

WAFER-LEVEL PACKAGE WITH ENHANCED PERFORMANCERelated Applications

5 **[0001]** This application claims the benefit of provisional patent application serial number 62/374,318 filed August 12, 2016, provisional patent application serial number 62/374,332 filed August 12, 2016, and provisional patent application serial number 62/374,439 filed August 12, 2016, the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated herein by references in their entirety.

10 Field of the Disclosure

[0002] The present disclosure relates to a packaging process, and more particularly to a packaging process to provide a wafer-level package with enhanced thermal and electrical performance.

15 Background

[0003] The wide utilization of cellular and wireless devices drives the rapid development of radio frequency (RF) technologies. The substrates on which RF devices are fabricated play an important role in achieving high level performance in the RF technologies. Fabrications of the RF devices on conventional silicon
20 substrates may benefit from low cost of silicon materials, a large scale capacity of wafer production, well-established semiconductor design tools, and well-established semiconductor manufacturing techniques.

[0004] Despite the benefits of using conventional silicon substrates for RF device fabrication, it is well known in the industry that the conventional silicon
25 substrates may have two undesirable properties for the RF devices: harmonic distortion and low resistivity values. Harmonic distortion is a critical impediment to achieve high level linearity in the RF devices built over silicon substrates. In addition, the low resistivity encountered in the silicon substrates may degrade quality factors (Q) at high frequencies of microelectromechanical systems
30 (MEMS) or other passive components.

[0005] Further, high speed and high performance transistors are more densely integrated in RF devices, even as they are required to carry more power. Consequently, the amount of heat generated by the RF devices will increase significantly due to the large amount of power passing through the transistors, the large number of transistors integrated in the RF devices, and the high operation speed of the transistors. Accordingly, it is desirable to package the RF devices in a configuration for better heat dissipation.

[0006] Wafer-level fan-out (WLFO) packaging technology and embedded wafer-level ball grid array (EWLB) technology currently attract substantial attention in portable RF applications. WLFO and EWLB technologies are designed to provide high density input/output ports (I/O) as well as low profile package height without increasing the size of the component semiconductor chips. The I/O pad size on the chip remains small keeping die size to a minimum. This capability allows for densely packaging the RF devices within a single wafer.

[0007] To accommodate the increased heat generation of the RF devices, to reduce deleterious harmonic distortion of the RF devices, and to utilize advantages of WLFO/EWLB packaging technologies, it is therefore an object of the present disclosure to provide a packaging process for a wafer-level package with enhanced thermal and electrical performance.

Summary

[0008] The present disclosure relates to a packaging process to provide a wafer-level package with enhanced thermal and electrical performance.

An exemplary process can include:

providing a mold wafer having a first die and a first mold compound, wherein:

the first die comprises a first device layer, a first dielectric layer over the first device layer, and a first silicon substrate over the first dielectric layer, wherein the first device layer comprises a plurality of first die contacts at a bottom surface of the first device layer;

a top surface of the first die is a top surface of the first silicon substrate and a bottom surface of the first die is the bottom surface of the first device layer; and

5 the first mold compound encapsulates the sides and the top surface of the first die, wherein the bottom surface of the first device layer is exposed;

forming a multilayer redistribution structure underneath the mold wafer, wherein:

10 the multilayer redistribution structure comprises a first dielectric pattern, redistribution interconnects, a second dielectric pattern, and a plurality of package contacts;

the first dielectric pattern is formed underneath the first die and the plurality of first die contacts are exposed through the first dielectric pattern;

15 the redistribution interconnects are electrically coupled to the plurality of first die contacts through the first dielectric pattern and extend underneath the first dielectric pattern;

the second dielectric pattern is formed underneath the first dielectric pattern to partially encapsulate each redistribution interconnect;

20 the plurality of package contacts are on a bottom surface of the multilayer redistribution structure, wherein the redistribution interconnects connect the plurality of package contacts to certain ones of the plurality of first die contacts;

25 each of the plurality of package contacts is separate and surrounded by a continuous air gap, wherein the continuous air gap extends underneath the first die; and

connections between the redistribution interconnects and the plurality of first die contacts are solder-free;

30 forming a support dielectric layer to fill the continuous air gap and encapsulate each of the plurality of package contacts, wherein the support dielectric layer has a planarized bottom surface;

thinning down the first mold compound to expose the top surface of the first silicon substrate;

removing substantially the first silicon substrate of the first die to provide a first thinned die and form a cavity within the first mold compound and over the first thinned die, wherein the first thinned die has a top surface exposed at a bottom of the cavity; and
applying a second mold compound to substantially fill the cavity and directly contact the top surface of the first thinned die.

10 **[0009]** In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the first die provides a microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) component.

[0010] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the first die is formed from a silicon-on-insulator (SOI) structure. The first device layer of the first die is
15 formed from a silicon epitaxy layer of the SOI structure, the first dielectric layer of the first die is a buried oxide layer of the SOI structure, and the first silicon substrate of the first die is a silicon substrate of the SOI structure.

[0011] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the mold wafer further
20 includes a second intact die, which includes a second device layer and a second silicon substrate over the second device layer. Herein, a top surface of the second die is a top surface of the second silicon substrate and a bottom surface of the second die is the bottom surface of the second device layer. The first die is taller than the second die. The first mold compound encapsulates the sides and
25 the top surface of the second die, such that the bottom surface of the second device layer is exposed.

[0012] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the first die provides a MEMS component and the second intact die provides a complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) controller that controls the MEMS component.

5 **[0013]** In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the second mold compound has a thermal conductivity greater than 2 W/m·K.

[0014] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the second mold compound has an electrical resistivity greater than 1E6 Ohm-cm.

[0015] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the first mold compound is formed from a same material as the second mold compound.

10 **[0016]** In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the first mold compound and the second mold compound are formed from different materials.

[0017] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the top surface of the first thinned die exposed at the bottom of the cavity is a top surface of the first dielectric layer.

15 **[0018]** In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the multilayer redistribution structure is free of glass fiber.

