



National
Trust

Castlefield Viaduct Planning Proposal Public Consultation Summary Report 2021



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1. Project

For several years, local people and organisations in the community have been passionate about finding a future for Castlefield viaduct. The National Trust are excited to be working with them to try to make this a reality.

As a charity committed to protecting nature, beauty and history, our work covers everywhere from remote islands and nature reserves to urban heritage and city parks. Our work in, around and near urban areas is about giving more people the opportunity to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of green, nature-rich parks and gardens.

The long-term vision is to transform Castlefield viaduct into a free-to-access park and meeting place for people and nature. Imagine a hidden oasis sitting above this busy city.

It will be a space that respects the listed structure, celebrates the nature, beauty and history of the viaduct, and fits in with existing plans for the city. As well as bringing people closer to nature in the city, it will be a steppingstone to other South Manchester green spaces and attractions on foot or bike. The viaduct will take its place in this vibrant area for cultural and heritage, sitting alongside iconic Manchester venues including the Science and Industry Museum and The Factory.

Over the past months we have been assessing the safety and condition of the viaduct to help us to understand what its future could look like. We want to open the viaduct next summer as a temporary park to test ideas and this consultation was designed to get feedback on this Phase One design.



Concept art, before and after
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2. Consultation

2.1 Background to the engagement

In May 2021, the National Trust announced its ambitions to find a future for the disused Castlefield Viaduct in Manchester. We are in the early stages of a project to bring the Grade II structure back into use, transforming it into a green oasis created by and for the benefit of local people.

The National Trust propose to run a temporary pilot scheme starting in the Summer 2022, to try things out and consult with local communities about what they want this space to be in the long term. With the support from the team at Twelve Architects, the National Trust have come up with an initial design proposal for the temporary pilot.

We will apply for a change of use to open the viaduct next summer as a temporary park. The proposal and design would enable us to invite members of the public up into the space safely, to experience and learn more about the structure and most importantly for us to hear from the public about what they would like to see as part of any permanent scheme.

Prior to finalising the design proposals and submitting a formal application, we wanted to hear from the public, particularly local people who would be most affected by the development, to feedback on the pilot designs, its scope and raise any concerns that they may have about its delivery. This would enable the project team to address any issues raised prior to submitting a formal application to the local authority.



Castlefield Viaduct
©National Trust/ Jennifer Ingham

2.2 Asking for people's feedback

The purpose of this document is to provide an analysis of the public responses on the proposed planning application for a temporary park on the Castlefield Viaduct.

On 23rd May the National Trust launched a public consultation, supported by a questionnaire to find out people's views on the planning proposals. The questionnaire was live until the 26th July, prior to which a range of consultation events and briefings alongside local and national media and social media activity was delivered to encourage people to respond.

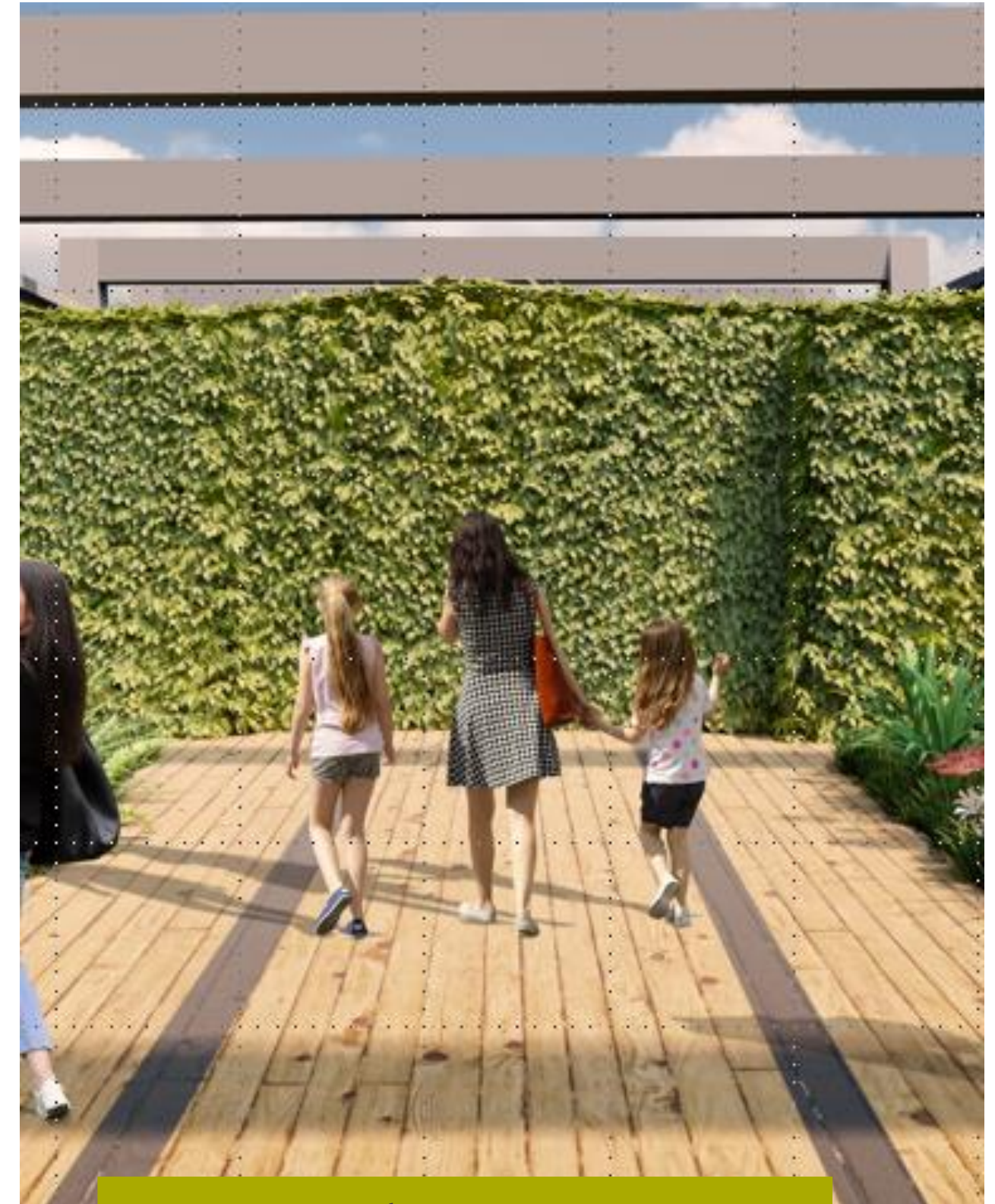
National Trust were particularly keen to hear from local people, who live and work in the immediate area around the viaduct who would be most affected by the planning proposals on a day to day basis.

