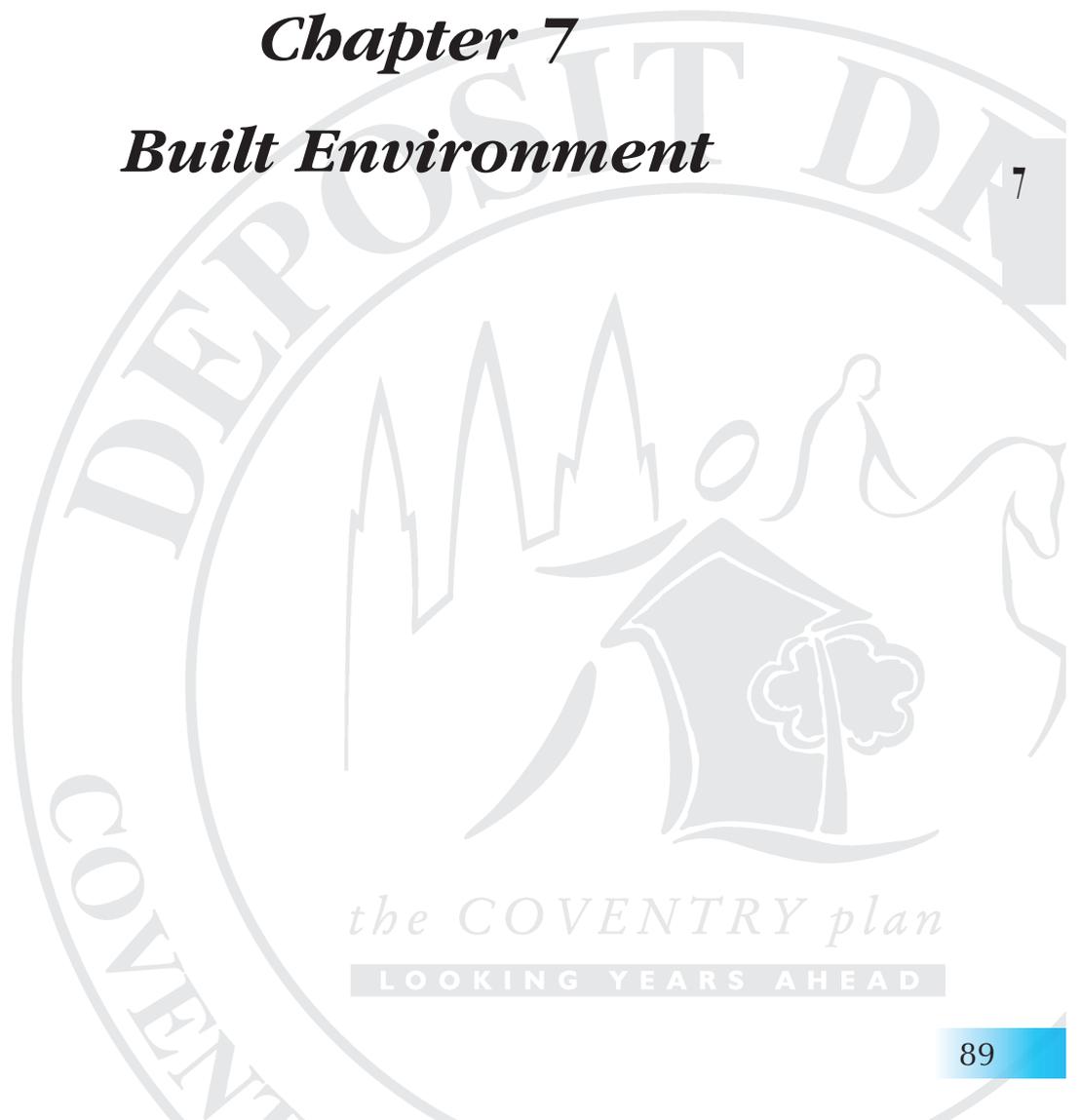


Chapter 7
Built Environment

7



the COVENTRY plan

LOOKING YEARS AHEAD



the COVENTRY plan

LOOKING YEARS AHEAD

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INTRODUCTION AND POLICY AIM

7.1 Environmental Quality is one of the three Strategic Objectives of the Plan. This Chapter concentrates on the built environment which comprises buildings and the spaces and environment around them. It includes policies for creating a higher quality environment by:

- ensuring that new developments are of a high standard and relate well to what is already there;
- giving design advice on transport corridors, locally distinctive areas and specific topics; and
- protecting and enhancing the environment generally.

The Plan sets out an approach to design against which development proposals will be considered. Policies are based on a proper assessment of the character of the City's built and natural environment.

7.2 The policy aim is to achieve a high quality built environment throughout Coventry, not only for its own sake, but to maintain the attraction of the City as a good place in which to live, work, play, invest and visit.

National and Regional Policy Context

7.3 Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 1 "General Policy and Principles" 1997, amongst other things, promotes good design and emphasises that it should be the aim of all involved in the design process. Good design can help to create successful places, where people will choose to live, work, play, invest and visit. Local authorities should concentrate their advice on broad matters of scale, density, height, massing, layout, landscape and access and they should reject poor designs.

7.4 PPG 12 "Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance" 1992 advises that detailed development control policies may control particular aspects of development including visual intrusion and pollution and protect particular parts of the Plan area including Conservation Areas. It stresses that high quality environments should be protected and enhanced and poor environments should be improved.

7.5 PPG 15 "Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas" 1994 gives detailed advice on how to preserve the character and appearance of important historic buildings and areas. It sets out that new development should be designed to respect the character and settings of these buildings. PPG 16 "Archaeology and Planning" 1990 does the same for important historic sites.

7.6 PPG 6 "Town Centres and Retail Development" 1996 also gives significance to urban design policies in development plans in order to help improve the environment of town centres. In preparing a town centre strategy, the importance of an urban design analysis to providing a framework for policies, proposals and development briefs for key sites is stressed. Authorities are also encouraged to consider drawing up policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on shopfront design and to review street furniture, paving and signs.

