

Reference: EDC/17/0025

Agenda Item: 006

Site Address: Parcel A, Phase 2
(South-eastern Lake Edge)
Castle Hill, Eastern Quarry
Swanscombe
DA10 0EX

Proposal: Reserved matters application (details relating to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of 138 dwellings and car parking, along with associated landscaping, infrastructure and earthworks at Parcel A, Phase 2, Castle Hill pursuant to conditions 25 & 30 of outline application 12/01451/EQVAR.

Applicant: Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd

Parish / Ward: Swanscombe & Greenhithe

SUMMARY

This application relates to land falling within Castle Hill, the first of three villages to commence construction in Eastern Quarry. Outline planning consent for Eastern Quarry was granted by Dartford Borough Council for up to 6,250 dwellings. The outline permission secured masterplans and various strategies and design codes together with a S106 legal agreement to guide a phased approach to the development of Eastern Quarry that adhere to the same guiding framework. The outline consent reserved all matters for later consideration.

This application seeks permission for all reserved matters for the erection of 138 houses to the southern portion of Castle Hill, one of the last phases to come forward in this village, and provides detailed design in respect of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

It is considered the proposal is in broad accordance with the approved parameters as set out in the guiding documents established under the outline permission. Access within the site is legible and has a strong layout in a grid pattern with good cycle and pedestrian links. The external appearance of the buildings is appropriate to the character areas set out in the approved Area Masterplan / Design Code. Some units display particularly interesting design features and have been specifically developed by the applicant for Ebbsfleet Garden City. All dwellings meet the nationally described internal space standards and are designed to meet Category 2 of the Building Regulations 'Approved Document M: Access to and use of Buildings' standards. Green spaces and landscaping have been used effectively to enhance the public and private realms.

In accordance with Dartford Borough Council's Car Parking SPD, the scheme exceeds the required provision for residential parking. Visitor parking is under the requirement by 3 spaces and van parking provision is under by 2 spaces. All parking spaces sizes meet the requirements of the SPD. While the slight under-provision of spaces is not considered significant, it is acknowledged there is over-provision of off-street residential parking that enables some additional parking to be absorbed. The applicant has also confirmed there will be no covenants restricting van parking on-plot. It is therefore considered in this instance the proposed level of parking is acceptable.

Additional comments from Dartford's Environmental Health department are still being examined by the applicant in respect of noise levels to the private amenity areas of

properties along Main Street. Further site-specific information and details of mitigation measures are sought to further improve anticipated noise levels at the site. Dialogue is ongoing with the applicant and will be reported as supplementary information.

The proposal presents a high standard of development and design that complies with policy B1 of the Dartford Borough Council Core Strategy on design which will contribute to essential national housing growth and the development of the Ebbsfleet Garden City.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to the following conditions with delegated authority to the Chief Planning Officer to make minor changes to the wording:

Time

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of this reserved matters approval.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Approved Plans

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:

Layout Drawings:

BRS.6001_06P – Site Layout
BRS.6001_11C – Context Plan
BRS.6001_12F – Parking Plan
BRS.6001_13G – Adoption Plan
BRS.6001_16D – Waste Plan
BRS.6001_22D – Movement Plan
BRS.6001_24C – Building Heights Plan
BRS.6001_25C – Place Making Plan
BRS.6001_27D – Materials Plan

House Plans & Elevations:

BRS.6001_03G – House Types Schedule (plus bin & bike store; boundary details)
BRS.6001_29D – Street scenes

Landscape Plans:

P16-6001_32-C – Detailed Landscape Proposals (1 of 2)
P16-6001_33-C – Detailed Landscape Proposals (2 of 2)
P16-6001_34-D – Hard Landscape Zoning Plan
BRS6001_40 – Tree Pit Detail
BRS6001_001_LMP – Landscape Management Plan

Technical Drawings:

C85227-SK-005C – Levels
C85227-SK-101C – Refuse Vehicle Swept Path Analysis (1 of 2)
C85227-SK-102C – Refuse Vehicle Swept Path Analysis (2 of 2)
C85227-SK-103C – Estate Car Swept Path Analysis (1 of 2)
C85227-SK-104C – Estate Car Swept Path Analysis (2 of 2)
C85227-SK-105C – Site Visibility Splays
C85227-SK-014 – Site Cross Sections (1 of 3)

C85227-SK-015 – Site Cross Sections (2 of 3)
C85227-SK-016 – Site Cross Sections (3 of 3)
C85227-SK-106A – 4.6t Panel Van Swept Path Analysis

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory form of development.

Prior to Commencement of Development

3. No development, or the delivery of any associated machinery or materials, shall take place until full details of the retaining walls that support the adoptable highway or land above it, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure suitable design of structures that affect the highway in the interests of highway safety and maintenance, in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011) and emerging policy DP4 of the Dartford Development Policies Plan.

4. No development shall take place until details of the surface water drainage system for the development (including storage facilities where necessary), and including details of the relationship to any landscape planting and tree pit details, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall broadly accord with the Water Management Plan approved under reference DA/07/01325/EQCON pursuant to the outline permission and the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory means of surface water drainage in accordance with Policy B1 of the adopted Dartford Local Plan.

Prior to Development above Foundation

5. No development above foundation level shall take place until full details and samples of materials for the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - i) Porch canopies including method of affixing to the building and associated finishing;
 - ii) Hard surfacing materials to be used in the external finishes of all roads and footpaths;
 - iii) Specification of edging, kerbs and how paving transitions are to be dealt with;
 - iv) Boundary treatment along Main Street; and
 - v) Street furniture including bollards and demarcation of safety margins.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

6. No development above foundation level shall take place until soft landscaping details in respect of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the

Local Planning Authority and the development carried out in accordance with the approved details:

- i) Shrub planting mixes to dwelling frontages (avoiding shrubs that are likely to attain heights of above 1.5m);
- ii) Details of hedge planting to plot 83-91;
- iii) Details of species and size of tree planting along Main Street;
- iv) Detail section through the landscaped frontage along Main Street to the north of the site, demonstrating specific dimensions of the tree pit together with sufficient space for the proposed boundary treatment and edging to adjacent hard surfaced areas;
- v) Details of the use of Amsterdam Tree Soil identifying which type and how it is to be installed, in accordance with manufacturer/supplier guidelines.

Reason: Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy B3 of the Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

7. Prior to development above foundation level, full details of signage and any additional landscaping as may be required, shall be provided in relation to the Main Street junction where it joins Link Street 4, as identified on the approved plans. The details shall serve to direct public traffic along the main roads through Castle Hill. The approved details shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway legibility and good design and to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

Prior to First Occupation

8. The dwellings hereby approved shall not be occupied, until the area shown on the submitted layout as vehicle parking space / garaging / car port has been provided, surfaced and drained. Thereafter the facilities shall be kept available for such use and no permanent development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) shall be carried out on the land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to this reserved parking space and garaging.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

9. The flats hereby approved shall not be occupied, until the approved cycle parking and bin store has been provided. Thereafter the facilities shall be kept available for such use and no permanent development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) shall be carried out on the land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to this reserved parking space and garaging.