2.3 How we did it

We offered a range of dates at different times of day for people to attend.

Dates of sessions were as follows:

- 30th June 2021: Online consultation (MS Teams) 13:00-14:00
- 1st July 2021: Online consultation (MS Teams) 18:00-19:00
- 6th July 2021: Online consultation (MS Teams) 19:00-20:00
- 22nd July 2021: Drop in session at the museum of Science and Industry, face to face, 12:00-15:00
- 26th July 2021: Presentation to Castlefield Forum (local residential forum), face to face, 19:30-20:30



Concept art, welcome area
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2.4 Engagement documents, questionnaire and materials

A webpage on the National Trust website was developed to host information about the project and display planning material, including the masterplan, images of the proposed designs and the headline operational model for the public to view.

A simple questionnaire of 17 questions was created split across three sections:

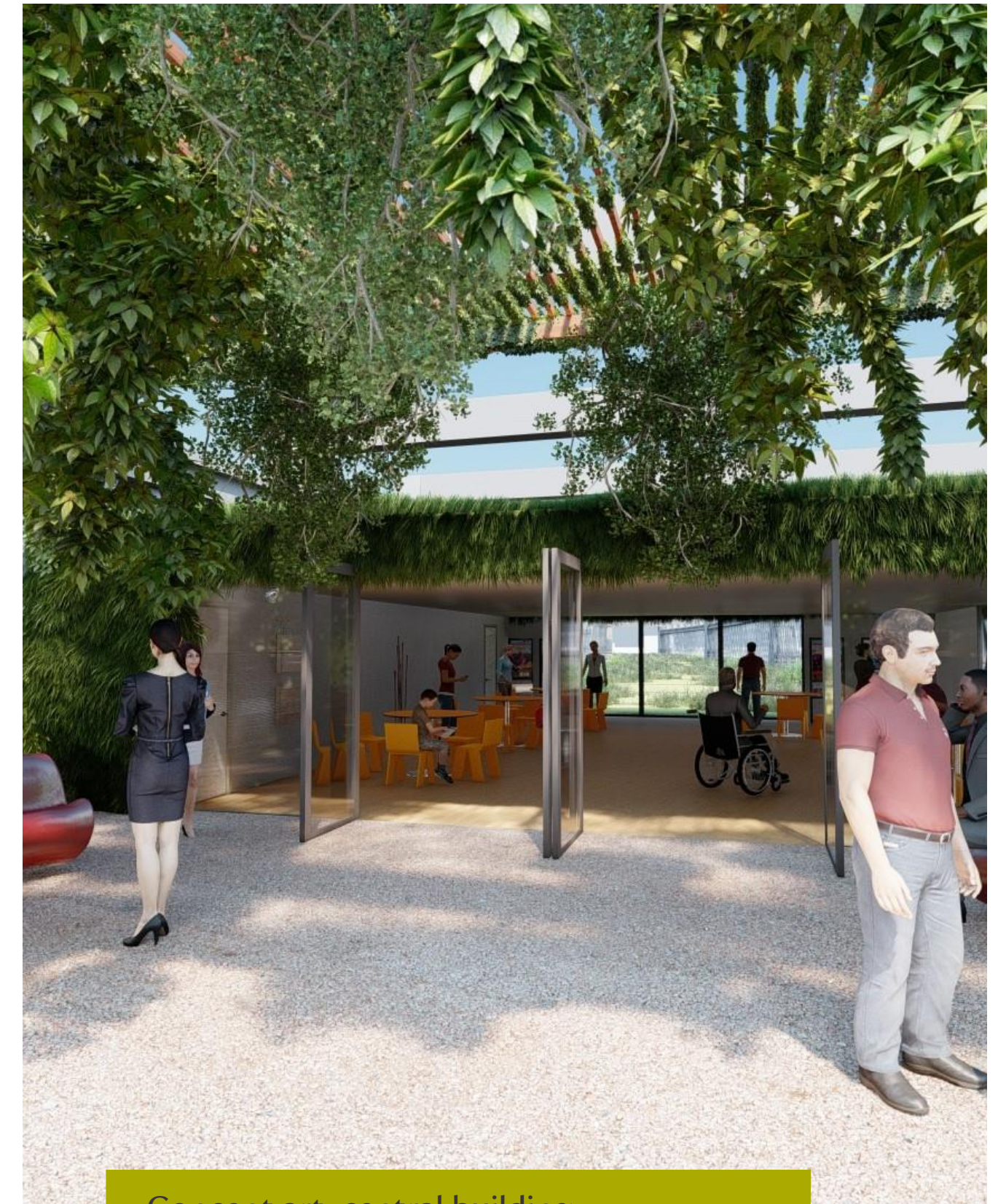
- Section One (questions 1-4) and Section Three (questions 13-17) were designed to find out the location and demographics of respondents.
- Section Two (questions 5-12) were designed to assess levels of support, impact, important issues and give respondents the opportunity to raise any concerns.

Thirteen of the 17 questions were multiple choice. Three offered free text boxes to enable people to provide more detail to their answers.

Documents made available online were as follows:

- Masterplan
- [Video](#)
- Design Images
- Pilot overview
- Link to questionnaire (refer to appendices A-B)

All were available in large font and or alternative formats available on request.



Concept art, central building
© Twelve Architects & Masterplanners

2.5 Feedback mechanisms

Respondents could provide feedback in the following ways:

