

The world's most expensive pie is from Manchester. It was created by Kevin Perkins. It is yet another association Manchester has with Britain's true national dish. Imagine for a moment a place where you can enjoy a pie, a place with views over the city unrivalled by any other place. Well, that place is New Islington, and alongside Chips and Tutti Frutti is a new exciting event, Pi in the Sky.

A tethered balloon rises 120 metres in the air. It can be seen all over the city. It draws people across the city. At the base of the balloon is a dense inflatable forest, a gathering of things, a multitude of opportunities. Within the steel trees is the best pie shop in Manchester, and in the clearing stands the tethered balloon, the route to the best place in all of Manchester to eat that pie.

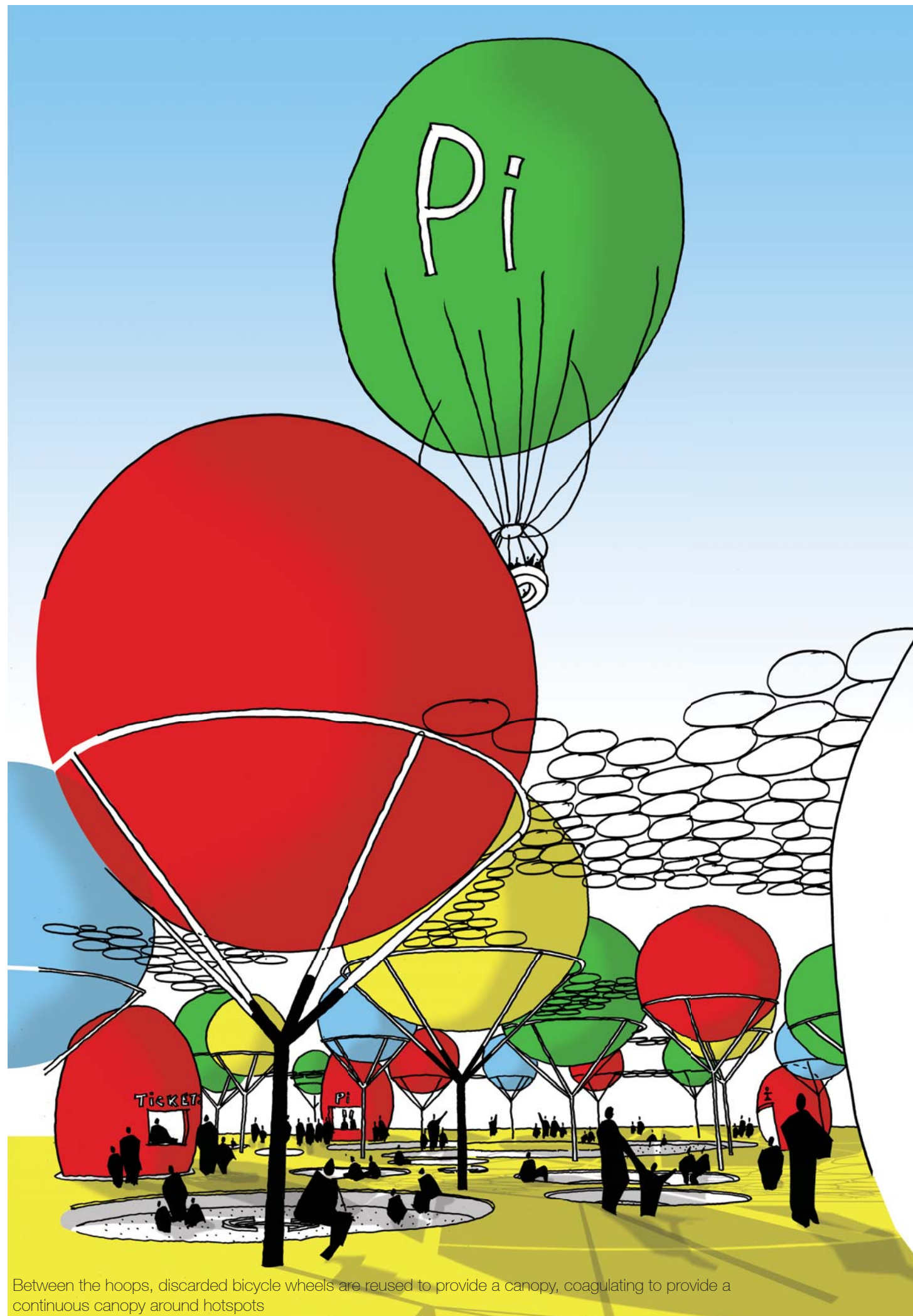
The inflatable forest of winched weather balloons draws close providing protection from the elements and opens up when the sun shines. When lowered the balloon canopy rests in the steel trees which resist the wind and keep them out of reach. Between the hoops, discarded bicycle wheels are reused to provide a canopy, varying in density to define hotspots such as the ticket office or pie shop. The wheels are simply clipped together with hose clamps and additional cover is provided by individual umbrellas fastened to the bicycle wheels and clustered together. At the base of each steel tree, from which the balloons rise, is a steel hoop providing a seat or something to lock your bike to.

