CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Unitary Development Plan 2005

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is part of the statutory development plan for Birmingham. It contains policies and proposals that guide development and the use of land in Birmingham up to 2011. Until September 2004, every Metropolitan authority, including the City Council, was required to prepare such a plan for the whole of its area, and to keep it up-to-date.

In September 2004, a new planning system came into effect. Under the new system, the City Council is required to maintain a Local Development Framework (LDF), containing a range of different plans, including existing plans such as the UDP.

The 2005 UDP follows the same basic format as the preceding version adopted in 1993, and includes:

- General topic chapters (covering subjects such as Economy, Housing and Transport), setting out broad objectives and policies to guide development and land use;

- Detailed policies relating to specific types of development or development affecting certain types of area (such as Hotels and Guest Houses, Places of Worship, and Development in the Green Belt);

- Area statements setting out policies and proposals for different parts of the City, including the City Centre; and

- A Proposals Map, which shows the location of specific development proposals and areas of special control.

The first UDP was adopted in 1993 and reviewed between 2000 and 2005. The review took the form of changes, or alterations to the adopted plan. These revisions to the UDP were adopted by the City Council on 11 October 2005. The statutory adoption notice was published on 8 November 2005 and the six-week period allowed for challenge expired on 20 December 2005 completing the adoption process. This revised version therefore supersedes the 1993 UDP.

Within this version of the Plan, the revisions from the original plan are shown in italics, with new text underlined and deleted text shown with a line through it. Throughout a bolder typeface has been used to distinguish the policies and proposals from supporting text.
Saved Policies

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, policies in the Birmingham UDP were due to expire on October 11th 2008, unless a direction was issued by the Secretary of State to extend their life. Under the Act adopted development plans are extant for a period of three years from the plan’s adoption date.

On March 31st 2008 Cabinet agreed the submission of a schedule of UDP policies to be saved to the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM). Under the proposals the Secretary of State was asked to consider saving the majority of the plan’s policies. On the 19th September 2008 the City Council received a direction saving all but three policies from the UDP. Those policies which have been saved will continue to apply until they are replaced by new policy documents (in particular the Birmingham Core Strategy).

Under the direction the three policies which have not been saved after 11th October 2008 are

- Heartlands policies in chapter 2 which were out of date (paras 2.27 – 2.38)
- Office campus policies in chapter 4 which were inconsistent with government planning guidance, Planning Policy Statement 4 (para 4.45)
- Housing requirements in chapter 5, which have been replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy policy CF3 (paras 5.21 – 5.25 and Figures 5.3 and 5.4)

These paragraphs have been deleted.

Longbridge Area Action Plan

In April 2009 the City Council adopted a Development Plan Document for the Longbridge area – the Longbridge Area Action Plan. This provides a detailed framework for the redevelopment of the former Austin Rover car plant at Longbridge.

The Longbridge AAP is a separate document and has replaced the sections of the UDP which related to Longbridge. As a result the following paragraphs of the UDP have been deleted:

- Part of paras 6.30, 19.8, 19.9A and 19.35
- Paras 19.19 – 19.19D

Consequential changes have also been made to the Proposals Map. The proposals for Longbridge are shown on an inset plan.
Other Development Plan Documents

The City Council is in the process of preparing three other Development Plan Documents. When these are adopted they will replace further sections of the UDP.

The three plans are:

- **The Core Strategy.** This is a city-wide plan which will set out an overall spatial strategy for Birmingham to 2026. It will replace chapters 2 – 7 of the UDP.

- **The Aston Newtown Area Action Plan.** This will provide a detailed framework for change and regeneration in the Aston/Newtown area. It will replace parts of chapters 11 and 12 of the UDP.

- **The Bordesley Park Area Action Plan.** This will provide a detailed framework for the Bordesley area. It will replace parts of chapters 14 and 17 of the UDP.

The programme for preparing these plans is set out in the Council’s Local Development Scheme (LDS)

Regional Spatial Strategy

Under the new Planning system, the Regional Spatial Strategy also forms part of the Development Plan. The policies of the UDP should therefore be read alongside the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands.
CHAPTER 2 - STRATEGY

National/Regional Context

2.1 The City of Birmingham grew in its present position because of its accessibility by canal at a turning point in the region’s industrialisation. This marginal advantage was reinforced by successive waves of private investment. This in turn created the need for investment in railways, trams, roads etc., reinforcing the initial advantage.

2.2 This cycle of growth resulted in:-

- growth in prosperity until the high water mark of the 1960’s;
- growth in population, especially in the nineteenth century, to a peak in the 1950’s, accompanied by outward growth of the built-up area and gradual additions to the City’s administrative area.

2.3 Birmingham therefore owes its very existence and its subsequent growth, to economic and social trends operating at a regional and national level. For a hundred years these trends worked to Birmingham’s advantage, but more recently the reverse has been the case, and the City has endured a period of decline from which it is now recovering. Three main processes can be identified:-

- ‘The North/South Divide’ - the shift in the balance of the national economy from the Midlands and the North to the South, as a result of the decline of manufacturing industry in the traditional manufacturing areas, and the growth of new industries and higher level services located predominantly in the South, to take advantage of the increased concentration and internationalisation of financial and commodity markets.
- ‘The Urban/Rural Shift’ - the movement of employment and population from the City to the smaller surrounding towns and rural areas. This is a phenomenon common to all City regions, generated by the environmental and spatial advantages of the smaller towns, combined with increased personal and business mobility. These changes are illustrated by Figures 2.1 and 2.2 respectively. For the City this leads to a reduction in its taxable base, without a corresponding reduction in the demand for its services.
- ‘Social Polarisation’ - an increased concentration of social, economic and environmental deprivation in particular areas, principally the inner city but also some outlying Council estates compared to the relative affluence of many outer suburbs (see Figure 2.3). This results from the increased personal mobility of the better-off, giving them a greater choice of housing location relative to employment. There is a close connection here with concerns over the social exclusion of particular groups within the community, such as black and ethnic minority people and women.

2.3A In addition to the above trends, further challenges have arisen which include growing recognition of the fragility of the global environment, the rapid development and application of new information technologies and increasing recognition of the importance of international relationships and linkages at sub-national levels. The City Council’s involvement in EuroCities and other initiatives involving major international cities serve to illustrate the latter point.
2.4 The City’s problems cannot be solved and its opportunities cannot be fully exploited in isolation, and in ignorance of these wider trends. There is a need for complementary policies at a regional and sub-regional level, and this is provided by [Strategic Guidance for the West Midlands (PPG10), published by the Secretary of State in February 1988,] Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11) originally published by the Secretary of State in September 1995 after extensive discussion and agreement between the Metropolitan District and Shire County Councils in the West Midlands, and re-published with some revisions in April 1998. * [Strategic Regional Planning Guidance provides an overall context for the [preparation] Review of UDPs and [the Review of] Shire County Structure Plans. The Birmingham UDP develops the policy approach which it sets out. Advantage West Midlands (the West Midlands Regional Development Agency) is responsible for the preparation of a Regional Economic Strategy, which will have an important bearing on its activities in relation to inward investment and regeneration funding.

Basic Approach

2.5 The Birmingham UDP Strategy is based above all on a vision of the future of the City. This vision sets out the City’s position in relation to the key socio-economic trends described above, thereby providing continuity with the past as well as establishing a basis for the development of future strategy. This vision comprises three broadly based objectives which will provide the touchstone against which future action can be judged.

(a) Birmingham’s Citizens

Birmingham is home to a million people of diverse cultures, ethnic origins, skills, incomes and lifestyles. The City Council is committed to provide a social, cultural and physical environment which allows all these groups to play a satisfying and distinctive part in the life of the City. In particular the City Council will endeavour to reverse the trend towards social polarisation and concentrate its efforts on improving conditions for those [most in need] socially excluded through discrimination and disadvantage.

(b) Birmingham [and the Nation] in its National and International Setting

Birmingham is the UK’s Second City - and one of the largest concentrations of people and economic activity outside London. [The perceived location of Birmingham is likely to change dramatically with the arrival of the M40, providing a second motorway link between Birmingham and London. This in itself is likely to be a generator of activity and will no doubt confer upon Birmingham a new status, as the northernmost part of ‘the South’.] The City Council aims to consolidate the City’s status vis-à-vis competing regional centres, and secure for Birmingham a national/international standing equivalent to that of other major European [provincial] regional capitals.

* This has now been superseded by revised Regional Planning Guidance, which was published in June 2004. The revised RPG11 is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands, and under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, forms part of the statutory development plan for Birmingham.
N.B. Modification proposed to Birmingham by Wards plan – see below

Chapter 2 – Strategy
Modification to Figure 2.1

POPULATION CHANGE 1981 - 1996 IN BIRMINGHAM

KEY
% Population Change 1981-1996
- Increase of more than 5%
- Increase of 0 - 5%
- Decrease of 0 - 5%
- Decrease of more than 5%

Note:
N.B. This diagram shows Ward boundaries prior to May 2004, which correspond to the UDP Constituency statements.

Source: OPCS Mid-year Estimates and Information Team, Dept of Planning & Architecture, Birmingham City Council.

Chapter 2 – Strategy
Figure 2.2

CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT, BIRMINGHAM AND SURROUNDING AREAS, 1981-1996

- Birmingham
- West Midlands County
- Large Towns
- Medium Towns
- Rural Areas

% Change

Manufacturing
Service
All Groups
MAP SHOWING THE CONCENTRATION OF DEPRIVED AREAS OF THE CITY

Key
Census Enumeration Districts
- with some level of deprivation
- in the worst 7% in England
- Ward Boundaries

Source: London Research Centre on behalf of The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions; Crown Copyright
Produced by The Information Team, Dept of Planning & Architecture
(c) Birmingham and the Region

Despite recent trends towards decentralisation, Birmingham [remains a strong central place] is the Regional Capital, providing higher level services and specialised functions to the whole of the West Midlands Region. The City Council will continue to foster and promote this distinctive central role.

2.6 This vision has stability, it has continuity with the past and is sufficiently broadly based to command the political and interest group support to survive the inevitable crises and conflicts that will occur over the years ahead. These objectives are intended as a starting point and are not sacrosanct: the vision will be enlarged and refined as time progresses, but it will not be either denied or reversed.

2.7 This approach is wider than the limited land use perspective of the UDP. However, although the UDP is a land use plan, its policies are inextricably bound up with wider socio-economic and environmental considerations. In particular the success of the UDP strategy will depend on the sustained reversal of the spiral of decline which set in during the 1970’s. The long term revival of the City’s economy and the renewal of those parts of the City most affected by that decline, will continue to be crucial. Knowledge and skills will underpin this process and will also be essential if social exclusion and discrimination are to be reduced, social and community life strengthened and citizenship and civic involvement promoted. The City Council’s commitment to lifelong learning is encapsulated in the idea of ‘The Learning City’ and planning policies will seek to promote this wherever possible. Although primarily a land use strategy, this Plan will support broad-based regeneration programmes such as the Single Regeneration Budget, which combine land use with a strong social regeneration focus.

2.8 [This position is wholly consistent with, and builds upon, the Secretary of State’s Strategic Guidance for the West Midlands, with its widely supported twin objectives of economic revitalisation and urban regeneration. Fundamental to both of these is the need to improve the quality of the City’s environment, and this theme runs throughout the plan. Enhancing the environment is a pre-requisite if the quality of life of the City’s residents, particularly the less well-off, is to be improved. It is also important to the continued success of the City’s economy: economic activity is becoming increasingly footloose, and environmental considerations are assuming an ever increasing importance in business decision-making and investment. This not only affects the investment decisions of mobile industry but also the decisions of existing firms.] This position is wholly consistent with the Secretary of State’s Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11). This sets out a vision for the West Midlands as:

“... an advanced and competitive Manufacturing Region, where development is set within a sustainable development framework, where inward investment and enterprise are encouraged, where everyone has access to a high quality of life and choice of opportunities, and the quality and distinctiveness of the natural and built environment are maintained and enhanced”. (paragraph 1.2)

For Birmingham, this requires a continued emphasis on three interlinked themes:

- Economic revitalisation. It is essential that the modernisation of the City’s economy continues to be encouraged. This will require measures to promote investment in new
economic sectors with strong growth prospects - but just as important will be the need to support the City’s existing businesses and to assist their growth and modernisation.

- **Urban and social regeneration.** It is essential that economic growth feeds through into real benefits for those in greatest need, and for those areas which experience the greatest deprivation. This will require a continued emphasis on integrated, area-based approaches to the regeneration process combining physical with social and economic measures.

- **Environmental Quality.** It is essential that measures to protect and enhance the City’s environment are energetically pursued, as a pre-requisite to the success of the City’s economy and to securing improvements to the quality of life of the City’s residents - especially the less well-off. This will require a commitment to securing positive environmental benefits from new development, as well as steps to avoid, or at least minimise, any adverse effects.

2.8A This approach is also consistent with the City Council’s commitment to move towards a more sustainable pattern of development, as set out in the corporate Sustainability Strategy. In this context, the City Council adopts the ‘Brundtland’ definition of sustainable development, which is also adopted in PPG1 and RPG11 - “development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”

2.8B The Government has also taken forward this definition in its strategy for sustainable development “A Better Quality of Life,” by identifying the following four objectives for sustainable development, which are fully supported by the City Council:

- **Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;**

- **Effective protection of the environment;**

- **Prudent use of natural resources; and**

- **Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.**

2.8C In line with this, the UDP Strategy seeks to promote the development which is necessary to meet the City’s current needs, but seeks to ensure that this development is carefully located, and carefully planned, to avoid, or at least minimise, adverse environmental impact and ensure the most efficient use of non-renewable resources.

2.8D This involves maximising the use of the existing public transport infrastructure, and providing more high quality public transport opportunities in order to encourage people to choose to travel by more sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling wherever possible. In line with the Transport Corridors principle set out in RPG11, the City Council will seek to encourage activities which generate high transport demand to locations well-served by public transport, and will encourage higher density development within public transport corridors, subject to provision of a high quality environment. The City Council will also support improvements to park and ride facilities both within the City and beyond, including strategic park and ride (see also Transport Chapter, paragraphs 6.19, 6.30 and 6.32).
2.8E In seeking to meet the City’s current needs, account will also be taken of the Council’s Social Justice Strategy, which aims to provide a framework for tackling social exclusion across Birmingham. Particularly important within this context will be the reversal of the long-term trend for the decentralisation of population from the City, and especially the out-migration of the better off. The desired outcome is to counter the trend for the socially and financially disadvantaged to be concentrated in the City, particularly in certain parts. The aim should be to create a balanced community. To the extent that out-migration of population continues then this too should reflect more strongly the make-up of the City’s population, including those on lower incomes who for many years have been denied such opportunities. The promotion of housing in the City Centre (“City Living”), and provision of a quality environment and the infrastructure necessary to support it, will be a major theme.

2.8F At the local level, initiatives to promote the concept of sustainability are being developed through the Local Agenda 21 process, which the City Council is facilitating. Local Agenda 21 embraces a wider range of concerns than simply land use issues, but the UDP has the potential to provide a useful context for some aspects of its work. Similarly planning decisions will be informed by the Local Agenda 21 process.

2.9 This Unitary Development Plan is rooted in the belief that there is a very direct relationship between environmental quality and levels of economic activity. The aim is to make Birmingham a better place in which to live or work or just to visit. As part of that process the Plan seeks to attract activity, and activity may also mean investment and, ultimately, development. Such development provides an opportunity to manage change and effect improvements in the quality of the environment. The intention is to make the City more ‘attractive’ not just in terms of the physical environment but also in the magnetic sense... to more activity, investment, development and so on. The Plan seeks to create the opposite of a vicious circle: to create a virtuous upward spiral, whereby economic activity and environmental quality feed off and promote one another. It must be stressed, however, that the intention is not to attract activity for its own sake, but to make the existing Birmingham a better place... in the first instance for the million people who already live in the City.

2.10 These guiding principles have widespread support and influence the whole range of the City Council’s activities. In many areas key strategic choices have already been made - for example in the context of the City’s Economic Strategy. It is the function of the UDP to develop land use policies which will carry them forward in a consistent way.

Scale of Change

2.11 Implementation of the strategy will require large-scale change in some areas. However, [it is an undeniable fact that much of the City in the year 2001 will be the same as it is now. Most] most of the City’s dwelling stock already exists and it is anticipated that most of the City’s commerce and industry will [still continue to exist, albeit bringing more, better quality employment and wealth to the City. The main issue for many areas will not be the level of new development but rather the level of resources devoted to the upkeep and refurbishment of what already exists.
2.12 The scale of the task that we face is enormous, yet it is inconceivable that the resources will be available to carry out every worthy scheme. [Strategic] Regional Planning Guidance emphasises the need for the City Council, Central Government and the private sector to combine their programmes, responsibilities and skills to foster urban regeneration. Past experience has shown that the concentration of action on particular parts of the inner city is far more likely to achieve long-term benefits. The City Council’s record supports this approach and the following priorities for action (shown by Figure 2.4) have been established.

1. Birmingham City Centre - the heart, not only of the City, but of the region as a whole. This is discussed further below.

2. The remainder of the Inner City (the area which corresponds to the former Inner City Partnership Core Area) – including the former Birmingham Heartlands Development Corporation Area (see below), but also some outlying estates where deprivation is also concentrated.

3. Elsewhere, emphasis will be given to schemes:

   a) which provide benefits which are in areas easily accessible to those in greatest need;

   b) where major new development or improvement to the environment, consistent with the strategy, will be encouraged to take place.

2.13 The strategy can only be achieved with the support of investment, on a massive scale, by the private sector and other agencies. The City Council’s own initiatives can help leverage far greater private sector investment. The renewal of development activity in the City Centre and Birmingham Heartlands are examples of how public sector support can manage development pressures and private sector resources to meet wider objectives.
2.14 Given the relatively small scale of new development City-wide, it follows that we need to retain the best of what already exists, enhance it and build upon it. In the past, Birmingham’s wider image [has been] was damaged more by the quality of its built environment - as a concrete jungle - than any other single factor. This reputation [reflects] reflected the poor quality of the rapid redevelopment that took place in the 1950’s and 1960’s. The recovery of the city’s economy is giving a second, unexpected, chance to redress many of these earlier mistakes. Much progress has been made, particularly in the City Centre, for example, with the development of the International Convention Centre and National Indoor Arena complex, Brindleyplace, and other developments in the 1990s. The emphasis for the future must therefore be to [encourage development of a high quality] continue this process, through the development projects currently in the pipeline, such as the Bull Ring, Martineau Galleries and Millennium Point, and through the encouragement of other high quality developments. Where feasible, the inclusion of high quality greenspace will be positively encouraged. Provision of the following types of greenspace or open space of public value will be encouraged within new developments throughout the City in appropriate circumstances:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural areas such as woodland, urban forestry, grasslands, wetlands and pools
- Green corridors along canals, rivers, streams, cycleways and rights of way
- Sports pitches, playing fields and other outdoor sports areas
- Informal recreation spaces including amenity space associated with housing developments
- Children’s play areas
- Allotments and community gardens
- Public squares and other formal public spaces.

To be effective, this approach will need to be applied consistently over many years.

**Planning and Health**

2.14A The City Council recognises that there are clear links between the quality of the environment and the quality of people’s health. Poor housing, traffic and air borne pollution and high levels of urban deprivation have all been shown to contribute to medical problems and poor health. Conversely, access to open space, sport and recreational facilities are important in being able to offer opportunities for physical exercise thereby promoting healthier living. The planning process therefore has a clear and important role to play in helping to tackle health inequalities and promote healthy neighbourhoods.

2.14B The Government’s commitment to securing a healthier nation has as a key element the need for health bodies to work in partnership with local authorities and this approach is endorsed by Birmingham City Council. Accordingly the City Council will work closely with the Health Authority, Hospital Trusts, Primary Health Care Groups and others to help them develop and implement their Health Improvement Programmes. Particular support will be given to help them achieve any appropriate physical development initiatives such as building a new hospital or health centre or redeveloping hospital campuses. Support will also be given to specific initiatives such as Health Action Zones, delivering Healthy Living Centres and implementing local Primary Health Care Group strategies.
2.14C When producing local action plans or supporting area or estate renewal strategies, the City Council will assess the health implications and actions as a key element of that work. Such actions could include the provision of social housing, the provision of open space and recreational facilities, supporting public transport improvements, the promotion of cycling and walking as well as the provision of any direct health facilities such as a GP surgery. When considering planning applications for new development the effects of the development on people’s health will similarly be considered. Developments which contribute to creating a healthier environment will be encouraged.
[Inner Versus Outer City] Regenerating the Whole of the City

2.15 The urban regeneration emphasis of the strategy means that most new development and investment will take place within the confines of the existing built-up area, with a strong bias toward the inner city. Confidence within the inner city will be reflected by the scale of investment and the amount of new building taking place. This, in turn, will act as a barometer for the success of the strategy as a whole. The return into beneficial use of derelict and vacant land and buildings will be one of the most important ways in which regeneration will be achieved.

2.15A A key element in the regeneration of the City will be the A38 Corridor Strategy. This Strategy will be brought forward to diversify the economy and counteract the City’s strong reliance on the automotive industry. Further details of this initiative are set out in paragraphs 4.32A - 4.32C in the Economy Chapter, and in the relevant Constituency Chapters.