7.7 RPG II "Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands" 1998 supports the maintenance and enhancement of the quality and distinctiveness of the Region's natural and built environment. RPG 11 also indicates that development plans should identify sites for recycling, treatment and disposal to meet demand and requires the monitoring of waste disposal especially across boundaries. The White Paper "Making Waste Work" 1995 identifies the need to establish the Best Practical Environmental Option (BPEO) which considers the environmental and economic costs and benefits of the waste management options. The White Paper also sets targets for reducing municipal waste, recycling, composting and for amounts of waste going to landfill. Many of these targets are subject to review.

Local Policy Context

7.8 As a result of Government guidance and a recognition of the need to improve design advice, the City Council commissioned a City wide Urban Design Study from consultants Urban Initiatives which informed the urban design policies in this Chapter. The overall objective of the Study is to help Coventry become a City:

- that inspires through imaginative and sensitive design;
- with a lively and distinctive character;
- whose streets and public spaces are safe, accessible and pleasant to use;
- with a flourishing economic life; and
- that promotes sustainable development by using resources efficiently.

- 7.9 The report proposes a hierarchy of design policy and guidance which includes:
- general design policies which will be City wide;
 - policies for particular contexts, e.g. corridors, gateways, the Canal, locally distinctive areas and suburban centres of activity;
 - policies for specific areas, e.g. the City Centre, the Ringway, Inner Area Zones of Change and the North West City Fringe; and
 - policies for specific topics, e.g. residential development, shopfronts.
- Some of the advice will be of a detailed nature and is best presented in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) rather than policies in the Plan.
- 7.10 Policies are also recommended for the processes to be followed in relation to design which include:
- design statements as part of planning applications; and
 - the identification of situations where planning briefs will be required.
- Policies to secure these processes are referred to in SPG.
- 7.11 The Coventry Community Plan identifies four priorities which are highly relevant to the built environment:
- tackling crime and making communities safer;
 - tackling poverty;
 - investing in young people; and
 - meeting the needs and aspirations of older people.
- 7.12 It refers to the need to spend money on physical improvements to people's environment as part of tackling crime including:
- improvements to street lighting;
 - designing out crime;
 - schemes to improve security and safety;
 - improving the environment of target areas to improve local confidence and pride; and
 - enhancing the distinctiveness of neighbourhoods by appropriate street furniture or materials.
- 7.13 The City Council's Disability Equality Policy makes a commitment to "carrying out a phased programme of physical improvements to all premises which are open to the public". This is referred to in Policy OS 11 and further advice will be given in SPG. The City Council, for instance, owns about 500 buildings of which 122 are open to the public. Only 9 of these are accessible to disabled people in relation to the Citizens Charter performance indicators. However this indicator does not necessarily meet the priorities of disabled people. Therefore, a survey of public access to Council buildings is being undertaken and money will be spent on improving the buildings identified as priorities within the context of a financial strategy 1999 to 2003.
- 7.14 The Public Art Strategy aims to complement and enhance other development strategies, including the Arts, Lighting, Heritage, Regeneration and Urban Design Strategies. Creative industries play an important part in regenerative strategies including attracting inward investment, assisting in the marketing of the City, creating identity, developing cultural tourism and supporting local industries. The Public Art Strategy aims to build upon existing cultural skills and achievements to create a public art programme that is visionary and achievable and which is supported by its citizens. This Strategy will enable the Council to commission innovative, distinctive and challenging work. The Lighting Strategy aims to transform the City Centre at night.
- 7.15 Design can play an important role in achieving a more sustainable City by considering the orientation and aspect of buildings, the reduction of energy consumption by insulation and the use of particular materials.

STRATEGY

Strategy and the Principles of Urban Design

BE 1: OVERALL BUILT ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

The City Council will promote and encourage improvement to the built environment throughout Coventry by setting out and applying:

- the principles of Urban Design;
- policies and proposals for the environmental enhancement of corridors and gateways;
- policies for areas of local distinctiveness including Conservation Areas;
- policies for historic buildings and archaeology; and
- policies for other specific design topics.

This will include working with all those involved in development processes as well as voluntary groups and local people.

More detailed advice will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in appropriate cases.

(Part 1 Policy)

7

7.16 The policy aim referred to in paragraph 7.2 is supported by a framework of policies and proposals. Developments will be required initially to consider the principles of Urban Design referred to in Policy BE 2. Depending on the location of the proposals, they will need to take into account policies for corridors, gateways and areas of local distinctiveness including Conservation Areas referred to in Policies BE 3 to 10. Policies for some specific areas are dealt with elsewhere. The Ancient Arden Guidelines are referred to in the Green Environment Chapter while the City Centre is a separate Chapter in its own right. In some cases there will be design advice for specific topics which will usually be expressed in the form of SPG.

7.17 The variety of people who create and maintain the built environment often need advice on a range of matters. These can include:

- the site and its setting;
- existing natural and built features;
- views that contribute to the area;
- the relationship to adjacent buildings;
- the scale, density, massing and height of the proposals;
- the quality of design;
- urban form;
- layout, parking and servicing;
- landscaping and boundary treatment;
- environmental impact;
- a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and road users;
- the creation of energy efficient buildings;
- the creation of secure environments; and
- maintenance concerns.

7.18 There is need for a partnership between the local authority, the developer and the community in caring for the environment. Developers should consult with local communities and amenity societies in preparing proposals. The involvement of the community, if undertaken in an effective way, offers the advantage of generating greater concern and care for the environment and the development of a sense of responsibility towards the environment. Neighbourhood Watch Schemes can contribute to the security of areas.

7.19 Particular attention will need to be paid to the Priority Areas, described in paragraph 2.16 of the Overall Strategy chapter, where the benefits of community involvement in environmental improvement can bring can be increased by helping disadvantaged groups and Areas to help themselves. There are other sections of society who suffer disadvantage in one form or another, including disabled people, children and young people, the elderly, unemployed and, in some respects, women. The needs of all such groups should be taken into account when issues of the built environment are considered, and their involvement in the actual improvement of the Areas identified should be encouraged.

7.20 Proposals will also need to consider Policy OS 4 which promotes sustainability through developments which use resources efficiently and reduce the need to travel, and Policy OS 9 which encourages mixed land use developments.

BE 2: THE PRINCIPLES OF URBAN DESIGN

High quality urban design will be promoted by ensuring that all new development takes into account the following design principles:

- enhancing townscape and landscape character by reflecting locally distinct patterns of development;
- strengthening the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines the boundaries between private and public space;
- providing high quality public spaces which are safe, uncluttered, active and easily identifiable;
- making places that inter-connect and are attractive to move through;
- ensuring that developments are readily understood by users; and
- encouraging developments which can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions.

