



Apartment 318  
73 Liverpool Road  
Manchester  
M3 4AQ

2 September 2021

Dear Duncan,

### **Castlefield Viaduct Pilot Scheme – Letter of Support from Castlefield Forum Trustees**

I am writing on behalf of the Castlefield Forum Trustees in support of the National Trust's Planning Application proposal to Manchester City Council for the Castlefield Viaduct Pilot Project.

We have long looked up at the viaduct and wondered “what if...” and “how might we...?” and as a community-led organisation had always assumed we were decades away from something incredible happening. We are thrilled at your ambitions and plans to reimagine the historic viaduct as an iconic urban park destination and community amenity.

We support the National Trust's ambition to work with partners and communities of Manchester, including the Forum, to reinvent the viaduct as a new, walkable green space for the city that acts as a further beacon for urban industrial heritage re-use. Lockdown has taught many of us the increasing importance of green space and mindfulness. We see the viaduct as a hugely welcome addition for residents, visitors and commuters alike.

We particularly support the ambition for this park to bring the structure back into use and to celebrate its heritage: Castlefield is the oldest part of the city, containing Manchester's Roman origins, the first passenger railway in the world and also the oldest of the Industrial Revolution canals. It is important this history is recognised in the area today.

The people metrics also speak strongly. We support the focus on the 52,000 residents within a 20 minute walk of Castlefield viaduct that will be able to enjoy nature-rich green space near to where they live and have access to the benefits that outdoor exercise and a connection to nature can provide.

As an organisation that was set up to contribute to and drive forward Castlefield as a locality, whilst conserving and enhancing its heritage assets, for the benefit of all members of the community and visitors to the area, we recognise the wider social value of these plans.

As of Summer 2021 we are continuing to deliver against our Roman Gardens Masterplan and we see the viaduct as a vital catalyst and ‘stepping stone’ to other heritage attractions and active travel routes in the area. We are willing to share our knowledge and expertise in support of Castlefield viaduct as well as opening up our blooming ‘clean and green’ network of volunteers. We also have untapped CSR resources to explore as a little normality returns.



Through this letter, we acknowledge specific roles and responsibilities that we will fulfil in this project. In the event that this Planning Application is accepted, we would expect our role in the Castlefield viaduct to include:

1. Support and publicity amongst Forum members for the Pilot testing phase
2. Continued engagement and support with the project to work towards longer-term design and viability
3. Sharing of local knowledge and expertise with the project team
4. Provide a calendar of volunteering events

We look forward to working with you in this and making this incredible project a reality.

Very best regards,

Calum McGowan  
Chair, Castlefield Forum