

8 Implementation and Delivery

The Local Plan requires the promoters of the development to show how the scheme can be implemented in detail on a phased basis, and how this will bring forward the required infrastructure when it is needed. This is addressed in section 8.1. Delivery and the investment context follow in 8.2. Preliminary proposals for the management of built community facilities, and the establishment of a Community Trust are put forward in sections 8.3 and 8.4. The following section 8.5 deals with affordable housing, while managing the design process and long term management, are outlined in sections 8.6 and 8.7.

8.1 Phasing

The phasing of the housing and employment allocation responds to the transport infrastructure and community facilities sought in the Local Plan.

This phasing will be largely controlled by transport capacity improvements (including improvements to M20 Junction 10) following the recommendations in SATS and SPG6. With respect to M20 Junction 10, Ashford Borough Council has granted and will continue to grant residential planning permissions in South Ashford on a basis which is consistent with improvements to the motorway junction capacity. Those improvements are funded by the infrastructure contributions from all developments in the area including this scheme. The provision of appropriate capacity at the site access on to the Southern Orbital Road and on adjacent junctions will also be an influence on phasing and implementation, which will be addressed through the SPG6 financial contributions.

The scheme has been sub-divided into the following phases which relate directly to the character areas identified in Chapter 4:

Residential

- Phase 1: High Street and Bilham Lawn
- Phase 2: Stour Meadows
- Phase 3: Captain's Wood

- Phase 4: Wood Bank and Captain's Green
- Phase 5: Sevington Lake

Employment/mixed use

- Phase A: The Crescents (stage 1)
- Phase B: The Oval (stage 1)
- Phase C: The Oval (stage 2)
- Phase D: The Crescents (stage 2)
- Phase E: The Crescents (stage 3)

The proposed phasing of the scheme is illustrated in Figure 8.1 and has been developed to allow for the first access to the site to be from the Southern Orbital Road or from the Park Farm East development. The access from the Southern Orbital Road will be the principal access for the site as it develops and this will be provided at an appropriate stage based upon traffic needs and discussions with the Highway Authority.

All construction traffic will access the site via the Southern Orbital Road. This may require provision of a temporary accommodation bridge over the East Stour to facilitate access from the existing road network serving the Freight Clearance Facility at Waterbrook. Construction traffic will be prohibited from accessing the site via the local road network.

In order to respond to the diverse requirements of investors and occupiers, serviced employment land will be made available on a phased basis (as indicated in Figure 8.1 overleaf) in parallel with residential development. The Church Commissioners will promote the employment opportunities in the active marketing campaign for the site. This will demonstrate the attraction of Ashford as a location as well as the specific advantages of East Stour Village as a high quality, sustainable development, with a range of employment, live/work, residential and community uses.

The Commissioners would seek to work in partnership with public and private sector organisations to promote East Stour Village to businesses looking to expand or relocate in Kent (for example SEEDA, Locate in Kent and

the Kent Developers Group). This campaign would be coordinated with the marketing initiatives of Locate in Kent (which The Commissioners participate in as a partner of the Kent Developers Group) and Ashford Borough Council's Economic Development Department in order to ensure that the locational advantages of East Stour Village are promoted as part of the wider attraction of Ashford to new investors and occupiers. Local businesses will be encouraged in the campaign.

The Commissioners will be active in seeking to promote the development of buildings for employment use at East Stour Village. They will seek to stimulate demand and in appropriate cases would assist occupiers in development. Decisions by The Commissioners will be made on their normal investment criteria. The Commissioners recognise the importance of employment uses and should employment development not come forward on such a scale as to ensure the development of a balanced community will promote a limited amount of "pump priming" employment or mixed use development, both by providing serviced land and floorspace, the timing of which will be covered by Agreement.

Indicative Timing

The indicative timing of the infrastructure and community facilities is shown in Table 8.1 overleaf.