- 7.21 The positive features of a place and its communities contribute to its special character and sense of place. They include the landscape, building traditions and materials, culture and other factors that make one place different from another.
- 7.22 Successful urban spaces, including streets, are defined and enclosed by buildings and structures. The relationship between buildings on a street and between the buildings and the street is the key to this.
- 7.23 The success of public space depends on the quality and integration of:
- paving;
 - planting;
 - lighting;
 - orientation;
 - shelter;
 - the arrangement of street furniture and signs;
 - the way in which it is overlooked;
 - the routes which pass through it; and
 - the uses in and next to it.
- 7.24 The convenience, safety and comfort with which people go to and pass through buildings, places and spaces plays a large part in determining how successful a place will be.

- 7.25 It is important that people can move easily through spaces and buildings by receiving clear messages about where to go and how the links work.
- 7.26 The most successful places can handle change. Even though people may live, travel and work in very different ways, the buildings and spaces can meet these changing needs, rather than being tightly fitted to some immediate purpose.

AREAS OF LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Transport Corridors and Gateways

BE 3: THE ENHANCEMENT OF TRANSPORT CORRIDORS AND GATEWAYS

The environment along the main transport corridors and gateways to the City will be protected and enhanced.

- 7.27 An important aspect of regenerating the economy of the City is the continual upgrading of its image for both visitors and residents. For many visitors, including potential investors, the impression taken away is the one that they first get upon entering and travelling through the City. Residents use corridors and gateways on a regular basis and improvements there benefit the overall quality of life. Major radial transport corridors link the City Centre to the edge of the built up area and divide the City into wedges. The transport corridors have an important role both as links and places in their own right. Giving a corridor a “beginning and end” is important to enhance local character and identity as well as creating a good impression. Gateways give a physical definition to these qualities.
- 7.28 Subsequent policies cover road, canal and railway corridors which are shown on Text Map BE 1.



BE 4: ROAD CORRIDORS

The following road corridors are priorities for environmental enhancement during the Plan Period:

- 1 Foleshill Road/Longford Road/Bedworth Road;
- 2 Sky Blue Way/Walsgrave Road/Ansty Road/Hinckley Road; and
- 3 Coventry Eastern By-pass (A46).

The following sections of road corridors will also be considered:

- 4 Butts Road/Spon End/Hearsall Lane between the Ring Road and the A45;
- 5 Holyhead Road between the Ring Road and Moseley Avenue;
- 6 Radford Road between the Ring Road and Radford Common;
- 7 Stoney Stanton Road between the Ring Road and Phoenix Way; and
- 8 London Road between the Ring Road and the Whitley roundabout.

Enhancement will be achieved by both planning control and direct action. A Design Framework will be prepared for each corridor to guide the form of development and ensure that co-ordinated enhancement takes place.

7.29 Most of the City's corridors serve two roles as a thoroughfare and a place to live. The street character depends upon its ability to create quality in terms of place and links. There are already several high quality road corridors and gateways to the City including Kenilworth Road, Allesley Old Road, Holyhead Road between Moseley Avenue and the A45, Tamworth Road, Binley Road and Leamington Road. Conversely, there are other road corridors which would benefit from being upgraded and improved.

7.30 Three road corridors should be given priority. Enhancement of the Foleshill Road/Longford Road/Bedworth Road corridor, comprising a succession of traditional inner area streets, will aid the regeneration of the north of the City. Enhancement of Sky Blue Way/ Walsgrave Road/Ansty Road/Hinckley Road, a succession of different types of street, will also aid regeneration in part and also improve the image for those entering the City from the north-east and east. Enhancement of the Coventry Eastern By-pass (A46), will improve the image of the City for passing motorists.

7.31 Having identified these corridors, enhancement will be achieved through planning control (negotiating improvements to proposals) and direct action (through planning and highway powers or other action). Design Frameworks including development briefs will guide enhancement with the following objectives:

- to provide a better welcome and first impression to visitors;
- to guide, orientate and inform visitors about areas, attractions and facilities both along the route and in the City Centre before arrival;
- to reinforce the character and identity of overall corridors, particular areas and sections of a corridor;
- to promote the provision and use of public transport;
- to enhance the public space through co-ordinated environmental improvements reflecting corridor and local character identity.

7.32 The last five corridor sections will be considered later in the Plan period. These are corridors of which only a part causes problems, where the corridor is not a major entrance to the City or where opportunities for action may be limited.

BE 5: THE CANAL CORRIDOR

Developments within the Coventry Canal Corridor will be considered on the basis of the Canal Corridor Study.

7.33 The Coventry Canal is a major City corridor which has already been the subject of a comprehensive design and development study which forms SPG and is identified as an Urban Green Space corridor in Policy GE 3. It also forms part of the North-South Regeneration Corridor and ties into the North of Coventry Regeneration Zone, Foleshill Gasworks Strategic Regeneration Site (see Policy OS 2) and Local Area Regeneration initiatives (see Policy OS 3). Several enhancement schemes have already taken place.

BE 6: THE WEST COAST MAIN LINE RAILWAY CORRIDOR

Particular regard will be had to the design and attractiveness of all development proposals in the vicinity of and visible from the West Coast Main Line railway.

7.34 The West Coast Main Line is one of the busiest sections of railway line in the country and passengers need to receive positive images of the City from the train. Current images are mainly positive with views of modern industrial premises, open space and housing mixed with less attractive sections around the A45 bridge and south of Tile Hill station. There is a need to ensure that any new developments present an attractive view to the railway as well as a need for improvements to a number of existing buildings. Policies AM 7 and AM 17-3 and 17-4 seek improvements to the existing stations at Canley and Tile Hill. The main station area is referred to in Policies CC 28 and CC 29.

BE 7: GATEWAYS

Design Frameworks will be prepared for each City gateway to guide the form of development and ensure that co-ordinated enhancement takes place.

7.35 The City gateways are shown on Text Map BE 1. Most of them are at major road junctions, some at the edge of the City, others at key locations within the built-up area and others at the Ring Road junctions. Two are on the rail corridor at Tile Hill station and the main station. Both public and private investment will be encouraged at these locations.

