

Reference: EDC/18/0195

Site Address: Alkerden (Central Village), Eastern Quarry, Watling Street, Swanscombe, Kent

Proposal: Application for the approval of conditions 19 & 20 attached to planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to Submission of an Area Masterplan and Area Design Code for the Alkerden area.

Applicant: Henley Camland LLP

Parish / Ward: Ebbsfleet and Greenhithe & Knockhall

SUMMARY:

This application seeks approval for a combined area masterplan (AMP) and area design code document (ADC), parking management plan (PMP) and junction design modelling pursuant to conditions 19 and 20 of the outline planning permission for Eastern Quarry (EQ).

The area masterplan and design code covers the whole of the central village (Alkerden). It identifies Alkerden as the heart of EQ and develops clear principles and exciting objectives for delivery of a market centre which will be the community focus of the village and the wider development site. The document identifies high quality design parameters for both the built form and open spaces and is fully comprehensive to ensure delivery of high quality detailed schemes.

The PMP identifies a set of parking levels and control measures to deliver the vision for EQ which seeks to lower the reliability on private car use and ownership to improve sustainability. Initiatives such as car clubs and public transport orientated measures have been identified to deliver this vision.

Details of junction designs for the major junctions within the site have been modelled on forecast traffic flows to demonstrate junctions can be designed to accommodate the anticipated level of traffic and avoid traffic backing up.

Although this is an application for approval of conditions which are not usually reported to Committee, the impact of the matters addressed in these documents is significant. The AMP/ADC and PMP will become the standards against which all future reserved matters applications in the central village will be assessed.

It is considered the submission has successfully met the requirements of conditions 19 and 20.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE AND DISCHARGE CONDITION

Informatives

1. APPROVED DOCUMENTS

The application is approved in accordance with the submitted information as contained in the following approved documents:

- Site Location Plan drawing number DE229_001
- *Alkerden Area Masterplan & Design Code* – report by Define dated May 2019
- *Eastern Quarry Parking Management Plan: Alkerden and Ashmere Villages* – report by PBA dated 5 June 2019
- *Eastern Quarry Junction Modelling: Technical Note* – report by PBA dated 20 May 2019

2. DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATIONS

The Local Planning Authority would welcome discussion on the following issues as part of Reserved Matters Applications:

- Maximising accessibility levels in accordance with Building Regulations Part M4(2)
- Landscaping details relating to: the open space along the northern boundary; areas of land with restricted public access; safety measures for the chalk spine and greater diversity in the palette of trees ; and
- Position of garages to avoid half size parking spaces in front

3. 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/highway-land/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.

4. POSITIVE AND CREATIVE APPROACH TO DECISION MAKING

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

- The agent was advised of planning issues during the processing of the application and additional information has been submitted to address these.

1.0 SITE CONTEXT AND PROPOSAL

Site Description

- 1.1 Eastern Quarry (EQ) is a former quarry site and area of brownfield land located within the Ebbsfleet Garden City. It is broadly rectangular in shape and includes the former route of a minerals railway in Craylands Gorge to the north of the quarry. The site is approximately 2.5km long (W-E) and 1.2km wide (N-S) and covers an area of approximately 270 hectares. The site 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, Knockhall and Swanscombe to the north. The eastern edge of the site, bounded by the B259 Southfleet Road, is approximately 500m from Ebbsfleet International railway station. Outside the boundary of EQ, the Northfleet West Grid Sub Station site (known as Ebbsfleet Green), which is being developed by Redrow, is located to the southwest.

- 1.2 Former quarrying activity at the site has created a dramatic landscape with steep chalk cliffs around the quarry's southern, western and north-western boundaries. Much of the site has been backfilled with Thanet Sand over the worked chalk but there are still considerable land level differences between the quarry floor and the site's surroundings. The topography of the site generally falls from north to south. There are large bodies of water within the site comprising a large lake to the west resulting from quarrying activities and a man-made lake along the southern boundary in Castle Hill.
- 1.3 The variations in levels limit access into the site. The main accesses are from Watling Street at the South which provides access to the Washmills area containing buildings associated with the quarry activities, and two accesses leading from East from Southfleet Road. There is also a footpath bridge which crosses Craylands Gorge.
- 1.4 Tunnels remain under Bean Road along the western boundary, connecting the quarry to what was Western Quarry and is now Bluewater. Other historic connections exist via an old railway tunnel connecting the Peninsula to Craylands Gorge, though the status of this is unknown. A water pipeline also runs through the Gorge carrying water from the Quarry to the Thames.
- 1.5 An area of former agricultural land is located at Alkerden Farm off Alkerden Lane to the north of the site, which comprises a farmhouse and various outbuildings. This site is now vacant and unused. A smaller area of agricultural land is located at Western Cross Farm also off Alkerden Lane which comprises agricultural storage buildings and is currently being utilised by a third party under lease.
- 1.6 The eastern portion of EQ is formed of a village known as Castle Hill which is currently under construction. Phases 1 and 2 are complete and occupied. Progress across the village is progressing well from northeast to southwest with all phases now having detailed consent. The neighbourhood centre, which contains the primary school and community centre which are operational, is also currently under construction with a mixed use centre including local supermarket.

Background

- 1.7 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. The planning permission fixed certain elements to form a framework for the development as it comes forward. These include:
 - *Parameter Plans* – Series of plans identifying ground levels; broad floorspace disposition across the site; location of the key green zones and area for ecology and nature reserves; water features; principal accesses; built development area; open space; heights of buildings; and densities.
 - *Land Use Disposition Plan* - A plan showing, spatially, how the development could be masterplanned to meet the requirements of the parameters.

- *Strategies* – A series of documents identifying the broad approach to spatial considerations covering landscaping, design, phasing, public art, community participation, community and leisure facilities, sustainable development, education and transport.
- 1.8 The extant outline permission sets a structured approach to delivery and identifies a hierarchy of plans and documents, to comply with the fixed elements listed in 1.7 above, to be submitted in stages as follows:
- *1st Stage*: Site Wide Master Plan (SWMP) – Identifies the broad location and approximate disposition of land uses across the site. To be provided prior to the 3rd stage submissions. An updated SWMP for the extant permission was granted in December 2018.
 - *2nd Stage*: Strategies – An additional set of strategy documents providing the site-wide approach to waste and water management; archaeological field evaluation and safeguarding measures; programme for implementing the Bio-diversity Action Plan (as secured under the outline consent); utilities framework; and signage design. These documents to be reviewed and updated where necessary prior to the 3rd stage submissions. Where relevant, updates have been submitted and approved under separate planning applications.
 - *3rd Stage*: Area Masterplans (AMP) and Area Design Codes (ADC): Informed by both 1st and 2nd stage submissions. These are 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. The design code provides the necessary detail to inform final design, being such matters as, architectural style and treatment, surface finishes, materials pallets, building forms and soft landscaping.

Proposal

- 1.9 This application seeks approval for a combined AMP and ADC document pursuant to conditions 19 and 20 of the outline planning permission reference EDC/17/0048 issued in 28 March 2018. The exact wording of the conditions can be found at Appendix 1 and 2 of this report. Broadly, the following details are required:

Area Masterplan (AMP):

- Land uses and maximum floor space areas
- Affordable housing locations
- Phasing
- Land forming / relative levels
- Archaeology including remains to be preserved in situ
- Extent and form of built development and design (including identification of character areas)
- Access routes and car parking standards, typologies and management measures
- Integration of footpath and cycleway connections and associated signage
- Location and linkages of open space and information on access for the public
- Public art including broad locations and themes
- Lighting strategy
- Provision of employment and workspaces
- Details of any existing structures

- Interim landscaping strategy should development slow/cease

Area Design Code (ADC):

- Architectural style and treatment
- Treatment of public highways
- Building materials pallet
- Surface materials pallet
- Street furniture and design and lighting design
- Soft landscape
- Frontage types
- Heights
- Building forms
- High density living standards

- 1.10 The approved masterplans for Eastern Quarry divide the site into three distinct villages. The eastern village is identified as Castle Hill. The central and western villages have been named by the applicant as 'Alkerden' and 'Ashmere' respectively. This application applies to the central village (Alkerden) which abuts the landscape buffer between Castle Hill to the east, extends south as far as the Castle Hill Lake, abuts Alkerden Road to the north and includes Craylands Gorge and the majority of the proposed major urban park which separates Ashmere.
- 1.11 In addition to the AMP/ADC document, the application also seeks approval for details in relation to parking and junction design.
- 1.12 Condition 19 of the outline permission requires details of 'car parking standards, typologies and distribution and car parking management measures' to be provided within the AMP. However, there is also a requirement under the S106 Agreement dated 28 March 2018 for submission of a Parking Management Plan (PMP) 'approved from time to time on approval of Area Master Plans pursuant to planning condition 19'. Details of the PMP are embedded within the Transport Strategy, which forms part of the suite of documents under which the outline planning permission for EQ has been secured and requires the following:

"Each Area Master Plan submission will be expected to incorporate a Parking Plan that will establish some key criteria for the parking provision within that part of the site. These criteria will be:

- The parking standards to be applied within individual building or land use curtilages for each land use within the Area Master Plan;
- The additional provision to be made in respect of visitor parking;
- The extent of provision to be made within charged car park areas, along with an overview of the parking charge regime – i.e. short stay or long stay, particularly associated land uses (especially in retail, leisure and community areas), management and enforcement etc.; and
- The locations where on-street parking is considered appropriate, and an overview of the volume of parking that is provided by this means, and whether it is envisaged that it will be charged for and/or time controlled (parking management TRO's to be funded by the owner in this case)."

