

Rep0154/1- Matter 4 Ore Community Land Trust
Hastings Local Plan - Development Management Plan
Proposed addition - to Historic and Natural Environment Policies

Small Green & Open Spaces

While the main focus on protection of green spaces in an urban environment is usually on parks, larger green areas and woodland, it is also very important to recognise the positive contribution made by small parcels of open space beside roads and alongside areas of housing.

These may be either existing small area of grass, trees or plants or open areas that could be planted and enhanced to provide an attractive visual and practical amenity to offset densely built up areas and busy roads. This enhancement work could include planting of small trees, shrubs and flower beds, provision of seating and other features such as public art installations. This environmental improvement work is used to very good effect in many cities and towns and can have a beneficial effect that far outweighs the cost.

In Hastings and St. Leonards some roads have grassed or tree lined verges, houses with good sized front gardens, or areas of public open space around buildings that soften the environment. However, in many parts of the Borough and not just the central areas high density housing, often without front gardens or communal open space, and commercial buildings combine with narrow pavements and busy roads and junctions to create a harsh and oppressive urban environment.

In all areas and in the latter setting in particular, the identification, preservation and enhancement of often very small parcels of green or open space should be given due priority. These parcels of land could be small open spaces at junctions, between or in front of houses and other buildings, on the border of a development or in the form of strips of land or tree lined banks beside roads not included in gardens. Sometimes the tree line in itself provides a very valuable visual amenity.

The Borough Council will develop a town wide initiative to create a register of small open and green spaces, involve local communities to identify parcels of land that would contribute to the environment of their neighbourhood and give protected status based on jointly agreed priorities. This will be coupled with a program to fund enhancement work and make use of developer contributions where possible.

(new) Policy HN11 - Protection, Creation and Enhancement of Small Green Spaces

Any new development application will need to take into account any small parcels of land registered on the Borough Register of Small and Open Green Spaces and in particular those that have been given priority, and include the protection and enhancement of these spaces in the development plan.

Equally, any new development should seek to include the creation of small areas of green space and public amenity areas to soften the impact of the development and to contribute to the environment and enhancement of the public realm.