

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

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REDISCOVERING: CHADWICK DAM

In close collaboration with Tameside Council, we aim to deliver an accessible and sensitive project to the site of Chadwick Dam, evoking natural and community led qualities that are absent from the site currently. As an effort to further enrich the lives of residents and visitors to the area, this transformative project represents a close synergetic endeavour to create a lively, accessible and attainable public space. Through careful planning, community feedback and designed interventions we aim to redefine the value of Chadwick Dam as an asset of high community value. We will make Chadwick Dam an area the community can be proud of.

In teams, we will work in unison to develop, design guides, masterplans and creative nodes, of which we will take to site together and engage with users of the park to not only inform our current work, but what can be possible from it.

SKILLS

Rhino
SketchUp
ArchCAD
AutoCAD

InDesign
Illustrator
Photoshop
Hand-Drawing

Community
Engagement
Group Work
Site Analysis

Visit msa.ac.uk for more information

Team

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Benaia Haim Zauderer (MLA1)

Yuxin Fang (MLA1)

Partners

This project collaborates with Thameside Council to explore and activate Chadwick Dam's potential, as well as seek to unify the previous invested works at Stamford Park. As the representative for Thameside Council in this project, Hayley McCaffer was able to provide continued invaluable insight and expertise to the collaborative development, equally imbuing us all with her unwavering enthusiasm to design a project that is truly impactful for the people of Thameside.

Equally, whilst not in direct partnership, the community groups situated at the 'Big Local' adjacent to Ridgehill and Chadwick Dam have been routinely considered and any feedback they have provided through our surveys and in-person communications have been finely filtered into any applied design process found within this document.

Finally, despite being an unofficial partner, any locally proposed works that have either been proposed or approved will be acknowledged and integrated into the design process

Introduction

Rediscovering Chadwick Dam

Thameside Council are actively looking to employ different community fed partnerships to activate and generate interest for the large park area of Chadwick Dam. Whilst previous efforts have attracted investment and interest, such as the Bee network and localised seating against newly imposed footpaths, these developments haven't been as successful as they could've been to rejuvenate the park area.

Our Team 'Rediscovering Chadwick Dam,' lead a collaborative project with Thameside Council to design a new masterplan for the park, to activate the efforts seen in Stamford Park, translated to the site of the Dam.

Social Impact

The desire to develop and repurpose existing areas of Chadwick Dam for those of poor mobility and local to the site can have many social impacts for both the overall site, as well as further developments around Stalybridge:

- Increasing overall wellbeing for Ridgehill residents as well as those occupied at Thameside Hospital
- Encouragement of the use of the established Bee network as well as natural facilities offered to the public
- Improvement of overall safety within the park demise due to poor lighting and equally poor terrain (Especially for those of reduced ease in mobility)
- Creating opportunities for new developments and incorporation of local projects into the park's site boundary
- Crafting a greater sense of awareness and pride within Thameside's community, likely increasing the contribution to rewilding schemes and green design development around the area

Existing Site Introduction

Tasked with the master-planning and activation of the site, we at Group 19, began our action week by visiting the site of Chadwick Dam to ensure everyone was familiarised with the conditions and requirements.

By meeting the collaborator on site, we were able to take a tour of the site, allowing for the visual input to be explained alongside the collaborator's immense knowledge of the site and its history. The visit to site highlighted 3 keys issues; The condition of the seating, gate access & the disparity in terrain typology, all of which would become the driving force for our masterplan and subsequent designs.



Meeting The Collaborator



Site Analysis

After visiting site, the team began to analyse both our observations on site and our research through online resources. Compiling survey information, seasonal conditions and demographic challenges, the foundations for the design strategy were set, establishing our key demographics and development areas. Alongside this, further analysis through the masterplan was performed.

