

# 8. Design Guidelines



This chapter provides more detailed and descriptive guidance aimed at promoting quality design solutions and providing information as to the scale, character, urban design and public realm qualities being sought for the development.

The street hierarchy will be the defining and structuring element for the built form, establishing street character and spatial form through definition of carriageway, pavement, building height, front garden widths and parking arrangements. Once the street hierarchy has been established this will define the development plot available for built development. The second part in this chapter looks in more detail at the arrangement of buildings that will be provided within the development plots – defining the relationship between the built form and the public realm.



## 8.1 STREET HIERARCHY – SECTIONS & ELEVATIONS

The development has been designed around a hierarchical network of streets, squares, courtyards and mews providing maximum permeability for the pedestrian whilst controlling and limiting the movement and speed of vehicles.

The hierarchy of routes relates to the function, location and character of adjacent development and comprises:

- The High Street;
- Residential Access Roads;
- Mews and Courtyards; and
- Park Road Frontages.



The following pages described the character of each of these streets setting out the defining distances of the carriageway, pedestrian and cycle routes, tree planting, building set backs, boundary treatments and access arrangements for plots and courtyards.

Through the provision of street sections and descriptions it is possible to define the inherent character of the scheme and indicate the form that the development will take. This will provide the basis for the development's design, acting as a design code against which detailed applications for housing layouts will be measured.

### HIGH STREET

The High Street is the primary circulation route and focal point through the heart of the new development it will accommodate the bulk of the vehicular traffic, the public transport route and dedicated cycle paths. It will have a spacious feel, be tree lined and have adequate room for pedestrian movement. The pavement will be generous, up to 4.4m wide allowing for street tree planting and cycleways.

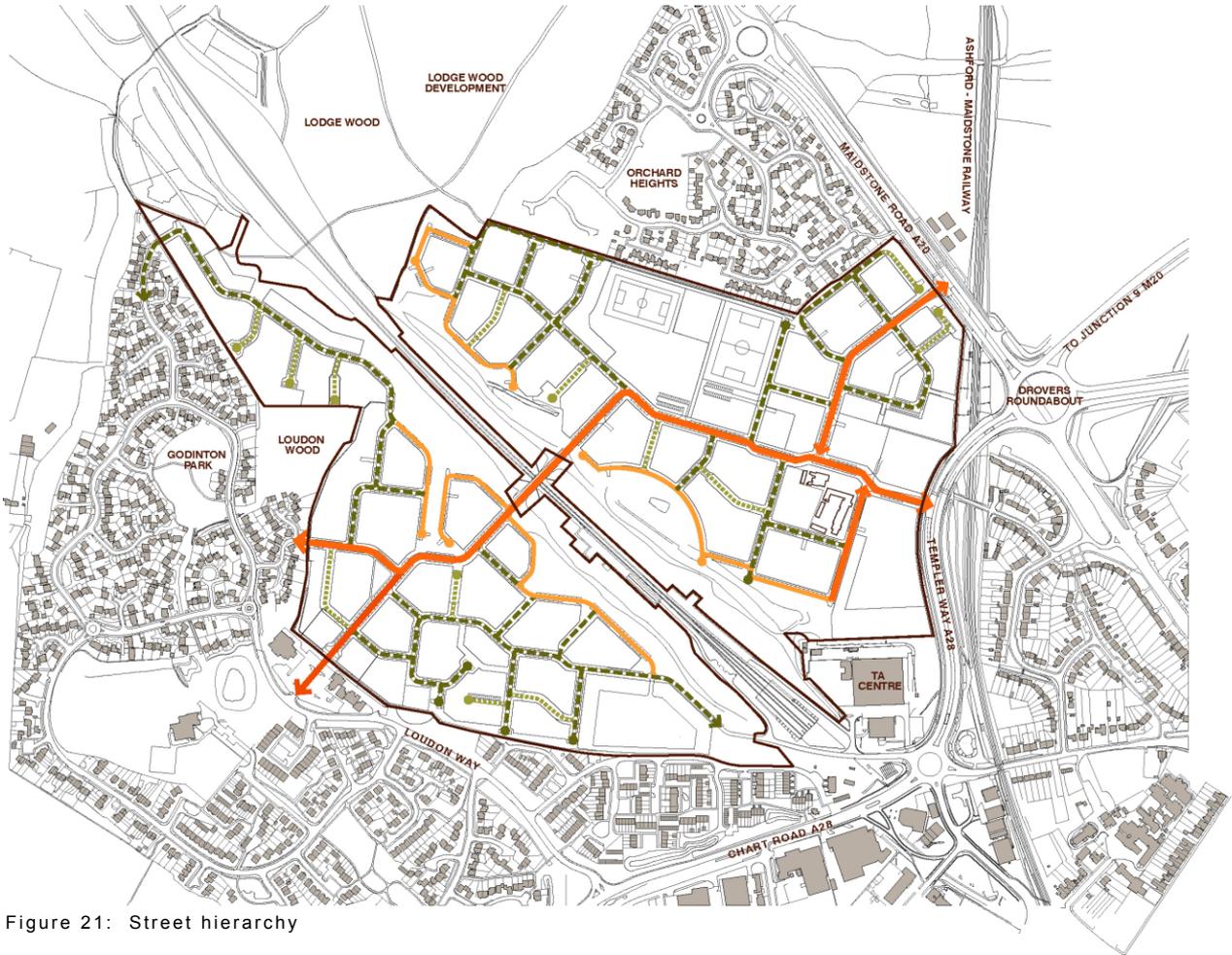


Figure 21: Street hierarchy

- High Street
- Residential Access Road
- Mews/Courtyard
- Park Road Frontages



Sketch view along high street

The carriageway will be a maximum of 6m wide. In most locations on street parallel parking bays of 2m x 6m will be provided. Vehicular access to plots will be from the residential side streets and not directly from the High Street. The majority of dedicated parking, save for the on street parking, will be located to the rear of the building.

A dedicated cycleway will be provided along the High Street the routing and detail design will be agreed in consultation with KCC and ABC at the detail design stage

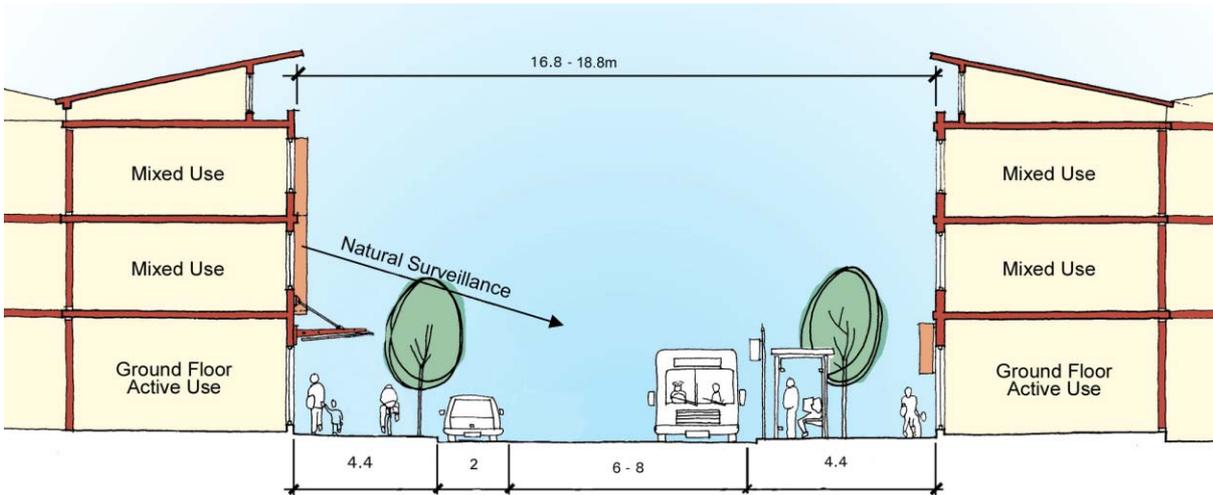


The High Street will have strong, continuous frontages along a minimum of 80% of its length. Building heights should be a minimum of 3 storeys with taller buildings located at focal points and corners. All buildings will front onto and have their primary entrance and principle rooms overlooking the High Street with commercial, mixed use and public buildings (*public buildings include the multi-purpose community building, primary health care facility, health and fitness centre and the nursery*) being hard against the back of the pavement.

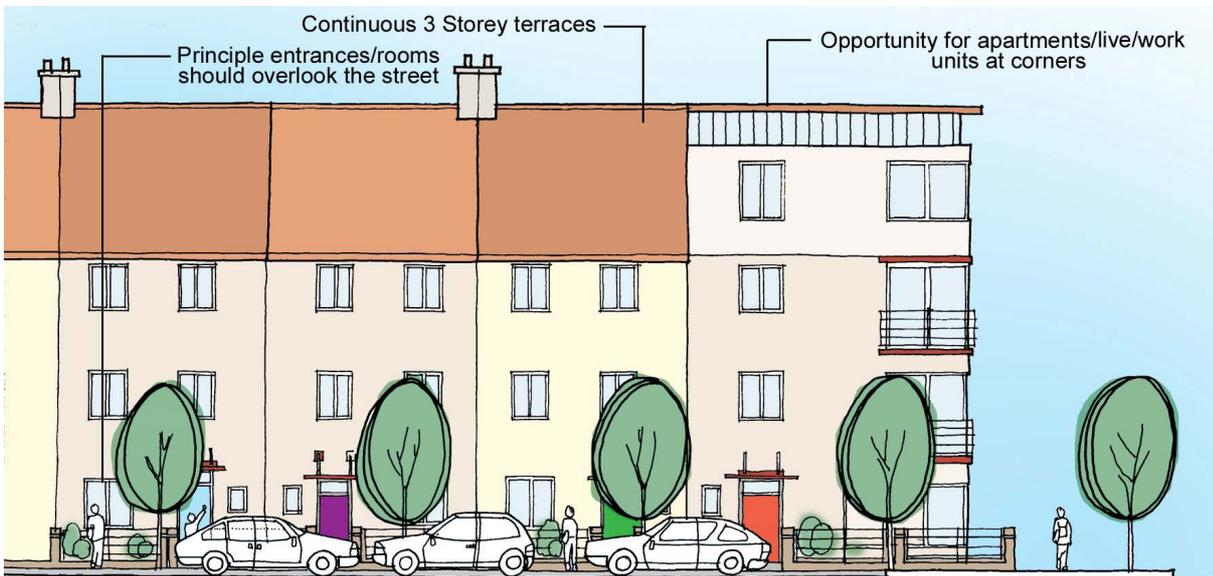
The residential units along the high street will be terraced and a minimum of 3 storeys high. Buildings should turn corners to create visual markers. Residential properties may have a semi-private front garden of a maximum of 1.5m depth. Boundary treatments should comprise walls, railings and fencing up to 1.2m high, with solid walls up to 2m high permitted where they will be used to enclose side gardens or parking areas.

High quality surface material and street furniture will be used along this route to emphasis its importance.

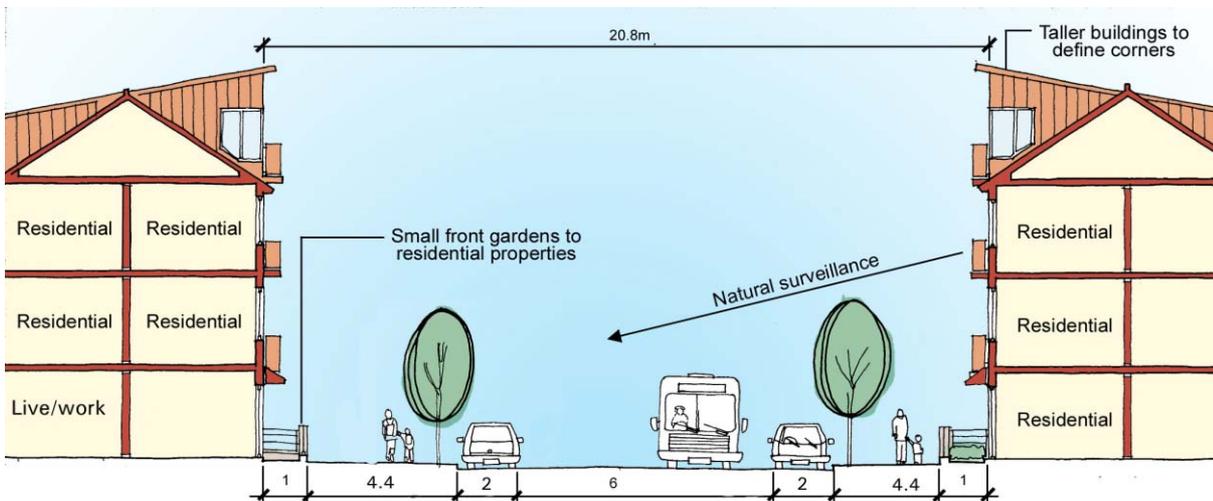




High Street Commercial Areas - Section



High Street Residential - Elevation



High Street Residential - Section

**RESIDENTIAL ACCESS ROADS**



View along residential access roads

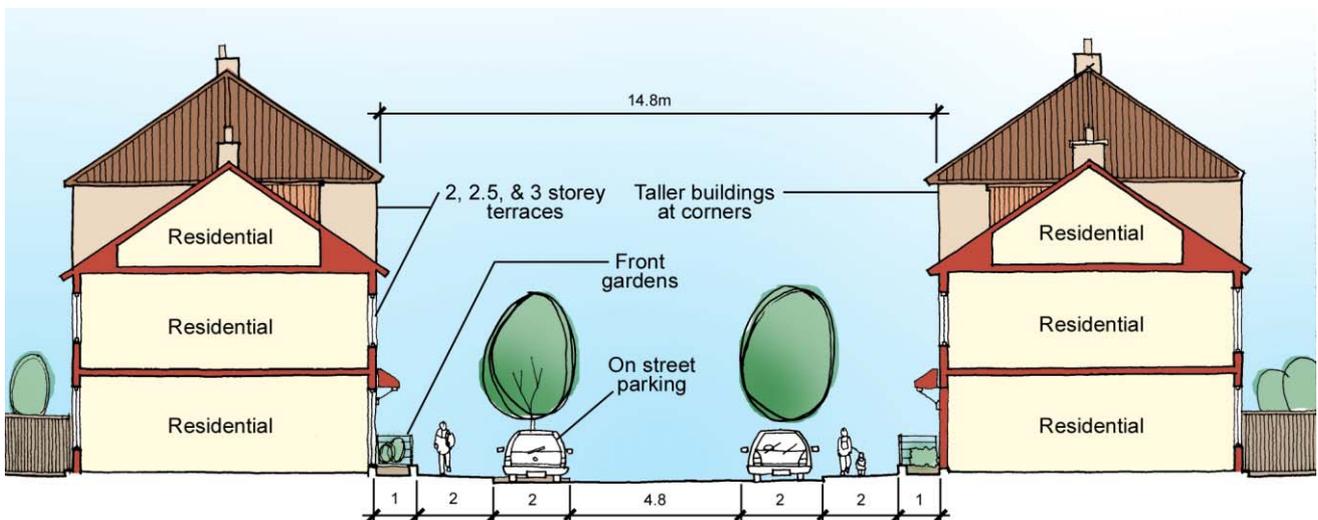
These will provide the main vehicular access to residential development plots and be the secondary circulation system. They will have a more intimate character and be less formal than the high street with building frontages being brought closer together. The pavement will be 2m wide with street tree planting focused at corners and pedestrian crossings and between parking bays.

