Tiananmen Square

Paper 1: Appraisal. (RIBA Work Stage A)

A paper written and published by
David G. Jukes-Hughes BA (Hons) MA RIBA MRAIC
Registered Architect (United Kingdom)
Smithers, BC, Canada

27th March 2007

About the Author

David Jukes-Hughes was born in Salisbury, England, in 1961. He spent his boyhood at various boarding schools in that country, and in camps of The British Army in parts of Europe. David studied stage design under Anne Brackenbury. He read politics, geography and the visual arts at Lancaster University. He studied the practice of sculpture under Don Potter, Paul Cooper and Faith Winter, and went on to read Architecture at Kingston University under Professors Dennis Berry and Peter Jacob. He completed his professional training under Dr. Paul Nicholson, a consultant to Nottingham University.

David has been in the practice of design since 1986, and was made a Registered Architect in the United Kingdom in 1997. He now specializes in architectural theory and its consequences. He is a chartered member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and a member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC).

David divides his time unequally between the countries of Wales, England, Hong Kong, The PRC and Canada.

Tiananmen Square: Paper 1: Appraisal

A couplet in small characters was inscribed vertically on either side of the arch:

"Truth becomes fiction when fiction's true;
Real becomes non-real where the unreal's real."

Cao Xueqin.
"The Story of the Stone. Volume 1. Golden Days."
c. 1760. (P. 55)

Preface

This paper is written as a somewhat delayed response to a visit to Tiananmen Square that I made on the 2nd July 1997.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Canny Cheung and "Dr. Ben" for their assistance in providing me with important visual information on the site.

I would like to thank Howard Neville for inviting me on a visit to Peking (by train) from Hong Kong on 30th June 1997, the organizers of the visit, "Dragon Escapes" (Long Chun), our very efficient guide and the group of people from Hong Kong that accompanied us. It was both a memorable and enjoyable visit.

I would also like to thank the staff at the Smithers Public Library for their assistance.

Illustrations

All Illustrations by David G. Jukes-Hughes unless otherwise noted.

Contents

Introduction

Tiananmen Square is probably the largest city square in the world. Its plan dimensions are approximately 1 kilometre from north to south and 500 metres from east to west. This is eight times the base area of the Pyramid of Cheops. (See Figure 1) (Measurements are derived from satellite photography of the square provided at http://www.drben.net)

When I first saw the square its huge size was keenly felt. However, what I had not realized at the time was that I was only seeing half of it. The southern half is currently occupied by the Mausoleum of Chairman Mao. (See Figure 2)

The square is a relatively new urban addition to the city of Peking (also called Peiping or Beijing). During imperial times the area was used for government offices. After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on 1st October 1949, these were removed to make way for the new square. At this time, the great walls of the old city were also removed to make way for new roads. Only a few of the main city gates remain. One of these is Qianmen Gate (Front Gate), which lies at the southern end of the square. It consists of two gates, Zhongyang Gate and Arrow Gate on the south side. Each gate has one arch. (See Figure 3) (Buckley, P.604-5)

The square is surrounded by a ring road on all four sides. On the outer side of this the buildings of the city define the full 3-dimensional space of the square. To the north the square is bounded by the imperial palace of the Qing and the Ming Emperors. This palace is known as "The Forbidden City." The entrance to the palace from the square is by "The Tiananmen Gate." ("Tiananmen" means "Gate of Heavenly Peace.") A large portrait of Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong) decorates the top of the central archway. On the west side is "The Great Hall of the People." This is where the full National People's Congress (NPC) and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) meets once a year in March. On the east side is the History Museum and the Museum of the Revolution. (See Figure 1)

Just north of the centre of the square is "The Monument to the People's Heroes." This is a granite obelisk which is 36 metres high. The obelisk is decorated with bas-reliefs. (See Figure 2) (Buckley, P.606) At the northern end of the square is a flag pole some 25 metres high. It displays the flag of the People's Republic of China. (See Figure 2)

Traditionally the square has tended to be the focal point for demonstrations and gatherings with a national dimension. It has become a place of great symbolic value.

Figure 1: Tiananmen Square: satellite Image. (North is to the right of the picture.) From left to right (south to north) the main Architectural elements along the central axis are the Arrow Tower, the Zhongyang Gate, the mausoleum, the obelisk and the flag pole. Also on the axis but outside the picture on the right are Tiananmen Gate and “The Forbidden City.”

At the top right (on the west side of the square) is the “Great Hall of the People.” On the bottom right (on the east side of the square) is the History Museum.

The satellite photo is taken from a position east of the square at approximately 35 degrees above the Earth’s horizon. As a result, the square and the buildings appear narrower from top to bottom (east to west) than they are in reality. (The latitudinal distances are about 50% greater in reality.) The longitudinal distances from left to right (south to north) remain true to reality. In reality, the proportion of the square is 1:2. So the distortion in this picture is quite considerable.

The picture does show the elevations of the buildings. These appear reduced, but do give a true indication of their relative differences. If the picture was taken directly over the site and perpendicular to the Earth’s horizon, then this information would not be seen.

Figure 2: Tiananmen Square. View from Tiananmen Gate looking due south. The national flag is in the foreground. “The Monument to the People’s Heroes” is in the centre. Chairman Mao’s Mausoleum lies in the background. Image from http://www.code-d.com

Figure 3: Tiananmen Square: Aerial View from the South. Arrow Gate is in the foreground. Tiananmen Gate and The Forbidden City are in the background to the north of the square.

In this paper I wish to explore some of its Architectural possibilities. (Indeed, the square 'begs' to be redesigned by an Architect!) However, before this can be done it is important to "prepare the canvas" as it were. I shall cover this topic in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2 I shall cover further preparatory requirements pertaining to Chapter 1.

In Chapter 3 I shall outline some possible landscape options. In Chapter 4 I shall review the options for built structures. And lastly, in Chapter 5, I shall review those possibilities which combine both landscape design and built structures.

1. "Preparing the Canvas"

As in any great painting, both great Architecture and landscape design needs to have a well prepared canvas.

This needs to be boldly done and without regrets.

The necessity of removing the Mausoleum of Chairman Mao is self-evident. Without removing it the original unity and greatness of the square prior to the construction of Mausoleum in 1976-7 cannot be achieved.

Indeed, considering that the square is reported to be Chairman Mao's own design, it is ironic that this great unity has been compromised after his decease by the presence of the man himself (or to be more precise, by his present embalmed embodiment.)

The Mausoleum is aligned on the central north-south axis of the square. In plan, it is 150 metres from east to west, and 110 metres from north to south. Its height is approximately 35 metres.

The built structure is surrounded by a landscaped area. This is 400 metres from east to west and 360 metres from north to south. A clear of width of 50 metres is provided for pedestrians to circulate around each side of the Mausoleum. It allows people to move from Zhongyang Gate in the south to the open area to the north. Satellite photography shows that this circulation area is prone to bottlenecks, particularly when people are lining up to visit the Mausoleum, whose entrance lies on the north side of the building. (See Figure 1)

The second and final item which may need removing is "The Monument to the People's Heroes." However this would be subject to any final design proposals. (It need not be demolished, but simply relocated to another place.)

2. Other Preparatory Requirements

Having decided to demolish the Mausoleum of Mao Tse-tung, two 'design' problems related to this exercise will need to be 'solved.' These are:

(a) The method of demolition to be decided.
(b) The removal of the embalmed body of Mao Tse-tung.

(a) The Method of Demolition to be Decided

Given the large number of people that usually congregate in Tiananmen Square the method of demolition should be considered with their utmost safety in mind. In addition, noise and dust should be kept to a minimum.

With these points in mind, it is recommended that explosives are not used. To replace this common technique, JCB mounted jack hammers could be used instead. To reduce wind blown dust, the entire building could be hidden behind a protective screen of strong plastic netting mounted on "double-row" bamboo scaffolding. To separate the public from the works area the site area could be surrounded by a three metre high structural steel and steel plate demolition hoarding, with a protected walkway beneath, which is wide enough to take the expected pedestrian flow. Construction vehicle access to the enclosed works area could be made from the west side, allowing the east side to remain free for some limited pedestrian circulation.

In order to add some element of visual interest to the works during the demolition period, the bamboo scaffold could also be wrapped in colourful plastic sheeting held down by rope and covered by dyed strips of cloth or banners. This would also help to reduce dust pollution and reduce noise impact. Some of this work could be subcontracted out to fine artists.

(b) The Removal of the Embalmed Body of Mao Tse-tung

Ordinarily, a deceased person in the People's Republic of China (PRC) is bounded by law to be cremated. There are two exceptions to this rule: the Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of the People's Republic of China are exempt, and until now, Mao Tse-tung has been exempt. However, this latter case would appear to be contrary to PRC law. It is therefore suggested that Mao's body be disposed of by cremation.

An alternative to cremation could be to deliver Mao's body to Hong Kong or Macao where it could either be buried or entombed in its current embalmed state. It should be remembered however, that regional laws may prohibit the public display of the body on grounds of taste or 'obscenity.' In other words custodians of the body could not necessarily expect to make a profit from its continued display, as is the now.

A third option could be a full burial at sea in international waters or, if cremated first, a 'burial' in home waters. The last paramount leader of the PRC, Deng Xiao-ping (Deng Xiaoping), was cremated and 'buried' at sea. (However, surprisingly enough, I believe that his ashes were dropped from an aircraft flying over international waters at 30,000 feet, which is certainly a very novel way to go.)

The question of disposing Mao Tse-tung's body raises the ever present question of what to do, if anything, with the other embalmed bodies of the 'immortals' of the revolutionary movement. Naturally, such questions will need to be answered by the respective countries concerned. However, the disposal of Mao's body could be seen as an opportunity for 'resolving' that issue in one great event.

Mao's body is just one of four embalmed revolutionary 'immortals.' The others are, in no particular order, Vladimir I. Lenin in Moscow, Kim Il Sung in Pyongyang and Ho Chi Minh in Ha Noi (Hanoi). All four bodies could be cremated or buried in one place at the same time. Perhaps, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region could be a suitable place. (For some reason Ernest Bevan, a British Socialist, called Hong Kong, "The Berlin of the Middle East" (Welsh, P.443). Although Hong Kong is actually in the Far East, some leaders might think of it as having a similar quality or focus for the political rhetoric of the 'Cold War' era, an era which still seems to stratify and divide certain elements of the Far East community. Of course, unlike Berlin, the Hong Kong Area appears to have fallen into the ambit of the 'Communist Block.' This, I believe, should make it easier for the four countries to part with their embalmed inheritance, if they cannot quite do the deed themselves.)