The site will become a destination for all residents and tourists in the city, and the exhibition pod can be used for curated shows or lectures, local community events, school visits and lessons about Pi and Pies. The appearance of the site will evolve over daily, weekly and monthly cycles as the weather dictates how high you can fly and the events organised take over and appropriate the layout.

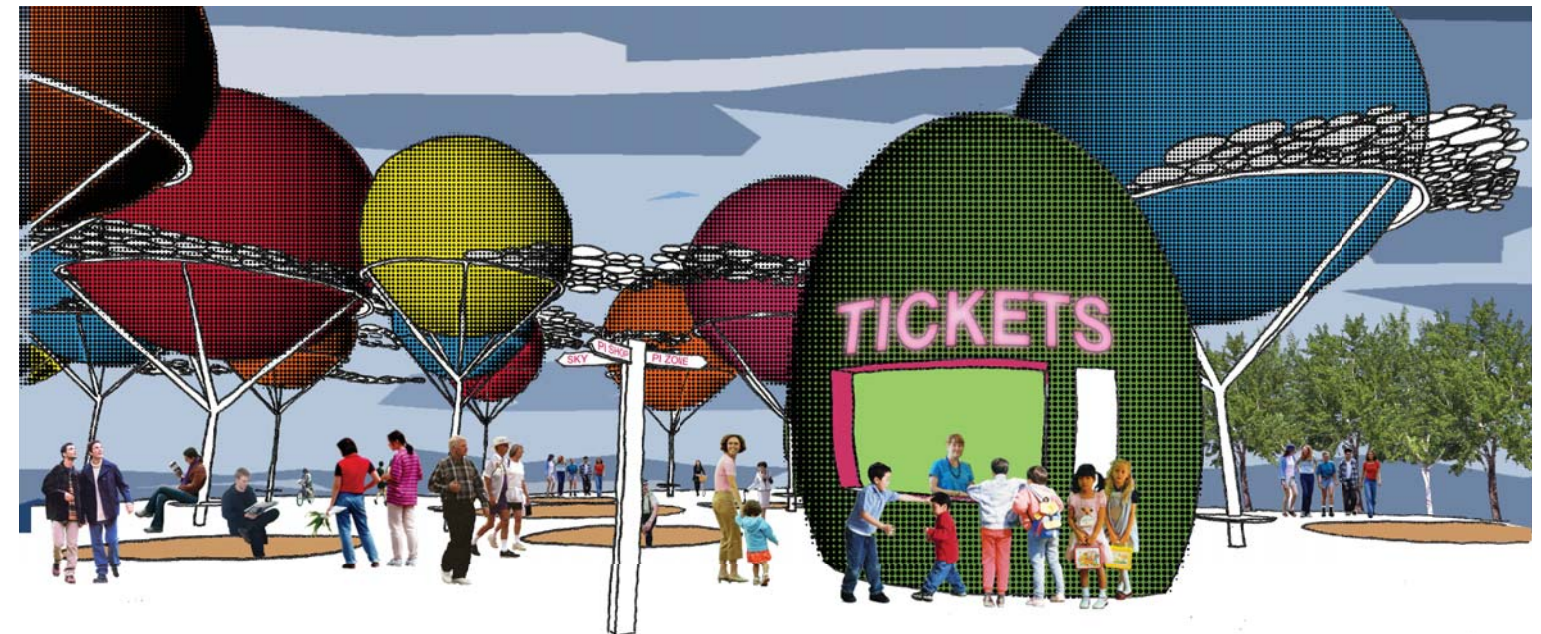
The forest floor is a timber deck pieced together from offcuts, plywood sheets and scaffold planks. The forest floor gently undulates to provide space for counterweights and winching devices below. Circular pie dishes are carved out of the deck to provide seating areas and expose the pebbled forest bedrock.