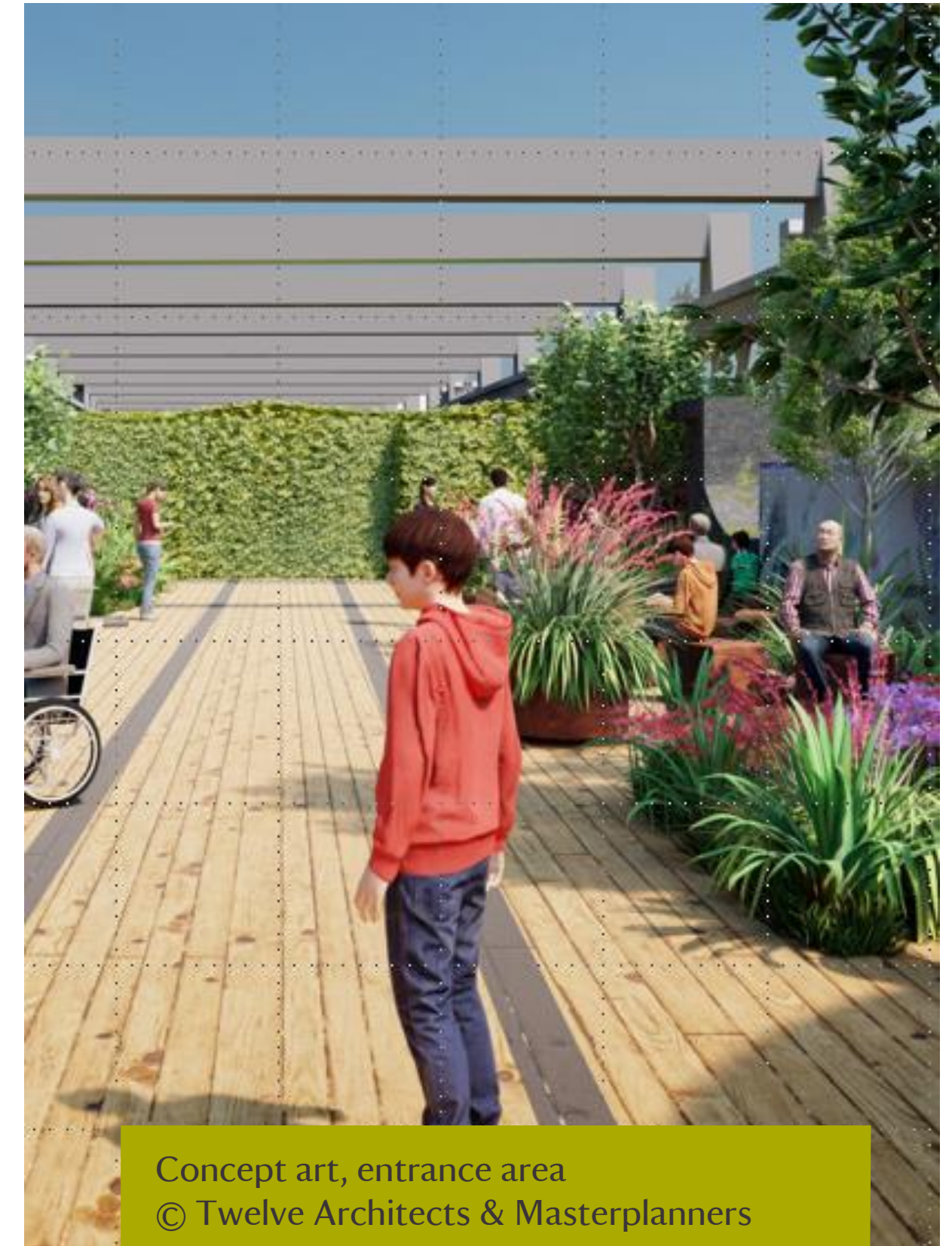
- Questionnaire
- Questions and comments as part of the online briefings live Q&A session
- Questions to staff at the live drop in consultation events
- Email

Although we targeted local responses, we ensured that those in the broader Greater Manchester area, Northwest region and further afield could also provide feedback if they wished.

2.6 Marketing and distribution

The National Trust were keen to target local audiences. We consulted locally, with our marketing approach concentrated on the immediate and residential community that would be most likely to be affected by the Phase One pilot scheme from construction and day to day operation.

Marketing was primarily focussed on local residents and community within a 20–30 minute walk, key partners and supporters. We publicised locally through Manchester media outlets, via press releases, interviews on the radio, on posters, A5 leaflets distributed by the Castlefield Forum, through local councillors, the Castlefield Forum and the Science and Industry Museum. Further publicisation of events was made through national and local media coverage alongside the promotion of the event through our National Trust Social Media channels.



Concept art, entrance area
© Twelve Architects & Masterplanners

We provided consultation material via our website(www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castlefield-viaduct) and advertised large font versions as well as alternative formats if required. Our feedback questionnaire via Surveymonkey was available online, and paper copies available at our face-to-face events.

We had initially planned to run two face to face drop in events at the Museum of Science and Industry and a single online session, but due to the extension of COVID-19 restrictions we moved to MS Teams video conference presentation. As soon as Covid-19 restrictions were lifted we allowed for one public face to face drop-in session and one face to face.



Marketing poster advertising consultation events
© National Trust



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Executive Summary



3. Executive summary

3.1 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to analyse and summarise the feedback we have received as part of the public consultation around the design proposals for the Phase One Pilot scheme.

3.2 Summary of results

In total, we engaged the following number of people through our online and face to face consultation events, alongside conversations with local organisations, ward councillors and those with an operational interest:

- Questionnaires: 319
- Consultation event attendees: 95
- Emails: 15

429 responses in total.

According to our analysis of the questionnaire feedback most of our responses came from Manchester, with 115 responses from the local area including the areas of Castlefield and Deansgate, and a further 104 responses from other postcodes in Manchester City Centre. There were 33 further responses from the wider Greater Manchester area and 17 from further afield.

From the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered as part of the consultation there is significant support for the proposal to turn the viaduct into a green space in the long term and to test this in summer 2022.

“What a fabulous idea, It’s perfect and will have broad appeal”

Anon, Questionnaire

“This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Let's go for it!”

Anon, Questionnaire

“I hope that this scheme does get given the green light!”

Anon, Questionnaire

We received a substantial number of positive comments through the free text answers in the questionnaire, the online consultations session chat function and our face-to-face events.

Overall, 99.68% of people were supportive of the scheme and 100% would visit.

Findings supported much of our thinking when we were putting together the design proposals. There were no new or unexpected issues that have resulted in any key changes to the design itself.

3.3 Key themes, issues and concerns

People are keen to see nature and heritage as part of the viaduct plans, with a recognition from local people that there needs to be more green space in the city centre. We will be able to test some of these areas, through planting but also through the programming and activation of the space. We will be taking this into consideration over the next few months and including this public feedback into our approach.

Key concerns from the public were around accessibility and inclusion to scheme. The design itself is DDA compliant with the spaces on the viaduct deck itself designed in a way that would be safe and easy to navigate. Disabled access up to the carpark deck is a challenge that was identified by respondents throughout the consultation and is one we are striving to work with others to reactivate lift access up to the carpark deck, in conjunction with the lift owners. Accessibility will remain a key consideration when approaching programming and activation of the space.

Another key concern from the public was around antisocial behaviour, including litter and vandalism. We have taken this into consideration in the design proposals with a 'secure by design' approach to discourage antisocial behaviour, and by reactivating the space and creating a desirable and popular staffed attraction in the area, the likelihood and opportunity for antisocial behaviour will reduce.

