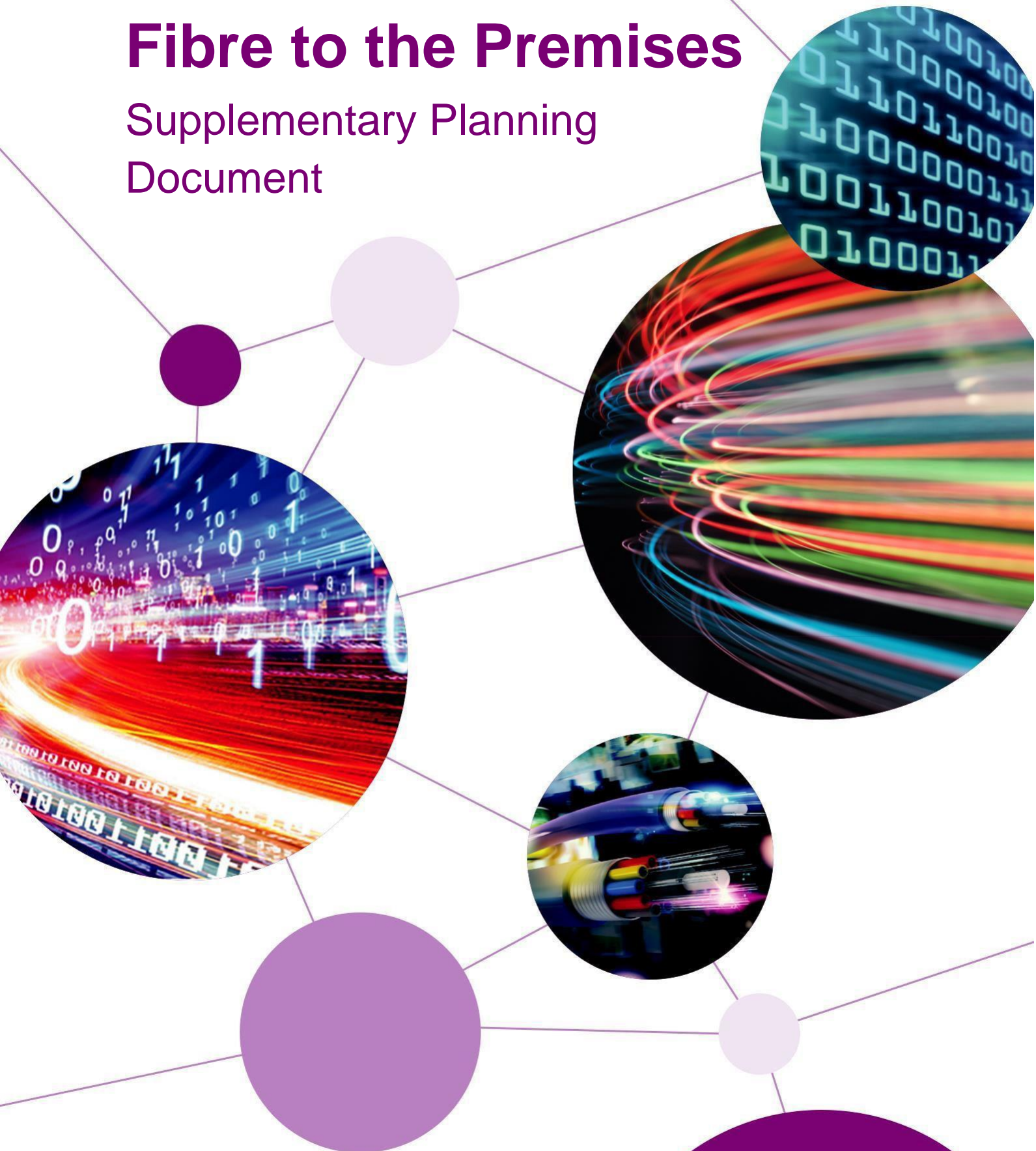


# Fibre to the Premises

## Supplementary Planning Document



Adopted October 2020



ASHFORD

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## **Section 1 – Introduction**

### **Purpose of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

1. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides further guidance to applicants on specific policies within a Local Plan. It does not seek to alter or introduce new policy requirements and is focused on setting out how applications comply with a Local Plan policy.
2. This SPD provides further guidance on Policy EMP6 ‘Fibre to the Premises’ (FTTP) of the council’s Local Plan 2030 (adopted Feb 2019). For ease of reference, the actual policy is replicated below (see section 3). Applicants must have regard to the reasoned justification contained in the Local Plan that supports Policy EMP6 (see paragraphs 7.31 to 7.48 of the Local Plan 2030).
3. The primary driver of Policy EMP6 is to deliver as much FTTP enabled development in the borough as possible. In doing so, advanced and high quality communication infrastructure will be expanded in the local area
4. Ashford Borough Council has long recognised the importance of high speed broadband and its benefits. In 2008, local planning policy required developments to be supported by adequate ducting arrangements to facilitate high speed broadband technology. This has been successful in delivering a connected network around the town of Ashford.
5. The council now requires that the market is further tested, by focussing on FTTP technology. This technology is recognised as a ‘Next Generation Access’ technology and will effectively futureproof the borough and attract further investment. FTTP is already a key market driver; developers, occupiers and employers will require ever more fast and stable connections.
6. This document contains concise details to encourage applicants to engage with relevant stakeholders early in the planning process so that FTTP enabled development is delivered. It is not suggesting that developers become providers of FTTP.
7. Communication and engagement with FTTP providers is vital, particularly in early stages of the planning process. The council has ongoing engagement with these providers and operators for the formulation of Policy EMP6 and this SPD. Useful contact information for providers is provided in Section 7 of this SPD.

## **Who is the SPD for?**

8. This SPD is to guide applicants to the evidence required for a planning application to ensure that the requirements in Policy EMP6 have been met.

