



# Maylands Gateway Development Brief

Planning Policy Statement  
Adopted April 2009

This publication is the Maylands Gateway Development Brief. It sets out how we envisage the Gateway area of the Maylands business park in Hemel Hempstead developing over the coming years, in order to meet the aspirations of the adopted Maylands Masterplan. If you would like this information in your own language, or you would like to contact the Council about any other issue, please call 01442 867212.

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這刊物是 Maylands Gateway 發展摘要; 列出了我們擬想中位於 Hemel Hempstead 的 Maylands 商業區 Gateway 地區部份在未來的發展, 以求達到對已被接納的 Maylands 總計劃的期待。如你需要以你的母語寫成的資料, 或有任何其他問題需要聯絡政府, 請致電 01442 867212 查詢。

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Hemel 2020 Vision

- 1.1.1. In 1947 the architect and landscape designer Geoffrey Jellicoe produced a master plan for the development of the new town at Hemel Hempstead. This guided the development of Hemel Hempstead in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and led to the development of a town characterised by a series of residential areas with neighbourhood centres at their core, plus the provision of a network of parks and open spaces, and thriving business areas.
- 1.1.2. Hemel Hempstead new town is now 60 years old, and in many ways has proved to be a successful new town. Despite these successes a new vision is needed for the regeneration of the town and provide a template for its future development. This has led to the creation of the Hemel 2020 Vision.
- 1.1.3. The Hemel 2020 Vision has been produced by Dacorum Borough Council in partnership with local residents, businesses and community groups along with English Partnerships (now the Homes and Communities Agency) and the East of England Development Agency. The Vision sets out the Council's aspirations for the development and improvement of the town. The original document, launched in February 2006 was set out on a project basis. These projects have since been refined and set out under the following themes:
  1. **Waterhouse Square** - *regeneration of the northern section of the town centre, to provide additional shopping facilities, a new civic 'heart,' arts and entertainment facility, offices and homes*
  2. **Neighbourhood Centres** – *to regenerate and reinvigorate the neighbourhood centres.*
  3. **Wider town centre** - *to provide an exciting and thriving town centre.*
  4. **Green spaces** - *to improve the natural and historic environment.*
  5. **Growth of Hemel Hempstead** – *to respond to the designation of the town as a 'Key Centre for Development and Change' and the need to provide significant numbers of new homes, jobs and associated facilities.*
  6. **Maylands** - *to rejuvenate the Maylands Business Area to achieve a vibrant, dynamic and premier business-led community and first choice investment location.*
- 1.1.4. It is this final objective that underpins both the Maylands Master Plan, and as a key driver of this, the Maylands Gateway Development Brief.
- 1.1.5. The need for such guidance, through both the Master Plan and the Development Brief, has been given a further sense of urgency due to the impact that the Buncefield incident has had upon the economy of Maylands and the wider town. This guidance sets out an aspirational, yet realistic economic future for Maylands, to ensure land uses are compatible with any changes in the regulatory environment, and to contribute to restoring any loss of confidence in the local economy that may have been a consequence of the incident.

## **1.2 The Vision for Maylands Gateway**

- 1.2.1 The Maylands Gateway is intended to be a visible sign of the regeneration of Maylands and emphasise the role of the area as a high quality environment in which to invest, do business, and work.
- 1.2.2 The Gateway is a key part of Maylands becoming a 'green' business park. The Gateway will aim for high levels of sustainability, incorporating sustainable building design, energy use, transport and ecology. Development in the Gateway is expected to be office-led (B1). Businesses operating in the areas of technology will be especially welcome.
- 1.2.3 To fulfil the vision for the Gateway, high quality design and layout is expected, set within a high quality environment. This requires careful consideration of the design of the buildings, the public realm, as well as the location and treatment of parking areas. The provision of good quality, accessible open space is a key feature of the vision. This provides amenity value, is an environmental and ecological asset, and is important in creating a place of choice for investors and businesses.

## **1.3 This Document**

- 1.3.1 This Development Brief presents background site, planning and design information and presents the aspirations for the development of the Gateway area. It includes advice on land uses, proposed layouts, design and landscaping principles, transport and movement information and requirements for the delivery of the Gateway sites.
- 1.3.2 Development Briefs are planning policy documents that relate to a particular site. They aim to distil planning and design information into a clear statement of what kinds of development are expected to come forward on the site(s).
- 1.3.3 The aim of this Development Brief is to provide clear guidance on how the Maylands Gateway should be developed, whilst not being overly prescriptive on the design of specific buildings or spaces, or on the uses that individual buildings will have.
- 1.3.4 Recommendations are provided for land uses, building scale and form, landscaping quality, environmental performance of buildings, parking standards, and the intended transport and landscape conditions proposed as part of the Gateway, as well as guidance to the kinds of infrastructure provision expected from developments.
- 1.3.4 As these requirements may change or evolve over time, those with an interest in the development of the area are advised to contact the Council at an early stage for further advice.
- 1.3.5 The Development Brief is intended to ensure the desired level of quality in the design, construction, maintenance and management of the Gateway in order to contribute to the regeneration of the Maylands area as a whole. It will be a visible sign of the area's regeneration and embodiment of the kind of business environment that investors and employers want to see in Hemel Hempstead.

## **1.4 Relationship with the Master Plan**

- 1.4.1 The Gateway forms part of the wider area covered by the Maylands Master Plan. This Development Brief is intended to supplement the Master Plan and provide a more detailed, yet complementary strategy for the Gateway area.
- 1.4.2 The planning status of the Gateway Development Brief is the same as the Maylands Master Plan for this area.
- 1.4.3 The Gateway site, due to its prominent location within Maylands and its potential for change afforded by the availability of sites, is seen as a key priority for the regeneration of Maylands. It is vital for the future development of Hemel Hempstead and a key component of the Hemel 2020 Vision.
- 1.4.4 The creation of a Development Brief separate to the main Master Plan reflects the importance of the Gateway in terms of delivery and timing.
- 1.4.5 One of the underlying aims of the Master Plan, which the Development Brief takes forward, is to bolster the recent trends away from manufacturing into higher value sectors of the economy, such as advanced engineering and technology businesses. It is also the intention of the Master Plan to move towards more sustainable ways of working through changing travel behaviour, providing a greater mix of uses on site and encourage sustainable forms of building. This is another key theme of the Development Brief.
- 1.4.6 A consistent strategy is particularly important in relation to land use and distribution of uses, the transport and movement strategy, the character of development and landscaping, the Green Strategy and as the approach taken to management and branding.
- 1.4.7 Consultation undertaken to inform the content of both the Master Plan and Development Brief are set out in the 'Report of Community Involvement' that accompanies these documents.

## **1.5 The wider planning context**

- 1.5.1 As well as its intrinsic relationship with the Maylands Master Plan, the Gateway Development Brief is set within the wider planning policy context, specifically the Council's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) and the East of England Plan.
- 1.5.2 The implications of these documents, as well as other relevant planning guidance, are explained in more detail in Chapter 2.