“ Please consider the diversity of Manchester and include artists, architects and designer from different races, abilities, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds to create a space that's truly inclusive and representative of the city ”

Anon, Questionnaire

“ Would love for Manchester people to be able to help out with this in terms of volunteer work! ”

Anon, Questionnaire

“ Security should be a key feature. Which is important it does not just become another area that isn't managed properly ”

Anon, Questionnaire

We will also work with our neighbours to take a holistic view of the area and implement additional measures, such as CCTV, as required.

Some comments were made around the opportunities this scheme could present to local artists, businesses and people and this needs to be representative of Manchester. We agree: working with the people and communities is at the heart of this scheme, through programming and activation of the space and partner plots. We will be exploring further in the coming months.

Respondents have helpfully made suggestions of organisations we should get in touch with around partnerships and engagement. We will be picking up these conversations once the planning application is submitted and we turn our thinking to programming and activation. This also includes ways to engage local communities, diverse, and harder to reach groups to ensure we can be truly accessible and inclusive and will form part of a wider consultation piece delivered during the pilot.

We received feedback that people would prefer the Phase One pilot not to be guided as it is too restrictive. Our ambition is that any Phase Two permanent scheme would be for unsupervised visits to enable people to have more freedom, however this is not possible for the pilot due to health and safety reasons and the constraints of the site.

Some comments indicated they would like to see the scope of the pilot to extend further to include the carpark and other grey spaces. Due to other planned uses for the carpark between 2021-2024 we are unable to include this as part of the Phase One plans. Our ambition in the future would be to explore how we could connect the viaduct with other spaces, not necessarily part of the viaduct, to create a 'string of pearls' in the area.

“ Please consider the diversity of Manchester and include artists, architects and designer from different races, abilities, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds to create a space that's truly inclusive and representative of the city ”

Anon, Questionnaire

“ Would love for Manchester people to be able to help out with this in terms of volunteer work! ”

Anon, Questionnaire

“ Security should be a key feature. Which is important it does not just become another area that isn't managed properly ”

Anon, Questionnaire

3.3 People value

A short online survey was undertaken by Purcell as part of the Statement of Heritage Significance to assess the people value of the viaduct locally. The report overwhelmingly indicated that people see the structure as a positive asset to the area. More detail on this can be found in the Statement of Heritage Support submitted as part of the planning application.

3.4 Feedback on issues out of scope

Due to the temporary nature of the planning application there are some things we are not able to do as part of the Phase One pilot. This includes any permanent changes to the structure or the inclusion of any areas outside of the viaduct deck that are not in our control.

There was significant consensus from public feedback that turning the viaduct into a thoroughfare to other areas of the city and a secondary exit would be beneficial. This is something we have considered for any Phase Two permanent scheme and agree this is an important element that needs to be explored further for the any permanent scheme. These comments have been logged and will feed into thinking for next design phases.

There were some differences in opinions around shared access, with numerous comments that would like to see the space pedestrian only and other that would like to see it a shared space. This would be a greater consideration for any Phase Two permanent scheme. It has been agreed that the Phase One Pilot that that this consultation refers to, will remain pedestrian only due to site constraints, although we encourage cycling as a means of travel to and will provide a

“ I was disappointed to see that it would be guided tours only. This space would be so valuable as an area for contemplation. Having guided tours only feels like a hugely missed opportunity and minimises its value to the local area. ”

Anon, Questionnaire

“ This scheme could provide a new public park, an extra lung for the city, in line with GM clean air proposals. it has potential for outdoor education arts, culture and emotional wellbeing. ”

Anon, Questionnaire

“ Could we see proposals for making it a through route - so you could walk from the ring road to the Tram stop via the park? ”

Anon, Questionnaire

number of bike racks for visitors in the entrance space.

2.5 Next steps

The National Trust has reviewed the findings of the engagement and considered feedback as part of the design. Where able, within the constraints of the structure, we have listened to feedback and focussed on areas of concern.

The next step is to use this report as a supporting document for the official planning application for the temporary pilot scheme in Summer 2022.

Should the National Trust be successful in securing planning permission for Phase One in Summer 2022, it will enable a significant community consultation piece. This wider consultation will let the Trust hear from the public on what they would like to see in a permanent scheme. This feedback will inform the design and operation in the long term.



Concept art, viaduct as existing
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Key findings

319
questionnaire
responses to the
consultation

100%
Would visit the
project

429
responses
overall

Accessibility
and inclusion in
the project is
important to
people

96.8%
support the
project

People would like
to see the final
scheme (Phase 2)
be a thoroughfare
of some
description

87%
think this would
positively impact
their life



93.1%
identify nature
as one of the
key draws to
visit the viaduct
scheme



Security is
important to
people





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Overview of questionnaire feedback



Overview of responses



Question 1: Are you a resident of?
(Multiple choice: Deansgate, Hulme, Piccadilly, City of Manchester, Greater Manchester, other)

- 25.39% of responses came from the Deansgate area, followed by 6.27% from Hulme and 15.67% from the City of Manchester.
- Within the 'Other' category, 15 responses (4.7%) identified themselves as Castlefield residents, and 9 (2.82%) identified as Salford residents.



Question 2: If you are happy to, please provide the first 5 digits of your postcode (for example. M22 5E) F

- The majority of responses (81.19%) came from Manchester postcodes
- A further 10% of responses came from Greater Manchester postcodes.
- 8.4% were from further afield, including responses from (Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and some as far as London and Norfolk).



Question 3: Are you (Multiple choice: An employee working locally, A resident living locally, A landowner that has an interest locally, Other with option to specify)

- The majority of responses came from residents living locally (68.67%)
 - 17.92% came from employees working locally
 - Landowner only accounted for 1.26% of responses
 - The remaining 11.95% of responses identifying as 'other' included former employees and residents, business owners and visitors from outside the region.
-



Question 5: Would you support this project? (Multiple choice: Yes/No)

- A majority (98.69%) of respondents said yes, they would support the project
- Only 0.31% of respondents said they would not support the project.
- One respondent declined to answer



Question 6: Would you visit the scheme (Multiple choice: Yes/No)

- 100% of respondents said yes, they would visit the scheme



Question 7: How will this proposal impact your day-to-day life? (Multiple choice: Positive impact, Negative impact, No impact)

- The majority (87.15%) of respondents said this development would have a positive impact on their lives
- 12.85% said it would have no impact
- No respondents said it would have a negative impact



Question 8: Please expand on your answer to question 7 (Free text response)

Key themes around how it would have a positive impact included:

- Access to new green space and nature, including health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor space, a new place to visit/use, preserving and celebrating heritage of the area and improvement of the area.

