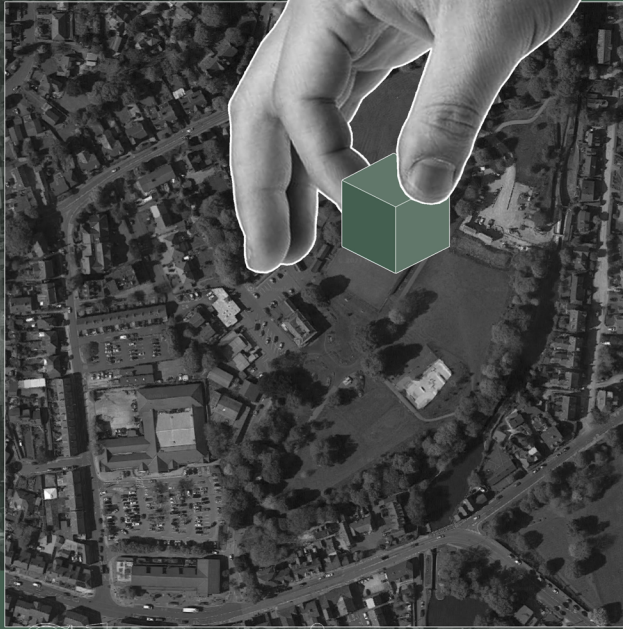


MANCHESTER SCHOOL  
OF ARCHITECTURE



Re-Shaping  
**Re-Shaping**  
Marple

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**MSA  
LIVE 21**

## Team

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**Yuet Ka Wu** (BA 01)

## Partners

Our primary collaborator for this project is Joe Jessop. Joe is a former head of the Manchester School of Architecture and currently a member of Marple Civic Society. Joe is also a resident of Marple and is involved in the consultation process with GT3 Architects. He will therefore be able to provide valuable information that will benefit our project and bring it to life.

Our second collaborator is Judith Atkinson from GT3 Architects, the principle architects working on the live project. GT3 are architects trained in problem-seeking, concept-defining, solution-framing and communicating. They identify new needs and opportunities, building alliances and helping to shape solutions. GT3 work across a range of architectural sectors including master planning, interior design with specific project experience in the fields of sport and leisure, workplace, civic, residential and mixed-use developments.

Judith obtained both her Undergraduate and Masters degrees in architecture from Northumbria University before working in the healthcare sector for large scale London hospital projects before moving back to her hometown of Newcastle, joining GT3 Architects in 2015, qualifying as an Architect soon after. During her time at GT3, Judith has gained valuable experience in a range of sectors, including master-planning, commercial, leisure and private residential schemes.

# Agenda

## Re-Shaping Marple

Marple is a historic town within the Stockport Council region. Despite significant urban development during the Industrial Revolution and over the 20th century, it remains surrounded by natural landscape. The area has great potential as a commuter town and many of Marple's inhabitants are proud of their home. But, it is missing a defined community centre where residents can gather and enjoy activities like sports and reading. The new heart also needs to capture a sense of place, which is currently lacking. Through meetings with community groups within Marple, including the Neighbourhood Forum, Civic Society, Friends of Marple Memorial Park, Senior Citizens' Association, Swimming Club, Libraries Service and Life Leisure, GT3 Architects have concluded that a new Leisure and Community Centre will provide the catalyst for the wider redevelopment of the town. The new proposal will be built in the middle of the Memorial Park so will form the basis of a landscaping project. The building and surrounding masterplan should respond appropriately to the context and should completely transform Marple in what is being described as a 'ripple effect' within the area.

The design should be modern and striking as the site has many opportunities for a building of this scale. Since the park sits on the highest point in Marple, the design should maximise sweeping views of the Dark Peak of the Peak District and the adjacent canal, which is banked with listed housing. Care and consideration must be taken for the existing buildings on the site, but students should feel they have the freedom to engulf anything worth demolishing and attempt to incorporate the uses into their scheme. The core brief is to design a new Fitness and Leisure Community Centre (containing a pool, gym, spa etc.) with the additional options for a library and anything else that would benefit Marple and work on the site. It is an urban design project ultimately, so landscaping around the building and area is essential to the success of the project.

# Exploring Marple

We weren't able to physically go to the site to experience the genius loci of the place and better understand the context due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions. By means of attempting to overcome this obstacle, Joe, our project co-ordinator and Marple resident, explained to us in detail the site with some accompanying images he had taken. This gave us an interesting local perspective of the key features of the park and surrounding area.

