

MAYLANDS BUSINESS PARK

DESIGN STRATEGY - MAY 2013

URS



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MAYLANDS BUSINESS PARK - DESIGN STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

URS consultants were commissioned by Dacorum Borough Council in January 2013 to prepare a Design Strategy and subsequent Improvements Specification for the Maylands Business Park. The purpose of the project is to enhance the built and natural environment and address some of the issues raised in the Maylands Master Plan Document that related to the public realm. Broad aims include increasing the use of the business park, scoping out some of the issues and opportunities, improving connectivity for non motorised users, improving the Maylands Business Park brand and introducing a step change in the quality of public realm materials.

Recently a number of strategies have been prepared for the Borough Council and this report aims to highlight some of the main issues pertinent to this project. Furthermore in order to adopt a truly holistic approach the public realm proposals aim to be not only consistent with the issues identified in the aforementioned strategy documents but also with the extensive survey work that was undertaken at the start of the project.

This survey work has involved detailed site analysis and condition survey work, including a Pedestrian Environmental Review System (PERs) assessment as well as undertaking an initial baseline review including a comprehensive desktop research.

Maylands is a mixed use business park located on the periphery of Hemel Hempstead, to the east of the town. It is a large business park, covering an area of around 2.5km from north to south and 1.5km from east to west. The site is currently home to some 700 businesses providing employment for an estimated 20,000 people. Major land uses include offices, warehousing, distribution and storage. The Buncefield oil terminal is also located to the east of the Park. Guided by the Maylands Master Plan, the site is undergoing significant development and renewal. As more businesses locate to the business park greater volumes of vehicle traffic will be generated.

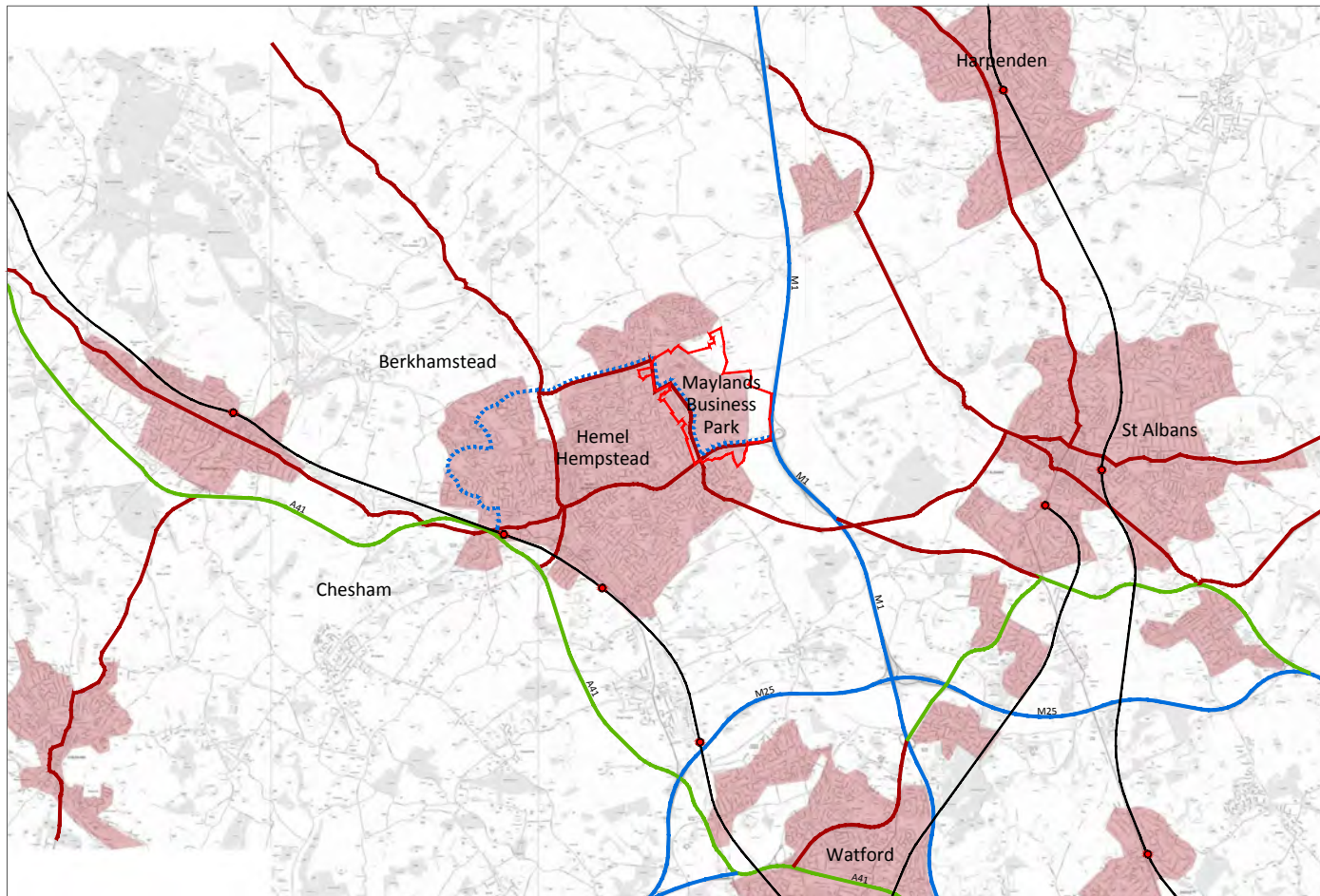


Figure 1.0 Site Context Diagram

As well as including general guidance on streetscape improvements the Masterplan describes how the general quality of the environment and public realm throughout Maylands suffers from inconsistent maintenance and quality. This deters investment and weakens the offer the business park provides to potential and existing tenants. Investment in these areas is a proactive way of lifting the quality and perception of the Maylands Business Park.

Improving the quality of the public realm throughout the business park is the main aspiration of this design strategy.

URS's role on the project includes

- Preparation of Design Strategy
- Preparation of an Improvements Specification
- Preparation of cost estimates for the improvements
- Indication of Phasing of Works
- Funding/Community Infrastructure Levy

POLICY REVIEW

A number of documents relating to the business park were reviewed as part of the desktop analysis. The documents that we reviewed as part of this study include:

Maylands Area Travel Plan 2011 - 2016

This document supports the aspirations of the Maylands Master Plan and aims to provide a programme for the delivery of initiatives to encourage sustainable transport for people working and living at Maylands Business Park. This is promoted through the provision of:

- A long term, sustainable travel management plan;
- A framework for existing and new Maylands businesses to adopt their own site-specific measures and encourage sustainable travel behaviour at individual workplaces; and
- A framework against which to assess planning applications for any new commercial development in the area.

The area travel plan also aims to provide a mechanism for the development of more strategic level measures that are relevant to the business park, such as the Maylands Parking Strategy. It also recognises conflict between non motorised users and vehicles

particularly at junctions during peak times where poor provision for cyclists and pedestrians becomes apparent.

The Nickey Line (National Cycle Network Route 57) is recognised as an alternative cycle link to the business park from residential areas of Hemel Hempstead, although the travel plan acknowledges that the route is predominantly used for recreational purposes and currently offers few connections from core areas into residential settlements.

East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan (AAP)

The East Hemel Hempstead AAP seeks to incorporate some of the elements of the Maylands Master Plan into the formal planning policy framework. It identifies the need to address under-performance of the area and to attract higher value, professional employers to meet the needs of our well qualified workforce.

Whilst not yet fully adopted the AAP recognises the poorly defined road hierarchy within the business park and also proposes a network of landscaped routes and small pocket parks in support of the Maylands Master Plan.

Marlowe's Improvement Strategy -2010

This strategy is intended to be used to implement public realm improvements that will significantly enhance the public realm and

streetscape of the Town Centre. The proposed measures focus on increasing the sense of pride and ownership in the town centre.

Amongst the key objectives of the plan, the strategy aims to create a safe and clean pedestrian streetscape and a series of coherent well connected spaces.

Although the study area is located some distance from the business park, an understanding of these proposals is important so that a consistent approach to environmental improvements is achieved.

Dacorum Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

Dacorum Borough Council has identified the following regeneration projects within the Maylands Business Park as developments where contributions will be sought from a range of uses as appropriate:

- Heart of Maylands
- Maylands Gateway
- Provision of renewable energy generation
- Sustainable Transport contribution in accordance

The development briefs and other guidance relating to these projects set out the Council's approach to seeking planning obligations. It

also defines the key areas of re-development within the business park study area which will reflect the hierarchy of highway and movement routes. This document was adopted by the council in January 2013.

Core Strategy (Adopted 2013)

The Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy recognises the role of Maylands Business Park and the challenge it faces to strengthen its role as part of the wider economic prosperity of the borough. It acknowledges that the area also suffers from a lack of services and facilities accessible to its daytime users.

The Core Strategy make specific reference to Maylands Business Park in Policy CS34: Maylands Business Park which amongst other things requires development to contribute fully to the achievement of design principles.

The policy outlines principles for guiding development and includes support for the Heart of Maylands development, the retention and improvement of the Nickey Line, the creation of new public meeting spaces, encouraging walking and cycling throughout the business park, as well as distinguishing between character zones.

Hemel Hempstead Town Centre masterplan - 2011-2021 (adopted 2013)

Dacorum Borough Council wishes to enhance the quality of the built environment and revitalise the town centre. Detailed advice is provided for each of the character zones to guide development proposals. This document aims at ensuring a holistic approach is taken to future improvements and that they are maximised across the town centre. A range of surface materials, street furniture and landscaping for use within each character area is also described.

The document also recognises sub-standard public transport, inadequate wayfinding and poor pedestrian and cycle linkages between the town centre, the railway station and Maylands Business Park as problem areas. It also reinforces the need to provide an appropriate safe and inviting route for cyclists linking the business park with the town centre. The masterplan was adopted by the Council as a supplementary planning document in January 2013.

Dacorum Green Space Strategy 2011 – 2016 (January 2011)

The strategy recognises that green spaces are integral to the Dacorum Borough, and are an important component of people's health and well being as well as contributing to the borough's economic prosperity, its biodiversity and its sustainability agenda. The Green Space Strategy is committed to improving the quality of neighbourhoods, meeting community and planning needs, and delivering the priorities of Dacorum Borough Council and The Dacorum Partnership.

It also includes the identification, improvement and promotion of accessible routes through Maylands Business Park from the surrounding residential areas as part of the implementation of the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan.

Policy HNE7 also seeks opportunities to develop a cycle link through High Street Green which runs close to the eastern boundary of the business park and links to Maylands Avenue and Marks Road. This is further strengthened by Policy HNE16 which seeks to identify, improve and promote access routes through Maylands Business Park from the surrounding residential areas.



Figure 2.0 Existing Green Open Space and Woodland

Dacorum Cycling Strategy (October 2009)

Dacorum Borough Council has a long term vision of continuing the improvement of cycle facilities in the borough to promote and encourage the uptake of cycling through providing safe and attractive transport infrastructure and to encourage and facilitate cycling as an alternative the private car travel.

This is supported county wide by Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2031) which commits to promoting a county-wide increase in cycling year on year.

