

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



New archive unlocked!



ARCHIVING ALBERT

Visit msa.ac.uk for more information



**MSA
LIVE 21**

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Partners

We are collaborating with Lendlease; the current contractor undertaking the renovations throughout Manchester Town Hall and it's surrounding squares, on behalf of the City Council. As a globally active real estate and investment group, Lendlease have vast experience with many projects of public, cultural and social significance; including restoration of historic monuments, developing numerous buildings of varying typologies, and orchestrating large-scale urban master-plans.

Our primary point of contact from the firm; Tamara Karim, has been collaborating and providing us with necessary information regarding the restoration project. As a prior employee to the Manchester City Council, she is a keen advocate of inclusive growth as a means of providing opportunities for the Mancunians to explore the history of their Town Hall and the Albert Square.

"Companies must start justifying their worth to society, with greater emphasis placed on environmental and social impact rather than straight economics."

-Dick Dusseldorp, Founder of Lendlease.

We would like to thank Tamara Karim and Mr. Craig Dick (Lendlease), Ms. Meg McHugh and Mr. Westley Robinson (Manchester City Council), Mr. Richard Denny and Mr. Tony Ewings (Stone Edge) and Mr. Lee Bilson (Recclesia) for their contributions and insightful sharings with our team throughout the 2 weeks period of this MSA Live project.



Agenda

Archiving Albert

As part of Manchester's Our Town Hall restoration project, MSA and Lendlease are proud to present Archiving Albert - an initiative to create accessible digital connections to the rich archive of the Town Hall and Albert Square's collective heritage. We seek to revive and reintroduce Manchester's 'hidden' historical artefacts to the wider community by connecting them with the 'story' of the Town Hall and Albert Square. We want to make sure that our urban development, artefact revival and digital network not only caters to everyone who wants to explore the realms of Mancunian history, but enhances Albert Square's role as one of Manchester City Centre's most important landmarks and active event spaces. What are our ambitions?

Design safe, open, accessible public realm

Through well-considered, interactive and utility-based spaces with close ties to Manchester's urban heritage.

Bring buried heritage to life

By tracing, mapping and visualising the rich array of historical archives in the Town Hall and Albert Square.

Fully utilise the potential of digital infrastructure

Through the creation of a bridge between the digital and the physical realm, and facilitated within the Square's visitor centre, refuge hub and QR code interface.

Please note: This pdf document is **interactive**.



Context

Click the statues and buildings to reveal stories

● Grade 1 and 2 listed buildings

🗿 Statues

Web Version to be used for QR codes
(compatible with mobile devices):
<https://indd.adobe.com/view/9967b634-5892-405b-82bb-bd8fd94bb8c6>

Beginning as a tightly compacted mix of buildings to being one of the most prestigious urban areas in Greater Manchester, Albert Square portrays the city's municipal and civic pride. A wide variety of listed structures and monuments complement the Town Hall to create a point of celebration for the city and its achievements.

Events

Constructed as a representation of the municipality, power and wealth of Manchester, the Town Hall and Albert Square both would not exist without the people. From influencing the location of the Albert Memorial to constructing the Town Hall itself, the role the public played in forming Manchester as one Britain's most important cities goes underappreciated.

Albert Memorial was originally going to be located at the Royal Infirmary (Piccadilly Gardens), however this was widely disliked as its gothic style clashed with the surrounding neo-classical architecture.

Manchester went to great lengths to make the Queens visit memorable. Part of the event involved around 80,000 Sunday School children performing the national anthem.

After the Town Hall's opening there was a great 'Procession of Trades' where over 15000 men from all industries marched on the square.

In 1945 the City Surveyor Roland Nicholas and his team released a city plan that suggested the demolition of the Town Hall.

1850:
Albert square is currently a collection of over 100 buildings forming quite a 'seedy' area including; public houses, a smithy, coffee-roasting works and a dense mixture of houses. The site of today's Town Hall was an open space called Towns Yard.

1851:
Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visit Manchester, making it the first visit from a monarch in a century and a half. She found 'great pleasure... seeing the attention that was paid to the education of the rising generation in Manchester.'

1867:
Albert Memorial is unveiled. Its construction began in derelict land among the densely packed buildings with the proviso it would be cleared into a public open space, to honour the late Prince Albert hence the name Albert Square.

