MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

fashioning a new childrens play space for the hulme community garden

AGENDA

SKILLS

The project will look at designing a new The project will incorporate a variety of children's play-space for the Hulme different design skills, such as conceptual Community Garden using low-tech materials design, ecological design theory, hands-on and sustainable "permaculture" design + low-tech construction, as well as methods. We will liaise directly with the presentation. Don't be scared - we are garden to produce a handbook for realising excited to help you get better at using these the design.

skills!

Visit msa.ac.uk for more information









Team

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Partners

Hulme Community Garden Centre (HCGC) is an establishment that aims to bring the community together through the power of gardening. Their work and presence in Hulme aims to develop and share information about horticulture and environmental issues to their local community, extended through the sale of plants, community activities, as well as learning facilities for all ages.

The HCGC are committed to promoting well-being through gardening, bringing specialist knowledge to best help and advise people to enjoy the nature. Kath Gavin, the sustainability coordinator at HCGC collaborated with us on this project.

PermaPlay

A Sensory and Educational Playscape

PermaPlay is a collaborative MSA LIVE project that worked transversely between architecture students and the Hulme Community Garden Centre to facilitate a new playscape for multiple age groups, exploring multiple styles of play. The MSA live group explored working with low-tech materials, a strict budget, and creatively exploring solutions to allow children to access educational and sensory play at the community garden. The project aimed to explore concepts of Permaculture design.

The MSA LIVE group explored a variety of different design activities, including design competitions and exploration of playscape through a variety of mediums (such as hand-drawing, digital and physical modelling, and group collaboration). Working with the client throughout the two-week project, we were able to shape the design by real client input. This offered multiple opportunities and constraints for the group to work around and consider throughout the design process.

The design was finalised to consider the multiple ways in which children play. The main components realized as part of the scheme were the sensory walkway, the educational play area, the creative zone and the rough play area. At the end of the two MSA Live action weeks, we were able to deliver a construction booklet to explain the different construction methods considered to realise the various play structures. Working on this deliverable we got an opportunity to explore natural and environment friendly methods of construction, and understand how the play structures could be constructed by re-using scrap materials found on site. The MSA Live group also developed a 1:100 scale model to present all the different play structures on the site.

Design Competition

The design process began by understanding design principles of Permaculture - the design theme of the project as discussed with the client during a site visit. The BA1 and BA2 students were divided in three groups and a design competition was conducted during the first week.

BA1 and BA2 students presented the three distinct designs based on the concepts - inlcuding a sensory playground, Freeplay and Multipurpose playground. The client provided feedback and a wish list of components they would like to incorporate within the playground, taking into consideration the designs presented by the students.

BA students used various skills to explain their designs involving methods such as hand sketching, collage design, diagramming using Adobe suite and so on.











Design Development

Following the design competition and on receiving feedback from the client, we consolidated the three design concepts. The BA students took inspiration from the Permaculture design book introduced by the client, and created various iterations as part of the design process. They critically assessed client requirements and addressed the client brief throughout the design process. The MArch students guided the BA students by conducting reviews and crit sessions throughout the design development process.

This final design incorporated various zones within the playground site namely, the educational zone, the creative zone, the sensory walkway, the main play structure on the exisiting mound of the site and the rough play area.











The final design consists of various zones: namely the educational zone, the creative zone, the sensory walkway, the main play structure on the existing childrens' mound on the site and the rough play area.

The masterplan is designed so as to encourage circular movement around the existing children's mound on the site. A sensory walkway is designed around this circular movement, involving various textures relating to the different zones as part of the design. Seating incorporated around the walkway and the kitchen/ cafe areas allows parents to supervise their children. The educational zone incorporates three boards incorporating distinct educational activities. The main structure over the mound can be accessed through four climbing structures - a rope climbing net, a climbing wall, a tree stump step access and the existing cable wheel bridge.



- Main play structure
 Sensory Walkway
 Rough Play Area
 Kitchen creative zone
- 5. Educational zone
 6. Climbing wall
 7. Rope climbing access
 8. Tree stump access
 9. Existing cable wheel bridge







Construction Manual

During the second week of the MSA Live action weeks, the BA1 and BA2 students were divided into three groups - the modelmaking group, the drawing package group and the constructional manual layout group.

The construction manual group was involved in detailing the various play structures designed as part of the playground design. The layout team was further divided into four groups to design the main structure, the access to the top of the mound, the walkway/ seating areas and the educational areas. The BA students created page arrangements for the four sections of the manual as part of their groups, and presented their ideas to the MArch. students.







Education zone



Sensory Walkway



Main Play Structure



Access to the mound



Main Play Structure

Educational boards: Wooden palett Assembly



Illustrations and hand sketches were created for each section of the manual to depict the journey of children around the site. This also showcased the location of the play structures on the site.











2. REMOVE EXISTING PLANKS

3. REARRANGE EXISTING NEW PLANKS

4. ADD NEW PLANKS IF NECESSARY







5. CUSTOM PLANKS CUT IF NECESSARY

1. EXISTING PALETTE

7. REVERSE SIDE IS READY FOR WORK

8. REMOVE EXISTING PLANKS FROM REVERSE SIDE





6. FIRST SIDE COMPLETED





5. REVERSE SIDE IS COMPLETED

6. EDUCATIONAL BOARD COMPLETED 14





One of the two main outputs of the project incorporated a 1:100 scaled model of the playground. During the second week of the MSA Live action weeks, BA students were introduced to model making methods at the B15 workshop.

The BA students got an opportunity to learn and prepare a CAD drawing to build the model. Methodology to build the model included traditional model making techniques as well as methods such as laser cutting for building the childrens' mound located on site. All the proposed play structures were built as part of the scale model to depict our vision of the playground.

The model and the construction manual waere presented to the client on the final day of the MSA Live action weeks.











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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WEBSITE

www.msa.ac.uk