

Reference: EDC/17/0108

Site Address: Eastern Quarry, Watling Street, Swanscombe, Kent

Proposal: Reserved Matters application (details relating to access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of 163 dwellings and parking along with associated landscaping, infrastructure and earthworks.

Applicant: Clarion Housing Group

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. The wider Eastern Quarry site benefits from outline planning permission (granted by Dartford Borough Council in 2007, then varied in 2013 and subsequently again in March 2018) for up to 6,250 dwellings. The outline consent reserved all matters for future consideration but 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 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.

This application seeks permission for all reserved matters for the erection of 163 dwellings consisting of 126 houses (59 x 2bed; 64 x 3bed; 3 x 4bed) and 37 flats (6 x 1bed; 31 x 2bed) distributed across 2 apartment blocks and 9no. flats over garages (FOGs) in the southern area of Castle Hill, one of the last phases to come forward in this village, and provides detailed design in respect of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

The proposal is in broad accordance with the approved parameters as set out in the guiding documents established under the outline permission. The proposals would provide for an adequate level of amenity for future occupants of the dwellings without a detrimental impact on the character of the area, ecology, flood risk, traffic and highway safety beyond that which was considered acceptable at the outline stage.

Access within the site is legible and has a strong layout in a grid pattern with good cycle and pedestrian links. The external appearance of the buildings is appropriate to the character areas set out in the approved Area Masterplan / Design Code. Green spaces and landscaping have been used effectively to enhance the public and private realms.

Extensive negotiation has been undertaken with the applicant over a protracted period to secure significant improvements to the original plans on the appearance and detailing of the development. The proposal has been scored a 'green light' assessment (9 green; 3 amber) by EDC Officers against the Building for Life criteria. Some areas have not been developed as fully as had been desired but it is considered the scheme has been significantly improved.

All units meet the nationally described internal space standards and all houses and ground floor flats are designed to meet Category 2 of the Building Regulations 'Approved Document M: Access to and use of Buildings' standards. Allowing for apartment blocks under 4 storeys that are not fitted with lifts due to viability reasons, 92% of properties would meet Category 2,

far exceeding the 25% required by the outline consent.

In respect of parking provision within the application site boundary, the scheme exceeds the provision for residential parking as required by the Dartford standards by 52.5 spaces. Visitor parking is under the requirement by 20.6 spaces and van parking provision is under by 2.2 spaces. All parking spaces sizes meet the requirements of the SPD. It is considered the over-provision of on-plot parking and provision of some non-allocated spaces provides a degree of flexibility that accounts absorbs the shortfall in visitor spaces. Van parking spaces are in close region of required spaces to be considered acceptable.

Complication arises with double counting of spaces on the streets which arises from the application boundary for the separate affordable housing application submitted by Taylor Wimpey which is currently live (EDC/17/0107). Since the application site boundary includes access roads to the plots, there is a cross-over of application site boundaries between the two applications. As a result, some on-street parking spaces fall within both application sites (34 visitor 15 vans). For each application to provide appropriate parking, these parking spaces would be double counted. It is difficult to separate the two applications since they have been brought together under joint negotiations between the Taylor Wimpey and Clarion. It is considered the combined provision across the two applications for the whole of Castle Hill South is appropriate. In the event that either application does not come forward, any future application for either site would be required to meet the strategy that has already been established by these two applications.

The applicant has agreed to enter into a Unilateral Undertaking for a contribution to mitigate the impact on European sites designated for their ecology and biodiversity and this has been accepted by Natural England.

Taking all elements into considerations, this is a balanced scheme which provides a high standard of development and design, in compliance with the Development Plan for the Borough and will which will make a huge contribution to the number of houses in Castle Hill and contribute to essential national housing growth and the development of the Ebbsfleet Garden City, in keeping with Garden City principles as set out in the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval subject to:

- (i) The applicant entering into a Unilateral Undertaking to make a financial contribution of £2,445.00 (£15 per dwelling) to the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS); and
- (ii) Imposition of the following planning conditions and informatives;

CONDITIONS:

Time limit

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

Reason: To comply with the provisions of section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Approved Plans and Documents

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

Layout Drawings

BRS.6450_06 C – Site Location
BRS.6450_05 C – Site Layout
BRS.6450_13 C – Parking Provision
BRS.6450_14 D – Proposed Highway Adoption
BRS.6450_15 C – Waste Strategy Plan

House Plans & Elevations

BRS.6450_1E – House Type Pack

Materials

BRS.6450_16 C – Materials Plan

Landscape Plans

BRS.6450_21 B – Hard Landscaping Zoning Plan (Sheet 1 of 2)
BRS.6450_22 B – Hard Landscaping Zoning Plan (Sheet 2 of 2)
BRS.6001_81 B – Street Typology Sections (Sheet 1 of 2)
BRS.6001_92 A – Street Typology Sections (Sheet 2 of 2)

Landscape Plans

BRS.6450_18 – Soft Landscape Proposals (Sheet 1 of 3)
BRS.6450_19 – Soft Landscape Proposals (Sheet 2 of 3)
BRS.6450_20 – Soft Landscape Proposals (Sheet 3 of 3)
BRS.6001_2 – Landscape Management Plan

Cross Sections

C85227-SK-135 A – Site Cross Sections, A-A and B-B (Sheet 1 of 3)
C85227-SK-136 A – Site Cross Sections, C-C, D-D & E-E (Sheet 2 of 3)
C85227-SK-137 A – Site Cross Sections, Sections Plan (Sheet 3 of 3)

Highways and Levels

C85227-SK-121 C – Levels Strategy
C85227-SK-124 C – Refuse Vehicle Strategy (Sheet 1 of 3)
C85227-SK-125 C – Refuse Vehicle Strategy (Sheet 2 of 3)
C85227-SK-126 C – Refuse Vehicle Strategy (Sheet 3 of 3)
C85227-SK-127 B – Fire Tender Strategy
C85227-SK-128 B – Street Lighting Layout
C85227-SK-129 C – Site Visibility
C85227-SK-130 B – Estate Car SPA
C85227-SK-131 B – Panel Van Strategy
C85227-SK-132 A – Refuse Vehicle Tracking

Street Scenes

BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 1 – Street Scene (A - Central Code Edge)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 2 – Street Scene (B-C – Waterfront/Habitat Edge)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 3 – Street Scene (D1-D2 - View Corridor)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 4 – Street Scene (E - Main Street)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 5 – Street Scene (F-G - Link Street/Habitat Edge)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 6 – Street Scene (H - Fastrack Edge)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 7 – Street Scene (I - Link View)

BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 8 – Street Scene (J - Linear Park)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 9 – Street Scene (K - Habitat Edge)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 10 – Street Scene (L - Link Street)
BRS.6001_50_17C Sheet 11 – Street Scene (M – Habitat Edge)

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

Detail Drawings

09.6722.416 Rev D – Parapet Detail
1531/DET/01 – Eaves and Verge Details
1556/A/16 Rev P/D – Balcony Details
1556/NC40/54 – Oriel Window Detail
08273-PL-(00)-0252 – Detail through Car Park Opening
1573/DET/01 – Feature Entrance Porch

Pre-Commencement

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 and the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory means of surface water drainage in accordance with Policy CS25 of the Dartford Core Strategy and DP2 of the Dartford Development Policies Plan.

INFORMATIVE: KCC will expect for it to be demonstrated, as part of the detailed drainage design, that any changes in permeable areas (from assumptions made in the outline planning permission), and therefore the associated run off from the site, can be accommodated within the wider strategic network.

Prior to Development Above Foundation Level

4. Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, no development above foundation level shall take place until details and samples of the materials for the following elements have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) External surfaces of all dwellings and associated storage structures including facing brick, roof tiles, fibre cement cladding, render, fenestration (including all doors to ground floor storage areas on apartments);
 - b) Hard surfacing materials to be used in the external finishes of all roads, footpaths, parking areas, areas allocated for bin collection points, terrace areas for ground floor apartments, specification of edging, kerbs and treatment of paving transitions;
 - c) Architectural detailing including all details listed in the approved housetype pack including alternating projecting brick course, recessed string course, landmark apartment feature brickwork, and contrasting brick panel. A sample panel shall be prepared on site for all details for inspection;
 - d) Details of the method for affixing fibre cement panel to the buildings in respect of feature porches and canopies, bay and oriel window details. A sample panel shall be prepared on site for inspection;

- e) Balconies and balustrades including :
 - i) Sample of steel frame balcony sample to be provided on site for inspection showing timber and fibre cement board inserts,
 - ii) Finish to the underside of balcony platform;
 - iii) detail of corner balcony platforms demonstrating continuous unobstructed access;
- f) Screen detail to be used on undercroft car parking including materials. A sample shall be prepared on site for these details for inspection;
- g) Details of boundaries including:
 - i) materials and images of timber fencing,
 - ii) materials for brick boundary and retaining walls, including piers, and including decorative features to break up boundary walls of significant height e.g. above retaining walls;
 - iii) gates and railings
- h) External service/meter box design, material and locations;
- i) External rainwater goods;
- j) External lighting (in relation to design/appearance);
- k) Street furniture (including bollards); and
- l) Details of how parking spaces will be demarcated.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and without prejudice to conditions of visual amenity in the locality, in accordance with Dartford Development Policies Plan Policy DP2.

