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# GATEWAY

## KEYSTONE OF THE FUTURE AIRPORT VILLAGE

The attraction of the area around the airport for companies has been further demonstrated by Deloitte in a quite spectacular manner. The company is to occupy the whole of the 'Gateway' building to be developed by Codic and Immobel. And Gateway is not in the 'airport zone', but in the airport itself!

■ Tim HARRUP

The Gateway project being undertaken by Codic and Immobel, and designed by Jasper-Eyers Architects and A2RC Architects, follows the granting of the mandate to the companies by the Brussels Airport Company in the middle of last year. It represents the redevelopment of the former office building occupied by Sabena amongst others, adjacent to the original airport building. Once fully renovated, Gateway will be directly connected to the airport terminals.

The existing U-shaped structure of the building will be renovated and a new wing added, which will have the effect of creating a large atrium. Around 2,000 members of Deloitte's staff will be accommodated in Gateway. Thierry Behiels of Codic and Gaëtan Piret of Immobel have spoken of the 'most advanced environmental standards and technological requirements' integrated into the building.

### Interest for a multimodal hub

For his part Deloitte CEO Rik Vanpeteghem has made reference to the fact that the airport is not the only transport facility to benefit Gateway: "Companies today are undergoing major changes, and the New Way of Working is on the rise. Employees themselves are

requesting more flexibility and better mobility. And that is exactly what Deloitte Belgium can offer through this innovative workplace. Thanks to the immediate vicinity of the train station, Gateway offers direct access to public transport, thereby raising the quality and the efficiency of the work environment. Moreover, its close proximity to the airport and the international Thalys station allows Deloitte to position its offices as the 'Gateway to Europe'. Of particular note in this respect is the recent opening of the 'Diabolo' rail link, which connects Brussels and the airport to Antwerp and Mechelen in particular, and by extension to all of the Belgian rail network. Arnaud Feist, CEO of The Brussels Airport Company confirms this "Demand for modern office infrastructure within the airport is very strong, and for two reasons: we are both an airport and an important multimodal hub".

### Further expansion

In time, the immediate vicinity of the airport will extend to around 400,000 m<sup>2</sup> of constructions (Airport Village), of which 'Gateway' represents the first stage. Many major companies have already located in the existing business parks close to the airport – one of the most recent being Johnson & Johnson. This is a sign that despite



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the high vacancy rate in slightly more distant parts of the periphery, 'airport' locations are likely to continue to be attractive. Other developments very close to the airport include the Corporate Village, offering very high visibility to occupants at the motorway exit to the airport, the Airport Plaza, and Pegasus Park, which along with its location no more than one kilometre from the airport, is unique in offering a railway station (Diegem) located inside the business park. It is also not a coincidence that the main boulevard leading from Brussels to the airport is home to the future NATO buildings and to international headquarters and major office buildings of companies including Toyota, KPMG, 3M, HP... all within two minutes drive of the airport.