- 1.13 It should be noted that that the last Parking Management Plan was approved for EQ in 2007. Since this time, Dartford Borough Council has adopted a Parking Standards SPD (2012) and these have been the standards applied for detailed plans for Castle Hill as being more up-to-date.

- 1.14 The scale of the EQ site presents huge opportunity to develop a set of parking principles based on the unique nature of the site and the structure of the permission sets out to do this. This application therefore seeks to secure an individual set of parking standards, based on relevant case studies and the individual character of this major residential development site which will become a standard against which all future RMA for EQ will be measured in the future.
- 1.15 Under consideration of the site-wide masterplan (SWMP) for EQ, Kent Highways identified the need for future modelling to understand the highway implications of the development on the internal network in order to ensure that key internal junctions and links are designed to accommodate peak time demand. It was deemed the SWMP was too high-level for this detail and that it would be more appropriately considered with the AMP in conjunction with part 'n' which required details of access routes (vehicular, public transport, pedestrian and cycle) and connections to surroundings areas and when these will become available for use. An informative was added to the decision notice to advise the applicant this information would be expected to support the AMP submission. A report has therefore been provided as part of the current application.

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

Approval of Conditions

- 2.4 EDC/18/0065 Application for approval of condition 10 attached to outline planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to the Site Wide Master Plan. Approved 19.12.18
- 2.5 EDC/19/0006 Application for the Discharge of Condition 11 attached to the planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to the submission of a Waste Management Plan. Approved 21.03.19
- 2.6 EDC/19/0035 Application for the discharge of condition 12 attached to planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to the Water Management Plan.

Under consideration

- 2.7 EDC/18/0091 Application for approval of condition 14 (a-b) pursuant to outline planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to an archaeological field evaluation report, written timetable and safeguarding measures. Under consideration
- 2.8 EDC/17/0132 Application for approval of condition 15 attached to planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to the Bio-Diversity Action Plan (BAP) implementation programme. Approved 20.12.18
- 2.9 EDC/19/0027 Application for the discharge of condition 16 attached to planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to the submission of the utilities Framework. Approved 31.05.19.

Other Applications

- 2.10 EDC/18/0086 Reserved Matters Application pursuant to Conditions 2 and 18 of planning permission reference no. EDC/17/0048 relating to advanced infrastructure works in the form of land forming and earthworks within the Central and Western villages (excluding Alkerden Farm). Approved 06.03.19
- 2.11 EDC/19/0004 Housing Implementation Strategy pursuant to S106 attached to outline planning permission EDC/17/0048. Approved 31.05.19.

3.0 PUBLICITY

- 3.1 This type of application as condition discharge would not normally require public consultation. However, due to the nature and implications of the document, full consultation was undertaken
- 3.2 Neighbour notification letter expiry date: 25.01.19
- 3.3 Site notice expiry date: 29.01.19
- 3.4 Press notice expiry date: 31.01.19

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 19 letters of representation have been received in objection to the application and raising the following concerns: -
- Inadequate parking provision
 - Increase in traffic
 - Strain on existing community facilities
 - Traffic / Highways
 - Insufficient pre-application engagement with community
 - Impact on heritage

- Earthworks and height of development platform
- Inadequate public transport provisions
- Affect local ecology
- Development too high
- General dislike of proposal
- Out of keeping with character of area
- Increase of pollution
- Over development
- Residential Amenity
- More open space needed on development
- Not enough info given on application

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

5.1 The following organisations have been consulted on the application:

- Environment Agency
- Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
- KCC – Flood and Water Management; Archaeology; Ecology; Kent Highways
- Dartford Borough Council
- Kent Police Crime Prevention Officer
- Bean Parish Council

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

5.3 Environment Agency

(08.01.19) All water and drainage infrastructure must be adequately designed to allow for the safe use of the development with regards to groundwater protection principles and safeguarding of future resource options and use of the chalk aquifer.

All earthworks and spoil management strategies should be agreed with the EA and relevant codes of practice utilised to enable earthworks and re-profiling.

Relevant SuDs design must have regard to groundwater protection as necessary

EDC Officer Response: Principles of water treatment and drainage are managed strategically under the outline permission in higher level consents. An application has been made for condition 12 of the outline permission that deals with water treatment and the EA has been consulted. Earthworks and spoil management strategies have also been determined under separate applications for advance infrastructure for earthworks and application for Scheme of Working and Code of Conduct associated with landforming. The EA has been consulted on both these applications.

5.4 Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council

(17.01.19) The parking management document seems to be an attempt to reduce the importance of the Dartford Borough Council parking standards SPD (2012). We note from previous applications that Dartford Borough Council states that the SPD should be adhered to unless firm justification is provided for a lower provision. A survey of parking in Castle Hill is included with the application as justification, however this is a new development and we consider that the parking patterns are not yet established. We expect that this demand could change over the next five, ten or twenty years. Ingress Park, Greenhithe is an example of this as it is a similar development. Kent

County Council decided that there was no demand for the proposed school but now, due to demand, additional class rooms have been added to two local schools to cater for the need. Likewise with parking, early residents tended to commute by public transport but now many are working locally and travel by car. Families have started to grow and the demand for a second family car has increased. There is then also a need for visitor spaces for child carers. The situation in Ingress Park regarding parking and traffic management has reached the point that it is now the most common item residents are complaining to local councillors about.

The Town Council endorse the comments and observations, submitted by email to the EDC on 15 January 2019, by a local resident.

(11.04.19) The Town Council feel that the applicant should provide a clear and understandable list of the revisions as it seems unreasonable to expect consultees to identify all the changes in a 220 page document

EDC Officer Response: The outline consent requires an individual parking strategy to be developed specifically for EQ which is not reliant on the Dartford SPD. Highways have been consulted extensively and are satisfied with the findings of the survey material. Ingress Park was not considered an appropriate comparison since matters of scale, location and master planning principles are too different to EQ. The length of the document reflects the content as required in the outline planning permission.

5.5 Kent Highways

(24.01.19) Parking provision at the site should ensure enough spaces are available so as not to create on-street parking issues but should also show restraint to reflect the sustainable location and the high-quality public transport services that will be available.

- Proposals for 1 space per 1-2 bed unit and apartment, and 1 space per 20 units for vans, are acceptable.
- Parking for flats should be unallocated.
- Visitor spaces should be provided at 0.2 spaces per unit, and 0.3 spaces per unit where tandem spaces are provided, rather than the 0.1 spaces proposed. This will cater for visitors and provides a balance to the reduction in spaces for the 1-2 bed units and apartments.
- Garages are proposed to be counted as 1 space. Recognising the reality
 - that garages are often used for storage, the provision should be 0.5 spaces.
- 1 cycle parking space should be provided per bedroom, regardless of house type.
- To help resolve any parking issues that may arise, small parcels of land should be identified, which can be converted to on-street parking if on-street parking issues arise within a defined period of time, if other sustainable travel measures have not been effective in combating the issue.
- Displaced parking areas are proposed. These are acceptable but should be for a limited number of vehicles so as not to create the potential for large areas of hardstanding.
- Monitoring occupations and car ownership proposed to be undertaken every 250th occupation is acceptable.
- Non-residential parking provision proposed to be based on provision set out in the EQ Transport Strategy. This is acceptable.
- Evidence or first principles assessment should be provided to support proposals for education parking.

- Where on street parking in public places is to be charged for, the provision of a pay-by-phone facility should be considered in addition to pay-and-display.
- Electric vehicle charging is welcomed. Contact should be made with energy provider to ensure there is enough capacity to support the level of vehicle charging proposed; consideration to be given to providing a rapid vehicle charging hub (akin to today's 'petrol station').
- Fastrack stops need to have suitable infrastructure including flag and Landmark shelter with real time information.
- The cycle routes shown on the primary street proposals should be increased from 2m to 3m to accommodate two-way flow.
- The 1.2m footway shown on the 'mews' is a departure from the standards and if not increased, should be amended to a 'service strip'.
- Locations of footway and cycleway connections to the surrounding areas are shown, however, no off-site works or necessary signage have been identified. Further details should be provided.
- Landscaping and its impact on highway safety and maintenance together with lighting will be considered in further detail at the Reserved Matters Application stage.