## **1.6 The Gateway's location**

- 1.6.1 Maylands is one of the largest business parks in the Eastern Region and home to around 630 businesses employing an estimated 16,500 people. It is located on the eastern side of Hemel Hempstead, bounded to the south by Breakspear Way, to the north by the B487 Redbourn Road and Three Cherry Trees Lane, to the east by Green Lane and roughly demarcated to the west by the A4147 Redbourn Road and High Street Green (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2).

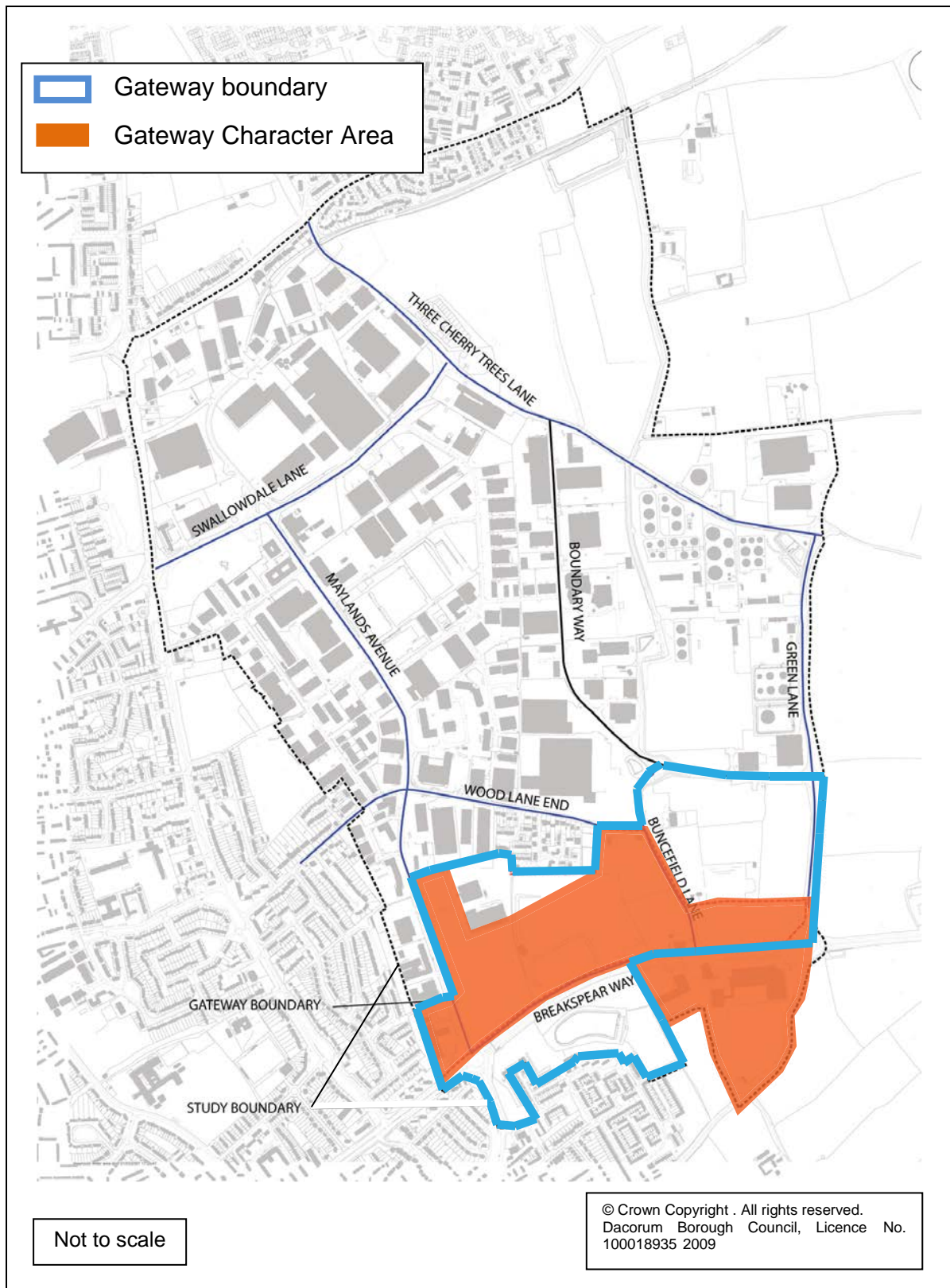
- 1.6.2 The estate formed part of the post-war master plan for Hemel Hempstead New Town and was developed as the main employment area for the town. Early development at Maylands was mainly to cater for the demands from manufacturing industry and major companies such as Lucas Aerospace were located on the estate. The construction of the M1 improved Maylands' connections to all parts of the UK and the estate was seen by the property market as a well located, prime estate within the south east of England.
- 1.6.3 Maylands currently provides a mix of ages and qualities of employment space, with office, industrial/warehousing/distribution and manufacturing stock, although the industrial accommodation continues to be the dominant use. Excepting the obvious impacts wrought by the Buncefield incident, the estate is largely well tenanted, and continues to provide the largest concentration of employment floorspace in Hemel Hempstead, with approximately 6.2m sqft of commercial accommodation on the estate.
- 1.6.4 The area covered by this Brief lies to the south of the Maylands Business Area and is subdivided by Breakspear Way. The northern section is bounded by Green Lane, Maylands Avenue, Boundary Way and the housing development at Hales Park. The southern section includes the balancing tank and surrounding open space. The whole area is approximately 48 hectares.
- 1.6.5 The Gateway Brief covers a larger area than the Gateway Character Area as defined within the Maylands Master Plan (see Figure 1.2). The northern section, fronting Boundary Way falls within the Service Centre Character Area.
- 1.6.6 Current uses within the Gateway area includes the Woodwells Caravan Park, Woodwells Cemetery, the former Lucas sports ground and part of the Stanhope owned PeopleBuilding site, the balancing tank to the south of Breakspear Way and the former Royal Mail site (now owned by Kier) to the west of Maylands Avenue.



Figure 1.1: Location Plan



Figure 1.2: Street Plan



## **2. Policy Background**

2.1 This section provides the existing planning policy context for the Maylands Gateway. This is explained in terms of its relationship with the current Local Plan and emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).

2.2 A summary of the key policies specifically related to the Gateway sites and to the Maylands Business Area when relevant is also provided.

### **2.3 Relationship with the current planning context**

2.3.1 The Development Brief for the Maylands Gateway is being produced ahead of the adoption of the Local Development Framework for Dacorum, and therefore it has a relationship with both the current Local Plan and the forthcoming Local Development Framework (LDF).

2.3.2 Where the Development Brief reinforces, elaborates and supplements the adopted Local Plan, it attracts the highest weight in Development Control decisions (i.e. the establishment of clear urban design principles). Some key elements of the Development Brief, such as the proposed development on areas of Open Land, are contrary to the adopted Local Plan. The justification for the proposals is set out in the Master Plan and accompanying Technical Report and relates to the demand for office space, the need to overcome constraints such as the quality of the built environment and the attractiveness of the wider Maylands business area to potential investment.

2.3.3 This Development Brief is a material planning consideration that may justify proposals which are contrary to the Local Plan. The Council will also need to take account of emerging information (for example relating to the employment land supply and guidance from the Health and Safety Executive) and consider how this affects the proposals outlined here.

