

**COVENTRY CITY  
COUNCIL**

**CITY CENTRE AREA  
ACTION PLAN**

**THE PREFERRED APPROACH**

**FEBRUARY 2015**

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**To be inserted**

## **GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS**

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## COVENTRY CITY CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN (AAP) – 2011-2031

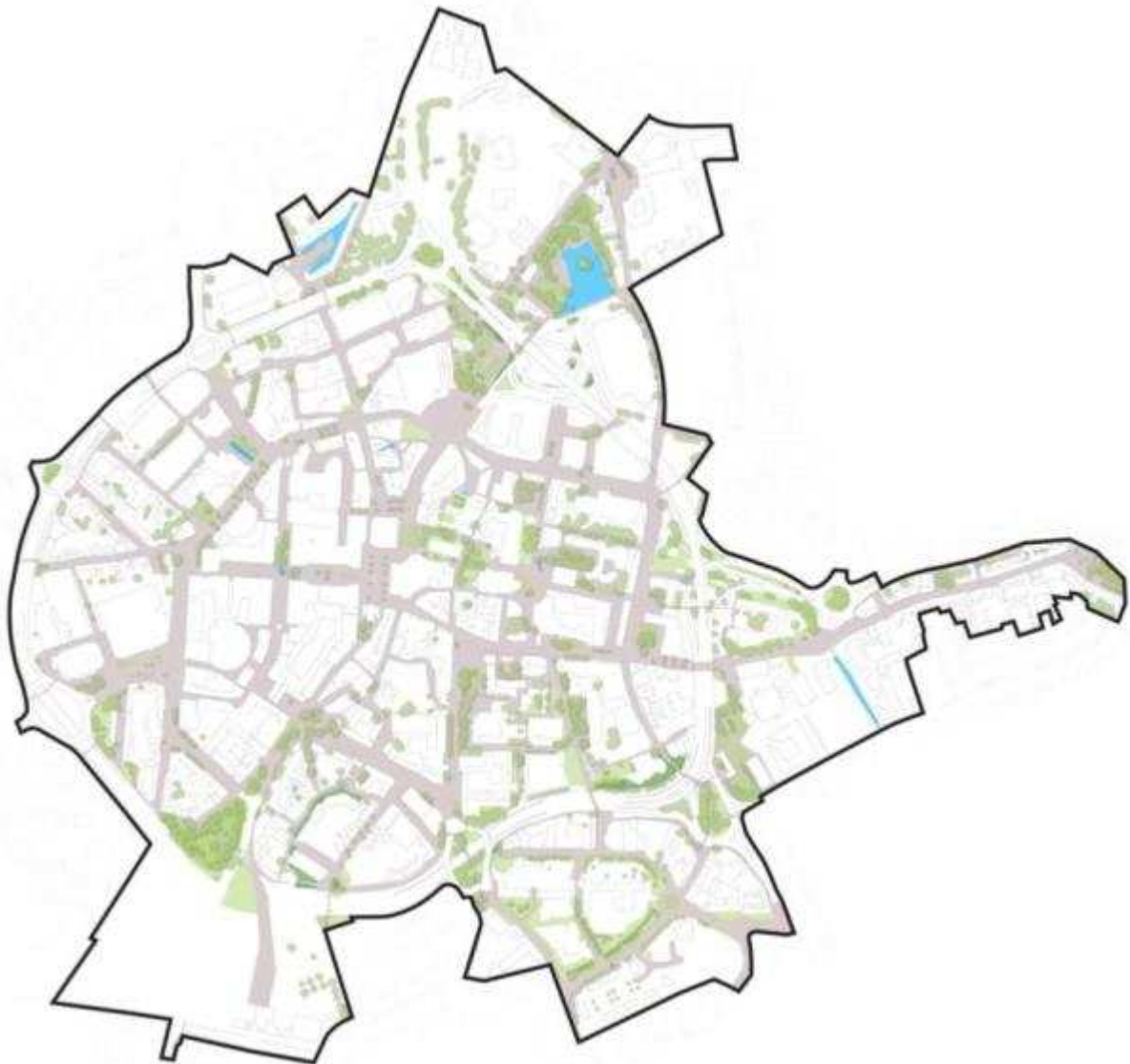
### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The City Council is preparing an Area Action Plan (AAP) to help guide, inform and consider development proposals within Coventry City Centre. This Area Action Plan will sit alongside the Councils emerging Local Plan, but will provide greater detail and build upon the policy basis provided in that document.
- 1.2 It will guide how the city centre will develop over the next 15-20 years and set out a number of strategic principles. The document will also identify key areas of regeneration, important heritage assets that must be preserved and areas of opportunity for a range of uses. These include employment, housing, culture and leisure. As such, the AAP is intended to provide a framework for the transformation of the city centre, whilst ensuring the appropriate level of new residential, office and retail floor space is delivered.
- 1.3 This is the first opportunity for stakeholder involvement in the City Centre AAP since the Council withdrew the previous version from submission in 2010. The new version of the AAP has been developed alongside updates to the evidence base and has been prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 1.4 To support the blueprint for the city centre, the AAP has been developed in two specific sections. The first will consider overarching policy guidance focused around four key areas:
  - city centre heritage;
  - the built environment;
  - the natural environment; and
  - parking.

The second section will provide a more detailed overview of:

  - 9 quarters that have been identified around specific characteristics;
  - 2 regeneration areas to the north of the city centre; and
  - An area of planned stability with small infill opportunities to the south of the city.
- 1.5 Figure 1 outlines the extent of the city centre and the area of Coventry covered by this AAP.

Figure 1: Coventry City Centre Boundary



## 2 Background

- 2.1 Existing planning policy specifically relating to Coventry city centre is contained within the Coventry Development Plan (CDP) 2001. The CDP was intended to deliver and manage development between 1996 and 2011 and amongst other things, included a policy basis for the redevelopment of Lower Precinct, the Coventry Transport Museum and Priory Place, Coventry Technology Park and Belgrade Plaza. Despite this period of successful redevelopment activity, it has been more than 13 years since these policies were written and as such they have become dated, with many of the key policy aims and objectives now implemented or superseded.
- 2.2 The Council first published a draft City Centre Area Action Plan for public consideration in November 2009 in support of the emerging Core Strategy of that time. This was followed by a proposed submission draft of the AAP in

April 2010. Although published for a period of public engagement the document was not submitted to the Secretary of State for examination owing to significant changes to national planning policy at that time and the impacts this had on local policy development.

- 2.3 In order to robustly progress an AAP, it is considered best practice to have a higher level policy document in place in advance, or at least being developed in parallel. As such, the intervening years have focused on developing a new Core Strategy or more recently a Local Plan for Coventry. Due to a number of delays in this process the Council has not been able to return to developing the AAP for the city centre until now.

### **3 Where is the City Centre Now?**

- 3.1 The 2011 Census identified Coventry's population at 316,900 people, a growth of around 5% since the previous census in 2001. This was primarily driven by substantial population growth in the latter half of the decade and means Coventry is experiencing a sustained period of population growth for the first time since the 1960s. As a result, subsequent population projections have identified Coventry as having one of the fastest growing populations in the country. This represents a game changer for the city and requires significant attention through both the Local Plan and the city centre AAP in order to provide appropriate levels of homes, job opportunities, retail floor space and social and community provisions.
- 3.2 Coventry is now the UK's 13<sup>th</sup> largest city, but the influence of the city centre reaches wider than the city's boundary and covers a population in excess of half a million people. The spend power within this catchment is also significant at in excess of £1,200 million, however only a third of this spend is currently drawn to the city centre<sup>1</sup>. This is also emphasised by the city centre's current national ranking, which currently sees the city centre sit 58<sup>th</sup> in the nation's retail rankings according to spend<sup>2</sup>, lagging behind other similar centres in terms of the quality and range of shops. With the Council's aspirations to grow and return to being a top 10 city and this level of spend power expected to increase significantly, it is clear that improvements in both quantity and quality of floor space are required to help increase the market share exerted by the city centre.
- 3.3 With this in mind there is a clear disparity between the size of city's population and the standard of its city centre retail offer. In addition the Shopping and Centre Study highlights issues around vacant units<sup>3</sup>, a relatively low market share and a shortage of higher end retailers.
- 3.4 Although the city centre's retail offer has suffered in recent times, there are some positive signs of recovery with small reductions in the number of vacant

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 3 of the Coventry Shopping and Centres Study (Developed by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP)) 2014 – linked to the results of the MENS survey

<sup>2</sup> 2013 Venuescore Shopping Index and CACI 2013 - The Coventry Shopping and Centres Study (2014)

<sup>3</sup> The 2014 GOAD report (considered as part of the Coventry Shopping and Centres Study: NLP - 2014) suggests vacancies in Coventry city centre are at 14.8% compared to a national average of 12%.

units and increases in footfall. The platform for supporting the city centres retail offer has also been developing in recent years, with a significant investment in new homes, meaning more people are now living in the city centre. Table 1 below highlights the number of new homes built in the city centre in the last 10 years. This represents around 15% of all completions in Coventry.

**Table 1: Completion of new homes in Coventry city centre 2004-2014**

Year	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	Total
Total Completions (net)	418	691	1,165	1,149	680	496	705	921	994	1,095	8,314
Within city centre	120	148	156	0	28	97	195	137	152	99	1,132
Outside city centre	298	543	1,009	1,149	652	399	529	784	842	855	7,182
<b>% within city centre</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>14%</b>

Source: Coventry city council monitoring database

- 3.5 The delivery of new homes within the city centre has been supported by the growth of Coventry University, which has acted as a catalyst for associated development of student accommodation. This has included a number of purpose built student accommodation developments around the Ring Road and conversions of former offices. In the last 12 years such developments have delivered in excess of 2,900 new bed spaces within the city centre, of which more than a third have been completed this decade. In terms of conversion opportunities these have completed in excess of 390 bed spaces in the last 4 years at sites such as Market Way and Trinity Street.
- 3.6 There are also significant numbers of bed spaces yet to be developed within or adjacent to the city centre with approximately 1,400 additional bed spaces with extant planning permission.
- 3.7 There have also been notable completions in the last 10 years of affordable and market housing, including sites at Queen Victoria Road, Belgrade Plaza and Far Gosford Street. In addition significant investments have been made to improve Whitefriars' housing stock at various points across the city centre.
- 3.8 In terms of jobs growth, the amount of people working within the wider city centre remains at around 35,000 jobs, although there has been some fluctuations in the last 5 years. These fluctuations have been reflective of changes to working practices and continued economic restructuring, which has seen some companies move into the city such as Severn Trent Water, whilst others have left such as AXA. It is important to note though that the city centre remains home to some of the city's most significant employers, including the City Council, Coventry University and Severn Trent Water, whilst in recent years it has also attracted new businesses to Coventry University Technology Park helping to diversify the centre's employment base.
- 3.9 Despite some signs of an upturn in performance in 2014, it is clear from the study that the city centre has performed poorly during the recession and to

some extent in the intervening period. This is, in part at least, a result of significant competition from neighbouring towns and city's including Leicester, Birmingham, Solihull and Leamington. As such, it is clear that Coventry must provide a clear blueprint that will not only support the city as a whole but also help the city centre claw back market share and compete more widely with its neighbours.

3.10 Within this context, it is clear that the city centre and its immediate surroundings have enormous potential and currently comprise significant assets to be proud of and utilise. The table below (Table 2) provides a summary of these assets and strengths as well as issues and risks currently facing the city centre. This also includes some of the factors which are currently preventing the city centre from achieving its potential:

**Table 2: City Centre Strengths and Weaknesses**

Coventry City Centre	
Strengths and Benefits	Issues and Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationally renowned cathedrals;</li> <li>• Other significant heritage assets, both built and natural;</li> <li>• Good quality museums including Coventry Transport Museum and The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum;</li> <li>• Successful theatres;</li> <li>• A growing and successful University rated Modern University of the year 2014 and 2015;</li> <li>• New buildings and spaces of high quality design including recent investment in public realm enhancements and shared spaces;</li> <li>• A Railway Station on the West Coast Main Line with direct access to Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and a 1hour journey time to London;</li> <li>• A compact and walkable city centre, with easily accessible links to surrounding residential area;</li> <li>• Regular bus services to and from different parts of the city and neighbouring towns;</li> <li>• Coventry Canal Basin;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The size and quality of retail units do not meet the standards required by proposed occupiers;</li> <li>• The current mix of units within the heart of the city centre and the limited night-time economy means that the city centre has low levels of activity after 18:00;</li> <li>• Office accommodation in the city centre for the most part is of inadequate size, of poor quality and unattractive;</li> <li>• The city centre feels unconnected, and despite its compact size, it lacks well-connected routes and attractive gateways;</li> <li>• Dated, poor quality sports and leisure facilities;</li> <li>• Limited green and blue infrastructure;</li> <li>• Poor gateways into the city centre;</li> <li>• Poor residential and pedestrian environment in parts of city centre;</li> <li>• A shortage of multi-functional green spaces associated with residential provisions;</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Ring Road that enables easy movement around the city centre and wider city;</li> <li>• The HQ of a FTSE100 company in Severn Trent Water;</li> <li>• A high tech, university led Technology Park; and</li> <li>• A new bohemian area focused around historic Far Gosford Street.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor links between higher quality parking provisions and services;</li> <li>• A relatively low density and inefficient use of land in some parts of the centre; and</li> <li>• Unsympathetic development such as West Orchard external escalators or Coventry Point.</li> </ul>
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#### **4. Developing the City Centre**

4.1 One of the principle aims of this AAP is to provide the platform from which to regenerate and develop the city centre. This involves new homes, employment space, new retail provisions and leisure, social and community provisions. It will also require a strategic overview of transportation and accessibility issues including parking and pedestrian movement.

#### **4.2 Providing New Homes**

To support the continued vibrancy and growth of the city centre it is important to continue promoting the area as a place to live. The 2001 CDP proposed giving the City Centre a 'living heart' and as identified above, this policy approach has helped grow the number of people now living in the city centre.

4.3 Although recent developments have focused on new student accommodation, both in terms of purpose built provision and the conversion of former office buildings, there have also been notable developments of new family housing and new apartments for sale and rent.

4.4 The AAP will continue to encourage the development of more homes within the city centre. Indeed the Draft SHLAA<sup>4</sup> has identified potential opportunities for in excess of 3,000 homes within the area. It is important though to ensure an adequate balance is made between providing enough homes for the city's student population as well as appropriate accommodation for other elements of the city's population, including: families, young professionals and older people. The importance of this balance has been amplified in recent years with a growth in student focused developments. However it is an area of provision the Council supports as it helps to reduce the pressure on family housing for student occupation elsewhere in the city.

4.5 Notwithstanding, the AAP will look to promote an appropriate balance through the city centre quarters, with a number of sites specifically proposed for varying types of residential development that will help reflect their respective characters.

4.6 Of particular importance will be the build to rent market, which is expected to help overcome some of the viability pressures often associated with the

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<sup>4</sup> Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

apartment market since the recession. This is a market the city council will support and will actively be promoting through this AAP.

#### 4.7 Providing new Jobs

Although the number of city centre jobs has fluctuated in recent years, the overall total remains around 35,000. There are however a range of key employment initiatives being promoted within the city centre, which form a key aspect of this AAP. The most important of these is the new business quarter (known as Friargate) situated around Coventry Railway Station, which already has planning consent for 185,000 m<sup>2</sup> of new grade A office space. Preparatory works are now underway to deliver the first of 14 new office buildings, with further premises providing new, complimentary retail and leisure facilities, generating up to 15,000 new jobs. This development will see this part of the city centre become the focal point for new office provision and the primary location for new office investment and job creation.

4.8 Other key schemes will include the City Centre South redevelopment, creating 100's of new jobs in retail and leisure, whilst the continued expansion of the Technology Park at Parkside, will create new jobs in the high-tech industry.

#### 4.9 Providing New Retail Floor space

The Shopping and Centres study (2014) recommends the provision of around 37,600sq.m of gross new floor space in the city centre up to 2031, which covers a range of retail needs. This projection is broken down however into short term requirements and longer term contributions which reflect links to economic growth, market conditions and expenditure patterns (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Retail Needs in Coventry City Centre (2014 - 2031)**

	2014-2021	2021-2031	Total
Totals Retail Floor Space sq.m (gross)*	18,139	19,489	37,628

\* Opportunities to occupy retained vacant floor space may reduce this level of need but will need to be considered in the context of demolished floor space as part of redevelopment proposals

Source: Coventry Shopping and Centres Study (2014)

4.10 The required floor space up to 2021 should be delivered within or immediately adjacent the Primary Shopping Area with at least 10,000sq.m being provided within the City Centre South redevelopment. The Shopping and Centres Study (2014) highlights the importance of this scheme in terms of increasing both quality and quantity of floor space in the city centre. As such, it is vital that city centre retail investment be prioritised within this scheme.

4.11 Included within the comparison floor space provision up to 2031 is an allowance for 2,700sq.m gross of retail warehouse floor space, which the study suggests should be directed to the city centre, where this is considered appropriate. Given the type of retail this involves it is acknowledged that this may be difficult to deliver within the Primary Shopping Area. However, opportunities to deliver this floor space within the wider city centre should be explored, especially as part of mixed use schemes.

4.12 Across Coventry as a whole the Shopping and Centres Study (2014) identifies a need for approximately 15,500sq.m of gross retail floor space for convenience shopping. Although this need is primarily focused within the south and north west of the city, opportunities to provide an enhanced convenience food offer within the city centre will be encouraged.

#### **4.13 New Leisure, Social and Community facilities**

The Shopping and Centre Study suggests there is potential for Coventry city to increase its market share of cinema trips and therefore support the provision of a new cinema. There is also expected to be sufficient capacity to support 2 new health and fitness clubs over the plan period, of which at least 1 should be situated within the city centre.

4.14 As the city centre becomes an increasingly prominent focus for community services and facilities, opportunities to provide new social, community or leisure uses will be supported in principle. This will form part of the Council's City Centre First Strategy.

### **5 Health and Wellbeing within the City Centre**

5.1 The recent Local Plan document identified a specific policy area linked to the health and wellbeing of Coventry people. In doing so a number of key issues were identified that are of relevance to the city centre, most notably:

- The promotion of active travel and improving accessibility;
- The creation of good quality green infrastructure;
- Improving accessibility to good quality food;
- Improving the built environment; and
- Combating poor air quality and other pollutants.

5.2 Through the course of this AAP specific policy areas will provide a clear steer towards improving health and wellbeing within the city centre, providing specific guidance around the key aspects highlighted above.

### **6 Key City Centre Principles**

6.1 The redevelopment of Coventry's city centre seeks to enhance the vitality and viability of the city as a whole and flagship developments such as Friargate and City Centre South aim to act as a catalyst for further high quality development. Such schemes will help build upon the city centre's strengths and help combat its weaknesses.

6.2 The AAP envisages Coventry city centre as being truly world class, leading in design, sustainability and culture. It also reflects a number of key principles which will help achieve this. As such, Coventry city centre will:

- Preserve or enhance the character and setting of the historic built landscape and where appropriate the archaeological environment;
- Recognise, preserve and re-establish key views to the iconic three spires of St. Michaels, Holy Trinity and Christchurch;

- Enhance its position as a focus for the entire sub-region and as a national and international destination to live, work and play;
- Strive for high quality sustainable built design;
- Provide opportunities to improve health and wellbeing;
- Be attractive and safe for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;
- Have a connected public realm including public squares and green space, easily accessible through the creation of desirable and legible pedestrian routes;
- Provide accessibility for all;
- Contain high quality office space;
- Include a variety of places to live which cater for different needs;
- Enhance its retail and leisure offer to strengthen the city's sub-regional role;
- Continue to develop a vibrant and attractive night time economy; and
- Be a hub for education.

## **7. Alternative Options**

- 7.1 As already stated, Coventry city centre is of significant importance in the future development of Coventry as a whole and it is therefore necessary and imperative to have adopted planning policy which has the ability to shape and direct future development within the city centre. This will help enable Coventry develop a city centre that reflects the size of the city and a city centre that residents can be proud of.
- 7.2 This has been an overarching theme in the development of this AAP and as such only one alternative option has been considered. That is to not have an Area Action Plan at all and to leave the city centre to develop independently in an ad-hoc fashion. For the reasons set out above this option has been rejected as it will not deliver a coherent and high quality city centre that will support the ambitions of the city as a whole. As such, the development of specific planning policy guidance is considered essential to the rejuvenation of Coventry city centre.

## **8 Evidence Base**

- 8.1 In progressing the new Local Plan and the new City Centre AAP a number of updated evidence documents have been developed. These include:
- An update of the Shopping and Centres Study. This document has been completed by NLP Planning Consultants and provides an update of the previous reports completed in 2006 and 2008;
  - A Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment(SHLAA), which provides a technical overview of residential development opportunities across Coventry;
  - A new Employment Land Review. This document has been completed by Atkins Planning Consultants on behalf of the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP. The document identifies the importance of Friargate proposals to the sub-regional economy;
  - The Draft Coventry Parking Strategy, which provides an updated overview of Car Parking across Coventry City Centre;

- The Delivering a more Sustainable City SPD (2009);
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2015) and Surface Water Management Plan (2011); and
- The Council's Historic Environment Record

## **9 Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

- 9.1 This document provides the next step in delivering a new City Centre Area Action Plan for Coventry. Its continued progress however requires input and consideration from the people of Coventry, local businesses and other interested Stakeholders. As such, this document is being published for a period of 7 weeks public engagement.
- 9.2 It will begin on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February, and run for 7 weeks until Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015. This period of community and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
- 9.3 As part of the process specific events will be held across the city with local communities and key stakeholders to help the Council understand areas of support and challenge in order to shape the next stage of the Area Action Plan and the future of the City Centre.
- 9.4 A Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) has been undertaken, and has been used to help shape this document and its proposals. It is available to view as part of the supporting documents released by the Council that relate to this period of engagement on the new AAP. These are all available to view on the Council's webpages [www.coventry.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/localplan)
- 9.5 All responses should be submitted to the Council by 5pm on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015 and should preferably be submitted via email to: [localplan@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@coventry.gov.uk)

Alternatively written responses can be submitted to the following address:

Coventry City Council Planning Policy Department  
 Floor 3, Civic Centre 4  
 Much Park Street,  
 Coventry  
 CV1 2PY

## **City Centre Heritage**

Coventry has its origins in the late-Saxon period when Leofric and Godiva, the Earl and Countess of Mercia, founded their Priory here. The City became an important centre of trade and industry and by the 14<sup>th</sup> century it had become England's fourth wealthiest city behind London, York and Bristol. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Coventry became a major centre for engineering and the heart of Britain's motor industry.

Today despite substantial damage to the centre during World War II, the City still retains many of its major medieval buildings and other heritage assets. Within the AAP boundary there are 117 Listed Buildings including eleven Grade I buildings, 40 Locally Listed Buildings and 13 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

There are seven Conservation Areas within the city centre (Hill Top, Far Gosford Street, Greyfriars Green, High Street, Lady Herbert's Garden and The Burges, Spon Street and the Coventry Canal) all of which have their own distinctive characteristics. The Areas are subject to an on-going programme to produce Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans to guide their preservation and enhancement. Many of the conservation areas suffer from poor settings and poor linkages with other areas of the city centre.

Owing to its medieval history, much of Coventry city centre has significant archaeological potential with extensive deposits surviving despite wartime damage and post-war re-developments. The Phoenix Initiative regeneration project undertaken between 1999 and 2002 excavated the medieval St. Mary's Cathedral Priory, the remains of the west part of the cathedral church are permanently displayed in a garden while the undercrofts were preserved and displayed in the basement of a new building with an associated visitor centre.

