20. Hemel Hempstead Place Strategy

Context

- 20.1. Hemel Hempstead is a Mark One New Town designed by Geoffrey Jellicoe in the 1940s with development starting in the 1950s. It is the largest town in the borough and has a population of just over 82,000 (2001 Census). The town is quite compact and is surrounded by Green Belt. Distinctive landscape features include the Grand Union Canal, and the Gade and Bulbourne Valleys with rivers that converge at Two Waters, south of the town centre. The topography of the town and the design of the neighbourhoods draws the countryside in, allowing views of open space, woodland and parkland from residential areas to the west, east and south of the town centre.
- 20.2. The town has excellent links to London and the Midlands, via the M1 and M25 motorways and the main railway line stations in Boxmoor and Apsley. The main focus for employment is the Maylands Business Park, which is the largest business park in the eastern region and lies to the east of the town. The town centre is the largest centre for shops, business and commerce in Dacorum, although its functions and employment have been changing due to economic pressures. Local centres provide a range of shops, services and facilities. Two Waters and Apsley contain out of centre retailing and a wide range of business opportunities and employment. The area has benefitted from private-led regeneration of its former industrial base a process which is continuing. The main leisure and sports facilities comprise Leisure World, Hemel Hempstead Sports Centre, Esporta and The Snow Centre.
- 20.3. The accessibility of the town centre is one of Hemel Hempstead's assets, although there is a need to maintain and improve pedestrian routes between adjoining residential areas, car parks and bus stops. The linearity of the town centre presents a challenge to commercial growth and integration of new uses.
- 20.4. Regeneration is the main priority for the Council and must be underpinned by growth and investment in business, homes and infrastructure. As an original New Town, many buildings and public areas in the town centre are dated and some areas require significant improvement. Regeneration is required in the east of Hemel Hempstead at the Maylands Business Park to aid economic recovery since the Buncefield explosion.
- 20.5. The Council's regeneration ambitions will concentrate on in Hemel Hempstead:
 - 1. **The town centre** to modernise and grow the centre and improve the public environment.
 - 2. **Maylands** to rejuvenate and grow the business area and promote the use of 'green' energy.
 - 3. **Neighbourhood centres** to reinvigorate and improve the environment of the neighbourhood local centres.
 - 4. **Green spaces** to extend the network and use of open spaces.

The Visions

The town

Hemel Hempstead will embrace new development and aim to promote pride of place and heritage, taking forward the 1947 Hemel Hempstead New Town Development Corporation motto 'Greater, Richer, More Beautiful'. Its long-term strategy as a main centre for development and change will be to meet the housing and economic challenges of the borough. Extensions to the town will contribute fully to its success. The town will provide a better quality of life and prosperity for its residents and business community and a better experience for visitors.

The open land network remains as a cherished and easily accessible asset: it has been extended and accommodates a diverse range of uses including leisure, schools and wildlife habitats. Movement within the town is convenient and effective. Public transport links between Maylands Business Park, the town centre and main railway station are good.

The regeneration of the town centre will be complete and more people will shop there from choice. People can also access shops and services locally.

More business and employment opportunities will be available through the expansion of Maylands Business Park. Community needs will be met. New schools will be built. New cultural, leisure and sports facilities in the town centre, Jarman Park and East Hemel Hempstead will serve the town. A new cemetery will also be necessary to accommodate the needs of the town and the wider area.

New buildings will incorporate energy efficiencies and low carbon technologies: development will take advantage of district heating or combined heat and power.

The town centre

The town centre will be a vibrant place where people will want to shop, work, live, learn and visit during the day and evening. Business and commerce are successful. New development has included offices, civic facilities, homes and shops. The Marlowes Shopping Zone is busy. A residential community occupies the homes. Their demand for services has been met by local provision, use of the town centre facilities and improved access to open space out of the centre. New facilities will include a local general hospital, school, college and cultural centre. Shoppers, visitors and residents benefit from the rationalisation of bus stops and interchange facilities within the centre. The town centre is attractive. New buildings, refurbishment and extension of pedestrian routes have delivered a pleasant and secure environment that makes best use of its built and natural assets and respects its New Town history. Marlowes and Waterhouse Street are significantly improved. There are good connections with the Old Town. A walkway

and cycleway runs alongside the River Gade. Green links with Gadebridge Park, Two Waters Open Space, Paradise Fields and the Nickey Line have been enhanced. The restoration of the Water Gardens is admired and public art promoted.

