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(54) **MICROELECTRONIC ELEMENT WITH BOND ELEMENTS TO ENCAPSULATION SURFACE**

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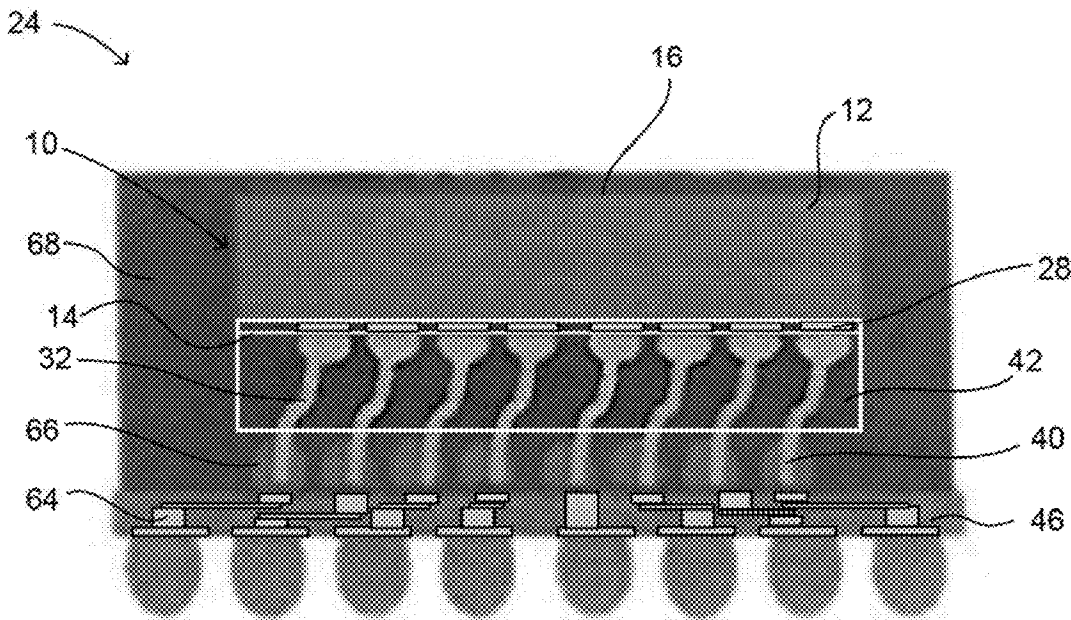
USPC **257/784**; 438/669

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A microelectronic structure includes a semiconductor having conductive elements at a first surface. Wire bonds have bases joined to the conductive elements and free ends remote from the bases, the free ends being remote from the substrate and the bases and including end surfaces. The wire bonds define edge surfaces between the bases and end surfaces thereof. A compliant material layer extends along the edge surfaces within first portions of the wire bonds at least adjacent the bases thereof and fills spaces between the first portions of the wire bonds such that the first portions of the wire bonds are separated from one another by the compliant material layer. Second portions of the wire bonds are defined by the end surfaces and portions of the edge surfaces adjacent the end surfaces that are extend from a third surface of the compliant later.