The carriageway will be a maximum of 4.8m wide and in most locations on street parallel parking bays of 2m x 6m will be provided; cyclists will share the

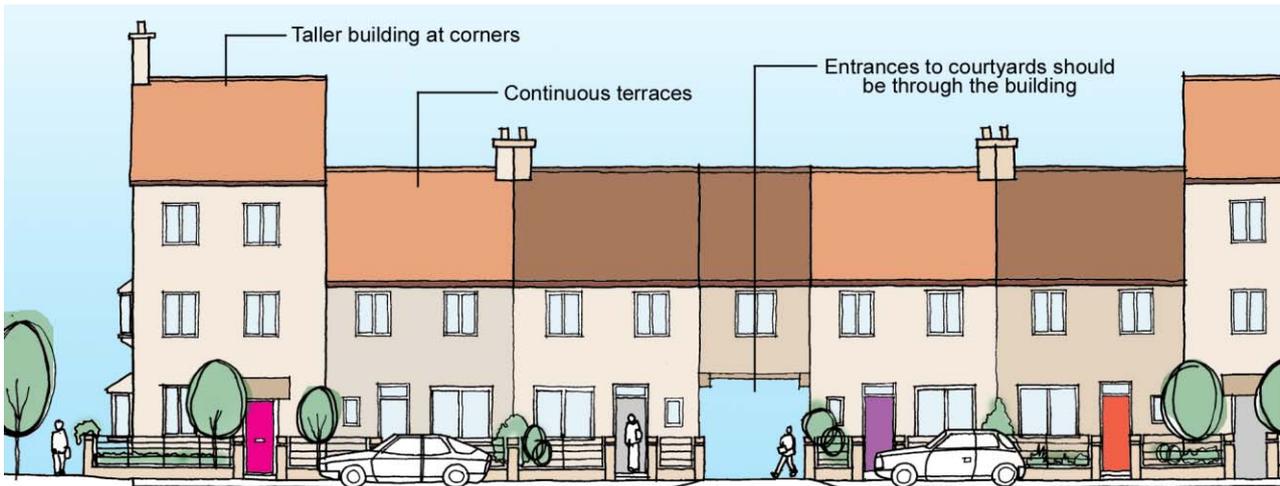
carriageway with vehicles as traffic speed will be slow. The majority of dedicated parking will be on street parking with private parking courtyards located to the rear of the building within the centre of the plot. Vehicular access to private parking courts will be provided via an archway through the building facade.

The residential access roads will have a strong continuous frontage with houses terraced in a minimum of groups of six. All buildings will front onto and have their primary entrance and principle rooms overlooking the residential access road. Buildings will be a minimum of 2 storeys high with some 3 storey buildings at corners and to create visual markers. Residential properties may have a semi-private front garden of a maximum of 1.5m depth. In medium to lower density areas semi-detached and linked-detached houses will be permitted.

Boundary treatments should comprise walls, railings and fences up to 1.2m high, with solid walls up to 2m high permitted where they will be used to enclose side gardens or parking areas.



Residential Access Road - Section



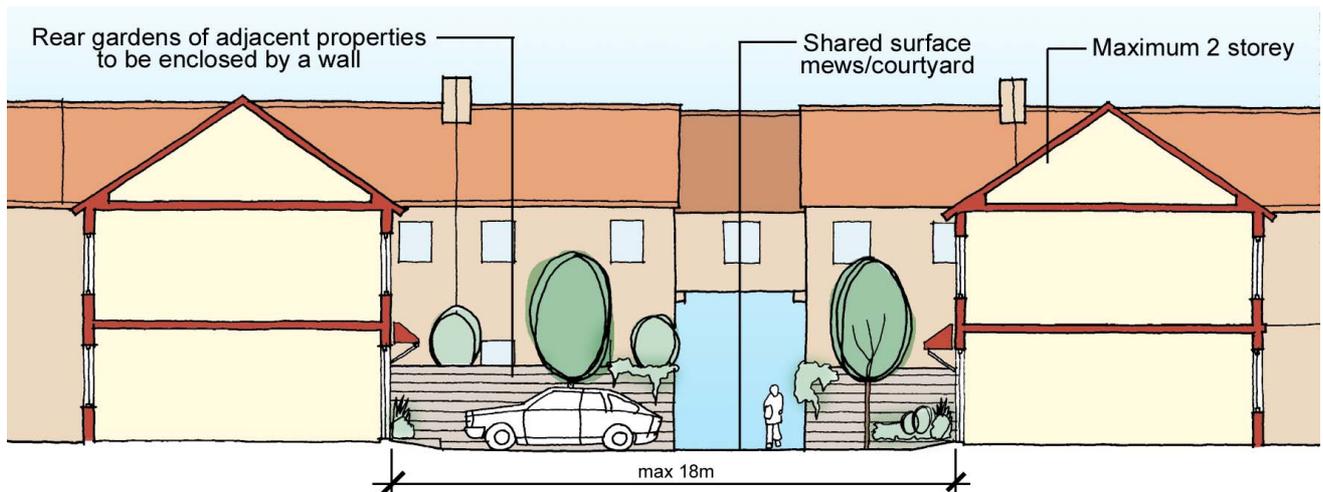
Residential Access Road - Elevation

### MEWS AND COURTYARDS

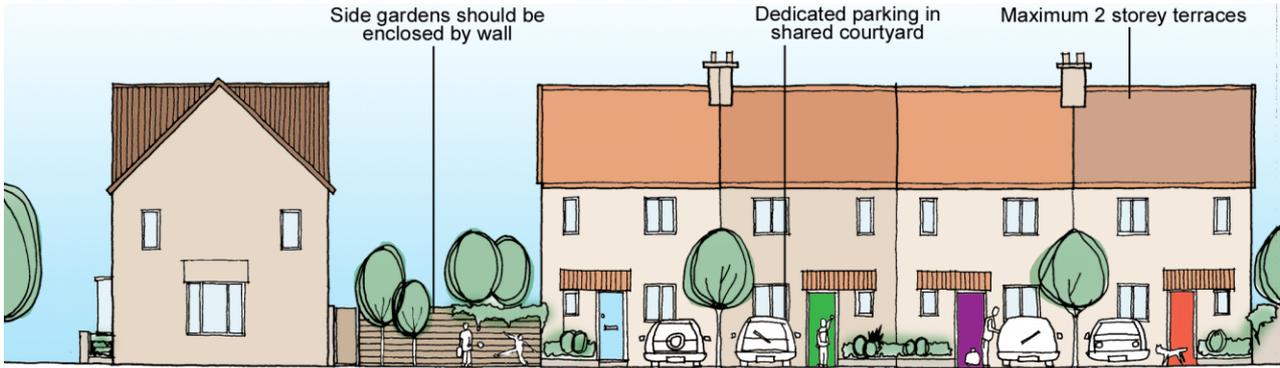
These will provide the tertiary vehicular access to residential development plots. They will be more intimate and informal with pedestrians having priority at all times. Mews will have a shared surface throughout with no dedicated pavement, although, for safety in certain locations a carriageway may be delineated by a change in materials. These mews areas will also provide private parking and individual parking areas will be delineated by a change in materials.

The mews will vary in width from a minimum of 5m where building gables front each other to a maximum of 18m where building frontages overlook each other.

The mews will have strong continuous frontages, comprising terraced housing in a minimum of groups of four. Where private gardens abut the mews they should be enclosed by a good quality wall of a minimum of 1.8m so as to retain the sense of enclosure. Buildings will be a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 storeys high. Residential entrances to properties will normally open directly onto the mews although small semi-private front gardens of a maximum 1m may be provided.



Mews courtyard - Section



Mews courtyard - Elevation



View along edge of Park

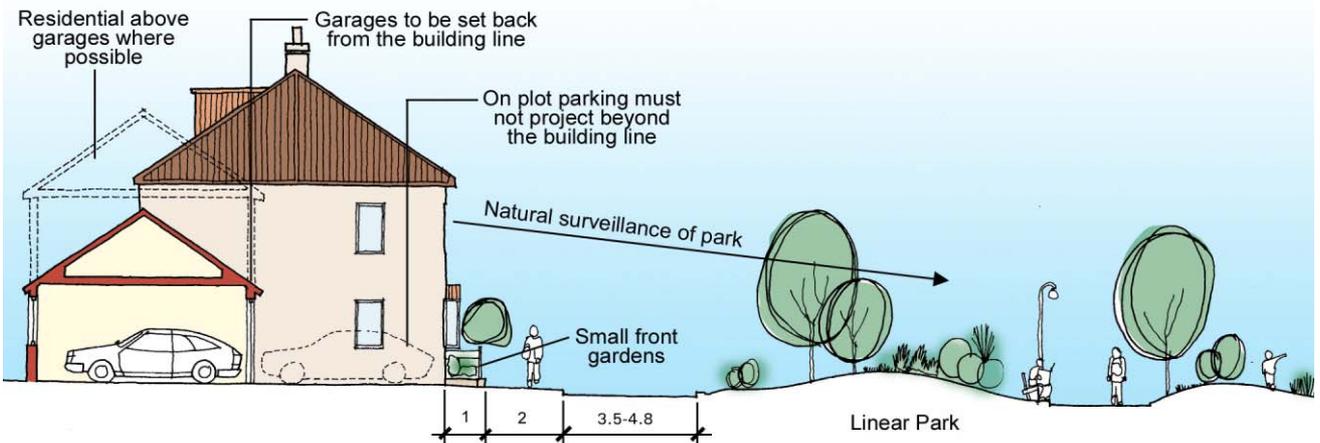
**PARK ROAD FRONTAGES.**

The linear park will be overlooked by residential frontages along its length. These buildings will be larger 2 storey semi detached, linked-detached or terraced properties. Where garages are provided these will be set back from the street frontage and where appropriate the garage will be integral to the house with residential property above.

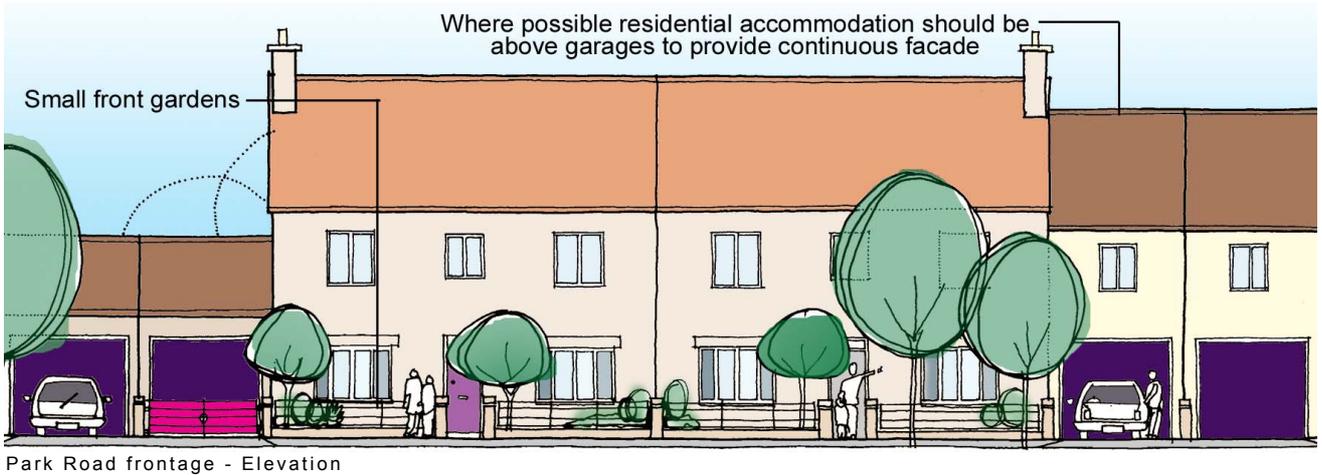
These properties will be accessed via a 3.5-4.8 metre access road with a 2m wide pavement on one side. In certain locations on street, parallel parking bays of 2m x 6m will be provided on the park side of the road. These routes will be more informal to soften the edge between built development and the linear park.

Pedestrians will have priority in key locations affording easy access to the park.

Residential properties may have a semi-private front garden of a maximum of 1.5m depth. Boundary treatments will comprise walls, railings and fences up to 1.2m high.



Park Road frontage - Section



private gardens within the centre of the block



## 8.2 URBAN DESIGN

### PERIMETER BLOCK STRUCTURE

The most important design principle for structuring the built form within development plots is to make a clear distinction between public fronts and privates backs. Buildings that present their façade, principle entrances and rooms to the street provide life and activity. In addition to the safety and security afforded by natural surveillance over the public realm. This type of development has a strong bearing on land take and allows higher densities to be achieved without compromising design quality.

In principle, buildings should be placed around the outer edge of the development plot forming a continuous public façade with all private gardens and private courtyard parking enclosed to the rear. Where buildings are set back from the building line the resultant space should be kept to a minimum and provide a usable public space or should remain private and be enclosed by a wall, railings or fence. Incidental 'landscaped areas' will not be permitted.



Continuous urban terraces



Buildings create the spaces

### RESPECTING PEOPLES PRIVACY

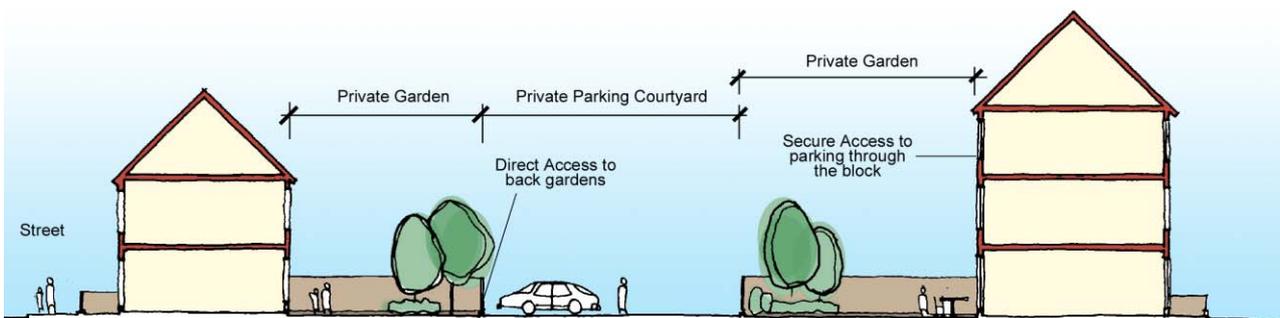
The distance between the backs of properties needs to be carefully considered in terms of privacy and to prevent unacceptable overlooking of private gardens. A privacy distance of 20m back-to-back provides an approximate rule of thumb, but need not be applied too rigidly. Closer distances will be appropriate in contexts such as mews and where windowless gable ends overlook private gardens, where screen planting is provided or where private courtyard car parking is located. In the past these rules were strictly enforced and often led to a compromise in the design quality and layout. The intention is to be flexible and to assess each development plot on its individual design quality.

### CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE

Continuous building lines along the block edge are more successful in providing good enclosure to the street, square or courtyard and generating 'active frontages' with frequent doors and windows to animate the public realm. In the district centre direct frontage to pavement relationships will also assist commercial viability and street vitality.

Continuous frontages should be used as far as possible, and adhere to a common building line. The intensity or length of continuous frontage will vary however, depending on the general density and character of the plot. Within the District centre and along the High Street an almost continuous frontage will be expected say up to 80%.

Where a looser framework of buildings is required development should still comply with the perimeter block principle with building frontages set back a maximum of 1.5 metres from the edge of the plot. Projections and set backs from the building line may be used to add emphasis but the function of the resulting space must be clearly defined as public or private space. In these situations the spaces between the buildings along the street edge should be enclosed by walls, railings or fences.



Section through typical residential block



Axonometry of district centre

### ACTIVE FRONTAGES

Making frontages 'active' adds interest, life and vitality to the public realm. This means:

- All primary entrances and principle rooms overlooking the street;
- Minimise blank walls - where gable ends abut the street these should be specially designed to provide additional windows adding visual interest and improving natural surveillance; and
- All public buildings should front directly onto the street with principle entrances and lively internal activities clearly visible from the street.



Active uses on the ground floor along the High Street

Where public or commercial buildings are situated additional devices can be incorporated into the building façade so that a building interacts with the public realm. Views into a building, provide interest to passers-by and make its function apparent, while views out provide additional 'eyes on the street' and contribute to safety. Adding visual interest and animation to facades should be done in a number of ways, including:

- The more windows and doors onto the public realm the better;
- Using transparent glass for windows, where privacy allows, rather than mirror or frosted glass that only allows occupants to benefit from views out;
- Enliven edges with balconies, bays, porches, canopies or arcades that provide a more comfortable threshold in inclement weather, prolonging activities and allowing uses to overlap onto the street;



3 Storey terraces along high street



Buildings should turn the corner



Opportunities for higher density uses

- Clearly define public entrances with canopies or porches allowing the passer-by to orientate themselves, entrances should also be well lit and not set back from the street; and
- Where public activities are located, such as a café, pub or restaurant allow room for activities to spill out onto the street such as outdoor seating and eating.

#### BUILDING HEIGHT AND FORM

As set out in section 8.1 'Street Hierarchy' building heights will be a minimum of 2 storeys and comprised a range of building heights including 2, 2.5, 3 and 4 storeys up to a maximum of 5. Development will be predominantly terraced with some semi-detached, linked-detached and mews buildings.

Building heights will relate to street widths to create enclosure with taller buildings used to define corners and terminate key views as set out in section 7.8 'Focus Buildings and Groups'.

#### TURNING THE CORNER

Corner sites are visually prominent and form an important part in the character of an area and can be used to aid orientation and legibility. A number of design approaches will be adopted to deal with these corner sites.

**District Centre:** In the mixed use district centre corner sites are not only visually prominent but have two facades, potentially offering more entrances to different parts of the buildings and as such provide special opportunities for mixing uses such as residential or office accommodation over commercial uses. In built form the corner should be defined in a number of ways such as;

- Ground floor active frontages;
- Locating taller buildings on corners;
- Projecting buildings forward either in plan or through the use of special treatments such as balconies and entrance features; and
- Special façade treatments, such as change of material or colour to add visual prominence.

Corner plots are also the most appropriate location for adaptable building units.

**Apartments:** Corner plots are ideal locations for apartments as the reduced requirement for private open space and parking allows the plot to be developed at a higher density. In general apartments will be located on corner sites along the High Street and should follow these principles:

- Form a continuous street frontage with windows and entrances addressing both street frontages;
- Principle entrances should be placed on or near the apex of the corner to add visual interest and activity; and
- Balconies, bay windows and special façade treatments will be encouraged to provide visual interest.



Active uses on the ground floor



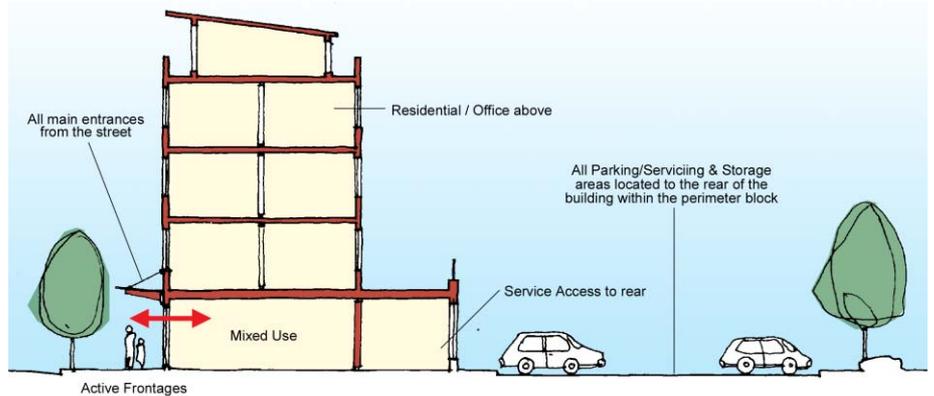
Vertical mixed use - Residential and or commercial uses above retail

**Housing:** Where individual houses are located on corner plots specially designed buildings types will be utilised. These will provide maximum development frontages to the edge of the plot with entrances and windows along both facades. Where appropriate, 3 storey units may be uses.

### MIXED USE

Many of the old justifications for the separation of uses are no longer valid, with the post industrial economy and the rise of the service sector uses can once again be re-mixed. This coupled with the need to increase densities and reduce the need for car travel provides a compelling argument for mixing uses not only within the development plot but within individual buildings.

A mix of uses within the district centre will be positively encouraged with residential, community and commercial uses sharing the same development plot. A mix of uses within individual buildings will also be encouraged.

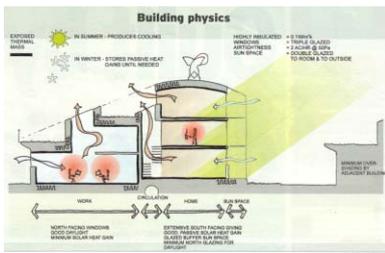


Section through typical mixed use block

### VERTICAL MIXED USE

Flats or offices should be accommodated over shops, cafes and restaurants, and where commercially viable, over community or leisure uses. Care needs to be taken however, regarding the combination of uses to avoid conflict or nuisance to resident's e.g. a bar/restaurant may be very successful located on the ground floor of office accommodation but less successful when located immediately below apartments. Bearing this in mind however, there is no reason why a mix of uses should not be provided within the same building. The following design principles should be followed:

- Entrances to upper floors should be carefully positioned so as not to break up ground floor retail continuity, but they must also be visible and well lit;
- Secure parking, with allocated parking for residents, should be provided for larger developments. Shared use of both on-street and off street parking should be considered (such as daytime use for offices and evening use for residential); and
- Service and rubbish collection areas should be located to the rear of the development, with measures to mitigate noise and smells and to reduce the need for lorries to use reversing horns.



Energy efficient



Flexible internal accommodation



Ground floors in key locations adaptable for business uses

### ADAPTABILITY

Flexible buildings offer occupiers the opportunity to modify and personalise their homes and workspaces. They can be altered to suit individual preferences, provide for a change of use and meet changing social and economic circumstances. All these will help prolong the viable life of a development.

It is proposed that flexible units are provided in certain key locations such as within the district centre, at key corner sites along the High Street and near Godinton Park if the new road link can be provided.

It is proposed that these flexible units house residential accommodation in the short term but are designed in such a way as to allow for a change of uses at a later date. Such uses may include office, workshops or commercial space. Key design features will be:

- Higher ground floor to first floor heights;
- Roof spaces that can be converted to residential at a later date;
- Removable ground floor partitions to allow flexibility in size and configuration of ground floors;
- Larger windows;
- Consideration of possible future emergency exit arrangements; and
- Provision for ground floor toilets/washrooms.

### ACCESS FOR ALL

Buildings and public spaces must address the needs of everyone, and especially those with pushchairs, people with disabilities and the elderly. Particular attention should be paid to the detail design of the building-street interface. All design should comply with Part M of the Building Regulations.

### 8.3 PUBLIC REALM QUALITY

The public realm comprises the areas around and between buildings such as streets, squares, linear park and neighbourhood parks. An important design objective within the development will be to create a place where the spaces around the buildings are as important as the buildings themselves. A successful public realm depends on its relationship/interface with the built form as much as the quality and arrangement of the individual materials i.e. paving, lighting, street furniture etc.

It will be important to 'design out' incidental open spaces. Every space should have a clearly defined function. 'Left over' areas which are often poorly maintained or vandalised can very quickly detract from the appearance of the development and are a costly maintenance item. As such the public realm within the development will:

- Establish a clear distinction between public and private space that will help to improve safety and security and give people clear direction as to where they can or cannot go.
- Create a positive interface with the built form e.g. building frontages, windows and entrances should face onto and overlook the street and open spaces.
- Use high quality materials; and



A co-ordinated range of contemporary street furniture

- Establish a comprehensive management and maintenance regime to look after all public realm areas.

### STREETSCAPE

The streetscape is often characterised by a clutter of mismatched signage, lighting, street furniture and traffic control measures. These detract from the appearance of the public realm.

A more holistic approach is proposed involving a co-ordinated, design, installation, management and maintenance strategy – ensuring consistency of quality, style and colour. This will involve discussion with key stakeholders, such as KCC highways, local authority cleansing departments and utility companies. Key design issues will be:

- Design the space so that the functions of its parts are clear and the need for superfluous signage, bollards and barriers are minimised;
- Establish a comprehensive suite of materials and street furniture to be used consistently throughout the life of the development;
- Liaise with utility companies to identify the most appropriate location of inspection chambers, manhole covers etc.

It is proposed that good quality 'off the shelf' designs are used utilising the best in modern and contemporary design. This will not include pastiche 'heritage' type ranges.

Lighting should be designed with the comfort, safety and general ambiance of the pedestrian in mind and should not be selected purely for highway illumination purposes. This often results in out of scale, ugly fittings and poor lighting quality for the pedestrian.

### MATERIALS

With regard to surface treatments the emphasis will be on simplicity and quality of detailing. The mass usage of concrete block pavers will not be permitted. In general road surfaces and pavements will be in tarmac with higher quality, paving, kerbs and surface treatments utilised in key locations, such as the High Street, junctions and pedestrian crossings; around public open spaces and within news and courtyards.

## 8.4 PARKING AND SERVICING

### RESIDENTIAL CAR PARKING

Parking for private residential development will be provided at an **average** of 1.5 cars per dwelling over the whole of the development in compliance with PPG3. This will comprise a combination of on-street, private courtyard, private garage and on plot parking.

In higher density areas of terraced housing and flats parking will generally be communal, on street with some designated spaces in secure parking courtyards. For lower density areas garage courts or integral garages and on plot parking may be used.

**Positioning of car parking:** The manner in which car parking is arranged has a fundamental effect on the quality of the place. Vehicles will not be allowed to dominate the space or to inconvenience pedestrians or cyclists. The most appropriate place for off street car parking will be in secure rear courtyards,



Good quality, well detailed materials



Private parking should be visible from the house



Cycle Parking



Pedestrian movement within commercial car parks

where these are well overlooked by adjoining buildings. Parking within the front curtilage is to be avoided as this breaks up the frontage, restricts informal surveillance and creates a fragmented and cluttered streetscape.

**Keeping cars in view:** In residential areas a very careful balance will need to be struck between the expectations of car owners, in particular their desire to park as near their house as possible, and the need to maintain the character of the overall setting. To avoid parked cars dominating the surroundings there should generally be no more than 10-15 cars grouped in any one location (with the exception of commercial parking areas).

**Courtyard parking:** Communal courtyard parking will be provided within the centre of the residential block overlooked by adjoining development. Courtyards will comprise both open surface parking and garages. For convenience direct pedestrian access should be provided from the private parking court into individual properties via a back garden entrance. Vehicular access will be provided via a secure entrance. This entrance should be through the perimeter block with development 'bridging' over the opening. No general public access will be permitted through the courtyards.

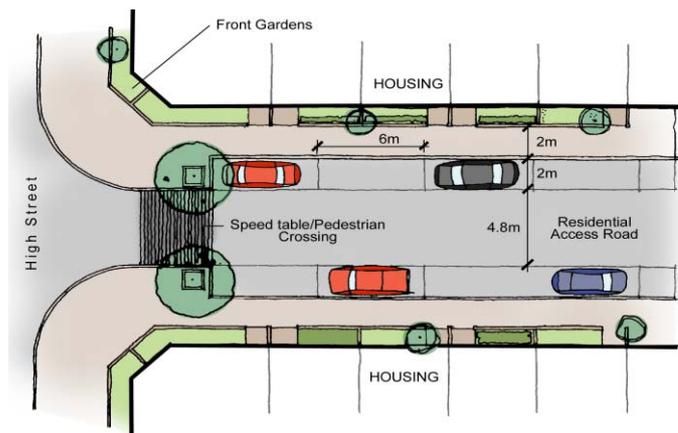
**On Plot parking:** For some of the larger properties it will be appropriate to provide on plot parking and integral garages. Where this occurs, garages and surface parking will be located to the side of the house with no cars projecting in front of the building line so as to retain the street elevation and minimise dominance of the car. Where possible residential accommodation should be provided above garages to retain continuity of the streetscene.

**COMMERCIAL CAR PARKING**

Commercial car parking areas should always be located to the rear of the building; no forecourt parking will be permitted in any circumstances. In commercial areas larger areas of car parking should be visually broken up by appropriate public realm treatment particularly tree planting and footpaths. Within car parks adequate space should be provided for dedicated pedestrian movement – pedestrian circulation should not be determined solely by vehicular requirements. In areas where commercial car parking abuts the back of the pavement its boundary should be clearly delineated by a wall and railings.

