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A R C H I T E C T

D E S I G N

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# CONTENTS

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<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Conceptual definition	2
1.2. Research background	4
<b>2. Rural construction in China and abroad</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1. The experience of rural development abroad	7
2.2. The experience of rural development in China	15
<b>3. Rural inheritance in rural construction</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1. Problems in the inheritance of rural culture	20
3.2. The goals of rural cultural inheritance	23
3.3. Aspects of rural cultural inheritance	26
3.4. Modes of rural cultural inheritance	28
3.5. Cultural inheritance of landscape authenticity	30
3.6. Cultural inheritance of industrial development	32
3.7. Cultural inheritance of culture reshaping	34
<b>4. The master project of rural construction</b>	<b>36</b>
4.1. Preliminary study of rural planning	36
4.2. Overall positioning	47
4.3. Overview of the village	51
4.4. The planning of the village	60
<b>5. Conclusions</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>6. References</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>7. Acknowledgments</b>	<b>74</b>

## 1. Introduction

Culture is the foundation of rural prosperity and plays various roles in rural construction. Cultural inheritance in rural culture includes a common content but also includes inheritance focused on subcategories and subregions. The requirements for content and inheritance are different in different types and regions of rural cultural inheritance.

The contents of rural cultural inheritance include material aspects and nonmaterial aspects. Material aspects include regional landscape features and historical architecture, environmental factors and the historical cultural landscape with its prominent historical meanings and humanistic values. Nonmaterial aspects refer to spiritual culture, institutional culture, social norms, folk customs, and social awareness formed in the villages; it also refers to social values, modes of thinking and living, and means of production formed by residents throughout history. All this cultural content not only reflects rural regional appearance in the most direct and authentic way but also constitutes important cultural elements for the stable development of rural society and has a far-reaching influence on the entire countryside.

Rural planning has previously consisted mostly of material or technical planning and has long lacked necessary attention under the background of the dualistic structure system of urban and rural planning. Without a sound rural planning theory, all rural construction plans originate from the concept and design approaches of urban planning. “This practice obviously ignores the peculiarity of villages, severs the connection between rural settlements and regional nature, economy and social culture and disregards the historical and cultural memory of villages.”<sup>1</sup>

In many regions, rural construction is misunderstood as demolitions and reconstructions; it does not consider the development of local cultural characteristics. Traditional culture

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<sup>1</sup> Zhou, Y. - Wei, K. - Zhou, J. Y.: A review of Chinese rural planning system. Southern Architecture. 2014. Vol. 2. pp. 24-29. (in Chinese)

is repeatedly relegated to an inferior place during this process. In the planning of rural construction, planning that ignores cultural elements of the village is imperfect. “Beautiful nostalgia” calls for attention to cultural elements in rural planning. As a designer, I must consider cultural elements in the planning of new rural construction, establish a sound system of rural cultural inheritance, and fundamentally solve the problem of how traditional villages face the loss of rural culture.

Based on my participation in a rural construction project in Xinglong County, this paper studies the cultural inheritance in the construction of beautiful countryside, exploring the new paradigm of rural planning. Such topics are of great importance to improve the theoretical system of rural cultural inheritance and promote research on rural construction.

### 1.1. **Conceptual definition**

#### 1.1.1. The beautiful countryside

The beautiful countryside refers to a set of specific requirements for a major historical project of constructing the new socialist village for “production development, prosperity, rural civilization, clean rural environment and democratic management”<sup>2</sup> as described at the 5th Plenary Session of the 16th CPC<sup>3</sup> Central Committee. The report at the 18th CPC Central Committee proposes the new concept of “Beautiful China” for the first time, emphasizes the establishment of the ecological civilization concept of “respecting nature, conforming to nature and protecting nature”, and clarifies the “Five-Pronged Overall Plan” for the socialism construction layout. The report concurrently puts forward the objective of “achieving the goal of ‘Beautiful China’, of which the construction

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2 Proposal of Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating "Eleventh Five-year Plan". (in Chinese) <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/64569/65414/4429220.html> [accessed: 2005.10.18]

3 CPC: Communist Party of China.

of beautiful countryside is an indispensable and important part”.<sup>4</sup> The National Department of Agriculture officially launched the “Beautiful Countryside” construction project in 2013.

The beautiful countryside must promote rural ecological and environmental protection, rural economic development, rural social harmony, and the protection and inheritance of rural culture in accordance with the natural resources, historical culture, and future development of the countryside. The beautiful countryside is a beautiful homeland suitable for living, the development of industry, and tourism.

#### 1.1.2. Rural culture

“Culture is the sum of material and spiritual wealth created by human beings in the course of social and historical development.”<sup>5</sup> It nurtures people by way of inheritance, lets people exist in accordance with traditional culture, advances civilization, and recasts the new glory of culture. Rural culture originates from the native land and depends on the native land, with peasants and rural areas as the main carrier. This special cultural formation depends on the specific rural economic base and social context. Rural culture records the history of the nation and is an important part of Chinese traditional culture. As an agricultural power with one thousand years of development, China has a long-standing history of rural culture that can be divided further into material culture and nonmaterial culture. Material culture in rural areas refers to the culture reflected by the material products produced out of the needs associated with rural existence and development, including natural landscape, spatial structure, and rural architecture. Nonmaterial culture in rural areas refers to all kinds of spiritual practices created by human beings in social and historical processes, including folk traditions and customs,

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4 Report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. (in Chinese) <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2012/1118/c64094-19612151.html> [accessed: 2012.11.18]

5 Comprehensive Chinese Word Dictionary. Chinese Dictionary Publishing House. 2000 (in Chinese)

rural conventions, religious beliefs, moral attitudes, aesthetic perceptions, values and opinions, plain and comfortable village settlement atmospheres, and so on.

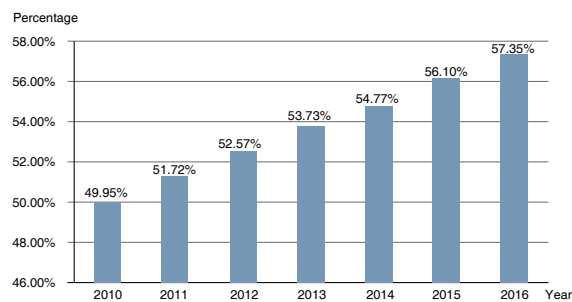
### 1.1.3. Rural planning

Rural planning, which improves the overall deployment of rural long-term development through planning, is the foundation for guiding rural development and construction.

The main contents of rural planning include analysing and evaluating the rural natural environment, human geography, industrial foundation, folk customs and living habits of local farmers, defining the development direction of villages, tapping traditional culture, and rationally using land resources.

## 1.2. Research background

The Chinese economy has maintained a consistently rapid pace of development since the beginning of the 21st century. However, the gap between urban and rural areas in salaries and the level of public services has become larger than ever before. The rural population is decreasing annually as a result. According to the latest data from the National Bureau of Statistics, the “urban population in 2016 was 792.98 million with an increase of 21.82 million since 2015, whereas rural population was 589.73 million, 13.07 million less than in 2015, urban population accounted for 57.35% of the total population in 2016”.<sup>6</sup> (Figure 1)



*Figure 1. Urbanization rates in China*

*Source: Author*

<sup>6</sup> In 2016, the national economy will make a good start in the "13th Five-Year Plan" period. (in Chinese) [http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zxfb/201701/t20170120\\_1455942.html](http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zxfb/201701/t20170120_1455942.html) [accessed: 2017.01.20]

The Chinese government continuously places great emphasis on comprehensively coordinated urban-rural development. In the No. 1 Document released in 2013, the Chinese government introduced the objective of the beautiful countryside for the first time and listed the beautiful countryside as an important component of the “Chinese Dream”<sup>7</sup>. From that point forward, the construction of the beautiful countryside became synonymous with the construction of a new socialist countryside in China. On the one hand, promotion of the construction of rural residential environments and the improvement of farmers’ production and living conditions can raise farmers’ livelihood and quality of life. On the other hand, such activity also enhances harmony between humans and nature, realizes green development, and maintains the ecological and cultural diversity of urban and rural areas. From 2005 to 2016, the growth rate of per capita annual income in rural areas had already exceeded that of urban areas in China (Figure 2).

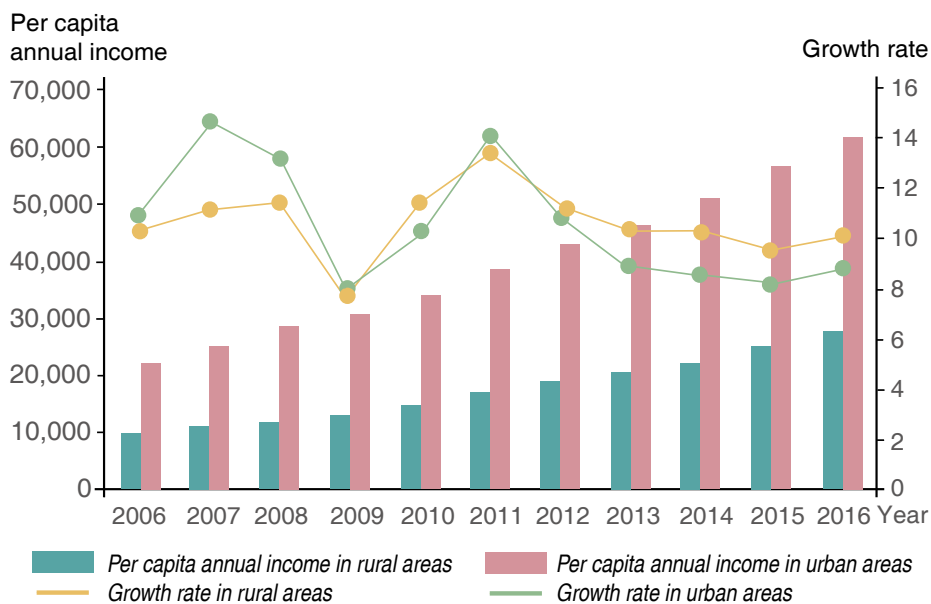


Figure 2. Growth rate of the per capita annual income in rural and urban areas  
Source: Author

7 General Secretary Xi Jinping puts forward the guiding ideology for realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. (in Chinese) [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2012-11/29/c\\_113852724.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2012-11/29/c_113852724.htm) [accessed: 2012.11.29]



The 18th CPC Central Committee stated that the Chinese government should “pursue the new-type industrialization, informatization, urbanization and agricultural modernization path with Chinese characteristics”.<sup>8</sup> This recommendation first advanced the concept of a new-type urbanization and qualified this concept as the momentum to promote national economic growth and the means to expand internal demands. The objective of urbanization neither excludes villages nor does it directly and simply apply urban practices to villages to reach uniformity and high conformity between rural and urban landscapes. Urbanization is conjectured to bring urban civilization to villages to let the residences enjoy modern civilization and a comfortable life while allowing the preservation of original rural customs and rustic scenery. The Central Urbanization Working Conference in 2013 emphasized that this new-type urbanization should embody the concept of “respecting and conforming to nature, achieving harmony between man and nature, incorporating cities in nature based on spectacular scenery of mountains and waters. Residents are allowed to see the scenery and retain emotions of nostalgia”.<sup>9</sup>

Hebei Province is one of the birthplaces of the Chinese nation. The history of Chinese civilization started here as early as 5,000 years ago. Due to the integration of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the process of urbanization in Hebei has gradually shifted from the stage of enhancing the speed of development to the stage of “counter-urbanization” to enhance its quality. Improving the living environment and building a beautiful countryside in rural areas is an objective to improve the quality of rural construction. “In 2016, the construction of beautiful countryside in Hebei Province had accomplished 12

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8 Report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. (in Chinese) <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2012/1118/c64094-19612151.html> [accessed: 2012.11.18]

9 Central Urbanization Conference, Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang make important speeches. (in Chinese) [http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2013-12/14/content\\_2547880.htm](http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2013-12/14/content_2547880.htm) [accessed: 2013.12.14]

provincial-level key planning areas.”<sup>10</sup> The beautiful villages will cover the entire Hebei Province by the end of 2020, and rural villages that have the necessary conditions will be built into the beautiful countryside with “environmental beauty, industrial beauty, spiritual beauty, and ecological beauty”.<sup>11</sup>

## **2. Rural construction in China and abroad**

### **2.1. The experience of rural development abroad**

Developed countries have relatively mature village protection systems ranging from the protection of rural landscape to the inheritance of rural culture, with the focus on rural natural landscape, rural characteristic industry, and historic architecture and infrastructure development. The inheritance of the rural culture is guaranteed by the support of government regulations and policies. In addition to establishing organizations that serve to protect traditional culture, governments also enact laws and regulations for different cultural inheritance and protection projects. Some countries have accumulated successful experiences concerning village construction during the process of development. Such successful experiences could guide Chinese people regarding the construction of beautiful countryside.