## **Section 2 – Background context**

### **The benefits of FTTP to residents, businesses and developers**

9. The government has implemented a Universal Service Obligation. This gives every household and business the right to request a broadband connection of at least 10 Mbps. Providing superfast broadband in new developments will provide further benefits and opportunities.
10. **Demand and expectations are high and rising:** Quality and speed of internet connections is important to property buyers and this is expected to rise as smart home technology continues to develop. The Clutton's Home Ownership Aspirations Survey 2018 found that apart from budgets and planned purchasing timelines, 84% of those surveyed said that high speed broadband was the most important specification when deciding on their new home. Furthermore research carried out by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) shows that 94% of small business owners rate a reliable broadband connection as critical to the success of their business.
11. **Fibre rollout is speeding up:** Thousands more UK homes and business will get connected to the network next year. Internet service operators will be looking to establish more connections, by working alongside land and housing associations, to meet the government's target of 100% gigabit connectivity to residential premises by 2025.
12. **Broadband could have an impact on property values:** Buying a new home is a large investment and broadband speeds often form part of that decision. ISPreview.co.uk conducted a poll in July 2018 which found 54.7% of readers would reject a house if it couldn't deliver their desired broadband speed, and 33% require speeds over 100 Mbps. Housesimple's May 2019 study claimed that "ultra-slow" broadband speeds (under 1 Mbps) could knock 24% off the value of the property.
13. Both surveys highlight that as the quality of national broadband networks has improved, the expectations for our desired internet performance of a new property have also increased.
14. Broadband remains a marketable element in property sales. The quality of the broadband speeds and connections can influence how quickly developers can sell both residential and commercial properties.
15. An issue that arises with new build developments and broadband is exclusivity clauses or agreements. These allow exclusive rights of access for a nominated provider to own and use the broadband infrastructure for a certain

amount of time, leaving purchasers minimal or no choice in provider options.

16. The government is taking steps to promote and legislate, where appropriate, that all new build developments are connected with full fibre. This will provide homeowners the choice of provider. The market already provides competition at a retail level for consumers, with BT (incl. EE and Plusnet) accounting for 35% of fixed broadband connections, Sky 23%, Virgin Media 20% and TalkTalk 11%<sup>1</sup>. Occasionally this market competition doesn't transpire to new developments if exclusivity rights are applied to one provider, restricting the choice for purchasers and tenants.
17. As suggested in the government's Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review<sup>2</sup>, the council would welcome evidence that negotiations have been undertaken with multiple providers to incorporate more than one network into the development. This will then give residents and businesses in new build developments more choice for broadband providers. This is also in line with policy ideas being proposed in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) "New Build Developments: Delivering gigabit-capable connections" consultation document<sup>3</sup>.
18. Fast, dependable broadband is essential for residents to benefit from online services, and for businesses to operate and reach their customers. It also contributes to the vibrancy of an area, in terms of both economic growth and social inclusion.
19. Ashford has been ahead of the national agenda in terms of the expansion of high speed broadband. As a result of the council's forward-thinking policies, in the past nine years superfast coverage (>24 Mbps) in the borough has increased from 52.6% of properties to 92.1%. Mean download speeds for the area have also increased from 2.8 Mbps in 2010 to 32.8 Mbps in 2019 and mean upload speeds increasing from 0.4 Mbps to 6.9 Mbps.
20. Whilst these figures demonstrate large improvements in broadband from this pro-active approach, there is still much more to do. The national picture shows that in the UK 96.1% of properties are connected to superfast broadband (>24 Mbps). In Kent 95.4% of properties are connected with some East Kent authorities having a better coverage than Ashford. With more than 13,500 dwellings due to be built in the borough over the next 11 years, together with many commercial premises, we must ensure that as many as possible of these

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<sup>1</sup> Ofcom, The Communications Market (2019). <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/cmr/interactive-data>, 17 February 2020

<sup>2</sup> Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (2018). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-telecoms-infrastructure-review>, 4 March 2020

<sup>3</sup> New Build Developments: Delivering gigabit-capable connections consultation (2018). <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-build-developments-delivering-gigabit-capable-connections>, 4 March 2020

developments have access to superfast broadband. The council considers that FTTP is an essential infrastructure for both residential and commercial properties and wants superfast coverage to increase over this Local Plan period.

21. Although Ashford is making great improvements in the provision of FTTP, we understand that there are also instances where superfast broadband installation will not be possible for a number of reasons. This has been reflected in Policy EMP6 and we have given more detail in this document.

## National Context

22. **Fast rising coverage:** FTTP deployment in the UK is increasing. 10% of premises in early 2020 were covered compared with 2.8% in 2017. In the borough, FTTP coverage is 3% in early 2020 compared with 0.5% in 2017<sup>4</sup>.
23. New-build developments are increasingly being built with FTTP connectivity. Nationwide, 78% of new-build premises were provided with FTTP in the first quarter of 2019, an increase from 70% in 2018 (see Figure 1). In the South East, more than 80% of new-build premises were provided with FTTP connectivity<sup>5</sup>.