As part of an integrated approach to transport, Dacorum Borough Council has also identified the following as priority routes:

- HH6 - Maylands Avenue shared paths
- HH7 - Queensway to Maylands advisory route (via Great Road, Ellingham Road, Briery Way, Cleveland Road, Maxted Road, Boundary Way, Three Cherry Trees Lane, Swallowdale Lane)

The cycle strategy's recognition of the important cycle routes assists in defining the hierarchy and phasing of improvements.

Dacorum Open Space Study (March 2008)

The Dacorum Open Space Study was undertaken in order to produce a comprehensive understanding of open space needs in the borough and provides technical support for the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

The study recognise the lack of high quality open spaces within the Maylands Business Park, and recommends that the business park provides some high quality recreational areas.

Maylands Master Plan: The Gateway to a Greener Future (Planning Policy Statement September 2007)

This document was prepared to promote the business park as the main employment area in Hemel Hempstead, and was formally adopted by Dacorum Borough Council as a Planning Policy Statement in 2007.

The Master Plan's vision is:

'To create an environment where a range of businesses can grow and prosper through the development of Maylands as a sustainable, well connected Green Business Park offering a high standard of accommodation within a pleasant high quality environment, served by a range of conveniently located shops and amenities'

The master plan identifies a series of character areas, a movement strategy and a green strategy for the business park and sets out guidance for development within the character areas. It is intended to be used in development control and in reviewing the local plan, taking aspirations forward in the new local development framework.

The document includes a series of recommendations relating to the design of the streetscape, and sees individual character areas as important in providing a hierarchal system of environmental improvements.

Maylands Landscape and Public Realm Visioning Plan

This document, published to support the Maylands Business Improvement District (BID) application identifies a range of interventions for the business park. It supports improvements the business park appearance as well as improvements to safety and security. It is also intended to support the Maylands Master Plan: the Gateway to a Greener Future.

The recommendations of the document illustrates the desires of the current landowners, businesses and public bodies and as such is beneficial in detailing the public realm and soft landscaping proposals.

Heart of Maylands Development Brief (October 2010)

The Heart of Maylands Development Brief describes the aspirations for future development in the Heart of Maylands character area. It sets out guidance on land uses, layouts, design and landscaping, access and movement and requirements for the delivery of sites in the Heart. It is intended to be used by Dacorum Borough Council to help guide development control considerations in the area.

Maylands Gateway Development Brief (May 2013)

The intention of this document was to emphasise the role of the area as a high quality business environment. The Gateway is seen as a key part of Maylands becoming a 'green' business park and seeks to encourage high quality development, including the provision of good quality, accessible open space.

The site is adjacent to Maylands Avenue which is seen as a major barrier to pedestrians and cyclists wishing to cross the highway. The guide defines a list of principles including the retention of a wide landscaped buffer between Breakspear Way and new development.



1 - Example of drainage issues



2 - Example of rutted pavement



3 - Example of trip hazard

suitability of current routes and identify improvements that could be made. Aspects of the public realm that have been assessed as part of this study include routes, links, crossings and public transport waiting areas. The full PERS report is included as Appendix A in this report. The PERS survey identified the following recommendations that require consideration in the design proposals:

- Improve surfacing where it is uneven;
- Provide clear and consistent crossing points;
- Provide a suitable crossing at the Northern end of Maylands Avenue;
- Ensure that signage is clear and constant to improve way finding across the business park and at key gateways into the area;
- Ensure that lighting is suitable for user after dark; Consider improving the route along Wood Lane End for pedestrians;
- Update public transport information as appropriate; and
- Maintain vegetation so that it does not encroach on footways or obscure sightlines.

SITE ANALYSIS

- PERS report

In order to survey and bench mark the existing public realm the Pedestrian Environment Review System (PERS) has been used.

This is a systematic evidence based process designed to assess the quality of the public realm. It has been used to measure the



4 - Example of fissures in paving



5 - Entrance to the off road cycleway



6 - Example of poor maintenance

CONDITION SURVEY

Footpaths/Cycleways

Within the business park there is a wide variety of hard surface treatments for footpaths and cycleways. These include; dense bitumen macadam, concrete paving flags, concrete block paving, resin bonded gravel, in-situ concrete paving and compacted bare earth.

In general the quality of the individual surface types tends to vary depending upon location. Those along relatively well used and higher profile routes such as Maylands Avenue appear to have a higher level of maintenance, whereas those routes which have lower pedestrian volumes tend to be less well maintained. Within those less maintained areas there are problems with concrete paving units not being level and creating trip hazards, and dense bitumen macadam is cracked, uneven, worn and moss covered e.g. Eastman Way.

A number of areas across the site as a whole suffer from a lack of general cleaning operations which is resulting in an accumulation of leaf litter and detritus along footpath edges.

A regular feature of the site is the presence of in-situ concrete at the vehicular entrances to plots. These tend to be in a poor state of repair and wheelchair access across many junctions is problematic. The width of the

footpaths tend to vary with the hierarchy of routes, i.e., Maylands Avenue has a relatively wide footpath at approximately 2 m wide, whereas the footpath along Wood End Lane is less than 1 m wide.

There is a generally lack of tactile paving at crossings other than those which are formal crossing points. Dropped kerbs are also inconsistently located in an apparent ad-hoc manner.

Along the majority of the dense bitumen macadam surfacing there has been repeated remedial works due to services which has resulted in a patchy appearance of the surface. In other areas the repair material does not match the surrounding original materials, e.g., DBM patched with Hot Rolled Asphalt (HRA) along Mark's Road.

There is an inconsistency with regards the edge treatment of the footpaths with some areas having a timber or concrete edging and others having no edging at all.

Examples of good pavement surfacing include the new section of DBM footpath adjacent to the Travel Lodge on Maylands Avenue and the resin bonded gravel paving within the People's Building complex.

Boundary Treatments

The boundary treatments across the business park are inconsistent and include; dwarf brick walls, timber post and rail fencing, post and wire fencing, chainlink fencing, steel hoop top fencing, steel palisade fencing, paladin fencing, timber panel fencing, 'Kee Klamp' steel railings, timber birds mouth fencing and steel post and rail fencing. Some plots have no boundary treatments at all.

The level of maintenance to boundaries is also generally poor with the majority of boundaries showing little of no maintenance. Examples of this are broken timber post and rail fences, damage posts to chainlink fencing and missing or damaged copings to brick walls. Marks Road is especially poor in terms of quality with low quality and poorly maintained brick walls dominating the western side of the road.



7 - Example of damaged boundary wall



8 - Example of damaged fencing



9 - Example of unattractive fencing



10 - Example of good boundary treatments

Planting and hedging

The type and quality of planting along plot boundaries varies widely without any particular connection with the plot location, business type, size of plot, age of plot etc. Generally the majority of planting along plot boundaries tends to be well maintained but a large number of areas are suffering from over mature planting. The new developments such as those at the junction of Maylands Avenue and Swallowdale Lane tend to have the better quality planting, although these tend to be recently installed and as such are not suffering from any specific maintenance issues.

The lack of a consistent approach to boundary treatments assists in producing a disparate appearance for the business park. The overall effect is a business park lacking a strong identity or brand.

Across the site there is the wide use of laurel as hedging and this creates some degree of uniformity. These hedges tend to be approximately 2.0m high and provide all year round interest.

Many of the large planting areas and hedges along plot boundaries have gaps or are over mature or contain species with limited winter interest. This results in large areas of bare ground being visible in the winter months.

It would appear a number of areas receive little or no maintenance and have reverted to scrub whereas some plots are fronted by rank grass and weeds e.g. along Maxted Road which give a poor appearance to the streetscape.

Where a single species hedgerow or planting bed occurs the plot boundaries are better defined and this provides a greater level of uniformity across the business park. Good examples of this are the Next site along Eastman Way and at the Atlas Copco site on Swallowdale Lane.



11 - Example of poorly maintained boundary



12 - Example of bare ground

Amenity space

Other than the relatively new pocket park which opened in May 2010, there is a lack of publically accessible amenity spaces within the site.

The Maylands Avenue pocket park, although less than three years old is poorly maintained with damaged seating and tables. The park is located adjacent to the busy Maylands Avenue but offers no protection from the noise of the traffic. At the time of the survey it showed few signs of its use by the public.

Gateways

The roundabout at the junction of Breakspear Way and Green Lane provides the location for a formal gateway feature known as the Phoenix Gateway sculpture. This is the only formal feature at business park entrances.

A number of opportunities existing to formalise or advertise arrival at the business park with gateway features or signage, these are as follows:

Highway entrances:

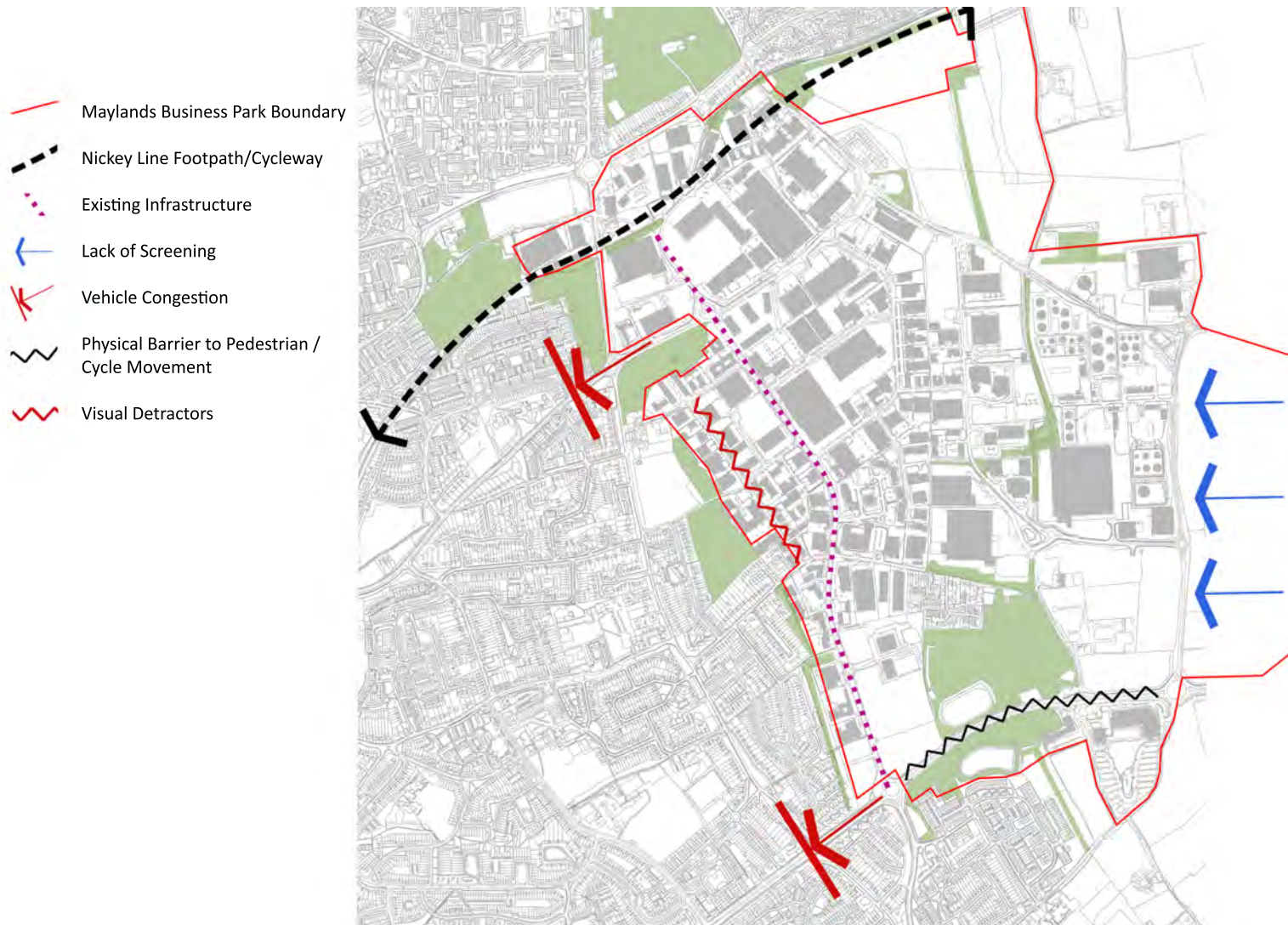
- Redbourn Road/Swallowdale Lane;
- Maylands Avenue/ Swallowdale Lane;
- Breakspear Way/ Maylands Avenue;
- Three Cherry Trees Lane/Redbourne Road; and
- Wood Lane End, adjacent to Mark Road junction.



