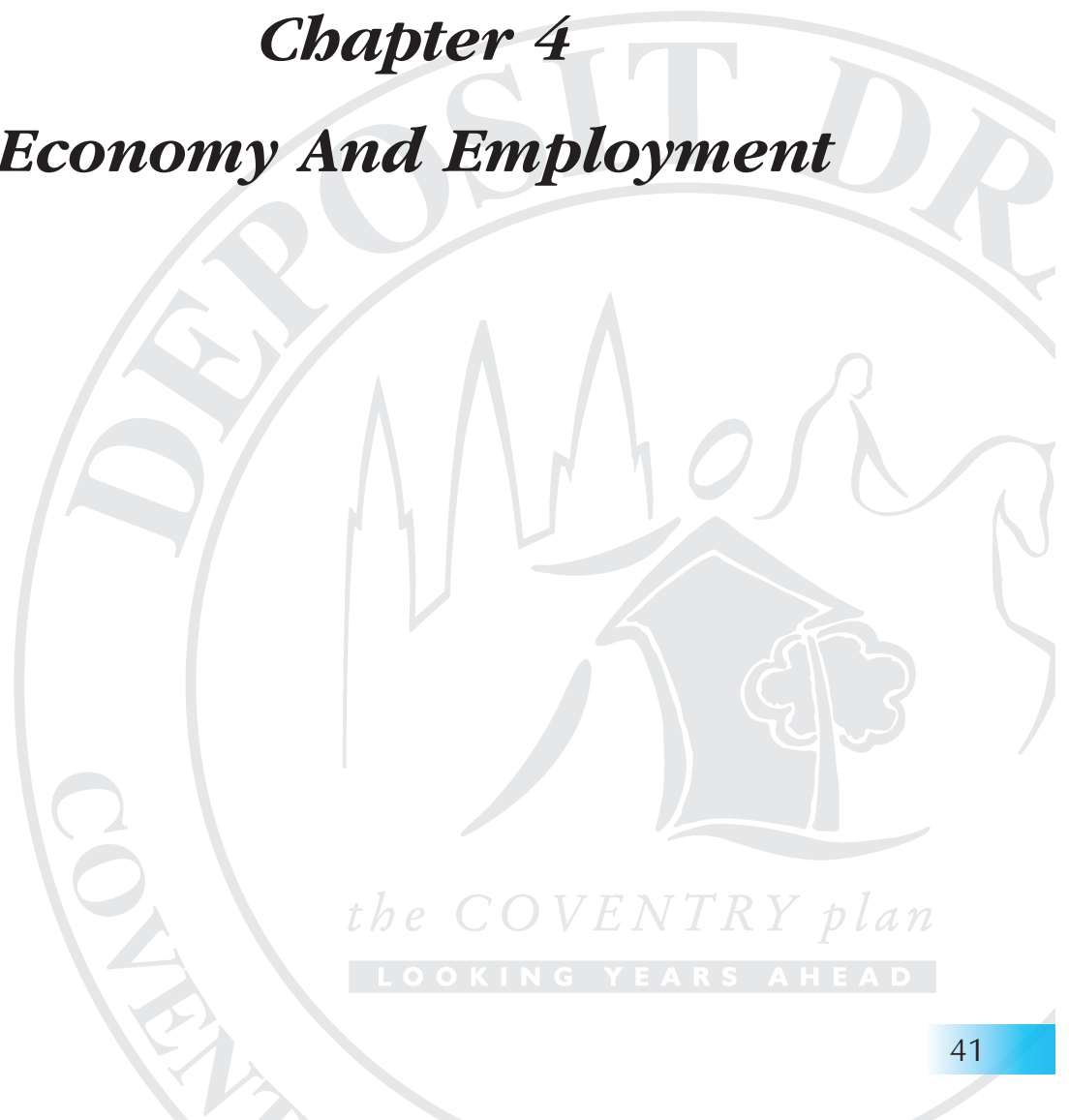


Chapter 4
Economy And Employment





the COVENTRY plan

LOOKING YEARS AHEAD

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INTRODUCTION AND POLICY AIM

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- 4.1 The severe recessions in the 1980s and early 1990s had a profound effect on the national economy and on the local economy in particular. Coventry suffered substantial job losses, particularly in the manufacturing and motor vehicles sector on which much of its employment has traditionally relied. The mid and late 1990s has seen a gradual recovery in both the national and local economy. The City has not only retained many of its existing employers but succeeded in attracting new investors into the area, particularly in financial and professional services. More recently, new investment in automotive components and manufacturing has reinforced its position as the manufacturing centre of the sub region. This investment has been influenced by a variety of factors including the City's excellent central location, the availability of high quality employment land and the presence of a skilled local workforce.
- 4.2 Although unemployment declined from its peak of over 15% in 1993 to around 6% in 1998, there remain concentrations of unemployment and associated multiple deprivation in parts of the City, such as the inner areas of Hillfields and Foleshill, and peripheral Council estates like Wood End and Willenhall. In general terms, the northern part of Coventry has not benefited from recent investment to the same extent as other parts of the City. The North of Coventry Regeneration Zone referred to in paragraphs 2.8-2.9 and the Strategic Regeneration Sites identified in Policy OS 2 are intended to spread market confidence and investment northwards. The regeneration of the City's economy therefore needs to continue and it remains one of the three strategic objectives of the Plan.
- 4.3 There is a high degree of interdependence between the economies of Coventry and Warwickshire. This is recognised in "Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands" 1998 (RPG 11) which treats the Coventry and North East Warwickshire as one sub-region. Employment sites within Warwickshire provide jobs for Coventry residents and vice versa on a significant scale. Whilst both this Plan and the Warwickshire Structure Plan identify employment land for each area's own needs, the City Council continues to support provision close to Coventry within Warwickshire in line with the aim of regenerating the metropolitan area stated in RPG 11.

- 4.4 The policy aim of the Economy and Employment Chapter is to provide sufficient land of a range of quality and size to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the City, in order to maximise employment and minimise economic disadvantage.
