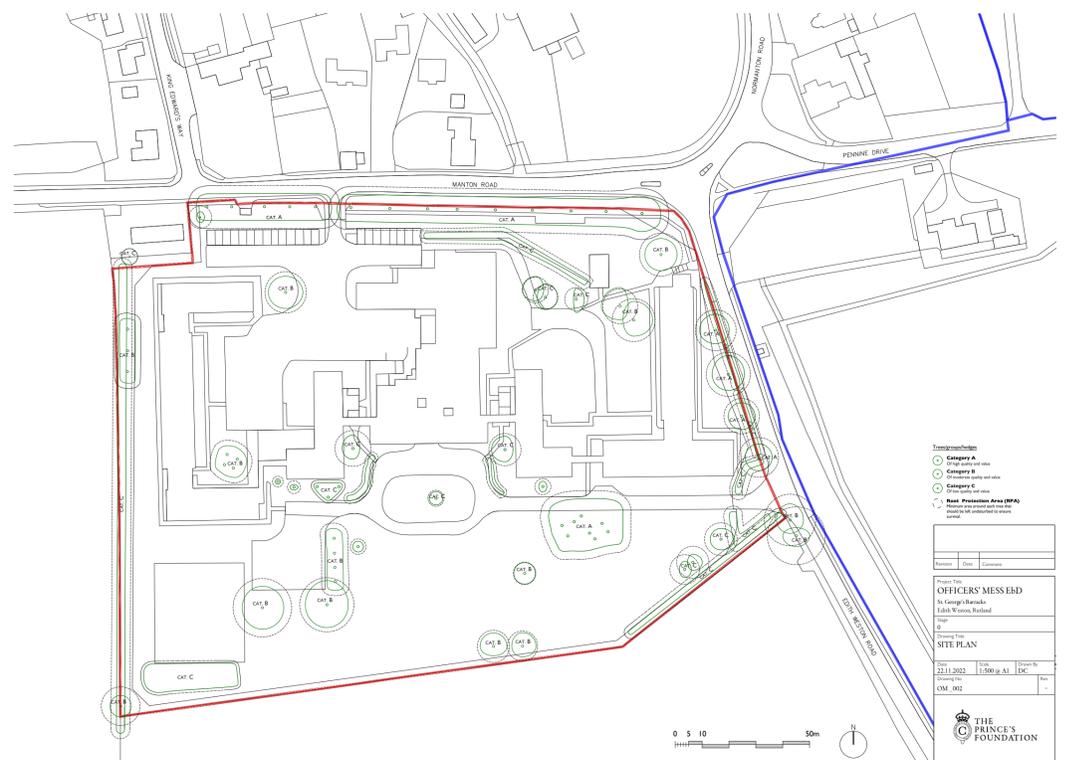


# OFFICERS' MESS ENQUIRY BY DESIGN

An Enquiry by Design workshop for the Officers' Mess site was held on 22-23 November, 2022 at Edith Weston Village Hall. The event was facilitated by The Prince's Foundation and comprised two days of stakeholder workshops - with invited community representatives - and an open public evening drop-in session.

The stakeholder workshops included information sharing, Q&A, site and village tours, and site plan sketching workshops. The public drop-in entailed engagement exercises and one-to-one discussions with the project team to answer questions and better understand the community's concerns and aspirations.

The outputs derived from the Enquiry by Design are presented here. They will be used by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation's (DIO) project team to inform an indicative masterplan and design guide for the site.



