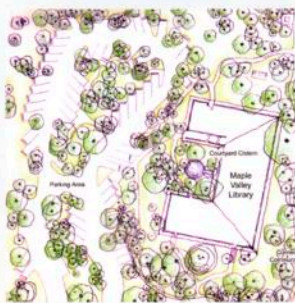


GARDENS

ILLUSTRATED

BREAKING NEW GROUND

RAE SPENCER-JONES LOOKS AT SOME OF THE DESIGN PROJECTS THAT ARE TRANSFORMING TOMORROW'S LANDSCAPES



MAPLE VALLEY, a developing community in King County, is situated in a wooded enclave between Seattle and Mount Rainier. Seattle-based landscape architects Swift & Company have recently completed the landscape surrounding the new Maple Valley library, which nestles in a Douglas fir forest. Local residents were keen that the develop-

ment should embrace the existing landscape and that the library should be integrated into the ecosystem, so extensive surveys were carried out on the forest's structure, soils and hydrology in order to understand how much development the habitat could absorb. The construction area was restricted to minimise disturbance to the forest and new planting was only carried out in the areas that had been disturbed. The library building has views out on to a central courtyard and roof runoff is collected at a single downspout and then splashes into a channel leading into a large stone-filled circular cistern. Native plants rescued from the construction site, as well as bought-in native specimens have been incorporated into the design. The result is a deceptively natural landscape that has influenced the design of Maple Valley Community Center and the Maple Valley Place Legacy Project, two further developments in the area. Call Barbara Swift on 001 206 632 2038 or visit www.swiftcompany.com