

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



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MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester

 **Manchester
Metropolitan
University**

**MSA
LIVE 22**

Team

Nur Dalila Nadzri (M Arch 01)

Norzafeera Nik Marzukee (M Arch 01)

Amizatul Shayidah Foad (M Arch 01)

Songchuan Yang (M Arch 01)

Cameron Ward (BA 01)

Mia Kavanagh (BA 01)

Sarah Priestley (BA 01)

Xingyu Song (BA 01)

Damla Tunic (BA 02)

Eva-Madalina Crutan (BA 02)

Gabriela Esguevillas (BA 02)

Harrison Baker (BA 02)

Si Xing Audrey Ma (BA 02)

Partners

Station South is a passionate, creative, and abundantly social Community Interest Company that was established by Abigail, Mark, and Pauline with their shared goal to restore a building to run a destination cycle café, bar, and bike repair shop with a great public space for events and an urban garden for all to enjoy. Done by retrofitting the former Levenshulme South railway station, it is located in the heart of an urban village along the A6 in Levenshulme, on the UK's longest urban cycleway (The Fallowfield Loop).

Their goal to convert the former Victorian railway station into a friendly and inviting place was achieved in March 2022, as Station South finally opened its doors for the people. They have set up a business that runs as an independent, eco-friendly active travel hub to support Levenshulme's community, and benefit the wider cycling community of Manchester, Stockport and beyond. Achieving this aim, they are working to connect more local people back to nature in the bustling city, while encouraging cycling and giving back to the community.

Through its operation, Station South is imagined to be an open, creative, ethical, low-carbon and socially-minded venture that people really want to visit, with or without bikes.

Find out more about Station South through their social media links,

Instagram and twitter: @stationsouth

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stationsouth/>

Agenda

Up-Cycle

Upcycle aimed to help realize Station South's goal of being a place for the community to come together by designing furniture and other related placemaking elements. The project explored the understanding of human ergonomics, and developed ideas of the furniture being movable, easy to construct and cost-effective. Alongside these points, the design was developed with the community in mind, as the team aims to design furniture that encourages interactions and chance encounters, which would serve our collaborator's aim for the space to be a cycle hub.

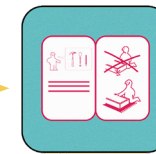
Reflecting on the project; while we have planned things differently initially, unforeseen circumstances such as the timeframe of the project, also the availability of space and working tools have led us to make changes to our plans and output – without compromising our objective. In summary, our outputs have changed as shown below:

Previous Output

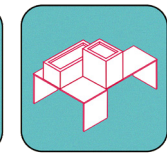


1:1 Scale Model

Updated Output



Instruction



1:5 Scale Model



Visualisation

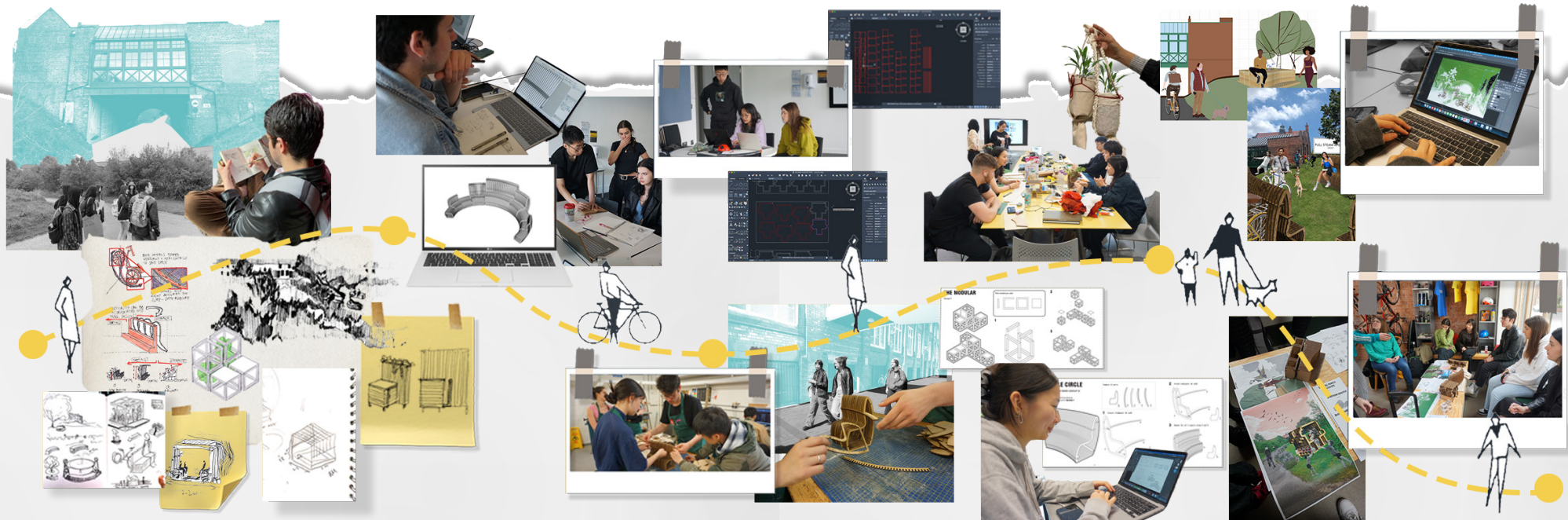
To look at our progress throughout the two weeks, please scan the QR code below:



// The Team



// Process Journey



// Timeline

WEEK 1

Throughout the first week, participants were divided into three groups to explore the designs of furniture through sketches and relevant software. These designs are built as actual scaled physical models by the end of the week.

WEEK 2

In the second week, we worked on the visualisations and instruction manuals for the furniture – this would help our collaborators, should they wish to adopt these designs as life-sized furniture.

Collaboration was the main essence of the brief, which the team successfully did in preparing the desired outputs for the project.



// Let's Explore!

Upcycle team visits Station South

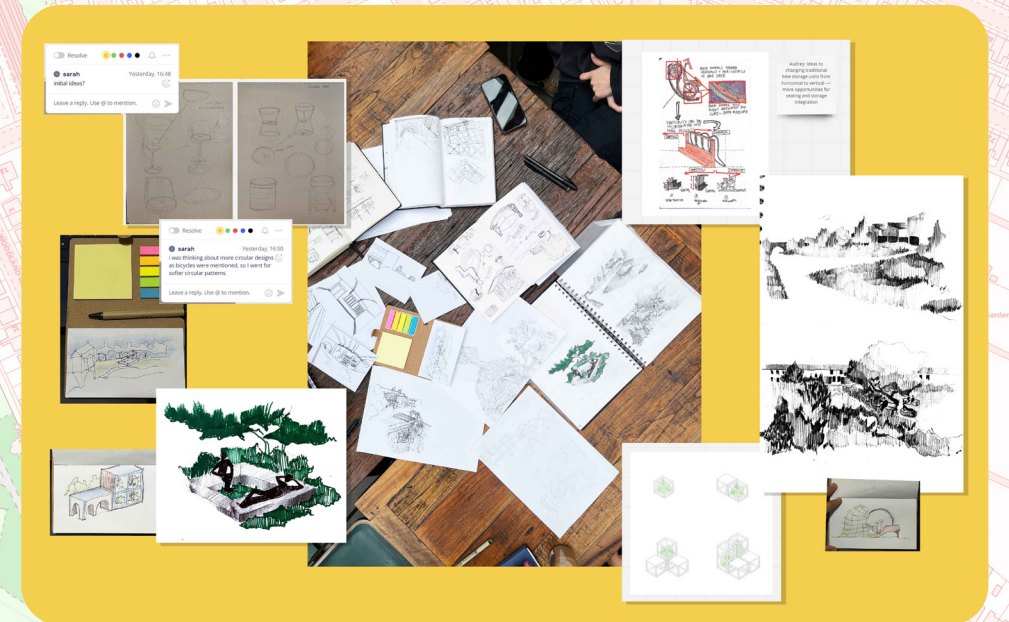
On the first day of MSALive, we kickstarted the project with a trip to Station South. By observing various aspects of the site and its context, along with information on the collaborator's aim and how the spaces are used, the team is able to imagine a design that would benefit Station South and the community.