In the future the steel trees can be reused as bike sheds, street benches or street lighting throughout New Islington. In the distant future New Islington residents will sit under these trees and reminisce about the time Tom and Johns inflatable forest came to town, the days when pies were pies and those hazy days when Kevin could charge £1,000 for a slice of his pie.

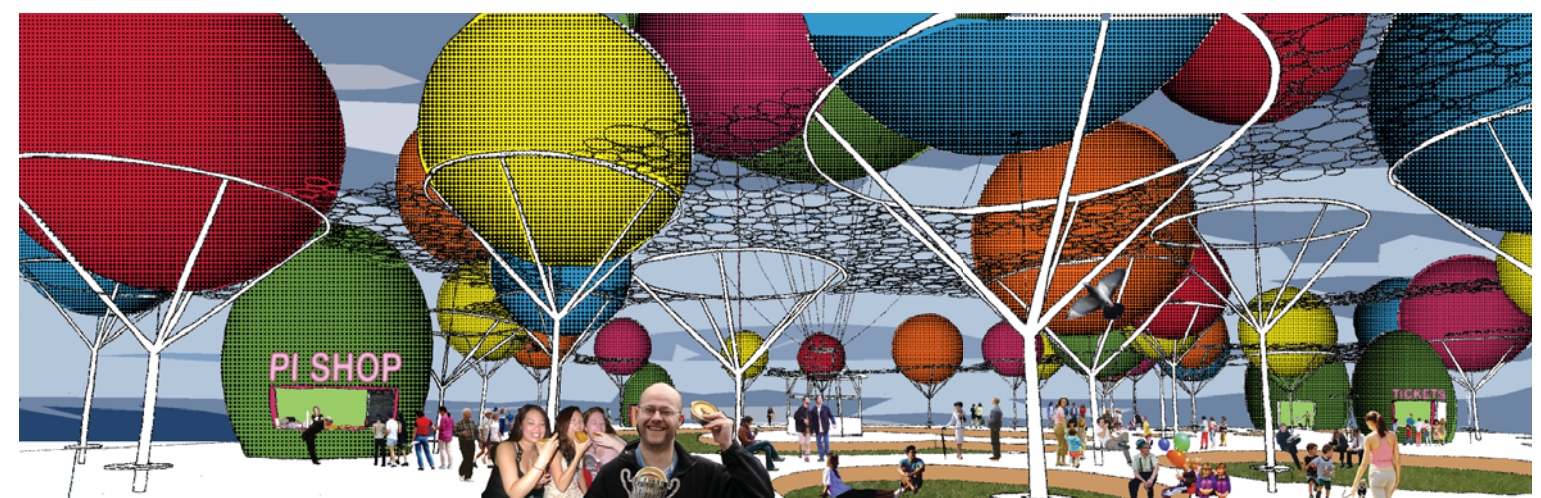




