

Edith Weston Neighbourhood Plan 2023–2041
Summary
(for guidance only)

1. Purpose and Scope

The Neighbourhood Plan provides a long-term framework to guide development in Edith Weston through to 2041.

Its primary aim is to manage change in a way that respects the village's identity, safeguards the surrounding environment, and ensures that development is sustainable and meets the real needs of the community.

The plan is legally binding and forms part of the statutory development plan, carrying significant weight in planning decisions. It reflects community aspirations and aims to ensure growth is carefully managed, not imposed.

2. Sustainable Growth

The plan does not allocate large-scale housing sites. It supports small-scale residential development within clearly defined areas.

Growth is directed through:

2.1 Infill development within the Planned Limits of Development (PLD), ensuring new homes are built in locations that maintain the character and layout of the existing village and,

2.2 Redevelopment of the brownfield site at St George's Barracks Officers' Mess, offering an opportunity to re-use previously developed land in a sustainable and sympathetic manner.

2.3 The housing need has been identified as between 21 and 51 homes over the plan period. The focus is on delivering a range of housing types, particularly affordable homes, to meet local needs and support a balanced, inclusive community.

2.4 Housebuilding Restrictions (Sustainable Growth)

No large housing sites are allocated; only small-scale development is supported. Housing is limited to areas within PLD and at the St George's Barracks Officers' Mess brownfield site.

2.5 Infill is only permitted if the development:

- has a road frontage

- is between existing buildings
- does not require major loss of garden
- does not create ribbon or back-land development
- maintains spacing between buildings
- meets identified local needs
- focuses clearly on affordability and sustainability.

3. Environmental Protection

Environmental sustainability is a core principle of the plan.

3.1 Development must not harm:

- Rutland Water. This is site of international and national ecological significance, and is covered by numerous designations and international agreements (SSSI, SPA, RAMSAR).
- Local Green Spaces. There are 21 areas designated as protected for their recreational, ecological, and community value.
- Trees, hedgerows, and habitats, which must be retained or replaced on-site where unavoidable loss occurs.

3.2 The plan requires all new development to deliver biodiversity net gain, protect water quality, and adopt nature-friendly design. Measures include retaining mature vegetation, creating wildlife corridors, and supporting habitat connectivity.

3.3 Housebuilding Restrictions (Environmental Protection):

Development is not permitted on or near:

- Rutland Water
- Local Wildlife Sites, ridge and furrow, ancient woodland
- Local Green Spaces (unless in very special circumstances)

All development must deliver biodiversity net gain

- Trees and hedgerows must be retained or replaced on-site
- Water quality of Rutland Water must not be harmed

4. Heritage and Design

Edith Weston has a rich buildings heritage, including a conservation area, listed buildings, and Cold War military structures.

4.1 Any development must:

- preserve and enhance the character of the Edith Weston Conservation Area and protect the setting of listed buildings
- reuse or sensitively integrate non-designated heritage assets such as the Water Towers and Type J Hangars on the former military site
- be designed to a high standard using local materials and building forms in keeping with the village character

The plan supports design that is sustainable and responsive to local context, while discouraging pastiche or inappropriate modern styles that could erode the village's historic character.

4.2 Housebuilding Restrictions (Heritage and Design):

Any development must

- preserve or enhance the Conservation Area, listed buildings, and Cold War heritage
- use traditional local materials (e.g., limestone, Colly Weston or similar slate)
- respect historic patterns, scale (1–2 storeys), and boundary features
- not alter public green spaces or the character of MOD housing estates

5. Transport and Movement

The Transport policy promotes safer, more sustainable travel options for residents and visitors. It:

- encourages walking and cycling, especially through enhanced links to Rutland Water and between key facilities
- supports infrastructure for electric vehicles and the reduction of dependency on private cars
- aims to improve road safety, particularly around schools and community areas

5.1 In a rural setting with limited public transport, the plan prioritises improvements to paths, cycleways, and connections that allow people to travel actively and safely.

5.2 Housebuilding Restrictions (Transport and Movement):

New developments must:

- Support active travel and include foot/cycle path connections
- Be scaled to avoid overwhelming road capacity
- Include EV infrastructure and avoid increasing car dependency

6. Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The plan protects the village's valued community facilities, recognising their importance to quality of life and social cohesion.

- the school, shop, church, public house, and village hall are all safeguarded
- Tommy's Close, a key recreational green space, is protected and could see improved play and sport facilities

6.1 Future development should support:

- A new, modern community centre suitable for a growing and ageing population
- Expanded or improved recreational and sports areas
- Safe routes and traffic calming to make the village more pedestrian-friendly
- Better public transport and connections to nearby towns

6.2 Housebuilding Restrictions (Infrastructure):

The Plan resists any development if it:

- harms or removes key community facilities
- puts excessive pressure on existing facilities, without contributing to essential infrastructure
- fails to address local priorities like safety, accessibility, and inclusive use

7. Policy Framework

The Neighbourhood Plan aligns with the wider Rutland Local Plan, and with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It complements existing policy, and introduces locally specific policies to reflect the distinct needs and priorities of Edith Weston.

Its policies must be considered in all planning applications and provide a clear and consistent basis for decision-making.

The overall aims of the Plan are to:

- protect the environment and heritage of the village
- safeguard landscapes, biodiversity, and historic assets.
- enable limited, well-designed growth
- ensure any new development fits the local context and serves the community.
- support community wellbeing
- maintain and enhance local facilities and promote inclusive, healthy living
- promote low-carbon living and biodiversity
- encourage sustainable design and energy use
- enhance the natural environment.

The plan is monitored regularly by the Parish Council, and reviewed and updated in response to changes in the local or national planning policy.