7.36 A collaborative design approach should be established to developing the gateways and:

- creating an enhanced sense of arrival and welcome;
- creating a series of structures to act as landmarks;
- identifying appropriate levels of highway and pedestrian signs;
- reflecting the enhancement strategies for individual City corridors;
- responding to development opportunities on adjacent sites; and
- improving the physical appearance of the public spaces.

Areas of Local Distinctiveness

BE 8: AREAS OF LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Areas of Local Distinctiveness will be identified in conjunction with their local communities. Design guidance which responds sensitively to the local character of these areas will be prepared.

7.37 Beyond the Ring Road, there are large residential areas nearly half of which were constructed in the 1920s and 30s. Some of these residential areas are locally distinctive including the existing and proposed Conservation Areas. Ancient commons, woodlands and brookstrays both provide green wedges and Urban Green Space and also define the suburbs.

7.38 There is a need for design policies which respond more sensitively to individual contexts and promote higher standards of design in areas where local character and identity is gradually being eroded. Areas which are locally distinctive will be identified in conjunction with their local communities and design guidance will be prepared for them.

7.39 The identification of areas of local distinctiveness will be on the basis of:

- consistency/coherence of building forms and materials;
- particular uses or mix of uses;
- historical significance in the development of the City;
- general environmental quality; and
- evidence of erosion of the above qualities.

Initial suggestions for areas to consider include Longford, Earlsdon, Upper Stoke, the wider Naul's Mill area and Canley Gardens. Because of the extent of the work involved one of these areas will be selected for a pilot study. Further areas could be considered in the future.

7.40 The programme of work to be carried out in each identified distinctive character area would include:

- identification of the boundaries of the area;
- preparation of a character statement through detailed area analysis;
- development of character statements leading to design guidelines which reflect the specific local context;
- development of character statements and design guidelines into an Urban Design Framework; and
- adoption as SPG following public consultation.

The main work would not necessarily be carried out by the City Council. A local community or other interested party could do it.

7.41 Detailed issues that could be covered could include:

- alterations and extensions to buildings;
- soft landscape design and open space;
- boundary treatments;
- floorscape design and street furniture;
- views, vistas and landmarks;
- shopfronts;
- environmental enhancement schemes, key development sites, site specific briefs and local design initiatives; and
- maintenance.

7.42 Defined Centres and local shopping areas often provide a centre of activity and an important element in the City's structure, contributing to local identity. They are sometimes worthy of special design attention and require developments which are sympathetic to one or more of the following characteristics:

- a concentration of particular building forms or uses;
- a shopping centre/frontage;
- a landmark building or structure;
- public uses and community facilities;
- landscape features and open space;
- road junctions marked by higher buildings.

Conservation Areas

7.43 Conservation Areas are existing examples of areas of local distinctiveness and are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. Policies for them should seek to preserve and enhance their character and appearance while taking into account the need for them to function successfully as places for social and economic activity. The Act also requires local planning authorities to review their Conservation Areas from time to time and, where appropriate, to designate additional areas. There are 13 existing Conservation Areas to be retained which are shown on the Proposals Map (including the City Centre Inset Map) and on the Text Map BE 2.

BE 9: CONSERVATION AREAS

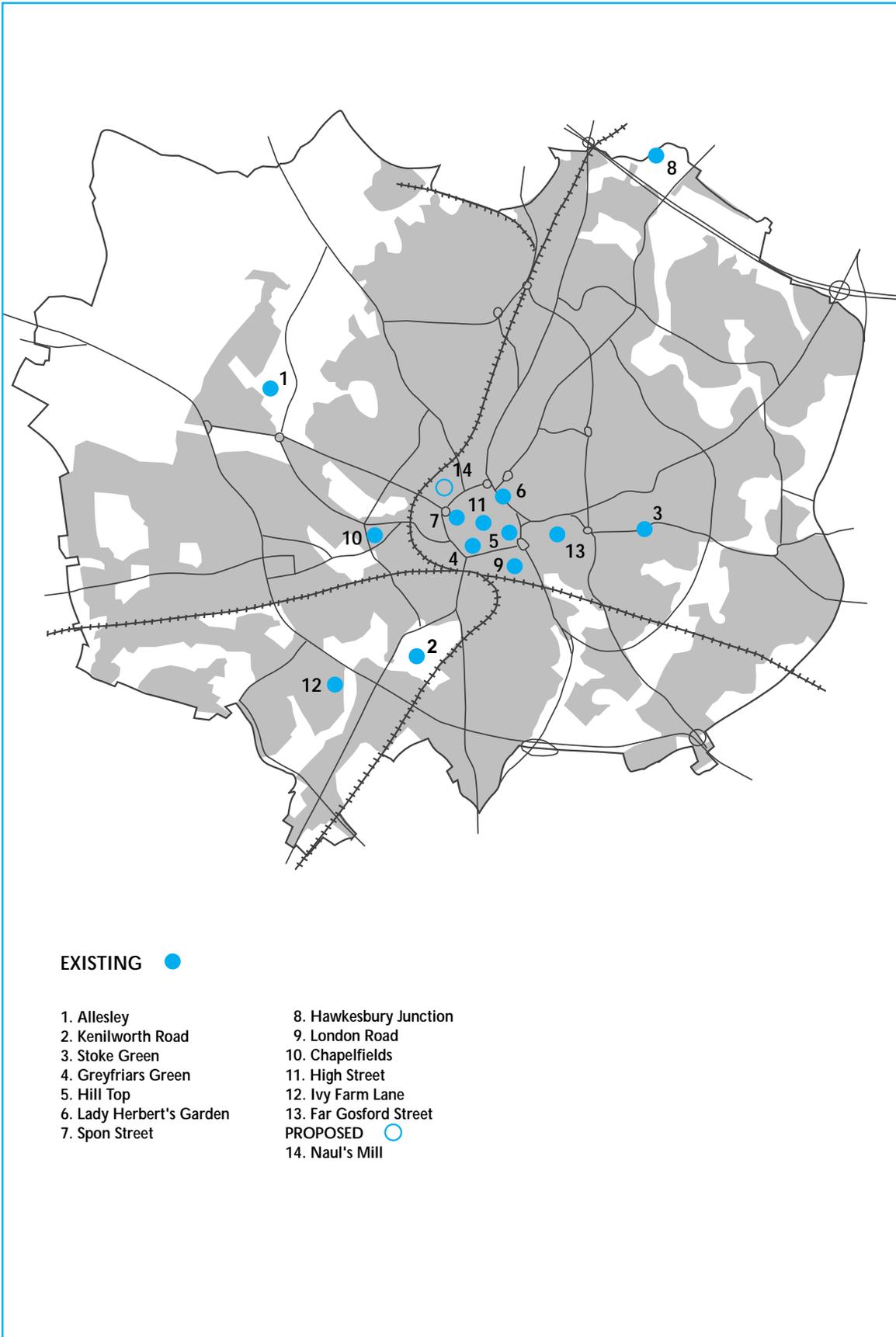
Naul's Mill Park area will be designated as a Conservation Area.