East Hemel Hempstead

The Maylands Business Park in East Hemel Hempstead will be the home to a vibrant, dynamic and premier business-led community. It will be a first choice investment location for offices and industrial development, capitalising on its strength as a sub-regional economic hub. The area will be the focus for high quality, energy efficient development permeated by open space. Development will showcase low and zero carbon technologies. A new local centre will provide a range of services in the heart of the business community. The North East Hemel Hempstead Relief Road enables better lorry access and circulation within the business park and links Spencers Park. Parking management and improvements to cycleways and footpaths, together with co-ordinated landscaping and street furniture, and leisure facilities have provided a more secure and attractive environment. Passenger transport will provide good connections to key destinations not only in the town, but also in other urban centres.

Spencers Park is a new residential neighbourhood with its own services and facilities.

Overall, development at East Hemel Hempstead is linked and has taken advantage of district heating and combined heat and power energy generation. Those living and working in the area will enjoy a high quality of life as a result.

Local Objectives

The objectives are split between the town as a whole and parts of the town.

For the town as a whole:

- to meet the full housing target of 8,800 new homes*;
- to ensure sufficient wastewater treatment and sewerage infrastructure;
- to provide a new cemetery; and
- to provide efficient public transport services between the town centre, the railway station and Maylands.

In the town centre:

- to deliver
 - around 1,800 homes
 - a local general hospital
 - a primary school
 - a new library and college
 - new civic and cultural facilities

- a supermarket and other shops
- a bus interchange; and
- a better footpath network.

In East Hemel Hempstead:

- to deliver
 - around 1,000 homes*
 - new jobs
 - a new local centre and open space in the Heart of Maylands
 - a primary school
 - a district heating network
 - better waste management facilities
 - a low carbon economy
 - new transport infrastructure, linked to parking management
 - the North East Hemel Hempstead Relief Road; and
 - a new access road from Breakspear Way to Boundary Way; and
- to accommodate new community sports facilities.

In the rest of the town:

- to deliver
 - around 6,000 homes
 - several primary schools
 - major open space enhancements in Two Waters and improvements elsewhere
 - a new indoor sports facility
 - improvements to the main railway station; and
 - improvements to local centres

[* excludes any new homes in St Albans district, which are built on the edge of the town].

Delivering the Vision: The Town

- 20.6. Hemel Hempstead will accommodate around 8,800 new homes, 77% of the borough's total predicted housing supply (see Table 7). Office and retail growth, including jobs, will be at Hemel Hempstead. New housing will be spread across the town, with particular concentrations at the town centre, East Hemel Hempstead and the Local Allocations at West Hemel Hempstead, Marchmont Farm and the Old Town. The level of change will be sufficient to accommodate the natural population and household growth of the town. A range of sites will enable the Council to secure the right mix and tenure of homes, to address the affordable housing shortage and to better balance homes and jobs.
- 20.7. The supply of business premises and jobs will be diverse. While major growth in the office sector will be promoted in the Maylands Business Park, there is an important role for designated employment land in Two Waters and Apsley. This will normally be retained. The roles of local centres and out of centre locations will be maintained through environmental improvements and management of new development. Most new shopping facilities will be directed to the town centre.
- 20.8. The timing and location of new homes and businesses will be linked to the availability of infrastructure. This will ensure that services, such as wastewater treatment and sewerage infrastructure¹, cemetery and schools are available when needed. In other cases, existing capacity can be more effectively used.
- 20.9. Public transport services will be improved between the town centre, Maylands Business Park and main railway station through route network improvements and the provision of more convenient hubs or interchanges.
- 20.10. The town's neighbourhoods will be supported through the planning and maintenance of shops and services and retaining the pattern of open spaces. Management of the open spaces will ensure the town's green infrastructure is effectively used and linked to the countryside. Outdoor leisure needs will be satisfied and space lost in the development of Maylands Gateway replaced.

