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Opportunities for designated Local Green Space within Oving Parish

Introduction

In June 2021 The terra firma Consultancy was appointed by Oving Parish Council (OPC) to undertake a study to establish if there were any areas within the parish which could be proposed as Local Green Space (LGS) as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 (paras 101 to 103).

The NPPF states that *'the designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.'* In addition:

> *The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*
> *(a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
> *(b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
> *(c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

Additional guidance regarding the designation of Local Green Space is published on the government website (at *https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation)* and states that:

> *....land could be considered for designation even if there is no public access (eg green areas which are valued because of their wildlife, historic significance and/or beauty).*
>
> *Designation does not in itself confer any rights of public access over what exists at present. Any additional access would be a matter for separate negotiation with land owners, whose legal rights must be respected.* (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 37-017-20140306).

In addition:

> *New residential areas may include green areas that were planned as part of the development. Such green areas could be designated as Local Green Space if they are demonstrably special and hold particular local significance.*

Methodology

The settlements were reviewed in turn to establish if there were any likely parcels of land which satisfy the criteria set out in the NPPF. The first test was that of *'proximity to the community it serves'* which was used to establish if there were any areas of open land that are considered in proximity to the settlements which lie within the parish; namely Shopwhyke, Drayton, Merston, Colworth and Oving Village and yet which do not comprise *'an extensive tract of land'*. Once these parcels were identified they were checked against the remaining criteria of being *'special to the local community'* and *'local in character'* . Some parcels were also specifically proposed by OPC.

Shopwhyke

Shopwhyke is a small hamlet to the west of the parish centred on the junctions of Coach Road and Drayton Lane with Shopwhyke Road. A significant area of open land is associated with Westbourne House School/Shopwhyke Park and whilst the grounds are not listed Shopwhyke House, the gate piers and West Lodge are. It is considered unlikely that Shopwhyke Park would pass the tests for Local Green Space as it appears not to be especially historically significant or in any other way *'demonstrably special'* to the local community unless it is used for community recreation. There are further listed buildings nearby but there is no conservation area associated with them. To the south of Shopwhyke Road lies a large area of land knows as Drayton Manor Landfill Site which is subject to a blanket Tree Preservation Order. It is

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considered unlikely that this area is *'demonstrably special to the community'* although it might hold some ecological value. Land to the west of Shopwhyke Manor Farm is currently being developed for housing known as 'Shopwyke Lakes ' and includes areas of public open space which might be considered for designation in due course if it can be proved they are special to the community, possibly for their recreational value. Similarly new public open spaces within the development on the corner of Oving Road and A27 might be considered for designation in due course.

Drayton

Drayton is a small community in the south-west of the parish centred on Grade II listed Drayton House but heavily influenced and divided by the B2144, A259 and railway line. Drayton House itself is used as offices and surrounded by water-filled gravel pits which give it a unique character but undermine its historic setting. There are areas of pasture to the north south of Wyevale Garden Centre/Camping World but which are cut off from any neighbouring residents and therefore not in '*reasonably close proximity'*. Further, smaller areas of verge to the west of the A259, adjacent to Green Lane, serve to provide some separation between the houses and the A259 and potentially have some wildlife value but it is considered unlikely that these areas are *'demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance'.*

Merston

Merston is a linear historic hamlet to the south-west of the parish and centred on Manor Farm. To the north of the settlement is the A259 but some separation is given by the triangle of land which sits between the two branches of Marsh Lane and provides a more rural setting for the properties in the west. Further south, to the east and west of Marsh Lane and bounded by the Chichester Flood Relief Channel (or Scheme) and the Forebridge Rife are narrow pasture fields which provide a rural setting for the village and an approach to the historic core. It is considered that this land either side of Marsh Lane from Manor Farm in the south to the A259 in the north (and including the triangle of land previously mentioned) has the potential to be considered as Local Green Space in that it is local to the community, has a certain amount of beauty and is *' local in character and not ...extensive'*. In addition it contributes to the setting of a number of listed buildings and potentially has a *'richness of wildlife'*, although is not designated. There is some evidence to suggest that it was formerly common land. Further south the landscape is crossed by the former route of the canal and it is considered that this too has the potential to be considered a Local Green Space due to its recreational and historic value. Further south the land to the east of the Grade I listed Church of St Giles and the churchyard both contribute to its setting and provide an historical context (as well as connecting with the former canal further south) and have the potential to be Local Green Spaces.

Colworth

Colworth is a small hamlet to the south-east of the parish centred on Manor Farm and which despite the lack of formal designations retains a largely rural setting, especially in the west. Whilst there are not any obvious green spaces suitable for designation the area is crossed by the former route of the canal and, as mentioned previously, it is considered that this has the potential to become a Local Green Space due to its recreational use and historic interest.

Oving Village

Oving is a small village located in a flat, rural landscape which retains a strong relationship with the wider countryside despite the former airfield lying to the north-east. To the north, south and west are large arable fields which, whilst presumably valued by the community, would count as *'extensive tract*[s] *of land'* and as such be ineligible for designation as Local Green Space. To the east of the village lies the Diamond Jubilee Park which would be potentially suitable for designation due to its proximity to the community and recreational value. Further north, the cemetery, which lies within the conservation area and overlooks open fields would also have potential for designation due to its proximity and tranquillity. It is considered unlikely that the land immediately to the east of the cemetery (north of Diamond Jubilee Park) would be eligible for designation as there is a lack of recreational value or obvious wildlife potential and whilst it forms part of the setting of the conservation area and comprises probable medieval to post medieval piecemeal enclosures any visible time depth appears to have been lost. The public open space

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which is located between Drewitts Mews and Sampsons Drive may have potential for designation as LGS if it can be proven to be special to the local community, perhaps because of its '*beauty, recreational value ..., tranquillity or* [the] *richness of its wildlife'*. The area of open space which lies behind the flint wall to the north of the High Street between Chippins and The Hovel is unlikely to be eligible for designation as it would need to be proven to be '*demonstrably special to a local community'* and whilst it affords views to the church there is seemingly no public access (and therefore no recreational use or public tranquillity) and a lack of beauty, historical significance and wildlife.