#### **2.1.1. Rural construction in Japan**

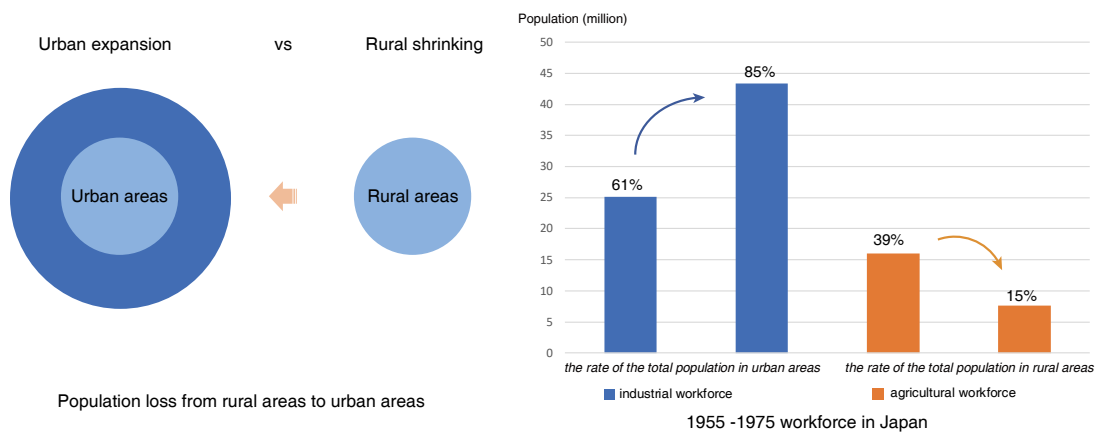
The “Rural Building Movement” in Japan was based on two major national conditions. With its relatively small size, Japan’s territory comprised 71% mountains and hills and 13.6% cultivated area. After the Second World War, “the country focused on urban reconstruction and accelerated industrialization and urban development, which forced

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10 Hebei Province would build 12 provincial-level beautiful rural key areas in 2016. (in Chinese) <http://he.people.com.cn/n2/2016/0116/c192235-27555954.html> [accessed: 2016.01.16]

11 Hebei Province will basically achieve full coverage of beautiful countryside in 2020. (in Chinese) <http://he.people.com.cn/n2/2016/0113/c192235-27528500.html> [accessed: 2016.01.13]

considerable numbers of the rural population to flow into cities”.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, rural development and agricultural production faced the risk of disintegration. “In order to reverse the depression of agricultural development, mitigate the urban-rural gap, and preserve the vigour of the regional economy, Japan implemented multiple rounds of rural development planning.”<sup>13</sup> The period between 1955 and 1965 marked the improvement stage of improving agricultural production environment, with a focus on enhancing the farmers’ production initiative. The period between 1966 and 1975 included the modernization, reformation, and improvement stage of traditional agriculture. The main task in this stage was to adjust the structure of agricultural production and product structure and satisfy the considerable demand of cities for agricultural products. (Figure 3)



*Figure 3. Background of the One Village One Product Movement*  
*Source: Author*

Japan launched the Rural Building Movement emphasizing the integration of rural resources and multi-objective, high-profit development at the end of the 1970s. The government was responsible for a series of laws, regulations, and policies to ensure the smooth implementation of the Rural Building Movement. The ultimate purpose was

<sup>12</sup> Chen, X. H.- Zhang, X. L.- Liang, D.: The practice of rural development and build in foreign countries’ urbanization and its enlightenments to China. *World Regional Studies*. 2005. Vol. 14. pp. 13-18. (in Chinese)

<sup>13</sup> Wang, L.: The legal system and enlightenment of Japanese rural planning. *City Planning Review*. 2009. Vol. 5. pp. 42-49. (in Chinese)

to create unique rural attractions and local advantages. In contrast to the previous two stages, the emphasis of the Rural Building Movement was not on the adjustment of agricultural structure but on the cultivation of rural industrial features, humanistic attractions, and endogenous dynamics. This great movement left deep and extensive impacts on rural reconstruction developments in Japan during the postindustrialization period and entirely changed the industrial structure, market competitiveness, and villages' regional affinity.

The “One Village One Product Movement” was proposed in 1979 by Morihiko Hiramatsu, former magistrate in Qita Prefecture. “Its fundamental aim is to develop competitive products relying on local resources, technology, production advantages and practical conditions.”<sup>14</sup> This movement was a comprehensive, bottom-up rural resource development practice oriented toward high-quality projects (Figure 4) with the aim of meeting diverse demands in cities. Throughout the development of the movement for more than thirty years, “one village” has expanded to “one county” and “one town”, while “one product” has been expanded from agricultural products to industrial or cultural and tourism products in the service industry (Figure 5). At its centre, the One Village One Product Movement is not about rural rejuvenation but instead concerns the competitiveness of a region, an industry, or even a country.

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14 Qu, W. Q.: Enlightenment of Japan 's rural campaign on the construction of new countryside in China. *World Agriculture*. 2006. Vol. 7. pp. 8-11. (in Chinese)



Figure 4. All dishes are made of local green tea in Shizuoka Prefecture  
 Source: <http://finance.huangniu.com/br/flavor/2018-01/11543533.html>



Figure 5. Shizuoka Prefecture products- green tea  
 Source: [http://forourjapan.blogspot.hu/2015/05/blog-post\\_54.html](http://forourjapan.blogspot.hu/2015/05/blog-post_54.html)

We now turn to the historic villages of Shirakawa-gō and Gokayama. Declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1995, the village is home to several dozen well preserved gasshō-zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old. The villages are constructed in the architectural style well known as gasshō-zukuri, which means “constructed like hands in prayer” (Figure 6). The architectural style developed over many generations and is designed to withstand the large amounts of heavy snow that falls in the region during winter. The roofs, made without nails, provided a large attic space used for cultivating silkworms. (Figure 7)



*Figure 6. Gasshō-zukuri-styled farmhouses*  
Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gassho-zukuri\\_farmhouse-01.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gassho-zukuri_farmhouse-01.jpg)



*Figure 7. Solid timber roof structures, all tied together by hand with ropes*  
Source: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/73/Gassho-zukuri\\_farmhouse-03.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/73/Gassho-zukuri_farmhouse-03.jpg)

To properly protect the natural environment and develop landscape resources, the villagers of Shirakawa-gō spontaneously established the “Shirakawa-gō Nature Conservation Association”, which stipulated that the buildings, land, farming fields, and trees in the villages of Shirakawa-gō must not be sold, rented, or destroyed. These villages are also defined as Important Preservation Districts for Groups of Historic Buildings, as defined within Japan’s Law for Protection of Cultural Properties. Specific regulations have been made in tourism landscape development for the transformation of buildings, new buildings, new billboards, paving, and new facilities. The overall style of the villages of Shirakawa-gō has been well preserved, and the village has become world-renowned for its beauty (Figure 8).



*Figure 8. Ogimachi, the largest village of Shirakawa-gō*  
*Source: <http://kashapasha.com/48>*

### 2.1.2. Rural construction in Germany

“Land consolidation, landscape planning and planning of rural renewal are the three stages that Germany has undergone in the process of rural construction.”<sup>15</sup> With a relatively large territory, Germany ranks among the highest in the world in terms of the level of agricultural development. Post-war Germany started to implement “Village Renewal” in the early 1950s. The level of urbanization was as high as approximately 60% at that time. The main target of Village Renewal was to improve sporadic rural land ownership, which formed an obstacle against agricultural modernization. One of the important components was land arrangement. Germany implemented modernization in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, Village Renewal started to review the original forms of rural architecture in villages, highlight rural road arrangements and reasonable transportation planning, and focus on rural ecological environment and regional culture. In addition, “this movement emphasized that the village was not the replica of the city but a settlement with distinctive features and development potentials”.<sup>16</sup> In the 1990s, rural construction incorporated the concept of sustainable development and started to combine ecological values with cultural, leisure, and economic values. The most important target of the Village Renewal project was to re-establish traditional architectures by keeping the focus on regional protection and regional features (Figure 9), expand rural infrastructure in accordance with rural protection, harmonize villages with the surrounding natural environment pursuant to the ecological system, develop regional economy in line with practical local conditions, and help rural communities achieve sustainable development (Figure 10).

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15 Yi, X.- Schneider, C.: Integrated rural development strategy and cultural identity cultivation in Germany. *Modern Urban Research*. 2013. Vol. 6. pp. 51-59. (in Chinese)

16 Meng, W. G. – Gebhardt, H.: Rural development and transformation in the federal republic of Germany since the 1950s. *Acta Geographica Sinica*. 2011. Vol. 66. pp. 1644-1656. (in Chinese)





*Figure 9. A view of the village in Freudenberg*  
Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/poly-image/10847980603/>



*Figure 10. Coordinated architectural blends with regional features in Freudenberg*  
Source: [https://www.flickr.com/search/?user\\_id=69460501%40N04&view\\_all=1&text=Freudenberg](https://www.flickr.com/search/?user_id=69460501%40N04&view_all=1&text=Freudenberg)

### 2.1.3. The inspiration of overseas rural development

As previously mentioned, Japan's village-building campaign has successfully promoted the development and transformation of rural areas and has had a wide range of effects internationally, especially the One Village One Product Movement. At the same time, the concept of sustainable development in the German countryside is also worth studying. Whether it is the One Village One Product Movement or the Village Renewal model, planning is based on national conditions and local characteristics to protect and continue the original culture of the village, which also is a model and path of typical rural cultural inheritance. At the current stage, China is in the process of rapid industrialization, and the development of rural areas has only just started. Consequently, the construction of the beautiful countryside in China should incorporate the knowledge gained in other developed countries to learn from experiences and avoid mistakes in the construction path of the beautiful countryside to guide the construction of this type of countryside in China.

## 2.2. **The experience of rural development in China**

### 2.2.1. Construction of the beautiful countryside in Anji County

Anji County in Zhejiang Province is a successful example of the exploration of the beautiful countryside. Anji, a typical mountainous county, hosted numerous companies that were highly active in environmental pollution during the preliminary construction period. However, such practice prompted the government to abandon the rural development mode driven by industries. After long-term careful investigations and consideration, the government identified the protection and improvement of the ecological environment as a top priority and used advantageous agricultural resources for the large-scale production and processing of bamboo, tea, and sericulture, ultimately establishing market-leading industries (Figure 11).



*Figure 11. Grand bamboo sea of Anji and bamboo products*  
 Source: <http://www.anjibamboo.com/index.php>

An important component of the Anji rural construction project is the extension of the industrial chain and achievement of farmers' prosperity based on a specific agriculture. Anji propels the joint development of agricultural production and processing industry based on the existing agricultural industry. During this process, Anji County has advanced green industrialization by strictly screening and supporting high-tech and low-pollution industrial projects. Moreover, the county has favourably expanded agricultural functions, prioritized leisure culture and rural tourism, and taken the lead in the development of the agricultural service industry. All of these efforts drive increases in the scale of rural tourism. The focus on the important status of agricultural culture in the construction of beautiful countryside raises requirements of the harmony between man and nature, the aesthetic elevation of rural life and the focus on environmental beauty; such focus also emphasizes the endogenous beauty of culture. "For constructing a liveable, prosperous village that attracts tourists, rural construction should be accompanied by cultural inheritance."<sup>17</sup> (Figure 12)

<sup>17</sup> Yang, X.W.: Practice and inspiration of the construction of beautiful Country in Anji county. Zheng Ce Liao Wang. 2012. Vol. 9. pp. 42-45. (in Chinese)



*Figure 12. A view of Liujiatang village in Anji County  
Source: <http://www.anjibamboo.com/index.php>*

### 2.2.1. Construction of the beautiful countryside in Gaochun District

The construction of the beautiful countryside in Gaochun District aims for the “construction of the most beautiful countryside on the bank of the Yangtze River” and the “beauty of rural residential prosperity, the beauty of rural environment and the beauty of harmonious rural customs and civilization” as the main construction concepts. The first step is to encourage the development of specific rural industries and realize the objective of the beauty of rural residential prosperity. Gaochun District has determined “One Village One Product, One Village One Industry” as the underlying concept and has targeted the village industry and living environment for personalized production and distinctive promotion, thus gradually shaping multiform construction modes, including the ancient village protection mode, ecological rural mode, landscape mode and leisure tourism mode. This process also involves completing the full coverage of national parks. By way of joint cross-regional development, land resource integration, and cooperative development in the form of joint-stock system, Anji County executes industrial projects with intensive processing and joint venture by combining supply, provision and marketing and by integrating plantation and cultivation. “For creating more opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship of nearby rural residents, Anji County decided to set

up highly efficient agriculture, commercial service and special tourism projects.”<sup>18</sup> (Figure 13)



Figure 13. Gaochun ceramics products  
Source: <http://www.gctc.cn/>

The second step is to improve and attain the intended beauty of the rural environment. Considering “greenness, ecology, humanity and liveability” as the primary concepts, Anji County follows the appeal of the beautiful countryside, resolutely conducts demolition and removal operations, and ultimately optimizes the urban-rural environment (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Rapeseed flowers in Gaochun District  
Source: <http://www.chinacittaslow.com/>

18 Jiang, K.- Xu, Z. Y.: Fusion of cultural elements and building the beautiful countryside. Xin Nongcun. 2011. Vol.11. pp. 8-11. (in Chinese)

The third step is to establish and improve rural public services and attain the objective of restoring harmonious rural customs and civilization. Gaochun District is devoted to the perfection of a public service system, the in-depth promotion of rural community service centres, the creation of comprehensive housing projects, and the integrity of a public facility-centred service network supported by special service facilities and service sites. Equal attention should be paid to the construction of rural communication, broadband coverage, and a comprehensive information service platform in addition to the continuous improvement of the quality of public services. In accordance with local practical conditions, the construction of the beautiful countryside in Gaochun District centres on the construction of the “beautiful urban countryside and peaceful residential homeland”. “It positively explores the green and happy development mode with equal emphasis on ecology and industry, environment and livelihood.”<sup>19</sup> Gaochun District intends to ultimately build distinctive beautiful countryside by implementing the construction mode that is characterized by conformity with the ecological civilization, the mutual interactions of transformation, and integration within peaceful urban construction.

#### 2.2.1. The inspiration of rural construction in China

Village planning with the goal of developing the cultural industry is effective after implementation, but such villages are concentrated mainly in the economically developed regions of southern China. The Anji and Gaochun modes of rural reconstruction allow residents to live a happy life under the fresh natural scenes of the homeland while enjoying modern rural civilization. The construction of the beautiful countryside does not have a uniform mode but instead has a uniform concept of development. Every region has its own regional conditions, and geographical and industrial advantages.

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<sup>19</sup> Wu, F. L.: Analysis of the beautiful countryside in Gaochun District. *Jiangsu Rural Economy*. 2017. Vol. 2. pp. 67-68. (in Chinese)

Under such circumstances, every region should select an optimal development mode according to its characteristics. Since agricultural resources can be transformed into agricultural capital and mountainous ecology, environmental and culture resources can also be transformed into capital. The functions of ecology and culture need to be expanded and transferred to leisurely life and tourism industries. Only in this way is it possible to achieve the healthy development of the countryside and expand the multiple functions of agriculture..