[0019] According to another embodiment, the exemplary process further includes attaching the bottom surface of the dielectric layer to a rigid carrier via an adhesive material before applying the second mold compound and detaching
20 the rigid carrier from the dielectric layer after applying the second mold compound.

[0020] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the dielectric layer encapsulates each package contact, and the exemplary process further includes removing the dielectric layer to expose the package contacts after applying the
25 second mold compound.

[0021] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the dielectric layer encapsulates the sides of each package contact, and the bottom surface of the dielectric layer and a bottom surface of each package contact are in a same flat plane. The exemplary process further includes forming a bump directly over the
30 bottom surface of each package contact after applying the second mold compound. Alternatively, the exemplary process further includes removing at

least a portion of the dielectric layer after applying the second mold compound, such that at least portions of the sides of each package contacts are exposed.

[0022] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the dielectric layer encapsulates the sides of each package contact and extends vertically beyond the bottom surface of each package contact. Herein, the dielectric layer extends underneath at least 70% of the first die. The exemplary process further includes forming a number of external contacts. Each external contact is in contact with a corresponding package contact through the dielectric layer and extends underneath the dielectric layer.

[0023] In one embodiment of the exemplary process, the mold wafer is provided by applying an adhesive layer over a carrier. Next, the first die is attached to the adhesive layer, such that the first die contacts at the bottom surface of the first device layer are covered by the adhesive layer. The first mold compound is then applied over the adhesive layer to encapsulate the first die.

Lastly, the carrier and the adhesive layer are removed to expose the bottom surface of the first device layer.

[0024] Those skilled in the art will appreciate the scope of the present disclosure and realize additional aspects thereof after reading the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments in association with the accompanying drawing figures.

Brief Description of the Drawing Figures

[0025] The accompanying drawing figures incorporated in and forming a part of this specification illustrate several aspects of the disclosure, and together with the description serve to explain the principles of the disclosure.

[0026] Figures 1-8 illustrate exemplary steps to provide a precursor package according to one embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0027] Figure 9 provides a flow diagram that illustrates an exemplary process to provide a wafer-level package with enhanced performance from the precursor package shown in Figure 8.

[0028] Figures 10A-20 illustrate the steps associated with the process of Figure 9.

[0029] It will be understood that for clarity of illustration, Figures 1 -20 may not be drawn to scale.

5

Detailed Description

[0030] The embodiments set forth below represent the necessary information to enable those skilled in the art to practice the embodiments and illustrate the best mode of practicing the embodiments. Upon reading the following
10 description in light of the accompanying drawing figures, those skilled in the art will understand the concepts of the disclosure and will recognize applications of these concepts not particularly addressed herein. It should be understood that these concepts and applications fall within the scope of the disclosure and the accompanying claims.

15 **[0031]** It will be understood that, although the terms first, second, etc. may be used herein to describe various elements, these elements should not be limited by these terms. These terms are only used to distinguish one element from another. For example, a first element could be termed a second element, and, similarly, a second element could be termed a first element, without departing
20 from the scope of the present disclosure. As used herein, the term "and/or" includes any and all combinations of one or more of the associated listed items.

[0032] It will be understood that when an element such as a layer, region, or substrate is referred to as being "on" or extending "onto" another element, it can be directly on or extend directly onto the other element or intervening elements
25 may also be present. In contrast, when an element is referred to as being "directly on" or extending "directly onto" another element, there are no intervening elements present. Likewise, it will be understood that when an element such as a layer, region, or substrate is referred to as being "over" or extending "over" another element, it can be directly over or extend directly over
30 the other element or intervening elements may also be present. In contrast, when an element is referred to as being "directly over" or extending "directly

over" another element, there are no intervening elements present. It will also be understood that when an element is referred to as being "connected" or "coupled" to another element, it can be directly connected or coupled to the other element or intervening elements may be present. In contrast, when an element is referred to as being "directly connected" or "directly coupled" to another element, there are no intervening elements present.

[0033] Relative terms such as "below" or "above" or "upper" or "lower" or "horizontal" or "vertical" may be used herein to describe a relationship of one element, layer, or region to another element, layer, or region as illustrated in the Figures. It will be understood that these terms and those discussed above are intended to encompass different orientations of the device in addition to the orientation depicted in the Figures.

[0034] The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the disclosure. As used herein, the singular forms "a," "an," and "the" are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will be further understood that the terms "comprises," "comprising," "includes," and/or "including" when used herein specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof.

[0035] Unless otherwise defined, all terms (including technical and scientific terms) used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this disclosure belongs. It will be further understood that terms used herein should be interpreted as having a meaning that is consistent with their meaning in the context of this specification and the relevant art and will not be interpreted in an idealized or overly formal sense unless expressly so defined herein.

[0036] The present disclosure relates to a packaging process to provide a wafer-level package with enhanced thermal and electrical performance. Figures 1-8 illustrate exemplary steps to provide a precursor package according to one

embodiment of the present disclosure. Although the exemplary steps are illustrated in a series, the exemplary steps are not necessarily order dependent. Some steps may be done in a different order than that presented. Further, processes within the scope of this disclosure may include fewer or more steps than those illustrated in Figures 1-8.

5 [0037] Initially, an adhesive layer 10 is applied on a top surface of a carrier 12 as illustrated in Figure 1. Then, an silicon-on-insulator (SOI) die 14, a microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) die 16, and a complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) controller die 18 are attached to the adhesive layer 10 as illustrated in Figure 2. In different applications, there might be fewer or more dies attached to the adhesive layer 10. For instance, in some applications, there may be only the SOI die 14 attached to the adhesive layer 10; in some applications, there may be only the MEMS die 16 and the CMOS controller die 18 attached to the adhesive layer 10, and in some applications, besides the MEMS/SOI dies, there may be thinned integrated passive device dies (not shown) attached to the adhesive layer 10.