13 - Existing pocket park amenity space



14 - Existing seating within pocket park



Pedestrian entrances:

- The Nickey Line;
- Briery Way/Mark Road;
- The Flags/Mark Road; and
- Farmhouse Lane/Mark Road.

Figure 3.0 Constraints Diagram

Street Furniture

The site lacks any street furniture other than seating within bus stops and the pocket park on Maylands Avenue. Informal seating has been provided by the cafes at the junction of Maylands Avenue and Wood Lane End.



16 - Example of poor street signage



15- Example street signage



17 - Example of street clutter

Wayfinding and Signage

There is a clear lack of consistency amongst street signage with four different types being present within the business park. This reinforces the lack of identity for the business park area and further adds to the sense of discordance. In a number of places the road signs on opposite sides of a road junction do not match e.g. the junction of Maxted Road with Maylands Avenue. In other locations the signs are in a poor state of repair e.g. the junction of Swallowdale Lane and Maylands Avenue .

Pedestrian and cycle routes are generally well signposted with destination and distances present on signage along with National Cycle Route information. The exception to this is the cycle route signage along Eastman Way. Here the signage is small and easily missed.

The Nickey Line is well signed at its entrances with interpretation boards indicating links to wider destinations.

Within the overall Maylands Business Park study area there is a number of smaller business parks. There is also inconsistency amongst signage design within these areas. This further erodes the sense of being within a wider business park.

Lighting

The lighting assessment was carried out on Thursday 18th April 2013 between 6pm and 11pm. Weather conditions were clear, temperature 7 degrees Celsius, visibility good and the road/footway surface was dry.

Summary and Recommendations

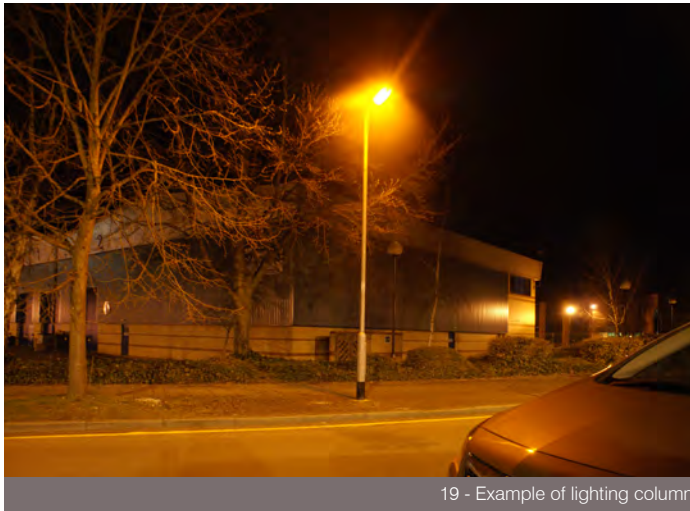
Lighting Columns

- Lighting columns are generally in a moderate condition throughout. Concrete columns should be considered for replacement.
- Lighting columns sited within the canopy of trees may require re-positioning or trees/foliage require to be trimmed to allow access for maintenance, full photometric distribution and efficient photocell operation.
- Some 5 metre lighting columns are of insufficient height to illuminate footways on the opposite side of the road. Increasing the mounting height to 6 or 8 metres may be considered as an alternative.

- Lighting columns are sited at consistent spacing/arrangement for the requirement of each road. Columns at junctions are sited in accordance with the relevant Annex from BS5489.
- Lighting columns appear to be regularly tested and maintained. Replacement columns have been installed as necessary on site.



18 - Existing lighting column



19 - Example of lighting column

Luminaires

- The majority of luminaires use Low Pressure Sodium type lamps. This source of light is monochromatic which leads to poor facial recognition and colour identification. A light source with a colour rendering index greater than 60 should be considered as a replacement.
- Luminaire brightness is adequate for the task. Luminaires mounted at 5 metres should be considered for replacement at a greater mounting height to allow for throw to the opposite side of the road.
- The general control of light is poor. A more controlled light source, such as LED, should be considered to prevent the amount of uncontrolled/upward light.



20 - Example of luminaire obstructed by planting

Lighting Levels

- Lighting levels are generally OK for main roads, although illumination of the opposite footway is not always achieved.
- Where adjacent private lighting has been installed the lighting levels peak on the adopted highway due to the contributory light, in addition to this, some private lighting has a high glare rating which can obscure the road user's vision.

Buncefield Lane

This link between Boundary Way and Wood Lane End is unlit. It is recommended that this section is provided with 2 or 3 new lighting units to provide continuity between the two roads.

The Nickey Line

The Nickey Line is a remote footway with low hanging trees and poor ground conditions in parts. This section of footway remains unlit. Lighting is recommended to encourage further use; however, a new lighting installation could be costly due to the lack of electrical supply and groundwork/overhead work required to supply/install columns.

Mark Road

The corner of Mark Road has a very low light reading (not used in results) It is recommended that a new lighting column is installed on the bend to provide consistency with the rest of the scheme.

Cleveland Road Footway

Lighting columns are spaced at large intervals along this section of footway. It is recommended that some infill lighting is installed to encourage increased use.

Pedestrian Strategy

The area surrounding the immediate study area of Maylands Business Park is well served by Public Rights of Way (PRoW), however they are concentrated to the northern and southern boundaries of the business park stopping short to the east and west, with no official north/south links within the business park itself.

The Maylands area travel plan 2011-2016 identifies that over a quarter of employees live within 5km of the Park, yet only 2% currently walk to work. The travel plan seeks to promote walking as a way of getting to work by producing information on walking routes and walking times from key residential areas, and combining this with park-wide initiatives and walking events. This design strategy aims to identify strengths and weaknesses in the existing footpath network and provide proposals to address current shortfall and support the planned development going forward.

The business park has been developed to facilitate efficient flow of vehicular traffic. Motor cars and delivery vehicles dominate, and as such it is not currently an inviting place to walk. Footpaths consisting of pavements, separated from the carriageway by grassed verges, align all major vehicular routes. In places they are uneven and in disrepair. There are currently no assisted crossing facilities for

pedestrians within the business park. Access to many more established developments is through the workplace car park. Both of these factors bring pedestrians into conflict with vehicles, particularly during the morning and evening peak.

Access to the business park from Hemel Hempstead for pedestrians is via:

- Link Road (A4147) / Redbourn Road (A4146) to the north-west of the town;
- Queensway / Swallowdale Lane or Wood Lane End from the town centre; and
- St Albans Road (A414) linking the park to the south of the town including the Station.

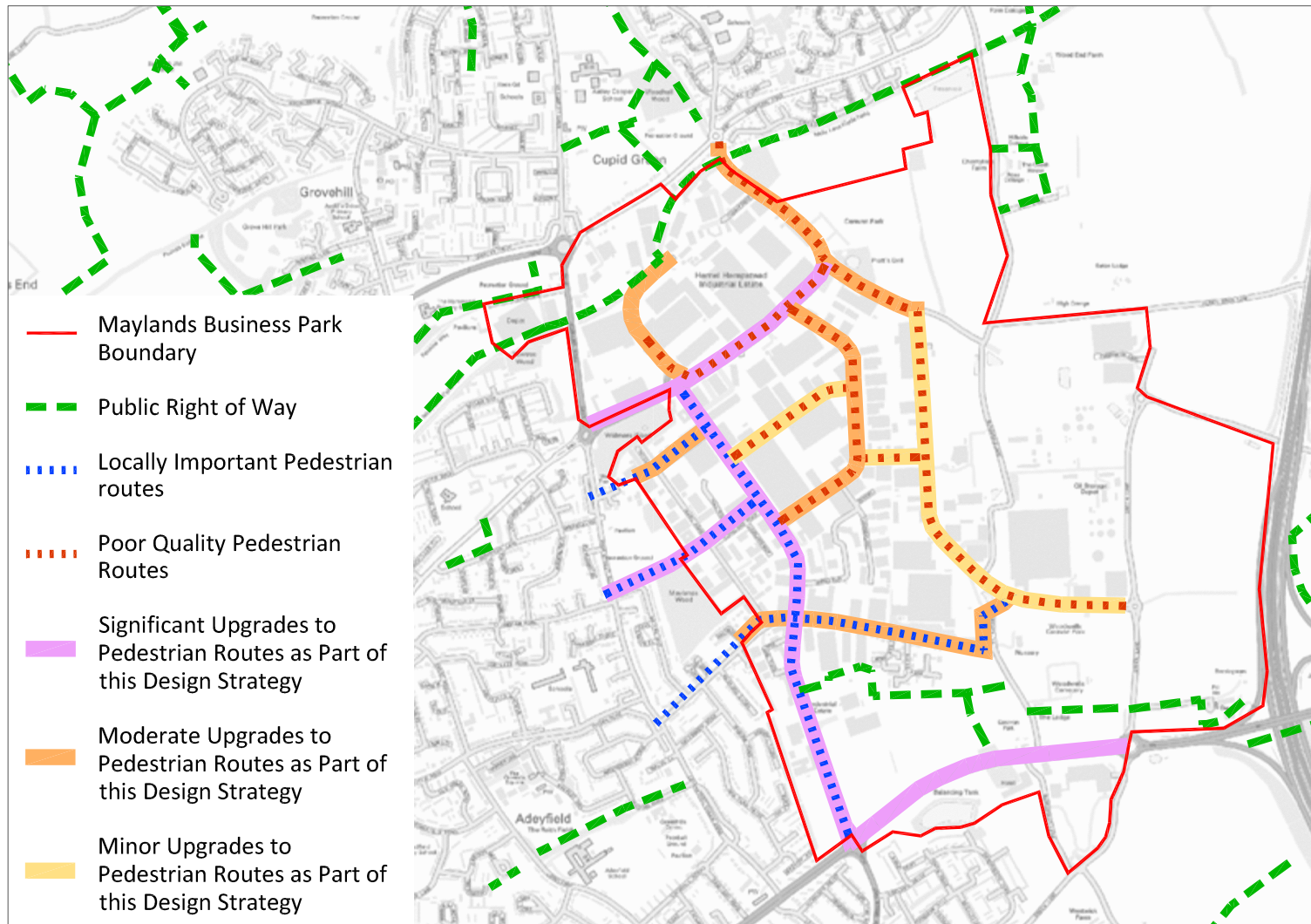


Figure 4.0 Pedestrian strategy

A condition survey and the PERS report of the business park have identified locally important pedestrian routes running north/south on Maylands Avenue with links off this main road to the residential area of Adeyfield to the west and into the business park east along Wood Lane End. However, further links east off Maylands Avenue into the central business park are of poor quality. This is illustrated on the pedestrian strategy plan, Figure 4.

