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CHILMINGTON GREEN

PLANNING STATEMENT

Prepared on behalf of

**Hodson Developments Ltd
Malcolm Jarvis Homes Ltd
Pentland Homes Ltd
Ward Homes**

September 2013

Regulated by RICS

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of the amended (September 2013) outline planning application for the comprehensive mixed use development of a new community at Chilmington Green, Ashford (No. 12/00400/AS). The planning application has been prepared on behalf of the four applicants (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicants'),

Hodson Developments Ltd
 Malcolm Jarvis Homes Ltd
 Pentland Homes Ltd and
 Ward Homes (a Trading name of BDW Trading Ltd).

1.2 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the application forms, Development Specification, Parameter Plans, Environmental Statement and other supporting material. The Development Specification explains the reasons for the submission of amendments to the planning application and the revised description of development.

1.3 Outline planning permission is sought for

“Outline application for a Comprehensive Mixed Use Development comprising:

- up to 5,750 residential units, in a mix of sizes, types and tenures;
- up to 10,000 m² (gross external floorspace) of Class B1 use;
- up to 9,000 m² (gross external floorspace) of Class A1 to A5 uses;
- Education (including a secondary school of up to 8 ha and up to four primary schools of up to 2.1 ha each);
- Community Uses (class D1) up to 7,000 m² (gross external floorspace);

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- **Leisure Uses (class D2) up to 6,000 m² (gross external floorspace);**
 - **Provision of local recycling facilities;**
 - **Provision of areas of formal and informal open space;**
 - **Installation of appropriate utilities infrastructure as required to serve the development, including flood attenuation works, SUDS, water supply and wastewater infrastructure, gas supply, electricity supply (including substations), telecommunications infrastructure and renewable energy infrastructure (including CHP in the District Centre);**
 - **Transport infrastructure, including provision of three accesses on to the A28, an access on to Coulter Road / Cuckoo Lane, other connections on to local roads and a network of internal roads, footpaths and cycle routes;**
 - **New planting and landscaping, both within the Proposed Development and on its boundaries, and ecological enhancement works; and**
 - **Associated groundworks**
- **where appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for future approval and where access is reserved for future approval with the exception of the three accesses on to the A28 and the access on to Coulter Road / Cuckoo Lane”.**

1.4 The only matters which are not reserved for future approval are the three accesses on to the A28 and the access on to Coulter Road / Cuckoo Lane. As a consequence, detailed plans of these four accesses form part of the submission. The eight Parameter Plans also define a series of Master Plan components (such as development footprint, the distribution of land uses, density, building heights, access and open space) to which any subsequent reserved matters applications must comply in accordance with the Development Management Procedure Order (2010 and 2012).

1.5 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to set out the case for the Chilmington Green proposal. It therefore

- describes the context for the development of the site

- describes the proposal
- explains the planning policy context for the assessment of the application
- evaluates the proposed development in terms of
 - o the principle of development
 - o scheme assessment
 - o infrastructure and other development requirements
 - o future management
- explains how the proposal will be implemented, including phasing, the infrastructure contributions associated with the S106 agreement and the associated community benefits.

1.6 The documents which form the amended 2013 planning application are

- the 2012 planning application form (but with amended description of development – Schedule B)
- land ownership and agricultural holdings certificates (2012)
- the eight amended Parameter Plans (2013)
- the five amended and detailed Access Plans (2013)
- the Development Specification (2013).

1.7 The planning application is accompanied by a number of supporting documents and studies. The Environmental Statement (ES) is required by law to accompany the application in order to assess its likely significant environmental effects. The Development Specification and Parameter Plans form the basis of the EIA. However, the ES does not form part of the application but is submitted in support of it.

1.8 The supporting documentation comprises

- (a) the Planning Statement (2013)
- (b) Design and Access Statement (2012) plus 2013 Addendum
- (c) the 2012 Environmental Statement (and Non Technical Summary) plus the ES Addendum (2013)

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- (d) the 2012 Transportation Assessment and Travel Plan plus the TA Addendum (2013)
 - (e) the Retail Assessment (2012)
 - (f) the Employment and Economic Benefits Report (2012)
 - (g) the Flood Risk Assessment (2012)
 - (h) the Sustainability Statement (2012) plus the Sustainability Statement Addendum (2013)
 - (i) the Utilities Appraisal Summary (2012)
 - (j) the Statement of Community Involvement (2012).

1.9 Whilst not forming part of the application for which approval is sought, these supporting documents are submitted with the aim of assisting the Local Planning Authority, other bodies and local people in both understanding and evaluating the proposals. If appropriate, parts of these documents can be linked via planning condition to the permission.

1.10 The Parameter Plan approach provides a robust planning framework compliant with current planning and environmental legislation for the application and the basis of the assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed development to be reported in the Environmental Statement.

1.11 Such an approach whilst providing sufficient certainty at the outline application stage, will also allow for some flexibility (through limits of deviation) for the future reserved matters, the detailed design and development which will be controlled through the planning conditions expected to be imposed on the Outline Planning Permission requiring the details of the scale and layout of the development to be fully in accordance with the approved Parameter Plans. Such conditions are also expected to secure and deliver any proposed mitigation arising from the EIA process.

2.0 The Application Site

- 2.1 The application site occupies an area of 415.29 hectares to the south west of Ashford. The site is bounded by the urban edge of Ashford to the north (Singleton and Stanhope), the A28 to the west, Long Length to the east and farmland to the south. The village of Shadoxhurst is located approximately 900 metres south of the application boundary.
- 2.2 Within the overall application site there are some parcels of land which are excluded from the proposed development. These areas are controlled by third parties and are mostly occupied as private houses with gardens. The planning application makes no proposals regarding the future of these land parcels.
- 2.3 The land which forms the planning application site is predominantly agricultural land plus a limited number of buildings which are controlled by the applicants. The site is crossed by a number of public highways, public rights of way (including the Greensand Way) and utility services (including overhead and underground power lines). The watershed between the catchments of the River Stour and the River Beult runs through the site. The topography of the site consists of sloping land falling from the Singleton / Stanhope ridge to the north, flattening into more level land in the central and southern portions of the site. There is a mosaic of fields largely bounded by hedgerows and interspersed with copses and small woodlands.
- 2.4 The site contains no Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are several listed buildings within the parcels excluded from the application site. The site contains five areas of woodland which are listed in the Ancient Woodland Inventory and a number of hedgerows which are deemed to be of historic importance under the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 The amended 2013 planning application proposal consists of the Development Specification, eight Parameter Plans and the detailed Access Plans which, together, support the indicative Master Plan set out in the Design and Access Statement. The Master Plan is the product of several years research and consultation with a wide range of people and organisations. The Statement of Community Involvement explains in detail the consultation process that has been undertaken. However, in summary, it has comprised

Table of Consultation Events

	DATE	EVENT
1.	September 2008	AAP Stakeholder Workshop 1
2.	February 2009	AAP Stakeholder Workshop 2
3.	July 2010	AAP Stakeholder Workshop 3
4.	September 2010	Design Champion Workshop
5.	September 2010	Young People's Workshop
6.	September 2010	Community Planning Weekend and AAP Options Exhibition
7.	October 2010	Report Back Presentation and Exhibition
8.	October 2010	Presentation to Landowners and Developers Group (Ashford's Future)
9.	November 2010	Presentation to ABC Councillors
10.	February 2011	Presentation to ABC Councillors
11.	March 2011	Presentation to ABC Councillors
12.	April 2011	Kent 20/20 Exhibition
13.	July 2011	Newsletter and launch of website
14.	September 2011	Pre-Application Exhibition
15.	October 2011	Presentation to ABC Councillors
16.	November 2011	AAP Stakeholder Workshop 3

17.	December 2011	South East Regional Design Review
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- 3.2 The consultation process has continued following the submission of the planning application in August 2012 through the formal application consultation undertaken by the Borough Council. These consultation comments have been reviewed and, where appropriate, have been reflected in this amended submission. Following the grant of outline planning permission, further consultation will occur when the phase master plans and individual reserved matters are submitted.
- 3.3 A dialogue has taken place in respect of the evolving scheme over a period of several years with a range of stakeholders. In addition to discussions with Ashford Borough Council, the scheme has been formulated in close liaison with such bodies as Natural England, the Environment Agency, Kent County Council (as highway and education authority), Southern Water and the Kent Wildlife Trust. Regular liaison meetings have also taken place with the Chilmington Green Community Group which is made up of local Parish and District Members and local people.

4.0 Policy Context

- 4.1 This chapter assesses the planning policy context for the proposed development.
- 4.2 Whilst not a policy, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out the legislative principles governing the consideration of planning applications.

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.