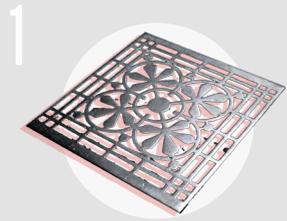
1868:
A two stage competition is held by the City Council for a new town hall on the oddly shaped triangular site facing Albert Square. The old Town Hall was inadequate for the rapidly expanding metropolis. The Neo-Gothic design of Alfred Waterhouse wins the competition and construction is completed in 1877

1987:
The traffic ring including trams buses and cars is removed creating one large pedestrianised space on Albert Square. Now paved with fan-shaped granite paving stone, York stone paving and heritage-style cast-iron street furniture.

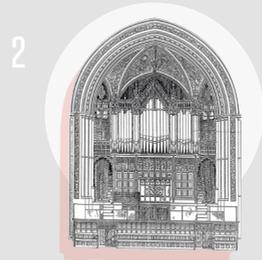
2018:
Town Hall and Albert Square are closed to the public as a six year repair, refurbishment and renovation plan commences.



Existing Collections



1
Metalworks



2
Organs



3
Bells & Carillons



4
Sculptures



5
Clocks



6
Textiles



7
Silver & Plates



8
Murals



9
Portraits

Manchester Town Hall has a collection of over 3,000 hidden 'gems' ranging from sculptures, furniture, silverwares, ceramics, glass, textiles and social history material. They were produced for the opening of the building in 1877 were all designed by, or with the approval of, the building's architect, Alfred Waterhouse. They were created to complement and enhance the architecture of the building, and their decorative details were developed to harmonise with the building. Together they convey a message about the Victorian ambitions and prominence of the city.

Conflicts and Controversies

Post War

After WW2, a city plan was released to redevelop Manchester. This involved demolition of almost all old Victorian structures. With this, there was a suggestion to remove the Town Hall to promote the idea of 'revamping' the city. They claimed it would lead to more comfortable homes and working spaces. Due to post war struggles there was not enough money and overall the plan was too ambitious.

1996

The Manchester IRA bombing occurred on 15/06/1996. A bomb was detonated on Corporation Street in the city centre, being the worst in Britain since WW2. Hundreds were injured but no fatalities occurred. Buildings within a half mile radius experienced the worst damage, and many were demolished. This created an opportunity for redevelopment and was a catalyst for the urban regeneration of the city.

2017

After the Manchester Arena attack on 22/05/2017, a 'vigil of peace' was held at Albert Square to honour those who lost their lives. Albert Square has now become a place for congregation for protests and times of union in tragedies. Poet Tony Walsh read his poem 'This is the place' to bring people together during a difficult time.

2021

Several large protests brought the city centre to a halt. Groups gathered to show their opposition to violence against women and the new police and crime bill. Black Lives Matter were also seen within the crowds. Several speakers, including black and indigenous human rights speakers, held speeches throughout the course of the protests.



Soon after its formation, Albert Square became a frequent meeting place for the citizens of Manchester to make their voices heard and create change. As the city has grown and diversified, the square has evolved from a representation of just the citizens, but also their cultures and nationalities.

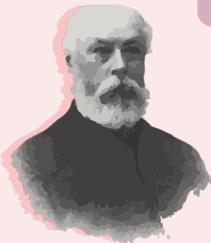
Behind the Scenes

Then



Alfred Waterhouse

He won the 1868 competition and is the architect responsible for the design of the Manchester Town Hall



Thomas Worthington

The designer of both the Albert Memorial and the Jubilee Fountain, and arguably his most renowned Neo-Gothic piece. His work was published in The Builder magazine in 1862, years before the London's Albert Memorial was unveiled.

E. Vincent Harris

A renowned municipal architect; in 1926, he won the competition to design for the extension of the new Town Hall and Manchester's Central Library



Now

1. MCC

The Manchester City Council.



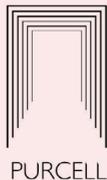
2. Lendlease

The contractor management lead of the restoration scheme on behalf of Manchester City Council.



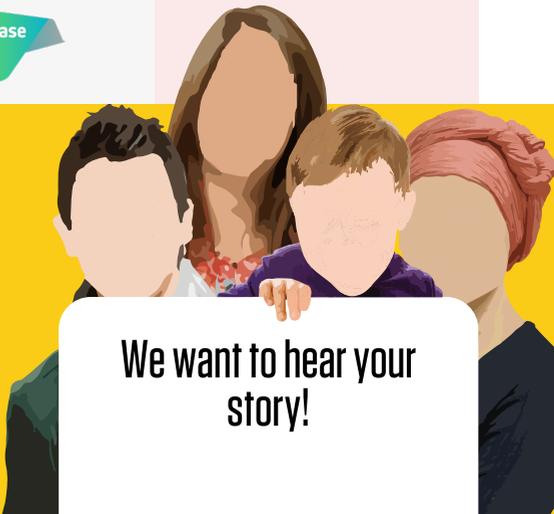
3. Purcell

Project Architect/
Heritage Lead



4. You!

Our Town Hall is a project with the local community at its heart. Whether you are an artist, a dentist, a contractor, a police, a teacher or a barista, we would like to hear your experience living in Manchester. Share your story with us at our Visitor Experience Centre in Albert Square.