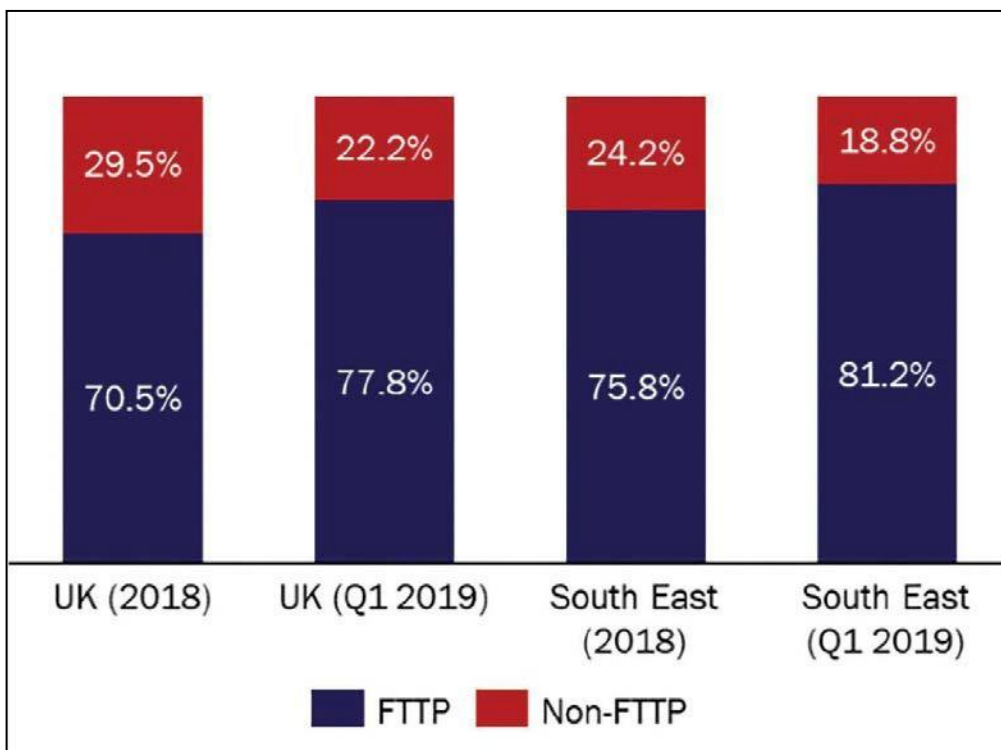


Figure 1 FTTP coverage in new-build developments [Source: ThinkBroadband, 2019]

<sup>4</sup> <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E07000105>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thinkbroadband.com/news/8583-new-build-premises-superfast-coverage-still-behind-uk-average>

24. **Growing investment:** The current wave of deployment is being driven by increasing levels of private investment in FTTP, which has grown rapidly in the last three years. Openreach is targeting four million premises to have FTTP availability by 2021 and 15 (space) million premises by 2025. It is currently deploying FTTP at a rate of approximately 26,000 premises per week. Virgin Media is part way through the roll-out of a hybrid cable/FTTP network extension covering four million premises by 2020, and has also announced plans to upgrade its existing network to DOCSIS3.1 by the end of 2021 – proving gigabit speeds across its footprint. Alternative operators (not including Openreach and Virgin Media) are also deploying FTTP networks, and have announced potential deployment plans that, when combined may cover more than 12 (space) million premises over the next few years.

## **Government Support**

25. **Financial support:** The UK government is increasingly supportive of full fibre, and is providing both financial and regulatory support to help meet its ambition of full gigabit coverage of residential premises by 2025. The DCMS has committed £5 (space) billion to support an “outside in” deployment of FTTP in areas unlikely to be commercially viable, and is also providing funding for FTTP via schemes such as the Local Full Fibre Networks and Rural Gigabit Connectivity programmes and a Gigabit voucher scheme. It should be noted that these funds are not available for new-build developments but do evidence the Government’s commitment to FTTP roll- out.

26. **Regulatory and policy support:** Ofcom is considering regulatory changes to promote full fibre investment. Ofcom has worked with Openreach to improve access to Openreach’s duct and pole network (Physical Infrastructure Access or PIA) and facilitate new infrastructure deployment. The DCMS also consulted on three proposals to promote full-fibre connectivity in new-build developments:

- Cost-sharing between developers and operators for FTTP infrastructure
- A “duty to connect” for network operators
- Amendments to the Building Regulations to mandate FTTP-ready infrastructure in new-build premises.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://telecoms.com/501763/openreach-decides-to-connect-more-new-builds-on-the-house/>



27. The consultation closed in December 2019, and the responses are being processed. The Queen’s Speech in December 2019 contained a commitment by the government to introduce legislation on both new-build connectivity and gigabit-capable connectivity including:

- Mending legislation so that all new build homes are required to have the infrastructure to support gigabit capable connections.
- Requiring developers to work with broadband companies to install gigabit capable connections in virtually all new build homes, up to a cost cap<sup>7</sup>.

28. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has updated the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2019 to suggest that all planning polices and decisions should support the expansion of telecoms networks – including full fibre broadband<sup>8</sup>. Irrespective of ongoing central government initiatives, local authorities are empowered to develop local planning regulations which are supportive of full-fibre deployment – including for new-build developments. A number of local authorities are also considering a similar approach to Ashford Borough Council.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8392>

<sup>8</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

## Section 3 – Guidance on EMP6 Requirements

29. Policy EMP6 contains a number of requirements. For ease of reference, it is replicated below<sup>9</sup>:

### **Policy EMP6 – Promotion of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)**

The council considers that FTTP is essential infrastructure and vital to the delivery of sustainable development. Therefore, all qualifying development shall deliver FTTP. Qualifying development includes:

- All residential and employment schemes proposed in, or adjoining, the urban area of Ashford, including on those sites allocated in this Local Plan on the periphery of the urban area of Ashford,
- residential schemes promoting 10 dwellings or more in the remaining parts of the borough,
- Employment schemes promoting 10 or more jobs (FTE) in the remaining parts of the borough.

Proposals for qualifying development will be required to be supported by an FTTP Statement, to be agreed by the council. This statement will establish how FTTP will be provided to serve the development and that it will be engaged at first occupation.

Exceptions to the approach outlined above could be justified in circumstances where it is not practical, viable or feasible to deliver FTTP. In such cases, evidence will be needed from the applicant to demonstrate that a departure from policy is justified.