### **3. Rural inheritance in rural construction**

#### **3.1. Problems in the inheritance of rural culture**

“Ecology reveals that under the influence of natural and man-induced factors, the natural environment on which mankind depends is always a variable.”<sup>20</sup> To construct the beautiful countryside, it is necessary to rehabilitate the rural environment comprehensively, afforest and beautify the rural landscape, and consistently improve the living environment in rural areas, which calls for the use of eminent domain, housing renovations, and infrastructural constructions. Some infrastructural constructions, such as the popularization and arrangement of roads, electric facilities, and communication networks in rural areas, may tarnish the texture of the rural space or natural landscape. These constructions are often done at the expense of changing the natural terrain, including river systems and mountains. Residents of some villages focus only on development, construction, and renovation, greatly altering the biological and ecological environment in the rural areas and breaking the long-standing relationship between human and nature. Natural landscape has always been the root of rural culture; the change of the manmade natural environment has also brought a crisis to the inheritance

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<sup>20</sup> Wu, J.: Research on traditional technology of Dong Group from the view of hydro-culture and education. Southwest University. 2010. (in Chinese)

of rural culture.

In the course of rural construction, people worship “individuality” over “entirety” and ignore the village’s own cultural inheritance (Figure 15). Diversity, as addressed in rural construction, refers to the emphasis on the characteristics of the region, which can be traced back to its original source, where the local conditions, topography, vegetation, materials can be well integrated and fully employed (in contrast to the approach of indiscriminately embracing all foreign culture and implementing change for its own sake).



*Figure 15. Incoordination between traditional buildings and new buildings in a village of Xinglong County, Hebei Province  
Source: Author*

In the process of rural construction, the invasion of foreign culture has strongly influenced rural social culture, spatial structure, residential function, and architectural form. Such a process has a direct effect on the new appearance of rural culture. Today, the pluralism appearing in this historical background can be observed in the countryside, such as the changes in architectural aesthetics. However, no matter how times change,



rural residents' yearning for a better life has never changed, and this yearning is reflected in the architecture of rural buildings. European architectural style has begun to spread in the countryside. The slogan "A multi-story building changes into a foreign-style house" explains much of the decline of rural architectural culture. Since the introduction of European architectural style, the architectural symbols of traditional northern Chinese houses have disappeared in some rural areas. The dissemination of diversified information has carried the ideals and ideas of the modern city into the countryside. The landscape culture, farming culture, food culture, and traditional customs and techniques included in rural culture have gradually receded into people's horizons. The gap between traditional rural civilization and modern civilization seems to be increasing, and the value of rural culture is not universally recognized in cities. Civilization has caused the local culture to fall into a crisis of marginalization. Retaining the authenticity and particularity of native culture should involve the exchange and integration of "modern" and "traditional" and the revival and reconstruction of rural spiritual and cultural values (Figure 16).



*Figure 16. European style buildings without any regional features in a village of Xinglong County, Hebei Province  
Source: Author*

Rural construction needs economic development support. The modernized development of economic industries, however, inevitably comes with flowing population, which further disrupts the enclosed countryside. Although this phenomenon can accelerate the

process of farmers' nonagriculturalization, improve rural life quality, and narrow the gap between urban and rural areas, the flowing population leaves behind a lost local rural culture in crisis.

The population flow also causes the loss of vibrant young residents and the problematic phenomenon of the empty nest in rural villages. In contrast, villagers working in cities are exposed to modern lifestyles and ideas and bring new concepts of thinking and lifestyles back to the countryside, creating conflicts between modern civilization and rural culture. Local folk customs and living norms are gradually forgotten through a lack of contact, and the sense of the local rural cultural identity is weakened. Young people lack interest in traditional culture, which used to be passed on orally but now suffers from a crisis of inheritance.

The population flow causes another problem, which is that traditional handicrafts will have no inheritors. Culture is created by people; it is inherited, developed and carried forward by people. Rural handicrafts are inherited mostly through the family or are taught by masters to apprentices. Skilled folk artists and artisans are the main group carrying rural culture forward. Such artists and artisans are aging and are less engaged in their traditional handicrafts because their handcraft skills cannot earn them a suitable living. In this case, these workers have to engage in other industries due to life pressures, ultimately leading to the deterioration of traditional handicraftsmanship. At the same time, young people are more involved in urban economic activities, deepening this crisis of rural inheritance.

### **3.2. The goals of rural cultural inheritance**

The beautiful countryside is based on an excellent farming culture, based on beautiful pastoral scenery, based on ecological agriculture, and shaped by simple village dwellings. This is the connotation of the beautiful countryside.

### 3.2.1. Cultural inheritance integrated with ecological protection

Rural construction should inject ecological elements into the cultural heritage and achieve the goal of harmonious coexistence between man and nature as well as man and the environment. “This process is mainly manifested in more attention to the fragility of the ecological environment, more attention to the harmonious development between man and nature, more attention to changing the mode of backward agriculture, more attention to sustainable development in rural areas and more attention to protect and develop agricultural civilization.”<sup>21</sup> The village has been the carrier of nostalgia for people for centuries. This process is also the goal pursued in the course of rural construction to make residents aware that “Mountain and water in the hometown can help remember and long for home”.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, urban people who live in bustling environments often yearn for the unique natural landscape of the countryside and the pastoral life. This longing provides a firmer reason for ecological protection. Harmony between man and nature, natural folk culture, and ecological protection are important goals of beautiful rural village construction.

### 3.2.2. Cultural inheritance has promoted economic development

Economy and culture have a relationship of mutual dependence; as a result, economic development is based on cultural prosperity, while cultural inheritance also depends on economic development. In the process of urbanization, industrialization development is the best way to protect and inherit historical and cultural resources. “In the process of industrialization, through creativity, the intangible cultural elements can become tangible, which can help both nonmaterial forms of culture and material forms of culture become and remain complementary and transformable from one another, thus

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21 Tao, L. H. – Fan, H. S.: The beautiful country: theories and cases of ecological village construction. People's Publishing House. CHINA, 2014. pp. 30. (in Chinese)

22 Central Urbanization Conference, Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang make important speeches. (in Chinese) [http://www.gov.cn/lidhd/2013-12/14/content\\_2547880.htm](http://www.gov.cn/lidhd/2013-12/14/content_2547880.htm) [accessed: 2013.12.14]

forming a good inheritance and development of the concept.”<sup>23</sup> Therefore, cultural heritage in rural construction should achieve the harmonious goal of balancing economic development with cultural inheritance. Economic development can be achieved through the development and continuation of culture, relying on the laws of the market and regarding economy, culture, and ecology as a large, interrelated promotion system to popularize cultural heritage and create culture as an industry.

The development of cultural heritage and the rural economy should be achieved by considering each village’s own advantages and disadvantages. Assessing local conditions, nurture and growth should be achieved in line with the actual characteristics of the village industry, with respect for the laws of nature, and by adhering to the guiding principles of classification, by selecting suitable seeds for the land. The selection of industry should be market oriented, taking two major factors — market sales and economic efficiency — into consideration to form their own characteristics and advantages and ultimately maximize returns. Peasants’ rights to make independent choices and decisions should be respected so that they can devote themselves to the development of characteristic industries in light of their own interests. We should adhere to the leading role of agricultural enterprises, let leading enterprises assume the responsibility of connecting with the market, and encourage and support the spontaneous formation of various economic organizations in the countryside.

The construction of the beautiful countryside requires economic development and cultural inheritance. The purpose of economic development is to ensure a better lifestyle for the people. We must adhere to the principle of being “people oriented” and enrich the lives of the population. Economic development and cultural industrialization act as “stem cells” for villages; in this process, rural construction is essential to bring new life to

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23 Xiang, G. E. -Chen, W.B.: Industrialization: The Choice of Paths for Protection and Inheritance of Historical and Cultural Resources. Journal of Chizhou College. 2011.Vol. 25. pp. 52-56. (in Chinese)

enterprises and regions.

### 3.2.3. Cultural inheritance adapted to social progress

Cultural protection and inheritance does not mean that all cultures remain intact. The original rural environment is expected to attract tourists in China due to the great emphasis laid on the protection of traditional culture in some places. Some ethnic and cultural concepts are too conservative as a result. These concepts exclude the advanced and modern culture of other ethnic groups, severely affecting cultural exchanges and social progress, such as hindering the inheritance of ethnic cultures in some ethnic minority areas in China. Due to the unique geographical values, world view, ethnic belief, or conservative religious consciousness, some of the rural areas in the modern society lack the competitive and open culture that characterizes the market economy. Therefore, they encounter challenges in adapting to the development and progress of society.

The inheritance of culture should accompany the progress of society. The pursuit of social progress is the common wish and aspiration of all regions in China. We must suitably address the relationship between modern civilization and traditional culture to achieve social progress without discarding outstanding traditional culture. We must use modern means of civilization to promote scientific rationality and modern civilization vigorously and oppose ignorance and superstition. Knowledge, modern ideas, modern science and technology, modern thinking, modern lifestyles, modern spirits, and modern values will replace backward systems of knowledge and life concepts to transform villagers into modern civilized people both in their lifestyles and behaviours; common progress of society can be promoted in this way.

## 3.3. **Aspects of rural cultural inheritance**

### 3.3.1. The purity of natural land formations

The area where the village is located has its original ecological resources of special terrain and biodiversity. Such biological and natural landscape resources, including land, water, animals and plants, are original and irreplaceable features that retain an internal symbiotic relationship with villages, settlements, architecture, and residents in the natural environment. Consequently, people should inherit these nonregenerative natural features in villages.

### 3.3.2. The memory of traditional architectural culture

Rural architecture is a type of local historical and cultural resource spanning across time and space. It is also the carrier of regional and national politics, economy, technology, and culture. Traditional rural architecture has witnessed the historical development of villages. Architectural styles in different time periods manifest unique rural construction memories and forms of appearance. Beautiful traditional rural architectures have been endowed with rich memorial values and deep implications about local natural and social processes. Consequently, people have to consciously retain the memories in traditional architecture culture and preserve the memory of beauty as the cultural specimen to record cultural progress.

### 3.3.3. Characteristic regional customs and traditions

The folk customs of the village are nonmaterial cultural features. These customs are the humanities and social relations in the rural environment. A strong family, clans, ethnic groups, and religious beliefs form a rural neighbour relationship that is extremely rich in local ethnic characteristics. Through the process of modern rapid urbanization in China and foreign countries, after this relationship has achieved citizenship status, the old folk customs quickly disintegrate, replaced by dynamic and short-range neighbourhood relations, and rural folk customs are transformed into neighbourhood customs. In addition, traditional customs and habits in the countryside and folk arts with regional

features have gradually disappeared. Such a modern rural social relationship lacks the simplest folk features of the countryside. Therefore, we must protect the local character of local customs, which will be developed in protection and inheritance.

#### 3.3.4. The traditional way of life and production

Farming culture and traditional handicraft culture are the most precious wealth assets, having been transmitted from one generation to the next for hundreds of years in rural areas. The traditional way of production and lifestyle was shaped not only by the basic necessities of life but also by folk religions and peasants' moral value systems. The farming culture of rural areas has a far-reaching impact on future generations in rural areas, as this culture has formed the rustic character and the quality of the rural peasants, which serves as one of the internal dynamic promoters of the development of the village in this new era. We must identify the most precious qualities of our ancestors and preserve the most traditional lifestyles to better understand and inherit traditional culture.

### 3.4. **Modes of rural cultural inheritance**

#### 3.4.1. Principles of rural cultural inheritance

The authenticity principle is as follows: to protect the rural natural landscape, spatial texture, historical and cultural heritage, and the most original features of the village. Historical buildings use original materials and original processes for maintenance to achieve maximum restoration and protection of historical authenticity.

The integrity principle is as follows: cultural protection in the villages should be implemented in consideration of the entire surrounding environment. To be specific, the integral protection and inheritance of rural culture targets the entire rural appearance, including life habits, customs, social activities, existing historical and cultural heritage, historical environment elements, and public space.

The sustainability principle is as follows: people can perceive the cultural atmosphere, read the historical implications of culture, admit, and preserve the cultural traces left by different historical periods in the villages. Throughout the implementation and reconstruction of culture, these historical and cultural marks are not removed during demolition and removal. Once determined, rural cultural protection and inheritance should be continuously protected and maintained as a permanent cause.

#### 3.4.2. The modes of rural cultural inheritance

The complete physical space of countryside along with the original way of rural life is an important part of rural culture. Furthermore, this space is an important element that can attract modern people. Conservationists initially focused on the protection of rural culture regarding increasingly damaged material heritage. In the contemporary era, consensus is that the construction of the beautiful countryside requires the protection of the rural space environment, the traditional natural texture, and the prevention of the loss of traditional culture.

From the perspective of cultural protection, the construction of the beautiful countryside should satisfy the precondition of culturally protecting rural areas such as spatial texture and traditional patterns. The renovation of ancient residential buildings should abide by the principle of repairing the old as the old and not to change external textures unnecessarily. From the perspective of cultural heritage, rural culture can be updated with the times, but trends cannot be applied blindly, which would undermine the classical simplicity of the cultural tone. Rehabilitating the rural environment and coordinating village styles are performed in part for the benefit of rural residents. Therefore, the protection of culture has the dual purpose of improving peoples' lives and augmenting traditional culture.

From the perspective of cultural development, the key concept is to innovate and



advance continuously with the times. The value of culture lies both in its static aesthetic interest and in its beautiful natural ecological landscape gifted by historical elements: narrow streets and rich historical heritage. History is fluid; villagers in the countryside have continued from generation to generation under the flow of space. Villagers can be proud of this cultural heritage. However, as the times progress, there is also a need to improve life and self-realization. The existing hollowing-out phenomenon in rural areas is the result of new generations of residents pursuing dreams. To address the problems of inheritance and innovation in the protection and development of rural culture, the goals of protection and development should not oppose each other. Culture needs development, and the culture that is self-styled is bound to lag behind the times. Such a condition does not favour the inheritance and development of the culture; indeed, it precludes cultural preservation.

