A Parkway of Places

The design for Beam Parkway is inspired by the unique existing landscapes in the area surrounding New Road, and the history of New Road itself.

Making new public space

New landmarks and spaces in specific locations will help people identify with the area and give a further unique identity to the area. These landmarks and locations have been identified in relation to the memories, character and history of the road.

To mark out each area from its surroundings, specific materials, signage and planting will be used to vary the experience of those travelling along the street.

New tall elements

Historically, there have been a number of tall features along the skyline of this mainly flat landscape. Some of these, such as St Helen and St Giles church tower in Rainham Village remain as local landmarks, whereas others such as the 13th century windmill near the Beam River at Mardyke Farm have left no trace. Today, pylons and wind turbines make up much of the ‘tall features’ view to the south.

The proposals include the installation of a number of new ‘tall elements’, including signs and trees, which will mark, celebrate and make visible key location and places within the Parkway which can be viewed from afar or experienced up close.

Key locations have been identified as:

• the entrance to Beam Parklands
• Marsh Way
• Southview Parade
• Manor Way junction, and
• Dovers Corner

Swales

Swales are areas of land which are set at a lower level than the road and cycle tracks. This allows surface water from the road and cycle tracks to run into them, creating a more marshy area which can support a wide range of plants as well as providing a cleansing and drainage system that will remove contaminants from the water as it soaks into the ground.

It is proposed to introduce a line of swales along the length of the Bean Parkway. These will separate the pedestrian and cycle routes from the road, and provide an opportunity for planting on both sides of the space.

Proposed view of Manor Way / Cherry Tree Lane junction transformed into a small public space with a clock to bring back a lost local place name describald in the proposed plaque below.

THE CLOCKHOUSE

Since at least the 17th century there has been a farmhouse on this site, first as Marshfoot Farm, and then later as Clockhouse Farm. The name derives from the ‘timepiece showing up in the house front’ of the farm*, and persisted as a local name through to Clockhouse Café in the 1960s. This new Clockhouse brings a timepiece back to Cherry Tree Lane, while also providing homes for local Swifts.

*From A History of Rainham, by Frank Lewis

Swale section

Water that is not taken up by the plants is collected into the ground, an overflow system ensures surplus water is directed into the drainage system during extreme rain events.

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