**Servicing and Storage areas:** Ideally delivery access should be directly to the building from the street in the traditional manner. Where this occurs adequate parking, loading and timing restrictions should be in place. Where service/storage areas are required they must be placed at the rear of the building and be screened by buildings. If there are any circumstances where service/ storage areas abut the public realm they must be screened from view with a high quality solid wall.

Typical residential access road plan





Change of materials to identify pedestrian priority



Pedestrian priority at junctions

## 8.5 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security are vital elements in any urban development. People feel more comfortable and confident using areas where there is good visibility and effective lighting and where people feel they can be seen and heard by others. There are essentially three key design principles for designing safety into the public realm, namely:

- Ensuring natural surveillance and human presence, this is achieved by:
  - Making buildings front onto the public realm;
  - Putting 'eyes on streets' and minimising blank facades;
  - Mixing uses, particularly at ground level, adding vitality at different times of the day and night;
  - Designing an integrated network of streets, rather than more vulnerable cul-de-sacs; and
  - Locating parking in front of buildings or in secure private courtyards.
- Minimising Conflict – by providing safe routes and crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists; and
- Community involvement – when people view spaces as their own they begin to take responsibility for them.

## 8.6 TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

In principle and in accordance with 'Places, Streets and Movement – DB32 Companion Guide' the layout of the buildings and public spaces will take precedent over the rigid requirements of highway design. Placement of buildings, location of on street parking, bus bays and pedestrian priority areas will be used to calm traffic.

Reliance on vertical traffic calming such as speed bumps/ sleeping policemen should be avoided at all costs. These are uncomfortable to passengers in private cars, public transport and cyclists. Where additional traffic calming measures are required they should be horizontal e.g. pinch points in the carriageway at pedestrian crossing points and junctions; changes in surface material from tarmac (denoting areas where the car has priority) to small element paving such as setts, block paving (denoting pedestrian priority areas).

In all circumstances pedestrian crossings should be clearly visible and in convenient locations, provision should be made for drop kerbs in all circumstances.

## 8.7 HIGHWAY DESIGN, SPECIFICATION AND CONSTRUCTION

The layout of the proposed development has been designed in accordance with the objectives and principles as set out in 'Kent Design – A guide to Sustainable Development'. Detail design and highway layout will be designed in accordance with the technical appendix attached to that document and in consultation with ABC and KCC highways departments.

# Appendices

# Appendix I

## PLANNING POLICY: DETAILED APPRAISAL

This appendix outlines the policy context within the Ashford Borough Local Plan (2000) and sets out how the Barracks development adheres to these policies. Local Plan Policy Development Site No: 22 (Appendix II) sets out the infrastructure requirements for the site to ensure the high quality development that is expected in terms of design. The Council wishes to secure a mixed-use development that embodies a set of strategic principles. Each of these principles and a description of how the development proposes to conform to each principle is set out below.

- a) *Establish a mix, density and pattern of land uses and a network of footpaths, cycle routes and public transport services which reduce the need for people to travel by car.*

One of the primary aims of the development proposals is to meet sustainability objectives by offering realistic alternatives to the private car by careful design and siting of land

uses. The overall residential density of the development will be an average of 40 dwellings per hectare within the PPG3 guidelines. Residential densities will be increased around and within the district centre and along the main access route through the development. A range of housing types and sizes will be incorporated into the overall design including flats within the district centre.

The district centre will establish a range of land uses to serve the needs of the existing resident population adjacent to the development as well as that from the proposed development. The district centre will include a foodstore, primary school and local shops to ensure that residents do not have to travel for basic amenities and facilities.

A pedestrian and cycle network is planned throughout the site offering all the residents a choice of movement without a car. The district centre, linear park and/or neighbourhood parks will be within walking distance from most of the development and will provide a quality environmental setting where residents can enjoy the amenities. The strong linkages that are proposed between the Godinton Park local centre and the development will also ensure that a range of facilities are available to those on the Barracks site.

The scheme proposes a local bus route that will travel through the centre of the development, through the district centre, over the railway and into the adjacent Godinton Park development and beyond to the town centre and the International Rail Station. This will offer substantial benefits to the residents of the development and the Borough generally.

A sustainability statement has been prepared by WSP Environmental and a summary is included in Section 5 with the full statement included in Appendix III.

**b) Create a real sense of place through sensitive, innovative and high quality design.**

The development design will be of the highest quality. The masterplan is designed to be sensitive to ecological and environmental opportunities and constraints incorporating green chains and parks that are linked over the whole development. The incorporation of a higher density high street provides an innovative urban feel to the district centre at the heart of the development. The district centre will contain a range of services and a primary school that will meet the needs of the community and provide a sense of place and a local meeting point for residents and employees.

The residential areas will be designed in a neighbourhood style that will ensure that residents have a sense of community.

**c) Help to establish strong links from the site to adjoining housing areas between the A20 and Godinton Park, especially by providing convenient pedestrian and cycle routes.**

The development proposals will incorporate linkages between the development itself and the adjacent developments. This will be done by the provision of new vehicular and pedestrian access points providing safe and convenient linkages into and through the development. The implementation of these routes will be dependent on other parties. This detail location of these routes will be carried out in consultation with the public.

**d) Provide for associated facilities needed – including a primary school, play areas, community/sports hall, public open space, and a local centre.**

The development will provide a large range of community and sports facilities for the use of the residents of the area. There will be a two-form entry primary school, two district play areas and 2 neighbourhood play areas, a multi-purpose community facility, a primary healthcare facility and substantial open space area. The provision of these facilities within a district centre is considered suitable to serve the needs of the development and wider community. The provision of these facilities has been in strict consultation with the local authority.

**e) Investigate fully the potential to reuse existing buildings and facilities within the site and avoid the demolition of property for which a viable use could be found.**

Through research into the architectural and historical merit of the existing buildings on the site, very few contain any architectural or historical merit. The Repton Manor and associated Barn, which are listed, will be maintained and improved. A number of alternative uses are still being considered for the building.

The remaining existing buildings do not offer the best use of urban land resources and some are unsustainable in their use of materials. A study has been undertaken that shows that the buildings do not show any architectural significance and this is available at the Council offices. The replacement of these buildings with higher density uses and more energy-efficient buildings is in line with Government objectives to achieve sustainable development.

Although many of the buildings will be demolished on the site, it is important that the historical nature of the Former Rowcroft and Templer Barracks site is maintained. The proposals will seek to maintain the historical significance of the

site through the provision of names and/or landmarks throughout the development. More detail as to how this can be achieved is set out in Section 7.

**f) *Protect existing trees and any important habitats wherever practical and design the site layout to complement a strategic landscape plan which provides new habitat links (such as planted areas, hedgerows and ditches) linking existing habitats and providing routes for wildlife, and provide for the long term management of these areas.***

A study has been undertaken to assess the importance of the trees that exist on the site and this has been taken into account when siting development. The Consortium has been in contact with the Council Tree Officer to explain the proposals for the site and aims to agree a strategy for

the safeguarding of important trees. Every effort will be made to maintain existing tree provision in line with the proposals.

The masterplan will contain a strategic landscape network that will provide for new ecological habitats; recreation of existing habitats; substantial green corridors and linkages; retention of existing trees and important hedgerows.

**g) *Be laid out in a way which takes account of the possible noise impact from the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.***

There has been extensive survey work assessing the noise impact of the CTRL. A large area has been safeguarded adjacent to the CTRL to

cater for this noise impact and buildings will be built outside this area. The area will be landscaped and will incorporate the two district play areas to ensure that it does not become a wasteland but is used as an access route and recreational facility.

**h) *Ensure that any land contamination issues are satisfactorily dealt with.***

There has been an extensive land contamination survey undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures will

be put in place prior to any development being built on each phase of the land. Further detail is set out in Section 7.8 Ground Conditions and Contamination.

**i) *Protect Repton Manor (with its important group of associated buildings) and its setting when viewed from within the site and Templer Way.***

Repton Manor and the barn that surrounds it will be protected and enhanced through the development. The setting of the buildings will be appropriately protected through the

development process. A study is currently being undertaken into the cultural heritage and setting of the buildings and the findings of this will be made available to the Council on completion. A listed building consent application will be submitted to the Council following the outline application to ensure all the Council's requirements are met. More detail on how Repton Manor and Barns will be enhanced is provided in section 8.

**j) Ensure that where new employment development takes place, the building footprints are limited to no more than 40% of the plot area and that the plot ratio for the development of Class B1 plots does not exceed 0.45:1. In all cases, the maximum amount of soft landscaping consistent with those proportions should be incorporated. The site is not appropriate for intensive office employment uses.**

As previously mentioned, it is proposed that the land to be occupied by pure employment will be reduced in line with recent Government thinking. It is proposed that the density of the employment land will be increased to comply with recent policy emphasis (PPG1, PPG3, PPG12, PPG13) and make best use of the

land resource. In light of these policy changes since the adoption of the Structure Plan (1996) and Local Plan (June 2000), it is considered inappropriate that the strict plot ratio calculations as set out in the local plan policy be applied.

A more design-led, qualitative approach is advocated in response to the detailed nature of each employment area. Current proposals include a small business office cluster located within a High Street environment and a small workshop complex. These will be 2 – 3 storey, high quality and urban in character. As they are located adjacent to residential development, car parking should be reduced to encourage walking and cycling. The layout will be designed in such a way as to address the street, provide clear distinction between public and private and minimise negative impact of parking, storage and service areas. The types of uses proposed include Class B1(a) and Class B1(c) and are not considered to be incompatible with residential development.

The provision of this higher density development will ensure that the reduction of employment land will not lead to such a significant reduction in employment floorspace. The scheme now proposes approximately 32,800 sq m that is estimated to generate around 1144 jobs.

**k) Provide affordable housing (target 100 units within the Plan period).**

The Council sets out in the Local Plan 'This Council's overall target is to secure as affordable housing 20% of the total number of dwellings proposed on major new housing

sites identified in the Plan.' (page 110, para 5.69). On this basis, the increase in provision of dwellings from 500 to about 1300 units on the site will now yield circa 260 affordable housing units.

**l) Secure provision of infrastructure listed below.**

The local plan policy sets out the provision of infrastructure sought on the site. However, due to the change in residential units from 500 to 1300 and after negotiations with the Council

infrastructure proposals are set out as follows:

Infrastructure Sought	Infrastructure Sought
Local Play Area	2 District Play Areas and 2 Neighbourhood Play Areas
Public Open Space	Linear Park (over 80,000sq m) and 2 Neighbourhood Parks
Primary School	A 1.9ha site for provision of a 2 form entry primary school. The detail size design and layout of this facility will be finalized in consultation with KCC
Secondary Education Facilities	Financial contribution linked to KCC requirements
Leisure Facilities	1 adult grass sports pitch – 90 x 60m
	1 artificial multi-purpose floodlit play area 60 x 50m to be marked out for a range of sports
	Associated changing facilities to be provided within the multipurpose community facility
Road and Footpath/Cycleway	Provision of road and footpath/cycleway on the bridge across CTRL in line with Union Railway restrictions and space considerations
Bridges across the CTRL	
Affordable Housing	Provision of around 20% affordable housing units in line with Council policy
Community/Sport Hall	Multi-purpose community leisure facility. Size to be determined in collaboration with the resident population. Suggested to include a multi-purpose room/hall, bar, meeting rooms and a crèche/nursery

There is adequate provision of infrastructure in the proposals that will offer the community excellent services and facilities in line with Council requirements. In addition, the Consortium agrees to provide some financial contribution to the Council for the provision of off-site facilities. The amount is to be agreed between the Council and the Consortium at Section 106 stage.

The phasing of these infrastructure requirements is still to be agreed with both Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council through Section 106 negotiations. It has been recognised that these elements/principles may be amended in clarification of the development to occur post 2006.

## OTHER LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Other general policies within the Local Plan set out the key principles guiding new development of this type within Ashford. The most significant of these are set out below:

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Several policies within the plan (Policies DP1-DP10) set out the need to produce a high quality design and layout in new development that protects and enhances the environment and provides the adequate infrastructure to achieve well planned and balanced communities.

Policy DP10 requires the preparation of a Development Brief for key sites allocated in the Local Plan, such as the Former Rowcroft and Templar Barracks.

**CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT** - The policies within the plan (Policies ENV1- ENV4, ENV10, ENV19-25, ENV32) aim to protect and enhance the environment, safeguard and improve character of countryside and towns alike and conserve buildings and sites of archaeological and conservation value.

**HOUSING** - The policies (HG1-2, HG4, HG11, HG14, HG15, HG16) aim to provide adequate housing for local needs by allocating sites in accordance with the policies within PPG3 whilst improving housing design and ensuring a quality of residential environment.

**EMPLOYMENT** - The policies (ET1-9) aim to provide adequate employment sites to meet the needs of Ashford's economic growth whilst maintaining a sustainable pattern of industrial and commercial development.

**SHOPPING** - The policies (SH2, SH7-8, SH10) in the plan aim to encourage a range of shopping facilities catering for people's everyday shopping needs as close to their homes as possible ensuring a choice and variety in shopping provision whilst achieving sustainable patterns of development and not undermining the vitality and viability of existing town centre.

**TRANSPORT** - The policies (TP1-7, TP11, TP16, TP18-19) aim to reduce the need for people to travel and encourage non-car based movement. They encourage integration and interchange of facilities and public transport facilitating linked trips and reducing traffic to help improve the environment and safety.

**LEISURE** - The policies (LE1, LE4-9 and LE17) ensure that new development must make adequate provision of public open space, play facilities, leisure facilities and playing fields for the needs they generate.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES** - The policies (CF1-6, CF8-9, CF15, CF19-21) ensure that new development will provide a wide range of services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the development where this is technically and financially realistic.

## KENT STRUCTURE PLAN

The Kent Structure Plan (1996) identifies Ashford as a key location for further growth in recognition of its location as a centre of attraction for inward investment in the County. The Structure Plan identifies the need to allocate 13,900 new homes and 440,000 sq m of employment floorspace in the Borough of Ashford

for the period 1991-2011. This is commensurate with Ashford's strategic role as a focus for business and commercial investment. It is envisaged that there will be no need for the allocation of new major development sites on fresh land in Ashford for the Structure Plan period.

## **REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR THE SOUTH EAST**

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), approved in 2001, identifies Ashford as a strategic growth area. As a key transport nodal point for national communications, the town has been predicted high levels of housing and economic growth.

## **PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE**

### **PPG3: HOUSING**

Government guidance on housing states that the Government is committed to accommodating new housing on previously developed land before greenfield land. In allocating these sites, local authorities should aim to create more sustainable patterns of development with accessibility to public transport, jobs and other facilities and services. Affordable housing should be provided in line with the Council's affordable housing strategy and in discussion with the developer.