For other residential and employment schemes, FTTP will be encouraged by the council as a means of expanding the local fibre network.

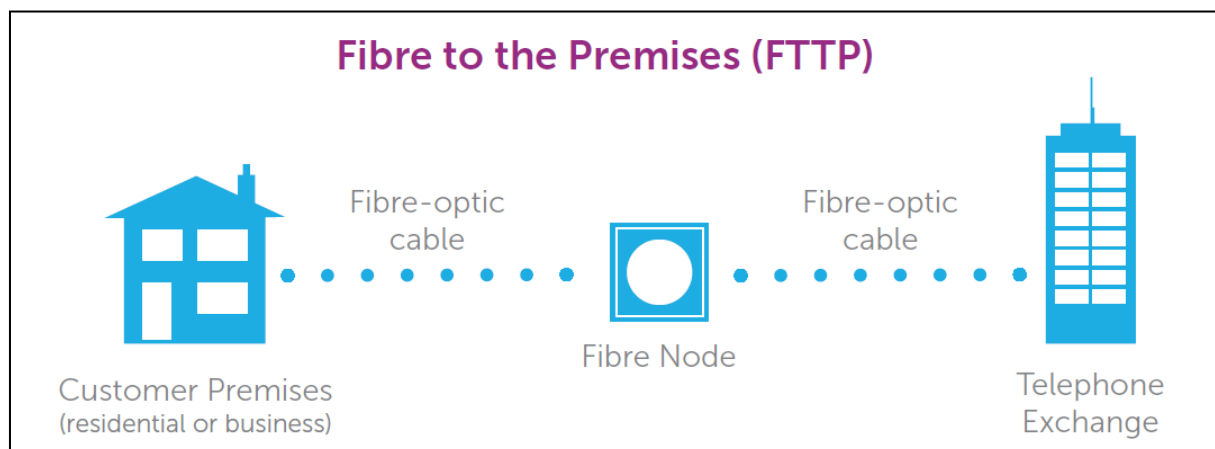
Where FTTP is not delivered, non-Next Generation Access technologies that can provide speeds in excess of 24Mbps should be provided as an alternative.

**Figure 2** Policy EMP6 from Ashford Local Plan 2030

<sup>9</sup> Regard is also needed to the reasoned justification that supports this policy as contained within paragraphs 7.31 to 7.48 of the council's Local Plan 2030 (Feb 2019).

## What is meant by FTTP?

30. FTTP is where the entire line of connectivity is fibre from the exchange, all the way to the building or premises (the dwelling or place of employment). Please see diagram below.



**Figure 3** Diagram explaining FTTP

## What is meant by 'qualifying development'?

31. 'Qualifying development' for the purpose of Policy EMP6 is:

- All schemes promoting residential or employment development 'in' or 'adjoining' the town of Ashford, or
- All residential schemes of 10 or more dwellings in the 'remaining parts of the borough', or
- All employment schemes promoting 10 or more full time jobs or equivalent in the 'remaining parts of the borough'.

32. Therefore a scheme for one dwelling or a scheme that delivers one additional full-time job, 'in' or 'adjoining' the town of Ashford will be required to comply with the requirements in Policy EMP6.

33. In the 'remaining parts of the borough'; this is limited to only those residential developments of 10 or more dwellings or employment developments that would yield 10 or more full time jobs or full time equivalent (FTE).

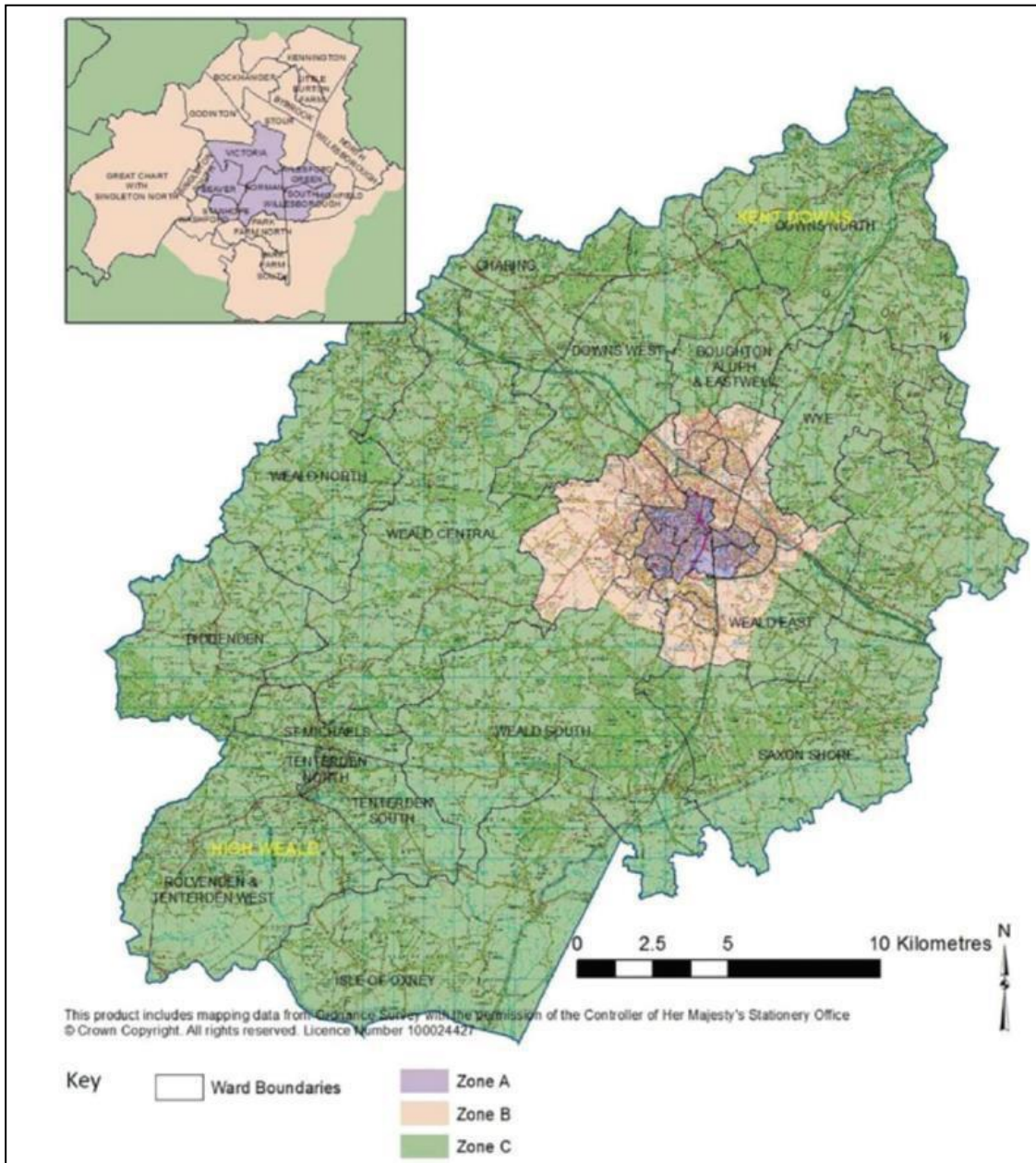
34. The FTE jobs can be determined by using the information contained in the Employment Densities Guide 3rd edition (2015), produced by the Homes and Communities Agency. Below is the main matrix identifying the number of square metre (sqm) per 1 FTE job. The document provides further guidance on employment densities however it is not readily available from the government so the council can help applicants in this respect.