A Wider Manchester



From a Roman fort, to an industrial hub, to a diverse metropolis, Manchester has evolved tremendously. In the past, the term 'Mancunian' referred to the young innovators and hard workers that helped form this city, however it now encompasses much more than that. The rich cultural diversity in Manchester and its communities is as important, if not more important, to the city as the monuments standing in Albert Square. This space takes an alternative approach to the existing elitist statues and now representational of a more inclusive Manchester.

Design Objectives & Concepts

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES



Improve the function and operation of the Town Hall and Albert Square.



To enhance the use of the building as a visitor destination and increase access to Mancunians.



To deliver economic and social value for Manchester.



To protect and enhance the heritage assets including the Town Hall, Albert Memorial and monuments.



To transform users' and visitors' experiences.



To provide high quality public and civic spaces that open up the city and provide places for people to meet and spend time.



To restore and celebrate this significant heritage asset for Manchester.



To consider opportunities to provide green space to enhance quality of life and achieve carbon reduction objectives.



STEP BACK IN TIME

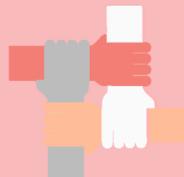
Reviving the past experiences in the current scenario through snapshots. This helps us to acquire a broader and richer understanding of history of Albert Square and Manchester townhall and also acknowledge the world we live in today

MANCHESTER BEE

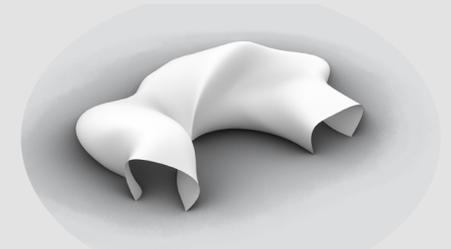
The Manchester bee has been an emblem for the city for over 150 years. The bee denotes Mancunians' hard work ethic and the city being a hive of activity. It has also come to represent the sense of unity in our great city.

CREATE . COMPOSE . CONTRIBUTE .

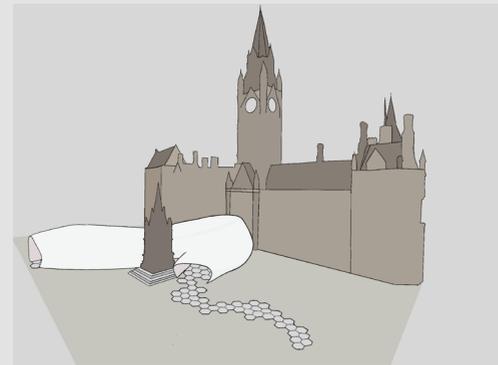
Introducing community activities that would help people to engage better. For example, creating community murals can bring local residents together in solidarity and help them to contribute their own story to Manchester.



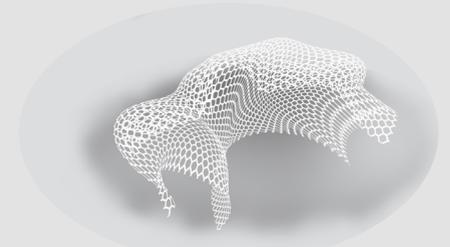
Design Development



By underlining the spatial movement we obtained an organic form to elevate the user experience.



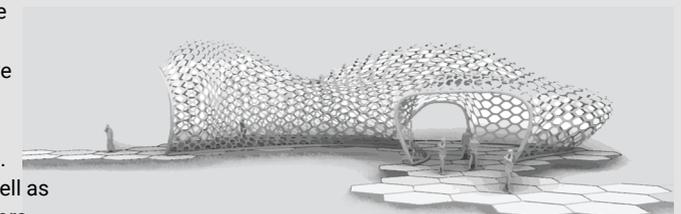
Considering the temporality, we designed a honey comb structure to associate with Manchester Bee



To break the solidity, we designed a translucent membrane.