2.16 [However, Strategic Guidance recognises that all new development cannot be located within the existing built-up area. Some development of greenfield land, a large proportion of it being previously confirmed Green Belt, is required.] Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11) is based on the premise that development should be encouraged to take place on previously developed land within the urban area and that development on greenfield sites should only be permitted where there is no alternative. Development on land within Green Belt will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. This approach is reflected in this development plan.

2.17 [At face value,] Development of greenfield sites is contrary to environmental aims and the strategy to concentrate investment within the inner city. However, revitalisation of the city’s economy depends on the contributions of a whole new generation of industries. Without sustained economic recovery the rate of deterioration in the City will once again exceed the rate at which improvements are taking place and the City could slip back into a spiral of decline, both economic and environmental.

2.18 It is important to note that the Secretary of State has recognised the need to provide land for high quality industrial development on the edge of the conurbation and that such provision can be achieved without detracting from the commitment to urban regeneration.

2.18A In Birmingham, at Bassett’s Pole, [up to 50] a site of 50 hectares of land (net developable area) [may need to be released from the Green Belt] is proposed for such development and will be excluded from the Green Belt. This reflects the specific proposal that has emerged following extensive technical studies and public consultation on the local planning study initiated under the adopted UDP policy.

2.18B In addition, Green Belt land release is proposed to accommodate a Major Investment Site at Peddimore. This proposal has been brought forward in the context of Regional Planning Guidance, to meet the Region’s requirement for the provision of a very large-scale inward investment. Additional land at Peddimore is identified as an “Area of Development Restraint,” reserved to meet longer-term needs. Taken together, the Peddimore site and Area of Development Restraint will accommodate up to three large, single industrial users. This will help to ensure that the Region does not lose out on large-scale investment in the longer run because of a lack of appropriate development opportunities. [Further releases

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will be made to meet the city’s needs in adjoining authorities.] The circumstances of this particular proposal are exceptional, and justify the alteration to the Green Belt boundary. In amending the Green Belt, the “Area of Development Restraint” has been identified to establish a new boundary, which will endure in the long-term. This approach is consistent with the policy in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2.

2.19 Similarly, [Strategic] Regional Planning Guidance indicates that the housing requirement for Birmingham [(22,300 dwellings, 1988-2001)] balances the need to maximise housebuilding in the [inner city] urban area as part of the urban regeneration strategy against satisfying the demand for new housing outside the existing built-up area.

2.20 [Strategic Guidance envisages land for up to 1400 dwellings being released on greenfield sites.] In Birmingham land for up to 1400 1100 dwellings has already been released from the Green Belt, as required by the former PPG10, Strategic Guidance for the West Midlands. No further Green Belt land releases are now proposed in order to meet the City’s revised housing requirement of 46,500 dwellings in the period 1991-2011. At the same time the City Council is mindful of the need to resist increasing pressures for housing development on open space and sports pitches, stadia and other sports facilities within the built-up area, and wherever possible, to improve levels of public open space and playing field provision. [The plan therefore proposes to release greenfield land for housing up to the full amount identified by Strategic Guidance. This will enable the environmental quality within the built up area to be maintained, while at the same time ensuring that the need for new homes is met.]

2.21 However, given that the precise boundaries have already been fixed for most of the City’s Green Belt (the exceptions being to accommodate the Bassetts Pole Premium Industrial Site, Peddimore, the proposed Area of Development Restraint at Peddimore, land at Severn Trent, Minworth, land at Woodgate Valley, and those areas brought into the City through administrative boundary changes), the UDP does not propose that the boundaries be altered still further to meet development needs that might arise post 2001.

**Birmingham City Centre**

2.22 If the overall strategy is to be achieved it is essential that the full potential of the city’s assets should be realised: the greatest of these assets is undoubtedly the City Centre. To a large degree the prosperity of the whole City will depend on the vitality of the City Centre which is by far the most important concentration of economic, cultural and administrative activity within the West Midlands Region. It is also the cornerstone of the City Council’s commitment to the promotion of Birmingham as a major international City and the strengthening of its status as both the regional capital and the nation’s first provincial City. It is also too easily forgotten that the City Centre lies at the heart of the inner city.

2.23 The City Centre must, therefore, be encouraged to develop and prosper, building on its strengths and by urgently addressing its weaknesses.

2.24 There is a need to exploit the City Centre’s strengths by:

* Building upon the massive historical capital investment.
• Exploiting the City's location at the hub of national communications systems.

• [Establishing] Consolidating Birmingham's position as the principal international financial and business centre outside London, and at the same time helping to diversify the City's employment structure.

• Maintaining and enhancing the City Centre's role as the regional shopping centre through the promotion of quality and specialist retailing.

• Encouraging the City's emergence as a major centre for business tourism, continuing to develop the National Exhibition Centre to maintain its international standing and supporting the rapidly expanding Birmingham International Airport and other international links. The [expectation of] success of the International Convention Centre provides a further major incentive for the development of broadly based cultural, leisure and tourist infrastructure including new hotel developments.

• Encouraging ‘City Living’ through the promotion of new housing in the City Centre to meet a wide range of different needs. This will involve both the conversion of existing buildings and new build. Housing will be particularly encouraged as part of mixed use developments and through the urban village concept.

• Integrating new investment and development to bring together a major regeneration initiative in the Digbeth Millennium Quarter, the City Centre Core and the Aston Triangle. This initiative is known as Eastside, and will focus on Millennium Point, Masshouse, the Bull Ring and the Martineau Galleries development.

2.25 The City Centre’s weaknesses where urgent action is required include:-

• Maintaining the City’s accessibility edge in the light of increasing personal mobility and, in particular, the proposed completion of the [Orbital Motorways and M40] Birmingham Northern Relief Road.

• Improving the quality of the pedestrian and built environment. Such improvements will perhaps be the single-most important factor in enhancing the City’s image and attractiveness.

• The potential for growth in the City Centre has been hampered by the concrete collar formed by the Queensway. The loosening of the grip imposed by the road and the attraction of extraneous traffic to the Ring Road and away from the City core is of the highest priority.

The aim is a City Centre which is economically sound; respects its own history; is easy to get to; is a pleasant and safe place in which to move around once there, and has the wide variety of activities and land uses which is the key characteristic of a major metropolitan centre.

2.26 [Strategic] Regional Planning Guidance supports this position by emphasising that existing town centres should continue to be the focus for the provision of shopping as part of the wider functions/ activities that centres perform.
Equity/Deprivation Issues

2.35 There is a limit to which the widespread concern to combat deprivation can be tackled through the UDP which is predominantly concerned with the physical environment. Other related social and economic policies covering a wide range of issues will also be required. However, insofar as it does have an influence, the UDP Strategy’s strong inner city dimension aims to focus investment and development into the areas of greatest need. The UDP also reflects the fact that there are pockets of deprivation in [some outlying estates] all parts of the City.

2.36 Apart from the quantity of development taking place its quality in terms of the benefits it brings to the area is equally important. The City Council will take all appropriate opportunities to negotiate planning obligations (also known as planning gain S106 agreements), [and to ensure that the benefits from both new development and renewal are directed to the wider community and in particular to those groups in greatest need. This commitment will be backed up by general policy reports to be approved by the appropriate Council Committee(s), development frameworks and development briefs (setting out requirements for specific sites/areas). The circumstances where planning gain might be negotiated range from infrastructure provision (such as roads and sewers) and dedication of land as public open space to the provision of community facilities (such as child care and primary health care facilities), training initiatives and support for public art where these can be justified in the context of the proposed development. In some cases consultations may be carried out on the type of planning gain to be sought.] The City Council’s Policy on Planning Obligations is set out in Chapter 8, and in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2.37 The City Council will use other powers where possible and appropriate to seek to ensure that the benefits of new development and renewal are spread as widely as possible throughout the community particularly to those groups in greatest need. The UDP is concerned to promote and encourage new investment - but as has already been noted it is not the intention to attract new development for its own sake. The key to success will be to ensure that new activity and new development help to strengthen Birmingham’s economy and improve its environment to the benefit of all who live in the City.

2.38 The City Council will take positive action to create an environment which is “barrier free” for all of its citizens by seeking to respond positively to the particular needs of, for example, women and people with caring responsibilities, elderly people, people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities who may have a wide range of specific access and other needs. Planning policies will reflect the City Council’s objective of creating a Child Friendly City, a City which reflects and celebrates its cultural diversity, a City which does not socially exclude any sector of the community and a City which is safe and welcoming to everyone, whatever their particular needs may be. Mixed use developments will be encouraged where appropriate in order to create lively and safe places which everyone will feel happy to visit. The design of all new developments should address issues of safety and accessibility, so that they will benefit everyone - including those with special needs.
2.39 Positive policies will focus on safety, access, childcare and other appropriate facilities to meet special needs. This will include, where appropriate, facilities such as parent and child rooms, public toilets, including those for people with disabilities, safe pedestrian access for all and creches, secured through planning conditions and/or Section 106 agreements. In some cases, detailed guidance regarding the requirements of groups with specific needs will be prepared, and updated as necessary, as it is recognised that the needs of people and the technological advances to meet these needs will change over time.
CHAPTER 3 - ENVIRONMENT

Context

3.1 The quality of the environment within the City is of fundamental importance in relation to the quality of life of the City’s residents. Achievement of the twin objectives of urban regeneration and economic revitalisation is dependent on creating within the City an attractive and safe environment, both to benefit existing residents and businesses, and to ensure that new investment continues to be attracted.

3.2 The factors which contribute to the quality of the environment are many and varied and in trying to formulate policies which are environmentally desirable it is recognised that there will be many conflicts of interest to be resolved. At the local level, all of the following are important - the quality of the physical environment around the home and workplace, access to pleasant shopping areas and safe places for children to play, landscape and townscape quality, access to a range of formal and informal recreational facilities and access to and protection for both local natural wildlife areas and the open countryside. In terms of the city's national and international competitiveness, the quality of the City Centre, and of the image presented by the main radial routes into the city, by both road and rail, are of great importance as is the need for attractive investment opportunities, and high quality residential areas.

3.3 Birmingham has many assets in this regard. There is a great variety of open space provision - from major areas like Sutton Park and Woodgate Valley to local parks and play areas. There is the historic legacy of the canal system, for many years declining, but now being brought into public use. The Jewellery and Gun Quarters and Warwick Bar provide links to Birmingham’s industrial past, as do ‘model’ housing areas, like Bournville. The cosmopolitan character of the city’s modern population is reflected in the [Chinese] Bull Ring and Markets quarter, and in shopping centres like Soho Road, and Small Heath. A major new recreational and cultural focus for the 1990s [will be] has been provided by the International Convention Centre and associated developments.

3.4 Nevertheless, it must also be recognised that the City has a number of serious environmental problems. Its image is still too often that of a concrete jungle dedicated to the service of the motor car rather than people. While this image contains much that is exaggerated, it cannot be denied that the quality of many of the redevelopment schemes carried out in the 1950s and 60s has proved to be poor, both in terms of design and construction. Although some progress has been made, some of the physical legacy of the economic recession of the early 1980s is also still with us [measured in vacant and derelict sites, declining shopping centres and poor quality housing], particularly in the inner areas of the City, where access to quality open space is also often restricted.

Future Prospects

3.5 Recent years have seen an upsurge in awareness of environmental issues at both a global and local level. This is a trend which is [likely to continue] continuing and there will therefore still be [continued] public pressure for improvements in environmental standards and concern over conservation issues. Linked to this, as economic activity becomes increasingly footloose, the environmental quality of the City [will be] is of growing importance, not only in
influencing the decisions of mobile businesses, but also the investment decisions of firms already located in the area. It [will] is also [be] central to the continuing drive to enhance Birmingham’s status as an international city.

3.6 At the same time development and redevelopment pressures are likely to remain high. The limited areas of open space, playing fields and allotments within the built-up area of the city are likely to fall under particular pressure. [Changes in the management of some Council services in particular the introduction of Local Management in Schools may have an effect in this area.] Pressure will also continue on the Green Belt, reflecting the fact, highlighted in the Economy and Housing chapters, that the area of land available for development within the City is limited and is not able to satisfy all the requirements for new homes, jobs and services generated by the City’s population. This will be so even with a continued emphasis on bringing forward recycled and derelict sites for development.

3.7 Redevelopment pressures will also continue, particularly in the City Centre, the area of greatest activity. On the one hand, this will represent a challenge to the character of Conservation Areas and listed buildings, but on the other it presents a great opportunity to remedy the mistakes of the past, through the replacement or refurbishment of the less successful developments of the 1950s and 60s.

3.7A The UDP environment strategy, together with the corporate Sustainability Strategy and Local Agenda 21 process, have a central role in the City Council’s desire to move towards a more sustainable pattern of development. One aspect of this is a commitment to protect the significant number of environmental assets which the City already possesses and to avoid, or at least minimise, the harmful effects of new development. However, the strategy is not concerned simply with protection - it is equally concerned with improving quality across the whole city. A key element in achieving this will be to take advantage of the opportunities provided by proposals for new development and redevelopment to create high quality new environments and improve what already exists. The West Midlands Regional Sustainability Strategy and the Birmingham and Black Country Bio-diversity Action Plan provide a context for this. A Supplementary Planning Guidance Document will be prepared, which will examine in more detail opportunities to secure more sustainable forms of development.

Policy Statement

3.8 The environment strategy is based on two principles:-

(a) the need to protect and enhance what is good in the City’s environment, and to improve what is less good;

(b) the need to recognise the key relationship between environmental quality and levels of economic activity.

The keynote must be quality. This will require a continuation of the wide range of current initiatives - derelict land clearance, [estates action,] residential and environmental improvement schemes, both in the City Centre and in the suburbs, canal enhancement, City Centre pedestrianisation etc - and no doubt the development of new approaches to new problems. Where appropriate, these will be secured through S106 agreements planning
obligations that are directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development. Some of these initiatives are discussed in more detail in other sections of the UDP. The function of this section is to provide the overall policy context within which they will all find their place.

3.9 As a general principle, Green Belt boundaries will only be altered in exceptional circumstances, and development will not normally be allowed on any open space, regardless of whether there is a public right of access, except where there is an overriding justification in order to achieve the other objectives of the UDP strategy. Examples of such a justification include:

- the need to release some Green Belt land in order to meet the new housing requirements specified in Strategic Guidance (former PPG10) and thereby avoid the even more damaging loss of open space or playing fields within the built-up area of the City. No further release for housing is required to meet the housing provision level set in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11). The need to make limited and carefully phased provision for premium and high-quality peripheral industrial development (mainly for ‘premium employment’ and ‘major investment’ purposes). Sites within the built-up area cannot always provide the environmental standards, site area and good motorway access required for this type of development.

- The need to make limited and carefully-sited provision for Park and Ride facilities in accordance with the policies set out in Chapter 6 (see paragraph 6.19).

Where appropriate, proposals within these two categories, together with other specific proposals for the release of open space are contained in chapters 8-21. Green Belt boundaries will only be altered in exceptional circumstances. An example of such a circumstance is the need to make limited and carefully phased provision for peripheral industrial development. As a general principle, development will not be allowed on any open space, regardless of whether there is a public right of access, except where there is an overriding justification in order to achieve the other objectives of the UDP strategy.

3.10 Proposals which would have an adverse effect on the quality of the built environment will not normally be allowed.

3.11 Positive action to improve the quality of the environment will also be required. There are a multitude of initiatives which aim to achieve this, and past experience has shown that the concentration of activity in particular areas is likely to produce the best results. Within this context the following priorities will apply:-

(a) The City Centre.

(b) The remainder of the inner city (including Birmingham Heartlands) and outlying estates where deprivation is concentrated.

(c) Schemes which will provide benefits in areas accessible to those in greatest need, including regeneration areas and local centres.
(d) Transport Corridors.

(e) Schemes which will encourage major new development consistent with the UDP Strategy.

The local Agenda 21 process which is being facilitated by the City Council will encourage, amongst other things, the emergence of initiatives to improve sustainability and this will be supported whenever it is consistent with the UDP Strategy.

3.12 The remainder of this section sets out a more detailed policy approach for the following subject areas:-

- The Built Environment
- Conservation of the Built Environment
- Canals
- Nature Conservation
- Green Belt
- Open Space (including Playing Fields)
- Children’s Play
- Allotments
- Sports Facilities
- Waste Treatment and Disposal
- Water and Drainage
- Air Quality
- Energy

The Built Environment

3.13 Improving the quality of the built environment within the city is one of the most important of the UDP’s objectives. The City’s image is damaged more by the quality of its built environment - particularly in the City Centre - than any other single factor. This reputation reflects the poor quality of the rapid redevelopment - including road schemes -
which took place in the 1950s and 1960s, typified by poor design, inappropriate building materials and a lack of consideration for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Already there are pressures for the redevelopment of many schemes: this presents an unexpected opportunity to remedy some of the mistakes of the past.

The Design of New Development

3.14 New developments will be expected to contribute, in terms of their design and landscaping, to the enhancement of the City’s environment. In particular, the planting of trees will be encouraged where appropriate. A high standard of design is essential to the continued improvement of Birmingham as a desirable place to live, work and visit. The design and landscaping of new developments will be expected to contribute to the enhancement of the City’s environment. Good design may also help to promote and secure sustainable forms of development.

3.14A In order to ensure a high standard of design in all new developments in accordance with the advice set out in PPG 1 – General Policy and Principles, the City Council has set out below a series of general good design principles. These are concerned with the design of and the relationship between buildings, streets, squares, parks, nature conservation areas, waterways and other spaces that make up the public domain. This includes the nature and quality of the public domain itself, the relationship of one part of the City with other parts, and the patterns of movement and activity which are thereby established.

3.14B In submitting applications for new development, including outline applications, developers will be expected to demonstrate that the scheme has been considered as part of its context. Apart from very minor applications affecting unlisted buildings outside conservation areas, and changes of use which do not affect the character or appearance of an existing building, all development proposals should be accompanied by a short written statement setting out the design principles adopted. In addition, all proposals should be accompanied by plans, elevations and drawings or photographs showing the site and the proposed development in relation to the surrounding buildings and uses. Where appropriate, developers should also provide illustrations showing the impact of their proposals at a detailed level. In more complex schemes, pre-application discussions are recommended in order to avoid unnecessary delays at a later stage. Design statements should be part of such discussions. To avoid problems of piecemeal and incremental development on very large development sites, comprehensive master plans or development briefs should be prepared to aid in the formulation and consideration of individual proposals.

3.14C Development should have regard to the development guidelines set out in “Places for All,” “Places for Living,” the Birmingham Nature Conservation Strategy, the Conservation Strategy, the Canalside Development Design Guidelines and any other relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents.

Good Urban Design Principles

3.14D Applications for new development will be assessed against the following principles:
• The City Council will have particular regard towards the impact that the proposed development would have on the local character of an area, including topography, street patterns, building lines, boundary treatments, views, skyline, open spaces and landscape, scale and massing, and neighbouring uses;

• Local characteristics which are considered detrimental in terms of urban design and which undermine the overall character of the area should not be used as a precedent for the design of new developments; for example, buildings that back onto the public realm;

• The scale and design of new buildings and spaces should generally respect the area surrounding them, and should reinforce and evolve any local characteristics, including natural features such as watercourses, which are considered to be positive;

• People should be able to move around freely, easily and safely throughout the City; therefore in new developments, streets and routes should generally link up rather than take the form of culs-de-sac and dead ends;

• Mixed uses will be encouraged in centres, and in other areas where they can contribute towards meeting an identified local need;

• To ensure that places feel safe, pleasant and legible, the fronts and backs of buildings should be clearly defined. Windows and more active rooms should face the public realm and main entrances should open onto the public realm, whereas the backs of buildings should be private and face other backs;

• Landscaping should be an integral part of all major development proposals, and this should be designed to complement the new development and the surrounding area;

• Any existing mature trees should be retained where possible, and the planting of new trees will be required where appropriate in accordance with the policy set out in paragraph 3.16A below.

Design Principles for Sustainable Development

3.14E Development has a large impact on issues such as global warming, resource depletion and pollution. Developments, including new and refurbished buildings, should therefore be designed in a way which reduces such harmful impacts and respects the principles of a sustainable environment. Applications for development will be assessed against the following principles:

• Layouts should be designed to minimise reliance on the private car and encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport;

• Existing buildings should be re-used wherever possible and where re-use would contribute to environmental quality;
• Consideration should be given to the use of environmentally friendly materials, including the re-use of materials, where appropriate;

• The orientation, external and internal design of buildings, and use of landscaping, should maximise the use of natural heat and light, contribute to local biodiversity and minimise the use of non-renewable energy sources. The use of renewable energy sources will be actively encouraged; This should not, however, be at the expense of good urban design;

• Good thermal and noise insulation should be provided;

• Consideration should be given to the use of higher densities and more compact layouts where they will not conflict with other Plan policies or with other good urban design principles;

• Consideration should be given to measures that will minimise the consumption of water, for example by the re-use of grey water and water saving devices and practices. Further policies on sustainable use of water and sustainable drainage are included in paragraphs 3.71-3.76;

• Buildings should be long-life and flexible and capable of being adapted for a variety of other uses with the minimum of disruption;

• Any contamination on a site should be assessed, and if necessary, remediation work carried out to ensure that the site is fit for the use for which it is intended.