- 4.3 The Courts are the arbiters of what constitutes a material consideration. However, they must be genuine planning considerations which means they must be related to the development and the use of land. They must also fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned. The Courts have held that the Governments’ statements of planning policy are material considerations which must be taken into account, where relevant, in decisions on planning applications.
- 4.4 Emerging policies, in the form of draft policy statements and guidance, can be regarded as material considerations, depending on the context. Their existence may indicate that a relevant policy is under review; and the circumstances which have led to that review may need to be taken into account.
- 4.5 Planning policy guidance applicable to the Chilmington Green development is currently provided at two levels. These are national guidance (the National Planning Policy Framework) and local guidance (the Ashford Core Strategy, the adopted Chilmington Green Area Action Plan, ‘saved’ Local Plan policies and SPDs). At the time of the original August 2012 submission, the South East Plan formed the regional level of statutory guidance. This plan has now been revoked and has no weight in the

decision making process. All levels of guidance have been reflected in the formulation of the Chilmington Green proposal and, where appropriate, are referred to in this Planning Statement. Since the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on the 27th March 2012, much of the scheme was informed by the guidance in the, now revoked, PPGs and PPSs. However, the next subsection analyses the NPPF and shows the high degree of compliance between the Chilmington Green proposals and the guidance in the NPPF.

National Guidance

- 4.6 **National Planning Policy Framework** : The NPPF confirms (para. 6) that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This is expressed in terms of having three dimensions, the economic, the social and the environmental. All planning applications need to be assessed against each dimension to ensure that they will deliver sustainable development.
- 4.7 Paragraph 12 confirms the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision taking and how proposals in accord with an up to date Local Plan should be approved unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is one of those material considerations. This is carried forward into paragraph 14 which sets out the ‘**presumption in favour of sustainable development**’, where applications which accord with the development plan should be ‘**approved without delay**’.
- 4.8 Having set the overarching approach of the NPPF, paragraph 17 specifies twelve core land use planning principles which should underpin both plan making and decision taking. These are
- be genuinely plan led
 - be creative in finding ways to enhance and improve places

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- to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development and meet objectively identified development needs
 - to always seek to secure a high quality of design and amenity
 - to take account of the different roles and characters of different areas, promoting vitality of urban areas, protecting Green Belts, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting rural communities
 - to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate
 - to contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations should prefer land of a lesser environmental value
 - to encourage the use of previously developed land
 - to promote mixed use developments
 - to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance
 - to actively manage patterns of growth to focus significant development in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable
 - to support strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing and deliver sufficient facilities and services to meet local needs.

4.9 Having set out the overall approach and the core land use principles, paragraphs 18 to 149 of the NPPF provide more detailed guidance on the thirteen topic areas relating to the delivery of sustainable development. Paragraphs 18 to 149 provide more detailed guidance on the thirteen topic areas arising from the core principles which will assist

in delivering sustainable development. Each of these topics are considered below in the context of the Chilmington Green planning application.

- 4.10 **‘Building a Strong and Competitive Economy’** : The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support economic development (para. 19). As part of this, LPAs should plan proactively to meet the needs of business in the 21st century.
- 4.11 Whilst the Ashford Core Strategy sees Chilmington Green as primarily a residentially led mixed use urban extension, it is expected to provide around 1,000 jobs servicing the new community. The Employment and Economic Benefits report demonstrates how the proposals will provide a flexible portfolio of employment, ‘A’ class, community and leisure land which will generate in excess of 1,000 jobs.
- 4.12 As a consequence, the planning application complies with the first sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.
- 4.13 **‘Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres’** : This principle recognises that town centres are the heart of their communities and requires that a sequential test is applied to planning applications for town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan.
- 4.14 The Ashford Core Strategy seeks to promote the viability and vitality of Ashford Town Centre, but it also recognises that the urban extensions at Chilmington Green and Cheesemans Green will need to include new district centres to provide for the day to day needs of residents and workers. Since a new retail centre at Chilmington Green is recognised in the 2008 Core Strategy and the 2013 Chilmington Green AAP, there is no need to undertake a sequential test in the Retail Assessment.
- 4.15 However, it is recognised that the retail facilities at Chilmington Green should not undermine the role of Ashford Town Centre. As a consequence, it is of a size that focusses on local needs. It is for this reason that GL Hearn was instructed to prepare a

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- Retail Assessment. This confirms that the level of retail floorspace proposed will meet local needs without threatening Ashford Town Centre.
- 4.16 As a consequence, the application complies with the second sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.
- 4.17 **‘Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy’** : This topic area is not relevant to the Chilmington Green planning application.
- 4.18 **‘Promoting Sustainable Transport’** : The NPPF notes (para. 29) that transport has an important role in facilitating sustainable development and states that support will be given to patterns of development which promote sustainable modes of transport.
- 4.19 The Ashford Core Strategy identified Chilmington Green as a suitable site for a sustainable urban extension, linked to the provision of high quality, bus based public transport and a network of cycle and pedestrian routes. The Transport Assessment and Travel Plan accompanying the planning application set out the detail of how these sustainable transport objectives will be achieved in practice. An important element in this is the provision of a wide mix of on site services and facilities such as schools, shops, leisure and employment which allow many trips to be retained within Chilmington Green. For those trips which do not have a destination within Chilmington Green, a high quality bus service will be provided to the Town Centre and the railway station.
- 4.20 As a consequence, the application complies with the fourth sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.
- 4.21 **‘Supporting High Quality Communication Infrastructure’** : The NPPF notes (para. 42) that advanced, high quality communication infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth and particularly highlights the potential of high speed broadband networks. In the course of preparing the Employment and Economic Benefits report, consultation with local Agents identified slow broadband speeds are a

problem in Ashford. The Chilmington Green developers have responded to this by entering into an agreement with Openreach to provide the site with high speed broadband; not otherwise available in the Ashford area. This should make Chilmington Green an especially attractive location for businesses that are heavy broadband users.

4.22 As a consequence, the application complies with the fifth core land use principle in the NPPF.

4.23 **‘Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes’** : The primary housing objective is the need “**to boost significantly**” the supply of housing and paragraph 52 notes that this can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns. The Ashford Core Strategy undertook an assessment of the best approach to meeting its housing needs and concluded that a significant proportion of its future housing supply would be focussed at the urban extensions of Chilmington Green and Cheesemans Green. This has now been carried forward into the adopted Chilmington Green AAP. The planning application is, therefore, consistent with the Core Strategy.

4.24 The NPPF (para. 50) also expects new housing developments to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes with a mix of housing types and tenures. Three areas are highlighted for particular attention

- the housing mix will be based on current and future demographic and market trends to meet the needs of different groups in the community. The proposals for Chilmington Green are based on evidence of current market demand and housing needs assessments. Future phasing will be able to respond flexibly to changing circumstances by the process of agreeing an appropriate housing mix prior to the start of each main phase of the development

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- size, type, tenure and range of housing reflects local demand. This will be achieved through a mix of market monitoring and research plus updated Housing Needs Assessments undertaken by Ashford Council
 - meeting of affordable housing needs. The Chilmington Green AAP sets out the policy objectives for affordable housing. Where these objectives cannot be met within a phase, the Council's Deferred Contributions Policy will come into effect with the aim of 'clawing back' any shortfall in later phases. In addition, the process of agreeing individual phase master plans and the approval of reserved matters will ensure the delivery of the maximum level of affordable housing that is viable.

4.25 As a consequence, the application complies with the sixth sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.

4.26 **'Requiring Good Design'** : The NPPF sees good design as a key aspect of sustainable development, it is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 62 urges LPAs to put in place design review arrangements and generally refer major projects for review. The Chilmington Green proposals were assessed by South East Regional Design Review Panel in December 2011 (p202 of July 2012 Design and Access Statement). The comments of the Panel were generally very positive and have helped influence the final form of the application. Examples of this include

- giving greater thought to the quality of the public realm
- the use of design codes
- the development of Character Area studies
- the early establishment of a Community Development Trust.

4.27 These comments were reflected in the August 2012 submission and further work is proceeding with Ashford Council on the development of the design codes and the establishment of a Community Development Trust.

4.28 As a consequence, the application complies with the seventh sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.

4.29 **‘Promoting Healthy Communities’** : Paragraph 69 of the NPPF expects the planning system to play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. It is suggested that this can best be achieved through creating mixed use communities with safe and accessible environments as well as clear, legible pedestrian routes and high quality public spaces.

4.30 The Chilmington Green development will be a new mixed use community containing a range of open spaces, community facilities (including health provision), shops and jobs. In terms of social interaction, the proposals will facilitate the aims of paragraph 69 of the NPPF in that

- the provision of a wide range of on site facilities, including strong district and local centres, will enable social interaction to take place
- the master plan is designed to create a safe and accessible environment where community cohesion can be fostered
- the master plan establishes the principles of a clear and legible environment for pedestrians and cyclists with high levels of surveillance over public areas and open spaces to encourage their active and continued use.

