

Reference: EDC/17/0067

Agenda Item: 005

Site Address: Castle Hill Neighbourhood Area
Eastern Quarry
Watling Street
Swanscombe
Kent, DA10 0EX

Proposal: Reserved matters application (details relating to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of a mixed use building comprising 10 townhouses, 46 apartments, up to 911m² of retail floorspace (A1, A2, A3, A5) and associated car parking, circulation space, landscaping, infrastructure, earthworks and Broadband Action Plan, pursuant to conditions 2, 25, 28 and 30 of outline application DA/12/01451/EQVAR.

Applicant: Newcrest Ebbsfleet Ltd & Land Securities Eastern Quarry

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 under planning application reference DA/12/01451/EQVAR 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. The initial phases for Castle Hill have already been determined. Phase 1 is complete and occupied and construction is underway for Phases 2 and 3B, with preparatory work for Phase 3A together with a primary school and community centre due to open September 2017.

The principle of development, layout of the major spine roads through Eastern Quarry and access into the site have already been secured by the outline permission and subsequent infrastructure applications. The purpose of this application is to provide further detail for matters reserved at outline stage in respect of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

This application seeks permission for all reserved matters for the erection of 56 residential units consisting 10 three-bed townhouses and 46 one- and two-bedroom apartments, together with 921.1m² GEA of commercial floor space, located on the ground floor of the apartment blocks comprising a convenience store and smaller units for non-food retail, small businesses, café and hot food take-away (Use Classes A1, A2, A3 and A5). The application presents a major development in the heart of Castle Hill, contribution to the creation of the village centre to provide services to the local residents.

Excellent design quality has been achieved through high quality architectural detailing. The external appearance of the buildings is contemporary and striking and provides a landmark to the village square, in accordance with the parameters set out in the approved AMP and Design Code. A successful legible layout has been achieved in a highly constrained site. Access within the site is legible and has a strong layout in a perimeter block layout with good cycle and pedestrian links to and through the site.

All apartments are designed to meet Category 2 of the Building Regulations 'Approved Document M: Access to and use of Buildings' standard with 4 of the units meeting Category 3 for wheelchair adaptability and each unit has adequate private amenity space. While the townhouses fall slightly short of the standards they present a very high quality layout that will be an asset to the housing quality of the village centre.

The level of parking for the residential accommodation falls slightly short of Dartford standards by 4 for residential, 3 for vans and 2 for visitor. However, there is flexibility in the use of spaces where they have not been allocated and additional provision is available in the village square. Furthermore, the properties would be located in a highly sustainable location within Castle Hill village centre, directly adjacent to Fastrack and the local village shops and services. Sufficient provision to accommodate commercial parking has been made available within the village square parking area secured under the consent for the school and community centre.

Considerable improvements have been made to the scheme since the initial proposals. The applicant has worked closely with the EDC to put forward a carefully considered scheme which would provide a safe and attractive living environment and essential services for future residents in keeping with Garden City principles.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval subject to:

The applicant entering into a Unilateral Undertaking for a financial contribution to the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS)

And 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:

- 10-20 Rev C: Site Plan
- 10-10 Rev A: Site Location Plan
- 10-11 Rev A: Boundary Line
- 10-02: Proposed Topographical Levels Plan

Floor Plans

- 11-00 Rev E: Ground Floor
- 11-01 Rev D: 1st Floor
- 11-02 Rev D: 2nd Floor
- 11-03 Rev D: 3rd Floor
- 11-04 Rev D: 4th Floor

11-R Rev D: Roof Plan
11-M: Mezzanine Floor
A/P-P11-10 Rev C: Townhouse
A/P-P11-11 Rev C: Corner Townhouse
A/P-P11-12 Rev C: 1 Bed Flats
A/P-P11-13 Rev C: 2 Bed Flats - Page 1
A/P-P11-14 Rev C: 2 Bed Flats - Page 2

Elevations

13-01 Rev B: Elevation 1 - North
13-02 Rev B: Elevation 2 - East
13-03 Rev B: Elevation 3 - South
13-04 Rev B: Elevation 4 - West
13-05 Rev B: Elevation 5 -East 2
13-06 Rev B: Elevation 6 - North 2
13-07 Rev B: Elevation 7 - South 2
A/P-P13-08: Long Elevations

Details

A/P-P11-15: Signage
A/T-P14-03: Detail - Typical Wall Plan (Apartment)

Landscape Plans

L1 Rev F: General Arrangement and Soft Landscape Plan

Lighting

M363/17/12 P1B Site Plan External Lighting

Reports:

Planning Statement – DLA, May 2017
Design & Access Statement – Barton Willmore, April 2017
Construction Management Plan: Logistics & Methodology - Simons
Vegetation for Extensive & Biodiverse Green Roofs - Bauder
Sustainability Statement – PBA, Ref: 41063 Rev 3, May 2017
Broadband Access Report – CSA, 2 May 2017
BREEAM Pre-Assessment – Waterstone Design, April 2017
Acoustic Consultancy Report, Noise Assessment – LCP, 74722/3/3/3, 16 May 2017
NPPF: Framework Travel Plan – Enzygo, SHF.1164.003.TR.R.001A, May 2017
Castle Hill Commercial Centre Car Parking Statement – WSP, May 2017
Technical Note: Van Parking Surveys – WSP, July 2017 Issue No. 1

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

Prior to Commencement of Development

3. In accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan, no construction shall commence until the access road and turning head into the site (subject of planning application reference EDC/17/0064) has been laid and provided to accommodate construction traffic.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and suitable construction practices.

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.

Prior to Development above Foundation

5. Notwithstanding the approved plans set out in condition 2 above, no development above foundation level shall take place until full details and samples have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the following:
- a) External surfaces of all dwellings and associated storage structures;
 - b) Hard surfacing materials to be used in the external finishes of all roads, footpaths and the delivery bay on the North-South Boulevard;
 - c) Boundary treatments;
 - d) Gated entrances including access ways from the Fastrack corridor and details of any proposed associated security measures;
 - e) Feature brickwork and feature lighting;
 - f) Privacy screens to balconies

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.

6. Notwithstanding the approved plans set out in condition 2 above, no development above foundation level shall take place until a detailed landscaping scheme, which broadly accords with the details in the landscaping plan scheme submitted with the application, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include an enhanced specification for the trees to the parking courtyard, ornamental planting which is shade tolerant, a section drawing of the planter to the front elevation of the townhouses, tree pit details and details of trees in relation to street lighting, together with a detailed planting schedule and maintenance programme. The details shall accord with the approved landscaping documents submitted with the application and the development carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development

Prior to First Occupation

7. The dwellings hereby approved shall not be occupied, until the area shown on the submitted layout as vehicle parking spaces has been provided, surfaced and drained and shall be maintained as allocated/unallocated as identified on the approved plans. 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) (England) 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.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to encourage the use of sustainable

modes of transport in accordance.