15 [0038] The SOI die 14 includes a first device layer 20, a first dielectric layer 22 over a top surface of the first device layer 20, and a first silicon substrate 24 over the first dielectric layer 22. As such, a bottom surface of the first device layer 20 is a bottom surface of the SOI die 14, and the backside of the first silicon substrate 24 is a top surface of the SOI die 14. The first device layer 20 includes a number of first die contacts 26 at the bottom surface of the first device layer 20. Herein, the SOI die 14 is formed from an SOI structure, which refers to a structure including a silicon substrate, a silicon epitaxy layer, and a buried oxide layer sandwiched between the silicon substrate and the silicon epitaxy layer. The first device layer 20 of the SOI die 14 is formed by integrating electronic components (not shown) in or on the silicon epitaxy layer of the SOI structure. The first dielectric layer 22 of the SOI die 14 is the buried oxide layer of the SOI structure. The first silicon substrate 24 of the SOI die 14 is the silicon substrate of the SOI structure. The first device layer 20 has a thickness between 0.1 μm and 50 μm , and the first dielectric layer 22 has a thickness between 10 nm and 2000

nm. In addition, the SOI die 14 has a thickness between 25 μm and 250 μm or between 10 μm and 750 μm , and the first silicon substrate 24 has a thickness between 25 μm and 250 μm or between 10 μm and 750 μm , respectively.

[0039] The MEMS die 16 includes a second device layer 28, a second dielectric layer 30 over a top surface of the second device layer 28, and a second silicon substrate 32 over the second dielectric layer 30. As such, a bottom surface of the second device layer 28 is a bottom surface of the MEMS die 16, and the backside of the second silicon substrate 32 is a top surface of the MEMS die 16. The second device layer 28 includes a MEMS component (not shown) that is typically a switch and a number of second die contacts 34 at the bottom surface of the second device layer 28. Via-structures (not shown) may be used to connect the MEMS component to the second die contacts 34. The second device layer 28 has a thickness between 0.5 μm and 100 μm , and may be formed from a combination of dielectric and metal layers (such as silicon oxide, silicon nitride, aluminum, titanium, copper, or the like). The second dielectric layer 30 has a thickness between 10 nm and 10000 nm, and may be formed from silicon oxide, silicon nitride, aluminum oxide, or aluminum nitride. In addition, the MEMS die 16 has a thickness between 25 μm and 300 μm or between 10 μm and 800 μm , and the second silicon substrate 32 has a thickness between 25 μm and 300 μm or between 10 μm and 800 μm , respectively.

[0040] The CMOS controller die 18 includes a third device layer 36 and a third silicon substrate 38 over the third device layer 36. A bottom surface of the third device layer 36 is a bottom surface of the CMOS controller die 18, and the backside of the third silicon substrate 38 is a top surface of CMOS controller die 18. The third device layer 36 may include a CMOS controller (not shown) that controls the MEMS component within the thinned MEMS die 14, and a number of third die contacts 40 at a bottom surface of the third device layer 36. Via-structures (not shown) may be used to connect the CMOS controller to the third die contacts 40. The third device layer 36 has a thickness between 0.1 μm and 50 μm , and may be formed from a combination of dielectric and metal layers (such as silicon oxide, silicon nitride, aluminum, titanium, copper, or the like). In

addition, the CMOS controller die 18 has a thickness between 25 μm and 250 μm or between 10 μm and 750 μm , and the third silicon substrate 38 has a thickness between 25 μm and 250 μm or between 10 μm and 750 μm , respectively. In this embodiment, the CMOS controller die 18 may be shorter
5 than the SOI die 14 and the MEMS die 16. In different applications, the CMOS controller die 18 may be the same height as the SOI die 14 or the MEMS die 16, or the CMOS controller die 18 may be taller than the SOI die 14 and the MEMS die 16.

[0041] Next, a first mold compound 42 is applied over the adhesive layer 10 to
10 encapsulate the SOI die 14, the MEMS die 16, and the CMOS controller die 18 as illustrated in Figure 3. The first mold compound 42 may be an organic epoxy resin system or the like, which can be used as an etchant barrier to protect the SOI die 14, the MEMS die 16, and the CMOS controller die 18 against etching chemistries such as potassium hydroxide (KOH), sodium hydroxide (NaOH), and
15 acetylcholine (ACH). The first mold compound 42 may be applied by various procedures, such as sheet molding, overmolding, compression molding, transfer molding, dam fill encapsulation, or screen print encapsulation. In a typical compression molding, a molding pressure used for applying the first mold compound 42 is between 100 psi and 1000 psi. Since the SOI die 14, the MEMS
20 die 16, and the CMOS controller die 18 are relatively thick and the bottom surfaces of the SOI die 14, the MEMS die 16, and the CMOS controller die 18 are essentially flat, there may be no vertical deformations occurring to the SOI die 14, the MEMS die 16, or the CMOS controller die 18 during this molding step.

[0042] A curing process (not shown) is then used to harden the first mold
25 compound 42. The curing temperature is between 100 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ and 320 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ depending on which material is used as the first mold compound 42. The adhesive layer 10 and the carrier 12 are then removed to expose the bottom surface of the first device layer 20, the bottom surface of the second device layer 28, and the bottom surface of the third device layer 36 as shown in Figure 4. Removal of the
30 adhesive layer 10 and the carrier 12 may be provided by heating the adhesive layer 10 or exposing it to ultraviolet or laser light.

[0043] With reference to Figures 5 through 8, a redistribution process is provided according to one embodiment of the present disclosure. A first dielectric pattern 44 is firstly formed underneath the SOI die 14, the MEMS die 16, and the CMOS controller die 18, as illustrated in Figure 5. As such, the first device layer 20 of the SOI die 14, the second device layer 28 of the MEMS die 16, and the third device layer 36 of the CMOS controller die 18 are in contact with the first dielectric pattern 44. In addition, the first die contacts 26 at the bottom surface of the first device layer 20, the second die contacts 34 at the bottom surface of the second device layer 28, and the third die contacts 40 at the bottom surface of the third device layer 36 are exposed through the first dielectric pattern 44.

