaos and that I am only surrounded by the sound of wind, I sit down by the water front and enjoy the view. The rhythm and repetition of waves always makes me calm. When sea planes start to arrive, I walk towards that area and lie down on the grass near the edge of water. The sound of sea planes always attracts people. I like to enjoy the cool breeze and spray of water on my skin. As it gets darker, I go to the restaurant for a meal. It is always nice to dine outdoors, under the stars, listening to the soft jazz music playing at the restaurant. This place always gives me pleasant memories."

<sup>3</sup> They used terms such as "walkway along the water, sea-plane area, and marshy area, shaded pathway with a lot of trees, 3D art area and entrance square" etc.

It is quite interesting how this person has tried to express his preferences and dislikes in a drawing. The sense of sound seems to be the most stimulated sense and water and trees seem to be the most preferred natural elements for him. The user has memorized the place mainly based on objects and sound rather than people. Presence of boats and sea planes has made a significant impact on his memory.

**Ex: 02 Description of section 04 and 05**

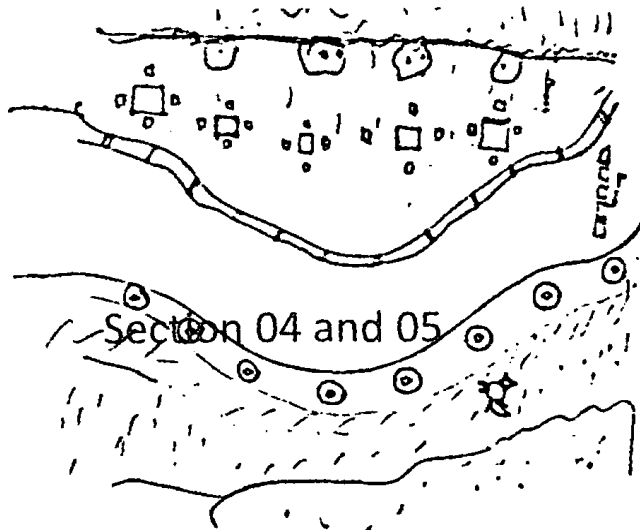


Fig: 06 a 'mental map' drawn by a visitor  
 Source: author

**A teenage boy, 17**

"I come here with my family to roller blade. It is safe here because you don't get disturbed by vehicles. It is wonderful how you feel while you are roller balding as you can feel the wind blowing against you. You feel so energetic and that the whole world is slower than you. You leave everything behind as you move. Also, I like to sit down and watch boats and water waves when I'm tired. You can watch birds in the marsh area. It is a nice place to hang out."

Here the user is talking about the boulevard and the 3D art street. His perception of the place is different from people who experience the place while walking. He has been observing the place while roller balding during the night. He has memorized the lighting objects as demarcating elements of the walk-trail. The user has captured the presence of water, trees and seating arrangements as key aspects.

As in the above two examples, all data gathered through 50 'narrative maps' were analyzed according to the attributes of conviviality listed under the theoretical frame work. Through their description of the sense perceptions within the prominent areas of the walk trail, the number of responses from people for each attribute in each section was recorded using 'tally marks'. The following table represents the number of responses received for various senses within the respective sections of the walk trail.

All the data gathered through 'narrative maps' could be summarized as follows.

**Table: 01 attributes and their obtained scores**

Source: author

Attributes		Description	Number of responses
<b>A</b> Geographical attributes	<b>a</b>	Location of the walk trail	38
	<b>b</b>	Climatic aspects of the zone	17
	<b>c</b>	Topography around the site (terrains, fauna, flora)	42
<b>B</b> Physical attributes	<b>a</b>	Layout of the walk trail	11
	<b>b</b>	Accessible routes and entry points	19
	<b>c</b>	Visual and physical connections with the surroundings	45
	<b>d</b>	Variety of activities and experiences	29

From the analysis of the questionnaire and the narrative maps, it was understood that the geographical definition of Diyatha Uyana (A-97 responses in total) was the key aspect that

attracted many visitors to this place, the marsh, the aquatic environment (Ac- 42 responses) along with the location of the walk trail (Aa-38 responses) was a key attraction to the usability of the place. This was strongly supported by the visual and physical connection (Bc-45 responses) with the surroundings and the variety of activities (Bd-29 responses) offered by the place.