Reason: To encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and secure appropriate facilities in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

10. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved details of all external lighting to the site, including relationship to any trees, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans with the lighting implemented prior to the occupation of the part of the development to which it relates.

Reason: To safeguard conditions of residential and visual amenity in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

Other

11. The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the dwellings hereby approved shall be as set out in approved drawing BRS.6001_27D and as indicated on the approved elevations within the approved housepack numbered BRS.6001_03G. Any amended details shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with policy B1 of Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011).

Informatives

1. In connection with condition 6 above the applicant is reminded that all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and in accordance with the timing as set out in condition 65 of outline permission 12/01451/EQVAR.
2. In connection with condition 6 above, it is recommended the following shrubs are avoided to dwelling frontages: *Aucuba japonica* 'Crotonifolia', *Aucuba japonica* 'Rozannie', *Choisya* 'Aztec Pearl', *Choisya ternata* 'Sundance', *Cornus sanguinea* 'Winter Flame' and the trees along Main Street shall be of greater stature than the current species proposed such as *Tilia cordata* 'Greenspire' or *Liriodendron tulipifera*.
3. Your attention is drawn to the need to contact Dartford Borough Council's Street Naming and Numbering Officer in order to have the new properties formally addressed.
4. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, as local planning authority, has taken a positive and proactive approach to the proposed development, focusing on finding solutions:
 - Pre-application advice was given
 - The agent was advised of planning issues during the processing of the application and additional information has been submitted to address these.
 - The application was determined within the relevant timescales.

1.0 SITE CONTEXT AND PROPOSAL

Background

- 1.1. The application site is formed of an area of brownfield land situated within the Eastern Quarry (EQ) development site in Ebbsfleet Garden City. EQ, which measures some 270ha in area, is bounded to the south by the A2, the B255 and Bluewater shopping centre to the west, and Alkerden Land and the settlements of Greenhithe and Swanscombe to the north. Outside the boundary of EQ, the Northfleet West Sub Station site (known as Ebbsfleet Green) which is being developed by Redrow, is located to the southwest. Outline planning permission was granted for EQ for up to 6,250 dwellings in 2007 and then varied in 2013 with all matters reserved for later consideration.
- 1.2. Phase 1 of Castle Hill consisting of 150 dwellings to the northwest of the application site has recently been completed by Ward Homes and is occupied. Phase 2 is located immediately to the west of Phase 1 and was granted permission by the EDC Planning Committee in January 2016 for 170 market dwellings plus 125 affordable homes. These dwellings are now under construction. Phase 3A is located immediately to the west of Phase 2. Part of this phase, consisting of 154 market dwellings, was approved in March 2016 and initial infrastructure works to the access roads are currently being undertaken. The remaining parcels of Phase 3a for 42 affordable housing units were granted at the last committee meeting in April 2017. In March 2016, permission was granted for a 2FE primary school and community centre to the southeast of the application site. This is currently under construction and on schedule for opening in September 2017.
- 1.3. Construction of infrastructure in Castle Hill is also underway including principal roads and a Fastrack route, a dedicated public transport corridor for bus, cycles and pedestrians only, which has a prioritised position, running through the middle of Eastern Quarry from east to west. The Neighbourhood Green within Phase 2 is almost complete and initial landforming works have been started for the Village Green to the south-eastern corner of Phase 3A, together with a roundabout to be constructed at the entrance to Eastern Quarry off Southfleet Road.

Site

- 1.4. The application site is located to the south of Castle Hill in the southeast corner and borders the lake which was constructed as part of the advance infrastructure works. The site covers an area of approximately 3.76ha. Being a former chalk quarry, the development platform is considerably lower than the surrounding land and chalk cliffs line the site perimeter. The topography across EQ slopes considerably, notably from north to south and at the site, the land falls from north to south over approximately 11 metres. To the north of the site is 'Main Street' which serves private traffic. This road runs through the southern portion of Castle Hill in a parallel position to the Fastrack corridor. Immediately to the north of the application site is a junction where Main Street meets the road leading along the bluff which is located to the east of the site and rises sharply to The Observatory offices above. Beyond the bluff, the road meets with Fastrack and leads out of EQ to Southfleet Road. Immediately to the west, the site borders an area identified for public 'Linear Park' open space, the details of which are yet to be agreed.

Proposal

- 1.5. The application seeks permission for reserved matters pursuant to the original outline permission for Eastern Quarry for condition 2 of DA/12/01451/EQVAR. The reserved matters relate to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 138 dwellings comprising 21 x 1- and 2-bed flats in two blocks comprising 12 and 9 apartments; together with 12 x 2-bed dwellings; 50 x 3-bed dwellings; and 55 4-bed dwellings. The overall density is 44dph.
- 1.6. The application includes a section of Main Street to accommodate pedestrian crossings and access into the site which has changed from the initial advanced infrastructure permission granted in 2007, as a result of the evolving design process for EQ. The proposal also includes internal access roads, parking, landscaping and footpath links to the adjacent open spaces.
- 1.7. Pursuant to condition 25 of the outline permission for EQ which requires the submission of details to be provided with any Reserved Matters application, details of the following sections in relation to the condition have been provided in the submission and will be discussed in the appraisal section below:
 - a) Updated area plan
 - b) Landscaping
 - c) Materials
 - d) Street lighting and furniture
 - e) Boundary treatment
 - f) Surface finishes and hard landscaping
 - j) Cycle Parking
- 1.8. The schedule of open space required by part g) of condition 25 is accommodated in this area of Castle Hill by the adjacent Linear Park immediately to the west and is being brought forward by the landowner to be submitted under a separate application. Details relating to part i) public art; k) television receivers; l) signage and interpretation; and m) layout of community buildings are not relevant to this application.
- 1.9. In accordance with condition 28, a noise assessment has been submitted for those dwellings abutting a principal highway to the northern boundary. An action plan in relation to broadband access has also been submitted in accordance with condition 30.
- 1.10. The application is supported by several documents and plans:
 - Design and Access Statement/Compliance Statement
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Plans:
 - Site Location
 - Layout
 - Parking
 - Highway Adoption
 - Waste
 - Movement
 - Building Heights

- Place Making
- Materials
- Boundary Treatment
- Levels/Contours
- House type drawings
- Streetscene elevations
- Hard & Soft Landscaping
- Swept Path Analysis
- Visibility Splays
- Cross Sections
- Gross Internal Area Comparison chart

1.11 Materials samples have also been submitted for consideration.

2.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

High Level Permissions

- 2.1. DA/03/1134/OUT - Outline permission for a mixed development comprising up to 6,250 dwellings and up to 231,000sq metres of built floorspace for: business premises; education; community & social facilities; hotels; theatre; & supporting retail & leisure facilities & associated works. Approved 13.11.07.
- 2.2. DA/12/01451/EQVAR - Section 73 application for the variation of conditions of DA/03/1134/OUT to reflect a revised disposition of land uses across the site. Approved 18.01.13.
- 2.3. The outline planning permission reserved all matters for future development but fixed certain elements:
- A 'Land Use Disposition Plan' was approved as part of the permission and this shows spatially how the development should come forward.
 - Several strategies (covering landscaping and open space, community and leisure, education delivery, phasing, public art, public realm, community participation, sustainable development and transport) which form a framework for the development as it comes forward were secured by the planning permission and S106 Agreement.