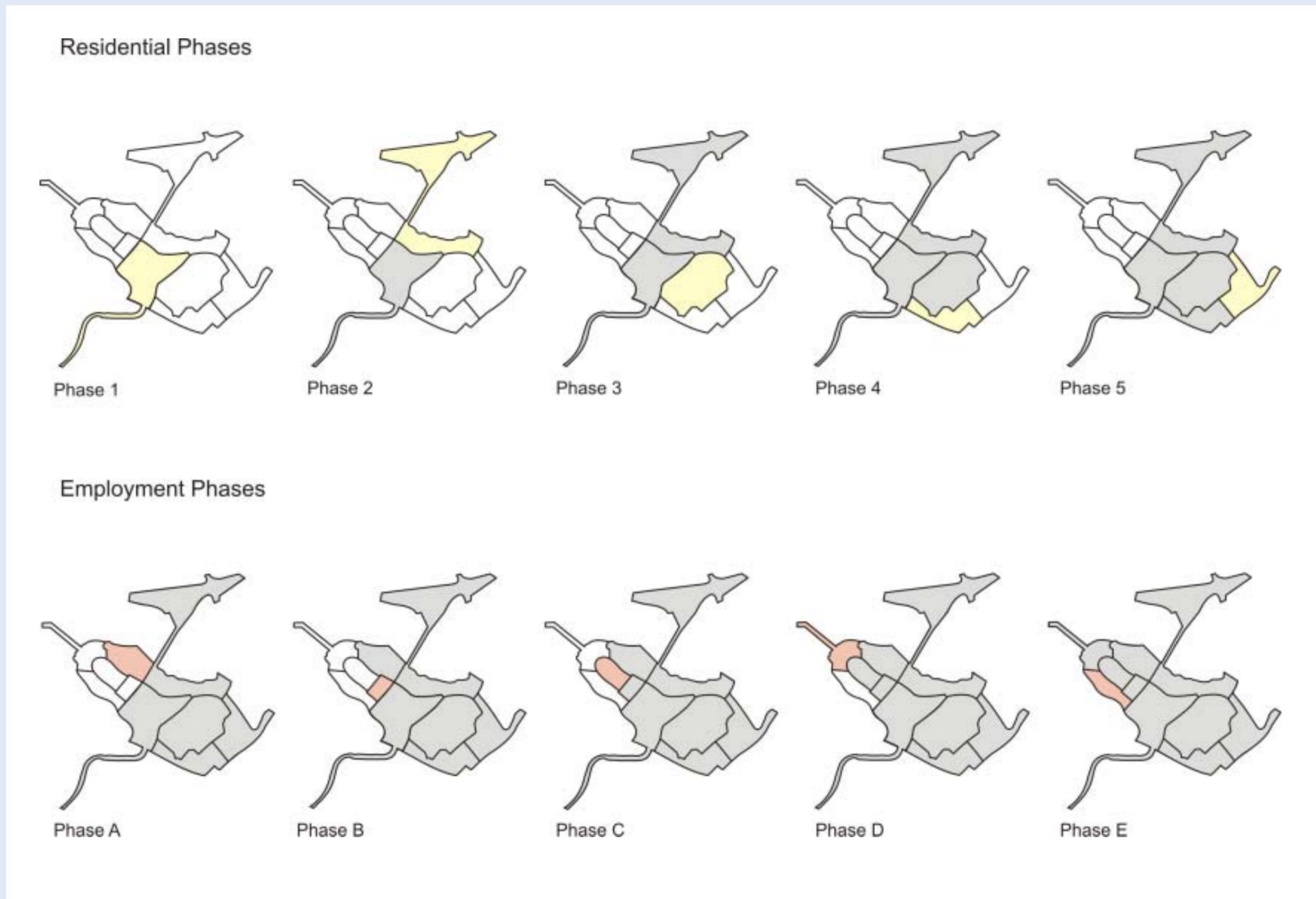
8.2 Delivery and Investment Context

The Church Commissioners are fully committed to Ashford and aim to create an exemplar of modern sustainable development that enhances the quality of life for the area as a whole.

