

Reference: EDC/17/0064

Agenda Item: 006

Site Address: Castle Hill Central – Phase 5, Eastern Quarry, Watling Street, Swanscombe, Kent.

Proposal: Reserved matters application (details relating to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of 68 dwellings together with associated landscaping and infrastructure and Broadband Action Plan, being pursuant to conditions 2, 25 & 30 of outline application 12/01451/EQVAR.

Applicant: Circle Housing Group

Parish / Ward: Swanscombe and 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 68 dwellings consisting of 37 houses (25 x 2bed; 12 x 3bed) and 31 flats (3 x 1bed; 28 x 2bed). The application is made on behalf of the affordable housing provider for Castle Hill and seeks to provide all units as shared ownership. Following an earlier approval for affordable housing in Phase 2 for 125 units, this application presents the next tranche of affordable dwellings to be delivered proportionately to the market housing, in accordance with the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement.

The application site comprises an area of 1.2ha at the heart of Castle Hill immediately adjacent to the primary school and community centre currently under construction. Two 4-storey apartment blocks of 11 and 20 units are located along the Fastrack elevation with 12 semi-detached 3-storey town houses positioned in between. The architectural style along Fastrack is contemporary urban. The remaining dwellings have a more traditional form covering two storeys some with gable end features, including some modern interpretations of traditional bay features. The architectural approach is in keeping with development already secured in Castle Hill and features bespoke designs. Access through the site is legible and a successful layout has been achieved for this awkward shaped site.

Design quality has been achieved through architectural detailing appropriate to its setting and consistent with the Design Code document which guides detailed design but also

through the provision of a successful legible layout of an awkward shaped site which incorporates landscaped areas. All units fully comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards with the flats in particular providing spacious double bedrooms and storage space above the standards. The dwellings have been designed to meet Building Regulations Part M4 – Category 2 for accessible and adaptable homes. The scheme is fully compliant with Dartford Borough Council's Car Parking SPD for residential, van and visitor spaces. An additional 7 residential spaces have been provided over the standards and there will be no covenants restricting van parking on-plot which builds greater flexibility into the scheme.

Significant improvements have been made to the overall layout and position of buildings and parking arrangements and it is now considered a high quality design standard which is appropriate for Ebbsfleet Garden City. The development will provide essential affordable housing units to help meet housing need and contribute to the continuing growth of the Ebbsfleet Garden City, in keeping with Garden City principles as set out in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

RECOMMENDATION:

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:

08274-AL-(00)-0190 Rev B - Site Location Plan

08274-AL-(00)-0199 Rev B - Site Layout 1_500

08274-AL-(00)-0201 Rev E - Site Layout

House Plans, Elevations & Sections:

08274-AL-(00)-0227 Rev B - Site I Street Scenes

08274-AL-(00)-0228 - Site Sections

08274-AL-(00)-0226 - Block A Elevations

08274-AL-(00)-0225 Rev B - Block B Elevations

08274-AL-(00)-0220 Rev P1 - Block A Ground and 1st Floor Plan

08274-AL-(00)-0221 Rev A - Block A 2nd & 3rd Floor and Roof Plan

08274-AL-(00)-0222 Rev A - Block B Ground & 1st Floor Plan

08274-AL-(00)-0223 Rev B - Block B 2nd & 3rd & Roof Plan

08274-AL-(00)-0301 Rev A - House Type A

08274-AL-(00)-0302 Rev A - House Type A1

08274-AL-(00)-0303 Rev A - House Type A2

08274-AL-(00)-0304 Rev A - House Type A3

08274-AL-(00)-0305 Rev A - House Type A4
08274-AL-(00)-0306 - House Type A5
08274-AL-(00)-0213 - House Type H
08274-AL-(00)-0218 Rev A - Fastrack House Garden Storage
08274-AL-(00)-0219 - Proposed Garden Shed

Landscape Plans:

D2472 L.112 Rev 02 - GA Hard & Soft Landscape Plan
D2474 Rev 01 - Landscape Design Statement

Technical Plans:

08274-AL-(00)-0200 - Existing Site Contours
08274-AL-(00)-0204 Rev B - Proposed Refuse Strategy
08274-AL-(00)-0203 Rev A - Proposed Lighting Strategy
P5-106 Rev C - Lighting Layout
P5-107 Rev C S104 Drainage Layout
Eastern Village Surface Water Drainage Scheme Design, By ARUP, Dated Dec
2009P5-100 Rev B - General Arrangement
102 Rev B - Engineering Layout
P5-101 Rev B - Swept Path Analysis

Report:

Planning, Design and Access Statement, Dated 10 May 2017

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

Prior to Commencement of Development

3. No development shall take place until details of the surface water drainage system for the development (including storage facilities where necessary), 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 (or any other plans amending or superseding this Plan) and demonstrate the volumes quoted within the submitted Surface Water Drainage Scheme Design undertaken by Arup in 2009 for the relevant catchment area is complied with. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory treatment of surface water drainage.