3.14F [This approach] The principles set out above will be applied throughout the City, including rural areas, as appropriate [but will be particularly important in the City Centre, major redevelopment areas (e.g. Birmingham Heartlands) and outlying estates where existing conditions are poor]. More detailed guidance for particular areas/sites will be provided through [more detailed local planning and or Development Briefs] Supplementary Planning Guidance new Local Development Documents. The City Council will expect the above principles to be applied when development is carried out under permitted development rights (for example, the provision of street furniture).

The City at Night

3.14G The image of the City at night, and particularly of the City Centre, should have the highest quality if Birmingham is to be seen as an attractive place after dark. At a basic level, well-designed lighting helps to improve pedestrian safety, road safety and legibility. An approach combining high quality lighting of buildings, places and spaces, can enhance the quality of the environment and even change it to create a more exciting night-time character. However, the City Council wishes to limit light pollution by avoiding unnecessary up-lighting. The local planning authority will encourage developers to provide imaginative lighting that enhances the night-time appearance of the scheme and the amenity of the area. In appropriate circumstances these will be secured through the use of Section 106
agreements. This will be particularly important in the case of major projects in prominent locations.

Public Art

3.15 In order to add variety to the visual environment, the local planning authority will in appropriate cases encourage the provision of new works of art as part of schemes of development and will have regard to the contribution made by any such works to the appearance of the scheme and to the amenities of the area. In appropriate circumstances these will be secured through the use of Section 106 agreements. This approach will be of particular importance in the case of major projects in prominent locations.

Accessibility and Safety

3.16 The design of new developments [public buildings and other buildings] where the public are admitted (including extensions to existing buildings, changes of use, open space and places of employment) should make provision for the access and other needs of all sectors of the community, including, for example, the elderly and infirm, people with disabilities and parents with pushchairs. Everyone, including people with disabilities and parents with pushchairs, should be able to gain access to buildings and other facilities through a main entrance wherever possible. Shopmobility schemes will be encouraged in centres and may be secured through the use of Section 106 agreements where appropriate. The design of the environment influences both the actual and the perceived threat of crime - two factors which are major problems affecting the quality of life. The need to eliminate or reduce criminal activity and contribute to the safety of people through the adoption of suitable measures at the design stage, in consultation with the police where appropriate, will be of particular importance. More detailed policies for crime reduction measures for new residential schemes are set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Trees and Landscape in the Urban Environment

3.16A Trees are important for their visual amenity, benefits to health, historical significance and nature conservation value. They help to improve air quality and can be used to screen development and soften building lines. The City Council will continue to protect trees through Tree Preservation Orders, planning conditions and conservation legislation. Developers will be expected to give priority to the retention of trees, hedgerows and natural features on development sites, and existing landscaping should also be kept and protected where possible. Where trees or hedgerows are lost as a result of development, replacement trees will be required and, wherever possible, replacement hedgerows. Suitable additional planting will be required to complement and enhance existing landscaping, where this will not result in the loss of other existing semi-natural habitats. Species planted should be appropriate to the locality, and a variety of species will be sought across the City. The City Council will continue to promote tree management plans where appropriate in order to ensure the long term amenity of an area. These will include the management of street trees.
which are coming under increasing threat from redevelopment or from the renewal or replacement of underground public utilities.

3.16B The City Council will itself, and in liaison and partnership with others, seek to expand the City’s woodland resource by encouraging the planting of new woodland wherever appropriate.

Existing Development

3.17 Overall the scale of new development will be small in comparison to the existing stock of buildings. Initiatives to improve the environmental quality of what already exists - such as building enhancement grants, pedestrianisation, the planting and preservation of trees, and greening on major transport corridors - will therefore continue to be promoted, in accordance with the priorities established in paragraph 3.11. More detailed proposals for particular areas are contained in the Constituency Statements.

3.18 High priority will be placed on bringing derelict land and buildings back into positive use. However, proposals which relate to sites which have been the subject of landfill operations should comply with the advice contained in the Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance on this subject. In addition, appropriate measures will be taken to remove non-conforming industrial uses from residential areas and special category (bad neighbour) industries will only be permitted away from residential areas and other community uses.

3.19 As proposals for windfall housing developments are brought forward over the plan period, those proposals on backland sites which would detract from the overall environmental quality and character of a particular area will not be supported. Detailed policies on this aspect have been prepared by the City Council and are available separately as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Conservation of the Built Environment

3.20 The historic legacy of Birmingham is considered to be of prime importance, especially as so much was demolished during the redevelopment of the 50s and 60s. Redundant historic buildings offer a range of opportunities for conversion to new uses and can be an important focus for wider urban regeneration schemes. Designated Conservation Areas within the City will continue to provide a powerful means of preserving the best of our historic and architectural heritage and within these areas and other areas identified in the Constituency Statements as of conservation importance, the emphasis will be on protecting and enhancing the individual character and appearance of the particular area. Where appropriate the Council will make use of its powers to control unauthorised development and signage.

3.21 Not all the City’s buildings or areas of architectural interest enjoy statutory protection and consideration will therefore be given to the designation of new Conservation Areas;
details of a number of such proposals are given in the Constituency Statements. There will
be a periodic review of the Schedule of Listed Buildings and the extent of Conservation Area
coverage to determine whether any additions or amendments should be made.

3.22 Proposals which would adversely affect buildings or areas of architectural interest will
not normally be allowed. There are about 1,800 Listed Buildings, 27 [25] Conservation
Areas, and [four] nine Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest
[Importance] (Highbury Hall and Park, Edgbaston Hall, Birmingham Botanical Gardens, [and] Aston Hall, Sutton Park, Key Hill Cemetery, Westbourne Road Leisure Gardens, The Vale, Edgbaston and Cannon Hill Park) within Birmingham and these will wherever practicable be guaranteed continued long-term protection. In addition, a great number of other buildings within the City are of value because of their local historic, social or architectural interest. Many of these have been included on a ‘local list’ which will continue to be revised and updated, and every effort will be made to encourage the preservation of buildings of local interest.

3.23 More generally, the quality of existing buildings and townscape will be taken into
account in considering proposals for new development. The City’s Conservation Strategy
contains more detail on the Council’s approach to conserving and enhancing Birmingham’s built heritage. The development of the educational, recreational and tourist potential of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings through management and interpretation will be encouraged.

3.24 More detailed policies towards Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, the Local List, Archaeology and Historic Parks and Gardens Historic Landscapes are set out in paras 3.25 -[3.29] 3.33 following and in the Conservation Strategy which has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Listed Buildings

3.25 Any development affecting a listed building should preserve or enhance its character.
Applications affecting Listed Buildings will be considered in the light of the following policies:-

- special regard will be given to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of the buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

- Listed Building Consent will not [normally] be granted for the demolition or partial demolition of a Listed Building unless it can be demonstrated that every possible effort has been made to preserve the structure of the building and to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use.

- the change of use of a listed building should not have a detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building.
• any external or internal alteration or addition to a listed building should not adversely affect its architectural or historic character.

• the setting of listed buildings will be preserved and enhanced by the exercise of appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.

The Local List of Buildings of Local Architectural Interest

3.26 The Local List includes buildings, structures or features of local architectural, archaeological or historic interest, which do not currently enjoy statutory protection, such as archaeological features or sites, historic parks, gardens and landscapes, and interiors. It is regularly reviewed and updated. The demolition of buildings or destruction of other structures or features on the ‘Local List’ [of buildings of architectural or historic interest] will be resisted to the extent of the powers available and wherever possible and appropriate, the setting of such buildings will be preserved. Proposals for the demolition, alteration and/or extension of a building on the ‘Local List’ should ensure that the features of historic or architectural interest are preserved and that all new work and any new buildings [is] are [in keeping with] of at least equivalent quality to [the character of] the original building and make a similar contribution to its setting.

Conservation Areas

3.27 In order to define the special character of Conservation Areas, Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans will be prepared for all of the City’s Conservation Areas. Development proposals within Conservation Areas will be considered in the light of the following policies:-

• the development should [normally] preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area, and the demolition of buildings or removal of trees or other landscape features which make a positive contribution to the area’s character or appearance will be resisted.

• outline planning permission will not [normally] be granted for development within Conservation Areas unless supported by detailed proposals showing siting, design, external appearance and means of access.

• consent to demolish a building in a Conservation Area will [normally] be granted only where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the area. [Demolition will normally only be permitted where there are approved detailed plans for the redevelopment. Control of premature demolition may also be secured by way of a conditional consent or a legal agreement.]

• the development should respect the character of the existing architecture, in scale, grouping and materials, and should generally reflect the character and appearance of the
area.

- where a detailed Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared for a particular conservation area, this will be a material consideration in determining applications for development within that Conservation Area.

3.28 Proposals for development adjacent to Conservation Areas should respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

**Historic [Parks and Gardens] Landscapes**

3.29 The City Council will continue to work with English Heritage to complete the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest for Birmingham. Historic landscapes which do not merit inclusion in the National Register, but which have special local significance, will be added to the City’s Local List (see above). Development that would adversely affect any part of a Registered Park or Garden, or its setting, will not normally be permitted. Similarly, development proposals that would adversely affect the character and appearance of other parks, gardens and open spaces and their settings will not normally be permitted. Planning proposals should respect the historic context of sites on the Register of Parks and Gardens and their settings. In determining applications the Council will take full account of the historic significance of these areas and seek to protect their distinctive characteristics. Similarly, development proposals that would adversely affect the character and appearance of other parks, gardens and open spaces and their settings will not normally be permitted.

**Archaeology**

3.30 Archaeological remains are the product of human activity over thousands of years and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism. There are 10 scheduled Ancient Monuments in Birmingham which are statutorily protected because of their national importance. [A range of other sites] These and other archaeological remains are included on the [West Midlands] Birmingham Sites and Monuments Record.

3.31 There is a need for further improvements to this Record which will continue to be monitored and updated. Wherever possible, sites and remains included on this register and their settings, and in particular scheduled ancient monuments, will be protected and enhanced according to their merits, as will further monuments archaeological remains which may be added to the list.

3.32 The development of the educational, recreational and tourist potential of archaeological sites and monuments remains through management and interpretation will be encouraged where appropriate and where it does not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the remains and their setting.

3.33 More detailed development control policies towards archaeology are set out in paragraph 8.36 and in the Conservation Strategy which has been adopted as Supplementary
Planning Guidance. The forthcoming Archaeology Strategy will also contain detailed guidance on protecting and managing the City’s archaeological resource. In addition, the Council will have regard to the advice set out in PPG16.

Canals

3.34 Birmingham lies at the heart of the national network of canals, which played an important part in the town’s early industrial development. The historic importance of canals is acknowledged, and wherever possible, important groups of canal buildings and features will be protected. Consideration will be given to the designation of canal settings as conservation areas. Canals are a major focus for urban regeneration. Accordingly, new developments adjacent to canals will be expected to enhance their setting and use. Where appropriate, the enhancement of canals and their settings will be secured through S106 agreements. All new canalside developments should be designed in accordance with the Canalside Development in Birmingham - Design Guidelines, which are being prepared as Supplementary Planning Guidance to this Plan. In addition, the City Council will have regard to the advice set out in PPG15.

3.35 Most of the City’s canals pass through inner city areas. Since 1983, the City has been [involved] a partner in the Canal Improvement Programme, which has secured improvements to and restoration of canals as part of the strategy for the physical and environmental regeneration of inner city areas. Some improvements are identified in the Constituency Statements, and further improvement and restoration schemes within the City will be supported.

3.36 Canals are also important for wildlife and make an important contribution to the City’s network of “Key Wildlife Corridors” as set out in the Nature Conservation Strategy for Birmingham. [Canals also] In addition, they offer [great] further potential for tourism, recreation and leisure, as well as for freight transport, and as commuting routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Proposals which seek to promote [this aspect of canals] these activities, and which do not detract from [their] the canals’ historic character, wildlife importance or create conflict with other users, will be encouraged. Canal use for water transfer and other public utilities, such as cable laying, will be considered on their merits and in line with the principles set out above. A strategy for future improvements to the canal network will be set out in the Birmingham Canals Action Plan, which will be prepared through the Birmingham Canals Partnership as a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document.

Nature Conservation

3.37 The importance of safeguarding and enhancing the natural environment of the City is recognised. This involves both the protection of existing areas of nature conservation importance and measures to improve the diversity and quality of wildlife habitats throughout the City. Development which may destroy or adversely affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserve or Site of Importance for Nature Conservation identified in the UDP or subsequently identified will not normally be allowed, and then only if and when compensatory measures are provided to offset (through substitution, replacement or
3.37A Development likely to have an adverse effect on a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) or Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) identified in the UDP, or subsequently identified, will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation value of the site or feature.

3.37B Where development of any SSSI, LNR or SINC is permitted, planning conditions may be imposed and/or planning obligations sought to promote the management and conservation of the nature interests involved and to provide appropriate compensatory measures. However, permission will not be granted for the development of any SSSI, LNR or SINC simply because the nature conservation value of the site has reduced since designation due to a lack of good management.

3.38 Schemes including reclamation of derelict land, and new developments, particularly those on open land, will be expected to respect, and where possible enhance, the local environment, for example through the retention of existing trees and through planting and landscaping schemes using native species where appropriate, with the objective of maximising wildlife value. The retention and enhancement of existing tree cover, hedgerows, wildlife habitats and geological features will normally be supported in order to ensure that the natural heritage of an area is not lost. Development proposals which lead to the loss of a valuable wildlife habitat should, wherever possible, make provision for a replacement habitat of equal value.

3.39 Development which may harm the integrity or continuity of landscape features which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora (including features such as river and stream corridors, canals, active and disused railway corridors, natural greenspaces, urban wasteland sites, hedgerows, ponds and small woods) will only be permitted where the reasons for development clearly outweigh the need to retain the feature and in such cases developers would be expected to provide appropriate mitigation measures. Appropriate management of features will be sought by the imposition of conditions, by the use of planning obligations, and by concluding management agreements with landowners and developers.

3.39A A comprehensive Nature Conservation strategy has been prepared building on existing policies on council owned land (as outlined in “Birmingham A Greener Future”). In and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. This identifies those parts of the City which are particularly valuable from a nature conservation aspect, acknowledges and recognises the value of green corridors and networks, and includes many areas which form part of the City’s open space system (see also paragraph 3.47). Those parts of the City currently lacking in wildlife habitats are identified in the strategy as Wildlife Action Areas. Policies to ensure local biodiversity, appropriate
management and adequate public access [without detriment to the conservation aspect will be set out in accordance with specialist advice] are included. These may be secured through the use of Section 106 agreements. In addition, the Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan provides additional information supporting the Nature Conservation Strategy.

3.40 Existing natural areas will continue to be conserved and enhanced in a variety of ways:

(a) The two existing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - Sutton Park and Edgbaston Pool - and any others which may be designated will continue to be protected in accordance with their statutory status. Sutton Park will be protected in accordance with its additional status as a National Nature Reserve.

(b) Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are identified in the Constituency Statements. These sites, which have all been identified by English Nature, will be protected. The designation of additional areas as SINCs will be supported where there is adequate justification, and other sites with known wildlife importance will also be protected wherever possible.

(c) Four Local Nature Reserves have been declared, at Bromwich Wood, Hill Hook, Rubery Cutting/Leach Green Quarries, Moseley Bog and Plants Brook Reservoirs. It is proposed that two further sites from category (b) will be given the additional statutory protection of being declared and managed as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), thus safeguarding the natural features and providing an educational resource for both school children and adults. The proposed LNRs are at Bromwich Wood and Rubery Cutting/Leach Green Quarries (both in Northfield Constituency), Merecroft Pool (and Moseley Bog (both in Selly Oak Constituency), and Plants Brook Reservoirs) and Hill Hook (both in Sutton Coldfield). Further LNRs will be established as appropriate.

(d) In addition a range of other sites will continue to be managed by the City Council and other organisations for conservation purposes and there will be an increased emphasis on enabling and encouraging local groups in their conservation initiatives.

(e) Further, it is recognised that the management of a range of landscape features of major importance to wild flora and fauna should be encouraged.

Green Belt

3.41 The principal functions of the Green Belt are to [prevent the unplanned outward growth of urban areas, and to prevent the coalescence of settlements,] check the unrestricted sprawl of the built up area, prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another, to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, and to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. [In recent years there has been a general recognition that Green Belt can play a significant role in the urban regeneration effort.]
3.42 Green Belt policies may contribute to urban regeneration by encouraging new investment away from the 'easy option' of greenfield sites to locations within the built-up area. However, as explained in para 3.9, there is a need for the release of some Green Belt land for development, to provide for essential elements of the UDP strategy. These land releases have been kept to a minimum, in accordance with the advice contained in Strategic Guidance that, “As much development as possible ... should be on sites within the present built-up area”, and in accordance with planning policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG 2) which states that Green Belt boundaries are only to be altered in exceptional circumstances. in accordance with Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts, which both state that detailed Green Belt boundaries should be altered only exceptionally.

3.43 The Green Belt boundary is shown on the Proposals Map. It incorporates the boundaries already defined in adopted Local Plans, amended as necessary to take account of the development requirements referred to above. Changes to the extent of the Green Belt resulting from the Local Government boundary changes in 1994 and 1995 are shown on individual plans at the end of the Constituency chapters.

3.44 The Green Belt, also includes areas of countryside which extend into the City, often along river valleys. Such areas are particularly important because of the valuable links which they provide to the open countryside, their visual quality, and their accessibility. Because they are accessible these areas are also particularly vulnerable to development pressures. The following Green Wedges form part of the Green Belt, the detailed boundaries of which are shown on the Proposals Map:

- Hill Hook
- Moor Hall
- Sutton Park
- Newhall Valley
- Walmley
- Sandwell Valley/Tame Valley
- Castle Bromwich
- Cole Valley
- Westley Brook
- Woodgate Valley
- Bartley Reservoir

3.45 Within the Green Belt development will be strictly controlled, in order to protect the character of the area. Proposals for new development will not be permitted except:

(a) Development for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, cemeteries, [institutions standing in large grounds] or other uses appropriate to the character and function of the Green Belt.

(b) The development of outdoor recreation facilities which could not be located within the built-up area and which are in keeping with the character and function of the Green Belt.
Detailed policies towards development in the Green Belt are included in paragraphs 8.56 - 8.63 (Chapter Eight).

3.45A Around 34.5 37.5 hectares of brownfield land, which is to become surplus to requirements at the Minworth Sewage Works, is allocated for industrial development (I50 - see paragraphs 4.31A and 9.42A) and most of this land is to be removed from the Green Belt. The allocation of land at Minworth Sewage Works is proposed in order to address the shortage in the supply of “Best Urban” industrial land. Demand for “Best Urban” land is buoyant and insufficient opportunities exist within the urban area to meet demand for the remainder of the Plan period. The land at Minworth Sewage Works is a brownfield site, adjoins the existing industrial estate at Midpoint Park and creates firm, long-term defensible Green Belt boundaries. The need for “Best Urban” employment land in the short- and medium-term is considered to outweigh the harm that would be caused by the removal of this land from the Green Belt. It is therefore considered that in this case, there are exceptional circumstances that justify the release of Green Belt land.

3.45B In August 1997 the Secretary of State granted planning consent for a large-scale industrial development within (the then) confirmed Green Belt at Peddimore (I51). Following a region-wide investigation, it was established that there was no brownfield site of sufficient size available in the region suitable for development as a Major Investment Site. The Secretary of State therefore accepted that this shortfall represented very special circumstances, justifying the development of land within the Green Belt. As a consequence of this decision, it is proposed to remove this land from the Green Belt. In revising the boundary of the Green Belt in the vicinity of this proposal it has been necessary to define a new boundary that will endure. As a consequence an “Area of Development Restraint” (ADR1) is proposed at Peddimore which will be reserved to help meet the Region’s requirements for accommodating very large scale industrial development in the longer term. For further details of the policy background, see the Economy Chapter, paragraphs 4.30A-E, and the Sutton Coldfield Chapter, paragraphs 9.42 A and B.

3.45C An Area of Development Restraint (ADR) is an area excluded from the Green Belt where development needs beyond the Plan period may be accommodated. In the meantime, the policies controlling development within the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 3.45 will apply within the Area of Development Restraint, subject to the proviso that only developments which do not prejudice the long-term use of the land for Major Investment Site purposes will be permitted. The ADR at Peddimore (ADR1) is to be protected specifically, and only, for longer term industrial development needs as specified above in paragraph 3.45B.

3.45D It is also proposed to remove about 60 hectares of land from the Green Belt, for a Premium Employment Site at Bassetts Pole. This development is required to meet the premium employment needs of Birmingham and Solihull, as specified in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11). The proposed development cannot be accommodated within the built-up area. In selecting the most suitable site for the proposed development, the City Council considered the potential options against a number of key criteria, including the impact on the Green Belt, as set out in paragraph 7.14 of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11).
3.45E At Quinton Meadows, it is proposed to extend the Green Belt boundary to include Highfield Farm Recreation Ground and the land allocated as open space in this Plan (Proposals E37A, E37B and E132).