Joe laid out the history of Marple and placed it interestingly in its geographical context, explaining the proximity to Sheffield and Manchester and the way in which it is surrounded by hillside thus offering spectacular views from the park towards the Peak District. This is what makes the place so special, the way it lies between two major cities and amongst a backdrop of beautiful landscape. It also is the reasoning behind Marple's weather conditions of heavy rainfall and prevailing winds coming from the south-east.

The existing buildings within the park are outdated and don't offer much in the way of enhancing the landscape and the environment for users of the park. We want to capture the essence of the park in our scheme and maximise the vista out towards the hillside from high points within the area and openings amongst the trees and landscape.

To further our visual knowledge, we used Google maps and Street View to virtually explore and 'walk around' Marple Memorial Park. We also took on board earlier research and analysis from GT3 architects that Judith had presented to us. From here, we produced figure grounds or 'Nolli' maps to show the build up of the urban fabric.

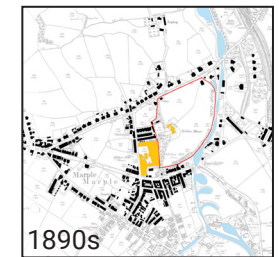
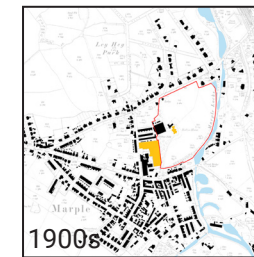
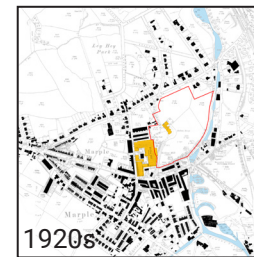
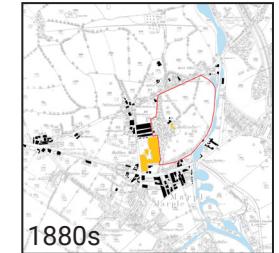
The analysis in and around the site was brought together using an opportunities and constraints diagram. This is a great way to bring different elements of analysis together, helping to narrow down the site and begin mapping out spaces for new interventions, using the background work from GT3 Architects as a base of knowledge. Ultimately this culminated in a masterplan for the park, touching upon different architectural elements such as building design, urban design and landscape design. New interventions included the design of three buildings to house the facilities desired by Marple residents, a new entrance scheme and a new parking layout, placing the pedestrians at the forefront of our design. This masterplan was then used for serial visions and journey through the park.

## A Historic Timeline: Marple

Before 1880

Marple was formally known as 'Mael Peel' or 'Mael Hope Hill', meaning 'hill in the border valley'.

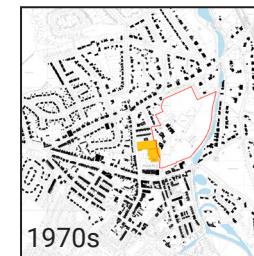
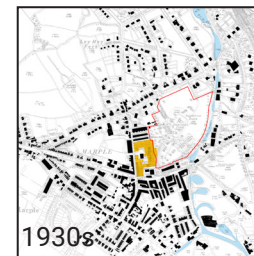
The rock (grit stone) in and around Marple is impermeable meaning there is instant rainfall run-off in this wet area, which led to the development of many rivers and streams which then enter the Manchester valley. Eventually a river formed and cut into the rock, creating a number of gorges. This river is now known as the Goyt, and the gorge-like cut through which it flows is the gorge-like separation between Marple and Marple Bridge, the border between Cheshire and Derbyshire. It is speculated that the Goyt River was forded at a convenient crossing point where people were faced with climbing to what is now Marple, where Marple Bridge was subsequently built. In the era before Oldknow came into play, Marple Bridge had a much larger population and industrial activity than anywhere else covered by Marple.



The map shows little change but this is not surprising since the First World War intervened and disrupted progression.

Church Lane started to be developed significantly and a number of houses were built along Bowden Lane from Stockport Road at the smithy.