(09.04.19) Comments on revised PMP:

- Proposals for 1 space per 1-2 bed unit and apartment, and 1 space per 20 units for vans, remain acceptable.
- Parking for flats should be unallocated.
- Additional visitor surveys are welcomed. However, maintain they should be provided at 0.2 spaces per unit, rather than the 0.1 spaces proposed.
- A blanket provision for counting garages as one space is unacceptable recognising the reality that garages are often used for storage. The increase in the dimensions of the garages to 7x4.05m / 7x4.2m (where they are to count as one space) is welcomed. In locations where the design of the street creates minimal (or no) on-street parking opportunities, such as The Mews, garages designed at the increased size will be acceptable as one space but must not be 100% enclosed to the front façade.
- Some of the garages shown are set back, leaving a large hard standing area in front. These should not, it should not create the opportunity for more than one vehicle to park and result in overhanging the highway
- Tandem parking for two vehicles can be under-utilised when not designed appropriately; tandem parking for three vehicles is unrealistic.
- Monitoring of the occupations and car ownership should be undertaken on an annual basis rather than every 500th occupation.
- Non-residential parking provision is proposed to reflect the local authority guidance, yet the parking provision for the office is approximately half of the DBC standard. Justification should be provided
- Education parking should be based on a first principles assessment including staff and pupil numbers etc.
- Cycle parking is proposed to be provided in line with DBC standards. Reflecting the sustainable nature and ethos of the development, additional cycle parking should be provided.
- Where on street parking in public places is to be charged for, the provision of a pay-by-phone facility should be considered in addition to pay-and-display.
- Proposed electric vehicle charging hub is welcomed.
- The Parking Management Plan refers to a 20% mode share for public transport. Fastrack requires a 25% mode share.

- Reference to MaaS is made, but information on how this will be procured should be provided.
- Reference to MaaS welcomed but should include how this will be procured;
- Fastrack stops need to have suitable infrastructure including flag and Landmark shelter with real time information.
- The cycle routes shown on the primary street proposals should be increased from 2m to 3m in order to accommodate two-way flow.
- The locations of footway and cycleway connections to the surrounding areas are shown, however, no off-site works or necessary signage have been identified.
- Junction capacity modelling of the internal junctions is still outstanding.
- Landscaping and its impact on highway safety and maintenance together with lighting will be considered in further detail at the Reserved Matters Application stage.
- KCC will not adopt shared space schemes over 25 units. Materials used should be in accordance with the standard Kent pallets.

(24.04.19) Response to junction modelling report:

- *Junction 1*: The junction is shown to operate well and is acceptable.
- *Junctions 2, 3, 4 and 6*: These are Fastrack crossings and have been modelled using a 150 second cycle time and four traffic phases. Fastrack also caters for pedestrians and cyclists who will also need to cross the carriageway but who are unlikely to wait for the Fastrack bus to trigger the red signal. The results show that the junctions are anticipated to operate well within capacity during both peak periods but the models should be re-run assuming the toucan crossing phases are called, to ensure the queuing traffic does not block back to neighbouring junctions.
- *Junction 5 (off Watling Street)*: Results show the junction will need to be of a significant size to cater for the demand. It includes three lanes on the eastern approach, two lanes on the southern and western approaches, a single lane on the northern approach and a merge on the eastbound exit lane. The stage diagram needs clarification in relation to eastern arm left turn running in stage 4. Pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities are provided on three of the four arms and consideration should be given to providing a standalone crossing facility east of the junction for future applications. Modelling results show the junction is anticipated to operate within capacity, but there is concern that significant queuing at the junction will block back onto the neighbouring junctions. This should be addressed.
- *Junction 7*: Consideration should be given to the desire lines of pedestrian / cyclists for future applications.
- *Junction 8*: KCC have recently advised that this junction is to be a gated access for emergency access only.

(28.05.19) Reconsultation on revised PMP and junction modelling:

- I have reviewed the Internal Junction Modelling Technical Note (v07) and have no further comments to make in relation to highways. I therefore raise no objection on behalf of the local highway authority
- In respect of the PMP, key outstanding issues have now been addressed. No further comments.

5.6 KCC – Flood and Water Management:

(24.01.19) No comment to make with regards to this application but would remind the applicant that we expect to be consulted with regards to demonstrating that detailed surface water drainage designs for future phases comply with the Site Wide Master Plan and approved strategy.

5.7 KCC – Archaeology

Most of the area covered by the Alkerden AMP has been quarried down to the underlying Chalk geology. However unquarried areas survive in the north of the site at the former allotments site, at Alkerden Farm and the surrounding area, in Craylands Gorge and on the southern edge of the site.

Archaeological evaluation has taken place in the allotments site and the Alkerden Farm area and, as part of another project, there has been preliminary recording along Craylands Gorge. A condition assessment has also been provided for Alkerden Barn. As far as I am aware the report for the most recent evaluation work at the allotments site/Alkerden Farm has not yet been submitted under application EDC/18/0091 [in relation to archaeological field evaluation works]. The condition assessment for Alkerden Barn has been submitted under application EDC/19/0048 [application for reconstruction of Alkerden Barn], and I will provide detailed comments in relation to that application, but it is relevant to note here that the detailed map regression which I requested as part of the consideration of the landscape context of the barn does not seem to have been provided as part of the assessment.

The absence of this information makes it difficult to comment fully on the AMP, and I would wish to see this information before providing final comments on the AMP.

There is also a need for further information in relation to Craylands Gorge. The Gorge is formed partly from original dry valley slope, cut by quarrying, and partly from quarry backfill; it contains industrial heritage in the form of tunnels and features associated with the light railway to the cement works. The route of the railway is itself of historical significance demonstrating physically the link between the former Eastern Quarry and the cement works to the north. It is important that this is maintained as an open route along its full length so that the landscape history of the area can be understood and appreciated. There is also a need for appropriate management of the industrial and Palaeolithic heritage (intact deposits survive to the north-west of the footbridge) along the Gorge.

The application for the AMP covers the whole extent of Craylands Gorge but the proposed footpath seems to stop at the footbridge. I would advise that a more detailed assessment of the industrial heritage and Palaeolithic remains within Craylands Gorge, including the area north of the footbridge, should be provided before the AMP is approved (this was proposed in sections 4.32 - 4.33 of the Historic Environment Framework). It would be sensible for this to cover the area immediately south of Alkerden lane as well as the original desk-based assessment was at too large a scale for the current level of decision-making. There should also be further assessment of whether any proposed landscaping or other groundworks at the southern edge of the AMP affects Palaeolithic remains which may survive in this area (see section 4.30 of the Framework).

In addition a management plan should be provided for the Palaeolithic, medieval/post-medieval and industrial heritage which survives in the area affected by the AMP, particularly along the whole length of Craylands Gorge and in the Alkerden Farm area.

Finally I note that the Site-wide masterplan shown in Fig.1.2 shows a potential off-site sports pitch located close to the Swanscombe Skull SSSI, which would presumably need a separate planning permission? Important Palaeolithic remains could extend outside the boundaries of the SSSI and should be assessed further before any application in this area is determined.

EDC Officer Response: The structure of the EQ permission requires matters of archaeology to be dealt with at a strategic level in advance of AMP approvals. A separate application to undertake site investigation and any necessary mitigation requirements was submitted and, in consultation with KCC, is under consideration. This covers the western edge of the site referred to in the comments above. It is not considered the scope of the development parcel proposed in the AMP would prejudice and further investigation or preservation of archaeological artefacts since the areas outlined by KCC above lie within open spaces.

There is no cut or fill proposed to Craylands Gorge and it is proposed to be maintained as an open route along its length as part of the planned major urban park within EQ. It is acknowledged the northern section is intended as an area of existing woodland with no public access. It is understood this was due to providing ecological mitigation areas. Having spoken to the ecologist, further consideration of this area can be undertaken when the RMA for the park is submitted. Given the overall form of the gorge is maintained, however, it is considered its industrial heritage will be maintained. Details relating to the management of the industrial and Palaeolithic heritage is required by the outline consent to come forward with relevant RMAs in accordance with condition 27 and will also therefore be covered by the RMA for this area of the park (this approach is endorsed by the Historic Environment Framework referred to by KCC). Section 4.30 of the Framework refers to areas south of Castle Hill and does not cover the area covered by this application.

The off-site sports pitch located close to the Swanscombe Skull SSSI does not fall within the boundary of this application.

5.8 Ecology

(18.01.19) Plans between the AMP and those secured in earlier biodiversity management plans do not match. For example the AMP refers to a Mountain Bike Trail and an existing tunnel but biodiversity management plans previously reviewed do not make reference to these.