Demographics



Older Visitors

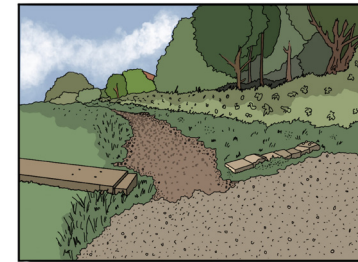


Disabled Access Users



Children & Infants

Depiction Of Site



Key Observation - Facing towards the Hospital access route lies a previous development of seating, of which is currently inaccessible



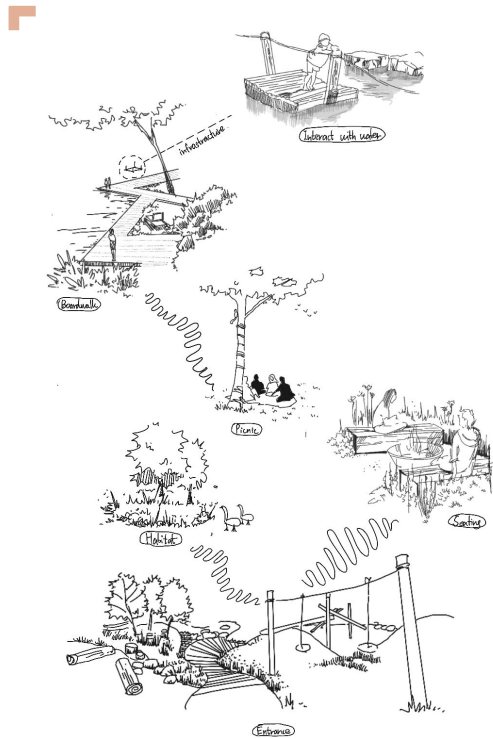
Key Observation - The sloped gradient against the pathway could suggest better seating application rather than the existing benches



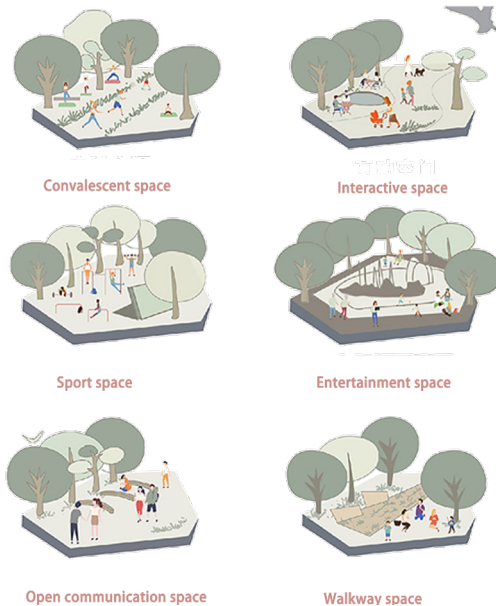
Planning The Masterplan

With the founding site analysis established, it was determined that, as designers, we needed to thoroughly understand and appreciate how it feels to navigate the site before making significant alterations. As such, through our keys areas we began to question all elements of everyday visitors from varying demographics.

The result of this was a storyboard, depicting journey and relations between spaces, whilst equally creating 'islands' that would interrogate this story and suggest improvements for the overall masterplan