The bodies of Lenin and Kim could travel to Peking by train. (In the case of Kim, this would presumably need to be an armoured train!) At Peking central train station, the bodies of Mao, Kim and Lenin could then travel together, perhaps on Kim's armoured train, to Canton (Kwangchow / Guangzhou) central train station. Here the body of Ho, having traveled from Ha Noi (Hanoi) by another train could then join the main entourage from Peking. Together, all four bodies could then travel on the armoured train to Kowloon Station, or specifically, the KCRC Hung Hom railway dockyard. (See Figure 4)

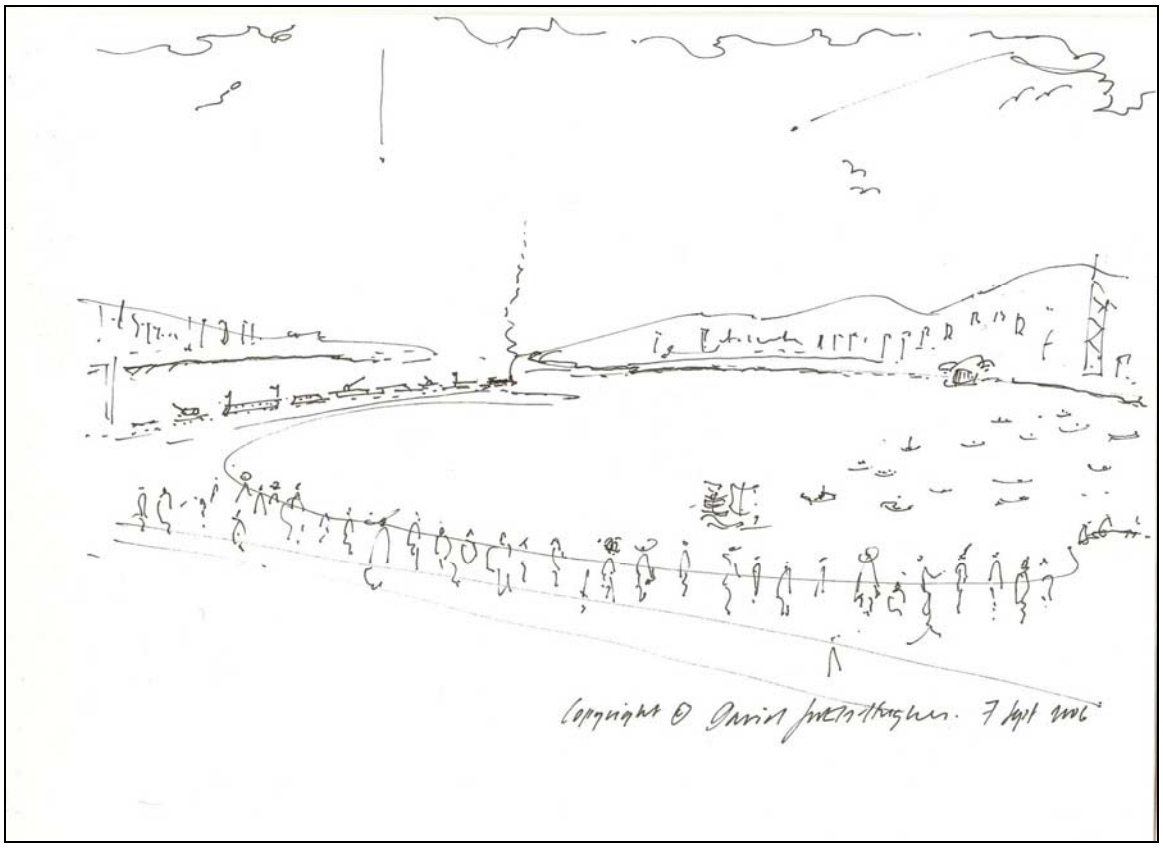

Figure 4: Sketch: The Armoured Train. This picture shows what the train might look like on arriving at the Kowloon Station / Hung Hom railway dockyard, Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong. View from Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui quayside.

At the Kowloon Station / Hung Hom railway dockyard (which is usually occupied by containers of the COSCO patriotic capitalist company), the bodies could then be loaded onto a ship. Lenin could be in the vanguard, with Kim second, Ho third, and “The Helmsman” (representing the host nation) last to board. The ship could then take the bodies to the Tamar Site on Hong Kong Island to lie “in state” for a week or so before burial or cremation, either at sea or on land.

From the Tamar Site the opportunity also exists for the full entourage to be loaded on to an ocean vessel to go on a final global tour as it were, at the expense of one or two of the Hong Kong patriotic capitalist shipping companies. This ship could then travel along the world’s coastline (traveling westwards perhaps and following the route of Cheng Ho (Zheng He) for part of the way), dropping in at the major ports on the way so that people can pay their last respects (the ship might be lucky enough to pick up Fidel Castro’s body in Havana on the way). It could then return to Hong Kong. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5: A Global Tour. A possible sea route is marked in red. The four or five revolutionary immortals could travel westbound from Hong Kong. The ship could stop off at major ports on the way to receive visitors (for a small fee). It could then return to Hong Kong from the east for the final burial or cremation of the immortals by August 8th 2008. Volunteers from the Hong Kong Area could accompany the ocean going vessel, which could be financed and organized in a joint corporation with the major Hong Kong patriotic capitalist shipping companies (ie: COSCO, OOCL, Swire, Jardines and Hutchison Whampoa), financed by the major patriotic banks (ie: HSBC, HSB, Standard Chartered and China Bank (HK) and headed up by the Government in the Hong Kong Area or SAR. The voyage, if it were to go ahead, would of course need to be properly insured by Lloyds of London against any mishap. (This could be offset by the sale of television rights in each country to be visited. A Free Press is not always free, alas.) As the tour would start from Hong Kong in would have the great advantage of not appearing to be “political” in any way.

Once back in Hong Kong, the four or five bodies could then be cremated or buried at sea or on the land prior to the Olympic Games in Peking in August 2008. One of the more interesting opportunities that Hong Kong has to offer from a geographical perspective is the opportunity to have a ‘burial’ at sea in the magnificent Victoria Harbour. The four or five revolutionary ‘immortals’ could also be given a ‘burial’ which would of course take account of the unique legal system found in the region. As the best legal minds in the area will know, the current law originates from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, a country with a long legal history dating back to the Old Testament (which was begun over 9,000 years ago). On its way through time this law has evolved in part through successive invasions and immigrations of people to the British Isles. One of the more interesting influences to the Law is “The Dane Law,” which was brought in by the invading Danish Vikings during the Ninth Century AD. A common practice for Danish Chiefs was cremation at sea in their ships, I believe.

Perhaps, then, the revolutionary ‘immortals’ could be put to ‘rest’ in a similar fashion. The four or five bodies having arrived directly from their current resting places, or from a global roundtrip, could then be laid in state (again) at the Tamar Site, and from here they might then be laid on a Ming Warship similar to the one shown in figure 6. The ship could then be towed out into Victoria Harbour at night, and duly set alight. And that would be that. (See Figure 7)

Figure 6: A Ming Warship. Image from http://www.act.com
(The ship could be made in Hong Kong at the Aberdeen Boatyard by competitive tender and financed by the sale of exclusive television and media rights.) The model can be found at The Museum of Coastal Defence in Hong Kong, I believe.

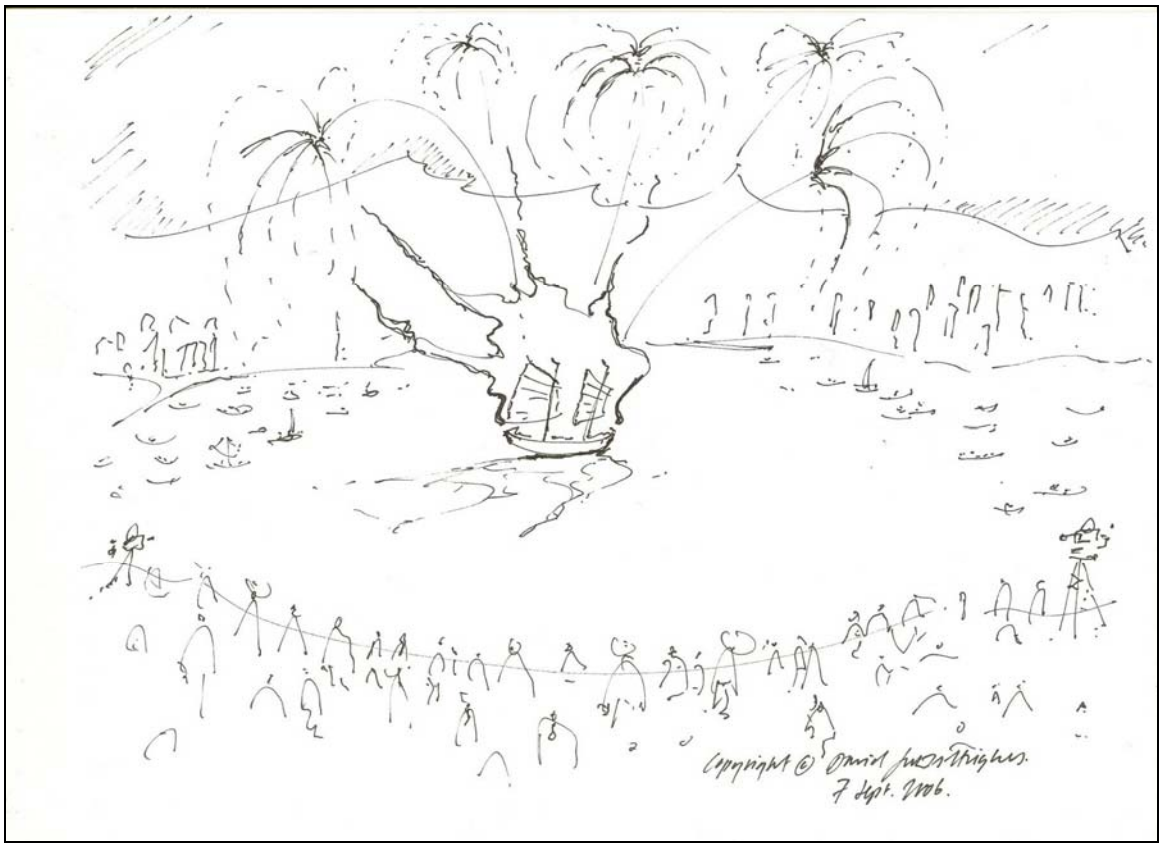

Figure 7: Sketch: A Hong Kong Ceremony. This picture shows what a Viking type funeral ceremony might look like in Victoria Harbour at night. The view is from the Tamar Site on Hong Kong Island. The ship is a Ming warship of the type in figure 6. Fireworks could be used to enliven the event. However, these would need to be launched from a separate vessel for safety reasons. People would be able to watch the event from an 'Armada' of pleasure craft.