4.31 Paragraph 70 of the NPPF also seeks the delivery of social, recreational and cultural facilities. Four objectives are set out

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- to plan proactively for the provision and use of a wide range of facilities. The Chilmington Green development provides for a wide range of shopping, recreational, community, leisure and health facilities. Their delivery and phasing will be ensured through the provision of the S106 agreement
 - to guard against the loss of valued facilities and services. There are no current services or facilities at Chilmington Green
 - to ensure shops and services can develop and modernise. The master plan is a flexible plan which can be adapted from phase to phase. It is envisaged that the district centre will take many years to be fully developed, thus enabling it to respond to changing needs
 - to ensure an integrated approach to the location of land uses. At Chilmington Green it is proposed to cluster such uses as retail, community, education and employment at the district centre and the local centres. Dual use will be provided, where possible.

4.32 Paragraph 72 notes the importance of ensuring that sufficient school places are available. The Chilmington Green proposals achieve this through the provision of a new Secondary School and four Primary Schools. This will widen choice by adding to the range of schools that both existing and new residents have available to them. The potential also exists for one or more of the new schools to be 'free schools' which will diversify the portfolio of educational opportunities. All of these facilities will be delivered through the S106 agreement.

4.33 Paragraph 73 of the NPPF gives great weight to access to high quality open space. The Chilmington Green development will provide a hierarchy of open spaces in accordance with the AAP and the Council's SPD. These open spaces will range from small 'doorstep' areas of play, through equipped areas of play to parkland and formal pitches. The establishment of Discovery Park as a strategic area of multi functional

open space is central to the development concept. Further detail is provided in the Addendum to the Design and Access Statement.

4.34 The Chilmington Green site is crossed by a number of public rights of way, including the Greensand Way. Where possible, these have been incorporated into the network of green spaces on the master plan. If any rights of way need to be diverted, they will be the subject of the normal statutory processes which require the new routes to be of at least equal utility. Further detail is provided in the Addendum to the Design and Access Statement.

4.35 As a consequence, the application complies with the eighth sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.

4.36 **‘Protecting Green Belt land’** : The application site is not Green Belt land and no land around Ashford is Green Belt. As a consequence, this sustainable development topic area does not apply to the Chilmington Green proposals.

4.37 **‘Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change’** : Paragraph 93 advises that planning has a key role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, minimising climate change, providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. Chilmington Green reflects the advice in paragraph 96 by using landform, layout, orientation, massing and landform to minimise energy consumption. It also complies with the low energy / renewable energy policies in the Core Strategy, the AAP and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. The proposals facilitate the creation of a CHP unit in the District Centre and this is assessed in the Addendum to the ES.

4.38 With regard to flood risk, the proposals have been extensively discussed with the Environment Agency and the form of the development has been carefully designed to locate development away from areas of highest risk of flooding. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment which provides detailed information on the

proposals and how SUDS measures will be adopted to ensure that flood risk is not increased off site.

- 4.39 As a consequence, the application complies with the tenth sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.
- 4.40 **‘Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment’** : Paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 111 encourages the reuse of previously developed land. In the case of Ashford, the Core Strategy has established that there is insufficient previously developed land to meet the required housing provision. As a consequence of this, the greenfield urban extension at Chilmington Green was selected.
- 4.41 Paragraph 118 provides advice for the determination of planning applications. The Chilmington Green development has been derived using an extensive evidence base of surveys which has allowed the nature conservation interest of the site to be established. Where impacts are expected to occur, they are proposed to be mitigated by a range of measures which have been agreed in principle with Natural England. These measures are set out in Section 9 of the ES (Ecology and Nature Conservation) and its associated Appendices. The mitigation measures have been designed concurrently with the formulation of the master plan to ensure a robust approach. The mitigation includes the retention of important hedgerows and trees and uses the master plan to ensure green connectivity within the site. In addition, large mitigation areas are proposed, primarily to the south of the development, which will be actively managed for nature conservation purposes. All the proposed mitigation land is controlled by the Applicants.
- 4.42 Paragraphs 120 to 125 deal with pollution, land instability, air quality, noise and light pollution. All of these issues have been taken into account in the preparation of the Chilmington Green master plan and are addressed in the Environmental Statement (Chapters 11, 13 and 16).

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- 4.43 As a consequence, the application complies with the eleventh sustainable development topic area in of the NPPF.
- 4.44 **‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’** : Paragraph 128 requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposed development. The Applicants have prepared a Heritage Assessment and have also done some archaeological evaluation, all of which are assessed in the ES and the 2013 Addendum. This has enabled the extent of the heritage assets to be identified. This has allowed the master plan to be designed to minimise the impact on these assets. Where impacts are identified, mitigation measures are proposed.
- 4.45 As a consequence, the application complies with the twelfth sustainable development topic area in the NPPF.
- 4.46 **‘Facilitating the Sustainable Use of Minerals’** : The Chilmington Green proposals do not relate to mineral bearing land, so this sustainable development topic area is not applicable to the development.
- 4.47 The conclusion to be drawn from this brief evaluation of the National Planning Policy Framework is that the Chilmington Green planning application proposals comply with all of the thirteen sustainable development topic areas which underlie the core land use principles in the guidance.

Local Guidance

- 4.48 The statutory local policy documents of relevance to the Chilmington Green planning application are the Ashford Core Strategy (2008), the Chilmington Green AAP (2013) and the ‘saved’ policies of the Ashford Local Plan (2000). In addition, the adopted SPDs are material to the application.
- 4.49 **Core Strategy** : The statutory strategic local policy document of relevance to Chilmington Green is the Ashford Core Strategy. This was adopted in July 2008 and

relates to the period 2006 – 2021 with further guidance on the growth of the town and the urban extensions to 2031.

4.50 Policy CS1 sets out the guiding principles which flow from the Council's desire for sustainable development and high quality design. There are thirteen planning objectives.

- 7 A. Development that respects the environmental limits that protect the high quality built and natural environment of the Borough, minimises flood risk, provides for adequate water supply, and protects water and air quality standards;
- 7 B. The conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and built heritage of the Borough;
- 7 C. Protection for the countryside, landscape and villages from adverse impacts of growth and the promotion of strong rural communities;
- 7 D. New places – buildings and the spaces around them – that are of high quality design, contain a mixture of uses and adaptable building types, respect the site context and create a positive and distinctive character and a strong sense of place and security;
- 7 E. New buildings and places designed to meet challenging sustainable design and construction standards that work towards achieving zero carbon developments, including minimising the use of resources and waste, and to enhance biodiversity;
- 7 F. The best use of previously developed land and buildings to help regenerate urban areas and the carefully phased release of green field land to make best use of a finite resource;
- 7 G. The timely provision of community services and other local and strategic infrastructure to provide for the needs arising from development;
- 7 H. A general balance between a growing population and the creation of jobs locally and, on large sites, a mix of residential, employment, community and

other local services that together help create a well served community, capable of providing locally for many of its needs;

- I. A wider choice of easy to use forms of sustainable transport to serve developments that generate significant demand for movement;
- J. Provision of a commercial environment that is conducive to encouraging new and existing businesses;
- K. The creation of an integrated and connected network of green spaces to provide a framework for growth – helping serve the recreational needs of the community, enhancing biodiversity and providing green routes for pedestrians and cyclists;
- L. Healthy sustainable communities that put human health and well being at their heart – fostering access to amenities, healthier forms of transport, and mixed and cohesive communities designed for social interaction;
- M. Developments that are designed to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

4.51 Policy CS2 provides the Borough wide strategy. The main elements of relevance to Chilmington Green are

- land for 16,770 new homes and around 16,700 new jobs will be identified in the Ashford Growth Area
- large scale growth will be located in the Ashford Growth Area and will include two major new peripheral urban extensions
- key infrastructure will need to be brought forward at the same time as the new development they serve
- the need for a broad balance between housing and job growth.

4.52 The supporting text to Policy CS2 also provides guidance on the form of the urban extensions

- there should be a high quality public transport system (para 2.28). Whilst SMARTLINK is no longer a current scheme, the Chilmington Green

proposals will deliver a high quality bus service which is capable of being incorporated in a wider 'SMARTLINK' type network, should this become established. The TA sets out the proposals for the new bus service and the 20% level of modal shift that is anticipated (TA para 11.3.1)

- they should be of a sufficient size to create a sustainable place of between 5,000 and 7,000 homes (para 2.28). At 5,750 new homes plus a range of facilities and services, the planning application proposals comply with this objective and with the subsequent Policy CG2 of the AAP
- they will each be centred on a new 'High Street' (para 2.29) which is the focus for activity and density. These principles are embodied in the master plan and, in particular in the District Centre Character Area (see pages 120 – 125 of the Design and Access Statement).