4. No development, or the delivery of any associated machinery or materials, shall take place until cross sections and details of the finished slab levels have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and to facilitate monitoring.

Prior to Development above Foundation

5. Notwithstanding the approved landscaping plan listed in condition 2 above, no development above foundation level shall take place until full details and samples of materials for the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the

Local Planning Authority:

- a) The external surfaces of all dwellings and associated storage structures;
- b) Hard surfacing materials to be used in the external finishes of all hardstandings, roads and footpaths; and
- c) Boundary treatments including retaining walls; and
- d) Gated entrances including access ways from the Fastrack corridor and details of any proposed associated security measures.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details 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 all species of trees, a detailed planting schedule and maintenance programme and shall show details of trees in relation to street lighting. 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 have been provided, surfaced and drained. Thereafter it 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: In the interests of highway safety.

8. No property hereby approved shall be occupied, until the approved cycle parking and bin store has been provided. Thereafter the facilities shall be kept available for such use and no permanent development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (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

Other

9. Two visibility splays measuring 2m x 17m shall be maintained along the western end of the access road at the following locations:

- a) one on the south side of the road between parking spaces numbered 23 and 24 on the approved plans; and
- b) one outside the apartment Block B on the north side of the road to the west of the car park access.

There shall be no obstructions above 1m in height above the road surface. The visibility splays shall be maintained at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

10. All units of 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.

Informatives

1. In connection with condition 7 above the applicant is reminded that all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and in accordance with the timing as set out in condition 65 of outline permission 12/01451/EQVAR.
2. The applicant's 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.
3. The applicant's attention is drawn to comments made by the Police Crime Prevention Officer in relation to Secure by Design and the Kent Design Initiative and is advised to contact the Crime Prevention Design Advisors to ensure crime prevention is addressed effectively.
4. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, as local planning authority, has taken a positive and proactive approach to the proposed development, focusing on finding solutions:
 - The applicant was engaged in pre-application discussions and matters raised addressed in the submission;
 - The agent was advised of planning issues during the processing of the application and additional information has been submitted to address these; and
 - 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 an irregularly shaped piece of land coving approximately 1.2ha. 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 site falls from north to south over approximately 8 metres. The site is situated around the Castle Hill Village Centre, fronting the Fastrack corridor to the north and adjoining the boundary of the previously approved primary school and community centre site to the south. The site is sandwiched between a mixed use site currently under consideration to the west and a triangular shaped site to the east which is the subject of a Local Development Order and was granted permission for 69 apartments, to be developed by Taylor Wimpey.

Proposal

- 1.5. This application seeks approval for reserved matters pursuant to the original outline permission for Eastern Quarry for condition 2 of DA/12/01451/EQVAR. The reserved matters relate to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 68 dwellings consisting of 37 houses (25 x 2bed; 12 x 3bed) and 31 flats (28 x 1bed; 3x 3bed) distributed over two 4-storey apartment blocks. The site would have a density of 57dph with all units provided as shared ownership. Permission is sought by Clarion Housing who is the appointed affordable housing provider for Castle Hill.

- 1.6. The application includes provision of a local street for access to the proposed dwellings but also intended to provide access to the adjacent mixed use site to the west. The proposal also includes associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.7. Pursuant to condition 25 of the outline permission for EQ which requires the submission of details to be provided with any Reserved Matters application, details of the following sections in relation to the condition have been provided in the submission and will be discussed in the appraisal section below:
- a) Updated area plan
 - b) Landscaping
 - c) Materials
 - d) Street lighting and furniture
 - e) Boundary treatment
 - f) Surface finishes, hard landscaping details
 - h) External lighting (to buildings, car parks etc.)
 - j) Cycle parking
- 1.8. The schedule of open space required by part g) of condition 25 is accommodated in this area of Castle Hill by the Village Green to the west of the site and is being brought forward by the landowner to be submitted under a separate application. Details relating to part i) public art; k) television receivers; l) signage and interpretation; and m) layout of community buildings are not relevant to this application.
- 1.9. In accordance with condition 28, a noise assessment has been submitted for those dwellings abutting a principal highway to the northern boundary. An action plan in relation to broadband access has also been submitted in accordance with condition 30.
- 1.10. The application is supported by several documents and plans:
- Plans:
 - Location Plan
 - Layout Plans
 - Contour Plan
 - Housetype plans and elevations (including indicative materials)
 - Site sections
 - Streetscene elevations
 - Refuse strategy
 - Hard and soft landscape layout plan
 - Lighting Layouts
 - Drainage Layout
 - Road GA Plan
 - Engineering Layout
 - Swept Path Analysis
 - Planning Design and Access Statement
 - Internal Space Size Matrix
 - Water Drainage Scheme Design Dated December 2009
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Landscape Design Statement
 - Road Traffic Noise Assessment and Mitigation Report