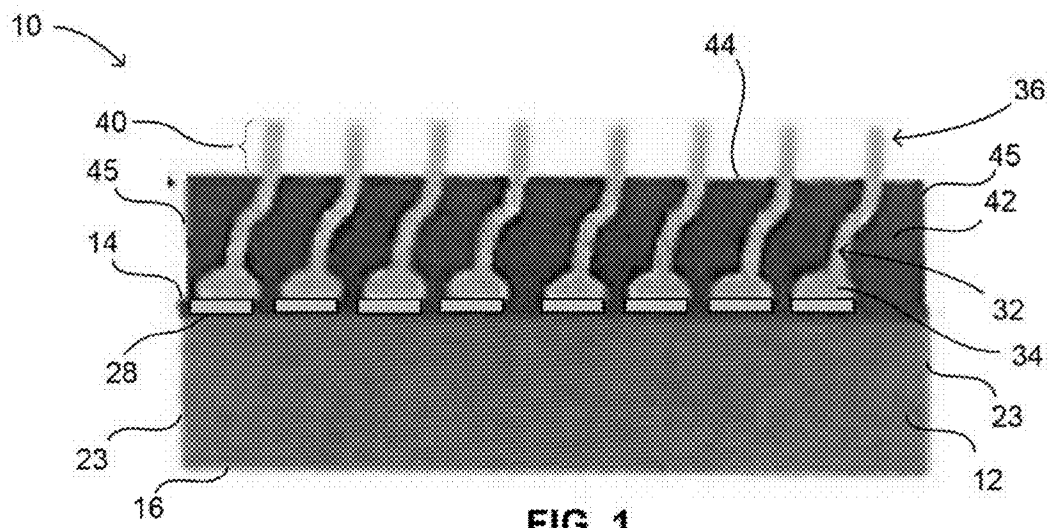


FIG. 1

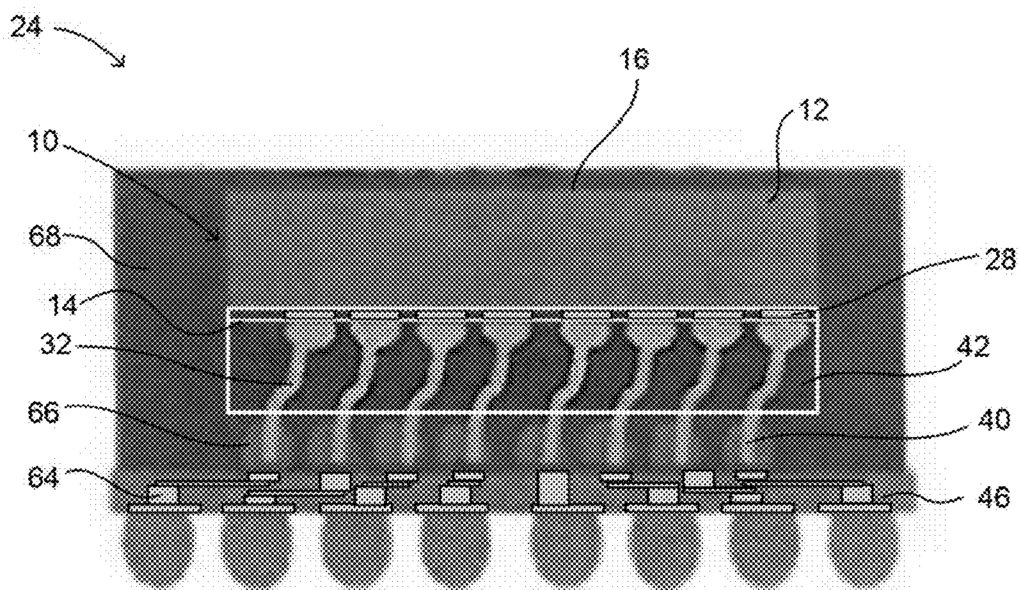


FIG. 2

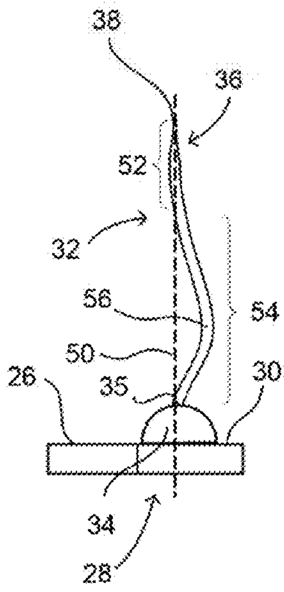


FIG. 3A

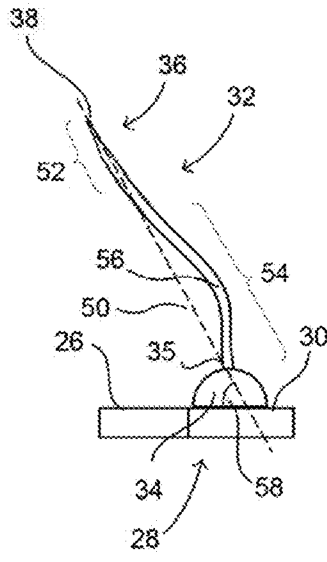


FIG. 3B

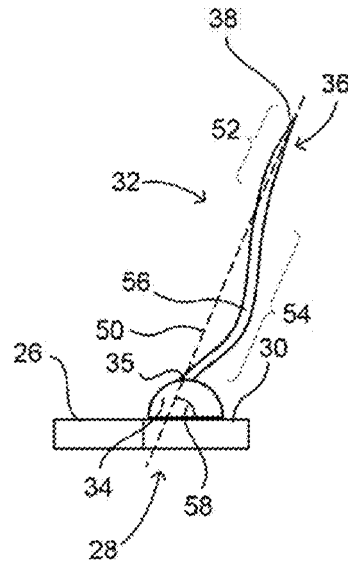


FIG. 3C

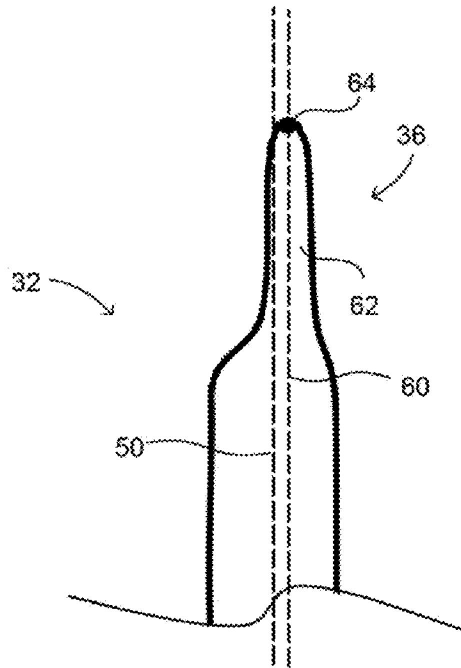


FIG. 4

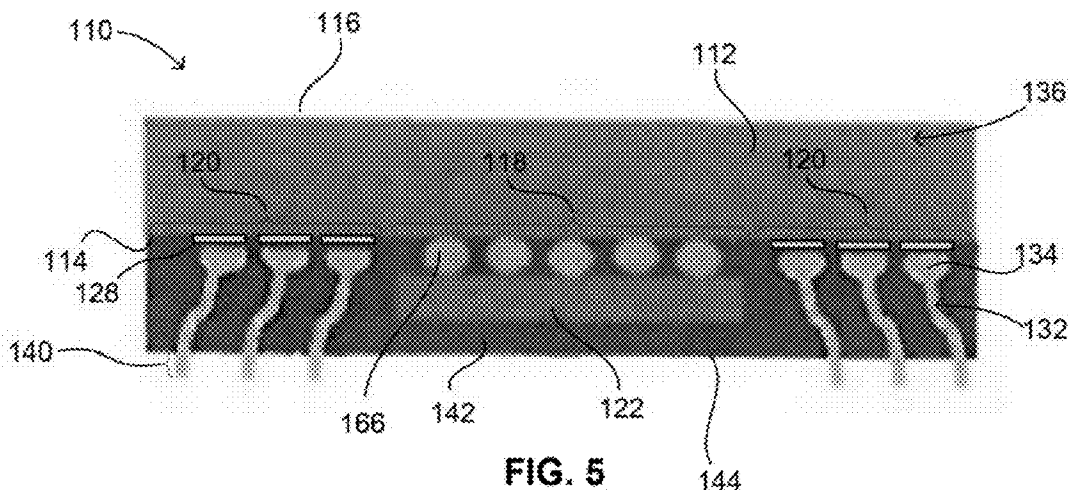


FIG. 5

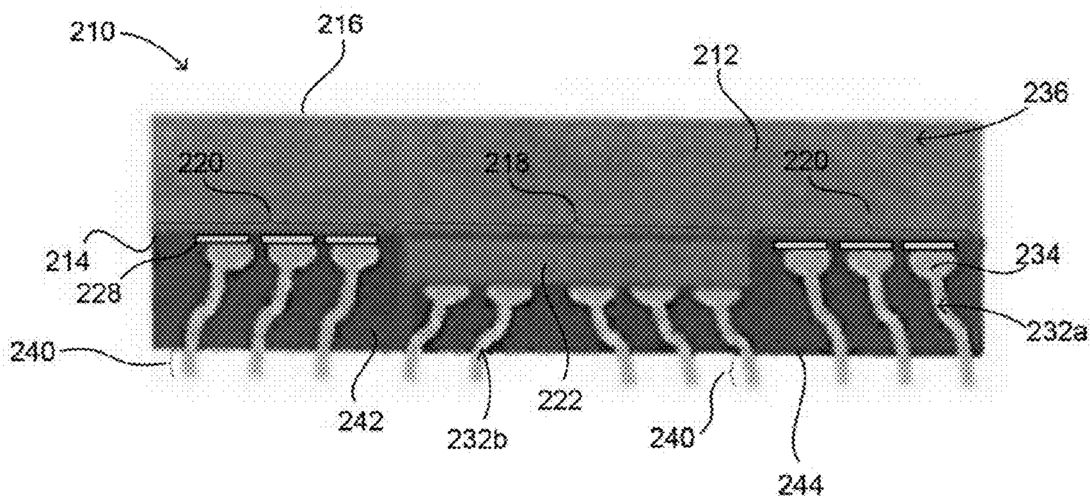


FIG. 6

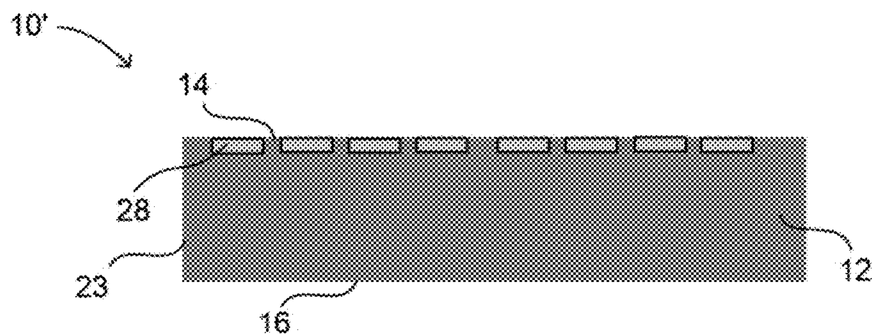


FIG. 7

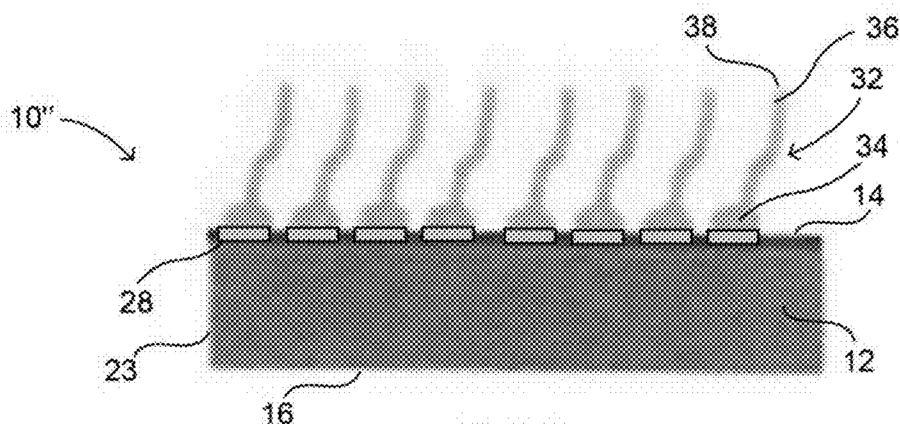


FIG. 8

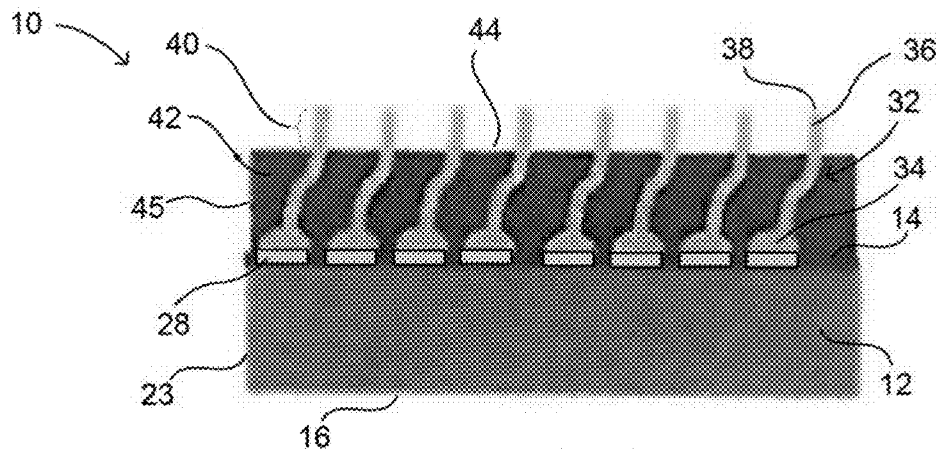


FIG. 9

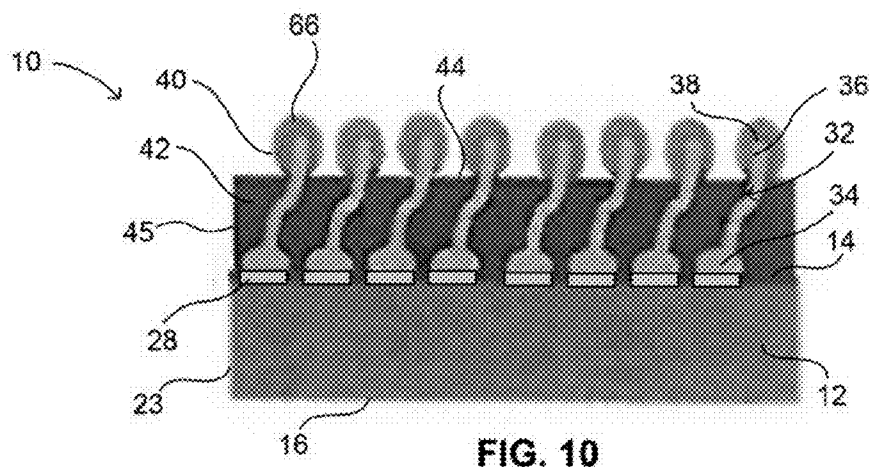


FIG. 10

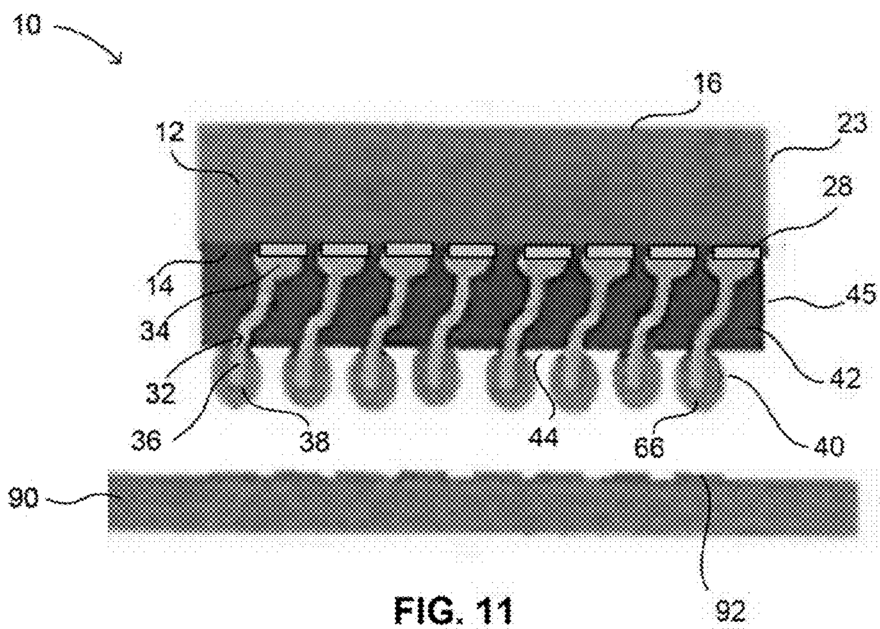


FIG. 11

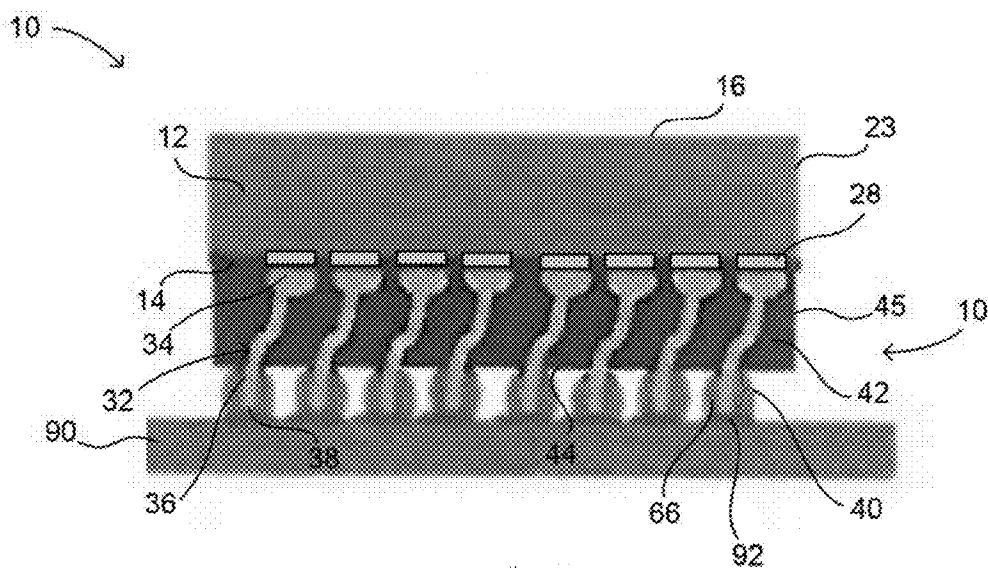


FIG. 12

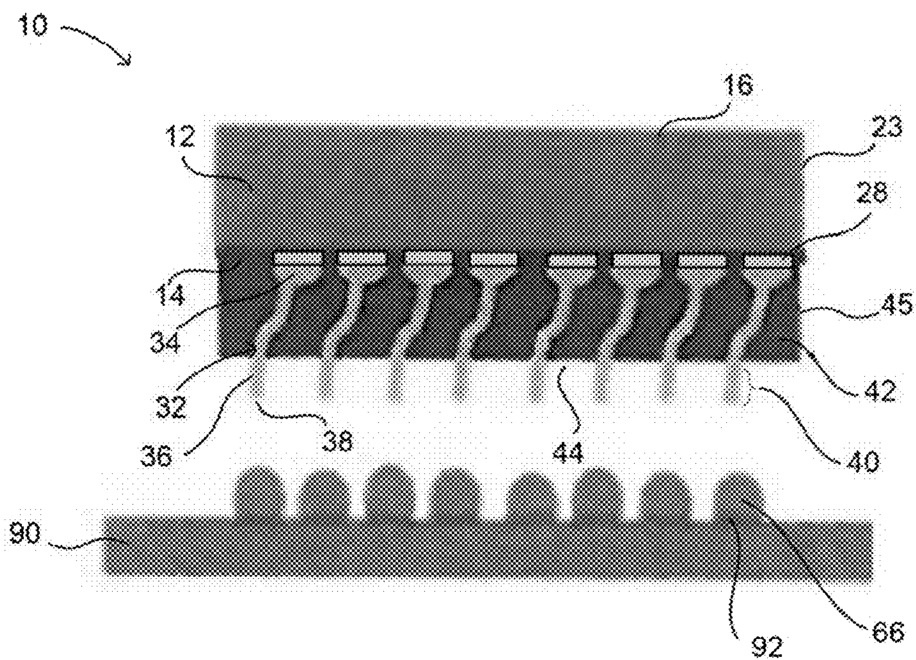


FIG. 13

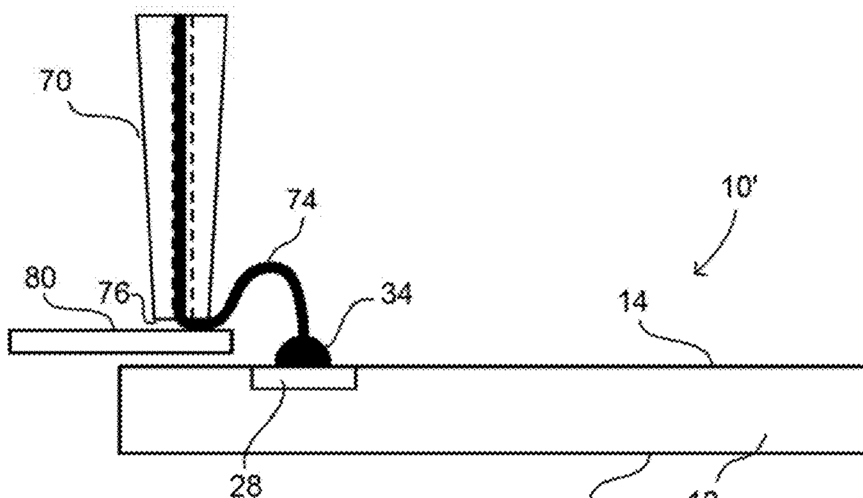


FIG. 14

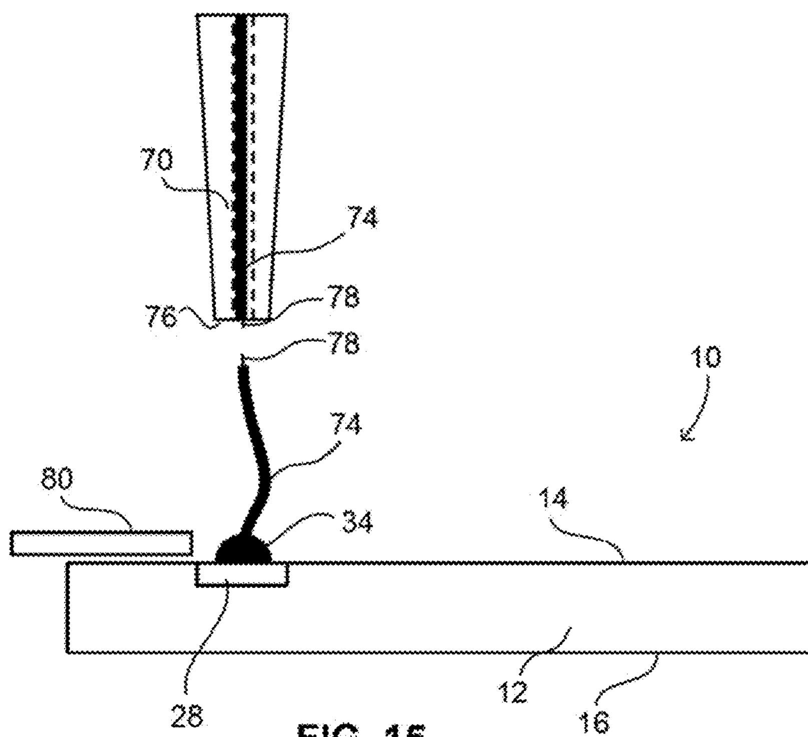


FIG. 15

MICROELECTRONIC ELEMENT WITH BOND ELEMENTS TO ENCAPSULATION SURFACE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The subject matter of the present application relates to a microelectronic element including a semiconductor chip with structures to achieve improved reliability when assembled with external microelectronic components, including compliant connection structures, and methods of fabricating the microelectronic element.

[0002] Semiconductor chips are flat bodies with contacts disposed on a front surface that are connected to internal electrical circuitry of the chip. The chips are typically packaged to form a microelectronic package having terminals that are electrically connected to the chip contacts. The terminals of the package may then be connected to an external microelectronic component, such as a circuit panel.