Use Class	Sub-Category	Sub-Sector	Density (sqm)	Notes
<b>B1a Offices</b>	General Office	Corporate	13	NIA
		Professional Services	12	NIA
		Public Sector	12	NIA
		TMT	11	NIA
	Finance & Insurance	10	NIA	
	Call Centres		8	NIA
<b>B1b</b>	R&D Space		40-60	NIA lower densities will be achieved in units with higher provision of shared or communal spaces
<b>B1c</b>	Light Industrial		47	NIA
<b>B2</b>	Industrial & Manufacturing		36	GIA
<b>B8</b>	Storage & Distribution	National Distribution Centre	95	GEA
		Regional Distribution Centre	77	GEA
		'Final Mile' Distribution Centre	70	GEA
<b>Mixed B Class</b>	Small Business Workspace	Incubator	30-60	B1a, B1b – the density will relate to balance between spaces, as the share of B1a increases so too will employment densities.
		Maker Spaces	15-40	B1c, B2, B8 - Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model
		Studio	20-40	B1c, B8
		Co-Working	10-15	B1a - Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model
		Managed Workspace	12-47	B1a, b, c
<b>B8 / Sui Generis</b>	Data Centres	Wholesale	200-950	
		Wholesale Dark Site	440-1,400	
		Co-location Facility	180-540	
<b>A1</b>	Retail	High Street	15-20	NIA
		Foodstore	15-20	NIA
		Retail Warehouse	90	NIA
<b>A2</b>	Finance & Professional Services		16	NIA
<b>A3</b>	Restaurants & Cafes		15-20	NIA
<b>C1</b>	Hotels	Limited Service / Budget	1 per 5 beds	FTE per bed
		Mid-scale	1 per 3 beds	FTE per bed
		Upscale	1 per 2 beds	FTE per bed
		Luxury	1 per 1 bed	FTE per bed
<b>D2</b>	Fitness Centres	Budget	100	GIA
		Mid Market	65	GIA – both types tend to generate between 40-50 jobs per gym
		Family		
	Cinema		200	
	Visitor & Cultural Attractions		30-300	The diversity of the cultural attraction sector means a very wide range exists
Amusement & Entertainment Centres		70	Potential range of 20-100sqm	

Figure 4 Employment Density Guide 3rd edition Matrix, Homes & Communities Agency (2015).  
 GEA - Gross External Area. GIA - Gross Internal Area. NIA - Net Internal Area.

## **How do I determine if the proposal is located ‘in’ or ‘adjoining’ Ashford or the ‘remaining parts of the borough’?**

35. At the time of drafting this SPD, the built confines for the town of Ashford have not been drawn on a map base. As such, there is no spatial area defined to help the planning applicant, or the decision maker. In such circumstances a degree of pragmatism is needed.
36. To make this process simpler for the applicant and decision maker, the SPD proposes to utilise the zones of the Affordable Housing Viability Areas map, as identified under Policy HOU1 of the Local Plan 2030.
37. Therefore, for the purposes of Policy EMP6, all application sites that fall within **zones A and B** (see figure 5) will be considered as being ‘in’ or ‘adjoining’ Ashford. All application sites that fall within **zone C** (see map below) will be considered as being in the ‘remaining parts of the borough’.



**Figure 5** - Map derived from MAP2 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030: Affordable Housing Viability Areas

38. These zones were derived from a range of evidence relating to the local housing market, and are primarily used to help determine the council's affordable housing policy. The zones however also offer a simple and practical solution to helping to determine how Policy EMP6 should be applied, for two main reasons:
- i. Most of Ashford's existing fibre network is located within zones A and B. It houses all of the existing urban fibre enabled cabinets which have, in part, been delivered as result of the expansion of the town.
  - ii. All of the 'Ashford Site Policies' in the Local Plan 2030 are located within zones A and B. All of these site allocations are required to

deliver FTTP. In doing so the existing urban fibre network will be enhanced or expanded. In this context, the large scale development of Chilmington Green (up to 5,750 homes and associated infrastructure) also falls within zones A and B.