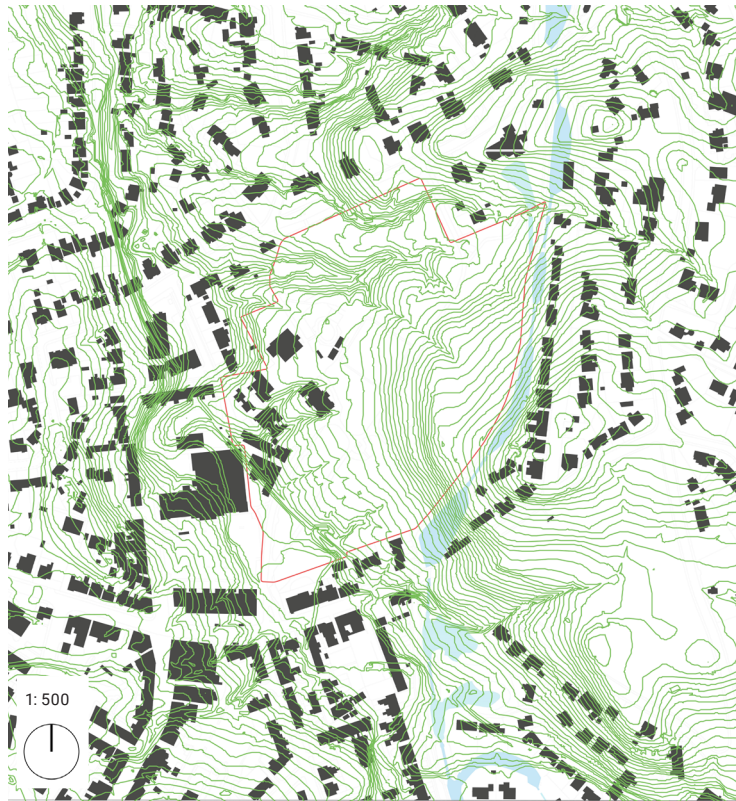
The development of villas spreading down Station Road, which is obviously housing for "modern" commuters from the station built in 1865 recall.



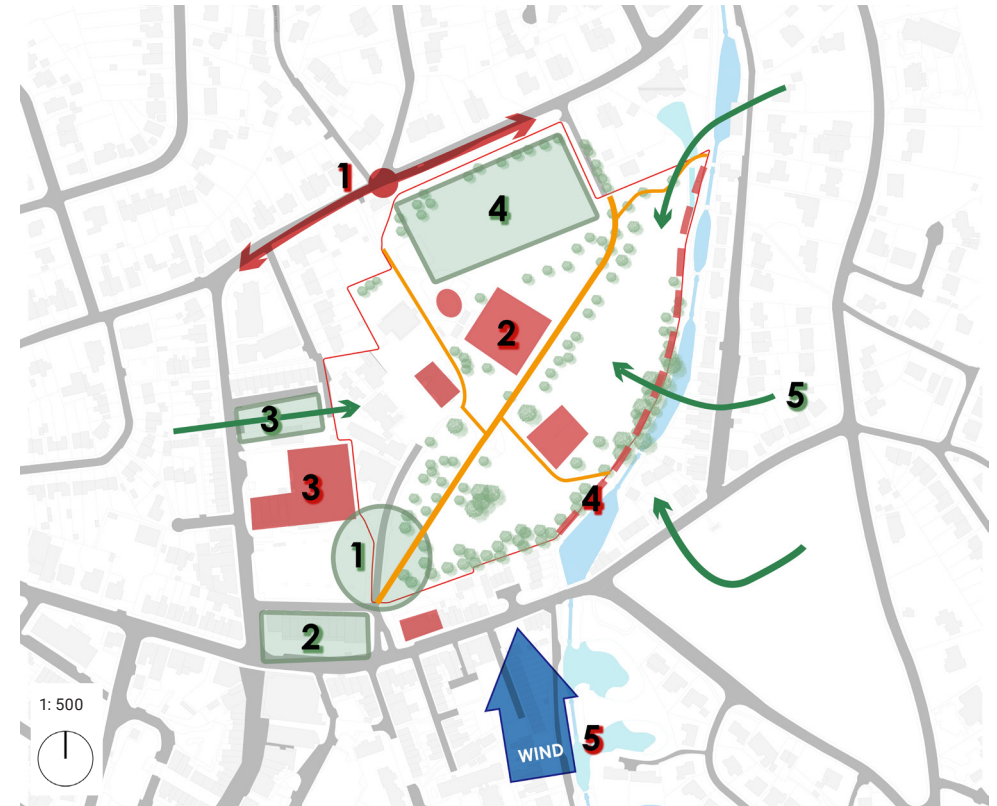
A striking outgrowth west beyond Rosehill station along Stockport Road, which correlated with the start of suburban commuter life.