[0044] Next, a number of redistribution interconnects 46 are formed as illustrated in Figure 6. For the purpose of this illustration, the redistribution interconnects 46 include five first redistribution interconnects 46(1) and one second redistribution interconnect 46(2). In different applications, the redistribution interconnects 46 may include fewer or more first redistribution interconnects 46(1)/second redistribution interconnects 46(2). Each first redistribution interconnect 46(1) is electrically coupled to a corresponding one of the first, second, and third die contacts 26, 34, and 40 through the first dielectric pattern 44 and extend underneath the first dielectric pattern 44. The second redistribution interconnect 46(2) is used to connect one second die contact 34 to a corresponding third die contact 40, such that the CMOS controller within the CMOS controller die 18 electrically connects the MEMS component within the thinned MEMS die 16. The second redistribution interconnect 46(2) may also extend underneath the first dielectric pattern 44. The connections between the redistribution interconnects 46 and the first, second, and third die contacts 26, 34, and 40 are solder-free.

[0045] A second dielectric pattern 48 is formed underneath the first dielectric pattern 44 to partially encapsulate each first redistribution interconnect 46(1) as illustrated in Figure 7. As such, a portion of each first redistribution interconnect 46(1) is exposed through the second dielectric pattern 48. Further, the second dielectric pattern 48 fully encapsulates the second redistribution interconnect

46(2). As such, no portion of the second redistribution interconnect 46(2) is exposed through the second dielectric pattern 48. In different applications, there may be extra redistribution interconnects (not shown) electrically coupled to the redistribution interconnects 46 through the second dielectric pattern 48, and an
5 extra dielectric pattern (not shown) formed underneath the second dielectric pattern 48 to partially encapsulate each of the extra redistribution interconnects.

[0046] Lastly, a number of package contacts 50 are formed to complete a multilayer redistribution structure 52 and provide a precursor package 54, as illustrated in Figure 8. Each package contact 50 is on a bottom surface of the
10 multilayer redistribution structure 52 and electrically coupled to an exposed portion of a corresponding first redistribution interconnect 46(1) through the second dielectric pattern 48. Consequently, the first redistribution interconnects 46(1) connect the package contacts 50 to certain ones of the first, second, and third die contacts 26, 34, and 40. In addition, the package contacts 50 are
15 separate from each other and extend underneath the second dielectric pattern 48, such that a continuous air gap 56 is simultaneously formed surrounding each package contact 50. The air gap 56 may extend underneath the SOI die 14 and/or underneath the MEMS die 16.

[0047] The multilayer redistribution structure 52 may be free of glass fiber or
20 glass-free. Herein, the glass fiber refers to individual glass strands twisted to become a larger grouping. These glass strands may then be woven into a fabric. The first dielectric pattern 44 and the second dielectric pattern 48 may be formed of benzocyclobutene (BCB), polyimide, or other dielectric materials. The redistribution interconnects 46 may be formed of copper or other suitable metals.
25 The package contacts 50 may be formed of at least one of copper, gold, nickel, and palladium. The multilayer redistribution structure 52 has a thickness between 2 μm and 300 μm .

[0048] Figure 9 provides a flow diagram that illustrates an exemplary process to provide a wafer-level package with enhanced performance from the precursor
30 package 54 shown in Figure 8. Figures 10A-20 illustrate the steps associated with the process of Figure 9. Although the flow diagram and the associated steps

are illustrated in a series, they are not necessarily order dependent. Some steps may be done in a different order than that presented. Further, processes within the scope of this disclosure may include fewer or more steps than those illustrated in Figure 9.

5 **[0049]** Firstly, a third dielectric layer 58 is formed at the bottom surface of the multilayer redistribution structure 52, as illustrated in Figures 10A-10D (step 100). In some applications, the third dielectric layer 58 may not remain in a final wafer-level package. As such, the package contacts 50 do not need to be exposed through the third dielectric layer 58, as shown in Figure 10A. The third dielectric
10 layer 58 fully fills the air gap 56, which is surrounding each package contact 50, encapsulates each package contact 50, and provides an essentially planarized bottom surface. The third dielectric layer 58 may be formed by spinning on, laminating, depositing or molding dielectrics to encapsulate each package contact 50, and may then be followed by polishing to realize an essentially
15 planarized surface.

[0050] To facilitate easy removal of the third dielectric layer 58 in a later processing step (more details in the following discussion), a passivation layer 60 may be formed between the multilayer redistribution structure 52 and the third dielectric layer 58, as illustrated in Figure 10B. The passivation layer 60 covers at
20 least exposed bottom surface portions of the second dielectric pattern 48 to protect the first and second dielectric patterns 44 and 48 during the later removal of the third dielectric layer 58. In one embodiment, the passivation layer 60 may be formed before applying the third dielectric layer 58 by depositing silicon nitride, aluminum nitride, or other metal or dielectric film, which etches differently than
25 the third dielectric layer 58, to the exposed bottom surface portions of the second dielectric pattern 48 within the air gap 56. The passivation layer 60 is not vertically beyond the package contacts 50 and has a thickness between 5 nm and 5000 nm. In another embodiment, the passivation layer 60 may be a seed layer for the package contacts 50, which is formed before the package contacts
30 50 and may be formed of a same or different material as the package contacts 50 (although more than 10 times thinner than a thickness of the package

contacts 50 protruding from the bottom surface of the second dielectric pattern 48). Herein, the passivation layer 60 may extend over the entire bottom surface of the second dielectric pattern 48 and may be sandwiched between the second dielectric pattern 48 and the package contacts 50 (not shown).