4.53 Policy CS5 'Ashford Urban Extensions' provides the detailed rationale and content of the urban extensions at Chilmington Green and Cheesemans Green. The elements which apply to Chilmington Green are

- no less than 3,350 dwellings and 600 jobs by 2021 with the potential for over 7,000 dwellings and about 1,000 jobs in total
- the urban extensions should be planned and implemented in a comprehensive way that is linked to infrastructure delivery. Area Action Plans will guide the detailed planning of these areas
- the core aims are to
 - create flexibly designed, mixed use places of real character
 - to incorporate high quality and innovative building design, public spaces and landscape to create strong character areas
 - to be well related to the surrounding rural landscape
 - to be developed at a rate which is supported by the delivery of infrastructure.

4.54 The only element of Policy CS5 that the application does not comply with is the potential for over 7,000 dwellings. However, this element of Policy CS5 has been superseded by the provisions of AAP Policy CG2 which reduces the residential capacity of the site to 5,750 dwellings.

4.55 Policy CS7 'The Economy and Employment Development' seeks to improve the economy of Ashford. Chilmington Green was never regarded as having a strategic employment role due to the availability of committed employment sites closer to the M20. However, CS5 clearly anticipated that Chilmington Green should perform a local employment role largely servicing the new community. This is the approach adopted in the planning application which provides in excess of 1,000 local jobs in a manner which is complementary to the role of the Town Centre and the employment allocations closer to the M20.

4.56 Policy CS8 'Infrastructure Contributions' largely focusses on the proposal to have a 'Strategic Tariff' in the Ashford Growth Area. Whilst the Strategic Tariff is no longer being progressed, the Chilmington Green S106 will perform this role in ensuring the phased delivery of all necessary social and physical infrastructure.

4.57 Policy CS9 'Design Quality' lists nine criteria that all development proposals must comply with to achieve a high quality design.

4.58 These are

- Character, Distinctiveness and Sense of Place : The master plan has been conceived around the concept of distinct character areas (see Design and Access Statement pages 118 to 162 and the Addendum). These relate not only to individual development areas such as the District Centre and the Hamlet but also to important edges and connections
- Permeability and Ease of Movement : The master plan has been designed with an arrangement of land uses and connections that allows most

movements to be undertaken by foot, cycle or bus. The character of these movement corridors have been designed to be pleasant and distinctive to encourage their use (Design and Access Statement pages 166 to 169 and the Addendum)

- 7 Legibility : This was one of the basic design principles which led the form of the master plan (see Design and Access Statement pages 22 and 23 and the Addendum)
- 7 Mixed Use and Density : The submitted master plan achieves this objective with a full range of land uses, facilities and services plus a wide range of density bands
- 7 Continuity and Enclosure : These aspects of the master plan are set out in outline form in the proposals for the Character Areas (Design and Access Statement pages 118 to 162) and will be articulated in more detail in the Design Code and the individual phase master plans
- 7 Quality of Public Spaces : All the public spaces at Chilmington Green, whether formal or informal, have been designed to be high quality and safe places which are attractive to residents and workers alike. An example of the proposed quality of a formal space can be seen in the master plan proposals for the Market Square in the District Centre (Design and Access Statement pages 120 to 125). An informal example is the Chilmington Green Hamlet and its village / cricket green (Design and Access Statement pages 126 to 129)
- 7 Flexibility, Adaptability and Liveability : The master plan is inherently flexible, allowing each phase to be reviewed in the context of prevailing needs and circumstances. Whilst the District Centre is in phase 1, its development will span several phases, so it can adapt to meet changing needs
- 7 Richness in Detail : This is an important objective of the Master Plan which will be articulated in the detail of the Design Code and individual phase master plans. It is also an essential element of the 'Quality Charter'
- 7 Efficient Use of Natural Resources : Pages 160 to 162 of the Design and Access Statement and the Sustainability Strategy (and their Addenda) set out

the extensive range of measures which will promote the efficient use of natural resources in accordance with this objective.

- 4.59 It is clear from the above assessment that the planning application complies with the design aspirations of Policy CS9.
- 4.60 Policy CS10 ‘Sustainable Design and Construction’ expects all major developments to incorporate sustainable design features to reduce the consumption of natural resources and help deliver the aim of zero carbon growth in Ashford. These are set out in pages 160 to 162 of the Design and Access Statement and in the Sustainability Statement (and their Addenda) and include the potential for CHP in the District Centre. Taken together, these proposals will meet the standards required under Policy CS10.
- 4.61 Policy CS11 ‘Biodiversity and Geological Conservation’ seeks to avoid harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, and to maintain and, where practicable, enhance and expand biodiversity. Chapter 9 of the ES sets out the base line position on the ecology of the site and proposes a range of mitigation measures that have been developed in parallel with the preparation of the Master Plan and these are updated in the ES Addendum. These include the retention of important hedgerows and trees and use the master plan to ensure green connectivity within the site. In addition, large mitigation areas, primarily to the south of the development, will be actively managed for conservation purposes. All mitigation land is located within the application boundary and is controlled by the Applicants.
- 4.62 In combination, these measures will maintain and expand biodiversity as sought by Policy CS11.
- 4.63 Policy CS12 ‘Affordable Housing’ sets a target of not less than 30% affordable housing, of which 60% shall be social rented and 40% other forms of affordable provision. The developers are committed to providing the maximum level of affordable housing consistent with Policy CS12. Discussions are progressing on the

viability model as part of the wider S106 negotiations. As such, this Planning Statement is currently unable to provide a definitive answer to the level of affordable housing that will be provided on site.

- 4.64 Policy CS13 ‘Range of Dwelling Types and Sizes’ aims to maintain and extend the range of dwellings to increase housing choice. The Chilmington Green proposal is large enough to provide a complete range of housing types and sizes. It is likely that patterns of market demand and demographic based needs will change over the development period. This can be flexibly accommodated by the preparation of a phase master plan at the start of each phase which will detail the housing mix.
- 4.65 Policy CS15 ‘Transport’ has the objective of promoting public transport and other non car based modes of travel. In particular, this would be achieved by the early introduction of a bus based rapid transport system. The Council will also seek the early implementation of necessary highway works which would remove serious impediments to growth. The Chilmington Green planning application responds to this policy as follows
- the range of on site facilities and services such as jobs, shops and schools allows the internalisation of many trips that would be ‘exported’ by smaller, less comprehensive developments
 - the spatial arrangement of the master plan allows many trips to be by foot or cycle
 - the master plan proposes a high quality network of footpaths and cycleways
 - a new high quality bus route will be provided both within the site as well as to the town centre and railway station. This will further encourage non car based trips. SMARTLINK is no longer an active proposal, but the Chilmington Green bus route is designed to deliver many of the characteristics of SMARTLINK and is capable of being incorporated into a future SMARTLINK type network if this becomes operational. The bus link is expected to achieve a modal shift of 20% which has been agreed for

modelling purposes with Kent County Council and is consistent with Policy CG12 of the adopted AAP

- the development will be associated with the phased improvement of the A28 and a range of traffic calming measures on rural roads to the east of the site.

4.66 Taken together, these elements will ensure that the Chilmington Green development complies with the principles of Policy CS15.

4.67 Policy CS16 ‘retail’ seeks to maintain the existing retail hierarchy but recognises that new retail of an appropriate scale will be provided to meet the local needs of each of the two urban extensions. The Retail Assessment submitted with the planning application analyses the current and committed position in respect of retail provision in Ashford along with the extra retail expenditure generated by the new residents of Chilmington Green. The report concludes that the level of A1 to A5 floorspace proposed will meet local needs without materially impacting on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

4.68 Policy CS17 relates to Tourism and is not relevant to the Chilmington Green proposals.

4.69 Policy CS18 ‘Meeting the Community’s Needs’ states that the social and physical infrastructure needs generated by new development should be provided in accordance with standards set out in other DPDs and SPDs. The Chilmington Green development complies with this policy through the provision of a wide range of community facilities including

- open space (formal and informal)
- schools
- community floorspace (including health and social services)
- sports floorspace.

