

### Policy EMP1(4) Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted

#### Policy EMP1(4)

##### Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted

Woodcut Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development for up to 49,000m<sup>2</sup> mixed employment floorspace (B1a; B1b; B1c; B2; B8). The site will deliver a genuine mix of B class uses in terms of type and range. Office type uses (B1a & b) will be a vital component of this mix and the site will provide at least 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of B1a/B1b floorspace as an absolute minimum. The mixed use employment, landscaping and infrastructure elements will be delivered in an integrated and co-ordinated manner that respect the site's visual and physical relationship with the Kent Downs AONB. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

##### Design & layout

1. The proposals create a spacious parkland setting for development through the addition of substantial internal landscaping which will be sympathetic to the site's countryside context and which will help to break up the visual appearance of the development, in particular in views from the AONB including through the use of substantial tracts of planting extending into the body of the development to achieve clear visual separation between individual buildings and between parking areas. Buildings will cover not more than 40% of the developed site area.
2. The development proposals will respect the topography of the site by minimising the need for site excavation.
3. Landscape buffers of at least 35m in depth are established along the site's boundary to the M20 including a new native woodland shaw at least 15m to Musket Lane, at least 25m to the A20 including a planted bund, and at least 30m along the western boundary, which will also help secure the setting to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed) and the amenity of residential properties at Chestnuts and White Heath. Tracts of structural landscaping will extend into development areas of at least 15m in width.
4. An area of 9ha to the north and north west of Woodcut Farm is secured as an undeveloped landscape area in the form of open woodland including the addition of a landscape buffer of at least 30m along the eastern boundary. Future management of this area will be secured by means of legal agreement and maintained in perpetuity.
5. Larger footprint buildings will be accommodated in the field to the east of the stream up to a maximum unit size of 5,000m<sup>2</sup> with building ridge heights not to exceed 12m. Units should be orientated end-on to predominant views to and from the AONB.

6. Development on the field to the west of the stream comprises smaller units of up to 2,500m<sup>2</sup> footprint. Graded building heights will take account of the site's topography with building ridge heights not to exceed 8m. On the highest part of the site at and above the 55m contour line as shown on the policies map, building footprints will be limited to 500m<sup>2</sup>. The siting, scale and detailed design of development must have regard to the preservation of Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II) and its setting.
7. The development proposals are designed to limit their visual impact including through the use of curved roofs on buildings, non-reflective materials, sensitive colouring, green roofs and walls on smaller footprint buildings (500m<sup>2</sup> and below), and sensitive lighting proposals. Buildings should include active frontage elements incorporating glazing, and address both the A20 and M20.
8. To the east of the stream, land to accommodate a minimum of 7,500m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace within Use Classes B1a and B1b will be provided. Land sufficient for at least 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of this floorspace will be provided with vehicular access and all necessary services including drainage and electrical power supply to the boundary of the plot/s prior to the first occupation of any units falling within Use Classes B1c, B2 or B8. The land which is provided for the minimum of 7,500m<sup>2</sup> of B1a and B1b will be safeguarded from any other uses until April 2026 or until otherwise allocated through a local plan review.
9. To the west of the stream, land to accommodate a minimum of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace within Use Classes B1a and B1b will be provided. This land will be safeguarded from any other uses until April 2026 or until otherwise allocated through a local plan review.

### **Landscape and ecology**

10. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance. The assessment will specifically address the impact of development on views to and from the Kent Downs AONB escarpment. This will include environmental enhancements of the wider landscape beyond the allocation boundaries through financial contributions using the mechanism of a S106 agreement.
11. The development proposals are designed to take account of the results of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be necessary, together with any necessary mitigation and significant enhancement measures.

### **Archaeology**

12. The proposals are designed to take account of the archaeological interest on the site as revealed through appropriate survey.

### **Access**

13. Vehicular access to the site will be from A20 Ashford Road.

### **Highways and transportation**

14. Improvements to capacity at the A20/Willington Street junction.
15. Package of measures to provide bus stops, pedestrian refuges and improvements to the footway on the northern side of the A20 Ashford Road.
16. Development will contribute, as proven necessary through a Transport Assessment, to improvements at the following junctions:
  - i. The M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge);
  - ii. The A20 Ashford Rd/M20 link road roundabout;
  - iii. The A20 Ashford Rd/Penford Hill junction;
  - iv. The A20 Ashford Rd/Eyhorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access; and
  - v. The Willington Street/A20 Ashford Rd junction.
17. Development will deliver a significant package of sustainable transport measures to secure access to the site by a range of sustainable modes, including the provision of a subsidised bus route, and must be supported by the implementation of a Travel Plan.

### **Minerals safeguarding**

18. This site falls within the Minerals Safeguarding Areas as shown on the policies map and therefore development proposals will be required to undertake a minerals assessment to assess the viability and practicability of prior extraction of the minerals resource. The minerals assessment will comply with Policy DM7 of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2013-2030) and any supplementary planning guidance produced by the Minerals Planning Authority in respect of minerals safeguarding.