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 S73 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, design, phasing, public art, community participation, community and leisure facilities, sustainable development, education 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 2013 (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: 28.06.17.
3.2 Press notice expiry date: 24.08.16.

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 No representations have been received.

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
- Police Crime Prevention Officer
- Southern Water
- Thames Water

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

5.3 Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council:

Concerns raised in respect of the allocation of the parking spaces and lack of spaces to accommodate people with impaired mobility. There should be 6 spaces allocated and of sufficient specified size to the disabled standard.

EDC Officer Response: Dartford parking standards do not stipulate minimum spaces for impaired mobility. This matter is discussed in full at section 7.49 below.

5.4 Kent Highways:

Comments made in respect of the following:

- Recommend condition to secure visibility splays along the access road;
- Removal of landscaping to improve access to parking space 5;
- Details of hard landscaping details which are missing from the turning head;
- No objections raised to amended plans relating to provision of a bell mouth junction to access plots 1 to 7 but recommends the applicant liaises with the Agreements Team at KCC that this provides what they require, and agree the details of the design;
- Stage One road safety audit required;
- Recommend a dropped crossing with tactiles at or very close to the junction. I understand that the path crossing the access road here would be a shared-use cycle path.

EDC Officer Response: Visibility splays recommendation has been set out in condition 9 above. Removal of the landscaping does not prohibit parking and is considered detrimental to the appearance of the site. As such, its removal has not been sought. The alignment of the road has already been examined under this application and requirements for a Phase 1 Road Safety Audit would be covered by the KCC Agreements Team. A condition is therefore not considered necessary in this instance.

5.5 KCC Lead Local Flood Authority:

No objections raised and welcome the consideration of surface water within the Design and Access Statement. Expect to be consulted 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: Secured under condition 3.

5.6 Dartford Borough Council:

DBC Environmental health raise concerns about the assessment. The noise levels in the outdoor amenity space are very high but it is noted that the assessment is a worst case scenario without mitigation such as barriers or ground absorption. Environmental health advise that details of the mitigation proposals should be submitted in order to demonstrate that the amenity areas will be suitably protected.

They also note the reference to decisions regarding HS2 and the A14 in section D4.1.6 and query why these are included in the assessment as these were major infrastructure works not a new housing development. They advise that BS 8233:2014 is clear and specific in this area.

The report has also failed to assess the potential impact of noise from the school in particular the playing fields to the South of the development area.

EDC Officer Response: It is noted that reference made to HS2 and the A14 are not considered relevant. The report submitted suggests consideration of barriers in the form of the proposed buildings has been taken into account, showing noise levels of 50-51dB(A)LAeq,16hr. The need for additional details of mitigation is therefore questioned and has been raised with Dartford. It is acknowledged use of the playing field will give rise to increased noise levels. However, these will be transient only when the field is in use. It is not considered this would cause demonstrable harm to the amenity of the proposed dwellings.

5.7 Police Crime Prevention Officer:

Consider the applicant has had regard to crime prevention and attempted to apply the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design matters in the Design and Access Statement. Identifies the merit of pre-application meetings and would like the applicant's attention drawn to the Kent Design Initiative which would help assist with Crime Prevention and Community Safety.

The general layout is noted and recommendations made to apply minimum security standards, particularly in relation to the apartment blocks and the provision of access control measures; defensible space; mail delivery; bin and cycle storage. Recommends that if this reserved matters application is given approval and no contact has been made to the Crime Prevention Design Advisors (CPDAs) by the applicant/agent, suggest that an informative be issued to the applicant/agent to ensure that Crime Prevention is addressed effectively. Applicant should give

consideration to the recently published “Q” building regulations for doors and window specifications.