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- 4.70 These will be provided on a phased basis in association with the development of the site. The precise phasing and trigger points will be set out in the S106 agreement.
- 4.71 Policy CS18A ‘Strategic Recreational Open Spaces’ has the objective of protecting and enhancing Victoria Park and to establish new strategic recreational open spaces, including Discovery Park. The size and boundaries of these areas of strategic open space will be established in other DPDs. In the case of the Chilmington Green planning application, the master plan establishes the form and content of that part of Discovery Park to the west of Long Length in accordance with the boundary defined in the AAP. The S106 agreement will provide for the delivery of that part of Discovery Park required under the standard set out in the Public Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD. This ensures compliance with Policy CS18A.
- 4.72 Policy CS19 ‘Development and Flood Risk’ seeks to ensure that new development is not at risk of flooding and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application demonstrated how
- † all developed areas will be in the low risk zone / area
 - † run off will be attenuated to the greenfield run off rate required by the EA
 - † there will be no increased risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 4.73 The Chilmington Green proposals therefore comply with Policy CS19.
- 4.74 Policy CS20 ‘Sustainable Drainage’ expects all new development to include appropriate sustainable drainage systems. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates how SUDS will be used across the site to attenuate surface water flows in an appropriate manner. The SUDS system has also been integrated into the submitted master plan to ensure wider green space, landscape and biodiversity benefits.
- 4.75 The SUDS proposals therefore comply with Policy CS20.

4.76 The Chilmington Green development has been developed with close regard to the strategic statutory planning context set by the Core Strategy and the precise evolution of the master plan is described in Section 1 in the Design and Access Statement. The only areas where the application proposals do not precisely accord with the Core Strategy are

- that 5,750 dwellings are proposed rather than the 'potential for over 7,000' expressed in Policy CS5. This lower figure results from the application of more recent open space, dwelling size and car parking standards adopted by ABC which would make it difficult for the site to accommodate 7,000 dwellings. The result of applying these factors is a high quality and distinctive development of 5,750 new homes. This lower figure has now been given statutory weight in the more recent Policy CG2 of the AAP
- the modal shift expected from the new bus service is expected to be 20% rather than the 35% - 45% aspiration set out in paragraph 11.8 of the Core Strategy. However, this percentage is not enshrined in the policy itself. The 20% figure is considered to be reasonable and has been agreed with KCC for the purposes of the wider transport modelling. It is also the assumption used in the recently adopted AAP (para 9.46)
- until the S106 and viability negotiations are complete it will not be known whether the first phase of the site can deliver 30% affordable housing. However, the developers' objective is to provide the maximum viable percentage of affordable housing in association with the Council's Deferred Contributions Policy.

4.77 It is evident from the above that where limited areas of non compliance with the Core Strategy appear to occur, they relate to matters which have been superseded by more recent policy in the adopted AAP. In view of this, it is considered that the amended 2013 planning application complies in all material respects with the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy to create a high quality, sustainable mixed use urban extension at Chilmington Green.

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- 4.78 **Ashford Local Plan (2000)** : The Ashford Local Plan was adopted in June 2000 and has a plan period to 2006. Whilst many of its policies have been superseded by more recent statutory development plan documents, certain policies have been ‘saved’ by Direction of the Secretary of State. Of these ‘saved’ policies most are not of relevance to the determination of the Chilmington Green planning application since they either relate to other development sites (eg S17 : Park Farm) or topic policies such as EN7 ‘shop fronts’ which relates to the alteration of shop fronts.
- 4.79 Having reviewed the ‘saved’ policies, three are considered to be of relevance to Chilmington Green. These are.
- Policy EN23 ‘Sites of Archaeological Importance’
 - Policy EN32 ‘Importance of Trees and Woodland’
 - Policy LE9 ‘Maintenance of Open Space’.
- 4.80 Policy EN23 ‘Sites of Archaeological Importance’ confirms that in exceptional circumstances, permission may be given for development affecting archaeological sites of regional or local importance as long as the sites can be satisfactorily preserved in situ or by record. Chapter 12 of the ES and Appendices 12.1 to 12.6 plus the ES Addendum provide a comprehensive assessment of the archaeology of the site including field walking, a geophysical survey and trial trenching. Appendix 12.6 forms the Heritage Statement for the site. The Statement and the ES Addendum conclude that the Heritage Assets on the site warrant further consideration and discussions are on-going with the Archaeological Officer at KCC regarding further trial trenching that can be undertaken post outline permission but before development commences on site. In combination, these measures will ensure compliance with Policy EN23.
- 4.81 Policy EN32 ‘Important Trees and Woodland’. This policy seeks to prevent the loss of important trees and woodlands Borough wide. The Chilmington Green Master Plan was informed by a prior assessment of the quality and importance of trees and

hedgerows, both from a landscape and ecological perspective. This has allowed the master plan to be designed so the loss of trees and woodland is minimised. Whilst some minor losses are inevitable on a site the size of Chilmington Green, any impact will be mitigated by extensive new tree and woodland planting and the improved management of existing trees and woodlands within the site.

- 4.82 It should be noted that the negative and rigid formulation of Policy EN32 means that it does not comply with the approach recommended in the NPPF, however, it is considered that the application proposals accord with the objective of the policy.
- 4.83 Policy LE9 'Maintenance of Open Spaces'. This policy seeks to ensure that where open space, woodland and nature conservation areas are proposed as part of the development, the Council will need to be satisfied that it will be properly maintained in the future. In response to this policy, it is proposed to set up a Chilmington Green Community Development Trust, a 'not for profit' organisation, which will run and manage community assets. This will include both land and buildings. It is considered that the CDT will fully satisfy the requirements of Policy LE9.
- 4.84 Only a limited number of 'saved' Local Plan policies are of relevance to the determination of the Chilmington Green planning application. However, it is considered that the proposals accord with the objectives of Policies EN23, EN32 and LE9.
- 4.85 **Chilmington Green Area Action Plan** : In accordance with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy, ABC commenced the preparation of this AAP in 2007. The AAP was the subject of its public examination in January 2013 and was adopted by Ashford Council in July 2013. As a consequence, the AAP now has statutory status. It is, therefore, a highly material and up to date consideration in the determination of the Chilmington Green planning application.
- 4.86 The AAP contains 23 policies and the high degree of compliance of the planning application with each of the AAP policies is set out below.

4.87 Policy CG0 was inserted into the AAP as a post public examination modification. This is the standard ‘Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development’ policy which effectively incorporates the thrust of paragraph 14 of the NPPF into the statutory policy document. The policy confirms that planning applications that accord with the AAP will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The remainder of this subsection of the Planning Statement demonstrates how the amended 2013 planning application complies in all material aspects with the AAP and should be approved.

4.88 Policy CG1 “Chilmington Green Development Principles” : This policy contains seven guiding principles which set the tone for the whole development. Each of these principles has also informed the design of the master plan and hence the application meets all of these principles. In summary, compliance with each principle is set out below

- (a) all the components in principle (a) are provided
- (b) each main phase will be sustainable in its own right
- (c) there will be a mix and range of house types provided within a wide density gradient set within distinct character areas
- (d) a range of non residential uses are proposed to support job creation
- (e) the master plan provides an integrated and connected network of green spaces, including Discovery Park
- (f) the master plan responds to the landscape character and assets of the site
- (g) careful attention has been given to the creation of well designed edges to the new countryside boundary.

4.89 More details on each of these guiding principles is set out in the submitted Design and Access Statement and its Addendum.

4.90 Policy CG2 ‘Strategic Development Requirements’ : This policy sets out the basic development parameters of 5750 new homes, at least 1,000 jobs, focussed around a

District Centre and two Local Centres. The policy also defines the built footprint and requires that the density of the development shall be consistent with the density bands in Strategic Diagram 3. The planning application fulfils all of these requirements.