Developments should make efficient use of available land (between 30 and 50 per hectare net) and combine a mix of land uses to enable mixed and inclusive communities. Developers should not be required to provide more car parking than they or potential occupiers might want and the emphasis should be on quality and designing places for people to create sustainable residential communities.

### **PPG13: TRANSPORT**

PPG13 encourages a pattern of development that ensures it is easy and safe for people to move around through a choice of modes. Residential development should be undertaken on previously developed land and avoid inefficient use of land. Consideration should be given to good design that may significantly lower levels of off-street parking in new developments.

The built form should be designed to encourage sustainable modes of travel (public transport, walking and cycling) and access to jobs, shopping, leisure and services will be a key consideration in the determination of planning applications. Mixed use development may help accessibility and promote vitality.

### **PPG6: TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS (1996)**

This document promotes vitality and viability of existing town centres along with mixed use developments which provide additional housing and create lively frontages. Local authorities should particularly focus on the opportunities for urban design strategies for large sites in or on the edge of town centres. The Guidance stresses the need to encourage design that enables linked trips through the provision of a wide range of facilities in district and local centres.

## **OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION**

The Consortium has sought to assimilate and reflect the range of advice and guidance provided on the creation of sustainable communities into the proposals,

including:

- Places, Streets and Movement: DB32 Companion Guide (DETR, 2000);
- By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System (DETR/ CABE, 2000);
- Millennium Villages and Sustainable Communities (DETR, 2000);
- A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: A National Strategy Action Plan (DETR, January 2001);
- Sustainable Urban Extensions: Planned Through Design (The Prince's Foundation, English Partnerships, DETR and CPRE); and
- Kent Design: A guide to Sustainable Development March 2000 and technical appendices.

### CONSIDERATIONS

The development proposed for the Former Rowcroft and Templer Barracks site meets all the Council policy requirements as set out above. The proposal will provide a high quality development that meets the requirements set out in the local plan as well as meeting the aspirations of the more recent policy guidance from national government.

# Appendix II

## LOCAL PLAN POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT SITE NO.22

### Site 22. Land at former Rowcroft and Templar Barracks, Ashford

The former Barracks Site is proposed for a mix of residential and commercial development to be built over a number of years. An institutional use, able to reuse existing buildings, would also be appropriate. In this Plan's timescale (to 2006) it is estimated that 500 dwellings could be provided together with employment development of 10 hectares. (In the period after 2006 the site has capacity for a mix of housing and employment uses which may involve the redevelopment of existing buildings). A development brief will be needed, to be approved by the Borough Council. The Council will seek to secure proposals for the site which:

- a) establish a mix, density and pattern of land uses and a network of footpaths, cycle routes and public transport services which reduce the need for people to travel by car;
- b) create a real sense of place through sensitive, innovative and high quality design;
- c) help to establish strong links from the site to adjoining housing areas between the A20 and Godinton Park, especially by providing convenient pedestrian and cycle routes;
- d) provide for associated facilities needed - including a primary school, play areas, community/sports hall, public open space, and a local centre;
- e) investigate fully the potential to reuse existing buildings and facilities within the site and avoid the demolition of property for which a viable use could be found;
- f) protect existing trees and any important habitats wherever practical and design the site layout to complement a strategic landscape plan which provides new habitat links (such as planted areas, hedgerows and ditches) linking existing habitats and providing routes for wildlife, and provide for the long term management of these areas;
- g) be laid out in a way which takes account of the possible noise impact from the Channel Tunnel Rail Link;
- h) ensure that any land contamination issues are satisfactorily dealt with;
- i) protect Repton Manor (with its important group of associated buildings) and its setting when viewed from within the site and Templar Way;
- j) ensure that where new employment development takes place, the building footprints are limited to no more than 40% of the plot area and that the plot ratio for the development of Class B1 plots does not exceed 0.45:1. In all cases, the maximum amount of soft landscaping consistent with those proportions should be incorporated. The site is not appropriate for intensive office employment uses.
- k) provide affordable housing (target 100 units within the Plan period);
- l) secure the provision of the infrastructure listed below:

INFRASTRUCTURE SOUGHT	INDICATIVE TIMING
Local play area	Available for use on completion of 100th dwelling
Public open space	Available for use on completion of 150th dwelling
Primary school	Financial contribution and provision of site (minimum 1.15ha) before completion of 150 <sup>th</sup> dwelling or subsequently where the education authority is agreeable
Secondary education facilities	Financial contribution – the timing of which is to be agreed with the Borough Council, in consultation with the local education authority
Leisure facilities	Sports pitch and multi-games area laid out before completion of 150th dwelling
Road and footpath/cycleway bridges across the Channel Tunnel Rail Link	To be provided in position to be agreed as part of CTRL works
Affordable housing	Completion of affordable housing before completion of 300th dwelling, or transfer of land on “affordable” terms
Community/sports hall	Provided to agreed specification before completion of 300th dwelling

During the Plan period, and dependent upon the scale of development to 2006, the requirement may arise for the construction of a local centre, a neighbourhood play area, further open space and leisure facilities. The initial layout should be designed with these needs in mind.

A significant part of the site contains substantial buildings and facilities which would be appropriate for a single, large institutional use. The Council would support such a proposal in principle.

S22.1 The site of Rowcroft and Templer barracks is 62 hectares in area. There are some key features which will guide the development of the site. Firstly, there are a number of existing buildings and facilities on the site which can be reused as such. This will need to be taken into account when considering the provision and timing of the infrastructure requirements set out in the policy. In future there may be potential for the redevelopment of some of the employment buildings but this is likely to be beyond the Plan period and can be considered when the Plan is reviewed. Particular opportunities may arise to provide community, sports and leisure facilities in existing buildings. There are also two existing areas of residential development. Development proposals will be expected to reuse such buildings to make the best use of resources. If there is no viable reuse, or if wider development plans are seriously prejudiced by retaining buildings, then some demolition may be justified.

S22.2 This is a key brownfield site both in terms of its size and its proximity to the town. There are opportunities to create well-designed layouts at densities higher than those assumed in respect of other sites in the Plan and to convert existing buildings for high density residential use. Should it prove feasible to provide more than 500 dwellings in the Plan period, this figure should not be seen as an upper limit providing that the development proposed is of good layout and design. This figure does not include existing dwellings on the site.

S22.3 The line of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link will run through the site. There will be significant effects on the site during construction of the Rail Link - part of the site south of the link is identified as a construction site and significant works are programmed for the crossing of Chart Road. At the same time, this is a key brownfield site, the whole of which is suitable for development. Although the CTRL works will delay the development of part of the site until after the Plan period, the Council will make every effort to ensure that the remainder will be developed concurrently with the CTRL. It is likely that the total site capacity will exceed 500 dwellings and the infrastructure requirements and the timing of their provision in the policy reflects this. There is evidence of soil contamination on parts of the site and detailed proposals will be needed to deal with this prior to development taking place.

S22.4 The field at the western edge of the site should remain free from development as this would extend buildings into the wooded countryside beyond. There is a very substantial area

of land proposed for development and no over-riding need to release land in this sensitive location. The field can continue in agricultural use or be used as a managed but informal area of grassland (for example, a wildflower meadow) linking the housing area to the extensive area of protected woodland on the western edge of the town.

S22.5 The development of such a large site in the urban area of Ashford presents a significant opportunity to promote a sustainable form of development. Central to this is an appropriate mix of housing and employment uses together with a range of related facilities.

S22.6 The main proposed land use is residential. The opportunity exists, by detailed design, layout and landscape planning, to create distinct neighbourhoods to help create a sense of place. There is a possibility of new employment uses being located at the eastern end of the site where there is best access to and visibility from Templer Way. This is also the least attractive residential environment being close to the CTRL and link road.

S22.7 In the area west of the rail link, which includes several major buildings which may be retained, a wider variety of employment uses, including B1 light industry and warehousing would be acceptable. Any B2, general industrial use would need to be considered both in terms of potential impact on residential property and the overall approach taken to the layout of the Barracks site. In line with the approach taken elsewhere to the layout design of new employment areas, the building footprints will be limited to 40% of each plot area and a maximum plot ratio of 0.45:1 applied to B1 uses.

S22.8 A school site is needed (minimum 1.15 ha) with a financial contribution to primary and secondary school places if required under policy CF21. The location will need to be agreed between the developer and the Borough and County Councils. There will also need to be good cycleway and pedestrian links with the surrounding areas of existing and planned housing. Affordable housing is also required on the basis of 20% of the total site capacity giving a target within the Plan period of 100 units.

S22.9 Proposals for the future use of Repton Manor, a Grade II Listed Building, and its associated buildings will be needed and care must be taken to protect and enhance its setting. Alternative uses will need to respect the building and its setting, but subject to this could include leisure, residential, community or office uses.

S22.10 The site has four possible vehicle access points. There are two existing accesses, the first from Maidstone Road and the second from Chart Road. There are also two possible additional access points, from Templer Way and from Loudon Way. Access points should be linked through the site in a way which discourages the diversion of through traffic from other routes in the area. Until there are more detailed proposals, the role and design of routes through the site and access points cannot be fully assessed. The possibility of a vehicular access from Loudon Way will need to be investigated should the existing employment buildings be proposed for residential development. Development on the scale envisaged may trigger the need for highway improvements off site.

S22.11 Layout design should encourage bus services by providing convenient routes to areas of the site likely to generate most passengers, bus stops, shelters and seating. Cycle and pedestrian links are critical. They should provide easy access to bus stops and serve all areas of the site. Residents in the surrounding areas may use the facilities provided within this site and therefore, particular attention should be paid to linking adjoining areas for pedestrians and cyclists. The CTRL running through the site is an obstacle and two crossing points are likely to be needed for pedestrians and cyclists (one of which will also be the road link) to link the southern housing area to the local centre, primary school and open space. These will be provided as part of the CTRL project.

S22.12 In view of the size of the site, complexity of issues involved, the timespan for development and the need to show how a compatible mix of land uses can be developed, a development brief is likely to be needed for this site. The timing of development on the site is affected by the rail link construction. The northern part of the site is least affected and it is reasonable that a large part of this area is phased for the Plan period to 2006. In addition a smaller area of housing could be developed south of the CTRL. The remainder of the development is likely to take place beyond the Plan period.

# Appendix III

## **SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT**

### **Introduction**

Sustainable development is now a well-recognised concept that touches all aspects of our life today and seeks to protect our natural environment as well as improve our quality of life. Initiatives such as the Kyoto protocol have raised our awareness of greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion and pollution, etc.

With these issues and more in mind, Sustainable development has rightly become the most important challenge facing the planning system. In seeking to provide the homes needed by Ashford's rising number of households, the principal focus is on achieving greater local self-sufficiency and a reduction in car use and carbon dioxide emissions so as to cut down the impacts of modern living. And at the same time, development will be designed to enable a higher quality of life, not just for new residents but also, where possible, for those living in the surrounding area.

As well as an attractive higher quality design, the scheme includes a range of measures intended to reduce the need for car use and overall carbon dioxide emissions, create employment opportunities and encourage "community spirit", whilst at the same time minimising the impact on the wider area.

### **Incorporating Sustainability**

The Consortium has sought to assimilate and reflect the range of advice and guidance provided on the creation of sustainable communities into the proposals, including:

- National Planning Policy Guidance, particularly PPG3 (Housing) and PPG13 (Transport).
- "A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: A National Strategy Action Plan" (DETR, January 2001).
- "Millennium Villages and Sustainable Communities" (DETR, 2000).
- "Local Quality of Life Counts" (LGA, IDEA, DETR, 2000).
- "Places, Streets and Movement – DB32 Companion Guide" (DETR, 2000).
- "By Design; Urban Design in the Planning System" (DETR/ CABE, 2000).
- The Building Regulations, including the new "Part L".
- "BREEAM 2002 – Environmental Rating for Offices" (BRE 2001).
- Ashford's Future (The output document from Ashford Borough Council's Quality of Life Workshops).
- "Sustainable Urban Extensions: Planned Through Design" (The Prince's Foundation, English Partnerships, DETR and CPRE).
- "EcoHomes – Environmental Rating for Homes" (BRE 2000).
- Ashford Borough Council Local Agenda 21 Action Plan.

- Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9).
- Kent Design: A Guide to Sustainable Development & Technical Appendix.

### **Commitments to Sustainable Development**

This document aims to set out the measures that The Consortium is committed to delivering as a part of the development. The measures detailed in the report have been established to support the aims of Ashford's Local Agenda 21 Action Plan and Ashford's Future – the output from Ashford's Quality of Life Workshops - and the key documents listed in Section 2.

The Consortium has adopted the following Core Objectives:

- stakeholders should be given the opportunity to contribute to the design process;
- the need to travel should be reduced;
- walking, cycling and the use of public transport should be encouraged in preference to reliance on the private car;
- resource consumption and waste should be minimised;
- design quality should be high;
- local environmental capital should be protected and, where possible, enhanced;
- residents should enjoy a high quality of life;
- equity and social inclusion should be encouraged or improved;
- the community should be commercially viable;
- residents should be encouraged to lead more sustainable lifestyles.

### **PREPARATION OF A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

In order to deliver against these broad principles the consortium is prepared to have prepared a comprehensive Development Brief in accordance with Ashford Borough Council SPG2 : Development Briefs: A guidance Note ' Jan 2001. This development brief has been prepared as a result of the enquiry by design process and in close consultation with ABC, KCC and key stakeholders. The Brief will set out the strategic and detailed design objectives and principles against which future detailed planning applications will be judged. It is intended that this development brief is adopted as SPG and as such will undergo extensive public consultation.

### **Overall Approach to the Design**

- To provide a high quality residential and working environment.
- To create a "sense of place" with a strong local identity.
- To provide a high degree of safety for residents and workers.
- To encourage a highly sustainable pattern of work and living.
- To encourage social inclusiveness.
- To respect the site's environmental capital (e.g. ecology, landscape, heritage and resources).

To achieve these aims The Consortium are proposing to:

### ***The Design Approach***

- Create a development that has low impact on the existing urban area whilst relating closely to it, has individual style and character, is unobtrusive and relatively self-contained.
- Sets a high standard in terms of sustainability at the design stage.
- Design the scheme as a sustainable mixed-use urban development.
- Create an urban form with a sense of place based on local character and building tradition.
- Construct residential areas at an average density of 40 dwelling per hectare, but incorporating a range of types, tenures, densities and character areas.
- Create a “green travel network” by the creation of greenways, cycleways and urban footpaths which complement a broad network designed around public transport priority.
- Encourage the use of public transport by building all homes and workplaces within an easy walk of a bus route.