- 4.5 The future impact of technological changes is considered in the Introduction to the Plan. Whilst continuing developments in telecommunications and information technology will increase the possibility for people to work from home, the degree to which this will affect the way people live and work and the demand for office space is yet to be fully understood. However, within the context of the policies within the Plan, the City Council will seek to embrace the opportunities created by technological change.

National and Regional Policy Context

- 4.6 National planning guidance is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 4 "Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms" 1992. This seeks to balance the need for development plans to take account of the locational demands of business with other objectives such as the re-use of vacant land and limiting the need to travel.
- 4.7 RPG 11 stresses the need to regenerate the metropolitan area in order to support the economic heartland of the region and to avoid further decentralisation into the shires. It also:
- emphasises the need to diversify the economy through encouragement of growth industries, the service sector, high technology activity and inward investment;
 - advises that a range of employment sites should be offered "to reflect the differing development needs of businesses and to give a choice in terms of size and quality";
 - states that, in the interests of reducing car travel, urban regeneration and town centres, "greenfield sites should be considered only if there are insufficient alternatives within the urban fabric"; and
 - locations should minimise reliance on the car for access and should provide for the juxtaposition of employment and residential uses.

Local Policy Context

- 4.8 One of six priorities of the Coventry Community Plan is to create more jobs for Coventry people. The specific targets are, by 2003, to:
- create an additional 5,000 jobs (net);
 - reduce the average rate of unemployment to below the West Midlands Regional rate;
 - reduce the average rate of unemployment in any ward to below 10%; and
 - reduce the number of people unemployed for one year or more by half.
- 4.9 To achieve these targets will require a wide range of economic development activities, co-ordinated through the City Council's annual Economic Development Plan, and carried out in partnership with a wide variety of organisations. An example of this partnership approach is the creation of Coventry and Warwickshire Partnerships (CWP) in 1994. CWP is a partnership of local authorities and other economic development agencies which recognises the interdependence of the Coventry and Warwickshire economies and aims to create a lasting prosperity to which every local person will have the opportunity to contribute and benefit. In 1998, CWP published its strategy document "Regeneration Beyond 2000" providing a context for economic programmes and activities in the area into the next Millennium.
- 4.10 The role of this Plan in achieving economic prosperity is complementary to many of these economic development activities by providing sufficient land of appropriate quality, and encouraging appropriate development to meet the employment needs of the City.

ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

E 1: OVERALL ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

In order to:

- **consolidate, strengthen and diversify the economic base of the City within the sub-region, and**
- **maximise employment and skill levels within the City, accessible particularly to areas with the highest unemployment levels,**

the Plan allocates and seeks to retain a portfolio of sufficient employment land of appropriate size and quality, and provides a framework for investment and regeneration of the City's economy.

(Part 1 Policy)

- 4.11 Within this Chapter, the terms employment land, employment uses and employment sites refer to business uses and general industrial uses and those storage and distribution uses which satisfy Policy E 13. These uses are found in Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order) 1987 (UCO).
- 4.12 Policy E 1 summarises the overall role that the Plan has in achieving the economic prosperity and regeneration of the local economy. It provides the land use framework to facilitate regional, sub-regional and City Council economic objectives of achieving economic prosperity and regeneration of the local economy. The identified portfolio ensures that a balance is achieved between economic development and environmental and social demands.
- 4.13 It is important that a sufficient range of jobs of appropriate quality is available for the City's workforce throughout the Plan period. These jobs should be more stable and recession proof than they have been in the past. To achieve this, a more diversified economic base is required, taking advantage of opportunities for new economic growth. At the same time, it is important that appropriate measures are taken to assist existing industries and firms within Coventry.

Consolidating, Strengthening and Diversifying the City's Economic Base

E 2: CONSOLIDATING AND STRENGTHENING THE CITY'S EXISTING ECONOMIC BASE

The modernisation, expansion and relocation of existing employers in Coventry, particularly manufacturers, will be encouraged and enabled through the allocation and retention of sufficient employment land of appropriate size and quality.

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- 4.14 In the early 1980s, manufacturing accounted for almost half of the City's 146,000 employees. The Annual Employment Survey 1995 showed that manufacturing has fallen to 28% of its 123,000 employees. Current indications are that this trend has stabilised and it is evident that existing manufacturing industry will continue to provide a significant share of employment in the City well into the next century. It is important to try to consolidate this existing economic base, in order to ensure that "traditional" jobs and skills are not lost, whilst also making a wider range of employment opportunities available for the City's workforce. Policy E 7 not only allocates land suitable for inward investment but also of varying size and quality to meet the modernisation, expansion and relocation needs of existing employers. This will help maintain a more stable balance between the industrial sector and the growing service sector.
- 4.15 To encourage the growth and modernisation of existing companies, the City Council will support redevelopment, refurbishment or expansion on their present sites where this does not perpetuate or create unacceptable environmental problems. It will also help local firms to relocate to better sites within Coventry when existing sites become inadequate or inappropriate to changing needs. When there are opportunities to attract new, modern manufacturing firms to Coventry, the City Council will work with landowners and developers to make appropriate sites available.

E 3: DIVERSIFICATION OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The establishment of economic activities in sectors which help to strengthen and diversify the City's economic base will be supported.

Emphasis will be given to promoting the City for:

- new technology, including research and development and environmental technology industries;
 - hotels, conference and training accommodation in the context of Policy E 4;
 - business office developments in the context of Policy E 5; and
 - recreation, leisure and tourism facilities in the context of Policies SCL 2 and SCL3.
- 4.16 The diversification of the local economy is one of the keys to providing an improved range of well paid and secure jobs and to achieving a healthier economic future for Coventry. Emphasis will therefore be given to supporting the land uses referred to in the policy.
- 4.17 Throughout the 1990s Coventry has been successful in attracting investment in new technology industries, partly as a result of the allocation of significant amounts of quality employment land in the 1993 Plan. The City's further and higher education institutions have played an important role in the development of new technology industries. The University of Warwick Science Park, now virtually completed, has become a great success and Coventry University, with its strength in science and engineering, is currently developing a technology park at Parkside, referred to in Policies E 7 and CC 31. The City Council will continue to encourage such developments in Coventry, both by seeking to attract new companies to the City and by encouraging existing firms to develop their new technology facilities, including research and development, in appropriate locations.
- 4.18 Hotels, conference and training accommodation are referred to in Policy E 4 below. Business office developments are referred to in Policy E 5 below.