[0003] Microelectronic devices such as semiconductor chips typically require many input and output connections to other electronic components. The input and output contacts of a semiconductor chip or other comparable device are generally disposed in grid-like patterns that substantially cover a surface of the device (commonly referred to as an "area array") or in elongated rows which may extend parallel to and adjacent each edge of the device's front surface, or in the center of the front surface. Typically, devices such as chips must be physically mounted on a substrate such as a printed circuit board, and the contacts of the device must be electrically connected to electrically conductive features of the circuit board.

[0004] Semiconductor chips are commonly provided in packages that facilitate handling of the chip during manufacture and during mounting of the chip on an external substrate such as a circuit board or other circuit panel. For example, many semiconductor chips are provided in packages suitable for surface mounting. Numerous packages of this general type have been proposed for various applications. Most commonly, such packages include a dielectric element, commonly referred to as a "chip carrier" with terminals formed as plated or etched metallic structures on the dielectric. These terminals typically are connected to the contacts of the chip itself by features such as thin traces extending along the chip carrier itself and by fine leads or wires extending between the contacts of the chip and the terminals or traces. In a surface mounting operation, the package is placed onto a circuit board so that each terminal on the package is aligned with a corresponding contact pad on the circuit board. Solder or other bonding material is provided between the terminals and the contact pads. The package can be permanently bonded in place by heating the assembly so as to melt or "reflow" the solder or otherwise activate the bonding material.