EDC Officer Response: Initial comments noted that no communication had been received directly from the applicant. Comments were subsequently passed to the applicant and additional comments have now been received to confirm the applicant has now been in touch with an intention to apply for Secured By Design (Silver award) for physical security and states that with this in mind he has no further comments to make.

Defensible spaces and bin/cycle stores have been assessed in the appraisal section below. An informative has also been added to the decision notice, as recommended.

5.8 Southern Water:
No objection.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY

6.1 National Policy & Guidance

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

6.2 Development Plan

6.2.1 Dartford Borough Council – Core Strategy (2011):

CS1	-	Spatial Pattern of Development
CS4	-	Ebbsfleet to Stone Priority Area
CS5	-	Ebbsfleet Valley Strategic Site
CS10	-	Housing Provision
CS15	-	Managing Transport Demand
CS17	-	Design of Homes
CS18	-	Housing Mix
CS19	-	Affordable Housing
CS23	-	Minimising Carbon Emissions
CS25	-	Water Management

6.2.2 Dartford Development Policies Plan (DDPP) (Adopted 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
DP9	-	Local Housing Needs
DP11	-	Sustainable Technology and Construction
DP25	-	Nature Conservation and Enhancement

6.3 Other Guidance

Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework
Dartford Borough Council Parking Standards SPD

7.0 PLANNING 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 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 boosting the supply of housing and the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes to ensure development meets the market and affordable housing needs. 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. Paragraph 50 specifically supports the development that widens opportunities for home ownership. 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 provision of a 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 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 for affordable housing. The proposal is therefore in compliance with the overall strategy that has been established in the AMP.
- 7.5 Provision of an appropriate level of affordable housing was considered at the time of the original outline permission. This permission requires, via the accompanying S106 legal agreement, the provision of 25% affordable on-site and 5% off-site affordable housing contributions as part of the approved 6,250 dwellings. In accordance with the requirements of the S106, 156 affordable housing units are to be provided by the first occupation of 930 market units at the latest (Paragraph 3.1). The S106 also seeks to ensure there is a proportional provision of affordable housing within each village against occupation of the market housing (provision of 10% affordable at 25% occupation of market units; 30% affordable at 50% market units; 60% affordable at 75% market units).

- 7.6 The quantum of housing currently envisaged for Castle Hill is just over 1600 units, somewhat below the numbers anticipated within earlier consented documents (a maximum of 2850 units was originally envisaged in the first Castle Hill AMP – excluding Phase 1). This revision in the quantum for the site took shape following a review in 2013 of the best marketable mix and developable area which showed that fewer units would derive the best land value and serve to generate the required developer interest following a prolonged period of inactivity at the site.
- 7.7 To date, 793 market units have been granted detailed permission in Castle Hill (Phases 1, 2, 3a, Part 6 (South) and LDO A and B) with a further 388 in discussion. Of those approximately 179 are occupied. Within Phases 2 and 3a, 167 affordable units have already been granted detailed permission and are under construction, with 21 completions. Based on these figures, the development is in compliance with the requirements of the S106. Pre-application discussions on forthcoming stages of both market and affordable housing is being undertaken, together with on-going monitoring across the site, to ensure the required spread of housing types is provided in accordance with the outline permission.
- 7.8 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 affordable housing in this location has already been established by the outline planning permission and supporting documents and the proposal accords with this principle and the requirements for affordable housing as set out in the S106. The provision of affordable homes supports Garden City principles to create mixed-tenure homes that are affordable for all as identified in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

Reserved Matters

- ***Access & Layout:***

- 7.9 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).
- 7.10 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

- 7.11 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.

- 7.12 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 follow good urban design principles to deliver, attractive, safe and efficient layouts that contribute positively toward an appropriate character for Ebbsfleet.