- 4.91 Policy CG3 ‘The District Centre and High Street Character Areas’ : This policy provides the broad design parameters and some key floorspace guidance for the District Centre and requires the application to be accompanied by a retail assessment. The Design and Access Statement (pages 120 to 125) provides extensive information on the way in which the design and layout aspirations for the District Centre will be met and the GL Hearn Retail Assessment confirms that the level of ‘A’ class floorspace is of an appropriate scale. The scheme therefore complies with Policy CG3.
- 4.92 Policy CG4 ‘The Local Centres’ : This policy explains that two Local Centres will be provided in phases 3 and 4. These will meet the day to day needs of the local communities. The Parameter Plans, the Design and Access Statement (pages 130 and 131) and the phasing plans demonstrate how the objectives of this policy will be realised.
- 4.93 Policy CG5 ‘Chilmington Green Hamlet Character Area’ : This policy provides guidance on the form of development around the sensitive environment of Chilmington Green Hamlet. The Design and Access Statement (pages 126 to 129) provides information on how the Character Area will meet these policy requirements. The 2013 Density Parameter Plan amends the density bands in the Hamlet to accord with those set out in the AAP.
- 4.94 Policy CG6 ‘Southern Fringe Character Area’ : This policy provides guidance on the form of development on the southern fringe area necessary to achieve an informal, low density transition to the open countryside. The Design and Access Statement (pages 136 to 141) shows how this form of development will be delivered in practice to ensure compliance with the policy. The 2013 Density Parameter Plan amends the

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- density bands in the Southern Fringe Character Area to accord with those set out in the AAP.
- 4.95 Policy CG7 ‘Discovery Park Edge Character Area’ : This policy provides guidance on how the development will achieve an attractive and seamless transition between the development edge and Discovery Park. The Design and Access Statement (pages 132 to 135) demonstrates how these objectives can be achieved in practice.
- 4.96 Policy CG8 ‘Meeting the Recreational Needs of Chilmington Green’ : This policy requires open space to be provided in accordance with the Green Space and Water Environment SPD on a phased basis. The revised Open Space Parameter Plan (OPA06R) and pages 108 to 112 of the Design and Access Statement show the proposed distribution and quantum of open space to achieve the SPD requirements. Phasing is dealt with in the Design and Access Statement (pages 180 to 183).
- 4.97 In response to queries from the Borough Council regarding the location, use and measurement of the individual areas of open space, the 2013 Addendum to the Design and Access Statement provides a detailed schedule and plan. This demonstrates compliance with Policy CG8 and the Public Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD.
- 4.98 Policy CG9 ‘Discovery Park’ : This policy provides for the creation of a new strategic park to the east of Chilmington Green called Discovery Park. Within the park there will be a cluster of sports pitches and an indoor sports hall. The Land Use Parameter Plan (OPA02R) and the Open Space Provision Parameter Plan (OPA06R) plus the Design and Access Statement show how Discovery Park forms an integral part of the master plan for Chilmington Green. It is acknowledged in Policy CG9 that the Applicants will not be responsible for the delivery of the whole of Discovery Park. This is because that would exceed the level of provision necessary to meet the recreational needs of the new residents and workers and would therefore be unlawful. The precise extent of Discovery Park provided by the Applicants will be dependent on a number of factors including the extent of dual use of the Secondary School Playing

Fields. As such, it is not appropriate to show the extent of the Park to be delivered by the Applicants as a Parameter Plan. However, the indicative extent is shown in the Design and Access Addendum.

- 4.99 A detailed master plan for the whole of Discovery Park will be prepared in conjunction with the Council. This will include such issues as management, phasing and delivery.
- 4.100 It is considered that all of the above elements will ensure the delivery of Discovery Park in a form and manner that is consistent with Policy CG9.
- 4.101 Policy CG10 ‘Developing a Community at Chilmington Green’ : This policy supports a community led management arrangements to help support a strong new community at Chilmington Green. The Councils’ preferred solution of a Community Development Trust is also supported by the Applicants who are currently preparing a business case to put to the Council.
- 4.102 CG11 ‘Highways and Access’ : Policy CG11 sets out the principal highway arrangements proposed for the development plus a requirement to assist in the funding of wider on and off site highway improvements as well as the provision of a high quality bus service. The Transport Assessment and the TA Supplement provide an evidential base to demonstrate that the transportation proposals in Policy CG11 are appropriate and deliverable. The TA includes an assessment of existing conditions and then models the impact of the Chilmington Green development with other relevant developments on the highway network. It then set out the range of phased mitigation measures including the KCC proposals for the improvement of the A28 corridor.
- 4.103 The Parameter Plans and Access Plans show how the site will be accessed in accordance with Policy CG11 and the Development Specification confirms that the Applicants accept the principle of off-site and on-site highway contributions and a commitment to the provision of a high quality bus service.

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- 4.104 CG12 'Public Transport' : This policy sets out the requirement that public transport services at Chilmington Green will be designed to achieve at least a 20% public transport modal share. The Transport Assessment and the TA Supplement submitted with the application provides evidence on how this will be achieved in accordance with Policy CG12.
- 4.105 Policy CG13 'Cycling and Walking' : Policy CG13 states that the development will provide a network of pedestrian, cycle and equine routes. The Footpath and Cycle Routes Parameter Plan (OPA08R) shows how this Policy will be achieved and more detail is provided on pages 163 to 178 of the Design and Access Statement.
- 4.106 Policy CG14 'Park and Ride' : This policy identifies land to the west of the A28 for a Park and Ride facility. The application does not seek permission for a Park and Ride facility, but the proposals are designed to accommodate a Park and Ride if one is subsequently promoted. Since no prejudice is caused to this objective, the application accords with Policy CG14.
- 4.107 Policy CG15 'Education Provision at Chilmington Green' : This policy requires the on site provision of one Secondary School and four Primary School. The Land Use Parameter Plan (OPA02R) shows the locations of each of these schools. The policy also states that the minimum size of the Primary Schools will be 2.05 ha and the Secondary School will have a minimum size of 8 ha. The master plan meets these requirements of Policy CG15.
- 4.108 Policy CG16 'Indoor Sports and Community Leisure Provision at Chilmington Green' : This policy sets out the requirements for each of these topics in terms of an indoor sports hall in Discovery Park, leisure buildings in the District Centre and the two Local Centres plus a cricket pavilion at the Hamlet. The Development Specification confirms that these buildings will be provided and will form part of the S106 package. In its response to the application, Ashford Council queried whether the 5,000 m² of D1 floorspace and 5,000 m² of D2 floorspace sought in the August

2012 application would be sufficient to accommodate the full range of indoor facilities set out in Policy CG16. In order to provide the necessary flexibility to ensure compliance with Policy CG16, the amended 2013 submission proposes up to 7,000 m² of D1 floorspace and up to 6,000 m² of D2 floorspace.

4.109 Policy CG17 ‘Social and Community Facilities at Chilmington Green ‘ : This policy seeks a focussed provision of community facilities in the District Centre with a lesser level of provision at the Local Centres. Appropriate buildings will be provided to accommodate the uses set out in Policy CG17, although their precise sizes will be determined through the S106 agreement. In its response to the application, Ashford Council queried whether the 5,000 m² of D1 floorspace and 5,000 m² of D2 floorspace sought in the August 2012 application would be sufficient to accommodate the full range of indoor facilities set out in Policy CG17. In order to provide the necessary flexibility to ensure compliance with Policy CG17, the amended 2013 submission proposes up to 7,000 m² of D1 floorspace and up to 6,000 m² of D2 floorspace.

4.110 Policy CG18 ‘Provision of Affordable Housing at Chilmington Green’ : The policy sets out a target of 30% affordable housing with a tenure split of 60% affordable rent and 40% ‘other forms’. The policy expects each main phase of the development to meet these ‘normal’ affordable housing requirements unless the Council accepts that this would not be viable. In these circumstances, the Councils’ Deferred Contributions Policy will be applied to ensure at least a minimum of 10% affordable housing would be provided within any main phase. The policy further provides for any shortfall to be subject to ‘claw back’ up to a maximum of 40% of the housing in any main phase being affordable. It is this approach which is being adopted by the parties in the Section 106 negotiations to ensure that the development complies with Policy CG18. It is anticipated that 1% of the affordable housing will be wheelchair accessible.

4.111 Policy CG19 ‘Sustainable Design and Construction’ : Policy CG19 is designed to ensure that the development is zero carbon in accordance with Policy CS10 and the

emerging Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. The Sustainability Statement and its Addendum detail how this will be achieved in practice. This sets out a portfolio of measures which could be employed to meet the requirements of Policy CG19. These include the potential to provide CHP in the District Centre, as long as it is a feasible proposal. The Addendum to the ES assesses the visual and air quality effects of the inclusion of a CHP in the District Centre (including its associated chimney).

4.112 Policy CG20 ‘Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage’ : This policy seeks to ensure that development should avoid land in the 1 in 100 year floodplain and provide a network of SUDS. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment details the Applicants proposals and demonstrates that the requirements of Policy CG20 will be met.

4.113 Policy CG21 ‘Ecology’ : This policy requires development at Chilmington Green to avoid the loss of locally important ecological networks and semi natural habitats. The Environmental Statement (Chapter 9 and Appendices plus the ES Addendum) and Ecological Mitigation Strategy show how this is to be achieved in accordance with the policy and the mitigation plan in the AAP. All mitigation areas are within the application boundary and are controlled by the Applicants.

4.114 Policy CG22 ‘Phasing, Delivery and Implementation’ : This policy seeks the implementation of Chilmington Green in four broad phases in association with the necessary supporting infrastructure. The Design and Access Statement (pages 180 to 185) sets out how this will be achieved in practice. An important part of this policy is the on-going commitment to quality in the implementation of Chilmington Green. This will be achieved through a series of inter-related measures

- the agreement of the Quality Charter between the Applicants and the Borough Council
- the preparation of Design Codes
- the preparation of detailed phase master plans

- monitoring and review of completed developments to inform future stages of the development.