[0005] Many packages include solder masses in the form of solder balls, typically about 0.1 mm and about 0.8 mm (5 and mils) in diameter, attached to the terminals of the package. A package having an array of solder balls projecting from its bottom surface is commonly referred to as a ball grid array or "BGA" package. Other packages, referred to as land grid array or "LGA" packages are secured to the substrate by thin layers or lands formed from solder. Packages of this type can be quite compact. Certain packages, commonly referred to as "chip scale packages," occupy an area of the circuit board equal to, or only slightly larger than, the area of the device incorporated in the package. This is advantageous in that it reduces the overall size of the assembly and permits the use of short interconnections between various devices on the substrate, which in turn limits signal propagation time between devices and thus facilitates operation of the assembly at high speeds.

[0006] Mismatches or differences between coefficients of thermal expansion ("CTE") of the components in such a package can adversely impact their reliability and performance. In an example, a semiconductor chip may have a lower CTE than that of a substrate or printed circuit board to which it is mounted. As the chip undergoes heating and cooling due to the use cycle thereof, the components will expand and contract according to their differing CTEs. In this example, the substrate will expand more and at a greater rate than the semiconductor die. This can cause stress in the solder masses (or other structures) used to both mount and electrically connect the semiconductor die and the substrate. Such stress can cause the solder mass to disconnect from either or both of the semiconductor die or the substrate, thereby interrupting the signal transmission that it otherwise facilitates. Various structures have been used to compensate for such variations in CTE, yet many fail to offer a significant amount of compensation on a scale appropriate for the fine pitch arrays being increasingly utilized in microelectronic packages.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] An aspect of the present disclosure relates to a microelectronic structure including a first semiconductor die having first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface. The structure also includes wire bonds having bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements. The wire bonds further have free ends remote from the bases, the free ends being remote from the substrate and the bases and including end surfaces thereon. The wire bonds define edge surfaces extending between the bases and end surfaces thereof. A compliant material layer overlies and extends from the first surface of the semiconductor die outside of the bases of the wire bonds. The compliant material layer further extends along first portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds at least adjacent the bases thereof and fills spaces between the first portions of the wire bonds such that the first portions of the wire bonds are separated from one another by the compliant material layer. The compliant material layer further has a third surface facing away from the first surface of the semiconductor die. Second portions of the wire bonds are defined by the end surfaces and portions of the edge surfaces adjacent the end surfaces that are uncovered by the third surface and extend away therefrom.

[0008] The first portions of the wire bonds can be encapsulated entirely by the compliant material. Further, the second portions of the wire bonds can be moveable with respect to the bases thereof. In an example, the compliant material layer can have a Young's modulus of 2.5 GPa or less.

[0009] The second portions of the wire bonds can extend along axes of the wire bonds that are disposed at angles of at least 30 degrees with respect to the third surface. The end surfaces of the wire bonds can be positioned above the third surface by a distance of at least 50 microns. Further, the end surfaces of the wire bonds can be positioned above the third surface at a distance of less than 200 microns.

[0010] The semiconductor die can further define edge surfaces extending between the first and second surfaces, and the

compliant material layer can further include edge surfaces extending from the third surface thereof to the first surface of the semiconductor die so as to be substantially coplanar with the edge surfaces of the semiconductor die. At least one of the wire bonds can have a shape such that the wire bond defines an axis between the free end and the base thereof and such that the wire bond defines a plane. In such an example a bent portion of the at least one wire bond can extending away from the axis within the plane. The shape of the at least one wire bond can be further such that a substantially straight portion of the wire bond extends between the free end and the bent portion along the axis.

[0011] The microelectronic structure can further include conductive metal masses joined with the second portions of the wire bonds and contacting the third surface of the compliant material layer. In such an example, at least one of the conductive metal masses encapsulates at least some of the second portion of a respective one of the wire bonds. The conductive metal masses can be configured to join the second portions of the wire bonds with external conductive features by reflow thereof.

[0012] In an example, the semiconductor die can be a first semiconductor die having a first region and a second region surrounding the first region. The electrically conductive elements of the first semiconductor die can be within the second region. The microelectronic structure in such an example, can further include a second semiconductor die mounted on the first semiconductor die within the first region. The second semiconductor die can be electrically connected with at least some of the conductive elements of the first semiconductor die. The compliant material layer can cover the second semiconductor die.

[0013] In another example, the semiconductor die can be a first semiconductor die having a first region and a second region surrounding the first region. The electrically conductive elements of the first semiconductor die can be within the second region. The microelectronic structure can further include a second semiconductor die mounted on the first semiconductor die within the first region. The second semiconductor die can have first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface facing away from the first surface of the first semiconductor die. Additional wire bonds can have bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements of the second semiconductor die. The additional wire bonds can further have free ends remote from the bases, and the free ends can be remote from the first surface of the second semiconductor die and the bases and including the end surfaces thereon. The wire bonds can define edge surfaces extending between the bases and end surfaces thereof. The compliant material layer can further overlie and extend from the first surface of the second semiconductor die outside of the bases of the additional wire bonds, and the compliant material layer can further extending along first portions of the edge surfaces of the additional wire bonds. Second portions of the additional wire bonds can be defined by the end surfaces and portions of the edge surfaces extending from the end surfaces that are uncovered by and extend away from the compliant material layer at the third surface.

[0014] Another aspect of the present disclosure can relate to a microelectronic package including a microelectronic element having a first semiconductor die with first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface. The element can further have wire bonds with bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements at the first surface and end surfaces, the end surfaces being remote from the substrate and the bases. Each of the wire bonds extends from the base to the end surface thereof. A compliant material layer overlies and extends from the first portion of the first surface of the substrate and fills spaces between first portions of the wire bonds such that the first portions of the wire bonds are separated from one another by the compliant material layer. The compliant material layer has a third surface facing away from the first surface of the substrate, and second portions of the wire bonds are defined by at least portions of the end surfaces of the wire bonds that are uncovered by the compliant material layer at the third surface. The package further includes a substrate having a fourth surface and a plurality of terminals exposed at the fourth surface. The microelectronic element is mounted on the substrate with the third surface facing the fourth surface and at least some of the wire bonds are joined, at the second portions thereof, to respective ones of the terminals.

[0015] The second portions of the wire bonds can be electrically and mechanically joined to the terminals by conductive metal masses. The microelectronic package can further include a molded dielectric layer formed over at least a portion of the fourth surface of the substrate and extending away therefrom so as to extend along at least a portion of the microelectronic element. The Young's modulus of the molded dielectric layer can be greater than the Young's Modulus of the compliant material layer. The compliant material layer can have a Young's modulus of less than 2.5 GPa.

[0016] The wire bonds can further define edge surfaces extending between the bases and end surfaces thereof, and the compliant material layer can extend along portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds at least adjacent the bases thereof and within the first portions of the wire bonds. Portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds that extend from the end surfaces thereof can be uncovered by the compliant material layer around entire circumferences thereof at the third surface thereof.

[0017] Another aspect of the present disclosure relates to a method for making a microelectronic structure. The method includes forming wire bonds on a semiconductor die, the semiconductor die having first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface. The wire bonds are formed having bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements and having end surfaces remote from the substrate and the bases. Edge surfaces of the wire bonds extend between the bases and the end surfaces. The method further includes forming a compliant material layer overlying and extending from the first surface of the semiconductor die outside of the bases of the wire bonds. The compliant material is further formed to extend along portions of the edge surfaces of first portions of the wire bonds to fill spaces between the first portions of the wire bonds and to separate the first portions of the wire bonds from one another. The compliant material layer is further formed to have a third surface facing away from the first surface of the substrate with second portions of the wire bonds being defined by at least the end surfaces and portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds that are uncovered by the conductive material layer at the third surface so as to extend away therefrom.

[0018] The method can further include the step of mounting the microelectronic package on a substrate with the third

surface facing a surface of the substrate. The surface of the substrate can have terminals at the surface thereof, and the mounting can include joining at least some of the second portions of the wire bonds with the terminals. The second portions of the wire bonds can be joined with the terminals including reflowing of conductive metal masses joined with the second portions of the wire bonds. At least one of the conductive metal masses can encapsulate at least some of the second portion of a respective one of the wire bonds at least after the reflowing thereof. In an alternative example, the second portions of the wire bonds can be joined with the terminals including reflowing of conductive metal masses joined with the terminals.

[0019] The method can further include forming a molded dielectric over at least a portion of the surface of the substrate and extending away therefrom so as to extend along at least a portion of the compliant material layer and along at least a portion of the semiconductor die.

[0020] The compliant material layer can be deposited over the semiconductor die so as to cover the wire bonds, including the end surfaces thereof, and forming the compliant material layer can further include removing a portion thereof to form the third surface thereof and to uncover the second portions of the wire bonds. Alternatively, forming the compliant material layer can include molding the compliant material over the semiconductor die so as to form the third surface thereof such that the second portions of the wire bonds extend therefrom.

[0021] Forming the wire bond can include severing a wire segment joined with one of the conductive elements at least by pressing the wire segment into contact with a secondary surface using a capillary of a bonding tool so as to form the end surface of the wire bond remote from the base.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0022] FIG. **1** is a sectional view depicting a microelectronic element according to an aspect of the disclosure.

[0023] FIG. **2** is a sectional view of a microelectronic package including the microelectronic element of FIG. **1**.

[0024] FIGS. **3A-3C** are schematic views of example wire bonds that can be used in the microelectronic element of FIG. **1**.

[0025] FIG. **4** is a detail view of a tip of the example wire bonds of FIGS. **3A-3C**.

[0026] FIG. **5** is a sectional view of an alternative microelectronic element according to another example of the disclosure.

[0027] FIG. **6** is a sectional view of an alternative microelectronic element according to another example of the disclosure.

[0028] FIGS. **7-12** show various sectional views of an in process unit during steps of a method for fabricating a microelectronic element according to another aspect of the disclosure.