The following table was constructed based on sensorial responses within the various sections of the walk trail.

**Table: 02 attributes and the number of responses received**  
Source: author

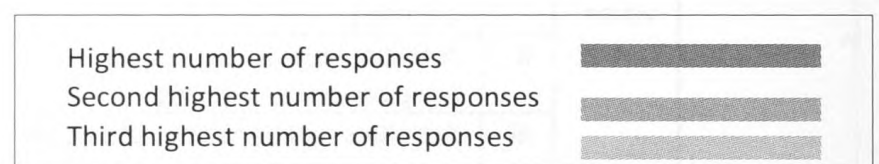
Attributes			Description	Number of responses					
				Section 01	Section 02	Section 03	Section 04	Section 05	Section 06
<b>C</b> Sensorial attributes	<b>a</b> Sense of vision	<b>i</b>	Natural elements and attractions that triggers progression or lingering (water, trees, terrains, animals)	16	19	20	-	18	-
		<b>ii</b>	Artificial objects that triggers progression or lingering	5	9	-	7	-	10
		<b>iii</b>	Activities and behaviour of people	11	8	4	24	14	27
		<b>iv</b>	Impact of natural and artificial lighting	2	-	8	7	3	6
	<b>b</b> Sense of touch	<b>i</b>	Natural stimulators of sense of touch (heat, wind)	28	17	2	3	3	-
		<b>ii</b>	Texture of horizontal boundaries of walk-trail (shade of trees, tents and huts, grass, sand, stones, pebbles, cement paving)	12	10	5	4	6	8
		<b>iii</b>	Texture of vertical boundaries of walk-trail (trees, walls, hedges)	-	-	4	-	21	16
	<b>c</b> Sense of movement	<b>i</b>	Impact of speed (variations of perception while resting, walking, running, skating and cycling)	-	-	2	20	21	2
		<b>ii</b>	Impact of activities or artificial elements (rowing, sailing, swimming)	9	11	-	-	-	-
		<b>iii</b>	Impact of movement of natural elements (wind, water, tree leaves)	14	12	3	9	4	-
	<b>d</b> Sense of sound	<b>i</b>	Sound of natural elements (water, wind, rustling of leaves, animals)	15	14	19	2	10	-
		<b>ii</b>	Sound of people	9	7	2	22	3	4
		<b>iii</b>	Sound of music	8	-	-	-	-	15
		<b>iv</b>	Sound of artificial elements	-	11	-	6	7	-
	<b>e</b> Sense of smell	<b>i</b>	Natural cues of smell (water, flowers, herbs)	7	12	29	1	4	5
		<b>ii</b>	Smell related to food items	10	-	-	-	-	31
	<b>f</b> Sense of taste	<b>i</b>	Food offered at the premises	6	-	-	-	-	28

The hierarchy of sense perceptions along different sections of the walk trail was tabulated as follows.