8. No commercial unit hereby approved shall be occupied until a Management Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include a methodology for the reservation of the commercial delivery bay, a strategy for the management of deliveries for each of the units including hours of delivery and take into consideration refuse collection. The development will be carried out in accordance with the approved details. A report demonstrating compliance with the approved strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority 6 months after the first opening of any of the commercial units to the public and an annual report provided thereafter. Where the report shows the operation of the units does not comply with the approved Management Strategy, necessary measures shall be carried out during the next review period.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and efficient management of the site.

9. No property or commercial unit hereby approved shall be occupied, until the approved cycle parking and bin store to which it relates 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) (England) 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).

Other

10. Within 3 months of the first occupation of any commercial unit hereby approved, details of measures that have been implemented to alleviate parking demand and encourage sustainable travel to and from the site, as set out in the approved Travel Plan submitted with the application, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning for review, together with the outcomes of these measures including staff travel patterns. Any further measures agreed shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details. A monitoring and review report shall be submitted annually thereafter for a period of 5 years.

Reason: To relieve demand on parking and encourage sustainable travel methods.

11. Units 2-5 shall fall within Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A5 and shall not be used for any other use, whether permitted or not, falling within the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). No more than one unit shall operate as Class A3 or A5 at any one time, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate mix of uses on the site.

12. The opening hours of the commercial units hereby permitted shall be limited to 7am to 11pm Monday to Sunday including Bank Holidays and shall not be open for business outside these hours.

Reason: In the interests of neighbouring amenity.

13. All flats secured in the development hereby approved shall comply with Part M4(2) - Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings of the Building Regulations 2010 unless otherwise agreed in writing, with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To secure a high quality of design.

14. Prior to installation of any plant or equipment required for the extraction and treatment of cooking fumes, including details for the control of noise and vibration from the system and details of any external flue, shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall accord with BS4142:2014 and shall have regard to the approved noise assessment submitted with this application. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development is brought into use and thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved details. No cooking of food shall take place unless the approved extraction system is being operated.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the occupants.

Informatives

1. The applicant is advised that in accordance with the approved plans and S106 obligations, the use of the Unit 1 shall be limited to a convenience store (Use Class A1) and, in accordance with condition 49 of the outline consent 12/01451/EQVAR, must be used only for the sale of predominantly convenience goods for a period of 10 (ten) years from the date of Completion of the Unit, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.
2. The applicant is reminded in accordance with condition 51 of the outline consent 12/01451/EQVAR that, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA, the floorspace designated as comparison goods retail floorspace shall be used only for the sale of comparison goods for a period of 10 (ten) years from the date of Completion of each of the relevant unit(s).
3. The applicant is advised in connection with condition 6b) above that the surface materials to the delivery bay should be in a matching colour to the adjacent footpath.
4. 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.
5. In connection with condition 6 above, it is recommended *Alchemilla mollis* is avoided.
6. Any signage to be erected at the site will require separate advertisement consent.
7. 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.
8. 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 provided

- 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) strategic 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 Lane 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. The approved masterplan for EQ takes the form of three connected villages. The first village to come forward is 'Castle Hill' at the eastern end of EQ. Phase 1 of Castle Hill consisting of 150 dwellings to the northwest of the application site has 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 with some occupations. 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 with construction work due to start this month. The remaining parcels of Phase 3a for 42 affordable housing units were granted at the 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. Construction is progressing well and is on schedule for opening in September 2017.
- 1.3. Construction of infrastructure in Castle Hill is also underway including principal roads and 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 complete and open and works are progressing for the Village Green to the south-eastern corner of Phase 3A, together with a roundabout at the entrance to EQ off Southfleet Road. The final phases of development to the south to complete Castle Hill have been in discussion and detailed planning applications are expected over the next few months.

Site

- 1.4. The application site is a regular shaped parcel of land covering 0.46ha. Being a former chalk quarry, the development platform within EQ is considerably lower than the surrounding land and chalk cliffs line the wider site perimeter. Consequently, the topography across EQ slopes significantly and land at the drops approximately 3.5m from the northwest to southeast corner. The site is situated at the heart of Castle Hill in the village centre. Two major roads boarder the site with the Fastrack corridor to the north and North-South spine road to the west. The primary school / community

centre and village square site currently under construction is located to the south and to the east a parcel of land currently under consideration for 68 affordable housing units (EDC/17/0064).

Proposal

- 1.5. This application seeks approval for reserved matters pursuant to the original outline permission for Eastern Quarry under condition 2 of DA/12/01451/EQVAR. The reserved matters relate to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for a mixed use development comprising 56 residential units and 921.1m² GEA of commercial space. The commercial floors space is located on the ground floor and split into 5 separate units comprising a retail units of 424m² for retail (Class A1) as a convenience store and 4 smaller units between 95 – 150.8m² for uses falling within Classes A1/A2/A3/A5 (retail/financial & professional services/restaurants & cafes/hot food take-away). Directly above the commercial units, the building rises over 4 additional floors to provide 46 flats (9 x 1-bed; 37 x 2-bed). Along the Fastrack elevation, 10 x 3-storey townhouses (3-bed) are proposed. The overall density is approximately 122dph. The proposal includes a private parking area within a courtyard area to the centre of the buildings and associated landscaping.
- 1.6. 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
 - h) External lighting (to buildings car parks etc.)
 - j) Cycle Parking
 - l) Signage
- 1.7. The schedule of open space required by part g) of condition 25 is accommodated in this area of Castle Hill by the adjacent Village Green immediately to the west and is currently under construction by the landowner. Details relating to part i) public art; k) television receivers; and m) layout of community buildings are not relevant to this application.
- 1.8. 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.
- 1.9. The application is supported by several documents and plans:
 - Planning Statement (incorporating Economic, Retail, Employment and Affordable Housing Statement)
 - Design and Access Statement (including movement and refuse plans)
 - Framework Travel Plan
 - Car Parking Statement
 - BREEAM Pre-Assessment
 - Sustainability Statement

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Construction Management Plan
- Noise Assessment
- Broadband Action Plan
- Plans:
 - Site Location Boundary
 - Site Plan
 - Existing & Proposed Topography
 - Floor Plans and Elevations (including Parking Plan)
 - Landscape GA Plan
 - External Lighting
- Swept Path Analysis
- Cross Sections

1.11 Materials brick 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 for Castle Hill was originally approved in March 2008 (DA/07/01326/EQCHC). Following approval of the subsequent S73 application for EQ in 2013, Castle Hill was sub-divided into 3 parcels for the purposes of the AMP (Castle Hill Central/Castle Hill East/Castle Hill South). The AMP for Castle Hill Central, in which this application site is located, was granted in October 2014 (DA/14/00584/EQCHC). For the most part, the area is designed to be low to medium density residential development punctuated with village green and neighbourhood greens, with higher density along the Fastrack public transport corridor which runs through the middle of the area, with mixed use high density, public square and primary school to the southeastern corner.