INFORMATIVE: It is recommended that a larger range of brick types is provided than set out on the materials plan to add variety; painting on the ground for parking spaces should be avoided; and Juliet balcony should be serviced by doors and not windows. In relation to the wrap-around balconies, the plans appear to show two separate platforms with a space in the middle. It is recommended the space in the middle is in-filled and the platforms joined to create a larger external space.

5. Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, no development above foundation level shall take place until a refuse storage and collection strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details shall include:

- a) The location of domestic storage and a demonstration that where houses have no direct access from garden to road, there is sufficient space elsewhere to accommodate refuse storage;
- b) Appropriate collection points within the public realm including full details of any associated structure or hardstanding.

The private and communal refuse storage areas for the development hereby approved, as shown on the approved plans, including the associated bin collection points where applicable, shall be constructed, furnished and made available for use prior to relevant dwelling first being occupied. The communal refuse storage areas shall thereafter be retained and kept available for use by the residents at all times and collection points kept clear and unobstructed.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity, in accordance with adopted Dartford Development Policies Plan Policies DP2, DP3 and DP4.

INFORMATIVE – The applicant is advised that the location of refuse collection

points in the public realm should not conflict with any tree planting, landscaping or parking spaces. In the event a tree must be removed, an alternative location should be found to replace it within the site.

6. Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, no development above foundation level shall take place until the following landscape details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:
 - a) Final layout and spacing of trees in the landscaping strips adjacent to the trees lining Main Street so the species and locations can be fully co-ordinated;
 - b) Maintenance prescriptions for proposed hedgerows, including heights they are to be maintained at;
 - c) Combined plan to show locations and details of all tree root barriers to be used in relation to adjacent hard surfacing and surface and foul water systems and routes for all other services;
 - d) Typical tree pit detail showing root barrier installation;
 - e) Details to demonstrate there is sufficient space in the narrow verge adjacent to Main Street to accommodate the proposed trees;
 - f) Review of planting to the soft verge in front of plots K21/K22 and H12/H13;
 - g) Full details of final lighting column positions in relation to proposed trees.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and ensure there are no conflicts between services and street furniture that would result in conflict with landscaping design in accordance with adopted Dartford Development Policies Plan Policies DP2.

INFORMATIVE – KCC have advised there are several instances along View Corridor where light columns conflict with the proposed landscaping scheme. The position of some lighting columns set back behind the trees will cause shadowing onto the highway which is not acceptable in relation to highway safety. The applicant is advised to develop an alternative solution that resolves this problem without the loss of regular tree planting, which is crucial to the character of this important corridor. In relation to additional planting (g.) it is felt an additional tree could be located to the verge in front of K21/K22 and shrub planting within the verge in front of plots H12/H13.

Prior to First Occupation

7. No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until suitable Electric Vehicle Charging ductwork, capable of receiving the underlying infrastructure for future Electric Vehicle Charging points serving car parking bays from the apartment block plant room, has been installed to serve 4 parking spaces in locations to be submitted in writing and agreed with the local planning authority. The ductwork channelling shall thereafter be made available to the individual or company responsible for the car parking area, enabling the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure as and when demand from residents arises.

Reason: To ensure that the development is adequately future proofed enabling the future installation and activation of Electrical Vehicle Charging as and when demand arises, in accordance with adopted Dartford Development Policies Plan Policies DP1, DP4, and Dartford Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document 2012.

8. The dwellings hereby approved shall not be occupied until the areas shown on the approved layout as vehicle parking spaces / garaging / car port have been provided, surfaced and drained. The spaces identified as parking for vans, visitors, and unallocated on the approved Parking Provision plan shall be kept available at all times as unallocated parking. Thereafter, 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 area of land reserved for vehicle parking or in such a position as to preclude its use for vehicle parking.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with adopted Dartford Development Policies Plan Policies DP3 and DP4.

9. The dwellings hereby approved shall not be occupied until the visibility splays as set out in the approved drawings have been provided. The splays shall be kept clear of obstructions over 600mm in height (measured from footway level) at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway and pedestrian safety, in accordance with adopted Dartford Development Policies Plan Policies DP3 and DP4.

10. The cycle storage facilities for the apartments hereby approved, as shown on the approved plans, shall be constructed, furnished and made available for use prior to the relevant dwelling first being occupied. These cycle storage areas shall thereafter be retained and kept available for use by the residents at all times.

Reason: In order to encourage sustainable travel, in accordance with adopted Dartford Development Policies Plan Policies DP3 and DP4.

Other

11. All dwellings and ground floor apartments in the development hereby approved, shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Building Regulations Part M4 (2), evidence demonstrating compliance should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.

Reason: To ensure that the internal layout of the building provides flexibility for the accessibility of future occupiers and their changing needs over time, in accordance with Dartford Development Policies Plan Policy DP8.

INFORMATIVES:

1. POSITIVE AND CREATIVE APPROACH TO DECISION-TAKING

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, as local planning authority, has approached the proposed development in a positive and creative way, focusing on finding solutions

- Pre-application advice was given
- The agent was advised of planning issues during the processing of the application and additional information has been submitted to address these.
- The application was determined within the relevant timescales agreed through a Planning Performance Agreement.

2. OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION

The applicant is reminded that this decision is an approval of reserved matters pursuant to an outline planning permission and that the conditions attached to the outline planning permission also have to be complied with.

3. REASON FOR IMPOSITION OF PRE-COMMENCEMENT CONDITIONS

Pursuant to Articles 35 (1) and (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the requirements of planning conditions 3 (including the timing of compliance) is so fundamental to the development permitted that such details must be submitted prior to works commencing on site.

4. BUILDING REGULATIONS AND OTHER CONSENTS

This decision DOES NOT imply any consent, which may be required under the Building Regulations or under any other enactment or provision. Nor does it override any private rights which any person may have relating to the land affected by this decision, including the provisions of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.

5. NAMING AND NUMBERING

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.

6. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, before the development hereby approved is commenced, that all necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained and that the limits of highway boundary are clearly established in order to avoid any enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the road. This is called 'highway land'. Some of this land is owned by The Kent County Council (KCC) whilst some are owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil. Information about how to clarify the highway boundary can be found at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/highwayland/highway-boundary-enquiries>.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under such legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

7. LANDSCAPING

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.

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.
- 1.2. 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) being developed by Redrow, is located to the southwest.
- 1.3. Outline planning permission was granted for EQ for up to 6,250 dwellings together with associated open space, social infrastructure and employment floorspace in 2007 and then varied in 2013 with all matters reserved for later consideration. A second variation to the outline approval was granted in March 2018.
- 1.4. The extant 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.
- 1.5. Phase 1 of Castle Hill, consisting of 150 dwellings to the northwest corner of EQ has been completed by Ward Homes and is occupied. Phase 2 is located immediately to the west of Phase 1, consisting 170 market dwellings plus 125 affordable homes, has several occupations and is nearing completion. The construction of Phase 3A located immediately to the west of Phase 2, consisting 154 market dwellings and 42 affordable housing units, is now underway. Castle Hill Neighbourhood Centre (Phase 5) is located immediately south of Phase 2 and comprises an approved mixed use scheme for commercial/residential due to commence works next month, a community centre and 2FE primary school which opened last year and an affordable housing scheme for 27 dwellings approved July 2018. Planning permission for 138 dwellings to the south of the neighbourhood centre (eastern section of Phase 6) has been granted and construction has commenced.
- 1.6. Infrastructure construction across Castle Hill is progressing including principal roads and the Fastrack dedicated public transport corridor. A hierarchy of open spaces is being delivered including local neighbourhood greens, a larger village green and a lakeside park. A roundabout has been constructed along Southfleet Road to upgrade the access into the site and this facilitates access to the south of Castle Hill along the southern loop road.

Application Site

- 1.7. Notwithstanding a small individual site in the neighbourhood centre, the areas of Castle Hill which do not yet have detailed consent are those in the southwestern corner: Phase 4, and the remaining part of Phase 6. Together, these phases cover a large area of approximately 12ha and measuring some 370m north-south and 300m east-west. To the north, the area is bounded by the Fastrack corridor. Through the middle, runs the southern loop road, 'Main Street', which serves Castle Hill South and will eventually connect into the central village to the west and subdivides the area with Phase 4 to the north and Phase 6 to the south. Castle Hill Lake, which was constructed as part of the advance infrastructure works, is located to the south. To the west, the site borders the central Green Zone which will

provide a semi-natural amenity space open to the public at all times, marking the boundary between Castle Hill and the central village. Along the eastern boundary adjacent to Phase 4 is the Castle Hill Neighbourhood Centre comprising a 2FE primary school, community centre, and up to 911m² of retail floor space (A1, A2, A3, A5) Below the southern loop road to the east of Phase 6 is an area identified as a public 'Linear Park' open space, the details of which are yet to be agreed. In the centre of the site and to the north of Main Street, a Neighbourhood Green is proposed which will be delivered by the landowner.

- 1.8. Two separate planning applications have been submitted for the determination of reserved matters to cover these remaining phases. One application for market housing submitted by Taylor Wimpey and the second application submitted by Clarion Housing Group. It should be noted that although they are two separate applications, discussions on the schemes have been conjoined with both developers at the same meetings.
- 1.9. This application is for the Clarion development and covers a large area of approximately 4.6ha.
- 1.10. Being a former chalk quarry, the development platform is considerably lower than the surrounding land and chalk cliffs line the site perimeter. The topography across EQ slopes considerably, notably from north to south across this section of Castle Hill, the land falls from north to south over approximately 20m.
- 1.11. The application site subject of this application is divided into 5 distinct parcels for the purposes of assessment. They are located in the northwest, southwest and southeast corners of Phase 4 (north of Main Street); and eastern and western sections of Phase 6, separated by an affordable housing in the middle (south of Main Street).

