

This document outlines a Green and Blue Statement for Castlefield Viaduct (for both Phase Two and long-term vision) within the context of the [Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Implementation Plan Refresh 2021-25](#)

1. Overview

1.1 Headline vision: To extend the footprint of Castlefield Viaduct- an elevated urban park and visitor attraction. Following a successful pilot scheme that explored what is possible by utilising an unused historic structure, National Trust are working towards a long-term community vision to enhance access to quality green space and create a through route to connect the city. The pilot provided a platform to facilitate consultation with local communities, enabling the project to deliver something of, for and by Manchester in the long-term. Over the past 3 years we have been working with the local community and partners to decide together how the whole vision will look, feel and work most successfully to improve the city's green and blue infrastructure. Phase Two is the next practical and proportionate step towards achieving this.

1.2 Objectives:

- To extend the footprint of the park on to the currently inaccessible grey space of the viaduct as the next practical step towards the long term vision scheme- maximising benefits for both communities and biodiversity.
- To build the key infrastructure needed for the next phase of the project which will works towards delivering a permanent, accessible high-quality nature and heritage space in the long term.

>> All feeds into viable vision scheme (long-term objectives below)

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

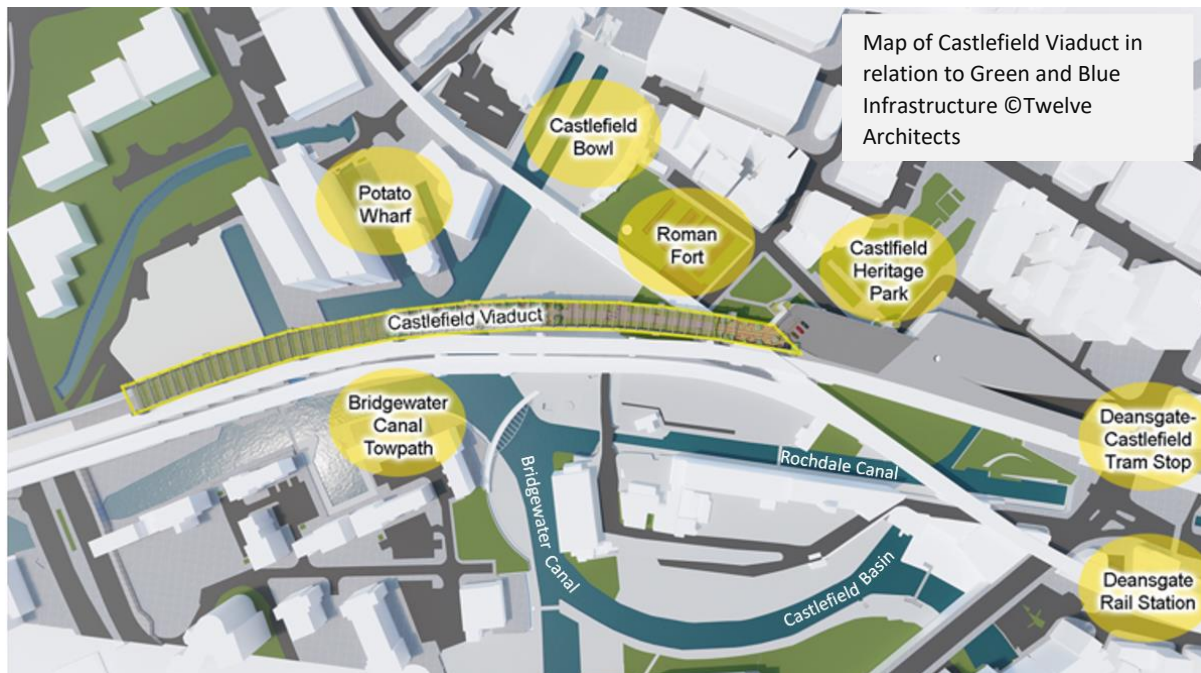
2. Location

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 green and blue 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 further create new green infrastructure by extending the development on to the disused side of the asset. This will complement the green blue infrastructure in the immediate area including the Urban

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

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.



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 Manchester City Council's Green and Blue infrastructure objectives, as summarised below. Some elements have been tested through the delivery of the pilot scheme and others will form part of Phase Two and the vision scheme².