Masterplans

- 2.4. The outline permission sets a structured approach to the consideration of planning matters as phases come forward over time. The structure of the required documents are set out in the following hierarchy:
- Site Wide Master Plan (SWMP) – originally granted in 2008 and revised 14.03.13 (12/01452/EQCON) which identifies the broad location and approximate disposition of land uses across the site.
 - Area Master Plan (AMP) – required for each parcel of land for each phase as the development proceeds. Each AMP shall generally accord with the SWMP and

provide greater detail on matters such as land use, building heights, density and indication of private/affordable sub areas.

- Area Design Code – The design code follows on from the relevant AMP and should provide the necessary detail to inform final design, being such matters as, architectural style and treatment, surface finishes, materials pallets, building forms and soft landscaping.

2.5. The AMP and Design Code (AMP/Code) for Castle Hill South was approved as a combined document in February 2017 (EDC/17/0094). The document covers the area to the south of the southern access road, including the lake and landscaped area south of the lake. For the most part, the area is designed to be low to medium density market and affordable housing with a Linear Park through the middle and areas of open space around the lake. The Design Code element of the document identifies sets out the detail to which the final submissions should generally accord. The document identifies character areas which respond to their surroundings, identifying different building forms, massing and architectural approach and street design typologies.

3.0 PUBLICITY

- 3.1. Neighbours notified by letter. Expiry date 28.02.17.
- 3.2. Site notice. Expiry date 23.03.17.
- 3.3. Press notice. Expiry date 23.03.17.

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1. None received.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1. The following organisations have been consulted on the application:

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council;
Kent Highways;
Dartford Borough Council - Environmental Health.

- 5.2. The following responses have been received and summarised as follows:

- 5.2.1. Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council:

No observations.

- 5.2.2. Kent Highways:

A number of comments relating to the following:

- a) Alignment of junction onto Main Street from the bluff road should be re-orientated;
- b) Margin, visibility and parking arrangements outside plot 99 and 100;
- c) Width of junction on internal streets (link street 2 and 7);
- d) Rearrangement of van parking along Linear Park to be parallel in the interests of improving visibility for reversing vans;
- e) Relocation of vans outside plot 36 also due to poor rearward visibility for vans if reversing onto street;

- f) Provision of turning space for transit vehicles within the service roads (adjacent to the spine road);
- g) Preventative measures where vehicles might cross the northern landscaping strip as a short-cut;
- h) Longer passing area outside houses 1 and 82;
- i) Parking provision does not fully meet Dartford parking standards and suggests adding visitor spaces where possible;
- j) Lack of horizontal traffic calming measures along Linear Park Street;
- k) Some plots show insufficient space between parking spaces and garage doors and between spaces in tandem parking.

EDC Officer Comments: Amended plans were submitted to address these comments and Kent Highways was re-consulted. They acknowledged improvements had been made but noted some comments had not been addressed (points a), d) and e)) but have not raised a formal objection. In consultation with EDC Officers, it was considered that the scheme was acceptable in its current form and no subsequent amendment pursued. These matters are discussed in full below.

5.2.3. DBC - Environmental Health:

Concerns raised since the noise assessment indicates daytime noise levels of external amenity areas exceeds the desirable levels but there is no indication of mitigation measures to ensure acceptable noise level in the external amenity areas. Environmental Health considers that a desirable daytime noise level in an external amenity area on a new development should be 50dB L Aeq, 16hr. The Council believes that mitigation should form a part of this submission to ensure reduced noise levels within the external amenity areas and that in its current form the proposal is unacceptable.

EDC Officer response: The applicant has provided a response and Dartford Council have been re-consulted. Any additional comments will be reported to Members as supplementary information.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY

6.1. National Policy & Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

6.2. Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Core Strategy (2011):

CS1 - Spatial Pattern of Development
CS4 - Ebbsfleet to Stone Priority Area
CS5 - Ebbsfleet Valley Strategic Site
CS10 - Housing Provision
CS11 - Housing Delivery
CS15 - Managing Transport Demand
CS17 - Design of Homes
CS18 - Housing Mix
CS23 - Minimising Carbon Emissions
CS25 - Water Management
CS26 - Delivery and Implementation

6.3. Dartford Borough Local Development Framework – Local Plan – Saved Policies (2011):

- S6 - Conservation and improvement of the built environment
- T18 - Traffic Management
- T23 - Parking
- T27 - Pedestrians and the Environment
- T33 - Provision for Disabled People and the Less Mobile
- B1 - Criteria for Consideration of Development Proposals
- B3 - Landscaping Within New Development

6.4. Dartford Development Policies Plan Document (DPPD) (draft December 2015) as emerging policy:

- DP1 - Sustainable Development
- DP2 - Good Design
- DP3 - Transport Impacts
- DP4 - Transport Access and Design
- DP5 - Environmental and Amenity Protection
- DP7 - Borough Housing Stock and Residential Amenity
- DP8 - Residential Space and Design in New Development
- DP11 - Sustainable Technology and Construction
- DP25 - Nature Conservation and Enhancement

6.5. Other Guidance:

Parking Standards SPD
Kent Design Guide
EDC Implementation Framework 2017

7.0 APPRAISAL

7.1. The main issues to be considered in connection with this proposal are each of the Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale), together with parking/highway issues, housing standards, noise and neighbouring amenity. Intrinsic to the assessment of these issues is whether the proposal complies with local and national policy and the overarching aims of the suite of documents secured under the outline permission, notably the AMP and Castle Hill North Design Code.

7.2. Matters relating to contamination, archaeology, ecology and drainage have been considered as part of the outline permission and any necessary works or mitigation measures examined under the outline permission, S106 Agreement and associated Strategies. EDC Officers are in conversation with the landowner to ensure the monitoring of these factors is on-going.

Principle of Development

7.3. The Government is committed to significantly boost the supply of housing and the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF encourages housing applications to be considered in the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development and paragraph 52 endorses the provision of new homes that follow the principles of Garden Cities. Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy supports the housing development of Ebbsfleet, in accordance with policies CS4 and CS5 which set out specific parameters for the creation of a chain of distinctive and individual but linked communities. Policy DP7 of the emerging DPPD supports

housing development which provides for an appropriate range of housing stock and garden sizes and to achieve satisfactory quality of residential development.

- 7.4. Outline planning permission has already been secured for the whole of Eastern Quarry and its provision drawn down through the suite of documents (Site Wide Master Plan, Castle Hill Central Area Masterplan and Design Code) that have all been approved pursuant to the outline permission and form a comprehensive strategy and set of objectives for delivery of housing in this location.
- 7.5. The current proposal is required to fit within the established vision and reflect the detail of the aforementioned approved plans and documents. Policy CS5 of Dartford's Core Strategy states that applications for reserved matters will need to demonstrate that proposals will not undermine the principles to be achieved across the site as a whole as set out in the outline consent to which they relate. The principle of residential development in this location has been established by the aforementioned outline planning permission and subsequent supporting documents and the proposal accords with this principle and Delivery Theme 1 of the Implementation Framework which seeks to provide quality homes and neighbourhoods.

