

This document outlines a Blue Green Statement for the Castlefield Viaduct (for both pilot and long term vision) within the context of the [Manchester's Great Outdoors- A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025 \(G&BIS\)](#) proportionate to the temporary nature of the propose scheme. By

1. Overview

1.1 Headline vision: To run a temporary elevated urban park and attraction at Castlefield Viaduct that explores what may be possible by utilising an unused historic structure. This pilot provides a platform to facilitate consultation with local communities, enabling the project to deliver something of, for and by Manchester in the long-term. The pilot will seek input from local audiences and partners and test interventions so we can decide together how the main scheme will ultimately look, feel and work most successfully to improve the cities green and blue infrastructure.

1.2 Objectives:

- To temporarily reutilise an unused and currently inaccessible grey space for a 'micro park' to test and codevelop a long-term scheme that maximises benefits for both communities and biodiversity.
- To test design elements and make sure the urban park becomes a high-quality nature and heritage space in the long term.

>> *All feeds into viable Phase Two main scheme (long-term objectives below)*

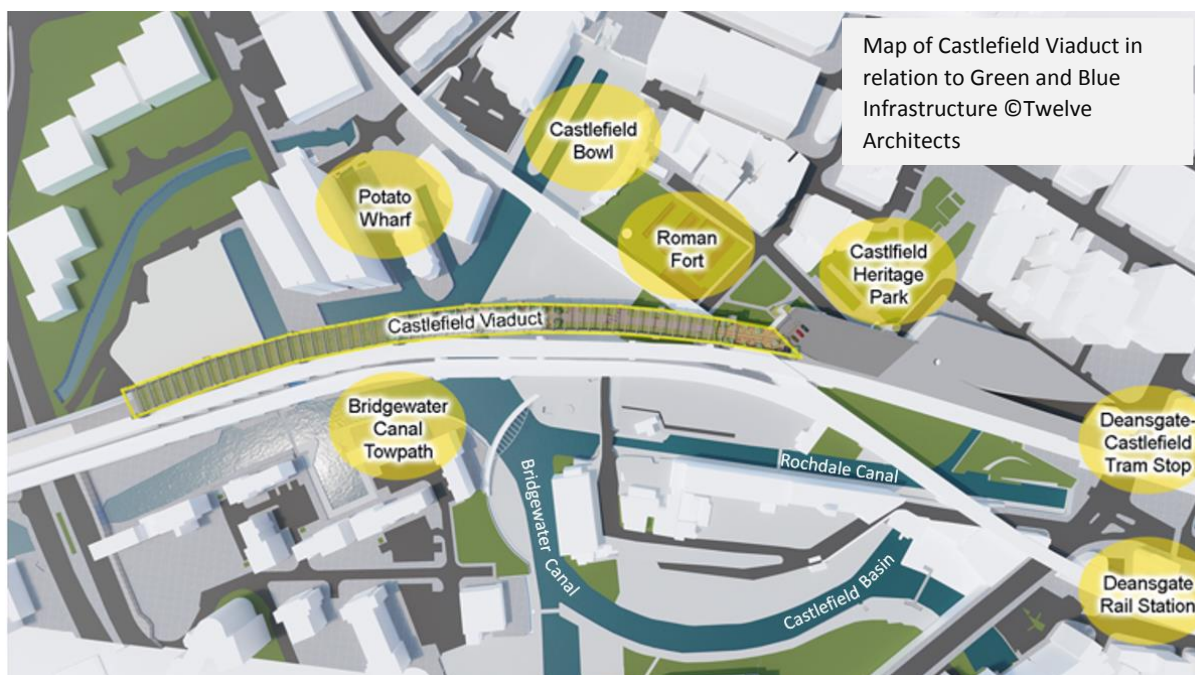
- To create a new, high quality green and open space for the people of Manchester that is appropriate to its location.
- To create a destination park for onward and active travel.
- To create sense of Mancunian ownership and sense of place for the viaduct.