This last method of 'departure' from this world to the next, should of course meet all the legal requirements of the PRC for cremation. (Although under "one country, two systems," the force of the PRC legal system does not usually apply to the Hong Kong Area, except when it's *enforced* by the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China (CPGPRC), or to be more precise, by the office of the Chairman of the State Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China (SCMCPRC). For, as I understand it, the constitution of the People's Republic of China operates in a similar way to the Common-Wealth of Great Britain and Ireland under the Lord Protector. (The National People's Congress (NPC) would be something like the House of Commons during "The Long Parliament," and it's Standing Committee a kind of "Rump Parliament." (The Standing Committee is similar in size.) However, a fuller analysis of this topic is best left to a separate paper.)

In the event that the above method of cremation meets objections, either from living relatives who may be against cremation or the Hong Kong Government or people, who may be against a land burial in Hong Kong, the bodies could be transported to another location for burial. This might be the United Kingdom, which has in the past shown it's self to be tolerant to the idea of burying other revolutionary immortals. (Perhaps all four or five immortals could join Karl Marx at Highgate Cemetery in North London: "An appointment with Marx," which no doubt should please them all. However, they may need to be cremated first if they were to share his actual grave site. For those readers needing direction, the nearest underground station is Archway.)

3. Landscape Options

With the 'canvas' now prepared, Tiananmen Square offers the landscape designer many creative opportunities. In this chapter I shall now like to explore some of the options that might please the city state of Peking and its inhabitants. These are as follows:

(a) A hard landscape scheme
(b) An agricultural scheme
(c) A formal scheme with a combination of hard and soft landscaping
(d) A picturesque scheme
(e) A picturesque scheme with some hard landscaping
(f) A modern design
(g) The importance of water

(a) A Hard Landscape Scheme

In a hard landscape scheme the entire square would be paved. The full splendor of the square would be open to view. (See Figure 19)

The great advantage of this arrangement is the opportunity for hosting national events and gatherings on an even greater scale than before. These could be military parades by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), theatrical events, rock concerts, musical festivals, rodeos, country fairs, trade fairs, sporting events (such as tennis and beach volley ball?) and social gatherings of various kinds.

To make the above events possible without significant disruption to the city additional washroom facilities, electrical outlets and refuse collection points would be necessary on the edge of the enlarged square. In addition new street lighting fixtures would need to be installed.

Onsite storage facilities could also be discretely located along the edge of the square.

The obelisk at the centre of the square could remain in place or not as required.

(b) An Agricultural Scheme

In the agricultural scheme the entire square could be given over to the plough, which is to say that the square might be planted with a crop of agricultural produce. This might be a field of Cabbage, Potatoes, Wheat (See Figures 8 and 9) or even Red Sorghum. (See Figure 10)

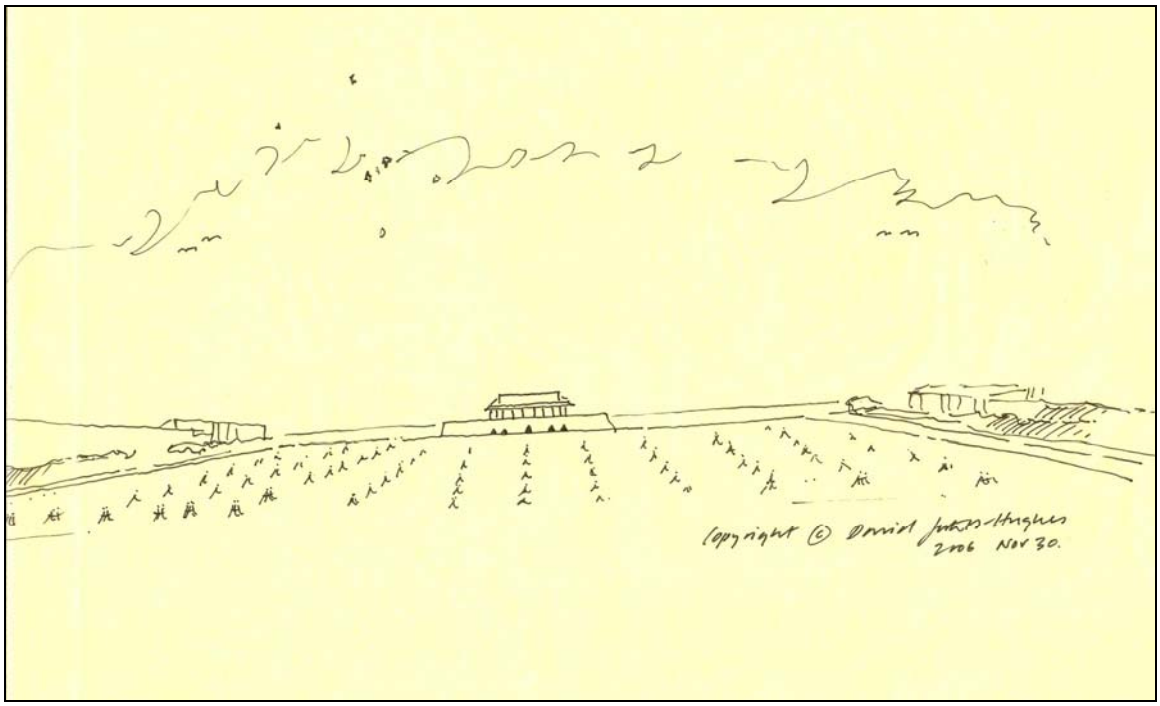

Figure 8: Sketch: The Wheatfield. A view of how Tiananmen Square might look at harvest time. View from the south. Tiananmen Gate is shown in the background.

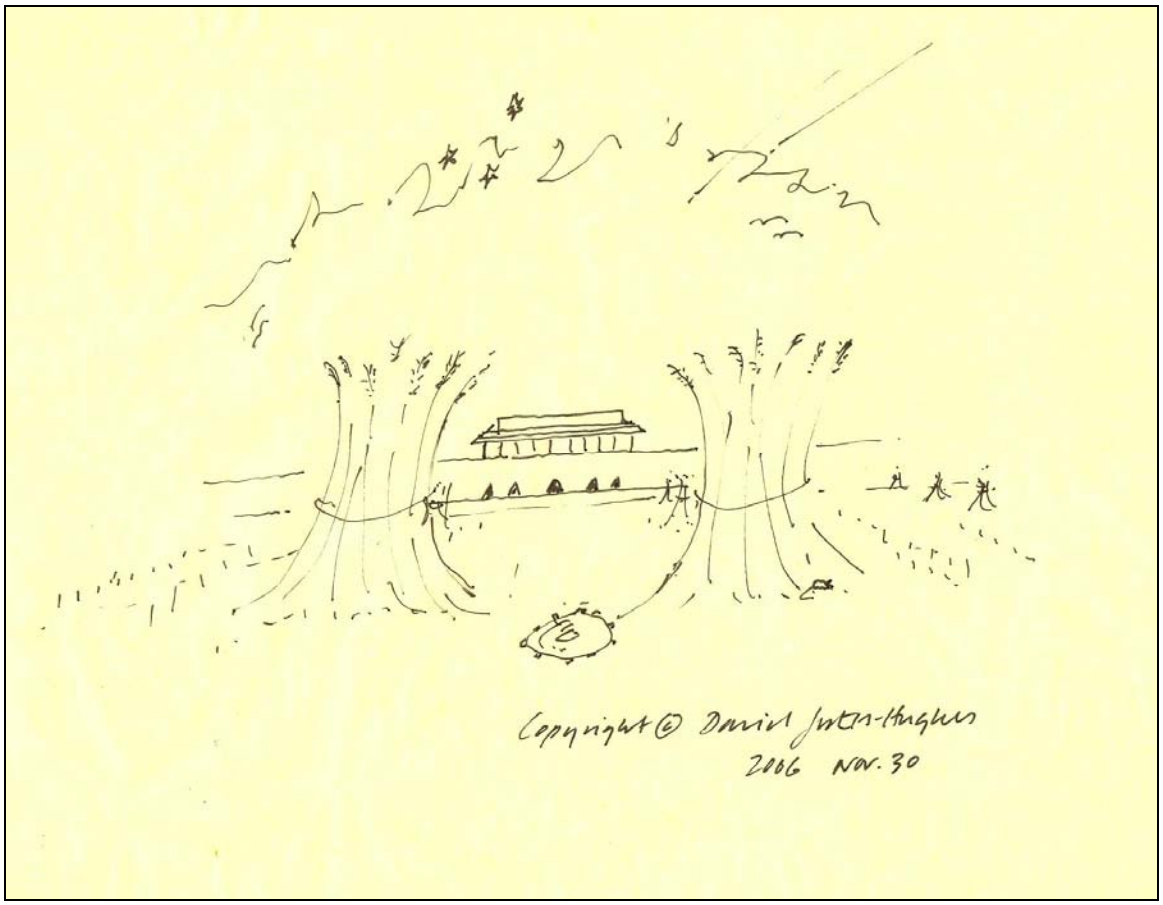

Figure 9: Sketch: The Wheatfield detail. This shows another view of Tiananmen Gate with some old machinery and some of the wildlife that can be expected at harvest time.