- 5 **[0051]** In some applications, at least a portion of the third dielectric layer 58 may remain in a final wafer-level package. As such, each package contact 50 needs to be exposed through the third dielectric layer 58. Herein, the third dielectric layer 58 fully fills the air gap 56 and encapsulates the sides of each package contact 50 as shown in 10C. A bottom surface of the third dielectric layer 58 and a bottom surface of each package contact 50 are in a same flat plane. The third dielectric layer 58 may be formed by spinning on, laminating, depositing, or molding dielectrics to encapsulate each package contact 50 and is then followed by a thinning step (such as chemical-mechanical planarization or etching technique) to expose the bottom surface of each package contact 50.
- 10 **[0052]** In addition, when the air gap 56 extends underneath at least 70% of the SOI die 14 and/or extends underneath at least 70% of the MEMS die 16, the third dielectric layer 58 may encapsulate the sides of each package contact 50, fully fill the air gap 56, and extend vertically beyond the bottom surface of each package contact 50 as shown in 10D. Since the third dielectric layer 58 may
- 15 extend vertically beyond the bottom surface of each package contact 50, a number of separate air openings 62 are simultaneously formed vertically below each package contact 50. Each package contact 50 may have a same or different size, and may have a same or different shape, such as square, rectangular, triangular, and round. Consequently, each air opening 62 may have
- 20 a same or different size, and may have a same or different shape, such as square, rectangular, triangle, and round. If there is no package contact 50 vertically below the SOI die 14 and the MEMS die 16, there will be no air opening 62 vertically below the SOI die 14 and the MEMS die 16. Each air opening 62 has a size between $25\ \mu\text{m} \times 25\ \mu\text{m}$ and $400\ \mu\text{m} \times 400\ \mu\text{m}$, and is much smaller
- 25 compared to the air gap 56. The depth of each air opening 62 is minimized to as close to zero as possible. Herein, the third dielectric layer 58 has an essentially
- 30

planarized bottom surface and each package contact 50 is exposed through the third dielectric layer 58. The third dielectric layer 58 may be formed by spinning on, laminating, depositing, or molding dielectrics, and may then be followed by polishing to realize an essentially planarized surface. For Figures 10A-10D, the third dielectric layer 58 may be formed of BCB, polyimide, or other dielectric materials (like UV sensitive material). The third dielectric layer 58 may be formed of a same or different material as the second dielectric pattern 48.

[0053] After the third dielectric layer 58 is formed, the first mold compound 42 is thinned down to expose the first silicon substrate 24 of the SOI die 14 and the second silicon substrate 32 of the MEMS die 16 as shown in Figure 11 (step 102). Herein, Figure 11 is derived from Figure 10A, a same thinning procedure may also be applied to Figures 10B-10D (not shown for simplicity). The thinning procedure may be done with a mechanical grinding process. Herein, the CMOS controller die 18 has a lower height than both the MEMS die 16 and the SOI die 14, such that the silicon substrate 38 of the CMOS controller die 18 is not exposed and still encapsulated by the first mold compound 42.

[0054] Next, the first silicon substrate 24 and the second silicon substrate 32 are removed substantially to provide an etched precursor package 64, as illustrated in Figure 12 (step 104). The removal of the first silicon substrate 24 from the SOI die 14 provides a thinned SOI die 14T and forms a first cavity 66 within the first mold compound 42 and over the thinned SOI die 14T. The removal of the second silicon substrate 32 from the MEMS die 16 provides a thinned MEMS die 16T and forms a second cavity 68 within the first mold compound 42 and over the thinned MEMS die 16T. Herein, removing substantially a silicon substrate refers to removing at least 95% of the entire silicon substrate and remaining at most 2 μm silicon substrate. In desired cases, the first and second silicon substrates 24 and 32 are removed completely, such that the first dielectric layer 22 of the thinned SOI die 14T is exposed at the bottom of the first cavity 66 and the second dielectric layer 30 of the thinned MEMS die 16T is exposed at the bottom of the second cavity 68.

[0055] Removing substantially the first and second silicon substrates 24 and 32 may be provided by an etching process with a wet/dry etchant chemistry, which may be TMAH, KOH, ACH, NaOH, or the like. The first dielectric layer 22 functions as an etching stop to protect the first device layer 20 of the thinned SOI die 14T, and the second dielectric layer 30 functions as an etching stop to protect the second device layer 28 of the thinned MEMS die 16T. The first mold compound 42 encapsulates and protects the CMOS controller die 18 from the wet/dry etchant chemistry. In some applications, a protection layer (not shown) may be placed at the bottom surface of the third dielectric layer 58 to protect the third dielectric layer 58 and/or the package contacts 50 (if the package contacts 50 are exposed through the third dielectric layer 58, as shown in Figures 10C and 10D) from the etchant chemistry. The protection layer is applied before the etching process and removed after the etching process. Further, if the silicon substrate 38 of the CMOS controller die 18 is not encapsulated by the first mold compound 42 (in some applications, if the CMOS controller die 18 has a same height as or is taller than the SOI die 14 and the MEMS die 16, the silicon substrate 38 of the CMOS controller die 18 will be exposed during the thinning process), there may be an extra protection layer (not shown) placed over the silicon substrate 38 to protect the CMOS controller die 18 from the wet/dry etchant chemistry. The extra protection layer is applied before the etching process and removed after the etching process.

[0056] The etched precursor package 64 may be attached to a rigid carrier 70 via an adhesive material 72, as illustrated in Figure 13 (step 106). The rigid carrier 70 may be photo-transmissive and formed from quartz, fused silica, or sapphire. The adhesive material 72 may be a UV sensitive adhesive tape or film. If the third dielectric layer 58 encapsulates the package contacts 50 or extends vertically beyond the bottom surface of each package contact 50 (as shown in Figures 10A, 10B, and 10D), the planarized bottom surface of the third dielectric layer 58 is in contact with the adhesive material 72. If the bottom surface of the third dielectric layer 58 and the bottom surface of each package contact 50 are in a same flat plane (as shown in Figure 10C), both the third dielectric layer 58 and

the package contacts 50 are in contact with the adhesive material 72 (not shown). The rigid carrier 70 may help assist with mechanical support of the etched precursor package 64. In some applications, the etched precursor package 64 may not be attached to the rigid carrier 70, and the rigid carrier 70 is not used in the following fabrication steps.

5 [0057] A second mold compound 74 is then applied to substantially fill the first and second cavities 66 and 68, as illustrated in Figure 14 (step 108). Herein, substantially filling a cavity refers to filling at least 75% of the entire cavity. The second mold compound 74 directly resides over the top surface of the thinned SOI die 14T and the top surface of the thinned MEMS die 16T. If there is no first silicon substrate 24 left in the first cavity 66 and no second silicon substrate 32 left in the second cavity 68, the second mold compound 74 directly resides over the first dielectric layer 22 and the second dielectric layer 30. In some cases, a portion of the second mold compound 74 may further reside over the first mold compound 42. The second mold compound 74 is separated from the CMOS controller die 18 by the first mold compound 42. A top surface of the CMOS controller die 18 is in contact with the first mold compound 42.