- The area travel plan final report (2011) states “we aim to ensure the design proposals:
- Link important routes to Nickey Lane;
- Respond to the existing network of footpaths within site;
- Link to locally important pedestrian routes; and
- Address the varying quality footpaths throughout site.”

Dacorum Borough Council’s pedestrian and cycle vision identifies short term improvements to existing routes with upgrades of cycle routes and footways and issues such as lighting and provision of safe crossing point as being of paramount importance.

- Maylands Business Park Boundary
- Sustrans National Route
- - - Sustrans Proposed National Route
- Chilterns Cycleway Regional Route
- *Maylands on the Move* Recommended Cycle Routes (on road)
- - - *Maylands on the Move* Planned Cycle Routes (off road)
- Dacorum Borough Council 2009 Cycle Strategy - Priority 1 Route
- - - Dacorum Borough Council 2009 Cycle Strategy - Priority 2 Route
- . . . Dacorum Borough Council 2009 Cycle Strategy - Inter Urban Route
- - - New Off-Road / Significant Cycle Route Improvements as part of the Design Strategy and Improvement Specification Proposals

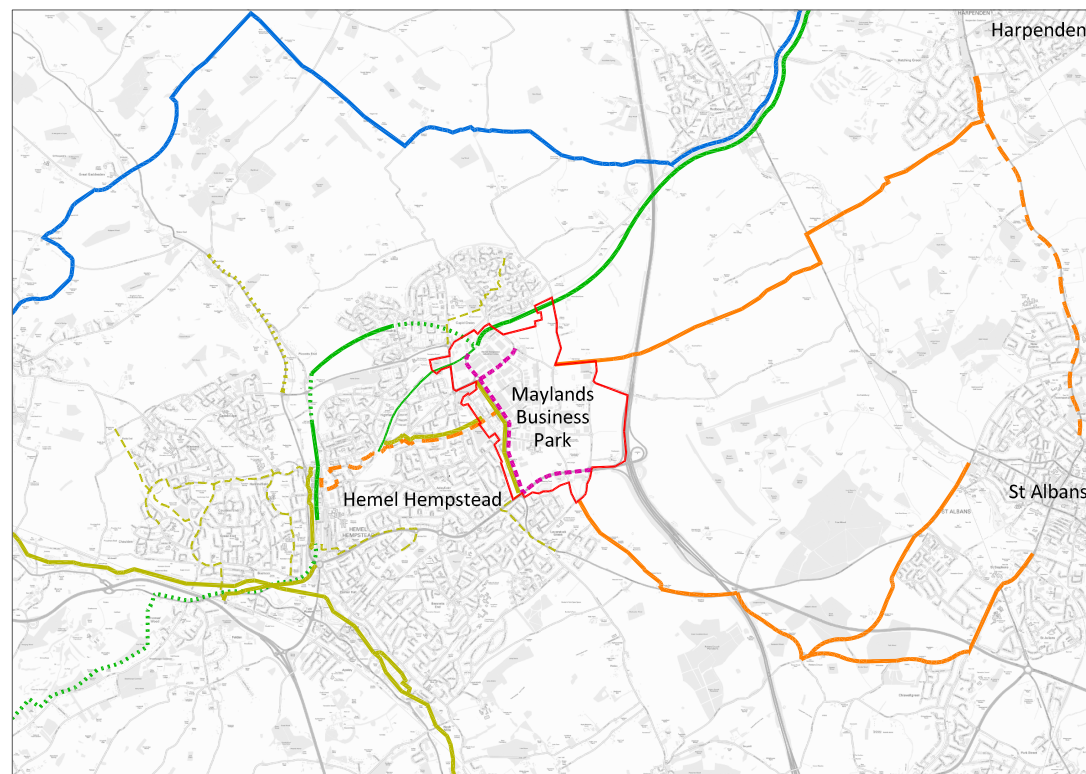


Figure 5.0 Cycling Strategy

The work to the pedestrian network within the business park is part of the longer term 'green' vision with the creation of new green corridors. These, along with improved signage (including from/to the town centre and rail station), will allow ease of movement to, from and around the park, promoting health by encouraging walking and, particularly at lunchtimes, pursuits such as jogging.

The proposals are illustrated on the pedestrian strategy plan (Figure 4), categorised into proposed significant/moderate/minor upgrades.

Cycle Strategy

The area surrounding the immediate study area of Maylands Business Park is served by a Sustrans National Route to the northern boundary. This is the Nickey Line (National Cycle Network Route 57) and it provides an alternative cycle link to the business park from residential areas of Hemel Hempstead and then onwards to Harpenden.

The Chilterns Cycleway Regional Route is present further to the north, with the two routes converging and running parallel from Redbourn in the north east. There are Maylands on the Move Recommended Cycle Routes (on road) to the east, connecting the business park with Harpenden and St Albans, but these stop at the eastern and southern boundaries of the business park. These routes are illustrated on the cycle strategy plan, Figure 5.

The Maylands area travel plan 2011-2016 highlights that the benefits of cycling are well documented and will be communicated to employers and employees on the Park.

The travel plan seeks to promote cycling with the production of site specific maps showing cycle routes and also journey time distances, encouraging individual employers to set up cycle to work schemes, and putting in place discounted cycle training opportunities. This design strategy aims to rectify weaknesses in the existing cycle network in order to support the aforementioned agenda.

There is currently poor provision for cyclists at junctions and a number of roundabout intersections. There are currently no on-street stands for cycle parking. Many individual occupiers provide cycle facilities for their employees and visitors at their own premises and new developments will be required to meet minimum standards regarding cycle parking provision.

Access to the business park from Hemel Hempstead for cyclists is via:

- Link Road (A4147) / Redbourn Road (A4146) to the north-west of the town;
- Queensway / Swallowdale Lane or Wood Lane End from the town centre; and



21 - Promotion of cycling

- St Albans Road (A414) linking the park to the south of the town including the station.

Dacorum Borough Council's Town Cycle Strategy is the basis of the cycling strategy element of this design strategy. The area travel plan final report (2011) states "Key aims of the cycle strategy include:

- Link to the Sustrans National Cycle Route/ Nickey Lane footpath and cycle route;
- Form links to planned traffic free cycles routes to Hemel Hempstead town centre;
- Make best use of the close proximity to Chilterns Cycleway Regional Route;
- Promote good cycle links to St. Albans and Harpenden; and
- Recognise the importance for local traffic free cycle lanes."

Dacorum Borough Council's cycle vision identifies improvements to existing routes. Quality crossing facilities will be included within all the junction modifications and linkages to the large residential areas surrounding Maylands will be improved. Improved signage will be a key element within this vision.

As part of these aforementioned strategies links will be improved between Adeyfield to the west, with the Maylands on the Move Planned Cycle Route (off road) proposed to link the business park with Hemel Hempstead town centre and the Leighton Buzzard Road (A4146). New off road/significant cycle route improvements will run north/south through the business park (shown on Figure 5), following Maylands Avenue, and serve to link the business park with Grovehill and Cupid Green to the north and the Leverstock Green area to the south (this being through the proposed signalised junction between A414 and Maylands Avenue).

A new link will be installed along the southern side of A414 between Green Lane and Maylands Avenue, extending into the proposed cycle link that will head east and then south along the new A414 to Chiswell Green.

Linkages will also be provided for in the future to possible Regional Residential Growth areas to the east and north of the Maylands Business Park.

The travel plan also identifies the need for visitor cycle parking into the Heart of Maylands area. It also aims to support the establishment of park-wide bicycle users group (BUG) which will provide a forum for those who regularly commute to work by bicycle and/or use their bicycle during working hours or want to be able to do so.



22 - Example of good public realm - Maylands Business Park



23 - Example of good boundary treatments - Liverpool Innovation Park

PUBLIC REALM PROPOSALS

The Vision

A key objective of the masterplan is to improve the quality of the environment throughout the business area through the creation of a hierarchy of open spaces, landscaping and improvements to the public realm. There is currently not enough high quality open space within Maylands. Open space in which to exercise, eat, relax or socialise contributes to the wellbeing and satisfaction of employees and is an important part of the modern business park environment.

Routes will also benefit from tree planting to define the street line and soften fencing in front of building plots. Improved lighting will improve illumination of the footway and enhance safety. Main public realm principles are:

- Reinforcing the Mayland's brand and unifying a disparate business park campus
- Introducing a hierarchy of spaces and streets
- Improved cycle/pedestrian links to surrounding areas
- Improving cycle/pedestrian connectivity within the business park

- Introducing a step change in the quality of materials
- Providing a safe and secure environment

Reinforcing the Mayland's brand and unifying a disparate business park campus

Currently the business park consists of a variety of different businesses occupying different sized buildings with different architectural styles. As a result the business park does not have a strong identity or brand. A range of public realm improvements are proposed to reinforce the Mayland's brand. The new business park shall be free from visual clutter and have a clean contemporary modern image associated with a business park of the 21st century.

In order to redress visual inconsistency as a result of different architectural styles and a variety of boundary treatments, a simple consistent approach to hard landscaping, street furniture, lighting, signage and boundary treatments is being proposed. Single species avenue trees will provide much needed consistency and continuity and single species hedge planting shall be used for different character areas. This shall replace the variety of fences, walls and railings that currently exist. Additional security shall be provided by metal vertical bar fencing.

Introducing a hierarchy of spaces and streets

At over 320 hectares, Mayland's Business Park is one of the largest business parks in the UK. The current road layout however doesn't afford any real hierarchy of spaces and as a result way finding can be problematic, particularly for visitors. The introduction of a hierarchy of treatments based on the character areas identified in the Maylands Master Plan is therefore being proposed as part of the public realm improvements.

Improved Cycle/Pedestrian Links to Surrounding areas

The proposed cycle/pedestrian improvements to the business park which are described in detail in the cycling and pedestrian strategies seek to improve connectivity to the Mayland's Business Park from recommended cycle routes to the south and east such as the Dacorum Borough Council priority 1 & 2 cycle routes and routes to the north such as the sustrans national cycle route. The scheme also aims to connect pedestrian routes to the west and north of Mayland's.

Improving cycle/pedestrian connectivity within the business park

As well as providing links to external routes, the proposals also allow for improving footpath and cycle provision within the business park. The proposals aim to increase footfall within the business park in order to improve natural surveillance, but also to encourage greater recreational use of the business park, by creating circular walks and cycle paths, while also improving routes to key facilities and amenity spaces.

Introducing a Step Change in the Quality of Materials

This design strategy recognises that the business park suffers as a result of the poor condition of the existing public realm. The proposals will therefore include introducing a step change in the quality of existing materials. This will involve introducing a new resin bonded gravel surface for all type 1 and type 2 footpaths. Where existing dense bitumen macadam surfacing is available and in good condition, this shall be used as the base course. If this is not available or in poor condition, a new dense bitumen macadam base course shall be installed prior to laying the resin bonded gravel.