39. In light of the above, all future planning applications coming forward in zones A and B will be in close proximity to both the existing and future fibre network in and around the town of Ashford, as well as existing cabinets (all of these are fully fibre enabled) and any expanded or new cabinets. It therefore follows that these sites should be treated as 'in' and 'adjoining' Ashford for the purpose of compliance with Policy EMP6.
40. Although the zones were derived for a separate purpose, it provides an opportunity to pragmatically and clearly define, on a map base, where the various components of Policy EMP6 apply.

## **What is an FTTP Statement?**

41. An FTTP Statement is a document needed to support a planning application where a qualifying development is proposed. The Statements are required to demonstrate that the proposed development will be supported by FTTP at commencement. Please see section 4 of this SPD for what the FTTP Statement should cover.

## **What are the exceptions to the requirements of Policy EMP6 and how can they be justified?**

42. Where FTTP cannot be delivered for a qualifying development, the applicant will be required to produce evidence justifying why. In line with Policy EMP6, these reasons will normally relate to issues surrounding viability, feasibility or the practicality of delivery, or a combination of these factors. Failure to demonstrate why non-compliance is justified may well result in the refusal of planning permission.
43. If non-compliance of policy EMP6 can be justified, varying levels of evidence will be required depending on the reasons FTTP cannot be delivered. For example, it could be that an appropriate physical trench cannot be dug, or that the scheme is too far from the nearest breakout point on the fibre network, or that there is an issue with the capacity of a nearby cabinet and this capacity cannot be increased. There may also be scenarios where operators or providers are unable to assist in the delivery of FTTP on a particular site.

44. Whatever the reason for non-compliance, the applicant is expected to produce thorough, transparent and robust evidence. Where appropriate, this should include non-commercially sensitive correspondence between the applicant and a provider.
45. If a viability case is being made, compliance with Policy IMP2 of the Local Plan 2030 is also required. Any viability case being made must be done so in a transparent way and will be rigorously tested by independent advisors, paid for by the applicant.

## **What is meant by ‘encouraged’ in relation to ‘other schemes’?**

46. The council encourages all new development to be FTTP enabled. Doing so can only assist in delivering as full a fibre network across the borough as possible, while futureproofing and adding value to development. We encourage applicants for all schemes, including those that do not qualify for Policy EMP6, that deliver new residential or commercial premises across the borough, to evidence that superfast broadband connections have at least been considered. For schemes that do not qualify for Policy EMP6 we would anticipate evidence such as quotes from service providers, viability assessments and/or a statement explaining how broadband will be provided on the site.

## **Why is 24 Mbps the ‘fallback position’?**

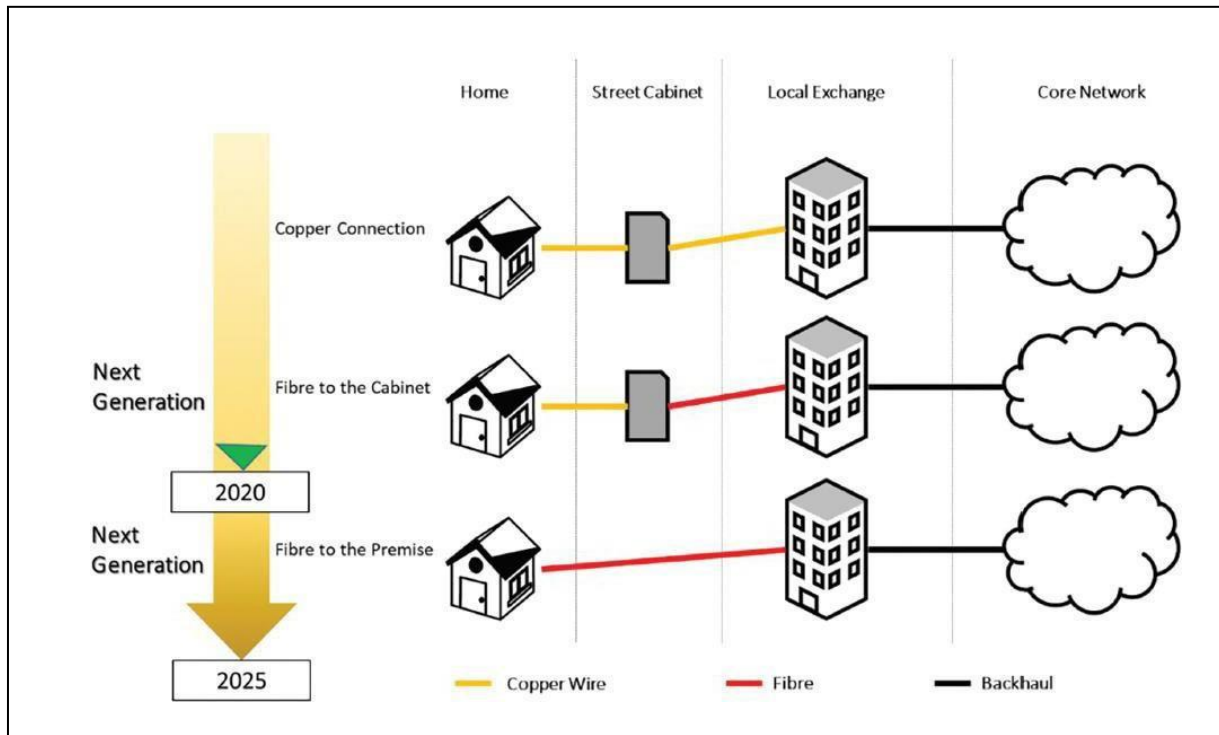
47. There is no single definition of superfast broadband. At the time of drafting policy EMP6 the UK government defined superfast broadband as download speeds of at least 24 Mbps. However, Ofcom and the EU define it as 30 Mbps. Given the advances in technology and the sector since Policy EMP6 was first drafted in 2017, the expectation now is that at least **30 Mbps** download speeds should be achieved as the fallback position, as opposed to the 24 Mbps speed stipulated in Policy EMP6. It is noted that recent BDUK contracts have adopted this speed as ‘superfast’ connectivity.