Proposal

- 1.12. This application seeks approval for reserved matters pursuant to the extant 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 126 houses (59 x 2bed; 64 x 3bed; 3 x 4bed), and 37 flats (6 x 1bed; 22 x 2bed) distributed across 2no. apartment blocks and 9no. flats over garages (FOGs). The proposed tenure is 140 units provided as affordable housing comprising 25 affordable rent and 115 shared ownership. The remaining 23 units are to be grant funded open market housing which Clarion have indicated will become shared ownership units. Clarion Housing is the appointed affordable housing provider for Castle Hill. The site would have a density of 65dph.
- 1.13. The proposal includes associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.14. 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
 - e) Boundary treatment

- f) Surface finishes, hard landscaping details
- h) External lighting (to buildings, car parks etc.)
- j) Cycle parking

- 1.15. 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 north of the site, a local neighbourhood green at the centre of Phase 4 and a separate neighbourhood green accommodated within the linear park to the east of the site. These spaces are being brought forward by the landowner and will be submitted under separate applications. 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.
- 1.16. In accordance with condition 28, a noise assessment has been submitted to identify the impact on dwellings that would be located adjacent to a principal highway.
- 1.17. Details of an action plan in relation to broadband access has been included in the submission to address condition 30.
- 1.18. The application is supported by several documents and plans:
- Plans:
 - Location Plan
 - Layout Plans
 - Contour Plan
 - House type plans and elevations (including indicative materials)
 - Site sections
 - Streetscene elevations
 - Refuse strategy
 - Hard and soft landscape layout plan and Management Plan
 - Lighting Layouts
 - Road GA Plan
 - Engineering Layout
 - Swept Path Analysis
 - Planning Design and Access Statement
 - Internal Space Size Matrix
 - Noise Assessment Note
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING 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 EDC/17/0048 S73 application for the variation of conditions of DA/12/01451/EQVAR relating to parameter plans and strategies. Approved 28.03.18
- 2.4 The outline planning permission reserved all matters for future development but fixed certain elements including:
- 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

- 2.5 The outline permission sets a structured approach to the consideration of reserved 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.
- 2.6 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 application site (which encompasses Parcel 4 and part of Parcel 6) is covered by two of these AMP areas; Castle Hill Central and Castle Hill South.
- 2.7 The Castle Hill Central AMP was approved in October 2014 (DA/14/00584/EQCHC - Castle Hill Central Area Master Plan & Written statement - September 2014). The Castle Hill South AMP was approved as a combined AMP and Design Code document in February 2017 (EDC/16/0094 - Castle Hill South Area Master Plan & Design Code - January 2017). Under the same permission, the Design Code for Land West of Castle Hill Central Neighbourhood Area (Parcel 4) was also approved (EDC/16/0094 - Castle Hill Central (West Parcel) Design Code - January 2017).

- 2.8 For the most part Parcel 4 is designed to be low to medium density market and affordable housing, with higher density housing situated along the Fastrack public transport corridor. Parcel 6 is designed to be low to medium density market and affordable housing with a Linear Park through the middle and areas of open space around the lake. In both areas the design Codes identify character areas through frontage styles, treatment of public realms and response to landscape features rather than a specific architectural style.
- 2.9 It should be noted that since they were submitted together by the current landowner, in dialogue with the housebuilders, design concepts developed within the Castle Hill South AMP, such as Character Edges and Streets, have been drawn through the Design Code for the Castle Hill Central Neighbourhood Area (Parcel 4). During discussions with the developer, the Design Code for the Castle Hill Central Neighbourhood Area (Parcel 4) has been the focus for discussion.

3.0 PUBLICITY

- 3.1 Site notice expiry date: 30 Aug 2018
- 3.2 Press notice expiry date: 30 Aug 2018

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 No representations have been received in respect of this application. 1 letter of representation has been received in objection to application ref. EDC/17/0107 for the construction of 332 dwellings. The objection to the planning application raises the following concerns: -
- Affect local ecology
 - Development too high
 - General dislike of proposal
 - Increase in traffic
 - Over development
 - Strain on existing community facilities
 - Traffic or Highways
 - Unwanted in the area

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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

- Swanscombe And Greenhithe Town Council
- Bean Residents Association
- Swanscombe And Greenhithe Residents Association
- KCC Lead Local Flood Authority
- KCC Highways And Transportation
- Dartford Borough Council
- NHS DGS Clinical Commissioning Group
- Police Crime Prevention Officer
- CSA Landscape Consultant

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

- 5.3 Swanscombe And Greenhithe Town Council

No observations.

5.4 KCC Lead Local Flood Authority

No comments to make regarding the approval of reserved matters for this phase of development. Comment made that it will be expected, through detailed drainage design that any changes in permeable areas and therefore associated run off from the site can be accommodated within the wider strategic network.

EDC Officer Response: No drainage details have been submitted with the application. It is therefore necessary to condition submission of these details for approval and in so doing a note can be added to the decision notice to advise of KCC's expectations.

5.5 Police Crime Prevention Officer

Initial comments identified that the applicant had not engaged with Crime Prevention and there were issues that needed to be discussed.

EDC Officer Response: These comments have been passed on to the applicant. It is understood a meeting has been arranged to discuss these issues. Any feedback will be reported as supplementary information.

5.6 Dartford Borough Council

- *Environmental Health:* No objections in respect of noise. On reconsultation on amended plans, it was confirmed the noise exposure is acceptable.
- *Housing:* No comment relating to detailed layout, design, or affordable housing.
- *Planning:* Initial comments regarding concerns that the layout leads to large parking courtyards that lead to opportunities for crime that should be designed out. Subsequent reconsultation, no issues raised in relation to layout but make recommendation for provision of electric vehicle charging pints.

EDC Officer Response: Issues with large parking courtyards was identified and addressed with the applicant as part of the negotiations. It is considered DBC's concerns have been overcome in this respect. Matters regarding EV charging points is picked up in the discussion below and is recommended to be conditioned.

5.7 KCC Highways And Transportation

Extensive engagement has been held with Kent Highways including several meetings and rounds of correspondence. Initial comments identified several areas that needed refinement. Concerns raised in relation to the location of car parking and design solutions to the number of parking spaces; conflict with manoeuvring cars; pedestrian routes; road alignment; adoption boundaries; retaining walls abutting highways and detailed comments on individual parcels. Additional information was requested on visibility splays; swept path analysis; Road Safety Audit; car parking schedule including electronic car charging points, refuse strategy, reversing distances, footway widths, verge widths and landscaping details, through routes, street lighting .

Changes were agreed that achieved a balance between design objectives while making sure safety aspects were adhered, including establishing a street hierarchy that complied to the necessary road dimensions, parking arrangements adjusted, moving car parking spaces at least 10m away from junctions. All details requested emerged during the course of the application to address concerns.

Comments in respect of parking identified more provision was being made for smaller units than larger ones and a concern that triple tandem parking spaces would be under-used. However, it is considered an acceptable balance has been achieved

overall in terms of allocated and visitor parking and the overriding need to promote sustainable modes of transport within Castle Hill.

It is noted that a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of the site layout has been completed, together with a Designer's Response. This further addresses many of the points previously raised by KCC H&T's Agreements Engineer. Suitable design changes to overcome the issues raised have been made and/or committed to via the Section 38 process. Specifically, however, the positioning and specification of the proposed street trees must take account of the need to avoid the obstruction of sight lines and street lighting, as this may otherwise delay the Section 38 process.

Final conclusion of no objection, subject to standards conditions in relation to construction vehicle; provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing; provision and permanent retention of the vehicle loading/unloading and turning facilities shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing; provision and permanent retention of secure, covered cycle parking facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

EDC Officer Response: Previous issues at Castle Hill on engagement with KCC have been recognised and consultation with both the Development Planners and Agreements Team has been undertaken for this application. From the initial submission, significant changes have been undertaken to the layout and design to address the considerable list of concerns initially raised. It is not considered suggested conditions in relation to construction is necessary in this instance since such matters are covered by the Code of Construction Practice under the outline permission.

5.8 CSA Landscape Consultant

Initial comments made identifying that the landscape proposals offer a comprehensive submission for hard and soft landscaping that accords with the approved design code, subject to recommended amendments relating to additional tree planting in the public realm, enhancement of apartment block landscaping, reconsideration of species planting in smaller plot areas; and provision of a management plan.

Subsequent comments on revised drawings acknowledge additional trees. It is noted opportunities for planting have been left blank in the drawings and should be re-examined. No change to smaller planting beds which still need looking at. Lighting details now added but incorrect information and therefore unclear if there are any conflicts with tree planting. Management plan still required.

Final comments indicate some conflict may still arise between lighting columns and street trees particularly along View Corridor, condition recommended in relation to management for proposed hedgerows, root barrier and tree pit details, as well as details for planting to narrow verge along Main Street to ensure there is sufficient space to accommodate trees.