In order to achieve these aims and to justify the investment needed to create the development, the Commissioners will adopt a long-term approach in which they will:

- Take the role and responsibility of long term investor in the delivery of the master plan in appropriate phases;

Figure 8.1 Indicative Phasing of Development



Note: As explained in section 8.1, this figure is not intended to imply that the employment phases will follow on from the residential development

Table 8.1 Phasing of Infrastructure and Community Facilities

Infrastructure and Community Facilities Sought	Indicative Timing	Phase of Development
Transport system	Phased improvements to the existing junction on the Southern Orbital Road to provide vehicular access to the site	Phase 1 - High Street and Bilham Lawn
	Bus link and cycleway to boundary of Site 17 (Park Farm)	Phase 1 - High Street and Bilham Lawn
	Bus link and cycleway to Waterbrook	The end of Phase 1 - High Street and Bilham Lawn
Local play areas	Available for use before completion of 100 th dwelling	One on the north side of Captain's Wood at end of Phase 1, second at end of Phase 4 in East Stour Valley Park
Neighbourhood play area	To be provided on the south side of Captain's Wood	The end of Phase 4
First shop	Combined with foodstore, together with the two further sites identified in Local Plan	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Public house	Market serviced site before completion of 200 th dwelling	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Playing fields/pavilion	Available for use before completion of 200 th dwelling	Off-site contribution to be allocated to Park Farm sports complex
Affordable housing	Affordable housing to be provided on the basis of 20% of total homes.	"Pepper potting" of affordable housing throughout character areas and phases
Community hall	To be provided adjacent to primary school	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Library	To be combined with KCC One Stop Shop building near the primary school	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Church	Land reserved adjacent to primary school	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Health centre	Overlooking the district square, opposite the foodstore	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Primary school	2ha site reserved next to Captain's Wood	To be made available at end of Phase 1 High Street
Secondary school	Site not provided. Financial contribution to be made	

- Ensure that a high quality physical and social infrastructure is provided from the beginning of the development;
- Promote both the employment and residential elements of the scheme;
- Retain ownership of the public realm so as to ensure quality of built form, landscape provision and maintenance, including the social infrastructure, public open space and the green corridors;
- For the same reasons, retain maintenance/ management of footpaths, highway verges and associated planting adopted by the Highway Authority;
- Provide estate management services to the development;
- Use best practice in the procurement of development with competition to obtain the best development as well as appropriate financial terms;

- Secure contractual commitments from occupiers to develop and maintain the high standards set out in site development briefs.

The brief proposes the grant of planning consent with realistic phases. The initial phases are key to the creation of a sustainable new community with adequate highway capacity to justify the substantial initial investment. The support of Ashford Borough Council and KCC in securing the necessary improvements in off -site public infrastructure especially transport and highways, will also be of central importance.

The Commissioners will take a qualitative, rather than quantitative approach, establishing a long-term partnership between the relevant stakeholders, to achieve the successful development of East Stour Village as a key site in the sustainable growth of Ashford as a whole.

The Commissioners are committed to ensuring that infrastructure is developed in the context of the master

plan and in support of each phase, on a proactive rather than a reactive basis. They also expect to establish a local estate management office on the site.