2015.

¹ Local Water Authorities (Thames Water Utilities Ltd and Veolia Water Central) manage the collection of wastewater mainly at Maple Lodge Wastewater Treatment works and the supply of potable water. The Local Water Authorities do not intend providing any new infrastructure before

20.11. New development will aim to enhance the pride and image of the town through high quality design, and through the provision of new open space, public realm improvements and co-ordinated public transport improvements. Figures 19 and 20 illustrate the town's urban design characteristics which must be respected. Policies CS33 and CS34 aim to maximise regeneration and development opportunities through good design. New development will also accommodate renewable energy generation and energy efficiency technologies to reduce carbon emissions. However, the greatest opportunities for zero and low carbon technologies are associated with high density developments, which will be delivered in the town centre and to the east of the town.

Delivering the Vision: The town centre

- 20.12. The town centre is the focal point of the town. The aim of new development will be to refresh and maintain the role of the centre as a hub of commerce and public transport. A variety of employment, shopping and leisure uses will be delivered to suit the income levels of local residents. Multiple retailers will be attracted to strengthen the economy. The town centre is also a neighbourhood, a role which will be reinforced by new housing. Existing and new residents will need access to a similar range of facilities as other neighbourhoods.
- 21.13 Character Zones have been identified to guide regeneration in different parts of the town centre (described in Figure 17 and illustrated in Figure 21). Each zone will accommodate similar uses and/or a similar built or natural character. The Town Centre Master Plan will provide further guidance, particularly on the areas of greatest change and activity.

Figure 17: Town Centre Character Zones and Development Opportunities

Developers must consider the relationship of the proposed development with its character zone and the opportunities available.

The Old Town - is based around the High Street, Queensway and the northern tip of the Marlowes. The main businesses include professional services, quality specialist shops. There is a strong evening economy with a variety of pubs, restaurants, cafes and an arts centre. The quality of the built environment in this zone is recognised for its special architectural and historic importance and the notable landmark of St Mary's Church. The historic character offers further opportunities for uses which can attract visitors and new investment. North/south pedestrian links and refurbishment of the building fascias along the northern tip of the Marlowes need improvement.

The Gade Zone - includes the north western section of the town centre from Queensway to Combe Street. Notable features include the River Gade and the Marlowes Methodist Church. This zone holds significant regeneration opportunities, primarily for educational, civic, residential and community uses, along with opportunities for decentralised heating systems or Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

Original Marlowes Zone - contains part of the north eastern section of the Marlowes. Its notable feature is its listed villas. It includes services for the town centre such as a large doctors surgery and food stores Asda and Iceland. This zone holds some redevelopment opportunities for residential, commercial and business uses. There are opportunities for better design and improvements to the building fascias of the listed buildings.

Jellicoe Water Gardens - encompasses the whole of the listed Water Gardens area designed by Jellicoe, running from Combe Street to Moor End Road. Within the zone there are opportunities to restore the Water Gardens, rationalise bus connections and interchanges and improve the pedestrian environment along Waterhouse Street. Subject to design considerations, this zone could provide an alternative location for civic uses.

The Hospital Zone - includes the hospital site, Paradise employment area, and the offices, hotel and surgery opposite. The hospital zone holds significant regeneration opportunities for residential, education, health and business uses, along with opportunities for improved pedestrian/cycle links, and decentralised heating systems or CHP. Paradise Fields is mostly to be retained as open space.