24 - Example of cycle route

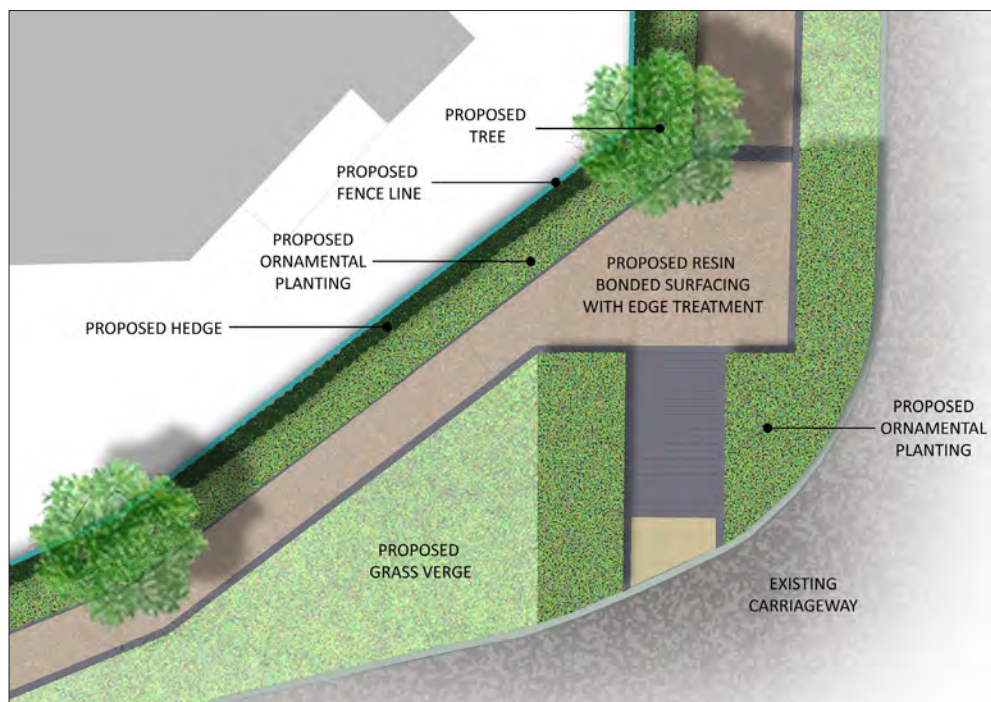


Figure 6: Typical Public Realm Treatment

This footpath shall be edged with new blue brick pavers, which shall also be used on the approach to junctions. This overall approach was deemed the most cost effective since existing dense bitumen macadam footpath surfaces could be retained and overlaid with a new resin bonded gravel wearing course. Some localised use of a regulating course may be required where the surface is undulating or has broken up.

A different coloured aggregate shall also be specified for the different character areas, to reinforce identity and hierarchy. As well as improvements to hard landscaped areas, high quality street furniture, improvements to lighting and high quality tree and shrub planting are also proposed as part of the scheme improvements.

Providing a safe and secure environment

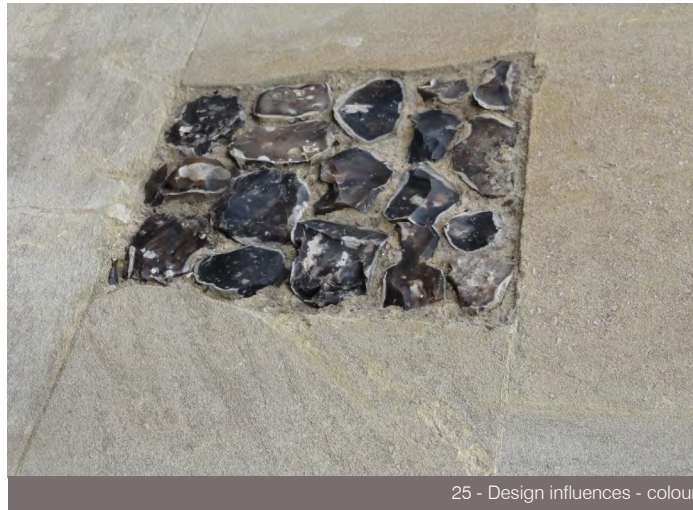
The proposals aim to provide a safe and secure environment for all users within the business park at all times of day. In order for the business park to offer the right conditions for flexible working hours, a 24 hour use of the business park should be available to employees. As a result the public realm should provide well lit routes and spaces that encourage night time activity. This will also increase natural surveillance which will again increase safety and the perception of safety within the business park. The scheme proposals shall also ensure that natural surveillance is maximised during the day and public realm improvements shall

be selected so that they do not impede visibility or allow places for intruders to lurk.

Design Influences – Materials, Textures and Colours

The scheme proposals have been influenced by traditional materials found locally in Berkhamsted, St Albans and Tring. These include blue clay brick pavers, sandstone paving and kerbs, as well as brickwork. Other traditional building materials such as chert nodules, brick tiles, dimensional sandstone and pebble dash finishes have also influenced the choice of materials. The proposals aim to reflect these traditional materials in a contemporary, modern way, since this will ensure that the proposals reinforce local identity and have cultural associations with the area. A contemporary take on these more traditional influences will however ensure a modern forward thinking image of the business park is projected rather than a historic pastiche.

The proposals also aim to reflect some of the local colours and textures that help to provide the richness that is observed in some of the more traditional building materials as seen in Tring, Berkhamsted and St Albans. The warm colour tones that are observed in the sandstones or brickwork contrast wonderfully against the darker blue and blacks of the chert nodules and blue brickwork.



25 - Design influences - colour



26 - Design influences - texture and colour



27 - Design influences - texture



28 - Design influences - colour



29 - Design influences - materials

Contrasting textures provided by the rough chert nodules and smooth sandstone has provided further inspiration that will be explored in the new hard landscape materials.

The proposals also aim to reflect some of the Hemel Hempsteads cultural associations with the photographic industry which was once a major employer in the area. The street furniture and signage proposals will therefore be a black in order to reflect the colour of the photographic film.



30 - Design influences - photography

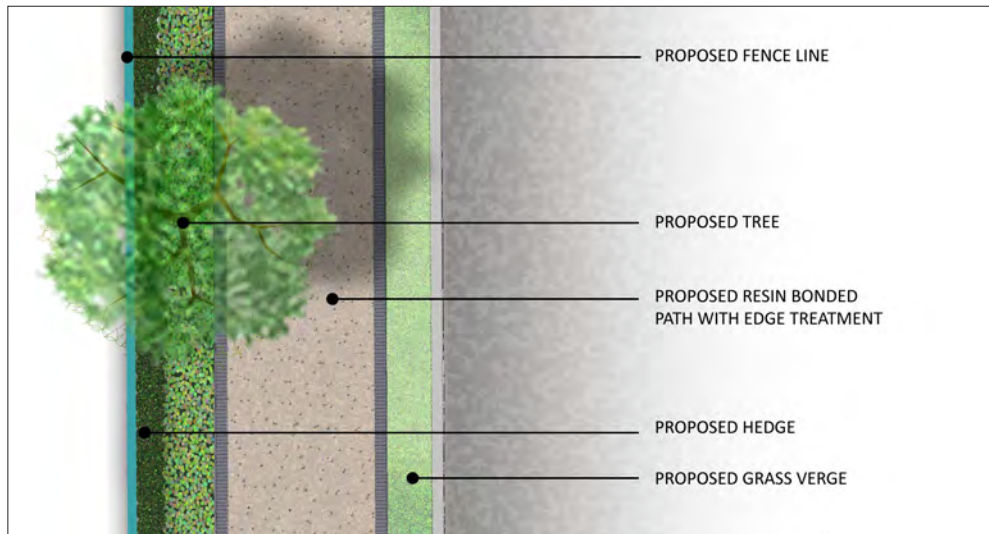


Figure 7: Typical Footpath Treatments

Principles of public realm improvements

This section sets out the broad principles of the public realm improvements for each of the identified character areas set out in the Maylands Master Plan.

Category Type 1 Improvements

- 3.0m wide type 1 resin bonded, gravel shared pedestrian cycle surface. (hard landscape treatment type 1)
- New boulevard tree planting (soft landscape treatment type 1)
- New single species ornamental hedge planting (soft landscape treatment type 1)
- New blue grey metal vertical bar railings (boundary treatment type 1)
- Finger post type 1 and new street signage
- New street furniture proposal type 1

Category Type 2 Improvements

- 2.0m wide type 2 resin bonded, gravel pedestrian surface (hard landscape treatment type 2)
- New native hedge planting (soft landscape treatment type 2)
- Finger post type 1 and new street signage
- New street furniture proposal type 2



Category Type 3 Improvements

- Existing surface repaired (hard landscape treatment type 3)
- Existing vegetation retained but gapped up where necessary (soft landscape treatment type 2)
- Finger post type 2 and new street signage
- New street furniture proposal type 3

These proposals aim to establish a simple hierarchy by introducing 3 distinct treatment types across the business park. Whilst distinct, these types will have common themes so that the proposals have a strong narrative thus ensuring that the business park also has a strong identity.

Figure 8: Concept Proposals



31 - Design influences - Maylands Gateway

Maylands Gateway

The aspiration for Maylands Gateway is that it becomes a first rate business park with some technology sector focus, containing a series of high quality, sustainable buildings set within a green landscape focused around a central lake.

Design & Materials:

- Company signage to be integrated into the overall building design.
- High quality exterior lighting
- Retention of a wide landscaped buffer between Breakspear Way and development
- Fencing between individual plots should be avoided
- High quality public realm encourages pedestrian and cycle movements.

The proposals for Maylands Gateway shall therefore be Category Type 1 Improvements.



32 - Design influences - Maylands Gateway



33 - Design influences - Heart of Maylands

Heart of Maylands

The vision for the Heart of Maylands is that it becomes the functional centre of Maylands, providing shops, cafes, restaurants, business services, community facilities, open space and access to public transport.

The emphasis of development within the 'Heart' will be around human activity and social interaction. This will be achieved by encouraging ground floor activity and enhanced by high quality public realm spaces. Where building uses are compatible with outdoor seating, it will be encouraged to contribute to an active public realm.

The public realm will provide areas for activity such as pavement cafés or areas for markets or events, as well as quieter areas to sit or linger.

A mix of uses are encouraged within the 'Heart'. Ground floor uses should promote street activity, and therefore shops, banks and financial services, restaurants and cafés and pubs or bars are sought.

The proposals for Heart of Maylands shall therefore be Category Type 1 Improvements.

Face of Maylands

Particular improvements are needed along Maylands Avenue, due to its role as the main route into Maylands, the location of high end users and the identification of it as being the 'Face of Maylands'. Distinct pedestrian and cycle routes will enhance the pedestrian environment, mature trees along footpaths, and at the centre of the carriageway will give the route a boulevard character as well as having aesthetic and environmental benefits.

