

MANCHESTER SCHOOL  
OF ARCHITECTURE



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MSA  
LIVE 21

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## Partners

MUD (Manchester Urban Diggers) is a non-profit social enterprise, established in 2019 as a response to an increasing demand for growing services across Manchester and beyond. They are dedicated to finding solutions to the problems with their local food systems. This includes; advocating for food sovereignty, being a member of the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network, providing educational services and growing fruit, vegetables and herbs to make available to the local community. They always use organic growing methods and improve local biodiversity and soil health wherever they grow. MUD is committed to developing projects and creating employment opportunities for our volunteers, as well as providing free services and events for the community. MUD offer a wide range of services and opportunities for the public and private sector, including several exciting projects that are explained in detail on their website.

Website: <http://www.wearemud.org>

Instagram: @mud\_cic

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/mud.cic/>

YouTube: Manchester Urban Diggers CIC

# Agenda

## Heart and Soil

We believe that gardening is an activity which in the current circumstances is both therapeutic and essential. Through this two-week intensive project, we've collaborated with Mud and tried to create a more accessible gardening place for the differently abled to use and enjoy since they deserve to have access to these spaces.

It is well known that the current architectural framework in the world is not sufficiently designed for the disabled. Keeping this fact in mind, we've tried to cover different kinds of disabilities (Sight, sound, mobility etc.) and design gardening spaces suited to them. We have also explored suitable gardening structures that merge well with the site and experimented thoroughly with materiality and structure with several ideas.

To gain an in depth understanding of the needs of the differently abled we started brainstorming several ideas in our own garden spaces and started thinking of how we can incorporate some of the ideas in the Platt fields site. Coping with an illness or disability can be intensely stressful and traumatic and adaptable gardens can be a much needed stress buster and dopamine catalyst for the disabled. Furthermore, Gardening can be an excellent activity for socialization and community interaction which can be extremely useful for people facing a disability. Individuals facing mobility challenges can develop a range of motion and promote hand-eye co-ordination and consequently increase strength and balance. Being out in open air and doing group activities related to gardening can prove to be immensely therapeutic.

Through rendering ,3D software's and hand sketches we have not only proposed technically feasible structures but have also suggested appropriate locations for them in the site to use. Some of the disable friendly gardening infrastructure we've designed are accessible and stackable planters suited for people with mobility disabilities, tactile paving and signage for visually impaired people, workshop spaces to promote social interaction and many more.

We've put in all our efforts in hope that we are able to make the Platt fields MUD site a more accessible garden for everyone and make it a place where differently abled people come together and work with utmost ease as a community.



# PLATTS FIELD MARKET GARDEN

SITE PROPOSAL



# DESIGNING FOR VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

## INCLUSIVE PLANT MARKERS

We looked at utilising more inclusive plant markers that contained braille as well as raised images of vegetables that could be traced with the finger, offering a different way to gain planting information.

## VISITING THE SITE

In order to highlight how our designs help create a more inclusive environment we created a storyboard showcasing how people used the site and how our proposal helps create a more inclusive environment

## TACTILE MAPPING

At the entrance users can make use of a tactile map that offers information to the spatiality and arrangement of the site, aiding navigation.

## CLEAR SPACES

Around the market stalls there are clear and open spaces, free of obstacles and featuring a stable and high-friction gravel surfacing to making walking as easy and safe as possible

## TACTILE PAVING

To highlight the different areas throughout the site we proposed to have different finishes around the seating spaces and circulation paths to make navigation and orientation as easy as possible for those with visual impairments.