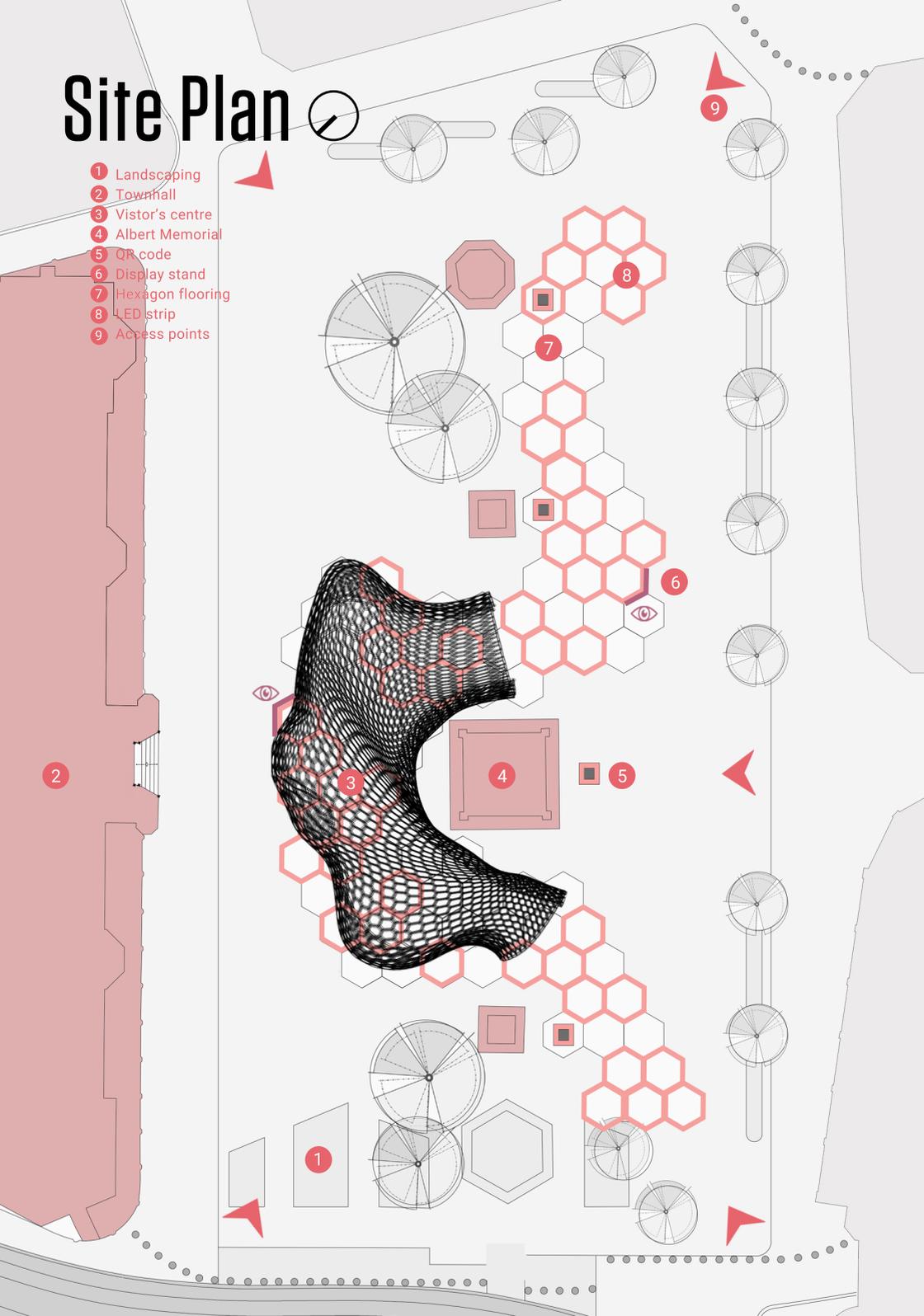
By locating the arrival points, we managed to develop a trail of the visitor experience centre. we dissected the initial serpentine volume to produce the visitors' centre behind the Albert Statue.

