

Ore Valley Greenspace

Summary of Local Consultation (February to April 2007)



Ore Valley Greenspace - Consultation Workshop Report (February 2007)

This report details the content of two consultation workshops held on February 21st 2007. The consultation workshops explored local views and opinions about the present and future uses of existing Greenspaces in the Ore Valley. The consultation was held in order to establish what the local community felt about the Greenspace and what plans should be made for making the best use of its ecological value and purpose (as a natural space) and its amenity value and purpose (as a local, outdoor resource)

The consultation involved 39 people (full list see Appendix) including local residents, community groups, and local organisations such as schools, Hastings Borough Council and 1066 Housing Association. In attendance were also Sea Space (Abigail Gilbert); the Landscape Architect who has surveyed the site (Luke Greysmith) and an Independent Facilitator who was running the consultation (Jim Simpson)

Summary from Consultation

Present use of the Greenspace -

There are presently fairly substantial Greenspace, woodland, formal and informal paths, ecological value and space highly thought of by local people. The Greenspace have some limitations as to how they are used mainly due to areas of steep sloping. Right now there are no plans for changing the use of the Greenspace but rather to consider ways of:

- a) improving the spaces for the local community now and
- b) improving the spaces for the community as it changes following the housing and services/facilities development that will be taking place in the Ore Valley.

Ore Valley Greenspace Task Group -

An 'Ore Valley Task Group' has been exploring how the Greenspace are presently used and clearing some of the access points and over-grown patches. The group has involved the Ore Valley Forum, HBC (Hastings Borough Council), BCTV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) and 1066 Housing Association and it is hosted by Sea Space. The Task-Group has started some work with a Landscape Architect evaluating the site and it decided to undertake an open, local consultation (without fixed ideas) to consider what local people wanted most from the Greenspace.

Key issues and preferences -

In general people wanted to improve the current usage of the site (by people) as well as protect and preserve the natural beauty and ecology of the site. Improvements and ideas to consider included:

- A plan that preserves the ecology of the space
- Improving access to footpaths and trails; improving the quality of paths and walkways; and improving the ways that pathways linked to each other and to access points
- Various ideas and project suggestions about new sculptures; arts projects (e.g. oral history, mythology, ecology); natural play; space or a building/shelter for warden use; and increasing the 'interest' and amenity value of the space
- A long-term land management plan and funding for this



The following is a summary of the points from consultation event participants that were the most important in the use of the Greenspace. A 'target points' exercise was used to identify priorities (illustrated above). Priorities are listed below in no particular order (full notes and all the ideas and points made at the consultation follow this summary):

What needs to be kept and maintained?

Ecology

- Keep as many trees as possible; protect trees; leave wild-space
- Keep the reservoir
- Minimal disturbance to wildlife; protect animals as much as possible; include foraging space and (access to) clean water
- Happy with siting of footpaths; could improve trail-links across and up the valley
- 'Green Lung' – keep feeling of countryside in the middle of the town

Amenity

- Keep heart of space for wildlife
 - Improve top and bottom ends – amenity – play, picnic and art-park
 - Little Greenspace for play and recreation, no space leads to problems and an increased incidence of frustration
 - Encourage partnership development from college, timber yard and Flimwell timber – have sustainable timber workshop
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What needs to be changed or improved?

Ecology

- Climactic change – consider 'warmer' planting (e.g. olive and citrus)
- Increase environmental accessibility for all
- Change to nature reserve (including for 5+ to Secondary age) defining intentions; name as Ore Valley Eco-Park
- Long-term management including funding of a land-management programme
- Composting toilets
- Enhance SSCI areas

Amenity

- Environmental play that utilises landscape; 'magical woods' with natural play and sculptures; natural climbing; rope-swings
 - 'Play' areas for children and adults
 - Play area safe and accessible
 - Information boards
 - Sustainable transport in and out of Ore Valley
 - Greenway link to upper Ore Valley over footbridge and running along green corridor south of Deepdene Close to Frederick Road
 - Town ranger's or BCTV site on wood yard or ecology point to encourage training use and resident use
 - Oral history links; art features (web-linked)
 - Local resident ranger team
 - Reduce fly-tipping by creating a sense of ownership; manage waste with more bins and dog bins
 - BMX/BSX off-road zone for teenagers
 - Walking and cycling links
 - Solar powered lighting
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Landscape Plan for the sites -

The Greenspace Task Group will be producing a 'Landscape plan' for the Greenspace following local consultation. Some budget resources are in place for limited environmental improvements – other funds for any major works would need to be found afresh.

