

Further statement on behalf of Eyton Parish Meeting in response to Matter 6, Issue 4, Qu 111 (MIQs)

This statement is supplemental to our original submission and comments dated 1 May 2025.

We are strongly of the view that an additional Strategic Green Gap at Wappenshall/Eyton is necessary for Policy NE7, and other green infrastructure policies in the Plan, to be effective and refer again to our comments set out in paras 3.1 – 3.4 of our representations document dated 1 May 2025.

We note and appreciate that there may be some comfort to be gained from the additional provision requiring a “green buffer area” now inserted in the wording of the SC3 section of Policy HO2 in the Submission version of the Plan, although reference to a green buffer area is not a term of art and as highlighted by the Inspectors’ own comments in Matter 6, Issue 4, Qu 99 (MIQs), the meaning of “buffer zones” may not be immediately clear.

However, given that the principle of maintaining separation between settlements appears to be accepted, and reiterated in, for example, section 7.33(h) of the Plan and Policy NE5 generally, as well as in Policy NE7, it is not clear why this should not be robustly protected with a formal Green Gap designation.

Because Eyton/Wappenshall is a settlement of a historic and essentially rural nature and character, and is the only settlement at risk of encroachment and loss of separation as a result of the development of the three proposed Sustainable Communities, the Strategic Green Gap policy would seem to be ideally and specifically designed to protect the character of settlements such as Eyton.

Aims and objectives contained in Masterplans and in outline planning applications can change, and over the expected development period for large scale proposals such as SC3, many changes to layout, density, etc, may be sought by developers in multiple subsequent applications, approvals of reserved matters, etc. In any event, without the establishment and formal protection of a Strategic Green Gap, the effectiveness of the policies in support of separation will be at risk of being compromised, resulting in having to monitor every application and potentially argue for the protection of the principle throughout the life of the development.

Furthermore, we believe that the incorporation of the requested Green Gap would not materially harm any stakeholder interests (given the current Masterplan proposals) although it would represent a significant mitigation and comfort with regard to what is the key concern for Eyton Parish.