Reserved Matters:

○ **Access:**

- 7.6. Matters relating to access include consideration of the accessibility to and within the site for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network. Matters relating to parking provision will be considered separately under the Highways section below.

Policy

- 7.7. Paragraphs 29 and 30 of the NPPF support the favourability of sustainable transport modes and solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. The use of sustainable means of transport and provision for Fastrack is set out in policy CS15 of the Core Strategy to minimise car use and make effective and sustainable use of the transport network and policy T33 encourages consideration to disabled people and the less mobile. Emerging policy DP3 of the DPPD requires development to be appropriately located to minimise and manage arising transport impacts and DP2d) and DP4 promote the prioritisation of walking, cycling and public transport through clear linkages and permeability. Policy B1 of the Local Plan encourages direct frontage access onto roads. Delivery Theme 3 in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework on 'Connected People and Places' promotes legible networks and the creation of safe, integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport systems designed to be the most attractive form of local transport.

Access Design

- 7.8. The principle routes and junctions through EQ and the spine roads that surround the application site have already been approved at the outline stage. Access to the site has therefore already been secured by the higher level documents and previous permissions for highway infrastructure and is therefore outside the remit of this application.
- 7.9. The AMP/Code sets out a movement network which identifies a broad strategy for the layout of streets and spaces on a permeable grid pattern, as required by the EQ Transport Strategy. In accordance with this grid pattern, the application site is set out

in a series of perimeter blocks to enable full access and permeability for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians, including open edges to enable accessibility to the open spaces adjacent to the application boundary. Cul-de-sacs have been designed along the southern edge to calm traffic and enhance the pedestrian/cycle-friendly route identified in the AMP/Code. A cul-de-sac has also been created along the northern edge to avoid several direct accesses onto the busy main road, at the request of Kent Highways and in accordance with the AMP/Code. A gap in the boundary treatment has been maintained however, to enable cycle/pedestrian access.

- 7.10. The scheme is broken down into smaller perimeter blocks than indicated in the AMP/Code which gives greater permeability and better use of space. The AMP/Code identifies three accesses into the site from Main Street. Through pre-application discussions, it was identified the location of the third point of access to the western edge of the northern boundary was not practical in highway terms due to the levels at the site and proximity of other accesses opposite the site. The overall layout and hierarchy of streets as set out in the application is otherwise generally in accordance with the approved movement plan.
- 7.11. The main roads surrounding the site are being delivered by the landowner. Work has started on Main Street and a S38 application made to the Kent Highways Agreements Team. A section of the Main Street is included within the red line boundary to regularise changes that are required subsequent to the advance infrastructure permission that was granted for all major roads in Castle Hill in 2007. These include pedestrian crossings and the position of the entrance into the site. No ramps or raised tables are proposed. All details are yet to be agreed as part of the S38 process. However, inclusion of the road within this application will allow for any minor amendments to be made to the road, if required. Delivery of the internal streets is on-going but forms part of this application and will be delivered at the same time as the houses.
- 7.12. The applicant states the dwellings are intended to meet Category 2 of the Building Regulations 'Approved Document M: Access to and use of Buildings' standards. This regulation sets out the national standard for accessible and easily adaptable homes. Category 2 requires improved accessibility to homes over and above the previous Building Regulations standards. The NHBC will formally sign off each plot through the building regulations procedure, including an assessment of the accessibility to determine that these standards have been met.
- 7.13. Accessibility within the site is clear and legible which allow unrestricted and uncomplicated freedom of movement around the site. There is level access across the site to accommodate sustainable modes of transport and to be mindful of disabled people and the less mobile, in accordance with policy T33 of the Core Strategy and Delivery Theme 6 of the Implementation Framework that seeks to secure the delivery of new homes with enhanced standards for accessibility above the statutory minimum.
 - **Appearance:**
- 7.14. Matters of appearance refer to a building or place within the development which determine the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.

Policy

- 7.15. The NPPF sets out the importance for good design as being indivisible from good planning (paragraph 56), gives weight to achieving high quality designed buildings and spaces (paragraph 57) and states that planning permission should be refused for 'development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions' (paragraph 64). The NPPF states that architectural styles or particular tastes should not be imposed through planning policies and decisions and they should not stifle innovation or originality through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.
- 7.16. Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy on the Ebbsfleet to Stone Priority Area promotes the creation of a chain of distinctive and individual but linked communities with built development 'reflecting the varied heritage of the area in order to create a sense of place'. Emerging policy DP2 of the DPPD sets out design principles for Dartford which includes a response, reinforcement and enhancement of positive aspects of the locality including cliff faces, facilitation of a sense of place with social interaction and use of materials which should be sourced locally. Policy B1 of the saved Local Plan requires a high standard of design in all development proposals and respect and integrate with their surroundings. Delivery Theme 1 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework on the creation of 'Quality Homes and Neighbourhoods' promotes the delivery of high performing, high quality, homes and buildings

Character Areas

- 7.17. The AMP/Code identifies various character areas to define the urban environment, according to identified street typologies, 'edges' where the built environment meets the surrounding open spaces and landmark or 'key' buildings. The character areas within this application site include the Waterfront Edge to the southwestern corner, Wetland Edge along the southern boundary, Linear Park Edge along the western boundary, Main Street along the northern boundary and Link Street forming the core of the site. Landmark or 'key' buildings as identified in the AMP/Code are located to the western boundary of the site adjacent to either ends of the adjacent Linear Park open space and to the eastern corner fronting the junction of Main Street and the bluff road.
- 7.18. The proposed dwelling typologies include detached and semi-detached houses and two apartment blocks. The AMP/Code does not stipulate a specific architectural theme but set out guidelines for building forms and materials for each of the character areas. These have broadly been reflected in the proposal. The designs of the houses are brick-led with contemporary architectural detailing including projecting brickwork and window build-outs used on particular houses to enliven the streetscene, turn corners and depict landmarks. Amendments have been negotiated with the applicant to improve ratios of the houses and enhance architectural features to assist in placemaking. It is noted the design guidance set out in the AMP/Code, which identifies the use of repeated gables along the Waterfront Edge, has not been followed. However, it is considered the principles in the AMP/Code are intended to act as a framework for design. In this way, it is considered the sense of rhythm the AMP/Code identifies for this edge has been created through the heights, spacing and layout of the buildings.
- 7.19. The AMP/Code makes provision for a landmark or key dwelling located towards the eastern end of the site. This has been identified in the proposal as a pair of semi-detached dwellings (plots 79 and 80) which are located directly opposite the junction of Main Street and the bluff road. These houses are therefore visually prominent in the streetscene facing the junction of two main roads. In order to distinguish this as a

landmark, the dwelling is three stories tall, standing about the houses either side which would be 2.5 storeys tall. Additional features have been added such as projecting brickwork and window surrounds which have been pushed through the eaves. These features, while subtle, stand these plots apart from their counterpoints either side to achieve the prominence of a landmark.