**Table: 03 Magnitude of stimulation of each sense in each section of the walk-trail**

Source: author




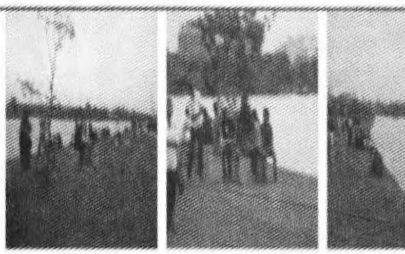

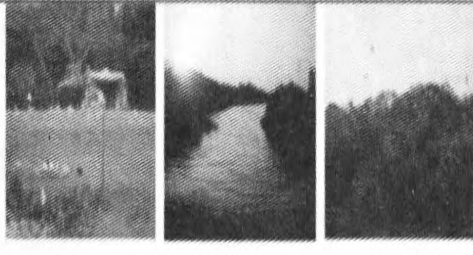






Type of sense	section 1	section 2	section 3	section 4	section 5	section 6
sense of vision	34	36	32	38	35	43
sense of touch	40	27	11	7	31	24
sense of movement	23	22	5	29	25	2
sense of sound	32	39	21	30	20	19
sense of smell	17	12	29	1	4	36
sense of taste	6	0	0	0	0	28



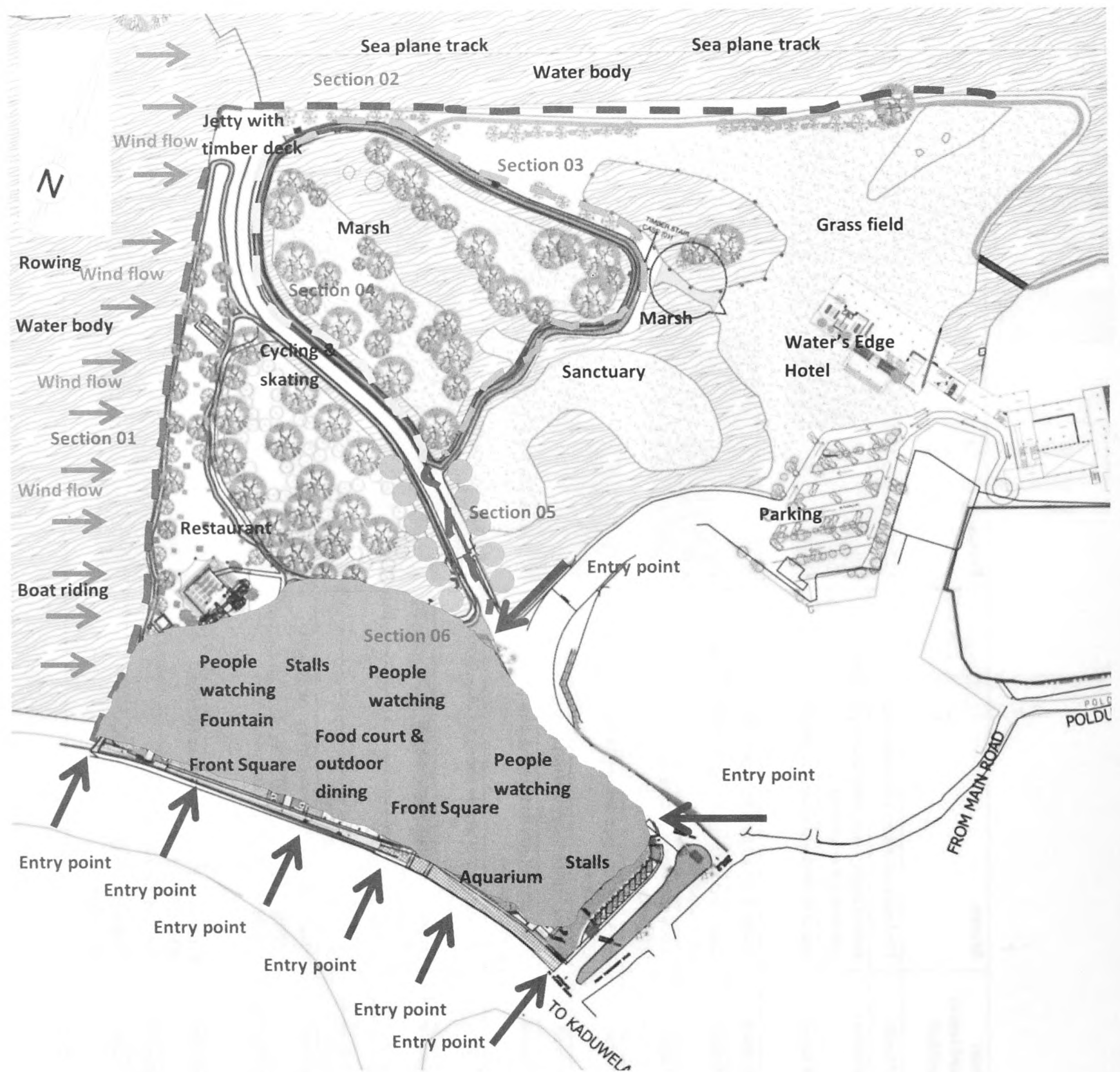
A detailed breakdown of the sensory perceptions in a hierarchical order along the specific sections of the walk trail with the corresponding generators of such perceptions is as follows.