Mountain Bike Trail – this needs to be acknowledge within the management plan as it will influence the ongoing management of the woodland.

Tunnel – the proposal to light an existing tunnel may have impacts for roosting bats – to my knowledge I've never seen any information on whether bat surveys have been carried out.

Need to ensure there is consistency within the documents and appropriate management is implemented.

With regard to the bats – this is something that Middlemarch [developer ecologist] can provide information on. Updated surveys not necessarily required but we need to understand what surveys have been carried out to date and why they are satisfied that any tunnel can be lit.

EDC Officer Response: Agreed with KCC that an update is required to the management plans to acknowledge potential management for mountain bike trail and tunnels and to include update on bat surveys. The applicant has been advised and has confirmed that an update will be provided. Detailed assessment of any proposals for mountain bike trails and tunnels will also be examined under future RMA submissions once specific details are known.

5.9 Kent Police Crime Prevention Officer

(23.01.19) Applicant should consult with local Designing Out Crime Officer or alternative. Acknowledge AMP does not set out detailed level and no contact has been had with applicant. Identify particular issues that can be discussed to inform future applications and would welcome a meeting or discussion. Additional comments on requirements for door sets and window design requirements.

5.10 Bean Parish Council

(18.01.19) Concerns that the Parish Council was not included in any pre-application engagement although they were required to consult with Parishes on its southern boundaries as per EDC Consultation Engagement Rules. Inadequate parking provision and the development will put a strain in the existing community facilities.

EDC Officer Response: There is no obligation to engage with the Parish on pre-application. It is understood from the applicant invitation were sent to the community engagement event. Parking is discussed in detail in the report below.

5.11 The following additional comments have been received:

5.12 Gravesham Borough Council:

(31.01.19) EQ lies in the Dartford Borough but has the potential to impact upon Gravesham due to its scale and proximity. In particular, the implications on jobs numbers, retail floorspace and resulting transport impacts, which may have consequences for the provisions that need to be made in the Gravesham Local Plan.

The outline planning permission sets out a sustainable public transport orientated development whereby 'local living' should be promoted with according maximum quantum. It is somewhat unclear as to what scale of commercial uses are proposed in the next two villages. What little information is provided would suggest the scale of employment floorspace has been significantly scaled back.

It is now suggested for example that the mixed-use centre in the western village will now only contain around 4,060m² commercial and community uses (excluding the primary school) compared to the maximum 80,000m² 81 office floorspace actually permitted. The situation in respect of the mixed-use market centre in the central village is even more unclear, with no real indication given of the scale of B 1 office floorspace to be provided when the outline permission actually allows for a maximum 60,000m².

Neither is there any clear indication given in the documentation of the likely scale of A 1 - A5 retail and O2 commercial leisure likely to be provided within the proposed layout and built form, when the outline permission allows for over 50,000m² floorspace in these two categories.

Whilst it is appreciated that the developer cannot be tied to deliver precisely defined levels of floorspace in each use class under the outline planning permission and that what actually comes forward over time will be in response to the market, it is extremely difficult to understand what sort of place will emerge and what this means for planning in Gravesham as an adjoining authority.

Clearly, there may also be transport implications should Eastern Quarry be delivered as a predominately residential area, with supporting services but limited employment, because this may place additional pressure on the highway network, public transport or both.

Gravesham Borough Council would therefore request greater clarity in these areas to assist in informing its own local plan work before the current applications are permitted.

EDC Officer Response: The quantum of development for the western village is addressed under the separate application for the area masterplan for this village (EDC/18/0196). Since the time of the response above, the AMP has undergone amendment and additional information provided to indicate the likely floor areas of land uses in the Alkerden and the market centre within it. It is considered this addresses the comments raised and is discussed in further detail in the report below.

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):

CS4 - Ebbsfleet to Stone Priority Area
CS5 - Ebbsfleet Valley Strategic Site
CS11 - Housing Delivery
CS14 - Green Space
CS15 - Managing Transport Demand
CS17 - Design of Homes
CS18 - Housing Mix
CS19 - Affordable Housing
CS21 - Community Services
CS23 - Minimising Carbon Emissions

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
DP12 - Historic Environment Strategy
DP25 - Nature Conservation and Enhancement

6.3 Other Guidance

Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework 2017
Design for Ebbsfleet Guide 2019

7.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues to be considered in connection with this proposal are whether the submitted documents comply with the requirements of conditions 19 and 20, and that they establish appropriate principles to inform detailed schemes and delivery of high quality, sustainable schemes for buildings and open spaces within the central village (Alkerden) of EQ.

Vision

- 7.2 The design narrative for Alkerden is focussed on creating a healthy and stimulating 21st century place 'to live, learn and grow'. It is centred around creating 'the heart' of EQ, providing a 'unique, connected, mixed-use community centre in the middle of the development site which provides high quality community infrastructure which will be the focus of EQ. Drawing from the framework of relevant documents that inform delivery, as secured by the outline permission, the Healthy New Towns programme and EDC guidance documents and 21st century Garden City concepts, a set of visionary principles have been developed:

- 1) Provide a diversity of housing types and tenures;
- 2) Ensure land-efficient development to maximise the number of new homes being delivered within the existing consent;
- 3) Promote active, attractive and safe streets and public spaces;
- 4) Establish a connected network of landscapes and open spaces;
- 5) Establish walkable centres with high levels of accessibility to public transport routes;
- 6) Ensure clear connections between individual development sites;
- 7) Establish a network of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes that link neighbourhoods;
- 8) Provide a healthy built environment that supports well-being;
- 9) Provide an appropriate design response to site assets (e.g. iconic chalk cliffs, lake and naturalised setting);
- 10) Provide a contemporary interpretation of the relevant cultural history of the area using local materials and forms where appropriate

Layout and Built Form

- 7.3 Alkerden is characterised largely by the market centre which will serve as a community hub, including an education campus, together with residential development to the north around the edge of the education campus and to the south of Fastrack. The following areas have been identified in the AMP/ADC for Alkerden: residential – 19.7ha; education campus – 11.2ha; mixed use – 4ha; open space – 27.8ha (Total: 62.7ha).
- 7.4 The provision of affordable housing is obligated by the outline consent at 25% provision on site and 5% off site. The AMP/ADC identifies sub areas across the village. Each parcel 'will respond to the requirement for 25% affordable housing in each plot with the precise tenure details for the affordable mix to be agreed through the reserve matters process'. It is acknowledged the education campus parcel will not contain residential use and the market centre is expected to deliver a mix of uses. Despite this, and while precise numbers have not been given, or a proposed mix, it is considered the information is sufficient to ensure that affordable housing can be delivered evenly across the village. The delivery of affordable housing will continue to be monitored as development progresses across the wider site to ensure delivery accords with the requirements of the outline consent.

- 7.5 The AMP/ADC is arranged over a permeable block layout with Fastrack running through the middle east to west, primary streets running north to south and crossings provided into the adjacent villages to the south of Fastrack and north of the education campus. A bus connection is also provided for directly onto Alkerden Road to the north. The network of streets is proposed to use a variety of techniques to establish a journey through the development as being legible and logical, but not necessarily convenient by private car. It is proposed this is achieved by varying highway performance levels, or character, along a route, forcing drivers to alter their speed and behaviours along the route. This principle was established in the outline consent and has been evolved through the design of a series of street typologies in the AMP/ADC, which establishes a clear hierarchy of street types. Landscaping is used to help define the character of each streetscape. Dedicated pedestrian and/or cycle paths have been provided on the major roads. In light of the scale of the village and predominant residential use, variations have been added to the road typologies to enable some variety in character. Sections of the primary street have been identified as providing direct vehicular access to the residential properties. This also assists in calming vehicular speeds. All street typologies including dimensions, surface materials and the principle of direct access have been agreed by Kent Highways. The principles of establishing key view corridors from within the market centre radiating out to Castle Hill Lake and the cliffs is established, utilising key garden city principles of bringing landscape into the built environment.
- 7.6 The creation of safe and legible walking and cycle environments is identified as being critical to successful placemaking, embedded in the vision for the Garden City and the outline consent for EQ. This is essential to Alkerden not least because of the number of centrally-located civic facilities in the Market Centre and Education Campus as well as necessary access to areas of public realm. The AMP/ADC therefore identifies that key open spaces will be linked by a network of pedestrian-friendly routes; walking and cycling to school located within the centre is encouraged through the provision of direct routes to schools and generous pavement widths on Fastrack, and Primary Streets; and a network of Permissive Ways will be provided within and around the village. A cycle hub is identified in the market centre next to the education campus.
- 7.7 In response to the division of land uses, three broad character areas have been identified: market centre; garden suburb; and urban neighbourhood.
- 7.8 The Market centre is the focus of Alkerden and of EQ. Geographically is it located at the centre of the site and is adjacent to the major urban park which lends itself to the creation of central squares and public open spaces which include the dramatic natural chalk spine feature. The Fastrack route will run straight through the middle with proposed stops located centrally. The AMP/ADC identifies the aim to create the market centre as a 'vibrant, active heart to Alkerden and the wider EQ site that focuses on experience for individuals as well as compatible land uses. The Market Centre will be a place to use local facilities, shop, work, learn and live all within an exciting, bold, safe environment'. A mix of uses will be provided in the market centre as follows:

Planning Use Class	Total Permissible in Alkerden as Established by Outline Consent (m2)	Maximum Proposed for Market Centre Area within Alkerden Village (m2)
B1 (Office)	60,000	20,000
C3 (Residential)	200,000	30,000
C1 (Hotels)	11,000	11,000
A1 – A5 (Retail/Professional Services/Restaurants/Café/ Takeaway)	27,000 (A1 not to exceed 16,900)	18,000 (A1 not to exceed 16,900)

D2 (Leisure)	25,000	18,000
D1/D2 (Community/ Leisure)	35,000	18,000
Total	358,000	50,000 (Not to be read as aggregate of the above)

- 7.9 The size of the EQ scheme results in a long build out programme and so it is likely there will be changes to retail and commercial activities and markets during this time. The AMP/ADC therefore maintains a degree of flexibility to allow for this. While the exact floor areas will be determined through detailed consents, the proposed quantum of different uses represents a good mix and will help deliver the vibrant market centre.
- 7.10 A significant draw to the market centre will be the education campus which will occupy the majority of Alkerden north of Fastrack. The education campus includes an 8FE secondary school and 2FE primary school together with shared sports facilities including sports pitches. The education campus will create a great deal of activity. The AMP/ADC takes advantage of this by combining this with the mixed use centre, facilitating shared trips, and creating busy, vibrant spaces.
- 7.11 To reflect the vibrancy of the market centre, the AMP/ADC identifies a bold approach should be taken to design and architecture. Taller building forms compared to the surrounding character areas are proposed (maximum of 6 storeys) with the area punctuated by several landmark corners and gateway buildings. A key landmark building is identified as the education campus on the crossroads between the primary street and Fastrack. Particular guidelines are provided for this landmark feature to ensure this will be a unique landmark. The AMP/ADC identifies each building or group of buildings should provide an individual style and the architectural form therefore varied. It is likely the buildings will have a large scale to accommodate the proposed heights and facilitate co-location of commercial and community facilities. The AMP/ADC therefore identifies that architecturally ground floors should provide a human scale with the upper floors to include elevational details that break up the overall mass.
- 7.12 The combination of community and commercial land uses and potential to co-locate these together in one area (and potentially within buildings) is welcomed. The principles helps creates vibrant spaces and a solid basis for community engagement, helping to drive commercial viability. The possibilities for a wide range of community uses would be appropriate in this area, notwithstanding those obligated by the outline consent such as the life long learning centre and possibly religious facilities. It is considered the market centre will create significant employment opportunities and is an exciting prospect for EQ.
- 7.13 The Garden Suburb character area located to the north of Fastrack, surrounds the education campus on three sides and borders the open spaces fronting Castle Hill, Ashmere and Swanscombe. The overall narrative is for a contemporary interpretation of the garden suburb with linear blocks with green street frontages. This area is broken down into 3 sub-character areas: Alkerden Heritage, Swanscombe Edge and Custom Build Community.
- 7.14 Alkerden Heritage is located to the western edge of the education campus fronting the major urban park. Together with the Garden Suburb theme, the influence for this residential area is also taken from the context of the historic Alkerden Barn which is located within this area (the status and treatment of which is discussed below under

'Other Matters'). This is a low-medium density area of 2-3 storey houses which will have a loose grain, irregularity and draw the landscape from the major urban park in to the built form. The area will be characterised by building forms that have regard to the Kentish historic farmstead.

- 7.15 Swanscombe Edge is located along the northern boundary and is medium density of 2-3 storey residential buildings and have a loose urban structure. The AMP/ADC states the block structure, building positioning, building massing space and scale of Swanscombe should be used to inform the context of this area but that architectural treatment will be informed by features that are more likened to Garden Suburbs such as Letchworth and are a simple contemporary interpretation of family house type that features diversity of forms, articulated by different roof shapes, chimneys, large window sizes and proportions and brick plinths.
- 7.16 The Custom Build Community is promoted for custom build housetypes which offers innovation and variety into the site. This is a medium density area of 2-3 houses. In terms of urban form, dwellings should engage positively with the adjacent green zone and will have regular height and massing but architectural freedom given the nature of the housetypes. It is expected the character will evolve with the individual model of the self-build contractor once one has been engaged and will be determined further through the RMA. However, falling within the Garden Suburb character area, it will be expected to have regard to this architectural form to comply with the AMP/ADC.
- 7.17 The third character area 'Urban Neighbourhood' occupies the remainder of the site to the south of Fastrack. This is a residential area of medium density with one high density strip along the western boundary adjacent to the market centre. Building heights are identified at 2-3 storeys and up to 4 storeys in the higher density area. It is envisaged this area will be formed by a contemporary, tight-knit neighbourhood of family housing formed by over formalised block structures on an orthogonal street pattern, akin to Victorian settlements. It will focus on the rhythms and rich visual detailing of traditional terraced house types within a palette of materials that reference the chalk cliffs.
- 7.18 The AMP/ADC identifies that all residential properties will be required to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards for internal accommodation and include appropriately sized gardens. It also identifies standards for high density to include dual-aspect where practicable and provision of balconies. The document identifies 25% of all dwellings will meet the Building Regulations Part M4(2) standards for accessible and adaptable dwellings. The accessibility level meets minimum requirements of the outline permission and while it is the aspiration of the EDC to exceed this level, it is acknowledged there are topographical difficulties in Alkerden that are more pronounced than in Ashmere, which is on a much more level plateau. While a minimum level has been identified, further discussion will be expected for future RMAs to increase this amount. Housing typologies and associated parking typologies are also identified, including the provision of undercroft and podium parking as a possibility which is welcomed. The diagrams provided do suggest that some space would be maintained in front of garages which may lead to overhanging of the footpath which would not be welcomed. It is suggested this is advised by way of an informative to inform discussions at RMA stage.
- 7.19 Broad locations are identified in the AMP/ADC for public art and the theme of historical Alkerden identified which could reference Alkerden Barn located on site. The areas identified are considered to be quite limited. However, the document identifies that determination of public art installations should be a dynamic process that involves public consultation and engagement. The AMP/ADC recognises that public art can

take varying forms including physical installations, lighting or integrated pieces in the public realm, landscape or street furniture. The document therefore identifies that the broad locations identified will be reviewed and shaped further following community engagement, along with the identification of secondary opportunities that could be developed through custom designed elements of landmark buildings, the public realm, and landscape and play areas. The parameters identified for the installation of public art is welcomed. It is recognised that an update to the broader Public Art Strategy secured under the outline permission is currently being undertaken. This will inform in more detail the procurement of the public art. However, the information in the AMP is welcomed as being aligned to the EDC's emerging work on a vision for art and communities in the Garden City and is considered to satisfy the requirements of the condition.

- 7.20 The AMP/ADC identifies strong parameters for delivery against which future RMAs will be assessed. It is considered the emphasis on the market centre is key to the delivery of the individual character of this village and principal issues to deliver this objective has been considered carefully and articulated in the AMP/ADC. The narratives for the residential areas are not as strong but clear guidelines to form development in the articulation of the streets and guidelines for an approach to architecture has been established. It is considered the document forms a robust and comprehensive set of principles that will help ensure the delivery of high quality schemes.

Open spaces

- 7.21 Principal open spaces within the village of Alkerden is primarily the major urban park which has been divided into distinct areas from north to south as Craylands Gorge; local park; chalk spine; Whitecliffe Square; and recreational area. Two neighbourhood Greens are identified: one to the north within Alkerden Heritage character area adjacent to the major urban park; and another to the south in a central location within Alkerden South character area.
- 7.22 Consideration of the design of the landscape has been led from a vision to help improve health and wellbeing, developed from the "Five Ways" to mental wellbeing developed by the Government Office for Science (2008) being social, environment, recreation, play and education and these elements have been identified in the design of the open spaces.
- 7.23 Within Alkerden, the major urban park spans the entire length north to south of the village. It provides an important buffer between the village to the west (Ashmere) but also provides significant opportunities for a variety of landscape, recreational and ecological benefits. Each section of the park provides an individual character from the next. Craylands Gorge in the north will provide a leisure routes and informal recreation opportunities. It will have a largely unmanicured appearance, maintaining the existing rugged character that alludes to its former use as a former rail link to the Swanscombe cement works. To the south of the Gorge, a local park is proposed which will provide areas for recreation and community sports/activities within a natural setting. Proposals for this area include a bowling green, mountain bike trail, adventure play area and leisure routes integrated within the landscape. Moving south to a linear section which will incorporate the chalk spine. Leisure routes are to be provided which will provide dramatic views of the site and down into the market centre. The character will be wild and naturalistic with swathes of open meadow to enhance the dramatic natural features. The southern section of the park will meet the Castle Hill lake. This section is to be more formalised and terraced north to south, falling in levels as it approaches the lake edge. It will include opportunities for formal sports such as MUGAs, play areas

and courts for tennis, netball and basketball. Wildlife corridors and SUDS features are proposed to run throughout the length of the park.

