



Buncefield Incident

Business & Economic Impact

The Maylands Business Park is one of the UK's largest mixed business areas, it is 325 hectares and 620 businesses with 16,500 employees and sustains circa 25,000 jobs, the equivalent to 1 in 3 of Dacorum's workforce. It generates a value circa £59bn, which is approximately 2% of the East of England GDP.

- The explosion injured 45 people, destroying 350,000 sq ft and leaving 200,000 sq ft of commercial space in need of repairs.
- Every business on Maylands was adversely affected and were unable to access their premises for up to a week
- 92 businesses employing 9,500 people were displaced from their premises
- The clean up operation was massive with approximately 50 tonnes of industrial removed from the Maylands business area.
- An Impact Assessment commissioned by the EEDA (April 2006) reported that there were 923 temporary and casual jobs lost, 410 redundancies were notified shortly after the explosion. Some businesses permanently relocated – costing the area 513 jobs and 8 companies temporarily relocated and were unsure as to whether they would return – risking 1420 jobs,
- In 2007 25% of businesses were still suffering disruption and loss of sales.
- Small business in the area, including, cab drivers, catering companies, cleaners, couriers and vehicle cleaners were also directly affected as their services were less in demand from the companies on Maylands.

Legacy for the Economy

Following the Buncefield explosion, and subsequent negative impacts on business and community, Dacorum Borough Council and various partner organisations started work on a series of recovery projects – some of which continue to date.

The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) allocated public funding to work towards rejuvenating the area, this included a Masterplan, physical improvements and a PR and Comms strategy. The basis of these projects was to restore business confidence in the area, with the aim of retaining businesses already located in Maylands, and to attract new business to take the place of those that had to or choose to move following the incident.

There are still on-going impacts following the Buncefield explosion, particularly in respect of implications for the Maylands Business Park.

A lot of work has taken place to restore business confidence and physically improve the area following the damage caused; however there has been a loss of employment land, which was

formally designated for office space, which can now only be used as very low density or open storage.

Major companies which have looked to locate to the area have also been off put by the close proximity to the Buncefield Oil Terminal.

Other businesses continue to reconsider their location as leases come to an end.

Further Information

More detailed information on the business and economic impact of the Buncefield explosion is available on the Dacorum Borough Council web site, [**www.dacorum.gov.uk/news/buncefield**](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/news/buncefield)