As it was raining lightly, the team spent most of the day inside Station South's observatory bridge. From there, we got the chance to observe people utilising the Fallowfield Loop: there are people cycling, children playing, and people walking their pets. We also heard the sounds of birds from nature, juxtaposed with the sounds of vehicles from the other side. Other than the site context, we also managed to observe the interiors of Station South, and noted on the parts that was retrofitted.

Drawing inspiration from these elements, we sketched our initial thoughts of the site and the furniture. Afterwards, the team discussed the idea and possible placements of the furniture on site. This discourse allows us to develop our design into a better proposal.



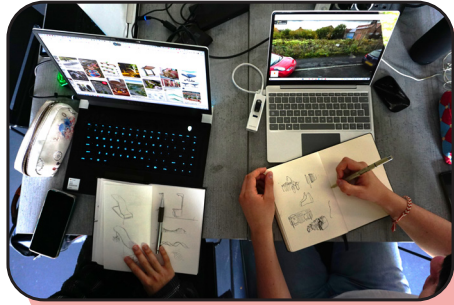
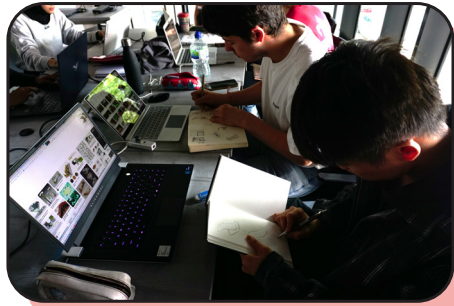
// Sketching Compilation



// Mind Thinker

Purpose

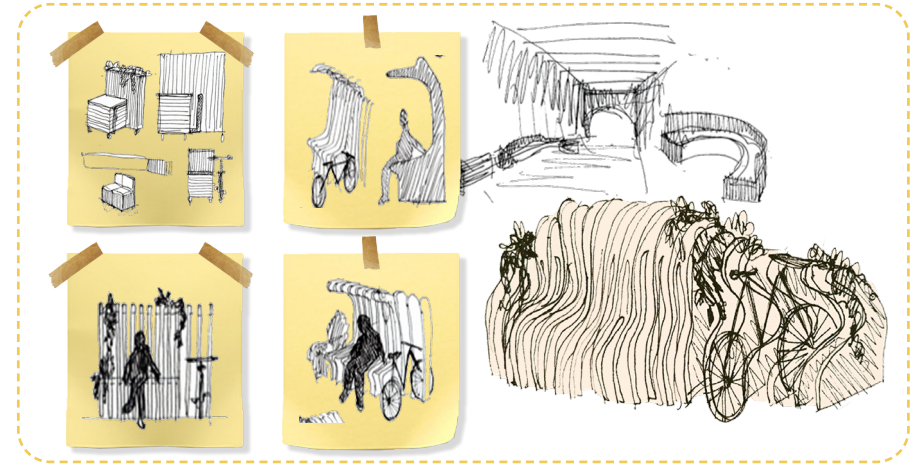
Drawing inspiration from the previous sketching activity, the team looked into precedents of furniture to further develop the designs. We also delve into the understanding of ergonomics, materiality and connection methods to help facilitate the design process.