2.6. The Design Code for this site which covers the heart of Castle Hill including the village centre school, community centre commercial floorspace and residential was approved in 2016. The Code identifies design principles for a contemporary interpretation to a traditional Kent village approach together with the methodology for approaching the public realm in the village square.

3.0 PUBLICITY

3.1. Site notice. Expiry date 03.08.17.

3.2. Press notice. Expiry date 03.08.17.

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

4.1. One letter received from Bean Residents Association raising comments in relation to the extent of publicity for the applicant's public consultation event and the level of parking, with information relating to the parking of vans in Bean during the weekend to demonstrate demand for parking provision.

EDC Officers Response: It is considered the Public Consultation event was carried out in accordance with Dartford's Statement of Community Involvement. Level of parking provision is discussed in the appraisal section below.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
 Kent Highways
 KCC Lead Local Flood Authority
 Dartford Borough Council - Environmental Health
 Police Crime Prevention Officer

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

5.2.1. Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council:

Concerns raised in respect a lack of invitation to the public consultation event; ambiguous parking arrangement where no allocation identified; insufficient parking overall; requirements for disabled parking provision.

EDC Officer Response: The applicant has given assurance that a letter to the public consultation event was sent by post. Details of parking provision is discussed in the appraisal section below but it is noted that disabled parking spaces are proposed within the private courtyard are and additional provision has already been secured for the village square in a precious consent.

5.2.2. Kent Highways:

A number of comments relating to the following:

- Parking provision is below Dartford's standards;
- Clarification on provision of commercial parking in the village square;
- Questions validity of data used in the submitted Parking Statement in relation to vans;
- Servicing arrangements for commercial units in relation to crossing the footpath for deliveries is awkward;
- Pinch-point in the footpath that would be below recommended standard;
- Drag distances for refuse collection in the private car park are excessive;
- Balconies that overhang a footpath will require an oversailing licence from KCC;
- Details of wheel washing and banksman supervision should be incorporated into the Construction Management Plan.

EDC Officer Comments: It has been clarified that commercial parking provision has been secured in the village square car park and parking provision including evidence base and servicing arrangements is discussed in the appraisal section below. Amended plans have been received removing the bay causing the pinch point in the footpath. Drag distances for refuse has been discussed and a tracking plan is expected from the applicant. Problems with overhanging balconies over adopted footpaths has been discussed with the applicant but is outside the remit of this application. The construction management safeguards are standard procedure. Wheel washing is included within the Code of Construction Practice secured under condition 36 of the outline permission. A revised Code is currently undergoing consideration and securing of a banksman can be considered under this separate application.

5.2.3. KCC Lead Local Flood Authority:

Surface water provision has been indicated within the Design and Access Statement to be incorporated within the wider Easter Quarry strategy. It is unfortunate that there appears no consideration of other treatments within the parking areas given the extent of hard paved surfaces over the entirety of the site

Advise that consultation would be expected with KCC with regards to the detailed surface water design for the site particularly with regards to ensuring that the volumes quoted within the Surface Water Drainage Scheme Design undertaken by Arup in 2009 for the relevant catchment area is complied with.

EDC Officer Response: It is acknowledged surface water treatment regulations have been introduced since outline permission was secured at EQ and through discussions with KCC, it is understood the broad water treatment

strategy for Castle Hill is deemed acceptable. In light of parking standards there is limited scope for alternative methods in the car park. Detailed surface water design can be secured by condition to ensure the proposal complies with the approved strategy for Castle Hill. Condition 4 relates.

5.2.4. Dartford Borough Council - Environmental Health

Whilst the noise assessment appears comprehensive, as all plant and equipment have not been selected, the design limits set for both daytime and night time have not taken into account the potential intrusive characteristics of any plant. A full BS4142:2014 should be undertaken, however this cannot be done reliably without narrow band information that isn't available at this time. This element could be undertaken at a later date if suitable provision is made for attenuation should it be required.

EDC Officer Response: Condition 14 relates.

5.2.5. Police Crime Prevention Officer:

Confirm consultation has been undertaken with the applicant in regard to Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) for this application, as detailed in the Design and Access Statement. No additional comments to make.

6.0 **PLANNING POLICY**

6.1. National Policy & Guidance:

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

6.2. Development Plan:

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

CS1	-	Spatial Pattern of Development
CS4	-	Ebbsfleet to Stone Priority Area
CS5	-	Ebbsfleet Valley Strategic Site
CS7	-	Employment Land and Jobs
CS10	-	Housing Provision
CS11	-	Housing Delivery
CS15	-	Managing Transport Demand
CS17	-	Design of Homes
CS18	-	Housing Mix
CS23	-	Minimising Carbon Emissions
CS25	-	Water Management

6.2.2. Dartford Development Policies Plan Document (DDPP) (July 2017):

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

6.3. Other Guidance:

EDC Implementation Framework 2017
 Parking Standards SPD
 Kent Design Guide

7.0 **APPRAISAL**

- 7.1. The main issues to be considered in connection with this proposal are the principle of development, each of the Reserved Matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale), together with design quality, parking/highway matters, noise and neighbouring amenity and drainage. 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 Design Code.
- 7.2. Matters relating to contamination, archaeology and ecology, 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 DDPP supports housing development which provides for an appropriate range of housing stock and garden sizes and to achieve satisfactory quality of residential development. Delivery Theme 1 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework promotes the delivery of a wide range of homes and tenures for all life stages, that meet local aspirations including the affordable housing requirements as set out in relevant local planning policies.
- 7.4. At the heart of Government policy too is the support to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to create jobs and thriving local places, particularly through the promotion of mixed use development (paragraph 17). Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy states that support will be given to developers of mixed use sites at Eastern Quarry to encourage the phasing of jobs in line with, or in advance of, the delivery of homes. Delivery Theme 2 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework seeks to develop an enterprising economy, to facilitate the establishment and growth of new and existing businesses providing a mix of sustainable jobs accessible to local people that puts Ebbsfleet on the map as a successful business location.
- 7.5. 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 AMP and Castle Hill Central Neighbourhood Area

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. The relevant AMP for this area identifies this application site as a mixed use with high density residential development, forming part of the activity centre and heart of Castle Hill Village. The principle of the proposal therefore complies with the overall strategy established in the AMP.