- 7.24 The provision of social civic spaces supports opportunities for social and community events or pop-up activities. The focus on drawing people together in the centre of the site, driving the narrative for the market centre, creates the opportunity to create good quality open spaces. The AMP/ADC identifies two formal squares within the market centre. The 'Market Centre Square' is a linear plaza along the Fastrack corridor outside the education campus which deviates from the standard Fastrack typology in this location recognising that this space will generate a lot of activity at various times of the day. It has therefore been designed as shared space with opportunities for ornamental paving and threshold steps in front of the school created by the topography. Whitecliffe Square, situated in the centre of the major urban park, is identified where major green infrastructure crosses the Fastrack and is located where the chalk spine terminates, creating a dramatic backdrop. It will be fronted by ground floor mixed use development in the market centre therefore will experience a large amount of human traffic. This large area has been subdivided into spaces at a human scale with idea that free pedestrian movement is interwoven with special landscape features. It is proposed to use the topography to create terraces, with usable spaces overlooked by feature steps and seats integrated within the level changes. A large civic space is proposed with water feature focal point, grass lawns, a play space and a large wildlife corridor. Overlooking the square, it is proposed to accommodate the chalk cliff with a viewing platform which will provide views out of the surrounding landscape.
- 7.25 The two neighbourhood greens provide opportunities for play and leisure but also break up the built form. It is recognised that it is good practice for these to be situated in the centre of the built up areas in the interests of accessibility to surrounding residents. In the case of the neighbourhood green to the north of the site in the Alkerden Heritage character area, it has been relocated to the edge adjacent to the major urban park. The existing Alkerden Barn is currently located in this area. While the treatment of the historic barn is yet unknown (refer to 'Other Issues' discussion below) the positioning of the open space around it current siting provides opportunities for the barn to be maintained in a location which relates to its original setting.
- 7.26 The open spaces provide variety and interest to meet the needs of all residents. Several meeting places have been identified on different scales for social cohesion. The designs will enhance the environment within the site with natural and semi-natural landscape characters providing diversity. Walking and cycling is encouraged by connectivity through open spaces and will be enhanced by waypoints, picnic benches, information panels and trim trail equipment. Each of the 4 formal play spaces are identified as each having a difference concept or size and scale and opportunities for imaginative play are also identified as being possibly throughout the public realm through the creation of banks, mounts and valleys. The variety of open spaces also provide ample opportunities for outdoor learning. A tree strategy has also been developed outlining appropriate tree species for the various open spaces.
- 7.27 Internal consultation was undertaken with a landscape consultant and initial comments raised have largely been successfully addressed. Outstanding issues raised in relation to limited detail being available on the open space along the northern boundary, a clear indication of the extent of land with restricted public access, safety measures for the chalk spine and greater diversity welcomed in the palette of trees were acknowledged. It is considered that these details would emerge as RMAs which would be more appropriate at this scale of application. These can be brought to the applicant's attention by way of an informative. The AMP/ADC provides very comprehensive details in relation to the open spaces. In the context of the AMP, it may be considered

over and above the level of detail required, However, it demonstrates a commitment to high quality landscapes and sets a good standard and expectation for the detailed schemes to come forward under future RMAs.

Highways

Parking Management Plan

- 7.28 As required by the outline consent, the PMP sets out a set of parking standards to be applied throughout the village. The same PMP has been submitted pursuant to the AMP/ADC for Ashmere (planning ref EDC/18/0196) and as such the document identifies standards that are proposed to be adopted for the rest of EQ.
- 7.29 The PMP develops a clear line of reasoning, from the vision for EQ, through current parking trends and evidence base, to the proposed measures for delivering the vision and monitoring methodology.
- 7.30 The development of a site at this scale offers exciting and unique opportunities to establish its own strategy which maximise benefits offered by sustainable transport initiatives. The PMP identifies the role of the Transport Strategy which falls under the scope of documents approved as part of the S73 application and sets out a set of objectives which are based around the philosophy of managing car use and reducing convenience of the car. This is supported by masterplanning principles that have been established such as the priority location of the Fastrack corridor, convoluted vehicular routes and the creation of walkable neighbourhoods through the provision of accessible infrastructure together with good amounts of open space, and well-connected pedestrian and cycle links. It is also assisted by the location of the site next to the international station and a nationally significant retail/leisure destination which will be well connected and easily accessible for residents.
- 7.31 The vision for EQ is therefore a 'public transport orientated development' with the aim to embed the principle that the use of 'walking, cycling and public transport to meet daily travel needs will challenge the historic default use of the car' (paragraph 2.1.2) and thereby foster a healthier lifestyle and promote community interaction. The PMP seeks to 'dovetail with a wider aspiration for EQ to cater for, and hence be attractive to, families and individuals who are seeking a much more sustainable approach to living' (paragraph 2.1.10). In light of the long build-out programme for EQ, the PMP proposes the vision (and PMP) should evolve accordingly, responding to relevant trends at the time.
- 7.32 The PMP identifies current trends in car ownership and use that affect consideration of an appropriate level of parking. It draws on research undertaken by DfT - Young People's Travel - What's Changed and Why? – found that since 1990 trends show young people travel less and to own and use cars less. The reasons have been attributed to rising car costs, stagnation in wage rates, increasing housing expenditure, decline in disposable income and home ownership and a general change in attitude and shift in values.
- 7.33 A subsequent report by PBA - Planning Transport and Development – All change? - shows predictions in traffic forecasts since the 1980s far exceed actual growth. A number of societal changes that have been attributed to this include big data, real-time information, car clubs, bike hire schemes, smart ticketing, improvements in public transport quality and reliability, and cost of living versus cost of travel.

- 7.34 By and large, empirical evidence clearly shows habits are changing away from dominated car use in favour of alternative methods an increasing rate and it is important for large development site with long build-out periods to be able to react and respond effectively.
- 7.35 The unique nature of EQ means the availability of comparable sites to carry out survey research is incredibly limited. It was therefore determined that a survey of Castle Hill within EQ was most appropriate and would enable a review of the standards applied to date. Surveys were undertaken at phases 1 and 2 which are complete and fully occupied.
- 7.36 To determine current resident parking levels at Castle Hill, surveys were carried out on Sunday 16 September at 0700 and Wednesday 19 September at 2100. These times are considered appropriate to make meaningful conclusions on resident car ownership. To create a 'worst case' scenario' all on street parking counted as residential spaces and data was combined for both survey days selecting the highest number of cars parked on either day. Garages were not surveyed but were assumed to be used for parking at a rate of 50%. In summary, a parking ration of between 0.93 – 1.62 was observed identified as follows:

Beds	Parking Ratio Observed
4 bed	1.62
3 bed	1.24
2 bed	0.98
Apartment	0.93
Total	1.21

- 7.37 While visitor parking was added to resident parking in the calculations above, the numbers of cars in visitor bays were recorded separately. The demand from these surveys ranged from 0.16 – 0.23 for houses and 0.21 – 0.25 for apartments.
- 7.38 It was identified that visitors were less likely to be visiting during the early and late hours of the September surveys. Subsequent surveys were therefore carried out on Saturday 16th March at 13:00 and 16:00 and Sunday 17th March at 13:00 and 16:00 when visitors were more likely to be utilising spaces. The demand for visitor parking from these surveys ranged from 0.14 – 0.20 for houses and 0.15 – 0.22 for apartments. No data was provided as to whether the parking provision was on an allocated or unallocated basis.
- 7.39 Vans were also surveyed both on and off plot. Of the 19 van spaces provided across phases 1 and 2, only 1 was being used for van parking, 13 were observed being used for cars and 5 were empty.
- 7.40 A total of 40 vans were observed parked on site. Of these:
- 1 van was observed parked within a dedicated van space
 - 29 vans were observed parked on plot
 - 8 vans were observed parked in visitor spaces
 - 2 vans were observed parked outside of designated spaces