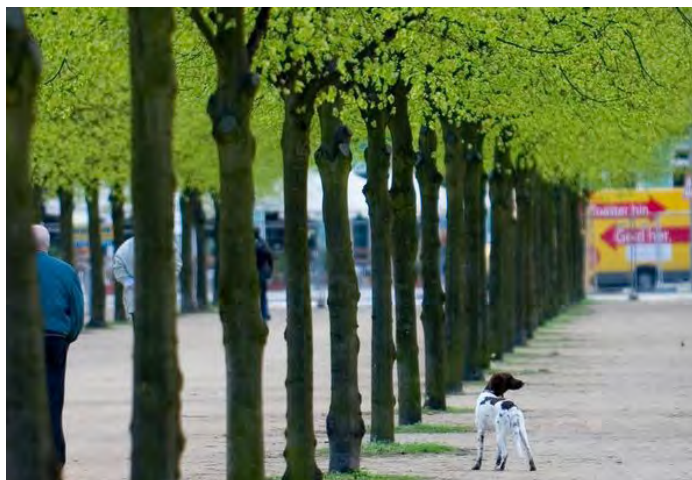
The vision for the Face of Maylands' is a high quality development, within a people-friendly environment to create a sense of place and arrival for Maylands. Along with the Gateway, it will be Maylands' core office location.

The treatments of footpaths and cycleways will be of a high quality to encourage other uses than the car. Generous path widths will resolve conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists and space will be provided for high quality planting and boundary treatments.

Design & Materials:

- Good quality hard landscape materials
- Introduction of High quality exterior lighting
- Good quality street furniture
- High quality boundary treatments
- High quality soft landscape treatments
- Screening of refuse storage facilities

The proposals for Face of Maylands shall therefore be Category Type 1 Improvements. This is also consistent with the pedestrian and cycle strategies where pedestrian and cycle routes are required along this section.



34 - Design influences - Face of Maylands

Engine Room

'The Engine Room' aims to provide the conditions to encourage enterprise and investment in a range of industrial and commercial uses, offering more flexible terms for development and business occupation.

A consistent approach is proposed for hard and soft landscaping in order to lift the quality of the environment.

Design & Materials:

- Retention of existing hard landscape materials
- Introduction of new wayfinding/signage
- Some introduction quality street furniture
- Retention and repair of existing boundary treatments
- Introduction of soft landscape treatments to bolster existing
- Screening of existing refuse storage facilities
- Retention of existing exterior lighting where necessary

The proposals for the Engine Room shall therefore be Category Type 2 Improvements unless pedestrian and cycle improvements necessitate a treatment type 1 approach.

Service Centre

'The Service Centre' aims to encourage investment and enterprise but its location near to routes identified for HGV traffic will be of particular advantage to the active distribution and logistics sectors.

Design & Materials:

- Retention of existing hard landscape materials
- Introduction of new wayfinding/signage
- Occasional Good quality street furniture
- Retention and repair of existing boundary treatments
- Introduction of soft landscape treatments to bolster existing
- Screening of existing refuse storage facilities
- Retention of existing exterior lighting where necessary

The proposals for the Service Centre shall therefore be Category Type 3 Improvements.

Hard Landscape Proposals

The hard landscape proposals for the three treatment types shall consist of either bonded gravel surfacing or the application of a dense bitumen Macadam regulating course. In order to establish a hierarchy there are differences between the application method as well as aggregate type for the bonded gravel surface.

Hard Landscape Treatment Type 1

This shall consist of a buff / natural coloured resin bonded gravel (3-6mm nominal size) which shall be applied to a new 3.0m wide surface. Where possible the existing dense bitumen macadam surface shall be used albeit with a regulating course where necessary. Blue engineering brick shall form the edgings and

these shall be laid on edge in a soldier course laying pattern.

Hard Landscape Treatment Type 2

This shall consist of a natural coloured tar and chip gravel surface which shall be applied to existing dense bitumen macadam, or in-situ concrete footpaths. If the condition of the existing surface is damaged or undulating, then a dense bitumen macadam regulating surface shall be applied. The colour of the gravel shall be darker than that used for type 1 surfaces. Existing edgings shall be retained.

Hard Landscape Treatment Type 3

This shall consist of repaired existing dense bitumen or a new macadam regulating course

which shall be applied to existing macadam or in-situ concrete surfaces. Any existing paving flags will be replaced with a new dense bitumen macadam paving. Existing edgings shall be retained.

Prior to final confirmation of paving materials the council will however require confirmation that materials are readily available and any warranties meet the council requirements.



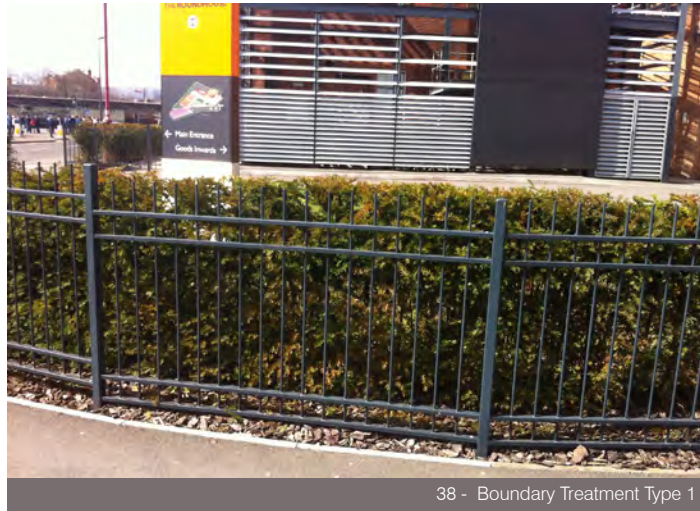
35 - Hard Landscape Treatment Type 1



36 - Hard Landscape Treatment Type 2



37 - Hard Landscape Treatment Type 3



Boundary treatments

The new boundary treatment proposals for the 3 treatment types shall consist of either a formal hedge planting with new metal bar fencing, or a new mixed native hedge with a timber post and rail fence, or retention of existing planting but gapped up where necessary. Existing fencing for type 1 and 2 treatments shall, on the whole, be replaced.

Boundary Treatment Type 1

This shall consist of a new mild steel vertical bar fencing powder coated blue grey which shall be installed on the plot boundary. A new single species ornamental hedge of either laurel or photinia red robin shall be planted in front of the new fence. All existing boundary treatments are to be replaced.

Boundary Treatment Type 2

This shall consist of a new timber post and rail fence which shall be installed along the plot boundary. A new native hedge of either beach, hornbeam or hawthorn shall be planted in front of the new fence. All existing boundary treatments shall be replaced unless fences are in a good condition and planting consists of existing native hedging.

Boundary Treatment Type 3

In this instance existing boundary treatments shall be retained wherever possible unless in a poor state of repair, in which case fences will be repaired and planting shall be bolstered with new native hedge planting.



41 - Street Furniture Type 1



43 - Street Furniture Type 2



42 - Street Furniture Type 1



44 - Street Furniture Type 2

Street furniture proposals

Street furniture will be of a consistent quality. The aim will be to use subtle changes for each Character Area in order to give each zone a specific identity within the wider Maylands brand. It will also give each area a sense of place, and aid its functionality in terms of being a wayfinding tool. Where possible all benches should be designed to have backs.

Street Furniture Proposals Type 1

The proposed benches shall consist of a black granite bench. This is the highest quality sheet furniture thus helping establish a hierarchy of treatments. The black benches have been chosen to reflect the black theme for sheet furniture and signage. The black colour reflects the acetate film once used in the photographic industry which was once a major employer in the area. Litter bins shall be stainless steel but also with the black colour to reinforce this theme.

Street Furniture Proposals Type 2

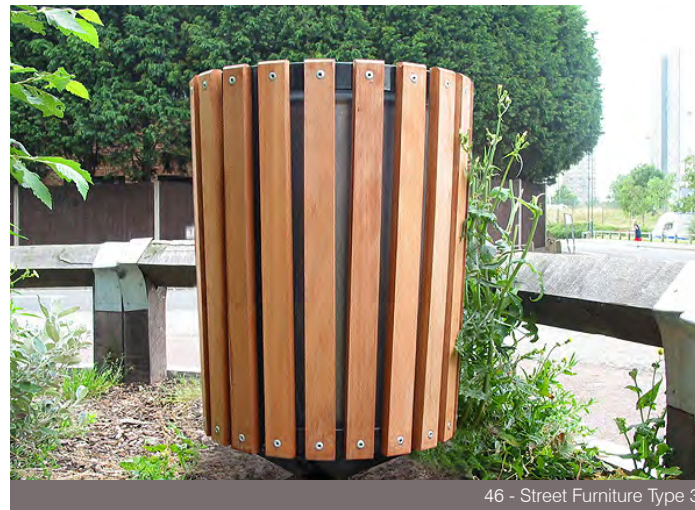
Although more cost effective than the granite bench, this shall be a good quality timber bench with a dark stain to reinforce the colour theme. Litter bins shall match the type 1 bin but shall have a timber door and back panel to match the timber bench. Again the timber shall be stained.



45 - Street Furniture Type 3

Street Furniture Proposals Type 3

The seating proposed here will be a more informal timber seat to reflect a decreased intensity of use. The seating reflects the move to a more rural character of the business park where influences consist of native hedges and pockets of woodland. A timber litter bin is proposed to match the bench. Where deemed necessary bins shall also have closed tops.



46 - Street Furniture Type 3



47 - Soft Landscape Treatment Type 1

Soft landscaping and Tree Planting

Soft Landscape Treatment Type 1

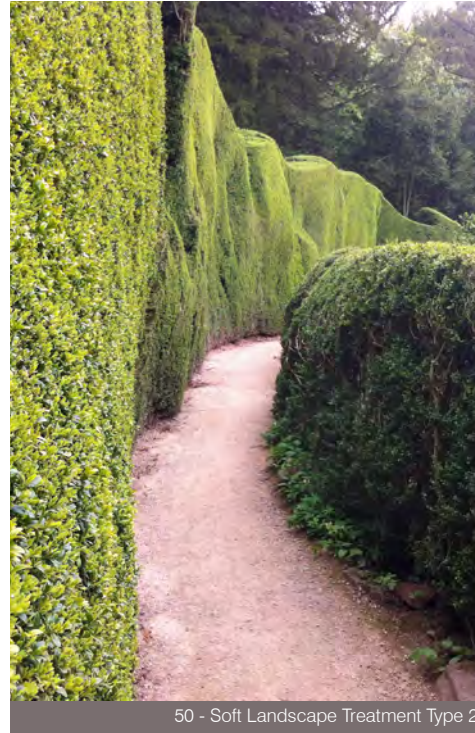
Proposed hedge planting shall consist of formal ornamental hedges where as path side planting shall be ground cover ornamental shrub planting with emergent herbaceous planting to provide visual and ecological diversity. Proposed tree planting that is located along plot boundaries shall be small to medium sized trees with either light canopies casting dappled shade such as bird or flowering species such as magnolia.