- 7.6. In respect of convenience retail provision at the site, the S106 requires the Owner to have completed to shell and core and made available for sale and/or rent no less than 250m² GIA of convenience retail floors space prior to the first occupation of 500 dwellings. In addition, and slightly conversely, condition 49 of the outline permission requires that the AMP for Castle Hill village centre designates an area for convenience retail floorspace of no less than 200m² GIA (unless otherwise agreed). The condition goes on to state that unless otherwise agreed, the floorspace designated as convenience retail floorspace shall be used only for the sale of predominantly convenience goods for a period of 10 (ten) years from the date of Completion of each of the relevant unit(s).
- 7.7. The GIA of the proposed convenience retail unit is 400.2m² which meets both S106 and condition 49 requirements. At present, occupations fall around the 200 mark. Subject to permission, it is anticipated the retail element of the development will be complete and occupied by the end of 2018. In accordance with projected figures from the housebuilders, delivery of the convenience store will be in advance of the occupation trigger. Notwithstanding this, the landowner is contractually obliged to comply with the obligations of the S106 and ongoing monitoring of the site will ensure these are met. Since condition 49 secures the use of the proposed retail unit as a convenience store for a minimum of 10 years, it is not considered any further condition relating to its use is necessary to the current proposal but can be identified in an informative.
- 7.8. Similarly, the S106 requires a minimum of 200m² GIA of comparison goods floorspace to be available within each local centre prior to the first occupation of 750 dwellings within that Village (or such other stage of the Development as may be agreed). Condition 50 of the outline permission requires that no unit shall exceed 200m² GIA and condition 51 requires a minimum provision of 300m² GIA of comparison goods retail floorspace (in contrast to the 200m² required by the S106) which shall be used only for the sale of comparison goods for a period of 10 (ten) years from the date of Completion of each of the relevant unit(s).
- 7.9. The proposed development includes 456.1m² GIA across 4 units in addition to the convenience retail unit. The largest proposed unit measures 137.7m² GIA. The amount of floorspace to be provided accords with the requirements of the S106 and conditions, although the application seeks initial flexibility within the Class A Use Classes (A1/A2/A3/A5) to allow for the appropriate mix of occupiers to be determined in due course.
- 7.10. The economic benefits of the proposal will have been considered at outline stage. However, the applicant states the convenience store is likely to generate approximately 20 FTE jobs and while the use of the remaining units is sought to be flexible, it is anticipated at least 4-5 jobs would be generated per unit totalling a further 16-20 jobs. The sizes of the proposed units are considered appropriate to the village centre to support small businesses to provide local shops and services to nearby residents.

- 7.11. The principle of this development fits within the established vision and reflects 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 a mixed use development in this location has already been established by the outline planning permission and supporting documents and the quantum of commercial development accords with this principle and the requirements as set out in the S106 and accords with Delivery Themes 1 and 3 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

Reserved Matters

○ ***Access & Layout:***

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).

- 7.12. Consideration in respect of layout 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

- 7.13. Paragraphs 29 and 30 of the NPPF favour sustainable transport modes and solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion. The use of sustainable means of transport and provision of the Fastrack bus route is set out in policy CS15 of the Core Strategy to minimise car use and make effective and sustainable use of the transport network. Policy DP3 of the DDPP requires development to be appropriately located to minimise and manage arising transport impacts. Policy DP4 of the DDPP requires that the layout should promote walking and cycling and public transport use through provision of attractive and safe routes which address the needs of users. 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.
- 7.14. The NPPF encourages the provision of safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians and avoiding street clutter (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 DDPP. 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) seeks development to provide permeability through clear pedestrian and cycle linkages, 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. Delivery Theme 1 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework seeks to ensure that the design of new neighbourhoods follows good urban design principles to deliver, attractive, safe and efficient layouts that contribute positively toward an appropriate character for Ebbsfleet.

Site Arrangement

- 7.15. The principal routes and junctions through EQ and the spine roads that surround the application site have already been approved at the outline stage and advance infrastructure applications. The application site is on the corner of two major spine roads through Castle Hill and is in a highly sustainable location in the heart of the village.
- 7.16. The Design Code details proposed movement network for the site and indicative position of buildings. In relation to the application site, it shows two distinct buildings with a pedestrian route running from Fastrack, in between the buildings and into the village square in a north-south direction to promote pedestrian movement, creating 'retail mews' with active frontages and extend the public realm from the village square. In addition, a 'retail arrival area' is identified to the north of the buildings adjacent to Fastrack, offering an opportunity for active retail frontages on two sides along with the potential for a public art installation and potentially a bike rental service (similar to the Santander Cycles scheme).
- 7.17. Initial designs for the application followed the layout as proposed in the Design Code and several possible layouts were explored. In each case, however, problems were identified. Due to the size of the site, sloping topography and provision of services to the commercial units, the design could not accommodate active frontages to Fastrack and the North-South Boulevard as well as the proposed pedestrian route through the middle. There were also significant access issues that resulted in unsightly zig-zag ramps in the retail arrival area which was not considered a good use of space. Consequently, this area did not serve a particular function, being surplus to the village square and did not create the sense of enclosure that is required for this site.
- 7.18. The entire approach to the layout was re-examined and re-designed with a perimeter block layout, omitting the retail arrival area and with a parking area in the middle. This allowed the active frontages to be maximised and created a continuous frontage along north, west and southern edges addressing public spaces and creating an appropriate level of enclosure. It is acknowledged that this conflicts with the Design Code. However, attempts were made to conform with the Code and it is considered a much better design has been achieved in the layout and does still allow for a pedestrian-friendly environment that provides accessible routes to all key public and commercial facilities, which was the intention of the Design Code.
- 7.19. The layout of the site has also been influenced by reported ground conditions. It is understood detailed site investigations have been carried out which identify made ground at the site consisting of sand/silt/clay up to a depth of 29.5m to 33.7m overlying structureless chalk. The applicant claims that tall buildings would require deep piling to support them which would come with significant cost implications impacting on viability. A row of 10 x 3-storey townhouses is therefore proposed along this edge. While this argument has not been tested, it is considered that this layout is acceptable. The building line and enclosure are appropriate to the Fastrack corridor and the housetype consistent with other townhouses which have already been granted permission along Fastrack.
- 7.20. As a result of the perimeter block layout, a pinch point was created along the North-South Boulevard between the proposed building and a parking bay that had been identified in earlier advanced infrastructure permissions for the roads. It is likely that this area is likely to be very busy, especially during peak times, being located in the village centre, close to the school, community centre and local shops/services. In accordance with best practice in the Kent Design Guide, it is considered the footpath should be as wide as possible, particularly since the layout no longer accommodates a separate pedestrian route through the middle of the site. It was therefore strongly

recommended that this parking bay should be removed. Problems had also been identified with its proximity so close to the crossroads. Sufficient parking provision is located in the village square such that the loss of one bay would not cause demonstrable harm. This has now been removed from the plans.