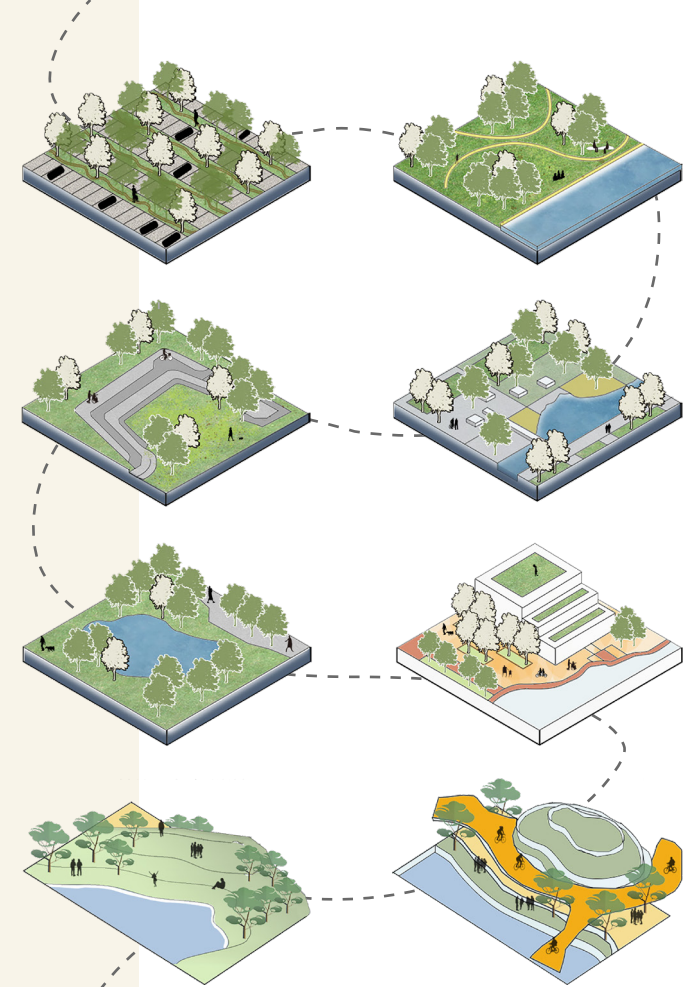
Journey & Experience



Refining Ideas

With the group splitting into teams (Team 1: Masterplan, Team 2: Nodes, Team 3: Design Guide) it was time for the master-planning team to start collating ideas of altering strategies for different environments present on the site.

Alongside this, previous sketches from the site analysis and early design drafts were refined into a shared 2D Digital file, allowing for more specific design goals and equally allowing for highly specific data regarding the site's gradient.



Bonding Ideas - Teamwork



To retain continuity throughout the project, the teams would often reunite to collate ideas and critique / add to founding thoughts from each team. By allowing the teams to split off and reunite to present design decisions we were able to accumulate greater breadth of research and equally allow for greater creative thinking under a restrictive budget.

Masterplan Output

Upon completion of the drafts, the final masterplan was drawn. The main goals with the plan was to not only identify where potential key developments could be, but to also to highlight segments of the map to the public that are available to them now, leading to potential activation of these areas without requirement of investment.

The masterplan features highlighted design routes and equally a sympathetic depiction of the core design goals we had for the project, whilst simultaneously working in tandem with the team's high acknowledgement of the existing wildlife & vegetation. Moreover, it incorporates innovative sustainability measures to ensure a harmonious coexistence with the environment.



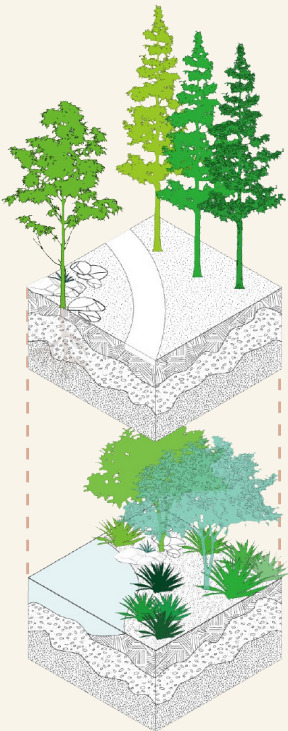
KEY:

- 
 Main
Footpath
(Paved)
- 
 Secondary
Footpath
(Wild)
- 
 Medium
Accessibility
- 
 Poor
Accessibility
- 
 Inaccessible



The Final Masterplan - Zonal Thinking

This masterplan highlights the terrain based zones of the site, focusing on their accessibility. The most accessible areas follow the paved path, as this can be used by wheelchair users, children and the elderly. The unpaved path will however pose difficulty for those in wheelchairs and for people with strollers. The 'medium accessibility' zones can be accessed by most, but this may be difficult due to uneven ground and/or loose terrain. The 'poor accessibility' zones cannot be accessed easily, being a challenge for most. The 'inaccessible' areas cannot be accessed. We believe this grading to be an accurate portrayal of the site.