3.46 Proper management of Green Belt is also important, if the requirements of recreation, landscape, nature conservation, agriculture etc. are to be reconciled and the full potential of these areas is to be realised. A new Country Park is [proposed for] being established in the Newhall Valley which will provide a major recreational resource - with public access - serving large areas in the north of the City. Support will continue to be given to appropriate management initiatives, such as Project Kingfisher, in the Cole Valley and an Urban Fringe Project [s, such as the initiative proposed] for Sutton Coldfield (Green Arc Partnership). The Beacon Regional Park was established in 1986 and is an important recreational resource and area of open land serving the western and north western parts of the City. While only a small part of the Park lies within the City’s administrative area (the Sandwell Valley Green Wedge), the City Council will continue to work closely with the neighbouring authorities to enhance the Park and establish a management framework.

Open Space*

3.47 The policy will continue to be to develop an integrated and linked [system] network of open space* throughout the City ranging from the Green Belt including Green Wedges to local play areas and including Country Parks, informal open space, formal parks, playing fields, golf courses and woodlands. The linking element is provided by linear open spaces ensuring a range of recreational facilities accessible to all and enabling the natural wildlife of the countryside to penetrate deep into the urban area.

3.48 Complementing and forming part of linear open space is a [network] system of interlinked walkways often utilising canals and rivers. The completion and extension of this network, including footpaths within the rural areas of Birmingham, will continue to be a priority, in particular to ensure that full public access is provided to all linear open spaces and to the countryside. Every opportunity will also be taken to enhance and improve links into the national system and to promote Birmingham’s strategic importance at the hub of existing and proposed long distance routes.

*Definitions:

For the purposes of the UDP, “open space” is defined as “all open land of recreational or public value, including playing fields, which primarily consists of natural elements such as trees, grass and water. It may or may not have free public access. It may or may not be used or held by the City Council for recreational purposes”.

For the purposes of the UDP, “public open space” is defined as “open space, including playing fields, owned by the City Council or to which there is a public right of access, used by the public primarily for recreation purposes. It does not include private or education playing fields, nor does it include municipal or private golf courses, cemeteries, or open areas within housing estates which substitute for private gardens”.

Chapter 3 – Environment
3.49 The importance of the canal systems which also form part of the linear open space will continue to be recognised.

3.50 Proposals for development which would have an adverse effect on this open space network will not normally be allowed, and the completion and extension of the network of open space will be a priority.

3.51 In the City Centre open spaces make a particularly valuable contribution to the quality of the urban environment. As a consequence the development of any public open space in excess of 1000 sq.m. will normally be resisted in the central area.

3.54 3.52A Proposals which would result in the loss of urban open space will not normally be allowed, [This will include areas to which there is no general right of access] particularly where:

- Proposals which would result in the loss of open space will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. In determining whether exceptional circumstances exist, the City Council will take account of the availability of public open space nearby, its quality, and how well it meets local needs. It is unlikely that developers will be able to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances exist where:

  (a) existing public open space provision falls below the standard of 2.0 hectares per 1000 population (see para 3.53); and/or

(b) there would be a loss of land from the open space network.

3.53 The distribution and accessibility of public open space, [and its accessibility], is also important. The standard of 2 hectares of public open space per 1000 population will be used to assess the adequacy of existing public open space provision across the City. Provision will normally be calculated on a Ward basis. However, fluctuations in provision within Wards, and provision within adjoining Wards where sites fall close to Ward or City

Public Open Space
boundaries, will also be taken into account, subject to the minimum standard above, and subject to the cumulative provision for adjacent Wards meeting the above standard. [Past practice has been to set a target of 2 hectares of public open space per 1000 population. In many parts of the City this ‘target’ is not realistically attainable. It does, however, provide a useful measure against which the adequacy of public open space provision in different parts of the City can be judged, and it will be retained on this basis.] Currently public open space is below the standard in almost half the Wards in the City and there is a deficiency in most parts of the inner area. Redressing the inequality in provision is important, but difficult due to the built-up nature of the environment. Every effort will be made to encourage the provision of new public open space, incorporating new nature conservation interest where appropriate, in areas of existing deficiency where the opportunity arises. One means of achieving this is through the provision of public open space to serve the needs of new residential development and policies to achieve this are set out in paragraphs 5.20B–5.20E. [The need to take steps to improve this position is reflected in the priorities for action identified in para. 3.11. It will also be important to improve the quality of open space and ensure that all dwellings are within reasonable walking distance (400m) from a local area of open space.] Improvement in the quality of public open space is equally important. In localised areas where existing provision meets the standard of 2 hectares per 1000 population, it may be more appropriate to improve facilities on existing public open space rather than provide new areas.

3.53A Improvements may include measures to improve safety and security such as lighting and natural surveillance, to provide or improve play and recreational facilities or to improve access. The overall objective is to provide an area of safe, attractive and useable public open space, accessible to all sectors of the community including carers with pushchairs and people with disabilities within reasonable walking distance (400m) of all dwellings.

3.53B New residential developments generate a need for public open space and children’s play facilities to serve the occupants of the new homes. These will be secured through S106 agreements, where appropriate. This will normally be provided within the curtilage of the site but in certain circumstances off-site provision or improvements to existing local facilities, including playing fields, may be more appropriate. Policies are set out in paragraphs 3.61 and 5.20B–5.20E.

3.54  - See paragraph 3.52A

**Playing Fields**

3.55   [Again, past practice has been to set a target for playing field provision – 1.2 hectares per 1000 population] A standard of 1.2 hectares per 1000 population of playing fields provision (excluding education playing fields) will be used to assess the adequacy of existing playing field provision across the City. This standard [target] is only reached in [8] 6 of the 39 Wards in the City and, as in the case of public open space, opportunity to improve this situation is limited, due to the built up nature of the environment. Every effort will therefore be made to bring existing pitches into more beneficial use as the opportunity arises through for example improvements to drainage and the provision of changing facilities. [is not realistically capable of being achieved in many areas. The target will
nevertheless be retained as a standard to assess the adequacy of provision in different parts of the city.)

3.55A In Wards where existing provision is below 1.2 hectares per 1000 population, consideration will be given to using contributions in lieu of public open space secured under Section 106 agreements planning obligations on new residential developments towards meeting this shortfall or to bringing existing pitches into more beneficial use through, for example, improvements to drainage and the provision of changing facilities.

3.56 Playing field provision falls into three main categories:-

- Playing fields provided by the City Council’s Leisure Services Committee as part of its leisure and recreation function, including tennis courts and bowling greens.
- [privately-owned] all other playing fields - eg. company sports pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens.
- school playing fields and school tennis courts.

3.57 [Private] Playing fields have fallen under increasing pressure for development in recent years. Development of such [pitches] playing fields will not normally be allowed particularly in areas which fall significantly below the standard of 1.2 hectares playing field provision per 1000 population. Where, in exceptional circumstances, permission is granted for the development of a [private] sports [pitch] field this will be subject to the provision of equivalent long-term recreational community benefit (where appropriate, through the use of S106 agreements) [such as improvements to other sports facilities in the area, or the provision of an all-weather pitch]. Planning permission will not be granted for development simply because a [pitch] playing field has been allowed to fall out of use and become derelict.

3.58 Some school playing fields are also used by the general public outside school hours. This ‘dual use’ of educational facilities will continue to be encouraged.

3.59 [Changes in the administration of education, involving greater responsibility for Governors over the day-to-day management of schools, may have effects on school playing field provision. It is possible that] Some school playing fields will become surplus to educational requirements. In these circumstances development will not normally be allowed and the site will be expected to remain in playing field or open space use, especially in areas where existing provision falls significantly below the standard of 1.2 hectares per 1000 population. However, in some cases, other uses may be more appropriate, but such uses will only be acceptable where there will be an appropriate community benefit, which will be secured through a S106 agreement.

3.60 The quality of sports pitches is also important. Encouragement will continue to be given to improvements, for example to changing facilities, and to the provision of all-weather pitches, which can be used more intensively than grass pitches. An all-weather
pitch is considered to be the equivalent of \([2.5] \)\ 2 grass pitches and will be assessed on this basis in calculating the extent of existing sports pitch provision in an area.

**Children’s Play**

3.61 It is important that a safe and accessible play area is available for all children. This will normally be expected to be provided within 400m safe walking distance of all dwellings and [but] will also take into account local neighbourhood identities, the demographic profile and physical barriers such as busy roads. *Careful attention should be given to the design and location of play areas to avoid the risk of disturbance to nearby residents. Children’s play areas will normally be required in all new residential developments of 20 or more dwellings in accordance with policy outlined in paragraphs 3.53B and 5.20B-5.30E. [In addition small incidental play areas for pre-school children will be provided in areas of special need.] Where appropriate, this will be secured through the use of S106 agreements.*

**Allotments**

3.62 Allotments provide a much needed facility especially in areas where private gardens are limited and they will continue to be protected. *There is uneven provision of allotments across the City. Redressing this inequality is important, and every effort will be made to encourage the provision of new allotments in areas of deficiency, where the opportunity arises.*

3.62A Planning permission will not be granted for the redevelopment of allotments simply because the allotments have been allowed to fall out of use and become derelict. Where it can be demonstrated that the demand for allotments has fallen, consideration will be given to alternative uses for surplus allotments. [First consideration will be given to] Such uses will be alternative recreational, [nature conservation or horticultural uses, subject to the policy set out in paragraph 3.52A. If in exceptional circumstances planning permission is granted for other forms of development on part of the site this will be subject to the provision of an appropriate, equivalent, long-term recreational community benefit[, for example, improvements to allotments on the remainder of the site].

**Sports Facilities**

3.63 The increasing demand for a variety of indoor sports [and leisure] facilities, including multi-purpose buildings is recognised and a spread of facilities throughout the city will be encouraged. *Where there is an identified demand for particular sports and physical recreation facilities, redevelopment of existing facilities for other purposes will not be allowed until either adequate replacement for their loss has been secured, or adequate alternative facilities have been identified.*

3.63A Public swimming provision is important and a chain of leisure pools and traditional local pools will be maintained across the city. The provision of an international standard 50m pool will be supported.
3.64 Dual use facilities within the City’s schools provide a useful contribution towards the recreational and leisure requirements of the City. The service offers educational opportunities through sports coaching and provides the springboard for participation in sport for all ages. Their continued use will be encouraged, as will proposals for any new dual use facilities.

### Waste Treatment and Disposal Management

3.64A The Council’s waste management policies reflect the key principles set out in PPG10 and the Government’s Waste Strategy, ‘Waste Strategy 2000, and in particular the principle of “Best Practicable Environment Option (BPEO)”’, the “proximity principle” and the concept of a waste hierarchy. The Council will adopt a sustainable approach to waste management which seeks to ensure that adequate facilities exist for the treatment and disposal of waste within the City, achieving the best balance of social, environmental and economic costs and benefits, and taking account of the following principles:

- Consideration of the best practicable environmental option for each waste stream;
- Regional self sufficiency;
- The proximity principle; and
- The waste hierarchy.

3.65 The City Council is keen to encourage the minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste and wishes Birmingham to be as self-sufficient as possible in dealing with its waste. Accordingly, the provision of waste treatment facilities which reduce the amount of waste for disposal, particularly waste recycling plants dealing with materials such as wood and construction materials – and in-house treatment at source, will be encouraged in suitable locations. Scrapyards can also provide a valuable service in re-using and recycling materials. However, in assessing proposals for all new waste treatment operations, including scrapyards and recycling plants, the suitability of any particular site will be considered in relation to the likely impact on environmentally sensitive areas, the visual amenity of the area, nearby residential properties, other adjoining uses, and site accessibility, particularly by rail. On construction sites, waste materials should be re-used on site where safe and practicable to do so. Applications for new facilities must, wherever appropriate, be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment. No new sites have been specifically allocated in the Plan for the management, treatment and processing of household wastes. Existing municipal waste sites are considered to have sufficient capacity to deal with anticipated levels of household waste arisings throughout the Plan period, and to have sufficient flexibility to accommodate any Materials Recycling Facilities (MRFs) that may be required by the City Council during the lifetime of the Plan. Although there is likely to be a demand for new commercial waste treatment and processing facilities in Birmingham during the Plan period, at present it is not possible to quantify this with any accuracy. A Regional Waste Strategy for the West Midlands is currently in preparation, and the technical studies associated with this will provide information on future requirements for waste management, treatment and processing facilities and will inform the City Council’s
own Waste Management Strategy. The City Council will continue to work with adjacent waste planning authorities to establish the likely need and demand for such facilities, and if appropriate, will identify and allocate sites for this purpose in future development plans.

3.65A In the meantime, the City Council’s policy is that the development of all new waste management, processing and treatment facilities should be provided in accordance with current national and regional planning guidance, should be in appropriate locations, and should be sited so that they minimise any adverse impacts on local communities, the environment and the local transport network. Where appropriate, the City Council will require mitigation such as protective screening and/or landscaping to minimise the impact of such facilities on adjacent areas. Proposals for different types of facility will be assessed against the criteria set out in the following paragraphs.

3.65B The following types of location are regarded as being suitable for developments that involve the management, treatment and processing of wastes:

- **a)** Industrial areas, especially those containing other heavy or specialised industrial uses;
- **b)** Degraded, contaminated or derelict land, provided that any nature conservation issues are adequately addressed by the development;
- **c)** Existing or former landfill sites, provided that any problems of contamination and/or gas migration can be safely addressed;
- **d)** Existing or redundant sites or buildings which can be re-used or adapted;
- **e)** Sites previously occupied by other types of waste management facilities; and
- **f)** Other suitable sites located adjacent to railways, canals, or major junctions in the road network.

New energy from waste plants, incinerators, scrapyards, waste transfer stations, brick-crushers and other waste management, treatment and processing facilities that are likely to cause noise, disturbance, air pollution, smells and other nuisances, are expected to be located within existing industrial areas, and will not be permitted in or adjacent to residential areas, unless any adverse environmental impacts can be adequately mitigated.

3.65C When considering proposals for new or expanded waste management, treatment and processing facilities, the City Council will take the following into account:

- The need for the facility and its proximity to the source of the waste to be treated;
- The impact that the facility is likely to have upon the environment and adjoining uses, particularly in relation to sensitive land uses such as residential areas and nature conservation areas;
• The need for pollution control measures appropriate to the type of wastes to be processed or handled;

• The effectiveness or appropriateness of any measures proposed to mitigate or overcome any adverse environmental impacts;

• The impact of traffic generated by the proposal and the potential to transport bulky goods by more sustainable transport modes, e.g. rail or canal.

### Waste Recycling Facilities

3.66 The recycling of waste has the potential to both reduce the quantity of waste to be disposed of, and demand for raw materials. The Government has set a target for the recycling or composting of 30% of household waste by 2010, and the City Council is aiming to meet this target, by expanding the scope of its current kerbside collections, and thereby the proportion of household waste that is recycled. In order to meet this target, the City Council will need to develop a new Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). It is anticipated that this facility can be accommodated within an existing waste depot. However, at present, the market for recycled products has not developed sufficiently for it to be commercially viable to recycle all materials. There is currently only a significant market for recycled paper in Birmingham. The existing Kappa plant in Nechells has sufficient capacity to recycle all of the waste paper that is currently generated in Birmingham, and indeed, currently handles a significant amount of waste paper from areas outside the City. It is not anticipated that any further paper recycling plants will be required during the Plan period. There is known to be a market for recycled or secondary aggregates in Birmingham, but accurate information about this industry is currently lacking. The demand for other recycled materials is at present limited, and although it is likely to grow in the future as technology improves, it is uncertain whether plants for the recycling of other materials will be required in Birmingham during the Plan period. Any proposals for the development of such facilities will be considered against the policy set out in paragraphs 3.65A – 3.65C.

3.66A Waste recycling requires a range of facilities, including those needed to sort, process and bulk up recyclable materials into loads for transporting elsewhere. There is also a need for facilities such as bottle banks, where the public may deposit different types of waste for collection. Where they are subject to planning control, the provision of facilities for the recycling of waste, such as bottle and other recycling banks, will be encouraged in shopping centres, at or adjacent to community facilities, in new residential developments and in other locations that are easily and safely accessible, provided that there is no adverse effect on adjacent uses. There is separate Supplementary Planning Guidance covering the siting of these facilities in supermarket car parks. All such facilities should be carefully designed and sited, to minimise their visual impact. Recycling facilities used by the public should be located at multi-use sites so that extra journeys by car are not encouraged. There is separate supplementary planning guidance covering the siting of these facilities in supermarket car parks. Other proposals involving the recycling or composting of wastes will be considered in the light of the policy set out in paragraphs 3.65A – 3.65C above.
Energy from Waste Plants

3.67 Waste incinerators can provide an efficient means of reducing the amount of waste for disposal, and an opportunity for energy recovery. At present (2004) more than 65% of the City’s household waste is processed at the energy from waste plant in Tyseley and this generates enough power to run a leisure centre and several blocks of flats. However, it is acknowledged that, where it is a practical and viable option, the re-use or recycling of waste products is preferable to incinerating waste. The City Council will therefore investigate alternative options for processing household waste which would reduce the need for it to be incinerated, such as expanding the kerbside collection of recyclable materials, and developing a new Materials Recycling Facility. The new municipal Energy from Waste Plant at Tyseley meets current EC standards. An incinerator is also operating at Heartlands Hospital, burning hospital waste only. Proposals for the expansion of existing waste treatment facilities or new waste treatment facilities will be considered in the context of the relevant Government guidance, the Regional Waste Strategy and the Birmingham Waste Management Strategy. Such proposals should also be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment, as they will normally fall within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) England and Wales) Regulations 1999. The Birmingham Waste Management Strategy is currently in preparation and will provide detailed guidance on the City’s future waste management requirements. This will also contribute towards a Regional Waste Strategy for the West Midlands. Proposals for the expansion of the existing energy from waste facility at Tyseley or for new energy from waste plants will be considered in the light of the policy set out in paragraphs 3.65A – 3.65C above.

Landfill Sites

3.68 At present, there is only one landfill site operating within the City boundary at Minworth Sewage Works. No further sites suitable for landfill have been identified at present, and it is unlikely that there will be scope for large-scale landfill operations in Birmingham in the foreseeable future.

3.69 Applications for landfill must be accompanied by a full environmental impact assessment if they fall within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) England and Wales) Regulations 1999. Landfill will not be permitted on any Site of Special Scientific Interest, Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, Scheduled Ancient Monument, or other archaeological site of national importance.

3.70 The City Council wishes to encourage the rehabilitation of former landfill sites, subject to adequate remedial measures and monitoring of gas and contaminants. Whilst monitoring is taking place, former landfill sites may be suitable for temporary uses. Suitable uses could include open space, woodland, sports pitches, park and ride or open storage. However, permission will only be granted for such uses if appropriate measures can be put into place to avoid the build-up or migration of gas, or the leaching of contaminants. This may be secured through conditions or a S106 agreement. Where tests demonstrate that gas generation and contamination on former landfill sites has fallen to acceptable levels, the land may be used for development. Applications for development on known former landfill sites must be accompanied by supporting evidence, demonstrating that this is the case.
Development of land within 250 metres of the boundary of existing, former or restored landfill sites may also require a site investigation for the detection of migrating gas or leaching contaminants. More detailed policies towards the development of former landfill sites and land within 250 metres of such sites are contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**New Development and Waste**

3.70A Waste is normally generated in the construction of new development and throughout its operational life. Planning permission for proposals for major new development will not be granted, except where the proposals include a comprehensive, detailed and practical scheme for dealing with the waste that is likely to arise both at the construction phase and during the life of the development. The Council will encourage the provision of on-site waste management where this represents the best practicable environmental option. The provision of on-site waste management will be assessed against the criteria set out above in paragraphs 3.65A - 3.65C.

**Water and Drainage**

3.71 The City Council recognises the importance of the natural watercourse system in providing essential drainage. The City Council also wishes to protect water resources by minimising the use of water, and to improve water quality. Proposals for new development will therefore be expected to take account of any effects they might have upon water and drainage and to consider using rain water as a resource water minimisation techniques to conserve water.

3.71A The effects of development should be dealt with at or as near as possible to source in order to mitigate any detrimental effects and protect the resources. The City Council will have regard to the issues raised in the West Midlands - Tame Local Environment Agency Plan (LEAP) and in the forthcoming Environment Agency Action Plan, and will consult with the Environment Agency on planning applications for developments affecting water resources and drainage.

3.72 The impact on the water table must be considered for all new developments. In general, the removal of rainwater from the natural drainage system should be avoided unless the water is to be used as a resource. The full potential for the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) must always be reviewed before any rainwater/run-off is diverted into sewers or storm water drains. Wherever possible, rainwater should drain into the ground, via adequate control devices. However, full consideration must be given to the suitability of the underlying ground to accept the additional ingress of water. In particular, direct drainage into the ground in areas with a known history of high levels of ground water should be avoided. In these areas, the controlled extraction of ground water should be encouraged.