Therefore, from the perspective of development, the inheritance of rural culture in rural areas is also an important part of the beautiful countryside. The development of rural culture can form a vivid cycle of economy. This condition has led not only to the preservation of traditional culture but also to the innovation and interdependence of cultural development, which is an issue that must be considered in the study of cultural inheritance.

### **3.5. Cultural inheritance of landscape authenticity**

#### **3.5.1. Basic connotation of the mode**

The cultural inheritance mode based on landscape authenticity essentially advocates that the countryside is no longer a replica of the city and an accessory but rather an individual with local characteristics and development potential. By retaining and updating the unique local architecture, the traditional village pattern is preserved, the original rural scenery is protected, the pristine agricultural production scene and the

comfortable cultural life are restored, the traditional lifestyle is preserved, and the true environment of the village is displayed.

### 3.5.2. The scope of application

Some villages with strong local flavour or unsophisticated folk customs – if these characteristics have not yet been destroyed – have favourable natural foundations, relatively unique residential houses or long-term farming life, which compose a village memory worthy of retention and a more precious “beautiful homesickness”.

### 3.5.3. The direction of inheritance

The landscape authenticity includes two aspects: material features and cultural features. Material features include landscape patterns, pastoral landscape, traditional architecture, ecological environment, etc. Cultural features include folk customs, spiritual culture, historical traditions, etc.

The inheritance of landscape authenticity should focus on both the material level and the cultural landscape level. It should consider how to integrate the cultural and ecological protection of the village landscape into economic and social development. In the interweaving of tradition and modernity, this process not only ensures cultural heritage but also prevents a population from adapting to modernization and eventually achieving long-term sustainable development. The phenomenon of destroying the texture of the rural space, ecological environment, and traditional culture should be avoided in the process of improving the overall ecological environment.

We can use the consanguinity deeply rooted in rural culture to restore the authentic landscape of the countryside and its natural features, spatial texture, and architectural landscape and still strictly follow the relevant provisions to carry out repair and maintenance and rehabilitate damaged cultural landscapes and ancient buildings with careful design and full respect for the history, or we can implement overall cultural

protection and heritage in the form of “ecological museums” and “cultural villages”. The “spirit of localities” of the villages should be continued for villages with a better ecological environment. Maintaining full respect for the primitive features, terrain, greening, and street and lane patterns of the village not only retains the “nostalgia” but also attaches importance to the protection of the natural ecology and retains the rural development value so that the villagers can experience, touch, and sense the return of their nostalgia.

### **3.6. Cultural inheritance of industrial development**

#### **3.6.1. Basic connotation of the mode**

The cultural inheritance mode based on industrial development essentially uses cultural industrialization to drive the economy and conversely promotes cultural inheritance, focusing on cultural development and activating the cultural elements in the countryside. This mode focuses on the needs of the local residents regarding living improvement, on the cultural manifestations of the buildings and natural landscapes where the residents are located, and on the coordinated development of rural culture and economic society. The cultural inheritance based on industrial development requires that the precious traditional culture and folk customs of the countryside are not only protected, inherited, and developed but also conform to the development of the rural economy and society and stay in harmony with modern civilization.

#### **3.6.2. The scope of application**

This mode is applicable mainly to rural areas with distinct cultural features, a strong regional atmosphere, rural villages with local folk customs, or villages with higher life experiences and cultural perceived values.

#### **3.6.3. The direction of inheritance**

Tourism development is a personalized cultural and creative product. Rural tourism has

to convey a permanent charm; a location must have its own unique charm to become a modern city crowd's return destination. This need incurs new and more stringent requirements for cultural connotation. Culture is the soul of rural tourism and is also where vitality lies. It is possible to develop a strong competitive power only by implanting culture into rural tourism. Only then will this product be more attractive and the construction of the beautiful countryside be sustainable. As the soul and vitality of rural tourism, culture can become more competitive and attractive, and the construction of beautiful countryside can be sustainable only when implanted into rural tourism.

Of course, in the process of the economic development, we should protect, promote, and inherit the rural traditional culture, constantly learn from practice and experience, and explore new ways and methods for the cultural inheritance to remain adaptive to local characteristics of rural areas during the construction of the contemporary beautiful countryside, which not only promotes the development of rural tourism as an important means for inheriting the rural culture but also enables the rural traditional culture to become the most valuable competitive asset for rural tourism.

Agriculture and culture have been closely related, mutually complementary and essentially inseparable since ancient times. With the continuous development of the leisure tourism industry, the culture and agriculture have tended to be increasingly strongly connected. As a kind of social and cultural activity, leisure activities have become a cultural and spiritual power to correct, balance, and compose various functions in the process of social development. Culture inheritance driven by developing leisure agriculture means making full use of various resources in rural areas, adjusting and optimizing the agricultural structure, expanding the agricultural functions, extending the agriculture industry chain, developing the industry of rural tourism services, and increasing farmers' income, thus creating a solid economic foundation for rural

construction, which is not only an important way for protecting, inheriting, and promoting the rural culture but also an approach for promoting overall urban-rural development and increasing urban-rural interactions. The culture and consciousness of the city radiate to the countryside so that peasants can experience the concept of modernization without leaving the rural area and receiving the living customs of modern civilization; thus, the comprehensive lifestyle of the peasants can be improved, and a new civilized rural style can be formed.

### **3.7. Cultural inheritance of culture reshaping**

#### 3.7.1. Basic connotation of the mode

The cultural inheritance mode based on culture reshaping is essential for noting the connotation of construction in the process of rural construction and repairing the faults in traditional culture. The countryside is a fertile ground for nourishing and nurturing traditional culture. Many rich traditional cultures have originated in the countryside and are preserved in the countryside. Traditional cultural heritage needs to be preserved to protect local culture and folk customs and pursue the reconstruction of traditional culture in the process of rural construction. This process stimulates vitality and enables the continuation of rural cultural features.

#### 3.7.2. The scope of application

Some villages have historically rich areas with special cultural landscapes and traditional culture but lack system planning. Rural villages have lost their cultural connotations under the influence of foreign cultures. Some villages are also rich in special cultural landscapes and areas with traditional culture, but their existing scale can no longer meet the needs of the villagers. Modern design methods are used to retain the regional culture in the course of such expansion.

#### 3.7.3. The direction of inheritance

Reconstruction of the rural public cultural space can be divided into two types. First, we can renovate, build or restore the traditional public cultural space in the countryside to reflect fully the rural regional characteristics and the inner essence of the rural traditional culture.

Second, a new type of rural public cultural space exists that requires reasonable planning in the process of rural construction and appropriate increases of newly built cultural infrastructure and other public cultural scenes, such as village exhibition halls and event-oriented squares. In the process of building and increasing these new cultural public spaces, however, we must always remember not to abandon the concepts of integrating the rural culture. Moreover, we should analyse and mine the local culture deeply in the countryside; integrate with the modern civilization and culture already developed; and implement professional and scientific reshaping, planning, and design of the rural public space for cultural construction and display so that the public spirit and cultural values of the rural society can ultimately be fully reflected during the reconstruction of the rural public cultural space. This careful attention allows the rural culture to be inherited and reshaped by enhancing the cultural consciousness, rebuilding the social democratic consciousness and rural culture and reconstructing the spiritual homeland with the sense of belonging and cohesion.

Reshaping of public spaces can be used to restore the villagers' daily life activities, to rebuild the cultural plaza and to rebuild the public life in the countryside using a harmonious rural lifestyle sufficient in rural artistic conception and cultural connotation to lead the value orientation of the rural public life, make the rural public space full of cultural attraction and connotation, increase rural people's active participation and subjectivity, fundamentally vitalize people's cultural consciousness, enhance the identity of the village local culture, and thus fundamentally strengthen the cohesion and

solidarity and ultimately reshape the new cultural style in the countryside.

#### **4. The master project of rural construction**

After half a year of investigation and research in Xinglong County in 2016, I participated in the overall planning of the beautiful countryside in Xinglong County and finished the renovation design in Beikanzi Village, which is one of the eight key villages in Xing County.

Upper planning interpretation refers to the overall township planning that is one level higher than village planning and even higher than overall county planning; the relationship between the two is overall and local. The overall positioning of the villages included in the counties is proposed through the overall planning of Xinglong County; eight key villages will be built in the first phase of the plan, and the coordinated development of the surrounding countryside will be driven by the key villages. Detailed planning and design for the entry into Beikanzi Village will be made after a clear positioning analysis.

##### **4.1. Preliminary study of rural planning**

The planning area is located in Xinglong County, with outstanding natural endowments, abundant terrain and physiognomy, and excellent ecological conditions. The area has a prominent advantage: it is located in the central and southern part of Xinglong County, west of Miyun District of Beijing City, south of Pinggu District of Beijing City, north of Ji County of Tianjin City, and east of Qianxi County of Tangshan City. The planning area covers 7 townships, 8 key villages, 22 normal villages, 24,000 individuals and a total area of 226.94 square kilometres (Figure 17). In the first stage of planning, giving priority to the development of 8 key villages will lead to the collaborative development of the surrounding villages (Figure 18).

COUNTY	NO.	VILLAGE	LOCATION	HOUSEHOLD	POPULATION
Xinglong	1	Boluotai	Liudaohu Town	296	960
	2	Zhoujiazhuang	Liudaohu Town	295	985
	3	Beikanzi	Liudaohu Town	322	1200
	4	Qianweitang	Liudaohu Town	368	1249
	5	Nanshuangdong	Xinglong Town	183	688
	6	Changhetao	Xinglong Town	169	649
	7	Dawa	Nantianmen Township	205	788
	8	Yangshuling	Nantianmen Township	91	320
	9	Shimiaozi	Nantianmen Township	145	485
	10	Nantianmen	Nantianmen Township	185	635
	11	Guojiazhuang	Nantianmen Township	226	768
	12	Miaoling	Nantianmen Township	172	561
	13	Huangmenzi	Banbishan Town	144	560
	14	Baxiangou	Banbishan Town	188	692
	15	Xiaozizhuang	Banbishan Town	188	505
	16	Baiyangtang	Banbishan Town	198	695
	17	Jinzhangzi	Banbishan Town	360	1293
	18	Dongfeng	Lanqiyang Town	455	1640
	19	Shuanlutai	Anziling Township	236	889
	20	Laihugou	Anziling Township	110	352
	21	Anziling	Anziling Township	329	1027
	22	Tianqiaoyu	Anziling Township	32	126
	23	Yanggaoyu	Anziling Township	228	830
	24	Shangzhuang	Anziling Township	153	536
	25	Gaobanhe	Anziling Township	168	560
	26	Liujiashuang	Anziling Township	130	425
	27	Mizidi	Daquanshui Township	302	1169
	28	Huangjiupu	Daquanshui Township	467	1566
	29	Shuangmiao	Daquanshui Township	241	978
	30	Baimachuan	Daquanshui Township	162	607

Figure 17. Seven townships and 30 villages in the planning area  
Source: Author

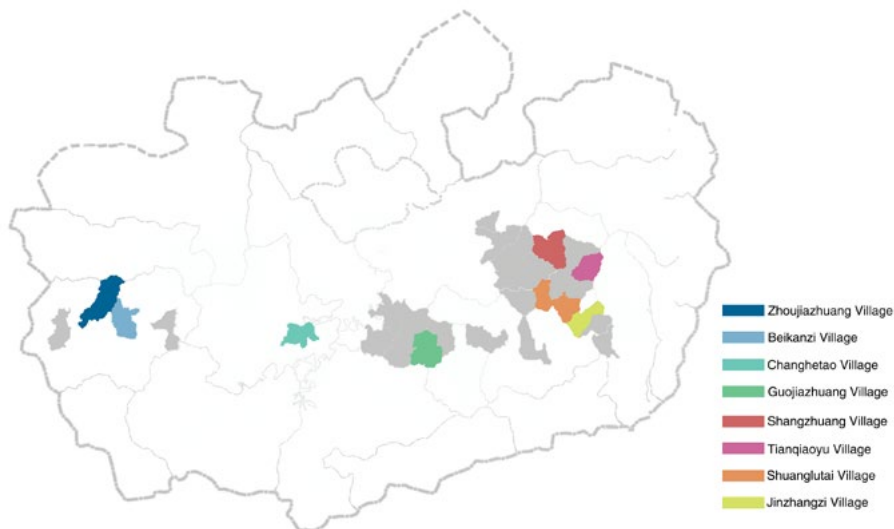


Figure 18. The eight key villages of Xinglong County  
Source: Author

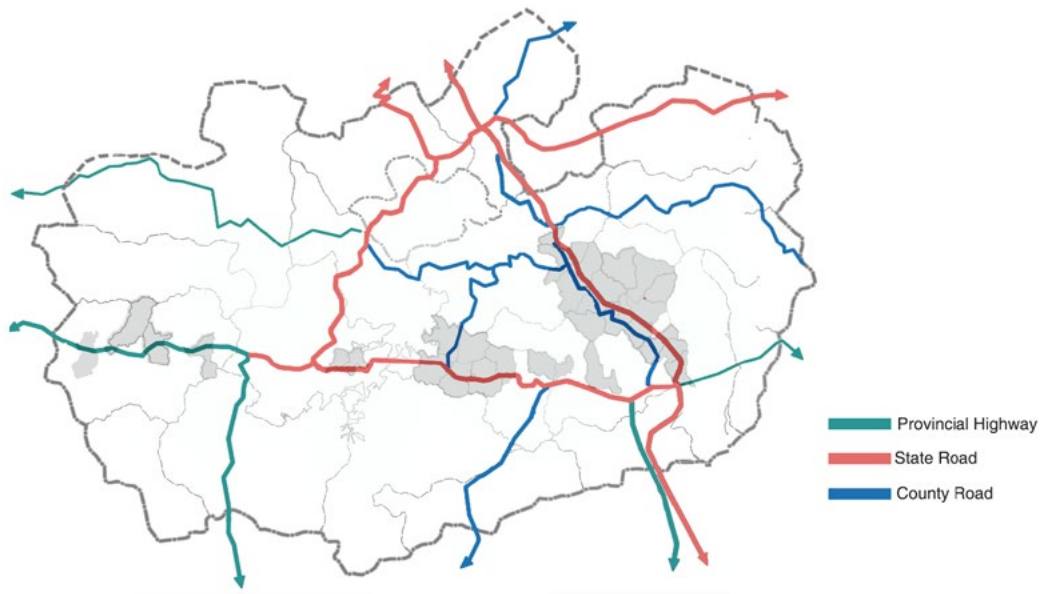


#### 4.1.1. Geographic conditions

Located in the southernmost of Chengde City, Xinglong County is near the eastern end of the Yan Mountains and on the northern side of the Great Wall (north latitude  $40^{\circ}11' - 40^{\circ}42'$ , east longitude  $117^{\circ}12' - 118^{\circ}15'$ ) (Figure 19). The county is connected with three provinces and is the close neighbour of four major cities: Beijing, Tianjin, Tangshan, and Chengde City. The Beijing-Shenyang high-speed railway is under construction; after the completion of rail transportation, it will take only 19 minutes to travel from Xinglong County to Beijing. That rail has prominent geographical advantages (Figure 20).