- 7.20. The apartment blocks are contemporary in style with a flat roof and projecting timber and steel balconies (of the same design as those used in the approved scheme at Castle Hill LDO Parcel B - reference EDC/16/0097). The blocks would be constructed of red brick with grey and orange/red 'copper' coloured cladding. Negotiations have been held with the applicant to rationalise the amount of cladding to increase the amount of brickwork and enhance the overall appearance. The apartment blocks are identified in the AMP/Code as being key buildings or landmarks. Due to their design, appearance and size compared to the surrounding houses, it is considered the form of the apartment blocks has achieved this status. The use of the cladding materials also achieves a striking appearance compared to the dwellings surrounding them. The northern of the two blocks forms a gateway to the adjacent Linear Park. It is therefore expected that an apartment block of the same design would come forward for the opposite corner to mark this entrance.
- 7.21. Worthy of particular mention are the house types along the Wetland Edge along the southern-most boundary of the site facing the lake. In the SWMP, this corner arranged into 3 individual 'eco islands', separated by swales and landscaping with an informal layout and no defined edge and accessed from a local street to create a separate environment to the rest of Castle Hill South. This was a particularly ambitious vision that would result in filling part of the lake that has already been constructed under the advance infrastructure works. Furthermore, this corner of the lake has been identified by the ecologist to have significant value for nesting birds. The problems identified through the initial design visions were acknowledged in the determination of the AMP/Code for Castle Hill South and the design expressed in the 'Wetland Edge' character area. The AMP/Code pushes development back towards Castle Hill but maintains ambition to create a more distinctive character in reflection of the unique setting against a meandering lake shore, wetland and prominent cliff face. The Wetland Edge is not replicated anywhere else in Castle Hill. The architectural approach is much more innovative, with large detached houses displaying recessed gable-end features with large glazing sections and providing large enclosed balconies taking advantage of the lake setting. The design of these particular houses stands out from the rest of the site and is unique to Ebbsfleet Garden City.
- 7.22. Materials samples have been submitted with a materials schedule that identifies where they are to be used. Improvements have been made to roof samples and cladding colours through negotiation with the applicant. A yellow multi brick paired with an interlocking plain tile in a sand-faced brown blend along Main Street and some houses along the internal streets to provide variety; two types of red/orange blend brick samples paired with a dark grey interlocking plain tile design interspersed along the Linear Park edge, waterfront and core areas; and a light buff heavy textured brick with composite 'slate' tiles to the wetland edge. Cladding in for the key buildings and Wetland Edge dwellings have been provided in 'Equitone [tectiva]' in colours Hessian, Pebble and Sahara. Although the materials proposed represent a departure from those suggested in the AMP/Code, they are considered to be good quality, appropriate to the development and have some continuity with other dwellings in Castle Hill to create a common language.

7.23. The housetypes have been well designed in accordance with the design parameters as set out in the Design Guide and provide a strong visual appearance to the streetscene. The use of different materials and architectural detailing such as projecting brickwork and build-outs around windows and bay windows provide variation and visual interest along streetscenes. It is also considered the Wetland Edge dwellings display qualities of more innovative design which is encouraged.

○ ***Landscaping:***

7.24. This reserved matters considers the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated including screening by fences, walls or other means; the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass; formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks; the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and the provision of other amenity features.

Policy

7.25. The NPPF states that planning decisions should aim to ensure developments are visually attractive as a result of appropriate landscaping (paragraph 58), identifying the importance of good landscaping being intrinsic to good quality design, as advocated by policy DP2 of the emerging DPPD, which states that within large developments, public art reflecting local character and heritage should be included where possible and that spaces should be designed to be inclusive, safe and accessible for all Dartford's communities, including young, elderly, disabled and less mobile people. Delivery Theme 4 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework emphasises bringing in the 'green' landscaping to promote healthy landscapes and encourage active lifestyles.

Planting

7.26. The application site is well connected to the wider open spaces within EQ, specifically the Linear Park to the west and lake edge to the south. These open spaces are not included within this application but provision is made through the site for direct access to these areas. Landscaping plans have been submitted with the application including a detailed soft landscape scheme including plant specification alongside implementation and maintenance guidelines and a hard landscape zoning plan.

7.27. Generally, the landscape proposals offer a comprehensive submission that accords with the approved design code. Broadly, the landscape treatment to the plot frontages accords with the character areas as defined within the AMP/Code, with species selection used to reinforce and define character. The use of predominantly 5L and 10L stock sized planting is noted as a positive and should achieve a greater instant impact. It is noted that the strong tree line along Main Street will enhance the visual amenity of the principal route through Castle Hill in accordance with Garden City principles.

7.28. Some recommendations have been made to the applicant concerning: planting to the Waterfront Edge; suggestions of alternative smaller species in dwelling frontages in favour of more manageable species that do not grow as tall as those proposed; potential for more substantial trees along Main Street and along the edge with Linear Park; details of tree pit to secure long term health of the proposed trees; and position of particular trees relative to lighting columns.

- 7.29. Amended plans were provided in response to these comments including plant specification, implementation and maintenance guidelines, a detailed landscape management plan and tree pit details. Some amendments have been made to the proposals to address the initial comments. However some matters are still outstanding in respect of the species used in dwelling frontages.
- 7.30. The other outstanding matter relates to planting along Main Street. This tree line represents an important landscape component to Castle Hill as a key access route through the site. In light of its location and major statues, as well as the large width of the road, there is opportunity to plant trees of greater stature along this frontage than the ornamental pear (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer') proposed and any approved scheme should seek to ensure the successful establishment of such planting. Additional details are recommended to demonstrate adequate room exists along this main street frontage to accommodate the required tree pit as well as the landscape features including proposed fencing and edging to adjacent hard surfaced areas. It is considered there is sufficient information to identify a satisfactory landscaping strategy and these final details can be secured by condition.

Hard Landscaping

- 7.31. The Hard Landscape Zoning Plan generally follows the principles for each of the character areas as defined within the Design Code and the indicative materials accord with details implemented in the streetscape throughout Castle Hill. It was recommended Link Street 4 was changed to a coloured tarmac as prescribed by the AMP/Code to alleviate the extent of block work and help to define Link Street 4 as the primary route through the site. This has been changed to a red tarmac. To ensure this is to a satisfactory finish, it is considered appropriate to condition details. While other surface materials are identified, the drawing suggests they are indicative only and some, such as the van spaces, have not been detailed. It is therefore considered appropriate to condition the submission of these details.
- 7.32. Specification of edging, kerbs and how paving transitions are to be dealt with are not included with the submission and it is therefore considered that clarification is secured by condition.

Boundaries

- 7.33. Where domestic boundary treatments are visible from the public domain, these are either brick walls or planted. Timber panel and close-boarded fences will delineate boundaries along gardens. Elevation drawings of the boundary treatments have been submitted and the brick walls are to be constructed of the same brick to match the adjoining house/garage, as identified on the materials schedule.
- 7.34. With the exception of a small stretch of wall around the garden of one house adjacent to the Linear Park, the boundaries with the adjacent landscape is otherwise open, to create a welcoming environment to the open spaces.
- 7.35. Elevation details have been provided for the brick walls and fences. No details have been provided for the proposed post and rail fencing along Main Street frontage and it is therefore proposed to secure this by condition.