This acts as a transitional as well as congregation point for the visitors



Site Plan

- 1 Landscaping
- 2 Townhall
- 3 Visitor's centre
- 4 Albert Memorial
- 5 QR code
- 6 Display stand
- 7 Hexagon flooring
- 8 LED strip
- 9 Access points



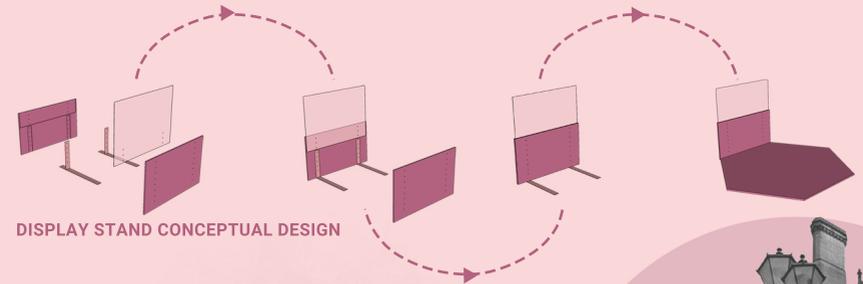
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Manchester school of Music was situated in Albert square around 1958. It was situated here for at least 25 years as seen of its removal by 1981. The buildings which it once occupied are now demolished but design of the replacement are in some parts sympathetic.



WAR + MANCHESTER

The City Battalions of the Manchester Regiment were formed in the autumn of 1914. They recruited Warehousemen of the City's commercial business and were known as the Manchester Pals. This was the final occasion that the large crowds at the event could acknowledge the volunteer soldiers in their home town



DISPLAY STAND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

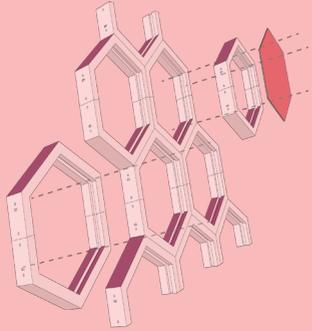
LOOKING INTO THE PAST

Viewpoints arranged around the square with perspectives to co-relating images to the current day area of the square. Historic imagery and contextualising text partner the installations to give an understanding of Albert square at the time in history. Reviving the past experiences in the current scenario through snapshots. This helps us to acquire a broader and richer understanding of history of albert square and Manchester townhall and also acknowledge the world we live in today and our place in it. It aids in preserving the heritage through memory as well.



Structural Strategy

A - STRUCTURAL MEMBRANE



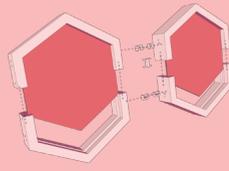
HDPE + Acrylic Joinery

MEDIUM WEIGHT MATERIAL

The first proposal uses aluminium sheets bolted together as main structural framework. Similar to origami, the hexagonal shapes are created by folding thin aluminium sheets and welding both ends. The structure is easily dismantled.



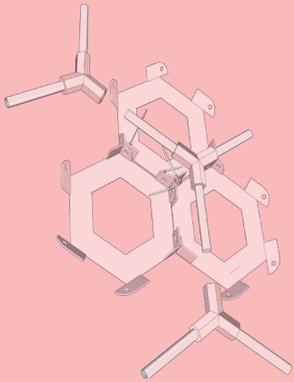
HDPE Skin for filling



Acrylic Sheet for Windows

LIGHT WEIGHT MATERIAL

The second proposal minimizes the use of materials. The steel arch reinforcements and the translucent coroplast provide stability to the structure. The hexagonal shapes are bonded together with the metal frame using nylon cable ties. Partly transparent during the day, the interior is provided with natural light.



Steel + Coroplast Joinery

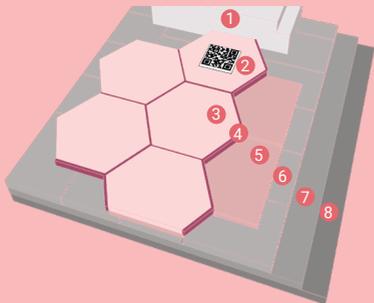


Steel Arch Reinforcements

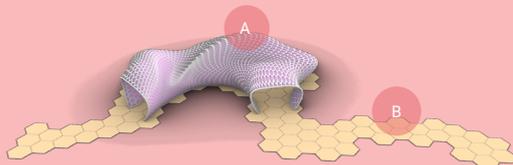


Hexagonal Translucent Coroplast

B - FLOORING MEMBRANE



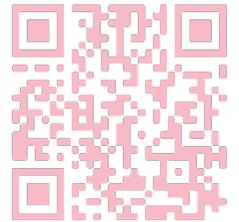
- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Statue Pedestal | 5 Cement Adhesive |
| 2 QR Code | 6 Granite Setts |
| 3 Porcelain Stonework | 7 Cement Mortar |
| 4 LED Strip | 8 Compact aggregate |



Visualisations

For video footage, please visit the following link:

<https://youtu.be/P7H0CjQ3aYY>



SCAN ME

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

SOCIAL

#MSALive21

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WEBSITE

www.msa.ac.uk