

**MANCHESTER SCHOOL
OF ARCHITECTURE**

**LET
THEM
FREE**



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**MSA
LIVE 22**

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Partners

Manchester Metropolitan University, which is in the process of selling the fields to housing developers, is currently threatening to develop Ryebank Fields. Manchester City Council has approved a development framework that includes plans for 120 new homes. Following that, as part of the process of selling the site to a developer,

The Friends of Ryebank Fields (FORF) organisation was formed in 2018 as part of the Save Ryebank Fields campaign, with the specific goal of preventing any development of the land. FORF is continuing to commission reports that refute allegations in the MMU reports, as well as hiring a planning consultant to advise them on how to best oppose any future planning applications. Donations and crowdfunding were used to fund these, and more appeals may be needed in the future.

On a more positive note, FORF continues to market the site's charms, such as through on-site events and activities, video interviews with locals, and a series of gorgeous photos capturing the natural beauty on its Facebook page

Stephen Fernley is one of the community camp members that has been proteting in order to save the fields, We have been working closely with Stephen in order to address the concerns and move forward with the campaign

Agenda

Let Them Free

Ryebank Fields is an important area of wild green space that is threatened by a proposed housing development. There is a campaign to save the fields and more recently a community camp. We at the community camp have an area on tarmac that be used as an exhibition space. We intend to create a new exhibition on biodiversity loss that would attract a large and diverse audience in order to convince them of the importance of what wild are as we have left.

The students involved in the project will be using their soft skills, architectural sketching, architectural software and real-life model making skills to install an exhibition for this beautiful green field which will be transformed into a free wildlife and vegetations planting for wider community in Manchester.

Key Points

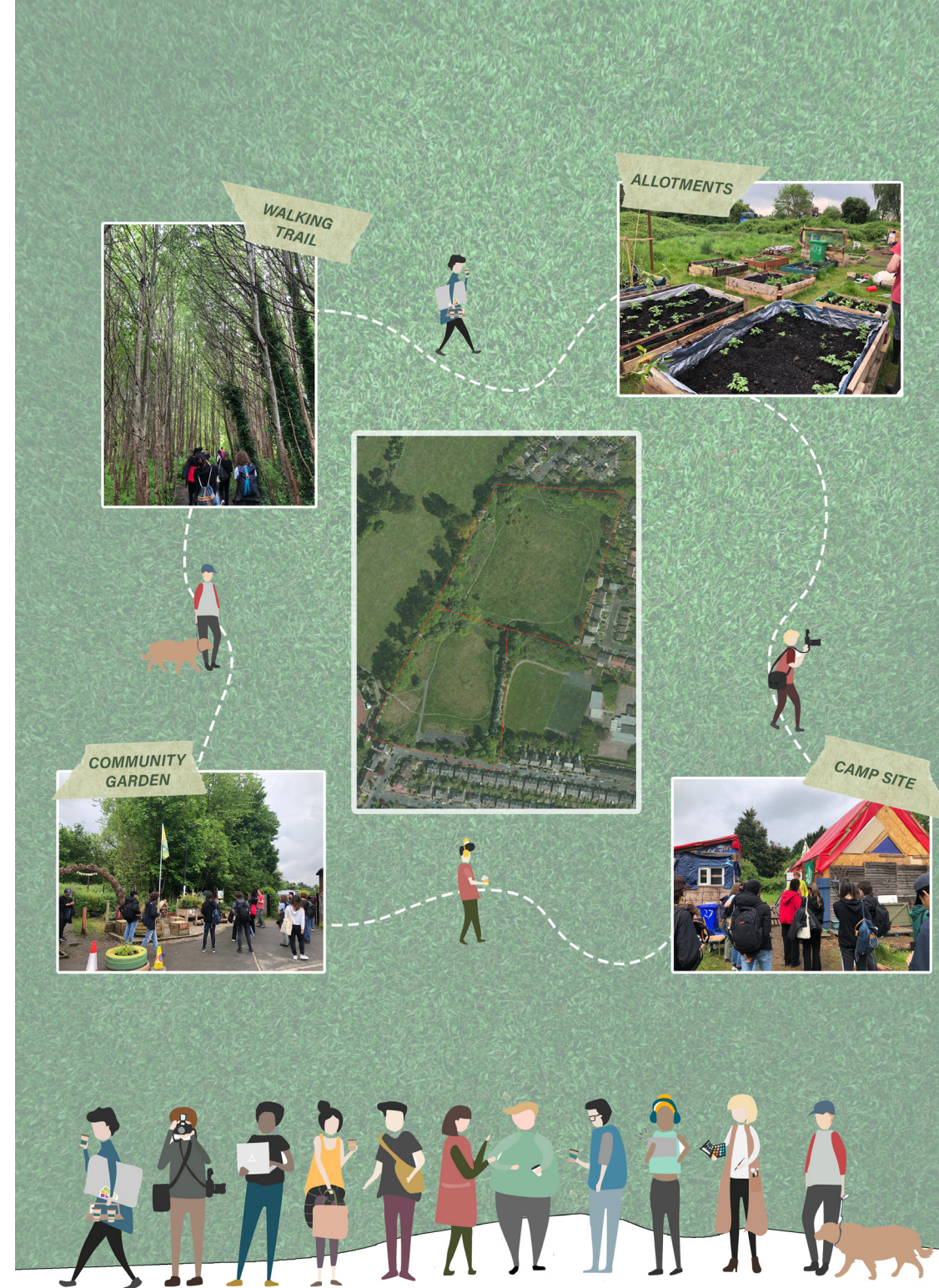
1. Soft skills
2. Digital skills
3. Wood working
4. Critical thinking
5. Photography