Changes will be made to the boundaries of:

- **Spon Street Conservation Area;**
- **Stoke Green Conservation Area; and**
- **Kenilworth Road Conservation Area.**

Existing Conservation Areas, including these intended changes, and the proposed Naul's Mill Conservation Area, are shown on the Proposals Map.

7.44 Naul's Mill Park is an area containing a traditional Victorian park and Bablake School, together with several streets of fine Victorian houses, the character of which could be eroded by unsympathetic works and alterations. There is also potential for enhancement works to be carried out within the area. The area represents a coherent, attractive and high quality mainly residential area which is unusual within Coventry and is worthy of special care to ensure its conservation.



EXISTING ●

- 1. Allesley
- 2. Kenilworth Road
- 3. Stoke Green
- 4. Greyfriars Green
- 5. Hill Top
- 6. Lady Herbert's Garden
- 7. Spon Street

- 8. Hawkesbury Junction
- 9. London Road
- 10. Chapelfields
- 11. High Street
- 12. Ivy Farm Lane
- 13. Far Gosford Street
- PROPOSED ○
- 14. Naul's Mill

7.45 The opportunity has also been taken to review the boundaries of the existing Conservation Areas and changes to 3 of them are proposed:

- Spon Street Conservation Area to be extended to include parts of Hill Street and Lower Holyhead Road, which possess a similar quality and character to the existing Area, and backland in Watch Close in order that development can be controlled in such a way as to safeguard the setting of the Conservation Area. There are also minor changes to reflect property boundaries.
- Stoke Green Conservation Area to be extended to include an attractive area of allotments and to make a small adjustment to the boundary behind 11-17 Stoke Green to reflect development since the Conservation Area was designated.
- Kenilworth Road Conservation Area to be extended to take account of development behind 54 Kenilworth Road.

BE 10: DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be permitted only if it will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Area.

The acceptability of development will be determined on the basis of:

- the scale, massing, siting, design and materials of any new building or structure;
- the effect of any associated loss, alteration or creation of buildings and other townscape and landscape features; and
- the nature of its use and resulting levels of traffic, parking, disturbance and other activities.

Supplementary Planning Guidance will be produced for Conservation Areas.

7.46 The City Council has a duty to protect or enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. Designation alone will not ensure this. This includes the duty to formulate and publish guidelines and proposals from time to time for their protection and enhancement. These proposals include not just the buildings which are of importance to their character but also the spaces between buildings and views into and within the Area.

7.47 Within Conservation Areas, there is a presumption that buildings which contribute to the environment or character of the area will be retained rather than demolished. This may require a change in the use of a building. The City Council will seek to ensure that the use is compatible with the preservation and enhancement of the building and its setting. Where a proposal involves demolition and replacement of a building or where the acceptability of a proposal depends for any other reason on completion of all its elements, permission may be conditional upon measures to ensure rapid completion.

7.48 Particular attention will be paid to the details of submitted applications in Conservation Areas. This includes consideration not only of siting, scale, massing and design but also the landscaping, colour and materials of the proposed development. Because these details are fundamental to the consideration of planning applications in Conservation Areas, it will normally be a requirement that they are submitted as part of the application. Details of important Conservation Area features to be taken into account will be given in SPG.

7.49 The enhancement of Conservation Areas is the positive side of designation and can act as a catalyst for individuals and groups to assist in improving an Area. Funding is available from English Heritage under Conservation Area Partnership schemes or under the Heritage Lottery Fund for a programme of enhancement schemes to be carried out in Conservation Areas and for works to buildings within Conservation Areas where this will ensure the retention of historic fabric.

7.50 SPG exists for the following Conservation Areas:

- Stoke Green
- Chapelfields
- Spon Street
- Kenilworth Road

Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

7.51 “Listed buildings” are those recognised by the Secretary of State for the Environment as being of special architectural or historic interest. They can often be of crucial importance to the character of an area and there is the strongest presumption against their demolition.

BE 11: ALTERATION OR EXTENSION OF LISTED BUILDINGS

Development which:

- involves alteration or extension;
- is within the curtilage of; or
- affects the setting

of a listed building will be permitted only if there will be no detrimental impact on the appearance and character of the building and its setting or on the contribution it makes to the area in which it is situated.

Submission of full details of any changes will be required.

7.52 The character and historical significance of a listed building can be damaged by unsympathetic alterations even of a relatively minor nature. Before alterations are approved, a detailed survey clearly showing all the proposed changes should be submitted. As far as possible all original features should be retained and, where this is not possible, careful attention must be given to the details of any replacements. Alterations will be judged on:

- the degree to which historic fabric is retained;
- the extent to which change could be reversed; and
- the use of sympathetic design and materials.

7.53 It is not only the use and physical structure of a listed building which are important. Of equal importance is the context of the building in relation to the surrounding development. The character of a listed building can be spoiled by the unsympathetic development of an adjoining site. It is important, therefore, that the settings of listed buildings are also protected.

BE 12: CHANGE OF USE OF LISTED BUILDINGS

The change of use of a listed building will be permitted only if there will be no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the building and its setting.

7.54 The best use of a listed building is generally that for which it was built. However, it is not always possible for it to remain in its original use and it may be necessary to find an alternative use in order to ensure the maintenance and retention of the building. Alternative uses for listed buildings will only be allowed if they would not have a detrimental impact on its appearance or character. To help ensure that this is the case, it will be a requirement that details of any consequent alterations are submitted as part of the application.