Management

- 7.36. Condition 65 of the outline permission requires landscaping schemes to be implemented during the first planting season following completion of the relevant area and thereafter be maintained for a period of 5 years, during which time any trees,

shrubs or grassed areas that die must be replaced. This is established practice to ensure sufficient period of maintenance for the trees and plans to establish.

- 7.37. Following initial feedback, a 5-year landscape maintenance plan was submitted which satisfactorily covers the objectives and prescriptions regarding the management of the site.

○ ***Layout:***

- 7.38. Matters for consideration include the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development.

Policy

- 7.39. The NPPF encourages the provision of safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians (paragraph 35). The provision of a successful layout is intrinsic to good design which is at the heart of the NPPF core planning principles (paragraph 17) and policy DP2 of the emerging DPPD. Part 1c) of policy DP2 states that good design should 'facilitate a sense of place, with social interaction, walking/ cycling, health and wellbeing, and inclusive neighbourhoods, through a mix of uses and careful design and layout', while part 1d) requires the provision of clear pedestrian and cycle linkages and permeability, active frontages, and a fine grain mix of buildings and spaces. Part 4 of the policy requires spaces to be designed to be inclusive, safe and accessible for the whole community, reducing the fear of and opportunities for crime. Emerging policy DP4 of the DPPD requires that layouts should promote walking and cycling and public transport use through provision of attractive and safe routes which address the needs of users. Delivery Theme 1 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework seeks to ensure that the designs of new neighbourhoods follow good urban design principles to deliver attractive, safe and efficient layouts that contribute positively toward an appropriate character for Ebbsfleet.

Layout Design

- 7.40. Extensive discussions regarding the layout have been undertaken at pre-application stage as a result of a number of constraints including established positions of the main spine roads and position of accesses to parcels on the northern side of Main Street secured through advance infrastructure permissions, together with topography and the consequential need for traffic calming measures. The scheme presented is a response to those constraints and pre-application negotiations which involved several iterations.
- 7.41. The site layout is based on grid pattern with houses regularly spaced, in accordance with the AMP/Code guidance. Houses are positioned back-to-back with appropriately sized gardens adjoining each other and principal frontages facing the road. The position of the internal streets means houses all face outwards, there are no back gardens fronting the streets which ensures streetscenes are active. Garages are positioned between houses with tandem parking in front and additional parking on-street. There is adequate distance between dwellings and the apartment blocks to ensure there would be no undue overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact on the amenity of the future occupants.
- 7.42. The layout is open and legible and fully permeable with connections for cyclists and pedestrians to Main Street and surrounding open spaces, promoting walking and cycling. Key linkages are provided across the application site including link through a fence from Main Street and open access from the adjacent Linear Park and lake

edge. Defensible spaces are clear and well-defined, with good natural surveillance, to assist in creating a safe environment.

Density

7.43. Policy CS17 of Dartford Borough Council's Core Strategy addresses the design of homes taking into account layout and density. It identifies that sites will be developed at a variety of densities, depending on their location and accessibility to public transport and that the form and density of housing will vary across the larger sites, in response to accessibility and other characteristics of each part of the site.

7.44. The AMP/Code identifies a range of densities from low (up to 30 dph) along the Wetland Edge, medium (30-60 dph) in the core and high (60+ dph) to the western corners of the site either end of the adjacent Linear Park. The densities are indicated by an arbitrary line and are representative of the tight or loose urban grain set out in the AMP/Code for each identified character area. The two apartment blocks are located in the high density area within the more social, manicured area around the Linear Park and the more spacious plots along the Wetland Edge in the low density area where the character is more spacious to reflect the meandering lake edge. It is considered this is in broad accordance with the AMP/Code. Overall, the density of the whole site is 44 dph which falls in the middle of the medium density and therefore compliant.

○ **Scale:**

7.45. The matter of scale relates to the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings.

Policy

7.46. Matters of scale are intrinsically linked to good design quality as set out in NPPF Paragraph 58 and policy DP2 of the emerging DPPD, which require developments to be visually attractive, function well and add quality to the area to making high quality and inclusive design for all developments.

Building Scale

7.47. The AMP/Code identifies appropriate heights for development according to their location, relationship to open spaces and road hierarchy and corresponds to the density plan. The heights of the dwellings range from 2 to 3 storeys. Dwellings fronting onto main streets and the Linear Park range from 2.5 to 3 storeys to create a strong edge. The core of the site and more intimate Wetland Edge is characterised by 2 storey dwellings.

7.48. The roof height of the landmark houses to the east of the site have been increased to improve the balance of building to roof ratio but also to increase prominence of this important location. The apartment blocks located to the northern and southern ends of the Linear Park are 4- and 3-storeys respectively. The proposed building heights substantially accord with the building heights plan set out in the AMP/Code.

7.49. The proposed design succeeds in creating consistency and symmetry in form, scale and roofscape with repeated house types, regularly spaced with strong perimeter blocks that identify the public/private realm. The scale of development and site coverage is consistent with the design vision for Castle Hill. Buildings are well spaced and the scheme does not present an over-development of the site.

Highways & Parking

Policy

- 7.50. The NPPF strongly advocates sustainable transport methods (paragraphs 29 and 30). The reduction of pollution and use of public transport, walking and cycling are at the heart of the policy document as part of the core planning principles (paragraphs 17 and 35). Policies DP2 and DP4 promote the prioritisation of walking, cycling and public transport through clear linkages and permeability. In order to encourage sustainable development, the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. The overall impact of traffic movements has been established under the outline permission. No greater parking demand or traffic movements would be generated by this permission than assessed under the outline permission and a separate assessment/Travel Plan has not therefore been requested. However, Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy identifies the need for a Car Parking SPD which has been developed by Dartford Borough Council (DBC). Assessment of this application must therefore have due regard to this policy document.

Parking Levels

- 7.51. Residential parking is largely provided in tandem spaces on-plot with some provision allocated on-street, totalling 173 spaces. The size of the car spaces is in accordance with the guidance in the SPD and there is general provision along the side of driveways and access to rear gates into private gardens to allow bins to be dragged to bin collection areas. The majority of houses (104 of 117) also have garages. All garages comply with the Dartford size standards and therefore, in accordance with the Parking SPD, 50% can be counted towards parking provision. A total of 25 unallocated spaces are provided in parking courts for each of the apartment blocks as required by the SPD, together with some visitor spaces within the courtyard of Block A. Unallocated visitor and van parking is also provided for on-street including along the boundary with the Linear Park to make provision for potential visitors to the park. The proximity of on-street visitor parking would also accommodate apartment Block B. The following table sets out the parking requirements according to Dartford Borough Council's Parking SPD and the total number of spaces made available on site:

Type	No. spaces provided	SPD Requirement	
Residential	(198 + 50% of 104 garages) 250	1 & 2-bed flats	(21 units x 1.2) 25.2
		1 & 2-bed house	(12 units x 1.2) 14.4
		3 bed house	(50 units x 1.5) 75
		4+ bed house	(55 units x 2) 110
		TOTAL	225.4
Visitor	39	3 spaces per 10 homes	41.4
Van	12	1 space per 10 homes	13.8
TOTAL	301		280.6

- 7.52. The Dartford Parking SPD states that visitor and van parking spaces are calculated 'per 10 homes or part thereof'. It follows, therefore, that where part spaces are calculated, the SPD requires them to be rounded up to the nearest whole. As shown in the table above, there is a minimal shortfall in visitor and van spaces.
- 7.53. Due to the over-provision of residential spaces in excess of the policy requirement, it is considered there is some flexibility for visitor parking on-plot which will absorb the under provision of visitor parking spaces. This is an approach that has been taken on earlier phases of Castle Hill. It is considered there is sufficient provision for visitors to the park as well as to the residential development.