4.115 These measures will ensure compliance with Policy CG22.

4.116 This analysis of the Policies in the adopted AAP demonstrates how the planning application closely conforms to the provisions of the AAP.

4.117 **Ashford Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents** : There are seven adopted SPDs which are material considerations in the determination of the Chilmington Green planning application. Each is considered below.

4.118 Affordable Housing SPD : This was adopted by the Borough Council in February 2009 and where it conflicts with Policy CG18 of the AAP, the AAP will take precedence. Relevant parts of the SPD which will be reflected in the phase master plans and reserved matters applications include

- size and types of affordable housing
- supported housing and wheelchair housing
- potential affordable housing partners
- design and integration.

4.119 Landscape Character SPD : This was adopted in April 2011 and seeks to promote regard for the landscape and ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the landscape. The guidance in the SPD is supported and has been the basis of the LVIA (including Landscape Character Assessment) and master planning work which underpins the Chilmington Green planning application.

4.120 Residential Parking SPD : This was adopted in October 2010 and brings together residential parking standards and good practice in residential parking. This SPD post dated the 2008 Core Strategy which proposed around 7,000 dwellings at Chilmington Green. As explained elsewhere in this Planning Statement and in the Design and

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- Access Statement (page 89) the higher parking standard in the SPD was one of the factors which led to a reduction in the Chilmington Green proposals from 7,000 dwellings in CS8 of the Core Strategy to the 5,750 in Policy CS2 of the AAP.
- 4.121 At the more detailed level, the guidance on parking strategies and design solutions has been reflected in the formulation of the approaches to residential block design set out in pages 91 to 99 of the Design and Access Statement. This shows how a range of parking typologies can be adapted to different density parcels. This is integral to the place making approach. This also informs the hierarchy of streets and their design.
- 4.122 Sustainable Design and Construction SPD : This was adopted in April 2012 and its purpose is to provide guidance to developers on how to incorporate sustainability into their developments and how to comply with Policy CCS10. Paragraph 1.8 has six objectives for sustainability, all of which have been embedded in the formulation of the Chilmington Green Master Plan. These include energy use, water use, the use of sustainable materials, waste recycling and biodiversity all of which will help make Chilmington Green resilient to climate change. The success of these measures will be progressively monitored as the site is developed to ensure compliance with Policy CS10, Further guidance on this is contained in the submitted Sustainability Statement and its Addendum.
- 4.123 Sustainable Drainage SPD : This was adopted in October 2010 and sets out how developments can meet the requirements of Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy. The Flood Risk Assessment and the Design and Access Statement (pages 115 to 117) demonstrate how SUDS techniques have been integrated into the whole development to ensure that the desired greenfield run off rates are maintained. As designed in the Master Plan, the SUDS additionally have a landscape / green space function and a biodiversity function. The SUDS will either be adopted and maintained by the Borough Council or by the Community Development Trust. This will form part of the S106 obligations.

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- 4.124 Residential Space and Layout SPD : This was adopted in October 2011 and sets out the Council's minimum standards for living space. This SPD forms part of the Borough Council's initiative to improve the quality of housing in Ashford. The Applicants support the initiative and the linked Quality Charter and these standards will be reflected in the detailed reserved matters applications across the site. These standards are another factor which led both the Applicants and the Council to scale back the size of Chilmington Green from 7,000 to the 5,750 dwellings in Policy CG2 of the AAP.
- 4.125 Public Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD : This was adopted in July 2012 and its purpose is to provide guidance in the protection, improvement and expansion of public green space and water environment in the Borough. The master plan for Chilmington Green has been designed to meet the quantitative standard for each type of open space listed in Table 1 of the SPD. More detail is provided on pages 104 to 112 of the Design and Access Statement. In response to a request for further information from the Borough Council in July 2013, a 2013 supplement to the Design and Access Statement has been prepared which provides more detail on the areas of open space and their function. It is intended that the green spaces at Chilmington Green will be managed by the Community Development Trust.
- 4.126 The information set out above demonstrates how careful regard has been given to all the adopted SPDs when formulating the Chilmington Green planning application.

Conclusion

- 4.127 The conclusion to be drawn from this section of the Planning Statement is that the planning application proposals for Chilmington Green will deliver a well considered and sustainable urban extension to Ashford which benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development in paragraph 14 of the NPPF. It also complies with the statutory development plan in terms of the Ashford Core Strategy, the Chilmington Green AAP and 'saved' Local Plan policies as well as the Council's non statutory SPDs.

5.0 Planning Policy Evaluation

- 5.1 **The Principle of the Development** : The principle of an urban extension at Chilmington Green is accepted in Policy CS5 of the statutory Ashford Core Strategy (2008). This proposes a mixed use community of up to 7,000 dwellings with a wide range of supporting community, retail and employment uses.
- 5.2 Policy CS5 states that Chilmington Green should accommodate 3,350 homes and 600 jobs by 2021 with the potential for over 7,000 dwellings and 1,000 jobs in total. The evidence base underpinning both the planning application and the AAP has demonstrated that it would not be possible to accommodate around 7,000 new homes at Chilmington Green whilst also achieving the Core Strategy and AAP objectives of creating a place of real character, well related to the surrounding rural landscape and incorporating high quality and innovative design of buildings and public spaces. This is largely due to the adoption by ABC of new car parking and dwelling size standards plus open space standards which increase the amount of the site taken up by open space and car parking. In combination, these changes since the Core Strategy was adopted in 2008 result in lower densities. This was also reflected in the 2010 amendments to PPS3 which removed the minimum density criterion of 30 dwellings to the hectare.
- 5.3 A second factor which has led to a reduction in the size of the Chilmington Green development is the detailed assessment of the site undertaken as part of the master planning and EIA process. This has included assessments of a wide range of issues including landscape and visual impact, nature conservation, archaeology and sustainable urban drainage capacity. As a consequence of these studies, both the AAP and the planning application propose a development of 5,750 homes.
- 5.4 The principle of reducing the number of dwellings at Chilmington Green from 7,000 to 5,750 was considered by the AAP Inspector. He concluded (paragraph 28) that this

change was evidence based, and hence sound. As a consequence, adopted Policy CG2 refers to a development of 5,750 dwellings. Since the adoption of the AAP post dates the Core Strategy, the AAP policy takes precedence. This means that the planning application proposal for 5,750 dwellings is entirely consistent with the most relevant statutory policy.

- 5.5 Policy CS5 also anticipates the creation of 1,000 jobs at Chilmington Green. The Employment and Economic Benefits Report prepared by Sellwood Planning and supported by the Nathaniel Lichfield Report "Chilmington Green, Economic Benefits Report" show how more than 1,000 jobs will be created at Chilmington Green. As a consequence, the development will exceed the jobs target in Policy CS5. This was also considered by the AAP Inspector (paragraph 29) who concluded that the 1,184 jobs indicated in Table 1 of the AAP had been reflected in the traffic modelling and was not unsound. As such, the jobs potential of the planning application is consistent with both Policy CS5 and Policy CG2.
- 5.6 With regard to the timing of the development, Policy CS5 refers to the completion of 3,350 dwellings and 600 jobs by 2021. The housing objective will not be achieved due to the site starting later than anticipated because of delays in the completion of the AAP and the wider recession. However, once house completions commence in 2014 / 15, they are expected to achieve annual rates similar to that assumed in the Core Strategy (250 - 300 pa). As a consequence, around 2,000 dwellings are likely to be completed by 2021. With regard to jobs, the location of the District Centre, community hub and Primary School in the first phase and the Secondary School early in the second phase, mean that job growth will be approaching, or have achieved, the desired 600 jobs in 2021. The AAP Inspector also considered the fact that the Policy CS5 objective of 3,350 completions by 2021 would not be achieved. He accepted that this was due to the down turn in the economy and delays in the production of the AAP. He did not conclude that this disparity made the AAP unsound.
- 5.7 **Scheme Assessment** : The master plan has been informed by both the evidence base and public consultation. The Design and Access Statement and the Landscape and

Visual Impact Assessment explain how the master plan has evolved. In the case of some elements, such as the locations of the District Centre and Secondary School, this has included the creation of a range of sub options which have been tested in order to derive a preferred option. The master plan has also benefitted from assessment against the policies of the emerging and adopted AAP.