- 7.41 On the basis of these results, the report concluded that visitor spaces are being used by residents who could instead be parking on plot, and that van spaces are not being used by vans. It is further evident that vans are predominantly parked on plot.
- 7.42 In order to help deliver the vision for reduced car use in EQ, the PMP identifies a series of key initiatives to help encourage the use of sustainable methods of transport:
- 7.43 The report identifies the significance of the Fastrack route to the local area which passing through EQ will be a key and fundamental part of the overall transport network. Planned improvements to the route and the EDC's direct involvement to help deliver service and infrastructure improvements are reflective of the importance this public transport network has. The report states resident welcome packs will include details of the Fastrack timetable and its proposed routes. It also identifies that real time information is also required to ensure that the service can meet the responsiveness required. This will be gained from the bus stops on site as defined by the Transport Strategy and obligated through the S106. It is envisaged this will become increasingly available on mobile phone apps.
- 7.44 The report identifies the increasing popularity of car clubs. Car clubs are incredibly convenient and provide the convenience of private car use without the frustrations of associated costs of owning a vehicle or finding parking spaces. Booking is generally online or by phone and vehicle can be rented for as little as 30 minutes and returned at any time. There are clearly significant opportunities for provision of car clubs at EQ in a development of this scale. The PMP identifies approximate locations for 1-2 spaces within the village, reasonably distributed and accessible, ensuring residents are generally within a 400m radius (5 minute walk) of a car club space. The report states the presumption is that car clubs will be provided for as part of the development unless it is demonstrated there is unlikely to be demand. The report also highlights that car club spaces will include provision for both fuel and electric cars.
- 7.45 The AMP identifies significant walking and cycling routes within the development parcels and through the open spaces. Accessible and safe connectivity will also be provided to the surrounding areas. Support for walking and cycling is embedded within the EQ consent. The PMP identifies resident packs will inform the new community as to the routes that are currently available and the timings of future routes becoming available. In key locations, signage will be provided that indicates key travel distances by both walking and cycling to encourage transition to these modes. To help encourage trips to commercial areas by bicycle, the PMP states the provision of cycle lockers to lock and store bikes will be assumed to be included as part of future commercial applications and showers expected to be provided in non-residential buildings where more than 30 employees work. In addition, the PMP commits to infrastructure being provided for a cycle hire docking scheme within the site which will be provided within each of the commercial centres.
- 7.46 The increased popularity of demand based services such as Uber are identified, demonstrating a change in trends towards a different way of accessing transport services which are particularly tending towards internet accessibility. The development of flexible, cross modal travel initiatives known as 'Mobility as a Service' (MaaS) is also identified as an opportunity for the Garden City. This service is internet based and allows journeys to be planned and paid for in real time across all modes and for a fixed subscription cost. This would also help to reduce existing car use and ownership.
- 7.47 In recognition of a shift towards electric vehicles, the PMP identifies the opportunity to provide an electric vehicle charging hub in the south of Alkerden village.

- 7.48 The outline consent required the appointment of a Transport Co-ordinator whose responsibility it is to promote the use of non-car modes of travel and co-ordinate Travel Plans and related initiatives. They will provide current and helpful information about travel opportunities and alternatives for people living or working at EQ2. They will also act as broker between residents and businesses at EQ2 and transport providers, so that travel needs can be highlighted and appropriate and timely solutions delivered. Commitments to achieving initiatives asset out in the PMP is therefore to be championed by the Transport Co-ordinator, as required by the outline consent.
- 7.49 Compiling the relevant trends, survey information and recognising the opportunities to delivery initiatives for alternatives to private car ownership at EQ, proposed car parking standards have been produced. While recognising the car has a legitimate place in the overall transport mix, the approach to car parking will be moderated and managed.
- 7.50 The residential parking standards are proposed as follows:

House type	Car	Visitor	Van	Cycle	Garages
1-2 bed	1.0	2 spaces per 10 homes (0.20)			Large garages to be counted as 100% parking provision where on-street parking opportunities are designed out and a proportion of the front façade is not enclosed.
3 bed	1.5				
4 bed	2.0				
Apart	1.0	2 spaces per 10 homes where resident's parking is allocated (0.20)	1 space per 20 homes (0.05)	1 cycle space per bedroom	Typical standard garages to be counted as 50% parking provision.
		1.8 spaces per 10 homes where resident's parking is unallocated (0.18)			

- 7.51 Garages were not surveyed at Castle Hill and assumptions made they were used for parking cannot therefore be substantiated. The evidence base is therefore inconclusive and cannot be used to ascertain the extent of garages that are used for storage rather than parking.
- 7.52 It was agreed in conjunction with Kent Highways that where alternative on-street parking options would not be readily available for residents, for example in narrower mews type streets, there could be circumstances where garages could count as a full space towards parking provision. These scenarios must be demonstrated through detailed RMA. Furthermore, the design of these garages must be enlarged to accommodate bin and cycle storage plus circulation space alongside car storage and must a proportion of the front façade must be open. The Ashmere AMP expands on this provision, stating 'the front and rear façades of the garage should be at least 50% open where garages count as 100% parking provision, unless there is design rationale to do otherwise'.
- 7.53 Initial proposals sought a blanket proposal of 1 visitor space per 10 homes (0.10). In light of survey results demonstrating a higher demand, Kent Highways did not support this proposal. The applicant accepted the provision of 2 spaces per 10 homes for

houses but concerns were raised on the impact this level would have on parking courtyards for apartments, notwithstanding this being based on urban design grounds rather than the evidence presented. However, it was recognised that where spaces are unallocated in the case of flats, there is greater flexibility in the use of spaces, acknowledging some occupants may have 1 or 0 cars. A slightly lower provision of 1.8 spaces per 10 homes was therefore accepted by Kent Highways where they would be unallocated.

- 7.54 The proposed van parking provision of 1 space per 20 homes is consistent with the survey data and is supported by Kent Highways.
- 7.55 The proposal of 1 cycle space per bedroom across all housetypes is a good standard and is welcomed.
- 7.56 The PMP also stipulates that shared vehicular parking areas will also provide 1 motorcycle parking space plus 1 additional motorcycle space for every 20 car parking spaces provided.
- 7.57 To develop a standard for education parking provision, it was considered a survey of other schools was not advantageous since it would not reflect the unique setting and opportunities at EQ. The report draws on an assessment of walking and cycling routes undertaken by Space Syntax as commissioned by the EDC. The report demonstrates that 95% of EQ is within a 15 minute walk to a school and 97% within a 5 minute cycle ride to a school. This highlights the connectivity of the site by walking and cycling modes to key education sites.
- 7.58 Kent Highways requested a first principles review. This has been incorporated into the PMP and takes into consideration the likely number of staff working at the schools on site, referring to School Workforce Census data together with Journey to Work by Occupation census data for Gravesham and Dartford. Consideration has also been given to other factors including the sustainable location of EQ; catchment of the primary school pupils and majority of secondary school pupils is expected to be from within EQ; external catchment for the secondary school is likely to be in Dartford and Gravesend which are connected by the Fastrack link; school travel plans will be implemented as required by the outline consent; empirical evidence in the PMP has shown a low car ownership rate. Consequently the following standards are proposed for education use:

Use	Employees	Pupils / Visitors / Clients
Nursery	1 space per 2.4 staff	1 space per 4.8 children
Primary School	1 space per 18 pupils	1 space per 2.4 classes
Secondary School (inc Sixth Form)	1 space per 18 pupils	1 space per 2.4 classes

- 7.59 The employee provision is consistent with the first principles analysis and primary school is 89%. The PMP also identifies motorcycle parking and provision for mobility impaired parking.

- 7.60 Based on the information provided and first principles survey, the proposed standards are supported by Kent Highways.
- 7.61 In respect of other commercial uses (Class A1 – shops and retail outlets; Class A2 – professional services; Class A3 – food and drink; Class A4 – drinking establishments; Class A5 – hot food and takeaway; Class B1 – business; Class C1 – hotels; Class D1 – non-residential institutions; and D2 – assembly and leisure) the proposed standards have been set c.20% below the local parking standards in Dartford. No survey work has been undertaken for these figures but have been considered against the following factors:
- The highly sustainable location of the site with comprehensive sustainable transport network;
 - Commercial development will be located within the central areas of the development and closest to the Fastrack and walking, cycling networks;
 - A proportion of residents will move to EQ to be close to their place of work and therefore within walking/cycling distance of Fastrack
 - A proportion of employees on site will arrive from Ebbsfleet International station and connect to the site via Fastrack.
 - Travel Plans will be implemented as required by the outline consent for all commercial developments which will encourage travel by non private car modes.
 - Empirical evidence in the PMP has shown a low car ownership rate.
- 7.62 Kent Highways acknowledge that there is no relevant survey data available that might be used to measure commercial parking standards. However, they agree with the assumptions made and support the proposal.
- 7.63 In relation to car parking charges, the PMP sets out general principles including: where charges are imposed, payment will be at point of use; on street spaces to have short free period to support local facilities; enforcement will need to be undertaken by the developer until roads are adopted when a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is likely to be required at which time the local parking authority would take over; public car park spaces should be charged for such that they are not attractive for use other than for the local facilities, such as expensive all-day parking, but will not prevent evening community events; charging regimes set to prevent commuter parking.
- 7.64 To ensure all objectives of the PMP are being met, it is proposed the plan will be reviewed annually following first occupation in either the Ashmere or Alkerden on the basis that a minimum of 250 additional occupations have occurred since the previous review. This allows for empirical data to continue to be collected and observed at the time of the review, allowing any necessary adjustments to be made. Notwithstanding, there will be some settling down period as the site is built out to accurately reflect on the effect on the objectives of the PMP.
- 7.65 The standards proposed in the PMP are considered to be based on a sound assessment of current trends and are balanced against aspirations for lower car use at EQ. The review mechanism allows for some flexibility, enabling the PMP to be an evolving document which may be amended accordingly where evidence from the ongoing monitoring demonstrates there is a justified need for reconsideration.