- 7.21. The layout is clear and legible. The building line is tight up to the public realm and provides a good sense of enclosure. Accesses to/from the residential and commercial units are obvious and visible. Two private routes have been provided through the site from the Fastrack corridor with a third identified on the plans as open for the public. It is considered there may be safety issues with this so a condition is recommended to control the details. A public route is provided from the village square to link with the adjacent affordable housing site which is coming forward as a separate application (EDC/17/0064). Several routes are therefore provided for pedestrians through and around the site to connect with the wider highway network and sustainable transport options. All properties are orientated to address the streetscene and overlook parking areas to provide active frontages and natural surveillance.
- 7.22. Development should contribute to the accommodation requirements of residents with restricted mobility, or as they age. Condition 31 of the outline consent for Eastern Quarry states that unless otherwise agreed in writing, 25% of all dwellings on the site shall meet the Lifetime Homes requirements. Subsequent to the requirement of the outline permission, the Code for Sustainable Homes has now been withdrawn. Requirements for accessibility is now assessed in relation to Building Regulations Part M. Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy requires developments to demonstrate they are providing the maximum practical proportion of homes built to Lifetime Home standards. Policy DP8 of the DDPP states that accessible/adaptable accommodation should be maximised on each site and 'proposals to construct new dwellings that do not include any Category M4(2) units for accessible and adaptable dwellings - or Category M4(3) units for wheelchair adaptable dwellings - within each housing tenure should provide a robust justification, otherwise permission will not normally be granted'.
- 7.23. In the proposed scheme, it was identified that the southern block of flats contained no lift. The applicant has amended the scheme and a lift has now been added. The applicant confirms all apartments are now compliant with Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 for accessible and adaptable homes. The applicant states that due to the size of the ground floor WCs and ground floor level changes resulting from the sloping topography and ground conditions, the townhouses do not meet Category 2. A total of 82% of the proposed accommodation will meet the standards required by policy. In addition, the applicant identifies that 4 flats in the western block are wheelchair adaptable units M4(3) standards. Furthermore, all commercial units will have level access. It is unfortunate the townhouses do not meet Category 2 but it is acknowledged the proposal meets with the 25% required by the outline consent for EQ. The level of accessibility across the site is generally acceptable and, on balance, it is not considered that the accessibility level of the townhouses is sufficiently harmful to the scheme to withhold planning permission and the delivery of a high quality scheme. It is proposed a condition is added to secure the accessibility levels for the flats.
- ***Form / Design – including matters of Appearance & Scale:***
- 7.24. 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.

- 7.25. Consideration of scale relates to the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings.

Policy

- 7.26. The NPPF sets out the importance of 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). 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'. Policy DP2 of the DDPP 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. 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

- 7.27. Matters of scale are intrinsically linked to good design quality as set out in NPPF Paragraph 58 and policy DP2 of the DDPP, 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. Furthermore, policy DP7 of the DDPP requires that development should maintain and provide for an appropriate range of housing stock and garden sizes, retention or enhancement of the character, local environment and amenity of established residential areas, and achieve satisfactory quality of residential development. Policy CS17 of Dartford Borough Council's Core Strategy 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.

Design Quality

- 7.28. The application site is identified in the AMP as falling within an area of high density between 75-178dph. It requires building heights to be up to 6 storeys and identifies this site as a landmark location. Roughly calculated across the site, the density for this development is 122dph which complies with the parameters. The AMP identifies that building heights will vary within each density zone, reflecting their function and position within the space hierarchy and the character of the place intended, for example, landmark buildings may be distinguishable by greater vertical emphasis. All building heights comply with AMP requirements. The proposed townhouses fronting Fastrack are 3-storey, in keeping with the height and scale of other previously approved townhouses along this corridor. The commercial/apartment blocks are 4-5 storeys, and although there is a single storey section along the south elevation fronting the village square, this is considered a design feature and not representative of the overall height. The proposal responds to the changing levels at the site and complies with the parameters set out in the AMP. The proposal has a rectilinear form, divided into distinctive blocks through the use of different materials and design features. It therefore has a prominent form and substantial mass. The increase in height and mass between the townhouses and the commercial/apartment blocks helps to promote legibility and provides a point of reference for the commercial

units. The distinctive appearance, prominent height and form provide a point of reference as a landmark at the heart of Castle Hill.

- 7.29. The Design Code does not specify a particular architectural style and treatment to be followed, but guides the design of residential development in this central area to incorporate a mix of traditional and contemporary features. The Code identifies the opportunity offered by the Fastrack corridor to provide a more urban typology, whilst requiring that all architectural forms respond to the adjacent vernacular feel and palette of the Kent Village aesthetic adopted within the early phase of Castle Hill. Architectural themes that make 21st century references to Georgian or Edwardian town housing is encouraged through terraces and semi-detached units in relation to frontage typology.
- 7.30. The scheme has undergone considerable changes in the external appearance as the applicant has addressed problems arising from limited active frontages and undesirable architectural detailing of the original designs. Significant improvements have been made and the proposal now presents a very high quality bespoke design. The scheme follows a contemporary architectural design with clean lines which complements the modern design of the adjacent school/community centre. The townhouses are flat-roofed terraces with recessed facades to the front and integral second floor balconies to the rear. In accordance with the Design Code, the units are of an urban style and make references to Georgian townhousing though their vertical proportions and repetition. Different brick types and parapet heights are used to the commercial/apartment elements to help to break up the length of the elevation into smaller blocks. Two balcony types in either glass or metal rail also create variation and interest. Large wrap-around balconies are used on the northwest corner to add prominence and contribute to the landmark status. The retail and apartment entrances at ground floor are treated with larger areas of glazing in a repetitive grid around the perimeter of the block to enliven the public realm and generate activity. The development is brick-led using a simple palette of 3 types of brick in a dark brown, buff and red to break up the mass of the blocks and highlight entrances. The same materials would be used across the site to create a common language. Varying feature brickwork is used around the site, such as hit and miss and protruding brickwork, to enliven frontages and create visual interest. Feature lighting is also proposed such as downlighters to soffits to the recessed residential entrances/lobbies, uplighting areas of protruding feature brickwork and hit and miss brickwork lit from behind. Deep window reveals add to the design quality and contemporary design. The provision of signage has been considered and detailed in the reveals of the shopfront to ensure fascia signs will sit comfortably within the fabric of the building. It is proposed the single storey element on the south elevation is covered with a green roof. These subtle detailing features are considered key to the high quality finish. While these features have been identified in the application documentation, some of the specific detailing has not been submitted and is therefore considered appropriate to secure by condition.
- 7.31. Design quality has also been reflected the design of internal spaces. The Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) were introduced by the Government in March 2015 as part of a revised approach to provide technical standards to drive the provision of quality housing throughout the country. Dartford's Core Strategy policy CS17 requires 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). Policy DP8 of the DDPP identifies that the design of new residential development will only be permitted where dwellings