*Figure 19. Location advantages of Xinglong County*  
*Source: Author*



*Figure 20. Main traffic routes in Xinglong County*  
*Source: Author*

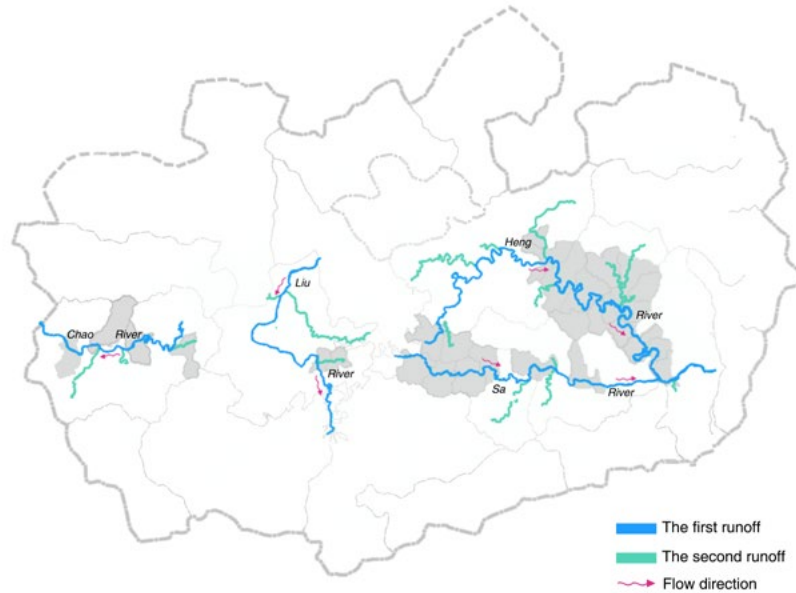
#### 4.1.2. Climatic conditions

Located in the middle latitudes, Xinglong County has a humid continental monsoon climate in the warm temperature zone, agreeable weather and four distinct seasons. Under the atmospheric circulation influences of the topography and especially the Yan Mountains, Xinglong County has stereoscopic climate features, characteristic of “peach flowers at the bottom of the mountain with flying snowflakes at the top of mountain”. The average atmosphere throughout the year ranges between 6.5°C and 10.3°C and the frost-free season lasts for 130-175 days. The average temperature in summer is approximately 22 °C. There are many summer resorts in this area, which is called the Natural Oxygen Bar.

#### 4.1.3. Hydrological conditions

There are more than ten rivers in Xinglong County, including the Liu River, Sa River, Heng River, and Chao River, which flow through the 20 townships in the county (Figure 21). Xinglong County supplies 260 million tons of water to Beijing and 470 million

tons of water to Tianjin annually. The county expects to build more than 100 small reservoirs that will increase the water storage to 12.5 million cubic metres to create a functional area with water conservation in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.



*Figure 21. Water system of Xinglong County  
Source: Author*

#### 4.1.4. Landforms

A north-south low-lying terrain, undulating hills, gully aspect, and slope disparity are the main geographical characteristics in Xinglong County. The main features in Xinglong are deep mountains and valleys, large mountainous areas, steep slopes, and little cultivated land. Mount Wuling, which is the main peak of the Yan Mountains, is the highest point of the county, 2118 metres above sea level, lying in the northwest of the county where the mountain range winds to the southeast. The lowest point in the south is Mount Bagua, 150 metres above sea level (Figure 22). The whole landscape forms high mountains above 2000 metres above sea level, medium mountains of 1000-2000 metres, low mountains of 500-1000 metres, and hills below 500 metres. This pyramid comprises terrain stretching from the northwest to the southeast in a typical mountainous area of

“eight-tenths mountain, one-tenth water, and one-tenth field” (Figure 23 and 24).

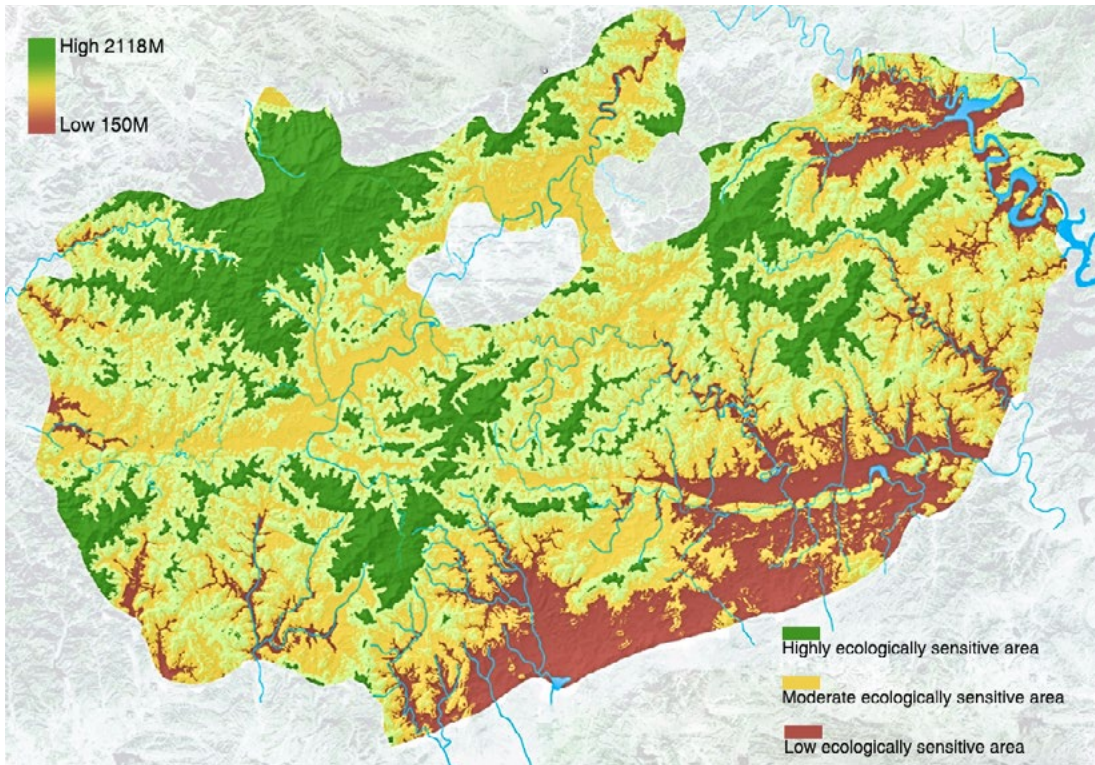


Figure 22. Topography in Xinglong County  
Source: Author



Figure 23. Mountain scenery in Xinglong County  
Source: Author



*Figure 24. Mountain scenery in Xinglong County*  
*Source: Author*

#### 4.1.5. Characteristics of cultural resources

The landscape of Xinglong County features the forest landscape as its main body, high mountain peaks as its skeleton, and blue lakes as its veins, embellished with cultural relics as ornaments, and composes a static landscape in harmony with the dynamic landscape, natural landscape, and human landscape integrated as a whole. Water is the spirit of the mountain. Many rivers exist in the county, flowing mainly from the mountainous areas and expanding to the neighbouring counties. Liu River is the longest, passing through Xinglong County from south to north. In the middle of the mountains, all rivers are fast-flowing and powerfully scouring, and the scene is particularly captivating when the streams wind their way through forest canyons. The landscape offers many essential resources for valley expeditions, upstreaming, rafting, and other outdoor sports (Figure 25).



*Figure 25. Mountain scenery in Xinglong County*  
*Source: Provided by Xinglong County Planning Bureau*

In the emergence and development of Chinese culture, farming culture is the foundation because this practice aims to satisfy people's most fundamental living necessities (clothing, food, shelter, and transportation); farming culture determines the manner of existence and shapes the ethnic culture. The characteristics of farming culture can be summarized as follows: reacting to time, taking the advantage, respecting regulations, and living in harmony with nature.

The most direct linkages of agricultural production are time and solar conditions. In ancient China, people lived in time frames arranged according to natural rhythms and agricultural production cycles. Traditional agriculture in China emphasizes the importance of time, land, and local conditions. Respecting regulations means complying with norms, standards, and orders. This principle of practice formed from a long-term interaction between man and nature. As the foundation of Chinese traditional culture, farming culture contains many outstanding cultural qualities such as “taking agriculture as the basis, taking harmony as the principle, taking pride in virtue, taking ceremony as the priority”. Farming emphasizes the harmony between man and nature and the

smoothness and harmony of agricultural life, guiding the Chinese people as a nation to love peace and value harmony. The plan shows and inherits the farming culture through rural farming experience and farming culture display.

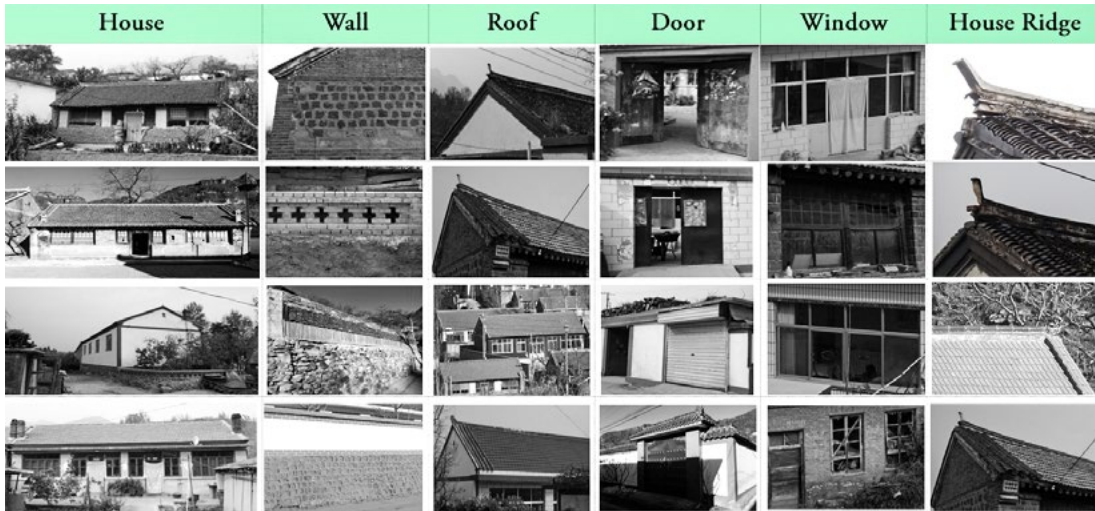
Farming culture in Xinglong County has a long and unique history that should be the focus of cultural inheritance. We expect to build a regional brand of “Beijing-Tianjin water source agriculture” and develop vigorously green, pollution-free and organic agriculture for Beijing and Tianjin. At present, the total area of fruit trees in the county is 1.05 million mu, with 52.5 million plants; there are more than 220 fruit trees per capita for farmers. The revenue of fruit and its process industry account for more than 65% of the income of farmers. The three major fruits are hawthorn, chestnut, and apple. The State Forestry Administration has given Xinglong County the titles of “haw of the township”, and “the hometown of the Chinese chestnut” (Figure 26).



*Figure 26. Chestnut processing and chestnut foods in Xingong County  
Source: Provided by Xinglong County Planning Bureau*

#### 4.1.6. Analysis of the local architectural style

To protect and inherit the natural environment, it is important to consider the whole traditional spatial pattern, the ancient village architecture and various historical and cultural environment elements in Xinglong County. The spatial distribution of the historic villages should be strengthened, and protection of the heritage and rich historical buildings should be considered to reflect accurately the remaining elements of historical buildings (Figure 27).



*Figure 27. Analysis of traditional architectural details in Xinglong County*  
*Source: Author*

#### 4.1.7. Analysis of folk culture

Religious Culture: local customs and traditions advocate Buddhism, and various villages have unique temples with local cultural characteristics; temple festivals and festivals are held at temple festivals or on prescribed dates. People also perform wonderful songs and dances, contributing to the atmosphere (Figure 28).



*Figure 28. Religious activities in Baiyun Temple in Xinglong County*  
*Source: Provided by Xinglong County Planning Bureau*

Folk Culture: Zheng Kexiang, a scholar in Qing Dynasty, learned the technique of sand painting during his travels. This technique has been passed on for more than 150 years; it offers the dual benefits of art appreciation and collection. More than ten kinds of traditional handicrafts exist, such as grain paintings, root carvings, clay sculptures, dough sculptures, pyrography, reed paintings, wood carvings, hydrangea cloth art, and



sugar figure blowing art. These are the treasures of Xinglong folk culture (Figure 29).