4pm to 6pm Session – Full notes of Consultation

Ore Valley Greenspace – land use study presentation Luke Greysmith (Landscape Architect Sea Space) 15 minutes

Historical development - 1800s largely agricultural followed by; railway development; cattle pens; brick works; quarry; sanatorium; power station; allotments; housing; public baths; tramway; piggery; housing and factory. To 2000s features removed with disused areas. In 2010 new housing and road layout with Greenspace will feature. Local history of site could be brought into development. What should we protect? What can we work with? How will people interact? There is woodland, scrub, a flat area and a stream. There needs to be a balance in the space between ecology and amenity.

Questions and Answers 15-20 minutes

(including Luke Greysmith - Landscape Architect; Sofie Swindlehurst – Ecologist; Jim Simpson - Independent Consultant chairing the Consultation; Abigail Gilbert – Sea Space in attendance)

Q. What do you mean by greenspace? What's its purpose?

A. A space that has plants in it.

Q. How will wildlife get into it?

A. Hopefully we will enhance the wildlife. It is a non-built up area, where people can put in what they want (wildlife enhancement and conservation measures have been put in place)

Q. Are we going to look after wildlife?

A. Local people have different ideas, we want people to contribute their ideas (to this consultation)

There are parts (of the Greenspace) protected by law, we can improve and enhance the area.

There are beneficial things that we can do.

Q. History fascinating, where are you at? Is it a balance between wildlife, people and educational purposes? Accessible space is vital.

A. Today is to discuss balance, to help develop a framework between landscape and amenity.

A. Some work has already started. Reptile location to be resited for ecological reasons. Some areas accessible for people, so can make areas more useable. Site will be more precious because of housing development.

Q. Why aren't we looking at Victoria Avenue?

A. Sea Space are not involved with this site

Q. Concern that this site is being looked at in isolation, development is a big issue, where are the sustainability plans, where are the connections with the housing development?

A. Hastings Borough has plans for the green way but it has not yet been planned in detail.

A. There is no design (for the Ore Valley Greenspace). This meeting is to see what people may want to see in the design. This is involving you and is your chance to get issues on the list.

Small group discussion – identify key issues (Ecology – what to keep; Ecology - what to change; Amenities - what to keep; and Amenities what to change)

Some points discussed by participants included: -

- Badgers and lizards were of concern and that there aren't enough foraging sites*
- Need to be links for animals and humans*
- The development should be guided by the ecology of the site*
- Want people to have a sense of value for the land*
- To have play areas for children using the natural resources*
- For walking and cycling to be incorporated into the plan*
- Hastings Council should be linking the different (green) development areas together*
- Consider the play area review and 1066 in relation to the development*
- One cannot plan this without reference to other Greenspaces*
- There needs to be access for children and basic facilities*

Key Issues Prioritised (9 high priority - 1 low priority)

Ecology - What to keep

Priority	Key Issue
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links for animals to move around the site and out of the site to other sites in the area. Links also important for humans to cross the valley • Keep sidings (use as art) and keep railway lines. Keep as many trees, plants and creatures as possible. There is very little Greenspace for play and recreation, no space leads to problems and an increased incidence of frustration
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the heart of the site for wildlife and improve the top and bottom end for amenity - play, picnic and art park • Protect species and their foraging areas - badgers and reptiles • Make absolutely sure that all wildlife has space to survive including foraging & clean water
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the pond; keep some areas wild but accessible; divert springs under footpaths and enhance the water courses.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland habitats that are linked together across the valley to act as wildlife corridors for bats, birds & other species • Keep allotment space • Take a strategic view encompassing wider Greenspace, green routes and council strategies