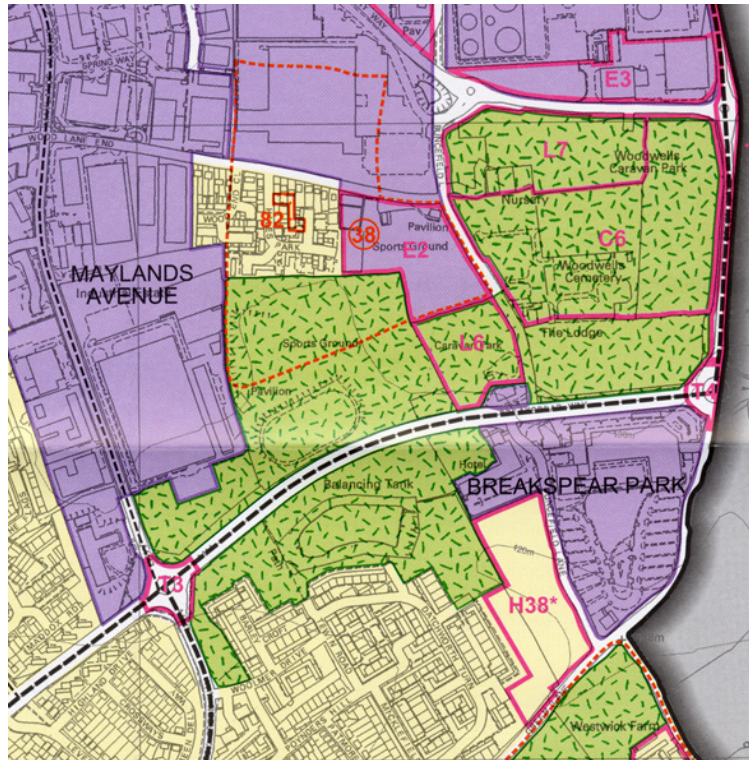
2.3.3 The Development Brief indicates the Council's intentions for the future formal planning policy framework for the area and the Council wishes it to be taken into account now.

2.3.4 The Development Brief and associated documents will inform production of the East Hemel Hempstead Action Area Plan, which will form part of the Council's LDF.

2.3.5 A summary of the current site-specific Local Plan policies that are applicable for Maylands Gateway is provided below. These policies and designations will be reviewed through the emerging LDF.

## 2.4 Current Local Plan Allocations for Maylands Gateway

Figure 2.1: Local Plan (Adopted 2004) Extract for Maylands Gateway



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2.4.1 The following Local Plan designations apply to the Gateway land:

### Site E2: Buncefield Lane (West)/Wood Lane End (South) (Kodak Sports Ground)

Site for Industry and Storage and Distribution. The land is only available to meet needs for development of industrial and warehouse sheds. Business Development is not acceptable except as an ancillary use. Development is conditional upon satisfactory access arrangements being in place or provided by the developer and upon the replacement of the playing fields to a suitable alternative site. Landscape screening to caravan site is necessary. Archaeological evaluation of the site, together with any necessary mitigation measures, is required before development takes place.

### Proposal T3: Improvements to A414 Maylands Avenue Roundabout, Hemel Hempstead

This proposal should be brought forward by developer contributions in association with major developments in Hemel Hempstead. Land outside the existing highway boundary may be required.

### Proposal T4: Junction Improvements to A414 Maylands Avenue Roundabout, Hemel Hempstead

This proposal should be brought forward by developer contributions in association with major developments in Hemel Hempstead. Land outside the existing highway



boundary may be required. Local Highway Authority scheme to be co-ordinated with works as part of Scheme T1 (M1 widening).

**T7: Widening and junction improvements to complete North East Relief Road (line of existing Three Cherry Trees/ Green Lane)**

This proposal should be brought forward by developer contributions in association with development at North East Hemel Hempstead. Potential dual carriageway line to be safeguarded where appropriate. Initial single carriageway route could also be completed on dualling line shown in Hemel Hempstead Transportation Plan. This alternative line follows Punchbowl Lane in St Albans City and District. Landscaping to enhance boundary with Green Belt.

**Tiv: Widening to dual carriageway of North East Relief Road, Hemel Hempstead**

Details of scheme to be decided. This will be a follow up to Scheme T7. Land to be reserved as part of development of Proposal Site E4 (see Schedule of Employment Proposal Sites).

**Tv: Hemel Hempstead Cycle Route Network**

Advisory routes and junction/crossing improvements including Buncefield Lane. Further details to be decided.

**Txii: Hemel Hempstead Park and Ride Schemes**

Study carried out in 2002 to assess the potential for additional park and ride facilities identified two locations: Gadebridge Park and Breakspear Way. The Gadebridge site ceased operating in April 2008. The 'Hemel Hempstead Park and Ride Study' was published in 2004 as part of the Hemel Hempstead Transportation Plan 2003/4. This concluded that a scheme near to Breakspear Way serving Maylands Avenue area would be feasible, though a scheme serving the town centre may not be justified due to the price of parking in the town centre. The Highway Authority has however advised that further technical work is required (see section 6). The Borough Council has established a Task and Finish Group to consider this issue in more detail.

**Site C6: Woodwells Cemetery**

Land safeguarded for cemetery.

**Site L6: Buncefield Lane, Hemel Hempstead**

Existing touring, camping and caravan site. Land to be safeguarded from alternative development unless a satisfactory alternative is available.

The Inspector at the Local Plan Inquiry considered the scope for alternative provision as part of the leisure proposal at Bunkers Park. This alternative is currently being discussed between the landowner, the Homes and Communities Agency (formerly English Partnerships) and the Caravan Club.

**Site L7: Woodwells Farm, Buncefield Lane**

Existing caravan storage site. Land to be safeguarded from alternative development.

2.4.2 Parts of the Gateway are also designated as Open Land (Local Plan Policy 116) and hence protected from building and other inappropriate development.

## 2.5 Planning Policy Documents

2.5.1 A number of planning policy documents have been used to inform, and are relevant to, this Development Brief. These include:

- Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011
- Dacorum Core Strategy: Issues and Options (May 2006)
- Core Strategies: Supplementary Issues and Options Paper (Dacorum and St Albans, November 2006)
- Dacorum Site Allocations DPD: Issues and Options (November 2006)
- East Hemel Gateway Options Report (Roger Tym & Partners, January 2005)
- Water Conservation SPD (July 2005)
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation SPD (July 2005)
- Open Space Study (March 2008)
- Urban Nature Conservation Study (March 2006)
- Hemel Hempstead Urban Design Assessment (January 2006)

## 2.6 Key Contacts

Key organisations and relevant officers in relation to Maylands and the Gateway Development Brief include:

### Dacorum Borough Council

- James Doe, Head of Planning and Regeneration [James.Doe@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:James.Doe@dacorum.gov.uk)
- Laura Wood, Principal Planning Officer – Spatial Planning [Laura.Wood@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Wood@dacorum.gov.uk)
- Jackie Ambrose, Assistant Team Leader – Development Management [Jackie.Ambrose@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:Jackie.Ambrose@dacorum.gov.uk)

### Maylands Partnership

- Chris Taylor, Senior Manager – Hemel 2020 [Chris.Taylor@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Taylor@dacorum.gov.uk)

### St Albans City and District Council

- Philip Bylo, Principal Planning Officer (Policy) [P.Bylo@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:P.Bylo@stalbans.gov.uk)

### Hertfordshire County Council

- David Hughes, Key Sites and Regeneration Manager [David.Hughes@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:David.Hughes@hertscc.gov.uk)
- James Dale, Area Highways Development Control Manager [James.Dale@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:James.Dale@hertscc.gov.uk)

### 3. Site and Context Appraisal

3.1 This section describes the current situation of the Gateway in terms of issues relating to transport and traffic, any potential environmental or ecological constraints of the sites, and an appraisal of the current economy and local property market.