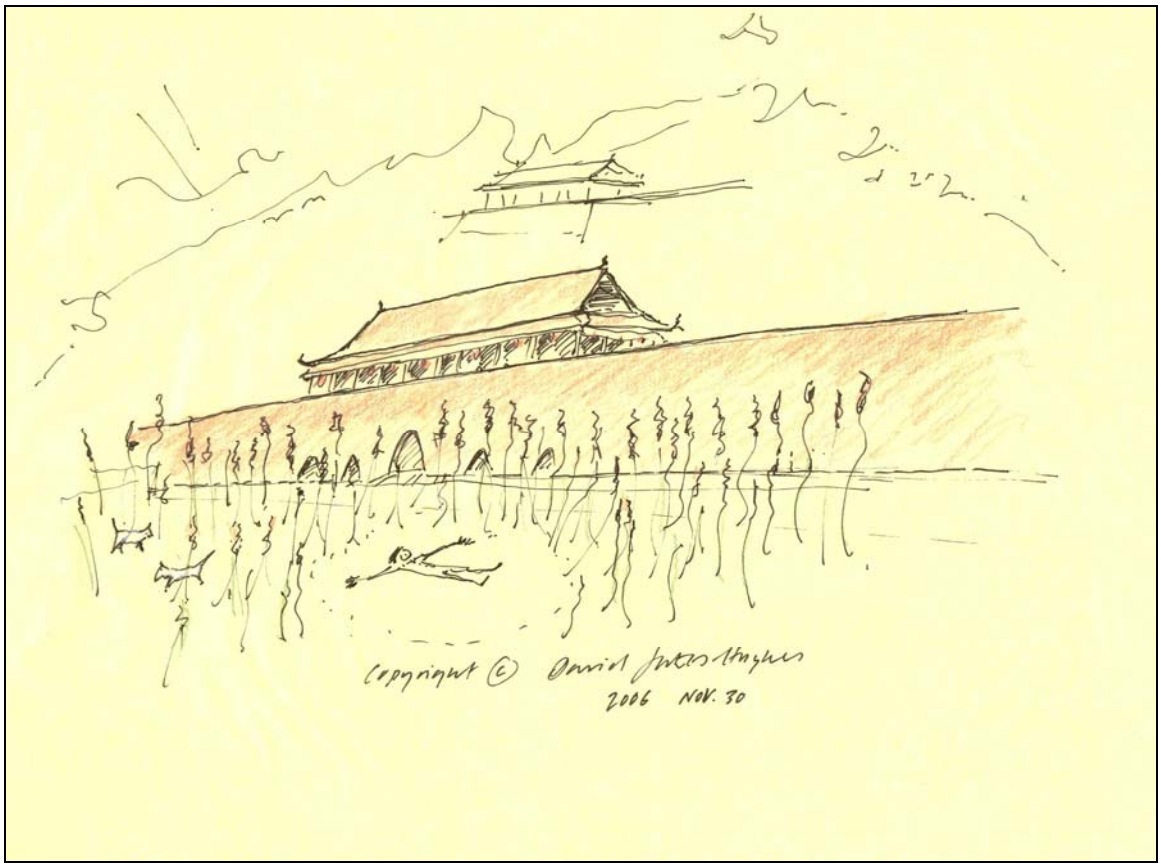

Figure 10: A field of Red Sorghum with Tiananmen Gate in the background. This picture shows how some recreational activity is possible in the Sorghum field proposal such as sunbathing (it is woman in the circle in the square in this case, I believe), and walking the dogs. (These chalky white Scottie dogs (or possibly dyed Yorkshire Terriers) might be made of straw however. I believe that all of Chairman Mao's lanterns are still red in colour the whole year round, unless of course one has gone missing since I was last at the Square.)

Alternatively, the square could be meadowland for the grazing of animals such as horses, donkeys, beef cattle, dairy cows, goats or sheep. Or the square could be planted with fruit orchards or a forest of trees for the production of lumber (See Figure 11). This could be combined with meadowland for grazing. Game birds could be kept in the orchards or forest. Ponds could be added to the last two proposals to provide water for the farm animals or for domestic birds such as ducks or geese. Rainbow Trout might also be found in the pond.

Instead of the above, glass houses could be built to grow hot-house fruit such as Tomatoes or Cucumbers, or even flowers, such as Chrysanthemums of various colours.

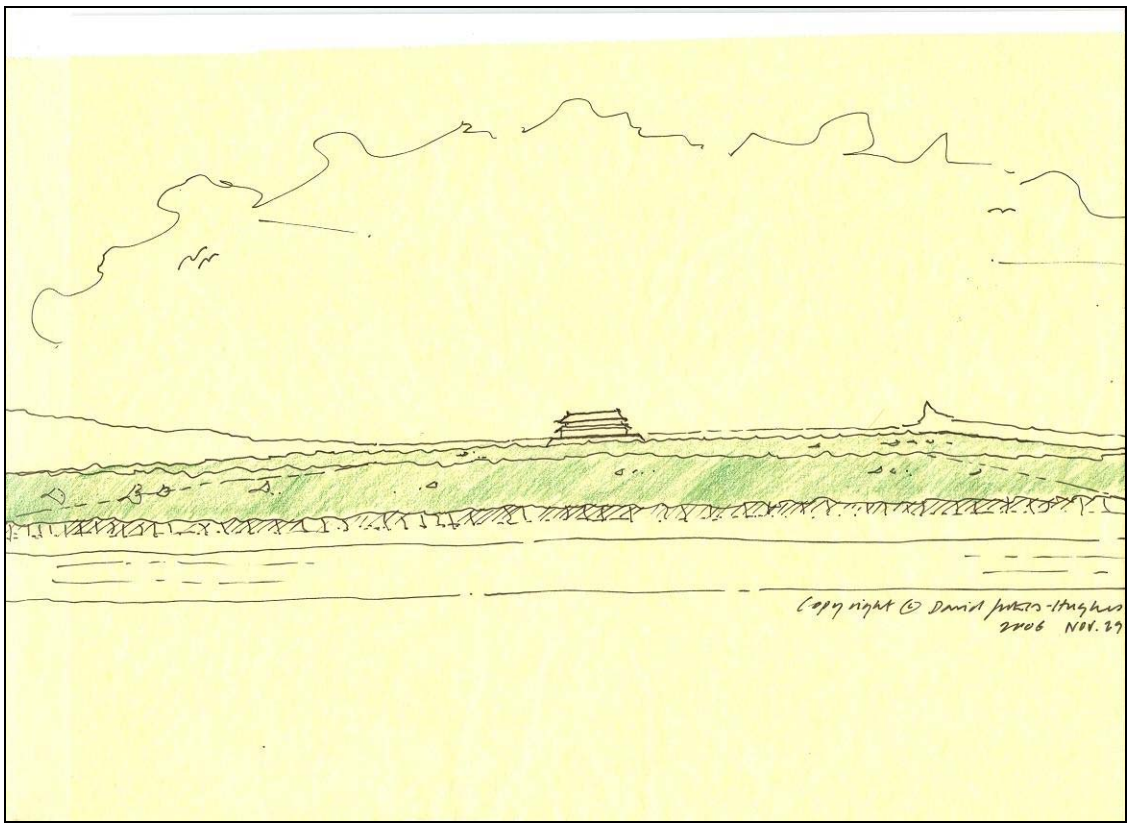

Figure 11: An Oak Forest. This shows the view of what a forest could look like in Tiananmen Square viewed from Tiananmen Gate. (I call this the “Birnam Wood” option.)

Finally, all or some of the above proposals could be provided in various combinations, which might change from year to year. In short, Tiananmen Square would become a working farm in the heart of the city. (Farm buildings could be included as required.)

At first sight it may seem to be an odd thing to propose an agricultural use for the square. However, I believe that it could make an important contribution to the life of the city both as an additional “green lung”, and as a valuable resource for education, whether this is nature, economy, literature, history or even the political philosophy of *Juche.* (This is pronounced Joo-chay!)

(c) A Formal Scheme with a Combination of Hard and Soft Landscaping

For some people the formal scheme will certainly be the most obvious choice for such a location. The square already has a strong feeling of formality. This is most marked by its overriding north-south axis, which is defined by the Tiananmen Gate, the Obelisk, the Zhongyang Gate and the Arrow Gate. And this formality is accentuated by the ring road and some of the buildings on the east and west side of the square, particularly “The Great Hall of the People” and the History Museum.

Addressing this existing axis might form the basis of any scheme proposed, and this could be achieved with a combination of hard and soft landscaping.

However, in designing such a scheme, it is important to remember that the formality need not be total, but could be either graduated away from the axis, or mixed in some way with more informal arrangements at various scales. (See Figures 12 – 17)

The scheme might also retain some elements of the existing scheme such as the obelisk, the flag pole, or the open area on the north side of the square. (Fig.14)

The design possibilities of this type of scheme are clearly innumerable, as are its precedents. The most famous of these is perhaps the Palace of Versailles, which lies to the south of Paris in France. What is interesting about this scheme is the gradation from formality to informality as distances increase away from the palace itself. Gradation of intensity also recedes in a similar fashion. The precision and detail of the work is concentrated around the palace, and as one moves away from it, the landscape becomes less precise and more ‘natural’ or ‘picturesque.’ This approach might also be applied to the square as distances increase away from the Forbidden City, or from the main north-south axis, or both in combination.

(d) A Picturesque Scheme

Historically, the gardens of China have tended to fall into this category of design. However, unlike the great picturesque gardens of eighteenth century Europe, the ‘picturesque’ in China is much reduced in scale. The gardens of Europe are wide and expansive, whilst those of China are small and compact. In Europe, the eye is drawn towards visual axis which might recede as far as the horizon. In China the eye is forced to focus on detail and the miniaturization of form.

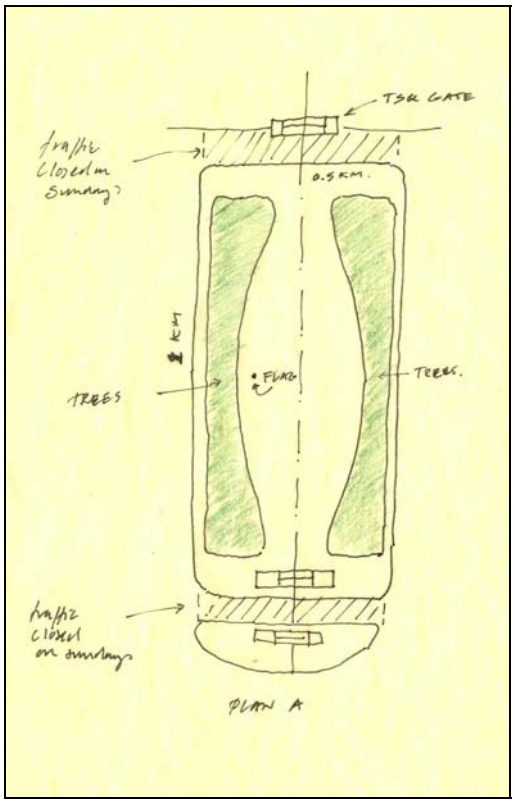

Figure 12: Plan A.