- 5.8 Although the form of the master plan has been influenced by the evidence base, the submitted master plan has also been assessed by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, the Transport Assessment (TA) and the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). These documents (and their Addenda or Supplement) have assessed the base line position at Chilmington Green and then considered the impacts of the development both without mitigation and with the proposed mitigation measures. It is the conclusion of the Environmental Statement (ES), the TA and the FRA that, with the introduction of suitable mitigation measures, the full proposals for development at Chilmington Green can be accommodated without unacceptable levels of impact.
- 5.9 **Infrastructure Requirements** : Policy CS5(d) of the Core Strategy and Policy CG22 of the AAP expect the Chilmington Green development to be developed at a rate which is supported by the delivery of infrastructure. This has also been a guiding principle in the preparation of the Chilmington Green planning application.
- 5.10 It is accepted that a new urban extension, such as Chilmington Green, will require the creation of a new network of social and physical infrastructure both on site and off site. The on site infrastructure will include
- a District Centre containing a range of shops, community facilities and employment
 - two local centres containing more modest levels of retail and community facilities, each local centre will be associated with a nearby primary school
 - a Secondary School on an eight hectare site
 - four Primary Schools

- a community hub containing a community hall, community meeting rooms, sports and health / social facilities
- an indoor sports hall in Discovery Park
- a range of open spaces from local areas of childrens play to the strategic Discovery Park and allotments
- new areas of habitat and habitat enhancement
- a new high quality bus service both within the site and onward to the town centre and railway station
- a new sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS)
- a new foul drainage system
- a new utilities infrastructure
- a network of new and enhanced vehicular routes, cycleways and footpaths
- new landscaping both within and on the edge of the site.

5.11 It is recognised that the full Chilmington Green development will have some impacts which will be wider than the site itself; particularly in terms of transportation. In order to minimise the number of external car trips, the Chilmington Green development provides

- a wide mix of on site uses, thus allowing many trips to be internalised
- a good network of footpaths and cycleways both within the site and via connections to Ashford as a whole. By giving residents a real opportunity to use non car modes, some trips will be diverted to cycling and walking
- a high quality bus service operating from the earliest stages of the development. This will link the site to both Ashford Town Centre and Ashford International railway station.

5.12 However, it has been recognised in the Ashford Core Strategy, the AAP and the Local Transport Plan that whilst this combination of measures will reduce vehicle trips, there will still be an impact on traffic flows in Ashford over the next 20 years as a result of the adopted growth strategy. In order to mitigate these impacts, ABC and KCC have agreed a package of strategic highway improvements to support the

strategic growth proposed at Ashford including those to the Drivers Roundabout, Victoria Way and the phased upgrade of the A28. These projects are all KCC schemes which will be promoted by KCC which, if necessary, will use CPO powers. The Chilmington Green development will make its due contribution to these strategic improvement works via the S106 agreement.

- 5.13 **Management** : The provision of a range of new social and physical infrastructure will require the creation of an appropriate structure to ensure long term management and the maintenance of quality. The applicants accept that a new community is more than the construction of new housing and new facilities, it is also the creation of a new community with a distinct sense of place. As a consequence, the favoured option of both the developers and ABC is the establishment of a Community Development Trust (CDT). This would be a 'not for profit' organisation whose sole purpose would be to support the new community at Chilmington Green. The management board of the CDT would evolve over the lifetime of the development from a more developer led structure at the early stages to one controlled by local residents and community organisations on completion.
- 5.14 Further details on the Community Development Trust will be provided in the S106 agreement and in the emerging CDT Business Plan.
- 5.15 In addition to complying with current and emerging national and local planning policies, the scheme has been assessed through the Environmental Assessment process. It is the conclusion of the ES and its Addendum that where impacts arise they can be appropriately mitigated. Overall, the balance of advantages arising from the development of Chilmington Green in accordance with the statutory Core Strategy and AAP, far outweigh the identified residual impacts.

6.0 **Phasing, Developer Contributions and Delivery**

- 6.1 **Phasing** : The phasing strategy is set out in the Design and Access Statement (pages 180 to 185). In accordance with adopted AAP, it is proposed to develop the site in four broad phases. Phase 1 will commence at the western edge of the site where new accesses will be created on to the A28. This first phase will include the District Centre, the first primary school and part of the Hamlet. Phases 2 and 3 will progressively move east and south and the final, fourth phase completes the south eastern edge of the development.
- 6.2 Each phase will not commence until a detailed master plan for that phase is agreed and it will be associated with the delivery of its own package of social and physical infrastructure which will be secured by a S106 agreement or agreements. Whilst there will be four phases, it is probable that a further phase or phases may start prior to the completion of the first and second phases. This is recognised in the supporting text to Policy CG22. The precise pattern of development will reflect updated information on infrastructure delivery and market demand. However, any amendments to the phasing will need to be fully justified and agreed with Ashford Borough Council as part of the relevant phase master plan.
- 6.3 **Developer Contributions** : As explained in Section 5, the applicants recognise that a major planning application such as the new community at Chilmington Green will need to be associated with a package of planning conditions and a S106 planning agreement. This will ensure that the progressive expansion of Chilmington Green is matched by the provision of new infrastructure as required by Policy CG22.
- 6.4 The S106 agreement will relate to the range of on site matters as set out in Section 5 plus a contribution to the wider off site package of strategic transportation improvements being promoted by KCC as part of the Ashford growth strategy. The Heads of Terms of the S106 are currently being discussed with ABC and will be progressed in parallel with consultation on the planning application.

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- 6.5 One important element of the S106 agreement will be the delivery of affordable housing. The Core Strategy aspires to achieve 30% affordable housing, subject to this being viable. The adopted AAP takes a similar approach whereby any figure less than 30% needs to be fully justified by a transparent viability assessment and agreed by the Council. In circumstances where a viability assessment demonstrates that less than 30% affordable housing can be provided, the Councils' Deferred Contributions Policy will come into effect. This will apply a 'claw back' mechanism to later phases subject to a cap of 40% affordable housing in any main phase.
- 6.6 Whilst the impact of the current recession indicates that it is unlikely to be viable to provide 30% affordable housing in the first phase, it is not possible to complete a full viability assessment for phase 1 until such time as the other elements of the S106 are settled. Since this position will not be reached until some time after the application is submitted, it is not possible for this Planning Statement to define a percentage of affordable housing now. It is anticipated that the level of affordable housing in each phase will be agreed prior to the start of that phase in the context of the prevailing economic circumstances of the time and subject to Policy CG18 and the Deferred Contributions Policy.
- 6.7 **Delivery** : At the present time, there are four Applicants who have submitted the planning application. However, following the grant of planning permission it is likely that additional housebuilders will become involved in the development of the site. This will be necessary to achieve the desired house building rate of 250 to 300 dwellings per year and also to provide market diversity and choice in accordance with Policy CG1(c). However all future housebuilders will be required to submit reserved matters that comply with the Quality Charter and the principles of the Design and Access Statement.
- 6.8 If outline planning permission is granted in late 2013 or early 2014, it is likely that infrastructure works would commence in mid 2014 with the first house completions in 2014 / 15. The rate of completions normally builds up rapidly and the optimum

completion rate of 250 to 300 dwellings per year is likely to be achieved in 2015 / 16. This broad level of development activity is likely to be maintained up to the completion of the development in the latter part of the 2030's.

- 6.9 The AAP sets out a sequence of approvals between the grant of outline planning permission and the submission of reserved matters. This is to ensure that all matters of strategic or phase wide importance are agreed prior to the submission of a reserved matters application in that phase. When a reserved matters application is submitted, it should then only need to provide a statement of compliance that it accords with all higher level documentation.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Chilmington Green planning application is the culmination of several years research, evidence gathering, option assessments and public consultation. The proposals take as their starting point the strategic principle of a mixed use urban extension at Chilmington Green as contained in Policy CS5 of the Ashford Core Strategy. This remains the strategic statutory planning document for the area and should be given significant weight in the determination of this planning application.
- 7.2 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2008, ABC has progressed the requirement in the Core Strategy for the preparation of an Area Action Plan for Chilmington Green. The AAP has been in preparation since 2007 and during this time it has been possible for the emerging AAP and the planning application to be developed and finalised on a complementary basis. As a consequence, the planning application now accords with the adopted Chilmington Green AAP (July 2013) in all material respects.
- 7.3 The period between the submission of these 2013 amendments to the application and determination in late 2013 or early 2014 will allow a further period of public consultation to take place. This, in turn, provides the opportunity for further amendments to be made to the application, if these are felt to be appropriate. This period also gives time for the S106 negotiations to be completed and planning conditions agreed.
- 7.4 As noted previously, the combination of the S106 agreement and the package of planning conditions will give both the Council and local people the confidence that the social and physical infrastructure necessary to support the new community at Chilmington Green will be provided in a timely manner.
- 7.5 Chilmington Green has taken ten years from inception to the submission of this planning application. We trust that Members of Ashford Borough Council will view

this application favourably and the Applicants can continue to work jointly with the Borough Council to make the Chilmington Green concept a reality.