meet Nationally Described Space Standards unless clearly shown to be unnecessary or unviable due to site specific circumstances. In particular reference to the Garden City, the DDPP sets out 'the EDC consider sufficient internal space in dwellings is an essential prerequisite necessary to provide quality sustainable housing in all the new communities being created in the Ebbsfleet area' (para. 9.45). In accordance with the expectations for design quality and exacting standards required in the Garden City, the proposal is in full compliance with the NDSS. Bedroom sizes across the development are generally well in excess of the NDSS and the townhouses in particular offer very generous storage areas. Each dwelling is provided with adequate private amenity space with gardens for the townhouses and balconies for the apartments. The accommodation is therefore considered very high quality. It has been identified that there is a long corridor that runs the length of the larger apartment block to the western edge of the site which would not benefit from a great deal of natural light and ventilation. It is acknowledged this is not a habitable area and the building has been designed in order that the residential units and living spaces benefit from the maximum amount of natural light and ventilation rather than transient circulation areas. The layout of the corridor is therefore considered acceptable in this instance.

Housing Mix

- 7.32. Policy CS18 of the local plan seeks to provide an appropriate spread of housing mix across developments, particularly in relation to houses and flats. The policy seeks to achieve an approximate ratio of houses to flats at 70:30 where developments under 100 homes to provide a majority of houses of 2 bedrooms or more. The ratio of houses to flats is heavily in favour of flats (82%). However, in order to achieve the higher density level required by the AMP and in light of the location of the site at the centre of the village, it is considered an appropriate provision of flats. Furthermore, the overall mix will be monitored and can be corrected accordingly as EQ develops

Affordable Housing

- 7.33. The scheme does not provide any affordable housing. Adequate parcels have already been identified by the landowner which has been secured in the AMP to bring forward the appropriate number of affordable homes as required by the outline permission and S106. It is understood any additional provision resulting from this current scheme has already been addressed and taken up in the remaining parcels of Castle Hill South which are due for submission this month.

○ **Landscaping:**

- 7.34. 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

- 7.35. 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 DDPP, which states that consideration will be given to how landscaping relates to neighbouring buildings. Delivery Theme 4 of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework emphasises bringing in the 'green' landscaping to promote healthy landscapes and encourage active lifestyles.

Planting

- 7.36. No open communal spaces are provided within the site. The Village Green and Linear Park will be in close proximity to the site and future residents, in accordance with the obligations across EQ. As such, there is no overriding need for this application to provide areas of public open space.
- 7.37. Opportunities for soft landscaping are extremely limited, notwithstanding the fact the scheme is largely part of a commercial area fronting the village square and the character of the space is hard landscaped, where other areas of green spaces are provided nearby. Details of some planting is identified within the parking area in the middle of the site together with some planters to the front of the townhouses. It is acknowledged the scheme would benefit from additional soft landscaping, particularly in the southeastern corner where the car park runs adjacent to the footpath. However, this space provides a turning head from the adjacent site and due to several challenges and constraints with the layout of the site and provision of an appropriate level of parking, it was not considered feasible in this instance. Instead, the applicant has addressed this matter by looking to increase the specification of the existing planting to provide larger or more mature tree species. No details have yet been submitted but will be reported as supplementary information or otherwise controlled by condition.
- 7.38. The EDC's landscape consultant considered that frontage planting should be extended in front of the apartments. It is proposed that feature lighting would be added here and is favoured over the planting, particularly where there would be landscaping along the road edge. It was identified that the proposed ornamental planting was not appropriate for shaded areas. The proposed species has been changed and is being considered by the landscape consultant. Some species have still been identified as inappropriate. Further details can be secured by condition.

Hard Landscaping

- 7.39. The landscape proposals are generally well designed and are in keeping with the approved Public Realm Strategy and consistent with earlier approvals for Castle Hill. Details within the proposal have been examined against the proposals for the perimeter of the site and adjacent highways and the scheme is consistent with these wider plans for the village square and footpaths. Details of the hard surface treatment of the delivery bay have been discussed and specific demarcation is yet to be agreed (discussed in the highway section below). In light of this, and to build in flexibility for the detailed design stage, it is considered the details should be controlled by condition.

Boundaries

- 7.40. The layout of the proposal as a perimeter block does not necessitate extensive boundary treatments. There is a limited amount to the parking courtyard to the rear of the properties consisting of brick walls to the rear of the townhouses to enclose the gardens. The gardens would be sub-divided by black stained fencing. The same fencing is also proposed to enclose the service areas serving the commercial units, also backing on to the parking courtyard. These areas are not in the public domain and fencing is therefore accepted. Where detailed designs have not been provided for these, they will be secured by condition.

Management

- 7.41. 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. Some details of planting strategy and landscape management have been provided but it is anticipated this will be updated where the planting specification is being reviewed. If necessary, this can be secured by condition.

Highways & Parking

Policy

- 7.42. The NPPF strongly advocates the use of sustainable transport. 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). The submission of Transport Assessment and Travel Plans is encouraged for all developments generating significant transport movements (paragraphs 32 and 36). In respect of the individual phases of development 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

- 7.43. The scheme provides a courtyard in the centre of the site to accommodate residential parking only providing spaces for cars and vans. No garages are provided. Under the previous permission for the village square in association with the school/community centre, consent was granted for a shared use parking area that accommodated spaces for the visitors to residential units. The following table sets out the residential parking requirements according to Dartford Borough Council's Parking SPD and the total number of spaces made available on site:

RESIDENTIAL			
Type	No. spaces provided	SPD Requirement	
Residential	67	<i>1 & 2-bed flats</i>	<i>(46 units x 1.2)</i> 55.2
		<i>3 bed house</i>	<i>(10 units x 1.5)</i> 15
		TOTAL	70.2
Visitor	15	<i>3 spaces per 10 homes</i>	16.8
Van	3	<i>1 space per 10 homes</i>	5.6
TOTAL	85		92.6

- 7.44. The Dartford Parking SPD states that 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. It is acknowledged that there is some flexibility in the Dartford parking standards, which state that 'an alternative level of provision may be considered on a site specific basis, where evidence to justify it on the circumstances of the specific case is provided. Where a lower standard of provision is proposed, a Travel Plan and/or Transport Impact Assessment/Transport Statement will need to demonstrate that the proposed provision would meet the demand for parking generated by the development'.