Reconstruction of the city centre began in the late 1940's following City Architect Donald Gibson's redevelopment masterplan. This included numerous revolutionary town planning concepts that were widely copied elsewhere including pedestrianised shopping streets, areas zoned by their function and a Ring Road. Much of the Gibson Master-plan can still be seen today, despite some unfortunate later additions which have spoilt its clarity. Several of the post-war buildings including the railway station, the swimming pool and the market are now listed for their historic and architectural interest.

Since the 1960s there has been a lack of significant investment within many areas of the city centre and a clearly identifiable and deliverable plan as to how the centre should develop in a way that is respectful of its heritage. However, since 2012 (coinciding with the city being an official venue for the summer Olympics) a programme of public realm improvements has been implemented with its most notable achievement being the pedestrianisation and redevelopment of Broadgate Square.

## **Policy CC1: Enhancement of Heritage Assets**

- a. All development within, or affecting the setting of, a Conservation Area (as highlighted in Figure 2) shall preserve and enhance its character and appearance and adhere to the policies of the relevant Conservation Area Management Plan.
- b. All development relating to or in close proximity to heritage assets such as statutory and locally listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, public artwork and non-designated heritage assets (Figure 2) shall be undertaken sympathetically to those heritage assets and seek to enhance their setting.
- c. Where new developments take place adjacent to the remaining sections of the Historic City Wall, opportunities to enhance the setting of the wall and to incorporate it into landscape design should be taken. Where developments take place on the site of the now removed City Wall archaeological excavation must be undertaken prior to development commencing. Opportunities to reflect the line of the Historic Wall should also be incorporated into such developments.
- d. Within Archaeological Constraint Areas and areas of archaeological potential (Figure 3), appropriate archaeological assessment will be required prior to the determination of a development proposal. Where significant archaeological remains are found they shall be recorded in a manner proportionate to their significance. Remains of high significance shall be preserved and protected.
- e. Development within the city centre primary shopping area must respect the principles and significant elements of the post-World War II reconstruction

Figure 2: City Centre Heritage Assets

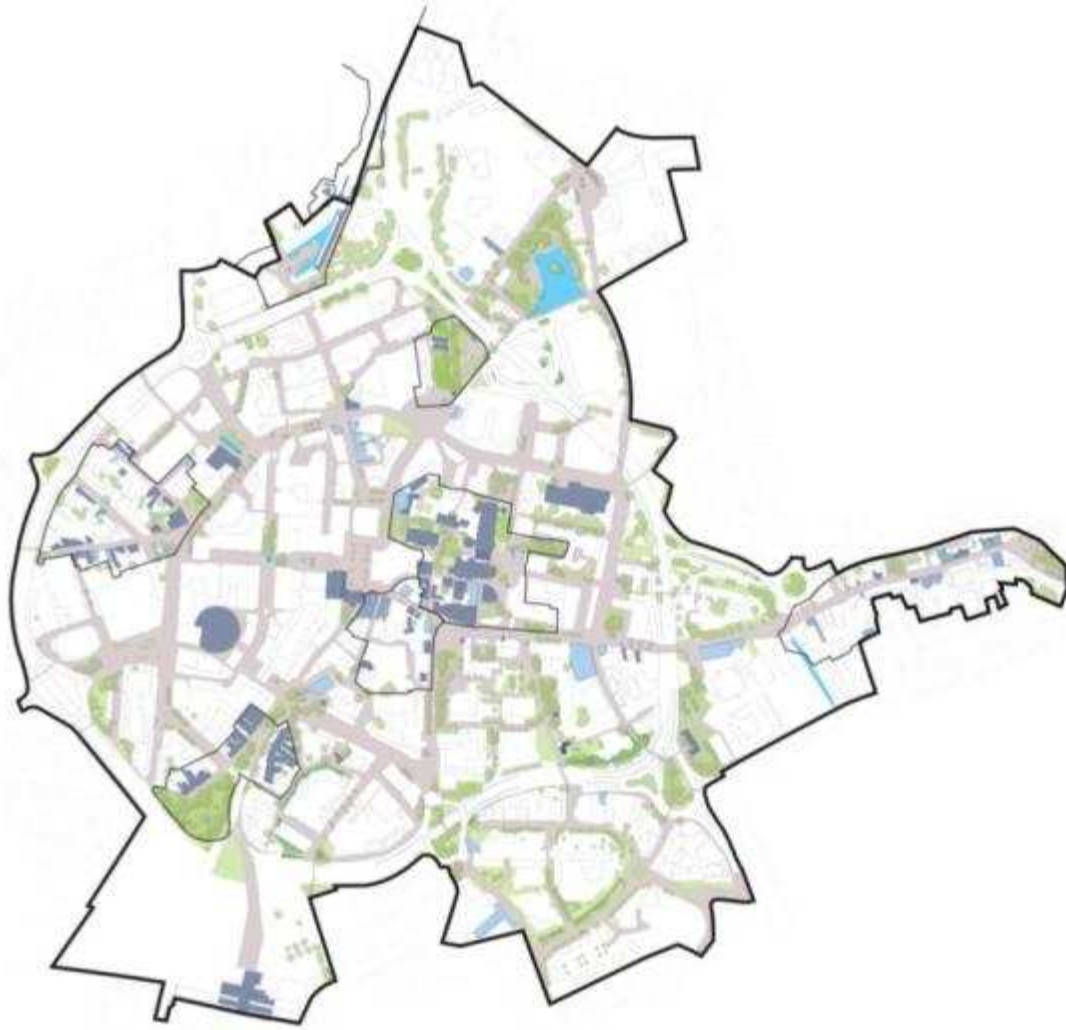




Figure 3: Areas of Archaeological Interest



NB: Areas outlined in red comprise areas of archaeological potential. The line of the former city wall is identified in brown.

## **The Built Environment**

The city centre is the focal point of Coventry and is often perceived as a 'shop window' for visitors, investors, business and local people. Throughout history Coventry has often been at the forefront of pioneering urban design and public realm initiatives from the first pedestrianised shopping precinct to the construction of the Coventry Ring Road and more recently the introduction of shared spaces and new innovative buildings.

At a time when the city centre is facing significant change and redevelopment, it is imperative that the city continues to promote enhancements to the built environment, helping to provide the improved quality of space that will be essential to reviving the fortunes of the city's retail and leisure offer and to improve people's perception of Coventry City Centre. This section of the AAP will therefore provide an overview of design principles to provide a basis upon which to move forward with redeveloping the built environment of Coventry city centre.

### **Building Design**

The NPPF recognises that good building design is an essential element of any townscape and forms an integral part of good planning. To ensure that new buildings within Coventry city centre positively contribute to an excellent built environment the following will need to be taken into account.

#### *Building Massing*

Monolithic 'slab' like buildings that wholly occupy the building envelope will not be acceptable. Any block/building will need to be articulated within these envelopes through varied storey heights and the projection and recession of elements along the elevations and above the roofline (for example with entrances and corners) to provide interest at both street level and on the skyline.

Furthermore, the massing of buildings and their positioning within the site footprint will need to have regard to supporting landscaping, with clear plans of hard and soft landscaping. This will ensure building lines or envelopes are referenced to defined spatial dimensions, with appropriate space for public realm routes and footways and green infrastructure as well as establishing strong frontages and clear views.

#### *Proportion*

The use of proportion on the façades can help break up the mass of the building and add interest. This should be done horizontally, by giving each building a base, middle and top e.g. emphasising the base/ground floor of the building through different materials and/or a greater floor to floor dimension than the rest of the building and emphasising the top floor of the building through a different material and/or set back etc. It can also be done vertically through (amongst other things) window size, location and rhythm etc.

#### *Roof Design*

The overall design of any roof will need careful consideration as again it can be used to break up the mass of a building and make for an interesting roofscape/silhouette. A 'plant zone' will need to be designed into the roof area to ensure that any plant can be screened from view so as to ensure that it does not spoil the final appearance of the building.

### *Block Depth*

This will need careful consideration to ensure adequate levels of natural light penetrate the buildings. Conventional perimeter block development will allow for a deeper block depth as the central courtyard spaces will ensure there is day-lighting to both sides

### *Active Frontage*

All elevations should, wherever possible, have active frontage at ground floor. This will allow for a positive relationship between the buildings and the public realm giving animation and dynamism to the elevations. It will also allow for overlooking and natural surveillance of the public realm.

### *Entrance Points*

Entrance points should be clearly emphasised both in scale and form. This should be achieved by use of vertical elements which project beyond and above the building line, different façade treatments or larger openings in the façade. In order to reinforce the activity at ground floor, buildings will be expected to have more than one entrance, unless shown to be inappropriate for the end use.

### *Materials*

The choice of materials will need careful consideration. They will need to be high quality, durable and sustainable. The use of a large palette of materials on large buildings as an attempt to disguise their mass and bulk is undesirable as this usually proves unsuccessful. It would be preferable to have a building where mass is broken down through architectural design and uses a smaller palette of high quality materials.

### *Signage*

The location of the principal signage should be given consideration at an early stage so that buildings can be designed to comfortably accommodate it rather than it having to be 'retro-fitted' at a later stage.

### *Safety and Security*

The security of staff, the buildings and the sites themselves needs to be taken into account from the outset of the design process. This is important as it will negate the need for expensive and possibly unsightly retro-fit measures at a later stage. This will also help to reduce the fear of crime.

Any boundary treatment will also need careful consideration and the use of palisade or chain link fencing will not be acceptable.

The Central Government publication 'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention' gives detailed advice on safety and security issues.

### *Sustainability*

New development must contribute towards the reduction of the city's carbon footprint. Buildings should therefore be designed to be more energy efficient and incorporate sustainable technologies, having regard to the Council's Delivering a More Sustainable City SPD. Recent developments within the city centre such as the new Severn Trent Water headquarters and new Coventry University buildings have successfully incorporated such measures while providing innovative design

### **Policy CC2: Building Design**

- a. High quality design will be required for all new buildings with the criteria set out in the supporting text above forming an integral part of the building design process.
- b. All new buildings shall be sustainably designed to maximise energy efficiency and limit carbon emissions and the resultant impact upon the environment. Sustainable technologies should form an important part of this approach and should be incorporated wherever possible.

### **Public Art**

Coventry City Centre has a strong legacy of public art, particularly from the post war period where public art formed an integral part of the redevelopment of the city. It is an important element in defining the character and identity of the city centre, be it landmark pieces such as the Whittle Arches or small more intimate pieces such as the Niad or historically important pieces such as the Coventry tapestry located in St Mary's Guildhall.

To build on this legacy, public art will be encouraged to be incorporated into buildings and public spaces. It will be particularly encouraged within and around public squares, parks and gardens, civic and cultural buildings, heritage sites, Coventry University, religious centres, leisure centres and business districts. Furthermore, public art will be encouraged along transport corridors, gateways and pedestrian and transport nodes.

### **Policy CC3: Public Art**

- a. Public art should, where appropriate, form an integral part of the design process of any future development proposals.
- b. As an alternative to stand-alone pieces of public art, opportunities should be taken to incorporate this into the design of the buildings e.g. through the use

of artist/architectural glass or ironmongery etc. thus giving it more legitimacy and integrity.

- C. Established public art shall be retained in redevelopment proposals unless the benefits of its removal outweigh the harm of its loss. Where public art is lost replacement works shall be incorporated into new development unless robust justification is provided highlighting that this it is not viable.

## **Lighting**

Carefully designed architectural lighting has the potential to enhance the appearance of important buildings and features including historic buildings and thus improve the experience of the City Centre during the hours of darkness. It can also define routes and boundaries, emphasise views and features and reveal or conceal buildings.

A number of taller and more prominent buildings within the City Centre have benefitted from the addition of architectural lighting which has added to visual interest during hours of darkness. It is however important that such schemes are designed in a way that does not result in unnecessary light pollution or have an adverse impact upon highway safety or the amenities of residents. Schemes should be designed so that during day-time hours the lighting apparatus is not unduly prominent and furthermore they should also consider energy use.

Within a development proposal lighting should be employed to create atmosphere and provide levels of light sufficient to give a feeling of safety and security in hours of darkness. Any lighting scheme will need to cater for vehicular users, pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Policy CC4: Lighting**

Carefully considered architectural lighting proposals for new buildings and refurbishment of existing buildings will be encouraged to enhance the overall appearance of the City during the hours of darkness.

## **Public Realm**

The public realm will act as an essential component in conveying the high quality environment the Council is seeking to achieve in the city centre – a series of high quality, well designed spaces linked by clear and legible pedestrian routes. Therefore high quality hard and soft landscaping will be expected throughout. A high standard of landscape design and boundary treatment will be required as part of the design of any development.

In order to demonstrate a high standard of landscape design the hard and soft landscape elements will need to be considered together and integrated from the outset in any public realm or other scheme design.

### *Soft Landscape*

There are many opportunities to enhance the attractiveness of the city centre and its public realm with planting and other soft landscape elements for the benefit of environment, residents, workers and visitors to the city alike.

These may take the form of formal street tree planting, hedging, informal and native tree and shrub planting in green open spaces, native and ornamental shrub and perennial planting, edible plants, rain gardens and swales and other types of planting. There are also opportunities to integrate planting into the buildings themselves through the use of green walls and roofs, which is particularly valuable in areas of dense building development where planting opportunities at ground and/or connected into natural soils levels may be limited.'

Soft landscape elements that offer the greatest possible ecological and amenity benefits will be positively encouraged to ensure longer term aesthetic and environmental benefit. Soft landscape elements that are well connected with other green infrastructure will be preferred over isolated features because of their greater environmental and multifunctional benefits.

### *Hard Landscape*

Hard landscaping will be an important element in visually and physically linking new developments with adjoining buildings and spaces as well as the wider city centre. It will be important in defining what areas are to be used by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular users. Therefore it is vitally important that a small palette of materials are chosen that are:

- Durable;
- easy to maintain;
- complement those used on the buildings;
- are appropriate to the scale and use of the spaces; and
- are aesthetically pleasing.

Any hard landscape design should incorporate street furniture e.g. seating, signage, lighting columns, litter bins and cycle storage, as and where appropriate. The design should link to and compliment proposals for soft landscape treatments.

### **Policy CC5: Public Realm**

- a. Where relevant, all development proposals will be required to integrate high quality soft and hard landscape designs.
- b. The palette of materials and street furniture for any development proposal will need to accord with the palette that already exists in the city centre and reflect the character of its respective quarter or adjoining landscaping where no distinctive landscape character exists.

### **Routes, linkages and gateways**

#### *Connectivity and Legibility*

Coventry city centre is relatively compact with most of it being within a 10 minute walk from Broadgate (the perceived heart of the city). However many post war developments have made parts of the city centre illegible and difficult to navigate. This has occurred through:

- the placement of buildings severing direct physical and visual links either by physically blocking routes or squeezing them into alleyways or;
- their orientation backing onto pedestrian routes making them appear uninviting or giving the impression that they are not routes for the general public.

This can cause pedestrians to take longer, less direct routes than necessary or worse still can deter them from visiting parts of the city centre, which together can have adverse economic and social consequences.

### *Linkages*

Coventry City centre has a number of high quality spaces and attractions which are enjoyed by locals and visitors alike. Unfortunately many of these spaces and attractions are isolated and poorly connected, meaning visitors to one do not always result in visitors to the others despite their close proximity.

In an attempt to start to address this, the City Council embarked upon a public realm improvement programme in 2010. Phase one of this programme included a multi-million pound transformation and pedestrianisation of Broadgate, a radical reconfiguring of the Gosford Street/Cox Street and Hales Street/Burges junctions, a facelift of Hertford Street and a transformation of the route from the railway station to Bull Yard.

Broadgate is the perceived heart of the city centre but until 2011 was dominated by an oversized road which ran around three sides of the space leaving a small public area in the middle which was flanked by two brick built grass planters. This meant that the usable public space was approximately a quarter of what was potentially available and the square lacked any real sense of place or arrival and the constraints made it difficult to hold events.

The removal of the road allowed for a radical transformation. It allowed the space to be pedestrianised which completely changed the sense of scale and proportion and created a real sense of arrival. This was further enhanced by the use of high quality materials (granite), street furniture, trees and architectural lighting. The result is a truly flexible civic space that feels like the heart of the city.

The Gosford Street/Cox Street and Hales Street/Burges junctions were radically redesigned, transforming what were multi-lane traffic light controlled junctions into non-priority junctions with no traffic signals and no dedicated turning lanes, which significantly reduced carriageway widths creating much wider footways. The angular geometry of the junctions combined with the use of red mastertint at the centre has helped reduce vehicle speeds and give pedestrians more priority when crossing. The widened footways with additional tree planting combined with the simplified and de-cluttered junctions has turned complex road intersections into high quality urban spaces.

The Station to Bull Yard scheme involved the closure of the inbound lanes of Warwick Road from the junction with Greyfriars Road past Bull Yard to where it becomes New Union Street and pedestrianising and landscaping the road space. The subway under Greyfriars Road was filled in and replaced with an at-grade zebra crossing. The route through Greyfriars Green was repaved and the lighting enhanced whilst the ring road flyover was repainted (underside) and fitted with architectural lighting. The subway to the station was filled in and replaced with an at-grade light controlled crossing. The result is a dramatically enhanced more legible and safer pedestrian route from the station to Bull Yard.

Hertford Street was decluttered and the canopy significantly improved. Architectural lighting was added to the link to Greyfriars Lane and the sandstone paving was deep cleaned throughout. The result is a brighter, clearer route with a stronger visual link to Bull Yard.

Alongside new developments and public realm enhancements there has been some improvement to connectivity between the Coventry University campus and the wider city centre. Through the on-going delivery of the university's masterplan opportunities should be taken to further enhance the way the university campus interacts with the wider city. This is of particular importance along the Gosford Street/Jordan Well/Earl Street corridor and around Coventry Cathedral.

These completed schemes combined with those that are currently on site or in the pipe-line have transformed a large part of the city centre and the City Council is actively seeking funds to undertake additional schemes. These include changes to the ring road, which is often seen as a physical and psychological barrier, This is with a view to creating safer, more convenient and attractive routes across it through:

- improvements to existing at-grade crossings and subways;
- improving existing bridges and constructing new ones and/or;
- replacing existing bridges and subways with suitably designed at-grade crossings.

To support improved pedestrian routes, the enhancement of existing public spaces and the provision of significant new attractive and welcoming public spaces will be promoted and encouraged. Within these spaces and other developments within the city centre, opportunities should be taken to incorporate soft landscaping including tree planting to promote biodiversity and create a visually attractive environment. This is considered further in the public realm and green and blue infrastructure sections of this AAP.

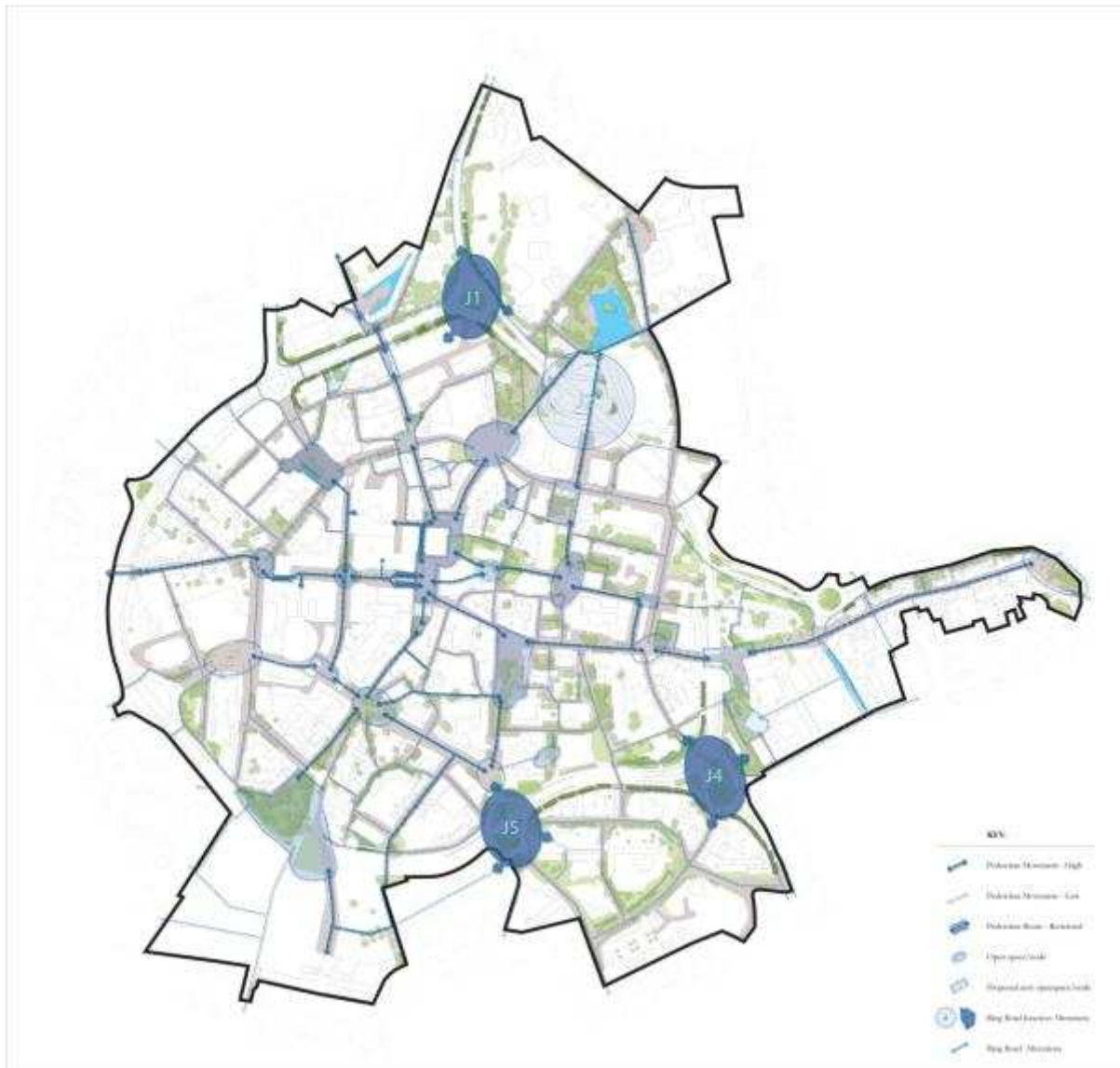
### **Policy CC6: Routes, linkages and gateways**

- a. Development proposals will be required to incorporate improvements to the significant routes and linkages as shown on Figure 4.
- b. Development proposals will be required to incorporate improvements to crossing the Ring Road to ensure enhanced connectivity between the city centre and the wider city and should reflect the priorities identified in the supporting text (above). This will be of particular relevance at:



- Ring Road Junction 1
- Ring Road Junction 2
- Ring Road Junction 4
- Ring Road Junction 5
- The Canal Basin crossing between Ring Road Junctions 1 and 9
- Connectivity between Parkside and Much Park Street

Figure 4: Key Routes and Linkages



## Tall Buildings and Views of the Three Spires

The spires of St Michael, Holy Trinity & Christchurch have become synonymous with the image of the city – giving rise to the descriptive title of the ‘City of Three Spires’. They are a majestic sight on the skyline and an important link to the city’s medieval past.

The postwar building boom saw a number of tower blocks join the spires on the skyline and whilst many of these buildings added a sense of modernity and dynamism to the city, some, like Civic Centre 4, were to the detriment of the setting of the spires.

Given the importance of the spires to the city it is important that any additional large/tall buildings are carefully designed and located so as to ensure that the spires retain their rightful prominent position on the skyline.