EDC Officer Response: Landscaping discussed in full below. Recommended conditions have been added to decision notice. It is noted that different comment have been made in respect of EDC/17/0107 and EDC/17/0108 but the issues cross over since there is an overlap in the red line boundary. It is therefore recommended that appropriate conditions are replicated on both consents.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY

6.1 National Policy & Guidance

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

6.2 Development Plan

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
CS11	-	Housing Delivery
CS15	-	Managing Transport Demand
CS17	-	Design of Homes
CS18	-	Housing Mix
CS19	-	Affordable Housing
CS23	-	Minimising Carbon Emissions
CS25	-	Water Management

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
Kent Design Guide

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 11 of the NPPF encourages housing applications to be considered in the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development and paragraph 72 endorses the provision of new homes that follow the principles of Garden Cities as an identity of quality. 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, Area Masterplans and Design Codes) that have all been approved pursuant to the outline permission and form a comprehensive strategy and set of objectives for the delivery of housing in this location.
- 7.5 The relevant AMPs and Design Codes which cover this area identify the application site as medium density residential development with areas of low density along the lake edge and high density in key landmark locations, interspersed and boarding areas of open space. The proposed application complies with this broad development strategy established in the AMP. The AMP identifies affordable housing provision in shared ownership tenure to come forward broadly in the location of the application site. The latterly approved Design Code refined the location of this residential development to the south-east corner of the central area.
- 7.6 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).
- 7.7 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.

- 7.8 To date, 849 market units have been granted detailed permission in Castle Hill (Phases 1, 2, 3a, 5, Part 6 (east) and LDO A and B) with a further 332 under consideration. Of those approximately 439 are occupied. Within Phases 2, 3 and 5, 262 affordable units have already been granted detailed permission and are under construction, with 68 completions. Based on these figures, the development is in compliance with the requirements of the S106. 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.
- 7.9 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

o Access & Layout:

- 7.10 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).
- 7.11 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

- 7.12 Section 9 of the NPPF provides guidance for promoting sustainable transport where paragraph 102 supports opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. This is supported in policy CS15 of the Core Strategy which supports use of sustainable means of transport and provision of the Fastrack bus route 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.

- 7.13 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

- 7.14 The principal routes and junctions through EQ and the spine roads that surround the application site have already been approved at outline stage and subsequent advance infrastructure applications. Access to the site has therefore already been secured by high level documents and previous detailed permissions for highway infrastructure. As such, the site fits well into the wider road, pedestrian and cycle network and public transport corridor since this has been planned strategically.
- 7.15 The principal distributor roads are positioned around the perimeter with Main Street dissecting the site through the middle, creating two distinct areas. Accesses into these areas are provided from the distributor road at specific points. From these access points, the roads branch off into local streets, creating smaller perimeter development blocks.
- 7.16 The position of the streets broadly follows the layout set out in the AMPs which identifies a hierarchy of street typologies. The movement network identified in the Castle Hill Central AMP has been developed further in the relevant Design Code, drawing on design principles from the Castle Hill South AMP.
- 7.17 After the principal distributor roads and Fastrack corridor, the next street typology in the hierarchy is 'View Corridor' which plays an important role in providing a visual and green link between public open spaces within and outside the area. Running through the middle of the area from Fastrack to the proposed Neighbourhood Green, the View Corridor then splits into two straight branches that use the natural topography of the site to allow a consistent line of sight through the development between public open spaces and to the lake shore and iconic chalk cliffs to the south. View Corridor does not provide a direct vehicular link since it is interrupted by Main Street. However, it provides vistas to the dramatic landscape features which aid legibility and provides a strong, direct and attractive pedestrian and cycle route with a wide landscaped strip with regular planting. The alignment of one View Corridor is slightly skewed to the northern end adjacent to the Neighbourhood Green limiting views of the cliffs and lake from isolated positions from within the open space. This has been improved slightly through negotiation with the applicant and while not completely resolved, the overall purpose and role of View Corridor would be delivered. The quality of the space at the northernmost tip of View Corridor is also diluted by the orientation of dwellings towards Link Street and Fastrack Edge. This is an unfortunate scenario since it reduces the level of natural surveillance though a short section which is also partially pedestrian only. However it is a reasonably wide space

with decent landscaping and therefore would not feel too oppressive. Attempts have also been made to ensure there are windows to the side elevation of the properties, albeit secondary windows.

- 7.18 The third street typology identified in the AMP/Code is 'Link Street' which is a minor access road serving the key residential parcels and providing a 'spine' within the parcels, linking to lower category streets. Discussion of the omission of one branch of Link Street is discussed in the relevant report for EDC/17/0107 since it falls outside the boundary for this application. The position of link streets to the south of Main Street is consistent with the AMP.
- 7.19 Due to the way the site has been divided into several small perimeter blocks, an additional street typology has been developed. The AMP anticipated a lower level street would emerge through detailed design but did not determine specific detailing. The applicant has named these streets 'Link View'. In general, these streets provide access to the private driveways located along the edges of parcels and are generally set out with reduced widths and shared surfaces (with one exception to the north of Main Street which serves as the main access into the parcel). An exercise to reduce carriageway widths to this street typology from 4.8m to 4.1 was carried out during negotiations with the applicant to improve the character to this local street typology. These street typologies serve to provide views out of the site and are generally located around the perimeter in order that views are served to the open spaces beyond. Frontages have been splayed at the end in some instances to provide views out.
- 7.20 There is no direct access from either the Fastrack corridor (being a dedicated public transport route) or the distributor roads. At the time of the AMP, direct access was not supported by Kent Highways. The effect of limiting direct accesses has been to provide local access driveways which have created challenges to layout design. The provision of these local access roads either side of Main Street creates a very wide corridor to the main distributor road which is not desirable. However, it is acknowledged there is an explanation for this outside the applicant's control.
- 7.21 The effect on the layout from non-direct access onto Fastrack has also been the subject of extensive discussion. Initial layout drawings showed a very poor environment to the street to the rear of the Fastrack properties which was dominated by rows of parallel car parking, including some in between buildings directly fronting Fastrack. FOGS were introduced on the northern side of the street to benefit from natural sunlight and absorb some of the on street parking by incorporating the parking underneath while creating overlooking and activity. The parking has been broken up with some landscaping to help soften the appearance of this street and the apartment block on the corner extended to absorb the parking as undercroft (x18 spaces). The houses have now been replaced with a 3 storey apartment block which is in keeping with the style, form and scale of the adjacent block, creating a more satisfactory streetscene. It is to the applicant's credit that this block also incorporates 5 undercroft parking spaces, creating 23 in total.
- 7.22 It is, however, considered the street to the rear of Fastrack will lack a human scale and desired level of natural surveillance since there will be no ground floor windows and areas where 1.8m high boundary walls, some sitting above 1.0-1.5m high retaining walls. Some overlooking will result from FOGs which have been designed with full height windows and there is some landscaping proposed, albeit limited. It is acknowledged there were difficulties experienced also with the size of the perimeter blocks and some improvements have been secured. However, to make changes at this point would result in considerable changes to the whole layout which is not

considered expedient. This street typology stretches across both this application site and the adjacent site the subject of application reference EDC/17/0107 which is currently under consideration for market housing that makes up the remaining parcels in Castle Hill South. However, the length of this street relevant to this application is relatively short (some 80m). On balance, due to the design constraints affection layout and in the context of the wider site, it is not considered to cause sufficient harm to justify a refusal. It is recommended a condition is imposed to detail the boundary wall to secure some brickwork detailing (e.g. different coursing detailing) to try and relieve the impact.

- 7.23 Other notable changes to the original layout design during the course of the application include the eastern edge of the section north of Main Street. This edge fronts the north-south distributor road and the Castle Hill village centre. The original drawings proposed a very poor layout which comprised 4 storey flat-roof apartment blocks interspersed with 3 storey semi-detached houses with pitched. This resulted in a poor level of enclosure opposite the village square, secondary school/community centre and approved mixed use scheme, all which promote large buildings around an open square and the design of the houses jarred against the scale and form of the apartment block. The frontages of the flat blocks have now been elongated and houses removed to create a consistent building line and improved building scale. This change has resulted in the provision of an extensive rear parking courtyards to the rear of the flats. Due to the site levels, the car park has been terraced, serviced by 3 separate access roads which breaks the car park up into distinct sections, reducing its overall impact. A landscaping scheme including a living wall – retaining wall topped with planting – has been designed to further soften the impact of the rear parking courtyards.
- 7.24 The layout also includes parking courtyards to the rear of houses. This has now been reduced by 1 to 3 but results in a poor layout where parking spaces are separated from their relevant units and lacks in natural surveillance and activity. FOGs have been introduced to the courtyards to help address this although it would be preferable to remove the courtyards altogether, this would not be possible to bring forward the number of car parking spaces required. In his respect, the limited occurrence is not considered sufficiently harmful to the overall layout to warrant a refusal.
- 7.25 Much discussion was had with the applicant on the design and hierarchy of the streets due largely to the scale of the site and concern for legibility. The streets reflect different cross sections as identified in the AMP and depending on the status of the road in the hierarchy, use different carriageway widths, provision of footpaths or shared surfaces, landscape treatment including hard landscaping. Legibility is also aided by the sloping topography which helps orientation, provides opportunities for vistas out to the Quarry's natural landscape features, long views along primary roads and shorter along lower ranking streets to identify direction of travel drawing through the site, as well as key buildings and open spaces. The applicant also developed the concept of a 'nodal space' in three key locations: one along the link street running east to west through the parcel north of Main Street; and two in the parcel south of Main Street (though only one of these two falls within the boundary for this application) where each View Corridor crosses Link Street. The applicant claims this feature provides opportunities to animate the space, pushing the building line back, providing opportunities for additional planting and using 'parking to animate space'. In very limited locations, houses have been pushed back slightly from the road edge. This is considered to be largely a consequence of removing rear parking courtyards rather than delivery of a nodal space. It is not apparent that these nodes have provided any greater opportunities for landscaping than identified on the original

plans. The nodes are demarcated on the plans with a change in hard surface material limited to the carriageway only, and each have different and irregular forms which do not appear to follow a particular strategy. The plans appear to indicate that these are not raised tables, as no ramps are indicated. The Road Safety Audit and consideration by Kent Highways will inform the ultimate decision as to what form these features should take. The need for these features is not fully understood. It is acknowledged they may serve as traffic calming and a change in surface helps aid wayfinding, however, the overall concept of a nodal space appears to have been lost.