### ***Built Form***

- Produce an overall Masterplan to guide the creation of new urban areas in an urban form which is compact allowing ease of access to essential daily needs such as work, leisure, education and shopping facilities by foot, cycle and public transport.
- Link all residential and employment areas with a convenient network of footpaths and cycleways to complement public transport routes.
- Locate the primary school in a central location on the mixed use High Street convenient to the new homes, where trips to accompany children to the school can be combined with shopping and other daily pursuits.
- Provide suitable sites to accommodate a range of employment uses throughout the redevelopment and within mixed-use areas and mixed-use buildings to provide opportunities for people to live and work in close proximity.
- Create an urban form of terraced and linked properties to add greater visual cohesion to the street scene and reinforce the sense of place.
- Design streets and squares to create interesting and human scale spaces to add visual interest.
- Provide landmark buildings in key locations (i.e. public spaces and terminal vistas) to give a sense of identity and place.
- Define the frontages of buildings along streets and important urban spaces to create a sense of place and urban form.
- Use the frontage of new buildings to provide the definition of urban spaces and sequential and terminal vistas.
- Provide “gateways” to the new development areas.
- Retain the existing footpath to the Northern boundary of the proposed development area and supplement this with a new network of footpaths and cycleways.

### ***Appearance***

- Create variety in terms of height of buildings and related design features such as eaves and roof form.

- Encourage the use of local building materials to reinforce the sense of place and local tradition.
- Create safe places for children to play, both within the built urban form and within the wider public open space areas.
- Ensure that all public areas are designed with safety in mind for all age groups.

#### ***Landscape Framework***

- Provide a comprehensive landscape framework with strategic native planting to soften the impact of new development.
- Create an inter-linked network of open spaces including incidental public open space, formal recreation areas and areas for nature conservation.
- Retain as many areas of existing planting and habitat as are compatible with accommodating major re-development.

#### **Consultation and Communication**

##### ***Aims***

- To encourage participation in all aspects of the new neighbourhood.
- To encourage a sense of “ownership” and pride in the new neighbourhood.
- To encourage sustainable lifestyles.
- To encourage the creation of a balanced and inclusive community.
- To encourage a strong and supportive community spirit.

To achieve these aims The Consortium will participate in and provide for:

##### ***Enquiry by Design***

- Undertake public consultation through the ‘Enquiry by Design’ process in the preparation of the Development Brief and during/at the time of the planning application submission.
- Prepare a development brief for the site that will be adopted by Ashford Borough Council as SPG.
- Assist Ashford Borough Council, where necessary, with a full and extensive formal consultation programme for the redevelopment proposals.

##### ***On-going Participation***

- Provide community facilities to encourage social interaction.
- Design public and semi-public spaces and open areas to encourage people to meet and interact.
- Encourage new residents to get involved in sport, recreation and other group activities.
- Encourage residents to take a pride in their home and work environments and to contribute to the management and maintenance.
- Work with all local organisations and the local planning authority, as well as the voluntary sector, to encourage the development of a strong and supportive spirit of community.

## **Green Travel Strategy – Reducing the Need to Travel by Car**

### ***Aim***

- To reduce the need to travel.
- To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport in preference to reliance on the private car.

To achieve these objectives The Consortium are proposing to:

### ***Improve Public Transport Provision***

- Work with local transport providers in the provision of a public transport route through the development, through extending current bus routes to the north-west of Ashford. This will not only ensure effective public transport linkages for the new development, but will also improve existing provision and improve linkages with Ashford town centre and public transport links.
- Facilitate rapid public transport linkage with the nearby Ashford railway station through off-site road improvements.
- Liaise with local transport providers to ensure that the layout allows public transport to be accessible to and convenient for the use of disabled people.

### ***Walkable Neighbourhoods***

- Create a mixed-use 'High Street' area within the redevelopment which provides for education, community facilities, a range of convenience shopping, pubs, employment opportunities, play areas and other day-to-day needs within easy walking and cycling distance of new housing.
- Mitigating the access constraints presented by Maidstone Road and Templer Way by providing pedestrian crossings in conjunction with the proposed new development access points.
- Accommodate 'safe routes to schools' within the redevelopment providing safe and easy access on foot to the primary school from all surrounding residential areas thereby providing for a 'walking school bus'.
- Design the new road network to maintain a maximum speed of 20 mph along the high street and significantly lower within the heart of the residential area in accordance with "Places, Street and Movement – DB32 Companion Guide".
- Design the new road network to provide safe and convenience access for residents, education, community and recreation facilities and commercial uses but prevent rat running.
- Incorporate safe and convenient crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists at road junctions.
- Use the principles of home zones and pedestrianisation to reduce the impact of the private motor car on the local environment, improve the level of safety afforded to pedestrians and cyclists and encourage social interaction within the community.
- Provide secure covered cycle parking in visible locations adjacent to local facilities.

### ***Parking***

- Adopt appropriate parking provision requirements for dwellings and employment facilities in accordance with national and local policy guidance.
- Design for flexible use of parking areas for commercial, recreation and community uses where appropriate.

## **Minimising Resource Consumption**

### ***Aim***

- Reduce CO2 emissions.
- Reduce resource and energy consumption, particularly from non-renewable sources.
- Reduce the amount of waste requiring final disposal.

To achieve these aims The Consortium are proposing to:

### ***Trial Use of Renewables in Community Buildings***

- Investigate potential sources of funding for photovoltaic power generation through participation in the UK Government Solar Roof scheme and other sources.

### ***Heating and Hot Water***

- Promote water heating powered by renewable sources (direct solar, heat exchanger) or through high efficiency gas fired boilers with a low NOx emission rating. .
- Install timers and local thermostatic controls on all heating and hot water systems.
- Provide external drying spaces, wherever practicable.
- Install low energy appliances that achieve an 'A' or 'B' rating as defined by the EC Energy Efficiency Labelling scheme or, if no white goods are installed, provide information on purchasing energy-efficient white goods.

### ***Insulation***

- Insulate all properties to achieve a Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating to exceed the requirements of the revised Building Regulations "Part L".
- Use only mineral or glass wool insulation with respective densities less than 150 Kg/m<sup>3</sup> (mineral) or 160 Kg/m<sup>3</sup> (glass), or foamed insulation products with an ozone depletion potential of zero.
- Use double-glazing systems to give a U-value of 2.0 W/m<sup>2</sup>K or less with lockable openings to provide natural ventilation as well as trickle vents (subject to Building Regulations).

### ***Lighting***

- Optimise natural lighting, particularly to kitchens and living rooms, through orientation and design.
- Provide low energy bulbs or fluorescent tubes.
- Provide low energy high-pressure sodium street lighting.
- Position, control and focus all external lighting for maximum efficiency and to reduce light pollution.

### ***Energy Efficient Built Form and Layout***

- Use energy-efficient built forms with a high proportion of terraced and some flatted dwellings.
- Ensure that all dwellings comply with the up-dated Part L of the Building Regulations (this will achieve a 25% reduction in CO2 production on 1995

Building Regulations). The Consortium also propose to investigate reducing this further.

#### **Materials**

- Select materials from the current BRE 'Green Guide for Specification', 3rd Edition, BRE 2002. They will achieve 'A' ratings, where practicable, thereby giving preference to materials with high environmental performance through reduced pollution and low embodied energy.
- Give preference to the use of locally-sourced materials.
- Give preference, where permitted by the adopting Authority, to the use of locally- available reclaimed and recycled materials and aggregates, particularly in the construction of roads, footpaths, cycleways and hard landscaping.
- Source at least 75% of all solid and laminated timber from either a) verifiably sustainably-managed forests (sources registered with the Forest Stewardship Council, Pan European Forest Certification or the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme) or b) sources which are post-consumer re-used/recycled.
- Where possible, avoid materials (foams) or air conditioning systems containing CFCs, HCFCs or HFCs volatile organic pollutants.

#### **Water and Drainage**

- Promote Best Management Practices (BMPs) in connection with Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes, with specific strategies to be developed in consultation with Southern Water.
- Encourage Mid Kent Water to install unobtrusive visible water meters that are accessible to the householder.
- Install in all buildings i) flow-regulated or spray taps ii) low or dual-flush toilets which are less than 6.5 litres maximum flush and iii) showers with flow rates less than 15 litres/ min (where fitted).
- Specify water efficient appliances that achieve a 'B' rating or higher ('C' or higher for washer-dryers and dryers) where these are to be provided by the consortium.
- Install water butts in gardens for the collection and re-use of rainwater where adequate space is available.

#### **Reuse of Demolition Waste and Reduction of Construction Waste**

- Waste management priorities for the proposed demolition operations will focus on reducing wastes, reusing materials and recycling waste materials to minimise disposal to landfill.
- To minimise the demand for primary aggregates it is intended to recycle suitable demolition arisings for use on-site in the redevelopment works wherever feasible. Any surplus recycled aggregate materials would be sold into the local aggregate market for use in construction projects elsewhere.
- Other measures will include:
  - retention of existing buildings (Repton Manor and adjacent barns) in the new development;
  - recycling of demolition arisings as aggregate materials;
  - salvage of ferrous and non-ferrous demolition arisings;
  - salvage of other materials (timber, fixtures and fittings), as appropriate;

- reduction of construction waste through good site practice;
- The Consortium will work closely with a waste management company throughout the construction phase of the development, with a brief to reduce and recycle construction waste. The Consortium anticipate a significant reduction in waste generated compared with the national average. This will be achieved by
  - reduction of materials wastage through good storage and handling;
  - segregation of construction wastes for recycling;
  - use of innovative prefabrication techniques for a significant proportion of the development, allowing significant reductions in waste and facilitating greater recycling.

#### ***Reduce Household Waste***

- Work with the waste collection and disposal authorities to agree efficient solutions to deal with waste arising from the new neighbourhood in line with a 'waste hierarchy' aimed at maximising opportunities for waste reduction, re-use, recycling and composting prior to final disposal.
- Work with Ashford Borough Council to develop appropriate recycling facilities. This could involve the provision of appropriate neighbourhood recycling facilities, or extending the existing 'Box Clever' doorstep recycling service to serve the new neighbourhood. Along with the other measures proposed, this should enable an initial recycling, and composting rate of over 40%, making a significant contribution to Ashford's statutory target rate of 14%.
- Provide a compost bin to homes with a garden where adequate space is available to help reduce waste going to landfill.

#### ***Innovative and Renewable Technology Housing***

- Adopt innovative building systems including prefabrication 'Space 4 Build' process to minimise construction waste and energy, and improve building performance.

#### ***Feedback & Monitoring***

- Provide each new occupier with easy-to-understand instructions on the use and control of heating systems, lighting and appliances.
- Provide a Handbook to residents and occupiers detailing the unique features of their properties and the technologies in and around them. The handbook will advise them of the correct method of operation of plant and equipment, as well as how they can protect their environment.

#### **Protecting Natural Resources**

##### ***Aims***

- To retain important and significant areas of habitat and landscape and to enhance, where possible.
- To respect the environmental features and constraints on-site.
- To make effective use of the available land and to remediate contaminated areas of the site.
- To provide a sustainable network of recreational spaces within the development with priorities for biodiversity and landscape enhancement.
- To reflect the existing and historical usage of the site.

- To create new sustainable areas of habitat and landscape.
- To mitigate any adverse impacts arising from development, both on and offsite.

To achieve these aims The Consortium are proposing to:

#### ***Ecology and Landscape***

- Retain and enhance the most valuable habitats on the site. This includes mature parkland trees, selected ponds and a species rich hedgerow.
- Link habitat areas with each other and adjacent habitat areas, through a system of green corridors. These are to be designed to provide connectivity between habitats and allow (re-)colonisation and dispersal of plants and animals throughout the site and adjoining areas. The proposed linear habitats are also beneficial to maintain important fauna species found at or near to the site including badgers, bats, small mammals and songbirds.
- Put in place appropriate mitigation and replacement where habitats are to be lost or damaged by the proposed redevelopment. For example, semi-improved grassland lost to the re-development will be replaced by semi-natural rich grassland species will be incorporated into the informal areas of parkland and the linear park.
- Implement habitat creation and protection of important sites at the earliest opportunity in the development process so that they are established and at an optimal state by the time existing habitat is removed, providing refuge for displaced fauna.
- To mitigate impacts and provide habitat for specific species, specifically:
  - Small-scale relocation combined with habitat creation and enhancement of an area to provide more extensive and higher quality habitat for great crested newts.
  - All work that affects bats and their roosts will be carried over in an appropriate manner agreed and English Nature and under license to DEFRA, where required. This will include exclusion from existing roosts following the creation of alternative habitats, maintenance of foraging habitat and flightpaths.
- Protect ecology during construction through:
  - Fencing and demarcation of all habitat areas to be retained or created, including individual trees.
  - Nomination of an environmental manager to be responsible for the ecological aspects of the work and liaison with Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations.
  - All staff and workforce, including sub-contractors, undergo a thorough induction on ecological aspects of the site and know whom to contact for advice. This will be undertaken as part of the projects construction phase environmental management system.
  - Sensitive location of material/plant storage, access routes etc – with advice from an ecologist.
  - Any trenches left open over night should have a means of escape for any animals that might fall in.
- Develop a management plan to ensure that all retained habitat, habitat restoration and creation achieves its intended compensatory value. One of the key elements of future management will be to minimise the use of

pesticides and herbicides in semi-natural and formal open space, so that invertebrate and plant diversity maximised across the site.

#### ***Maximise Use of Available Land and On-Site Resources***

- Minimise the amount of land lost to urban development through the use of densities in excess of those required by PPG3.
- Maintain soil quality by following best practice guide for stripping, storing and re-spreading of top soil.
- Utilise topsoil from within development areas for use in private gardens and public open spaces.
- Remediate and reuse land that has been shown by previous studies to contain levels of contamination, where appropriate.

#### ***Recreation***

- Provide a range of formal recreational facilities; the location, type and extent of which to be agreed with key stakeholders but may include a sport pitch and an all weather games area.
- Provide a new linear park through the centre of the development ,along the route of the CTRL, within easy walking distance of the residential areas and incorporating two district play areas, two neighbourhood play areas, informal play space, seating and sheltered areas.
- Create new footways and cycleways linking the new development area with the surrounding built up area.
- To improve and enhance the quality of the existing public rights of way between the proposed development area and the open countryside beyond.
- Provide a range and variety of informal walks within the development area.

#### ***Historic Capital***

- Retain Repton Manor and other listed buildings on the site, to maintain linkages with the site's history and provide additional character to the re-development.
- Reference the historical use of the site through the incorporation of appropriate public art and historically relevant street names.
- Take into account all other tangible areas of built heritage and protect such features within the development should this prove practical and desirable.
- Monitor the construction of the development and photograph and record any further articles or artefacts of historical/archaeological significance.