3.73 New development should also avoid polluting ground and surface water. With regard to groundwater, reference will be made to the Environment Agency publication entitled “Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater.” Development should be served by
adequate full drainage and treatment facilities. Any development involving the use of chemicals or resulting in contaminated surface water run-off should include adequate pollution prevention measures. All oil and chemical stores and other sources of polluting material should be bunded or otherwise contained. Where feasible, surface run-off and contaminated water should be treated at source, through the use of “natural” features such as reed beds. If a site is contaminated or likely to be contaminated, developers will be required to undertake site investigatory work and, where necessary, submit remediation strategies either before a planning application is determined or through a planning condition or legal obligation as appropriate.

3.74 River and stream corridors are liable to natural flooding. New developments should not encroach onto natural flood plains and obstructions to natural flows should be avoided. Where possible, new developments should restore natural flood plains and remove obstructions. New developments should not adversely affect the ability to carry out flood alleviation works, and should protect accesses to watercourses for maintenance. New developments should not increase the rate of run-off to watercourses or to surface water sewers draining directly to watercourses. Water should naturally drain into the ground, or if this is neither practical nor desirable, then storage should be provided on site by means of oversized pipes, tanks or balancing ponds / areas. Where areas are being redeveloped, then a reduction in the rate of run-off should be actively encouraged.

3.75 To develop sustainable urban drainage, the extraction of ground water from areas of high water table should be encouraged for commercial and industrial use. This will reduce demands from more vulnerable sources of water and reduce problems associated with high levels of ground water. The policy of natural drainage of surface water into the ground or the control of direct flows to watercourses will lessen the impact of flash floods and decrease the risk of flooding. This will not only prevent flooding to properties but also reduce future maintenance and flood alleviation schemes.

3.76 As well as providing water and drainage, the City’s rivers, streams, lakes and ponds are an important amenity and are also valuable as wildlife habitats. The opening up of culverted streams and rivers as part of development proposals will be encouraged, as will other measures which would increase the wildlife and amenity value of natural water features, provided that there is no adverse effect upon water quality and drainage.

Air Quality

3.77 The City Council is committed to improving air quality within Birmingham and will require development which minimises or reduces air pollution. This will be addressed in various ways, including:

• an increase in tree cover throughout the City (see paragraph 3.16A)

• modes of transport which reduce the impact of travel on air pollution (see Chapter 6)

• the use of alternative clean fuels
3.78 When assessing planning applications, the implications of new development for air quality will be taken into account.

**Energy**

3.79 The City Council is aiming to minimise energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions within Birmingham and encourage the use of renewable energy resources. The City Council recognises that one of the best ways to reduce energy use and therefore carbon emissions is by designing buildings to be energy efficient. The City Council will therefore require development which minimises or reduces energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, thereby helping to reduce the City’s impact on global warming, resource depletion and pollution.

3.79A The City Council is committed towards carbon dioxide reduction and renewable energy targets, in line with the Government’s current target for renewable energy generation, i.e. that 10% of UK electricity requirements should be met from renewable energy sources by 2010. The City Council’s current target is to acquire 15% of its own energy use from renewable energy sources and to reduce its CO$_2$ emissions by 30% from 1990 levels by 2010.

3.79B The City Council is aware of the potential for renewable energy sources within Birmingham, in particular, solar energy (photovoltaics and solar heat). The City Council will also support Combined Heat and Power installations, where appropriate, as they are a sustainable form of energy by using the heating and electricity generation potential of energy usage. As far as possible, the layout of new developments should take account of the potential for future Combined Heat and Power schemes. The City Council will give favourable consideration to proposals for the application of Combined Heat and Power in developments with significant energy demand, e.g. major mixed-use developments, subject to full consideration of any adverse effects on local amenity that might arise as a result of the development.

3.79C The City Council is aware that there needs to be clear guidance about the circumstances in which proposals for renewable energy developments will be permitted. A range of clearly specified and suitable environmental criteria will therefore be developed in a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document. Development of renewable energy sources will be permitted where there would be no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area; or on areas of ecological, cultural, historic or archaeological interest; or on the living conditions of nearby residents and the operation of other established uses in the vicinity. In assessing the impact of the proposed development, account will be taken of the possibility of including mitigating measures and any harmful implications of the development balanced against the potential of wider environmental benefits.

3.79D In addition, the achievement of minimising energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions will be addressed in a number of ways, including:

- locating the most intensive forms of development within the City Centre or other centres and along public transport corridors (see Chapter 2)
• mixed use development

• modes of transport which reduce the impact of travel on energy resources (see Chapter 6)

• layout and design (see paragraph 3.14E – Design Principles for Sustainable Development)

Further detailed guidance will be set out in the forthcoming Supplementary Planning Guidance Document on Sustainable Development (see Chapter 8).
CHAPTER 4 - ECONOMY

Context

4.1 The performance of the City’s economy will determine the number and type of jobs, the level of population, the amount of wealth created, as well as the extent to which the Council and other agencies are able to tackle wide ranging inter-dependent urban and social problems. The Council’s policies, whether expressed through its UDP, Economic Strategy or elsewhere, must be sympathetic to the economic restructuring that has been taking place and to exploit new economic growth opportunities.

4.2 The economy has undergone dramatic changes since the early 1970s - [first suffering from a period of unprecedented decline, followed more recently by an upturn in its economic fortunes - with employment growth taking place in the service sector and signs that the decline in manufacturing employment has finally bottomed out.] suffering from two deep seated recessions (1979-82 and 1990-92) which have particularly affected the manufacturing sectors. More recently there have been signs of improvement but the state of the City’s economy still gives cause for concern. In July 1993 Birmingham was designated a full Development Area. From January 2000, the majority of the City remains within the revised Assisted Area as part of the second tier of Regional Assistance, and in the large part is eligible for European Union funding under Objective 2.

4.3 While many of the factors affecting the local economy are structural and are operating at wider national and international levels (over-capacity in the European motor industry is an example), the decline suffered by the City’s manufacturing sector has been attributed in no small part to factors peculiar to the West Midlands economy. These included:-

• Inadequate investment in developing products, processes and training.

• Over-dependence of the economy on a narrow range of declining sectors.

• An environment and image - which remains in part - unattractive to modern investors and employers.

4.4 Additional economic forces at work have included:-

• The disparity between the relative employment fortunes of the conurbation compared with the rest of the West Midlands Region - causing a major relative shift of manufacturing employment (and population) to smaller towns. This process has been exacerbated by the shortage of good quality industrial land within the City.

• Regional policies of the 1960’s and 1970’s which led to a ‘lost generation’ of new industrial investment in product lines and processes.

• An increasing proportion of jobs within the City being taken by commuters - increasing the concentration of unemployment within the inner city.

4.5 [The Council’s ability to] Within certain constraints, the City Council, in partnership with the private sector and other agencies, has sought to tackle key economic issues, [is heavily
constrained. Any action that the Council undertakes must be set in the context of [the actions of] Central Government policies and in future will be influenced by the Regional Economic Strategy being pursued by Advantage West Midlands (the West Midlands Regional Development Agency (RDA)) [and the private sector]. Furthermore, the Birmingham UDP - which is essentially a land use planning tool - can only address a limited range of issues. Nonetheless, these are of fundamental importance and [complementary to] reinforced by the wider policies set out [by the Council] in Birmingham’s Economic Strategy.

**Future Prospects**

4.6 The Council’s commitment to the revitalisation of the City’s economy has already been agreed as part of its Economic Strategy. This recognises that the City’s prosperity, and hence its ability to provide employment, depends in large measure upon its ability to attract inward investment and to ‘export’ its goods and services (whether to other countries or other parts of the UK). *The Economic Strategy for Birmingham continues to evolve and adopt to changing local national and international circumstances. To reflect the many interests in the economic life of the City, Birmingham City Council has been working with its partners to develop a shared Economic Strategy. The Economic Strategy provides the strategic framework within which organisations from the public, private and voluntary sector will take action to respond to the challenges and opportunities facing the local economy.*

4.7 The Economic Strategy therefore gives a high priority to those industries which export a substantial proportion of their output. By and large this means manufacturing industry and those services which bring in revenue from outside - such as tourism, *banking* professional and financial services, [and] higher education and, increasingly, the potential of knowledge-based industries.

4.8 Service industry is becoming increasingly important to the City’s economy. While manufacturing remains crucial to the generation of growth and prosperity, continuous improvements in productivity mean that even a successful manufacturing sector with a growing output is unlikely to generate many of the new jobs required to reduce unemployment significantly. Indeed, to compete successfully in the market economy the City’s firms must seek to reduce employment (for example by the rapid adoption of labour-saving new technologies).

4.9 The prospects for sustained economic recovery of the World and UK economies are fragile. The scale of local economic recovery, the attraction of investment and the creation of new jobs depends on these wider forces. *Birmingham has considerable potential for economic and employment growth over the next 10 years, particularly within the 10 key business sectors, or “clusters,” that are identified within the West Midlands Economic Strategy “Delivering Advantage,” published by the West Midlands Regional Development Agency (Advantage West Midlands) in January 2004. The 10 clusters are:*

- Transport Technologies
- Building Technologies
- Food and Drink
- Tourism and Leisure
- High-Value Consumer Products
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
Specialist Business and professional Services
Environmental Technologies
Media
Medical Technologies

This potential relates to the proposed expansion of the Region’s key industries, including:

- motor vehicles and components
- high technology knowledge-based industries
- business and financial services
- tourism, media and culture.

The balance of available evidence suggests that:

- Unemployment will continue to be a problem, albeit one of decreasing magnitude. Unemployment levels are likely to remain high among specific groups such as the long-term unemployed, ethnic minority groups and some young people and is particularly acute in inner city areas and on some outlying estates. Economic growth and improvements in output will not necessarily be matched by equally higher employment levels particularly amongst Birmingham residents. Tackling this issue is a key priority.

- The nature of the workforce will change - there will be fewer young people entering the labour market, although there will be a greater proportion of women in the workforce. However, skill shortages will continue to be a problem for employers: this reinforces the need to continue training/retraining initiatives especially for the long-term unemployed.

- Many of the new jobs will be in the service sector and will often be part-time and low paid.

Birmingham’s inner city communities - characterised by their concentration of relatively vulnerable disadvantaged population (for example, in terms of skills and ethnic composition) will continue to bear the brunt of these trends.

[Currently, the economy is growing more quickly than at any time since the early 1970s.] Since the end of the 1990-92 recession the City’s economy has experienced modest growth. The extent to which this will be sustained is uncertain. However, this has been reflected by increasing confidence amongst developers and businesses in Birmingham as witnessed by:-

- An upturn in Business enquiries to the City Council and the number of new firms established in the City and indigenous firms expanding, often to new premises.

- New purpose-built office, leisure and tourism developments facilities which have recently been developed at Birmingham Great Park and in the City Centre, such as the International Convention Centre and National Indoor Arena and Brindleyplace including the National Sea Life Centre.
• Continued interest in [regenerating] investing in older industrial areas, such as Heartlands, Tyseley, Newtown South Aston and Tame Valley/Witton, notably through the establishment of Birmingham Heartlands, Economic Regeneration Areas and Industrial Improvement Areas such as Tyseley and the Jewellery Quarter respectively.

• Strong commitment to the economic role of the City Centre, as shown by the proposed redevelopment of the Bull Ring Shopping Centre, major City Centre redevelopment schemes such as the Bull Ring, Martineau Galleries, Masshouse Circus, Millennium Point and the former Central TV Studios and Environs.

• The continuing success of new technology related developments such as Aston Science Park and the Birmingham Research Park.

• Investment proposals by a number of existing employers - notably the major motor manufacturers.

4.11A An adequate supply of quality land and premises is essential to the City’s economic prosperity. The shortage of good quality land and premises of the right size, specification and location will not only have a negative impact on the competitiveness of local businesses but also act as a deterrent to potential investors.

4.11B A large number of older buildings do not meet modern business requirements and many derelict sites are not immediately available for development because they are in need of costly clearance and reclamation work. A high priority will be given to initiatives which address the need for sustainable brownfield development.

4.12 The underlying processes at work in the local economy are unlikely to alter dramatically over the next few years. Birmingham possesses certain fundamental economic assets and opportunities upon which the City Council can base its future strategies whether expressed through this plan or in the Economic Strategy. It is important that future policies and proposals not only seek to support economic regeneration but recognise the initiatives needed in addressing some of the inequalities in the local economy. The greatest challenge facing the City is in ensuring that both renewal and new development is steered in such a way as to benefit local residents.

Policy Statement

4.13 The UDP’s economic policies and proposals [are based on] reflect the vision of the West Midlands set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11) and the Regional Economic Strategy as a world-class Region, with Birmingham as the international City and Regional Capital at its heart. The aim is to release Birmingham’s full economic potential for the benefit not just of the City itself, but also for the benefit of the Region as a whole. Within this context there are two broad objectives:-

(a) To ensure that the land use policies and proposals maximise opportunities for economic revitalisation and urban renewal.
(b) To ensure that the benefits of economic revitalisation are spread as widely as possible amongst the City’s residents and especially disadvantaged sections of the community.

4.14 The UDP is to be guided by the Council’s existing policies which are set out in its Economic Strategy. This plots a long term course for the City’s recovery. The UDP’s approach to the economy is based on five themes:

(a) Revitalisation, modernisation and restructuring of existing selected (mainly manufacturing) sectors in order to enhance their competitive position in export markets.

(b) Diversification into new manufacturing and service sectors with good export and growth prospects. Future employment growth is likely to be concentrated in the service sector: a major function of the UDP is to facilitate growth.

(c) [Capitalisation in employment terms on strengthened and diversified basic sectors by] Strengthening the supply chain through the provision of appropriate development opportunities [for related dependent sectors (mainly services)].

(d) Mobilisation of the human resource of the City (in terms of skills and training) and to tap latent energies and skills which can contribute to economic growth and to counter the debilitating effects of unemployment and social exclusion.

(e) Integration to ensure that the Council’s economic policies (whether expressed through the Economic Strategy or the UDP) are compatible with the other activities of the Council and all public and private sector agencies.

4.15 The City Council’s economic policies (which are amplified in detail in the Economic Strategy, which is reviewed regularly) aim to provide a local economy offering employment of a reasonable quality to all Birmingham residents who wish to have a job. It is important that policies and proposals in the UDP do not act in such a way as to aggravate unemployment problems. Rather, they should attempt to direct benefits to disadvantaged groups.

4.16 The following principles have and will continue to be applied to help to alleviate the problems caused by unemployment:

- New economic development and employment generating activities will be steered to areas of high unemployment where this is practicable.

- Where development cannot be located within deprived areas it should be located so that it has good public transport links with such areas.

- The benefits of development should, wherever possible, be precisely targeted on local residents (for example, through the use of Section 106 Agreements and criteria on grants and loans).

- The encouragement of community-based initiatives.
4.17 The remainder of this chapter is structured around the following elements:-

- Industrial Land
- A38 Corridor Strategy
- Office Development
- Tourism
- Infrastructure and Linkages

**Industrial Land**

4.18 The Birmingham Industrial Land Strategy, together with the results of the Regional Industrial Land Study, revealed the following conclusions about the City’s supply of industrial land:-

- The quality rather than the quantity of industrial land is the most pressing issue.
- The quality of the City’s portfolio of industrial sites is deteriorating as the better sites are used up.
- This situation has been aggravated by the loss to other uses, particularly retailing, of high quality land.
- The shortages of land immediately available, leading to lost inward investment opportunities.

4.19 The principles upon which the industrial land release policies are based are as follows:-

- To ensure that no desirable industrial investment is lost to the City for want of a suitable and readily available site.
- The creation of a balanced portfolio of readily available industrial land, recognising that there is no single uniform market for industrial land, providing a choice of site by size, location and quality.
- Ensuring that the supply in each identifiable sub-market of readily available land should lead demand: but at the same time that the quantity of the forward supply is kept within reasonable limits, having regard to the need for economy in the provision of infrastructure, stability in land markets and lead times for development.

- **[A consequent recognition, as reflected by the Secretary of State’s Strategic Guidance, that the limited release of land on the edge of the built-up area, including land in Green Belt, is justified.] A recognition that exceptional circumstances make it necessary to release land from the Green Belt to accommodate premium employment and major investment sites, in order to meet regional requirements, as there are no suitable brownfield sites available for such developments. In exceptional circumstances there might be a need to remove land from the Green Belt. However, in accordance with RPG11 and the**
sequential approach, this would only be appropriate in circumstances where land within the built-up area is not available.

- Conversely, in order to minimise incursion into greenfield sites, the urgent need to upgrade the quality and availability of land within the existing urban area.
- A recognition of the changing nature of industrial activities: demanding a cleaner and better quality environment, often with a high office content.
- A commitment to manage and keep up-to-date the portfolio of land.

Industrial Land Requirements

4.20 Analysis of the industrial land market, supply, demand and the development pipeline revealed that, for operational purposes, the Regional industrial land market can be broadly sub-divided into [four] the following sub-markets:

(a) ‘Major Investment’ - Very large sites to accommodate major new industrial investment for clients with an international choice of locations

[(a)](b) ‘Premium’ - Peripheral ‘greenfield’ sites, mostly located beyond, but close to the City’s boundaries, for locally based or incoming clients with an international/national/regional choice of locations.

[(b)](c) ‘Best Urban’ - Top quality sites within the City boundaries suitable for local or incoming clients with an international/national/regional choice of locations. This includes those greenfield sites which do not fall within the Premium category.

[(c)](d) ‘Good Urban’ - Good quality sites suitable for locally-based clients.

[(d)](e) ‘Other Urban’ - Other land of average or poor quality likely to be of interest to local clients.

N.B. The terminology used for employment sites in this Plan differs from that used in the revised RPG11, published in June 2004. For clarification, the sub-markets referred to above correspond to the following categories of land within RPG11 Policy PA6: Portfolio of Employment Land:

- “Premium Employment Sites (PES)” = “Regional Investment Sites (RIS)” in RPG11
- “Best Urban” sites = “Sub-Regional” sites in RPG11
- “Good Urban” sites = “Good Quality” sites in RPG11, and
- “Other Urban” sites = “Other” in RPG11.

FIGURE 4.1 INDUSTRIAL LAND REQUIREMENTS

(a) Indigenous Requirements
### Sub-Market Criteria for estimated land stock needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Market</th>
<th>Criteria for estimated land stock needs</th>
<th>Estimated Annual Demand</th>
<th>Requirement Requirement (ha)</th>
<th>Readily Available Land 'minimum reservoir' (Ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Urban</td>
<td>4 years demand</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Urban</td>
<td>3 years demand</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Urban</td>
<td>2 years demand</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**(b) Regional/Sub-regional Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Market</th>
<th>Criteria for estimated land stock needs</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Investment</td>
<td>2 sites always readily available within the West Midlands Region</td>
<td>In accordance with para 7.19 of RPG11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premium</td>
<td>2 locations</td>
<td>In accordance with paras 7.9 to 7.10 and para 7.17 of RPG11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 4.2 MAJOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS (Sites over 4 hectares at April 2000)**
### Chapter 4 – Economy

#### (a) PREMIUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Area (hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I1</td>
<td>Bassetts Pole</td>
<td>Up to 50 (net developable area)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### (b) BEST URBAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Area (hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I3</td>
<td>Minworth Hall</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I16</td>
<td>Holford Business Park Phase II</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I15</td>
<td>The Fort and Environs</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I16</td>
<td>Wood Lane/Railway/West Dunlop</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I24</td>
<td>Former Lucas Factory, Gt King St</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I31</td>
<td>Small Heath Business Park</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I36</td>
<td>Aston Science Park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I37A</td>
<td>Woodgate Site ‘A’</td>
<td>Up to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I39</td>
<td>Land south of Vincent Drive</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I45</td>
<td>Redfern Business Park</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I47</td>
<td>Woodgate Business Park</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M18</td>
<td>Hollymoor/Rubery</td>
<td>about 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### (c) GOOD URBAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Area (hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I28</td>
<td>Devon Street, Duddeston Mill Road</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I34</td>
<td>Part of Former Yardley Sewage Works</td>
<td>about 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I35</td>
<td>r/o Alcan Plate Works</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ref.</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Area (hectares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) <strong>MAJOR INVESTMENT SITE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) <strong>PREMIUM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) (a) <strong>BEST URBAN</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) (b) <strong>GOOD URBAN</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I51</td>
<td>Peddimore</td>
<td>56 (gross developable area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I1</td>
<td>Bassetts Pole</td>
<td>50 hectares (net developable area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I6</td>
<td>Holford Business Park Phase II – Nexus Point</td>
<td>10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I37A</td>
<td>Quinton Meadows</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M18</td>
<td>Birmingham Great Park</td>
<td>6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I50</td>
<td>Minworth Sewage Works</td>
<td>34.5 37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I52A</td>
<td>Former Dunlop Sports and Social Club</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I54A</td>
<td>Former Dunlop Works</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I64</td>
<td>Heartlands Central</td>
<td>10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M32</td>
<td>Selly Oak</td>
<td>up to 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I34</td>
<td>Yardley Brook Industrial Park</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I35</td>
<td>R/O Alcan Plate Works</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M21</td>
<td>The Fordrough</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I62</td>
<td>Crawford Street West</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I67</td>
<td>Dogpool Lane</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* in the course of development at April 2000

N.B. Site areas given in Figure 4.2 above represent the amount of land remaining to be developed at April 2000. Total site areas, including parts of sites already developed, are given in the lists of proposals at the end of the relevant Constituency Chapter.
4.21 The **minimum** amount of land that should be readily available* for development in each of the **Best Urban, Good Urban and Other Urban** sub-markets at any point in time [and the amount of land that needs to be brought forward annually to meet demand and to keep land stocks at the target level] throughout the plan period are set out in Figure 4.1. The estimated annual requirements in these sub-markets are also set out in Figure 4.1. These reflect both assessments of the likely demand for industrial land and the need for a choice of sites across the City. Figure 4.1 also shows there are also specific the Regional requirements for **Premium Employment Sites Land and Major Investment Sites** which derive from are set out in RPG11, although no such sites are allocated in this Plan.