- 7.26 The alignment of the roads has also been designed in consultation with Kent Highways to ensure traffic calming is integral to the layout design to avoid the need for excessive vertical and horizontal deflections. Slight deviations in the road have therefore been designed in at the regular intervals to avoid long stretches of straight lines which attract higher traffic speeds. This is particularly relevant given the site's sloping topography. Consequently however, this has frustrated some pedestrian/cycle routes which feature several corners/turns rather than providing a direct route which is preferred. Some routes work well, such as View Corridor and other which incorporate public open spaces, creating attractive, desirable routes and aiding legibility. In the interest of good urban design, buildings are turned to face the primary routes. Consequently, many of the local streets suffer from a lack of adequate development frontage. This affects the quality of pedestrian/cycle routes where there is a lack of natural surveillance. This also affects the termination of some views which end at 'dead' frontages such as parking spaces or garages. These instances are generally limited and most streets terminate at open spaces or the principal roads, albeit these are generally shorter stretches of View corridors rather than sweeping vistas. One instance where a termination point was improved was the relocation of the substation which in earlier layouts was enclosed in the middle of the housing parcel the houses to the west of the Neighbourhood Green. This resulted in an awkward access arrangement and limited opportunities for making the street around the perimeter of the neighbourhood green narrower to reflect a lower hierarchy. The substation was relocated to the adjacent road but terminated views from the linking street which was not desirable. It was recommended to swap the substation and adjacent tree to rectify this problem.
- 7.27 Principal streets through the site form complete circuits for vehicular traffic. Connectivity at secondary and tertiary streets is limited by cul-de-sacs at the request of Kent Highways to control the amount of traffic using the road that it is designed to take. However, this does not prohibit access for pedestrians and cyclists. Although there are no dedicated pedestrian/cycle routes, they are not prohibited to use any of the routes. It is recognised a balance has to be struck between design and Highways instruction and therefore the permeability through the site is considered to be good.
- 7.28 Although there are some areas in the site where the creation of well-defined streets and spaces has not been delivered so successfully, overall the site layout can be said to be generally good. The road layout is based on a grid pattern in-keeping with the EQ Transport Strategy and a road hierarchy has been established which has undergone extensive examination in conjunction with Kent Highways and complies with the guidelines set out in the AMP/Code. The hierarchy and legibility of the site is aided by key buildings on corners, landmark buildings and vistas to landscape features and there is clear distinction between public and private defensible spaces.

Accessibility

- 7.29 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, Lifetime Homes has now been withdrawn. Requirements for accessibility are 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'.

- 7.30 The application states all of the houses and ground floor units within the apartment buildings meet accessibility standards under Building Regulations Part M4(2). In addition all apartments located within buildings with lifts also comply with Part M4(2). Accessibility level M4(2) cannot be achieved on units above ground floor without a lift. The application states that it is cost prohibitive in terms of service charges to include lifts in apartment buildings of less than 4 storeys as the cost of maintenance is shared by a smaller number of units which results in a significantly higher service charge. EDC Officers accept this position and have applied the same approach to other consents in Castle Hill.
- 7.31 The development will provide 126 houses and 24 apartments (within Block A) to the M4(2) accessibility level. This equates to 92% of the proposed units being accessible and adaptable for wheelchair users.
- 7.32 The development does not propose any M4(3) wheelchair user units. Clarion are providing 22 affordable rent properties over which DBC have nomination rights. Although no comments had been made in their consultation response, confirmation has been sought as to whether there is any demand for socially rented units to be M4(3) wheelchair ready. Any response will be reported as supplementary information.
- 7.33 It is acknowledged the proposal meets the 25% required by the outline consent for EQ. The level of accessibility across the site is generally acceptable. It appears from the information submitted that there would be no ramped access in the public realm. and, on balance, it is not considered that the accessibility level of the upper floor flats which do not have access to a lift is sufficiently harmful to the scheme to withhold planning permission, given the overall percentage across the site. It is recommended that a condition is added to secure the accessibility levels.

Refuse Strategy

- 7.34 It is intended the majority of the roads are offered for adoption, with the only exceptions being the access roads into parking areas and the private no-through access roads along the perimeters. Swept path analysis drawings have been provided by the applicant and examined by Kent Highways. These illustrate that the layout as initially submitted is capable of accommodating the largest vehicles including for refuse and fire. Initial comments that insufficient detailing had been provided has now been addressed through the provision of additional plans and Kent Highways raise no further objection
- 7.35 Refuse storage to the apartment blocks are integral. In respect of the dwellings, each house has a gated entrance into the garden that provides opportunities to bring

refuse out to the street easily. The FOGs also have refuse storage provision in the ground floor.

- 7.36 The location of bin collection points has been challenged with the applicant since the strategy drawing appears to suggest proposed bin collection points are located in inappropriate locations in the middle of roads which would cause an obstruction directly in front of units or parking spaces or clashing with landscape features. The strategy does not appear to be well thought out and the suggested solutions are not desirable.
- 7.37 The applicant has responded saying the submitted plan is intended to show the general location of where bin storage will be needed give the bin carry distances shown on the plan. The small area of hard standing where bins would be stored would need to be provided in a way which does not clash with the parking spaces etc. but it is envisaged that the bin storage hardstanding detail could be provided as part of the working drawings/detailed design stage.
- 7.38 There is some concern that sufficient consideration has not been given to this detail and space given within the streets for collection. It is considered to be a detail that can be determined by condition and it is therefore recommended a detailed refuse storage/collection strategy is secured by condition. Since it is possible this might lead to amendments to the layout, it is considered appropriate to condition this to come forward at foundation stage so early enough consideration is given.

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

- 7.39 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.
- 7.40 Consideration of scale relates to the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings.

Policy

- 7.41 The NPPF sets out the creation of high quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It identifies good design as being a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work and helping make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 124). It states planning decisions should ensure developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development, demonstrates good architecture, is sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment (paragraph 127) 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 130). 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

- 7.42 Matters of scale are intrinsically linked to good design quality as set out in NPPF Paragraph 124 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.

Character Areas

- 7.43 The AMP/Code identifies various character areas to define the urban environment: street typologies (Fastrack, Main Street, View Corridor and Link View discussed above), 'edges' where the built environment meets the surrounding open spaces and landmark or 'key' buildings. The character areas within this application site are as follows:

- Fastrack:
Fronting the Fastrack public transport corridor. Is a signature street characterised by spacious width, with frontage development along its length with facing front doors, tight grain and increased building heights, flanked by key buildings to provide scale.
- Central Code Edge:
Located to the eastern boundary north of Main Street and opposite the Castle Hill Neighbourhood Centre. There should be a level of consistency to ensure a strong street experience is created. Composed of a mixture of apartments and houses, all with active frontages with front doors addressing the street wherever possible.
- Habitat Edge:
Located along the entire western boundary and along the edge of the lake as far as Waterfront Edge. Adjoins natural and semi-natural green space. Detached and semi-detached dwellings with contemporary façade treatments used to create distinctive scene against natural form of the lake with a loose building arrangement and varying front garden depths.
- Main Street:
Main vehicular route through the area. Has a sense of formality and will be predominantly fronted by medium density semi-detached housing on both sides. Consistent character, eaves and roof line with both sides having a consistent and coordinated approach to parking typologies and unit groupings.
- View Corridor
Provides a visual link between open spaces. A key feature is the 3m planted verge incorporating feature trees to focus the view. Consistent and coordinated approach to building on both sides of the street.

- Link Street
Local streets providing a safe residential environment with minimal carriageway width with traffic calming features to ensure low speeds. Predominantly hard surfaced with tree grilles and intermittent unallocated parking bays.