Ecology - What to change

Priority	Key Issue
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome children by putting in rope swings, natural climbing structures, information boards containing points on nature and relevant historical facts • Make sure that play area is sited in a safe location and a place that they can access and will use
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase accessibility to wild spaces for all and combine with access for educational opportunities and enjoyment
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change status from SNCI to nature reserve and define intentions. Make the main ethos of the site development ecology • Change name to Ore Eco Park and use as a nature reserve for learning 5+ to secondary school • Have composting toilets to encourage longer stays • All enjoyment. Owners are responsible for the welfare of wildlife on their property
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open up water areas and maintain pond, reservoir, stream and springs • Long term management including funding • Green infra-structure and long-term costs of maintenance need to be considered • Some disabled access to site eg. On top of the railway tunnel and by the railway bridge • Protect the protected species from human invasion
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species should be appropriate to area and landscaping needs to reflect wildlife needs • Make sure all materials used particularly for resurfacing are environmentally friendly • Open sandy areas for reptiles if they are still to be re-located

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational woodland trail with signs on trees • Interpretation boards and sign posts
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant some spectacular specimen trees • Prioritise children over badgers • Join up Greenspaces • Ensure site is not isolated and is linked to other green areas • Get rid of Japanese knot weed, sycamores and other invasive species • Make play and climbing feature throughout without jeopardising nature and habits

Amenities - What to keep

Priority	Key Issue
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep old railway lines; industrial architecture
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fortune of War and US site would be good public open space/community garden (Is owned by 1066 who have agreed to clean it up)
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the gradients; footpaths and benches with more secluded benches • Create better access from Priory Road which is very wet • Keep natural features - paths, trees/woodland, animals, insects etc

Amenities - What to change

Priority	Key Issue
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental play that utilises landscape • Enchanted woodland trail with pond dipping, bridges, stepping stones and bark paths • Change from fixed play equipment to natural play with a 'child friendly' pond, rope swings and picnic areas • Make into a 'Magical Wood' with natural/woodland type sculptures (like at Summerfields Woods)
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycleways and walkways • Cycle links to Greenway and other cycle paths; aim for sustainable transport into and out of Ore Valley by bike or foot • Greenway shared pedestrian/cycle route with connections to outside areas
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to HBC's parks and open spaces strategy and create walking and cycling links from surrounding areas into the Greenspace • Create a BMX/BSX off-road zone for teenagers • Consider climate change and plant olive trees and citrus trees etc • Have a good ranger team made up of local residents to manage the site and keep it in public ownership • Trees for climbing; Link with play area review • Reduce fly tipping by creating a sense of ownership • Use the space for education • Manage waste with more bins and dog bins
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate artists to work with landscapers to develop spaces for public use and to enhance the design • Circuit training; Art for Animals e.g. hedgehog holes, slow worm refuges, bird nesting boxes; and a totem pole that children can add to • Art/interpretation/history/environment all linked together on site
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access East -West using rope bridge/walkway or a walking bus • Make there be a reason to stay and not use just as a through route

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link routes with wider areas • Disabled access and provision in the areas of the park where it is possible • Make more entrances and exits to link to other Greenspaces
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate signage, landmarks and maps. Have input from artists • Good quality signage including distances to 'desired destinations' • Include the local community in a meaningful way by building in projects relating to specific areas of the park • Interactive art that includes history time line using paving slabs • Rest areas and seating with wildlife around and good views across the valley
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green recycling site on the wood yard side • Involve local community and educate/involve children and young people in design and implementation • Name areas - ask local community • Create a safe environment • Imaginative wooden play structures for children in open areas • Hastings Council to take a more obvious role in co-ordinating work - link cycle ways, footpaths and play areas - Ore Valley does not exist in isolation • Work with the contours of the land e.g. creating a slide built into the landscape without steps • A cycle/footpath running parallel with Chiltern drive that is not streetlamp lit and has a natural surface • Consider links to other Greenspaces or potential spaces e.g. upper Ore Valley

Ore Valley Greenspace Workshop - February 21st 2007

6pm to 8pm Session - Full notes of Consultation

Ore Valley Greenspace – land use study presentation Luke Greysmith (Landscape Architect Sea Space) 15 minutes

Historical development - 1800s largely agricultural followed by railway development; cattle pens; brick works; quarry; sanatorium; power station; allotments; housing; public baths; tramway; piggery; housing and a factory. In 2000s features removed with disused areas. In 2010 new housing and road layout with Greenspace will feature. Local history of site could be brought into development. What should we protect? What can we work with? How will people interact? Low or high impact activities? There is woodland, scrub, a flat area and a stream. Balance the space between ecology and amenity. Flood risk assessment to be undertaken. Links for pedestrians from college?