10 [0058] The second mold compound 74 has a thermal conductivity greater than $2 \text{ W/m}\cdot\text{K}$ or greater than $10 \text{ W/m}\cdot\text{K}$, and has an electrical resistivity greater than $1\text{E}6 \text{ Ohm}\cdot\text{cm}$. In general, the higher the thermal conductivity of the second mold compound 74, the better the thermal performance of the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T. Further, the high electrical resistivity of the second mold compound 74 may improve the quality factor (Q) at high frequencies of the MEMS component of the thinned MEMS die 16T, and may reduce loss in the thinned SOI die 14T.

25 [0059] The second mold compound 74 may be formed of thermoplastics or thermoset materials, such as PPS (poly phenyl sulfide), overmold epoxies doped with boron nitride or alumina thermal additives, or the like. In some applications, the etched precursor package 64 may only include the MEMS die 16 and the CMOS controller die 18. The second mold compound 74 may also be formed from an organic epoxy resin system with a thermal conductivity less than 2

30

W/m·K. The second mold compound 74 may be formed of a same or different material as the first mold compound 42. However, unlike the second mold compound 74, the first mold compound 42 does not have thermal conductivity or electrical resistivity requirements. In some applications, both the first mold compound 42 and the second mold compound 74 have a thermal conductivity greater than 2 W/m·K. In some applications, the first mold compound 42 has a thermal conductivity less than 2 W/m·K and the second mold compound 74 has a thermal conductivity greater than 2 W/m·K. In some applications, the first mold compound 42 has a thermal conductivity greater than 2 W/m·K and the second mold compound 74 has a thermal conductivity greater than 10 W/m·K.

[0060] The second mold compound 74 may be applied by various procedures, such as sheet molding, overmolding, compression molding, transfer molding, dam fill encapsulation, and screen print encapsulation. During the molding process of the second mold compound 74, liquefaction and molding pressure may be not uniform across the entire etched precursor package 64. A first combination of the thinned SOI die 14T and a first portion of the multilayer redistribution structure 52 directly underneath the thinned glass-based die 14T, and a second combination of the thinned MEMS die 16T and a second portion of the multilayer redistribution structure 52 directly underneath the thinned MEMS die 16T may suffer more molding pressure than the other portions of the etched precursor package 64. In a typical compression molding, if the second mold compound 74 is formed of high thermal conductivity materials (≥ 2 W/m·K), a molding pressure and a temperature used for applying the second mold compound 74 is between 250 psi and 1000 psi, and between 100 °C and 350 °C, respectively.

[0061] Notice that the thinned SOI die 14T has a thickness between 0.1 μm and 50 μm , the thinned MEMS die 16T has a thickness 0.5 μm and 100 μm , and the multilayer redistribution structure 52 has a thickness between 2 μm and 300 μm . As such, the first combination of the thinned SOI die 14T and the first portion of the multilayer redistribution structure 52, or the second combination of the thinned MEMS die 16T and the second portion of the multilayer redistribution

structure 52 may have a thickness as thin as a few μm . If there is no third dielectric layer 58 filling the air gap 56, especially portions of the air gap 56 that are vertically below the thinned SOI die 14T and /or vertically below the thinned MEMS die 16T, vertical deformations of the first combination and/ or vertical

5 deformations of the second combination may occur during a molding step.

Without extra support in the portions of the air gap 56 that are vertically below the thinned SOI die 14T and/or vertically below the thinned MEMS die 16T, the first combination and the second combination may not endure high vertical molding pressure.

10 **[0062]** In one embodiment, when the third dielectric layer 58 fully fills the air gap 56, encapsulates each package contact 50, and provides the planarized bottom surface (as shown in Figures 10A and 10B), there is no air gap under the multilayer redistribution structure 52. As such, the third dielectric layer 58 combined with the rigid carrier 70 may provide enough mechanical support to the

15 thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T for enduring high molding pressures. The vertical deformations of the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T may be reduced to an acceptable level.

[0063] In another embodiment, when the third dielectric layer 58 fully fills the air gap 56, encapsulates the sides of each package contact 50, and has the

20 bottom surface in a same flat plane as the bottom surface of each package contact 50 (as shown in Figures 10C), there is no air gap under the multilayer redistribution structure 52. As such, the third dielectric layer 58 combined with the rigid carrier 70 (not shown) may provide enough mechanical support to the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T for enduring high molding

25 pressures. The vertical deformations of the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T may be reduced to an acceptable level.

[0064] In addition, when the third dielectric layer 58 fully fills the air gap 56, encapsulates the sides of each package contact 50, and extends vertically beyond the bottom surface of each package contact 50 (as shown in Figure 10D),

30 there are a number of air openings 62 formed vertically below each package contact 50. Since each air opening 62 is much smaller compared to the air gap

56 and may not be vertically below the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T, the air openings 62 may lead to significantly less vertical deformation of the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T than the unfilled air gap 56. The third dielectric layer 58 extends underneath at least 70% of the thinned SOI die 14T and/ or extends underneath at least 70% of the thinned MEMS die 16T (because the air gap 56 extends underneath at least 70% of the thinned SOI die 14T and/ or extends underneath at least 70% of the thinned MEMS die 16T, and the third dielectric layer 58 fully fills the air gap 56). As such, the third dielectric layer 58 combined with the rigid carrier 70 (not shown) may provide enough mechanical support to the thinned SOI die 14T and the thinned MEMS die 16T for enduring high molding pressures. Further, there may be some air openings 62 vertically below the first mold compound 42 and/or vertically below the CMOS controller die 16. Since the first mold compound 42 and the CMOS controller die 16 are relatively thick, and the air openings 62 have small sizes (no more than $400\text{ }\mu\text{m} \times 400\text{ }\mu\text{m}$), the first mold compound 42 and/or the CMOS controller die 16 are rigid enough to ensure high molding pressures.