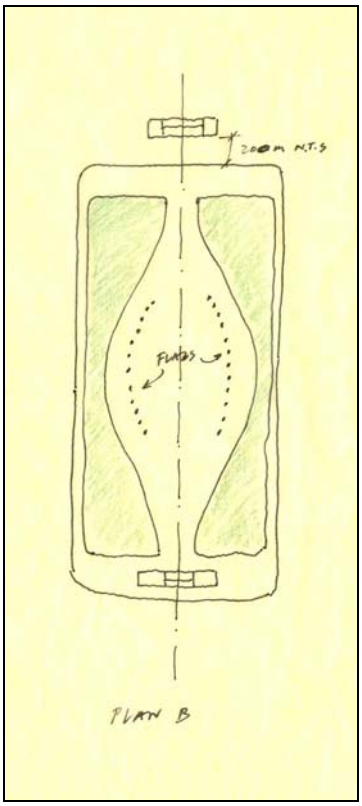

Figure 13: Plan B.

It would seem however that these differences in scale are simply the result of place. In Europe the 'picturesque' began in the wide expanse of the countryside. The idea of it was then imported to the city often with mixed results. In China the traditional garden seems to be a product of the city and the task of living under conditions of high population density.

At Tiananmen Square, it might seem appropriate for reasons of national pride to follow the traditional approach used in China for designing a garden in the 'picturesque.' However, I believe that this may not be appropriate in this instance for two reasons. Firstly, it would seem that a miniaturized approach would simply not 'fill-up' such a huge area of land in any adequate way. Secondly, such an approach would in all probability fail to address the grandeur and formality of the Architecture along the north-south axis. It could only ignore it.

For this scheme, it is therefore suggested that a more European approach to designing a park in the 'picturesque' is used, in order to achieve something like the effect of St. James's Park in London, England, which is similar in size.

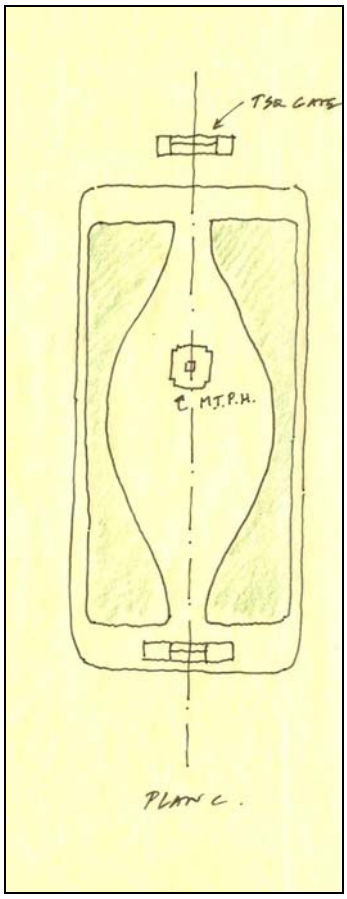

Figure 14: Plan C.

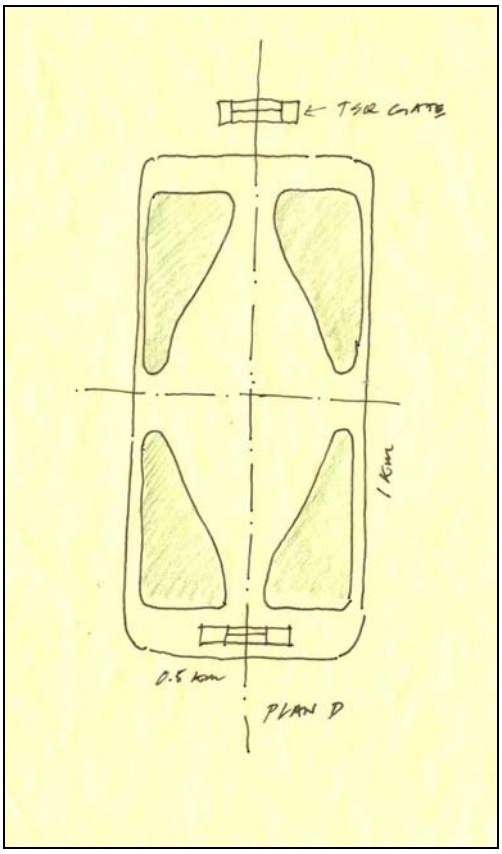

Figure 15: Plan D.

At St. James's Park trees are used to frame views of some distance from one end of the park to the other and to buildings and vistas beyond its boundaries. A large lake adds both horizontal depth and verticality to the vision as the blue London sky is reflected on the surface of the water. Trees are deciduous. Their colours change with the seasons providing new pictorial visions as time marches through the calendar. (See Figure 18)

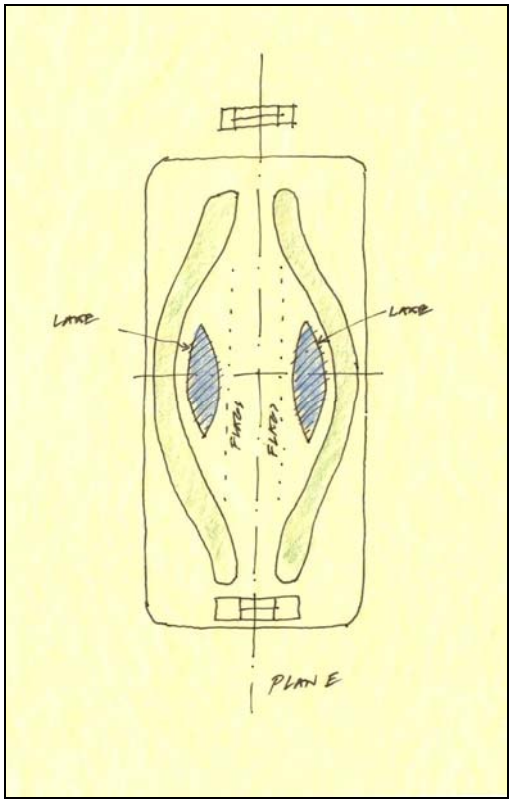

Figure 16: Plan E

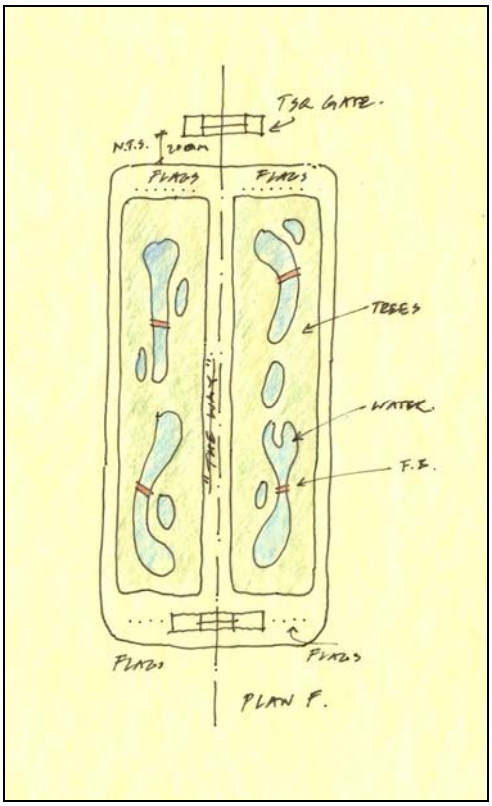

Figure 17: Plan F

(e) A Picturesque Scheme with Some Hard Landscaping

This scheme is suggested as a compromise between the current design for the square which is largely paved, and the idea of providing something of the 'picturesque' in order to soften it in some way. Such an approach would of course have the advantages of both the hard landscape scheme as outlined above, as well as providing the more 'passive' recreational advantages that soft landscaping is only capable of. As noted the hard landscaping could provide areas for 'active' recreation as well as a place for the more formal activities of State.

A good example of this relationship between hard and soft landscaping is also found at St. James's Park in London, England. Here the park is juxtaposed with the formal arrangement of The Horse Guards Parade which lies to the east of it. Although the two elements are separated by a road, they are nevertheless bound together in a strong visual way. The foliage of the park forms the western edge of the Parade area, giving the area a sense of unity and a central focus. At the same time the Parade area is allowed to 'spread out' beyond the road and into the park itself. In short, the Parade is given a kind of visual relief or 'escape' from its formal enclosure that is created by the buildings on its remaining sides.

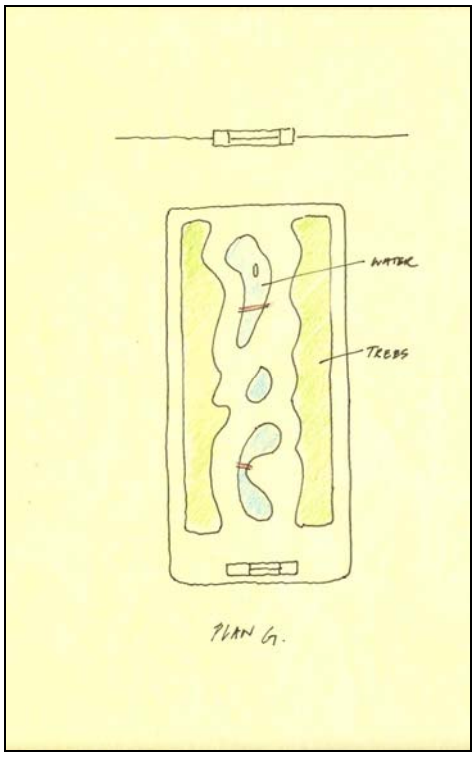

Figure 18: Plan G

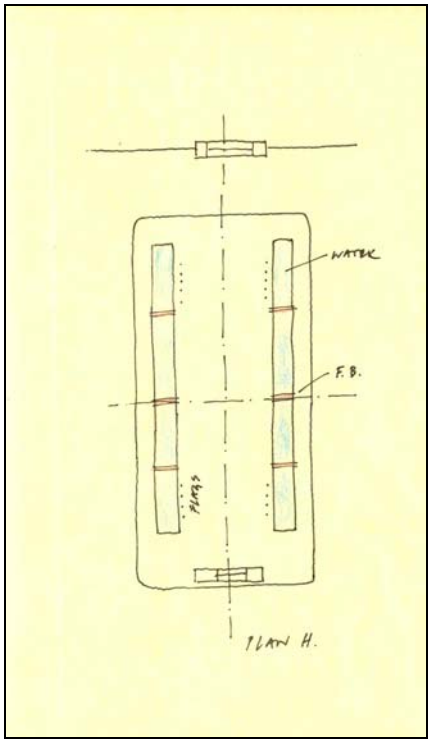

Figure 19: Plan H

How this design approach would be translated into the reality of Tiananmen Square is a matter of pure speculation. For again it would seem that such an approach could lead to an infinite range of possibilities. For example, unlike St. James's Park, the square could have two major paved or hard landscaped areas or parades. One might be to the north and the other to the south, each of which could be defined by the two gates, Tiananmen Gate and Zhongyang Gate. Whilst in the centre, the obelisk might be removed and the whole area given over to a green park in the 'picturesque' style. (See Figure 20)

In such a design, a connection between the two parades might be appropriate. This could be a visual connection across an open area or series of lakes or ponds, or it could also be a formal avenue, which both connects the two spaces visually, and allows the movement of people from one to the other. This would then leave the area on either side of the avenue for a soft landscape of trees, meadows and carp filled ponds. Such an avenue might be restricted in its use to people, or it might also allow the through-fair of bicycles or even horses. (I do not think the PLA has a cavalry detachment for occasions of State, but it might decide to have one at some future date or other. Anything is possible these days, or so it would seem.)