[0029] FIG. **13** shows a method step that can be used in a variation of the method depicted in FIGS. **7-12**

[0030] FIGS. **14** and **15** show schematic views of successive steps in a method for fabricating a wire bond that can be incorporated in the method depicted in FIGS. **7-12** and the variation incorporating the step of FIG. **13**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0031] Turning now to the figures, where similar numeric references are used to indicate similar features, there is shown in FIG. **1** a microelectronic structure **10** that can be in the form of a microelectronic element according to an embodiment of the present invention. The embodiment of FIG. **1** is a microelectronic element in the form of a semiconductor die **12** (also referred to as a semiconductor chip) having a plurality of wire bonds **32** extending from contacts **28** thereof to extending portions **40** thereof that extend above a compliant material layer **42** that covers and separates remaining portions of the wire bonds **32** from each other, including portions thereof adjacent semiconductor die **12**. The structure **10** can then used in computer or other electronic applications either alone or in an assembly with further components.

[0032] The microelectronic element **10** of FIG. **1** includes semiconductor die **12** having a first surface **14** and a second surface **16**. For purposes of this discussion, the first surface **14** may be described as being positioned opposite or remote from second surface **16**. Such a description, as well as any other description of the relative position of elements used herein that refers to a vertical or horizontal position of such elements is made for illustrative purposes only to correspond with the position of the elements within the Figures, and is not limiting.

[0033] Conductive elements **28** are at the first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12**. As used in the present description, when an electrically conductive element is described as being “at” the surface of another element having dielectric structure, it indicates that the electrically conductive structure is available for contact with a theoretical point moving in a direction perpendicular to the surface of the dielectric structure toward the surface of the dielectric structure from outside the dielectric structure. Thus, a terminal or other conductive structure that is at a surface of a dielectric structure may project from such surface; may be flush with such surface; or may be recessed relative to such surface and exposed through a hole or depression in the dielectric. Conductive elements **28** can be flat, thin elements of a solid metal material such as copper, gold, nickel, or other materials that are acceptable for such an application, including various alloys including one or more of copper, gold, nickel or combinations thereof. In one example, conductive elements **28** can be substantially circular.

[0034] Microelectronic element **10** further includes a plurality of wire bonds **32** joined to at least some of the conductive elements **28**. Wire bonds **32** are joined at a base **34** thereof to the conductive elements **28** and extend to a corresponding free end **36** remote from the base **34** and from the first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12**, the free ends **36** being within the extending portions **40** of the wire bonds **32**. The ends **36** of wire bonds **32** are characterized as being free in that they are not connected or otherwise joined to semiconductor die **12** or any other conductive features within microelectronic element **10** that are, in turn, connected to semiconductor die **12**. In other words, free ends **36** are available for electronic connection, either directly or indirectly as through a solder ball or other features discussed herein, to a conductive feature of a component external to microelectronic element **10**, such as, for example, a printed circuit board (“PCB”) or another substrate with conductive contacts or terminals thereat. The fact that ends **36** held in a predetermined neutral position by, for example, compliant material layer **42** (as described further below) or otherwise joined or electrically connected to another external component does not mean that they are not “free”. Conversely, base **34** is not free as it is either directly or indirectly electrically connected to semiconductor die **12**, as

described herein. As shown in FIG. **1**, base **34** can be substantially rounded in shape, extending outward from an edge surface **37** (as shown, for example, in FIGS. 3A-C) of wire bond **32** defined between base **34** and end **36**.

[0035] The particular size and shape of base **34** can vary according to the type of material used to form wire bond **32**, the desired strength of the connection between wire bond **32** and conductive element **28**, or the particular process used to form wire bond **32**. Example methods for making wire bonds **32** are and are described in U.S. Pat. No. 7,391,121 to Otremba and in U.S. Pat. App. Pub. Nos. 2012/0280386 ("the '386 Publication") and 2005/0095835 ("the '835 Publication," which describes a wedge-bonding procedure that can be considered a form of wire bonding) the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

[0036] Wire bonds **32** can be made from a conductive material such as copper, gold, nickel, solder, aluminum or the like. Additionally, wire bonds **32** can be made from combinations of materials, such as from a core of a conductive material, such as copper or aluminum, for example, with a coating applied over the core. The coating can be of a second conductive material, such as aluminum, nickel or the like. Alternatively, the coating can be of an insulating material, such as an insulating jacket. In an example, the wire used to form wire bonds **32** can have a thickness, i.e., in a dimension transverse to the wire's length, of between about 15 μm and 150 μm. In other examples, including those in which wedge bonding is used, wire bonds **32** can have a thickness of up to about 500 μm. In general, a wire bond is formed on a conductive element, such as conductive element **28** within contact portion **30** using specialized equipment.

[0037] As described further below, during formation of a wire bond of the type shown and described herein, a leading end of a wire segment is heated and pressed against the receiving surface to which the wire segment bonds, typically forming a ball or ball-like base **34** joined to the surface of the conductive element **28**. The desired length of the wire segment to form the wire bond is drawn out of the bonding tool, which can then cut the wire bond at the desired length. Wedge bonding, which can be used to form wire bonds of aluminum, for example, is a process in which the heated portion of the wire is dragged across the receiving surface to form a wedge that lies generally parallel to the surface. The wedge-bonded wire bond can then be bent upward, if necessary, and extended to the desired length or position before cutting. In a particular embodiment, the wire used to form a wire bond can be cylindrical in cross-section. Otherwise, the wire fed from the tool to form a wire bond or wedge-bonded wire bond may have a polygonal cross-section such as rectangular or trapezoidal, for example.

[0038] The extending portions **40** of the wire bonds **32** can form at least a part of a connection feature in an array formed by respective extending portions **40** of a plurality of wire bonds **32**. Such an array can be formed in an area array configuration, variations of which could be implemented using the structures described herein. Such an array can be used to electrically and mechanically connect the microelectronic element **10** to another microelectronic structure, such as to a printed circuit board ("PCB"), a substrate (in a packaged configuration for microelectronic element **10**, an example of which is shown in FIG. **2**), or to other external components or structures. Solder masses **66** (FIG. **2**) can be used to connect the wire bonds **32** to conductive features of such components or structures such as by electronically and mechanically attaching extending portions **40** thereof, including free ends **36** and corresponding end surfaces **38** (FIGS. **3**A-3C), thereto.

[0039] Microelectronic element **10** further includes a compliant material layer **42** formed from a dielectric material having a Young's modulus of less than about 2.5 GPa. As shown in FIG. **1**, compliant material layer **42** extends over the portions of first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12** that are not otherwise covered by or occupied by bases **34** of wire bonds **32**. Similarly, compliant material layer **42** extends over the portions of conductive elements **28** that are not otherwise covered by bases **34** of wire bonds **32**. Compliant material layer **42** can also partially cover wire bonds **32**, including the bases **34** and at least a portion of edge surfaces **37** thereof. Extending portion **40** of wire bonds **32** remains uncovered by compliant material layer **42**, thereby making the wire bonds **32** available for electrical connection to a feature or element located outside of compliant material layer **42**, as discussed above. In the examples shown in the Figures, a surface, such as major surface **44** of compliant material layer **42** can be spaced apart from first surface **14** of semiconductor **12** at a distance great enough to cover, for example, bases **34** and portions of the edge surfaces **37** of wire bonds **32** to provide some level of mechanical support therefor and to separate and electrically insulate the wire bonds **32** from each other. Other configurations for compliant material layer **42** are possible. For example, a compliant material layer can have multiple surfaces with varying heights.

[0040] The example of wire bonds **32** shown in FIG. **1**, which are shown in further detail in FIGS. **3**A and **4**, define a particular curved shape that can be imparted on the wire bonds **32** by a process of making the wire bonds **32** that utilizes a secondary surface. Such a method is further described below in connection with FIGS. **7-13**. The shape of wire bonds **32** can be such that the end surfaces **38** are aligned along an axis **50** with a base end **35** of the wire bond **32** that is immediately adjacent the base **34**. In the example of wire bond **32** shown in FIG. **3**A, the axis is generally perpendicular to the conductive element **28** such that the end surface **38** is positioned directly above the base end **35**. Such a configuration can be useful for a plurality of wire bonds **32** in an array wherein the array of connections on major surface **44** of compliant material layer **42** are intended to have a pitch that generally matches a pitch of the conductive elements **28** to which the wire bonds **32** are respectively joined. In such a configuration, the axis **50** can also be angled with respect to contact portion **30** such that end surface **38** is offset slightly from the base end **35** but is still positioned above base **34**. In such an example, the axis **50** can be at an angle of 85° to 90° with respect to contact portion **30**.

[0041] Wire bond **32** can be configured such that a first portion **52** thereof, on which the end surface **38** is defined, extends generally along a portion of the axis **50**. The first portion **52** can have a length that is between about 10% and 50% of the total length of wire bond **32** (as defined by the length of axis **50**, for example). A second portion **54** of the wire bond **32** can be curved, or bent, so as to extend away from the axis from a location adjacent the first portion **52** to an apex **56** that is spaced apart from the axis **50**. The second portion **54** is further curved so as to be positioned along axis **50** at a location at or near base end **35** and to also extend away from the axis **50** to apex **56** from the side of base end **35**. It is noted that first portion **52** need not be straight or follow axis **50** exactly and that there may be some degree of curvature or

variation therein. It is also noted that there may be abrupt or smooth transitions between first portion **52** and second portion **54** that may themselves be curved. It is noted, however, that the wire bonds **32** depicted in FIGS. **1** and **3**A, including second portion **54**, are further configured to lie on a single plane on which axis **50** also lies.

[0042] Further, both first **52** and second 54 portions of the wire bond **32** can be configured such that any portions thereof that do not intersect axis **50** are all on the same, single side of axis **50**. That is, some of first and second portions **52** and **54** may be, for example, on a side of axis **50** opposite the apex **56** of the curved shape defined by second portion **54**; however, any such portions would be in areas of the wire bond **32** that axis **50** intersects at least partially. In other words, first and second portions **52** and **54** of wire bond **32** can be configured to not fully cross axis **50** such that the edge surface **37** within those portions is only spaced apart from axis **50** on a single side of axis **50**. In the example of FIG. **3**A the plane can be along the page on which the illustration of wire bond **32** is presented.