The site is an SNCI - site of nature conservation interest

Points raised by participants: -

- *Some discrepancy over maps and areas - area narrower and more corridor like than on the maps (small amendment now made)*
- *There is an ecology buffer zone at the top of Deepdene which needs to be retained*
- *If a footpath is laid to form a green corridor (animals and people) it needs to be a 10m wide corridor*
- *Are viewpoints to be kept?*

Questions and Answers 15-20 minutes

(including Luke Greysmith - Landscape Architect; Sofie Swindlehurst – Ecologist; Jim Simpson - Independent Consultant chairing the Consultation; Abigail Gilbert – Sea Space in attendance)

Q. Who is land owned by?

A. Hastings Borough Council, Network Rail, Sea Space.

Q. Are stakeholders represented?

A. Yes. Some came this afternoon (as well as this evening). There are monthly ongoing meetings and other openings for people to feed in to consultation process

Q. Schools have to work with local partners and schools have an obligation to ensure safe routes to school - we need the routes to be safe and in line with regulations. ESCC want to increase offsite facilities for schools to use

Q. Are overhead power-lines an issue?

A. Yes. Some power cables will have to go underground and discussions are taking place with EDF. Health worry for people in new houses, no study been done on effects on health. Road could be gap between power-lines.

Q. Cycle way a problem with young people using it for motorbikes

A. Cycle ways can be controlled

Q. College will have a big impact on the area - how many students?

A. 700 students approximately

Q. Will there be an exhibition at the end of the scheme for people to look at?

A. Yes. The consultation comments and feedback will inform the 'brief' and the landscape plan which will then be shown to the public and will be well advertised.

Small group discussion – identify key issues (ecology – what to keep; ecology - what to change; Amenities - what to keep; and Amenities what to change)

Some points discussed by participants included:-

- *Green ways and cycle ways and the need for them to link to other areas*
- *Concern for the impact the college will have on numbers of people and whether the area could cope with the influx*
- *Residents want to protect Greenspace.*
- *There is a concern that a cemetery near Rye Road is to be deconsecrated and bought by 1066*
- *It is crucial to keep links between areas so that the community are linked and not cut off from one another*
- *That the valley needs to be owned by people and has its own identity and history*
- *That parking around the area will be a problem*
- *Concern for disabled access*
- *That the site could be organised as a trail with information fed in on local history and 'sound pieces' (see www.onetwoone.org)*

Key Issues Prioritised (9 high priority - 1 low priority)

Ecology - What to keep

Priority	Key Issue
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep as many trees as possible; keep the reservoir as a water area and protect the animals as much as possible • Greenspace should be kept as much as it is today with minimal disturbance to wildlife. • Am happy with the sites of footpaths • Ore Valley should be protected as much as possible. Trees and natural habitat of animals must be protected • As much Greenspace as possible and do not encroach any more on the space • Keep as much Greenspace as there is but enhance the existing SNCI areas for wildlife not public access
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Lung - keep the feeling of the countryside in the middle, you can stand in some areas and feel like you are in the country (2) • As much Greenspace as possible should be preserved; leave wild space and protect trees throughout
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise areas of wild Greenspace for animals and wildlife • Keep view points e.g. top of tunnel down the valley with a view information board • Paths for badgers and foxes with plenty of trees but trimmed back • Keep general flora and fauna • Tree Protection Orders on all quality trees and stands of trees • Plant around badger sets to give them more security and exclude humans • Create an orchard using a building as existing stock. Develop an Ore Valley apple with Brogdale in Kent

Ecology - what to change

Priority	Key Issue
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep power cables to residential area. Green on top of cables could be a cycle way, walk way and forage area for wildlife • Greenspace footpaths need to be improved maybe levelled in places and a covering of bark chips to help reduce slippery surface during winter

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a board walk installed over the permanent wet areas of the path • Open up areas in middle of space for a picnic area
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change status from SNCI to Nature Reserve in public ownership • Open up the stream to make the area more natural (2)
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of species • Art for Animals - natural wood/stone sculpture with spaces for bird perches, insect holes, hedgehog and slow worm bolt holes. • Art trail to draw people into site • Provide nesting boxes • Education Centre • Have the area managed by local people - local rangers
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstate upper pond by badger set and put in bridge to link from the top parallel with Chiltern Drive to Fellows Road • Dipping pond and bridge by lower pond to improve access to lower area