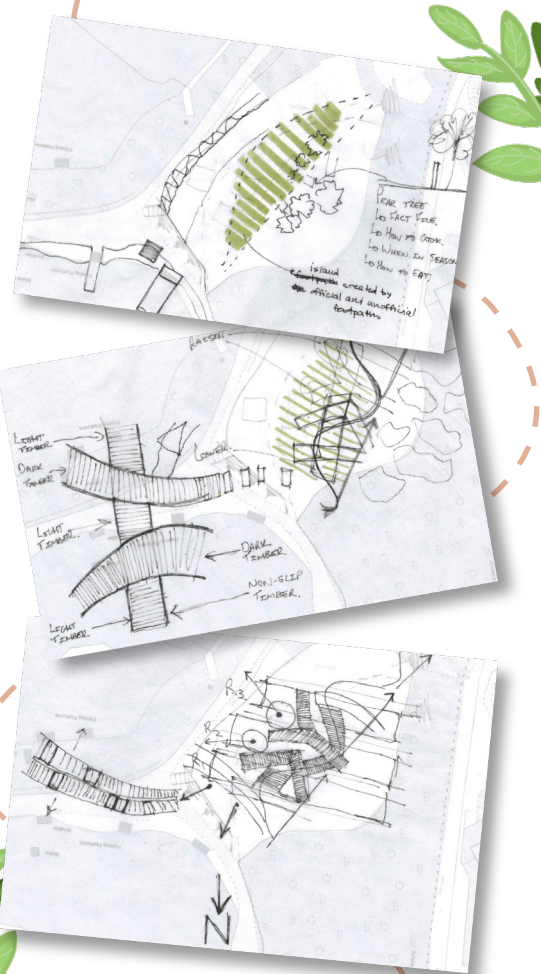
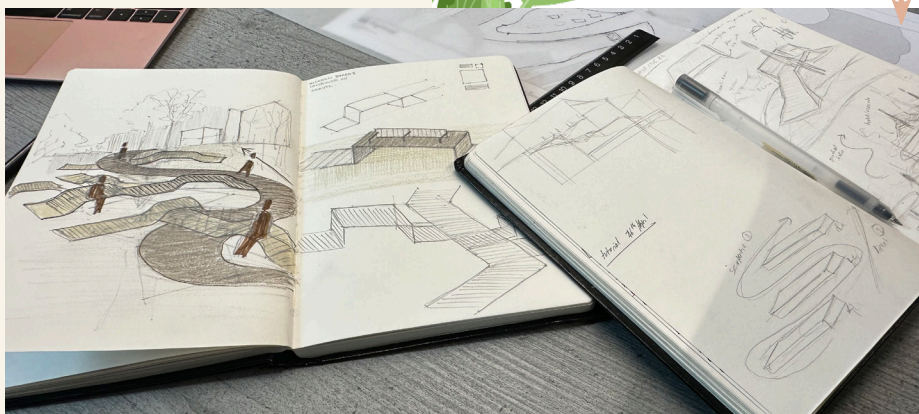


Finer Concepts - Node Focus

Initially the focus was elected towards developing an accessible feature that would be inclusive to wheelchair users as a priority. The existing picnic area was picked as one of the nodes, due to the poor application of accessibility from previous investment. The Tameside Hospital is located adjacent to the space, and whilst the pathway can serve adequately for walking access, the same cannot be said about the seating facilities imposed there.