[0065] A curing process (not shown) is followed to harden the second mold compound 74 (step 110). The curing temperature is between $100\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ and $320\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ depending on which material is used as the second mold compound 74. A top surface of the second mold compound 74 is then planarized as illustrated in Figure 15 (step 112). If the second mold compound 74 does not cover a top surface of the first mold compound 42, the top surface of the second mold compound 74 and /or the first mold compound 42 are planarized to be coplanar (not shown). A mechanical grinding process may be used for planarization.

[0066] Figures 16A-16D (step 114) illustrate that third dielectric layer 58 is exposed after the rigid carrier 70 is detached. Figures 16A-16D are derived from Figures 10A-10D, respectively. If the rigid carrier 70 is a photo-transmissive rigid carrier and the adhesive material 72 is a UV sensitive film or tape, the rigid carrier 70 is exposed to a UV environment to achieve the detaching process.

[0067] After the detaching process, the package contacts 50 may be fully encapsulated by the third dielectric layer 58 (shown in Figures 16A and 16B). In

order to complete a wafer-level package 76 with enhanced performance, the third layer 58 and the passivation layer 60 (if exists) are removed as illustrated in Figure 17 (step 116). Wet etching may be used to remove the third dielectric layer 58 from the multilayer redistribution structure 52. If there is no passivation layer between the third dielectric layer 58 and the second dielectric pattern 48, the third dielectric layer 58 and the second dielectric pattern 48 may be formed of different materials with different etching properties. For instance, the third dielectric layer 58 and the second dielectric pattern 48 are formed of two different polyimide materials with different etching properties. As such, selectively etching the third dielectric layer 58 without attacking the second dielectric pattern 48 may be achieved. If the passivation layer 60 is sandwiched between the third dielectric layer 58 and the second dielectric pattern 48, the third dielectric layer 58 and the second dielectric pattern 48 may be formed of materials with a same or different etching property. The passivation layer 60 is an etching stop to protect the second dielectric pattern 48. Wet or dry etching may be used to remove the passivation layer 60. Since the passivation layer 60 and the second dielectric pattern 48 are formed of different materials with different etching properties, selectively etching the passivation layer 60 without attacking the second dielectric pattern 48 may be achieved. In addition, to protect the package contacts 50 while etching the passivation layer 60, a lithography technique may be used. If the passivation layer 60 is the seed layer for the package contacts 50, the passivation layer 60 may be etched without the lithography technique. The package contacts 50 may be attacked but not significantly changed due to the large thickness difference (more than 10 times) between the passivation layer 60 and a portion of each package contact 50 that protrudes from the bottom surface of the second dielectric pattern 48.

[0068] In another embodiment, after the detaching process, the bottom surface of each package contact 50 may be exposed and in a same flat plane as the bottom surface of the third dielectric layer 58 (shown in Figure 16C). In order to complete a wafer-level package 76' with enhanced performance, at least one portion of the third dielectric layer 58 may be removed as illustrated in Figure 18

(step 116). An etching technique may be used to remove the at least one portion of the third dielectric layer 58 to expose at least portions of the sides of each package contact 50. Herein, the third dielectric layer 58 and the second dielectric pattern 48 may be formed of different materials with different etching properties.

- 5 Further, instead of removing the third layer 58, a bump 78 may be formed directly over the bottom surface of each package contact 50 to complete a wafer-level package 76'' with enhanced performance, as illustrated in Figure 19 (step 116). Consequently, each bump 78 is electrically coupled to a corresponding one of the first, second, and third die contacts 26, 34, and 40. Each bump 78 may be
10 formed of solder alloys, such as tin or tin alloys, by a standard bumping procedure.

- [0069]** In addition, after the detaching process, the bottom surface of each package contact 50 may be exposed through the third dielectric layer 58 that is vertically beyond the bottom surface of each package contact 50 (shown in
15 Figure 16D). A wafer-level package 76''' may be completed by forming a number of external contacts 80 as illustrated in Figure 20 (step 116). Each external contact 80 is in contact with a corresponding package contact 50 through the third dielectric layer 58 and extends underneath the third dielectric layer 58. Consequently, each external contact 80 is electrically coupled to a corresponding
20 one of the first, second, and third die contacts 26, 34, and 40. The external contacts 80 may be formed of at least one of copper, nickel, gold, solder and other solderable metal.

- [0070]** Lastly, the wafer-level package 76/76'/76''/76''' may be marked, diced, and singulated into individual components (Step 118).
25 **[0071]** Those skilled in the art will recognize improvements and modifications to the preferred embodiments of the present disclosure. All such improvements and modifications are considered within the scope of the concepts disclosed herein and the claims that follow.

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

providing a mold wafer having a first die and a first mold compound, wherein:

the first die comprises a first device layer, a first dielectric layer over the first device layer, and a first silicon substrate over the first dielectric layer, wherein the first device layer comprises a plurality of first die contacts at a bottom surface of the first device layer;

a top surface of the first die is a top surface of the first silicon substrate and a bottom surface of the first die is the bottom surface of the first device layer; and

the first mold compound encapsulates the sides and the top surface of the first die, wherein the bottom surface of the first device layer is exposed;

forming a multilayer redistribution structure underneath the mold wafer, wherein:

the multilayer redistribution structure comprises a first dielectric pattern, redistribution interconnects, a second dielectric pattern, and a plurality of package contacts;

the first dielectric pattern is formed underneath the first die and the plurality of first die contacts are exposed through the first dielectric pattern;

the redistribution interconnects are electrically coupled to the plurality of first die contacts through the first dielectric pattern and extend underneath the first dielectric pattern;

the second dielectric pattern is formed underneath the first dielectric pattern to partially encapsulate each redistribution interconnect;

the plurality of package contacts are on a bottom surface of the multilayer redistribution structure, wherein the redistribution interconnects connect the plurality of package contacts to certain ones of the plurality of first die contacts;

each of the plurality of package contacts is separate and surrounded by a continuous air gap, wherein the continuous air gap extends underneath the first die; and