Officers' Mess Site Plan

## KEY PUBLIC DROP-IN FEEDBACK

- Traffic concerns – during construction and long-term
  - Locally and on other villages in the region
- Concern over the number of homes
  - Officers' Mess site in addition to others being proposed in the area
  - Developments' strain on public services
- Passion for preserving and promoting nature and biodiversity
  - Swifts, bats, meadows, insects
- Preserving the Mess – main building or even whole complex
  - Reusing it for hospitality (hotel, café, etc.)
  - Preserving the WWII and Cold War heritage
  - Enhance visitor economy
- Maintaining village character



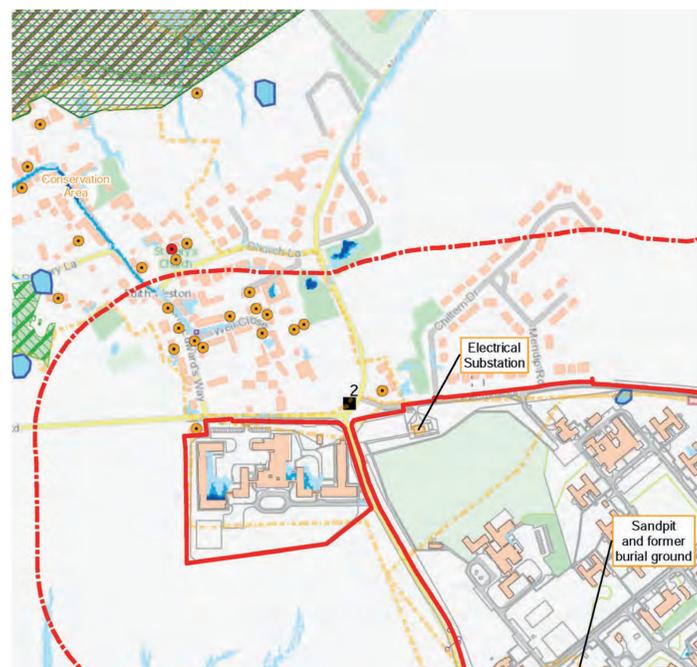
EbD stakeholder workshop

# OFFICER'S MESS ENQUIRY BY DESIGN TECHNICAL BRIEFINGS

Technical briefings ensured participants were informed of the physical and social context of the site, as well as any constraints. Some key points are shared here.

## HISTORY

- Officers' Mess forms part of the wider St George's Barracks.
- Barracks built as training airfield 1940.
- Officers' Mess, garages and squash court are non-designated heritage assets (do not meet criteria for designated status).
- Site buildings had significant extensions and alterations during use and are considered low historical importance.

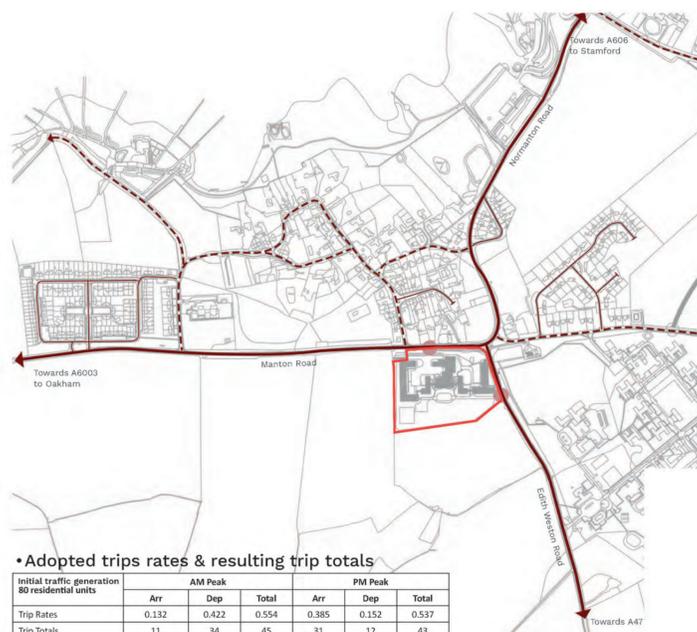


## LANDSCAPE/ECOLOGY

- Site lies within High Rutland landscape character type and Ridges and Valleys sub-area.
- Rolling land form with panoramic views across countryside.
- Regularly shaped fields bounded by thorn hedges with ash and oak hedgerow trees.
- Rutland Water (approx. 1/2 miles from site) - important nature reserve designated as:
  - Ramsar Site, European Special Protection Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, and a Country Park.
- Avenue of mature trees and some boundary hedgerows in good condition.
- Requirement for 10% net increase in biodiversity.