## **What is Next Generation Access?**

48. Next-generation access (NGA) networks represent new, or upgraded, infrastructure which can provide superfast internet speeds. Ofcom defines two levels of service quality:
  - superfast broadband delivering a minimum download speed of 30 Mbit/s
  - ultrafast broadband delivering a minimum download speed of 300 Mbit/s

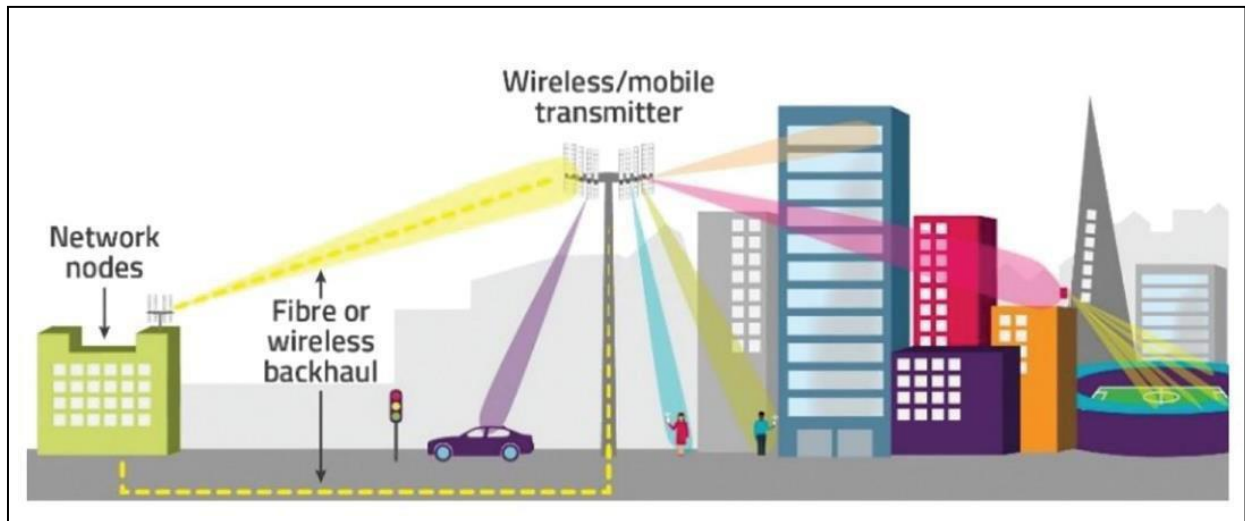


49. The UK government is basing its connectivity ambitions around a third definition – gigabit capable networks. Any NGA network that can deliver at least 1 Gbit/s connectivity meets the definition of a gigabit capable network. In Ashford, as in much of the UK, the way forward for delivering NGA superfast broadband is expected to be primarily via FTTP networks.



**Figure 6** Cable connections over time based on Ofcom diagram

50. Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) can be considered as an alternative solution to FTTP and traditional fixed broadband services. FWA requires a fibre or wireless backhaul connection to a transmitter, which then uses a wireless link for the final connection to a home or business. This approach avoids the cost of installing a fibre connection into the building for the “last mile”. Ashford Borough Council would consider this as an alternative where FTTP is deemed to be unviable.



**Figure 7** Schematic of FWA, Ofcom Connected Nations 2018

## **Section 4 – FTTP Statements**

### **What is the purpose of FTTP Statements?**

51. The main purpose of an FTTP Statement is to give the decision maker as much certainty as possible that qualifying developments will comply with Policy EMP6. The Statement should be provided as a standalone document. Statements will be expected to demonstrate:
- a) That appropriate and early discussion has been had with the telecom providers in relation to serving the development with FTTP,
  - b) That either the proposed development can be connected to existing infrastructure or that additional infrastructure is needed and how this will be provided,
  - c) That the infrastructure needed to enable FTTP will be available and in place, prior to occupation<sup>10</sup>,
  - d) How FTTP will be delivered in terms of the layout, design, connectivity to the cabinet and to the buildings proposed on-site.

### **What information is required at outline stage?**

52. An FTTP statement is required at outline planning stage. It is accepted however, given the nature of an outline application, that it might contain less details in terms of specific implementation dates of FTTP from a provider, and/or might not include detailed layout information.
53. However, the FTTP statement for an outline application must provide enough information to satisfy the decision maker that Policy EMP6 will be complied with, or that non-compliance is justified. In this regard, the expectation is that the information provided should be similar to the level that is supplied to support other utility infrastructure, such as mains drainage or the supply of water.
54. In addition, planning conditions or obligations will be applied to outline consent to ensure that the necessary and remaining details to be covered in subsequent FTTP Statements is provided at reserved matters stage. Some example conditions are provided in section 5, as a guide.

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<sup>10</sup> The council's preference is that FTTP is delivered in such a way that provides a competitive choice, or that this choice will be available after an initial term has been passed. However the council accept that this can only be an aspiration as it is beyond the scope of the planning system.

## **What about confidentiality with telecom providers?**

55. The council accepts that on some occasions, the detailed discussions between the telecom providers will need to be private, especially where correspondence is of a commercial nature. However, the minimum expectation is for an applicant to show that suitable liaison and discussion has been held with a number of providers and this has occurred early in the process.