4.19 Throughout the 1990s, Coventry has experienced some growth in leisure and tourism and this is expected to continue during the Plan period. This sector is of benefit to both visitors and residents, providing valuable local employment and supporting and diversifying the local economy. Such facilities will be considered within the context of Policies SCL 2-3. Examples of major schemes in this area are the Arena proposal on the Foleshill Gasworks site referred to in Policy OS 2 and the Leisureworld development within the City Centre.

E 4: HOTELS, CONFERENCE AND TRAINING ACCOMMODATION

Proposals for the development or expansion of hotels, conference and training accommodation will be permitted subject to:

- compatibility with nearby uses;
- accessibility by a choice of means of transport; and
- compatibility with other Plan policies with particular regard to the loss of existing or allocated residential or employment land.

Proposals will be encouraged within or immediately adjacent to the City Centre and the Major District Centres.

4.20 Coventry is well located nationally and regionally for conference and training activity. An expanding hotel sector in the City is important to meet these demands, the demands for business and leisure tourism in the Coventry/Warwickshire Sub-region and to diversify the City's economy. Specialist training facilities are also an important element. Locations will be permitted subject to the criteria set out in the Policy. On the principal employment sites identified in Policy E 7 and on existing employment sites, hotels will only be supported if they provide permanent training accommodation, are integrated with the development and are necessary to the overall viability of the development in accordance with the principles of Policy E 9. This is in order to maximise the continuing availability of quality employment land for employment uses.

4.21 Hotel developments will be encouraged principally within the City Centre and the Major District Centres identified in Policy S 2. This will enable them to take full advantage of their excellent accessibility by a choice of means of transport and the immediate availability of a range of adjacent leisure facilities. Larger hotels will be encouraged to incorporate conference and training accommodation.

E 5: OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for the development or expansion of business offices will be permitted subject to:

- compatibility with nearby uses;
- accessibility by a choice of means of transport; and
- compatibility with other Plan policies.

Proposals will be encouraged within or immediately adjacent to the City Centre, the Major District Centres or sites which are or can be made highly accessible by public transport.

4.22 Business office uses are any of those defined in Class B1(a) of the UCO but specifically exclude those financial and professional services found in Class A2 of the UCO.

4.23 The 1990s has seen some decentralisation of Coventry's business office market, resulting from developments at Westwood Business Park and Binley Business Park. Although these developments have been successful in attracting and retaining firms within Coventry, they are peripheral and heavily reliant on the private car. The focus of attention has therefore now switched to the City Centre. The City Centre is accessible to the majority of the City's workforce and is at the hub of the public transport system. Focusing office development within the City Centre, Major District Centres and other locations highly accessible by public transport will therefore minimise travel demand, congestion and energy consumption. At the time of Plan preparation, development was under way on the British Telecom regional headquarters at Parkside in the City Centre.

E 6: SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES

Encouragement and assistance will be given to the establishment and growth of small and medium sized business and community enterprises. Partnerships will be promoted with landowners and developers to make available suitable land and premises and encourage mixed use developments.

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- 4.24 In order to reduce further reliance on a few large firms, the City Council will encourage the development of small and medium sized business and community enterprises. These include a wide range of initiatives including self-employment, co-operative development and homeworking. Particular attention will be given to businesses which are aimed at improving the employment position of disadvantaged groups.
- 4.25 The land and premises requirements of small businesses are usually small scale, but they are often needed in areas where they will have some environmental impact, or may come into conflict with other uses. It is important to ensure that the creation of such employment opportunities takes into account environmental and amenity issues. The City Council will work with landowners and developers to identify suitable sites for the relocation and expansion of small businesses. Mixed use developments, for example, predominantly residential based schemes, can provide an opportunity for the incorporation of small units for “starter” companies where a suitable environment for both residential and employment is feasible. It is particularly important that mixed use proposals do not curtail normal business activities.