## LOCAL PLAN POSITION

- Adopted Local Plan (2011) "Out of Date".
- Withdrawal of new Local Plan due to HIF rejection.
- NPPF recognises housing need and has policy in favour of sustainable development.
- MoD have taken the Draft Local Plan as starting point - allocation for 70 new homes.
- Recognise Neighbourhood Plans and Design Guides.
- RCC Housing Supply Position:
  - No 5-Year Housing Supply.
  - RCC has an interim position identifying key considerations for proposed schemes.



## TRANSPORT/MOVEMENT

- Two existing site access points: Manton Road and Edith Weston Road.
- Detailed highway assessments to be undertaken.
- Likely traffic generation estimated using trip rates based on existing developments.
  - Initial basic assessment of 80 units was assumed.
  - Proposed development to generate <50 vehicles two-way during peak hours.
  - Such increases unlikely to result in operational issues at the existing mini-roundabout in Edith Weston.
- East-west road links via A47 and A606 Stamford - Nottingham road.
- A1 provides good north-south links.

## PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

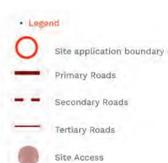
- Formal discussions undertaken with RCC Planning to test key principles:
  - land use
  - brownfield status
  - relationship with existing village
  - trees and landscaping
- Early discussion with RCC planning officers found residential development acceptable, in principle.

**HIF:** Housing Infrastructure Fund

**NPPF:** National Planning Policy Framework

**Ramsar Site:** designated wetland of international importance

**RCC:** Rutland County Council



# OFFICER'S MESS ENQUIRY BY DESIGN ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF PLACE

## 1. QUIET COUNTRYSIDE

Rutland has a relatively low population, only two towns, and no cities. Edith Weston, central in the county, is a peaceful setting with Rutland Water reservoir to the north and tree-bounded fields and a golf course at its edges. It has dark night skies and single carriage ways. Residents value its tranquillity.



## 2. LOCAL MATERIALS AND RURAL DESIGN

Quintessential Rutland cottages are of local limestone or ironstone, often with Collyweston stone or thatched roofs. Most buildings in Edith Weston are one to two storeys with gardens of varying size and in informal, organic arrangement.



## 3. LONG VIEWS/GREAT ASPECT

The rolling topography of the area gives long, interesting views that change as you move throughout the landscape. There are also good, open views over Rutland Water.



## 4. STRONG LOCAL HERITAGE

A settlement for nearly 1000 years, Edith Weston has a long history which is recalled in its historic buildings (27 listed). The age and historic character of the settlement are important to residents. The military has also been part of the community and village history since WWII through presence of the neighbouring airfield and barracks.



## 5. RICH BIODIVERSITY & ECOLOGY

Nearby Rutland Water is a designated ecological site and special habitat, especially for birds. Avenues of trees (e.g. between Lyndon and North Luffenham), foliage, wildlife, and the grasslands that have developed on the disused airfield are valued locally.



# OFFICER'S MESS ENQUIRY BY DESIGN ARCHITECTURAL & URBAN CHARACTER

## KEY MESSAGES RECEIVED

1. Be in keeping with the historic parts of Edith Weston – in material, scale, and form.
2. Incorporate nature into setting – bird boxes, green spaces, drainage.
3. Have hidden/off-street parking.

The most popular image featured:

- Local cream-coloured stone walls with quoins
- One and a half storeys (dormer)
- White timber casement windows (double and triple) with small lites
- Arched door and window openings
- Chimney
- Pitched roof stone entry
- Small/moderate setback/front garden
- Low stone boundary wall with timber gate



This image of a terrace of cottages on Well Cross was had the most positive response



The other popular images featured:

- Local cream-coloured stone and render walls
- Lack of uniformity
- One and a half (dormer) to three storeys
- Timber casement windows with glazing bars
- Timber bay windows
- Slate, tile, stone, and thatched roofs
- No setback or moderate front garden
- Mostly local cream-coloured stone, but one red brick property (with stone lintels and quoins) and timber sash windows
- Tutor-style stone-framed windows featured



# OFFICER'S MESS ENQUIRY BY DESIGN ARCHITECTURAL & URBAN CHARACTER

Attendees highlighted locations that embody the character of Rutland and that should serve as precedents for development of the Officers' Mess site. The Prince's Foundation will use this feedback in the characterisation stage of their work.

