



# EDITH WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Terms of Reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

### 1. Background

- 1.1. Edith Weston Parish Council (EWPC) has resolved to produce a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and has determined that the NP shall cover the area of the whole of Edith Weston Parish, including the land owned by the MoD which is contained behind security fencing and any land or buildings that have been vacated or designated as due to be vacated by the MoD, in line with the Draft Local Plan.
- 1.2. The Parish Council, while retaining full responsibility for the NP, recognises that the content of the NP must be driven by the community and will draw on skills and expertise from outside the Council.
- 1.3. A Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) has been created to lead the project to successful completion.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of the NPWG is the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and associated tasks leading to its adoption. In undertaking this, its further objectives will be to:

- 2.1. Consider the options and develop policies to inform the future development and use of land in the neighbourhood area.
- 2.2. Be aware of the development areas identified in the Rutland County Council Local Plan, including establishing of further development areas if they are required.
- 2.3. Ensure the NP is supported by an effective on-going programme of communication and consultation with the community, businesses, Rutland County Council, developers, adjoining parishes and other key third parties.
- 2.4. Identify sources of funding.
- 2.5. Liaise with statutory and other relevant authorities and organisations to ensure the NP is as comprehensive and inclusive as possible.
- 2.6. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- 2.7. Determine the types of consultation and information gathering to be used.
- 2.8. Liaise with, and direct the work of, consultants and specialists engaged to further the NP as appropriate.
- 2.9. Be responsible for the analysis arising from such consultation and the production and distribution of the final reports.
- 2.10. Conform to national policies and Rutland County Council District Council's Local Plan and with EU and Human Rights legislation.

- 2.11. Report back regularly to EWPC on progress, significant issues and budgetary implications.
- 2.12. Present key documents and the draft Neighbourhood Plan for consultation with the Parish Council, local residents and businesses, Rutland County Council District Council and the Independent Examiner, and assist in arrangements for the Referendum.
- 2.13. Present recommendations for the implementation of the NP.
- 2.14. To consider and respond on behalf of EWPC, in respect of seeking, authorising and acting on expert advice from Professional Consultants as required in respect of preparing submissions to Rutland County Councils regarding St Georges Barracks and any other major planning issues.

### **3. Membership and Conduct**

- 3.1. The NPWG shall be formed from current parish councillors and local members of the community and shall include no fewer than 2 and up to a maximum of 8 members (no more than 5 to be Parish Councillors in any capacity), to be ratified by EWPC. The Parish Clerk, or a representative from the Parish Council office, can be present in ex-officio, non-voting capacity at all meetings.
- 3.2. The NPWG may co-opt additional support to carry out specific tasks for as short or long a period as necessary.
- 3.3. Membership is voluntary.
- 3.4. All members of the NPWG, must abide by the Code of Conduct of EWPC.
- 3.5. All members of the NPWG must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to the decisions or recommendations made by it. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of interest in land or business or any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the NPWG.
- 3.6. A person shall cease to be a member of the NPWG upon notifying the Chair in writing of their wish to resign.
- 3.7. Up to two substitute members may be named (one councillor and one other).
- 3.8. The Chair of the NPWG will be appointed at the Annual Meeting of EWPC.
- 3.9. In the absence of the Chair the NPWG will elect a Chair from the members present at the meeting.

### **4. Supporting Officers and Administration**

- 4.1. Administrative support for the group may involve appointing officers, as required, including a Secretary, which will be appointed by a simple majority of the NPWG.

### **5. Meetings**

- 5.1. As a working group, the NPWG does not need to meet in public but shall report back all discussions and updates at the next meeting of EWPC where any decisions/resolutions shall be formally proposed, approved and minuted.
- 5.2. Matters requiring a vote shall be decided by a simple majority of votes by the NPWG members present. The Chair of the meeting has a casting vote.

- 5.3. NPWG meetings and activities shall follow good practice. The NPWG may seek, and shall follow, the guidance of the Parish Clerk in regard to any procedural matters.

## **6. Affiliations, Interests and Contributions**

- 6.1. The NPWG shall not itself be affiliated to any political party. It is recognised that town councillors and community members may have such affiliations which shall be declared where relevant.
- 6.2. The Localism Act and Edith Weston Parish Council's Code of Conduct will apply to all members of the NPWG.
- 6.3. All members of the NPWG must declare any pecuniary interest that may be perceived as being relevant to a decision of the NSC. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of land or a business, or any other matter that may be considered to be relevant. Such declarations are to be recorded and publicly available. Having declared an interest, that member shall not take part in a discussion or vote on the related issue. In the event of disagreement, the decision of the Chair shall be binding.
- 6.4. Organisations and businesses may assist in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and may contribute to the cost of producing it. Details of any donations or assistance must be made publicly available and must not influence the recommendations of the NP.

## **7. Reporting and Communication**

- 7.1. The NPWG has no delegated authority and therefore must take anything requiring formal approval to the full meeting of EWPC.
- 7.2. The Group will report to each meeting of the Parish Council setting out progress on its work. The Parish Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
- 7.3. EWPC remains in control of the NP as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by EWPC with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

## **8. Freedom of Information and Access to Information**

- 8.1. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), the NPWG will make available to the public all documentation in relation to its work.
- 8.2. Meetings will be informal and will not usually be open to members of the public, although a report will be given at the full EWPC meeting each month.

## **9. Finance**

- 9.1. The NPWG will identify any funding requirements and bring a budget proposal to EWPC for consideration/approval.
- 9.2. The NPWG may apply for grant assistance with costs if approved by EWPC.

- 9.3. The NPWG shall not have its own bank account. EWPC shall be responsible for all budgetary matters, expenditure, monitoring and reporting.
- 9.4. All items of expenditure shall be referred to the Parish Council for approval and action.

#### **10. Changes to these Terms of Reference**

- 10.1. These terms of reference will be reviewed annually by EWPC at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

#### **11. Dissolution of the NPWG**

- 11.1. The NPWG shall continue to operate for two years, and/or until the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, and/or any issues with major developments have been resolved.
- 11.2. Upon dissolution of the NPWG, any remaining resources will be passed to EWPC.