

MANCHESTER SCHOOL
OF ARCHITECTURE

REWORKING



WITHINGTON

BATHS

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MSA
LIVE 23

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Partners

This student-led project, in collaboration with Love Withington Baths, focuses on re-imagining the entrance and external space of the leisure centre, the last remaining Edwardian baths in Manchester.

Love Withington Baths is a community-run charity organisation. It was established in 2015 and the organisation comprises four trustees, including Paul Smith as the chair, Saqib Mohammed Hussain, Alice de Araujo, and David Payne. Withington Baths risked a complete shut-down in the 2013. However, the local community rallied together, staging a peaceful protest which saved the baths from the brink of closer. Love Withington Baths formed a core committee and successfully became a Charitable trust which means the community operates the building and all profits are used to maintain the it.

Withington Baths now stands as a symbol of its community who preserves and celebrate its heritage. Over the years the building has undergone multiple indoor and outdoor changes. Some of these include: new gym, studio classes, coworking spaces and cafe space. The building has plans to undergo further changes in order to better accommodate its diverse community.

Agenda

REWORKING WITHINGTON BATHS

The main task for this project was to refurbish the entrance and reception area of the existing building. The entrance area and the reception have faced several constraints which the design sought to address. The project aims to enhance the entrance and reception area by making the most of the available space, showcasing the building's historic architecture, and creating an inclusive atmosphere. The design also aims to improve accessibility, provide an efficient flow of movement, and create a sense of arrival and welcome.

In addition, we plan to incorporate the unused female entrance and highlight its architectural history, adding functional seating areas outside, incorporating greenery, and creating an inviting environment that appeals to different demographics. This will create an outdoor public space that will be a gathering place for the local community. We hope to draw more people to the area, creating a vibrant, thriving hub of activity. To ensure a successful transformation of the space we will execute the project in stages, starting with an evaluation, concept development and implementation to ensure a successful transformation of the space.

Timeline

The timeline for the two Action weeks has been divided into iterative design phase (week 1) and developing final design options phase (week 2).

Week 1 started with a site visit to Withington Baths where we undertook a building tour and a heritage tour. From this, the students were able to develop their initial design options which were compiled into a presentation for the client. At the end of the week we were able to present six outdoor and indoor reception layout options to the client. The consultation with the client allowed us to get feedback and understand their key concerns such as security of the outdoor space and indoor reception.

In week 2, the students were able to take the feedback from the client and develop a final proposal for the reception and outdoor space. They developed their final design option through sketches, 3D digital modelling, rendering and creating a physical model. The final proposals were presented to the client at the end of the week



First Meeting

To kick start the project, we had our first meeting at Withington Baths where the students were able to meet the client and understand the two week project. After the initial meeting we attended a building and a heritage tour on site. This allowed the students to understand the historical importance of the building and the key issues the client wanted us to tackle when developing a proposal.

After the tours, we held a short workshop where the students were able to sketch out their individual initial ideas, taking into account the clients key concerns that were outlined in the morning tours.



About the Site

Site Heritage

Withington baths is the oldest functioning heritage baths in the city. It was built in the early 20th century to offer regular baths to people as they did not have them in their homes. People were able to rent towels which were washed in the basement and pay to have a bath. The baths were separated into first and middle class, with the water from the first class being fed into the middle class. At the end of each week, the baths would be cleaned out which meant baths on a Friday were considerably cheaper than the start of the week. The baths consisted of separate pools, entrances and changes rooms for males and females. In 1914, Withington Baths became the first mixed pool in Manchester.

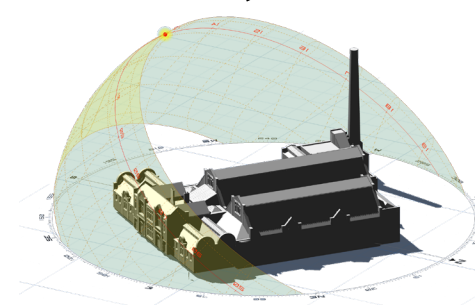


Today, one of the pools has been transformed into a gym and the warden's quarters, which used to house the warden responsible for heating the baths, is now a co-working space. Withington Baths now also offers swimming pools, a gym, studio classes, office space rentals, and a café with all the profits being used to maintain the building for its community.