BE 13: DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS

Development involving the loss of a listed building or any part or feature contributing to its special architectural or historic interest, whether or not specifically mentioned in its listing, will be considered only if it is proven that no realistic alternative for its survival can be secured.

7.55 Demolition of a listed building will only be considered where there is no acceptable use which could ensure its maintenance and repair, or the building is wholly beyond repair. The applicants will be required to prove this is the case. Before demolition, a detailed scheme for the redevelopment of the site should be agreed and the overall impact of the proposal must be assessed. Demolition must not cause harm to the setting of any other listed building, the character of the street scene or the character of a Conservation Area.

7.56 The City Council has powers under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to take action to ensure that listed buildings in private ownership are properly maintained and not allowed to fall into a state of disrepair. Where it appears that action is necessary to preserve listed buildings the City Council will consider the use of these powers.

BE 14: “LOCALLY LISTED” BUILDINGS

A list of buildings of local architectural or historic interest worthy of conservation will be maintained.

Development involving the partial or complete loss of such a building will be permitted only if the benefits of the development can be shown to outweigh any resulting harm, or that no realistic alternative for its survival can be secured.

- 7.57 In addition to statutorily listed buildings, the City Council also maintains a list of other buildings of local architectural or historic interest worthy of conservation. In considering planning applications for development which affects the character or appearance of buildings on this “local list”, the City Council will pay particular attention to the need to preserve their character or appearance. The City Council will seek to protect locally listed buildings, would need to be convinced that there are good reasons for demolition if it is proposed and will work to find suitable uses which ensure their retention. Where appropriate, it will seek to have such a building placed on the statutory list.
- 7.58 The criteria for including buildings on this “local list” will be based on the criteria for the compilation of the statutory list, although it is recognised that these buildings will be of local rather than national significance and will display the historic development of buildings within the City.

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites

- 7.59 Coventry is an ancient city which can trace its history back to the Saxon period. Urban growth and rebuilding over the centuries have removed most above ground traces of earlier times, and those buildings and structures that have survived have great importance because of their rarity within the City. Of these sites, 10 are protected by law as “Scheduled Monuments” under Part I of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and others are listed buildings.

BE 15: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

There will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of archaeological remains of national importance (whether or not scheduled ancient monuments and whether visible or concealed) and of their setting and accessibility for public enjoyment and expert study.

Development adversely affecting other known or suspected archaeological remains of importance, or their setting or accessibility, will be permitted only if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the likely harm and all practicable measures are taken for the investigation, recording and preservation of the remains.

Where the existence or importance of remains is uncertain, suitable investigation may be required prior to the determination of development proposal.

- 7.60 Development, particularly during the twentieth century, has considerably reduced the below ground remains, which survive more widely within the City than standing monuments. The principles set out in PPG 16 will be followed with a preference for the retention of archaeological remains in situ. Fieldwork, recording and “preservation by record” may be considered as an alternative where in situ preservation is inappropriate. The need for proper assessment of the archaeological effects of any development proposal prior to its determination is crucial.
- 7.61 The archaeological resource in some parts of the City is well documented and in these areas it is possible to predict with some accuracy what is likely to survive and in what condition. However for large parts of the City, the record is incomplete or non-existent. There is a clear need to collate the existing data and to ensure that the impact of development works on archaeological remains is properly assessed and managed within the planning process. The City Council will identify zones of differing archaeological priority as an aid to managing development of the City and will establish an urban archaeological database, allowing closer integration of archaeology and the planning process. The database will allow a more comprehensive urban archaeological assessment to be carried out, reviewing what is known of the City’s archaeology and identifying priorities for future work.

- 7.62 The City Council may require an on-site assessment by trial works before making a decision on a proposal. This assessment will seek to determine the character and condition of any archaeological remains within the site and the likely impact of the proposal on such remains. It can put forward proposals for the mitigation of the impact.
- 7.63 A detailed scheme of works, approved in advance by the City Council, will be required where complete preservation in situ of archaeological remains is not appropriate. The City Council may require that no development takes place before an archaeological investigation of the site has been commissioned.
- 7.66 PPG 8 “Telecommunications” 1992 states that local planning authorities should include policies which weigh the importance of making reasonable provision for telecommunications development against the need to protect and enhance the environment. There may be a need for special policies in relation to Green Belts, National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 7.67 It is necessary to ensure that apparatus is sited and arranged as unobtrusively as possible. Where possible existing masts or apparatus should be used to prevent a cluttered appearance. Sensitive views should be looked at carefully, particularly in the open countryside and in residential areas. Where visual harm is unavoidable the developer must demonstrate that there is no feasible and less harmful alternative.

OTHER DESIGN TOPICS

7.64 Policies have been prepared for a series of topics identified below. Many of these will be supported by SPG in the form of design guides, some of which already exist. These will be updated and prepared on a prioritised and phased basis. However, not all design guides need be prepared by the City Council and other organisations could assist.

7.65 The following topics will be covered:

- Telecommunications;
- Advertising;
- Public Art;
- Lighting; and
- Landscape design and development (including boundary treatment).

Telecommunications

BE 16: TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Proposals for telecommunications equipment should ensure that:

- **the equipment is designed and sited to minimise visual intrusion;**
- **local amenity is not adversely affected; and**
- **equipment provision should not exceed the needs of the telecommunications operator.**

Advertisements

BE 17: ADVERTISEMENTS

Supplementary Planning Guidance will be used to regulate advertisements.

7.68 PPG 19 “ Outdoor Advertisement Control” 1992 is concerned with helping everyone involved in the display of outdoor advertising to contribute positively to the appearance of an attractive and cared for environment in cities, towns and the countryside. Most advertisements are within the scope of the control regime of the Control of Advertisements Regulations 1992. Local planning authorities may control advertisements when it is justified in the interests of amenity and public safety.

7.69 Whether in the form of signs on individual properties, or in the form of commercial poster panels, outdoor advertising has an impact on the built environment. Applications for express consent to display advertisements can only be judged against the interests of public safety or amenity. The City Council has prepared planning guidelines for the control of outdoor advertising. These are SPG and will be a material consideration in determining applications.

Public Art

BE 18: PUBLIC ART

Public art will be encouraged and, where appropriate, required in new developments.