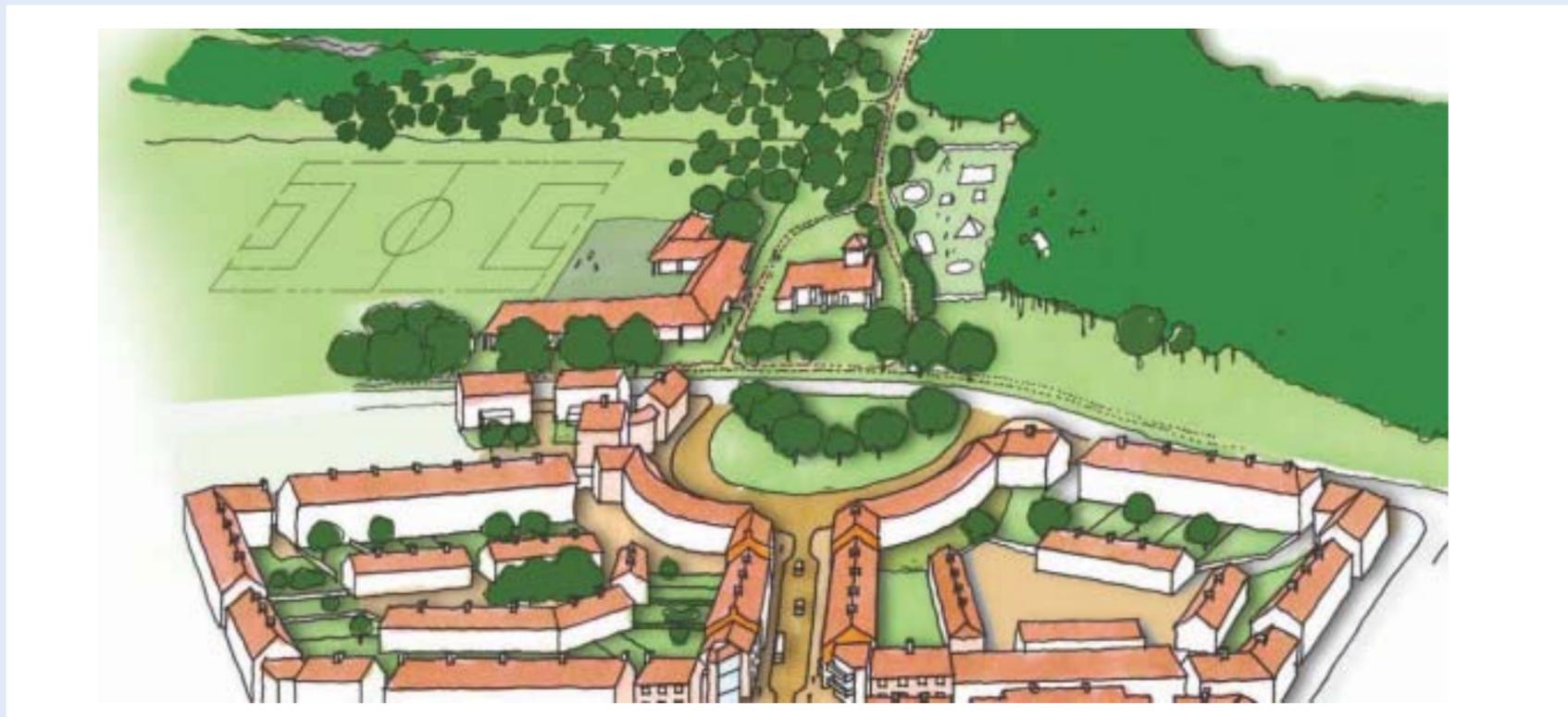
Generally, The Commissioners will not undertake development themselves, but will enter into contractual agreements with specialist developers to secure the aspirations of the site development briefs. They will market employment land for owner occupation and investment by specialists. Development of mixed-use accommodation including live/work space, will also be allocated to experts in the field, who will manage buildings on a property basis. However, The Church Commissioners will seek a financial interest in the developments and do not exclude the possibility of their own development, where it is limited to areas of low financial risk such as social or affordable housing.

The Commissioners propose a long-term approach that is markedly different to speculative housebuilder. A new community will be created at East Stour Village as an exemplar of development, responsive to market demand for both new homes and employment in an environment that is sustainable and supportive. The Commissioners long term involvement in the selection of developers and disposals to occupiers is vital to these objectives and to the delivery and maintenance of the high quality of the social and physical infrastructure needed to create the degree of quality that will make this a distinctive and valued addition to the wider community centred on Ashford.

The Commissioners believe that this approach will ensure realisation of the proposals for East Stour Village, to the common benefit of their own agenda, the new community that will be created at Cheeseman's Green and the wider community that will gain benefit from the employment and social infrastructure.