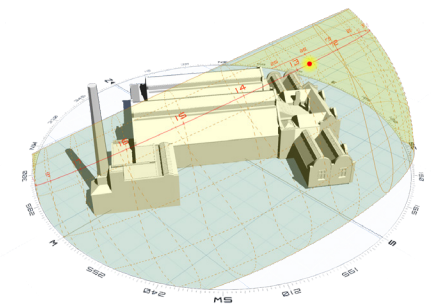


Site Development

Solar Study



North Orientation of the Site

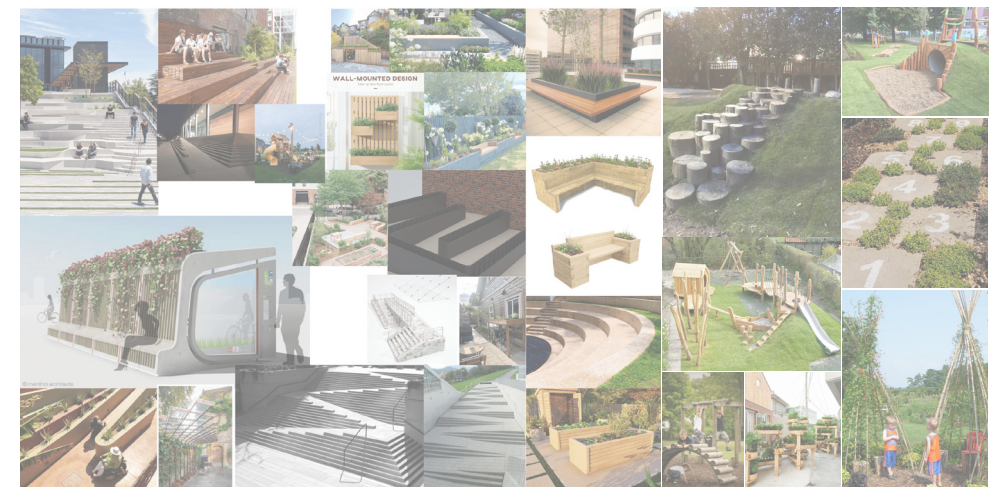


South Orientation of the Site

We conducted a solar study of the site to identify potential landscaping opportunities and the shading and sunlight distribution pattern, allowing us to zone the area for vegetative and non-vegetative purposes. This enabled us to plan the placement of vegetation to take full advantage of the available sunlight and optimise the use of space. We also used the data collected to inform the placement of outdoor furniture and equipment.

Outdoor Mood Board

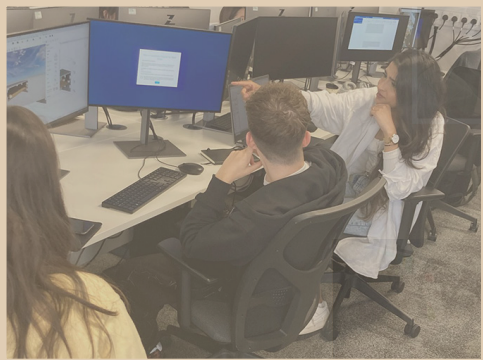
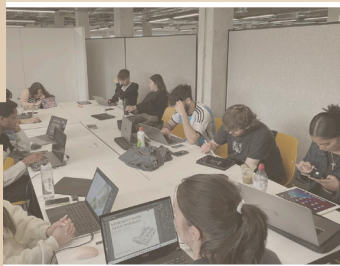
Before we started designing, we created a mood board from researching precedents for the outdoor communal space. The aim of this exercise was to gain inspiration on how we can tackle the key issues such as: as creating an improved ramp, creating a better outdoor gathering space and a better outdoor play area for the children.