### *Identified views of the spires*

The APP identifies 14 views of the spires considered to be of high value. They are located on the edge of the city centre and, in the majority of cases, are on key routes into the city centre and offer a strong and extended view of one or more of the spires. See figure 5.

The identified views are as follows:

1. Foleshill Road
2. Stoney Stanton Road
3. Swanswell Pool
4. Sky Blue Way
5. Far Gosford Street
6. London Road
7. Parkside
8. Mile Lane
9. Quinton Road
10. Manor Road footbridge and Friars Road
11. Spencer Park & footbridge
12. Upper Holyhead Road
13. Upper Hill Street & footbridge
14. St Nicholas Street

Each of these views has its own particular characteristics, but they are all dynamic in nature with the view of the spires (the number and proportion visible and their location) changing considerably along the length of the views.

The strength of these views depends on a number of factors:

- whether they are viewed on foot or in a vehicle;
- the time of day, with the image of the spires changing dramatically from hours of daylight to night-time when they are lit by architectural lighting;
- the time of year – the spires become more visible on certain routes when the trees are not in leaf and;

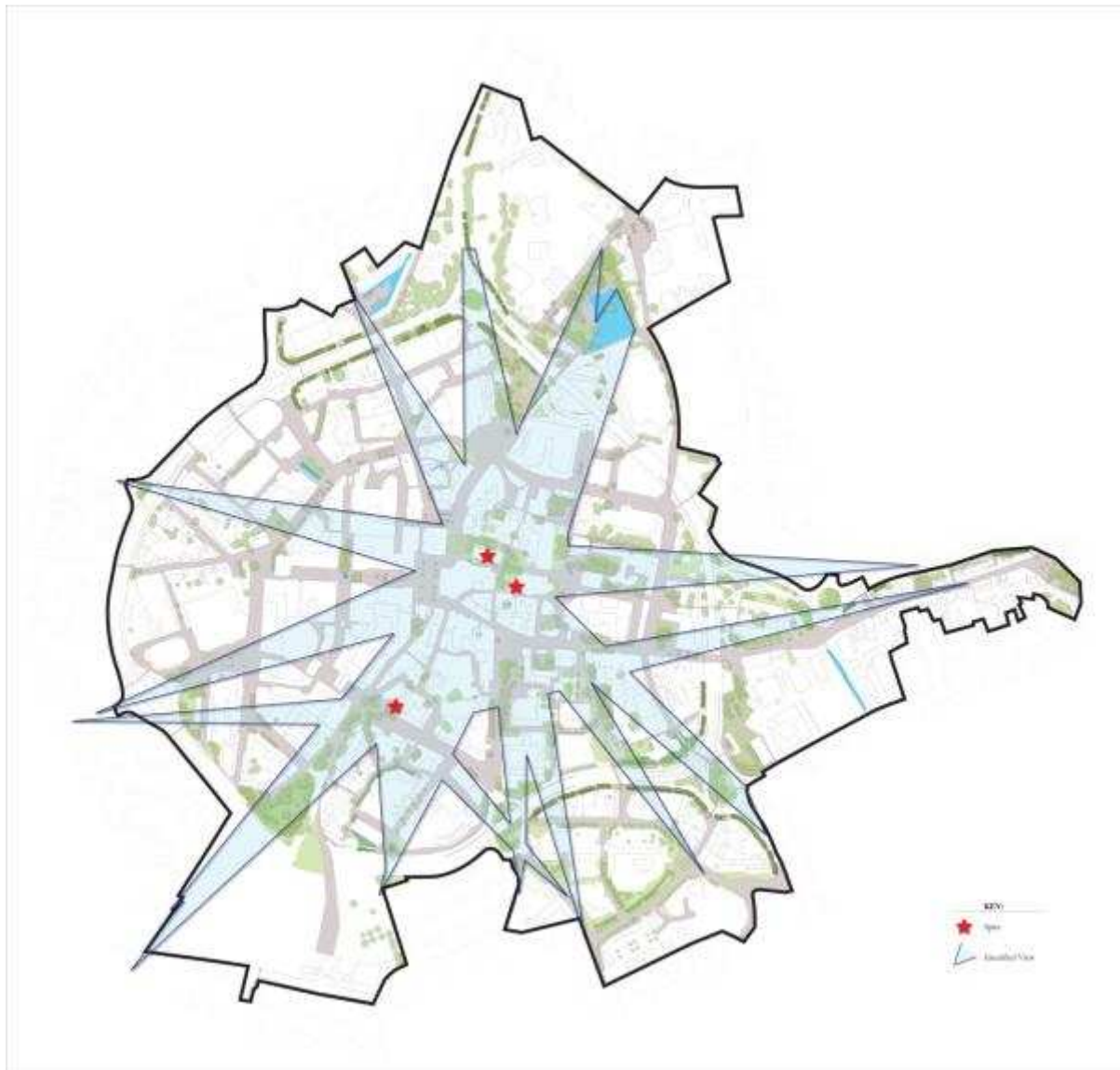
- the weather conditions – the spires stand out boldly against a clear blue sky as opposed to overcast weather conditions.

### Policy CC7: Tall Buildings

The location of proposed tall buildings will be considered in relation to the views of the three spires, with development proposals reflecting the view cones identified on plan.

Further guidance will be provided in a Tall Buildings SPD.

Figure 5: Key View Corridors of the Three Spires



## **The Natural Environment**

Historically developments within Coventry city centre have focused more on its built form than the natural side of its environment. For example the braded river sections of the River Sherbourne and its tributaries were culverted to make way for roads and buildings. Given the dense urban environment that has developed across the city centre there have also been limited opportunities for urban green space, whilst the Ring Road and poor connectivity between public spaces has meant the green and blue parts of the city centre have become isolated and peripheral. In recent years, as part of the city centre public realm works opportunities have been taken to introduce new green spaces around Holy Trinity Church and Council House square for example. The on-going works around Greyfriars Green will also increase the size of the green and improve its connectivity towards the railway station. Furthermore, the city as a whole has become an Air Quality Management Area, with a particular focus around the city centre and a need to improve air quality and the wider natural environment. This has also formed part of the Council's Public Health agenda, with a view to making the city centre a more pleasant and healthier environment within which to live and travel.

This section of the AAP will therefore provide an overview of how the city centre's natural environment needs to improve and will provide a clear basis for how such improvements can support and compliment the expected redevelopment opportunities within the built environment.

## **Green and Blue Infrastructure**

The term green and blue infrastructure refers to a strategic network of green and blue spaces, such as parks, amenity landscaping, ponds, canals and rivers, and the links between them.

A high quality and well-connected network of green and blue infrastructure assets has the potential to make the city centre a more attractive proposition for external investors and local people. As such, green and blue infrastructure should, where appropriate form an essential element in:

- Improvements to existing pedestrian routes;
- the enhancement of existing public spaces;
- the provision of new public spaces and pedestrian routes; and
- increasing levels of physical activity.

As part of this process, the provision of soft landscaping, including tree planting to promote biodiversity and create a visually attractive environment will be promoted. 'Greening' of the Ring Road will also be supported where highway safety is unaffected through the introduction of vertical planting such as green walls and climber structures to supporting walls and bridges in order to enhance the appearance of the City Centre and to offer screening opportunities.

In recent years the city centre has seen the introduction of new green spaces around Holy Trinity Church and Council House Square, as well as temporary pocket parks at Cox Street, Corporation Street and Hales Street. These new provisions have all

helped to complement existing green and blue infrastructure within the city centre, including Swanswell Pool, the Canal Basin and Greyfriars Green.

Notwithstanding, Green Infrastructure within the city centre remains fragmented, and has been delivered in more of a piecemeal fashion over time. Indeed, quite a large proportion of green infrastructure is vegetation around buildings and site boundaries, which is positive as it adds a greener feel to the city centre, but does lack the necessary elements for a more urban and structured feel. As a result there is a need to consider green infrastructure in more of a holistic context, to support the establishment of local biodiversity networks. This will generate environmental benefits as well as helping to guide routes, enhance views and create usable green spaces and links beyond the city centre. The proposed green spine coupled with the greening of the Ring Road, will support this.

Given that the level of planned development in the city centre is expected to result in an increased density of development and therefore protecting, enhancing and increasing green and blue infrastructure is particularly important. The 2011 Green Infrastructure Study suggested a set of Green Infrastructure Standards for greater levels of sustainable development. The evidence recommended:

- Green infrastructure should be considered in the same manner as any other form of infrastructure servicing new development, and should be an essential component of all developments;
- New green infrastructure associated with development should connect into site level and local green space networks which should in turn connect into the city-wide network;
- All developments should include, green infrastructure elements, including SUDs<sup>5</sup>, urban trees and green roofs, which deliver multiple sustainable benefits to the urban environment through their natural processes.

### **Policy CC8 – Green and Blue Infrastructure**

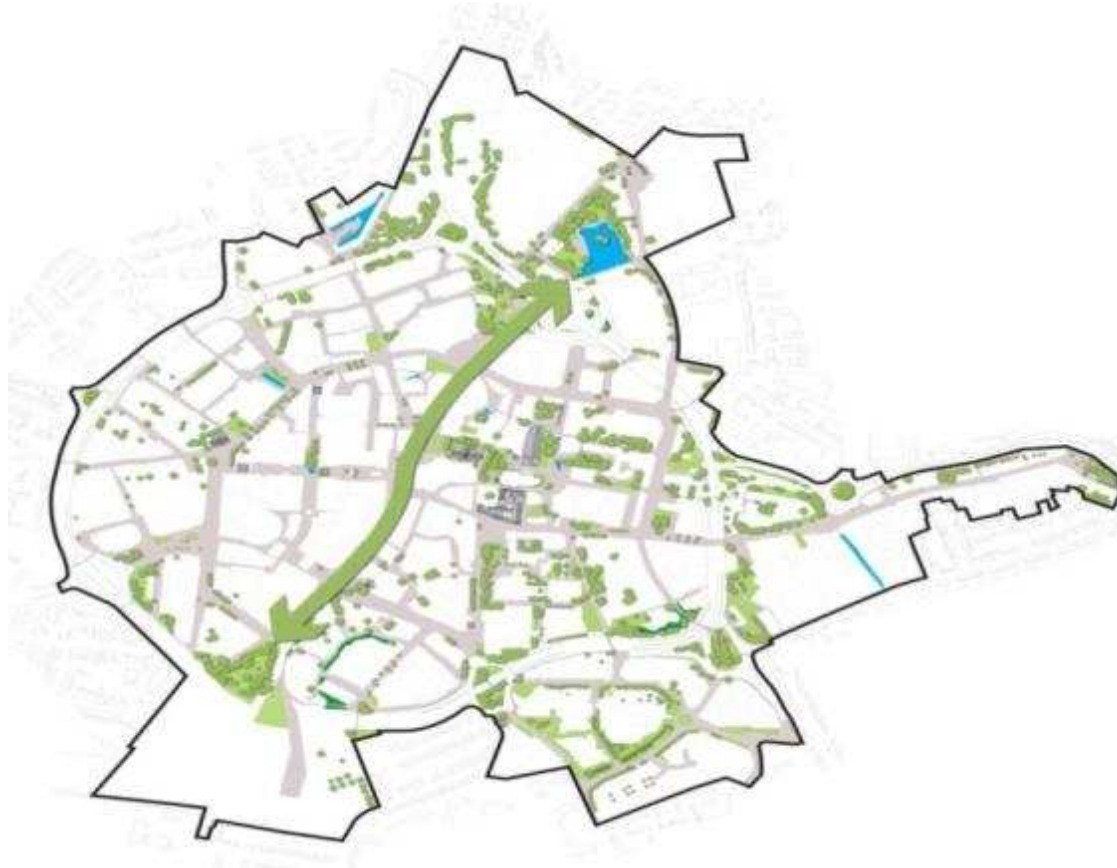
- a. New development will be expected to maintain the quantity, quality and functionality of existing green and blue infrastructure. In line with the city's Green Space Strategy and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, development proposals should enhance blue and green infrastructure, and create and improve linkages between the quarters. Any development which is likely to adversely affect the integrity of a blue or green corridor will be required to be robustly justified and where appropriate, mitigation measures put in place.
- b. Developments adjacent to the Ring Road should maximise all opportunities to develop the greening of vertical surfaces as far as reasonably possible. Opportunities to add greenery to the area on a north-south axis through the city centre, defined on figure 6 as the 'Green Spine', will generally be encouraged and supported.
- c. Trees that contribute towards public amenity shall be retained and protected unless they have a short life expectancy (less than 10 years), are dangerous

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<sup>5</sup> Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

or the benefits of their loss significantly outweigh the harm that would be caused by their retention. Where trees are lost, notable replacement planting must be provided.

Figure 6: The Green Spine



## Water Quality

The vast majority of the city centre watercourses are currently within culvert, most notably the River Sherbourne. This AAP has already identified an aspiration to explore opportunities to deculvert lengths of the River Sherbourne, most notably around Fairfax Street. This presents its own issues however and will need to be considered in greater detail as part of wider regeneration opportunities in this part of the city centre. An alternative to deculverting could be a recreation or representation of the river channel, which could help form part of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS). Although some SuDS features are not always appropriate in areas of ground contamination, opportunities should be taken to explore these within the city centre, not only around Fairfax Street but the centre as a whole.

In addition to the culverted river sections, the city centre hosts Swanswell Pool and the Canal Basin as its other notable water bodies. Development in these areas will need to provide a positive reflection of these areas and where appropriate enhance water quality.



## **Drainage & Flood Risk**

In the national context the risk of major scale flooding in Coventry is low. The city area is not low lying when compared nationally and is not subject to Tidal Surge River Flows. However, there are some areas of the city which are more susceptible to flooding from rivers and surface water, following heavy or prolonged rainfall. There is no evidence of major flood flow paths that could result in deep, fast flowing water within the city centre, but the existence of undulating terrain, basements and underground car parks means that during intense rainfall, some shallow ponding might occur. The widespread nature of this shallow ponding could cause damage to many commercial premises owing to the accessibility requirements typically needed for town centre retail. The second flood risk of scale to the city centre is from the River Sherbourne and the significant residual risk of blockage.

Flooding can never be completely prevented, but the frequency of flooding and impacts upon the communities can be largely reduced. Local flooding is becoming increasingly common due to the impacts of climate change on weather patterns and it is important to address this risk in Coventry. Historically, flood risk management has concentrated on high impact and often low frequency flood events.

When development occurs within the city centre it should seek to deliver open sections of water on the watercourses. This will enhance the overall potential of water to create a more harmonious and attractive environment thus providing a benefit to all users and attracting private investors to the city centre.

The city centre lacks water features and the ring road acts as a barrier to features such as Swanswell Park and the Canal Basin. Water within city centres such as a Rivers, Canals, designed water features or lakes are widely considered to be attractive and deliver amenity value. Therefore, where financially viable, opportunities to de-culvert existing historic watercourses or introduce new water channels and SuDS features into the city centre will be welcomed and supported, where appropriate. This should be undertaken in line with the national guidance in 'Making Space for Water'.

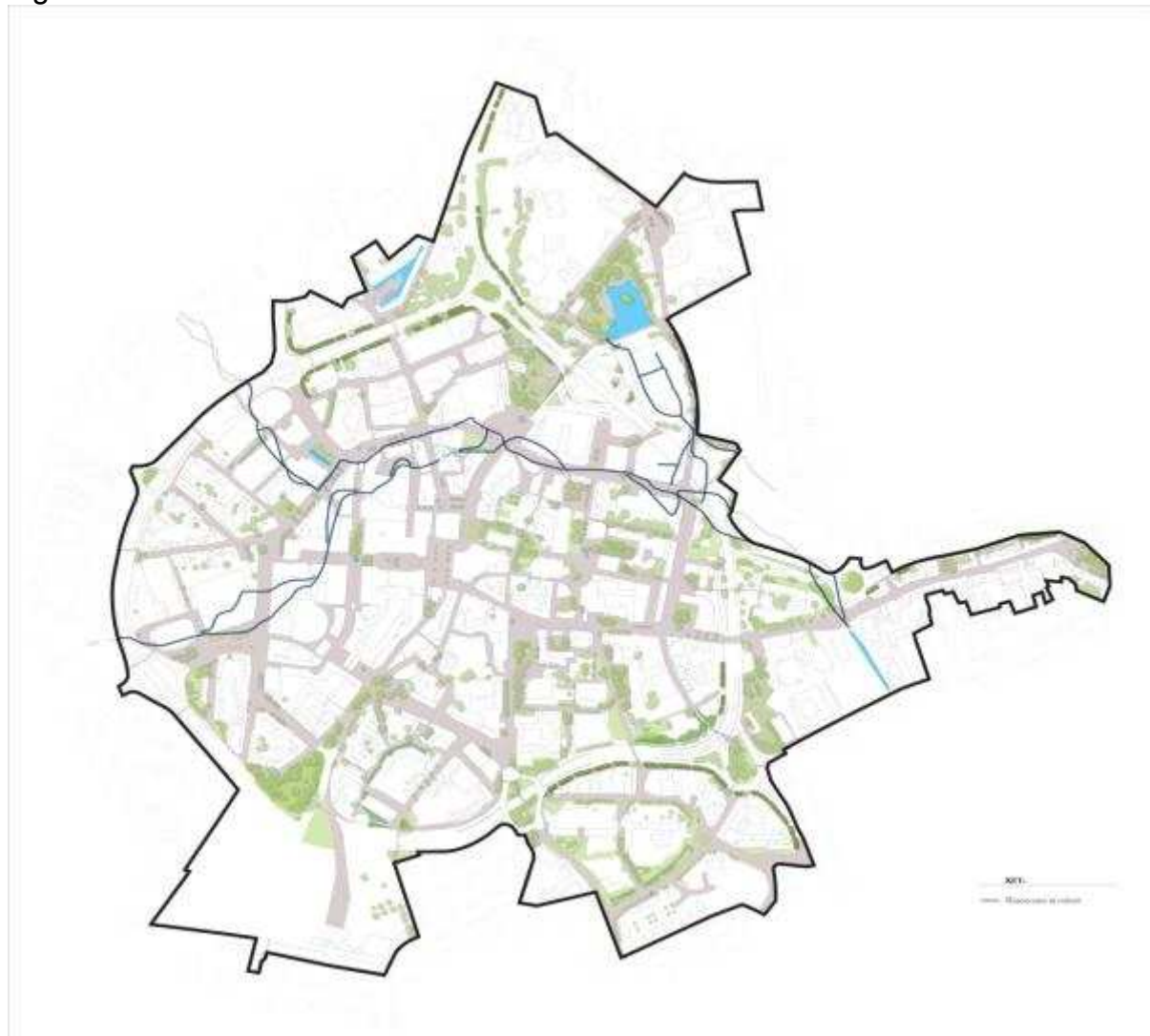
Any new development will require the production of a Flood Risk Assessment. This assessment will need to consider the flood risk from the all sources and residual flood risk. This is to ensure that flood risk to and from all developments is appropriately considered. Through appropriate assessments the impacts of current and future flood risk must be reduced.

### **Policy CC9: Drainage & Flood Risk**

- a. Development shall be designed and located to minimise the risk of flooding and if permitted development, be resilient to flooding. The opportunity must be exercised to maximise the absorption of surface water run-off by the ground. Sustainable Urban Drainage methods shall be incorporated into new developments including treatment for water quality.
- b. When development occurs, a Flood Risk Assessment will need to be produced to appropriately consider the risk of flooding from all sources.

- c. When development occurs, it must consider the evidence in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, Surface Water Management Plan and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. This includes all sites being treated as a Greenfield site when calculating permissible discharge rates.
- d. When development is proposed it should utilise water use reduction systems such as grey water harvesting to reduce the water usage within the proposed developments.
- e. Where a development proposal lies adjacent to the existing de-culverted river Sherbourne, a natural sinuous river channel should be retained. Consideration should be given to remove culverts along Fairfax Street as shown in Figure 7 in order to create multi-functional green/blue spaces or consider opportunities to create a water channel that respects the alignment of the River Sherbourne.

Figure 7: Watercourses





## Environmental Management

Environmental Issues can take many forms and include: pollution of water, air or land; and pollution through noise, dust, vibration, smell, light, heat or radiation. These issues may also have an impact on health and wellbeing.

Within city centres, such issues can be amplified due to the higher density of development, concentration of vehicles and relatively less green and blue spaces, unless they are well controlled through suitable mitigation. Coventry's city centre is no different and has its own specific issues to consider including:

- the relationship between new developments and the Ring Road, most notably in relation to air quality and noise;
- pre and post war development legacies and the uncertainty that resides around ground conditions; and
- the interaction of competing and complimentary uses within new and existing development, including noise and odour extraction.

Having regard to these issues new development must be designed to minimise environmental impacts within the city centre and ensure that any impacts such as air quality and noise are appropriately considered and mitigated. Schemes will also need to have regard to the wider policies in the Local Plan.

### Air Quality

Coventry is now designated an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for nitrogen dioxide, which is the main air quality concern within the city centre and the city as a whole. The source of nitrogen dioxide is the burning of fossil fuels, with vehicles and traffic congestion having the most notable impacts. Of particular concern here will be new developments adjacent to the Ring Road or alongside concentrations of public transport stops, such as Pool Meadow and Corporation Street, which if not designed in an appropriate way could have significant impacts on public health.

In this context new developments will need to have regard to the West Midlands Low Emissions Towns and Cities Guidance (WM LETC Guidance), which places greater focus on mitigating air quality impacts from development through a range of options. This can include an increase in active travel and investment in low emission vehicles and the infrastructure to support them.

Coventry is entering a period of significant redevelopment within its city centre, and it is during such phases that attention will need to be given to the creation of excessive dust and dirt created during the construction processes. As part of the planning process new development proposals will need to adhere to a construction environmental management plan (CEMP), which will assist in mitigating these concerns.

The emerging Local Plan has already identified opportunities around the Council's heat line project. This scheme looks to provide a sustainable source of energy to city centre buildings through the creation of heat from waste. In recent years significant investment has been made to introduce the necessary infrastructure to support heat line within the City Centre, helping to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and support

the reduction of the city's carbon footprint. Opportunities to connect to the heat line network, or introduce other renewable energy systems within the city centre should be a key priority within new city centre developments.

### Contaminated land

Historically the city centre has been a focal point for industry and manufacturing including cycles, motor cars and textiles. Areas that are now occupied by the Parkside Technology Park, Ikea and The Sky Dome are prime examples of such activity.

Any new development or redevelopment of existing sites within the city centre will require an investigation into the quality of the underlying soils and waters and where necessary an appropriate level of remediation to ensure the land is fit for its proposed use and will not pose a risk to future users of the site.

Of similar concern is the significant level of bombing experienced within the city centre during World War 2, which has left a legacy of unexploded ordnance. The key problem with this part of the city centres legacy is that there are no records of where unexploded bombs are beneath the ground, or how bomb damaged buildings were cleared and rebuilt in the post war period. As a result it is only as part of the development process that such legacies can be uncovered.

### Noise and Vibration

As focal points for a wide range of leisure, commercial and community provisions, city centres are often noisy and vibrant. Coventry city centre is no different and as redevelopment takes place, improving the quality of the built environment and increasing the centres offer, it will inevitably result in increased noise and increased issues. Of particular focus must be the need to strike an appropriate balance between competing and complimentary uses. Where developments are 'mixed use' in nature the types of uses will need to be carefully considered, especially where residential or quasi-residential provisions are being made.