[0043] FIGS. **3**B and **3**C show examples of wire bonds **32** with ends **36** that are not positioned directly above the respective bases **34** thereof. That is, considering first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12** as extending in two lateral directions, so as to substantially define a plane, an end **36** of one of the wire bonds **32** can be displaced in at least one of these lateral directions from a corresponding lateral position of base **34**. As shown in FIGS. **3**B and **3**C, wire bonds **32** can be of the same general shape as the wire bonds of FIG. **3**A and can have an end **36** that is aligned with the portion of the wire bond **32** immediately adjacent the base **34** thereof to define an axis **50**. The wire bonds **32** can, similarly, include a first portion **52** that extends generally along axis **50** and a second portion **54** that is curved so as to define an apex **56** that is spaced apart from axis **50** on a single side thereof to define a plane that extends along axis **50**. The wire bonds **32** of FIGS. **3**B and **3**C, however, can be configured such that the axis **50**, defined as described above, is angled with respect to contact portion **30** at an angle of, for example, less than 85°. In another example, angle **58** can be between about 30° and 75°.

[0044] Wire bond **32** can be such that the apex **56** defined within second portion **54** of wire bond can be either exterior to the angle **58**, as shown in FIG. **3**B, or interior thereto, as shown in FIG. **3**C. Further, axis **50** can be angled with respect to contact portion **30** such that end surface **38** of wire bond **32** is laterally displaced relative to contact portion **30** in multiple lateral directions. In such an example, the plane defined by second portion **54** and axis **50** can itself be angled with respect to conductive element **28** and/or first surface **14**. Such an angle can be substantially equal to or different than angle **58**. That is the displacement of end **36** relative to base **34** can be in two lateral directions and can be by the same or a different distance in each of those directions.

[0045] In an example, various ones of wire bonds **32** can be displaced in different directions and by different amounts throughout microelectronic element **10**. Such an arrangement allows for microelectronic element **10** to have an array of extending portions **40** that is configured differently on the level of surface **44** compared to on the level of first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12**. For example, an array can cover a smaller overall area or have a smaller pitch on surface **44** than at the first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12**. In a variation of the microelectronic element **10** of FIG. **1**, wire bonds **32** can be angled as shown in FIG. **3**B, FIG. **3**C, or a combination thereof.

[0046] As shown in FIG. **4**, the free ends **36** of at least some of the wire bonds can have an asymmetrical configuration the end surfaces **38** thereof defined on tips **62** of the wire bonds **32** that are narrower than the adjacent portions of thereof, at least in one direction. The narrow tip **62** of the free end **36** can be imparted on wire bond **32** by a process used for manufacture thereof, an example of which is discussed further below. As shown, the narrow tip **62** can be offset such that an axis **60** through the center thereof is offset from an axis **62** through the center of the adjacent portion of the wire bond **32**. Further, a centroid **64** of the end surface **38** can be along axis **60** such that it is offset from the adjacent wire bond portion. The tip **62** of wire bond **32** may also be narrowed in a direction perpendicular to the dimensions shown in FIG. **11** or can be the same width as the adjacent portion of wire bond **32** or can be somewhat wider. The extending portions **40** of the wire bonds **32** may include all or part of the tips **62** of wire bonds having such tips or may include the entire tips **62** and portions of the wire bonds extending beyond the tips **62**.

[0047] As discussed above, wire bonds **32** can be used to connect microelectronic element **10** with an external component. FIG. **2** shows an example of an assembly **24** of a microelectronic element **10** that can be as described in connection with FIG. **1**, or any of the variations thereof described in connection therewith. The extending portions **40** of wire bonds **32** are joined with contact pads **48** of a substrate **46** by solder masses **66** that extend along the extending portions **40** of wire bonds **32** and along contact pads **48**. Substrate **46** can be in the form of a dielectric element that is substantially flat. The dielectric element may be sheet-like and may be thin. In particular embodiments, the dielectric element can include one or more layers of organic dielectric material or composite dielectric materials, such as, without limitation: polyimide, polytetrafluoro-ethylene ("PTFE"), epoxy, epoxy-glass, FR-4, BT resin, thermoplastic, or thermoset plastic materials. The thickness of substrate **46** is preferably within a range of generally acceptable thicknesses for the desired application and, in an example, can be between about 25 and 500 μm. The substrate **46** can further include terminals **49** opposite the contact pads **48** in the same or different array configuration. The terminals **49** can be connected with the contact pads **48** by routing circuitry **64** within substrate **46**.

[0048] The assembly **24** can further include a molded dielectric layer **68** that can, for example, be molded over the surface of the substrate **46** facing microelectronic element **10**. The molded dielectric layer **68** be an encapsulant, for example, and can fill spaces between the solder masses **66** and can contact the substrate **46** and the third surface **44** of the compliant material layer **42** in the area therebetween. Molded dielectric **68** can further extend outwardly along substrate **46** and upwardly along the edge surfaces **45** and **23** of the compliant material layer **42** and of semiconductor die **12**, respectively, and can optionally cover microelectronic element **10** by extending over second surface **16** of semiconductor die **12**. Substrate **46** can include package terminals opposite contact pads **48** or other structures to facilitate connection of the package assembly **24** with an external component.

[0049] In another example, a microelectronic element can similarly be joined directly with a printed circuit board ("PCB") in place of substrate **46**. Such a PCB can be assembled within an electronic device such that connection of

microelectronic element **10** with the PCB can be done in assembling microelectronic element **10** with such a device. Further, such assembling can be carried out without the incorporation of a molded dielectric.

[0050] In either such assembly or application of a microelectronic element **10** as described herein, the structure of the wire bonds **32**, along with the incorporation of compliant material layer **42** according to the principles described herein, can help improve the reliability of the attachment of microelectronic element **10** with a substrate in a package assembly or with a PCB (or other component). In particular, the reliability of the connections therebetween, which in the case of microelectronic element **10**, is made between the extending portions **40** of wire bonds **32** and corresponding conductive features of the connected component (e.g. contact pads **48**) can be improved relative to, for example, a direct connection between contacts of a semiconductor die and terminals of a substrate. This improvement can be accomplished by the ability of wire bonds **32** to flex or bend to accommodate relative movement between the conductive elements **28** of semiconductor die **12** and the contact pads **48** of substrate **46** (or PCB or other similar structure). Such movement can be caused by handling of the components, movement of the device, e.g., in which microelectronic element **10** or an assembly thereof is used, or testing of the microelectronic element **10** or assembly **24**. Further, such relative movement can be caused by expansion and corresponding contraction of the components during the use cycle thereof caused by heat generated by the components and/or surrounding structures. Such thermal expansion is related to the coefficient of thermal expansion ("CTE") of the components, and the relative movement between components in different structures can be caused by a difference, or mismatch, in the CTEs of the various structures or the materials thereof. For example, a semiconductor die can have a CTE of between about 2 and 5 parts per million per degree, Celsius (ppm/° C.). In the same assembly, a PCB or substrate can have a CTE of 15 ppm/° C. or greater.

[0051] The CTE of either component can be a "composite" CTE, which refers to a the CTE of the finished structure, which can approximate, but may not exactly match, the CTE of the primary material from which such a structure is constructed and can depend on the construction of the structure and the presence of other materials with different CTEs. In an example, the CTE of the semiconductor die can be on the order of Silicon or another semiconductor material, from which the die is primarily constructed. In another example, substrate **46** can have a CTE on the order of PTFE or another dielectric material, from which substrate **46** can be constructed.

[0052] Accordingly, a CTE mismatch between materials can cause relative movement between the conductive elements **28** of semiconductor die **12** and the contact pads **48** of substrate **46** (or another structure, such as a PCB or the like) as the semiconductor die **12** and the substrate **46** expand and contract during thermal cycling of the assembly **24** thereof because the semiconductor die **12** and substrate **46** expand at different rates and by different amounts in response to the same temperature change. This can cause displacement of the contact pads **48** with respect to the conductive elements **28**, particularly in the peripheral areas of the substrate **46** or the semiconductor die **12** (i.e. toward edge surfaces **23** thereof) or in other areas depending on the particular configurations of the components and/or conductive elements **28** and contact pads **46**.

[0053] The flexibility of wire bonds **32** along the respective lengths thereof can allow the end surfaces **38** thereof to displace with respect to the bases **34** in a resilient manner. Such flexibility can be used to compensate for relative movement of the associated conductive elements **28** and contact pads **46** between which the wire bonds **32** are connected. Because wire bonds **32** are flexible, however, they may not themselves be able to reliably support semiconductor die **12** relative to substrate **46** or other structure. For example, the flexing of unsupported wire bonds **32** could lead to adjacent wire bonds **32** coming into contact with one another, which could cause shorting or otherwise damage wire bonds **32** or the associated components. Accordingly, compliant material layer **42** is configured to separate wire bonds **32** from each other and to adding to the structural rigidity along the height thereof, while permitting desired flexing of wire bonds **32** to compensate for displacement of contact pads **46** relative to conductive elements **28**. Accordingly, compliant material layer **42** can be made of a resiliently deformable (i.e. compliant) composition such as a material with a Young's modulus of less than 2.5 GPa. Further, compliant material layer **42**, as mentioned above, can be dielectric so as to electrically insulate the wire bonds **32** from one another without requiring additional coatings or the like. Suitable materials for compliant material layer include silicone, benzocyclobutene ("BCB"), epoxy, or the like.

[0054] In such a structure, it may be beneficial to configure microelectronic element **10** to be able to make a connection with substrate **12** with the connection being robust enough to cause and flexing of wire bonds **32** within compliant layer **42** (which requires deformation of compliant layer **42**). The extending portions **40** of wire bonds **132** can be configured to achieve such a connection. For example, by being uncovered by compliant material layer **42** so as to be physically separated therefrom, extending portions **40** allow conductive metal masses **66** to completely surround at least some of the edge surfaces **37** of wire bonds **32** within extending portions **40**, which can provide a more robust connection than one achieved by a mass **66** that simply extends along a side thereof, for example. To allow adequate access for a conductive metal mass **66** to surround a extending portion **40**, the extending portions **40** can be oriented relative compliant material layer **42** such that the axes **50** of wire bonds **32** within extending portions **40** are at an angle of between about 30° and 90° with respect to surface **44**. Further, the strength of the bond can be increased by structuring wire bonds **32** and compliant material layer **42** such that extending portions have a height above surface **44** of 200 μm or less. In an example, extending portions **40** can have heights of between 50 and 200 μm.