The majority of those not impacted by the scheme was because they did not live locally.



Question 9: What would encourage you to visit Castlefield Viaduct? (Multiple choice: Nature, Heritage, Performance, Social event, Family activities, Food and/or beverage)

- The majority of respondents (93.10%) identified Nature as a key factor to encourage them to visit.
- Heritage (82.75%) was identified as the next key factor.
- The remaining elements scored as follows: Food/Beverage (55.17%), Social Event (41.38%), Performance (34.17%) Family Activities (25.39%)



Question 10: How would you plan to travel to the viaduct? (Multiple choice, Walk, Bike, Tram, Train, Car (driver), Car Passenger/taxi)

- The majority of respondents indicate they would use sustainable transport methods to get to the viaduct. 71.16% would walk, 18.5% would bike
- A significant number of respondents indicate they would use public transport to travel to the viaduct, 35.42% via tram and 14.11% via train.
- Travel by car or taxi received the lowest level of responses. With 8.46% indicate that they would use a car and 2.82% a taxi.

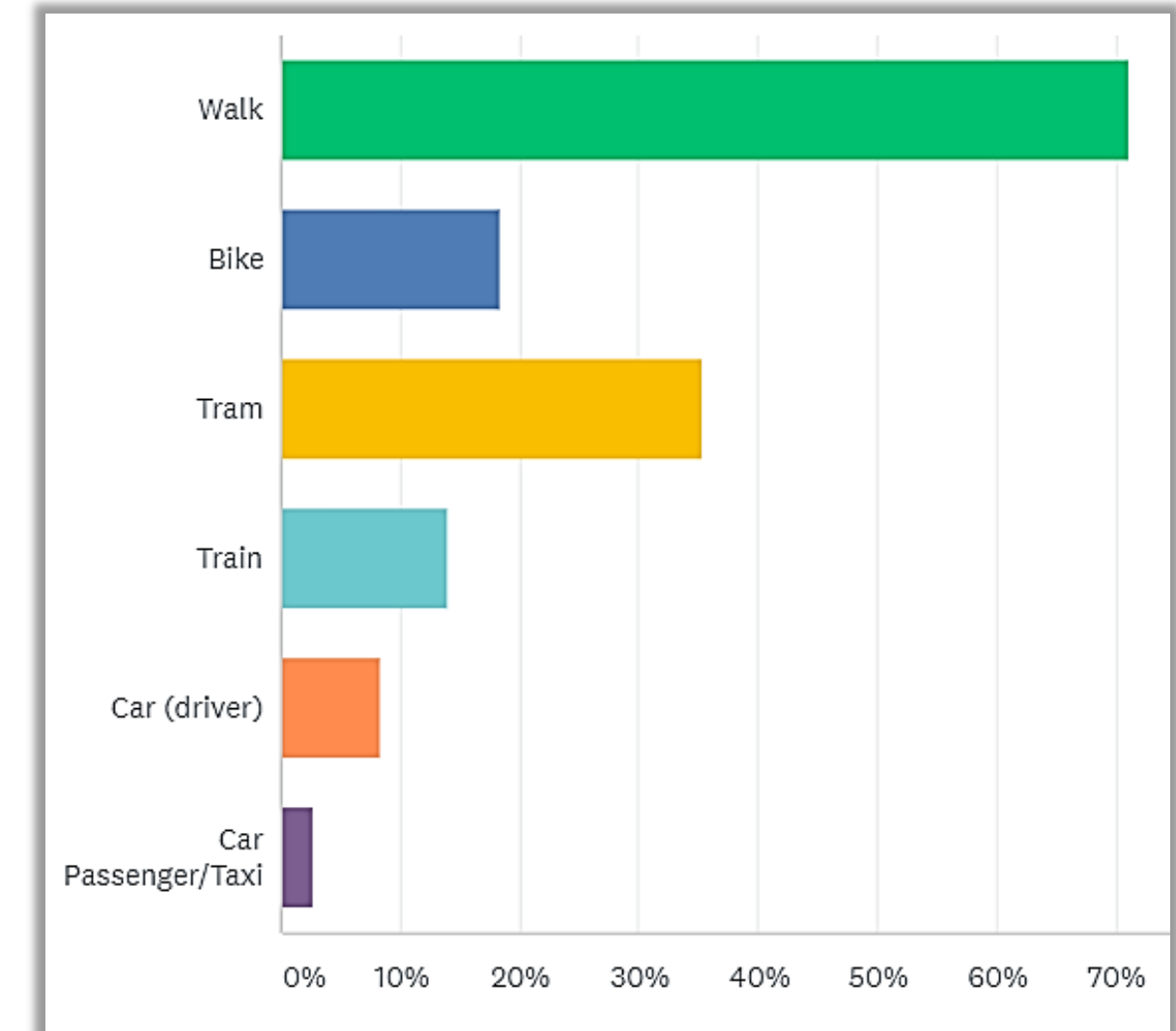


Figure 1: (above): Graph showing results of question 9, On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 not important, 5 very important) how important are the following issues to you regarding this proposal



Question 11: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 not important, 5 very important) how important are the following issues to you regarding this proposal:

Multiple choices options:

- Having more green space
- Celebrating Castlefield
- Community participation
- Accessibility of visit and experience
- Limiting noise during operation
- Impact on neighbors
- Additional traffic in the area
- Additional parking in the local area
- Antisocial behavior
- Personal safety
- Litter

Based on weighted averages (in brackets) the issues based on importance to people are as follows:

- Having more green space (4.82)
- Celebrating Castlefield (4.41)
- Litter (4.33)
- Accessibility of visit and experience (4.33)
- Antisocial behavior (4.26)
- Personal safety (4.20)
- Community participation (3.97)
- Impact on neighbors (3.53)
- Additional traffic in the area (3.22)
- Limiting noise during operation (3.02)
- Additional parking in the local area (2.85)

Key themes: A lot of the issues presented are ranked highly in importance from the responses. Those scoring more highly seem to split into two key areas

- a) provision of more green space and heritage
- b) more practical issues around antisocial behaviour.