Night-time entertainment in particular is often considered a 'bad neighbour' to residential developments, not just in terms of noise, but bass vibration as well. Any new development must ensure sufficient noise insulation is installed to mitigate these impacts. As such, new residential provisions will generally be discouraged in areas of existing night time entertainment (and vice versa) to minimise risks to established business, unless satisfactory mitigation measures can be demonstrated.

### Odour Extraction

Designated centres are often focal points for commercial premises such as restaurants and hot food takeaways. Coventry city centre is no different and is becoming an increasingly popular place for the provision of such uses. Where new restaurants and/or takeaways are provided within the city centre consideration must again be given to the impacts this could have on adjoining uses, most notably in terms of odour control in this instance. As such, all food premises will require an odour extraction system tailored to the nature and location of the premises to prevent

nuisance from odours. This will also include sufficient mitigation to prevent noise and vibration nuisance from extraction flues.

### Heat and lighting

The provision of appropriate architectural lighting and new street lighting is to be promoted alongside new city centre developments. This has previously been considered in the relevant section of this AAP. In promoting such uses however the location and brightness of lighting must give consideration to buildings and uses and mitigate any possible impacts.

The provision of new green infrastructure within the city centre is detailed in Policy CC8. The continued provision of green space and where appropriate blue infrastructure, which help to reduce the urban heat island effect, whilst also having positive impacts on public health.

### **Policy CC10 – Environmental Management**

New development must be designed to minimise environmental impact within the city centre and ensure that any impacts of pollution are appropriately considered and mitigated. In doing so new development schemes (including conversions and changes of use where appropriate) must ensure that:

- I. All construction and demolition schemes adhere to a construction environmental management plan which must be submitted to and approved by the council before works commences. The CEMP must specify how the developer will mitigate noise and dust emissions from the works.
- II. All opportunities to connect to heat line or implement renewable energy generation have been explored and included as part of new development unless shown to be unviable or inappropriate.
- III. Ground contamination needs have been assessed and remediated using the Environment Agency Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11).
- IV. Proposals for site investigation and remediation schemes (where appropriate) utilise appropriate risk assessment and are approved by the Council in advance of development. Such measures should ensure that sites are 'fit for purpose'.
- V. New residential and commercial development schemes and the introduction of fixed plant machinery have been designed to meet internal and external noise levels specified in BS4142 and BS 8223, or subsequent replacement standards.
- VI. Appropriate odour extraction systems are incorporated where the sale / preparation / consumption of food takes place within the relevant buildings.

- VII. Appropriate consideration has been given to the West Midlands LETC Air Quality guidance (or replacement guidance) and necessary mitigation measures incorporated into schemes.
- VIII. Have regard to other relevant policies within this City Centre AAP and its supporting documentation.

## **Parking**

Accessibility and the provision of adequate and high quality parking provisions have an important role to play in meeting the needs of local people, workers, city centre customers and investors. If people cannot easily access the businesses, shops and services they need, the economic prosperity of the city will stagnate.

Throughout the city centre there are a range of transport options to meet varying customer needs. The provision of appropriate parking plays an important role in meeting the needs of all who use Coventry's highway network, from cyclists and car drivers to coaches and delivery vehicles. Parking supports the regeneration of the city and the expectations of its residents and visitors. This Area Action plan will enable parking provision to be considered in the context of future city centre regeneration and economic prosperity which will support the local economy, shopping, leisure, tourism, accessibility and social inclusion.

Whilst this City Centre Area Action Plan is a key driver for investment and economic prosperity, other documents discuss the importance of parking provision in Coventry. Parking supports the themes and objectives of a range of other strategies:

- The City Council's Corporate Plan;
- West Midlands Local Transport Plan;
- Emerging Coventry Local Plan;
- Emerging Coventry Transport Strategy (including the Coventry Cycling Strategy);
- Coventry Network Management Plan;
- Coventry Parking Strategy; and
- Civil Parking Enforcement Policies.

High quality parking situated in appropriate locations throughout the city centre will also support objectives in the Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

### Car Parking

There are currently 21 public car parks providing approximately 3,000 parking spaces. These range from small short stay, to large long stay car parks. There are currently a total of 10 long stay car parks owned and managed by the Council, although the Christchurch car park is only for public use at weekends. These range in size from Cheylesmore with 44 spaces to New Union Street multi-storey with 240 spaces.

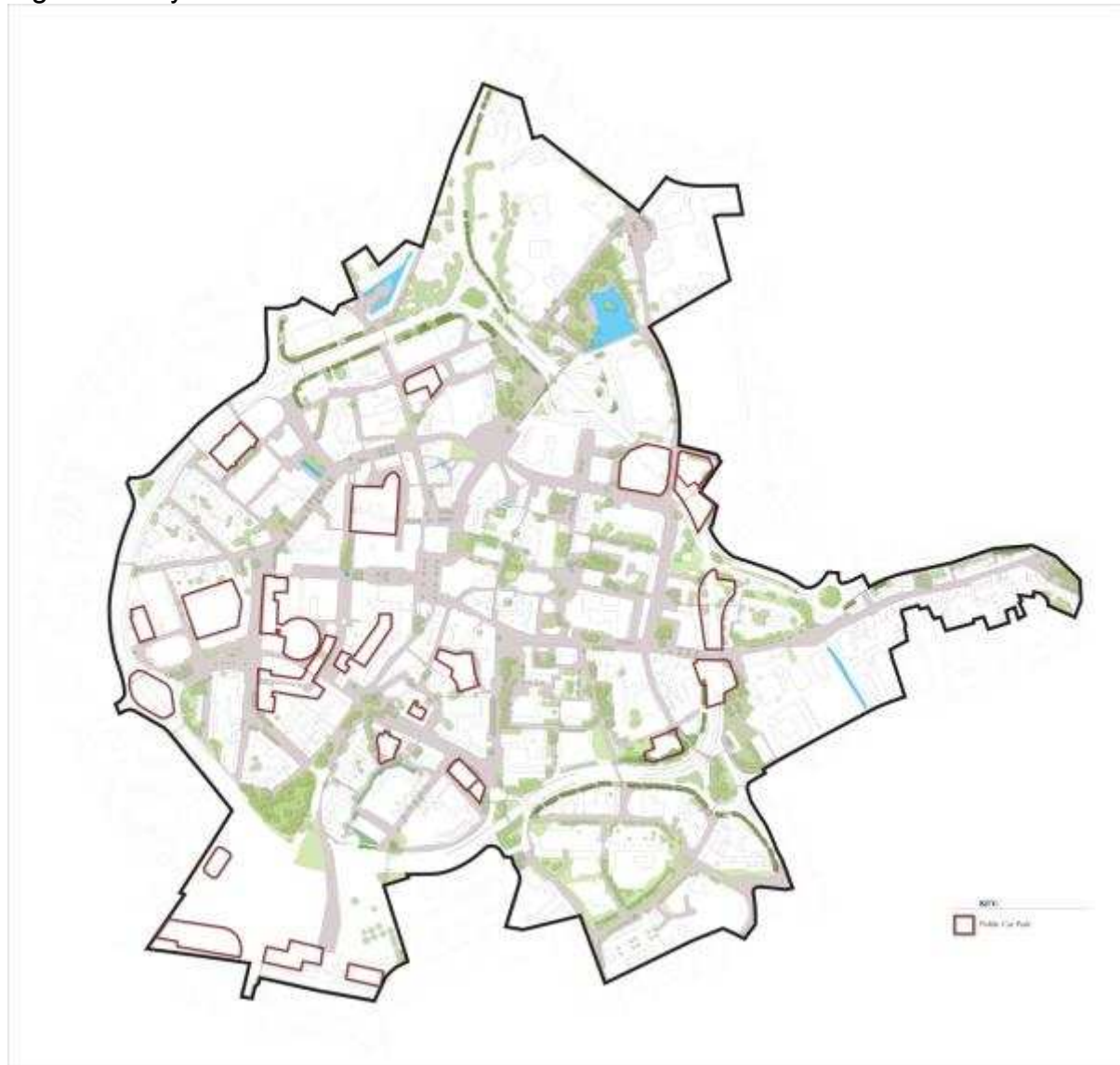
The Council owns and manages a total of 7 short stay car parks ranging from Far Gosford Street with around 30 spaces to West Orchards with around 630 spaces. In addition to those owned by the Council, there are 4 large privately owned and managed car parks in the city centre which cater for both short and long stay public parking. These are primarily located on the edge of the city centre, near key retail and leisure uses such as the Sky Dome and Belgrade Plaza.

This chapter provides a set of principles to direct the provision of public car parking in the city centre. Major shopping, business and leisure redevelopment proposals will affect the type, amount and location of existing and future parking provision.

### Developing Car Parking Provision

Parking provision will be easily accessible from the Ring Road and will provide for both short stay and long stay visitors. Existing levels of provision should be maintained, however; reconfiguration of existing car parks will be required to ensure demand is met in the right location. Proposals for the redevelopment of some existing surface level car parks will, where appropriate, be encouraged so long as the overall level of parking provision is maintained. Any reduction in existing provision must be clearly justified and shown to have an acceptable impact on the performance and accessibility of the city centre.

Figure 8: City Centre Car Parks



Additional maps of city centre parking services are available in the Council's draft Car Parking Strategy (2013).

Table 4 and 5 (below) set out existing car park provision across the city centre and consider its initial suitability for alteration or redevelopment to other uses.

**Table 4: Long Stay Council Owned and Managed Car Parks**

Location	Spaces	Redevelopment Opportunity	
Bishop Street	105	Yes	Future redevelopment opportunities as part of Bishop Street regeneration area.
Cheylesmore	44	No	Potential for the creation of a multi-storey.
Christchurch House	90	Yes	Potential for redevelopment as part of future leisure centre complex.
Gosford Street	171	Partially	Reduction in capacity as part of public realm works between Coventry University and Gosford Street
Grove Street	158	Partially	Heat line scheme has resulted in the reduction in capacity of this car park
Lower Ford Street	168	No	Limited redevelopment opportunity due to the ring road.
Manor House	70	No	Limited opportunity for redevelopment.
Moat Street	140	No	No opportunity for redevelopment due to the ring road.
New Union Street	241	No	Existing multi storey car park.
Whitefriars Street	134	Yes	Existing development allocation.
	<b>1321</b>		

**Table 5: Short Stay Council Owned and Managed Car Parks**

Location	Spaces	Redevelopment Opportunity	
Far Gosford Street	30	Yes	Redeveloped as part of the Far Gosford Street regeneration scheme.
Leicester Row	82	Yes	Appropriate development will be encouraged.
Barracks	461	Yes	New provision will be made as part of the City Centre South Scheme.
Cox Street	319	Yes	Redevelopment as part of a wider Fairfax Street regeneration area.
City Arcade	234	Yes	New provision will be made as part of the City Centre South Scheme.
Salt Lane	159	No	Potential for the creation of a multi-storey.
West Orchards	630	No	Remains as existing
	<b>1915</b>		

As part of the City Centre South scheme, the existing Barracks and City Arcade car parks will be redesigned and incorporated into the development. In order to address the loss of this parking provision and any other sites that are lost as a result of any development of existing surface level car parks, it will be necessary to create additional capacity in accessible and sustainable locations through the development of multi-storey parking.

Coventry is a national pilot for driverless technology and in partnership with international companies situated within and around Coventry is embracing the concept of an electric city. As such, parking and charging provision for electric vehicles has been trialled across Coventry for some years and further opportunities to expand this network will be supported. Such initiatives help to support improvements in air quality and should have regard to the requirements of the West Midlands LETC guidance on electric vehicle parking provision.

In recent years the council has made significant improvements to the city centre's on street parking offer and will continue to promote metered on-street parking as part of further public realm improvements. The creation of residents parking schemes will continue to review, where it is considered appropriate and supported by residents.

The council is also committed to developing a new Car Park Signage Strategy, which will help guide local people and visitors around the city centre and to the most suitable parking provision.

#### Bus and Coach Parking

Provision for Bus and coach parking will be provided in Pool Meadow Bus station and at a new transport interchange at the railway station, which is to be developed as part of the wider Station masterplan. The current coach park at White Street is expected to provide an ideal redevelopment opportunity subject to alterations to junction 2 of the Ring Road.

#### Cycle Parking

In order to support and encourage active travel, the provision of adequate and appropriate cycle parking will be promoted throughout the city centre, and should form an integral part of new development schemes. Opportunities for pay to use bikes will be explored within the city centre, similar to schemes currently operational in London. Further guidance on specific cycle parking requirements can be found in the Delivering a more Sustainable City SPD (2009).

### **Policy CC11**

- a. Proposals for the redevelopment of the following existing surface level car parks will be encouraged as part of the wider regeneration of the city centre. Schemes will be encouraged that complement existing nearby uses and designs in those specific quarters.
  - Bishop St Car Park;
  - Whitefriars St Car Park;
  - Far Gosford St Car Park;
  - Leicester Row Car Park; and
  - Cox St Car Park.



- b. Proposals for the redevelopment of White Street Coach Park will be encouraged, where linked to amendments to the Ring Road.
- c. Proposals to redevelop/re-configure Salt Lane and Cheylesmore surface level car parks to a multi-storey format will be encouraged.
  - Salt Lane car park should be sympathetically designed to take account of its conservation area surroundings, specifically the Grade I listed Ford's Hospital site.
  - Cheylesmore car park should, where possible, be linked to the existing multi-storey car park at New Union Street, which in turn would allow for an improved design of the existing New Union Street car park.
- d. Proposals for multi-storey car parks in the Technology Park Quarter and Fairfax Street Regeneration area will be encouraged. The council will work with partners to encourage public and private usage at appropriate times.
- e. Proposals for further new multi-storey public car parks will be supported, provided they are of good design, are accessible by a short drive from the Ring Road, are justified in terms of the number of spaces provided and ensure an appropriate relationship with adjacent buildings and uses.
- f. Suitable proposals for parking in the Friargate quarter will be encouraged, subject to appropriate design and suitability to the surrounding area. Where appropriate, opportunities for shared public and private parking will be explored.
- g. The provision of new surface level car parking will not be supported within the city centre unless its provision is to support the implementation of longer term regeneration schemes. In such cases surface level provision will only be allowed on a temporary basis.
- h. New cycle parking provision should be delivered as part of new developments within the city centre. This should be in conformity with the requirements in the Developing a More Sustainable City SPD, or replacement document.

## **The City Centre Quarters and Regeneration Areas**

Historically Coventry city centre has developed around specific zones or quarters, with related uses grouping together to support viability and vitality of such uses. As a result 9 specific quarters have been identified that promote similar characteristics, primarily in terms of their uses and functions, but in some cases through design also.

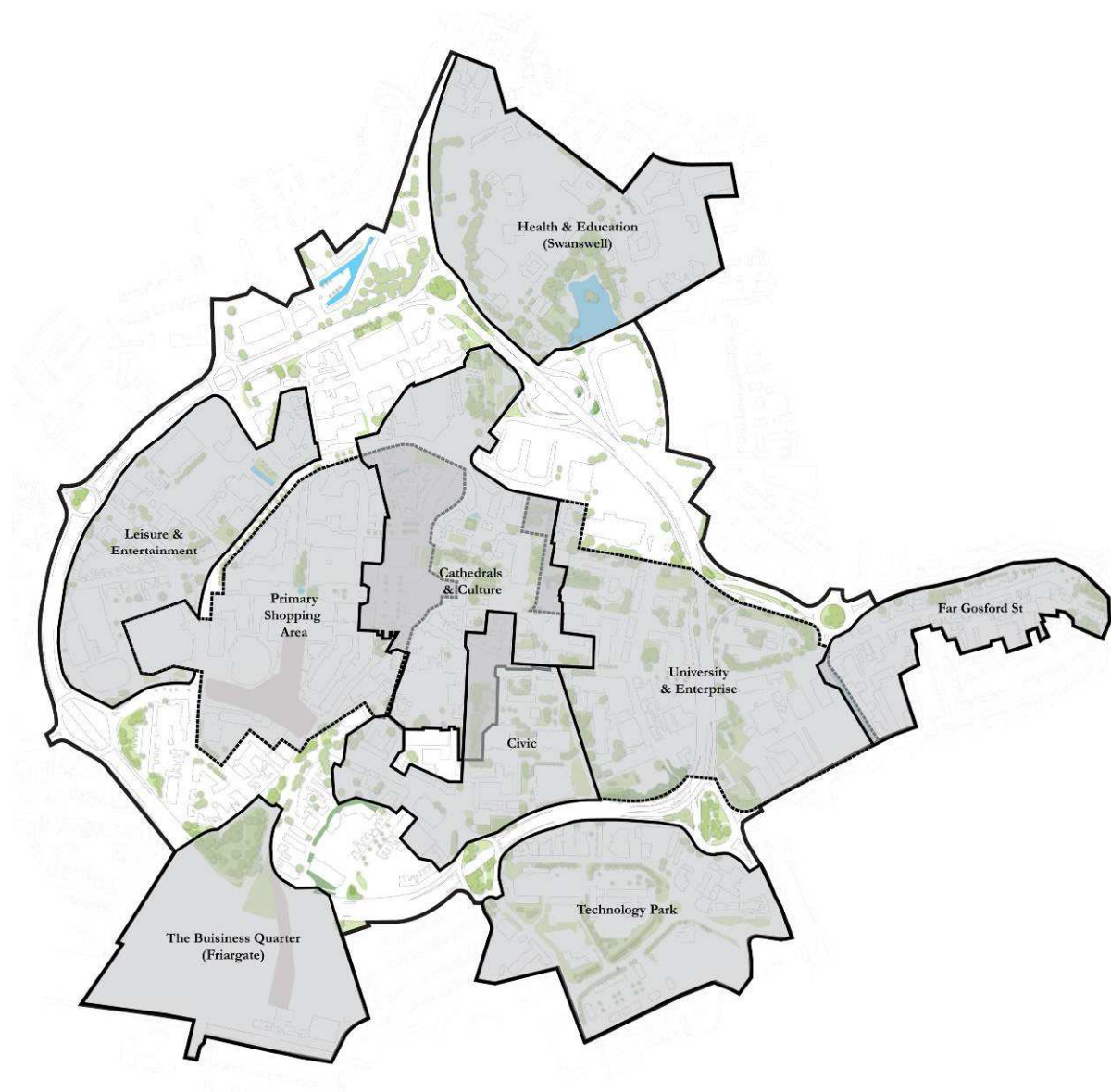
The following chapters of this AAP will explore these quarters and provide policy guidance for their future development.

In addition a further 3 areas within the city centre will be discussed. The first two of these will focus on significant areas of regeneration opportunity towards the northern half of the city centre. These two areas present little historic characteristics and are widely recognised as areas of significant redevelopment opportunities. The third area is situated to the south of the city centre and primarily consists of residential and commercial provision. Much of this area is well developed, and is unlikely to experience much change over the plan period. There may however be opportunities for limited infill development and changes of use.

Each quarter will be presented alongside clear maps identifying routes, linkages, heritage assets and redevelopment opportunities.

Figure 9 below highlights the city centre quarters:

**Figure 9: The City Centre Quarters**



- Please note that some quarters overlap. When considering development opportunities within the city centre care should be taken to ensure all appropriate policies are considered.

## The Business Quarter - Friargate

Exciting and significant change is expected within this quarter over the plan period. The area, spanning 15 hectares (37 acres) lies predominantly to the south of the inner Ring Road Junction 6 although includes the Ring Road junction itself and the Greyfriars Green Conservation Area.

The area is bounded by Grosvenor Road to the west, the railway line to the south and Manor Road to the east, whilst Warwick Road runs north-south through the centre. The area is currently home to:

- Coventry Railway Station and associated multi-storey and surface car parking;
- commercial outlets to the eastern side of Central Six Retail Park;
- dated office accommodation within two large tower blocks and lower level offices;
- Grosvenor Road public surface car park; and
- a vacant development site that was previously the home of the local Tax Office.

Friargate is a bold, major mixed use development which will provide up to 300,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space over the plan period, of which 185,000 m<sup>2</sup> would be office space. Granted outline planning permission in 2011<sup>6</sup>, a total of 25 new buildings are planned for the site, including 14 high quality new office buildings, two hotels, residential accommodation, leisure facilities and new retail floor space, although the latter must be considered within the context of its impact on the Primary Shopping Area. The first of these new buildings will be completed in 2016 and will provide the new central office for the City Council as part of its building consolidation programme.

As part of these proposals the Friargate area will become the focus for new job creation and economic growth within the city centre. It is expected to generate significant employment opportunities and will stimulate substantial inward investment with more than 13,000 new jobs to be created and approximately 8,000 jobs during construction.

To support this economic investment and promote sustainable transport, plans have also been prepared to expand Coventry railway station with new platform provision to support the NUCKLE<sup>7</sup> project. This seeks to enhance local rail provision between Coventry and its neighbouring towns to the north and south of the city<sup>8</sup>. In addition to enhanced rail provision further public transport improvements are planned including a new rail/bus interchange around Warwick Road.

The Friargate proposals seek to provide vibrant streets with active ground floor uses and improve key pedestrian and cycle routes from the area to other parts of the city

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<sup>6</sup> planning reference: OUT/2011/0036

<sup>7</sup> Nuneaton, Coventry, Kenilworth, Leamington rail upgrade project – known as NUCKLE

<sup>8</sup> This includes new stations at Kenilworth, The Ricoh Arena and Bermuda Park as well as enhanced service provision to Leamington, Bedworth and Nuneaton.

centre. New high quality public spaces will also be created and improvements will be made to Greyfriars Green.

As part of these improvement works, major infrastructure works are already underway including the re-design of Ring Road Junction 6. This will include the removal of the roundabout and the building of a bridge deck across the Ring Road to allow the creation of a new and attractive public boulevard. This will improve the connectivity between this area and the wider city centre and extend Greyfriars Green into Friargate. These works will remove the physical and visual barrier of the Ring Road which currently isolates the Railway Station and surrounding area from the city centre. This will help to bring the Friargate development and Railway Station much closer to the heart of the city centre and to the retail core of the city (including the City Centre Couth major retail development).

### **Policy CC12**

- a. Development proposals within this area must be informed by the approved Masterplan (as identified in the supporting text or any approved amendment thereafter).
- b. The business quarter will be the primary location within the city centre for new office development. As such, at least 185,000sq.m of office space is to be allocated within this area.
- c. The provision of A1-A5 retail floor space will be allowed as part of mixed use buildings and to support the creation of active frontages. Any individual unit should not exceed 500sq.m gross and should not be of a scale that would cause inappropriate competition with the Primary Shopping Area.
- d. Within the business quarter an allocation is to be made for the provision of at least 400 new homes
- e. Other uses that are considered acceptable within the business quarter include:
  - Leisure and recreation uses, including hotels;
  - Social and community uses;
  - New multi-storey car parking; and
  - Provisions for public transport infrastructure
- f. Improvements to and expansion of the Coventry Railway Station will be supported so long as it does not negatively affect the listed building.
- g. Greyfriars Green will continue to be protected as a conservation area and an important 'green' asset to the city centre. Any development proposals that would erode the character of the Green and damage the setting of the listed buildings will not be accepted.

Figure 10: Business Quarter – Friargate



## **Cathedrals and Cultural Quarter**

The Cathedrals and Cultural Quarter is at the heart of Coventry city centre and is rich in history, containing many of the city's most significant historic buildings and cultural assets.

The area encompasses 3 Conservation Areas – Hill Top; Lady Herbert's Garden and The Burges; and High Street. There are numerous heritage assets in the area including Coventry's three Cathedrals; St Mary's Priory Cathedral which was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1545, St Michael's Old Cathedral that was burnt down in the air raids of 1940 and St Michael's New Cathedral designed by Sir Basil Spence. It also contains Holy Trinity Church, St Mary's Guildhall, the Old Grammar School, the city wall and its two surviving gate towers, all of which are Grade I Listed Buildings. The narrow cobbled streets of Bayley Lane and Hay Lane contrast with the predominantly post-war city centre beyond and gives the best impression of how Coventry appeared prior to the second world war.