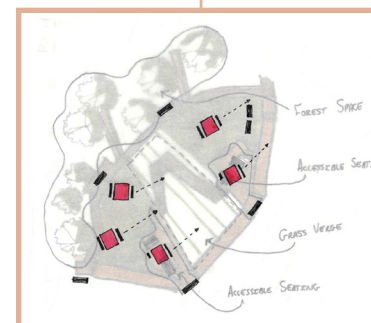
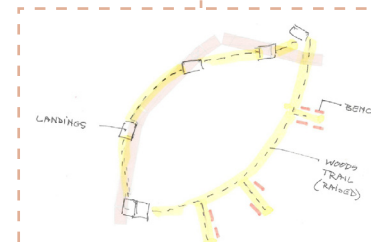
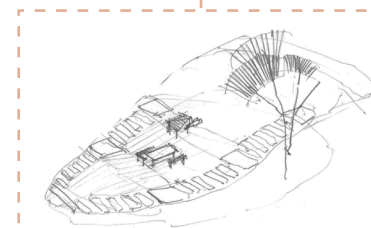
After exploring some initial design options, such as a serpentine shaped path (to make walking up and down the slope easier), it was concluded that this would be the driving force of the design. Due to budget and efficiency, the existing path should be retained as much as possible. The last few iterations of the design included the simplified serpentine, which has seating on the side as well as some new picnic areas, featuring complete wheelchair accessibility in line with Part M regulations regarding the gradient.

Drafting Universal Access



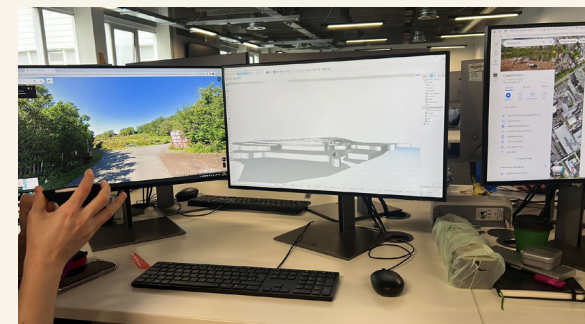
Configuration & Application

This configuration shows the retention of the two main paths with extended elements to adhere to accessibility regulations. The slope of the main path is reduced by raising the bottom end, so the gradient more gradual. Several landings are employed as a rest-stop. The accessible picnic areas are level with the landings and have spaces for wheelchairs to get close to the table. Between the two picnic areas there is a rough grass verge with a few steps for the children to play around in.



From Pencil to Model

Once the overall configuration was agreed upon, we began to formalise the design through a digital model, allowing us to see how the design would be embodied within the landscape, equally highlighting any required changes that weren't previously clear. By crafting a 3D model, we were able to see slight deviations within the ground buildup, of which we could amend the design to conform to.