- 7.54. The size of the van parking spaces meet the Dartford standards in full (7.5m x 3.5m), allowing larger vehicles to be parked in each location. The applicant has confirmed there would be no restrictive covenant on residents using their parking spaces for vans. The over-provision of allocated residential parking can therefore accommodate some of the smaller transit-type vehicles on-plot. As such, there is a reasonable degree of flexibility within the site to account for parking of different sized vehicles. The visitor and van spaces are well distributed through the development. Taking into account all these points, the under-provision is negligible and on balance the parking strategy is considered acceptable. Wherever possible, the position of on-street parking spaces is such that it would not obscure the visibility of adjacent on-plot parking or obscure visibility from dwellings in the interests of good urban design.

Cycle Parking

- 7.55. Cycle parking is to be provided within sheds in the garden or in a garage where one is provided. For each apartment block, a secure cycle storage/bin storage building is provided, the details of which have been provided. Sufficient access has been provided for each plot direct from the street. The provision is in accordance with Dartford's parking standards.

Highway Considerations

- 7.56. Extensive pre-application discussions were exchanged with Kent Highways. These discussions influenced the provision of a private access road to plots 79 to 124, avoiding direct access onto Main Street which would disrupt the anticipated high traffic volume along this road. Kent Highways also influenced the alignment of the roads and the position of the site entrance from Main Street. These comments have been reflected in the submitted scheme.
- 7.57. Kent Highways issued further comments following consultation on the formal submission. Several exchanges have been held with the applicant to address the concerns raised. Kent Highways are now satisfied that the technical issues flagged have largely been addressed. It is acknowledged that some comments remain outstanding. These relate to the position of the van spaces along Linear Park Road, van spaces outside plot 136 and the junction to the east of Main Street where it joins the road leading north out and out of Castle Hill.
- 7.58. In an early sketch, the van spaces along Linear Park were orientated parallel to the road but were changed to a perpendicular arrangement in the formal submission. The effect of this was to allow gaps in the parking and allow more landscaping into the streetscene. While Highways were concerned that this orientation would cause problems where reversing vehicles, and particularly vans, have limited rearward visibility, the applicant has satisfied some concern by identifying safety margins. In light of the character of the street and the low number of spaces to which the comments relate, it is not considered on balance to be sufficiently harmful to warrant the change that would bring about an increase in visibility of cars and block views of the open space beyond
- 7.59. Similarly, it was recommended the position of the van spaces outside plot 136 should be swapped with unallocated parking and relocated to parallel spaces elsewhere in the site. Following discussion with the applicant it was apparent there were significant problems in finding alternative locations for large van spaces within the red line boundary. Due to the size of the spaces, repositioning the spaces would have squeezed a block of houses or width of a road which would have had other design implications and impacts on the appearance of the streetscene. As discussed at 7.49 above, the scheme under-provides on two van spaces. It was therefore not

considered there could be any further loss of van spaces. It was also acknowledged that initial designs provided 4 van spaces outside plot 136 instead of the 3 now proposed and some landscaping added. The spaces have been moved closer together and the tandem parking at plot 36 shifted back to improve visibility. No further comments were raised by Kent Highways during re-consultation on this particular point. On balance, it is considered the scheme provides for alternative van parking arrangements that are evenly spread throughout the site and on balance with the issues discussed, the arrangement is considered acceptable.

- 7.60. The final outstanding issue relates to the junction from Main Street with the road that leads around the bluff to the northeast of the application site. The junction is within the red line boundary and therefore within the scope of this application. A junction is shown at the bottom of the bluff road before turning onto Main Street. Kent Highways consider the main flow of eastbound traffic should continue north along the spine road with a junction at the top of the road leading into the site. All main spine roads, including these roads, were secured under an application for advance infrastructure in 2007 that secured the alignment of the roads and the junctions. The red line of this application was extended to include Main Street to pick up on changes to pedestrian crossings and the position of the western access junction into this application site. Construction is well underway and the installation of services practically complete along this road. Further alterations are therefore prohibitive in the development of the overall site. Discussions have been held with the landowner and Kent Highways including the Agreements Team and it has been accepted that the current layout is subject to previous approval. No further changes are therefore being pursued to this junction. As a consequence, a landscaping strategy has been secured to attempt to delineate the 'public' realm along Main Street from the residential parcel of the application site. A change in hard surfacing materials has been introduced together with a change in the soft landscaping represented by the finish of the line of trees along Main Street and transition into ornamental planting. It is also proposed that appropriate signage is introduced, though no specific details have been produced. A visualisation has been provided to demonstrate the appearance of the landscaping detailing at this point. It is recognised that this will not overcome Kent Highways concerns but is an attempt to address the perceived problems within the scope of the application.

Housing Standards/Mix

- 7.61. In March 2015 the Government introduced Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) as part of a revised approach to provide technical standards to drive the provision of quality housing throughout the country. Where a local planning authority wishes to require internal residential space standards they should only do so by reference in their Local Plan to the Nationally Described Space Standard. Dartford's Core Strategy policy CS17 required housing to provide internal spaces that are fit for purpose and have adequate internal storage space whilst policy CS18 requires developments to provide the maximum amount of practical proportion of homes built to Lifetime Homes standards (although the emphasis on Lifetime Homes changed as a result of the Government's Housing Standard Review in 2015).
- 7.62. Dartford Council is in the process of updated its development plan in the production of the Development Policies Plan. Following an Examination in Public by a Planning Inspector in 2016, public consultation on the Proposed Modifications concluded in February 2017. The Council has stated it anticipates potential adoption of the Plan at July's meeting of the General Assembly of Council (full council). Policy DP8 has undergone minor modification but no significant changes made. The policy states that dwellings should meet the nationally described space standards 'unless clearly

shown to be unnecessary or unviable due to site specific circumstances'. To clarify application of this policy, amendments have been made to paragraph 9.45 of the Plan. It identifies the vital role of EDC in delivering new residential development and sets out that it is regarded appropriate 'for exemplar development to be sought at Ebbsfleet' and identifying EDC's consideration that 'sufficient internal space in dwellings is an essential prerequisite necessary to providing quality sustainable housing in all the new communities being created at the Ebbsfleet area'.

- 7.63. The applicant has provided a matrix of dwelling sizes relative to the NDSS on drawings BRS.6001_06P. The matrix confirms that all units comply with the minimum gross internal floor areas. It is noted two of the housetypes are fall under on the built-in storage by 0.5m² and 0.2m² but in general storage is generally in excess of the standards for storage.