48 - Soft Landscape Treatment Type 1



49 - Soft Landscape Treatment Type 2



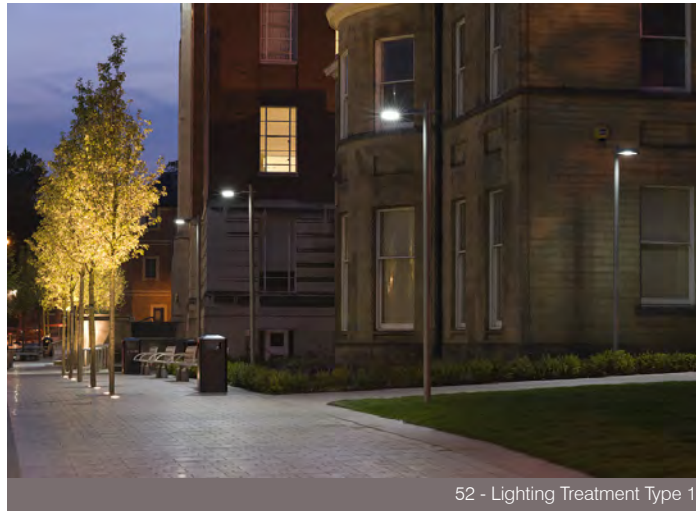
50 - Soft Landscape Treatment Type 2



51 - Soft Landscape Treatment Type 2

Soft Landscape Treatment Type 2

Proposed hedge planting shall be native hedges such as beach, hornbeam or hawthorn. This can either be clipped to maintain a formal appearance or less well maintained to give a more informal look. Again, planting will be ground lower shrub planting with emergent herbaceous planting. Species choice shall reflect a more informal environment and native wildflowers and herbaceous plants shall be used where ever possible. The planting will have a more natural characteristic towards the periphery of the business park where the influences over semi rural. Boulevard trees will again be small to medium size trees but consist of native species such as wild cherry or field maple.



Lighting

Lighting Treatment Type 1

Lighting proposals shall consist of new lighting columns and lanterns emitting LED white light. Column heights shall generally be 10.0m and spaced at 30.0m centres. Double headed lanterns shall be fitted to columns to light up the shared footpath / cycle ways as the carriageway. Columns shall be powder coated blue grey. The use of LED lighting shall reduce long term maintenance costs.

Lighting Treatment Type 2

Existing columns shall be retained and painted blue grey. Lanterns shall be changed to match those used in lighting type 1, so that LED lights emit a white light. A single lantern shall be used with carriage way lighting taking priority over footpath lighting.

Lighting Treatment Type 3

Existing light columns and lanterns shall be retained. As part of ongoing maintenance works the columns should however be painted blue grey to match those in type 2.



54 - Example of existing confused wayfinding



55 - Example of clear, simple wayfinding

Way Finding and Signage

Signage is an important part of creating identity as well as having the functional value of being a navigational tool. It is, therefore, important to establish a coherent signage strategy.

Maylands Business Park signage however is poor. Visitors and employees find it difficult to negotiate their way around the business park. Poor signage creates a poor impression of the business park estate. Too many signs, different types of sign and colour, clutter views and detract from the aesthetic quality of the business park. Heterogeneous signs also fail to establish a strong Maylands brand.

All Maylands signage should show the Maylands logo as a minimum. Larger signs should also refer to the area as the 'Maylands Business Park'. This strategy applies to external signs only.

Signage Principles

- All signage shall be in accordance with the Maylands branding
- Signage to use colours to help identify different zonal areas
- All buildings should be appropriately signed externally, making clear the name of the business occurring within the building.
- All incorrect or misleading signs should be removed or replaced;
- All wall mounted and monolith signs should correspond to agreed, standard formats recognising the Maylands brand (see image 59).
- Building signs should be kept to a minimum, consistent with clarity. Location is therefore critical; a building (or entrance) should normally have just a single well-positioned sign, either freestanding or wall mounted.
- Wayfinding signs should be located at key congregation points, car parks and pedestrian entrances to the business park. In this way, free-standing waymarkers should be minimised.
- Streets signs should be clearly readable from vehicles and consistent with the guidelines above;
- The business park will work with the Local Authority to ensure street signs are correct and kept to a minimum. There is a proliferation of unnecessary, inappropriate and unsightly street signs around the business park.
- All unnecessary signage should be removed to declutter areas and improve the visual appearance of the business

park. This will require liaison with and agreement from individual plot owners

- Signs with 'instructions' (e.g. no parking) should also be consistent with brand, should only be used where absolutely necessary, and the number of signs minimised (ie by using single, low height posts or painting on roadway rather than a free-standing sign).

Street name plates

All existing street name plates shall be replaced, within the Maylands Business Park with a black street sign with white lettering.

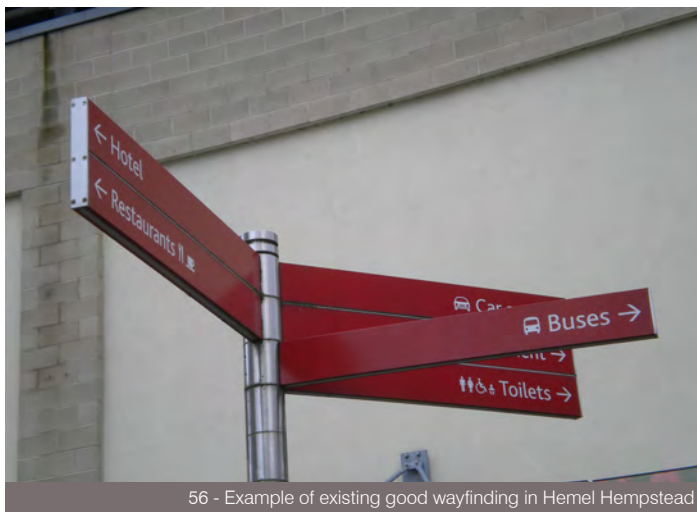
The use of black in the street name plate is consistent with other proposed street furniture whereby the black colour reflects the colour of the photographic film. A single type of street name plate will help to provide consistency and give the business park a stronger identity since currently there are various types of signage in use around the business park. The street name plate should be of a bespoke design rather than a standard DBC street sign in order to reinforce the Maylands identity. Walking distances should be shown on name plates as indicated in image 58 below right.

Wayfinding signs or finger posts

Finger Post Type 1

Finger posts shall be of a similar type to those used in Hemel Hempstead. Instead of the white lettering on the red background it is proposed that the Maylands finger post has white lettering on a black background. Again as with the street name plates, the use of black as a background colour is consistent with the other proposed street furniture. A suit of like minded objects speaking the same language again helps reinforce the Maylands brand and creates a strong identity. The post itself will be in stainless steel.

Finger Post Type 2



56 - Example of existing good wayfinding in Hemel Hempstead



57 - Finger Post Type 1



58 - Example of street plate showing walking distance



59 - Example of good quality free standing sign to form precedent



60 - Example of good monolith

This finger post shall be as finger post type 1 but with orange lettering.

Free-standing signs or monoliths

Free-standing signs or monoliths should only be used in the curtilages of the plots where building (on-wall) signage is not visible from the pavement or key access routes on foot, or when site entry is only possible by road and is required to indicate building location or parking facilities. Monoliths should be used selectively at entry points to the business park and in the Heart of Maylands.

Free Standing Signs

Free standing signs should be similar to the People Building design (see image 59) but with the use of black instead of an orange background colour. This is again to reinforce the Maylands brand and improve a sense of place.

Monoliths

Monoliths shall be of a similar style to the legible London type monoliths constructed from steel with a vitreous enamel paint work.



61 - Example of Gateway Feature - Chris Brammall



62 - Example of Gateway Signage - Chris Brammall

Wall mounted signs

Wall mounted or building signs should have the Maylands Business Park name and logo as well as the name of the individual business. Wall-mounted signs should be the sign of choice. There should be only one clearly visible sign per building/entrance. Larger signs should be used where a building is seen from road. Smaller signs are appropriate where buildings are approached on foot.

Public Art /Gateway/Entrance Features

Public Art and Gateway features should be strategically located at gateway points to the business park. Sculptural pieces should be bold contemporary public art works that reflects a modern, high tech business park of the 21st Century. Proposed Public Art should also have cultural and historic associations and reflect local identity, such as the former photographic industry for example.

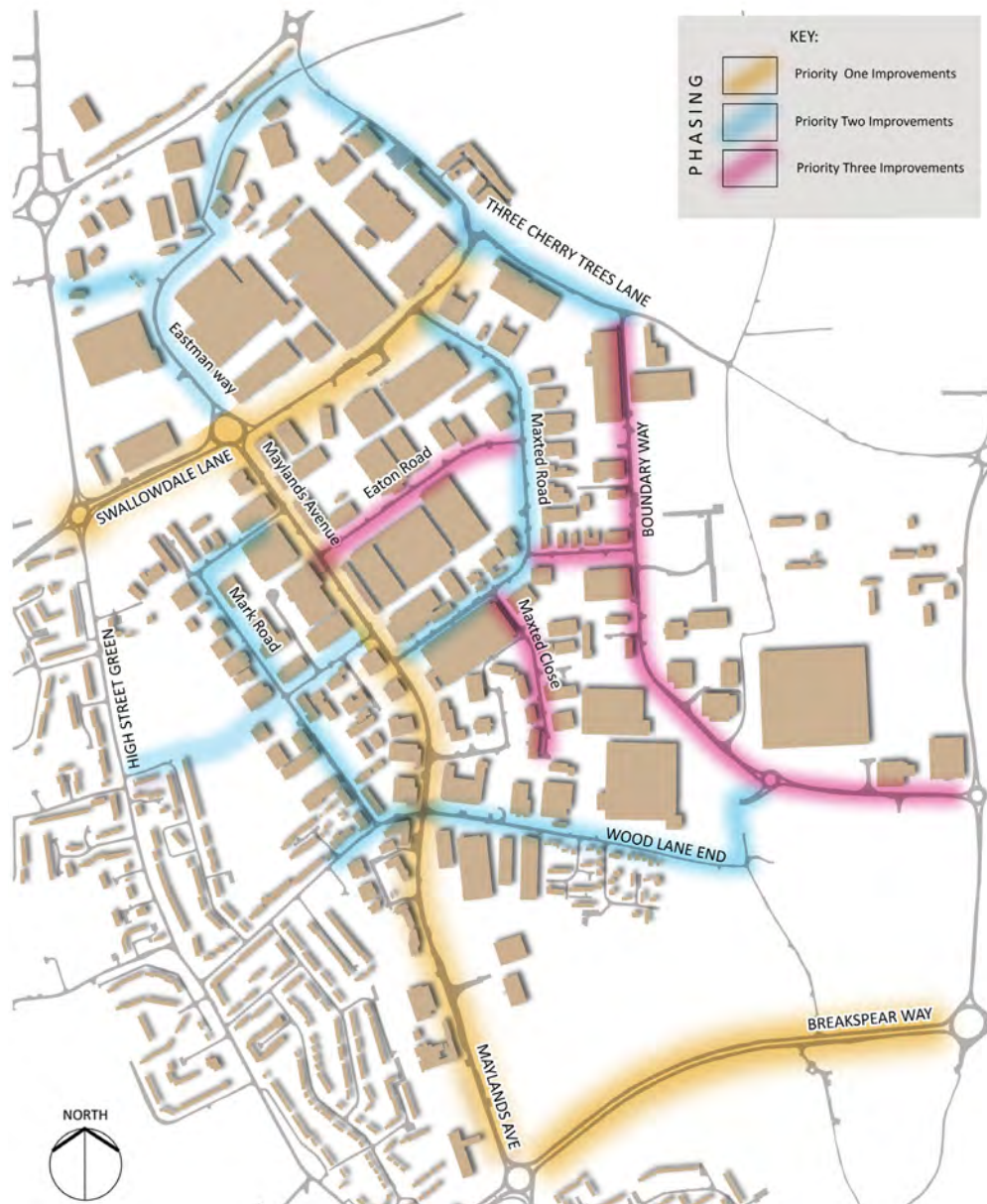


Figure 9: Phasing Diagram

Phasing

The public realm improvements identified in this report involve a series of connected interventions that seek to redress many of the issues that have had a negative influence on the public realm and the Maylands Business Park generally. It is anticipated that the overall programme of delivery will take place over a number of years and financed by developer contributions and in particular section 106 contributions. As a result the public realm improvements have been separated into 3 priority areas.