- 7.45. In respect of the residential units, total parking provision is under by 4 spaces, visitor (accommodated within the square) under by 2 spaces and vans under by 3 spaces. The scheme has undergone an extensive series of iterations to balance the appropriate layout and density against provision of parking.
- 7.46. A Travel Plan, Car Parking Statement and supplementary Van Parking Survey have been provided with the application. The Car Parking Statement seeks to justify provision based on average car ownership collected from census data. In relation to van parking, reference is made to the previous survey carried out for the adjacent site at Ebbsfleet Green where survey data was collected from Ratio (Slade Green), St Andrews Park (Halling), Waterstone Park (Dartford) and Springhead Park (Ebbsfleet) on Wednesday 13 July 2016 between 1900 and 2100 which counted vans outside marked bays. The supplementary Van Parking Survey takes data from Castle Hill and Ebbsfleet Green on Saturday 24 June 2017 between 1930 and 2000 which counted all vans on site. Both studies draw similar conclusions that vans are generally accommodated on plot and within standard sized parking bays together similar levels of indiscriminate on-street van parking despite the availability of a number of dedicated can bays within a few meters which were empty.
- 7.47. While the information submitted provides some insight to van parking, there are some weaknesses in the data provided. The comparable sites used to collect data are residential developments and do not appear to include mixed use and the length of time the survey was undertaken is also limited.
- 7.48. The initial submission did not make clear whether residential spaces were to be allocated or unallocated. The Dartford standards advocate a level of allocation, particularly for houses with unallocated parking preferred for flats. A revised parking layout has been submitted by the applicant which identified one space allocated to each townhouse directly to the rear of each plot, with the remainder left unallocated. This provides the level of allocation required by the standards while maintaining greater flexibility and makes use of different levels of ownership, including those households without vehicles.
- 7.49. The van parking spaces meet the larger bay sizes required by the standards. The unallocated spaces also allow for some flexibility for these spaces to be utilised by small transit-type vans. Although there may be some concerns for security, it is possible that provision for additional van parking can be accommodated overnight in the village square.
- 7.50. Notwithstanding the submitted reports, it is acknowledged the application site is in a highly sustainable location at the heart of Castle Hill, immediately accessible to local services and directly adjacent to the Fastrack route. The level of parking is therefore considered appropriate to the location and use of the site and there is sufficient flexibility in the available spaces that the deficit is not considered significant.
- 7.51. The village square parking area in front of the previously consented school/community centre accommodated parking for commercial units the subject of this application on a shared provision basis. The following table sets out the commercial parking requirements according to Dartford Borough Council's Parking SPD and the total number of spaces made available within the adjacent village square. The parking standards identify different parking provision for the commercial units based on the floor area of the proposed Use Class. Since only the convenience store is known at present (and must be provided in accordance with the requirement of the S106) and the applicant wishes to maintain flexibility for the Use Classes of the remaining units, the parameters for a worst case scenario has been used to calculate

the maximum possible number of spaces required by the standards, as explained below:

COMMERCIAL			
Type	No. spaces provided	SPD Requirement	
A1 Convenience (GIA)	24	1 space per 18m ²	22.2 (+1 x goods vehicle)
Other units (GIA) (A1, A2, A3, A5)	46	1 space per: 25m ² (A1) 20m ² (A2) 6m ² (A3) 10m ² (A5)	Worst Case: 48.7
TOTAL	70		70.9

- 7.52. Parking provision in the village square parking was based on the assumption that one unit of each Use Class A1, A2, A3 and A5 would come forward. Parking was then based on approximate estimations of the floor area of each unit. At this time, it is unknown what the use of each unit will be (with the exception of the convenience unit) and therefore gives rise to difficulties in calculating the number of required car spaces.
- 7.53. In accordance with the requirements of the S106, 200m² GIA must be made available for comparison goods. This amounts to two units falling within non-food retail Use Class A1. The combination of units 3 and 5 would provide the lowest combined amount of floorspace to meet the minimum requirement of 200m². The remainder of the units have been calculated on the highest demand for parking in accordance with Use Class A3. The total figure resulting from these worst case scenarios is 48.7 which is 3 spaces under the number actually provided.
- 7.54. In reality the smaller units would be likely to be occupied by the A3/A5 uses and the large floor space reserved for A1/A2, due to the nature of their use and amount of floorspace reasonably required for commercial viability. On this basis, taking a similar assumption to parking provision as made for the village square, parking demand would be in the region of 20 spaces, which would be 26 spaces under the provision that has been made. This would comfortably accommodate demand and staff parking. Furthermore, the standards also do not allow for linked trips and a Travel Plan has been submitted to encourage sustainable travel. It is anticipated, therefore, that parking demand would therefore be reduced further.
- 7.55. It is considered that the vitality of the village centre is dependent on a range of uses. In light of the small number of units proposed and the need to control parking levels, it is considered appropriate to condition the Use Class of the units to avoid saturation by a particular Use Class. Implementation and monitoring of the submitted Travel Plan can also be secured.
- 7.56. The consent granted for the village square required submission of a travel plan to regulate parking. An application has been submitted and is currently under consideration. The EDC is working with the applicant to ensure that short-term parking of up to 3hrs is maintained within the village square to avoid commuter traffic and help ensure the shared use of the spaces, as well as ensuring all-day staff

parking can be accommodated where required, and time limits do not apply late evening or overnight, enabling further flexibility for visitors and perhaps vans (as discussed above) for the residential element of the proposal. In light of the information, it is considered that a sufficient level of parking is available to accommodate the proposed commercial units

Servicing/Deliveries

- 7.57. The proposal includes provision of a delivery bay along the North-South Boulevard, directly adjacent to the proposed convenience store and retail units 3, 4 and 5 which front the road. It is proposed this will be for servicing only and will be reserved as such with no public parking allowed. It is not proposed that service vehicles would enter the village square parking area. The means of controlling deliveries has been identified by the applicant as being the responsibility of the individual operators at the site to ensure that deliveries are staggered and fall outside the busier times of day when children arrive/leave the school. Discussions are ongoing regarding the particular demarcation of the bay. The principal of control is considered acceptable a condition is recommended to ensure satisfactory details are secured.
- 7.58. Commercial bin stores are located to the west elevation and within the courtyard. If available, the refuse vehicle will be able to use the delivery bay. At present, the times of collection are unknown and are outside the control of this permission. Once, implemented, they can be taken into consideration as part of the delivery strategy to try and avoid refuse vehicles from stopping in the road. Collection of refuse to the dwellings will be to the rear. It is acknowledged the site is tight but tracking diagrams have been provided to show how refuse vehicles can manoeuvre in front of the stores.

Disabled Parking

- 7.59. The Dartford standards state that the assessment of parking areas in planning applications for residential will include consideration of the provision of spaces for people with impaired mobility. However, there are no minimum spaces that must be provided for Class C3 use (residential).
- 7.60. Two disabled parking spaces have already been secured in the village square and a further two are proposed within the parking area of the current scheme. It is considered this is an acceptable provision.