*Figure 29. Sand painting, wood carving, and sugar figure blowing art in Xinglong County*  
*Source: Provided by Xinglong County Planning Bureau*

Manchu Culture: the Manchu people enjoy singing and dancing, and their techniques of paper cutting are exquisite. The material originates from ethnic customs, unique cultural landscapes, and the ancient rhyme of poetry, demonstrating the characteristics of national integration. Nantianmen Township has a strong Manchu culture in Xinglong County (Figure 30).



*Figure 30. Paper cutting, Manchu dancing, and Manchu totem pole*  
*Source: Provided by Xinglong County Planning Bureau*

Poetry culture: “Deep in the Yan Mountains, Poems on the Shangzhuang Village”. In 2015, the first session of “International Poetry Forum in China” was held in Shangzhuang Village. Thirty-nine famous poets from China and elsewhere proclaimed their delight at the poetry gifts of rural residents. Tourists successively learn to compose poems in Shangzhuang Village. Poetry has already become the cultural featured product

in the village. In this way, the whole village aims to be a cultural presentation stage, which supports an innovative cultural industry chain and possesses strong vitality (Figure 31).



*Figure 31. The first session of “International Poetry Forum in China” in Shangzhuang Village  
Source: [http://www.sohu.com/a/28774671\\_117494](http://www.sohu.com/a/28774671_117494)*

Based on the above analysis, the ecological base within the scope of planning is favourable, the transportation is convenient, and some resources have the advantage of further improvement; Xinglong County offers the conditions to build demonstration sites of the beautiful countryside.

## 4.2. Overall positioning

### 4.2.1. Planning concept

Planning relies on the resources of mountains and water in Xinglong County to create the best tourism and leisure health destination in the surrounding areas of Beijing and Tianjin. The goal is to protect the overall ecological structure and landscape framework; maintain the sight corridors; highlight the original design of the countryside; remove the elements of “urbanization”; preserve, inherit, and reflect the native elements; and consider the protection and inheritance of the natural environment characteristics and spatial patterns of Xinglong County. Historical heritage sites, in addition to a simple, native, back-to-nature way of life, should be protected carefully. To inherit

the authenticity of Xinglong County, it is important to enter a dialogue with quiet and primitive life through tourism and health experience and carry on the original inheritance of rural culture in Xinglong County. By 2020, Xinglong County will be built into a nationally renowned beautiful countryside.

#### 4.2.2. Direction of cultural inheritance

In recent years, air pollution in cities has become a particularly severe problem in China, and the air pollution index continues to rise when North China enters its yearly heating season in winter (Figure 32). People start to yearn for the tranquil rural life in the countryside; moreover, leisure and health has become a major trend in the pursuit of a higher quality of life and already an area of interest for many Chinese residents. To live healthily, people need high-quality ecological natural resources and an environment suitable for living; people have high requirements for sunshine, air, water, and sensory demands. Suitable locations are generally those near rivers and lakes, forests, valleys, and wetlands.



*Figure 32. Air pollution in Beijing*  
*Source: Author*

The characteristics of rural primitive simplicity are well preserved in Xinglong County; its unique natural landscape characteristics, abundant natural resources, quiet environment, strong historical and humanistic atmosphere, and the simple quality of peasant life have brought great advantages to the leisure and health experience in rural areas of Xinglong County, which can use its natural resources of mountains and rivers fully and implement comprehensive renovations of the whole environment with the individual village as a unit to develop a culture of ecological leisure and health cultivation. Furthermore, the natural resources of the traditional agriculture unique to rural areas, the local characteristic food and green ingredients, and a healthy and seasonal emphasis in Xinglong County's cuisine all satisfy the need for well-being; thus, the experience of traditional food culture in Xinglong County can be used as a selling point to promote the development of the rural leisure experience culture.

The leisure health experience culture, or the rational return of contemporary human beings to the development of cultural products, offers the possibility for re-identification of the perspective on life and values; ecological study, environmental protection, health, low carbon pollution, well-being, nature and harmony should be advocated for in the construction of such a beautiful countryside. This approach is compatible with the final orientation of the contemporary development and can enable inheritance of the natural traditional culture of the countryside.

Rural tourism in Xinglong County should start from the essential characteristics of its rural culture, make use of the advantages of tourism resources in the countryside, and divide the existing countryside's cultural resources into different tourism experience modes and scales, such as hiking in the mountains, unique fishing experiences, rural fruit picking, appreciation of the minority catering culture and other characteristic touring projects. Furthermore, tourism should develop different experiential projects

according to different types of rural culture and increase the degree of association among different touring projects so that mutual promotion and common development can be achieved and thus form a strongly attractive cultural brand. Focusing on key villages and characteristic cultures, the combination of rural tourism development with characteristic projects will form distinctive rural features (Figure 33).

Key village	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )		Status characteristics	Leading the direction of development	Featured items
Shangzhuang	9.9		Poetry culture, Canyon landscape	Cultural and creative industries	Shangzhuang cultural theme scenic area
Tianqiaoyu	6.75	12.95	The only way to Shangzhuang Village, ice sculpture culture	Winter tourism	Ice sculpture exhibition
Shuanglutai	6.2				
Beikanzi	6.18		Pastoral landscape, beautiful landscape	Leisure health and agriculture picking industry	No.1 farmland project
Guojiazhuang	9.1		Manchu-culture, handicraft production	Manchu-cultural tourism	Manchu-style cultural park
Changhetao	3.5		The ecological environment is good. It is close to Liuliping National Forest Park and National Astronomical Observatory.	Emotional experience travel	Astronomical stargazing town, college art creative park
Zhoujiazhuang	10.3		Forest resources, rich stream resources	Ecotourism, aquaculture	Aquaculture, comprehensive forest development
Jinzhangzi	5.8		Convenient traffic and good industrial foundation	Fruit industry, green ecological cultivation	Agricultural production sightseeing, e-commerce platform

*Figure 33. Linkage development between the key villages and the projects*  
*Source: Author*

Culture, and especially intangible culture, provides unique properties and rich and colourful styles and patterns of rural intangible cultural inheritance in Xinglong County. Culture has provided living contents and styles for rural tourism, such as sand painting art culture, poetry culture, and Manchu customs. Many types of colourful forms and fresh cultural concepts exist in the countryside of Xinglong County, and it is necessary to perform in-depth mining and packaging of the custom and folk culture in each village to improve constantly the attraction and essential charm of the rural traditional culture. This strategy should involve developing a cultural brand of the rural characteristics by means of productization and industrialization of the rural culture and then changing

deep cultural resources into economic and industrial advantages (Figure 34).



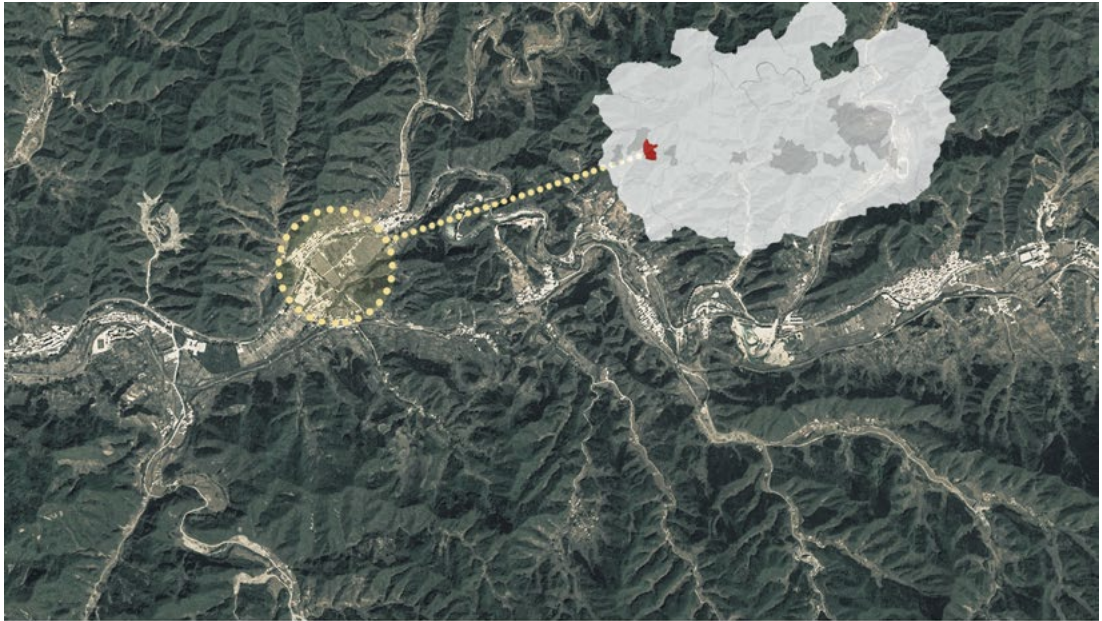
*Figure 34. Connecting rural villages with characteristic cultures to form a tourist industry tourist route*

*Source: Author*

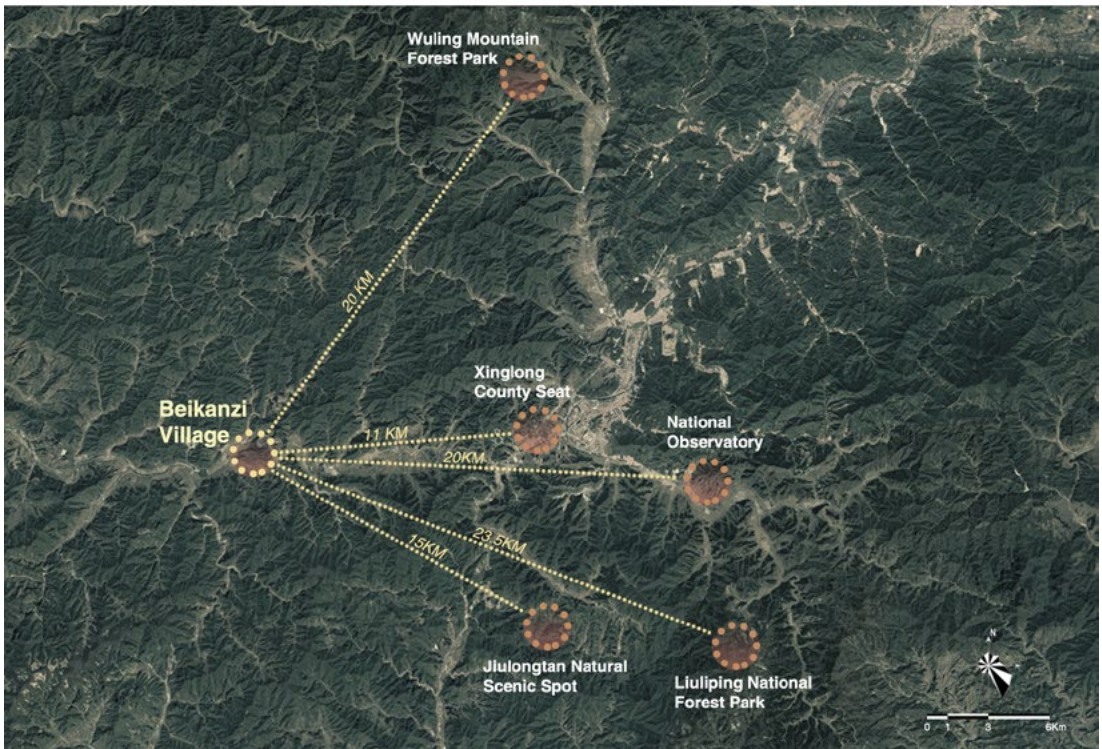
#### 4.3. Overview of the village

After the preliminary analysis of the previous section, different villages are found to have different characteristics and cultures, and characteristic cultures are taken as the basis for rural development. On this basis, cultural industry projects will develop the promotion of the coordinated development of towns and villages. This section provides detailed design instructions for the project in Beikanzi Village.

As one of eight key villages in Xinglong County, Beikanzi Village is located in the Western Xinglong County; the provincial road S355 runs through the whole village from east to the west as the only access from Xinglong County to Beijing. Taking advantage of these favourable geographical conditions and planning Beikanzi Village's future as a beautiful village has become the target of this design (Figure 35).



Satellite map of the surrounding terrain



The distance between Beikanzi Village and famous tourist attractions in Xinglong County

Figure 35. Beikanzi Village in Xinglong County  
Source: Author

There are 320 households registered in this village with a population of 1200, of which the working population is approximately 420; approximately 100 people go outside the village to work throughout the year. At present, the industrial composition of Beikanzi Village is based mainly on primary industry. The village collective does not develop this industry. The farmland area in the village area has not been planned systematically, and the development of tertiary industries such as village tourism and commerce still lags behind. In general, the current village industrial structure in Beikanzi Village is still in a state of being dominated by the primary industry and supplemented by the tertiary industry. The economic structure of the village needs to be optimized.

#### 4.3.1. Cultural elements

The contents of the rural culture inheritance in Beikanzi Village include two aspects of material culture and nonmaterial cultural elements, while the material cultural elements include architectural forms, local landscapes, and spatial textures; nonmaterial cultural elements include farming culture and folk culture.

Regarding architectural culture, the layout of each building is essentially along the road. The traditional building is dominated by white and grey colours, with a dark brown roof and wooden doors and windows (Figure 36). The main structure of the house is a brick and wood structure. The building space is in the form of a front yard and back room. The main house is in the back and the middle and contains small courtyards, with side-facing kitchens and other ancillary rooms, which form the common characteristics of northern traditional architecture in Xinglong County. The overall architectural style of the village is neat and orderly.





*Figure 36. Traditional houses in Beikanzi Village*  
*Source: Author*

The native rural landscape is a kind of rural resource with aesthetic value and ecological value. This landscape is the foundation that distinguishes rural features and competitiveness from the urban environment and is an important content of the rural economy, social development, and ecological protection. Beikanzi Village has approximately 10 hectares of cultivated land, creating “fields and gardens” in the mountains. Such a rural landscape offers incomparable surroundings that distinguish this setting from that of the city (Figure 37).