Workshops

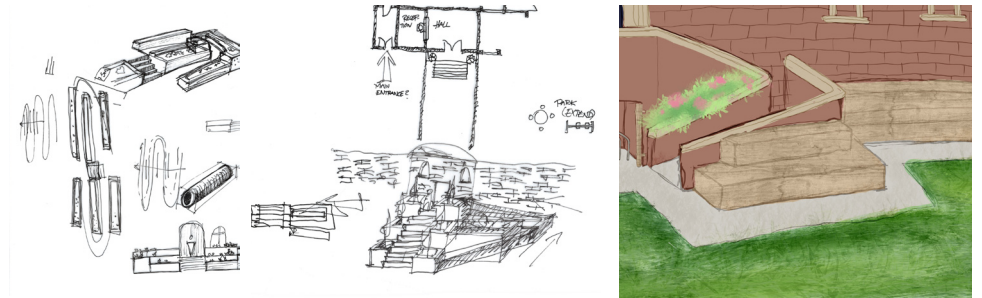


In order to advance the outputs to a more professional appearance, the students were taught software skills such as digimaps, revit, AutoCAD, twinmotion, enescape and photoshop.



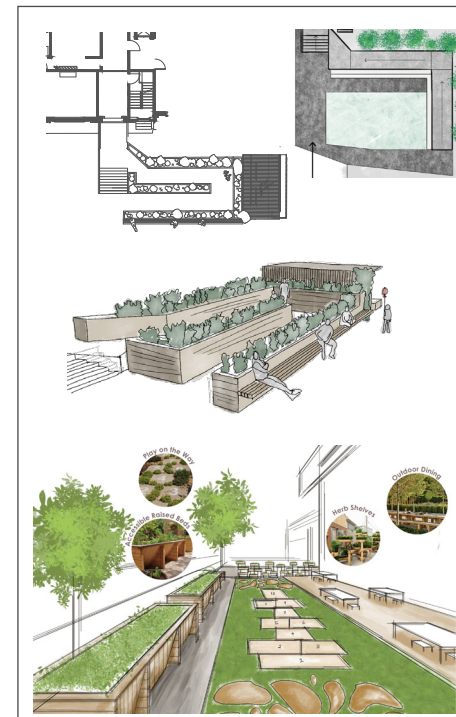
Design Proposals

Initial Sketches



The main task for this project was to refurbish the entrance and reception area of the existing building. The entrance area and the reception have faced several constraints which the design sought to address. The project aims to enhance the entrance and reception area accessibility.

External Proposals



Reception Proposals



Initial Consultation



The students met for the first time with Group 11, who undertook a separate area of the Baths. This was valuable time to practice presentation skills before meeting the client, as well as gaining a different perspective on the site.



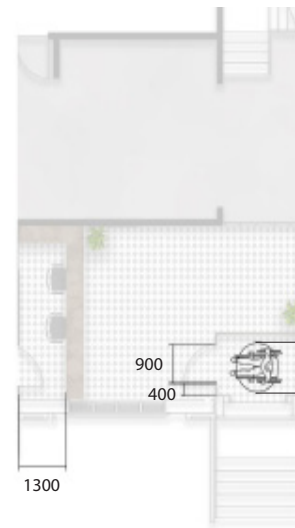
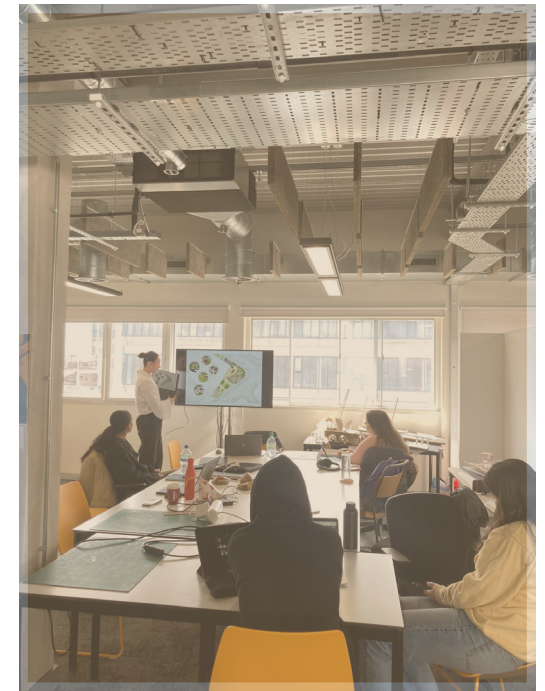
We then travelled down to withington baths to present our initial concepts to the client, gaining valuable feedback to carry into the next design stage of the project. A Few points included the need for staff in the reception area to be sheltered from the draught, security and accessibility via a reconsidered and more aesthetically pleasing ramp.