In addition to comprising many historic assets, this area is also a cultural centre for the city with Coventry Transport Museum and The Herbert Museum & Art Gallery both attracting visitors from across the country and Coventry Cathedral (ruins and new cathedral) is an international attraction as a centre for peace and reconciliation.

Since the turn of the century, there has been notable investment in the area through the Phoenix Initiative from 1999 to 2002 and the re-design of Broadgate in 2012. Broadgate has been the commercial heart of the city since medieval times and takes its name from the gate of Coventry Castle that once stood there. The area was flattened by bombing in November 1940 and then became the central square in City Architect Donald Gibson's post-war masterplan with Broadgate House and the former Leofric Hotel framing the axial route from St Michael's spire to the Upper Precinct. The construction of Cathedral Lanes shopping centre in the late 1980's erected a canopy over much of the space and blocked the link from the Precinct to the Cathedral. However, the removal of the canopy in 2010 and the refurbishment of Broadgate as a pedestrianised square has created an attractive and well-used public space.

The Phoenix Initiative was Coventry's Millennium Project and was conceived to form a pedestrian route between the Cathedral and the Coventry Transport Museum. The scheme saw the redevelopment of a multi-storey car park and a redundant cemetery into a modern mixed-use development of residential apartments, bars and restaurants set around a series of public spaces. The layout is derived from the sites history having been occupied by Coventry's first Cathedral in the medieval period. The excavated remains of the Cathedral are displayed in Priory Gardens while finds from the excavations are exhibited in the Visitors Centre. The remains of the medieval Priory Undercrofts are displayed in a glass fronted basement facing Priory Place.

The ruined St.Michael's was Coventry's second cathedral and was originally one of England's largest parish churches prior to it becoming a cathedral in 1918. It was built between 1230 and 1450 and the spire is the third tallest in England and a focal point of the city. The cathedral was burnt down in November 1940 and the new



St. Michael's Cathedral, which was designed by Sir Basil Spence was constructed between 1956-62. The juxtaposition of the old and new Cathedrals has great symbolic value and represents the Christian doctrines of sacrifice and resurrection. The visitor moves through the war shattered shell of the traditional medieval gothic building and into the crisp modern building and the optimism for the future that it represents.

Lady Herbert's Garden lies at the northern end of the Area between the Coventry Transport Museum and the ring road. The garden was created in the 1930's by the industrialist Alfred Herbert as a memorial to his wife and provides an attractive green oasis within the city centre. The garden is built around the best preserved length of Coventry's medieval wall with gate towers at either end; at the northern end is a group of Alms Houses with further residential properties along Chantury Lane. The Coventry Transport Museum was re-fronted as part of the Phoenix initiative and faces the Priory Place development across a semi-circular public square called Millennium Place.

Burges is one of the best preserved examples of a pre-war street in the city centre; some of the buildings are of medieval origin but are hidden by more modern facades. The name 'Burges' is derived from 'bridges' that cross the River Sherbourne that flows under the northern end of the street and briefly emerges behind it on Palmer Lane. This is one of only two locations where the river is visible inside the AAP boundary. At the end of the street is the Old Grammar School, originally the infirmary hall of the medieval Hospital of John the Baptist and is currently being refurbished to be an exhibition and educational space for the Coventry Transport Museum.

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for both the Hill Top and Lady Herbert's Garden and The Burges Conservation Areas were adopted in December 2014 and highlighted several issues that need addressing including;

- Although the conservation areas are high quality environments the approaches to them often are not and discourage people from using them.
- The neglected adjoining areas around Bishops Street and Hales Street.
- The route from the Precinct shopping area being blocked by Cathedral Lanes.
- The poor environment in Palmer Lane and views of the River Sherbourne.

### **Policy CC13**

- a. All development proposals within the Hill Top and Lady Herbert's Garden and The Burges Conservation Area will only be considered acceptable if they demonstrate that they preserve and enhance the historic environment of the area and are in adherence with the policies of the respective Conservation Area Management Plans.
- b. Development in areas adjoining the Conservation Areas should enhance their setting and improve linkages between them and other areas of the city centre.
- c. Mixed use development including active ground floor uses (A1, A2, A3, A4) with upper floor residential provision of at least 60 homes will be promoted on the land at the junction of Hales Street and Trinity Street. As part of any



development opportunities should be taken to enhance the setting of the exposed River Sherbourne at Palmer Lane.

**Figure 11: Cathedrals and Cultural Quarter – Heritage and Conservation Assets**

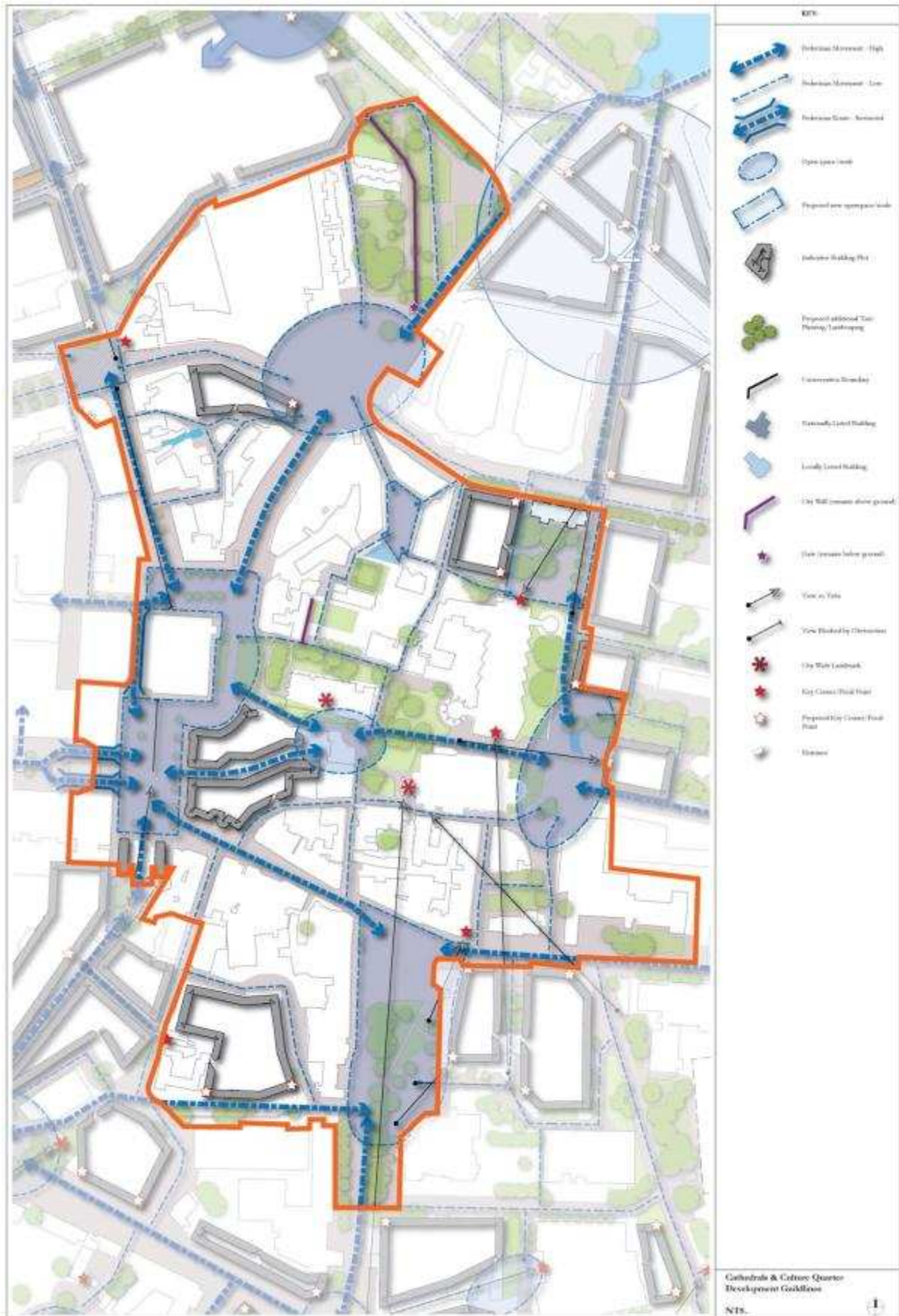
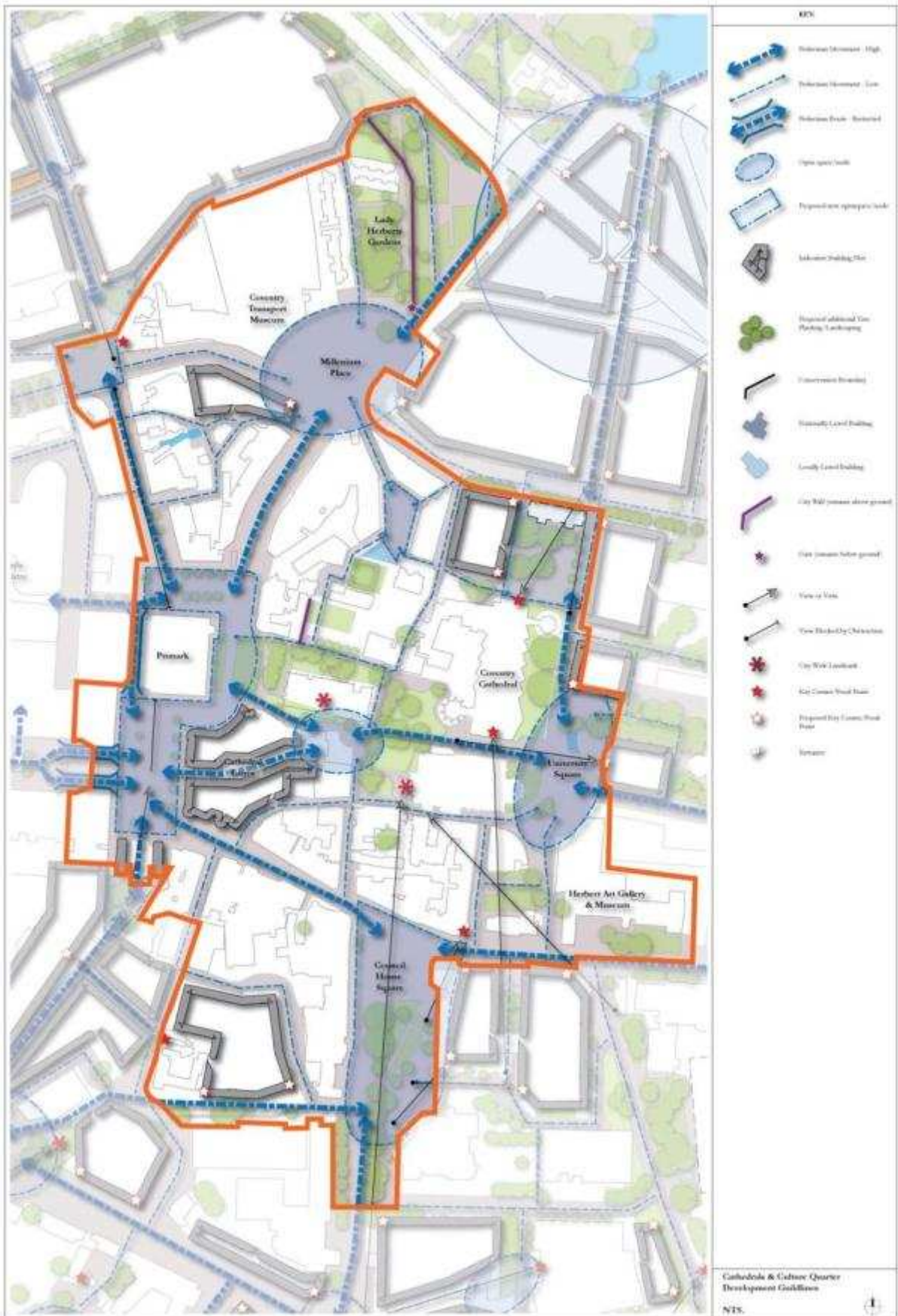


Figure 12: Cathedrals and Cultural Quarter –Development Guidelines





## The Civic Quarter

The civic quarter is characterised by office and commercial activity primarily targeted towards public sector operations. It is bounded by Earl Street and Bayley Lane to the north, Much Park Street to the east, the Ring Road and Manor House Drive to the South and Greyfriars Lane and Little Park Street to the west. It includes:

- a substantial area currently occupied by City Council offices (including the Council House, Civic Centres 1-4, Spire House and Christchurch House);
- the Crown Court, Magistrates Court and West Midlands Police Station complex;
- new office Head Quarters for Severn Trent Water at St Johns Street;
- surface car parks at Cheylesmore and Manor House Drive and the multi-storey car park at New Union Street;
- the Registry Office, shops, commercial offices and premises in New Union Street; and
- Job Centre services and Government offices at Cofa Court and Oakwood House.

Sitting largely to the east of the primary shopping area, this area has historically provided a basis for public buildings. Following the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war the vast majority of the area had to be cleared, removing bomb damaged buildings and other poor quality premises. With a view to retaining the character of public service operations however, the area was identified within the 1951 and 1957 Coventry Development Plans as a focal point for providing new office and operational buildings from which the Local Authority and other public bodies could serve the people of Coventry. As a result, the area is now dominated by post war buildings constructed in the 1950's and 60's, with a range of densities and design. There do however remain a small number of prominent historic buildings, which have provided both a basis and focal point for the civic activity that continues to take place in this area. These include the Grade II listed Council House and Grade I listed St Marys Hall to the north of the area, and the grade II\* Cheylesmore Manor House to the southwest corner, which forms part of the Registry Office provision. The Grade II\* Greyfriars Spire is also within this quarter and will need to be considered as part of any redevelopment of Christchurch/Spire House. Below ground are the Grade II cellarage below the site of Palace Yard and the Medieval Basement at site of the Old Star Inn. These remnants have now been incorporated into the Civic Centre buildings which front Earl Street and Council House Square.

In recent years the area has become tired and dated, reflective of its post war redevelopment. Although significant investment in the public realm and the development of the new office headquarters for Severn Trent Water have helped inject new life and vibrancy into the area, they have coincided with the changing face of how public functions are provided. This includes a rationalisation of service provision and building usage that will see the City Council release much of the land currently occupied by its civic area buildings as part of its move to Friargate, whilst the Police Station at Little Park Street will also be vacated during the plan period. As such, there is a clear opportunity for this area to regenerate itself again.

This in itself raises challenges and opportunities ensuring that any areas of redevelopment are appropriately integrated with those buildings which remain. The

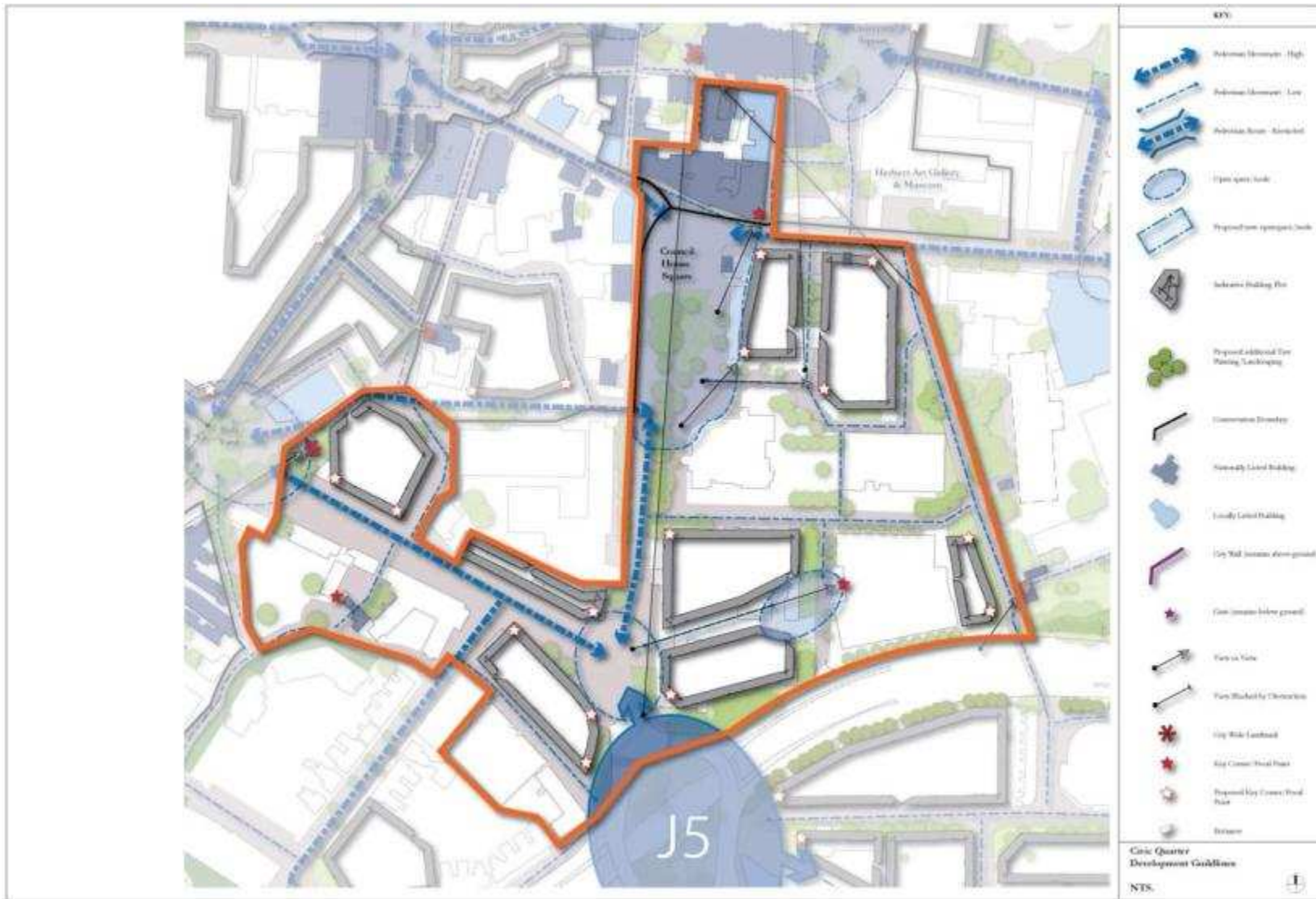
scale of these redevelopment opportunities, within what is a gateway part of the city centre, highlights the importance of comprehensive development proposals that manage the relationship with the distinctive areas that adjoin the civic quarter, in particular the historic cathedral area to the north and primary retail area to the west. Redevelopment opportunities will also be required to continue the public realm enhancements that have recently been completed, especially around Council House Square. Any redevelopment at Junction 5 of the Ring Road around the junction of New Union Street and Little Park Street will also need to ensure high quality frontages to the Ring Road to help provide a gateway feel to this part of the city centre as well as enhanced connectivity across to the Parkside Technology Park.

Within this context, real change is expected within the civic area and by the end of this plan period the area is likely to look very different to how it does now. As such, it may become more appropriate for redevelopment proposals that adjoin other character areas to reflect the characteristics of such areas through design and linkages. In terms of usage however the area should retain much of its public service orientation, building upon recent public realm developments to continue the improvements to the built environment.

#### **Policy CC14**

- a. New developments within the Civic Quarter must have regard to its historic characteristics of public service provision. As such, the following uses will be acceptable:
  - Social and community uses;
  - Leisure and recreation uses;
  - Educational uses, including new university provisions;
  - Office use;
  - Residential development; and
  - New multi-storey car parking.
- b. New developments must also respect and enhance the setting of the areas heritage assets, and where appropriate incorporate them into the design of new buildings and landscape.
- c. Other commercial activities (excluding A1 retail) will be supported where they support the provision of active frontages within a mixed use development.
- d. The provision of new retail development is unlikely to be supported within the Civic Quarter unless it can be demonstrably shown to form an integral part of a mixed use scheme.
- e. Opportunities to expand the programme of public realm improvements will be supported
- f. The existing surface level car park at Cheylesmore is encouraged to be redeveloped for a multi-storey provision and incorporated into the adjoining New Union Street multi storey car park. As part of this scheme the overall quality of the parking provision must be improved.

Figure 13: The Civic Quarter



## Far Gosford Street Quarter

The historic Far Gosford Street Quarter is located to the eastern side of Coventry city centre. The area comprises Far Gosford Street itself along with short sections of Binley Road, Bramble Street and Vecqueray Street. This area largely reflects the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area boundary and includes a rare visible section of the River Sherbourne.

The area is bounded to the north by the A4600 (Sky Blue Way), Gosford Green to the east and an area of Victorian/Edwardian terraced residential properties to the south. The western edge of the area adjoins Gosford Street which leads to the heart of the city centre and the large Sky Blue Way roundabout which links to the inner Ring Road.

To the eastern end of Far Gosford Street is a landscaped open area of land, on the site of the former St. Margaret's Chapel. A further area of open space within the area is the former All Saints' churchyard to the northern side of the street. A small surface car park is also located to the southern side of the road.

Far Gosford Street itself is a busy, linear commercial street. Buildings within the area vary significantly in date and architectural style with examples of structures from the 15th to 20th centuries. A wide variety of land uses exist along the road including shops, restaurants and hot food takeaways, a bank, nightclubs, public houses, a gymnasium, workshops, offices and residential uses including the sizeable 'Callice Court' purpose built student accommodation.

The area is designated as a conservation area in 1992 due to the concentration of listed and locally listed historic buildings. The area also has a high potential for archaeological remains, particularly the western end closest to the River Sherbourne

Far Gosford Street has a long established existence and was originally the section of Gosford Street that lay beyond the city wall. It was the main road out of Coventry to Leicester and would have been lined with houses as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The road includes a cluster of timber framed buildings dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Other notable elements of special interest in the area include:

- The existence of court houses and workshops to the rear of some properties, a once common feature of growth in the post-Medieval period;
- Three groups of distinctive weavers' 'topshops' which provide evidence of the former industrial use of the street for silk and ribbon weaving in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- Impressive offices of two former cycle works, which later became automobile manufacturers, and a number of workshops on a further site of automobile manufacturing, documents the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial uses of the area.
- The long thin plots along the street originated as medieval burgage plots.

In recent years Far Gosford Street has seen improvements to the built environment through the first phase of a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), aided by funding from various partners including the Heritage Lottery Fund and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The works to date have been successful and have

principally involved improvements to the public highway, refurbishment works to a number of historic buildings and the addition of new buildings. Phase 2 seeks to extend the heritage restoration work to the remainder of the street whilst also focusing on education of heritage understanding to ensure that the local business and residential community play a pivotal role in the longevity of Far Gosford Street's historic character.

A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan were published and adopted in November 2013 and provide a detailed analysis of the area, defining and recording Far Gosford Street's special architectural and historic interest. The Management Plan sets out suggested actions to maintain and enhance the special character of the area. These detailed documents seek to assist in the delivery of Phase 2 of the THI and also support the active management of the Conservation Area through the planning process. These should be strongly referenced when considering new development proposals within this area.

Far Gosford Street has been defined as a Local Centre in the previous adopted Development Plan for the city. It is proposed that the area remains a defined Local Centre and it should continue to provide for day-to-day convenience shopping, some service and catering uses and social and community uses. The area has however become dominated by hot food takeaways, thus detracting from the historically diverse character of the area and therefore further hot food takeaways will be strongly discouraged.