Amenities - What to keep

Priority	Key Issue
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage partnership development from college, timber yard and Flimwell timber. Have sustainable timber workshops
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting should be kept to a standard that the police approve • Lighting to enhance the area - not by lamp posts but by low level solar powered lamps • Disabled access to viewpoint
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character of the area must be kept
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access over railway (2) • Viewpoint over railway • It (the area) just being there

Amenities - What to change

Priority	Key Issue
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green way link to upper Ore Valley over footbridge and running along green corridor south of Deepdene Close to Frederick Road • Measures to stop motor cycles accessing cycle/walk way • Space for warden/ranger to encourage wood sculptures etc • Build in BTCV or town ranger's site on wood yard site or ecology point. Greenspace could then be used as a resource for training along with local residents group
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New footpaths to link existing footpaths link access up and across valley • Have picnic areas and viewpoints • Properly finance a land management programme • Ensure that station at Ore is safe and accessible • To install 'play areas' for adults/children alike • Natural play - totem pole you can climb, dipping pond area, tree climbing, rope swings • Local identity expressed through oral history biography trails • Art features to reflect local mythology; web links from markers • Lighting facilities preferably solar powered not lamp post size
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create allotments • Art features - cast features with text reflecting local history using concrete and pig iron. Have a vandal proof bench • Fitness routes of varying intensity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worry about the walkways being safe for students to get from Frederick Road to the new college site • Don't clear the area too much so as not to give an open invitation for motorbikes to cause problems in the area • Have a recycling area by the old wood yard
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove shrubs and trees adjacent to paths to create safe access • Make parkland area an adventure playground; picnic area; keep concrete area of wood yard for workshops and rangers area • Have an eco-building, rammed earth perhaps as an educational centre/café. Get local schools and groups involved • Semi-permanent sculpture trail that changes yearly for competition and done by artists, the college and schools • View points all through the public area • Connections to surrounding buildings

Appendix

Ore Valley Greenspace workshop Consultation sessions – Feb.21st 2007

Attendees list

A BISSETT	A BISSETT
ARTHUR KITSON	ARTHUR KITSON
HCAAT	DAVID HOLDEN
Play Forum,	LAURA BEERLING, CHARLENE PELLUET
Red Lake Residents Association contact Judith Everitt	AMY WHEELER
1066 Housing Association	ROBIN DEANE
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)	MIKE COOK AND ANNA HERRIVEN
Broomgrove Residents Association, Broomgrove Community Centre	KATHLEEN BOAKES
Clive Vale Residents Association	CATHERINE CHAMPION
Chantal Lass - Sustainability Policy Officer- HBC (Hastings Borough Council)	CHANTAL LASS
Cllr. Jay Kramer c/o Town Hall	CLLR. JAY KRAMER
Cllr. Peter Chowney c/o Town Hall	CLLR PETER CHOWNEY
Downs Farm Residents' Association	KEVIN ANDREWS AND DAVE WICKS
Halton Residents Association	TANIA EAGLEN + KAREN SMITH
Hastings Badger Protection Society	DON WISE + VALERIE KING
Hastings Urban Bikes (HUB)	NICK HANNA
Jonathan Ducker Land Restoration Trust,	JONATHAN DUCKER
Melvyn Johnstone	MELVYN JOHNSTONE
Michael Hambridge - Public Art Officer	MICHAEL HAMBRIDGE
Murray Davidson, Ecologist	MURRAY DAVIDSON

Ore Valley Action Group	IAN SIER + A INGLETON
Ore Valley Artists -	ELISE LIVERSEEDGE + MARY HOOPER
Pat Botley	PAT BOTLEY
SADOWLS	DAVE HEMSLEY
Sandy Rolfe (Chair) Environment Group	SANDY ROLFE
Land Use Architects	SOPHIE SWINDLEHURST
Greenspace Task Group	TANIA TURNER
The Head Teacher Castledown Community Primary and Nursery School	HELEN ROBSON + MIKE BIGG
Assistant Head and Bursar Hillcrest School	ANNE BULLEN + RUTH BRIGHT