- 7.70 The vision for public art is more than public art works, it should be part of the fabric of our City, incorporated into our buildings and our public spaces. Public art describes any contribution or intervention made by artists or craftspeople, whether permanent or temporary, that is intended for public space. A series of integrated works created through a collaborative approach, such as artist designed public squares, lighting schemes and planting projects, also enables art to become part of the fabric of the City. Public art encompasses a wide diversity of forms, media and processes. This can include the use of unusual materials or technologies, use of “art” materials or technologies in experimental ways, or in an innovative approach to social processes. The art element must be designed into schemes at the start. Art or design which is “bolted on” as an afterthought nearly always fails.
- 7.71 Public art will be encouraged in all new developments affording scope for it and may be required where development involves loss of some historic or aesthetic feature, or is in a prominent and accessible location, or will contribute to the achievement of high quality design.
- 7.72 The function and benefits of public art are not just aesthetic but also essentially social and economic. It can discourage abuse of the environment by generating public respect for it. A stimulating environment can lift the morale and generate pride in the environment. A well designed environment can attract business and visitors (and hence jobs). It can sometimes respond directly to the needs of communities; for example, in the design of public seating and street furniture. It can create jobs for artists, craftsmen, designers and manufacturers. Public art can also respond to the needs of minority interests and can encourage communities to gain social spaces. This can lend greater “humanity” and individuality to schemes which are important elements of the built environment.

- 7.73 SPG will include information and advice about commissioning procedures. There could be specific design and development briefs for projects and buildings. The City Council can play a particular role where it is a land owner. The Public Art Strategy gives a list of priority sites.

Landscape Design

BE 19: LANDSCAPE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

A high standard of landscape design and boundary treatment will be required as part of the design of development.

- 7.74 Good quality landscape contributes to the local environment, the positive overall image of the City and to the relationship of buildings and the quality of spaces between them. Landscaping in development is used to integrate with and soften its impact on the surroundings. Landscape schemes should use existing natural features and where necessary improve their ecological value. It can also link in with existing and proposed Green Space. Special landscaping schemes may be required along main transport corridors, etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- 7.75 The built environment cannot be separated from the natural environment in which it sits and which it, and the activities it accommodates, is capable of affecting so profoundly. Awareness of the environmental impact of built development should be integral to good urban design, rather than an afterthought. Effective protection of the environment has become a higher priority of government guidance since the 1993 Plan was prepared, during which time the concept of sustainability as referred to in Policy OS 4 has begun to be better understood. Accordingly, the last part of this Chapter deals with those aspects of environmental management where the planning system has a part to play. These policies seek to minimise the risk of contamination or hazard and provide for the management and disposal of waste.

Contaminated Land and Hazardous Installations

BE 20: CONTAMINATED LAND

Development on or adjacent to contaminated land will be permitted only if measures for remediation and protection will ensure the health and safety of the development proposed and its users.

- 7.76 Land contamination can be a material land use consideration so, where a proposed development site is contaminated or is adjacent to such land, the applicant will be responsible for carrying out an investigation of conditions which must be submitted with the planning application, together with proposals for remediation and protection. If the contamination is severe, planning permission may be refused. Otherwise the applicant will be responsible for removing the contaminants from the site or treating them to reduce any hazard to an appropriate level bearing in mind the proposed land use and any other protective measures. In the interests of sustainability, chemical cleansing will always be the preferred solution compared with removal from the site. During and after any on-site operations, the developer must ensure that pollution does not enter any adjacent watercourses or groundwater. Developers of sites found to be contaminated will be required to seal the site adequately against leakage of any polluted matter, and to divert surface water drainage away from any source of contamination. In implementing this Policy the City Council will consult the statutory agencies responsible for applying the standards set by legislation.

BE 21: HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS AND NEARBY DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for the use or storage of hazardous substances will not be permitted if there would be unacceptable risk to the health or safety of users of the land or neighbouring land or to the environment.

Proposals for development in the vicinity of a site known to be used for the storage, use or transport of hazardous substances will not be permitted if there would be an unacceptable risk to the health or safety of its users.

- 7.77 Certain sites and pipelines are designated as notifiable installations by virtue of their quantities of hazardous substance present. The aim of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992 is to keep these installations separated from housing and other land uses with which these installations might be incompatible from the safety viewpoint. Where other development is under consideration the objective will be to avoid the generation of hazards. The views of statutory consultees will be taken into account in determining applications. These will include the Civil Aviation Authority under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Aerodrome) Direction, 1981.

Air and Water Quality

BE 22: AIR QUALITY

Where likely damage to air quality cannot be satisfactorily mitigated, development will not be permitted.

- 7.78 Air pollution is the subject of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Clean Air Act 1993 and is an important element of the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997. In 1996 the Government launched its National Air Quality Strategy setting out a new set of 8 air quality standards which are to be complied with by 2005. Air quality, therefore, will be monitored in line with national standards and, if parts of the City breach these, an air quality management area will be identified and an action plan produced to reduce levels of air pollution. It is the duty of local authorities through their non-planning powers to manage air quality improvements and every local authority has to review the present air quality and compare this with the standards and objectives laid out within the Strategy. The location of development so as to minimise the need to travel, as well as any on-site threat to air quality, will be taken into account.

BE 23: WATER QUALITY

Proposals which appear capable of:

- **damaging the quality and ecology of the water environment;**
- **compromising the achievement of water quality objectives; or**
- **causing damage to or preventing use of groundwater resources;**

will be permitted only if it is certain that such risk will be kept to an acceptable level.

7.79 Groundwater is formed when rain soaks away underground into water-bearing rocks or aquifers. Since a significant percentage of Coventry's water supply is pumped from the aquifer beneath the City, it is very important that groundwater quality is maintained and, wherever possible, improved, because contamination damage commonly proves to be irreversible. Since polluted groundwater eventually becomes polluted river water baseflow, this is a further reason why development that threatens groundwater resources should be prevented.

7.80 Rivers and minor watercourses in the City are important for ecology, public health and public water supply. Water quality objectives set by the Environment Agency form the basis for water quality management decisions and are based on a scheme known as the River Ecosystem classification. It is important that the quality of the water environment is maintained as an important and essential resource both in terms of water supply and wildlife habitat. Changes can occur quickly both to improve and exacerbate a problem of water quality simply by changes in direct discharges or in nearby land use patterns. Proposals which could change the quality and ecology of water courses or compromise statutory quality objectives will not be permitted unless it can be shown that appropriate preventative measures acceptable to both the Environment Agency and the City Council have been incorporated.