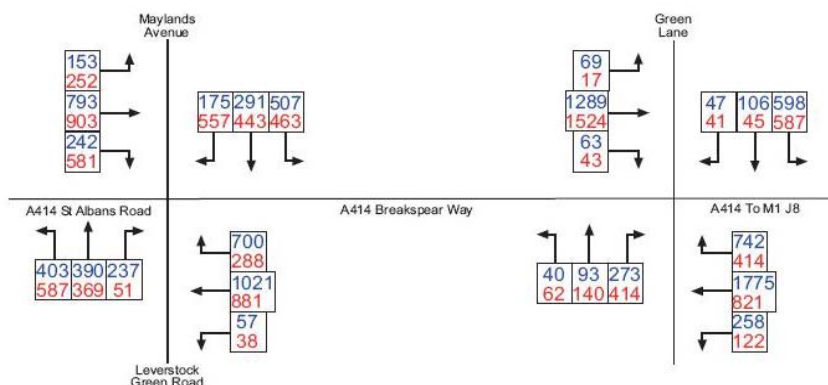
#### 3.2 Transport and traffic

3.2.1 The existing road system around the Maylands Gateway site including Maylands Avenue on the west, the A414 Breakspear Way passing through the southern part of the area and Green Lane on the eastern flank carries significant flows during the day. In particular the AM and PM peak hours between 8.00 and 9.00 and 17.00 and 18.00 hours respectively cause some congestion on this road system.

#### Traffic Movement:

3.2.2 To gain an appreciation of the relative traffic movements, circulating within the immediate area, Figure 3.1 indicates peak hour turning movements. These flows have been obtained from the 2004 Hemel Hempstead Park and Ride Study prepared by Mouchel Parkman which used figures from 2000. Whilst the flows are a little out of date, they still give an indication of the extent of the problem currently being experienced in the Gateway area. These flows are also pre-Buncefield blast and M1 widening and will need to be checked against the Hemel Hempstead Urban Transport Plan and associated transport model. It is clear from Figure 3.1 that there is significant conflict between traffic flowing east / west along A414 Breakspear Way and traffic flowing north / south along Maylands Avenue and to some extent Leverstock Green Road meeting at the Maylands Avenue roundabout on the A414. A further point to note is that approximately half of the traffic arriving off the M1 in the AM peak period that is heading into the Maylands Business Park area, turns right at the Green Lane junction. The remaining 50% continues west along the A414 and turns right at the Maylands Avenue roundabout.

Figure 3.1: Maylands Peak Hour Turning Movements



XXX AM 0800-0900 hrs  
XXX PM 1700-1800 hrs  
 Figures Taken From 2004  
 Park and Ride Report by  
 Mouchel Parkman

- 3.2.3 In the AM peak it is also apparent from Figure 3.1 that a significant flow is heading southbound along both Maylands Avenue and Green Lane before turning eastwards on the A414 towards M1 junction 8. This can be explained by traffic originating in the large residential areas of Adeyfield, Cupid Green and Grovehill to the west and north of Maylands having a destination via the M1 junction 8. The volume of traffic making this movement along both Maylands Avenue and Green Lane equates to some 1,100 vehicles in the weekday AM peak hour.
- 3.2.4 It is therefore evident that a key problem in relation to traffic is the conflict between east / west traffic and north / south flows during peak hours. There is also queuing northbound on Maylands Avenue, tailing back to the roundabout in the morning peak.
- 3.2.5 In relation to the significant flows occurring at the M1 junction 8 immediately east of the Green Lane roundabout junction, significant improvement works are currently underway between Junctions 6A and 10 of the M1. One of the key changes to the M1 movements will be the construction of a parallel distributor road that will allow A414 to M10 traffic to flow without encroaching onto the M1 as it does at present. All M1 improvements will take place east of the Green Lane roundabout.
- 3.2.6 There is also circumstantial evidence to suggest that Wood Lane End also suffers from localised congestion during peak hours turning onto Maylands Avenue by traffic attempting to cut out the Maylands Avenue/Breakspear Way junction. However, no traffic counts were available to reinforce this view. Evening peak traffic uses Wood Lane End before turning south along Buncefield Lane to avoid congestion on Maylands Avenue.

#### Walking and Cycling:

- 3.2.7 In relation to cycling and walking, footways exist on both sides of Maylands Avenue, though only on the north side of the A414. There is a footbridge over the A414 east of Maylands Avenue roundabout and a traffic signalled pedestrian crossing to the west of this junction. An advisory cycle route to Adeyfield and the town centre is signposted from Maylands Avenue north of the junction.
- 3.2.8 On Maylands Avenue at the junction with the access to the PeopleBuilding, a fully controlled signalised junction allowing pedestrian and cycle movements has been constructed more recently. Otherwise, Maylands Avenue is seen as a barrier to pedestrians and cyclists wishing to cross the road. Indeed, the Maylands Gateway area is not particularly well served by good safe pedestrian and cycle linkages.

#### Public Transport:

- 3.2.9 In relation to public transport, although Hemel Hempstead is generally well served by buses, in the main, the services follow routes that connect the residential areas and the Town Centre. Services visiting Maylands are currently somewhat limited. The most comprehensive route is service 6 running on a frequency of 2 buses per hour between the railway station, Town Centre, Adeyfield, the southern section of Maylands Avenue and Leverstock Green on route to Watford. Service 13 provides a peak hour service between the railway station, Town Centre, Queensway, Maylands Business Area, Maylands Avenue and Breakspear Way (Green Lane). Another peak hour only service, Route 14, extends between Bennetts End residential area and Cupid Green via A414, Maylands Avenue and Maylands Business Area. Longer distance services include Greenline service 758 which provides an hourly link from Hemel Hempstead bus station to London via Adeyfield,



Maylands Avenue and M1. A further strategic route (300/301) links Stevenage, Hatfield and St Albans with Hemel Hempstead bus station via Leverstock Green (and the southern section of Maylands Avenue in the peak hours). There is also a Uno service (634) to Hatfield Business Park/University of Hertfordshire (via A414), Lister Hospital and Hitchin. Currently there are bus stops on Breakspear Way (near Green Lane eastbound) and at the BP petrol station (westbound).