EMPLOYMENT LAND

Principal Employment Sites

- 4.26 Policy E 1 states that the Plan will allocate and seek to retain a portfolio of sufficient employment land of appropriate size and quality. There are a number of ways of determining employment land requirements in development plans, none of which is without its critics. The 1993 Plan took a “jobs gap” approach whereby the amount of employment land for the plan period was determined on the basis of providing for the

difference between full employment (assumed to be 4%) and actual unemployment. Whilst the objective of full employment is obviously highly desirable and remains the underlying intention of this Plan, this unemployment target approach is based on several sensitive assumptions and factors outside the influence of a land use plan. This Plan therefore adopts an approach to employment land provision relying more strongly on known factors.

- 4.27 Within the constraints of local land availability, a demand based approach to employment land provision has been adopted taking account of:
- past rates of development as an indicator of future trends; and
 - the demand for sites of different types and quality.

This approach is summarised below and was set out more fully in an Economy and Employment Background Paper (Jan 1998), jointly prepared by the City Council and Innes England, a local firm of chartered surveyors. Innes England have provided an independent private sector view which supports the modified approach to the provision of employment land.

- 4.28 Analysis of long term average rates of employment land take-up can provide reliable local indicators of levels of demand. Although the pattern is uneven, the 1990s have seen an average development rate of greenfield and redeveloped employment land of approximately 14 hectares (ha) per year within the present City boundary. Fluctuations occur over time due to periods of boom and recession and the availability of new sites, particularly large sites. If this average were to continue over the period from 1998 (the base date for the employment land figures) to 2011, it would suggest that the Plan should ensure a supply of at least 182 ha of employment land over the Plan period.

4.29 Employment sites over 1 ha at April 1998 total 96 ha. Taken together with an additional 9 ha of other commitments (principally sites under one hectare), the total employment land at April 1998 was 105 ha, equating to approximately 8 ha supply per year over the remaining part of the Plan period. In addition there are a number of existing small sites in the City Centre identified for UCO Class B1(a) (business office use) only which are the subject of specific policies in the City Centre Chapter. The majority of the employment land greater than 1 ha comprises the remaining undeveloped areas of sites allocated in the 1993 Plan. Of the 96 ha of existing Principal Employment Sites listed in Policy E 7, approximately 16 ha is land already under construction at April 1998. Of the remaining 80 ha, a further 16 ha is land not readily available at April 1998.

4.30 This land supply is considered to be insufficient to meet the employment needs of the City and not capable of providing for a continuous supply of readily available employment land, especially over the later years of the Plan period. Therefore, in order to replenish the employment land portfolio, an additional 72 ha of employment land on two additional employment sites is proposed.

4.31 The total provision of all sites listed in Policy E 7 is 168 ha, of which brownfield sites comprise approximately 52%. Taken together with the 9 ha of smaller sites, they provide an employment land portfolio of approximately 13.6 ha per year over the Plan period. Potential allocations of employment land beyond this total are limited by a lack of suitable unconstrained land. In order to help maintain the employment land portfolio, Policy E 9 seeks to resist the loss of viable employment land to alternative uses.

E 7: PRINCIPAL EMPLOYMENT SITES

Principal employment sites are over 1 ha and available at April 1998. They are reserved for employment uses and are shown on the Proposals Map at:

<u>International/national sector</u>	
1 Coventry Business Park	20.7 ha
2 Cross Point Business Park	8.7 ha
3 Westwood Business Park	7.4 ha
4 Parkside 2	4.5 ha
5 Parkside 1	4.0 ha
6 Parkside 3	2.0 ha
7 University of Warwick Science Park	1.2 ha
<u>Regional sector</u>	
8 Binley Business Park	10.7 ha
9 Toll Bar End	3.0 ha
10 Matrix Churchill	2.8 ha
<u>Local</u>	
11 Wickmans	12.1 ha
12 GPT New Century Park	5.9 ha
13 Leofric Business Park	4.0 ha
14 Aldermans Green Phase 2	3.8 ha
15 Stoke Aldermoor	3.8 ha
16 Foleshill Enterprise Park	1.5 ha
SUB-TOTAL	96 ha
Additional sites in the international/national sector are shown on the Proposals Map and reserved for employment uses at:	
17 Jaguar Whitley	32 ha
Keresley	40 ha
TOTAL	168 ha

4.32 In order to achieve a balanced portfolio of employment land, it is as important to consider qualitative aspects of land supply as well as quantitative aspects. A range of sites of differing size and quality is required not only to attract inward investment but also to meet the needs of local companies expanding and relocating within the City. The potential market sector of sites, based on characteristics such as size and position, is shown in Policy E 7.