The Marlowes Shopping Zone - is located around the Marlowes Shopping Centre, the pedestrian area and ramped area, and extends to Coombe Street. It is part of the prime retail pitch of the town centre and is in need of major investment. New stores can be accommodated. There is potential to create additional uses with active frontages and improve active frontages along the ramped area (at ground level) and Waterhouse Street. The area around the pedestrian gateway near the Market Square is a potential location for office uses. There are opportunities to create a new covered public meeting space along the pedestrianised area, make improvements to building fascias, de-clutter the pedestrian environment, revamp the children's play area and deliver decentralised heating systems or CHP. The southern end has recently been enhanced by the Riverside retail development and riverside walk.

The Plough Zone - is focussed around the Plough Roundabout. It is an important gateway to the town centre and includes the former Kodak site with its residential and commercial uses. Redevelopment opportunities should enhance the gateway and respect their location next to the moor and Corner Hall residential area.

Delivering the Vision: East Hemel Hempstead

- 21.14 The focus at East Hemel Hempstead will be on regenerating the employment area and becoming the economic beacon for the town. It will have an attractive environment that will draw in new employers, organisations and HQ offices. A new residential neighbourhood will be built at Spencer's Park. Figure 18 outlines the characteristics of zones within East Hemel Hempstead and the development opportunities they present. The different Character Zones are illustrated in Figure 22.
- 21.15 Planning East Hemel Hempstead is complex because of the range of issues. These include the size and character of the Maylands Business Park, both now and in the future, and also the range of facilities, transport and additional housing and services that help to support this businesses neighbourhood and the wider town. The area's location on the edge of the town, bordering the countryside, adds to the complexity. Close liaison is required between Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council to ensure that the Maylands Business Park is allowed to grow and fulfil its potential as a premier business location in Hertfordshire and the wider region. For these reasons, East Hemel Hempstead will be the subject of a separate Area Action Plan (AAP), progressed jointly by the two Councils.
- 21.16 Growth of the business park will be based on regeneration of the existing area, followed by expansion. The development of land will broadly be prioritised, with the re-use of previously developed sites first, followed by the undeveloped, greenfield land at the Gateway. Where this land is not suitable, other land will be required for planned needs and as a contingency. The AAP will provide more detailed information about the delivery of floorspace for different uses and the likely number of jobs from future development in the Face of Maylands, the Engine Room and the Service Centre.
- 21.17 The AAP will explain opportunities for cross-boundary regeneration projects, the delivery of more high quality housing, facilities and services, and countryside access and strategic landscape improvements. It will ensure that development and investment to the east of Hemel Hempstead is jointly planned and integrated with the town. This will include land which will remain open.
- 21.18 Some facilities are very difficult to accommodate within the existing town boundary or are more sensibly located outside. These include:
 - a public transport hub linked to public car parking;
 - · waste management facilities and a green energy park;
 - services for the Spencers Park neighbourhood estate, including public open space and a primary school;
 - a community sports facility; and
 - landscaping on land between Hemel Hempstead and the motorway to provide a 'green gateway' to the town.

21 10	21.19 The Maylands Masterplan, the Maylands Gateway Brief and the Heart of Maylar				
21.10	Development Brief will provide guidance on the aims and aspirations for the au until superseded by the AAP.				

Figure 18: East Hemel Hempstead Character Zones and Development Opportunities

Developers must consider the relationship of the proposed development with its character zone and the opportunities available.

Maylands Gateway - adjoins Breakspear Way, a primary route and green gateway into Maylands Business Park, and the town itself. This includes greenfield and some brownfield land, together with existing businesses.

The area to the north of Breakspear Way offers opportunities to provide an additional access road into Maylands Business Park, deliver prestigious landmark buildings at key nodes and enhance open space. The types of uses suited to this area will be primarily HQ offices, conference facilities and a hotel. There may also be opportunities for other development that accords with its high-status and green character, such as a green energy centre, and a park and ride facility, along with opportunities for decentralised heating systems or combined heat and power (CHP). Development must be designed to integrate with and enhance the open land.

Maylands Gateway offers around 29.7ha of developable land. This will deliver a large proportion of the Borough's employment needs over the plan period. (This excludes the as yet undeveloped People Building phases).

Woodland and open space to the south of Breakspear Way will be retained.