- 7.44 In relation to scale, the AMPs identify a range of densities from low (up to 30 dph) along the Habitat Edge, medium (30-60 dph) along the Waterfront Edge and core areas (including the whole of the parcel to the north of Main Street) and high (60+ dph) in two discrete areas to the northern and southern ends of the Linear Park Edge. The densities are indicated by an arbitrary line and are representative of the tight or loose urban grain set out in the AMP/Code for each identified character area: from the spacious plots and a loose building grain to reflect the low density of Habitat Edge to the tighter grain of development along Linear Park Edge where landmark apartment blocks are identified in the high density areas. Overall, the density across the site is 65 dph which falls within the high density bracket. Although the overall density is not compliant with the density set out in the AMP, the application seeks to bring forward affordable housing which is proportionate to the market housing in accordance with the S106 Agreement which is considered to carry more weight. The departure from the AMP is therefore considered acceptable in this instance.
- 7.45 The AMPs identify appropriate heights for development according to their location, relationship to open spaces, road hierarchy and corresponding density. Heights of up to 5 storeys are indicated along Fastrack; 3-4 storeys to the higher density apartments blocks either end of Linear Park Edge with development in between falling to 2.5-3 storeys. The remainder of the site is identified as 2-3 storeys. This includes Central Code Edge which fronts the principal north-south distributor road, public space fronting the school and the 4-5 storey mixed use development which forms the heart of Castle Hill Neighbourhood Centre. The guidance set out in the Design Code for this area identifies building heights of 2-3 storey townhouses and 4 storey apartment buildings. It is considered the taller apartment buildings align more closely to the current scenario than the AMP which was determined in 2014 since we now understand the layout, scale and character of the Neighbourhood Centre. Original plans showing townhouses interspersed amongst apartment blocks was not considered acceptable. The 3 storey pitched roof dwellings jarred against height of apartment blocks and did not create the sense of enclosure required opposite the neighbourhood square. It is therefore considered to be in the interest of good urban design that taller apartment buildings are built along this edge in accordance with the Design Code. Accepting this variation from the original AMP, the proposal is compliant with the AMP on building heights.
- 7.46 Although the AMP/Codes identify several different character areas there is no prescriptive guidance on specific architectural themes for each area. Instead guidelines are set out for building forms, design principles and suggested materials. More significant variations are identified in the treatment of frontage types, enclosure and sense of rhythm.
- 7.47 Overall, the proposal follows these guidelines. Following discussion with the applicant, revised plans were provided for the Habitat Edge to better comply with the guidance. The dwellings were angled slightly more from each other to gain a more random positioning and garden depths varied to identify a looser grain of development. The proposal broadly follow the guidelines set out in the AMP/Code. It is noted that the semi-detached dwellings along the Habitat Edge have been design so as to appear like detached properties, in keeping with the Taylor Wimpey scheme on either side, avoiding a 'poor front door' effect. There are some instances where

the rhythm of View Corridor is not coordinated due largely to dwellings turning to face other primary routes. However, this does not occur along the entire length and the most important feature of the 3m verge has been provided.

- 7.48 Extensive negotiation has taken place with the applicant to improve the design quality on the appearance of the dwellings in line with policy and the quality design standard expected for the Ebbsfleet Garden City. The initially submitted housetypes were very 'standard' products with little detailing and failed to meet design expectations; they were an 'anywhere' scheme not specific to Ebbsfleet. The only architectural feature elements included at the initial design stage were 'boxed' windows which had no reference point to the local area. Areas of feature brickwork provided visual interest but were not applied in a way consistent with local vernacular buildings. Reference was made to the horizontal striation of the cliffs on some dwellings through the extensive use of different coloured weatherboarding applied in vertical strips but this was crudely applied and unsuccessful. In general there was a lack of distinction between the housetype to successfully create distinct streetscapes and an over-emphasis on vertical detailing which elongated the elevations upwards.
- 7.49 The applicant was encouraged to develop a narrative to inform the design approach and the design language of the streets and the houses, referencing the local context and conditions of the Quarry to create a distinctive character to the buildings. An assessment was undertaken and submitted as part of the application. It states that the site has similar locational relationships to local centres as some of the more historic areas of Gravesend and that some of the design parameters set out in the Design Codes 'reflect back to traditional detailing (with a contemporary twist) of these areas through the use of projecting bays, detailing and materials. A series of character studies on each character area identified in the AMPs/Codes was provided to illustrate how the local context has been drawn through and developed into the development proposals. Reference was also made to the emerging EDC Design for Ebbsfleet which sets out a design narrative for the Garden City, drawing on how the 'Coombe' character area in the Design for Ebbsfleet document can be interpreted in the proposal.
- 7.50 The applicant's analysis identifies snapshots of largely Georgian and Victorian buildings in the locality in photographs which are deemed to relate to each of the relevant character areas. This provided a clearer context on which to base further assessment and guidance. The study identified detailing that was considered relevant to the context in Castle Hill and translated them into contemporary interpretations that were then applied to the proposed housetypes. New design features such as parapet walls, rendered window surrounds and different types of brick detailing including alternating projecting string courses, recessed string courses and contrasting brick panels were introduced, as well as chimneys to break up ridge lines. As a result, significant improvements were made to the elevational detailing and a greater horizontal emphasis applied. The alignment and size of fenestration was reconsidered, blank elevations animated, and more texture added generally. Dwellings along the wider principal streets added parapet details which accentuated height and improved enclosure. Some key buildings on the junction of two streets were refined to better turn corners. A stronger brick-led approach was adopted and use of weatherboarding reduced. As a result, while the exercise did not manage to shake-off the box window projections entirely, greater interest and variety was added to the housetypes which improved the streetscape at large and finesse added to the bay features.
- 7.51 Several landmark or 'key' buildings are identified in the AMP/Code. The AMP identifies a number of urban design principles should be applied to these key

buildings to emphasise the role and importance of landmarks. Guiding principles for key apartment buildings are that they should address both sides of the corner, use distinctive or distinguishing design features on the corners and show an increase in height scale and mass to development either side. For key dwellings, guidance in the AMP/Code identifies the need for continuous lines, primary frontages facing forwards, reduced prominence of garden frontages and boundary treatments to allow building to be more prominent and use of interesting material effects such as blended or textured brick.

- 7.52 For this application, a key apartment building is located in the north-eastern corner of Fastrack and north-south distributor road. A key house location is located on the southern side of the neighbourhood green.
- 7.53 The landmark apartment building has a similar rectilinear form as the other apartment building and features the same architectural detailing, contemporary appearance, brick facades and detailing through projecting brickwork, inset contrasting brick panels and protruding balconies structures in steel with timber insets. The landmark building, however, is much larger in scale and has an additional storey on higher land. Its prominence on this corner will therefore be much greater than other buildings in the application site. A wrap-around balcony feature has been positioned to emphasise the corner. The building will also be constructed of contrasting brickwork from the flanking buildings. While this will act as a key building, it will not be as tall or as striking in appearance as the Newcrest development on the opposite corner which also acts as a landmark to draw people to the commercial properties on the ground floor.
- 7.54 The landmark house fronting the neighbourhood green is in a prime position directly opposite the open space. The applicant has interpreted this as a terrace of 3 houses. The house typologies have been designed specifically for these plots and area not used elsewhere on the site. The other houses around the neighbourhood green are proposed to be 2 storey with traditional pitched roof (including those in the Taylor Wimpey site). The landmark houses, stand at 3 storeys high with gable ends which create a strong rhythm. Design features include projecting brickwork, box projections and Juliet balcony. It is considered this landmark has been delivered very effectively.
- 7.55 An indicative materials plan has been provided. The plan shows 3 brick types including a red multi, yellow stock, 'grey' (more beige than grey) and generic engineering bricks in red and buff have been identified for corner features brown. In addition, Marley fibre cement panel in 'Sahara', 'Chalk' and 'Argent Grey' are identified for box projections, Marley Eternit Rivendale Blue/Black slate and Redland Duoplain tiles in 'Charcoal' are identified for roofs with barge boards, fascias, soffits, window casements and rainwater goods all in dark grey. These materials are proposed to be used throughout the development.
- 7.56 Some indicative products have been identified although the applicant has expressed a wish that specific materials are not secured by condition in light of potential supply problems that would require unpicking the condition. EDC Officers agree with this approach and it is considered all materials and details of their application to the properties should be conditioned for quality control. There is no objection to the principle of the proposed materials and the way they have been applied is generally appropriate to the site, style of house and Castle Hill setting. However, it is considered a larger range is needed. The proposed brick range and colour schemes is very limited for such a large site and greater variety would be better to identify different character areas. This can be advised as an informative.

- 7.57 EDC Officers are keen to ensure that the final finish of the dwellings and, in particular, the detailing to be applied to the elevations, is of high quality. At the request of EDC Officers, some detailed drawings have been provided relating to eaves detailing, feature entrance porches, balconies, projecting 'oriel' box window surrounds, decorative screens to undercroft parking and parapet wall. Due to the EDC's focus on delivering development of high quality, and given other experiences around Castle Hill where finishes could be carried out with greater finesse, it is considered appropriate that conditions are imposed to secure fine details, including the provision of sample panels to be constructed on site for examination.
- 7.58 Overall, it is acknowledged there have been significant improvements from the original plans. There is general compliance with the AMP and Code and a justification for deviation. Working with Taylor Wimpey on the application with Taylor Wimpey leading on the design, the housetypes are bespoke to the site insofar as the elevational components are not 'standard' for that housetype. It is considered there is a distinction in the streetscenes which provides character which is of a high quality standard and will be enhanced by landmark buildings.

Amenity (including Nationally Described Space Standards)

- 7.59 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).
- 7.60 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. The majority of the units offer more generous double bedroom sizes and storage space than required by the standards.
- 7.61 Each dwelling is provided with adequate garden space. Of the FOGs, only 1 of the 9 has a private garden. This is due largely to the purpose of providing FOGs along the street footage entrance to parking courtyards to provide some surveillance. It does mean they are mostly facing out on to the street and therefore have an open aspect. Each apartment has a private balcony. The balconies are not very large but provide some external amenity space. It is also noted some balconies are located on northerly aspects which do not benefit from direct sunlight. While not ideal, the amount of open space which is accessible in close proximity to the apartments compensates. It is noted some of the apartments have double aspect balconies but despite them being joined to the same frame, the two balcony spaces are separated which is not desirable. It is recommended that full details of the balconies should be secured by condition to address this design flaw.