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PRINCIPAL EMPLOYMENT SITES

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Coventry Business Park | 7. University of Warwick Science Park | 13. Leofric Business Park |
| 2. Cross Point Business Park | 8. Binley Business Park | 14. Aldermans Green Phase 2 |
| 3. Westwood Business Park | 9. Toll Bar End | 15. Stoke Aldermoor |
| 4. Parkside 2 | 10. Matrix Churchill | 16. Foleshill Enterprise Park |
| 5. Parkside 1 | 11. Wickmans | 17. Jaguar Whitley |
| 6. Parkside 3 | 12. GPT New Century Park | ▲ Keresley (see Policy OS2-2) |

- 4.33 Many of the quality sites allocated in the 1993 Plan, such as Westwood Business Park, the University of Warwick Science Park and the Coventry Business Park are now nearing completion. Experience of the redevelopment at the Coventry Business Park, allocated in the 1993 Plan, shows that there is continuing strong demand for high quality industrial land and that brownfield redevelopment sites are critically important to employment land availability in the City. Given the need to provide attractive, well located and readily available sites to attract inward investment and enhance the health of the local economy, the Plan proposes two major new employment sites at both ends of the North-South Regeneration Corridor (see paragraphs 2.6-2.8). Locating major employment development within this corridor will provide a practical link between jobs, many of the most deprived residential areas of the City and major infrastructure improvements. Both the proposed new sites are considered capable of attracting international and national sector companies.
- 4.34 Adjacent to Jaguar's plant at Whitley, in the south of the City, a site adjacent to the Jaguar Whitley plant is identified. Ten hectares of this site was reserved in the 1993 Plan for the expansion of Jaguar Cars plc. The Plan proposes redefining and extending the allocation to a gross total of 32 ha. The new site will wrap around the existing Jaguar employment site and will provide a high quality business park incorporating and building upon research and development elements. The site, which lies only 2-3 km from the City's highest unemployment area, will create the opportunity for a high quality flagship development and help attract continued inward investment into the City.
- 4.35 Keresley. The closure and clearance of Coventry Colliery, together with the adjacent Homefire Plant produces a very large redevelopment site (see Policy OS 2) which straddles the City/County boundary. None of this site was identified for development in the 1993 Plan although an access road to serve the Colliery was promoted. The redevelopment of the site will require substantial road and rail infrastructure in order to avoid accessibility problems and to tie it effectively into the North-South Regeneration Corridor. In accordance with Policy AM 22, any large-scale warehousing will need to be strictly rail-based. Through the incorporation of Green Belt land to the east of the former operational land, a commercially viable redevelopment of around 40 ha of employment land can be achieved within the City.
- 4.36 The North of Coventry Regeneration Study makes it clear that the regeneration potential of the Zone is great, being particularly accessible to the inhabitants of the former mining village of Keresley and the wider area of North Coventry and Bedworth. A mixed use approach to future development will be adopted in order to achieve the best practicable development for the local area within a reasonable timescale. However, any mixed use development will be expected to be predominantly employment based. The site's redevelopment will result in a significant visual benefit to the surrounding area and will also include a residential element referred to in Policy H 7.
- 4.37 The successful joint promotion of economic development in the area has resulted in only 12 ha of employment land still being available at April 1998 just across the City boundary in Warwickshire at Middlemarch and Rowleys Green. A 20 ha site north of Coventry Airport at Rowley Road is being allocated in the Warwickshire Structure Plan. The rapid take-up of employment land near Coventry and the consequently small amount remaining make it vital that the portfolio within the City is strongly protected from non-employment uses.
- 4.38 The City Council supports the reallocation of a 40 ha Premium Employment Site at Ansty (introduced in PPG 10 "Strategic Guidance for the West Midlands" 1988) to a 50 ha Major Investment Site in RPG 11. The site lies within Rugby Borough, approximately 1 km from the City's boundary.