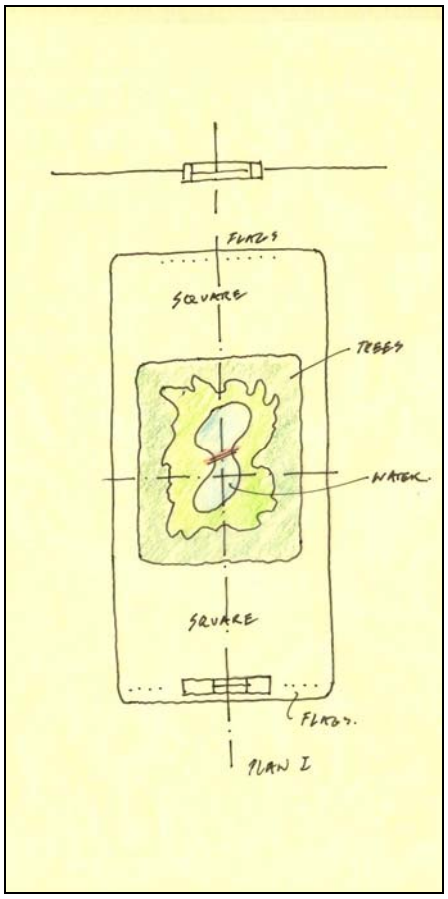

Figure 20: Plan I

(f) A Modern Design

A Modern design approach could be employed using more abstract lines and shapes. These could be expressed using a palette of natural forms, plants, water features and hard paving.

(g) The Importance of Water

The importance of water to any scheme proposed cannot be over-stressed.

In the traditional gardens of China water often forms a central focus. Water of course is valued in the ancient philosophical system of the country, “Feng Shui,” the system of ‘wind and water.’ It is not only valued as the source of life, but also for its use in recreation and the pleasure of the human senses. It also has a practical environmental element to it. It can help to cool the air in high summer, particularly when fountains are used within enclosed areas.

In *all* of the above proposals water could be employed as a significant design feature, even when the area is 'fully' paved in a hard landscape design. (Eg: Figure 19.)

Water could feature as lakes, light reflecting pools, axial features, Carp filled ponds, and even in small waterfalls amongst 'sculptured' rock gardens.

In winter, the shallow pools could be converted into ice skating rinks. In summer, these same pools might be used for swimming, with sandy beaches provided for the purpose, and changing rooms and showers discretely located near by.

4. Building Options

I have now covered the main thematic opportunities for any new landscape design in Tiananmen Square which might follow from the removal of Chairman Mao's Mausoleum. I now wish to investigate the possibility of building new structures on the site, which might be appropriate. Such structures might include one or more of the following types at various scales:

(a) Sculptural
(b) Monumental
(c) Recreational
(d) Cultural or Artistic
(e) Educational (*Installations)*
(f) Governmental
(g) Utilitarian / commercial (cafes, markets, concessions)

(a) Sculptural Structures

Currently Tiananmen Square has a number of existing sculptural pieces. These include the bas-reliefs which decorate the obelisk and the four free-standing figurative works which decorate the entrance and exit to Chairman Mao's Mausoleum. This work seems to be in a style which is not unlike the 'Socialist Realism' of the Russian Soviets. The work is carefully executed, and for reasons of historical record, if nothing else, it is work that is worth preserving either discretely in any future design for the square, or at another location. Perhaps the free-standing work could be repositioned outside the History Museum.

In any new scheme for the square, new sculptural work could be commissioned. This new work could be free-standing or part of other built structures. It could be figurative in nature or abstract. The work could be permanent or temporary, static or dynamic, provocative and *avant-guard* or perhaps more traditional in style. There is certainly room for 'performance art,' which would be temporary but might reoccur at regular intervals throughout the year or during the particular seasons of nature.

The arrangement and scale of this work would certainly depend on the landscape scheme decided and perhaps on any other structures to be built, such as monuments and buildings. I shall cover this topic in Chapter 5.

Such sculptures could be commissioned by the city or the federal government, donated by private citizens or provided on semi-permanent loan by local or overseas art galleries and national museums.

(b) Monumental Structures

The square has two existing monumental structures. These are Chairman Mao's Mausoleum and "The Monument to the People's Heroes." I have suggested that the first of these should be removed in order to make way for a new design for the square. The second of these could also be removed if required to meet a particular design goal either in landscape or building architecture.

The removal these monuments, however, should not necessarily preclude the building of new ones.

The monuments could be paid for by private subscription or donations, or paid for by the State and its institutions. The monuments might be figurative or abstract, and either large or small in scale.

Again their disposition and scale will need to be coordinated with any larger scheme for the square.

(c) Recreational Structures

Currently the square is used for flying kites, Tai Chi, practicing foreign languages on visitors, and strolling about. These activities of course require little infrastructure, although the first activity requires some open space. If other recreational activities are to be made possible some design intervention will be required.

Running, rollerblading or cycling around the square would require designated tracks. Ball courts for tennis, basketball and football would require netting around its marked areas. Golf driving ranges (anything is possible!) would require netting of some scale. Skate boarding would require ramps and so forth. And baseball and softball would require large areas of grass. Ice skating in winter would require a prepared ice rink.

At a smaller scale, Mah-jongg and board games such as Chess and Chequers would require seating and tables. Young children would need playground equipment of various kinds.

Some sport could be provided inside buildings such as squash, gymnastics or swimming.

(d) Cultural or Artistic Structures

A new scheme for the square could provide an opportunity for new cultural structures or those required for the Arts. A good example of this category would be outdoor theatres designed in the Greek manner.

Fixed seating or grassy banks could be also used for the audiences of theatrical events or the spectators of sporting events. In the case of a hard landscape scheme seating might be temporary and stored near the square. (There are already permanent stands on the north side of the square for State occasions and parades.)

An indoor theatre might also be an option. In each case, plays, musical events, poetry reading, films and discourse of any kind could be possible with due care to the acoustic requirements and noise protection from local traffic.

A public art gallery for paintings, smaller works of art and craft and temporary exhibits might also be placed in an area of the square.

(e) Educational Structures *(Installations)*

Educational structures might include a public lending library, lecture halls, a science museum, and external exhibits or installations of an educational nature. These might include experimental wind turbines, solar arrays, air quality measuring devices, weather and climate instrumentation, or space telescopes.

(f) Government Structures

Peking is the capital city of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It is the centre of its government, which is called, "The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China" (CPGPRC). A new design for the square might include new government offices of appropriate status and function.

Like any government, the CPGPRC is both broad and diverse in its scope and has numerous boards, representative councils, ministries and departments which are found throughout the city.

Locating a government office in Tiananmen Square would need to be carefully considered, taking due care of the established hierarchy, working structure and order of the CPGPRC. The building itself may need to be flexible in order to allow for any evolutionary change that might occur to the order of government in the future.

From a design standpoint any new offices should not be so big as to fill the whole square, but leave a substantial part of it open to the public for its current recreational use, as well as its use for State occasions and public gatherings.

(g) Utilitarian / Commercial (cafes, markets, concessions)

Finally, the square could be used to house building structures of a more utilitarian or commercial nature, such as cafes, outdoor market stands, public washrooms, refuse points and concessions. These could be temporary or permanent structures as appropriate.

5. Combinations

In this last chapter, I shall now cover those possibilities which combine both landscape design and built structures. These might include the following possible arrangements or typologies:

(a) A centralized scheme
(b) An axial arrangement
(c) A decentralized scheme
(d) A raised landscape platform
(e) An informal or abstract arrangement

(a) A Centralized Scheme

In a centralized scheme attention would be focused on the centre of the square. This could be achieved either with a built structure, a water feature or a paved open area.

However, any structure built at the centre would block the important view between the two gates at the northern and the southern ends of the square, which would have been revealed by the demolition of the mausoleum and the relocation of the obelisk. For this reason it is not recommended. (See Figures 23 & 24)

A water feature at the centre would still allow a visual connection between the two gates. However it would block any direct movement of people between the two gates, such as one might expect in a parade of some kind. For this reason, it too is not recommended.

A paved open area at the centre allows both a visual connection and the direct movement of people between the two gates.

(b) An Axial Arrangement

A logical outcome of the problems identified in a centralized scheme is an arrangement based on the north-south axis between the two gates at either end of the square. This would meet the requirement of both a visual connection and a path for movement between the two gates.

In the axial scheme, built structures and landscape features could ‘fall away’ from the main north-south axis toward the roads on either side of the square. (See Figures 21, 25 – 27)

(c) A Decentralized Scheme

In a decentralized scheme the focus of attention would be made away from either the centre or along the north-south axis. Focal elements could be located at the four corners of the square or in an asymmetrical arrangement along one side of it.

