

Unearthing New Malden

Hayatsu Architects + 121 Collective + Hortus Collective

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COLLECTIVE



1. Potential Environment Centre forecourt improvements
2. New signage/noticeboards and cycle stands
3. Self-binding gravel amphitheatre and footpaths
4. Foraging garden with recycled street furniture
5. Berms with seating
6. Scrubland gardens
7. New entrance thresholds with cycle stands
8. Potential pedestrian crossings
9. Rainwater pond in roundabout
10. New symbolic gate
11. Willow garden



We aim to unearth the history of New Malden through our built interventions and material treatments. Inspired by New Malden's brick manufacturing past and former clay-pit in the vicinity of the site, we propose to excavate the roundabout to create a pond and raingarden habitat, to be planted with a biodiverse plant community of marginal and aquatic species, surrounded by a willow coppice to one side. This acts as a rainwater reservoir and creates niche opportunities for attracting invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and birds to contribute to London's urban ecology.

The existing fountain column will be retained, forming a symbolic gate with a new lintel and brick pillar, referencing the former brickwork chimney. The gate stands in the water, reflected in the ever-changing surface, and frames the sun at certain times of day and year.

The excavated soil from the roundabout will be transported onto the pocket garden site, to form a series of berms and bunds along the edge of the community space, high enough to shield the noise from the busy traffic. The berms reflect the two pre-historic hills of New Malden and have distinctive geometrical shapes, as if they are sculptures, lending a playful character and identity. They provide sloping surfaces for sitting as well as new planting, and create vantage points which afford views towards the new wetland.

The berms are planted naturalistically with hardy and perennial plants to form a scrubland with edible plants, which builds on the qualities of the existing community garden and nods to the ancient ecology of the area. Planting zones are strategically designed to provide buffers and enclosures, as well as seasonal harvests and displays of flowers, offering opportunities to linger, explore, and forage. The scrub edge transitions down to meadow and mown

grass which has a greater availability of light and supports a diverse range of pollinators, birds and small mammals. Our proposal seeks to protect the existing trees and community garden, which will be kept and enhanced, providing further opportunities for the community to nurture and develop their garden as part of a wider habitat.

Behind the berms, a new circular amphitheatre is formed economically using brick benches and edging. Protected from road traffic, its self-binding gravel surface meets the front court of the Environment Centre, allowing activities to extend to an outside flexible space. The existing footpath arrangement is retained but its surface will be replaced with the same gravel, in order to enhance a sense of soft ground and the feeling of being in a park away from the busy streets.

Our strategy strives to minimise as much construction waste as possible, including a cut and fill process to the landforming, and the reuse of existing pavers to create entrance thresholds to the park. Each threshold contains bike stands and information notice boards, while also incorporating existing service manholes into the hard landscape.

Our team's local design studio will lead a series of "Play with Clay" workshops at Kingston Environment Centre for children and local community groups to take part. The workshops will teach participants about the history of clay-making in the area and the process of transforming local natural clay into various forms and building materials, which are potentially incorporated into the final built elements. The workshops will provide a great opportunity for participants to learn new skills, develop their creativity, explore New Malden's rich heritage, and become part of the design process.



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