The Heart of Maylands - includes the immediate area surrounding the crossroads of Maylands Avenue and Wood Lane End. This area is close to existing residential development to the east and west and includes a cluster of shops and services for the workforce and residential area.

This zone offers the opportunity to form a functional local centre with financial and commercial services, restaurants, cafes, leisure uses and a public square. Around 250 homes should be provided here. There are also opportunities for decentralised heating systems or CHP.

The Face of Maylands – fronts Maylands Avenue, but excludes the sites surrounding the gateway entrance to the avenue off Breakspear Way and the key buildings at the junction of Wood Lane End. The area currently includes a range of large office buildings.

Along with Maylands Gateway, this zone is expected to be a core office location suitable for HQ offices and large organisations. There is scope for general industrial, storage and distribution uses in less prominent areas. Improvements to the public realm will be delivered to provide a more inviting landscape for pedestrian and cyclists.

The Engine Room - includes three areas; land either side of Mark Road; land to the west and north of Eastman Way; and land west of Boundary Way and around Maxted Road.

This area should continue to offer a mix of industrial and commercial uses, as well as more flexible business uses. Areas on the periphery of Maylands offer more flexibility for bulky non B-class uses (such as a car showroom and some leisure uses). An area of residential opportunity lies directly north of the Nickey Line.

The Service Centre - includes three areas; land known as Swallowdale; land south and south west of Buncefield; and land north of Buncefield, which includes land south of Punch Bowl Lane in St. Albans District.

They currently include storage, distribution and warehousing. This use is expected to continue. A strip of land between Boundary Way and Buncefield Lane was an office location affected by the Buncefield explosion: this land may be converted to storage, distribution and warehousing.

Other small scale employment uses, such as office and industry, should be limited to Swallowdale in the future. A lorry park, with access to the new relief road, is proposed. The large expanse of roofs in the service centre offer opportunities for renewable energy generation. New buildings can take advantage of decentralised heating systems or CHP.

Spencer's Park – lies south of Hunters Oak and north west of Buncefield. The land is currently greenfield and extends into St. Albans District.

This area is prime land for residential development. A new primary school and other facilities will serve the area. Development on greenfield land also offers opportunities for decentralised heating systems or CHP.

Policy CS33: Hemel Hempstead Town Centre

New development will:

- a) contribute fully to the achievement of town centre uses, movement and design principles; and
- b) meet relevant opportunities for character zones within the town centre.

The principles guiding development are to:

1. use:

- (a) secure additional retail stores in the Marlowes Shopping Zone;
- (b) deliver a mix of uses to support the prime retail function;
- (c) encourage an attractive evening economy along Waterhouse Street;
- (d) deliver a range of new homes;
- (e) create new offices;
- (f) deliver new leisure, education and cultural facilities, including a primary school and library;
- (g) keep a public sector presence;
- (h) restore the Water Gardens, and retain and create other public spaces;

2. movement:

- (a) secure an integrated public transport hub and circulation within the centre:
- (b) provide better east-west links, particularly for pedestrians;
- (c) continue the riverside walk from the Plough Zone to Gadebridge Park:
- (d) improve cycling provision;

3. design:

- (a) emphasise pedestrian movement gateways through bold building design, height and landscaping;
- (b) provide active frontages;
- (c) apply a co-ordinated approach to building and streetscape design;
- (d) use high quality materials and public art to complement the existing palette of materials and features;
- (e) restore artwork and create new complementary pieces of art; and
- (f) deliver district heating and additional large-scale / high capacity renewable energy generation technologies.

Specific opportunities for each character zone are identified in Figure 17: Town Centre Character Zones and Development Opportunities.

A Town Centre Masterplan will elaborate this policy.

Policy CS34: Maylands Business Park

New development will:

- a) contribute fully to the achievement of use, movement and design principles; and
- b) meet relevant opportunities for character zones within Maylands Business Park.