INCLUSIVE PLANT MARKERS



1 - TACTILE MAPPING



2 - CLEAR SPACES



3 - TACTILE PAVING

# DESIGNING FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS

## THE GARDENING PROCESS

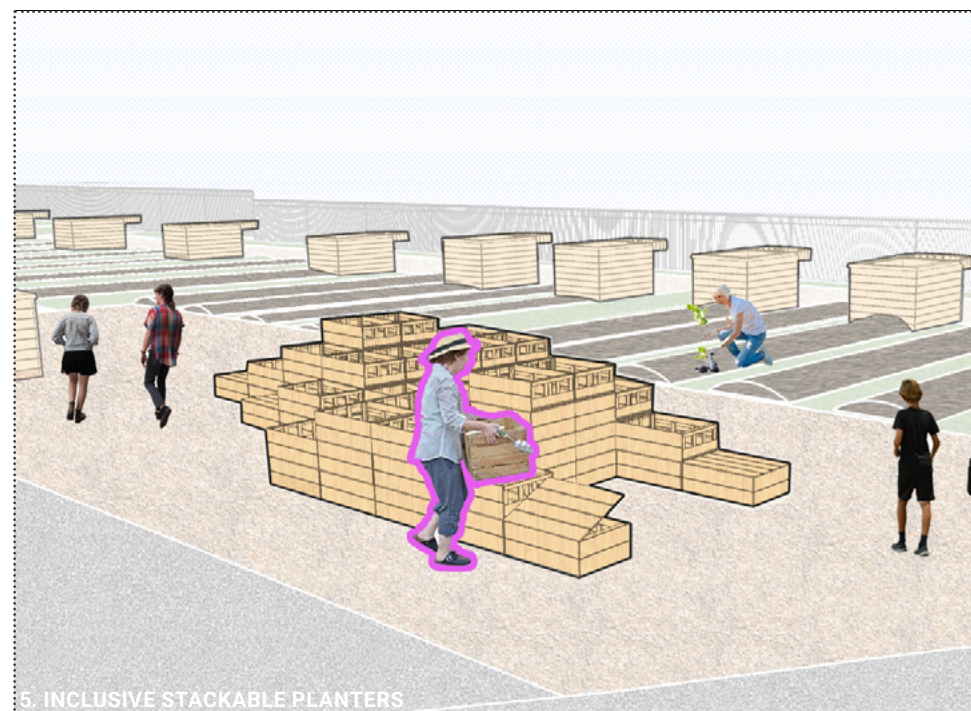
In order to create a more design friendly allotment for wheelchair users we explored the whole gardening process from seeding to planting to harvesting.

We came up with designs for wheelchair accessible high-rise planters as well as stackable planters that offered a variety of heights for working at, making it easier for those with low mobility.

The storyboard to the left showcases this process of utilising recycled crates to help making the process of seeding to harvesting as easy and inclusive as possible.

Users can utilise these crates throughout the whole gardening process, utilising them as storage for the seedlings in the greenhouse which then also makes easy transport in taking them to the stackable planters where they are able to grow further and begin to bud. Once they reach the stage where they need deeper soil they can be transported to the deeper planting spaces such as the ground-level planters or high-rise planters which are also wheelchair inclusive.

Within the implementation of our proposal we have explored how to make the gardening process as a whole more inclusive, instead of focusing on just the objects individually. We have ensured that our designs all work in tangent with one another to make the allotments as enjoyable and accessible as possible to all.



# DESIGNING FOR LOW MOBILITY

## HIGH RISE PLANTERS

We looked at utilising on-site materials and recycling them. One such example was using old filing cabinets that created high rise planters. These planters offer a higher level to work at meaning users don't have to spend long hours bent over or on their knees. Users can also sit on the benches and work if they get tired on their feet.



HIGH-RISE CABINET PLANTERS

## WORKING ON SITE

MUD offer a variety of workshops at the allotment and also encourage volunteers to come and help out. Some of these volunteers suffer from mobility issues so we looked at implementing various designs and strategies to help keep the workshops and working on site as inclusive as possible.



MORE ACCESSIBLE WORKSHOP SPACE

## FOLD-OUT WORKTOPS

Throughout the site we have introduced fold-out worktops, these are made from recycled pallets and offer a higher surface to work on. They also act as tool holders so users don't have to keep going back and forth from storage in order to work.



FOLD-OUT WORKTOPS

## HANDRAIL PLANTERS

We have looked at introducing handrail planters. These once again offer higher levels to garden at as well as acting as something to lean or rest on to alleviate fatigue. The bright colours of the handrails help those with visual impairments to identify edges and perimeters within the site



HANDRAIL PLANTERS

# TECHNICAL DETAILING

## HIGH RISE PLANTERS

Within the next three diagrams is showcased the technical elements of some of the designs implemented within Platts Field Market Garden. A main influence for these designs was utilising materials that were found within the garden market itself and exploring ways in up-cycling them. Not only does this reduce on waste and is more sustainable, but it also explores more affordable ways to implement inclusive designs within the allotments which is important due to MUD being a non profit social enterprise.