8.3 Management of Built Community Facilities

The Commissioners are committed to focused investment in social infrastructure for the new community at the early stages of development.



Community facilities at the end of the High Street

The Planning and Design workshops revealed a strong preference among stakeholders for community facilities to be concentrated within a traditional high street.

The High Street, which will run through the middle of the village from Captain's Wood to the main crossroads, has been designed to function as the "heart of the village" where community facilities including the health centre, community hall, church, foodstore, primary school and other public facilities will be provided. The school and community hall will be located at one end of the street by Captain's Wood, while the foodstore and health centre will be at the other end near the village crossroads.

The High Street - and with it the social infrastructure - will be created in the first phase of development.

A mix of housing types and tenure will promote a broadly based community of all ages and needs.

8.4 Establishment of a Community Trust

The Church Commissioners will enter into discussions with Ashford Borough Council, to determine the best arrangements for managing the community facilities. The establishment of a Community Trust is one mechanism that could be considered. This would be an effective method of involving residents and giving "ownership" to the emerging community.

The objective of establishing a Community Trust is to create a sustainable community based, non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO), with charitable status which would be capable and resourced adequately to manage all of the community facilities within the village. The Board of Trustees would not manage services directly, but oversee the provision of services through a contractor(s) and other service providers such as Day Care Nursery Operators and Health Centre (General Practitioners).

One option to be explored is that the Borough Council be granted a long lease by The Commissioners of the community assets and assign the management contract to

the Community Trust (on a 99 year term). The financial sustainability of the Trust is critical and could be achieved in a number of ways:

- Through income sources from the facilities, such as rents;
- Fees and charges to users, e.g. from playing fields and leisure facilities;
- A commuted sum;
- From charitable giving, or external challenge funding obtained by the Trustees;
- Through an estate service charge.

Another alternative would be the retained ownership by The Commissioners of the key landscape elements but the letting of community buildings to a local community trust.

8.5 Affordable Housing

As noted above, the site specific requirements relating to Development Site 13 in the Local Plan require 20% of the total housing provision to be allocated for affordable housing (para S13.11). The Commissioners are committed to meeting this required provision through the following two methods:

- The Commissioners are prepared to enter into agreements with Ashford Borough Council's Registered Social Landlords partners.
- The Commissioners are prepared to directly provide affordable housing and would manage the completed units themselves. The Commissioners would accept nomination rights in favour of Ashford Borough Council for the majority of occupiers of the affordable housing.

In accordance with the requirements of the Borough Council, two thirds of all affordable housing will be rented units and the other third will be shared ownership properties.

The rented units will comprise:

- A sheltered housing complex for the elderly, consisting of about 30-36 x 1/2 bed self-contained flats with communal lounge, office, kitchen and gardens (with some five or six of the units capable of accommodating the elderly physically disabled);
- Other special needs housing, consisting of 14 x 2/3 bed flats (with those on the ground floor capable of accommodating residents with a physical disability and at least two of the flats with 3 bedrooms for those with a physical disability) and 12 x 1 bed self-contained flats in at least two blocks providing sheltered (supported) accommodation;
- General needs rented, consisting of 20 x 1 bed flats (designed to accommodate a couple), 10 x 2 bed flats, 30 x 2 bed houses, 30 x 3 bed houses and 10 x 4 bed houses.

It is envisaged that the sheltered housing complex for the elderly and all the other special needs housing will be located in the High Street within close proximity to community facilities and shops. The general needs rented accommodation will be provided throughout all character areas, in small integrated groups of between 5-10 units. In order to help create a balanced community, care will be taken to ensure that all the larger family units are mixed in with other units of accommodation and not grouped together. All rented accommodation will be designed and built to meet the space standards set by The Housing Corporation and Registered Social Landlords.

The shared ownership properties will comprise 20 x 1 bed flats, 20 x 2 bed flats, 36 x 2 bed houses and 11 x 3 bed houses. As with the general needs rented accommodation, these properties (including the larger family units) will be pepper-potted throughout the scheme.