4.22 Figures 4.2 and 4.3 show industrial development opportunities on major sites (exceeding four hectares in size). The classification into market segments reflects the potential of these sites. In many cases, particularly in the Birmingham Heartlands area, extensive on-site works and infrastructure provision will be required before this potential can be realised, and it will be some years before many of the sites can contribute to the City’s portfolio of immediately available industrial opportunities. It is important that this distinction is kept in mind. Other large industrial proposals (between one and four hectares in size) are proposed in the Constituency Statements and are also shown in Figure 4.3.

**Industrial Regeneration**

4.23 [There is a particular need to improve the access from the business park at Holford in Perry Barr to Lichfield Road in order to support the existing and proposed economic activity in one of the City’s most important industrial areas. This will be achieved via Witton Lane and Grosvenor Road.] The **Tame Valley industrial area** is of strategic importance and represents a prime focus of employment provision. In order to exploit its economic potential the area will be targeted for co-ordinated action (IR6). Significant improvements are required to overcome operational problems in terms of the condition of premises, poor accessibility and the overall image of the area as a business location.

4.24 Additional industrial development opportunities are likely to come forward through recycling throughout the plan period. The main areas of Industrial Regeneration are shown on Fig. 4.3 and listed in Fig. 4.4, [and these are currently based on some of the City Council’s Economic Regeneration Areas (ERA’S – a City Council area-based initiative for tackling physical problems and business and community issues in priority locations), parts of Birmingham Heartlands and a proposed Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ)]. These areas are based on some of the City Council’s area regeneration initiatives and other areas which are likely to experience significant regeneration activity during the plan period, including proposals for “Regeneration Zones.” Land within these areas will be safeguarded for predominantly industrial uses except in the case of Waterlinks (IR2) where commercial uses will also be encouraged.

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*Readily available is defined as “All usual services present or capable of provision to order, and site available immediately.” This does not necessarily mean the site is being actively marketed.*
Chapter 4 – Economy
4.25 Smaller scale industrial regeneration initiatives will be encouraged elsewhere in the City.

**Major Investment Sites and Premium Employment Sites**

4.26 The shortage of top quality industrial development opportunities within the City (and the rest of the conurbation and Region) was reflected in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11) to the extent that in the absence of any site not in the Green Belt, overcoming this shortfall would represent exceptional circumstances, justifying the release of greenfield and possibly Green Belt land for development. [One such proposal is] Two such proposals are included in the Plan, a premium [industrial] employment site at Bassetts Pole (close to the proposed junction of the A453 Tamworth Road with the Northern Relief Route) (I1) and a Major Investment Site at Peddimore (I51). [This proposal will be particularly suitable for accommodating major inward investment.] In the case of both proposals, the criteria and process of site selection is consistent with the approach set out in Regional Planning Guidance.

4.27 The Secretary of State's Strategic Guidance confirmed that in the period 1988-2001, up to 260 hectares of land for high technology industrial development should be provided on the periphery of the conurbation. Of this, 140 hectares of land should be provided in the Birmingham/Solihull sector, and a similar quantity to meet the needs of the west of the conurbation.

4.28 A joint technical study to deal with the Birmingham/Solihull sector has been undertaken by officers representing the City Council with Solihull MBC and Warwickshire and Hereford and Worcester County Councils (The West Midlands
Premium Industrial Sites Study) and identified three broad locations which would be capable of accommodating the necessary 40-50 hectares net developable area. These broad locations are at Monkspath (close to the M42/A34 junction), Portway (close to the M42/A435 junction) and Bassetts Pole.

4.29 At Bassetts Pole [the process of site definition and appraisal is set out in the Sutton Coldfield Constituency Statement (paras. 9.43–9.47). Until such time as monitoring indicates that there is a need to release the Bassetts Pole site, to ensure a continued, uninterrupted supply of available land and a choice of sites, land at Bassetts Pole will remain within the Green Belt.] a 50 hectare (net developable area) site has been identified as the proposed location for a premium employment site (I1). This site has been selected from within the study area identified in the 1993 adopted version of this Plan, following a major public consultation exercise and an environmental, economic and transport appraisal.

4.30 In accordance with [the Secretary of State’s Strategic Planning Guidance,] Regional Planning Guidance the premium [industrial] employment land will only be used for top-quality industrial, research or office uses falling within Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. Retail or warehousing—only development will not be permitted. In accordance with advice from the West Midlands Regional Office of the Department of the Environment in respect of these specific locations, the City Council would interpret the phrase “within B1” as being less than the whole scope of B1; in particular the City Council will not permit large scale speculative office development because this would undermine the role of centres, especially the City Centre.

4.30A Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11) identifies a requirement for the provision of Major Investment Sites within the Region. The sites are to be very large (each to be 50 hectares, or more in size) and capable of accommodating new industrial and commercial investment, each by a single large organisation.

4.30B A joint study was undertaken in early 1996 involving the West Midlands Regional Forum, The Government Office for the West Midlands and the business community to identify suitable general locations for these sites. The Major Investment Sites Study was published in July 1996, the study recommended that sites at Minworth in Birmingham and North of Wolverhampton be released for early availability as Major Investment Sites, with further opportunities to be investigated through the development plan process to ensure that the Region is able to accommodate major new investment projects on a continuing basis. The identification of Minworth as a preferred location followed an analysis of all realistic potential brownfield alternatives, both within and beyond the City’s boundaries.

4.30C A 56 hectare Major Investment Site is proposed at Peddimore in the Minworth location in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy and recommendations of the West Midlands Major Investment Sites Study (I50). Proposals to develop the land at Minworth will be required to satisfy the following criteria:
(a) The land is reserved for the development of a very large-scale industrial project;

(b) The development will be of major benefit to the Regional (and thereby the City) economy either by encouraging diversification of the industrial base or to halt the decline of an important existing industrial sector;

(c) Occupation of the land will be restricted to a single user;

(d) Potential occupiers will be required to demonstrate that there are no suitable brownfield alternatives available.

4.30D The Major Investment Site will only be used for high quality uses which fall within Class B1 (b) and (c) and Class B2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order. Development falling within Class B1 (a) and Class B8 will only be permitted when such uses are ancillary to the main industrial user. Speculative offices, retailing or warehouse - only developments will not be permitted. Further details are set out in the Sutton Coldfield Area Statement (paras 9.42B - 9.42E).

4.30E Further background to this proposal and the related Area of Development Restraint is set out in the Strategy Chapter (paragraph 2.18).

Maintaining the Supply of Industrial Land

4.31 Opportunities for industrial development in the built up area of the City are diminishing. In order to reduce pressure on greenfield sites the loss of industrial land to retail or other non-industrial uses will be resisted except in cases where the site is a non-conforming use. Industrial land within the “Best Urban” category will not be released for piecemeal or poor quality developments. Industrial land within this category should include a minimum of four readily available sites (of at least 10 ha each), distributed across the City.

4.32 It is important that a link is maintained between supply and demand for industrial land. The estimates of demand and supply and land availability targets established by Figure 4.1 will be kept under regular review.

A38 Corridor Strategy*

4.32A The A38 is one of three corridors within the West Midlands which are being considered as a possible future focus for high technology development. The first

* N.B. The A38 Corridor forms part of the Birmingham to Worcestershire High-Technology Corridor (Central Technology Belt) identified in Policy PA3 of the revised Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11), which was published in June 2004.
stage report of the A38 Corridor Strategy, published in January 2001, proposes a very strong role for the A38 Corridor, focused within the City on the Longbridge area, with strong links through Northfield, Selly Oak and Birmingham University through to the City Centre. The objective is to target high technology uses along this Corridor. As development sites come forward along the Corridor, they will first be considered against the needs of the A38 Strategy.

4.32B The A38 Corridor is likely to play a significant role in changing the economic and technological structure of the City’s economy throughout the Plan period. The Strategy has already identified the following key technology drivers:

- nano-technology – very small-scale manufacturing and “leading edge” technologies;
- sustainable energy and environmental technologies, products and services;
- medical and health care technologies.

4.32C These technologies are likely to require a range of space (e.g. incubator, small-and medium-sized high quality office and technology space) and significantly improved communications links within the A38 Corridor, public transport investment and improved environmental conditions.

Office Development*

4.33 The City Council supports and welcomes office activity and growth. It encourages indigenous growth, in-movers and new business start-ups. To realise this growth potential, a portfolio of office development opportunities is to be maintained capable of satisfying the range of office user requirements. This will include sites and premises in:-

- The City Centre, including Edgbaston
- The City Centre Periphery
- Birmingham Heartlands
- Suburban Centres
- Campus locations

4.34 The bulk of additional office development is likely to take place in the wider City Centre. However, office users have a variety of locational, space, infrastructure and cost requirements all of which must be accommodated to ensure that no worthwhile development is lost for the lack of a suitable site.

*The policies apply to office developments falling within Class B1 (a) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Developments falling within Class A2 should be located in centres, and the relevant policies are set out in Chapter 7 and in Supplementary Planning Guidance.
4.35 In responding to market forces, the following factors will be taken into account:

- **The over-supply of office floorspace by the development industry will have a detrimental impact on rental levels and future levels of investment.** Careful monitoring of the office pipeline (through the granting of planning permissions, levels of development activity, take-up of floorspace and vacancy rates) will ensure that the demand for and supply of office floorspace are, as far as possible, kept reasonably in step, one with the other.

- Urban design, conservation and environmental enhancement policies will not be compromised.

- A recognition of the potential for conversion of out-moded office accommodation to residential use (see also paragraph 15.9).

4.36 The City Council’s approach to offices is designed to exploit the growth potential of the office sector, thus ensuring maximum benefits to the Birmingham economy as follows:

- It is a direct outcome of a study into Future Trends in Office Development commissioned by the City Council and undertaken by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited.

4.37 The main conclusions of this research were that:-

- Birmingham has achieved a critical mass in terms of office provision, developing a momentum of its own unrelated to the performance of the manufacturing sector resulting in self-sustaining growth of the office sector.

- Significant improvements in accessibility combined with the relative cost advantages of Birmingham (particularly in comparison to the overheating South-East) and the general upturn of the local economy in the mid-1980s in themselves provide evidence of a substantial likely increase in demand for office floorspace.

- **Birmingham is under-represented in a number of the newer information handling services, thereby providing considerable latent potential for further growth.** Unlocking the further potential to accommodate growing sectors of industry requiring quality offices.

- There is the potential to increase the stock of Birmingham's office floorspace and employment by 30% between 1985-1995. Much of this growth is committed and a similar rate of office development is anticipated over the remainder of the Plan period.

City Centre

4.38 Offices are one of the core activities that make up the City Centre. The future prosperity of the City Centre is dependent on the continued growth of office and service sector employment and, in turn, the City Centre is the key to the future success of the office sector in Birmingham.

4.39 At January 1990 there were over 17 million square feet of office floorspace in the City Centre. The anticipated growth in floorspace means that there is likely to be
in excess of 20m sq.ft. of office floorspace in the City Centre by 1995. It is proposed that Birmingham should become the largest provincial office centre in the country. The realisation of this growth] Over the last decade, Birmingham has emerged as the largest office centre in the UK outside London. The maintenance of this position is conditioned not only by the availability of suitable development opportunities, but also by the growth of the other activities within the City Centre (in particular retailing and leisure/tourism), improvement to the quality of the environment, enhanced residential, social, cultural and transportation facilities, the skills of the workforce and the success of the City’s marketing and promotional campaign.

4.40 The core area of Birmingham’s office centre is characterised by a concentration of higher order financial services. These have considerable scope for expansion which must be accommodated. The core area, however, has reached its physical capacity and additional demand for office accommodation can only be met by the physical expansion of the core area to contiguous areas beyond the Queensway.

4.41 Beyond the core area, office development opportunities exist up to and including sites found adjacent to the Ring Road. This will enable office uses with different requirements to those in the core area to be accommodated. Office development is not appropriate across the whole of this area. Development must not change the unique character of the Jewellery Quarter for example, but the opportunities that the wider City Centre offers will enable a very wide range of different office uses to be accommodated.

**Birmingham Heartlands**

4.42 Heartlands offers a highly accessible location which, given the commitment for environmental improvement, could be attractive for some office users. However, given the importance of the City Centre to both the City and the region - with its higher order functions - it is important that office development in Heartlands does not adversely affect the competitiveness of the City Centre. Office developments in the [Urban Development Corporation’s] area should therefore cater for particular market niches which are not met elsewhere in the City, such as: provision of offices on larger sites, associated with high technology uses, campus style offices and small starter units. *Large footloose office users, too large or unsuitable in other ways to be accommodated in the City Centre, may be contemplated as the core development of the Star Project site.*

**[The Suburbs] Suburban Centres**

4.43 [Elsewhere] *In other centres* within the City, scope exists for the further development of offices which would complement provision in the City Centre. Some centres are more suitable than others to accommodate growth. Priority will be given to those centres where: demand is already buoyant; transport links (especially public transport) are good; and where there is scope for offices to be encouraged by other major proposals. Suburban centres with potential for growth include:

- Sutton Coldfield
Chapter 4 – Economy

In other suburban centres, small-scale office developments will be permitted, provided that they are of a scale appropriate to the centre, and that there would be no adverse effect on the attractiveness of the centre or on the amenity of any nearby residents.

4.44 Office development will not be permitted in out-of-centre locations except as part of major campus-style developments (see below). [Furthermore, office development fronting key radial routes into the City Centre is also to be encouraged. In particular, office development along the A38 Bristol Road will be appropriate and along the A45 which links the City Centre with the NEC and Birmingham International Airport.]

[4.44 In addition, small-scale office developments will be appropriate in some other locations and these opportunities are identified, where possible, in the Constituency Statements.]

Tourism

4.46 Tourism represents one of the most buoyant sectors of the economy and in terms of jobs and wealth creation is particularly important to Birmingham. It has the ability to stimulate regeneration and change in other areas and to increase confidence and civic pride in the City. Birmingham takes a positive attitude to the promotion of tourism with its associated spin-offs in terms of accommodation, travel and local spending. The [City Council's Tourism Action Programme] City’s Tourism Strategy [seeks to exploit the potential of tourism by creating a growing and viable industry in Birmingham. A clear focus for activity and tourism promotion is identified with its emphasis on the City Centre, the canal network and selected clusters of activities.] aims to maintain Birmingham’s position as a top visitor destination, and also to exploit opportunities for leisure tourism. In addition it aims to improve Birmingham’s image as a visitor destination and to reinforce Birmingham’s role as a regional centre for tourism, culture and events.

[4.50] 4.46A Tourism is now a significant industry both nationally and locally. Whereas it is unlikely that manufacturing jobs will increase in Birmingham service sector employment is forecast to grow. Moreover, tourism provides valuable infrastructure which is available for both the local business community and residents alike, it can significantly improve the City’s environment, enhances the City’s image and aids inward investment.

4.46B The Tourism Strategy has been developed following consultation with a wide range of tourism businesses and in partnership with various organisations including the Birmingham Marketing Partnership and the Heart of England Tourist Board. At its
heart is the ambition to develop Birmingham as a high quality vibrant visitor
destination for the regional, UK, European and international marketplace, in
partnership with the private, cultural and community sectors of the City and the
region. The Strategy:

- provides the framework for increasing the number of visitors to the City, whether
  they come for business, leisure or entertainment.
- sets out what is required to make this happen
- stresses the benefits from encouraging more visitors to the City and provides the
  context for a quality visitor experience.

4.47  [The City Council’s primary objective is to develop Business Tourism which
represents an all year round market and provides better paid, full time employment
and to enhance the range of nationally recognised visitor attractions.] The [aim is to
build] Strategy builds on the undoubted success of the National Exhibition Centre
and Birmingham International Airport and it [to complement] complements the
National Indoor Arena and International Convention Centre which [is designed to be]
are the finest in Europe.

4.48  [A number of key priorities for action and improvement are:

- Information provision
- Visitor accommodation
- Transport facilities
- Business, exhibition and conference facilities
- Strengthening retailing
- Exploiting existing, and encouraging new, restaurant and entertainment
  facilities.
- Raising environmental standards.]

Three key areas for action are embodied within the Tourism Strategy. These are:

- Improving the quality of services to visitors - including encouraging access and
  movement, providing a welcoming environment and quality information and City
  Centre Management and maintenance.

- Developing the attractiveness of the City for visitors including maintaining and
  enhancing important areas of greenspace such as historic parks and gardens,
  setting up Visitor Priority Areas, developing a coherent mix of visitor attractions
  and encouraging investment in retailing, restaurants, bars and hotels.

- Winning and keeping more visitors for Birmingham for example by developing the
  multi-cultural strengths of Birmingham, enhancing the industrial and historic
  heritage and exploiting technology opportunities.

4.48A The impact of tourism on the local economy will be closely monitored by an
economic impact model. [4.49 It is proposed to give emphasis to the creation of new
and viable attractions thereby increasing the number of day visitors, promoting
weekend hotel occupancy and attracting more overseas holidaymakers.] The creation
of an improved physical environment throughout Birmingham but particularly in the City Centre is critical for the promotion of tourism.

4.49 – See paragraph 4.48

4.50 – See paragraph 4.46A

4.51 Birmingham already receives over 2 million domestic visitors and a quarter of a million overseas visitors each year, contributing in excess of £100 million (1986 prices) to the local economy.

4.52 The City already has much to offer the visitor. Its foundations for an expanding tourist sector are based on Birmingham International Airport, its conference and business facilities, cultural and sporting events, visitor accommodation and a growing range of visitor attractions. Birmingham is uniquely placed as a major gateway to many national attractions such as Stratford, Warwick and Ironbridge. It is also a major attraction in its own right particularly with its shops, markets, restaurants and nightlife.

4.53 Moreover, Birmingham's strong industrial heritage provides the basis for many museums and attractions including the Jewellery Quarter, the canal network, Millennium Point and [the proposed Urban Heritage Park] Cadbury World, [the Patrick Collection] besides the City's own Museum and Art Gallery and numerous parks and gardens, including Sutton Park. Furthermore the International Convention Centre, National Indoor Arena and Brindleyplace development, as well as the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Royal Ballet and various other artistic and cultural promotions such as the culinary culture of Birmingham and its shopping facilities, all [will enhance] enhance Birmingham's visitor appeal.
Infrastructure and Linkages

4.54 The health of the local economy is dependent on the provision of complementary infrastructure. The following principles have been and will continue to be applied to reinforce the Council’s strategy:-

- **Continued support for transport infrastructure that facilitates Birmingham’s national and international accessibility, such as Birmingham International Airport.**

- The highest priority for transport provision which underpins the economic well-being of the City Centre both through improved accessibility by all modes and by environmental/pedestrian improvements.

- A high priority for transport provision which helps access new or recycled industrial areas.

- **[Helping to ensure] Ensuring** that [City residents] everyone, particularly the unemployed and inner city residents, have public transport access to those areas where existing and new jobs will be concentrated including proposals on the edge of or beyond the existing urban area.

- By encouraging locally based and low cost facilities accessible to the unemployed and inner city residents.

Education and Training

4.55 A skilled and motivated workforce is a pre-requisite to a successful economy and the City’s education and training institutions are the key to help achieve this. Birmingham’s three Universities and a host of other bodies provide the broadest spectrum of opportunities for research, education and training. It is important that these institutions are encouraged to thrive to benefit both the City and wider regional economy and, subject to the other policies and proposals set out in the plan that their improvement and expansion will be encouraged.
CHAPTER 5 - HOUSING

Context

5.1 The City of Birmingham has a range and quality of housing probably unsurpassed in any other British city outside London. It is particularly strong at “the top of the range”. The housing stock and wider residential environment is indeed one of the City’s greatest assets and a major attraction in terms of further, particularly commercial, investment. It is, however, an asset of which people outside the region are largely unaware.

5.2 Housing is a key element of the strategy. The type and condition of the home in which every person resides, together with the quality of its immediate surroundings, is probably the most important factor affecting the quality of life. It is the largest land user within the City and new housing is the most widespread of new development.

5.3 The future number of households depends on both economic factors (which dictate, for example, an individual’s ability to set up a separate household) and social factors (numbers of children, the level of independence of young and old, etc). However, the number of new dwellings that are required not only depends on these factors but more importantly on the continued survival and usefulness of the existing stock of dwellings.

5.4 Almost the whole of Birmingham is built-up and therefore the supply of land within the City boundary is severely constrained. This, combined with the operation of the housing market whereby some people will seek accommodation beyond the City boundary, means that all of the housing needs generated by the city’s population cannot be located either within the confines of the existing built-up area or its administrative area. There is nothing new about this situation: it has been the case for many decades.