#### **High Quality of Life**

##### ***Aims***

- To provide essential housing to meet the needs of Ashford.
- To provide a high quality environment within which to live, work and play.
- To provide high quality local services and amenities.
- To provide the opportunity for local employment, training, educational and recreational opportunities.
- To provide a safe environment for people both at home, work and outdoors.
- To promote social inclusion.
- To minimise the impact of the new development on the surrounding communities.

- To provide a sustainable urban development.
- To provide a development that can be integrated into the social and community fabric of the town.

To achieve these aims The Consortium are proposing to:

#### *Affordable Housing*

- Ensure that 20% of all housing units meet the criteria of affordable housing, either as low cost or subsidised properties available to local people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market.
- Ensure that some of the above affordable housing provision are “key worker” units to be offered for sale to personnel from the local police force, fire service, teaching profession and health service.
- Ensure that housing for the elderly and disabled is located close to local services.
- Ensure that affordable housing is dispersed throughout the new development area to assist social inclusion and integration.
- Ensure that affordable housing is phased in line with the completion of housing for private sale and the provision of services and infrastructure.

#### *Mixed Tenure*

- Provide a wide range of dwelling types and sizes to reflect Ashford’s housing needs and demands.
- Achieve an overall average dwelling density in accordance with PPG3 but within the scheme provide areas of housing of different types and character and at densities both higher and lower than the average to give choice and variety.

#### *Control of Construction Process*

- Take action to minimise and control any nuisance arising from construction traffic by using measures such as controlling vehicle speeds, wheel washing of HGVs upon departure from the site and keeping all site entrances clean.
- Minimise the impact of construction traffic on surrounding neighbourhoods and road network by careful on-site management and reducing the need to import/export materials/spoil.
- Provide a dedicated haul route for construction and delivery traffic visiting the site throughout the construction period with a view to minimising impact on adjacent communities.
- Provide a management framework within which construction traffic is segregated from residents/employees’ traffic as the development progresses.
- The development will achieve certification from the Considerate Constructors Code (CCC) scheme through adherence to the scheme’s Code of Practice, outlined below:
  - **Consideration:** All work to be carried out with positive consideration to the needs of all potentially affected parties and the environment in general.
  - **Environment:** Minimising noise from construction, use of local resources where possible, attention to waste management, avoidance of pollution and encouragement of recycling.

- **Cleanliness:** The working site to be kept clean and in good order at all times.
- **Good Neighbours:** Full and regular consultation with neighbours including adjacent traders and businesses regarding programming and site activities.
- **Respectful:** Respectful and safe standards of dress shall be maintained. Lewd or derogatory behaviour will not be tolerated under threat of severe disciplinary action.
- **Safe:** Construction operatives and site vehicle movements are to be carried out with great care and consideration for the safety and security of the general public and site personnel.
- **Responsible:** Considerate Constructors will ensure that all site personnel and any other persons working on the site understand and implement the obligations of the Code.
- **Accountable:** Posters relating to the scheme will be displayed around the site, giving names and telephone numbers of staff who can be contacted in response to issues raised by the general public or other persons affected by the site operation.

*Full details can be found at <http://www.ccscheme.org.uk>.*

- Put in place management procedures and working methods such as CCC scheme covering matters such as noise, dust and pollution to ensure that the construction works do not adversely affect those living in the surrounding areas. This will be managed through a formal Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- Set up a Local Liaison Group comprising the relevant Site Managers and representatives of local residents and the Local Authorities to ensure that local people are kept fully informed about all aspects of the work and have the opportunity to discuss any operational matters.
- Establish a complaints mechanism to ensure that any concerns raised are properly addressed, in line with the 'Accountable' section of the CCC outlined above.

#### **Employment**

- Ensure jobs are created within the new development area in a variety of uses including the opportunity of home working. In addition to employment generated within commercial, educational and recreational facilities, additional employment space is provided on-site. It is anticipated that these employment uses will generally be small-scale office, business and workshop uses. A focus for small business will be located in the district centre to the south of the food store, with additional space provided along the length of the High Street and at key road junctions. These will be in the form of flexible units that can be adapted for commercial and/or employment uses, allowing the community to adapt to a changing social and political climate.
- Facilitate employment of local sub-contractors during the construction phase of the project through the development of a local labour agreements.
- Provide for a local scheme to be set up to enable local unemployed persons to register for employment during the construction phase of the project and provide for an on-site recruitment office.

### ***Social Inclusion***

- The development construction will comply with Wimpey and Westbury's existing equal opportunities programmes.
- Ensure that the urban layout, buildings and related wider environment are accessible to and convenient for the use of disabled people.

### ***Community & Health Facilities***

- Provide a mixed use community venue, with the specification and procurement route to be determined in partnership with key stakeholders through a combination of the Enquiry by Design process and liaison with the Local Authority.
- Provide a primary health care facility.
- Provide open space and facilities to promote healthy lifestyles, including a linear park, two district play areas and two neighbourhood play areas. These will provide essential outdoor space for exercise and general outdoor recreation.
- Provide sports facilities the type, location of which to be agreed with the Ashford Borough Council and other key stakeholders.

### ***Secure by Design***

- Consult with the local police force as part of the Enquiry by Design process.
- Design the new neighbourhood in line with the principles of reducing crime and the fear of crime, including avoiding narrow, isolated footpaths and enabling casual surveillance of public areas and car parks.
- Provide appropriate lighting at all public places, pedestrian and cycle routes and at bus stops.

# Appendix IV

## Key Issues: Linkages

- An integrated development
- New local amenities
- Improved pedestrian linkages
- Access to countryside to the west
- Improved links with the town centre



View along Templar Way



View towards Repton manor



Adjacent suburban housing

## SITE APPRAISAL

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In order to assess the opportunities and constraints presented by the site the consultants have undertaken an extensive desk-top and on site appraisal. This appendices presents a summary of the findings and identifies the key issues to be addressed in the proposed development.

More detailed information can be found within the Environmental Statement and the Traffic Assessment prepared by the consultants that will be available to view at the offices of Ashford Borough Council.

### 2 STRATEGIC LINKS & RELATIONSHIPS

The site is situated on the north-western edge of Ashford and is well related to the existing road and rail network, close to junction 9 of the M20 and within 1 km of the town centre and Ashford International Station.

The development is bordered to the north, south and southwest by the residential communities of Lodge Wood, Orchard Heights and Godinton Park. The north western edge of the site overlooks the grounds of Godinton House, Loudon Wood and Lodge Wood providing an attractive outlook and amenity area.

There are very few local amenities in the area – there is a small local centre on Loudon Way comprising a Pub, a community hall, a primary school, small park and a parade of shops. This local centre has not been trading particularly well due to its slightly dead end location and would benefit greatly from additional passing trade that could be generated through the development of the site.

As the site was owned by the MOD and was closed off to the public for many years, it formed a significant physical barrier to vehicular and pedestrian movement causing physical severance and isolation particularly to the communities to the north.

Redevelopment of the Barracks would create the opportunity to reconnect and integrate north west Ashford providing:

- An extension to the fabric of the town, rather than an inward looking development;
- A mixed use district centre for existing and new communities;
- Improved existing local centre at Godinton Park; and
- Much needed recreational, community and educational facilities.



Figure 1: Land Use Relationships

-  Site Boundary
-  Existing Residential
-  Former Barracks
-  Existing Trees
-  Existing Buildings
-  Listed Buildings
-  Vehicular Bridge
-  Pedestrian Bridge
-  Repton Manor & Barns
-  Godinton Park Local Centre

**Key Issues: Access & Movement**

- Off site infrastructure improvements
- New vehicular access points
- Retain public right of way
- A new footpath network
- New pedestrian/cycle linkages to surrounding residential areas
- Pedestrian permeability
- New bus routes



View along CTRL during construction



Existing access road from Maidstone Way

### 3 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

#### VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

A number of ongoing transport infrastructure projects and developments are taking place within the vicinity of the site which have and will continue to significantly change traffic conditions in west Ashford.

The Templer Way dual carriageway relief road has improved the environment west of Ashford by removing the A28 traffic from unsuitable routes through the town. It has also provided the opportunity to provide a suitable access into the barracks site. The CTRL passing through the site has required further changes to the highway network that are not yet complete and are affecting traffic conditions.

The current highway network is considered to have spare carrying capacity but with the implementation of significant development (residential and the Eureka Business park) together with the Barracks redevelopment may utilise the remaining capacity unless further highway improvements are implemented. As such a number of highway improvements are being proposed.

#### ACCESS

Two existing vehicular access points currently exist, one to the north from A20 Maidstone Road and one to the south from Chart Road/Tank Roundabout. These alone are not sufficient to serve the needs of the development so additional vehicular access points have been explored. These include a new access from Maidstone Road, further to the east of the existing entrance; a new access from Templer Way and two new access points via the Godinton Park development to the west. Land has been set aside for a possible future connection directly through to Loudon Way which would require access over third party land.

#### CTRL BRIDGE

As previously mentioned, the new CTRL line cuts through the centre of the site from the northwest corner to the southeast corner dividing the northern and southern portions. A new vehicle, pedestrian and cycle bridge has been constructed as part of the CTRL contract. The bridge is approximately 10m wide with a carriageway and one footpath/cycle way on the western side and is located midway along the CTRL route. It has been designed and constructed as part of the CTRL works, whilst the development will have rights of access across the bridge due to operational and safety reasons it is not possible to alter the structure of the bridge. An additional pedestrian footbridge crosses the CTRL track immediately to the north of the site connecting the line of the existing footpath.

#### PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

Pedestrian movement in the area is limited as the Barracks has always been closed to the public. Existing pedestrian and cycle facilities are generally located along the existing highway network.

A public right of way (AU67) runs along the northern boundary of the site, this is within the site boundary but Kent County Council is responsible for the upkeep of the path under the highways act. It is proposed that this route be retained in its current position and made more attractive and accessible. Within the new development this path will be incorporated into a wider public realm strip and onto by new housing. Another public right of way (AU66) that runs to the west of our site, this has now been diverted to accommodate the CTRL and connects into a new footbridge over the railway. The internal footpath network should provide access onto the existing footpath network.

-  Existing Vehicular Entrances
-  CTRL Bridge over Tunnel Box
-  Vehicular Bridge over CTRL
-  Existing Cycle routes
-  Public Right of Way
-  Footbridge
-  Pedestrian Bridge over CTRL

The development is bordered by existing residential development generally made up of back gardens and cul-de-sacs and a number of new vehicular pedestrians, cycle and public transport links are being proposed to alleviate this and are set out in detail in chapter 7. Along the southern boundary some of the cul-de-sacs abut the boundary and may provide opportunity for at the very least additional pedestrian and cycle connections.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Bus services in northwest Ashford are also patchy and will need improvement to encourage a modal shift away from the private car.



Figure 2: Existing Access and Movement

**Key Issues**

- Minimise noise impact of CTRL
- Minimise visual impact of CTRL
- Locate linear park within areas impacted by noise

**4 NOISE CONSTRAINTS**

One of the most significant constraints on development will be the noise impact from the CTRL and to some extent the existing highway and rail network including the A28 Templer Way and the A20 Maidstone Road and the Ashford to Maidstone Railway Line.

Recent on-site investigations have modelled the noise across the site and identified the potential constraints these will place on the location and layout of residential development. These constraints are based on the criteria as set out in PPG 24 'Planning and Noise' the aim of which is to ensure acceptable levels of noise within dwellings. ABC has confirmed that residential dwellings will only be permitted in Noise exposure categories A and B. Any residual noise impacts will be addressed through the provision of suitable noise mitigation measures. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Figure 3 illustrates the locations within which residential development would not be permitted. This is based on the noise mitigation measures proposed by Union Railways and no additional mitigation measures adjacent to the existing highway and rail network.

The majority of the linear park will be located within this area and no noise restrictions would be applied to recreational uses. This has been confirmed by the Borough Council's Environmental Health Department.

**CONSTRUCTION NOISE**

A comprehensive package of mitigation measures will also need to be prepared to minimise disturbance to existing residential uses and other sensitive land uses in the surrounding areas during the site clearance and construction phases.

No Build Zone



Figure 3: Noise Constraints

**Key Issues**

- Retain existing trees
- Create new habitat areas and focal points
- provide pedestrian access to countryside
- Improve visual outlook
- Significant new tree planting



View of sunken garden adjacent to Repton Manor



Existing grassland vegetation



Existing Avenue of trees

**5 LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**

**THE SITE**

The site is located on a gently undulating southerly facing slope on the northwestern edge of Ashford. Over half of the site's area consists of derelict buildings and hard surfacing, including redundant army barracks, equipment warehouses, offices and training buildings and their associated yards, parade grounds, and access roads. Green space on the site consists primarily of unmanaged amenity grassland with scattered parkland trees, many of which are ornamental. Amenity grassland shows signs of developing into semi-improved grassland due to the cessation of intensive management. Some areas of ground, particularly around housing areas and in derelict gardens have developed into a mixed native and ornamental scrub. Semi-natural habitats or features present on the site, albeit to a limited extent, are hedgerows, mature native trees, semi-improved grassland and ponds.

Much of the existing habitat areas are not considered worthy of retention with the exception of the existing trees and hedgerows. It is considered more important that new high quality habitat focal points and corridors are provided within the new development structure.

**TREE SURVEY**

None of the existing trees are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders. Prior to the Enquiry by Design workshop in October 2001 the MOD undertook a tree survey to assess the merits of existing trees and hedgerows and identify those that were worthy of retention and those that were suitable for relocation or, if necessary, removal. The consortium has met on site with the Borough Tree Officer to discuss how the proposed development will endeavour to retain the maximum amount of existing trees. It is proposed to continue close negotiations with the Tree Officer during the detail design process to provide an acceptable strategy for tree retention and replacement. In addition extensive new tree planting and habitat areas are proposed.

**SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE**

Tracts of ancient woodland (Lodge Wood and Loudon Wood) can be found in adjacent countryside, to the northwest of the site, which forms part of a wider network of woodland, parkland and hedgerows in countryside around Ashford. However, the site is surrounded on all but these northwestern boundaries by housing development and roads, which will have an isolating effect on the semi-natural communities found here.

There are two areas of ancient woodland adjacent to the site, Loudon Wood and Lodge Wood. These are identified in the Kent Provisional Ancient Woodland Inventory (1994) as being ancient woodland although large tracts have been removed for housing and CTRL development. See ecological assessment in section 6.

**EXISTING VIEWS**

The site is held within the folds of the landscape on the edge of Ashford. There are no obvious long distance views of the site from the surrounding low ridges as the site itself is well screened by trees. The principal receptors of existing views to the site and the quality of these views are described below. Figure 4 illustrates the most visible areas of the site.

