

# 'GROUND ZONE' – towards a Liveable City Design toolkit

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The Ground Zone project is a collaboration between the [Manchester Urban Institute](#), and architects / urban designers [Callison RTKL](#). In a 4-month pilot, funded by the University 'Innovation Lab' program, we aim to produce:

- a) A '**Liveable city pilot**': a case study of the Ground Zone or public realm, which demonstrates how physical urban design can combine with 'social design'.
- b) A '**Liveable city toolkit**' (demo version) – as a practical resource for general use.

The 'ground zone' is where building activities and users, meet the urban context & public realm – a kind of 'liveable city interface'. Current trends bring new challenges:

- Post pandemic urban centres see rapid change in employment & retail
- Local economy changes with part time work & semi-retirement,
- Rise in privatization & enclosure / surveillance of public realm
- Gentrification / globalization of formerly local areas

Overall there is competition for space & place, between two kinds of values and uses:

- a) private realm with defined uses: mainly an economic value agenda ('*city for enterprise*')
- b) public realm with open uses: mainly a social value agenda ('*city for humans*')

There are huge opportunities for synergies between social and economic value, and the stakeholders on each side. The *Liveable city design* toolkit helps to find those synergies, and embed them in the mainstream design & development process.

This current pilot program is a 'proof of concept', to test and evaluate. The case study is the area in Salford around Trafford Road between the Quays and Ordsall, including key development sites.



The project adapts the existing [Pathways Toolkit](#) for the Ground Zone & *Liveable city design* challenge. It aims to set up further development (depending on funding), with a larger program on *Liveable city design*, at different scales from the micro to the city-region.

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