SITE VISIT

We came to the Ryebank Fields Community Camp to conduct a site survey and attain site knowledge on the first day. Commenced with a tour around the site with Stephen highlighting the historical background of the site and its rich biodiversity which need to be preserved and maintained for the future generation. We entered the future exhibition site from the entrance on the north side of the Ryebank Fields. It is worth mentioning that there are carefully arranged green and campaign posters at the entrance. There are some flower pots filled with various exquisite plants, an acute and small bookcase, and some doodles hand-drawn maps.

When we walked into the site, we found two vacant grasslands; the enormous grassland in the north and the smaller grassland in the south. A variety of trees and shrubberies are growing wildly around the site. There is an extremely rare Manchester Black Poplar and many millennium oaks planted by local residents in 2000. According to local conservation organizations, there are also wild garlic, an ancient woodland indicator, and native hyacinth and aspen forests. Recently, beautifully grown Orchids are blooming which also increases the sentimental value of the land.

Continuing to the south of the Ryebank Fields, noticeable to find on the site, members of the conservation group have built several simple timber houses built with reused wooden boards and waterproofing canvas, which can be used as bedrooms and kitchens. There are some self-manufactured wooden frames around the houses that functioned as a space to grow edible plants. It is clear to see that the site offers a number of goods and values to the wider community, especially the ones who live around the site. Finally, we walked out of the site through the entrance on the site's south side. There is a tall tower here to protect the people on the site from being chased away by the police. Because the law says the police can only drive away people below a certain height.



DESIGN EXHIBITION

We divided the undergrads into three groups in order to share ideas and skills in creating the design, as some of the undergrads have experience in using softwares such as sketchup. We briefed them on the requirements of the design and materials available. We gave each group two days to complete the design whilst guiding them along the process.

Each group first started with sketching conceptual designs, drawing out floorplans and elevations that fit the required dimensions, At the end of the conceptual design process we asked each group to give a small presentation, this allowed us to guide them in the right direction and answer any concerns before moving onto the 3D digital modelling. The groups were then asked to create a 3D digital design of their design, most groups used Sketchup to complete this however we allowed them to use any creative 3D software they felt comfortable using.

At the end of the second day each group gave a presentation showing their designs. As a whole team we voted on which design to move forward on, when doing this we had to consider the tools and materials we had to achieve this and so we chose the design that was the most realistic. However we combined features from the other designs and used this to develop the final design.