Priority 1 involves the category 1 improvements and consists of the high priority areas such as Maylands Gateway, Heart of Maylands and the Face of Maylands. These areas form the public face of the business park and as such contribute to giving the business park its image or brand. Improvements here will therefore have an immediate effect of raising the profile of the business park and improving its image. Furthermore these areas have been identified as priority 1 areas since improvements in these locations will have the greatest impact on achieving the public realm principles as identified in the vision section as well as the overarching Maylands Masterplan Document.

Priority 2 improvements continue to fulfil the aims and objectives of the public realm vision

and consist of the category 2 improvements. These have principally been identified for the Engine Room area of the business park. The public realm areas in this location, albeit important, are not as high profile as the Priority 1 improvements and contribute less to creating the Maylands brand. That said, it is important for these improvements to be undertaken in order to create a unified whole and strong identity for the business park. It is also important that the existing users are encouraged to make greater use of the public realm and these proposals will assist with this aim.

Priority 3 improvements, again, continue to meet the aims and objectives of the public realm vision as well as the overarching aims of the Maylands Masterplan. These will consist of category 3 improvements as identified for the Service Centre area and where the intensity of pedestrian and cycle use is less than in other parts of the business park. The type of intervention therefore reflects this and as such, consists of more low key interventions than the aforementioned phase improvements. It is important that whilst improvements in this area are less extensive, user groups in the Service Centre Area should not be forgotten and encouraged to use the public routes and spaces not just for their own benefit but also to increase footfall and improve natural surveillance across the business park.

Whilst these priority areas have been identified there will nevertheless be separate sub-phases within these priority areas based on the extent

of developer contributions available for these works.

DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions as a preferred mechanism to fund the Maylands Design Improvements

New commercial development in Maylands Business Park can bring significant benefits to the local community, including jobs and increased local spending. However, there are some impacts on the local area as a result of this development, for example more people using local facilities such as roads, footways and public spaces in the area.

The public realm design interventions proposed within this design strategy will help address these impacts and these costs will be met through planning obligations (also known as s106 agreements – of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act) as set out in the Government’s Planning Circular 05/05 and within local planning policies. Section 106 agreements are commitments made by the developer and formalised by a legal agreement under the Planning Act.

The planning obligation associated with new development at Maylands Business Park would comply with the following three tests as set out the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010:

- They would be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- They would be directly related to the development; and
- Would be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Dacorum Borough Council, which recently held a formal consultation on its CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule, has confirmed it does not intend to use CIL to fund public realm improvements in Maylands, so there is no risk of the Council double charging developers for the same infrastructure (something that the 2010 CIL Regulations states charging authorities must avoid doing). The 2010 CIL Regs also state that from the adoption of CIL (or from April 2014, whichever is earliest) S106 monies towards a particular piece or type of infrastructure will only be able to be pooled from a maximum of five planning obligations, so after this date public realm improvements within Maylands Business Park should be implemented on a site by site basis or once up to a maximum of five planning contributions has been collected.

It is understood that the local planning authority intends to seek S106 contributions related to specific A3 sheets within the improvement specification to part fund the works, which will ensure that as these individual sheets can be referenced within S106 agreements and that the issue of pooling (whereby only a maximum five s106 payments can be taken for any one scheme) can be overcome by only relating to the individual sheet rather than the specification as a whole.

The local planning authority also confirms that S106 contributions will total around twenty percent of the total cost of the scheme with the other funding coming from Dacorum Borough Council and external funding sources such as the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).

Local policies and priorities

The Dacorum Corporate Plan identifies the following priorities over the period 2012 and 2015, which it will work towards with partners:

- Secure regeneration and development at Maylands Business Park, based on the Maylands Master Plan
- Secure the best possible infrastructure development so that people have a vibrant economy accompanied by good quality of environment and open spaces,

and other infrastructure – backed up by the Local Planning Framework, the Community Infrastructure Levy, and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

- Create the conditions that keep businesses in the area and attract new ones – as the place to do business

Policies 12 and 13 of the adopted Dacorum Borough Local Plan (2004) provide a general basis for securing contributions from developments towards the various types of infrastructure and facilities.

Within the Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy policy CS35 states that the Council will use planning obligations to ensure that developers make appropriate contributions towards the infrastructure required to support their development. These contributions will be used to mitigate the impacts of development; and provide infrastructure to support that development.

The Dacorum Borough Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2011) explains the Planning Objectives that Dacorum Borough Council will pursue in seeking planning obligations; sets out the evidence of need to substantiate the levels of contributions that will be sought for certain types of infrastructure; and gives details of the

Council's requirements; and describes the procedures that the Council will be followed in securing planning obligations. Within this document the Council identifies Maylands Business Park as an important regeneration project where contributions are particularly likely to be sought on a site by site basis in relation to environmental Improvements.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Design Strategy and Improvements Specification Project is to enhance the built and natural environment and address some of the issues raised in the Maylands Master Plan Document that related to the public realm. Broad aims include increasing the use of the business park, improving connectivity for non motorised users, improving the Maylands Business Park brand and introducing a step change in the quality of public realm materials.

The public realm improvements identified in this report involve a series of connected interventions that seek to redress many of the issues that have had a negative influence on the public realm and the Maylands Business Park generally. It is anticipated that the overall programme of delivery will take place over a number of years and be financed by developer contributions and in particular by a community infrastructure levy

In order to adopt a truly holistic design approach, the public realm proposals also aim to be consistent with issues identified in key strategy documents and also with the extensive survey work that was undertaken at the start of the project.

Improving the quality of the public realm throughout the business park is the main aspiration of this design strategy and URS's role on the project has included :

- Preparing of a Design Strategy
- Preparing an Improvements Specification
- Preparing cost estimates for the improvements
- Providing an indication of phasing of works
- Providing advice on Funding/ Community Infrastructure Levy

In order to survey and bench mark the existing public realm the Pedestrian Environment Review System (PERS) has been used (see Appendix A). This is a systematic evidence based process designed to assess the quality of the public realm.

Within the business park there is a wide variety of hard surface treatments for footpaths and cycleways. Boundary treatments across the business park are also inconsistent and include a wide variety of types in varying condition. Furthermore the type and quality of planting along plot boundaries varies widely and there is also a lack of publically accessible amenity spaces within the site. There is a clear lack of consistency amongst street signage with four different types being present within the business park and whilst a number of opportunities

existing to formalise or advertise arrival at the business park with gateway features or signage these are largely absent from the business park. These elements were surveyed in detail at the start of the project again to provide an evidence base for the improvements proposed (see boundary condition survey - Appendix B). The condition of the lighting was also surveyed and the results of this survey can be found in the lighting survey (Appendix C).

The Maylands area travel plan identifies that over a quarter of employees live within 5km of the Park, and yet only 2% currently walk to work. Whilst existing public rights of way (PRoW), are concentrated to the northern and southern boundaries of the business park they stop short to the east and west, and furthermore there are no official north/south links within the business park itself. The condition survey and the PERS report however identified locally important pedestrian routes running north/south on Maylands Avenue as well as potential links off to the west and east. This design strategy aims to readdress the current shortfall of provision by upgrading these internal routes and thus providing that north-south and east-west connectivity thereby encouraging more people to walk to work.

Maylands Business Park is served by a SUSTRANS National Route; the Nickey Line (National Cycle Network Route 57) and this provides a cycle link to the business park from residential areas of Hemel Hempstead and then onwards to Harpenden. The Chilterns Cycleway Regional Route is present further to the north and furthermore planned routes exist to the south and east but stop short at the eastern and southern boundaries of the business park. This design strategy aims to readdress the current shortfall of cycle provision by providing new off road routes within the business park thus providing that north-south and east-west connectivity and thereby encouraging more people to cycle to work.

A key objective of the masterplan is to improve the quality of the public realm and key public realm principles include:

- Reinforcing the Mayland's brand and unifying a disparate business park campus through a range of public realm improvements including introducing a simple consistent approach to hard landscaping, street furniture, and boundary treatments. The new business park shall be free from visual clutter and have a clean contemporary modern image.
- Introducing a hierarchy of spaces and streets based on the character areas identified in the Masterplan.

- Improving cycle/pedestrian connectivity and encouraging greater recreational use of the business park
- Introducing a step change in the quality of materials including introducing a new resin bonded gravel surface for all type 1 and type 2 footpaths as well as high quality street furniture, improvements to lighting and high quality tree and shrub planting.
- Providing a safe and secure environment with well lit routes and spaces that encourage night time activity.

The scheme proposals have been influenced by some of the local colours and textures that help to provide the richness that is observed in some of the more traditional buildings and materials in local towns of Berkhamsted, St Albans and Tring. These include blue clay brick pavers, sandstone paving and kerbs, as well as brickwork. The proposals aim to reflect these traditional materials in a contemporary, modern way, since this will ensure that the proposals reinforce local identity and have cultural associations with the area. The proposals also aim to reflect some of the Hemel Hempsteads associations with the photographic industry which was once a major employer in the area. The street furniture and signage proposals will therefore be a black in order to reflect the colour of the photographic film.

The public realm improvements will be split into 3 categories or priorities. These include:

- Category Type 1 Improvements - 3.0m wide resin bonded gravel shared pedestrian/cycle surface with associated street furniture, planting and boundary treatment improvements.
- Category Type 2 Improvements 2.0 m wide resin bonded gravel applied to existing paths with associated street furniture, planting, and boundary treatment improvements.
- Category Type 3 Improvements - repairs to existing pedestrian surfaces with some associated street furniture, planting and boundary treatment improvements.

These proposals aim to establish a simple hierarchy by introducing 3 distinct treatment types across the business park. As part of the proposals all existing street signs shall be replaced with a black street sign with white lettering. Finger posts shall be of a similar type to those used in Hemel Hempstead however instead of the white lettering on the red background it is proposed that the Maylands finger post has white lettering on a black background. The use of black in the signage is consistent with other proposed street furniture whereby the black colour reflects the colour of the photographic film.

Public Art and Gateway features should also be strategically located at gateway points to the business park. Sculptural pieces should be bold contemporary public art works that reflects a modern, high tech business park of the 21st Century.

It is anticipated that the overall programme of delivery will take place over a number of years and financed by developer contributions and in particular a community infrastructure levy. As a result the public realm improvements have been separated into 3 phases.

Phase 1 involves the category 1 improvements and consists of the high priority areas such as Maylands Gateway, Heart of Maylands and the Face of Maylands. Phase 2 improvements have principally been identified for the Engine Room area of the business park. Phase 3 improvements will consist of category 3 improvements as identified for the Service Centre area.

APPENDIX A

PERS REPORT

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC REALM CONDITION SURVEY

APPENDIX C

LIGHTING REPORT

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