Housing Mix

- 7.64. Core Strategy policy CS18 aims to keep the proportion of houses to flats at an approximate ratio of 70:30. However, it should be noted that the specified mix is not an express requirement. The application provides 1- and 2-bed apartments and 2-, 3- and 4-bed houses. The overall mix would comprise 15% flats. It is acknowledged the ratio is high but it is envisaged that over the development of Eastern Quarry, this will continue to be monitored and will be adjusted. There are no specific requirements for housing mix set out in the outline permission or S106 and as such it is not considered grounds for refusal.

Affordable Housing

- 7.65. The scheme does not provide any affordable housing. Adequate parcels have already been identified by the landowner which has been secured in the AMP-Code to bring forward the appropriate number of affordable homes as required by the outline permission and S106.

Noise

- 7.66. Condition 28 of the outline consent states that a detailed noise assessment be submitted alongside a reserved matters proposal where development abuts a principal highway and detail any mitigation measures required to safeguard residential amenity. A noise assessment has been submitted with the application and concerns raised by Environmental Health at Dartford Borough Council that the daytime noise levels of external amenity areas exceeds the desirable levels and no mitigation measures have been offered to address this. A recommendation has therefore been made that mitigation details should be provided to ensure reduced noise levels within the external amenity areas. As such, they consider the application in its current form the proposal is unacceptable.
- 7.67. The applicant responded to these comments with a statement saying the dwellings fronting the principal highway of Main Street are proposed to include acoustic mitigation measures within the fabric of the dwellings (though no details of such provided) but due to the gaps between buildings, the noise levels in the rear gardens of some properties are predicted to exceed the 50dB LAeq (being predicted to be 50-53dB). The statement then argues there is flexibility in emerging policy and that the development falls within British Standards and the principles of the EQ Environmental Statement on the Future Mitigation Strategy.
- 7.68. Environmental Health was re-consulted but maintains that the British Standards cited by the applicant require noise exposure to external amenity space to be minimised by design and therefore the requirements of BS8233:2014 has not been met. They

identify that a noise exposure in amenity space should be no more than 50 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ but we will accept a level of up to 55 dB $L_{Aeq,T}$ if all reasonable measures by design and mitigation have been considered. Since no possible mitigation measures have been offered, they consider that the application does not meet the relevant tests.

- 7.69. It is noted that the data contained with the submitted noise report is very high level. It gives some indication of noise levels from Main Street reaching up to 53dB on the southern side but the detailed layout of this application has not been mapped. It is therefore not understood what impact the detailed design of the proposal has. At present, it is not considered that sufficient information has been provided. The applicant has been advised and is working to provide more thorough information and detail mitigation measures in order to try and improve anticipated noise levels at the site. Dialogue is ongoing with the applicant and any further details will be reported as supplementary information and any conditions recommended as necessary.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 7.70. The application site is brownfield land that is currently part of a large re-development site, parts of which are already under construction with ground preparation works being carried out in anticipation of previously approved schemes. There are no immediately adjoining residential neighbours, the closest being those in the first phase of Castle Hill. There is an established works entrance which does not interfere with the existing residential development and there would be no issues arising with the organisation of works compound or storage of materials on site that would cause a disturbance to local amenity. A Code of Construction Practice has previously been secured under condition 36 of the outline permission with which the developer is required to comply with. As such, it is not considered necessary to impose further conditions in relation to construction practices.

Other Issues:

EIA

- 7.71. The outline permission was identified as being EIA development and the requisite assessments made. It follows that subsequent application made pursuant to the outline permission, including Reserved Matters such as this application are also in respect of EIA. However, it is officers opinion that all matters pursuant to EIA in respect of EQ have been satisfactorily identified and assessed as part of the outline permission application process and a further Environmental Statement is therefore not required as a result of this application.

Archaeology

- 7.72. Condition 26 of the outline permission requires that details of foundations are provided with any detailed application to ensure that no harm is caused to any archaeological interest. Investigation of archaeological potential at Eastern Quarry has already been examined in association with conditions 13 and 14 of the outline permission and the Historic Environment Framework which was approved under the outline permission. This Framework identifies the application site is located within an area of 19th/20th century quarrying which was excavated to significant depths. It therefore concludes that there is no potential for re-deposited or undisturbed Palaeolithic remains or any potential for remains of other periods. Since this has already been identified by approved documents pursuant to the outline permission and groundworks have already been carried out at the site, it is not considered necessary that foundation designs are required since no harm would arise,

particularly at that depth. It is therefore considered condition 26 is *ultra vires* in this instance and foundation designs have not been requested.

Drainage

- 7.73. An overall strategy for water management has been secured under the requirements of condition 12 of the outline permission which includes details of surface and foul water drainage and ground water control. While this covers the strategic approach to water treatment, details are not yet developed at site detail. These details are also required to ensure that they do not conflict with the landscape proposals and planting. It is therefore proposed these details be secured by condition. This has been confirmed with the Sustainable Drainage Team Leader at KCC.

Broadband Access

- 7.74. Details have been submitted with the application to confirm that, in accordance with condition 30 of the outline permission, broadband access will be available in all dwellings on first occupation. The applicant has confirmed that the installation will be in accordance with Utilities Framework currently under consideration pursuant to condition 16 of the outline permission (or any other subsequent amendments that may be made to the strategy). It is considered these details are satisfactory to form the action plan required by condition 30 of the outline permission to accompany this application.

Condition 25 – Outstanding Issues

- 7.75. The majority of matters listed in condition 25 of the outline permission have been addressed in the submission of the application. There are outstanding details that need to be secured in relation to part (d) street lighting and street furniture and part (h) external lighting (to buildings). Where detail has been indicated in the application, this is indicative only and does not provide the necessary level of detail to satisfy the condition. The particular design of these items, together with the specific materials for the hard landscaping and outstanding boundary treatments can be secured by condition.

8.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. Whilst this is not material to the decision, financial benefits will accrue to the area if permission is granted. The Government wishes to ensure that the decision making process for major applications is as transparent as possible, so that local communities are more aware of the financial benefits that development can bring to their area. In this area the following benefits to the public purse accrue from development - New Homes Bonus and Council Tax for new dwellings.

9.0 HUMAN RIGHTS

- 9.1. The application has been considered in the light of the Human Rights Act 1998 and it is considered that the analysis of the issues in this case, as set out in this report and recommendation below, is compatible with the Act.

10.0 PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY

- 10.1. In determining this application, regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular with regard to the need to –

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

10.2. It is considered that the application proposals would not conflict with objectives of the Duty.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

11.1. The principal of the development accords with the framework for the Eastern Quarry outline permission which will not undermine the principles to be achieved across the site as a whole as set out in the outline consent. It is considered the proposal complies with the guidelines for development and design parameters set out in the approved AMP/Code document for Castle Hill South. The proposal represents a high quality development where the applicant has worked closely with the EDC to put forward a well-thought-out scheme which would provide a safe and attractive living environment for future residents to provide a safe and attractive living environment for future residents, in keeping with Garden City principles. The application is therefore recommended for approval.