Junction Design

- 7.66 As outlined in the proposal section above, a junction design modelling report has been provided to understand the highway implications of the development on the internal

network. The purpose of this document is to ensure that key internal junctions, namely the four internal junctions on the key east/west route and the two junctions to the south, are designed to accommodate peak time demand and in particular will not back up and obstruct the Fastrack corridor.

7.67 The report identifies the key junctions through both Alkerden and Ashmere. Based on predicted traffic flows, junctions have been designed 8 specific areas, largely major crossing point across either main street or where these meet the Fastrack corridor. It does show in particular two of the junctions will be particularly large. However, the report identifies possible solutions for each of these junctions and do not represent the final designs.

7.68 Kent Highways are satisfied that the information sets out identifies to a level that is appropriate at this stage that junctions can be accommodated sufficiently well to deal with a predicted level of traffic moving within the site.

Other Matters

7.69 Alkerden Barn is an existing historic building located to the north of Alkerden. It is acknowledged that several of the objections received in respect of this application relate to the protection of heritage and specifically in relation to this barn. The Open Space section of this report identifies that one of the neighbourhood greens has been relocated to include the current position of the barn.

7.70 A separate application is currently under consideration for the barn. Matters of historic value and proposed treatment will be considered under this separate application. The earthworks advance infrastructure application previously approved carved out the area of the barn and its associated farm building until such time as treatment of the historic barn might be known. At this stage, therefore, it is unknown what the treatment will be. The position of the AMP is that an area of open space will be maintained in the area in which the barn is currently located. It is not considered this will prejudice any determination in respect of the application for the barn.

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 submitted documents provide a comprehensive set of design parameters which establish a high quality framework against which future RMAs will be assessed. The AMP/ADC sets out a vision which is aligned to the EDC Garden City vision and complies with Development Plan policy and the Implementation Framework. The submission is therefore recommended for approval and that conditions 19 and 20 be discharged accordingly.

APPENDIX 1 - CONDITION 19 of EDC/17/0048 (Area Masterplan)

19. With the exception of Infrastructure submissions pursuant to Condition 18, before any other application is submitted for approval of details pursuant to Condition 2 for the relevant area, and following submission to the Local Planning Authority of the Site Wide Master Plan (pursuant to Condition 10), an Area Master Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority for the area to which the application for detailed approval relates.

The approved Area Master Plans for the Castle Hill area is that approved by the local planning authority under reference, 13/00422/EQCHC on 15 July 2013, 14/00584/EQCHC on 7 October 2014 and EDC/16/0094 on 22 February 2017. From time to time a revised Area Master Plan may be submitted for approval by the local planning authority.

The AMP shall generally accord with the Site Wide Master Plan approved under condition 10 and other strategies approved as part of the planning permission and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details

The Area Master Plan shall be based on a 1:2500 scale plan(s) and be supported by a written statement.

It shall include consideration and detail of the following issues for that area, although these are not exclusive, as the detail included in the AMP should also reflect the requirements of the approved Strategies and Action Plans:

Land Uses

- a. Land uses and maximum floor space areas (including floorspace to be provided for comparison and convenience retail uses)
- b. Indication of affordable housing sub areas
- c. Land set aside for non-commercial uses (such as education and community uses, miscellaneous uses, open space etc)

Phasing

- d. General phasing for that area to include confirmation of where development is likely to start, when Fastrack stops are to be provided; when local centre to be provided; when links to adjacent communities (on and off site); when community facilities are to be provided; and public art provision.

Land Forming

- e. Land formation plan to show details of final ground levels and interfaces with existing ground levels. A comparison with existing levels on site should also be included, as well as cross sections of ground level in order to clarify proposals.

Archaeology/Historic Environment

- f. Identification of Historic environment area as identified in the Historic Environment Framework
- g. Identification of areas of archaeological remains to be preserved in situ.

Form of Development and Design

- h. Extent of development and its density
- i. Building height ranges

- j. General location of landmark buildings and features
- k. Cross sections and perspectives of key streets, buildings and open spaces including adjacent areas (as built or as completed) where necessary in order to facilitate integration.
- l. Boundary treatment details to the Area - existing and proposed treatments
- m. Identification of broad design character areas in order to guide the more detailed Area Design Codes.

Access and Car Parking

- n. Access routes (vehicular, public transport, pedestrian and cycle) and connections to surroundings areas and when these will become available for use.
- o. Indication of the location of permissive ways which form connections with the boundary of the site, existing public rights of way and key landscape features and are to be located predominantly within open space as required by the Landscape and Open Space Strategy. An indication of the implementation programme for such permissive ways.
- p. Car parking standards, typologies and distribution and car parking management measures

Integration

- q. Indicate the location of footpath and cycleway connections to the surrounding area and identify any off-site works which will be required and any signage which may be necessary. An indication of when these connections should be available for use.

Open Space

- r. The indicative locations of all areas of Open Land and Public Art to be included within or adjoining the Village which is the subject of the Area Master Plan, such general locations to take account of the principles of location and design set out in the Landscape & Open Space Strategy, Public Art Strategy, Public Realm Strategy (as appropriate)
- s. An indication of those areas of Open Land to which the public will at the appropriate time be permitted access and those to which the public will not be permitted access and the nature of that access.
- t. Location of public open spaces and play areas and phased provision as development progresses
- u. Linkages between areas of open space

Public Art

- v. The broad locations, design themes and timeframes for commissioning public art in accordance with the Public Art Strategy.

Lighting

- w. A lighting strategy and hierarchy in accordance with the Public Realm Strategy

Employment

- x. Ensure a provision of a variety of accommodation (including workspace such as small, affordable B1 (c) use provision and small office units to accommodate 1-4 people)
- y. Workspace near homes and flexibility to create work-live units Existing structures (where appropriate)

Existing Structures (where appropriate)

- z. Identification of overhead power lines (where present)
- aa. Identification of existing buildings where they exist and a consideration of the potential for re-use.

Interim Landscaping

- bb. Interim landscaping plan to be implemented in the event that less than 100 dwellings are completed for occupation on the site over a period of 5 years, such plan to include ground levels and landscaping.

The details submitted under condition 2 shall generally accord with the Area Master Plan as approved relating to the relevant Area.

Reason: To ensure that areas of the development are adequately master planned and to ensure that areas within the development interconnect and interrelate properly.

APPENDIX 2 - CONDITION 20 of EDC/17/0048 (Area Design Code)

Informative: Such a design code may cover a smaller area than an Area Master Plan in order to allow for more detailed design guidance to deal with specific nature of a sub- area. It is expected that the Area Master Plan will provide guidance on the design character of the sub-areas which the Area Design Code will provide more detail on.

20. With the exception of Infrastructure submissions pursuant to Condition 18, before any other application is submitted for approval of details pursuant to Condition 2 for the relevant area and following submission to the Local Planning Authority of the Site Wide Master Plan (pursuant to Condition 10), an Area Design Code for the relevant area (to be defined by the Code) shall be submitted to and be approved by the Local Planning Authority. Any replacement code which may from time to time be prepared shall also be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority. The ADC shall generally accord with the Site Wide Master Plan approved under condition 10 and other strategies approved as part of the planning permission. Such design code should show:
- a. The area to be covered by the code
 - b. Architectural style and treatment
 - c. Treatment of public highways
 - d. Building materials pallet
 - e. Surface materials pallet
 - f. Street furniture and design and lighting design
 - g. Soft landscape
 - h. Frontage types
 - i. Heights
 - j. Building forms
 - k. High density living standards which will establish a benchmark for detailed submissions to be assessed against, e.g. storage provision for individuals dwellings, provision of private outdoor space.

The details submitted under condition 2 shall generally accord with the Area Design Code as approved and relating to the relevant Area.

Reason: To ensure adequate standards of accommodation provision, a high standard of design and to ensure that the development is built out in a comprehensive and acceptable manner.