connections between the redistribution interconnects and the plurality of first die contacts are solder-free;

forming a support dielectric layer to fill the continuous air gap and encapsulate each of the plurality of package contacts, wherein the support dielectric layer has a planarized bottom surface;

thinning down the first mold compound to expose the top surface of the first silicon substrate;

removing substantially the first silicon substrate of the first die to provide a first thinned die and form a cavity within the first mold compound and over the first thinned die, wherein the first thinned die has a top surface exposed at a bottom of the cavity; and

applying a second mold compound to substantially fill the cavity and directly contact the top surface of the first thinned die.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the first die provides a microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) component.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the first die is formed from a silicon-on-insulator (SOI) structure, wherein the first device layer of the first die is formed from a silicon epitaxy layer of the SOI structure, the first dielectric layer of the first die is a buried oxide layer of the SOI structure, and the first silicon substrate of the first die is a silicon substrate of the SOI structure.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the mold wafer further comprises a second die, which includes a second device layer, and a second silicon substrate over the second device layer, wherein:

a top surface of the second die is a top surface of the second silicon substrate and a bottom surface of the second die is a bottom surface of the second device layer;

the first die is taller than the second die; and

the first mold compound encapsulates the sides and the top surface of the second die, wherein the bottom surface of the second device layer is exposed.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the first die provides a MEMS component and the second die provides a complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) controller that controls the MEMS component.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the second mold compound has a thermal conductivity greater than 2 W/m.K.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the second mold compound has an electrical resistivity greater than 1E6 Ohm-cm.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the first mold compound is formed from a same material as the second mold compound.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the first mold compound and the second mold compound are formed from different materials.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the top surface of the first thinned die exposed at the bottom of the cavity is a top surface of the first dielectric layer.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the multilayer redistribution structure is free of glass fiber.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising attaching the planarized bottom surface of the support dielectric layer to a rigid carrier via an adhesive material before applying the second mold compound.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising detaching the rigid carrier from the support dielectric layer after applying the second mold compound.

14. The method of claim 1 further comprising removing the support dielectric layer to expose the plurality of package contacts after applying the second mold compound.

15. A method comprising:

providing a mold wafer having a first die and a first mold compound,

wherein:

the first die comprises a first device layer, a first dielectric layer over the first device layer, and a first silicon substrate over the first dielectric layer, wherein the first device layer comprises a plurality of first die contacts at a bottom surface of the first device layer;

a top surface of the first die is a top surface of the first silicon substrate and a bottom surface of the first die is the bottom surface of the first device layer; and

the first mold compound encapsulates the sides and the top surface of the first die, wherein the bottom surface of the first device layer is exposed;

forming a multilayer redistribution structure underneath the mold wafer,

wherein:

the multilayer redistribution structure comprises a first dielectric pattern, redistribution interconnects, a second dielectric pattern, and a plurality of package contacts;

the first dielectric pattern is formed underneath the first die and the plurality of first die contacts are exposed through the first dielectric pattern;

the redistribution interconnects are electrically coupled to the plurality of first die contacts through the first dielectric pattern and extend underneath the first dielectric pattern;

the second dielectric pattern is formed underneath the first dielectric pattern to partially encapsulate each redistribution interconnect;

the plurality of package contacts are on a bottom surface of the multilayer redistribution structure, wherein the redistribution interconnects connect the plurality of package contacts to certain ones of the plurality of first die contacts;

each of the plurality of package contacts is separate and surrounded by a continuous air gap, wherein the continuous air gap extends underneath the first die; and

connections between the redistribution interconnects and the plurality of first die contacts are solder-free;

forming a support dielectric layer to fill the continuous air gap, wherein:

the support dielectric layer has a planarized bottom surface;

the support dielectric layer encapsulates the sides of each of the plurality of package contacts; and

the planarized bottom surface of the support dielectric layer and a bottom surface of each of the plurality of package contacts are in a same flat plane;

thinning down the first mold compound to expose the top surface of the first silicon substrate;

removing substantially the first silicon substrate of the first die to provide a first thinned die and form a cavity within the first mold compound and over the first thinned die, wherein the first thinned die has a top surface exposed at a bottom of the cavity;

applying a second mold compound to substantially fill the cavity and directly contact the top surface of the first thinned die; and

removing at least one portion of the support dielectric layer after applying the second mold compound, such that at least portions of the sides of each of the plurality of package contacts are exposed.

16. The method of claim 1 further comprising forming a passivation layer that covers at least exposed bottom surface portions of the second dielectric pattern within the continuous air gap before forming the support dielectric layer, wherein

the passivation layer is not vertically beyond the plurality of package contacts.

17. A method comprising:

providing a mold wafer having a first die and a first mold compound,

wherein:

the first die comprises a first device layer, a first dielectric layer over the first device layer, and a first silicon substrate over the first dielectric layer, wherein the first device layer comprises a plurality of first die contacts at a bottom surface of the first device layer;

a top surface of the first die is a top surface of the first silicon substrate and a bottom surface of the first die is the bottom surface of the first device layer; and

the first mold compound encapsulates the sides and the top surface of the first die, wherein the bottom surface of the first device layer is exposed;

forming a multilayer redistribution structure underneath the mold wafer,

wherein:

the multilayer redistribution structure comprises a plurality of package contacts on a bottom surface of the multilayer redistribution structure and redistribution interconnects that connect the plurality of package contacts to certain ones of the plurality of first die contacts;

each of the plurality of package contacts is separate and surrounded by a continuous air gap, wherein the continuous air gap extends underneath the first die; and

connections between the redistribution interconnects and the plurality of first die contacts are solder-free;

forming a support dielectric layer to fill the continuous air gap, wherein the support dielectric layer has a planarized bottom surface;

thinning down the first mold compound to expose the top surface of the first silicon substrate;

removing completely the first silicon substrate of the first die to provide a first thinned die and form a cavity within the first mold compound and over the first thinned die, wherein a top surface of the device layer is exposed at a bottom of the cavity; and

applying a second mold compound to substantially fill the cavity and directly contact the top surface of the first thinned die.