The area opened up by the demolition of Hollins Mill in 1957, creating a space on Stockport Road, sensibly placed to create the nearest thing Marple has to a town square. This space connects to the point at which Market Street spills on to Stockport Road and the few shops that have expanded down Stockport Road. It connects to the end of Hollins Lane and the supermarket that was built in the eighties. It connects to the area up Stockport Road to Posset Bridge, which was part of the historic old town.

Nolli Map of Memorial Park



View from the park of the Dark Peak



OPPORTUNITIES ■

1. Exploring how the main entrance at the southern corner of the site could be made more inviting through the introduction of landscaping and human activity such as market stalls.
2. Developing the connection with the main shopping street in Marple, which is well used, so that residents are drawn into the park.
3. Developing a new point of vehicular access via the adjacent car park to the west of the site.
4. Making use of the vast area of green space at the north of the park, which is currently unused.
5. Creating connections across the, currently impermeable, canal to the east of the site.

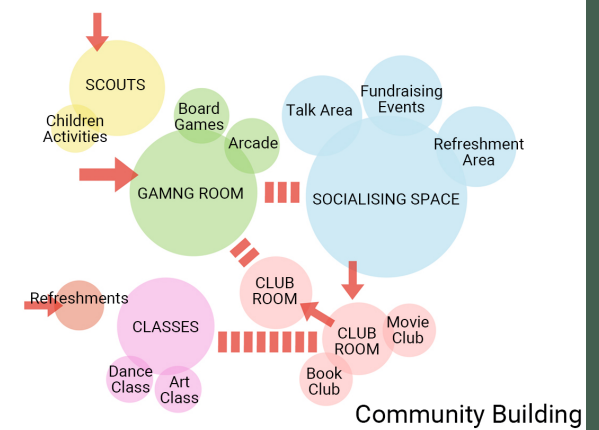
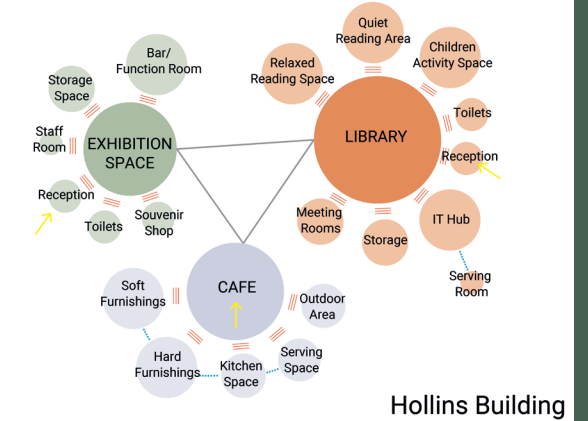
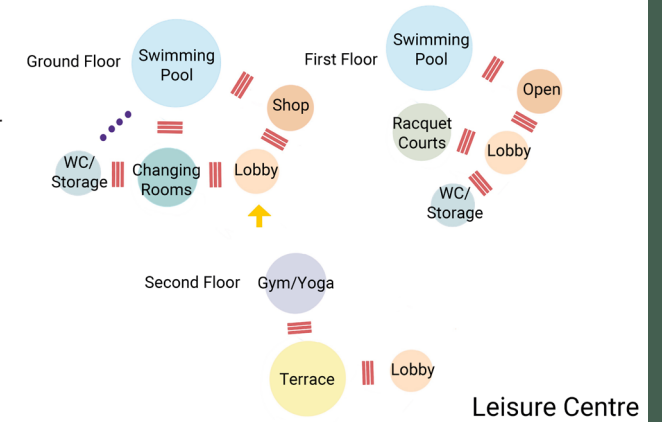
CONSTRAINTS ■

1. The busy traffic on Station Road which discourages access via the north of the site.
2. Existing buildings, such as Hollins house, and outdoor features which must remain or be moved to satisfy heritage demands.
3. The Asda supermarket to the west of the site which creates a hard boundary, unsightly views and the potential for overlooking.
4. The canal at the eastern edge of the park that currently creates an access boundary with the surrounding buildings and houses.
5. The strong southern wind could affect vegetation and the user experience of the site.



Following feedback from Joe and Judith, we focussed on two key elements and produced sketches detailing the journey through the park. Judith wanted to see a clearer narrative and Joe asked us to step back from designing individual buildings, to consider the park as the primary source of our focus and the buildings merely part of the landscape. As such, we took the buildings we had designed and focussed on integrating them better into the park. This was done by: producing a more considered masterplan, understanding the program of each building to illustrate how people would interact with the spaces, and most importantly – drawing serial visions of the journey through the park. This would enable us to see and experience the site through their eyes.