Cycle Storage

- 7.61. Cycle parking is to be provided within dedicated cycle stores on the ground floor of each apartment block. The stores are situated within the fabric of the building and are overlooked by surrounding units. Sufficient storage is available to accommodate the 46 cycle spaces required. Storage can be comfortably accommodated within the garden for each townhouse which can be accessed from the rear.
- 7.62. Provision has also been made for staff cycle parking within the parking courtyard to the rear of the commercial units and additional provision has been made within the village square for customer cycle parking. Based on calculations of 1 cycle space per 100m² in a worst case scenario, the standards require 8 spaces to be made available for customers and 5 available for staff. The proposal makes provision for 8 customer spaces and 10 staff which are provided within the site curtilage, in accordance with the standards. The level of parking is compliant with Dartford standards. Additional provision will also be made available outside the boundary of this site within the village square in association with the consent granted for the school/community centre.

Amenity

- 7.63. Consideration has been given to the relative distances between units and position of openings to limit overlooking. A distance of some 24m is maintained between the rear elevation of the houses and the apartments directly opposite to the south and 20m from the rear garden boundary. The position of windows to habitable rooms and balconies to the rear of the western wing of the proposal have been moved further southwards from initial drawings to provide a separation of 12m between the corner of the balcony and corner of the nearest garden which would be most affected. The angle of overlooking from the nearest habitable rooms into the windows of the townhouses would be too acute to result in direct overlooking and a reasonably satisfactory separation distance has been maintained from the closest balcony. In order to limit overlooking between balconies, privacy screens can be conditioned. This can assist with the reducing the perception of overlooking in to garden of the townhouses. The distance between windows across the single storey flat roof is also acknowledged to be limited at just over 16m. Consideration has been had to the position and size of window, obscure panels and balconies limited on these elevations. While the relationship is reasonably close, direct overlooking has been minimised in this respect. A greater degree of impact on amenity is generally anticipated on higher density schemes. In light of the village-centre location and character of the site, it is not considered there would be demonstrable harm caused to a future resident from overlooking when consideration of the level of privacy would be apparent upon occupation.
- 7.64. In relation to overshadowing, a sunlight/daylight analysis has been submitted identifying levels of shadow during March, June and December. Again, the western-most townhouse would be most affected but it is acknowledged that it will benefit from a reasonable degree of sunlight particularly during Spring and Summer months. The applicant states that the proposal complies with BRE guidance and these details are considered acceptable.
- 7.65. 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. This Code is currently undergoing an update. Additional recommendations suggested by Kent Highways can be considered as part of the update. As such, it is not considered necessary to impose further conditions in relation to construction practices.
- 7.66. While a Code of Construction Practice has been secured, it is acknowledged that the site is immediately adjacent to the primary school and community centre which will be open by the time construction commences at this site, subject to consent. In addition, the site is extremely constrained. As such, a site-specific Construction Management Plan has been provided to be mindful of site management and disturbance caused by dust, ensuring that engagement with the school is undertaken. It is the nature of development that there will be some impact but it is considered the necessary measures have been taken to minimise any disturbance.

Noise

- 7.67. 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.
- 7.68. A noise assessment has been submitted with the application and comments received from Dartford Environmental Health addressed at 5.2.4. above. Despite the proximity to the school, it is considered any noise arising from children entering and leaving the school will be limited to certain times of the day. Noise arising from the community centre is likely to be less disturbing due to the capacity of the space but noise attenuation measures have been controlled through the separate consent for the building.
- 7.69. In the interests of neighbouring amenity, opening hours and times of delivery should be conditioned. While it is acknowledged the operators are not yet known, the application states that the opening hours would be limited to 7am to 11pm Monday to Sunday. It is considered these times are reasonable in planning terms. Further licencing requirements will be controlled by Dartford Borough Council.

Other Issues:

EIA

- 7.70. The outline permission was identified as being EIA development and the requisite assessments made. It follows that subsequent applications made pursuant to the outline permission (including Reserved Matters such as this application) are also in respect of EIA. However, it is EDC 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, (as the EIA was completed in the last 3 years with no known environmental factors coming to light since its completion), the EIA remains compliant with current planning policy and legislation, there have been no significant new considerations that have arisen since the EIA was completed and a further Environmental Statement is therefore not required as a result of this application.

HRA Screening

- 7.71. Policy DP25 of the DDPP requires large residential developments located within 10km from the North Kent European Protected sites that are located outside the Borough to undertake a Habitats Regulation Assessment to demonstrate that the mitigation measures proposed are satisfactory to avoid potential adverse recreational effects to protected features.
- 7.72. Progress in understanding potential recreational impact in north Kent has enabled a study (the Dartford Study) of the approach that could be taken to protecting European sites in Dartford. The Dartford study sets out a practical approach that the planning authorities in Dartford Borough could incorporate into planning determinations that would enable development proposals to meet regulatory requirements. The principle of a bespoke approach for applicable developments in Dartford Borough, which would be required to undertake a Habitats Regulation Assessment, is confirmed in policy DP25 as set out above.
- 7.73. Consequently, where mitigating measures are not screened out of a tariff of £15 per house is applied in accordance with the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS). The applicant has confirmed the payment will be made and a draft Unilateral Agreement is expected. The scheme is being

recommended for approval subject to this being completed and further details will be reported to Members as supplementary information.

Archaeology

- 7.74. 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 that the application of condition 26 is not appropriate in this instance and foundation designs have not been requested.

Drainage

- 7.75. 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 as set out in 5.2.3. above.

Broadband Access

- 7.76. 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.

Sustainability

- 7.77. The outline planning permission makes reference to the need to design to code level 4 standards of the Code for Sustainable Homes. However, the government has withdrawn the Code for Sustainable Homes and this condition no longer reflects government policy. Notwithstanding the above, the application indicates a number of energy efficient measures detailed within the submitted Sustainability Statement.
- 7.78. These details generally accord with the Sustainable Construction Code and Water Conservation Plan have been secured as strategic documents for the whole of EQ in accordance with conditions 23 and 24 of the outline permission. The scheme accords with a Very Good rating which is adequate and compliant with the previously approved strategy documents for EQ. A detailed BREEAM pre-assessment has

been submitted with the application which will be secured by condition as an approved document.

Condition 25 – Outstanding Issues

- 7.79. The majority of matters listed in condition 25 of the outline permission have been addressed in the submission of the application. There are outstanding detailed designs which are yet to be agreed and these will 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 application proposes a high quality scheme for mixed use that displays excellent architectural quality which will serve as a landmark and enhance the visual amenity of the heart of Castle Hill. The proposal is in accordance with the framework for the Eastern Quarry outline permission, the approved Area Master Plan for Castle Hill and follows the design parameters as set out in the Design Code. The applicant has worked closely with the EDC to put forward a carefully considered scheme which would provide a safe and attractive living environment and essential services for future residents in keeping with Garden City principles. The application is therefore recommended for approval.