

Manchester City Council

Gorton Public Square - Phase 2 - Additional Landscape

Design & Access Statement

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0.0 CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	04
------------------	----

2.0 THE SITE	06
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- 2.1 Site Location
- 2.2 Project Brief
- 2.3 Site Constraints
- 2.4 Previous Applications

3.0 DESIGN STRATEGY	10
---------------------	----

- 3.1 Use
- 3.2 Amount
- 3.3 Layout
- 3.4 Scale
- 3.5 Sustainability

4.0 PROPOSED DESIGN	12
---------------------	----

- 4.1 Design Rationale

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY	14
--------------------	----

- 5.1 Sustainability Strategy
- 5.2 Material Selection & Durability
- 5.3 Ecological & Green Measures

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Author	Signature	Date
EA	E.Adedokun	20.08.25

Reviewed	Signature	Date
TF	E.Adedokun	20.08.25

1.0

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a full planning application for the proposed additional landscape works in continuation of the newly established Gorton Public Square at Manchester Gorton Market. The proposals form a natural extension to the first phase of public realm improvements, building on the success of the recently delivered square to further enhance the quality, usability, and inclusivity of the wider site.

The new scope of works introduces an additional play equipment area on the land adjacent to Tesco, complementing the existing square by providing active recreation space for children and families. The intention is to create a balanced and multi-functional environment where the existing public square fosters social, cultural, and community activities, while the new play zone introduces opportunities for play, movement, and wellbeing.

This continuation is considered an appropriate and valuable addition to the overall vision for Gorton’s town centre, supporting the long-term regeneration strategy, encouraging increased footfall, and ensuring the public realm caters to a wide spectrum of users across all age groups.



Figure 1 - Gorton Public Square / additional landscape (no new asphalt).

2.0

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Site Location

Gorton District Centre,
Garratt Way,
Manchester,
M18 8LD

The Gorton Public Square extension will be accessed directly from Garratt Way, with additional pedestrian connections provided from the south via Tesco and the adjoining car park.



Figure 2- Aerial 2D View of the TESCO car park,(Google Maps 20.08.25).



Figure 3 - Street View of Gorton Public Square from Garratt Way - Google Maps (20.08.25)

2.0 THE SITE

2.2 Project Brief

Manchester City Council has commissioned additional landscape works adjacent to the Tesco pedestrian walkway, extending the recently delivered Gorton Public Square.

The proposals aim to enhance the public realm by introducing new facilities that support play, relaxation, and community use, ensuring the square continues to develop as a vibrant and inclusive space.

The scope of the works is as follows:

- Installation of new play equipment to provide an engaging space for children and families.
- Provision of additional seating areas to support rest, social interaction, and community activity.
- Introduction of planters and soft landscaping to improve biodiversity, add greenery, and enhance the visual character of the square.
- Integration with the existing Gorton Public Square to create a seamless and cohesive public realm.



Figure 4 - Gorton Public Square - Play Equipment + Christmas Tree.



Figure 5 - Gorton Public Square - Additional Public Realm Works Along Tesco Frontage.



Figure 6 - Gorton Public Square - Continuation of Public Realm by Tesco Façade.



Figure 7 - Retractable Bollard to control vehicular access.

2.0 THE SITE

2.3 Site Constraints

The proposed additional landscape works are located within a busy pedestrian zone adjacent to the existing Tesco façade. While the scope of work is relatively minimal, there are key constraints that must be managed carefully to ensure safety, protect existing structures, and maintain operational access throughout construction. These constraints include:

- **Pedestrian access:** Ensuring safe and continuous pedestrian movement along the Tesco walkway during construction.
- **Traffic management:** Managing pedestrian circulation and any adjacent vehicle movements safely while works are ongoing.
- **Proximity to Tesco façade:** Protecting the existing building and canopy-supporting columns from damage.
- **Space limitations:** Working within a confined area while accommodating new play equipment, seating, and planters without overcrowding.
- **Construction logistics:** Coordinating deliveries, equipment, and workforce in a restricted operational area.

2.4 Previous Applications

Manchester Gorton Market has recently received approval for the Gorton Market Re-Roofing development under Application Ref: PP-13627728. This development is currently on site.

It is thought that the proposal outlined in this application will be of no detriment to the recently approved Public Square.



Figure 8 - Additional Landscape + Tesco Pedestrian Walkway.

3.0

3.0 DESIGN STRATEGY

3.1 Use

The additional landscape will provide a safe, accessible, and engaging public space, offering play areas, seating, and planters. It supports community interaction, leisure, and relaxation, complementing the existing Gorton Public Square.

3.2 Amount

The proposals introduce a modest but functional addition to the square, including new play equipment, seating, and soft landscaping. The scale of interventions is proportionate to the available pedestrian zone adjacent to Tesco.

3.3 Layout

Elements are arranged to maintain clear pedestrian circulation along the Tesco walkway while creating distinct activity zones. Play areas, seating, and planters are positioned for accessibility and visual cohesion with the existing square.

3.4 Scale

The scale of equipment and street furniture is human-centered, ensuring usability for all age groups while integrating seamlessly with the existing public realm. Careful consideration has been given to spatial relationships and sightliness.

3.5 Sustainability

Planting and materials have been selected to support biodiversity and low maintenance. The design prioritises durable, recyclable, and locally sourced materials, minimising environmental impact and long-term upkeep.

4.0

4.0 PROPOSED DESIGN

4.1 Design Rationale

The design for the additional landscape at Gorton Public Square represents a continuation of the original public realm, delivered through close collaboration between DEP (Landscape Architects) and HMA. Both teams worked together to translate the client’s brief into a responsive design that respects the existing site conditions, pedestrian flows, and the adjacent Tesco façade.

Site observations and analysis informed the placement of new features, including play equipment, seating areas, and planters, ensuring they respond to actual usage patterns and maintain safe, clear circulation routes. These insights were supplemented by desktop studies examining historical site data, existing conditions, and relevant urban precedents, providing a strong foundation for the design strategy.

The additional landscape is conceived as an extension of the original square, with each element carefully considered to complement the Phase 1 development. Play areas, seating, and greenery are positioned to maximise accessibility, interaction, and comfort while maintaining visual cohesion and respecting the scale of the existing public realm. The design also accounts for operational considerations, including protecting the Tesco roof-supporting columns during construction and future maintenance.

Overall, the proposals enhance the functionality, usability, and aesthetic quality of the Gorton Public Square, providing an inclusive, safe, and vibrant space for the local community while seamlessly integrating with the original development.

5.0

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

5.1 Sustainability Strategy

The sustainability strategy for the additional landscape at Gorton Public Square focuses on creating a resilient, low-impact, and environmentally conscious public space. The proposals prioritise green infrastructure, biodiversity, and long-term usability, ensuring that the space supports the local community while reducing environmental impact.

5.2 Material Selection & Durability

Hardscape elements such as a rubber crumb safety surface seating, and play surfaces have been chosen for their durability, low maintenance, and environmentally responsible production. Sustainable materials, including locally sourced products, are prioritised to reduce the overall carbon footprint and ensure long term performance.

5.3 Energy Efficiency

Planters, mature trees, and greenery are integrated to enhance biodiversity, improve air quality, and provide natural shading. These features support local wildlife, contribute to urban greening, and create a more comfortable, usable environment for visitors throughout the year.

Halliday Meecham Architects

111 Piccadilly,
Manchester,
M1 2HY
T: 0161 661 5566

www.hallidaymeecham.com/