[0055] In some examples where a molded dielectric **68** is also included in an assembly **24** with microelectronic element **10**, the molded dielectric can itself be compliant, with a Young's modulus that, in an example, can be greater than that of compliant material layer **42** and, in a further example, less than that of either semiconductor die **12** or substrate **46**.

[0056] FIGS. **5** and **6** show examples of microelectronic elements **110** and **210** that incorporate multiple semiconductor dies in a stacked arrangement. In the example of FIG. **5**, first surface **114** of semiconductor die **112** is considered as being divided into a first region **118** and a second region **120**.

The first region **118** lies within the second region **120** and includes a central portion of first surface **114** and extends outwardly therefrom. The second region **120** substantially surrounds the first region **118** and extends outwardly therefrom to the outer edges of semiconductor die **112**. In this example, no specific characteristic of the semiconductor die **112** physically separates the two regions; however, the regions are demarked for purposes of discussion herein with respect to treatments or features applied thereto or contained therein. The wire bonds **132** are connected with conductive elements **128** at surface **114** within the second region **120**.

[0057] A second semiconductor die **122** is mounted on semiconductor die **112** within first region **118**. In the example shown in FIG. **5**, semiconductor die **122** is mounted face down on semiconductor die **112** and is electrically and mechanically joined therewith by conductive metal masses **66** that can be solder masses, for example. In such a structure, conductive elements at the surface of semiconductor die **122** that faces first surface **114** can be connected with routing circuitry at face **114** of semiconductor die **112** that extends within first region **118**. Such routing circuitry can include traces, for example, that extend into second region **120** and connect with some of the conductive elements **128** at face **114** within second region **120**. Other conductive elements **128** are connected to the internal components of semiconductor die **112**. As such, wire bonds **132** can be used to facilitate connections with both semiconductor die **112** and semiconductor die **122** at third surface **144** of compliant layer **142**. To achieve such a structure, both wire bonds **132** and compliant layer **142** can be of a height sufficient for extending portions **140** of wire bonds **132** to be positioned above semiconductor die **122**, which can be covered by compliant layer **142**. Microelectronic element **110** can be mounted to a substrate, PCB, or other structure in a manner similar to microelectronic element **10**, described above, in which wire bonds **132** within compliant layer **142** can compensate for a CTE mismatch between components in a similar manner.

[0058] In the example of FIG. **6**, second semiconductor die **222** is mounted on semiconductor die **212** within first region **218**. Semiconductor die has conductive elements **228*a*** disposed within second region **220** surrounding semiconductor die **222** with wire bonds **232*a*** connected therewith. In this example, however, semiconductor die **222** is mounted face-up on semiconductor die **212** such that the conductive elements **228*b*** thereof face away from surface **214** of semiconductor die **212**. In this structure, second wire bonds **232*b*** are connected with conductive elements **228*b*** and extend to ends **238** remote from the conductive elements **228*b***. Compliant material layer **242** covers surface **214** of semiconductor die **212** in areas outside of wire bonds **232*a*** and outside of semiconductor die **222**. Compliant material layer further covers semiconductor die **222** such that compliant material layer **242** separates and extends between the edge surfaces **237** of wire bonds **232*a*** and **232*b***. As such, microelectronic element **210** can be mounted on a substrate, PCB, or other structure by connecting the extending portions **240** of wire bonds **232*a*** and **232*b*** with features of that structure in a manner similar to microelectronic element **10**, described above.

[0059] In such a structure, it may be desired to configure wire bonds **232*a*** and **232*b*** with heights sufficient to compensate for a CTE mismatch among components, as described above. In this structure, wire bonds **232*a*** and **232*b*** can be configured with a height sufficient to provide a desired height for extending portions **240** and sufficient compensation for displacement of features with which they are connected due to CTE mismatch. Displacement of contact pads on a substrate, for example, relative to the conductive elements **228*a*** may be greater than with respect to conductive elements **228*b*** because displacement is greater towards the peripheries of such structures. Accordingly, wire bonds **232*b*** may have heights that are less than would be necessary within a similarly-sized microelectronic element including only one semiconductor die.

[0060] FIGS. **7-12** show a microelectronic element **10** in various steps of a fabrication method thereof. FIG. **7** shows in-process unit **10'** consisting of semiconductor die **12**, as described above, with conductive elements **28** at first surface **14** thereof. In FIG. **8**, in process unit **10"** is shown having a wire bonds **32** formed on conductive element **28** of the semiconductor die **12**. Such wire bonds can be formed using specially-adapted equipment that can be configured to form a plurality of successive wire bonds in an assembly by heating a leading end of a wire that passes through a bonding capillary. The capillary is aligned with one of the conductive elements **28**, which accordingly aligns the leading end of the wire therewith. The base **34** of a wire bond is then formed joined to the conductive element **28** by pressing the heated free end thereagainst by appropriate movement of the capillary.

[0061] After a desired length of the wire has been drawn out of the capillary so as to extend above first surface **14** of semiconductor die **12** at an appropriate distance for the height of the wire bond to be formed (which can also include positioning of the wire to achieve a desired location for the free end **36** thereof and/or shaping of the wire bond **32** itself), the wire is severed to detach the wire bond **32** at the end surface **38** from a portion of the wire that remains in the capillary and is used in the formation of a successive wire bond. This process is repeated until the desired number of wire bonds is formed. Various steps and structures can be used to sever the wire bonds **32**, including electronic flame-off ("EFO"), various forms of cutting or the like, examples of which are provided in U.S. patent application Ser. Nos. 13/462,158 and 13/404,408, and in U.S. Pat. No. 8,372,741. A further example of wire bond severing is discussed below with respect to FIGS. **14** and **15**. In variations of the above-described wire bond formation steps, wire bonds **32** can be formed on the in-process unit **10"** by edge bonding steps, including wedge bonding or stitch bonding, using specially-adapted equipment, as described in U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/404,408.

[0062] After formation of the desired number of wire bonds **32**, compliant material layer **42** can be formed by depositing the desired material in a flowable state over in-process unit **10"**, as shown in FIG. **9**, before being allowed to harden or cure in place. This can be done by placing the unit **10'** in an appropriately-configured mold having a cavity in the desired shape of the compliant material layer **42** that can receive unit **10'**. Such a mold and the method of forming a compliant material layer therewith can be done in a procedure similar to the procedure for forming an encapsulation layer over wire bonds on a substrate that is shown and described in U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No 2010/0232129, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety. Compliant material layer **42** can be formed such that, initially, surface **44** thereof is spaced above end surfaces **38** of wire bonds **32**. To form extending portions **40**, including end surfaces **38**, the portion of encapsulation layer **42** that is above end surfaces can be

removed, creating a new surface **44** that is positioned below end surfaces **38**. Alternatively, compliant material layer **42** can be formed such that surface **44** is initially below end surfaces **38** at a distance to define the desired height of detached portions **40**. Removal, if necessary, of a portion of encapsulation layer **42** can be achieved by grinding, dry etching, laser etching, wet etching, lapping, or the like. If desired, a portion of the free ends **36** of wire bonds **32** can also be removed in the same, or an additional, step to achieve substantially planar end surfaces **38** that are substantially even with each other.

[0063] As discussed above, the microelectronic element **10** resulting from the above steps, or variations thereof, can be packaged on a substrate or mounted on a PCB. Either of these subsequent steps can be carried out in a similar manner. In an example shown in FIG. **10**, microelectronic element **10** can be prepared for bonding with an external component by depositing conductive metal masses **66**, which can be of solder or the like over the extending portions **40** of wire bonds **32**. The masses **66** can be allowed to cool and solidify so that the masses **66** remain at least temporarily fixed in the locations on respective extending portions **40**. As shown in FIG. **11**, the microelectronic element **10** from FIG. **10** can be aligned with a PCB **90** with the masses **66**, and accordingly the extending portions **40** of the wire bonds **32**, aligned with contact pads **92** of the PCB. The masses **66** can then be brought into contact with the pads **92** and heated to reflow the conductive material to join it with the pads **92** and to fix microelectronic element **10** to PCB **90**, as shown in FIG. **12**.

[0064] In a variation of the mounting steps of FIGS. **10-12**, conductive metal masses **66** can be deposited on contact pads **92**, as shown in FIG. **13** in preparation for microelectronic element mounting. Microelectronic element **10** can then be positioned over PCB **90** with extending portions **40** of wire bonds **32** aligned with the masses **66** (and, thus, with contact pads **92**). The masses **66** can be heated to cause reflow and microelectronic element **10** can be moved toward PCB **90** such that extending portions **40** are positioned within masses **66**, which can then be allowed to cool to join with extending portions **40**.

[0065] Either of the above-discussed steps (from FIGS. **10-12** and **13**) can also be used to join a microelectronic element **10**, formed as described above, to a substrate **46** in a package assembly **24**, as described above with respect to FIG. **2**. Such a package **24** can be further processes to deposit molded dielectric **68** thereon, as shown in FIG. **2**, which can be done using molding or other methods used elsewhere for molded dielectric formation in microelectronic packaging. Alternatively, an underfill can be deposited in the area between the microelectronic element **10** and the substrate **46** surrounding the conductive metal masses **66**.

[0066] Variations of the above-described method steps can also be used to form and package or mount the multi-die arrangements shown in FIGS. **5** and **6**. In such variations, second die **22** can be mounted on die **12** before or after wire bond formation (which can be done by any of the methods discussed herein). In the example of FIG. **6**, mounting die **222** on die **212** before wire bond formation could result in the wire bonds **232** being formed all at once, instead of in subsequent steps. After die mounting and wire bond formation, the compliant layers **242** and **342** can be deposited as discussed above, and the packages can be mounted, as previously discussed and in the same manner as single die microelectronic device **10**.