E 8: SITE RESERVED FOR THE EXPANSION OF JAGUAR/FORD CARS

Land shown on the Proposals Map at Browns Lane will be reserved for the reasonable expansion of Jaguar/Ford Cars. Proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated they are directly related to the continued long term operation of Jaguar/Ford Cars at that location.

4.39 Land within Coundon Wedge has been identified for Jaguar's expansion at Browns Lane since 1975 and the site is reserved for the reasonable expansion of this large established manufacturing firm. The expansion area is not considered as being generally available for employment or other forms of development and will be regarded as Urban Green Space until required by Jaguar/Ford Cars and protected by Policy GE 9. Any development will require sensitive treatment, particularly along its frontage, in view of its proximity to the Green Belt and the residential area on Browns Lane.

Redevelopment of Existing Employment Sites

E 9: REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES

Proposals for the redevelopment of employment sites for non-employment uses will not normally be permitted.

Exceptionally, quasi-employment uses may be introduced but only to the extent necessary to bring about the redevelopment of the site for employment uses.

Where the introduction of quasi-employment uses will not bring about redevelopment, proposals for mixed uses including a predominance of employment uses will be considered but only to the extent necessary to bring about redevelopment.

Only where redevelopment for employment uses, or mixed uses including a predominance of employment uses, would produce unacceptable environmental, amenity or traffic problems, will proposals for residential, open space or other appropriate uses be permitted, subject to other Plan policies.

An economic assessment and a comprehensive masterplan may be required.

4.40 This policy aims to avoid the loss of commercially viable employment sites where they come up for redevelopment, through a sequential assessment. The retention of such sites is a vital policy approach complementary to the provision of new employment sites set out in Policy E

7 and is designed to minimise the amount of greenfield land released by that Policy. Policy E 9 has been applied to existing employment sites listed in Policy E 7 and the policies together maintain a portfolio of land that is balanced geographically to the advantage of the City's Priority Areas as well helping to maintain a range of quality and size of sites.

4.41 It is recognised that, due to their high cost of redevelopment for employment purposes, some existing sites require the incorporation of "quasi-employment" uses to make them viable. Such uses comprise car dealerships and workshops, hotels and conference or training facilities. These uses will be limited to the minimum necessary to ensure that as much of the site as possible is redeveloped for employment uses and in any event to no more than 10% of the developable site area.

4.42 Where the introduction of quasi-employment uses alone will not bring about redevelopment then mixed use redevelopments with a predominance of employment use will be considered only to the extent necessary to bring about redevelopment. In this instance the term "predominance" means at least 65%.

4.43 In exceptional cases, a complete change of use may prove to be the only practicable outcome where environmental, amenity or highway problems cannot otherwise be overcome. Where the obsolescence of an employment site for employment use can be unequivocally demonstrated, consideration will be given to residential and open space use. Allowing residential use on former employment sites can facilitate effective redevelopment of the area, providing a choice of new homes in close proximity to local facilities and the public transport network.

Additional Employment Sites

E 10: WINDFALL ADDITIONS TO EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY

Proposals for additional employment sites will be determined on the basis of:

- compatibility with nearby uses;
- accessibility by a choice of means of transport;
- accessibility from the Priority Areas; and
- compatibility with other Plan policies.

4.44 Occasionally, potential new employment sites become available through unforeseen circumstances. Whenever such windfall sites become available, proposals for employment uses will be considered with reference to other Plan policies.

4.45 Increasing transport access to employment for those whose personal mobility is limited is an important part of the regeneration process. In many areas of the City, particularly the Priority Areas described in paragraph 2.16 of the Overall Strategy Chapter, car ownership is low and residents are restricted in their ability to travel to take advantage of employment opportunities. New employment developments must therefore ensure that layouts integrate with pedestrian and cycle routes in the vicinity of the site. Additionally the Access and Movement Chapter of the Plan refers to the requirement for the needs of public transport users to be taken into account, together with the negotiation with employers of Green Travel Plans.