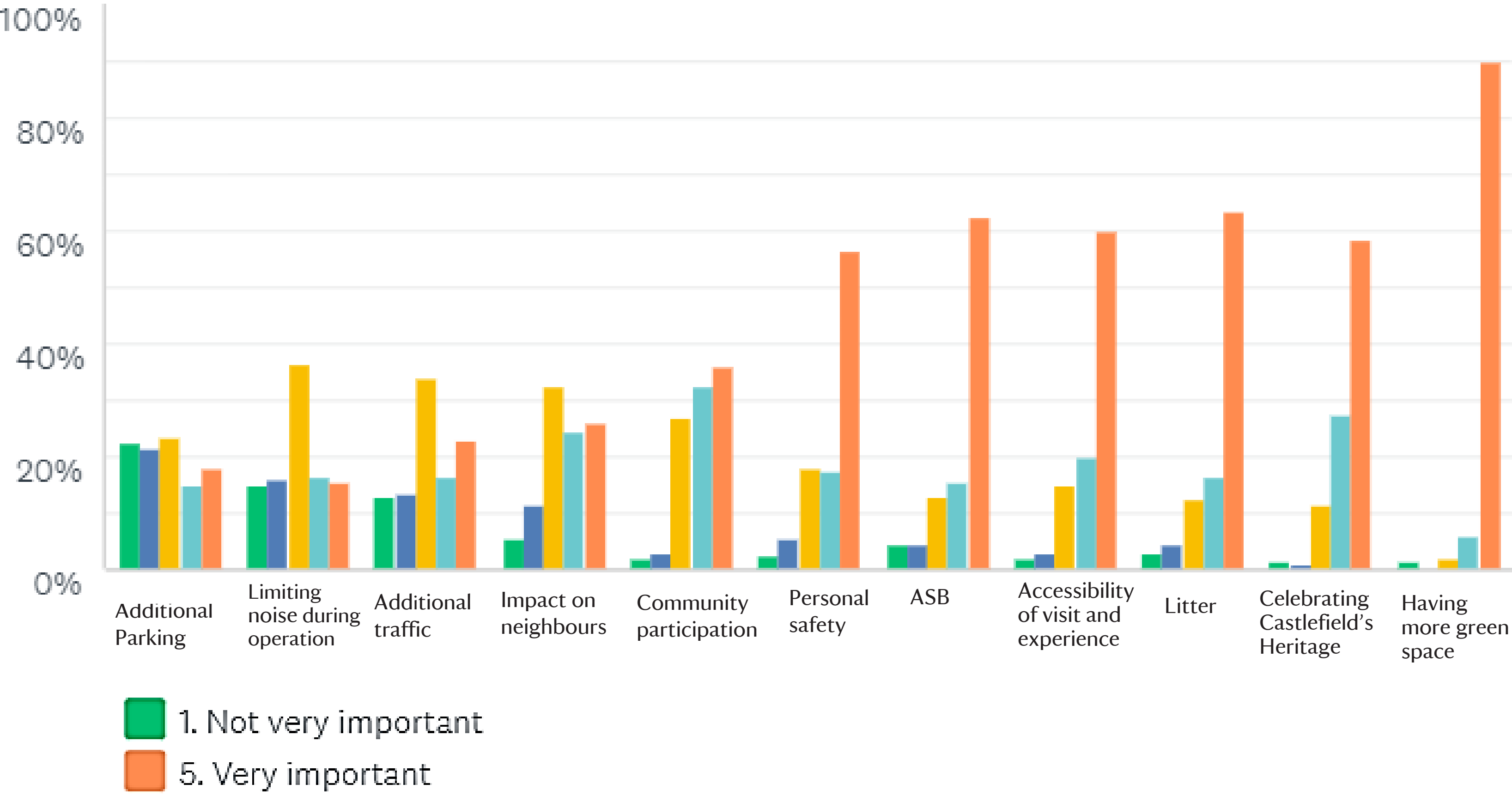


Figure 2 (above): Graph showing results of question 11, On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 not important, 5 very important) how important are the following issues to you regarding this proposal. The remaining colours correspond to the following rankings. dark blue (2), yellow (3) and light blue (4).



Question 12: Is there anything else you'd like to raise as part of this planning proposal? (Free text response)

Key themes:

- Significant portion of responses mention the need for **more accessible green space in Manchester city centre**
- People would like to see the scheme **support nature and biodiversity** though considered planting and retaining what is on the viaduct already
- **Accessibility both in terms of design and cost** was important to people to ensure that this park is accessible and representative of Manchester's diverse community

- **The need for a lift for access** was raised a few times, without which access from street level would be a big problem.
- Specific comments to consider that **one size doesn't fit all in terms of accessibility for users** including noise, clutter and movement and should be considered in design
- Respondents would like to see **opportunities to get involved in the project** provided, wither through volunteering, including educational groups or using local skills and professionals.
- A very small number indicated they **would prefer the scheme to be self guided** rather than solely through guided tours.
- A small number of respondents wanted to **avoid bar orientated space.**
- There were **some differences in opinion on the viaduct being a shared space for pedestrians and cyclists** in the long term (not applicable for pilot)
- A comment raised **the need for the space to LGBTQ+ friendly**
- A small number of comments were dog related, with respondents indicating they **would like the scheme to be dog friendly**
- A number of responses indicated they **would like to see the carpark (and wider) included in the scheme**
- A significant number of responses indicated they would **like to see the scheme be a thoroughfare**, or have a secondary exit point.

Question 13: are you? (Multiple choice: Male, Female, Other, Prefer not to say)

- 52.72% of respondents were female
- 45.05% male
- 0.64% identified as nonbinary
- 1.6% preferred not to say.
- 6 respondents declined to answer.

Question 14: Which age group are you in? (Multiple choice: Under 18, 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-77, 75+)

- Feedback from all age groups
- Majority of responses (65.82%) came from the 30-59 age ranges, with the 27.8% of those from the 30-39 age range.
- Only 0.32% came from under 18s and 1.92% from the over 75+.