- 7.62 The layout accommodates adequate distances between the proposed dwellings and the apartment blocks 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.

Housing Mix

- 7.63 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 would be 77:23 which is an acceptable in accordance with the policy. The provision of a small number (2%) of family homes with 4 beds is also compliant with this policy which seeks to deliver smaller family sized accommodation and only 5% as 4+ beds.

Affordable Housing

- 7.64 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 18% rented and 82% shared ownership, in compliance with the policy.

○ **Landscaping**

- 7.65 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

- 7.66 The NPPF states that planning decisions should aim to ensure developments are visually attractive as a result of appropriate landscaping (paragraph 127), 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

- 7.67 The application site is well connected to the wider open spaces within EQ, specifically the Linear Park including lake and circulation route to the south/southeast, the central green zone to the west which forms an open space interface between Castle Hill and the EQ Central Village, and the neighbourhood green which sits in the middle of the site in the parcel north of Main Street. These open spaces are not included within this application but provision is made through the site for direct access to these areas.

- 7.68 Detailed soft landscaping plans were provided in the original submission including plant specification alongside implementation and maintenance guidelines. The landscape treatments to the plot frontages in the initial plans were considered to accord generally with the relevant character areas, generally appropriate plant species had been selected and good stock size trees along with the use of specimen shrubs in key locations that were considered to provide a positive instant impact. Hedgerow planting along Fastrack is supported to provide a structural element within the landscape treatment.
- 7.69 It was noted that tree planting had been shown where opportunities allowed but the proposed layout limited such opportunities and as such was sparse in the public realm, particularly in hard landscaped areas associated with parking bays. Several recommendations were made, including spacing of trees along View Corridor to provide additional planting; find opportunities of any additional tree planting; reconsideration of species used in dwelling frontages to avoid amenity issues; more considered approach to planting in dwelling frontages; and consideration of appropriate shrub placement responding to sun/shade needs accordingly.
- 7.70 Revised landscape plans were provided to align with changes to the layout that had been negotiated with the applicant. Accordingly, the landscape scheme had been revised and the majority of concerns previously raised had been addressed. The revised scheme provided a stronger character variation through the planting styles and generally greater quantity and coverage of tree planting. Appropriate changes to plot frontages were also included. Still further opportunities for public realm enhancements were identified.
- 7.71 A final set of revised plans was submitted. It was identified by the landscape consultant on EDC/17/0107 that consideration should be had to the planting along Main Street as trees within the residential parcel and those along the distributor road will sit immediately adjacent to each other. To ensure these adjacent tree canopies do not clash and species can complement each other, it was recommended a condition was added to provide detailed species planting once the planting for Main Street had been agreed. It is considered this point is relevant to this application and the same condition therefore recommended.
- 7.72 Other recommendations for conditions relating to maintenance prescriptions for proposed hedgerows, tree root barriers and tree pit details, demonstration narrow verges can accommodate tree planting and planting for soft verges in front of particular plots where it appears to have been omitted from the plans have been made. It is recommended these details are secured by condition.
- 7.73 There also appears to be some conflict between the position of lighting columns and street trees. This is addressed at 7.77 below.

Hard Landscaping

- 7.74 Hard landscape zoning plans submitted show a good coverage of block paving in varying colours, with macadam areas kept to a minimum which is welcomed. The original drawings suggested block paving would be used for the principal access roads through the parcel south of Main Street and tarmac used on local streets. This approach was confused and did not follow a logic or approach that would be supported by Kent Highways in respect of durability of the busier spine roads. Revised plans were submitted to rectify this.

- 7.75 The Hard Landscape Zoning Plan generally follows the principles for each of the character areas as defined within the Design Code and the indicative materials accord with details implemented in the streetscape throughout Castle Hill, with contrasting block paving in varying laying patterns used to create a legible street hierarchy.
- 7.76 Specification of edging, kerbs and how paving transitions are to be dealt with are not included with the submission. It is recommended these details are secured by condition.

Lighting

- 7.77 Details submitted with landscaping showing position of lighting columns on the main roads. However, a number of conflicts were apparent. The Street Lighting Layout did not show the correct tree positions (as per the Soft Landscape Plans) and were not been fully coordinated to avoid tree conflicts. Particular problems were identified along the View Corridor where a number of trees were shown in close proximity to light columns. Due to the importance of View Corridor, it was not desirable to remove trees from the important landscaping strip as a cause of potential conflicts.
- 7.78 Revised soft landscape drawings and preliminary street lighting layout were provided, both showing tree positions and light columns which appear to be fully coordinated. However, the plans show several instances along the View Corridor, where light columns are set back behind a soft verge with tree planting in close proximity on either side and in front of the light column.
- 7.79 This has been raised by KCC who have confirmed that there are potential conflicts. It has also been flagged that the position of some lighting columns in relation to trees will result in shadowing across the highway which is not acceptable in highway safety terms. These details therefore need re-consideration. The lighting column plan provided is indicative only. It is recommended that the final position of trees and lighting columns is agreed by condition to ensure these conflicts can be addressed without the loss of the trees.
- 7.80 No other lighting details have been provided. Provision of some lighting will be required to areas such as parking courtyards in the interests of safety as highlighted by the Police Crime Prevention Officer. This detail is therefore recommended by condition.

Boundaries

- 7.81 Where domestic boundary treatments are visible from the public domain, these are either brick walls or planted. Timber panel and close-boarded fences will delineate boundaries along gardens. Simple elevation drawings of the boundary treatments have been submitted and it has been identified that the brick walls are to be constructed of the same brick to match the adjoining house/garage, as identified on the materials schedule. It is considered that more detailed information is needed to secure quality development and introduce any detailing where needed, for visual amenity. It is recommended that this is therefore required by condition.

Management

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

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

- 7.83 A detailed management plan has been submitted to identify short and long term maintenance objectives, operations and timings. The submitted landscape management plan generally provides adequate maintenance prescriptions for the proposed landscaping. There do not however appear to be any maintenance prescriptions for proposed hedgerows, including heights to be maintained at. This should be included given the number of hedgerows within relatively narrow soft verges which will require formal pruning. This can be secured by condition.

Highways & Parking

Policy

- 7.84 The NPPF strongly advocates consideration of the impacts of development on transport networks and infrastructure, management and appropriate mitigation of environmental impacts arising from traffic and transport infrastructure, and promoting development in locations which are, or can, be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. It identifies that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use should be identified and pursued and recognises that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations as being integral to the design of schemes, contributing to making high quality places (paragraph 102). The submission of Transport Assessment and Travel Plans is encouraged for all developments generating significant transport movements (paragraphs 111).
- 7.85 In respect of the individual phases of development in EQ, 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.
- 7.86 Embedded within the outline consent is a requirement to provide a Parking Management Plan to come forward alongside relevant AMPs for that area. The Parking Management Plan is contained within the AMP for the parcel south of Main Street and defers to the Dartford Standards. In February this year, an addendum update was approved to the Castle Hill Central AMP which also aligned to the Dartford SPD.

Parking Levels

- 7.87 Residential parking is generally provided in the form of on-plot tandem spaces. There is some perpendicular parking, for example to the rear of properties facing Fastrack. There are also parking courtyards to the apartment blocks and rear courtyard parking in 3 instances, accessed by passing beneath a FOG. In addition, 23 undercroft spaces have been provided in the apartment blocks which is commended. The size of the car spaces is in accordance with the guidance in the SPD and there is general provision along the side of driveways and access to rear gates into private gardens to allow bins to be dragged to bin collection areas. No garages are provided.

- 7.88 On-street visitor and van parking spaces are provided in parallel spaces including provision along edges adjacent to open spaces.
- 7.89 In terms of parking analysis provided by the applicant, an approach was taken to divide the site into parcels with an arbitrary line down the middle of access roads. The parking was then portioned off according to this parcelisation. This does not follow application boundaries and it therefore considered to be of limited use. While the application site forms only part of the Castle Hill South area, only the spaces that fall within the application site boundary can be considered. The application must therefore provide sufficient provision parking and comply independently with the relevant requirements.
- 7.90 The following table sets out the parking requirements according to Dartford Borough Council's Parking SPD and the total number of spaces made available:

Type	No. spaces provided	SPD Requirement	
Residential	<i>(On-plot allocated: 246 Unallocated: 28)</i> 274	<i>1 & 2-bed flats/houses</i>	<i>(130 units x 1.2)</i> 115.2
		<i>3 bed house</i>	<i>(103 units x 1.5)</i> 96
		<i>4+ bed house</i>	<i>(99 units x 2)</i> 6
		TOTAL	217.2
Visitor	54	<i>3 spaces per 10 homes</i>	48.9
Van	23	<i>1 space per 10 homes</i>	16.3
TOTAL	351		282.4

- 7.91 The table above demonstrates a significant over-provision of residential spaces (+56.2) and slight over-provision of visitor spaces (+5.1) and van spaces (+6.7). The provision of on-plot provision in double space accounts for the significant over-provision of residential spaces.
- 7.92 A full parking schedule was provided at the request of Kent Highways which identified the spread of on-plot parking for both Taylor Wimpey and Clarion for both Taylor Wimpey and Clarion. It highlighted that there is general unbalance in the approach with smaller units being over the standards and larger units under. This was exacerbated in a specific area of the site to the southwest corner where there was also lack of on-street parking in the vicinity of 4-bedroom properties (TW). In response, the applicant provided increased allocated allowance on-plot for a number of the largest units by shifting garages back into the plot (though garages in triple tandem scenarios again have not been included in the calculations). While this did push the number of residential spaces up, it was considered justified to do so. Kent Highways welcomed these changes and while they acknowledge it still remains the case that many of the smaller units are provided with allocated parking in excess of the standards, they remain of the view that an acceptable balance has been struck overall in terms of allocated and visitor parking and the overriding need to promote sustainable modes of transport within Castle Hill. In addition, residential parking numbers also include non-allocated spaces. The apartments are allocated on a basis of 1 space per flat the preference of the housebuilder responding to market demand. The leftover spaces are provided as non-allocated spaces in the parking courtyards. The SPD identifies a preference for non-allocated spaces in the case of flats but it is noted that it is the preference from the Police Crime Prevention Officer that they are allocated to prevent parking issues between neighbours. Additional non-allocated spaces are provided around the site adjacent to open spaces and within rear parking courtyards. This provides additional flexibility.