From Chips, the balloon grows high and the inflatable canopy sways in the wind

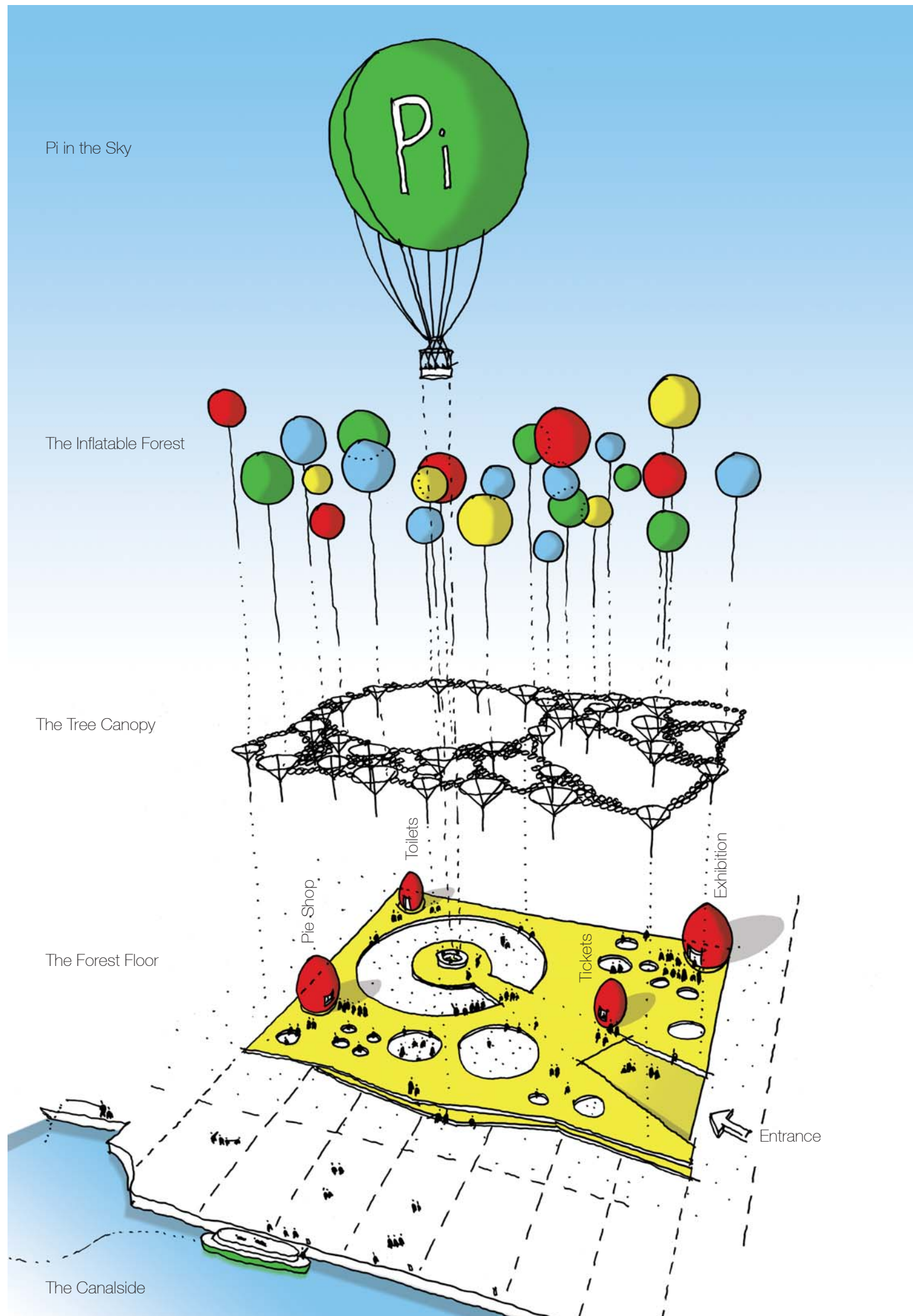


the ticket booth sells stubs for the tethered balloon and the site signpost is a meeting point for school groups

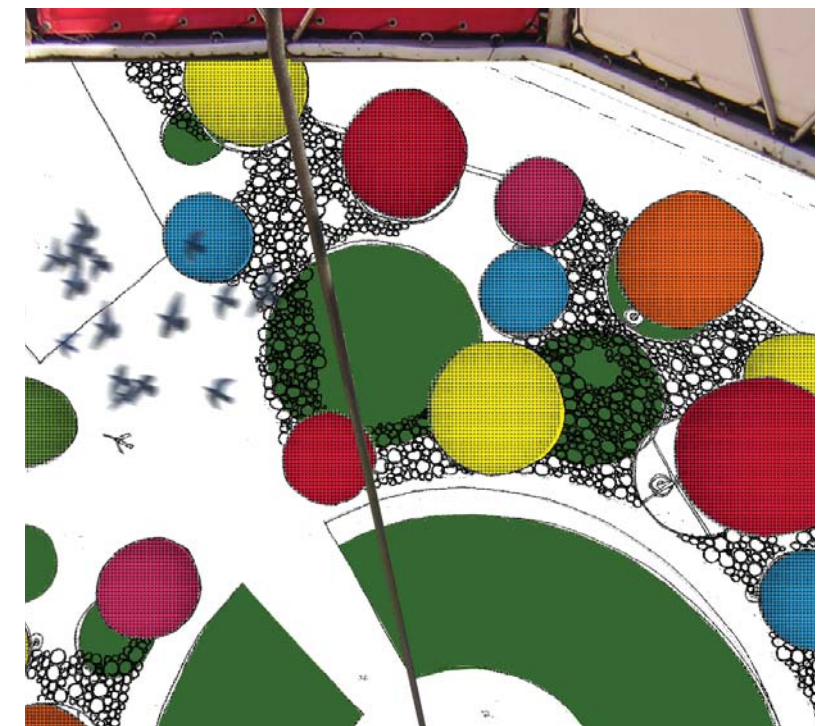


the pie shop is written up as the best gastronomic experience in Manchester, the queues grow