## Edith Weston

- The east end of Church Lane
- Well Cross (road)
- Edge of Rutland Water

## Rutland

- Central Uppingham
- Wing (north east)
- Area south west of Manton
- Hambleton
- Morcott (north east)
- Lyndon (south west)
- Area between Lyndon and North Luffenham
- North Luffenham
- Edith Weston



On day 2, a group of local representatives focused on the existing character of the area and what would be considered both desirable and realistic for new development. The outputs will guide The Prince's Foundation's character study. Key points covered were:

- Analysis of street compositions
- Reference documents – e.g. North Luffenham and Rutland Design Codes
- Places with similar stone – quoins and infill
  - Also traditional render houses, painted brick, brick or brick chimneys
- Features:
  - Gables, dormers
  - Boundary treatments: low picket fences, low stone walls, and hedges
  - Window surrounds, porches
  - Forms: gable ends to street, sometimes seen from down a lane; various setbacks
  - Colours – soft, chalky, esp. cream, ochre, and blue
  - Bins, defibrillator/power source
- Verges important
- Glimpses through lanes, past homes
- Informal composition, relationship of smaller and larger buildings
- Military housing having very different feel to the rest
- Building, verge, garden walls – together creating boundary

# OFFICER'S MESS ENQUIRY BY DESIGN KEY PRINCIPLES PLAN



*N.b. This plan represents the ideas that drew preference during the EbD. It is not the plan that will be submitted for planning permission, but should influence it.*

- Maintain existing avenues of trees.
- Add pedestrian crossings to the north and east to provide safe access and encourage integration of new and existing communities.
- Provide village green to create a welcoming amenity at key interface between old, new, and

main route through the village, and to enhance the setting of the listed Old School.

- Provide village shop facing green to give more visible and central space to this highly valued resource, and create a centre to village. (Potentially mixed use, i.e. flat above.)
- Retain category A and some category B trees (prominent clusters) and the hedgerows (to east and south-east).
- Sustainable drainage systems throughout with

pond at south-west corner (low point) - for attenuation and visual amenity.

- Make south-west portion public green space so new and existing residents can enjoy the views.
- Create positive frontages along Manton and Edith Weston Roads to engage existing village and help slow traffic.
- Have winding and pedestrian priority routes through development to encourage walking and avoid creating rat-run.



*EbD workshop sketch plans, consolidated by PF into the above plan*

# OFFICER'S MESS SITE NEXT STEPS & TIMELINE

Following the Enquiry by Design and reporting-back session, the DIO will consider the outcomes of the engagement. These outcomes will inform an indicative masterplan for the site and be used to create a design guide for the Officers' Mess site.

The DIO will hold a series of consultation events locally to share the evolving plans which will provide an opportunity for local residents to view and comment on the plans before an planning application is submitted to Rutland County Council in late Spring 2023.

Further information on the Officers' Mess site and the emerging development plans can be found at:

[www.officersmess-stgeorgesbarracks.co.uk](http://www.officersmess-stgeorgesbarracks.co.uk)



Officer's Mess site, looking west

## TIMELINE

22-23 November 2022	●	Prince's Foundation Enquiry by Design Workshop
January 2023	⊙	EbD Reporting Back Drop-In
Feb/March 2023	●	Pre-submission consultation on emerging plans
Late spring 2023	●	Outline Planning Application submitted to Rutland County Council Statutory Public Consultation
Early autumn 2023 (anticipated)	●	Planning Determination
TBD	●	Developer procured and site sold
TBD	●	Detailed Planning Application and Statutory Public Consultation
2026	●	MoD vacates Officers' Mess site Re-development potentially begins on site



Officer's Mess site, looking east