4.46 Proposals for office development will be determined on the basis of Policy E 5.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Accessibility to Job Opportunities

E 11: ACCESSIBILITY TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES

When considering proposals for employment development, the provision of job opportunities for Coventrians will be sought and promoted. This will include training schemes to help local people, particularly disadvantaged groups, to obtain the necessary skills to increase their access to job opportunities.

4.47 In attracting new employers to Coventry, it is recognised that some of the new jobs will be taken by people commuting from the rest of the sub-region. It is important, however, that the jobs created in the new and existing sectors of the economy are made available to all of the City's workforce. The City Council will therefore seek the provision of training and retraining schemes for local people, working in partnership with other organisations and achieved through negotiation and, where appropriate, legal agreements with developers.

E 12: EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING INITIATIVES TO ASSIST THE PRIORITY AREAS

Promotion of employment and training initiatives will focus on:

- the availability of employment opportunities throughout the City for residents of the Priority Areas; and
- the use of appropriate sites and premises within, or with easy access to, the Priority Areas for the provision of employment and training initiatives specifically aimed at relieving local economic disadvantages.

4.48 The restructuring of Coventry's manufacturing economy particularly affected those industries which were dominated by male full-time employment. The consequence of this restructuring is reflected in unemployment in the City, where over three quarters of claimants in the City in 1998 were men, with approximately 30% of claimants having been unemployed for more than a year. These problems are particularly concentrated within the City's Priority Areas. Therefore, special effort will be made to ensure that the benefits of economic policies are experienced by people who live in these Areas.

4.49 The City Council will encourage the development of employment and training initiatives specifically aimed at relieving economic disadvantages within the Priority Areas. In addition, the provision of appropriate sites and premises with easy access from the Priority Areas is another way in which assistance can be given.

Warehousing

E 13: WAREHOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for large scale warehousing will only be permitted if the applicant demonstrates that:

- it is essential and ancillary to local manufacturing or retailing;
- the level of employment generated is similar to that which could be expected to result from other forms of employment development; or
- the site is accessible by rail freight.

4.50 Warehousing (including wholesale cash and carry uses) means those storage and distribution uses in Class B8 of the UCO.

4.51 Warehousing requires a considerable amount of land but usually provides fewer job opportunities. In accordance with RPG 11, provision for large scale warehousing and distribution has been made at Hams Hall, Crick, Magna Park and Bermuda Park. The City Council therefore believes that Coventry, being an urban area with limited employment land, is not generally an appropriate location for such large scale B8 uses. The City Council will interpret large scale warehousing as being in excess of a 4,000 sq m gross internal floorspace threshold. This limits large scale warehousing development to more appropriate sub-regional sites. The Keresley site is dealt with in Policy AM 22 in the context of rail freight.

4.52 It is recognised that warehousing may be complementary to manufacturing industries in Coventry and, therefore, large scale warehousing may be acceptable if it can be demonstrated that it is essential to the efficient functioning of these local industries. Cash and carry warehouses are considered to be ancillary to the efficient operation of shops within the City and their development on employment land may be supported.

4.53 Exceptionally, large scale warehousing may be acceptable if the resultant job creation can be shown to be similar to that which might reasonably be expected to result from other forms of employment use (Classes B1 and B2 of the UCO). For example, where it would not be detrimental to residential amenity, twenty-four hour continuous

working of a distribution building might result in total numbers of employees similar to the number that might reasonably be expected to be employed if the building was used for “traditional” day shift industrial working.

General Industrial Development in Residential Areas

E 14: GENERAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Proposals for the development of new general industrial uses in residential areas will not normally be permitted.

Consideration may be given to the improvement or expansion of existing general industrial sites provided that:

- job opportunities are enhanced or protected; and
- environmental improvements result (including the reduction of pollution and the alleviation of traffic, access, parking and visual problems).

4.54 General industrial use falls within Class B2 of the UCO.

4.55 To avoid introducing new environmental problems, the City Council is concerned that the development of new general industrial uses in residential areas should be resisted unless the particular location, design and operation overcome environmental objections. Proposals for the improvement or expansion of existing general industrial premises will be considered in terms of how far the use helps to improve employment opportunities, and the potential for improving existing environmental conditions.

4.56 Proposals for other forms of employment development within residential areas will be considered against the criteria set out in Policy E 10.