Group 1

The special feature for this design included a viewing platform that showed the Ryebank fields and a garden space created using the crates to grow plants and food.



Group 2

The special feature for this design included a large entrance and open space that gave way for partition walls that could be easily adjusted in the space.



Group 3

The special features of this design included creating a platform for people to sit on and a hidden library below for kids to reach.

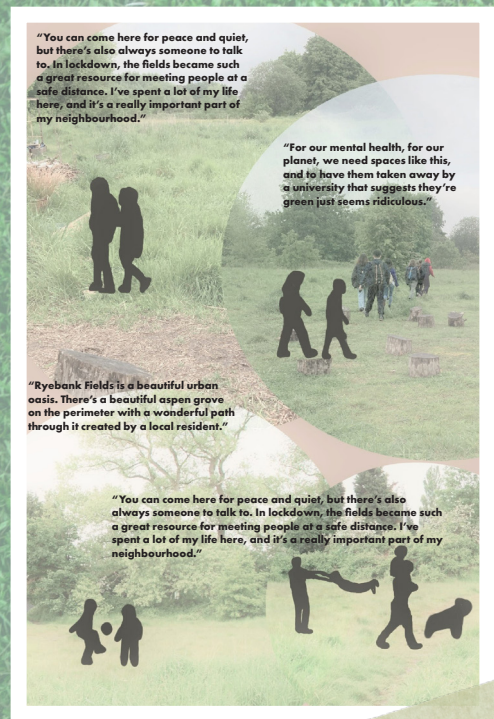
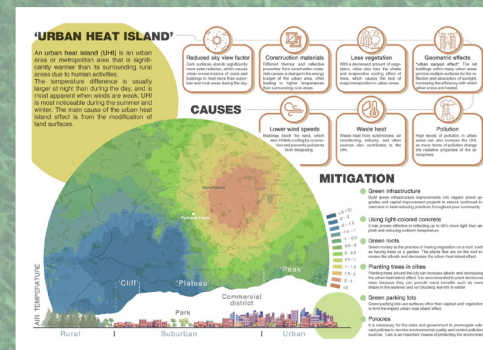


DESIGN POSTERS

The first thing that we did was make some posters for the protest that will take place on day 5 to protect Ryebank fields; everyone involved had the opportunity to work closely with their own distinctive message. Everyone got together and discussed their concept for the poster, which is meant to aid in the process of delivering a vital message to the general public regarding the contentious subject that surrounds the site. Following the conclusion of the conversation, we got to work drawing on scraps of paper and cardboard using various markers.

Following the completion of the protest poster by each individual participant, we held a brief introduction to Photoshop session to produce an informative poster that would be included in the exhibition area. Students will have the opportunity to choose from a broad variety of topics to include in their posters, ranging from the history of the site to current climate challenges and the greenwashing controversy that surrounds such issues. During the course of the Photoshop session, we gave the undergrads a number of tips on how to make the exhibition poster look more appealing

During the designing poster session, Dominic also gave a quick presentation on possible future ideas for Ryebanks that we ought to consider. He gave a short presentation on the history of the location, which centred on the contentious topic that involved MMU Estates and Ryebank Field. He proposed a few ideas and theme that may be incorporated into the design of the exhibition's poster. Since the exhibition is being used for for the community of Ryebank Field, the poster may be used to support promote awareness towards the public and visitors who are going to the site, and it can educate the value of conserving the land and keeping the biodiversity that it has

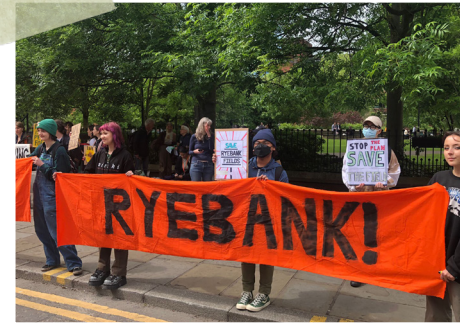


PROTEST

Protest day, was an important event by the Ryebank Fields community to bring awareness and message to the MMU Estates management on the issue of greenwashing and preserving the biodiversity of its land from future development. The protest was initiated by a few MMU students led by representatives from Ryebank Fields Community Camp. Stephen who is our client was there to help the campaign/protest by convincing the wider community including MMU students in voicing out their concerns regarding the greenwashing issue.