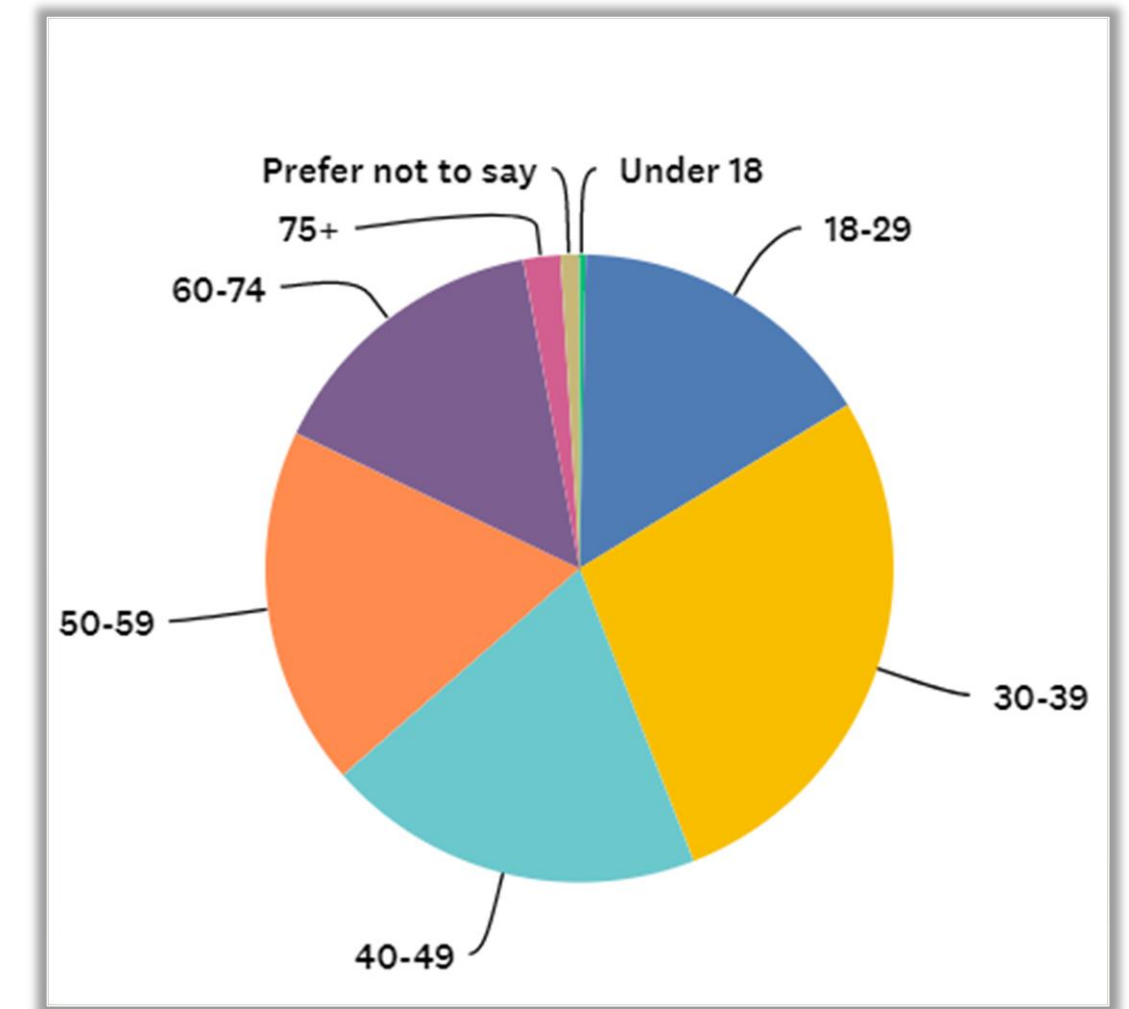


Figure 3 (above) Age ranges of respondents

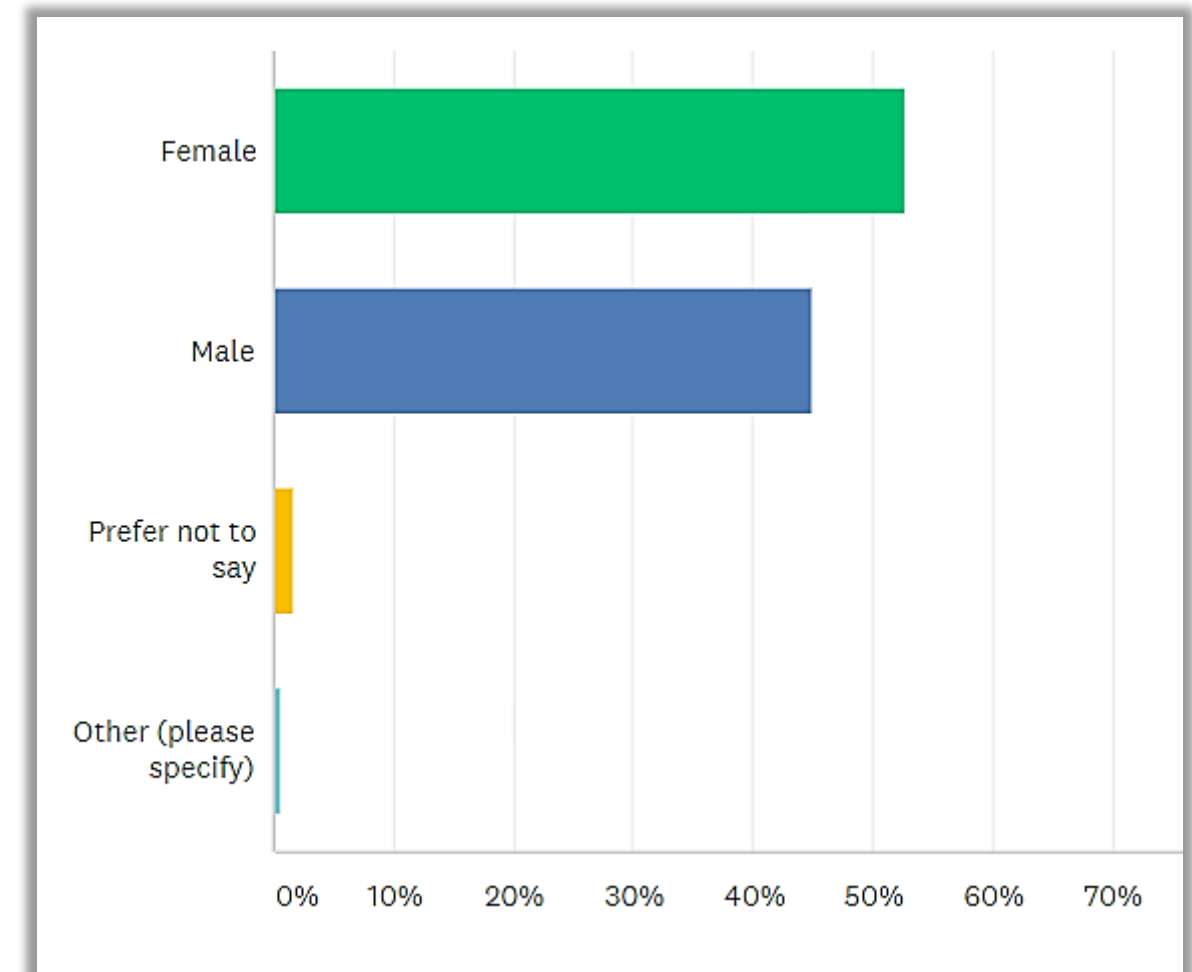


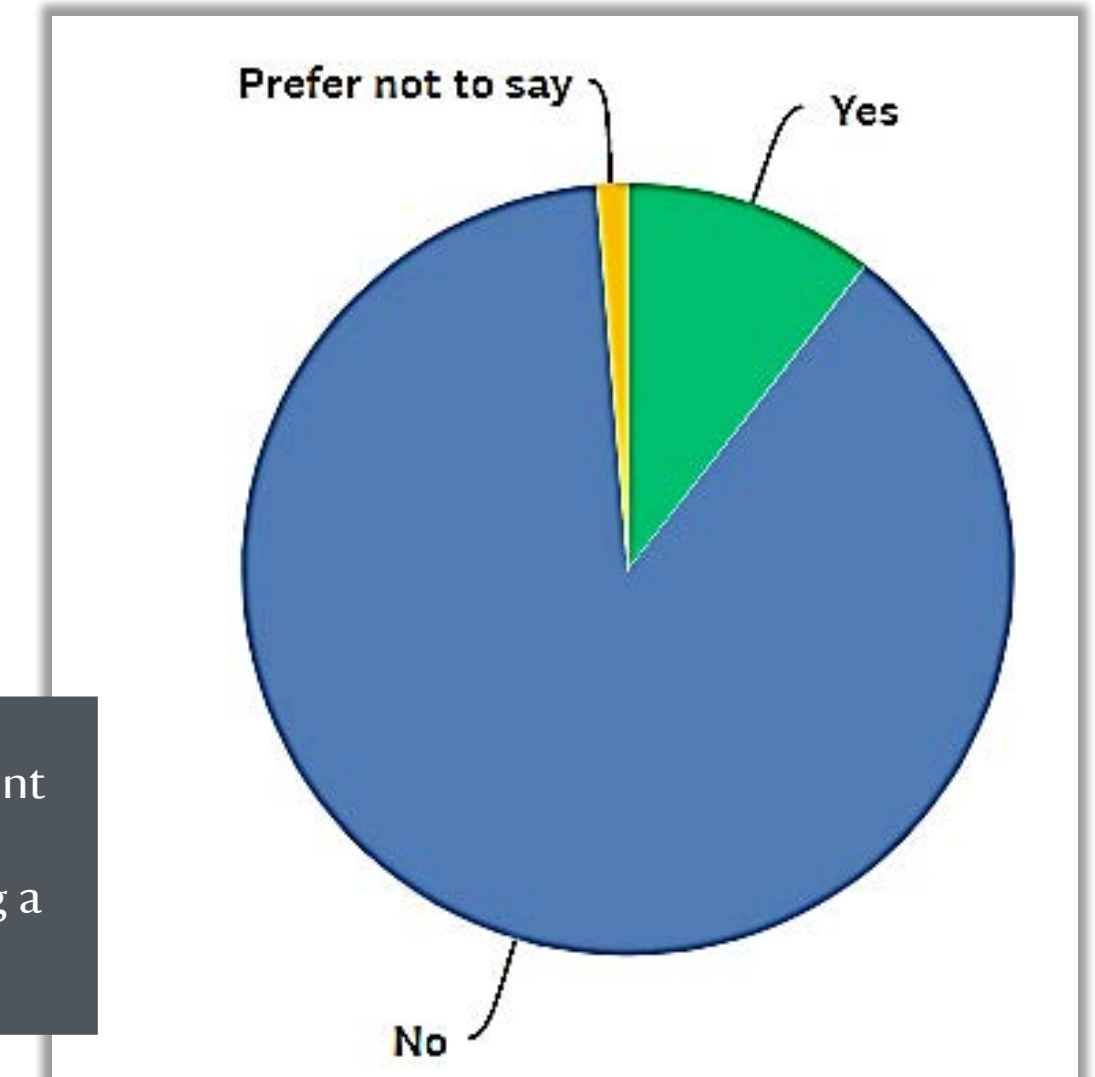
Figure 4 (above) Gender split of respondents



Question 15: A disabled person is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to carry out day to day activities. This includes progressive and long-term conditions from the point of diagnosis such as HIV, Multiple Sclerosis or cancer. Do you consider yourself to have a disability according to the definition above?

- 10.54% said yes, they identified as having a disability
- 88.18% said no
- 1.28% preferred not to say.

Figure 5 (right) Amount of respondents that identified with having a disability



Question 16: If you answered yes to the above, please indicate below, the day-to-day activities affected- tick as many as applicable. (Multiple choice: Ability to learn or understand or memorise, Ability to lift, carry or move objects, Hearing, Manual dexterity, Mobility, Physical coordination, Progressive condition, Speech, Vision, Other, Prefer not to say, Not applicable)

- 33 responses identified how their disability affected their day to day life.
- The greatest portion of this sample, 42.42% identified mobility issues. 24.23%, identified challenges with the ability to lift, carry, or move objects, and a 18.18% with physical coordination.
- 15% identified with the ability to learn and or understand or memorise.
- Lowest representation from those that identified with, Vision 12.1%, Hearing 2.39% and Speech 1.21%
- 27.27% identified as Other and 9.09% preferred not to say.



Question 17: What is your ethnic group (multiple choice: White, English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British, gypsy, Roma or Irish Traveller, Other White background, White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other Asian background, African, Caribbean, Other Black/African/Caribbean background, Arab, Other ethnic group, Prefer not to say)

