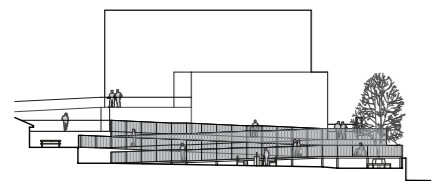


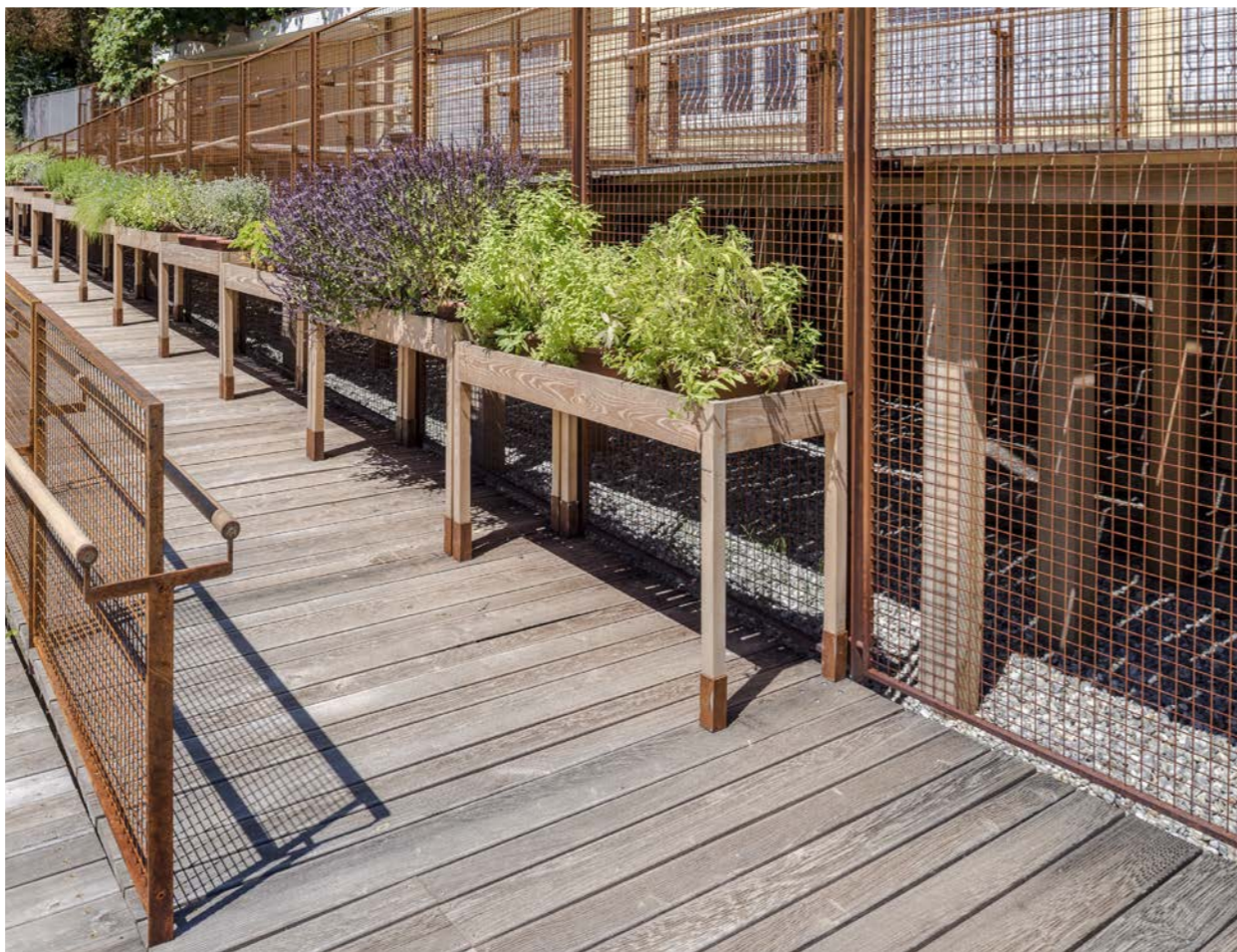
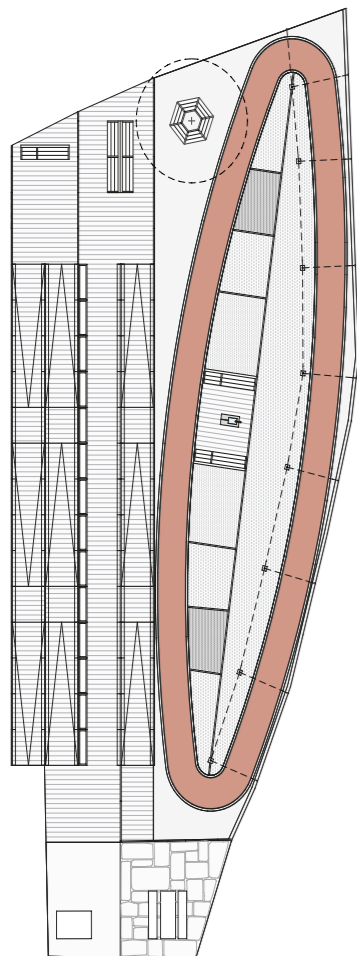
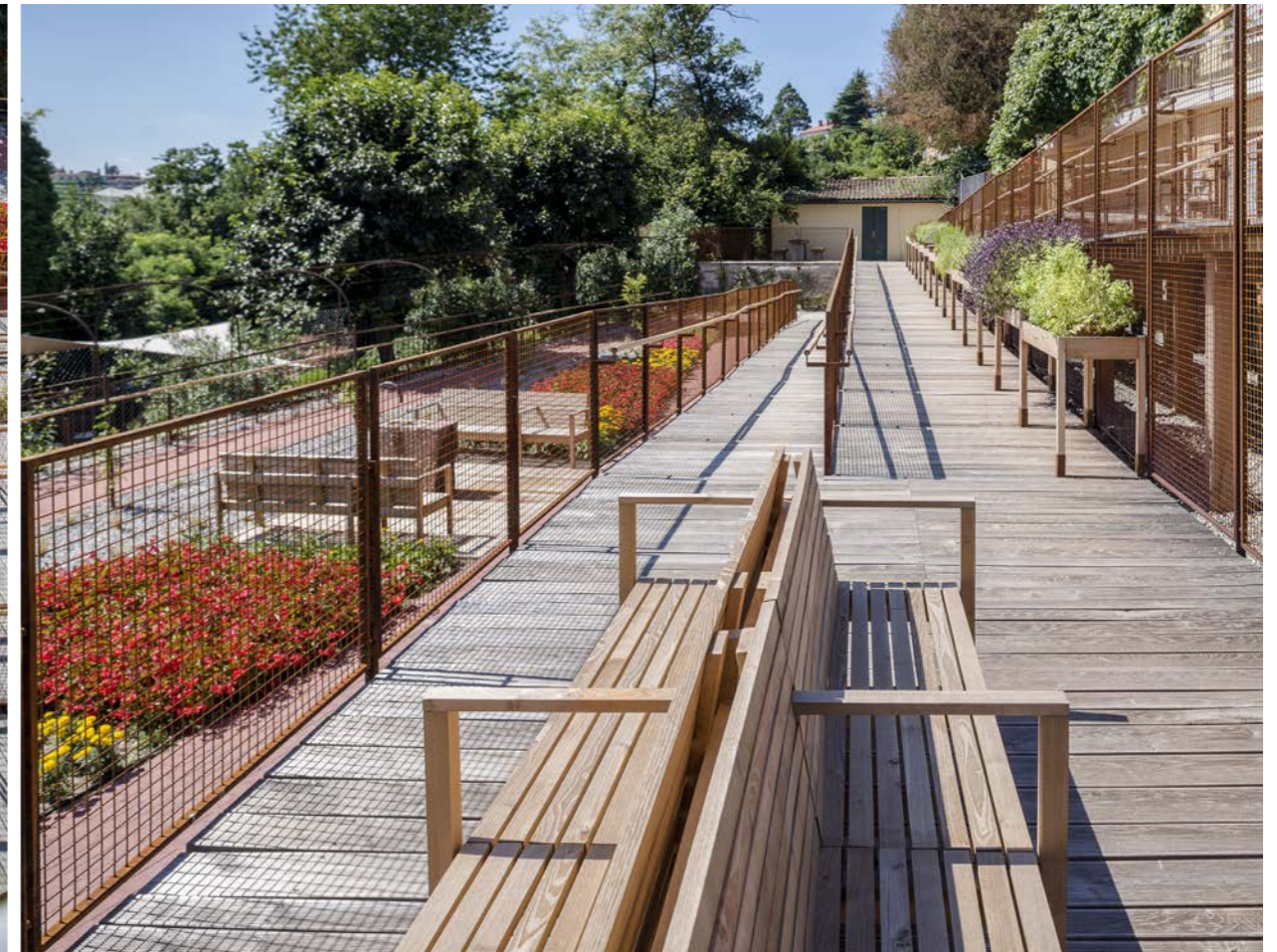
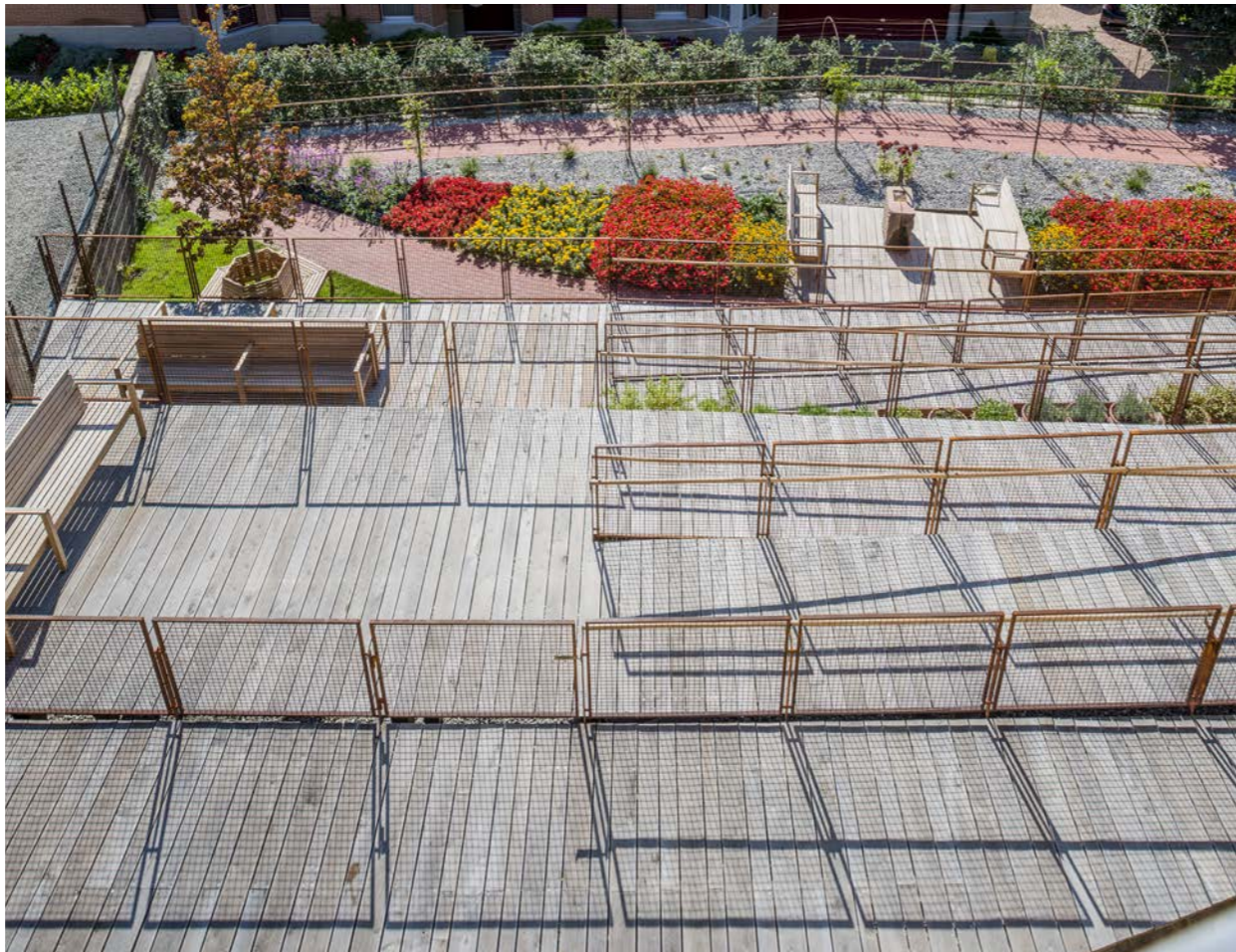
Technical information

Client: Pro Senectute Ticino e Moesano
 Architect: Enrico Sassi
 Promoter: Rotary Club Mendrisiotto
 Date: 2012 - 2014
 Photographers: Marcelo Villada Ortiz,

The "Sensory Garden" is a place with a recognisable and reassuring image in which to experience a sense of freedom and relaxation and is simultaneously designed for the implementation of a therapeutic programme of sensory stimulation. It is an open, but well-defined and protected space, which presents itself as a "normal" garden, accessible, simple and orderly, in which it is possible to experience a sense of serenity and well-being to counterbalance aggression; the garden space takes on therapeutic values. Closed places tend to generate states of anxiety; the garden allows guests to walk in safety and to satisfy the compulsion to move (wandering), typical