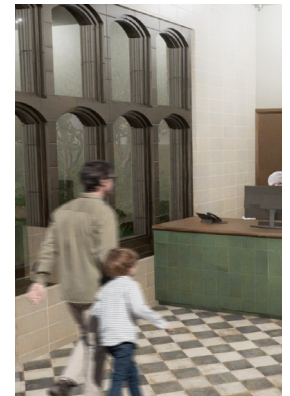
Redesign

Using the software skills learnt during the workshops, the students set out to redesign the proposals according to the client's feedback. Two teams were organised: One working on the digital models and renders, and one on the physical external model

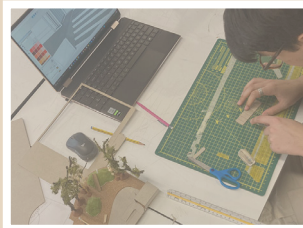
Following the client's reminder that accessibility was the most important aspect of the scheme, the internal group began in depth research into building regulations, designing a space that provided comfort to both staff and customer.



Advancing vignette collages to renders



Model



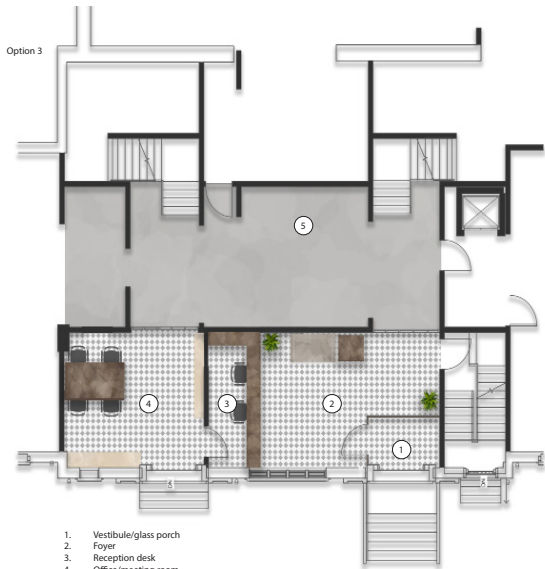
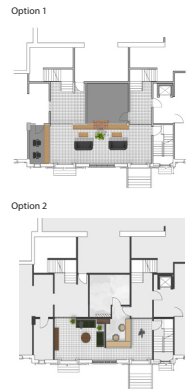
Day 7: Using the feedback from the Client from day 4 and the revised iterations, the BA students crafted a physical model to better visualise their design.

Process: After using the laser cutter for the base, the different materials of the landscaping were crafted by cork, grayboard and model grass.

The final external model was presented in tandem with Group 11's basement model, to allow the client an overview of the proposal for the entire site.



Internal



- 1. Vestibule/glass porch
- 2. Foyer
- 3. Reception desk
- 4. Office/meeting room
- 5. Communal space

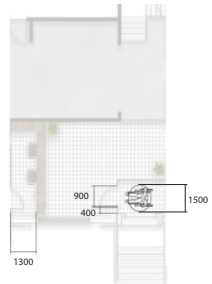
View of reception desk



View of reception desk from main entrance



Access & use



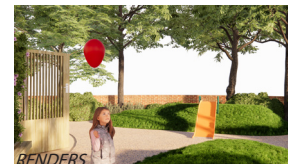
Material & colour palette



External



MASTERPLAN



RENDERS



RENDERED ELEVATION

ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 students with those in BA 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 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 650 students from 4 cohorts in MSA have worked on 42 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

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

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BLOG

live.msa.ac.uk/2023

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