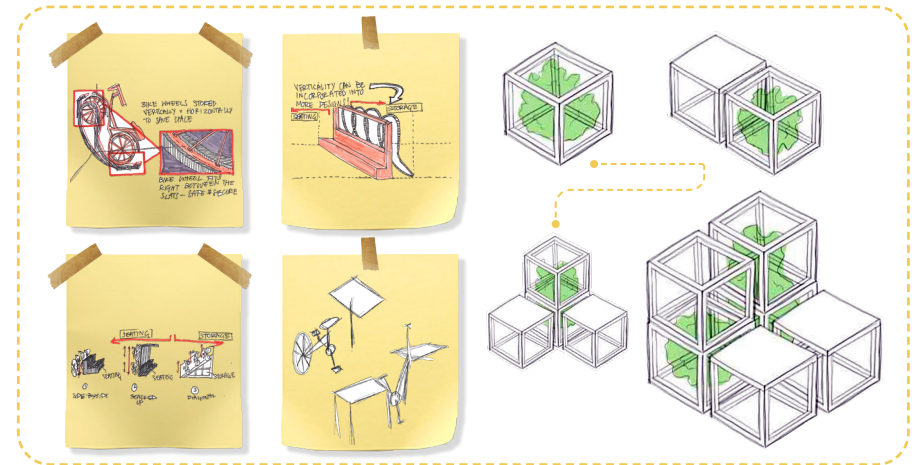
Group 1



Group 2



Group 3



// Booklet

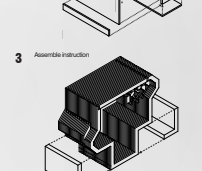
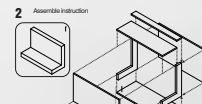
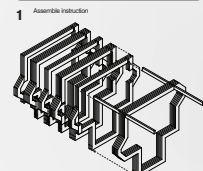
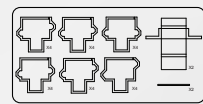
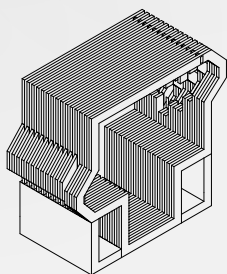
Since we are unable to produce a 1:1 scaled furniture, we made instruction booklets to help the client, should they wish to produce the them in the future. Another purpose of the booklet is to allow the team to assess the practicality of their designs, by knowing how the seating will be assembled and how many parts required. They can also sharpen their software skills during this process.

The booklet includes a final look at the design, assembly components and assembly.

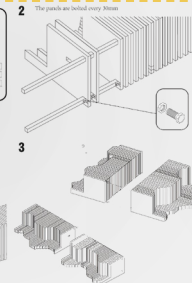
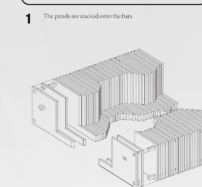
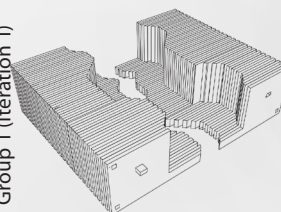
Through skill-sharing sessions on SketchUp and Adobe software, we hoped that this knowledge would benefit the students in the future.



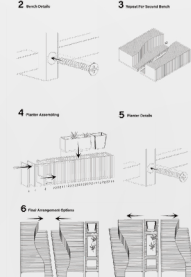
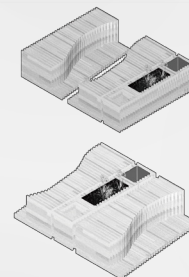
Group 1



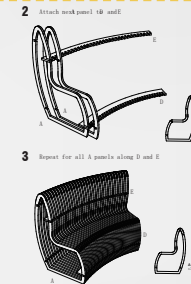
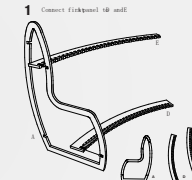
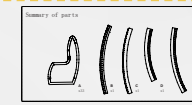
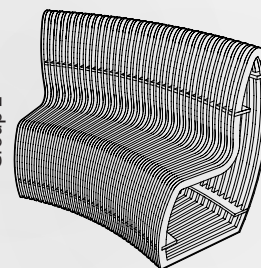
Group 1 (iteration 1)