In line with the provisions of the Local Plan (page 39), before completion of the 300th dwelling, all affordable housing will either be built or the necessary land for such transferred or provided on "affordable" terms: it is envisaged that the provision of affordable housing will be the subject of a s106 Agreement.

8.6 Managing the Design Process

Following the Planning and Design workshops attended by key stakeholders and representatives from the Borough Council, the local community and statutory consultees modifications were made to the master plan and Development Brief. A follow-up event was also held to present and agree the changes made.

It was agreed that The Church Commissioners and their consultants would pay special attention to creating mechanisms to ensure design quality. Three key areas were identified as:

- Design Competition for Phase 1: The High Street;
- Design codes and guidance;
- Continuing support from a Design Panel or similar mechanism.

Design Competition

The Commissioners intend to promote quality and encourage the positive use of planning guidance through architectural competitions and site development briefs.

The Commissioners will use an architect/developer competition for Phase 1 - High Street and Bilham Lawn, to secure the best development in terms of design, use of materials, setting and the financial terms offered by developers of established reputation.

It is anticipated that the Kent Architecture Centre (KAC) will play an important role in organising the competition. KAC has particular expertise in developing architectural and planning competitions and as a not-for-profit organisation set up to support design quality in Kent would be able to manage the process on behalf of all the interested parties. There are a number of ways in which the first stage can go forward to competition and to some extent the decision will be shaped by the chosen method of disposal of the land to a developer. KAC can advise on the process and produce a brief, appropriate short list and help manage the process through to selection of the chosen team.

Design Codes and Detailed Guidance

KAC would work with The Church Commissioners' consultants to develop codes and guidance. This might become a separate commission from The Church Commissioners and Ashford Borough Council. The combination of experience would be a very practical way forward and of particular benefit to future development in Ashford.

Design Panel

KAC as agents for SEEDA have now established a regional Design Panel that is free to local authorities. Chaired by the distinguished architect Paul Koralek, with Lord Richard Rogers as patron, the panel consists of some 30 distinguished development professionals who can be brought in as appropriate. This mechanism was formally launched at the Government's Urban Summit in November 2002 and is available now. Alternatively KAC can advise on a local mechanism.

Overall Design Process

The design process is illustrated overleaf in the form of a flow diagram. The diagram indicates the way in which the three key areas which emerged out of the Planning and Design workshops (design competition, design codes and guidance, and the role of KAC and the Design Panel) relate to the overall process. Other key areas are outlined below.

It is intended that the Development Brief (this document) will be adopted by the Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It will then have a strategic role in providing the overall framework for development, within which applications for individual phases of development can be submitted and considered.

These applications will take two broad forms:

- Detailed infrastructure design for the entire scheme, which will deal with the network of local distributor roads, major access roads, public rights of way, utilities,

hydrological matters including SuDS, the strategic landscape framework and treatment of public open spaces, major play areas and ecologically sensitive areas;

- Detailed design of individual parcels of residential/employment land (as illustrated in Figure 8.1), submitted by developers in accordance with site development briefs which will deal with such matters as house type/size mix, the treatment of live/work units, the scope for promoting sustainable construction and building techniques (which could be particularly appropriate to such units), plot ratios and site coverage (in the employment area), set-backs, architectural elements and detailing, materials, landscaping, and parking and servicing.