Site Arrangement

- 7.13 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 site fronts onto the Fastrack public transport corridor along the northern boundary. The southern boundary of the site is aligned with the boundary of the primary school and the southern loop road. Both Fastrack and the southern loop road are currently under construction. The proposed layout comprises a row of 3-storey semi-detached dwellings along Fastrack, bookended by a 4-storey block of 11 apartments to the western end and 4-storey block of 20 apartments to the eastern end. The Fastrack units are separated by small garden/cycle stores. Behind the row of Fastrack houses, the site is arranged into groups of semi-detached and terrace 2-storey dwellings which are laid out to respond to the alignment of the access road.
- 7.14 The Fastrack corridor is exclusively for the use of public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. This creates a significant constraint in terms of access and layout. The awkward shape of the site and sloping topography also causes significant layout challenges. Access to the site is proposed as a road junction from the southern loop road at the south-eastern corner of the site which runs through the middle of the site to a turning head which will serve the adjacent mixed use site (currently under consideration as a separate application reference EDC/17/0067). Permeability through this adjacent site to the village centre is intended which will provide residents in their parcel with a direct link to the local services. The road would also provide a secondary access to the adjacent Taylor Wimpey scheme for 69 apartments (the 'Triangle' site which is subject to a Local Development Order, previously considered by Members at committee in September 2016). A secondary access into the site is provided along the southern loop road to access units 1 to 7 and associated parking areas.
- 7.15 Early layout designs sought to align the access road along the southern site boundary fronted by dwellings either side which resulted in a double row of back-to-back dwellings to the rear of the units fronting Fastrack. This resulted in several large areas of car parking and poor amenity, connectivity and legibility. Extensive pre-application discussions led to significant improvements in the layout through a re-alignment of the proposed residential road. The road now runs along the rear of the Fastrack units, providing direct access to the rear of these plots and creates a more

legible, safe and accessible layout. The alignment of the road incorporates gentle bends to accommodate passive traffic calming measures to try and alleviate the need for horizontal or vertical deflections, subject to agreement with KCC Agreements Team. The alterations have also secured the provision of more on-plot parking which has enabled parking areas to be broken down into a mixture of small parking courtyards, tandem on-plot spaces and on-street spaces. The direct car access and proximity of parking spaces now proposed also enables greater accessibility for those with impaired mobility (*discussed further in the Highway section below*). The secondary access serving plots 1 to 7 – changed to a bell mouth design to satisfy KCC and amended plans submitted to reflect this. The Highways Officer has raised no objection.

7.16 The Fastrack dwellings front onto the public transport corridor, addressing this important streetscene and provide direct access to sustainable transport provision. Two pedestrian accesses have been provided through the site from Fastrack via pathways adjacent to both apartment blocks. The submitted landscaping scheme indicates these are to be secured. It is considered this should be conditioned to secure the most appropriate arrangements in the interests of access to the houses to the south of the site.

7.17 Consideration has been given to access levels in accordance with Building Regulations Part M4. The application states the dwellings are intended to meet Category 2 standards. This regulation sets out the national standard for accessible and adaptable homes. Level thresholds and ramped accesses to buildings, including routes from car parks to main entrances will be provided and the plans indicate wheelchair accessibility in the communal areas of the apartment blocks. It is proposed a condition is added to require this level of accessibility is met.

7.18 A swept path analysis for the junction in to the site and the turning head at the west of the site has been provided which illustrates that they are capable of accommodating the largest vehicles including for refuse and fire. The layout of the units accommodates access level access to rear gardens or apartment storage areas located on the ground floor. This allows refuse bins to be easily dragged to the street. This is considered to comply with Dartford's refuse collection guidance.

○ ***Form / Design – including matters of Appearance & Scale:***

7.19 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.

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

Policy

7.21 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

- 7.22 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.

Design Quality

- 7.23 In relation to scale, the AMP identifies the site as falling within an area suitable for high density (between 75-178 dwellings per hectare). Roughly calculated across the site, the density for this development falls short at 57 dwellings per hectare. The density of the proposal is heavily influenced by the numbers of affordable houses required to meet the obligations in the S106 agreement across Castle Hill and given the significant constraints at the site and influence of previously consented schemes around the site, it is considered there would be little opportunity to significantly increase the density. On balance, therefore, it is considered the density is acceptable in this instance. The site is appropriately spaced and creates suitable amenity areas and opportunities for small landscaping areas along the road.
- 7.24 The AMP sets a building height range of up to 6 storeys at this site and the proposal accords with these parameters. The heights of the Fastrack dwellings are consistent with the streetscene established through earlier consents. The Design Code sets out parameters for the treatment of the residential street to create a sense of intimacy. It is acknowledged that the layout results in buildings being set back from the residential street resulting in a separation distance of some 28m across gardens, parking areas and the street. Given the limitations on direct access onto Fastrack and the resulting impact on layout, it is acknowledged there are limited layout options available and in the interests of good urban design, buildings should front directly onto the principal Fastrack corridor. It is also acknowledged that the increased height of the units along Fastrack provide a sense of enclosure and the alignment of the road means the length of vistas is limited and views framed, particularly by the apartment blocks. The sense of intimacy required by the code is therefore maintained through these means. Furthermore, the buildings are orientated to address the streetscene and overlook parking areas to provide active frontages and natural surveillance.
- 7.25 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. Some reference is made to 21st century references to Georgian or Edwardian town housing through terraces and semi-detached units in relation to frontage typology.
- 7.26 The proposal consists of two architectural approaches consisting of a more contemporary detailing along the Fastrack frontage with the pitched roof 3-storey