*(The content of this table is extremely faint and illegible in the provided image.)*

**Table: 04 sensory perceptions in a hierarchical order along the specific sections with corresponding generators**

Section no:	Description	Map	Three most influenced senses in hierarchical order	Reason	Photograph
Section 01	path along the edge of the water body up to the timber jetty		Sense of touch	The heavy wind flow (40 responses)	
			Sense of vision	Rowing boats, Large, open water body and people watching (34 responses)	
			Sense of sound	Sound of wind and waves (32 responses)	
Section 02	path along the edge of the water body up to the open grass land		Sense of sound	Sound of sea planes (39 responses)	
			Sense of vision	Large open water body and people watching (36 responses)	
			Sense of touch	Heavy wind flow and breeze with water splashing (27 responses)	
Section 03	path through the marsh up to the boulevard		Sense of vision	Animals in the sanctuary and birds coming to nest (32 responses)	
			Sense of smell	Distinct smell of marsh (29 responses)	
			Sense of sound	Sound of creatures and nesting birds (21 responses)	
Section 04	3D art street which connects to boulevard		Sense of vision	3D street art and people posing for photographs (38 responses)	
			Sense of sound	Laughter and chattering of people (30 responses)	
			Sense of movement	Skating and cycling (29 responses)	
Section 05	boulevard which opens to Front Square		Sense of vision	Greenery (35 responses)	
			Sense of touch	Visual tactile quality created by the continuous canopy of trees (31 responses)	
			Sense of movement	Skating and cycling (25 responses)	
Section 06	boulevard which opens to Front Square		Sense of vision	People watching and vibrant trade stalls (43 responses)	
			Sense of smell	Aroma of food (36 responses)	
			Sense of taste	Food court and outdoor dining area (28 responses)	

## Findings



**Fig: 07** overall summary of relationships between physical context and sensorial attributes  
 Source: author

From the research it is evident that a cross section of the population that visits Diyatha Uyana has expressed their strong yet varied perceptions of senses which define the conviviality of the place. Observing the various socio-cultural groups that patronize this place it appears that sensorial experiences in this context are not necessarily culture and socio specific. They are primarily based on specific physical, geographical definitions of the locality. These definitions with varied spatial and environmental qualities give 'Diyatha Uyana' that sense of vitality that makes it convivial to the users enabling unique micro contexts within the overall place.

For example, the zoning of functions and spaces from a more urban character to the road frontage, with a large public square defined by spaces for commercial activities, to an immediate mini wilderness within a distance of less than 200 m gives variety in experience for the visitor. In

almost all occasions, a person's journey through the walk trail inevitably starts and ends from the large public square or space bordering the main access road. The combination of various leisure and shopping activities, some according to a theme on specific days of the week gives an added dynamism to the functional aspect. The food court is an essential part of that aspect of recreation, providing a variety of food to suit the various needs during different times of the day. Each section of the walk trail provides a different sensorial experience along the way. Especially the aquatic experience is varied along the different sections. At sections 1 and 2 a larger expanse of the lake forms a clear edge to the landscape. The added sensation of the wind blowing from the direction of water along with the different activities of boating, taking off and landing of seaplanes adds to the visual, tactile and auditory experience (Table 04). The inner portions within the marshy environment of section 3 provides a different experience of water in its scale formation and texture giving a sense of intimacy and personal space close to the green landscape. Exposure to the natural habitat of birds and other animals just a few hundred meters of the urban setting is a welcoming change that encourages relaxation and heightens not only the visual sensation, but the keen sensation of sound made by animals and birds.