## CONCLUSION

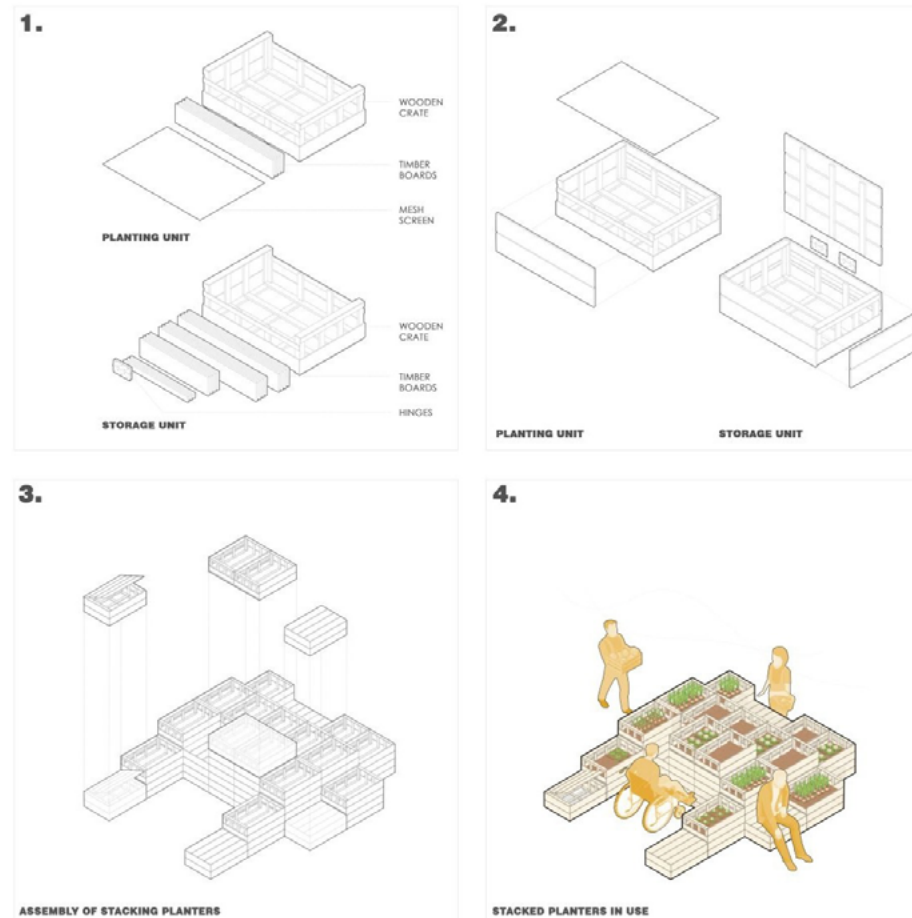
Through the course of this project we've explored a series of conceptual and design ideas to help make the Platts fields garden a more accessible space for the differently abled.

Due to the pandemic, people have felt isolated quite a lot in these past 15 months and facing a physical disability during these times adds on to the already existing trauma.

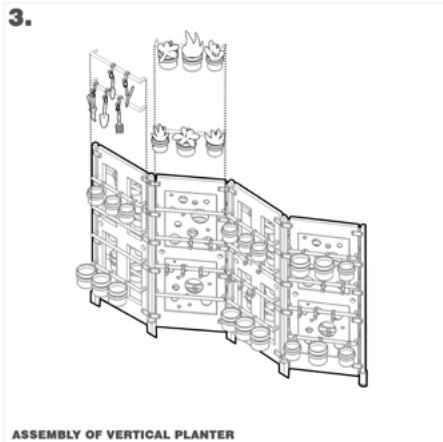
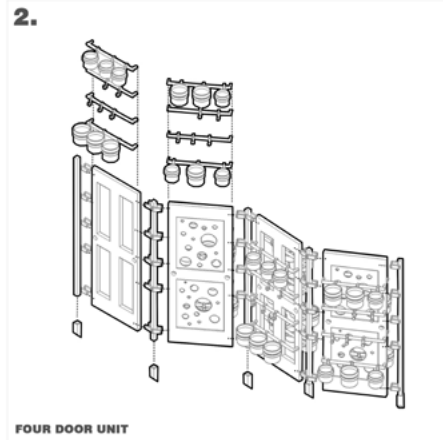
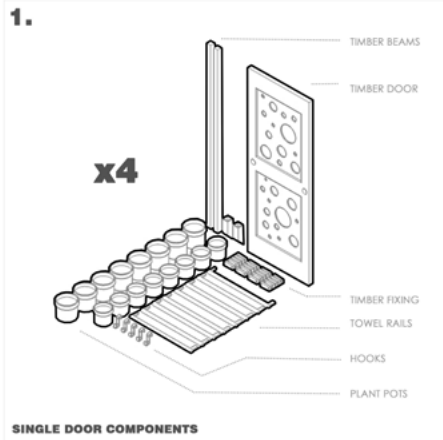
We believe that the work we've done can help build a sense of community and provide people struggling with day to day life with a platform to socialize. It is also our firm belief that gardening spaces should always be designed keeping in mind the needs of the differently abled to provide them with the comfort they deserve. As architects, it is our duty to make the world a more inclusive space and through this project, we've tried our best to deliver on it.



## STACKED PLANTERS TECHNICAL DIAGRAM



## HANGING DOOR PLANTERS TECHNICAL DIAGRAM



## WHEELCHAIR INCLUSIVE PLANTERS TECHNICAL DIAGRAM