- 7.93 The provision of van spaces has been made on-street and generally spread evenly through the site in general compliance with the standards.
- 7.94 However, it should be noted that the application site boundaries for this application and the adjacent Taylor Wimpey parcels for market housing (EDC/17/0108) cross over. Regulations for planning applications identify that accesses to sites should be included within the site boundary. This ensures that delivery of the parcels can be achieved successfully. While Clarion and Taylor Wimpey have been working together on the scheme, two independent planning applications have been made. As such, the access roads to their individual parcels are included within the site for both applications where it is required. Many of the unallocated visitor and van parking spaces are located along these roads. There is therefore a degree of double-counting that could occur between the two applications on visitor (34 spaces) and vans (15 spaces) which would not normally be accepted. In this instance, however due to the distribution of the parcels and the joint way of working between the two developers, it proves difficult to separate the two applications. If these spaces were removed altogether from the calculations, only 16 van spaces would fall only within the Taylor Wimpey application site at 48% of the standards. However, this is not considered realistic since the identified road and parking spaces associated with them would need to come forward to provide access. The applicant argues that the certainty of these roads being delivered can be demonstrated through a contract with the landowner, Henley Camland, who is delivering the adoptable infrastructure, to completion, in accordance with a contract agreed with each housebuilder and in accordance with an agreed timetable which feeds in to the housebuilders' delivery schedule. However, the contract falls outside the control of Planning, could change and cannot therefore be guaranteed. If the number of spaces between the two applications were to be combined the following figures would apply:

Summary of combined provision:			
	SPD	Provision	Difference
Residential	726.3	835	+108.7
Visitor	148.5	115	-33.5
Van	49.5	40	-9.5

- 7.95 This analysis should not necessarily be used to appraise the current application since it incorporates spaces outside the application site boundary. However, it does provide an indication that there is a reasonable spread across the area in accordance with the standards, if the same balance between residential and visitor are described as above, and van numbers are in the region of the standards and therefore considered acceptable. If, in the unlikely event, one or other application is not delivered as anticipated, any subsequent application made in respect of either site would need to comply with this strategy.

Disabled Parking

- 7.96 The Dartford standards state that the assessment of parking areas in planning applications for residential development will include consideration of the provision of spaces for people with impaired mobility. There is however no minimum space requirements that must be provided for under the Class C3 use (residential). No spaces have specifically been identified in the plans as disabled and there are limited places on-street that could accommodate a disabled parking space. However, since this is a residential-led development, it is considered that there is a reasonable amount of opportunities for on-plot provision if there was a need.

- 7.97 It is also considered there are opportunities to extend spaces within parking courts serving the apartments that could be converted as necessary, through this would likely result in the loss of some soft landscaping.
- 7.98 It is not standard procedure for Kent Highways to insist on disabled parking from the outset on development such as this, particularly when the need is not yet known and no comment has been raised.

Electrical Vehicle Charging

- 7.99 The Dartford SPD encourages the provision of EV charging points for residential dwellings with on-plot parking. Where developments do not benefit from on plot parking consideration should be given to providing charging points on-street or within communal parking areas, including designing the development so as to minimise the cost and disturbance of retrofitting charging points at a later date.
- 7.100 No provision has been made in the proposed development. Although no viability argument has been put forward, the applicant that since the majority of houses have on plot parking, there are opportunities for retrospective installations to be made which provides the flexibility for the occupant to choose the type of provision, however, this argument is not followed as it is not considered prohibitive due to the flexibility within installations at the plug. Although the ease of retrospective installations for dwellings is considered reasonably straightforward that this would not be prohibitive.
- 7.101 In respect of apartment parking, Clarion has confirmed it will provide ducting for 4no. unallocated spaces in its apartment block in the northeast corner. It is therefore recommended that this is secured by condition.

Cycle Storage

- 7.102 In accordance with Dartford standards, cycle parking will be provided for houses in the form of a secure shed in the garden. For apartment blocks, a secure, covered and lockable cycle storage area is provided serving each block integral to the building.

Other Issues

EIA

- 7.103 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

- 7.104 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.
- 7.105 Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires screening to be undertaken on a precautionary basis to assess likelihood of impact on a protected site without regard to any proposed mitigation. Where a likely impact is established, an Appropriate Assessment will be required and mitigation should then be taken into account.
- 7.106 The applicant has acknowledged that an Appropriate Assessment is necessary under the Habitat Regulations and has confirmed that the necessary information to carry out the Appropriate Assessment is already available within the application details submitted (Letter dated 4th September 2018).
- 7.107 In this instance the development is situated within 10 km 'as the crow flies' from North Kent European sites and is therefore likely to impact on the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 7.108 The scheme is likely to have significant effects on the SPA. An AA has been carried out by EDC as competent authority as to whether the project will affect the integrity of the site. The mitigation measures proposed via the s106 make certain that the scheme will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA
- 7.109 Progress in understanding potential recreational impacts in north Kent has enabled a study (the Dartford Study) of the approach that can be taken to protecting European sites in Dartford. The Dartford study sets out a practical approach that the planning authorities in Dartford Borough can incorporate into planning determinations that 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.
- 7.110 Consequently, the applicant has committed to paying the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) tariff of £15 per house in order to mitigate the impact of the development on the SPA. The applicant has confirmed the tariff will be paid and will be secured via a Unilateral Undertaking. As such the recreational impact of the development on North Kent European Protected sites is considered to be sufficiently mitigated.
- 7.111 Natural England have been consulted on the screening and Appropriate Assessment and have advised that on the basis of the appropriate financial contributions being secured to the Bird Wise scheme, Natural England concurs with EDC Officer's conclusion that this is suitable mitigation, as such the proposed developments will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European protected sites.

Archaeology

- 7.112 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

- 7.113 The details of ecological works, mitigation measures and monitoring have been secured under the outline permission and 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

- 7.114 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. All Water Utility companies, have a legal obligation under Section 94 of the Water Industries Act 1991 (WIA 1991) to provide developers with the right to connect to a public sewer regardless of capacity issues. It is understood there is a contract with a private company for foul water treatment in Castle Hill. It is therefore not considered necessary to condition details of foul water *per se*. However, it must be ensured that surface and foul water drainage measures do not conflict with the landscape proposals and planting and in this respect, it is therefore proposed these details be secured by condition.

Noise

- 7.115 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.
- 7.116 A noise assessment has been submitted with the application and comments received from Dartford Environmental Health addressed at 5.8 above expressing no concerns.
- 7.117 Following changes to the layout, updated noise assessment was submitted to demonstrate there had been no change in impact as a result.

Broadband Access

- 7.118 In accordance with condition 30 of the outline planning permission and the site-wide Utilities Strategy, the applicant has confirmed that Fibre Optic Voice and Data Network will be supplied to each of the proposed dwellings prior to occupation, with the same system being rolled out across Castle Hill.

Wider Neighbouring Amenity

7.119 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 early phases 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. Kent Highways recommended conditions relation to construction management. These matters such as vehicle routeing, wheel washing etc. are covered under the Code and are therefore not required by condition.

Sustainability

7.120 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.

7.121 Notwithstanding, a 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. No specific details have been provided demonstrating what measures the applicant will implement in their development to deliver sustainability. This information has been requested and will be reported as supplementary information.

Building for Life

7.122 A Building for Life (BFL) assessment of the scheme has been undertaken by EDC officers. BFL12 is a design tool to measure and assess good design for new homes that is supported by the house building and architectural industries as well as Government and Local Authorities.

7.123 The development is considered to perform well against the 12 BFL questions, achieving 9 Greens, 3 Ambers and no reds. The 3 amber scores (Creating well defined streets and spaces, Easy to find your way around, and Car Parking) indicate that more refinement could have been achieved or are 'justifiable ambers' where ideally aspects of the design would have been improved however constraints of the site restrict these elements such that design improvements cannot be resolved.

7.124 As the scheme scores 9 greens and no reds it is considered to achieve a 'green light' assessment.

Condition 25 – Outstanding Issues

7.125 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 none outstanding.

7.126 The final detail design of some of the items, such as specific materials for the external appearance of the houses and apartments, boundary designs, hard landscaping, gas meter services 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 principal of the development accords with the framework for the Eastern Quarry outline permission and complies with the guidelines for development and design parameters set out in the approved AMP/Code. The application has undergone extensive negotiation and revisions to achieve a high quality development which would provide a safe and attractive living environment for future residents and provide a large portion of affordable housing in keeping with the existing developments in Castle Hill and in accordance with Garden City principles. The application is therefore recommended for approval.