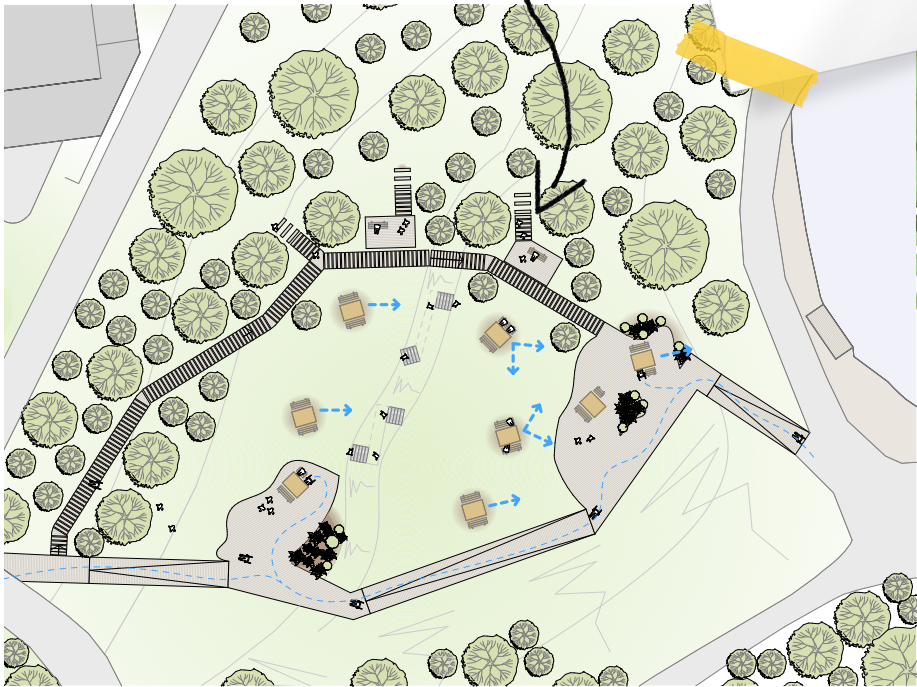


Developed Node Output

With the final design configured and critically analysed, the team moved their drafts into a final model to aid in generating site plans and to be later used for draft visuals. Team 2 were primarily tasked with the design output, but it was a combination efforts and input to the model that aided in realising the vision for the node.

The design builds upon proposals for audio trail links set to be implemented in the near future in collaboration with local primary schools. Attentive design features regarding views and the existing vegetation we hope will not only activate the existing environment, but also lay foundations for further developments such as bird boxes and static cameras to encourage movement around the park

Finalising The Plan

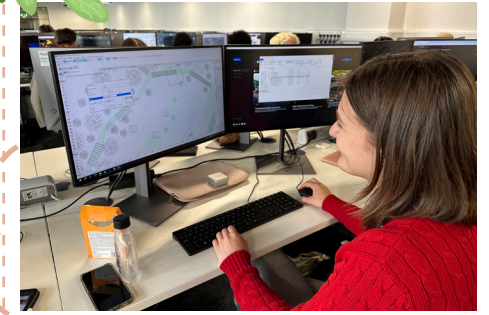


Visual Design

Upon completion of the model and exported plans, it was time to coordinate the best views in line with our earlier site analysis of view corridors to not only sell the project, but also to encourage users to make greater use of the highlighted spaces.

Integral to our approach to generate awareness across site, we elected to propose additional information plaques that can be cheaply erected around Chadwick Dam. The benefit of this is aimed at teaching younger audiences about the wildlife that exists around their local park, equally encouraging a greater appreciation for what lies on the doorstep of local residents.

The crafting of these viewpoints enabled the team to envision further improvements for the park outside of the node, equally encouraging feedback and re-interpretation to the master-planning team as they overlapped their ideas



Activating Use Of The Park



The team deem it important to note the existing condition of the information guides & plaques, as these are currently the only on-site method of informing users of how to navigate and appreciate the park.

With no other method of engaging site visitors with the narrative of the park, the idea of a guidebook was conceived and developed against the masterplan and node inputs for the project.

Design Guide

With the existing condition of the highlighted information boards around the site in mind, the team began to use this dilapidated feature to design a universal guide for the site. Whilst not taking the place of the information boards, the guide offers something different.

The designed purpose of the guide pamphlet is to be a cheap physical intervention that can be handed out to visitors if they wish to use it. Contained within it is a wealth of information and exposure of the existing conditions on site, to those who may be unaware. By doing this, the team hopes to activate some previously forgotten areas of Chadwick Dam, whilst also suggesting cheap alternatives / developments that could help these spaces thrive

EXISTING SITE STUDY: SEATING

Upon investigation of the existing seating, students of the Manchester School of Architecture have compiled an assessment of their usage and have suggested alterations to make them more inclusive to the shown demographics. More information can be found on the MSA Live website under Group 19's blog postings.