Objective 1: Improving GI quality and function

Castlefield Viaduct responds to objective one in the following way:

- By creating new accessible green space from unlocking an unused 'grey' structure in the city centre (pilot, phase two and vision scheme)
- Providing an outdoor space for local communities and the wider Manchester population to use and enjoy (vision scheme)
- Enhancing the Castlefield area by bringing a disused heritage asset into use and raising Castlefield's profile as a place to visit.
- Serving local and new communities, through consultation from Phase Two and the vision scheme to understand what would of most benefit to surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Providing additional green space as the population of Manchester grows through the new residential developments on the edges of the city centre, including the 15,000 new homes³ planned to the east of the city centre.

² Full vision scheme will be covered by separate planning applications in the future following the completion of the Phase Two proposed here.

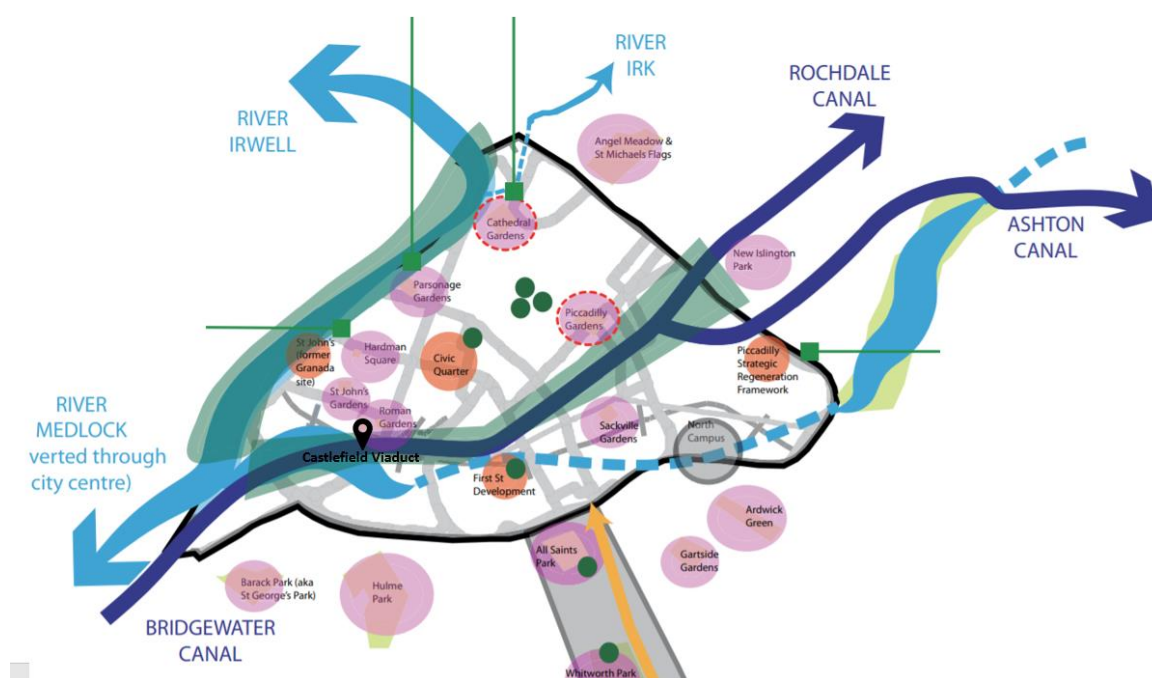
³ Headlines from the Future, pg.44, *Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy- Implementation Plan Refresh 2021-2025*

Objective 2: Embedding GI in developments of any scale across the city, including retrofit.

- The core component of the proposed extended development is to green more of the structure and create new useable green space for the benefit of local neighbourhoods. (phase two and vision scheme)
- Consultation with the local community and people of Manchester from the vision and Phase Two, to ensure a permanent scheme would provide access to nature for local people and deliver for the community.

Objective 3: Improving access and connectivity for people and wildlife

- As a destination green space, encourage walkable neighbourhood links from communities to the viaduct 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.



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.

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 enhance the quality and accessibility of existing parks and greenspaces and enhancing blue corridors, creating safe, attractive green routes for walkable/cyclable city.

Objective 4: increasing understanding of GI

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