The principles guiding development are to:

1. use:

- (a) secure HQ offices in an open land setting in Maylands Gateway;
- (b) deliver services and facilities to support small and large businesses in appropriate character zones;
- (c) deliver a local centre in the Heart of Maylands to support residents and workers:
- (d) create an energy park;
- (e) secure better waste management facilities;
- (f) retain and improve the Nickey Line, and create new public meeting spaces;

2. movement:

- (a) secure an integrated public transport hub;
- (b) facilitate easier walking and cycling throughout the business park;
- (c) establish an area-wide Green Travel Plan with appropriate traffic management and parking;
- (d) create a new access point off Breakspear Way to link to Boundary Way;
- (e) complete the North East Hemel Hempstead relief road;
- (f) secure a lorry parking facility near the North East Hemel Hempstead relief road;

3. design:

- (a) emphasise the importance of movement gateways through appropriate features and bolder building design, height and landscaping;
- (b) distinguish between character zones and follow a co-ordinated approach to building design, movement and streetscape;
- (c) deliver district heating and additional large-scale/high capacity renewable energy generation technologies.

Specific opportunities for each character zone are identified in Figure 18: East Hemel Hempstead Character Zones and Development Opportunities.

The East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan will provide further guidance.

Monitoring:

Indicator(s)				Target(s)
Achievement milestones.	of	key	development	

Delivery will be achieved by:

- implementing the strategy, policies and programme of the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan;
- designating development sites, together with their planning requirements, in the Site Allocations DPD and East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan;
- using a range of supporting planning documents, in particular the Hemel Hempstead Master Plan (SPD), the Maylands Master Plan (until superseded by the Area Action Plan) and various development briefs and design statements;
- · working with the highway authorities and transport providers;
- partnership working with the Local Enterprise Partnership, the business community, West Herts College, and business and education support partners; and
- targeted expenditure on improvement works in the town centre and Maylands Business Park.

Local Allocations

Legation reference	1 1 1		
Location reference	LA1		
Site location	Marchmont Farm		
Proposals	Around 300 new homes		
	Extend Margaret Lloyd Park		
Principles	A mix of two storey and three storey housing including around 40% affordable homes.		
	 A contribution must be made towards educational and community facilities. 		
	The layout, design, density and landscaping must create a soft edge with the adjoining Green Belt boundary.		
	 New strategic landscaping to mitigate impact of new development on the Gade Valley and help ensure its separation from Piccotts End. 		
	 Impact on the local road network mitigated through the promotion of sustainable travel options, including pedestrian links to the local centre. 		
Delivery	The proposal will be delivered as an allocation in the Site Allocations DPD where detailed planning requirements will be established.		

Location reference	LA2		
Site location	Old Town		
Proposals	Around 80 new homes		
Principles	Two storey housing including around 40% affordable homes.		
	 A contribution must be made towards educational and community facilities. 		
	 The layout, design, density and landscaping must be in keeping with the Old Town. 		
	 Impact on the local road network mitigated through the 		
	promotion of sustainable travel options, including pedestrian links onto Fletcher Way.		
Delivery	The proposal will be delivered as an allocation in the		
	Site Allocations DPD where detailed planning requirements will be established.		

Location reference	LA3				
Site location	West Hemel Hempstead				
Proposals	 Up to 900 new homes. Shop, doctors surgery and additional social and community provision, including a new primary school 				
Principles	 A mix of two storey and three storey housing including around 40% affordable homes. Contributions must be made towards improving local services and facilities, including provision of a new 2 form entry primary school. The layout, design, density and landscaping must create a soft edge to the Green Belt and the extended open space. Impact on the local road network mitigated through the promotion of sustainable travel options, including improved pedestrian links with adjoining areas. No vehicular access from Pouchen End Lane. Provision of new open space / playing fields. New strategic landscaping to mitigate the impact on the Bulbourne Valley. Local road junction improvements. Extend Shrubhill Common Nature Reserve and create wider green infrastructure links. Consider potential for inclusion of a new cemetery to serve the town. 				
Delivery	The proposal will be delivered as an allocation in the Site Allocations DPD where detailed planning requirements will be established.				