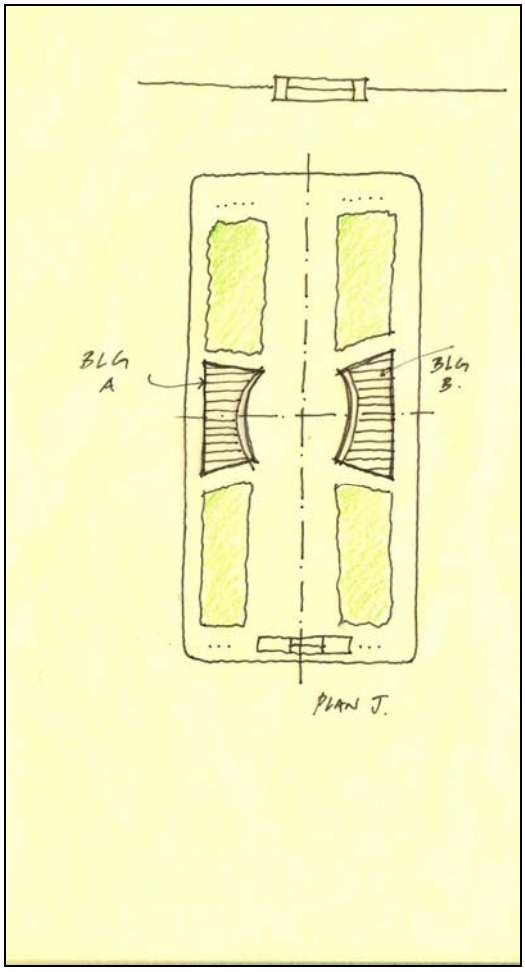

Figure 21: Plan J

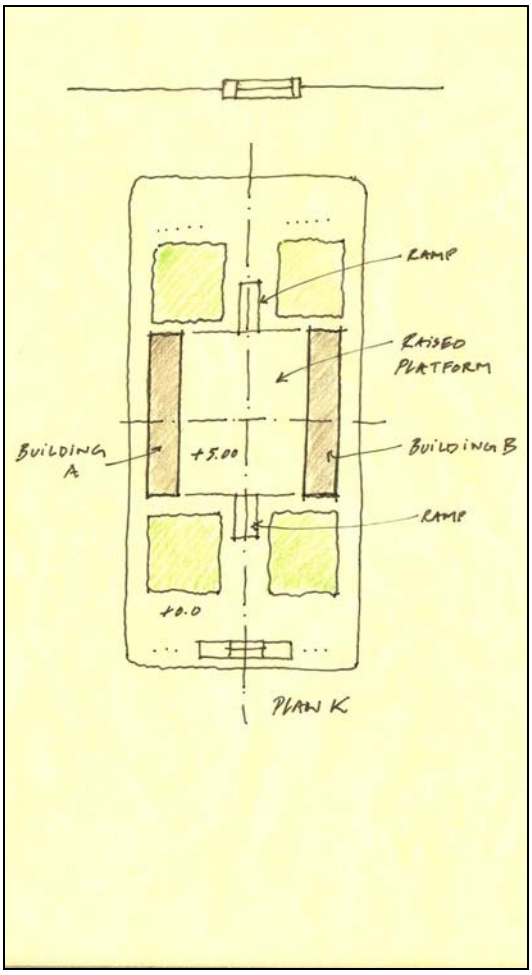

Figure 22: Plan K

(d) A Raised Landscape Platform

In this scheme the square could be developed in a way that emphasizes the three dimensional possibilities of modeling the square. This could result in attractively landscaped terracing, areas for sunbathing, raised viewpoints, naturally shaped outdoor theatres, and opportunities for ‘underground’ connections between buildings on either side of the main north-south axis.

Buildings could be ‘hidden’ beneath a large raised landscape platform across the whole site. (See Figure 22)

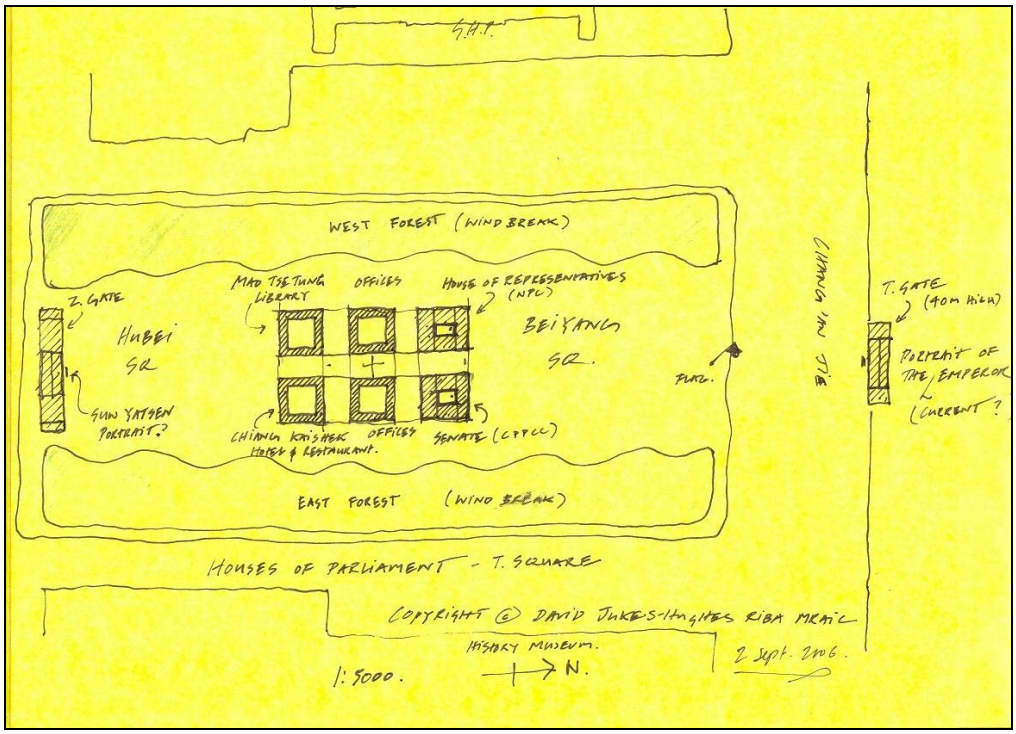

Figure 23: Plan L (Not to scale.)

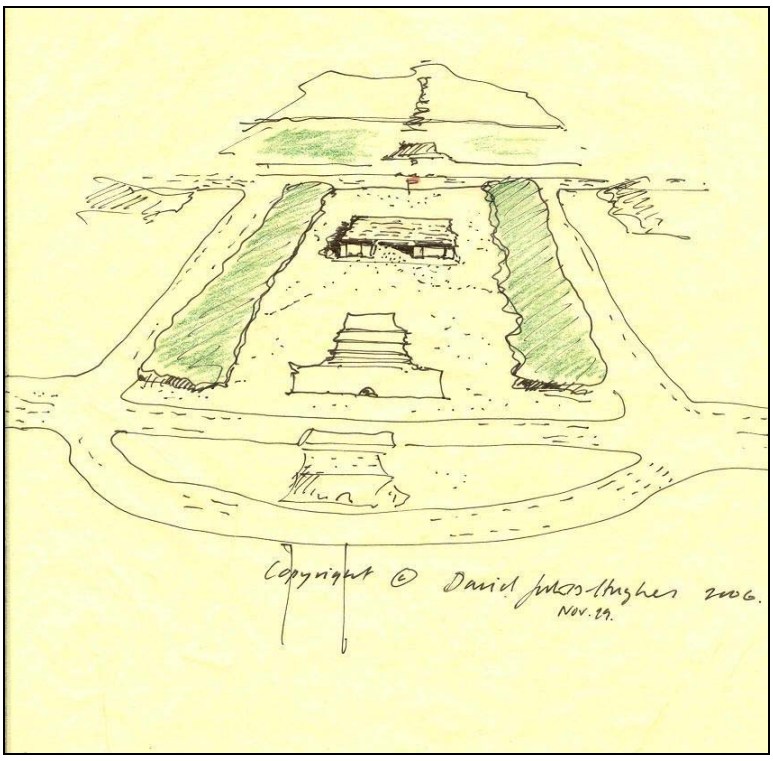

Figure 24: Sketch: 3D View of Plan L Scheme from the south.

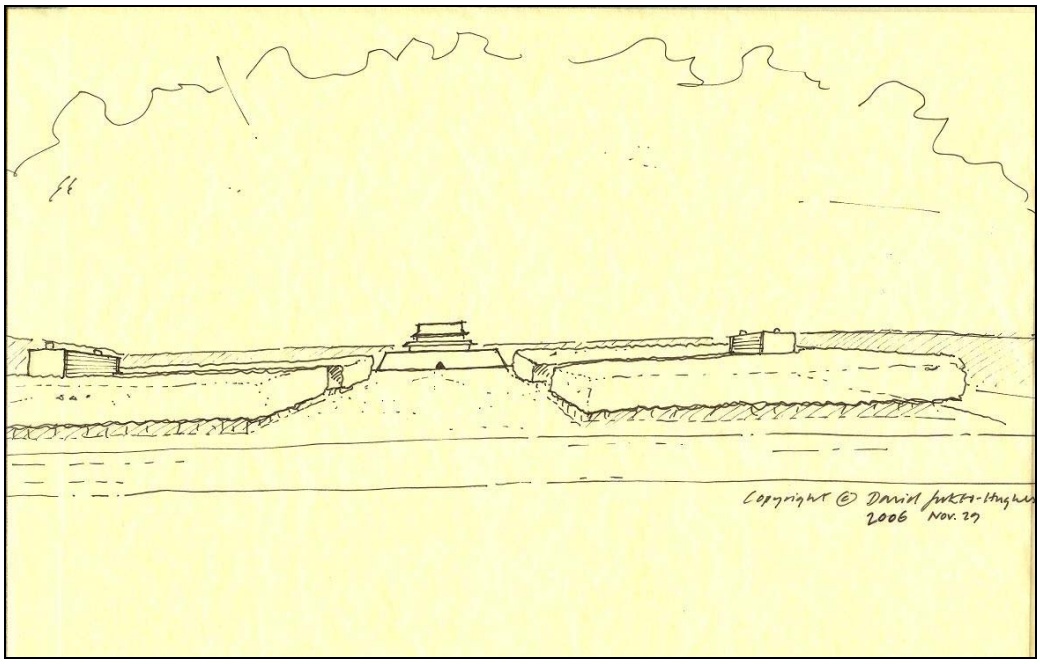

Figure 25: Sketch: Side Buildings in Plan K (Figure 22), as viewed from Tiananmen Gate.