## **What design and layout detail is needed?**

56. In terms of fibre installation, the following issues should be addressed within the Statements, or as part of the application itself. It might be useful to provide such information in the form of a layout plan of the site. Issues to be addressed include:

- Type, size and likely location of the cabinet to be installed,
- The type of fibre/data cabling to be used and examples of the fittings to be attached to the building(s),
- Indicative fibre cabling routing through the site and beyond,
- The extent and type of external cabling,
- The extent and type of external ducting and chambers,
- How the infrastructure is to be delivered in terms of the phasing of the scheme and completion to conform to intended first occupancy date.

## Section 5 – Example planning conditions

57. Planning conditions will be applied. Below are two examples of what applicants should expect:

### Example 1:

*Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling hereby permitted OR Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling in each phase approved under condition\_\_\_\_\_, an FTTP Statement for the development OR that phase shall have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing for the installation of a high speed wholly FTTP connection to each dwelling within the development OR that phase, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority (where supported by evidence detailing reasonable endeavours to secure the provision of FTTP and where relevant, details of alternative provision for superfast broadband in the absence of FTTP).*

The FTTP infrastructure OR alternative provision for superfast broadband in the absence of FTTP shall be laid out in accordance with the approved FTTP Statement OR approved details at the same time as other services during the construction process and be available for use on the first occupation of each dwelling hereby approved.

**Reason:** To ensure that the development is provided with high quality broadband services enhancing its attractiveness, in accordance with Policy EMP6 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030.

*(Note: first paragraph omitted where the FTTP Statement, or submitted details of alternative provision for superfast broadband in the absence of FTTP, is approved on granting planning permission and listed in the permission as an approved document.)*

**Example 2:**

*Prior to the first occupation of any premises hereby permitted, an FTTP Statement shall have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing for the installation of a high speed wholly FTTP connection to each premises within the development hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority (where supported by evidence detailing reasonable endeavours to secure the provision of FTTP and where relevant, details of alternative provision for superfast broadband in the absence of FTTP).*

The FTTP infrastructure OR alternative provision for superfast broadband in the absence of FTTP shall be laid out in accordance with the FTTP Statement OR approved details at the same time as other services during the construction process and be available for use on the first occupation of each premises unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority (where supported by evidence detailing reasonable endeavours to secure the provision of FTTP and alternative provisions that been made in the absence of FTTP).

**Reason:** To ensure that the development is provided with high quality broadband services enhancing its attractiveness, in accordance with Policy EMP6 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030.

*(Note: first paragraph omitted where the FTTP Statement, or submitted details of alternative provision for superfast broadband in the absence of FTTP, is approved on granting planning permission and listed in the permission as an approved document.)*

## **Section 6 – Highways**

58. The DCMS Digital Connectivity Portal provides a good level of guidance relating to street works and how local authorities/highways authorities and developers/operators can work in partnership. The Street Works Toolkit found in the Digital Connectivity Portal aims to improve consistency and thereby trust, promote collaboration and complement legislation.
59. Highways England is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the strategic road network (SRN). Highways England will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the SRN, in this case the M20 and A2070 in the vicinity of Ashford Borough. Any activity on the SRN falls in the realms of New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) and Traffic Management Act (TMA) and any works promotor will need to abide by these. In particular there are restrictions with regards motorways and other special roads. Even works on adjacent land may be restricted. For more information please visit the [Highways England website](#) or contact Highways England (tel: 0300 123 5000, email: [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:info@highwaysengland.co.uk))
60. There is a lot of emphasis on the need for providers, developers and local authorities to engage at an early stage in order to identify the standards expected, plan appropriately and ensure the efficient deployment of networks.
61. Please refer to the Street Works Toolkit on the Digital Connectivity Portal: [www.gov.uk/guidance/digital-connectivity-portal](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/digital-connectivity-portal).



**Figure 8**  
The Government's Streetworks Toolkit front cover



## Section 7 – Useful contacts and information

62. The expectation will be that the applicant will have made contact with FTTP providers. Some key contacts are provided below:

Provider	Website	Telephone
Openreach <sup>11</sup>	<a href="https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fibre-for-developers/registering-your-site">https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fibre-for-developers/registering-your-site</a>	
Virgin Media	<a href="https://www.virginmedia.com/lightning/network-expansion/property-developers">https://www.virginmedia.com/lightning/network-expansion/property-developers</a>	0800 408 088
Hyperoptic	<a href="https://www.hyperoptic.com/property/">https://www.hyperoptic.com/property/</a>	0333 332 1111
City Fibre	<a href="https://www.cityfibre.com/contact-us/">https://www.cityfibre.com/contact-us/</a>	0800 083 6160
Trooli <sup>12</sup>	<a href="https://www.trooli.com/help/">https://www.trooli.com/help/</a>	0800 358 7680
BUUK Ltd	<a href="https://www.bu-uk.co.uk/contact-us">https://www.bu-uk.co.uk/contact-us</a>	0135 924 0363

63. Some providers have specific guidance for property developers that can be downloaded for information. Please use the contact details above to access these.

64. Ashford Borough Council does not endorse the companies mentioned above and would suggest developers assess the whole market and make their own decision. Other companies are available however the list above are companies that are in contact with the council or are operating in or near the Ashford borough. If a provider wishes to be added to this list we will be maintaining an up to date list of registered providers on the council's website here.

<sup>11</sup> You may register your development site on their website

<sup>12</sup> While not active in the Ashford borough at the time of writing, *Trooli* are a Kent-based provider worth contacting

## **Section 8 – The need to monitor and review**

65. The council recognises that the e-technology sector is a rapidly changing environment, where innovations occur on a regular basis. Government policy is also evolving all the time, as it tries to keep pace.
66. It therefore needs to be recognised that government policy could be introduced, even in the short term, which would supersede the guidance contained in this SPD.
67. Given this context, the council will continually monitor the sector and any changes to national policy or legislation. If a revision to this SPD is necessary, the council will progress alterations as soon as reasonably practical to do so.

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