As Shaftoe says, one of the psychological attractions of a good public space is the promise that it will satisfy our innate curiosity. (2008, p-55) The winding walk trail around the central marsh (sections 3 and 4) gives a whole different experience in terms of scale and enclosure by the dense marsh forming a strong edge providing a sense of intimacy. These series of linked but not immediately visible spaces gradually reveal themselves as one move through them. As Cullen (1961), says, this is also an important factor in good park design. The paved pathway with 3D art in section 4 maintains a balance between the hard paved surface and soft canopy of trees that provide shade to the area.

According to Shaftoe, our minds are skilled at 'reading' space, which identifies where we are and the qualities the place appears to offer. This is mostly done through visual interpretation of the cues within a space, both in terms of built form and activities taking place there (2008, p-54). This opportunity is provided by the different types of entertainment activities included around and within the walk trail. As Shaftoe (2008) says, a good public space will offer the chance for a whole range of these activities that encourages people to linger on and use the place. The multiplicity of activities offered along with the distinct environment adds a positive exposure to the place experience.

The combination of nature (water, marsh, green, trees) and activities such as boating, seaplane viewing, bird watching combined with 3D art viewing, cycling, skating, shopping and dining has added a great vitality to the place in the way that people experience the place. People watching, meeting friends, relaxing and exercising are supported by the geographic definition and placement of functions as eating areas, spaces for sitting, lying down and walking providing a myriad of opportunities for engaging with the place and people within the chosen micro contexts. In other words, 'Diyatha Uyana' provides interesting channels of movement, nodes for pausing and communication both through active and passive engagement and common platform for relaxation, play and leisure. It provides a lively, varied and intriguing occupation of space, allowing people to observe diversity. The prominent aspect of the conviviality of this place is that it satisfies more than the visual perception of place. The non-visual aesthetics enable a holistic experience of all senses, where Shaftoe states that our experience of a place is usually based on a combination of several senses. Thus, there is a strong relationship between the various components of conviviality.

## Conclusion

The concept of conviviality helps to comprehend how people relate and respond to spaces and how their perceptions help make spaces work for them. As Canter (1974) says, they relate to basic human behavioral characteristics such as the need for different types of observation and communication and psychological effects as interpretation, coherence, legibility, sense of safety, intrigue and curiosity. These possibilities are provided within the various micro contexts of the sections to varying degrees, although not specifically defined and separated.

The notion of conviviality is a universal concept experienced by all irrespective of socio-cultural, economic parameters. From the research it is evident that a cross section of society that visited Diyatha Uyana expressed their strong yet varied sense perceptions of the place which defines its conviviality. Sensorial experiences in this context are not necessarily culture and socio specific. They are primarily based on explicit physical, geographical definitions of the locality that enables its sense of place. Thus, sensorial attributes of conviviality are “place-specific”. They are intertwined and cannot be separated although established as separate attributes of conviviality in the theoretical framework. The vitality and dynamism in terms of these qualities along with the type and variety of activities incorporated in a public place enables conviviality of a specific location. These attributes and the degree of conviviality due to these attributes may vary from place to place. The parameters of a specific context that enables “Conviviality” and its representing design parameters therefore cannot be replicated in a different context. The study presented the convivial attributes specific to ‘Diyatha Uyana’ and how they contribute to make the place sensational and joyful so that it can be a point of reference in future projects of similar nature.

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