Pedestrians using footpaths on the site boundary and adjacent to the north west quarter of the site - There are long distance views across the site to the distant



Views into the site

countryside from the section of path on the north boundary of the site across the disused playing fields.

Residents of buildings on the south, west and north sides of the site – Only occupants of those residences directly backing on to the site obtain views. On the southern edge, residents obtain poor quality views of board fencing or industrial buildings. Similar quality views are obtained by residents to the west who look onto the residential style buildings of the army barracks. The dilapidated sports hall dominates poor quality views of residents to the north of the site. Further west some of the north residents look over the disused playing fields to distant countryside giving moderate quality views.

Occupants of vehicles using Templer Way and Maidstone Road – Drivers and passengers of vehicles on these roads obtain poor quality views of boarded housing and board fences in the vicinity of the roundabout. Moderate quality views of the barns and parkland are obtained by drivers southbound or northbound on Templer Way. The views into the site from Maidstone Road and Templer Way are considered to be particularly important as are the views along the CTRL.

Demolition of the existing poor quality buildings and construction of a high quality new development along with improved boundary treatments will greatly improve the outlook for local residents and passers-by.

- Trees classed as 'A': Trees whose retention is most desirable
- Trees classed as 'B': Trees whose retention is desirable
- Trees Likely to be Retained
- Trees classed as 'C'
- Key Views into Site
- Most Visible Areas of the Site
- Important Views



Figure 4: Landscape & Visual Assessment

**Key Issues**

- Adjacent ancient woodland;
- Hedgerows
- Protected species
- Habitat retention
- Create new habitats



Existing hedgerows

**6 ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

There are no international, national, regional or local environmental designations across the site. There are three Sites of Nature Conservation Interest within 2 km of the site as well as two small areas of Ancient Woodland (Lodge Wood and Loudon Wood) on the site’s north-western boundaries, which form part of a wider network of woodland, parkland and hedgerows in the countryside to the north-west of Ashford.

**SITE CONSTRAINTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

The developable area of the site has been established following consideration of a number of environmental constraints and opportunities.

**TREES AND HEDGEROWS**

The remnant Ancient Woodland on the northwestern boundary of the Ashford Barracks site will not be affected by the proposals. However, it is recommended that a landscape/woodland buffer is provided to protect the woodland edge.

There are numerous and diverse planted trees scattered across the site as well as a few small groups of secondary Oak and Ash woodland. A tree survey has been undertaken (Scott Wilson, May 2001) to identify trees which are considered ‘worthy of retention’ and as such should be retained, where possible, when the site is redeveloped. On the southern part of the site there is a semi-natural, species-rich hedgerow. This hedgerow should be retained and sensitively integrated into the design proposals.

**PROTECTED SPECIES**

There is evidence of a number of protected species, including badgers, bats, great crested newts, barn owl and reptiles. A full mitigation package has been prepared and is set out in detail in the Environmental Statement. This package has been should be prepared in full consultation with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and English Nature.

**OTHER ECOLOGICAL HABITATS**

The majority of the site comprises amenity grassland of relatively low ecological value. However, there are some semi-natural habitats on site including the majority of mature parkland trees, selected ponds, species rich hedgerow, broad-leaved woodland, and small areas of semi-improved grassland. These habitats not only provide suitable habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna but also provide valuable wildlife corridors across the site and to the surrounding areas. These semi-natural habitats should be retained and incorporated into the open space network.

There are also significant opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement including the creation of semi-improved grassland within the Linear Park and the enhancement of the wetland and woodland habitats on-site. It is recommended that an ecological management plan is prepared to ensure the long-term protection of the ecology on-site and to maximise the opportunities to promote biodiversity.

**LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING**

The site does not lie within any landscape designations. It is located at the eastern extremity of the Hothfield Heath Farmlands Landscape Character Type described in Kent County Council Greensand Belt Landscape Assessment and Guidelines. The western edge of Ashford is characteristic of the populated areas

of the Greensand Belt. In contrast to the suburban edge of Ashford the site stands out as a diffuse and open development surrounded by residential development.

Godinton Historic Park and Gardens, adjacent to the site, is identified in the *Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England*, as Grade I, i.e. it is considered to be of exceptional historic interest in the national context. Close juxtaposition of the site with Godinton Park and Gardens will not adversely affect the setting of Godinton Park.

There are no significant long distance views of the site. Existing short-range views from adjacent dwellings, footpaths and roads are mostly of poor quality. The visual impact assessment concluded that the visual impact of the development would be beneficial by design.

The landscape assessment concluded that the impact of the proposed development on the landscape character of the western edge of Ashford would be moderately beneficial. The urban edge of Ashford will be better defined and the development will release open space for public use.

Lighting should be designed to minimise spill and glare and careful consideration should be given to its layout and orientation with respect to areas of ecological value and open space. If the sports pitches are to be floodlit then a lighting analysis based on 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Lighting Pollution' should be undertaken and the guidelines used to mitigate against such potential impacts.

- Ephemeral /short perennial
- Semi-improved neutral grassland
- Broadleaved woodland/ parkland tree
- Dense continuous scrub
- Scattered scrub
- Species poor intact hedge
- Species rich intact hedge
- Plantation / parkland tree
- Improved grassland
- Swamp/inundation vegetation
- Open water
- ★ Evidence of a protected species



Figure 5: Ecological Assessment

These constraints and opportunities are identified in the Environmental Scoping Study issued to ABC in June 2002 and will be explored further in the Environmental Impact Assessment that is currently being prepared and will be submitted with the outline planning application.

**Key Issues**

- Interpret the site heritage in an innovative way
- Bring Repton manor back into use
- Bring associated barns back into use
- Retain and enhance sunken garden
- Repton manor as visual and activity focus
- Reuse materials from buildings to be demolished

**7 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

The Barracks site today comprises a number of existing buildings ranging in age and quality and the site itself forms an integral part in the history of Ashford.

The Ashford local plan sets out two specific policies in relation to the existing buildings on the site, these are:

- To investigate fully the potential to reuse existing buildings and facilities within the site and avoid the demolition of those buildings for which a viable use could be found;
- To protect Repton Manor (with its associated barn) and its setting when viewed from within the site and Templar Way;

As such, a 'Historical Buildings and Archaeological Assessment' was undertaken by Broadway Malyan – Cultural Heritage, on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, in September 2001. The purpose of this assessment was two-fold. Firstly it sought to establish which buildings on the site were worthy of preservation, because of their archaeological and/or historical significance and which were not. Secondly it attempts to determine whether any potential areas of archaeological interest are likely to exist and whether any action is desirable in advance of development.

The assessment established that the only buildings worthy of preservation are Repton Manor House, which contains medieval fabric, and a group of early nineteenth century agricultural buildings, probably constructed at the same time as the house, and probably all designed by the architect John Nash in about 1805 for the Earl of Thanet. The house and a large barn are both Grade II listed.

The remainder of the buildings on the site include a group of ordnance and other stores built in the 1940's following the outbreak of the Second World War and form the bulk of what survives of the former Rowcroft Barracks. The remainder mostly constructed in the 1950's and 1960's form what is left of the former Templar Barracks and are not considered to have any architectural or historic merit.

Repton Manor and its associated barns should be retained and sympathetically renovated in line with guidance in PPG 15 '*Planning and the Historic Environment*' (1994) and the works carried out under consent as required by the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The treatment of any new build in proximity to these buildings should also be undertaken sensitively to protect their setting.

As such, a number of uses are currently being investigated including a family pub, crèche, residential, community or business uses. Whatever end use is decided this important group of buildings and their setting will form an integral focal point to the whole development.

**ARCHAEOLOGY**

No part of the site is scheduled as an Ancient Monument and no archaeological finds have been recorded on the site or identified during the earthworks for the



Existing Storage Sheds on former Rowcroft Barracks



Existing sports hall



Repton Manor and Associated Barn

CTRL. Although the majority of the site has undergone significant disturbance, a desk-top assessment undertaken by Broadway Malyan (September 2001) has identified a number of areas where potential buried archaeological deposits may survive.

A full archaeological survey will be carried out prior to commencement of any works on site.

Any archaeological finds identified during site investigations, site clearance or construction should be preserved *in situ* or recovered and recorded as agreed with Kent County Council and in line with PPG 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (1994).

**REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS**

In addition to assessing the historical importance of the buildings it was important to assess whether or not any of them would be appropriate for alternative uses either in the short or long term. The consultants have considered each of the buildings and their physical, commercial and locational suitability for reuse. It has been concluded that none of the existing buildings are suitable for long term reuse with the exception of Repton Manor and Barn and there are a number of reasons for this, namely:

-  Site Boundary
-  Grade II Listed Buildings to be Retained
-  Existing Buildings to be Demolished
-  CTRL Under Construction
-  Sunken Gardens to be Retained
-  Recreate Manor Way



Figure 6: Cultural Heritage



Existing low density, derelict housing



Existing accommodation block

- The majority of the buildings were constructed for a very specific end use in mind and, as such, do not lend themselves easily to conversion;
- The buildings have been empty for the previous 5 years with no maintenance and are now in a poor state of repair and would be costly to refurbish;
- Many of the buildings contain asbestos that would be prohibitively costly to remove;
- They are built at very low densities and their current location would greatly hinder the aspiration to develop a new higher density sustainable community; and
- Buildings do not comply with today's much higher energy efficiency standards and as such are not sustainable.

The opportunity still exists however to retain some of the buildings for temporary re-use during the construction period.

#### SUSTAINABLE DEMOLITION

Although it is not proposed to retain any buildings other than those listed a sustainable demolition and waste removal strategy is being put in place. This will ensure that much of the material arising from demolition will be reused in the construction of the new development e.g. for road sub-bases, ground modelling etc. This process will thereby minimise the need to remove material from site.

#### HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

The Ashford Barracks site has been in military occupation for the past 60 years and possibly significantly longer. Kent County Council's Sites and Monuments Record identified the possibility of a temporary barracks for 2000 men on the southern part of the site between the period 1540AD – 1900 AD.

It is important that the development design includes permanent reminders of the site's historic use. This may be in the form of public art, street names and/or small public displays or exhibitions.

More detail on interpretation of cultural heritage is set out in section 8.

## 8 GROUND CONDITIONS & CONTAMINATION

The ground conditions vary across the site, i.e. typically with the variation in the underlying geology. On Templer Barracks, and the area of housing at the western end of Rowcroft Barracks, the ground conditions comprise firm silty clays which pass into stiff silty clay and interbedded sand and limestone beds. The latter were encountered within exploratory holes located primarily over the southern part of this portion of the site. A mantle of topsoil or made ground was found to overlie the natural soils.

The ground conditions on Rowcroft Barracks comprise soft to firm silty clay passing into firm or stiff silty clay. A mantle of Topsoil or Made Ground was encountered overlying these soils. The Made Ground varied in composition from crushed concrete to black ash and clinker.

Contamination can be considered as three separate issues, these being chemical contamination, soil gas contamination and radiological contamination. The chemical contamination relates primarily to slightly elevated concentrations of metals within the soils across the site. Following the completion of detailed risk assessments any areas where contamination has been identified would be

remediated. Soil gas contamination has been identified and appropriate gas protection measures would be incorporated within the building fabric.

During the Ministry of Defence's ownership of the site, paints, including luminous paints were stored and used on site. The luminous paint contained radium. A series of radiological surveys were undertaken on behalf of the previous landowner and these led to the excavation and disposal of soils from certain areas of the site. A supplementary site wide survey was undertaken in 2002 to confirm that no other areas of radiological contamination were present on site. The radiological survey has been completed, albeit with the exception of the area occupied by contractors constructing the CTRL, which has been surveyed in part. The survey has confirmed that radiation levels across the site are generally no higher than the local background level. Some areas of the site were found to give rise to elevated readings. However, further inspection indicated that these readings were due to the presence of natural minerals within construction materials, e.g. granite chippings in tarmac. Detailed risk assessments prepared following the radiological survey have shown that no remedial measures are required to protect construction workers or end-users of the site. The radiological survey shall be completed as soon as full access can be gained to the CTRL compound area on Rowcroft Barracks. If any contamination is found it will either be removed from site or remediated to the required standards.

## 9 UTILITIES AND DRAINAGE

### FLOODING

According to the Environment Agency indicative flood plain maps, the site is not considered to be at risk of fluvial or coastal flooding for the 1% annual probability flood (100 year return period flood). No reported instances of flooding at the site are known.

### FOUL WATER DRAINAGE

A new foul drainage system will be provided to serve the development and this will be offered to Southern Water for adoption in accordance with Section 104 of the Water Industry Act (1991). It is proposed to discharge foul flows from the development to an existing public foul sewer at the junction of Chart Road and Godinton Road, and to Chart Road foul water pumping station.

Southern Water has indicated that proposed flow rates generated by the development may require the upgrading of existing Southern Water apparatus. Any off-site works will be procured by means of a sewer requisition under Section 98 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

### SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE – SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE

A new surface water drainage system will be provided to serve the development and this will be offered to Southern Water for adoption in accordance with Section 104 of the Water Industry Act (1991).

It is proposed to discharge surface water flows from the development to an existing public surface water sewer at the junction of Chart Road and Godinton Road, and to Chart Road surface water pumping station.

Proposed surface water off-site discharge rates will be heavily restricted to rates agreed with Southern Water and, as a result, development flows shall have no detrimental impact upon the existing drainage system. To facilitate this, surface water flows will be stored on-site and released at a controlled rate.

Underlying ground conditions are unlikely to be conducive to traditional infiltration techniques, such as soakaways. Consideration will be given, where possible, to the introduction of point source control techniques, such as porous surfaces and infiltration swales, and other sustainable measures in order to minimise the effect of diffuse pollution and to reduce the quantity of runoff collected.

The provision of attenuation storage techniques also form a suitable SuDS solution. Consideration shall be given to the use of balancing ponds and/or underground culverts as attenuation storage as part of the surface water drainage strategy.

#### **WATER SUPPLY**

Mid Kent Water has mains in Maidstone Road (A20) and Templer Way. Reinforcement of their system along the A20 to the west of the existing railway bridge and provision of a comprehensive new supply network on site will serve the development.

#### **GAS SUPPLY**

Transco has mains in Maidstone Road (A20), Templer Way and within the north eastern side of the site. We understand that Transco's network does not require reinforcement to serve the proposed development. A comprehensive new supply network incorporating two on-site pressure reduction stations, will serve the development.

#### **ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

SEEBOARD has apparatus in Maidstone Road (A20), Templer Way and within the site. SEEBOARD estimate the existing high voltage network is adequate to support a third of the total demand for the full development. It is anticipated that two new 6.6 HV feeders will be required to accommodate the complete development and it will be necessary to establish a number of new on-site sub-stations.

#### **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

British Telecom has plant in Maidstone Road (A20). Comprehensive telecoms will be provided to serve the development.