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**Darlington Local Plan Examination****Hearing statement prepared on behalf of Middleton St George Parish Council****Matter 10 Statement – Other strategic and development management policies  
12 August 2021****1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Jo-Anne Garrick Ltd on behalf of Middleton St George Parish Council (MSGPC) in response to the further supplementary questions contained within Inspector's Note No.13. It is informed by the most recent documents published by the council, namely:
- DBC19.1: Schedule of proposed main modifications – published 6 August 2021;
  - DBC20: List of changes to the policies map – published 6 August 2021;
  - DBC21: Revised policies map – published 6 August 2021;
  - DBC22: Revised version of the local plan – published 6 August 2021; and
  - DBC23: Revised version of the local plan (track changes) – published 9 August 2021.

**2. Response to the Inspector's further supplementary questions**Policy ENV3(A): Rural gaps (APFSQ7)

- 2.1 MSGPC support the identification of rural gaps on the policies map to ensure that policy ENV3 is effective. With regard to the proposed rural gap between Middleton St George and Middleton One Row, it is suggested that this would be more effective if it were to be extended further to the east, to reflect the green wedge proposed within the submission Middleton St George Neighbourhood Plan. An extract of the submission policies map is included in figure 1, with the proposed green wedge illustrated by blue dots.
- 2.2 It is submitted that extending the allocation would help retain the openness and green infrastructure function of the important gap between Middleton St George and Middleton One Row, particularly when viewed in the context of housing site 146.
- 2.3 With regard to the proposed boundary of the rural gap adjacent to Oak Tree, MSGPC would like to highlight that this is different to the settlement boundary proposed within the submitted neighbourhood plan (figure 2). The boundary of the proposed rural gap appears to follow the settlement boundary contained within the current local plan. The proposed rural gap boundary therefore does not take account of planning permissions 16/00500/FUL and 19/00183FUL for two dormer bungalows (figure 3 provides an extract from the council's public access system and figure 4 is the approved site plan). Apart from this anomaly, MSGPC supports the proposed rural gap boundary in this location.

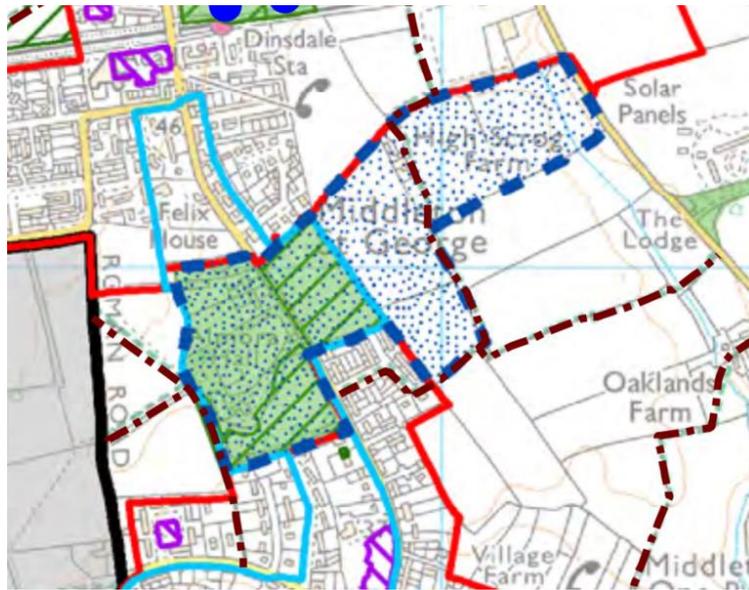


Figure 1: Extract from submission neighbourhood plan policies map showing green wedge



Figure 2: Extract from submission neighbourhood plan policies map showing proposed Oak Tree settlement boundary



Figure 3: Extract from DBC public access system mapping (boundary for applications 16/00500/FUL and 19/00183FUL)



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Policies ENV3(B) and ENV4(a) and (b): Green corridors (APFSQ8)

- 2.4 The updated version of the local plan, published on 9 August, does not appear to illustrate track changes to policies ENV3 and ENV4. However, MSGPC have no specific comments on the schedule of proposed main modifications regarding policies ENV3 or ENV4, other than to reiterate previous comments which question its effectiveness given the apparent lack of the clear spatial extent of green corridors.

Policy ENV5: Green infrastructure standards (APFSQ9)

- 2.5 MSGPC does not have any specific comments to make in response to question APFSQ9.