The location of the area on the edge of the main city centre and adjacent to Coventry University coupled with its historic character, means that it has developed a bohemian feel. It serves a citywide function for musical instruments, specialist cycles and specialist restaurants. Expanding this role, the area is considered to be suitable for the expansion of 'creative industries' including: arts and antiques; crafts; design and fashion; film, photography and video; music; radio and television; and visual and performing arts. The recent refurbishment of the Industrial Estate to the southern side of the street, to create the vibrant Far Go Village and other proposed development in the area have sought to create opportunities to accommodate these type of activities.

Whilst much work has gone into regenerating Far Gosford Street, there remains scope for further improvements. For example, inappropriate modern alterations and additions have a negative effect on individual structures and a cumulative effect on the character of the Conservation Area. As a result, a number of shop fronts are inappropriately designed with poor quality signage. It is envisaged that the Council's supporting guidance<sup>9</sup> will assist landowners in this regard and help prevent further undesirable additions to the area.

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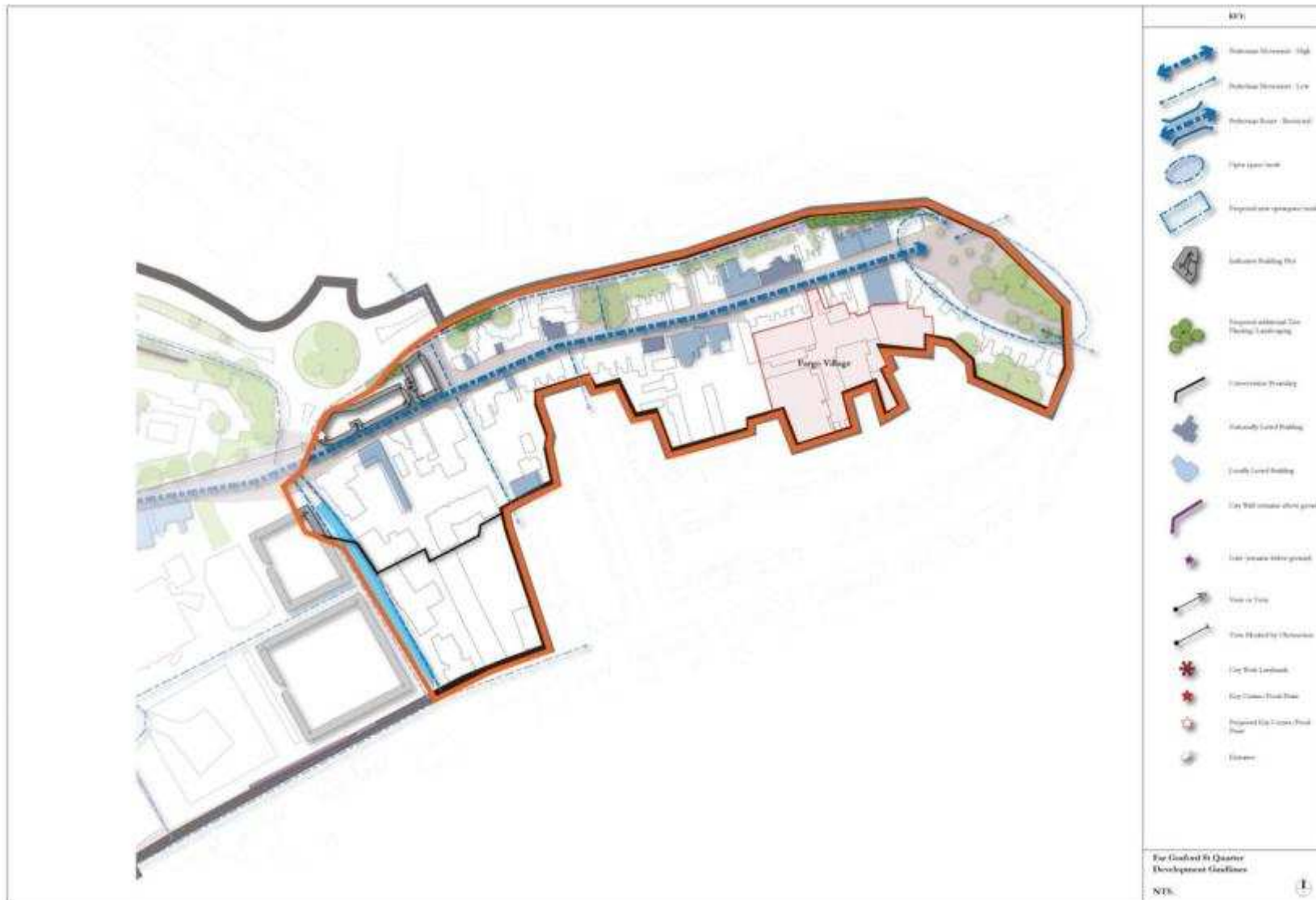
<sup>9</sup> This includes the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the recently adopted Design Guidance on shop fronts for Conservation areas and historic buildings.



## Policy CC15

- a. New developments, changes of use and conversions within the Far Gosford Street Quarter must respect and reflect the area's historic character. As such:
  - I. All development proposals, including applications for signage, within the area will only be considered acceptable if they demonstrate that they respect the historic environment of the area and are in keeping with the aims of the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, published 2013 (or any subsequently published updated documents).
  - II. All new build development within the area must be accompanied by an initial Archaeological Report identifying what archaeological work may be necessary ahead of commencement.
- b. Far Gosford Street will be regarded as a local centre meaning proposals for local shopping provisions will be supported. This will however exclude the provision of any further hot food takeaways (use class A5), which will not be permitted.
- c. To support the local centre designation a mix of creative industries, employment, residential and social and community uses will be supported within the Far Gosford Street Quarter.
- d. The use of upper floors of buildings for residential or office use will be supported and encouraged providing that appropriate noise insulation is included to ensure that the use is compatible with ground floor commercial activity.
- e. Opportunities to enhance the setting of the exposed River Sherbourne within this quarter through improvements to green infrastructure will be encouraged. This should include opportunities to improve wider green linkages beyond the city centre boundary

Figure 14: Far Gosford Street Quarter



## **Health and Education Quarter - Swanswell**

The Health and Education Quarter is situated directly to the north of the Ring Road with strategic links to junctions 1 and 2.

It extends towards Radford in the North-West and includes parts of Foleshill and Hillfields in the north. It includes a wide mix of uses and activities including:

- Older residential areas around Harnall Lane West and Howard Street;
- City College campus and educational buildings linked to the new Sidney Stringer Academy;
- Swanswell Pool; and
- The new City of Coventry Health Centre and additional health facilities.

Until the turn of the century this area had been characterised by the Coventry and Warwickshire hospital and a high density area of housing. In the last 15 years many of these buildings have been demolished, making way for new health and education buildings.

The new City of Coventry Health Centre, south of Howard Street, was completed in 2011. It was developed following the relocation of many aspects of the old Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital to the redeveloped University Hospital at Walsgrave. Alongside some remaining hospital buildings, its development has complimented the modern Mental Health Resources building on Stoney Stanton Road and helps to provide a unique suite of city centre based health facilities.

In 2009 the new home for Coventry City College was completed and saw the relocation of its two constituent parts from Tile Hill and the Butts. The campus also included a new multi storey car park, whilst further education focused buildings have been constructed fronting Primrose Hill Street, linked to the Sidney Stringer Academy, which sits adjacent to the Quarter.

In addition, construction of a new Islamic Academy (Eden School) is expected to commence in 2015 on a significant part of the former Coventry & Warwickshire Hospital site. The remaining parts of the former hospital site comprise the Grade II listed former Outpatients department and Nurses home. Adjacent to these is the listed former church of St Mark. All these buildings should be retained and re-used and converted to preserve their integrity. The Nurses Home will be promoted for conversion to high density residential redevelopment with the Outpatients department and church being suitable for various uses.

Part of the site falls within views of the spires from Stoney Stanton Road and White Street and any development scheme must respect these views whilst providing landmark buildings. There are a number of buildings situated north of Norton Street, including the former St Marks church Annex. Opportunities to convert and reuse these buildings are encouraged. Should these properties be cleared however the site should be reused as an extended area of green infrastructure.

The proposed residential development in and around the city centre could generate enough demand for up to a 2 Form Entry Primary School, which will need a site of around 1.75 ha. Given the character of this quarter, such provision would be most

suitably delivered within this Quarter. This could be provided on land that was previously part of the Coventry & Warwickshire Hospital site, or alternatively on land to the rear of Primrose Hill Street.

New developments will need to respond to the environmental issues posed by the proximity to the Ring Road and the main Stoney Stanton Road. It will also need to improve linkages to adjoining quarters, and explore opportunities to dilute the current barriers created by the Ring Road to the wider city centre. A significant opportunity to achieve this is situated adjacent to the quarter boundary and could involve the removal of the slip roads at Junction 2 of the Ring Road. Alongside the removal of the White Street car and coach park, this could offer significant opportunities for new development proposals, as well as an extension of Swanswell Pool and refurbishment of Volgograd Place, providing new green infrastructure. Such developments should be undertaken in conformity with policy CC8 and CC25. Developments would also need to be of a high quality design along what is still one of the major gateways into the city centre.

### **Policy CC16**

- a. New developments within the Health and Education Quarter must have regard to its established character; respond to the environmental issues associated with its proximity to the Ring Road and deliver high quality buildings and public space which reflect this areas position as a gateway to the inner city centre. As such, the following uses will be acceptable:
  - Education provisions;
  - Public Health provisions;
  - Residential development;
  - Social and community uses; and
  - Green and blue infrastructure
- b. All prospective developments should:
  - reflect and enhance the area's character through mixed-use developments;
  - ensure a mix of residential densities where appropriate;
  - improve and introduce high quality buildings;
  - Promote active travel and ensure it becomes easier and safer to move within the quarter and into adjoining parts of the city centre
  - Mitigate the negative impacts of the Ring Road;
- c. The conversions of existing buildings, where appropriate, and the development of small infill opportunities for new residential developments will be encouraged and supported in principle.
- d. The reuse of the listed buildings which remain as part of the former Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital site will be allocated for conversion to residential use, with the provision of up to 80 units.
- e. Remaining land at the former Hospital site or to the rear of Primrose Hill Street should be retained for the provision of a new 2 form entry primary

school to serve the needs generated from wider housing provision across the city centre.

- f. Swanswell Pool is of historic importance to the local area and the city centre as a whole. Opportunities to expand the park and enhance its quality will be supported. This should include opportunities to improve its linkages to the wider city centre.

Figure 15: Health and Education Quarter – Swanswell



## Leisure and Entertainment Quarter

Located to the western side of the city centre this area is characterised by its mix of historic buildings and leisure uses. The area abuts the Ring Road to the west and is bordered to the eastern side by Corporation Street and Queen Victoria Road with Upper Well Street to the north and Croft Road to the south. Other roads within the area include: Spon Street, Lower Holyhead Road, Hill Street, Bond Street, Ryley Street and Watch Close.

The area is a leisure and tourist destination providing a range of attractions. These include:

- buildings of historic interest;
- specialist retailing on Spon Street;
- café/restaurants and nightclubs on Spon Street;
- Coventry Watch Museum on Spon Street;
- the Belgrade Theatre and Belgrade Plaza eateries;
- Sky Dome leisure complex containing a 9-screen cinema, fitness centre, nightclubs, drinking establishments and the multi-purpose Sky Dome Arena; and
- the IKEA retail store.

The variety of uses means that the area not only provides day-time attractions but it is also one of Coventry's major evening/night time destinations.

Whilst comprising social, community, leisure and tourism uses, the area also includes a number of residential properties on Lower Holyhead Road and Hill Street, many of which are historic buildings within the Spon Street Conservation Area which was designated in August 1969.

Spon Street was the subject of a Townscape Scheme which saw the conservation of the street's surviving historic buildings and the re-location of other buildings from elsewhere in the city centre. The Scheme was born out of concern about the loss of historic buildings across Coventry in the 1950's and 1960's. The majority of the buildings along the street were conserved between 1967 and 1990 along with six additional buildings that were relocated from Upper Spon Street and Much Park Street.

The majority of buildings along Spon Street and Hill Street and several on Lower Holyhead Road are Grade II Listed while the Church of John the Baptist and Bablake School are Grade I Listed. There are also numerous Locally Listed buildings including the Town Wall Tavern and the cottages of the Watch Museum.

Spon Street is home to a number of specialist and independent retailers and the street will continue to be encouraged for such uses. The road has however suffered from the opening of a number of hot food takeaways that whilst complimenting the late-night uses within the quarter detract from the character of the area and result in closed property on the road during the daytime. Therefore, further hot food takeaways on Spon Street will not be supported in order to prevent further erosion of the character of this unique street.

Belgrade Plaza, to the north of the area, is a recent development that started in 2007. The development includes a public square incorporating a water feature that is bounded to its south-western side by the long established Belgrade Theatre and modernist extension and to the north by a multi-storey development comprising ground floor café/restaurants and upper floor residential apartments and floor space for offices and a casino. The development also includes a Premier Inn hotel and the multi-storey Belgrade Plaza car park. A further two plots remain as part of the wider complex and these will be priority development opportunities within this quarter.

The Grade II listed Belgrade Theatre was built in 1958 and was the first civic theatre to be built in Great Britain after the Second World War. The theatre is the only professional theatre in Coventry and has seating for 858 people within a two-tier main auditorium and capacity for up to 300 people in a flexible modern auditorium known as 'B2'.

The southern side of the area is characterised by its leisure offer. The Sky Dome is a £40 million multi-use development opened in 1999 comprising an Odeon Cinema, a gymnasium, nightclubs, drinking establishments and restaurants. The Sky Dome Arena, a 3,000 capacity multi-purpose arena, is a significant part of the leisure offer and is regularly used for ice skating and is the home of the nationally successful Coventry Blaze Ice Hockey team. Also to the south of the area and linking the area with the rest of the Primary Shopping Area is the seven floor IKEA retail store, which became the company's first UK city centre store when it opened in December 2007.

This part of the city centre is well served by car parking with Belgrade Plaza, Sky Dome and IKEA multi-storey car parks providing a total of 2648 spaces and therefore proposals for additional car parking within the area will not be supported.

It is envisaged that the area will maintain its current functions and act as an important cultural and leisure destination within the city centre both during the day and evening. Major change to the character of the area is not proposed over the plan period although significant development is promoted on remaining plots to complete Belgrade Plaza and support the re-development of buildings and sites on Watch Close, Hill Street and Spon Street.

### **Policy CC17**

- a. All development proposals within the Spon Street Conservation Area, including applications for signage, will only be considered acceptable if they demonstrate that they respect the historic environment of the area and are in keeping with the aims of the Spon Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, published 2015 (or any subsequently updated documents).
- b. Spon Street will be encouraged as a suitable and attractive location for specialist and independent retailers. In order to protect the availability of property for such use, further hot food takeaways (use class A5) will not be permitted within this quarter.



- c. Development for at least 95 homes on vacant land between Bond Street, Hill Street and Ryley Street will be supported subject to:
- The development providing an active frontage at ground floor to Belgrade Plaza. To provide this activity A1-A4 uses will be considered appropriate
  - High quality design that both relates well to the modern Belgrade Plaza development whilst ensuring the setting of adjacent listed buildings and Spon Street Conservation Area is preserved
  - Satisfactory noise mitigation measures, where required.
- d. Proposals for a hotel or residential use on the vacant site bounded by Ringway Hill Cross, Upper Well Street and Ryley Street will be supported and encouraged. The development will be expected to be high density and well-designed reflecting its prominent position adjacent to the Ring Road and its location adjacent to the sizeable Belgrade Plaza development. Active frontages, where appropriate, will be encouraged within use classes A1-A4
- e. Redevelopment proposals for land on Watch Close abutting Ringway Rudge for residential accommodation will be considered acceptable subject to high quality design and noise and air quality mitigation.
- f. The re-development or conversion of the property known as Ringway House on Hill Street will be encouraged for residential use of up to 30 units subject to high quality design that respects the amenities of neighbouring residential properties.
- g. Opportunities to improve the linkages between:
- Spon Street and the Primary Shopping Area;
  - Belgrade Plaza and the Primary Shopping Area; and
  - Belgrade Plaza with the Northern Regeneration Area
  - Improvements to the Ring Road underpass and Spon End.
- will be promoted and encouraged. Where appropriate these improved linkages should be incorporated into, or supported by, new development proposals



## Primary Shopping Quarter

The Primary Shopping Quarter is also reflective of the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) as required by National Guidance<sup>10</sup>. The definition of a PSA is necessary in order to protect the vitality and viability of the city centre's retail offer and to focus retail uses and investment into the most appropriate and suitable locations. Coventry is currently the 13<sup>th</sup> largest city in the UK, but ranks 58<sup>th</sup> in its retailing offer according to spend. Although the city centre has been impacted by the increase in on-line and home shopping, as well as competition from other established centres within Coventry it remains the city's main shopping destination.

It lies at the heart of the city centre and has become established around the precinct cross which sat at the heart of the original Gibson Plan. The PSA contains some 243 Class A1 retail units and serves a wide catchment area, with notable stores such as IKEA, Debenhams, Marks and Spencer's and Next. The West Orchards Shopping Centre offers indoor provisions on a more modern format, whilst the listed circular market offers a unique retail experience. The Shopping and Centres Study recommends strengthening the retail role of the city centre and building upon its strong offer of non-retail services. Recent city centre proposals have discussed the opportunity of expanding the retail core of the city centre, however within a changing retail climate, this AAP is now focusing more on a tighter retail area and will promote significant improvements in both the quality and quantity of retail floor space.

Within this context the PSA will be the principal focus and default location for all new shopping developments including the redevelopment, refurbishment, extension or conversion of buildings for shopping and supporting uses.

The Shopping and Centres Study recommends that the city centre should be the focal point for new retail provision across Coventry and should accommodate at least 37,600sq.m of gross new floor space up to 2031. This should include a range of retail needs (A1-A5) and be phased in accordance with Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Retail Needs in Coventry City Centre (2014 - 2031)**

	2014-2021	2021-2031	Total
Total Retail Floor space sq.m (gross)*	18,139	19,489	37,628

\* Opportunities to occupy retained vacant floor space may reduce this level of need but will need to be considered in the context of demolished floor space as part of redevelopment proposals

NB: Convenience retail floor space is excluded from this table and should be considered separately

Source: Shopping and Centres Study (NLP – 2014)

Having regard to the retail needs of the city centre, considerable change is anticipated within the Primary Shopping Area to enhance the retail offer and provide retailing of a standard to reflect the size of the city. The proposals for the regeneration of the retail element of the city centre comprise both redesign of existing floor space and substantial amounts of new floor space. The Council has decided to phase the regeneration programme of the primary shopping area into two elements, broadly split North/South along the Broadgate/Upper Precinct/Lower Precinct axis.

<sup>10</sup> As set out in Para 23 of the National Planning Policy Framework

Planning permission was granted in May 2012 for a comprehensive redevelopment of the Southern end of the Primary Shopping Area including demolition and alteration of buildings and construction of an anchor retail store and units accommodating shops (use class A1), financial and professional services (A2), cafes/restaurants (A3), public houses (A4) and hot food takeaways (A5), hotel (C1), residential (C3), leisure uses (D2), new multi-storey car park and public realm enhancements. The development proposes a maximum of 57,521 m<sup>2</sup> A1-A5 floor space. Once the demolition of existing floor space is considered, this scheme will contribute at least 10,000sq.m of the floor space requirement identified in Table 5 for the period to 2021. As such, this scheme is considered a priority in the delivery of this AAP.

Subsequent developments are then expected around the northern half of the PSA, with further redevelopment opportunities helping to improve connectivity to Corporation Street, Spon Street and Belgrade Plaza. Although no formal proposals have been made at this stage, development in this area may include the expansion of the West Orchards Shopping Centre.

### **Policy CC18: The Primary Shopping Area**

- a. The Primary Shopping Area is identified by the red line in Figure 17 and again in appendix 1. This will be the principal focus and default location for all new shopping developments including redevelopment, refurbishment, extension or conversion of buildings for shopping uses. This area is expected to accommodate at least 37,600sq.m of gross new floor space up to 2031, covering a range of retail needs (A1-A5). This will be phased in accordance with Table 5 in the supporting text.
- b. Opportunities to provide a new purpose built convenience food offer within or adjacent to the PSA will also be encouraged and will contribute additional floor space over and above the figure in Table 5.
- c. Other proposals that would introduce new town centre uses within the PSA will be encouraged and supported where they do not undermine or conflict with this or any other policy within this AAP.
- d. Opportunities for new residential provision above new or existing ground floor town centre uses will be supported with a view to supporting the vitality and viability of the city centre as a whole. This will be subject to appropriate design and appropriate mitigation of environmental concerns outlined in policy CC10.
- e. Opportunities to re-establish the original design concept of the precinct cross will be encouraged. This could include the removal the central fountain as well as the external escalators and the ramp within Upper Precinct leading to West Orchards, which should be replaced with attractive and less intrusive structure(s).
- f. The removal of the building, at ground level below Broadgate House, between Broadgate and Hertford Street, currently occupied by the Nationwide Building Society will be supported. The removal of this structure will improve linkages

between Broadgate and Hertford Street and thus enhance and encourage pedestrian movement through the city centre.

### **Policy CC19: Primary Shopping Area regeneration – South**

The regeneration of the Southern part of the Primary Shopping Area, for predominantly comparison shopping will be promoted, encouraged and supported. This should be delivered in accordance with a Masterplan which supports the approved planning permission (outlined above) or replacement document. This will provide for:

- A range of shop sizes that reflect market requirements;
- High quality entrances from the Precinct, Queen Victoria Road and Bull Yard;
- The redevelopment of the Barracks car park and the relocation of the parking spaces as part of a new multi storey car park incorporated within the development;
- The relocation of the listed mural situated in Bull Yard to a new and prominent site situated within the new development; and
- The retention of the listed market building, with improvements made to its setting and connectivity to Queen Victoria Road and Market Way
- Associated residential provision of at least 40 homes as part of upper floors above retail uses.
- Complimentary leisure, office and hotel uses as part of upper floors above retail uses.