3.2.10 In terms of rail links, Maylands is located 4km east of Hemel Hempstead Station, with direct links to London Euston, at a frequency of approximately 4 per hour. Northbound links are to Milton Keynes via Tring.

### **3.3 Environmental and Ecological Constraints**

#### **Services and Utilities**

##### National Grid Gas

3.3.1 Initial enquiries indicate no presence of high pressure gas plant in the Maylands Gateway area. The A414 houses a medium pressure main which runs from the Maylands Avenue roundabout (and beyond) to the Holiday Inn Hotel.

##### BT Geonet / openworld

3.3.2 Buncefield Lane, Green Lane and Boundary Way house GEO (fibre optic) apparatus.

##### Three Valleys Water

3.3.3 A review of Three Valley's asset plans indicates that the majority of their supply mains follow the road network. Where small public spurs from the main line do occur they appear to be confined to areas of existing hardstanding. The location of public supply mains is therefore unlikely to represent a significant constraint.

##### Thames Water

3.3.4 Thames Water need to be consulted regarding sewerage capacity.

##### NTL

3.3.5 NTL cabling runs along the western fringe of Maylands Avenue along its entire length before branching eastwards along the northern edge of Redbourn Road.

##### EDF Energy Networks

3.3.6 We are awaiting a response from EDF regarding plant location enquiries.

##### BPA / Total

3.3.7 3 major oil pipelines connect to the Buncefield Terminal from the east of the area, with one pipeline flowing out to the north. Whilst none of these flow under the business park site they would be a major consideration for development of the wider area.

## Urban Hydrology

- 3.3.8 The most notable drainage feature in the Gateway area of interest is the large surface water attenuation pond to the south of the A414, between Leverstock Green Way and Buncefield Lane. The pond is a Thames Water (TW) asset and approximately 8450 m<sup>2</sup> in area. From our discussions with the Environment Agency (EA), TW and Dacorum Borough Council (DBC), the pond is believed to accept urban runoff from the adjacent residential development as well as a large portion of the Maylands area itself. The pond has several inlets, the largest of which is a 1000 mm by 1500 mm culvert running southwards beneath the A414. The Pond's outfall is to the River Ver approximately 5 km to the east.
- 3.3.9 TW have been approached for their views on relocating the pond. However, given the scale of the feature it is unlikely that they would support such an idea. They may however be open to improving the pond's aesthetics thus increasing its visual amenity and ecological value. Security and health and safety issues are likely to restrict options for visually absorbing the pond into the local environment as TW are unlikely to allow the complete removal of any security fencing. They may however support its conversion to a more visually acceptable means of securing the area. The location of development will be constrained by its type and likely impact on the structural stability of the pond and associated pipes/culverts. Specific easements for the pond and pipes/culverts will need to be established in relation to proposed landuses.
- 3.3.10 There is also the possible presence of smaller, underground runoff attenuation tanks throughout the Maylands area, although these are more likely to be associated with the existing developed areas. Should any such tanks be removed during the development of Maylands Gateway their storage function will obviously need to be replaced.

## Groundwater and Surface Water

- 3.3.11 The site does not fall within a flood risk zone.
- 3.3.12 The site is located in an area of moderate groundwater sensitivity (a Ground Water Protection Zone). The main environmental receptor is the underlying Chalk aquifer, which is abstracted for drinking water supplies within 2km of the site. The underlying Chalk is a major aquifer and is highly vulnerable to pollution.
- 3.3.13 Developers will need to demonstrate adequate protection to the underlying groundwater resource.
- 3.3.14 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be used to attenuate surface water run-off whilst being compatible with the protection of underlying vulnerable groundwater resources.
- 3.3.15 Development should maximise opportunities to:-
- Reuse grey water
  - Install green roofs
  - Design for efficient use of water resources
  - Implement SuDS compatible with the protection of vulnerable underlying groundwater resources.

3.3.16 Further information on water conservation measures are provided in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Water Conservation (July 2005), and from the Building Futures website at [www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures](http://www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures).

### **Topography**

3.3.17 Ordnance Survey mapping (1:50,000) shows that the Gateway area to the north of the A414 lies within the same contour and land to the south of the A414 slopes generally southwards. A more detailed topographical assessment will be required as part of any development proposal.

### **Ecology**

3.3.18 There are no sites designated for their nature conservation value within the boundaries of the Gateway sites. However there are mature hedgerows in the area, and a woodland belt to the west of the Shell petrol station. These should be retained.

3.3.19 There are records of bats and badger activity within the wider area that will require further detailed investigation.

3.3.20 Ecological surveys would need to be undertaken prior to development and any necessary mitigation measures put in place. Compensation would be required for features lost to development where loss is completely unavoidable.

3.3.21 Development should maximise opportunities to:-

- Create new, and improve existing habitats and landscape features which could be of benefit to wildlife including the provision of brown roofs.
- Innovate in designs of buildings and shared spaces
- Incorporate green infrastructure.
- Link and connect isolated and fragmented habitats, important species populations and landscape features through creation of wildlife corridor networks.
- Protect the 'green entrances' to Hemel Hempstead – an important part of the new town concept and a feature of the original master plan.

### **Archaeology**

3.3.22 The northern part of the Gateway lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance. There was a great deal of activity in the Roman period in Hemel Hempstead, (buildings, villas and roads, as well as the Temple/Mausoleum at Wood Lane End). Recent excavations for the M1 widening project also support this view. South of junction 8 a late Iron age and Roman settlement was uncovered down the slope, with medieval occupation on the higher ground nearer the junction. North of the junction access road was a length of what may be part of a roman road leading in the general direction of Wood Lane End.

3.3.23 A Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), a Romano-Celtic Temple/Mausoleum, is located at Wood Lane End. Several historic environment records (HERs) are also located in close proximity to the SAM and beyond the Gateway site's boundaries to the South East.

3.3.24 Although no SAMs or HERs exist within the boundary of the Gateway sites there may be additional artefacts in the area which are as yet unrecorded. Therefore archaeological evaluation will be required prior to development with suitable

mitigation measures put in place to avoid negative effects if necessary. This should include a geophysical survey and excavation of trial trenches in consultation with the County Council's Archaeological Unit.

3.3.25 Development should maximise opportunities to:-

- Ensure there are strong and robust design standards relevant to local historic environment
- Ensure development is sensitive to the Historic Environment Records (HER)
- Ensure that development has regard to settlement patterns, the local vernacular style and incorporates local materials.
- Ensure archaeology is recorded or preserved in situ prior to development.

### **3.4 The Buncefield Incident and the HSE Guidance**

3.4.1 The events of December 11<sup>th</sup> 2005, when an explosion at the Buncefield facility caused widespread damage to property on Maylands, has resulted in some uncertainty regarding the planning of development in the Maylands area.

3.4.2 As a result of this explosion, consultation distance and planning zones around the depot have been extended to 400m and a new 'development proximity zone' (DPZ) introduced. This new DPZ is at a radius of 150 m from the site. Within this zone HSE would 'advise against' new development other than that involving 'not normally occupied' structures.