The serial visions were individual reflections of the teams' constructive efforts of redeveloping the site. This individualism shone through with the varied styles students opted for, to best capture the view of the site from their own perspective. The collective of serial visions are as compelling as they are illustrative; adding character. Joe told us to consider the park better, the underlying message from that was to consider the people that use the park and why they like to use the park. Through this journey of drawings we hope to have maintained and built upon the characteristics that make Marple so endearing to the local people.





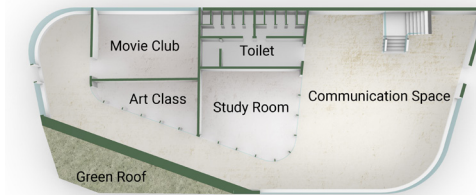
1 THE NEW ENTRANCE



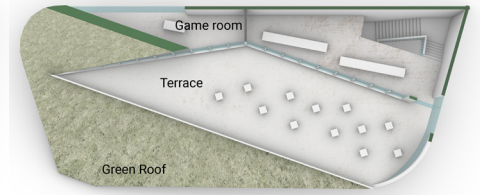
3 THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE



2 DRAWING YOU INTO THE PARK



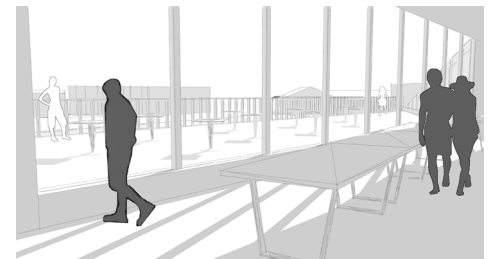
Ground Floor



First Floor



Communication Space



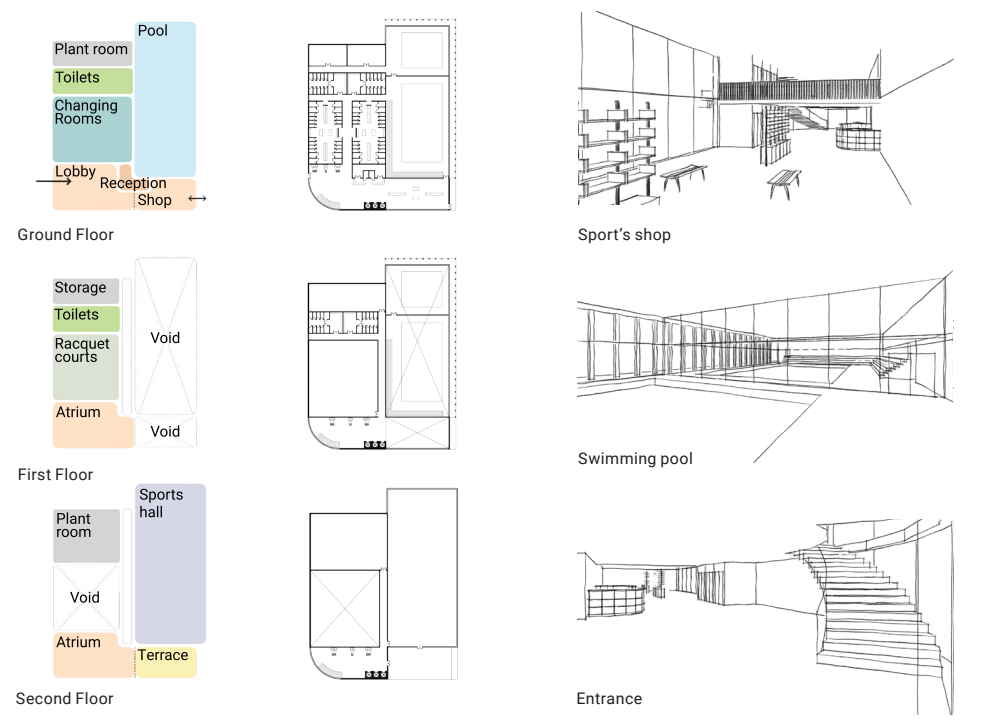
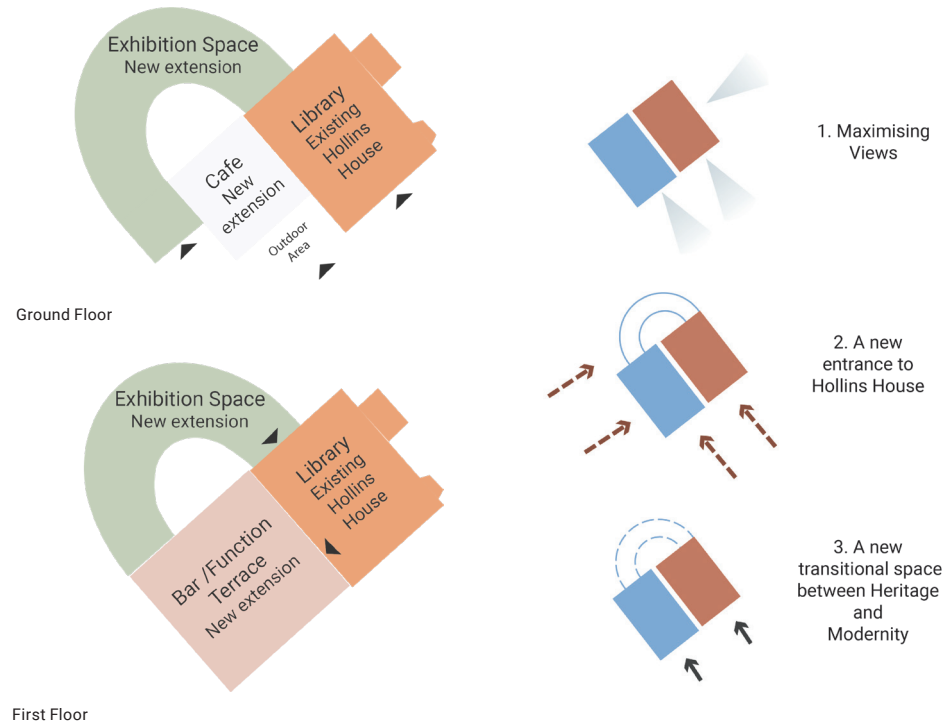
Views onto the terrace