### **Policy CC20: Primary Shopping Area regeneration – North**

The regeneration of the northern part of the Primary Shopping Area, focused around Smithford Way, will be promoted and encouraged for predominantly comparison shopping. This will provide for:

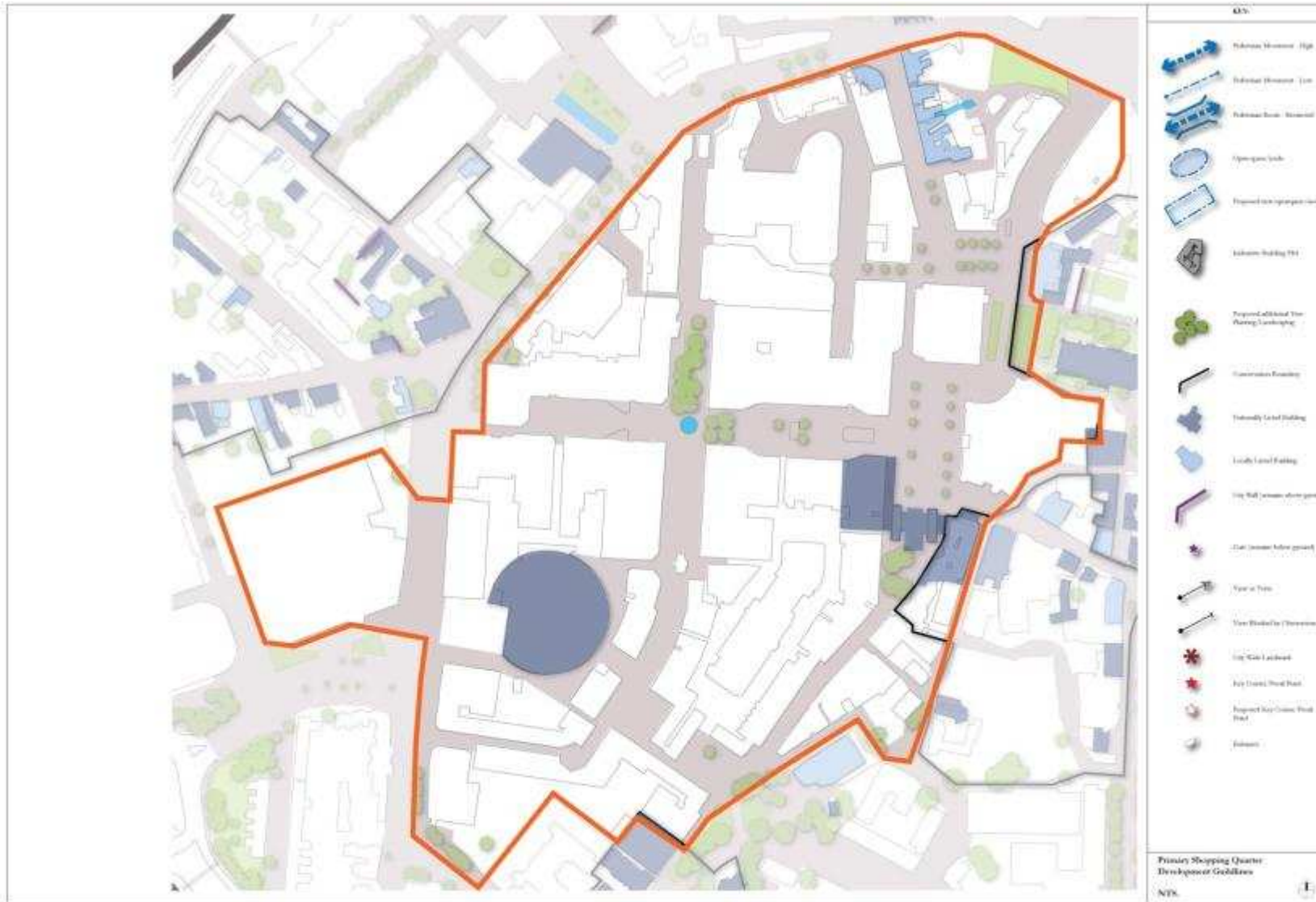
- A range of shop sizes that reflect market requirements;
- High quality entrances at Smithford Way and Corporation Street;
- Enhanced linkages to Belgrade Plaza and Spon Street.
- Associated residential, leisure, office and hotel uses on upper floors above retail uses.

### **Policy CC21: Cathedral Lanes**

Cathedral Lanes will be promoted for a change of use to café and restaurant uses, with such uses encouraged to spill out onto Broadgate Square to help reflect the new public realm. Opportunities should also be taken to enhance the façade of the building and create a new link through the building in order to improve the connectivity from Broadgate/Upper Precinct to Coventry Cathedral and the Hill Top Conservation Area.



Figure 17: Primary Shopping Quarter – Heritage Assets





## Primary and Secondary Frontages

As required by the NPPF, primary and secondary frontages are defined within the PSA. Primary frontages are focused around the Precinct Area and include:

- Upper Precinct (lower levels);
- Lower Precinct (at both levels);
- West Orchards and Orchard Link (both levels);
- Smithford Way;
- Market Way; and
- Broadgate.

Within the PSA, **Primary Frontages** will be designated and will contain a majority of Class A1 retail use but within which, financial and professional services (class A2), café and restaurant uses (class A3), drinking establishments (class A4), non-residential institutions (class D1) and assembly and leisure (class D2) uses will be permitted providing they do not undermine the overall retail function of the primary frontage. Although a clear majority of A1 retail uses should remain within all Primary Frontages at all times, an allowance for some non-A1 retail uses will be acceptable to help support the evening economy and encourage greater activity around the clock. The extent of non-A1 uses will depend on the market circumstances affecting primary retail areas and should have regard to vacancy rates, footfall patterns and retail needs.

**Secondary frontages** comprise all land within the primary shopping area that falls outside of the primary frontages, but within the PSA including:

- Cathedral Lanes;
- Burges;
- Trinity Street;
- Ironmonger Row;
- parts of Hales Street;
- Hertford Street;
- parts of Corporation Street;
- Bull Yard and Shelton Square and
- the IKEA building, Croft Road

Such frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

### Policy CC22: Primary and Secondary Frontages

- a. Primary Frontages, shown in appendix 1, are expected to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drink, clothing and household goods. A clear majority of A1 retail uses should remain within all Primary Frontages at all times. Where proposals would result in less than 60% of primary frontages being classed as A1 retail then the applicant will be expected to demonstrate exceptional circumstances to justify a change of use. Under no circumstances though will A1 retail be allowed to fall below



51% of primary frontages. Class A5 and sui-generis uses will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

- b. Secondary frontages are defined as any frontage situated within the PSA that is not identified as a Primary Frontage in appendix 1. Within such frontages a mix of Class A uses will be permitted as well as D1, D2 and sui generis uses.

## Technology Park Quarter - Parkside

The Parkside Technology Park was established in 1998 to the south of the city's inner ring road (between Junctions 4 and 5) with primary accesses off Mile Lane and London Road. The technology park is primarily linked to Coventry University and has been a success to date. It offers flexible modern office accommodation within a landscaped setting which supports start-up and innovation-led knowledge-based industries and it is currently home to around 70 businesses.

The Technology Park includes:

- the Coventry University Techno Centre, which incorporates the Innovation and Conference Centres;
- the Enterprise Centre, which represents a 'grow-on' business centre for companies who have expanded beyond the Innovation Centre;
- the Design Hub, which focuses on design implementation;
- the Innovation Village.
- The Serious Games Institute (SGI);
- Institute for Creative Enterprises (ICE);
- Health Design and Technologies Institute (HDTI); and
- the ACT-UK building.

Also within the Technology Park Quarter are a variety of uses including an Ibis hotel; a modern church with conference facilities known as 'The Welcome Centre', a residential terrace on Short Street; and a modern student accommodation block situated off Paradise Street. In addition to these uses are a range of buildings and vacant land, which offer prime opportunities for new developments, the majority of which are focused within the corridor that sits between Parkside and Deasy Road and The Ring Road St Johns and London Road. This area has been identified as the London Road Gateway and represents a prime opportunity to improve the profile of this area relative to the Ring Road as well as facilitating the growth of hi-tech industry within the city centre.

As such, policies within this area will seek to encourage and support the expansion of the Technology Park and promote the redevelopment of low level, poor quality and poorly designed buildings abutting the boundary of the site with the Ring Road for uses including residential, offices and technology park expansion within modern, well designed buildings.

As part of the 'Gateway' approach it will also be imperative to improve the linkages and connectivity across the Ring Road. Specific schemes will be targeted around Ring Road junctions 4 and 5, whilst improvements to the subway linking Short Street with Much Park Street will also be explored. Furthermore, there are clear opportunities to link this quarter with the railway station and Friargate proposals. As such, opportunities to enhance pedestrian routes across Quinton Road and Mile Lane linked to Park Road will be promoted.

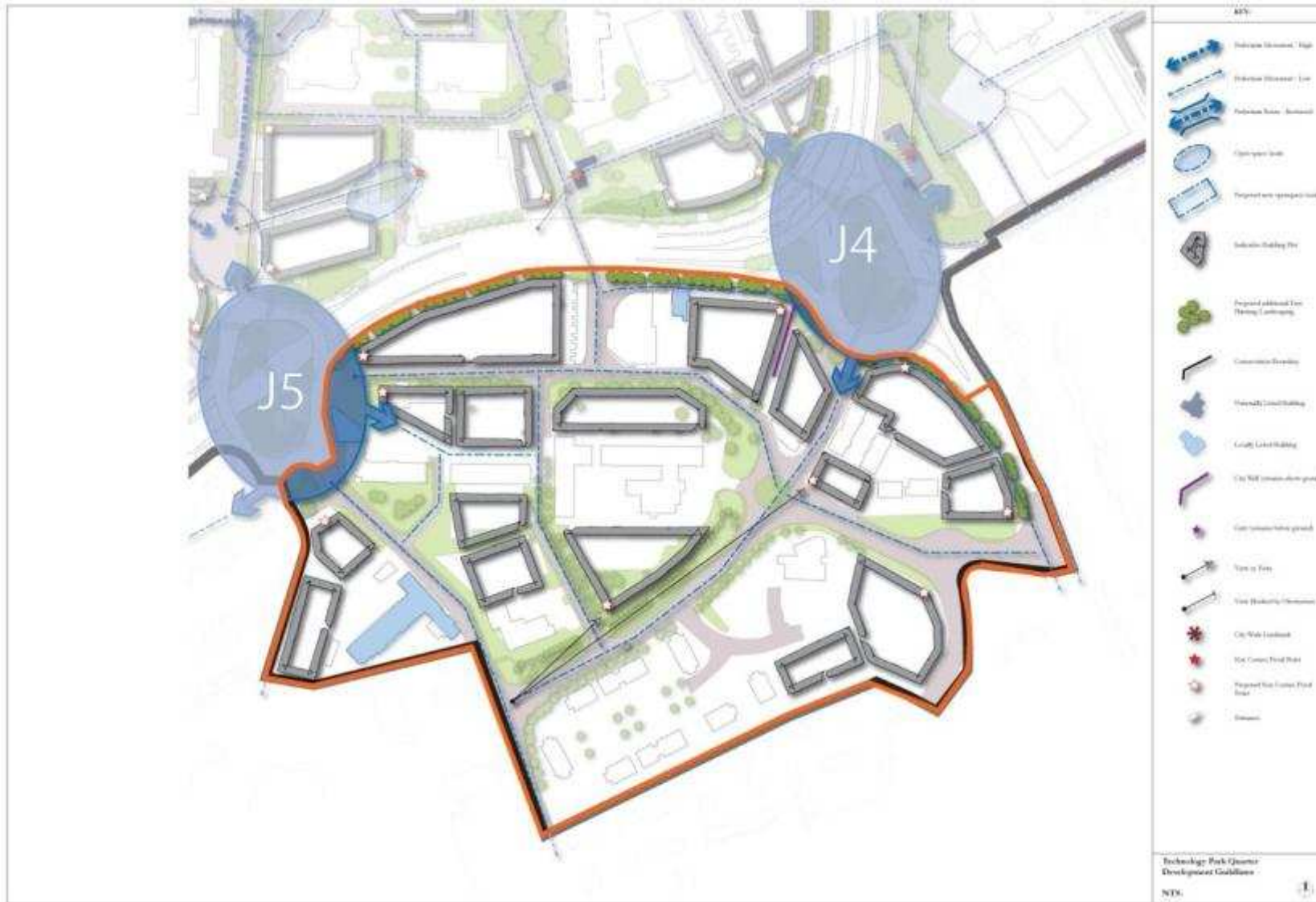
Car parking for the Technology Park and surrounding buildings is all at surface level with some additional on-street car parking on Parkside, Short Street and Paradise Place. As this area grows and redevelops existing parking provision is unlikely to be sufficient to meet demand. As such, opportunities to deck existing car parks will be

supported subject to design, whilst opportunities for purpose built multi-story provision should also be explored.

### **Policy CC23**

- a. Development proposals within the Parkside area, should support the hi-tech character that has been developed within this part of the city centre. As such, the following uses will be acceptable:
  - Hi-Tech industry use;
  - Research and Development activity;
  - Other Education facilities;
  - Residential provisions;
  - Leisure and recreation uses;
  - Social and community uses;
  - Office use;
  - New multi-storey car parking;
- b. The area of land situated north of Parkside and Deasy Road, South of Ring Road St Johns and West of London Road will be allocated as the London Road Gateway. This area must create a high quality frontage to the Ring Road and London Road, including high quality landscaping and more efficient use of land. Where possible, a comprehensive redevelopment of this land is desired.
- c. Developments within the London Road Gateway as well as the vacant sites at:
  - land East of Cheetah Road;
  - land situated between Swift Road and Mile Lane; and
  - The site of the former Formula One hotelshould make provision for at least 285 new homes and 27,000sq.m of gross floor space linked to the Technology Park.
- d. Opportunities to improve the linkages and connectivity across the Ring Road, especially at junctions 4 and 5 of the Ring Road and the subway linking Short Street with Much Park Street will be promoted. Improvement to these links should also include connectivity to the wider green infrastructure assets along London Road, including the cemetery and Charterhouse.
- e. The provision of a well-designed multi-story car park will be supported within a suitable location within the Parkside area subject to appropriate design and access.

Figure 19: Technology Park Quarter – Parkside



## University and Enterprise Quarter

The University and Enterprise Quarter is currently dominated by the presence of Coventry University. Under various guises Coventry University dates back to 1843 when it was the Coventry College of Design and therefore has a long and established history within Coventry city centre. In 1970 it became known as Lanchester Polytechnic following amalgamation with two Lanchester Colleges of Technology and Rugby College of Engineering Technology. After being renamed Coventry Polytechnic in 1987 the institution became Coventry University from 1992.

The university is the second largest employer within the city centre and fourth in the city as a whole and therefore is a key influence on the city's economy. The main Coventry University campus incorporates educational buildings on Cox Street, Gosford Street, Cope Street and Jordan Well together with the uniquely designed Lanchester library south of Gosford Street and student halls of residence, most notably around Priory Street.

In recent years the university has grown considerably, not only in terms of employees and students but also in profile, reputation and research output. This is encapsulated by the University being voted Modern University of the year for 2014 and 2015. The University have developed a Masterplan (March 2008) outlining future development plans of their campus, although this has no formal planning status. It is also under review at the present time and there is an ambition to consider an updated masterplan through more of a formal planning process.

The number of full time students now exceeds 15,000 and this growth has resulted in physical expansion of the University and new developments. Notable examples include:

- the £55 million 15,000m<sup>2</sup> Computing and Engineering Building opened in September 2012;
- the £24 million Student Hub building opened in September 2011; and
- a £5.6 million, 457 space multi-storey car park opened for staff and visitors in 2010.

Development of a new Science faculty building providing over 11,000m<sup>2</sup> of floor space has recently commenced signifying further intentions by the University to enhance their offer.

The Coventry Ring Road has often been perceived as a barrier to the growth of the city centre; however the University has shown in recent years how new developments can break through this perceived barrier. The expansion of the university campus has managed to successfully expand eastwards along Gosford Street and Gulson Road with the multi-storey car park and Computing and Engineering Building, and south as part of the Technology Park. Further expansion is planned with the second phase of the Computer and Engineering Building envisaged on a temporary student car park accessed from Gulson Road. A key requirement of this further expansion however will be to ensure it interacts with the wider city centre, to help integrate the university campus and its buildings in a clearer and more transparent way with other parts of the city.

The growth of the University has acted as a catalyst for significant associated development, most notably student accommodation, although much of this has been outside of the university and enterprise quarter. The one established student accommodation block within this quarter is Priory Halls at Priory Street. As part of the University's wider development ambitions, there are opportunities to redevelop this site as well as the Foundation Campus at Priory Street and the James Starley building at Cox Street. Both areas offer significant opportunities to enhance the built environment. With regards the possible removal of Priory Halls in particular this offers a prime opportunity to enhance the setting of the city's principal Cathedral and improve the linkages to Poole Meadow and Swanswell Pool. As a peripheral part of the University campus this site may lend itself to alternative forms of development such as high quality market housing, which could support these improvements and help promote post-education student retention within the city centre.

Within the University and Enterprise area are a number of heritage assets, including:

- the remains of the Whitefriars Monastery on London Road, a Grade I listed property which dates from 1342.
- Other listed buildings include the Grade II\* 'Medieval stonehouse', a sandstone building adjacent to the Sir John Laing Building and the Grade II\* Whitefriars Gate fronting Much Park Street.

In recent years both issues and opportunities have presented themselves in relation to these assets and how they can be incorporated into the University expansion to ensure their longevity and enhanced setting. Future expansion of the University campus must seek to respect the city's heritage assets and wherever possible seek to accommodate and link them to new developments to ensure they have a protected and sustainable future. Opportunities should again be taken to ensure such assets remain accessible to the wider Coventry public.

As part of the continued expansion of the Coventry University campus opportunities must also be taken to improve pedestrian movement and linkages between buildings and public areas. Opportunities have already been identified around Gosford Street as part of the Public Realm Improvement Programme, as well as the introduction of new green infrastructure along Cox Street.

University car parking is also becoming an increasing issue with a number of temporary parking provisions at Gulson Road and Lower Ford Street. These represent a far from ideal solution to long term parking requirements and represent an inefficient use of city centre land. As such, opportunities for new multi-story car parking, either within this area or in close proximity should be explored to support the University's growth agenda.

## **Policy CC24**

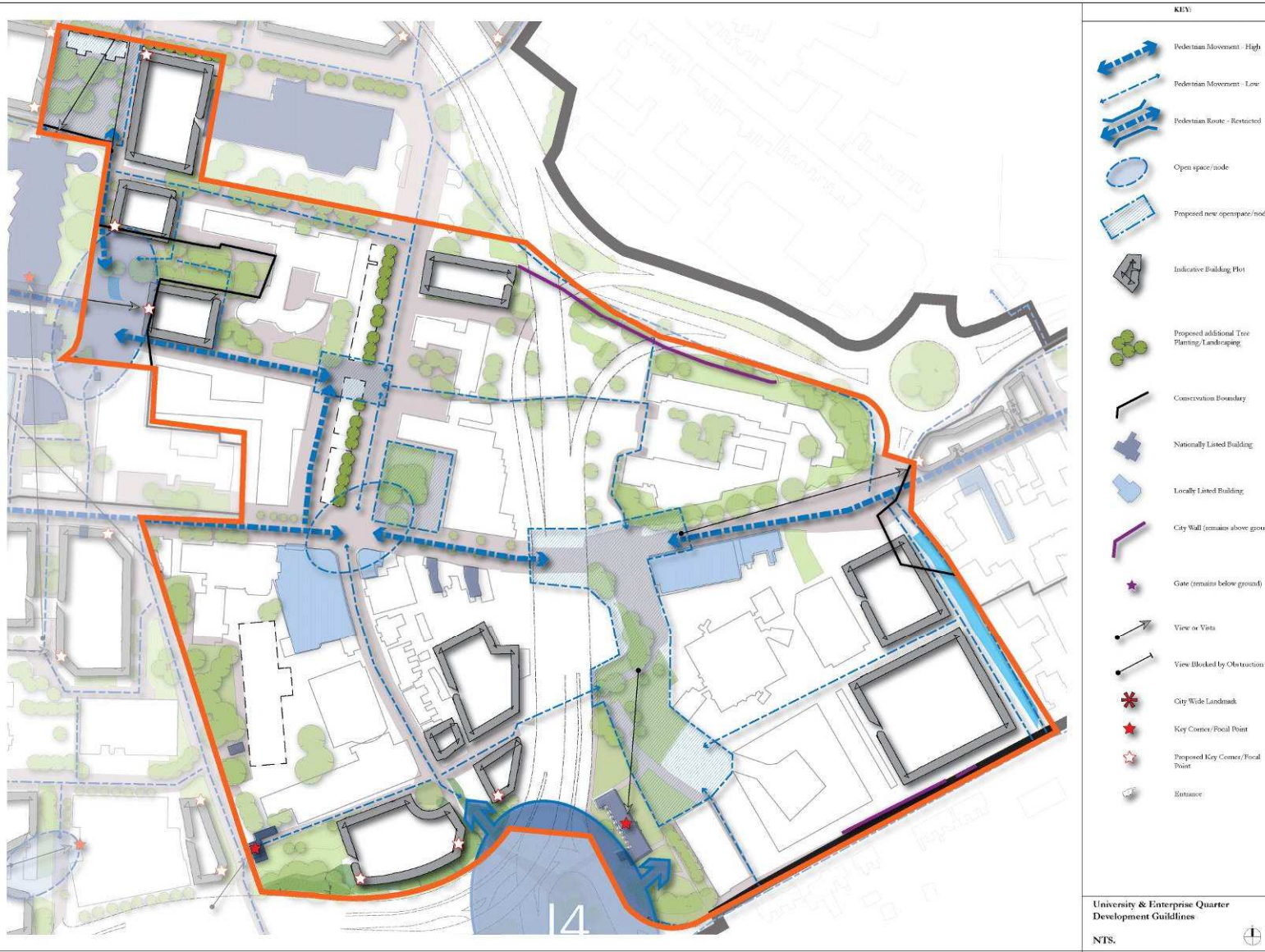
- a. Within the University and Enterprise quarter, proposals for redevelopment, refurbishment, extension or conversion of buildings for the following uses will be supported subject to high quality building and landscape design:
  - I. Education and faculty buildings;
  - II. University administrative facilities;
  - III. Residential provision including student accommodation; and

IV. Multi-story car parks (subject to evidence of need).

- b. Land to the east of The Computer and Engineering Building on Gulson Road will be allocated for the development of a Phase II Computer and Engineering Building or an alternative faculty building(s). A large innovatively designed building will be supported on the site.
- c. The demolition of the Priory Halls and Foundation Campus building at Priory Street will be supported with new high quality residential buildings being introduced to support the setting of the Cathedrals and improving pedestrian routes and vistas along Priory Street. New development should make provision for at least 85 new homes.
- d. Proposals to bring the Grade I listed Whitefriars Monastery into regular use will be strongly supported subject to that use not having a detrimental impact upon the architectural and historic interest of the building.
- e. Any redevelopment proposals for the Sir John Laing building will be supported only if they include measures to enhance the setting of the adjacent Grade II\* listed 'Medieval stonehouse' sandstone building.
- f. Any redevelopment proposals for the James Starley building will be supported subject to high quality design and measures to significantly improve the pedestrian environment along the western side of Cox Street adjacent to the site.
- g. University Square shall remain as an attractive public square at the interface of Coventry Cathedral, the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum and Coventry University.
- h. Within this area new development, where applicable, shall seek to improve and enhance the following pedestrian routes:
  - Jordan Well/Gosford Street to Far Gosford Street;
  - Gosford Street and Gulson Road; and
  - Cox Street between the junction with Fairfax Street and junction with Jordan Well



**Figure 20: University and Enterprise Quarter**





## **Regeneration Areas**

The following chapter discusses three specific areas of the city centre which do not have a specific or unique identity. The first two of these areas offer a range of redevelopment opportunities, whilst the other represents an area where limited change is envisaged due to its well established residential and commercial form. The three areas are:

- The Bishop Street Regeneration Area, with Bishop Street being the main route linking the Primary Shopping Area and Canal Basin.
- The Fairfax Street Regeneration Area, with Fairfax Street being the main route through the area, linking the University and Enterprise Quarter with the Coventry Transport Museum
- The Warwick Row Area, with Warwick Row being the main route linking the city centre with the Business Quarter (Friargate)

### **The Bishop Street Regeneration Area**

The Bishop Street Regeneration Area is located in between Junctions 1 and 9 of the Ring Road. The area forms a prominent gateway to the city centre from the busy Junction 1 of the Ring Road and the arterial road, B4113 Foleshill Road.