3.4.3 The proposals contained within this Development Brief have been drafted to provide sufficient flexibility to respond to these changes and the Gateway land effectively lies outside of the DPZ, as currently defined.

3.4.4 The most up-to-date position regarding HSE advice within the Gateway area can be obtained from the Council's Planning and Regeneration Department.

### **3.5 Economic and Property Market Conditions<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Current property market conditions**

3.5.1 An analysis of the current market in the Maylands Business Area as a whole reveals two key market sectors, industrial property (incorporating distribution and warehousing) and office property.

3.5.2 The industrial market exists mainly towards the north of the Maylands area, with a diversity of uses ranging from small workshop accommodation, through to mid-range manufacturing and storage, and large "mega-shed" logistics and distribution uses.

3.5.3 Older office properties are scattered across the estate but modern office development is focused particularly within the Maylands Gateway area and along Maylands Avenue.

3.5.4 Research indicates that the demand in the industrial market, particularly from distribution and warehouse operators is strong, which has given rise to robust values and supported a good speculative development market in Maylands as a whole over

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<sup>1</sup> Note: This assessment was carried out prior to the current economic downturn.

recent years (79% of industrial space developed over the last 5 years was speculative). The key drivers in the industrial market, particularly for distribution uses, are the accessibility of the estate, close to London and directly off junction 8 of the M1, and the availability of land for large-scale distribution development.

3.5.5 The office market on the other hand, despite there being a large number of office occupiers present in Maylands as a whole (including landmark HQ offices and a range of accommodation to meet all budgets, specifications and floorspace requirements) currently suffers from a lack of demand and corresponding low values for a number of reasons. These are not all a direct result of property market influences, and could in part be addressed by strategic interventions.

3.5.6 An easily deliverable option for utilising the available land in the Gateway given current market conditions would be to designate this area for industrial development, which would be likely to be taken up quickly by logistics operators. However, there are several factors which would recommend an alternative office-centred solution to the development of the Gateway:

- Hemel Hempstead has a history of providing a range of employment and was very successful in its early history in attracting a large number of blue-chip occupiers and HQ office operations, many of which it retains today. However, conditions for a modern office environment on Maylands at present, whilst existing in isolated pockets in certain locations (most notably The Campus, PeopleBuilding and prior to Buncefield, 3.com on Buncefield Lane) do not exist in sufficient quantity in a single location to reflect the high quality of occupiers present, or to create an image of an premier office location that would sell the location further afield.
- The employment area of Maylands is of such a size that there should be ample space to accommodate both industrial and office operators successfully, so long as the quite distinct requirements to support both these markets are in place, and conflict between the supporting requirements that are not aligned for each market are managed successfully e.g. HGV movements vs. commuter traffic.
- The size of the Gateway site would comfortably accommodate the average size of a UK science/ model, or a number of landmark headquarter offices, or a range of flexible large floorplate accommodation which could respond to market demand. The opportunity to create an entirely new product of this scale does not exist elsewhere in Maylands without extensive redevelopment, relocations and complications of land assembly. Nor would it be appropriate to do this when such office products require the high visibility that the Gateway sites present in order to be successful.
- The balance of floorspace across the estate at present is in favour of industrial accommodation, with Valuation Office Agency data indicating of all commercial floorspace, 74% is industrial compared to 24% office. The Gateway's location allows scope to further develop the office market and move to equalise this balance without compromising the industrial stock and attributes which makes the Maylands location successful for that use.
- Recent property investment in the locality has come from investment from the industrial sector and consequently there is a good range of modern premises available. This has not been matched with provision of similar quality new-build office accommodation, despite competing office locations having seen this emerging on the ground – absence of this kind of stock makes Hemel Hempstead appear less competitive. The location of the Gateway sites at the main motorway access to Hemel offers an opportunity to remedy this inequality

by putting cutting edge development on show as the face, not just for the Gateway, but for the Maylands Business Area and Hemel Hempstead as a whole.

- Feedback from agents and occupiers within the local market indicates that office development is most viable at the southern end of Maylands Avenue where there is already a more distinct, higher quality environment and corporate identity, and a critical mass of office occupiers already present.

3.5.7 A number of key factors have been identified that affect the office market in the Maylands area. It is considered that the Maylands Gateway offers a significant opportunity to address these issues and stimulate increased growth and a more robust office market. The Gateway area should therefore be the focus for high quality, office-led development particularly along Breakspear Way and Maylands Avenue.

### **Employment Land Study**

3.5.8 Dacorum Borough Council, in association with Three Rivers and Watford Councils, commissioned consultants Roger Tym and King Sturge to examine the current and future supply, demand and quality of employment land in the three districts and the implications on policy. The content of the study, and subsequent recommendations (published in January 2005), need to be recognised as part of the evidence base for the proposals contained in the Master Plan and Development Brief.

3.5.9 The study states that under economic conditions envisaged by the Regional Spatial Strategy, office space requirement in Dacorum would be 86,775sq m in the Plan period (up to 2021).

3.5.10 Current supply, forecast from current planning commitments and predicted losses of office space gives a figure of 145,170 sq m for Dacorum. However, this figure includes the proposal for the development of Spencer's Park (also known as Land at North East Hemel Hempstead) as a science park, representing nearly half of this supply figure.

3.5.11 The study also produced a market derived demand figure, which forecast that in the period up to 2021 there is a requirement of 130,000 sq m of office space within Dacorum – leaving a slight oversupply of approximately 16,000sq m of office space across the Borough. However – excluding the Spencer's Park commitment, there would be an undersupply of approximately 50,000 sq m of office space.

3.5.12 The indicative floorspace figure contained within the Gateway sites is 98,000sq m (net), which clearly addresses this shortfall and also leaves a surplus of nearly 50,000sq m.

3.5.13 This surplus was however based upon a scenario produced from draft RSS figures that suggested a housing allocation for Dacorum of 6,300 dwellings. The adopted East of England Plan actually allocates a minimum of 12,000 new dwellings to Dacorum Borough between 2006 and 2021. The majority of these would be built at Hemel Hempstead – reflecting its designation as a Key Centre for Development and Change (KCDC).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The housing figure in the East of England Plan has recently been challenged in the High Court. The full implications of this challenge are not yet clear, but the Borough's overall housing target will be reduced, at least temporarily, as a result. The Spatial Planning team can provide the most up-to-date

- 3.5.14 This uplift in housing numbers leads to the requirement of additional employment land within Dacorum. The relationship between new housing, new jobs and the employment land is a complex one, affected by the dwelling mix of new housing, household size, demographics, the socio-economic profiles of the new populations, travel to work and commuting patterns and levels of containment in relation to employment. Estimating the floorspace requirement of the potential new housing in Hemel Hempstead is beyond the scope of this Brief, but it is considered that as a result of policy aims to retain or improve Dacorum's self-containment ratio, together with the subsequent increase in population as a result of the new housing, would require an increase in office space. This increase in provision could be met by the Maylands Gateway.
- 3.5.15 The Employment Land study also specifically investigated the relative merits of Spencer's Park and the Gateway area for Science Park type uses. It was concluded that current environmental quality, nearby uses and unattractive entry into the area makes the current designation at Spencer's Park unsuitable for such development. Development of the type proposed requires high quality accommodation, within a well managed campus-style area, linked to a further or higher education facility. This is the kind of product and place that is being proposed for the Maylands Gateway.
- 3.5.16 Research indicates that the Gateway site would not only address many of the existing deficiencies in the office market of Maylands much more effectively than development at Spencer's Park, but should also prove to be a successful location in its own right.