4 HOLLINS HOUSE RENOVATION AND EXTENSION



5 THE NEW LEISURE CENTRE



Prioritising the People

- Pedestrian
- Vehicular



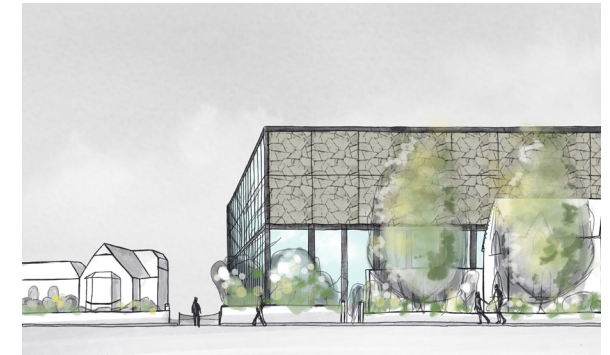
6 DISSECTING THE NEW BUILDINGS

To conclude the project, we were tasked with designing a leisure centre and library and we ended up designing an entire masterplan for the Marple Memorial Park. Our scheme and ideas pushed the design project as far as it would go into an urban design project, encompassing elements of landscape architecture, sculpture and architecture.

We feel we understood the heritage of the site and the value that our design would add not just to the park, but to Marple as a town. Joe described the project as having a 'ripple effect' in Marple and we tried to all but do that in these two weeks as a group. The team took on board the core brief and designed the buildings to a degree we were happy with within the first week. This enabled us to then think holistically about the park and the way the buildings interact with it by the second week.

Joe was very pleased with our outputs by the final day and we believe Judith was too from GT3 architects, the designers on the project originally before COVID-19 halted progress. We felt we did complete the project to a rigorous degree for a two week project, but would have loved to have had more time to have been able to better enhance the design of the buildings and the urban design of the park.

Overall, we are delighted with what we have achieved as a group in such a short space of time and feel we have learnt not just from the great selection of external parties we have had involved on the project, but from each other too!



7 THE LEISURE CENTRE FROM STATION ROAD



8 THE NEW VIEW DOWN STATION ROAD



9 CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE CANAL



## ABOUT

Each year the MSA Live (formerly Events) programme unites M Arch. year 01 with B Arch. year 01 and 02 and M Land. Arch 01 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

## LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA Live projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

## SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA Live projects have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

## EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

## STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts join for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

## LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 600 students from 4 cohorts in MSA will work on 42 projects with partners.

## QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA Live 21 contact MSA Live Lead: Becky Sobell:  
**b.sobell@mmu.ac.uk**

## BLOG

[live.msa.ac.uk/2021](http://live.msa.ac.uk/2021)

## SOCIAL

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