Lighting and Light Pollution

BE 24 : LIGHTING AND LIGHT POLLUTION

Carefully designed proposals will be encouraged to create and improve lighting where it contributes to the overall experience of the City during the hours of darkness.

However, development proposals should preserve the darkness of the night time countryside and any illumination should be controlled so as to avoid:

- **nuisance to road users;**
- **harm to the amenity of residents; and**
- **detriment to the local distinctiveness of an area.**

7.81 The imaginative use of lighting has the power to reveal or conceal buildings, landscape and topographical features, define routes and boundaries and emphasise views and features. The main objective of the City Council's Lighting Strategy is to improve the overall experience of the City during the hours of darkness. This requires the lighting within the City Centre and outer areas to be considered as a whole taking into account the image, the night time economy, safety, security, spectacle, energy use and light pollution.

7.82 While lighting is essential in many circumstances for security reasons and pedestrian and traffic safety, it is also important for recreation and for enhancing historic and architecturally important buildings. However, poor or insensitively designed schemes can result in light pollution. Where there is a danger of light pollution, lighting should be kept to the minimum standard required for security and operational purposes and be designed to minimise glare and spillage. Consideration will also need to be given to screening the lighting installation from neighbouring roads and residential areas. The visual impact of lighting apparatus on daytime views is also to be minimised through the design and painting of apparatus.

7.83 Particular attention will be given to proposals in the Green Belt and on the edge of the City's built up area, where development might be resisted if, despite efforts to minimise light pollution, the effect is unacceptable.

Waste Strategy

BE 25: WASTE STRATEGY

The following hierarchy of waste handling methods will be promoted and encouraged:

- waste reduction;
- re-use;
- recovery; and
- safe disposal.

7.84 Waste should be managed in the interests of sustainable development by minimising waste, re-using and recovering materials and energy where possible, reducing transport requirements and minimising pollution of the environment. Guidance in respect of Waste Management is based around two further concepts:-

- the proximity principle: aiming to handle waste close to where it arises; and
- regional self sufficiency: waste should ideally be disposed of in the same region as it occurs.

7.85 The City Council was in course of reviewing its Waste Management Strategy at the time of Plan preparation. The Strategy will consider developments in the industry and how best they can be managed in Coventry.

Waste Reduction

7.86 The promotion of reduction in the quantities of waste produced by the public and by industry is dealt with by the City Council outside of its local planning authority role. Reduction in the physical bulk of waste collected will continue to be dealt with primarily by incineration. Incineration at the Waste to Energy Plant at Whitley will continue to make this main contribution, pursued actively since the 1970s. This process has reduced the volume of tipped waste by 90% and its weight by 60%, with huge cumulative benefits over time in the reduction of landfill activity levels, mainly in Warwickshire. Energy recovery has been an additional gain, with surplus heat from the Plant being used to generate electricity and to provide heating for industrial premises.

Re-use and Recycling

BE 26: RECYCLING

Facilities for the following kinds of materials will be promoted and encouraged at suitable locations:

- materials recycling facilities;
- container banks; and
- composting.

7.87 Existing government recycling targets are to recycle or compost 25% of household waste and to have easily accessible recycling facilities for 80% of households by 2000. Recycling facilities for glass, paper, metals, batteries, textiles, oil and chlorofluorocarbons are provided at a variety of locations in the City. A flexible approach will be maintained over the Plan period to accommodate new disposal pressures as they arise, based around maintaining a range of facilities ranging from public waste disposal sites, material recycling facilities and composting, to more local facilities at supermarkets and bus stops. Container Banks will need to be located in places which are convenient for the public, either close to their homes and accessible by cycle or on foot, or else by car in a location designed to encourage a journey combined with other purposes.

BE 27: MATERIALS RECYCLING FACILITIES

Sites for materials recycling facilities should be located within areas used or allocated for industrial purposes.

7.88 These sites require high numbers of deliveries and collections and involve mechanical or hand sorting, preferably in a closed building. They have similar requirements to the criteria for the location of industrial employment sites. The scale of lorry movements resulting may have highways implications. The sorted materials are transferred to re-processors or the Waste to Energy Plant.

BE 28: COMPOSTING

Proposals for the composting of suitable waste will be required to meet the following criteria:

- site size of at least 2.5 hectares;
- no composting taking place within 400 metres from the curtilage of a dwelling; and
- compatibility with other Plan policies.

7.89 Composting is the breakdown of plant matter by the action of micro-organisms into usable end products. The City Council recognises the importance of separating out suitable wastes like green wastes from food wastes, and for providing for their bio-degradation rather than incineration. Existing targets for composting include the recycling or composting of 25% of household waste and encouraging 40% of domestic properties with a garden to carry out home composting by the year 2000. By 2005 the target is to recycle 40% of household waste and this includes composting initiatives. All of this should help to concentrate composting at source except where large quantities are involved and therefore reduce the need to travel and the need to provide additional composting sites.

Safe Disposal of Waste

BE 29: PUBLIC WASTE DISPOSAL SITE

A public waste disposal site will be located on land east of the Waste to Energy Plant shown on the Proposals Map.

7.90 This proposal would replace the existing inadequate facilities located within the yard of the Waste to Energy Plant, accessed off Bar Road, itself off the London Road. This location is within 10 minutes travelling time of most of Coventry's population. The continued presence of public waste disposal facilities near the Plant will minimise vehicle pollution and avoid adding traffic on the public highway. The site has been taken out of the adopted Green Belt only as a result of an extended, unsuccessful search for a satisfactory site elsewhere in the City as a whole, previously referred to in paragraphs 11.95 and 11.96 of the 1993 Plan.

BE 30: LANDFILL

Landfill will only be permitted where it is necessary to bring about the restoration and re-use of land and where environmental consequences have been minimised in accordance with other Plan policies.

7.91 The City Council continues to anticipate few applications for landfill. Landfill remains the waste disposal technique of last resort; the purposes of the preceding policies have been to minimise landfill in a variety of different ways and, therefore, to reduce export of waste beyond the City's boundary.