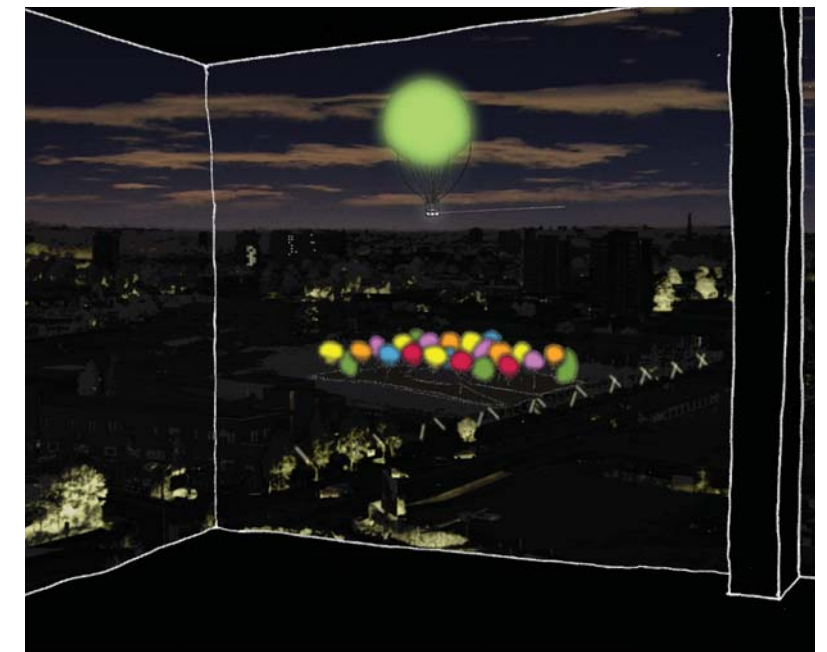




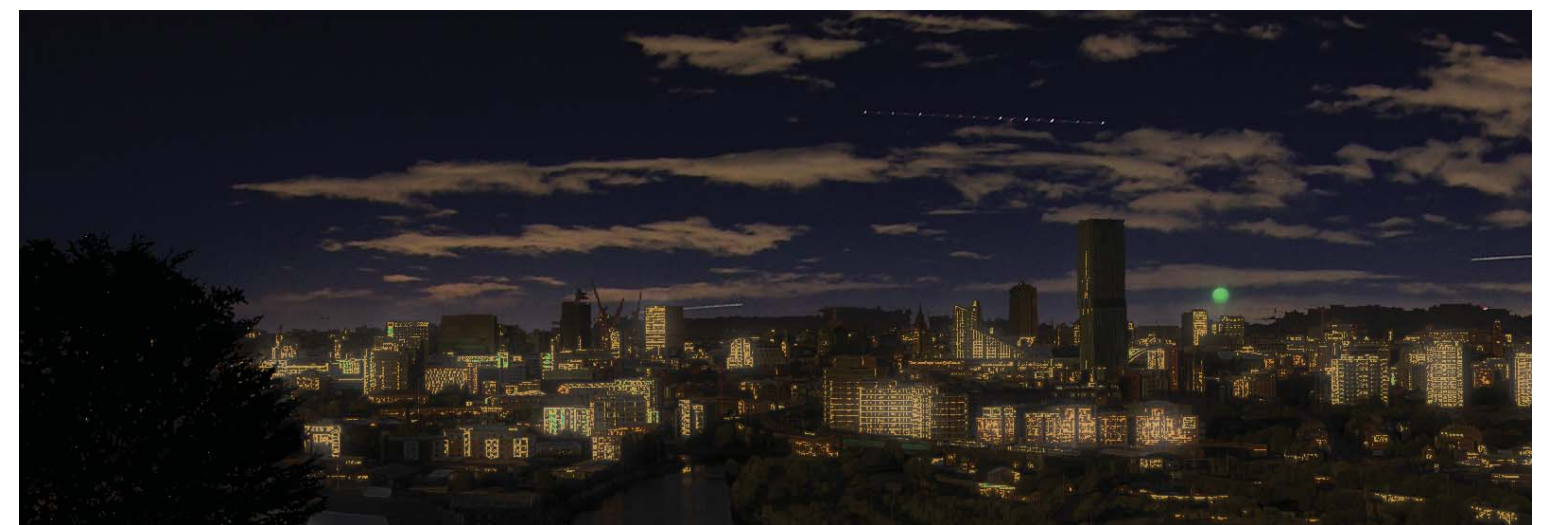
the zenith of northern cuisine



rising in the tethered balloon with your fresh pie



the site character changed as night draws on



A symbol for the ongoing work at New Islington and of a vibrant community enjoying a good time.