2. Location

The Castlefield Viaduct is located in the historically significant area of Castlefield, characterised by the criss-crossing network of transport infrastructure, two historic canals and canal basin, a river overlaid with railway lines and surrounded by historic warehouses. The blue and green infrastructure of Castlefield is linked to its heritage, with the Bridgewater and Rochdale Canal and towpaths, alongside the Urban Heritage Park and Roman Fort Gardens with the viaduct right in the centre.

The city centre of Manchester, of which Castlefield forms a part, is identified as a distinct area in the city with relatively low levels of green and blue infrastructure provision as a densely populated area¹. The viaduct itself provides an opportunity to create new green infrastructure through the development of a disused asset that complements the green blue infrastructure in the immediate area including the Urban Heritage park, Roman Gardens and Canal basin. There is also the potential in the longer term to work with partners to enhance the canal corridors and urban street networks through active travel and/or wider initiatives.

¹ Figure 10 City Centre, pg.30, *Manchester's Great Outdoors- A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025 (G&BIS)*



3. How will this project help realise the city's vision for Manchester?

The long-term vision for the Castlefield Viaduct Project responds to all four of the Manchester City Council's green blue infrastructure objectives, as summarised below. Some elements can be tested through the delivery of the temporary pilot scheme and others by a delivered in the Phase Two Main Scheme².

Objective 1: Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue Infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers.

The Castlefield Viaduct responds to objective one in the following way:

- By creating a brand new accessible green space by unlocking an unused 'grey' structure in the city centre (pilot and long-term permanent scheme)
- Providing an outdoor space for local neighbourhoods and the wider Manchester population to use and enjoy (long term permanent scheme)
- By enhancing the Castlefield area by bringing a disused heritage asset into use and raising Castlefield's profile as a place to visit.
- Serving local community and new communities, through consultation on the pilot to understand what would best benefit local neighbourhoods in the phase Two scheme.
- Providing additional green space as the population of Manchester grows through the new residential developments on the edges of the city centre, including the 16,500 homes³ planned to the west of the city centre.

² Phase Two Scheme will be covered by a separate planning application in the future following the completion of the Phase One Pilot proposed here.

³ Figure 6 Objective 2: New Development- Headline Actions, pg.20, *Manchester's Great Outdoors- A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025 (G&BIS)*

Objective 2: Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth

- The core component of the proposed development is greening the structure and creating a new useable green space that can be used and enjoyed by local neighbourhoods. (long term permanent scheme)
- Consultation as part of the pilot will work with the people of Manchester alongside local neighbourhoods to ensure a permanent scheme would provide access to nature for local people and deliver for the community.

Objective 3: Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond

- As a destination green space, encourage walkable neighbourhood links from communities to the asset through active travel, either with viaduct as a travel hub, destination or thoroughfare.⁴ This would include the exploration of the routes to and from the viaduct via canal towpaths, working in partnership with other organisations tested through the pilot scheme.