[0067] FIGS. **14** and **15** show an in-process unit **10'** during particular method steps that can be used in wire bond formation. As shown in FIG. **14**, capillary **70** of a wire bonding tool in proximity to the first surface **14** of substrate **12**. The capillary **70** shown schematically in FIG. **4**, along with the bonding tool (not shown) with which it is associated can be of the type generally described above and can join the bases **34** of wire bonds **32** to the conductive elements **28** of semiconductor die **12**.

[0068] In this particular set of method steps, after a desired length of the wire **74** has been drawn out of capillary **70** for the desired height of the wire bond to be formed, the wire **77** is severed and appropriately positioned using a face **76** of the capillary **70** and a secondary surface **80**. As shown in FIG. **14**, the severing and positioning is started by moving capillary **70** to a position over a secondary surface **80**, which is shown schematically as a surface of an element in FIG. **14**. In various applications, the secondary surface **80** can be on an element of sufficient hardness for the severing application described below such as metal or the like. Such an element can be attached with the bonding tool in a position to follow capillary **70** as it is moved during the wire bonding process.

[0069] In another example, the element can be fixed relative to the bonding tool in the area of the semiconductor die **12**.

[0070] In the example shown in FIG. **14**, the capillary **70** is positioned over the secondary surface **80**. After capillary **70** is appropriately positioned, it is pressed toward secondary surface **80** with a portion of the wire **74** between secondary surface **80** and a face **76** of capillary **70** that extends outwardly from wire **74**. Pressure is then applied to the wire to move face **76** toward secondary surface **80**, which compresses wire **74** therebetween, causing plastic deformation of wire **74**, e.g., flattening or constriction of the wire, in area **78**. Through such deformation, area **78** of wire **74** becomes somewhat weaker than the remaining portions of wire **74** on either side thereof and weaker than the joint between base **34** and contact portion **30**. For example, area **78** may be somewhat flattened, constricted, or twisted relative to other portions of the wire **74** on either side thereof.

[0071] After deformation of area **78** of wire **74**, the capillary **70** is then moved back toward a final desired position for the free end **36** of the wire bond **32** to-be formed. This position can be directly above base **43** or can be laterally displaced therefrom, as discussed above with respect to the examples of FIGS. 3B and 3C. The position of capillary **70** can be generally in the desired lateral area of free end **36** and can be just somewhat closer to first surface **14** than the desired final position. Further, the wire may remain partially bent, including a shape similar to the shape of the finished wire bonds **32** discussed above including a first portion **52** and second portion **54**.

[0072] Capillary **70** can then be moved away from surface **14** to apply tension to the segment of wire **74** (which can be clamped or otherwise secured within capillary **70**) between capillary **70** and base **34**. This tension causes wire **74** to break within area **78**, as shown in FIG. **15**, which separates wire bond **32** from the remaining portion of wire **74** with a portion of area **78** forming the tip **62** of free end **36** with end surface **38** defined thereon. A remaining portion of area **78** remains on a new leading end **72'** of the wire **74**. These steps can be repeated on other conductive elements **28** at the surface **14** of the semiconductor die **12** to form an array of wire bonds **32** in a desired pattern.

[0073] Although the invention herein has been described with reference to particular embodiments, it is to be understood that these embodiments are merely illustrative of the principles and applications of the present invention. It is therefore to be understood that numerous modifications may be made to the illustrative embodiments and that other arrangements may be devised without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

1. A microelectronic structure, comprising:

a semiconductor die having first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface;

wire bonds having bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements, the wire bonds further having free ends remote from the bases, the free ends being remote from the substrate and the bases and including end surfaces thereon, the wire bonds defining edge surfaces extending between the bases and end surfaces thereof; and

a compliant material layer overlying and extending from the first surface of the semiconductor die outside of the bases of the wire bonds, the compliant material layer further extending along first portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds at least adjacent the bases thereof and filling spaces between the first portions of the wire bonds such that the first portions of the wire bonds are separated from one another by the compliant material layer, the compliant material layer further having a third surface facing away from the first surface of the semiconductor die, wherein second portions of the wire bonds extend away from the third surface, the second portions including the free ends of the wire bonds.

2. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein the first portions of the wire bonds are encapsulated entirely by the compliant material, and wherein the second portions of the wire bonds are moveable with respect to the bases thereof.

3. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein the compliant material layer has a Young's modulus of 2.5 GPa or less.

4. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein the second portions of the wire bonds extend along axes of the wire bonds that are disposed at angles of at least 30 degrees with respect to the third surface.

5. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein the end surfaces of the wire bonds are positioned above the third surface by a distance of at least 50 microns.

6. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein the semiconductor die further defines edge surfaces extending between the first and second surfaces, and wherein the compliant material layer further includes edge surfaces extending from the third surface thereof to the first surface of the semiconductor die so as to be substantially coplanar with the edge surfaces of the semiconductor die.

7. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein at least one of the wire bonds has a shape such that the wire bond defines an axis between the free end and the base thereof and such that the wire bond defines a plane, a bent portion of the at least one wire bond extending away from the axis within the plane.

8. The microelectronic structure of claim **7**, wherein the shape of the at least one wire bond is further such that a substantially straight portion of the wire bond extends between the free end and the bent portion along the axis.

9. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, further including conductive metal masses joined with the second portions of the wire bonds and contacting the third surface of the compliant material layer.

10. The microelectronic structure of claim **9**, wherein at least one of the conductive metal masses encapsulates at least some of the second portion of a respective one of the wire bonds.

11. The microelectronic structure of claim **9**, wherein the conductive metal masses are configured to join the second portions of the wire bonds with external conductive features by reflow thereof.

12. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein:

the semiconductor die is a first semiconductor die having a first region and a second region surrounding the first region;

the electrically conductive elements of the first semiconductor die are within the second region;

the microelectronic structure further includes a second semiconductor die mounted on the first semiconductor die within the first region, the second semiconductor die being electrically connected with at least some of the conductive elements of the first semiconductor die; and

the compliant material layer covers the second semiconductor die.

13. The microelectronic structure of claim **1**, wherein:

the semiconductor die is a first semiconductor die having a first region and a second region surrounding the first region;

the electrically conductive elements of the first semiconductor die are within the second region;

the microelectronic structure further includes a second semiconductor die mounted on the first semiconductor die within the first region, the second semiconductor die having first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface facing away from the first surface of the first semiconductor die, and wherein additional wire bonds have bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements of the second semiconductor die, the additional wire bonds further having free ends remote from the bases, the free ends being remote from the first surface of the second semiconductor die and the bases and including the end surfaces thereon, the wire bonds defining edge surfaces extending between the bases and end surfaces thereof; and

the compliant material layer further overlies and extends from the first surface of the second semiconductor die outside of the bases of the additional wire bonds, the compliant material layer further extending along first portions of the edge surfaces of the additional wire bonds, wherein second portions of the additional wire bonds are defined by the end surfaces and portions of the edge surfaces extending from the end surfaces that are uncovered by and extend away from the compliant material layer at the third surface.

14. A microelectronic package, comprising:

a microelectronic element, including

a first semiconductor die having first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface;

wire bonds having bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements at the first surface and end surfaces, the end surfaces being remote from the sub-

strate and the bases, each of the wire bonds extending from the base to the end surface thereof; and

a compliant material layer overlying and extending from the first portion of the first surface of the substrate and filling spaces between first portions of the wire bonds such that the first portions of the wire bonds are separated from one another by the compliant material layer, the compliant material layer having a third surface facing away from the first surface of the substrate, wherein second portions of the wire bonds extend away from the third surface, the second portions including the free ends of the wire bonds; and

a substrate having a fourth surface and a plurality of terminals exposed at the fourth surface;

wherein the microelectronic element is mounted on the substrate with the third surface facing the fourth surface and at least some of the wire bonds are joined, at the second portions thereof, to respective ones of the terminals.

15. The microelectronic package of claim **14**, wherein the second portions of the wire bonds are electrically and mechanically joined to the terminals by conductive metal masses.

16. The microelectronic package of claim **14**, further including a molded dielectric layer formed over at least a portion of the fourth surface of the substrate and extending away therefrom so as to extend along at least a portion of the microelectronic element.

17. The microelectronic package of claim **16**, wherein the Young's modulus of the molded dielectric layer is greater than the Young's Modulus of the compliant material layer.

18. The microelectronic package of claim **14**, wherein the compliant material layer has a Young's modulus of less than 2.5 GPa.

19. The microelectronic package of claim **14**, wherein the wire bonds further define edge surfaces extending between the bases and end surfaces thereof, and wherein the compliant material layer extends along portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds at least adjacent the bases thereof and within the first portions of the wire bonds.

20. The microelectronic package of claim **19**, wherein portions of the edge surfaces of the wire bonds that extend from the end surfaces thereof are uncovered by the compliant material layer around entire circumferences thereof at the third surface thereof.

21. A method for making a microelectronic structure, comprising:

forming wire bonds on a semiconductor die, the semiconductor die having first and second oppositely facing surfaces and a plurality of electrically conductive elements at the first surface, the wire bonds being formed having bases joined to respective ones of the conductive elements and having end surfaces remote from the substrate and the bases, edge surfaces of the wire bonds extending between the bases and the end surfaces; and

forming a compliant material layer overlying and extending from the first surface of the semiconductor die outside of the bases of the wire bonds, the compliant material further being formed to extend along portions of the edge surfaces of first portions of the wire bonds to fill spaces between the first portions of the wire bonds and to separate the first portions of the wire bonds from one another, wherein the compliant material layer is further formed to have a third surface facing away from the first surface of the substrate with second portions of the wire bonds extending away from the third surface, the second portions including the free ends of the wire bonds.

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