We participated in the protest by bringing our protest posters that have been designed by each member of group 8. On that day, we gathered together with Ryebank Fields Community Camp members at All Saints Park and did the sit-in in the park and MMU faculty. The event started at 2.00 P.M., commencing with a speech from Stephen on the issue of ecocide followed by the other team members of the camp. Then we welcomed the wider community to join us in spreading the messages regarding our MSA live project, a public exhibition space that is built on the site.

Protest activity allows us to understand the importance of voicing out our concerns in order for the public and targeted audience in order for them to take an action and acknowledge a particular issue. The issue of land grabbing from a certain corporate body, especially in the case of Ryebank Field, helps us to channel out the voice of the community regarding the issue. With the help of protest on that day, we, fortunately, received a great amount of support including the materials that can be reused for the exhibition. This protest event allows us to engage with the wider community and create connections to improve our general standard of living thus providing better solutions for nature as well.



BUILD EXHIBITION

On the first day of construction, we cleared the site making the space safer and ready for use. We started by measuring the base length and detaching any extra crates that extended the length of the design. After, we secured the base and addressed any safety hazards. We also started preparing the external walls by attaching scrap wood panels to create a base to rest on.

Day 2: On the second day due to the limited material we had to collect extra crates from Platt fields, we then had a decent number of crates to complete the desired vision. We started assembling the first level of walls by nailing the wooden panel to the base of the exhibition. Half the group also started creating the allotment plots by sawing spare wood panels and nailing them together.

Day 3: The third day consisted of assembling the second level of the walls, we started with nailing the corner walls first in order to create some stability. In order to achieve this we had to use spare wood blocks to create corner joints and nail them to the walls, we then braced the walls using wooden panels to add more support. Half the group also finished the allotment plots by adding soil, and creating a willow arch by planting the willow into the allotment plots and bending to create an arch shape.

Day 4: On day four we began constructing the roof frame by attaching the beams made from spare wood panels to the right and left walls. We then added the central beams placing them align to the blocks of the back wall crates to give more support. Half of the group prepared the partition walls by sawing large wood panels to an appropriate size. After the frame was secure we attached the corrugated plastic sheets to the right and left sides of the space and used a red vinyl canvas to the central back for more coverage due to the limitations in material. We then cleared the site ready for the exhibition day.



FINAL OUTCOME

As a group we felt honoured to be part of this community in bringing awareness to the public about the importance of the natural environment in residential areas. We believe Ryebank fields has a rich history and biodiversity that is worth protecting, and the exhibiton is one step forward in achieving this. Whilst creating the breif for the design of the exhibiton we had to consider the limitations and challenges we would be facing. some of the challenges included the materials we had for use and the limited budget. As a group we feel the session plan was very helpful in organising and preparing the undergrads for the two weeks. We followed the session plan on and most days we finished the task that was set. During the construction days majority of the materials we used were recycled crates, however we did not have enough and so we had to experiment using spare scrapes of wood to create panels and corner joints to secure the structure. One of the improvements we would of made was spending more time on the design of the roof as we didn't have enough material to span the full length and so we had to mix material to attain more coverage. Another challenge we faced was the distance to the site having the site located further from MMU campus made it difficult for some of the students to travel to site, however we were determined to complete the exhibition at a good quality for public use. Despite the time contrait and many challenges We believe we were successful in executing the design and construction and worked really well as a team. The local community expressed they were pleased with the outcome and saw that it would be a great space for future use and actitives.



ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE 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 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 550 students from 4 cohorts in MSA have worked on 35 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:
msalive@mmu.ac.uk

BLOG

live.msa.ac.uk/2022

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