*Figure 37. Farmland in Beikanzi Village*  
*Source: Author*

Beikanzi Village is located in the Yan Mountains. The farmland is flat, and there is a patchwork pattern for the villages. Residential buildings are constructed according to the terrain. Each row of houses is oriented in the same direction and is oriented mainly towards the roads. The building density is high, and the village boundaries are not clearly defined. Such a spatial texture is formed cumulatively under the long-term influence of natural regions. This texture is both a microcosm of the harmonious coexistence between man and nature and a spatial manifestation of its social and cultural development, which is non-reproducible (Figure 38).



*Figure 38. Spatial texture in Beikanzi Village*  
*Source: Author*

In the farming culture, agricultural products mainly include hawthorn, walnuts, and chestnuts. Ploughs, taro, sickles, poles, and other tools used in early agricultural work have gradually disappeared from people's perspectives. The traditional farming and harvesting experience is becoming increasingly limited. As a basic part of rural culture, farming culture is also one of the main cultural contents to be rebuilt in Beikanzi Village. The folk culture of Beikanzi Village includes rural drama, ancient archery, and stalk lamp arrays. Local customs and culture are inseparable from the food, housing, leisure, and farming of the Beikanzi people, resulting in a rich folk culture. These activities include

the Beikanzi Summer Festival, Yangko performances during the Spring Festival, and traditional Chinese music performances during weddings and other happy occasions. This cultural aspect also accounts for the worship of land gods and other faith cultures and genealogical cultures.

#### 4.3.2. Reflections on rural culture inheritance

The material culture of Xinglong County's villages includes the geographical environment, architectural forms, local landscapes, and spatial textures. The process of rural development has suffered from a blind worship of urban culture, large-scale demolition and construction, and waste of land resources. The stereotyped form of construction has made many villages lose sight of their true identity. Some local leaders have paid less attention to pastoral landscapes; the one-sided external village appearance and village landscape restoration or economic development are the goals, making the local landscape and the traditional architectural texture susceptible to unrecoverable destruction.

With the advancement of urbanization, village-specific cultural aspects have gradually been discarded throughout the development process. The prosperous tradition of farming civilization has faded from people's memories. The popularization and popularization of agricultural modernization techniques have gradually resulted in the abandonment of traditional agricultural cultivation techniques, and traditional agricultural tools are increasingly being replaced. Rural life in the pastoral scenery is challenging to reproduce. It is frustrating to observe the villagers arranging fields, mowing grass, and harvesting. The handicraft skills of making agricultural tools are also almost lost. The long-term accumulation of production wealth and folk customs is dying.

The importance of traditional culture is not recognized universally. Villagers have lost their long-standing folk customs with the improvement of living standards and the

introduction of modern skills. Traditional festivals have become simpler and easier. Western festivals are increasingly being arranged by young people who are unaware of traditional rituals. The diversity of local culture is challenging to maintain as it fades continuously. With the development of agricultural technology, people gradually have liberated themselves from the arduous farming work and have lost the busy life of spring farming and traditional lifestyles. The spiritual life of rural residents is monotonous and unfulfilling. Coupled with the lack of cultural and sports facilities in rural settlements, the rustic flavour of rural life is gradually diminishing, and the spiritual and cultural life of villagers is increasingly poor.

Beikanzi Village has vast farmland, according to the planning direction of “No.1 Farmland in Xinglong”. The long-term accumulation of the farming culture influences the people of Beikanzi Village, shaping their basic values; a simple lifestyle also nurtures rural culture. The simple way of life has also nurtured the soul and core of rural culture, resulting in a series of customs related to farmland, folk customs, and belief culture. Beikanzi Village has outstanding agricultural culture and rich planting and picking activities; building a large-scale leisure picking area to enlarge its agricultural culture is one of the directions for the inheritance of rural farming culture.

The customs and living habits of rural society are a type of culture that has formed slowly and cannot be easily duplicated. The rural culture in the new period should benefit from both the historical accumulation of traditional culture and the continuous infusion of modern culture, representing the integration and exchange of tradition and modernity. There exist both family and village collective cultures and additional regional cultures. Cultural styles are also varied and include rural literature, rural architecture, local drama, folk costumes, and songs and dances, folk calligraphy and painting, various folk crafts, and food. These rural cultural styles should be preserved and inherited in a modern way

in combination with innovative ideas so that these styles can recover their vitality and be reintegrated into the lives of rural residents. At present, the cultural quality of rural people is generally not high, and per capita income predictions are not optimistic. Rural residents' spending on culture and education accounts for a small proportion of total expenditure and is influenced by the traditional concept of consumption.

The villagers are busy increasing their income and lack the ideas and motivation to enrich their cultural life. Therefore, we wish to create a cultural form that truly engages these villagers; the best way is to combine cultural heritage with economic development so that culture becomes one of the driving forces for economic development. This approach will also promote strong enthusiasm in the villagers to protect and inherit their local culture.

Exploring the development model of “culture makes rural prosperity” can also be combined with leisure tourism and characteristic agricultural tourism to promote distinctive local culture and increase the number of new places for leisure tourism and agricultural experiences.

#### 4.3.3. The mode of rural culture inheritance

Through the comprehensive rectification of landscape modelling, building renovation, and public facilities construction in Beikanzi Village, the village environment will be enhanced, and a beautiful countryside will be created that is guided by the ideas of leisure and cultural tourism and supplemented by agricultural economic development to shape the leisure culture brand of “No.1 Farmland in Xinglong” and to make Beikanzi Village an important base for leisure tourism in Xinglong County. The cultural strategy of Beikanzi Village is to refine the farming culture and local culture of rural areas. Through the cultural intervention approach, the country will create original rural villages rich in spiritual culture, restore original rural style, and continue traditional culture and

customs.

The protection of rural culture in Beikanzi Village is almost a blank slate, and the restoration and protection of physical spaces lie at a relatively low priority. In recent years, Beikanzi Village has exhibited a certain potential for development through the advantages of location, the ecology of fertile land, and the enthusiasm of villagers to improve their agricultural production environment.

The agricultural culture in Beikanzi Village is outstanding. The inheritance of rural culture, the development of leisure agriculture, and the creation of pastoral complexes are appropriate ways of inheriting rural culture. From the perspective of the mode of comprehensive cultural inheritance, we need to preserve the native style, authentic lifestyle, and traditional spatial texture and thus prevent the loss of rural culture and not focus on material planning. Many urban residents wish to stay away from the hustle and bustle of the city and wish to experience the unique and comfortable pastoral scenery of the countryside. Based on such social desires, it is appropriate to develop rural leisure tourism to promote the development of the village and promote the inheritance of local culture.

#### 4.3.4. The strategy of rural cultural inheritance in Beikanzi Village

The most striking difference between rural and urban areas is the unique rural landscape of the village. How to preserve the original rural character is one of the planning priorities. Part of the foundation of the beautiful rural construction is a suitable natural environment that allows for inheriting the natural culture of Beikanzi Village in the landscape authenticity mode. The ecological environment of Beikanzi Village is rehabilitated during the construction process, which includes aspects of beautification of the creek and natural ecological protection. Landscape planning has been conducted under the premise of respecting the landscape pattern, and the texture of the farmland

has been preserved and reformed.

These processes will be combined with the industrial development of farming culture. The cultural resources of Beikanzi Village will be refined in the planning process, and the “cultivating culture” will be emphasized. As an important part of rural culture, farming culture is one of the main areas of tourism development in Beikanzi Village. Experiencing farming and pastoral life can help tourists enjoy the joy of this type of life. Rural leisure tourism emphasizes a tourism environment that satisfies the rustic qualities, reflects rural culture, and provides visitors with a pleasant and rural memory. The tourist attractions created by Beikanzi Village are mainly rural scenery, agricultural planting, and picking experiences.

#### 4.4. The planning of the village

##### 4.4.1. Overall layout

The spatial structure of the original farmland will be re-divided according to the unique culture of the village and the overall protection and development needs. The planning area comprises one loop, two nodes, and three zones. This configuration constitutes a unique new pattern of farming culture in Beikanzi Village (Figures 39 and 40).

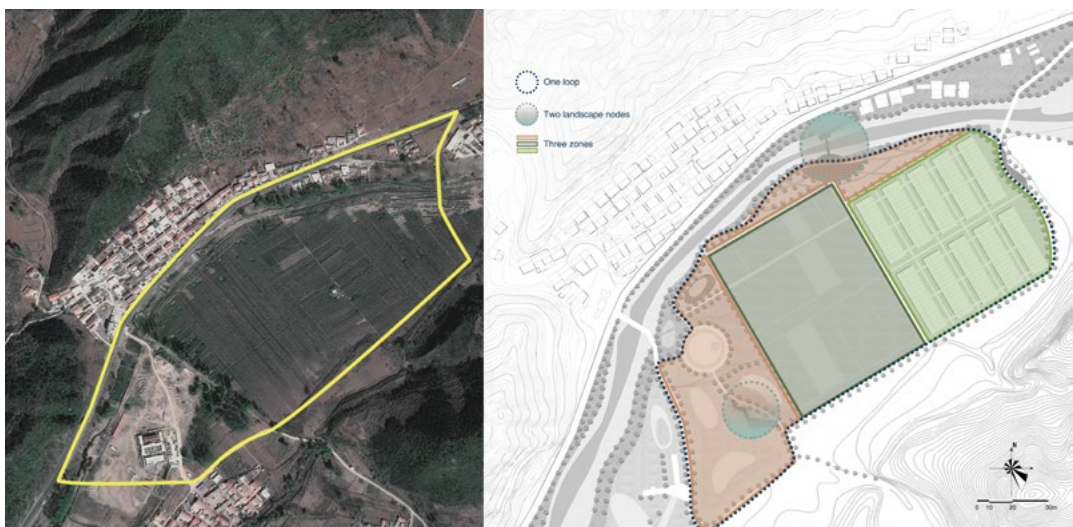


Figure 39. Reconstruction before and after  
Source: Author



*Figure 40. Overall layout  
Source: Author*

The agricultural park has been designed with a central activity plaza to provide a venue for people to collect and distribute rural activities. The local agricultural committee plans to build a rural cultural museum on the square. According to the committee requirements, the museum chose the shape of a windmill to emphasize the local farming culture. Collecting a variety of local cultural relics, farming tools, production and daily necessities for display in the museum has played an active role in protecting and inheriting the farming culture. This approach combines leisure and entertainment, farming activities, and eco-agriculture to provide a carrier of modern leisure products and create an agricultural sightseeing park and landscape of agriculture (Figure 41 and 42).





*Figure 41. A view of the overall planning from the air*  
*Source: Author*



*Figure 42. A view of the overall planning from the air*  
*Source: Author*

Native plants will be used to create rural landscapes, grow fruits and vegetables, enable the picking experience, and support agricultural planting, among other purposes. The experience of farming culture, from planting to picking, from traditional food

production to modern food production, presents agricultural production and life in all directions. Through creative innovation, simple agricultural production is designed as an interactive and highly engaging agricultural experience project. This scheme fully embodies the concept of life that is close to nature and enjoys farming, forms a farming cultural area that is different from urban culture and allows urban residents to experience the pleasures of a rural lifestyle.

#### 4.4.2. Road and creek reconstruction

Road planning: In the first level road, the pavement is made of cement concrete with a longitudinal gradient of 1.5%. Avenue trees are planted as road greening on each side of the road. The width of the road is 5 metres. In the second level road, the pavement is made of cement concrete with a longitudinal gradient of 1%. Avenue trees are planted as road greenery on each side of the road. The width of the road is 2-3 metres (Figure 43).