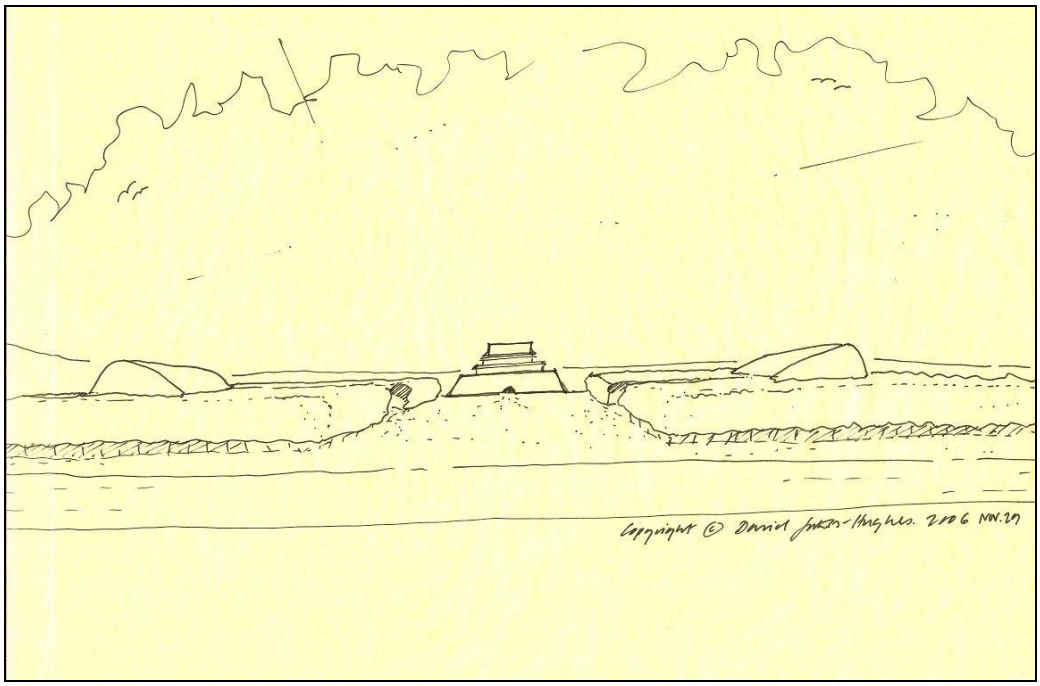

Figure 26: Sketch: Side Buildings in Plan J (Figure 21), as viewed from Tiananmen Gate. This design may have a ‘problem’ from a “Feng Shui” point of view. See my Tiananmen Square Paper 2: Appendix 2 for a brief explanation.

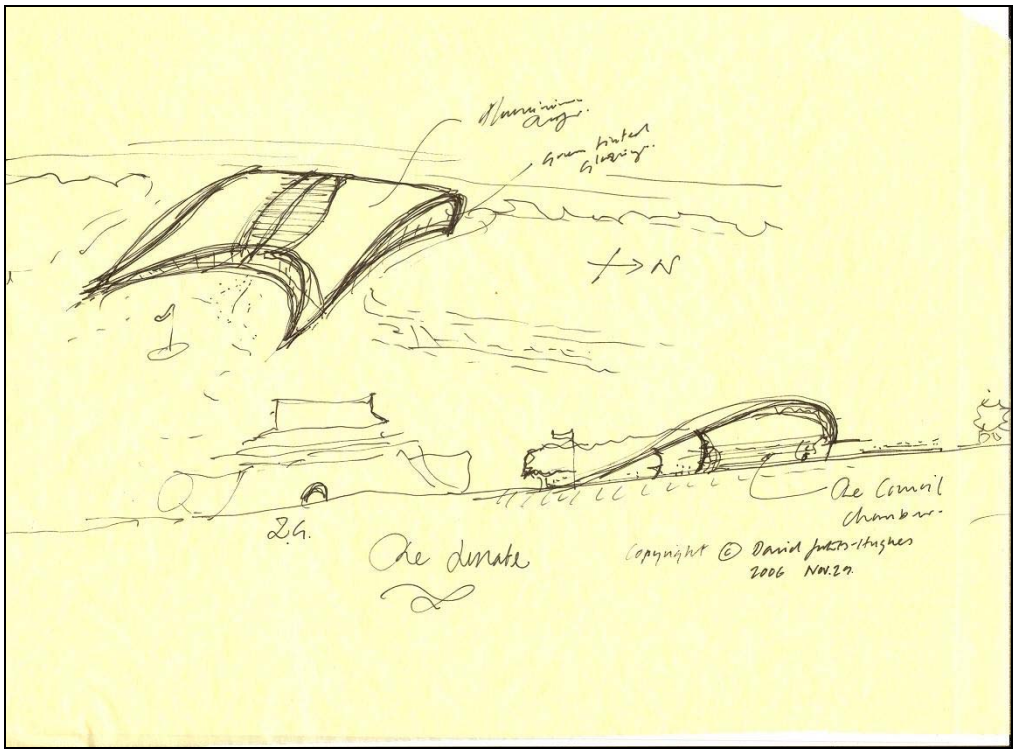

Figure 27: Sketch: Side Buildings (Plan J) detail. (See note on Figure 26.)

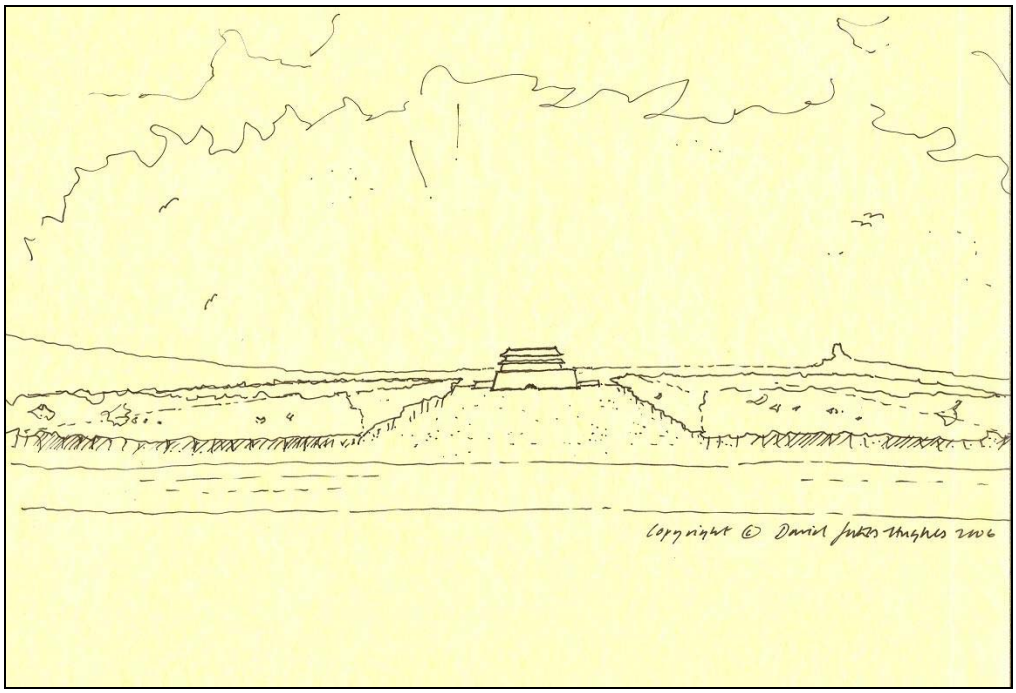

Figure 28: Sketch: 3D View of Plan F (Figure 17), as viewed from Tiananmen Gate.

(e) An Informal or Abstract Arrangement

In this scheme, buildings and landscape could be arranged more informally. This could take the form of an abstract design or Modern approach. Form, areas, lines and points could either be geometrical, hard-edged or soft and sinuous, or a mixture of moods. The designer might even be inspired by a work of Modern Art as a starting point or basis for the design.

Conclusion

In this paper I sort to open-up peoples' minds to the idea of the redeveloping Tiananmen Square, as well as identifying some possible design opportunities for the site.

It almost goes without saying that the square has tremendous symbolic importance, not only to the people of the city but to the country at large. With this thought in mind, I devoted a large element of the paper to the task of "preparing the canvas" and the necessities of which I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

In Chapter 3 I outlined some possible landscape options. In Chapter 4 I reviewed the options for built structures. And lastly, in Chapter 5, I reviewed those design possibilities which could combine both landscape design and built structures.

What this brief analysis demonstrates is the potential for a new creativity. The opportunities for the designer are almost boundless. However, some limitations or design direction would I think need to be addressed in any scheme proposed. These could include the following features:

- Maintaining the new visual connection between the Tiananmen gate and the Qianmen gate made possible by the removal of the mausoleum and the obelisk. (See Figure 28)
- Maintaining a direct and straight connection between the two gates for the passage of people, vehicles, and parades (like "The Mall" in London).
- Three dimensional landscaping, including raised areas and viewpoints.
- Large water features for bathing and pond life (like Hampstead Heath).
- Large areas of deciduous trees for shading and seasonal changes in colour.
- A place for large public gatherings and open-air exhibitions.
- Shaded seating areas.
- Outdoor public theatres (like Kenwood House on Hampstead Heath).
- Small concession stands and cafes.
- Sufficient washrooms (paid type) with permanent cleaning staff or automatic cleaning systems.

- A discrete refuse collection system.
- Good lighting.
- Perimeter fencing and the night-time closure of the landscaped areas.
- Good park security.

One final issue is the question of whether or not the square could or should support any major built structures such as new government offices or shopping facilities. Such work would take land away from any park area which would be regrettable, but not entirely detrimental. New buildings could be strictly contained along the outer edge of the square by the roadside. It might also be restricted to one side of the square if combined in an asymmetrical design for the remaining landscaped area.

There are of course other opportunities for building development in the immediate vicinity of the square which could be used. These would need to be investigated before any final decision could be made for the design of the square itself.

END

The Glossary

CPG	Central People's Government
CPGPRC	Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China
HK	Hong Kong
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
HMG (UK)	Her Majesty's Government (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
PLA	The People's Liberation Army
PRC	The People's Republic of China
SAR	Special Administrative Region
SCMCPRC	State Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China

Bibliography: Books

Buckley, Michael *et al* "China." Lonely Planet Publications, Australia. First published 1984. 4th Edition, March 1994

Cao Xueqin "The Story of the Stone. Volume 1. Golden Days." c. 1760. Trans. David Hawkes, Penguin Books Ltd, London, 1973

Welsh, Frank "A History of Hong Kong," Harper Collins Publisher, London, 1993

Papers, periodicals & web sites

http://www.drben.net
http://www.code-d.com
http://www.act.com

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) "Conditions of Engagement for the Appointment of an Architect (CE/99). For use with a Letter of Appointment." Updated April 2000.

Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) "RAIC Document 6" (2002)

Written and published by David G. Jukes-Hughes
PO Box 4062, Smithers,
British Columbia,
Canada, V0J 2N0

http://www.geocities.com/jukeshughes/

Reference: R058
Price: $CDN 152.00 (Canadian Dollars)

Original