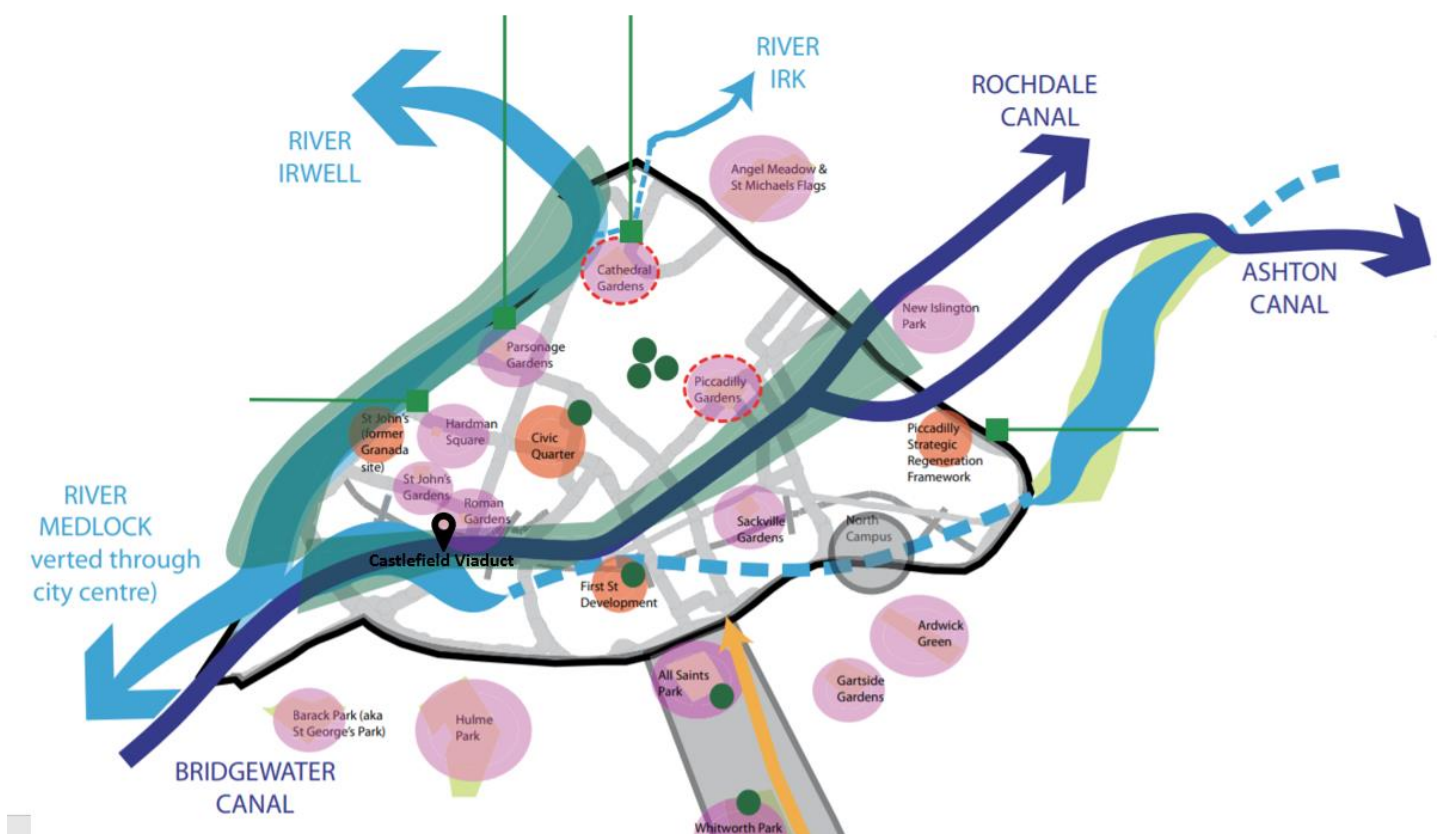


Figure 10 City Centre, **Manchester's Great Outdoors- A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-2025 (G&BIS)** Identifying the viaduct in an area with identified opportunities to enhances the quality and accessibility of existing parks and greenspaces and enhancing blue corridors, creating safe, attractive green routes for walkable/cyclable city.

⁴ Please note: the exploration of this route becoming a thoroughfare would be considered for the full scheme only. Any outcomes of this would rely on further work to consider suitability of options.

Objective 4: Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment

- Promote the benefits of green space, nature and biodiversity through the activation of the viaduct through interpretation and programming.
- Provide opportunities to show local best practice for local organisations that could include recognition of local greening and nature work.
- Explore working in partnership with local organisations off viaduct to share learning, deliver
- Explore ways to engage businesses and communities to get involved through consultation, communication, education and potential training.
- Raise profile of the Manchester as a attractive place to live with access to quality green space within the city as a high profile project.