dwellings with projecting cladded 'bays' around the windows and a strong vertical emphasis and flat roof apartment blocks with rectilinear form, featuring projecting balconies. The dwellings to the south of the Fastrack properties are 2-storey with pitched roofs and differing roof forms including gable ends but incorporate similar bay projections to the Fastrack dwellings, providing continuity within the site.

- 7.27 The proposed materials vary across the site to reflect the architectural styles. The Fastrack dwellings and apartments proposed to use yellow stock facing bricks, grey roof tiles and grey fibre cement cladding with the balconies on the apartments consisting of powder coated metal balconies and incorporating timber louvred accent panels. The remaining dwellings would use red stock facing brick, orange/brown roof tiles, grey fibre cement cladding and off white/grey render. The use of fibre cement cladding has been raised with the applicant in an attempt to use a higher quality material. However, the applicant prefers not to change this detail. It is acknowledged this material has been used elsewhere in Castle Hill and is in keeping with the recommendations in the Design Code.
- 7.28 In accordance with the Design Code, a more urban approach is incorporated along Fastrack. The buildings along this public transport corridor have a similar appearance to those previously secured in earlier consents. Similarly, the houses to the south of the site follow a more traditional form and relate to other dwelling consented to the north of Castle Hill. Care has been made to ensure houses turn corners including the use of wrap-around corner bay features and address the street so no blank facades are prominent in the public streetscene. Discussions have been held with the applicant to encourage additional detailing to be incorporated into the elevations along Fastrack and the applicant is considering this. Any amendments will be reported to Members as supplementary information. The architectural features and materials follow the guidelines set out in the Design Code which leads residential development to incorporating 'both traditional and contemporary materials including some pitched roofs and projecting bays'.
- 7.29 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. Some of the flat units in particular offer more generous double bedroom sizes and storage space than required by the standards.
- 7.30 Each dwelling is provided with adequate garden space and each apartment has a private balcony. The size of the balconies is considered adequate and policy compliant but the applicant has been asked to consider enlarging the balconies to the

south/centre of the apartment blocks to benefit from the southern aspect. Any changes to the balconies will be reported as supplementary information.

- 7.31 The layout accommodates adequate distances between the proposed dwellings to ensure there would be no undue overshadowing or overbearing impact on the amenity of the future occupants. Fenestration to the side elevations are minimal and generally serve secondary windows or non-habitable rooms. Consideration has been given to the relationship with the adjacent site to the east where a 4-storey block of apartments is proposed to be constructed (Parcel B of the LDO) where the scale of the apartment block is much larger than the proposed dwellings in this application. Discussions have been held with the applicant in relation to the design, as discussed below in terms of scale, but it is acknowledged the proposed dwellings are on the other side of the access road, creating a gap of some 15m. The side elevation of the apartment block has minimal openings and privacy screens to the balconies. Access to the roof top balcony is also limited for maintenance only. As such, it is not considered this will cause demonstrable harm to this scheme, particularly in relation to the private amenity of unit 7.
- 7.32 Details of the proposed lighting strategy have been submitted. The street lighting will be regulated by KCC. Provided no trees proposed in the landscaping design conflict with the position of street lamps, no objections arise. This can be secured by condition. Low level lighting is otherwise proposed to highlight parking areas, building entrances and footpaths. The proposed lighting is subtle and appropriately located.

Tenure

- 7.33 Policy CS19 of the local plan requires developments to meet the needs and aspirations of residents by requiring an appropriate mix of tenure being between 50-80% as intermediate housing with the remainder being social-rented. The policy also seeks any houses with 3 or more bedrooms to be social-rented where possible. The proposed tenure for this site is proposed to be 100% shared ownership. None of the proposed units would be above 3-bed. It is acknowledged no social-rented units would be provided. However, tenure will continue to be monitored and can be adjusted accordingly over the development of Eastern Quarry as required.