## Benchmarking

- 3.5.17 Consideration has also been given to how the Maylands Gateway vision might compare to other business parks on a regional basis. The following table lists some other high quality business parks across southern England that have been considered for benchmarking purposes (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Other Business Parks**

Business Park	Location	Web link
Butterfield Business Park	Luton	<a href="http://www.butterfieldluton.co.uk">www.butterfieldluton.co.uk</a>
Winnersh Triangle	Reading	<a href="http://www.winnershtriangle.co.uk">www.winnershtriangle.co.uk</a>
Green Park	Reading	<a href="http://www.greenpark.co.uk">www.greenpark.co.uk</a>
Chiswick Park	West London	<a href="http://www.enjoy-work.com">www.enjoy-work.com</a>
Cambourne Business Park	Cambourne	<a href="http://www.cambournebusinesspark.co.uk">www.cambournebusinesspark.co.uk</a>
Frimley Square	Camberley	<a href="http://www.frimleysquare.com">www.frimleysquare.com</a>
Farnborough Business Park	Farnborough Airport	<a href="http://www.farnboroughbusinesspark.com/index.html">www.farnboroughbusinesspark.com/index.html</a>
Hatfield Business Park	Hatfield	<a href="http://www.arlington.com/en/pr_2_Hatfield.aspx">www.arlington.com/en/pr_2_Hatfield.aspx</a>
Oxford Business Park	Oxford	<a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk/business/oxford-business-park.cfm">www.oxford.gov.uk/business/oxford-business-park.cfm</a>

information. Even without Green belt expansion, the town will see significant housing growth in the coming years.

- 3.5.18 In terms of how the vision for the Maylands Gateway compares to and has the potential to compete with these business parks, this will largely depend on the evolution of the market for this type of location.
- 3.5.19 Currently none of the existing Business Parks have the level of green design and sustainability integrated into the design from the inception as is proposed for the Maylands Gateway. The only features available in terms of sustainability are retro-fitted features. The proposal as it stands is therefore a step ahead in Business Park design and would be part of a new generation of Business Parks.
- 3.5.20 The Butterfield and Winnersh Triangle Business Parks listed in the table above are both in the development stage and both include integrated green design features such as Earth Duct Cooling and they represent the first in this new generation of green business parks. On the basis of the current situation the Gateway proposal fits well into this new generation. However in order to remain competitive the proposals must maintain a unique selling point over other locations and remain at the forefront of sustainable design. The vision will therefore need to be developed and evolved with the market and be reviewed accordingly to ensure that it remains at the cutting edge of design.
- 3.5.21 In terms of value, there is currently little evidence to support any firm conclusions as to whether a premium is available in the market for locations boasting integrated sustainable design features. It is likely that in the near future premiums will be paid and this will be crystallised by occupiers and will be in part dependant on government legislation and public pressure on businesses.

### Key property market factors

- 3.5.22 Creation of good quality premises alone will be insufficient to attract investment into the area and for the creation of jobs. This is illustrated by the fact that immediately implementable permissions for building good quality office accommodation have been available without take-up for several years on the PeopleBuilding site.
- 3.5.23 The Maylands Master Plan is intended to address the strategic-level barriers to development and investment. This includes addressing the factors dissuading occupiers from locating in the area at present, and by such, achieving the unlocking of property development potential and physical renewal and regeneration of the fabric of the area.
- 3.5.24 The following factors are key to the future success of the office market in Maylands and any proposals for development in the Gateway area should help address these factors. Many of these relate to the perception of the area, which a well-designed built environment and the implementation of specific projects could go a long way to resolving:
- High quality office occupiers require a **higher quality environment and a better separation between industrial and office uses**. At present, the environment is certainly not as degraded as many former industrial areas of this size, and in parts offers a quite pleasant outlook, however, this is not consistent across Maylands. To attract more, and major, office occupiers to the estate, **office development needs increased prominence and to be clearly defined from industrial areas**, whether this be manufacturing, warehousing or distribution



uses. This effect is much more important in the office market than the industrial market, as it is more likely to affect the customer perception of their business than for the industrial market. To engage office occupiers, the Gateway must succeed in having prominence and high environmental quality, both in the built form and landscaping.

- Maylands is in competition from other established office markets particularly at St Albans and Watford. To better compete, the **Maylands brand needs to be more defined and have an increased profile in the market place**. This can be achieved in part through enhanced marketing more targeted at occupiers, developers and agents in the wider region (to include London as the portal to overseas and corporate occupiers). However, **physical development that clearly identifies Breakspear Way as the Gateway to Maylands will underpin this brand** by raising the prominence of occupiers and Maylands as a business location to the travelling public, business relocation advisors and property agents.
- **Transport and access problems need to be addressed to support the perceived inaccessibility and congestion of the area**, including separation of HGV traffic from car traffic, reduction in local road congestion, improved parking provision and better public transport connectivity between the estate and the town centre and rail station.
- Employees need to feel that the area has profile and can **provide day-to-day facilities** which make Maylands a pleasant place to work. If employees are not content to work in a location, then employers will not come. **By making the location somewhere people want to work, employers will start taking the location more seriously**. Research indicates that, given the town edge location of Maylands, the office market would benefit from increased provision of local services, a higher quality public realm and enhanced network and visibility of (plus accessibility to) green spaces. These are all elements that employees and hence office occupiers consider in locational decisions, and on which Maylands currently does not score well compared to competing locations.
- Diversification from the historical industrial and engineering origins of Maylands has been achieved in part, ensuring that the property accommodation offer has largely succeeded in keeping pace with changing UK employment market conditions, and the Maylands area is still a strong employment location. However the physical evolution has translated to patchy clustering of accommodation types across the estate which means there is still an overall lack of clarity as to where the foci of the employment sectors lies, which can cause confusion in orientation within the estate. Particularly relevant to the property market, it creates a mixed perception of what the strengths of the location are. Some sites are successfully defined as being in a clear use, whereas other uses are located cheek-by-jowl with non-complimentary uses, and sometimes uses which might be considered detrimental to those of their neighbours. Occupiers like to feel that they have the presence nearby of others who operate in the spheres they do, and which may enable them to benefit from business synergies. **Clear zoning of uses within Maylands, and a clear vision for the uses in the Gateway** will do much to address this.
- To be able to diversify the Maylands office market to include more high technology research and development, **on-site support of a link to or presence of a higher/further education provider within the Gateway** is essential. This could take the form of a “branch office” educational outpost on site, which might additionally include conferencing suites or meeting rooms, to facilitate business/industry connections to adult education and lifelong learning.

Done effectively this could have the dual effect of supporting the skills set of the wider Maylands Business area.