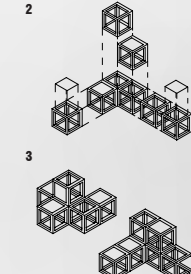
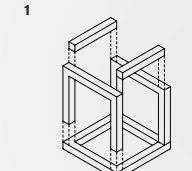
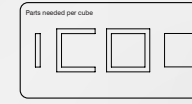
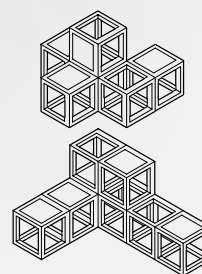
Group 1 (iteration 2)



Group 2



Group 3

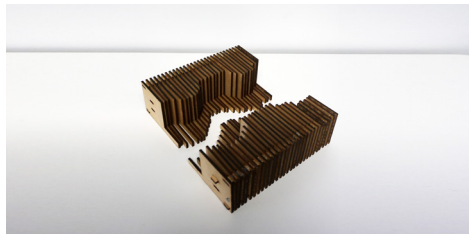
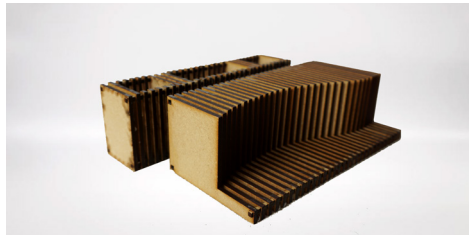


// Furniture

Model Making

To test the furniture's connections and stability, we made a scaled physical model of our designs. Before producing the final prototype, we had a test run of the laser-cutting machine at B.15 Workshop to ensure all parts work well with each other.

After this process, we assembled the prototype. Once this is done, the students gathered in the studio to take images of their models. These images will help them to produce visualisations of the furniture in the next session.



// Detailed Element

Placemaking Exploration

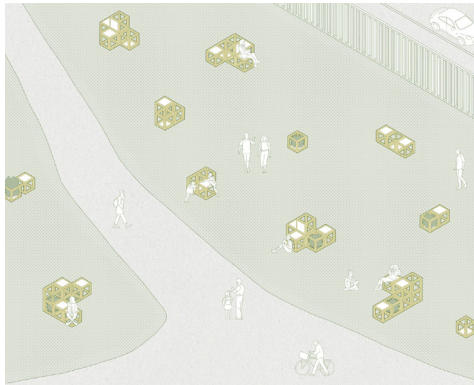
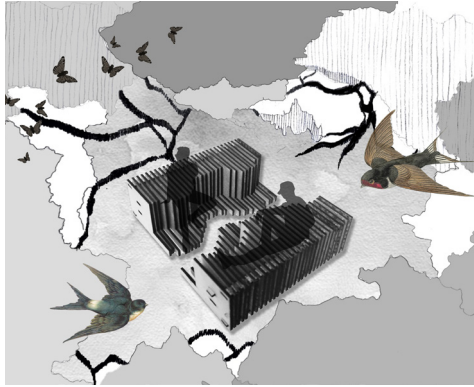
Adding to the furniture, we explored other placemaking elements. We made use of recycled papers, fabrics, boards and plastic bottles to compliment the furniture. We had a lot of fun with it! Some of the students even went so far as to make cushions to be placed on the seating.



// Poster

During the final weeks, we produced a series of a poster depicting our imagination regarding the furniture being placed on site. The team had a lot of fun exploring Photoshop. It was interesting to see the difference in styles when creating the poster.

From the posters, they can also express the furniture's ability to adapt to its surroundings, interacting with humans and nature.



// Presentation & Handover

On the final day, our collaborators: Abigail and Mark joined us at Station South for a presentation.

Before the presentation, we made note of any changes in our output or process that had occurred. After that, each group presented their designs. They were able to effectively convey their ideas with the use of a scaled physical model, instruction manual, and visualisations.



// Reflections

As a non-profit organisation, our collaborator had to secure their own funding and rely on volunteers for their projects, something we should have taken into consideration when establishing the brief.

If we could have done things differently, we would encouraged the BA students to develop designs that better reflected our collaborators' nature of work. In addition to the instruction manual, a cost and in-depth material study exercise could also be useful. More aspects of sustainability would also be introduced.

Nonetheless, Upcycle has been a rewarding experience for both participants and collaborator.



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

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