- 95.19% of responses came from those that identified as having a white ethnicity. Either as white, English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British or Other White background.
- There was much lower representation from other ethnic groups with breakdown as follows: White and Asian 0.64%, Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background 0.32%, Indian 0.32%, Chinese 0.3%, Caribbean 0.32%
- 1.6% of respondents preferred not to say
- 0.96% identified as other (unspecified) ethnic groups
- 7 respondents declined to answer.

This identifies some of the communities we need to target for future engagement for a more diverse and representative consultation.

How the information will inform next steps

We are grateful to all those who took the time to respond to this consultation, whether through attendance at our consultation events or through completion of the questionnaire.

Overall responses have been positive about the proposal, particularly about:

- It being an iconic development for the city of Manchester
- The potential to provide new green space and access to nature for local residents
- Reuse of a historic structure

Short term impact:

Responses have clarified our thinking in regards to the Phase One Design Proposal and highlighted areas of importance to local people.

Long term impact:

We will also take into account the views expressed during the consultation on areas currently out of scope for the Phase One pilot but that are relevant to the design of any Phase Two permanent scheme.

Should this planning application be successful, we plan to hold a significant consultation exercise as part of the phase one, with visitors, users, local communities and organisations for their input to help codevelop a long-term scheme suitable for Manchester.