Housing Mix

- 7.34 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 proposed ratio of houses to flats is closer to 54:46, although 70% of the units would be 2 bedroom houses in accordance with the policy. It is envisaged that over the development of Eastern Quarry, the overall provision of flats and houses will be adjusted in accordance with housing need, to comply with this policy as appropriate.

○ **Landscaping:**

- 7.35 This reserved matter 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

- 7.36 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

- 7.37 No open communal spaces are provided within the site. The Village Green to the west and Linear Park (application yet to be submitted) to the south of the site 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 open space.
- 7.38 Opportunities for landscaping within the site is not extensive in this confined site. An indicative planting layout and supporting document has been provided that shows the broad location of planting and some indicative species. Soft planting has been shown in the streetscene where possible to alleviate the appearance of the hard landscaping. The overall details are considered acceptable but details of the specific planting species and methodology for their maintenance should be secured by condition, drawing to the applicant's attention that an appropriate scope of evergreen and deciduous planting should be provided to ensure year-round colour and ensure the landscaping scheme does not conflict with highway maintenance and visibility or the position of streetlamps.

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. Specific details of materials have been set out in the submitted hard and soft landscape plan but in the interests of any amendments that may apply in the detailed design stage, it is considered the details are secured by condition. The applicant has agreed to this approach.

Boundaries

- 7.40 The position of retaining walls required in response to the sloping land have largely been confined between plots or built in to the landscaping so as to avoid tall walls which would harm the public streetscene, notably to the rear of units 1-6 and the northern edge of the car parking area fronting Fastrack.
- 7.41 Officers have been careful to ensure that where boundary treatments are visible from the public domain; these are either brick walls or planted. Boundaries formed of planting or solid boundary treatments ensure that defensible spaces are secure and provide privacy. Following a request to the applicant, some details of boundary treatments have been submitted but others are outstanding. A condition is therefore necessary to ensure the design quality of the final details.

Management

- 7.42 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. The application includes some detail of planting plans and maintenance schedules. In light of the limited level of planting detail submitted with the application, as cited in paragraph 7.28 above, any

further management and maintenance details specific to the additional information should be submitted and therefore secured by condition.

Highways & Parking

Policy

- 7.43 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

- 7.44 The proposal provides for parking spaces only in various arrangements including tandem on-plot, parking courtyards and on-street. No garages would be provided. The following table sets out the parking requirements according to Dartford Borough Council's Parking SPD and the total number of spaces made available on site:

Type	No. spaces provided	SPD Requirement	
Residential	93	<i>1 & 2-bed flats</i>	<i>(31 units x 1.2)</i> 38
		<i>2-bed house</i>	<i>(25 units x 1.2)</i> 30
		<i>3 bed house</i>	<i>(12 units x 1.5)</i> 18
		TOTAL	86
Visitor	21	<i>3 spaces per 10 homes</i>	21
Van	7	<i>1 space per 10 homes</i>	7
TOTAL	121		114

- 7.45 The size of the car and van spaces is in accordance with the guidance in the SPD and there is sufficient space along the side of driveways to allow bins to be dragged from the rear garden refuse storage areas.
- 7.46 The Dartford Parking SPD states that resident and van parking spaces are calculated 'per 10 homes or part thereof'. It follows, therefore, that where part spaces are calculated, the SPD requires them to be rounded up to the nearest whole. These whole figures are shown in the table above. The figures show the proposal meets the requirements in full with an extra provision of 7 residential spaces in excess of the standards.
- 7.47 The applicant has confirmed there would be no restrictive covenant on residents using their parking spaces for vans which provides additional flexibility for parking smaller transit-type vans on-plot.
- 7.48 The Dartford standards recommend that parking spaces for flats are usually unallocated. Currently 1 space per flat is allocated and the applicant is unwilling to change this. In light of the parking levels being fully compliant and the standards do

not insist spaces should be unallocated, there is no overriding reason why the current allocation should be changed.

Disabled Parking

- 7.49 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. Contrary to the comments received from the Town Council, however, there are no minimum spaces that must be provided for Class C3 use (residential).
- 7.50 No spaces have specifically been identified in the plans as disabled and this was brought to the attention of the applicant. It is noted that the additional space on the private on-plot tandem spaces allows sufficient space to accommodate a disabled parking space. This will limit available space for dragging bins to the collection points but it allows sufficient flexibility where any disabled spaces might be required in the future. The applicant has advised that they will denote the spaces within the communal parking areas that are capable of being extended as well as including some dedicated disabled spaces. Any additional information received will be reported to Members as supplementary information.