of a phase of Alzheimer's disease. The garden at the Balerna therapeutic day centre consists of two spaces with characteristic functions and appearance: the ramp system and the ring path.



Ramps - The ramp system that connects the height of the building with that of the garden further downhill (height difference of 3.20 m) is composed of ramps that are 1.50 m wide and 6 m long, their slope is always less than 6%, so that a disabled person can walk on them even if unaccompanied. The ramps are parallel to the existing wall. The total length of the wooden-floored path is 95 m. The 1.50 m module is repeated to mark the rhythm of the path. The handrails are made of robinia wood (robinia pseudoacacia), as are the ramps, paved with planks with non-slip grooves. The third ramp of the path is characterised, on its uphill side, by a sequence of 14 wooden tables that make up a hanging garden of aromatic essences (lavender, sage, thyme, mint, rosemary, etc.) 21 m long. The table edge serves as a handrail, the tables also allow wheelchair users to get close to the greenery and serve to stimulate tactility and sense of smell. At the end of the ramp with the aromatic tables, one can stand on a long bench with a double overlook, on one side looking down on the garden below, on the other an aviary, located under the landing of the previous ramp. The parapets of the ramps are metal frames, with protective netting, all metal has a natural oxidised (rusted) finish.



Ring path - The route is punctuated by furnished rest areas. Two areas with mineral paving have also been constructed: one shaded, paved with old granite slabs, equipped with a table and two stone benches; one paved with paste-coloured cement to give it an earth-like appearance, on which the bronze sculpture "The Profile of Time" signed by Salvador Dali is placed. On the lowest terrace of the garden was an old iron pergola, which has been preserved and restored. The circular path of the sensory garden is a 1.50 m wide path. Its major axis measures 32.7 m, the minor axis 8 m, the length of the path is 67 m. Clearly recognisable points of interest are arranged along the path: a small wooden-paved square with two benches and a fountain carved out of an ancient block of Arzo marble, a tree (liquidambar styraciflua) under which a wooden seat is built around its trunk, the pergola with various species of climbing plants, flower beds with brightly coloured flowers and blooms at different times of the year. The mulch around the ring is made of grey gravel. Thanks to the colour contrast, the path, paved in red artificial stone, is clearly visible. The vegetation demarcates the paths, the rest areas, and separates the garden from the outdoor space. The plant species used are not stinging, thorny, sharp or poisonous as the sufferer often puts what he finds in his mouth. The garden fence, integrated into the greenery, is covered with jasmine (jasminum) to give the space a non-coercive image. Water is an important presence, the fountain is designed to allow guests to touch the water which is drinkable and which, falling into the basin, produces a pleasant and relaxing sound.