The site includes Coventry Canal Basin, the former Royal Mail sorting office on Bishop Street, the former Coventry Telegraph offices, former AXA tower blocks and the Wickes retail store. The area covers properties on Lamb Street, Chapel Street, Well Street, Silver Street, Bishop Street and Tower Street. Many of the buildings within the area are considered to be of poor design quality and appearance (e.g. the nightclub on Tower Street; the former sorting office) and low rise (e.g. the majority of buildings on Lamb Street) and represent ineffective use of the land whilst other buildings have been vacated and remain empty.

Much of the area has been identified previously as requiring regeneration with the Coventry Development Plan (2001) identifying the parts of this area within the Phoenix Initiative (Millennium Project) strategic regeneration area, one of three such areas within Coventry. Whilst some regeneration of this defined area has been completed, including Priory Place and Millennium Place, the land within the Northern Regeneration Area has lacked any notable investment. Moreover, recent years have seen three of the major employers within the area vacate their large premises for alternative locations. The Royal Mail sorting office closed in November 2010 as the business sought to provide hubs around the City, in July 2012 the Coventry Telegraph vacated their large site for smaller offices at the Canal Basin and in 2012 the former AXA office tower blocks were closed.

Although the Coventry Canal Basin received investment in the late 1980s/early 1990s, the area has not been as successful as desired partly owing to the physical barrier of the Ring Road with a dated pedestrian bridge discouraging movement between the Canal Basin and nearby residential areas and the remainder of the city centre.

Recent years have seen planning applications for major redevelopment in the area, including:

- A mixed use office and residential development at the junction of Well Street and Bishop Street, including an expansion of the multi storey car park.
- Retail led development of the former Royal Mail sorting office and adjoining buildings at Bishop Street. The application also involved the closing of much of Tower Street and the removal of the footbridge over the Ring Road and creation of an at-grade crossing.
- A significant redevelopment of the former Coventry Telegraph offices and neighbouring land with demolition of existing buildings and erection of a mixed use development with a landmark building comprising a mix of retail floor space, a large hotel, student accommodation, market housing and office provision.
- The conversion of the former AXA office buildings to student accommodation, which is expected to be completed in 2015.
- The conversion of multiple properties Corporation Street to student accommodation.

Comprehensive redevelopment within this area will be required to improve the appearance of the area and make it function as part of the city centre. Redevelopment of the area will provide significant opportunities for residential and office development and other town centre uses. A significant level of residential development can be accommodated within this area to assist in delivering the city's housing needs and such a use will support other town centre uses.

Better integration of the Canal Basin into the city centre is a priority of this AAP. Opportunities to remove the existing Ring Road pedestrian bridge and replace it with a pedestrian crossing across the Ring Road will be promoted. Improved relationships between new developments and those existing buildings which are to be retained adjacent to the regeneration area, most notably the Coventry Transport Museum, the listed former Old Grammar School and the Belgrade Plaza, will be promoted.

There are also a number of key routes within this area that should be established as part of wider development proposals. As already highlighted the route to the canal Basin, along Bishop Street is of primary importance. In addition the re-establishment of the historic route around Silver Street and Lamb Street / Chapel Street / Well Street will also be protected. Redevelopment around this latter area must also enhance the setting of the historic city wall. The area is located between two conservation areas and any re-development will need to relate well to both and ensure that their setting is enhanced.

### **Fairfax Street Regeneration Area**

The Fairfax Street Regeneration Area is located between Junctions 2 and 3 of the Ring Road. This is a key transitional area linking the University and Enterprise and the Cathedrals and Cultural Quarter with the Health and Education Quarter to the north. The regeneration area covers Fairfax Street, Cox Street and White Street and contains several surface level car parks some of which have potential for future development.

Key attractors within this area include Pool Meadow bus station, Gala Bingo and the Sports Centre. Its transitional nature means the area contains several buildings

which can be considered in conjunction with adjoining quarters. Due to its layout, the Britannia Hotel sits within both the Cathedrals and Cultural Quarter and the Fairfax Street Regeneration Area, whilst the Priory Hall student accommodation is located within the University and Enterprise quarter, but adjacent to this regeneration area. These two buildings in particular have a significant influence over this regeneration area especially in terms of their routes, linkages and setting of listed buildings.

In this context, there are substantial opportunities in this area to improve views and sight lines to and from the cathedral. Of greatest interest here is Priory Street, which despite sitting within the Cathedrals and Cultural quarter is a key route into this regeneration area. However, there are perceived barriers to movement along Priory Street in the form of Priory Halls university accommodation, which bridges the northern end of Priory Street and acts as a visual barrier, impacting on sight lines to and from the cathedral. Fairfax Street is also one of the main routes through the site and views along the route should be enhanced with potential for greening where appropriate. The elevated section of the Ring Road also represents a significant barrier within this area, and there are opportunities to reduce its scale, especially around Junction 2, with the removal of the slip roads and development of the White Street car and coach park. This section of the Ring Road is currently a gateway view of many visitors to Coventry who arrive on national coach services. Such development would make significant contributions to the visual enhancement of this area.

There is future opportunity for development on Cox Street car park, with its future likely to be linked to that of the Sports Centre building. Proposals to enhance this particular area, will need to support improved routes and linkages and where possible make provisions for new green infrastructure, which will contribute towards the green spine running through the city centre.

Development opportunities within this area must also have regard to opportunities for new blue infrastructure in accordance with policy CC8.

### **Policy CC25:**

- a. Proposals for comprehensive redevelopment within the Bishop Street and Fairfax Street regeneration areas for a mix of uses including a significant proportion of residential development will be encouraged and supported.
- b. Both areas will be primarily promoted for new residential development in a range of types and tenures although a range of other uses will be acceptable subject to conformity with other parts of this AAP. These include:
  - Office;
  - Retail and commercial;
  - Social, community and leisure uses;
  - Education uses (including those linked to the university);
  - Multi storey car parking; and
  - Green and blue infrastructure

- c. Proposals for the redevelopment and reconfiguration of existing parking facilities at Cox Street and Bishop Street will be supported, subject to forming part of a comprehensive scheme that does not reduce the overall level of city centre parking, unless otherwise shown to have an acceptable impact on the city centre as a whole.
- d. The removal of the slip roads around Junction 2 of the Ring Road will be supported alongside the development of the White Street car and coach park. Any proposals should come forward as a comprehensive scheme, include significant green infrastructure and create a new high quality route between Fairfax Street and Swanswell Pool.
- e. The replacement of the existing Canal bridge with a new pedestrian crossing will be supported to help improve the connectivity between the Canal Basin and the wider city centre.
- f. New development opportunities should not conflict with any other policies within this AAP.

Figure 21: Bishop Street Regeneration Area

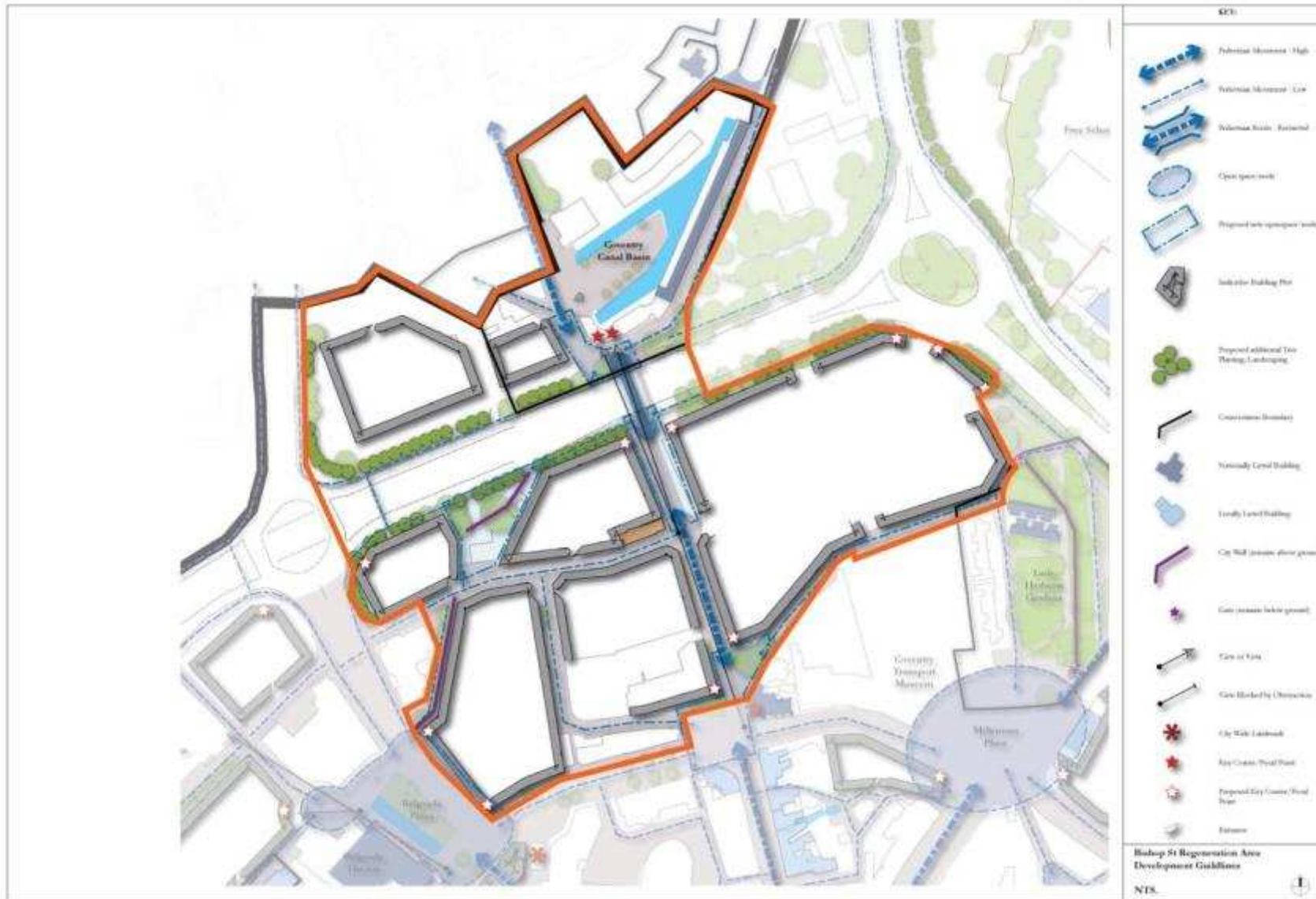
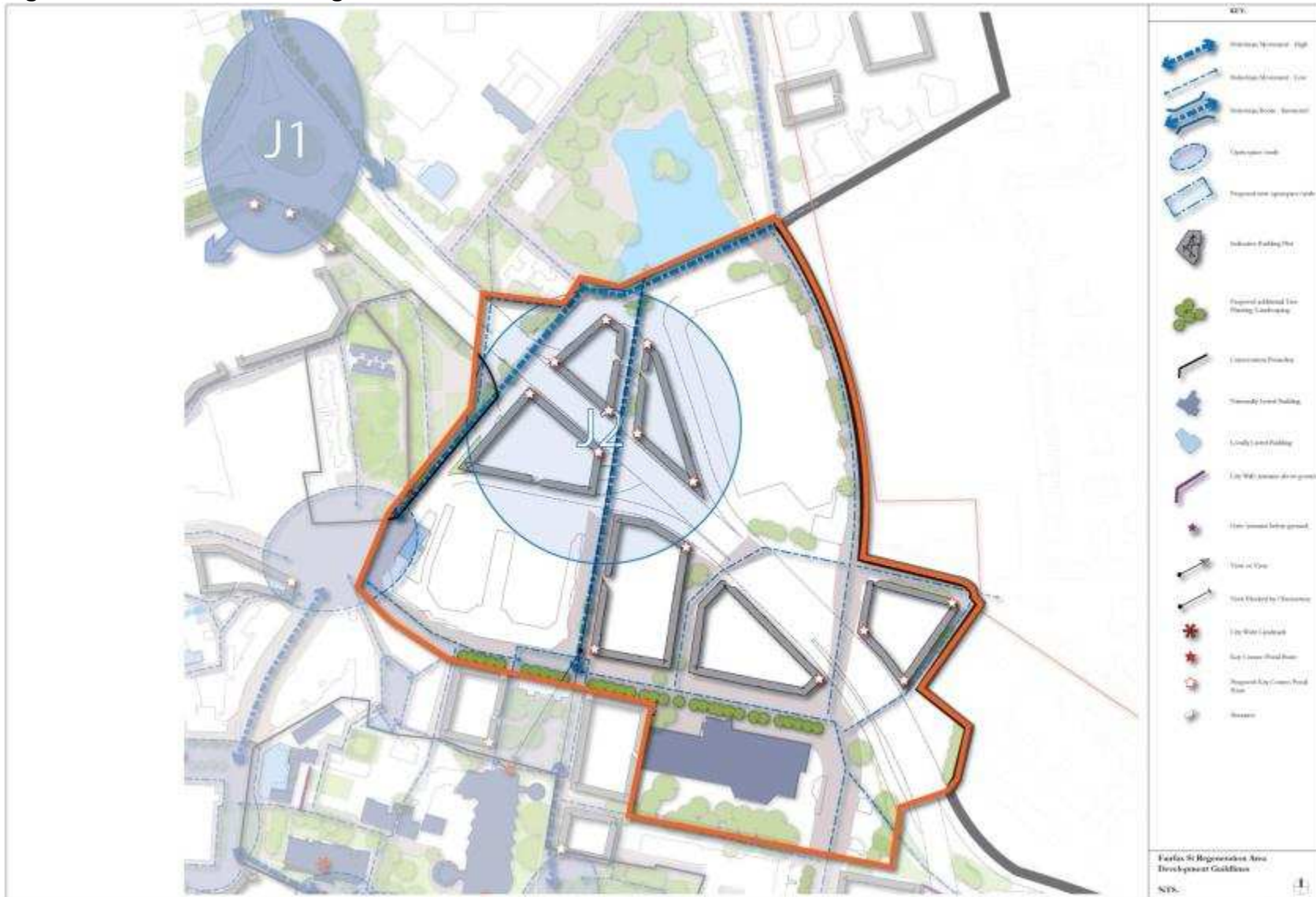




Figure 22: Fairfax Street Regeneration Area



## **The Warwick Row Area**

This area is located between the Ring Road and the Primary Shopping Area. It is an established area containing:

- Greyfriars Green Conservation Area;
- A number of Victorian buildings located at the Quadrant Business Centre;
- Modern residential premises and commercial buildings along Queen Victoria Road and Greyfriars Road;
- Further residential provision around Friars Road and St. Patricks Road;
- A number of office and commercial buildings around Manor House Drive, including Friars House and Sherbourne House.

A key route through the area is Warwick Row, this is an established route linking the city centre with the railway station and contains a number of locally listed and listed buildings. As identified above, the area contains a wide mix of uses, including significant residential apartments and houses, general commercial uses including estate agents, solicitors and advice centres and good quality open space, with links to Greyfriars Green.

As such this area is not expected to see significant development proposals over and above changes of use and suitable infill developments. These will be considered on their own merit, and so long as they relate well to their surrounding buildings and uses and complement existing styles and designs they will be considered acceptable in principle.

The one principal development site in this area is at the junction of St Patricks Road and Friars Road. This site has been vacant for some time and has previously benefited from planning permission for residential apartments. The site is considered a gateway opportunity, situated on a key route, close to the railway station and adjacent to the Ring Road. Suitable proposals for the redevelopment of this site will be welcomed.

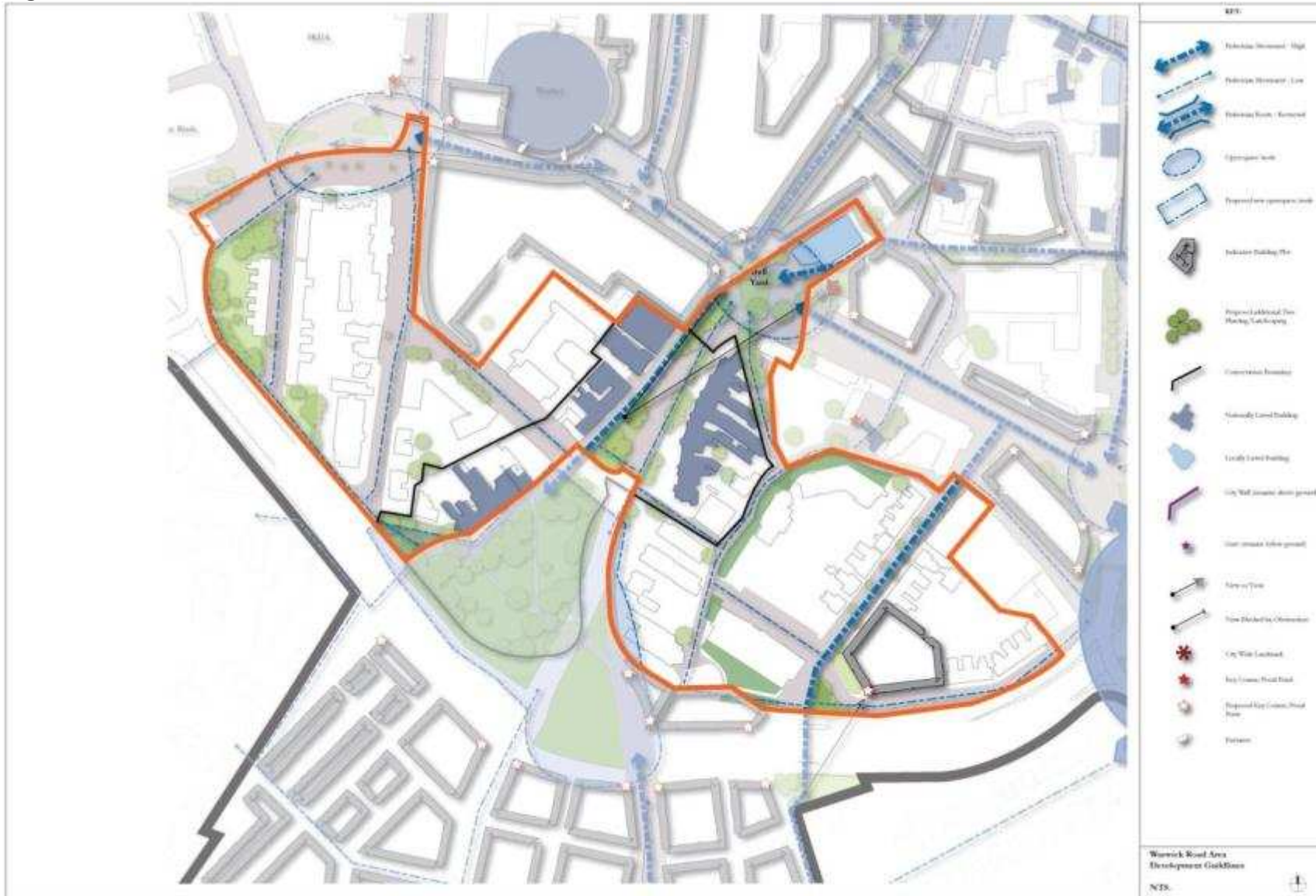
### **Policy CC26**

- a. Proposals for limited and sympathetic infill development in the Warwick Row area will be encouraged and supported where appropriate.
- b. Applications for conversions or changes of use will be considered on the basis of their relationship with adjoining buildings and uses. Where appropriate, proposals should complement existing styles and designs of adjoining buildings.
- c. The site at the junction of St. Patricks Road and Friars Road is to be allocated for at least 35 new homes and should provide a high quality building, fronting the Ring Road. Proposals should also incorporate opportunities to provide a green frontage to the Ring Road and relate positively to the pedestrian routes between Friars Road and the Railway Station.

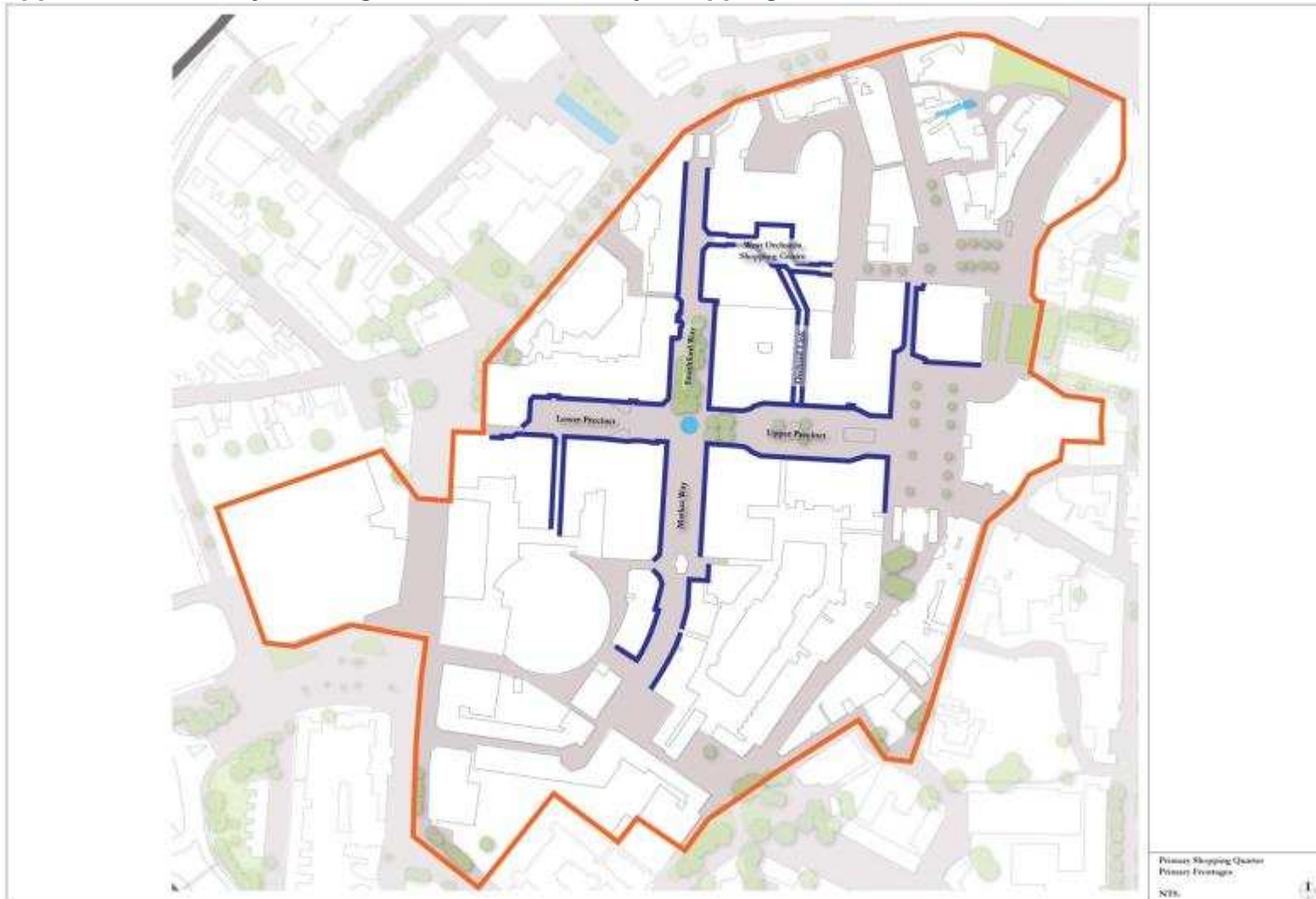


- d. Proposals should enhance the character and quality of the local environment and be compatible with other AAP policies.

Figure 23: The Warwick Row Area



## Appendix 1: Primary Frontages within the Primary Shopping Area



The proposed Primary Frontages are shown in blue. All other frontages within this Quarter are considered secondary for the purposes of draft Policy CC22.