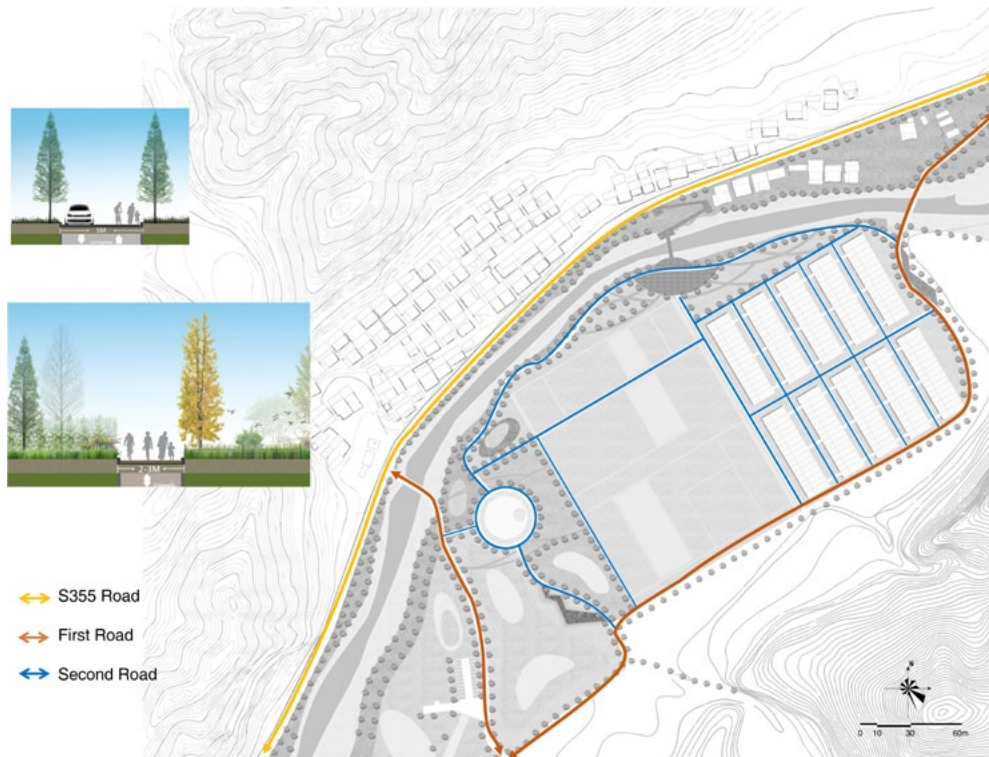
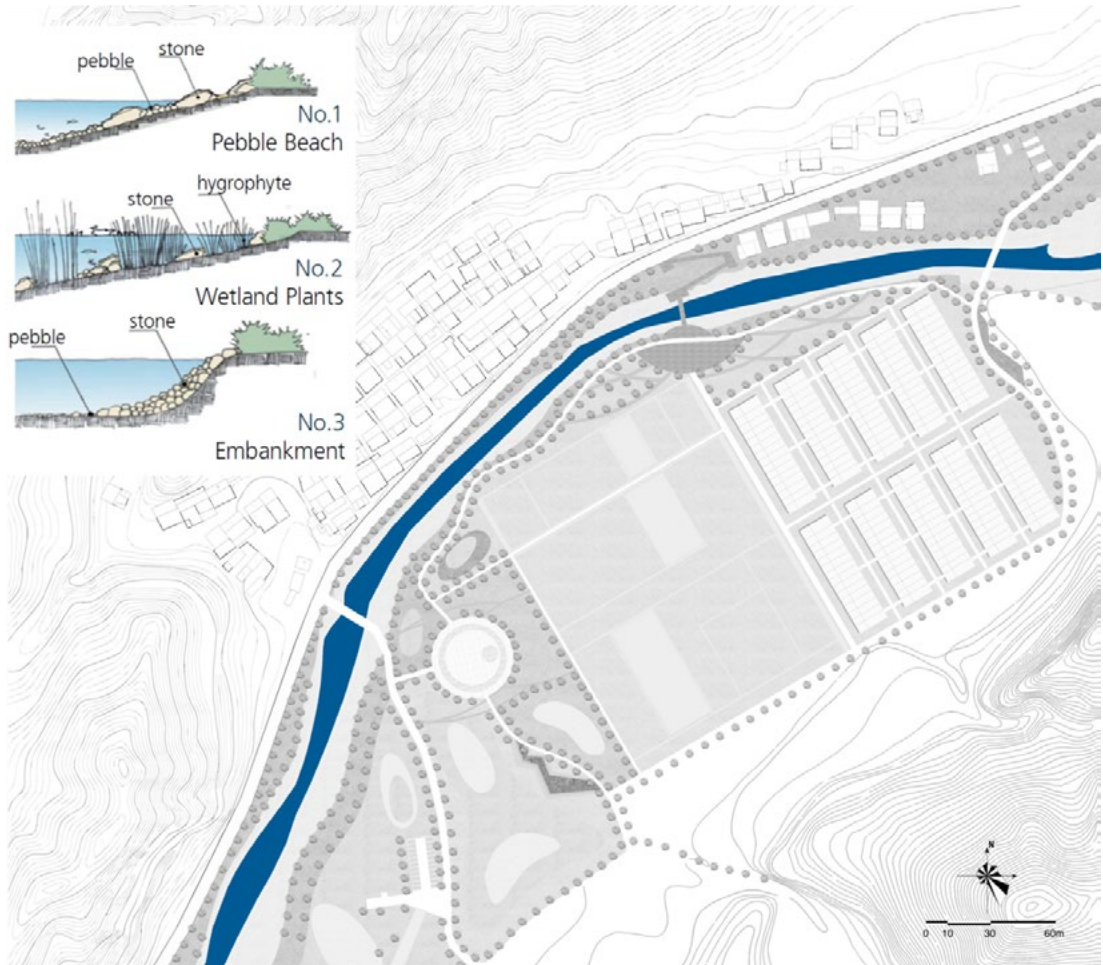


Figure 43. Road Planning  
Source: Author

Creek regulation: The dredging of the creek will open up the area of the creek's surface, and the width of the space will be sufficient to adjust the spatial relationships between humans, the water, and the plants, creating a protective ecological barrier and preserving the diversity of aquatic plants (Figure 44 and 45).



*Figure 44. Three types of creek bank reconstruction  
Source: Author*



*Figure 45. A view of the creek from water*  
*Source: Author*

#### 4.4.3. New traditional houses in Beikanzi Village

The existing residential houses in Beikanzi Village feature the courtyard layouts unique to the Xinglong area. The courtyard houses include one parlour and two bedrooms, which essentially can meet only the needs of the villagers and cannot accommodate tourists. To address this limitation, under the premise that the homestead does not exceed 300 square metres, a unitary residential building is designed to consider the integration of the homestead contour boundary and the courtyard boundary. The bases of the two basic unit buildings are arranged symmetrically, and the east-west image forms a set of traditional determinant layouts, which significantly improves land conservation and housing integrity (Figure 46). The local government can determine the number of building units according to the scope of the land for new buildings. The formation of clusters from units is consistent with the logic of community generation in local traditional buildings, providing strong operability and the possibility for future expansion (Figure 47).

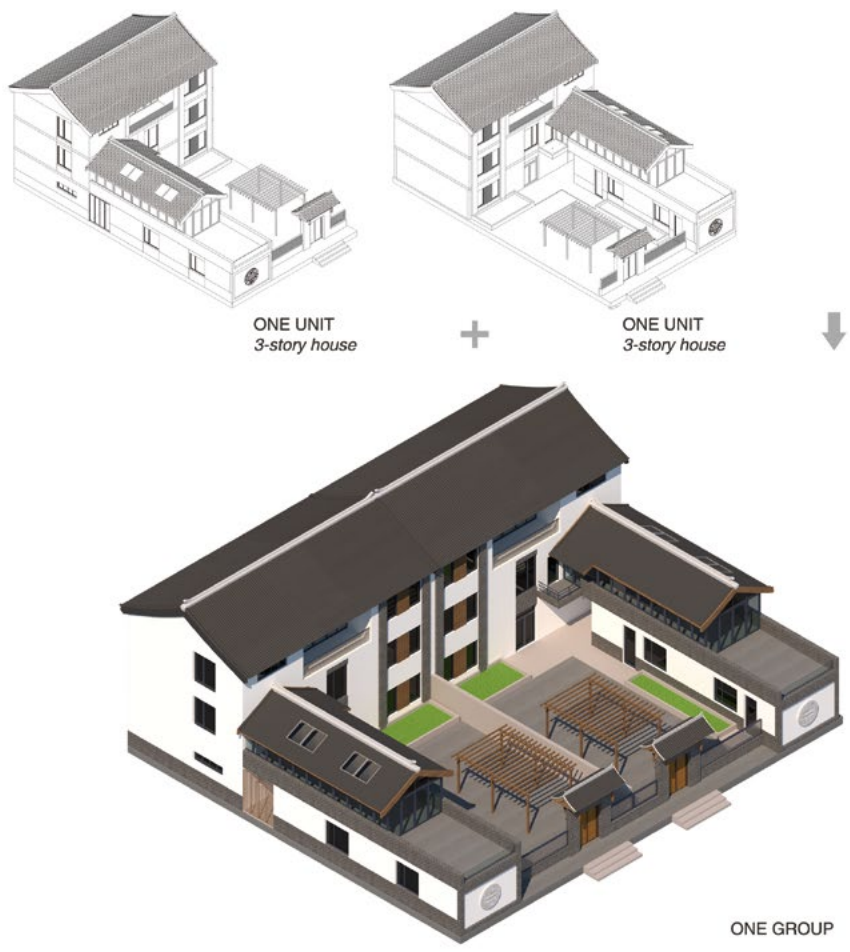
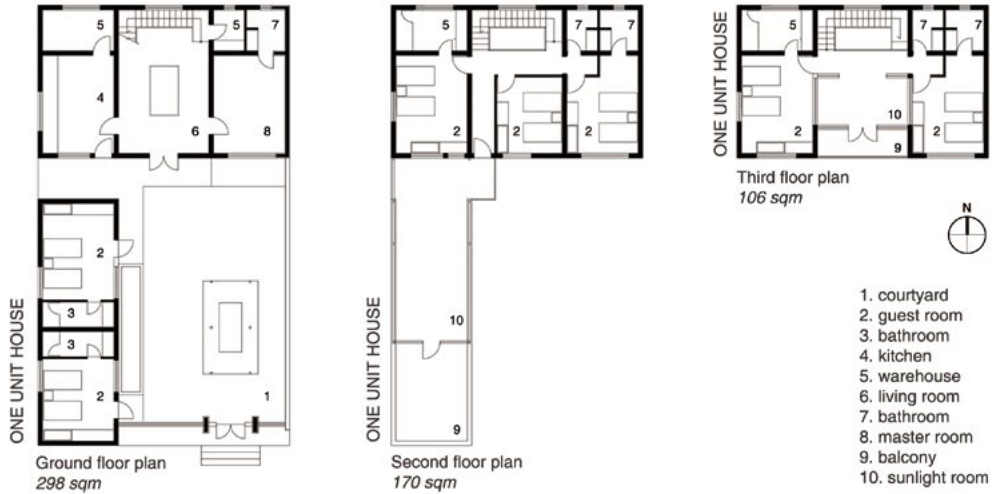


Figure 46. Two basic unit houses, arranged symmetrically  
Source: Author



*Figure 47. New houses in Beikanzi Village*  
*Source: Author*

The outstanding cultural feature of Beikanzi Village is its farming culture, which organically integrates leisure and entertainment, farming activities, and ecological agriculture to become the carrier of modern leisure products. Efforts will be made to create a “No.1 Farmland in Xinglong” to integrate recycling agriculture, creative agriculture, and agricultural experience so that people can revisit traditions and experience rural agricultural life.

## 5. Conclusions

Thesis Statement I.

The rural cultural inheritance is grounded on local characteristics. Rural construction in China has experienced a progressive process of revivification, placing equal stress on economic and cultural factors and achieving certain results, but can still benefit from lessons learned in developed countries.

After contrasting the backgrounds of rural transformation between China and developed countries, Zhang Jingxiang<sup>24</sup> proposed a comprehensive concept of rural revival and concluded that the revival of the countryside should be executed with multiple aspects in mind, such as culture, policy, industry, and management.

In my opinion, there is a universal cultural identity in developed countries, and there is a strong sense of national cultural protection. The government's strong support, improved cultural inheritance mechanisms, and cultural protection policies have supported the development of rural cultures in the process of rural construction. The practice mode of rural construction in developed countries is based on national conditions and local characteristics, with the ultimate purpose of protecting and extending the original culture of the countryside.

Thesis Statement II.

In China, economic development has increased the flow of urban and rural populations; the invasion of urban culture has undermined the closed traditional village, and villagers have blindly worshipped urban civilization, causing rural culture to fall into a crisis of marginalization.

This investigation has revealed that the process of rural construction in China lags

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<sup>24</sup> Zhang, J. X.- Shen, M. R.- Zhao, C.: Rural renaissance: rural China transformation under productivism and post-productivism. *Urban Planning International*. 2014. Vol. 29. pp. 1-7. (in Chinese)

behind that of urban construction and that consideration of the protection of villages is relatively weak. The rural patterns of life, architectural style, and traditional skills have all been eroded by certain external factors. The memory of the countryside will gradually be lost as villagers blindly pursue the “urban style”.

This situation requires planning, with government and villagers participating in various ways to preserve the authenticity and unique aspects of the local culture.

Thesis Statement III.

Rural culture should be passed from generation to generation, including the authenticity of the natural landscape, traditional architectural culture, local customs, traditions of production, and lifestyle. Different villages must choose different cultural inheritance modes.

I have summarized three modes of rural cultural inheritance, according to the characteristics of the village, to be applied in rural planning.

- 1.The inheritance mode of landscape authenticity refers to the natural landscape, spatial texture and traditional architecture, and public space. This mode is suitable for the construction of beautiful villages with rich natural resources and desirable historical features.

- 2.The inheritance mode of industrial development focuses on the development of culture. The essence is to drive the economy through the industrialization of culture and react upon the cultural inheritance while considering the coordinated development of rural culture and economic society. This mode is suitable for the construction of beautiful villages with better development of nonmaterial culture and unique regional cultural characteristics.

- 3.The inheritance mode of cultural reshaping considers the development of



connotation in the process of rural construction and repairs the faults in traditional culture. Traditional cultural heritage should be preserved to protect local culture and folk customs in order to pursue the reconstruction of traditional culture in the process of rural construction. This mode is suitable for the construction of beautiful villages with special cultural landscapes and traditional culture.

#### Thesis Statement IV.

Rural planning should rely on cultural resources to develop rural industries and explore the excavation of traditional culture and innovation of inheritance modes.

Beikanzi Village is a typical village with traffic advantages and a favourable ecological environment. How should such a village, which is surrounded by mountains, reflect its distinctive advantages? First, the farmland should be replanned and divided into agricultural planting areas and greenhouses to meet the agricultural demand of an entire year. Second, the characteristics of the farming culture should be emphasized, and a traditional farming experience area should be created. The planning concept involves characterizing and emphasizing the farming culture and using rural tourism to develop and reshape the rural landscape.

#### Thesis Statement V.

Rural cultural inheritance is a process of dynamics and “activity”, as culture needs to confer different values according to the times. Cultural inheritance requires a thorough understanding of people’s real lives.

In the process of the construction of a beautiful countryside, it is necessary to refine and excavate the material value of the village, to protect and respect its spiritual and cultural values and to shape and enhance its value. My goal is to meet the needs of modern

production while retaining the original rural elements and culture.

It is necessary neither to preserve nature's qualities with perfect fidelity nor to copy "fashion trends" to create replicas. Instead, it is desirable to extract and retain the authenticity of the village, grasp the scale of choice and transformation of the model, and create an identifiable cultural village.

In constructing Beikanzi Village, adherence to the principle of "according to local conditions" has brought internal impetus to rural development. To respect the wishes of local villagers, the traditional rural lifestyle in Beikanzi Village has been revived to reshape the landscape of the countryside. Recreating the traditional farming culture of the area and selecting the appropriate leisure tourism mode for Beikanzi Village preserves and inherits rural culture.

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