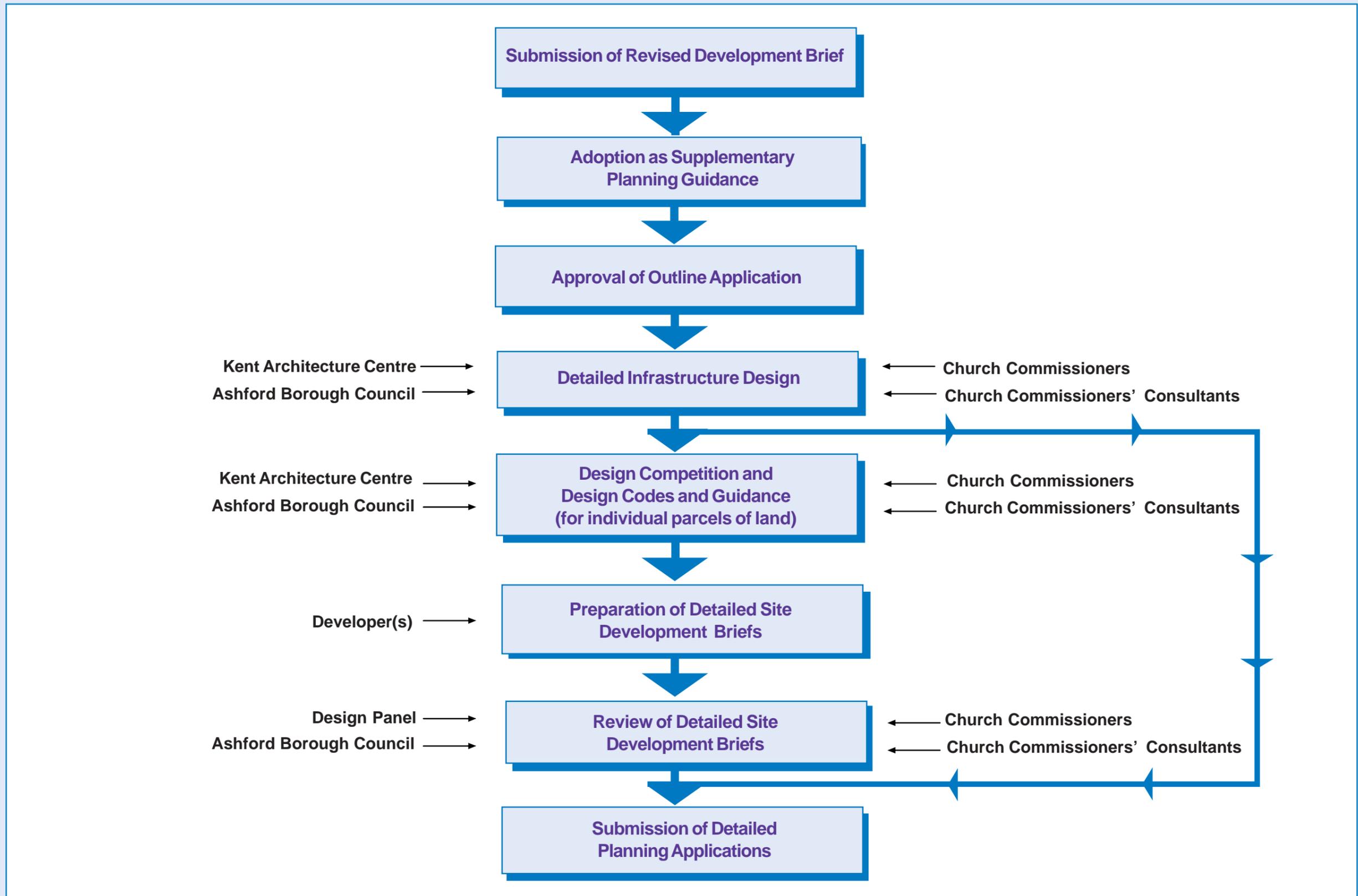
Individual site development briefs will be prepared by developer(s) within the framework set out in the overall Development Brief (this document), in compliance with the design codes and guidance drawn up under the auspices of KAC, Ashford Borough Council and The Church Commissioners and their consultants. Prior to submission of a detailed planning application, the site development brief to which it relates will be reviewed by the parties referred to above, ideally drawing upon the advice and expertise of the regional Design Panel.

8.7 Long Term Management

The Commissioners will continue to act as estate landowners and take a long-term interest in the phased development of the site undertaken in the context of a master plan.

Active, positive and well funded estate management will be enforced through covenants in the sale or letting of the property.

The Commissioners will also continue to manage the agricultural areas including drainage ditches and other elements of the sustainable landscape.



The Design Process