CATERING FOR THE COMMUNITY

EXISTING SITE STUDY: GATES & ACCESS

Suggesting the existing gates, it is extremely apparent that the gates do not currently facilitate easy use for elderly community members, or those with a walking impairment. Here at the Manchester School of Architecture, we have assessed and propose a new way to introduce gates to the park in a way that allows all users to navigate the park safely without restriction.

THE INCLUSIVE VISION

EXISTING SITE STUDY: TERRAIN & FOOTING

NEW PATHWAY

Noted by many users of Chadwick Dam, the existing terrain can prove challenging in colder climates, so such we have completed early facing sketches to suggest to readers how the park could accommodate visitors and local residents.

EXISTING SITE STUDY: Overview

In close collaboration with Tameside Council, the students of the Manchester School of Architecture have drafted this document to aid in explaining the use of the existing park, in hopes to raise awareness of untouched elements of Chadwick Dam, whilst equally offering suggestions to existing areas to enable their activation. Whilst these ideas may be early concepts, they are designed conclusions based upon heavy research and the opinions of the local community through survey testing organised by the students.

Visit msa.ac.uk for more information

Please visit the above link to track the student's developments for this planning scheme and equally get in touch with the collaborator for any input

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

A GUIDE TO NAVIGATING CHADWICK DAM

REFORMED ZONAL NAVIGATION

In tandem with the masterplan overview project, the students of the MSA have crafted a zonal hierarchy that has been identified across Chadwick Dam, with existing conditions highlighting the poor accessibility found the further north visitors

ACCESS LEVELS

- Intermediate
- Poor
- Easy

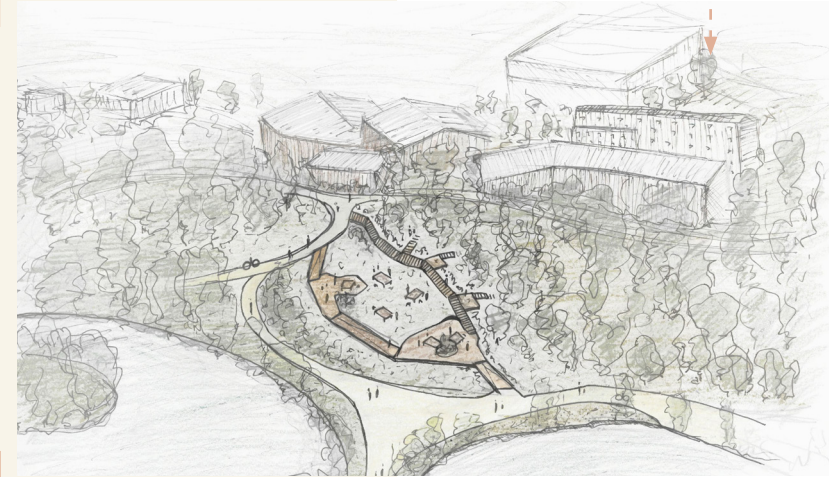
A Final Site Reflection

A final visit to site with our finished documents allowed us to meet up with our collaborator Hayley to discuss our developments within the context of the design area. Additionally, after a positive discussion with Hayley we were also offered the opportunity to showcase our work to the 'Big Local' community group to express our design ideas and equally provide physical handouts to encourage conversation with others. It was nice to see such a positive reception to our ideas and equally their excitable appreciation for their local park. A quick stop off also allowed us to speak with Rob, a member of the park maintenance team, of which he shared his immense historical knowledge of the park and equally allowed us to bounce our ideas off him and his wide array of understanding.

Revisiting site was a brilliant opportunity to gauge community feedback, as well as generate even more ideas for where the project could go in the future.



Rob On-Site!



ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 and Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students with those in BA foundation, year 1 and year 2 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 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 are for community benefit or 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 joined 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 6 cohorts in MSA have worked on 40 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:

msalive@mmu.ac.uk

BLOG

live.msa.ac.uk/2024

SOCIAL

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WEBSITE

www.msa.ac.uk