5.5 The UDP provides a framework for the allocation of land for housing within the City. It also sets the context for improving the quality of the existing stock, and enhancing the quality of the residential environment.

Future Prospects

5.6 The direction of the city’s housing strategy has been guided by a number of factors:

(a) The 1988 Housing Act [which] has fundamentally changed the local authority’s housing role. The City Council is now not only [from that of] a provider [towards that of] but also an enabler of housing provision. [Prospects in the foreseeable future for Council house building are limited, at best, to meet only specialised needs or to accommodate those unable to obtain housing by other means.]

(b) The 1989 Local Government and Housing Act - this [will have] has had far-reaching implications for the local authority, in particular relating to private sector stock. Means-tested improvement grants and a new standard of fitness [are] have been introduced. Housing Action Areas and General Improvement Areas [are] were replaced by larger Renewal Areas.

(c) The Secretary of State’s [Strategic Guidance] Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11) has [established] indicated the requirement for new housing provision at a City-wide scale. The
Review of Housing Provision in the West Midlands Region also proposed an integrated housing policy package to tackle the inter-related issues of accommodating household growth, meeting pressing housing needs and minimising social polarisation. Much of this has been incorporated into RPG11.

(d) Demographic changes and migration - the City has been losing population to other areas for many decades and its population has been in absolute decline since the early 1950’s. However, the number of dwellings within the City has continued to rise - driven by the trend towards increasing numbers of small households. [These trends will continue in the period up to 2001. The city’s population is likely to fall by about 50,000 between 1986-2001 yet the number of households is expected to rise by about 5,000.] Selective out-migration by higher socio-economic groups, leading to increased social polarisation, has been the most serious consequence of these trends.

(e) The condition of the existing dwelling stock - given that [some 95%] over 90% of the city’s dwelling stock in the year [2001] 2011 is now standing. This illustrates the relative scale of new-build and emphasises how new housing development is, numerically, confined to changes at the margins. The continued survival, and usefulness, of the existing dwelling stock is the issue of greatest concern. The availability of resources to maintain and improve the condition of the existing housing stock will be fundamental in determining whether the city’s housing policies can be successful over the Plan period. The Birmingham [A] House Condition Survey [was] carried out [during 1988 and preliminary results from this have shown that the targeting of improvement work in recent years has had a positive impact on the condition of the housing stock.] in 1993 confirmed that the City’s dwelling stock is deteriorating through age and due to lack of resources for repairs. Many dwellings do not comply with present day standards and expectations concerning amenities, space, fire protection, security, insulation and heating. Figure 5.1 summarises [the provisional results from the 1988 survey] the dwelling stock position in April 1996. [Although the bulk of the stock needing renovation was built pre-1919.] More than a quarter of the dwellings in the City were built before 1919. There is a high level of unfitness and disrepair in these properties. In addition, disrepair is an increasing problem in inter-war and post-war stock and particularly in multi-storey and system built accommodation, most of which is in the ownership of the City Council. By the end of the Plan period inter-war housing will be [70-80] 80-90 years old, and much will be in need of repair. Increasingly, disrepair [will become] is a suburban as well as inner city problem. However, where stock has outlived its design life, options other than repair may need to be considered. [Taken together.] The indicators show that some [37%] 17% of the city’s dwelling stock is [sub-standard.] unfit.

(f) The extent of the built-up area - this covers much of the city’s administrative area. Capacity for additional housing is severely restricted and new peripheral growth would involve[s] development within confirmed Green Belt.

(g) The findings of the Birmingham Housing Requirements Study (1996) and the Birmingham Housing Study (2001) have provided a wealth of information on housing in the City including on the housing aspirations of the city’s residents.
Policy Statement

5.7 Overall, the UDP is concerned with housing “in the round” – an overseeing role which should not be confused with the City Council’s (declining) role as a housing provider. The aim of the City’s housing policies is to contribute to the strategy for urban regeneration and economic revitalisation of the City by ensuring:-

- That there is a variety of [affordable] housing to meet [all] the full range of needs throughout the City.
- That the condition of the dwelling stock is improved, adapted and then maintained at satisfactory levels.
- The increased attractiveness of the City as a place in which to live and invest.
- The UDP provides a land-use framework within which the City Council’s Housing Strategy can be implemented. Meeting housing needs and demands is a key priority of the Plan, although this objective will be balanced against other land use needs and requirements.

5.8 Key elements of the City’s housing policies of particular relevance to the UDP are:-

(a) The quality of the existing housing stock.
(b) The provision of new housing.

Although these two elements are dealt with separately in the following sections, they are not mutually exclusive. Increasingly, the City will secure improvements to the housing stock in selected parts of the City by employing a combination of demolition, new housebuilding and refurbishment, utilising as appropriate the combined resources of the public sector, private housebuilders, individual householders and [housing associations] registered social landlords. This partnership approach will enable tenure diversification across the City and increase housing choice for residents currently living in sub-standard dwellings.

5.8A In developing and implementing housing policies and strategies the City Council will continue to build on the corporate approach which it has pursued.

5.8B In seeking to improve the existing stock and encourage appropriate new housing provision the City Council will continue to monitor housing need and demand, and other relevant indicators, such as stock condition.

[The Condition and Survival of]

The Existing Dwelling Stock

5.9 The continued improvement and maintenance of the City’s existing dwelling stock will be a major priority for the City Council over the Plan period. The UDP will provide the land-use policy framework within which the City Council will draw up its funding bids and implementation strategies for stock improvement.

5.10 Given the relative scale of the existing housing stock to new additions (approximately [41] 9:1), the condition of the former will have an important bearing on the quality of life of most of the City’s population - especially those who live in the inner city and in some outer estates where poor housing conditions are concentrated. The amelioration of poor housing conditions will also contribute to improving the image of the City, and encouraging further investment, including that in housing.

Clearance and Redevelopment

5.11 It is assumed that [41] 23,100 demolitions will take place during the period [1986-2001.] 1991-2011. This represents a [significant increase over] continuation of levels achieved in [the] recent [past] years reflecting increasing concern over the condition and obsolescence of the City’s high-rise, maisonette and system-built [Council] housing as well as pre-1919 stock which has reached the end of its useful life. Nevertheless, [resource constraints could prevent] the achievement of this level of clearance remains dependent upon the availability of resources. Further difficulties will be posed by the shortage within the inner city of land for dwellings to accommodate people displaced by clearance activity. Failure to achieve a reasonable rate of clearance will have significant consequences, implying that existing dwellings would need to have a much longer life than can reasonably be anticipated.
5.12 [As overall replacement capacity on cleared sites is estimated to be only about 40%, an increase in the number of demolitions above the 18,000 assumed would increase either pressure for the release of more Green Belt land for development or for the increased loss of population, or both. At the same time, the lower resultant population in redeveloped areas could lead to difficulties in maintaining satisfactory levels of service provision.] It is anticipated that future replacement capacity will rise to about 75% on average. The City Council will be seeking to maximise the replacement rate on cleared sites subject to the provision of high quality accommodation within a high quality environment. This will reduce pressure for the release of more greenfield land, and will help to retain a viable population within the built-up areas of the City.

5.13 A failure to act on the problems of poor house conditions will have the effect of storing up even greater problems for the future. The availability of adequate resources will be a key issue in this respect. Currently, public sector resource levels to finance repairs to both public and private sector houses are running at only about [one-third] one-eighth of the levels required. The City Council will examine opportunities for attracting increased resources. This applies not only to public sector funds, but also to the extent to which private sector monies can be attracted, including contributions from individual owner occupiers.

5.14 In deciding how to spend its limited resources the City Council will shift attention towards the replacement rather than the improvement of the poorest stock. This will then enable limited resources to be concentrated on preventing the deterioration of middle range “at risk” properties where they too would become too costly to repair. Consistent with its enabling role co-ordinating both public and private sector agencies and resources, the City Council will continue to focus its urban renewal initiatives through area based strategies.

Housing Regeneration

5.15 A number of initiatives to improve the condition of both the older private sector stock and the City Council’s own dwellings are underway or proposed for implementation during the period of the Plan. Many of these initiatives involve the City Council in partnership with [housing associations] registered social landlords and private sector interests. The partnership approaches adopted differ widely depending on the scale and characteristics of the housing problems being addressed. Increasingly, however, these initiatives are adopting a more corporate, comprehensive approach to housing renewal and are being drawn up in close consultation with the communities affected. In addition to securing improvements to, and where necessary the demolition of, existing dwellings, they will also identify other local housing needs.

5.15A The City Council will seek to address these and other needs, and where appropriate will identify opportunities to improve open space provision, playing fields, sports facilities and the quality of the local environment, set aside land for community, health and education facilities, and identify opportunities for new house building. Of course, many of these needs such as “training”, do not have a land use dimension. Figure 5.2 lists the major housing regeneration proposals which will be implemented up to [2004.] 2011.
FIGURE 5.2 - HOUSING REGENERATION AREAS IN BIRMINGHAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size in Hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR1 Perry Common  28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[HR2 Wyrley Birch 40]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR3 Central Handsworth 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR4 Pype Hayes 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR5 Castle Vale <strong>HAT</strong> 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR6 Nechells 81</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR7 South Saltley 63</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR8 Bordesley 42]</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR9 North Saltley 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR10 Overpool 5]</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR11 Firs Estate 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR11A “Australian Blocks” &amp; Environs 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR11B Buckland End 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR12 Sparkhill 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR13 Gospel Lane 5]</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR14 Stockfield 12]</td>
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<td>[HR15 Stonebrook Way 5]</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR16 Shenley Fields 64]</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR17 [Raven Hayes] Egghill 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR18 Cockhill Lane 12]</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR19 Leach Green 6]</td>
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<tr>
<td>[HR20 Staple Hall 40]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR21 [Pool Farm] 43 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The “Three Estates”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR22 Newtown 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR23 Central Area Estates 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR24 Highgate 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR24A Belgravia Estate 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR25A Ley Hill Estate 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR25 Welsh House Farm 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR26 Chapter 16</td>
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<td>HR27 Bellfields 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR28 Turves Green 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR29 Ingoldsby 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR29A Wychall Farm Estate 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR29B Sunderton Road/ Bayston Road 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.16 Figure 5.2 does however present a snapshot of housing regeneration schemes being pursued at the time of the UDP’s preparation. It is likely that over the period of the Plan new schemes will be brought forward to deal with the problems of the existing dwelling stock and these will be set out in UDP monitoring reports.

5.16A Ensuring that urban regeneration initiatives are implemented in a co-ordinated way will be a key objective. The Single Regeneration Budget, City Challenge and New Deal funds, which combine employment, competitiveness, environmental and housing objectives, seek to achieve this. Initially action will be focused on regenerating the Saltley/Small Heath area. Further area-based programmes will be developed as funding becomes available.

5.17 Substantial investment is required to address the problems facing private sector housing. Government legislation has signalled a shift away from old style Housing Action Areas and General Improvement Areas towards a more strategic, integrated Housing Renewal Areas approach. Improvement work will continue in Housing Renewal Areas which will consist of between 300 and 3000 houses which will be improved or redeveloped over a 10 year period until 2001. Local Action Plans or Development Frameworks will guide and influence land use decisions and investment in the Renewal Areas.

5.18 In the public sector, major and innovative redevelopment proposals will continue to deal with the problems of Council houses built using non-traditional construction techniques, for example at Pype Hayes, Perry Common and Stockfield. The redevelopment proposals for these estates involve a collaboration between the City Council, local residents, private housebuilders and registered social landlords. At other estates the Council is also adopting a Joint Venture approach, whereby City-owned land is to be utilised to encourage investment in existing and new dwellings.

5.19 The proposals for the Central Area Estates (Lee Bank, Benmore and Woodview) and the Castle Vale Housing Action Trust are major initiatives which will transform large areas of public sector housing. Estate Action schemes, devised by Central Government to improve run-down Council estates, employ a package of measures to improve public sector housing conditions, including estate-based management, tenure diversification, the encouragement of private investment and estate-based enterprise. The involvement of local residents in decision-making is seen as a crucial component of housing regeneration initiatives. Public investment in the estates is expected to lever considerable private sector finance. Other substantial public sector housing renewal initiatives are to be implemented in Birmingham Heartlands and Ladywood.

Maintaining and Protecting the Existing Housing Stock

5.19A The loss to other uses (through conversion or redevelopment) of housing which is in good condition, or could be restored to good condition at reasonable cost, will normally be resisted. Such loss of residential accommodation will only be permitted if there are good planning justifications or an identified social need for the proposed use.

5.19B Some residential areas contain properties which have been converted into "institutional" uses such as hotels, hostels, "foyers," day nurseries or nursing homes.
subdivided into flats, or are in multiple occupation. Although these are normally appropriate in residential areas, concentrations of such uses can have an adverse effect upon the essential residential character of a particular street or area. A number of areas in Birmingham are affected in this way, and to prevent further erosion of their residential character, Areas of Restraint have been identified where further changes of use of large dwellinghouses to non-family dwellinghouse use will be resisted. Details of these are included in the relevant Constituency statements. The City Council will prepare further Areas of Restraint policies as Supplementary Planning Guidance if the need arises.

5.19C In addition there are areas of the City where the quality of the residential environment has been adversely affected by high levels of student and other private rented accommodation. These areas are identified in the appropriate Constituency chapter. In such areas the City Council will take appropriate measures to prevent further erosion of the residential environment and will seek to improve the existing residential environment. Area of Restraint policies will be applied to such areas to prevent further erosion of the character of the residential environment. The Council will also seek to improve the existing residential environment.

The Residential Environment

5.20 In addition to maintaining and improving the quality of the stock itself, the City Council will take measures to maintain and protect the existing good quality residential environments which are one of the City's greatest assets. [These can be eroded by continuing development and redevelopment and the introduction of ever-more units often at higher densities. Not only is this often at the expense of existing open space and recreational facilities, but also over time the process serves to diminish the particular quality of the residential environment itself.] Proposals for new residential developments in such areas should therefore be carefully designed, so that they do not detract from the character of the surrounding area. A good standard of design is important in all residential developments, which should create a high quality living environment. To ensure that good design standards are maintained, all new residential developments will be expected to be designed in accordance with the City Council's detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance for the design of new residential developments ("Places for Living") and with the general good design principles set out in Chapter Three.

5.20A The design of new residential developments should incorporate crime reduction measures. 'Places for Living', the City Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on new residential development provides details of the crime reduction measures which should be incorporated into new residential schemes. The provision of security gates to residential development which block the main means of access will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances where there is a proven need for increased security.

5.20B Residential developments generate a need for public open space to serve the occupants of the new homes, and appropriate provision, directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed, will be required sought, secured through S106 agreements where necessary. Public open space, including children's play areas, will be required to be provided at the standard of 2 hectares per 1000 population, pro rata, to the size of the development proposed.
5.20C On sites of 20 dwellings or more, provision of new public open space will normally be required within the curtilage of the development site. In such cases, careful attention should be given to the design and location of open space and play areas, to minimise the potential for noise and disturbance to residents, and to ensure that they are safe and attractive to use. Exceptions to the policy of requiring public open space to be provided on site will be considered in the following circumstances:

- In the case of Wards where the existing level of public open space exceeds the UDP standard, and there is adequate local provision, the City Council will be prepared to accept a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision, to be used to provide additional public open space or playing fields in Wards where provision falls below the standard. However, in these cases, on-site provision will still be required to meet the immediate needs of the development, e.g. for children’s play;

- In cases where the proposed development is close to existing areas of public open space, the City Council may seek a commuted sum payment to secure a long-term improvement to the quality of the existing provision, in place of the requirement for on-site provision;

- In certain circumstances (e.g. the conversion of an existing building to residential use), on-site provision may not be practicable, and in these cases, a commuted sum payment will be required to enable off-site provision of open space.

In all cases where public open space is transferred from the developer to the City Council, a commuted sum payment for long-term maintenance will be required.

5.20D Development proposals of between 1 and 19 dwellings do not generate a sufficiently large open space requirement to justify on-site provision. In these cases, therefore, a financial payment will be levied per dwelling and the sum used for improving public open space provision, including children’s play facilities, within the area.

5.20DE In applying these policies, the City Council will take into consideration the economics of developing the site in question. Further details of these requirements, including the basis for assessing financial contributions, will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document.

Birmingham’s Housing Requirement

This section of the UDP 2005 has not been saved, and no longer applies. Birmingham’s housing requirement can now be found in the West Midlands Regional Strategy (2008) – policy CF3

The Location of New Housing Development
5.25A In reviewing its requirements for land for new housing development, the City Council has followed a sequential approach, and has also sought to create a more sustainable pattern of development. The sequential approach used to identify sites for allocation was as follows:

1. Firstly, the re-use of previously-developed land;
2. Then urban extensions;
3. Then nodes in corridors well served by public transport.

set out to identify sites for allocation using a sequential approach. The sequential approach began with the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings. However, as sufficient capacity was identified from this source the search was not extended further. In identifying sites for allocation, the City Council sought to create a more sustainable pattern of development. The City Council has taken account of the availability of previously-developed sites, location and accessibility, the capacity of infrastructure, the ability to build communities and constraints on development land – both physical and environmental - in assessing the suitability of sites with potential for residential development. Accordingly, a high proportion of the City’s housing requirement is expected to be met within the City Centre, other centres or in transport corridors, and almost all of the site-specific proposals brought forward through the Alterations to the Plan are located within the urban area. This approach will also be followed in assessing applications for new housing development, whether they are on brownfield previously-developed or greenfield sites.

5.25B To assist in enabling the Regional target for brownfield development set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands to be met, most of the new housing provision within Birmingham must be on brownfield previously-developed sites within the existing built up area. Based on past performance, and an assessment of future land supply, the City Council expects that a minimum of 82% of all new dwellings provided over the Plan period will be on previously-developed (brownfield) land.* Over and above the sites already allocated in this Plan, or granted planning permission or otherwise committed, development on greenfield land will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. The loss of greenfield land may be justified in relation to other planning objectives (for example, as part of a comprehensive area regeneration initiative), and where compensatory recreational and/or community facilities of an equivalent nature are provided.

* For the purposes of this Plan, previously-developed (brownfield) land is as defined in the most recent Government guidance. This is currently Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (published March 2000). If any revision to this definition is published by Government, the revised definition will also apply to this Plan.

* For the purposes of this Plan, and in accordance with draft Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing, brownfield land is defined as previously-developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent (non-agricultural) structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure, including the land within the curtilage of that structure. This includes:

- Land within the built-up area and land within the Green Belt
- Defence buildings
Land used for mineral extraction and waste disposal where provision for restoration has not been made through development control procedures

It excludes:

- Land and buildings that have been used for agricultural purposes, forest and woodland
- Land within the built-up area which has not been developed previously (e.g. parks, recreation grounds and allotments)
- Land that was previously developed but where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape, or has subsequently been put to an amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring development.

5.25C In assessing proposals for new housing development on brownfield previously-developed sites, the City Council will take account of the following:

- the suitability of the location for housing;
- the need to maintain a diversity of uses within the built-up area;
- whether there are any serious physical constraints, such as contamination, instability or flooding;
- any intrinsic historic, cultural or natural asset;
- the accessibility of the site to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car; and
- the capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development.

Where this involves buildings standing in large grounds, the development of the site will be expected to take account of the special characteristics of the open land and any deficiency in open space provision in the locality.

Making Better Use of the Existing Stock

5.25D Bringing vacant residential properties back into use will be a particularly sustainable source of new accommodation. Whilst vacancies are highest in the private sector, the City Council will seek, through implementation of its Empty Homes Property Strategy, to encourage the physical improvement and occupation of vacant homes of all tenures. Between 1991 and 2011 the City Council will, in accordance with Government Policy, seek to reduce the number of vacancies within the existing stock to 3%, a reduction of 7,800 units. The reduction in vacancies in the existing housing stock will be a monitoring indicator. The aim will be to reduce vacancies to 3% by 2011 in line with Regional Planning Guidance.

5.25E It will be particularly important to achieve a reduction in the numbers of long-term voids as this will have a particularly positive impact on local communities.
5.26 Although the housing requirement is set at a demanding level, sufficient urban capacity exists within the built-up area of the City to accommodate most of the City’s housing provision target for the period 1988-2001. This view is based on identified land capacity and estimates of likely future brownfield windfall capacity on previously-developed sites, capacity released through clearance and additional capacity from flat conversions. Greenfield sites on the edge of the built-up area (over and above commitments at 1 April 1988) with a capacity for up to 1,400 about 1,000 to 1,100 dwellings are proposed to help meet the housing requirement and to ensure that the City Council is able to maintain a satisfactory supply of housing land. The expected level of housing provision in Birmingham is summarised by Figure 5.5.

5.26A The success of the strategy in terms of new dwelling completions is dependent on:-

- The level of clearance assumed actually taking place.
- An overall increase in the number of conversions.

- [Significant] A continuation of recent increases in the level of building activity by the private sector within the inner city. [Since the early 1980’s the private sector has contributed only about one-quarter of completions in the core area.] During the 1980s, 30% of all dwelling completions within the inner city core area were by the private sector. For the period 1990-2000 this had risen to 36%.