Cycle Storage

- 7.51 Cycle parking is to be provided within dedicated cycle stores on the ground floor of each apartment block which provides 11 spaces overall in excess of the parking standards (1 space per unit plus 1 space per 8 homes for visitors). The stores are situated within the fabric of the building and are overlooked by surrounding units.
- 7.52 Individual covered and securable cycle stores are to be provided for each dwelling within the curtilage of each unit providing parking for 2 cycles each, in accordance with the standards.

Highway Considerations

- 7.53 Detailed discussions with KCC Agreements Team have given rise to identified problems with the access to units 1-7. Revised drawings have subsequently been submitted to provide a bellmouth junction in this position. Subsequent comments from Kent Highways on the amended plans identify that most matters had been dealt with satisfactorily.
- 7.54 No objections have been raised by Kent Highways and recommendations have been secured by condition. The only exception being the removal of a strip of landscaping. It was not insisted this be removed and on the balance of visual amenity and provision of as much greenery within the Garden City, this has been retained.

Other Issues:

EIA

- 7.55 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

- 7.56 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.
- 7.57 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.
- 7.58 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 tariff will be paid and will be secured via a Unilateral Agreement.

Archaeology

- 7.59 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.

Ecology

- 7.60 The details of ecological works, mitigation measures and monitoring have been secured under the outline permission. On-site and future works are being monitored by KCC Biodiversity Officers. The relevant ecological mitigation and site clearance has already been carried out at the site. Any changes or updates to ecological treatment at the site will be considered at a strategic level and therefore no further consideration is required at detailed application stage.

Drainage

- 7.61 A strategy for the general handling of surface water and foul water has been secured under the requirements of condition 12 of the outline permission. This includes

details of surface water drainage and ground water control. Ongoing discussions have been held between the developer and KCC Lead Flood Authority who are now in receipt of a full set of drainage documents that have been approved under previous applications for EQ. KCC are satisfied with the overall strategy for Castle Hill.

- 7.62 Documents submitted with the application related to the overall strategy but did not demonstrate how the specific design of this proposal will accord with the calculations that have been made in the strategy document. KCC therefore require further details which can be secured by condition.

Noise

- 7.63 Condition 28 of the outline consent states that a detailed noise assessment be submitted alongside a reserved matters proposal where development abuts a principal highway and detail any mitigation measures required to safeguard residential amenity. A noise assessment has been submitted with the application and Environmental Health at Dartford has been consulted. These comments have been addressed in section 5.6 above.

Broadband Access

- 7.64 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. It is understood this is the same system being rolled out across Castle Hill. These details are sufficient to satisfy condition 30.

Wider Neighbouring Amenity

- 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 forthcoming development. There are no immediately adjoining residential neighbours, the closest being those in the first phases of Castle Hill which are well distanced from the application site and some occupations in Phase 2. There are established works entrances which are well managed and do not interfere with the surrounding residential development. 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. Matters of overlooking within the development have been considered in the layout section above. A Code of Construction Practice has previously been secured under condition 36 of the outline permission with which the developer is required to comply and it is not considered necessary to impose further conditions in relation to construction practices.

Sustainability

- 7.66 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 that will be employed to reduce energy emissions from the development such as high efficiency lighting, low energy fittings and white goods, maximization of thermal insulation and orientation of units, where possible, to maximize solar gain and passive ventilation will reduce the need for energy inputs.

4.0.9 All units will be supplied with high efficiency boilers with electric supply for lighting and power.

7.67 These details 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. In addition, the applicant has confirmed the dwellings will be constructed to the equivalent Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 energy requirements, in line with Part L1a of the Building Regulations.

7.68 In light of the relevant strategies that have been applied through the outline consent, it is not considered necessary to condition further.

Condition 25 – Outstanding Issues

7.69 All relevant matters listed in condition 25 of the outline permission (in relation to details required for reserved matters applications) have been addressed in the application and there are no outstanding issues. The final detail design of some of the items, such as specific materials for the external appearance of the houses, boundary designs, hard landscaping, cycle storage and external lighting can be secured by condition.

8.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

9.0 HUMAN RIGHTS

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

10.0 PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY

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

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

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

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 The application proposes the provision of essential affordable housing which would provide a good variety of housing mix. 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 proposal represents a high quality development where the applicant has worked closely with the EDC to put forward a carefully considered scheme which would provide a safe and attractive living environment for future residents in keeping with Garden City principles. The application is therefore recommended for approval.