- There is a substantial differential that exists between rental values for prime office accommodation (£18.50 per square foot) and for prime industrial accommodation (£8.50 per square foot). Occupiers expect there to be a **quality of accommodation and environment to reflect this rental differential**. At present there is not this distinction of location and surrounding environment for isolated office developments on Maylands to justify this in a wider marketplace. This could be changed with the provision of a coherent and distinct Gateway office quarter.
- Current rental values for office accommodation may not support the quality of development which would be sought in the Gateway, which makes speculative development of these Gateway sites difficult current conditions. This is not necessarily a static position and the market may strengthen in future years to allow this type of development to happen. However, the value history in this location in recent years suggests that some step change needs to take place in the conditions for development to allow this to happen in the short-medium term. This **step-change in values so that development is viable** is what this Development Brief recommendations should facilitate e.g. significant upgrading of transportation connections, landscaping and access arrangements.

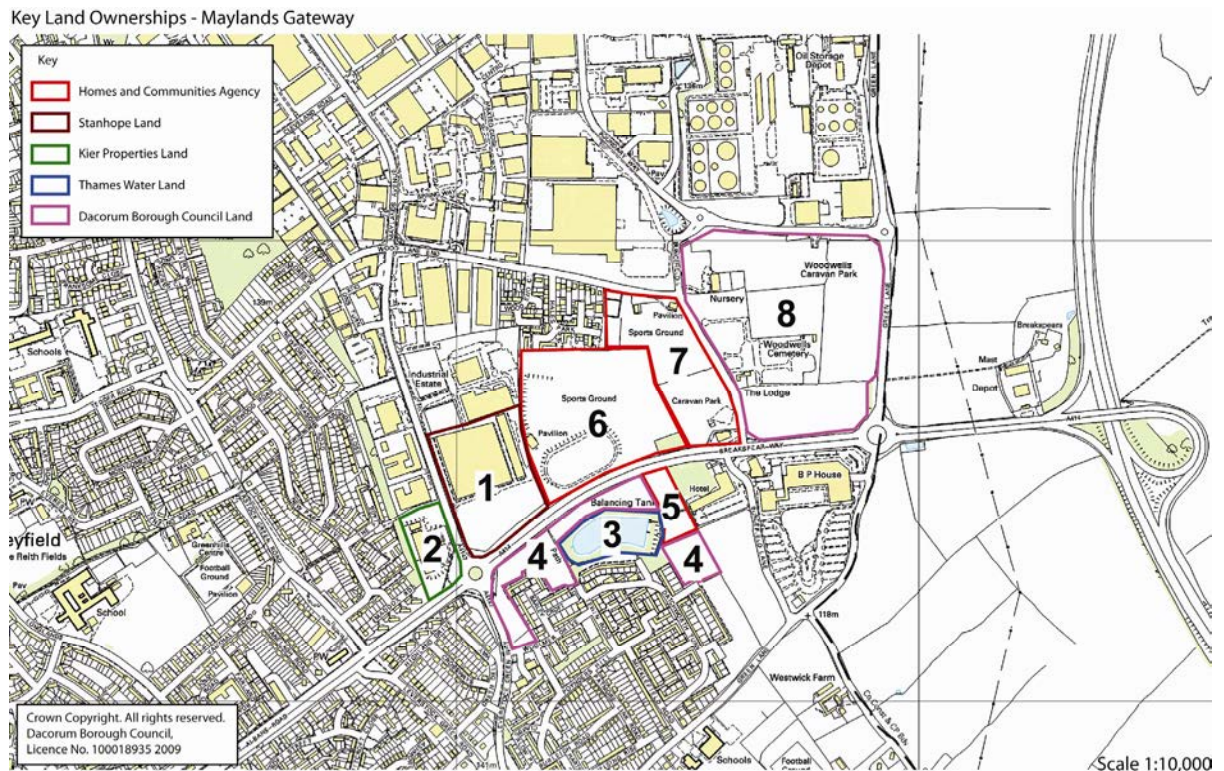
### Key Land Ownerships

- 3.5.25 There is a substantial area of land in the Gateway area (48ha – representing 15% of the 323ha total of the Maylands area) which is either currently undeveloped, or contains development which does not enhance the employment role of Maylands.
- 3.5.26 The availability of this extent of contiguous commercial land for development in a well-known and well-connected location is an exciting opportunity given the tight land supply of the South-East as a whole and the frequency with which other similar locations are often priced out of the marketplace by higher value residential uses.
- 3.5.27 The largely undeveloped nature of this land as shown in the aerial photograph extract means that there should be minimal land remediation costs required. This should keep the cost of development to a competitive level compared to many other such urban locations, which in turn should make the area attractive to the development market.



3.5.28 Land ownerships in the Gateway Technology Park area are generally in large lots. This will also facilitate development of the area by reducing problems associated with land assembly. The following plan (Figure 3.2) shows the key landowners in the area and the table below (Table 3.2) gives some brief details on each area.

**Figure 3.2: Key Land Ownerships - Maylands Gateway**



**Table 3.2: Key Land Ownerships - Maylands Gateway**

Site number	Site known as	Freeholder (as known from available Land Registry information)
1	Stanhope – the People Building	Norwich Union Life and Pensions Ltd
2	Former Royal Mail site	Kier Properties
3	Balancing tank site	Thames Water
4	Land adjacent to balancing tank	Dacorum Borough Council
5	Land adjacent to Holiday Inn	Homes and Communities Agency (formerly English Partnerships)*
6	Former Lucas sports ground	Homes and Communities Agency (formerly English Partnerships)*
7	Homes and Communities land – caravan park and former Kodak sports ground	Homes and Communities Agency (formerly English Partnerships)*
8	Woodwells Cemetery and caravan store	Dacorum Borough Council

\* Note: The Homes and Communities Agency may pursue the sale of their landholdings to a third party.

### **Opportunities in the Maylands Gateway area**

3.5.29 The Maylands Gateway area provides the opportunity to address many of the key factors identified in section 3 above.

3.5.30 With the area under two main ownerships, and the majority previously undeveloped, the potential exists through comprehensive design to create a new, well defined office and high technology area. This should be capable not only of providing the sort of accommodation required to attract major occupiers to the estate, but will also have a ripple effect on development and enhancement throughout the wider Maylands area.

3.5.31 The majority of the land within the Gateway area is also currently under public sector ownership. This opens up the potential for partnering arrangements with the private sector to deliver public realm, infrastructure and green business park initiatives.

3.5.32 The concept of comprehensive development to deliver a higher quality environment has already been embraced, with planning consent for office development having been granted for the redevelopment of part of the Gateway area. Whilst this should not prejudice the development of adjacent sites, it offers the opportunity to stimulate development across the remaining area.

- 3.5.33 The capacity exists within the large, previously undeveloped areas of land to create a significant mass of office accommodation. The Gateway area borders Breakspear Way on both sides and is visible from junction 8 of the M1 motorway. Development should enhance this visibility and competitive advantage and define Breakspear as the gateway to the wider Maylands business area, improving its prominence and market perception.
- 3.5.34 Further information regarding design expectations for the Gateway area is set out in the next section.