- Anticipated windfall capacity coming forward on brownfield previously-developed sites. (At April 1988 only 2000-2001 about one-third 58% 61% of the total housing requirement for the City for the period 1991 - 2011 had been [could be] completed or identified).

- The continued success of the City Living Strategy.

5.26B Without some effort to control the release of housing land there is every danger that the most attractive (especially greenfield) sites will be used up first and this is acknowledged by the Secretary of State in [his Strategic Guidance] Regional Planning Guidance. A combination of marketing factors and the provision of related infrastructure will generally ensure that the most attractive housing sites are not all developed in the early part of the Plan period. [The City Council will, however, take such phasing measures as it

* The City Council did not carry out an “Urban Capacity Study” in the terms precisely set out in PPG3 in the course of the preparation of the UDP Alterations. However, The assessment of housing capacity within Birmingham has been a key feature of forward planning in the City for many years and the supply and development of land for housing is kept under continuous review. As part of the review of this Plan, an Urban Capacity Study was carried out during 2001/2002 and this indicated that sufficient capacity existed within the urban area for between 19,622 and 26,063 dwellings (Scenario 2). Source: Birmingham Urban Housing Capacity Study (April 2002), Chesterton.
can to ensure that attractive housing sites are available throughout the Plan period. In particular, Site H1 (South of Duttons Lane) will not be released until the end of 1996 to guard against the possible over-supply of housing land, and unwarranted release of Green Belt land.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New Build, Existing commitments at April 1998 (with planning permissions, etc)</td>
<td>7,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment (from clearance)</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windfalls</td>
<td>6,350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New greenfield sites</td>
<td>Up to 1,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Flat Conversions</td>
<td></td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Within Inner City Partnership Core Area</td>
<td>About 40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. On sites less than about 1 hectare in size</td>
<td>About 40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REQUIREMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>46,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of Supply</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Existing Commitments at April 2000 2001</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td>9,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Redevelopment from clearance 2000-2001–2011</td>
<td>9,850</td>
<td>8,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Windfalls (on brownfield previously-developed sites) 2000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>7,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 – 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Redevelopment through Clearance

5.27 Of the [22,300] 20,150 26,781 dwellings to be provided over the period [1988-2001,] 2000 2001-2011 some [6,500] 9,850-8,995 8,955 dwellings are to be built on sites to be
cleared. Separate identification of this element is essential as the actual number of demolitions will be particularly important in revising the housing requirement for the purposes of assessing the City's five year supply of housing land [in Housing Land Studies] as the actual number of demolitions will be particularly important for monitoring purposes.

Conversions

5.28 Flat conversions* are expected to make an important contribution to meeting the City’s housing requirement. The estimate of [650] 2,500 2,270 conversions over the period 2000-2001-2011 [is based on] marks a substantial increase on recent trends [and should be seen as a minimum figure]. This increased assumption reflects the commitment of the City Council to substantially increase conversions to residential use from other uses in the City Centre and elsewhere, and growing evidence that the property industry recognises the potential of such conversions. Flat conversions will be effective in ensuring that the most efficient use is made of the existing housing stock given demographic trends towards increasing numbers of smaller households. Conversion of redundant non-residential buildings, including redundant retail premises outside shopping centres and vacant upper floors in shopping centres, will be encouraged where appropriate, and the introduction of a residential element into City Centre buildings - both existing and proposed - will be particularly encouraged. Notwithstanding this, in some parts of the City there are particular shortages of large family accommodation and where this is the case the City Council will [be sensitive to those particular requirements when considering any proposals] support the de-conversion of flats and resist the loss/conversion of family homes.

New Housing Provision

5.29 The portfolio of sites that will make up the City's housing land supply will enable provision of as wide a choice of sites as possible in terms of size and type (subject to overriding environmental considerations) across the City, attractive to the whole spectrum of housebuilders, ranging from the volume builders through to self-build groups.

5.30 Small sites scattered throughout the City will enable both the benefits of new development to be spread, as well as enabling localised special needs, such as sheltered housing for the elderly, to be integrated within existing communities. Development on small sites, much of it within the Core Area, will be important in ensuring the successful implementation of the strategy.

5.31 Figure 5.6 lists the major housing proposals. These include those sites in excess of 4 hectares in size and other new proposals (defined post April 1988) for housing on greenfield sites which have been identified to meet the additional requirement for new housing included in the Secretary of State's Guidance. These proposals are shown on the Proposals Map and on Figure 5.7 and they will be particularly attractive to the volume housebuilders. Other large housing sites (between 1 and 4 hectares in size) are proposed in the Constituency Statements and are shown on the Proposals Map and also on Figure 5.7.

*Flat conversions include conversions from both residential and non-residential property.

FIGURE 5.6 – BIRMINGHAM: MAJOR HOUSING PROPOSALS
### (a) [NEW] GREENFIELD SITES (PROPOSED POST APRIL 1988)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Capacity (dwellings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Duttons Lane, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>Up to 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Sir Alfred’s Way, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>Up to 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Warrenhouse Farm, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>Up to 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[South of Penns Lane, Sutton Coldfield]</td>
<td>[3.7]</td>
<td>[80]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Off Highfield Lane, Quinton]</td>
<td>[3.4]</td>
<td>[About 75]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H39</td>
<td>Longdales Road</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### (b) [OTHER PROPOSALS EXCEEDING 4 HECTARES] BROWNFIELD PREVIOUSLY-DEVELOPED SITES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Capacity (dwellings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Slade Road/Weeford Road, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Princess Alice Orphanage, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>[About 6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>Signal Hayes Road/Springfield Road, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>[5.3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>Fox Hollies Road/Signal Hayes Road, Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H18</td>
<td>Garrison Street, adj. Grand Union Canal, Small Heath</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H32</td>
<td>Woodcock Lane/ Shenley Drive</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H37A</td>
<td>&quot;The Davids,&quot; Hole Lane</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M18</td>
<td>Rubery/ Hollymoor</td>
<td>About 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H42</td>
<td>St George’s Barracks, Sutton Coldfield*</td>
<td>About 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H44</td>
<td>Highcroft Hospital, Erdington</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H45</td>
<td>South of Farnborough Road, Castle Vale</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H48</td>
<td>All Saints’ Hospital, Winson Green</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M19A</td>
<td>Land at Bass, Cape Hill</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M7</td>
<td>Rea Village, City Centre</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H53A</td>
<td>Griffin Close, Bristol Road South, Northfield*</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H55</td>
<td>Monyhull Hospital</td>
<td>About 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H56</td>
<td>Land at Allens Croft</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* in the course of development

NOTE: A substantial amount of new housebuilding will take place over the Plan period within the Housing Regeneration Areas set out in Figure 5.2. [In particular, large numbers of dwellings will be built at Pype Hayes, Perry Common, Stockfield, and in Bordesley.]...
Chapter 5 - Housing
Additional windfall housing capacity will come forward on sites in excess of 1ha in size (for example through the re-use of redundant industrial land and hospital sites) and some potential opportunities are identified in the Constituency Statements. However, no additional housing over and above the releases identified in Figure 5.6 will be permitted on the edge of the built-up area.

5.32 The scope [for additional large scale] exists to increase[s in] housing capacity within the inner city. [are limited. However, there is some scope for an increase in the amount of land for housing from redundant industrial/commercial land on smaller sites. In particular, there are a number of opportunities in and around the City Centre.] In particular there is potential for new housing development in and around the City Centre and there will also be some opportunities on redundant industrial/commercial sites. The housing provision level proposed for Birmingham includes substantially increased assumptions about brownfield site development on previously-developed sites within the City Centre and elsewhere in the built-up area. Achievement of such provision will, however, be dependent on the availability of resources (both public and private) to reclaim, assemble and bring forward sites for development. The City Council will work closely with other agencies and developers to secure these resources, and will encourage Government to put into place measures which increase the attractiveness of developing brownfield previously-developed sites vis a vis greenfield land (i.e. levelling the playing field).

5.32A The provision of housing as part of commercial developments will be encouraged. Housing would be particularly appropriate above ground floor office and shopping development.

City Living

5.32B Increasing the amount of residential accommodation in the City Centre will be beneficial for a number of reasons. It will create homes near where large numbers of people work, and in locations well served by public transport. It will help reduce pressures for greenfield development in suburban and peripheral locations. It will also help to create lively 24-hour activity and a safer environment. The construction of new dwellings, conversions to residential from other uses, and the bringing back into use of vacant properties and spaces above shops will be encouraged. An element of residential development will be required sought in mixed-use schemes where: this is considered to be appropriate. The City Council will also encourage the inclusion of a mix of uses within new ‘City Living’ developments, particularly at ground floor level, in order to create lively 24-hour activity and a safer environment. Developers will also be encouraged to provide an element of residential accommodation within other commercial developments in the City Centre where this would not undermine the primary economic function or historic character of the area. Such

- It would not undermine the primary economic function of an industrial or commercial area;
- It would not have an adverse effect on the historic character of a Conservation Area or Listed Building;
- It would not create an unacceptable living environment for the occupants of the proposed housing;
New developments will take into account the varying needs of different uses and will address any adverse impacts. Digbeth and the Jewellery Quarter are two locations where considerable potential exists for new housing, and this is reflected in particular proposals for Rea Village (M7) and the Jewellery Quarter Urban Village (M30). The City Council’s overall target requirement will be for up to 10,000 new dwellings within the City Centre over the Plan period.

Urban Villages

5.32C The City Council encourages the concept of Urban Villages in appropriate locations. Urban villages should provide a balanced and sustainable mix of uses and a range of local amenities to meet the needs of residents.

5.33 – see paragraph 5.26A

5.34 – see paragraph 5.26B

What type of new housing?

5.35 An aim in the provision of new housing is to encourage diversity, rather than uniformity, throughout the City. The City Council recognises, however, that the balance in the type and densities of new housing in any area will need to reflect not only affordable needs and market demand, but also particular groups with special housing needs, including will seek to ensure that the full range of its housing requirements are met, taking into account changing household structures and the respective requirements for general market and affordable dwellings. The specific needs of large family groups, the elderly, single people, people with disabilities, ethnic minority communities and other special care or vulnerable groups (such as those people whose housing requirements are affected by Care in the Community policies), will be taken into account. In areas where there is a particular need for larger family dwellings conversion of such dwellings to other uses or sub division into smaller dwellings will be resisted.

5.36 Achieving an increase in the level of private sector investment in housing, particularly in the City’s [Core Area] inner areas will be important not only to help achieve necessary levels of development, but also in helping to stem social polarisation. In accordance with the Regional Housing Review,* and confirmed by the Birmingham Housing Study**, The Regional Housing Review* anticipates that around 51% of all new dwelling completions will be provided by the private sector. This has also been confirmed by the Birmingham Housing Study.** An increasing proportion of inner area completions are by the private sector – continuation of this trend will be encouraged.


** Birmingham Housing Study 2001 (forthcoming)
Affordable Housing

5.37 It is important, however, that new private sector housing should not be encouraged at the expense of displacing groups already resident in any particular area. The exact size of new dwellings required in any area will depend on detailed assessments within that area and on the pattern of the housing market at any given time. Balanced provision of affordable and market housing across the City will be sought. In addition to the provision to be met within Birmingham, it is proposed - in accordance with the Regional Housing Review - that further affordable dwellings will be provided elsewhere in the Region, to meet needs generated in Birmingham. Should resources (public or private) be forthcoming to enable such provision, the City Council will liaise with other local authorities regarding the scale, location and mix of housing.

5.37A For the purpose of this Plan affordable housing is defined as comprising:

A. Housing provided by an organisation - such as a registered social landlord or local authority - which is allocated on the basis of need. While such dwellings will normally be made available for rent they may also include subsidised low-cost home ownership, such as shared ownership, where a registered social landlord or local authority retains a continuing interest.

And

B. Low cost market housing*, which may help to meet the needs of first time buyers, single people, the elderly and other low income households, who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market.

5.37B In order to meet the City’s overall requirement for affordable housing an element of affordable housing will be required the City Council will seek the inclusion of an element of affordable housing on housing developments** (including conversion schemes) involving on sites of 25 dwellings or more or 1 ha or more, or such thresholds as may be set in future Government guidance. This will be secured through Section 106 Agreements. On all such private sites the City Council will negotiate for the provision of:

- 25 dwellings or more or 1 ha or more
- Smaller sites which form part of a larger site of 25 dwellings or more or 1 ha or more
- Smaller sites, which, with further land assembly, could reasonably be expected to form part of a site of 25 dwellings or more or 1 ha or more.
- 25% of total dwellings to be affordable dwellings as defined in part A of the above definition, and
- 10% of total dwellings to be affordable dwellings as defined in part B of the above definition.

* For the purposes of this Plan, “low cost market housing” is defined as private housing that is subsidised or discounted to the extent that it is significantly below the market purchase price or rent for a similar property within the area. The proportion of subsidy or discount must relate to local house prices and/or rental levels and local income levels, and must be available in perpetuity to subsequent occupiers of the housing.

** This will apply to both new permissions, and renewals of lapsed planning permissions.
5.37C The City Council will provide details of the precise affordable housing mix it is seeking when individual proposals are brought forward by developers. The scale and nature of the affordable housing sought will depend on a number of factors including:

- Local housing needs (as defined by the Local Housing Authority)
- The suitability of the site and other economic constraints
- Accessibility to public transport and proximity to centres
- Other policy objectives (e.g. tenure diversification)

To assist developers, a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document is being prepared, setting out the City Council’s detailed requirements for affordable housing.

5.37D Where a requirement for an element of affordable housing is appropriate, there will be a strong presumption in favour of the affordable homes being provided as part of the proposed development. The affordable homes should be fully integrated within the development as a whole, and should be located throughout the site. In phased housing developments, developers will be expected to prepare a Master Plan, setting out the number and type of affordable dwellings to be provided in each phase. These should be proportionate to the overall level of affordable housing on the site (i.e. if 35% affordable housing is to be provided overall, then 35% of the housing in each phase should also be affordable), with each phase reflecting local need at the time that the proposal comes forward.

5.37E In exceptional circumstances, the City Council may consider provision of the affordable housing element off-site, subject to an equivalent level of housing need being met. This may be either by way of the developer directly providing affordable units on the alternative site, or by making a financial contribution to enable the provision. The meeting of other policy objectives and/or the economics of housing provision could provide justification for such off-site provision.

5.37F In the Housing Priority Areas, as defined by the City Council’s annual Housing Strategy Statements, the City Council will support the use of Social Housing Grant to assist in the provision of appropriate affordable housing. Developers will be expected to secure affordable housing provision without recourse to such grant within Housing Priority Areas when appropriate grant support cannot be identified by the City Council and on schemes outside the Housing Priority Areas.

5.37G Developers must ensure that affordable housing will be available only to those who need it. These will include those on housing waiting lists and those who wish to buy their own homes, but cannot purchase a property on the open market. Developers are therefore encouraged to enter into partnership arrangements with registered social landlords whose interest in the property will control initial and future ownership and occupation. Where affordable housing is provided under Part B of the definition, it will be necessary for developers to prove that such housing will meet the needs of those who cannot afford market rents or prices prevailing in the locality. Where necessary, planning conditions will be imposed, or planning obligations sought, in order to ensure that the benefit of provision is enjoyed by initial and subsequent qualifying occupiers.

**Lifetime Homes**
5.37H To ensure that the housing stock will meet the needs of all residents in the future, the City Council will expect all new affordable housing to be designed in accordance with the “Lifetime Homes” standards currently adopted by the City Council, subject to any variations which may be dictated by site topography. The City Council will also encourage other developers to consider incorporating these standards into all new dwellings built in the City.

Housing Densities and Types

5.38 Housing densities should reflect the approach set out in “Places for Living.” By and large, a variety of densities are appropriate throughout the City and on particular development sites. The main concern rather is to emphasise the quality of the development and its impact on its surroundings. Higher densities should not be confused with poorer quality development. The City Council will encourage a general increase in average housing densities compared to the densities achieved on development sites in the recent past. Densities of at least 100 dwellings to the hectare will be expected on sites close to main public transport links in the City Centre and other centres and for developments designed to meet the needs of smaller households, within the City Centre, 50 dwellings per hectare in other centres and within corridors well served by public transport and 40 dwellings to the hectare elsewhere. Lower densities will be appropriate in helping to meet the needs for family accommodation and executive-style houses. A wide range of dwelling sizes and types will be encouraged, to meet the needs of families and to take account of market demands. There may be occasions when these or other special circumstances would justify a lower density level. Lower density housing may be appropriate in certain circumstances, such as where it is necessary to preserve or enhance the character of a conservation area, or to provide larger family housing where a particular local need has been identified. Developers will be expected to provide supporting information justifying the density proposed, should it fall below those set out above.

5.39 Proposals for residential development on sites larger than 1 hectare should include a variety of house types, providing a mixture of dwelling sizes and capable of meeting a range of needs and demands wherever this is practicable. Where the City Council is able to influence proposals in these directions through land ownership, it will seek to do so.

5.40 The overriding consideration is that Birmingham must be able to provide and maintain good quality housing developments which incorporate accommodation of all sizes and types in an attractive and safe environment. Further advice on many of More detailed policies concerning these issues [is] are set out in paragraphs 5.20-5.20B above and in the City Council’s [Residential Design Guidelines.] Supplementary Planning Guidance for the design of new residential developments.

Provision for Travellers

5.41 The City Council currently fulfils its statutory obligations, as set out in the Caravan Sites Act 1968, through the provision of provides 15 pitches for travellers at an official site at Castle Vale. Should further provision be deemed necessary during the Plan period to meet the needs of travellers an additional site (or sites) will be identified. Any proposals that might be brought forward will take account of both the requirements of the travellers and the interests of local residents and other occupiers of land. The following development control criteria will be used to assess the suitability of proposed locations:-

Chapter 5 - Housing
1. Suitable access to shops, schools, social and health services, employment and public transport.

2. Suitable access to the major road network.

3. Access to mains water and electricity supply.

4. Potential for future improvements in accordance with the needs of site dwellers.

5. The need to minimise any adverse environmental effects, eg. on the landscape and on agriculture.
CHAPTER 6 - TRANSPORT

Context

6.1 In the past, transportation policy has concentrated primarily on existing and predicted traffic and transport problems. It is now recognised that transport planning and investment has a much wider role. It is a key factor in supporting and stimulating economic regeneration and urban renewal. Improvements in accessibility, the environment, safety and image are important areas of concern, in addition to the more traditional matters such as delays and speed. In order to maximise all the benefits that can arise from investment in transport, a more positive approach is now required.

6.2 Recently a complete review of strategic transport policies has been undertaken, following on from a number of specific studies commissioned by the City Council. This study (jointly undertaken with the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive – now known as ‘Centro’ – and the City Action Team) is known as the Birmingham Integrated Transportation Study (BITS) at both City and Regional levels. Both the Regional Transport Strategy, ‘Accessibility and Mobility’ published in March 1998 and the City Council’s 20-year Transport Strategy for Birmingham, entitled ‘Visions’ recognise the importance of reinforcing Birmingham as the Regional Centre and as a developing international city. Both documents also emphasise the growing importance of meeting accessibility at all levels, as well as providing effective alternative choices to the private car. Centro’s 20 Year Public Transport Strategy sets target standards and aspirations for local public transport services.

6.3 BITS has provided a framework within which the City Council can develop its own transport policies and influence the approach of others (both public and private sector). This framework assists the City Council both in taking a direct, positive approach to transport provision and related development, and in responding effectively to proposals made by others. The City Council has been at the forefront of policy development in transportation. The ‘Package Approach’ to local transport emerged from an integrated transportation study jointly undertaken with partners in 1989 and also contributed to new Government thinking seeking to manage demand through new planning guidance and an emphasis on providing transport choice. This approach has continued to evolve into Local Transport Plans. The first West Midlands Local Transport Plan was published in July 2000.

6.4 If Birmingham is to reinforce its role as the regional centre for the West Midlands, and to develop its international role, it is essential that the appropriate infrastructure should be provided to meet accessibility needs at all levels. This is examined below.

International Accessibility

6.5 The quality of international access to the City and Region has improved in recent years. This is reflected in the growth of both passenger and freight traffic at Birmingham International Airport and the provision of a new passenger terminal. Birmingham International Airport offers regular scheduled services to many European and other international destinations, as well as a wide range of inclusive tour charter package holiday destinations and freight services. The prospects for further growth at Birmingham International Airport are excellent to take advantage of: a catchment area of some eleven
million people; excellent surface access by road and rail; and constrained capacity at London’s four airports. Birmingham International Airport is a major asset to both the City and the Region. It offers an increasing range of regular scheduled services to many European and world-wide destinations, as well as charter flights and freight services. The prospects for further growth are excellent, and a Master Plan has been prepared to guide the future expansion of the Airport. The Airport has also produced a Surface Access Strategy, an important element of which is the development of a new multi-modal interchange facility.

6.6 Development of Direct freight trains through the Channel Tunnel [makes direct train services to destinations in mainland Europe have been a reality since 1994. It is anticipated that direct passenger services to Europe from the Midlands will be available when the Channel Tunnel opens in 1994.] The City Council would wish direct passenger services to be extended from Europe to and from the West Midlands as soon as possible. [However,] The prospects for growth in regional tourism and trade are constrained by the quality of rail links, in particular the cross-London links. [For freight, there are risks that the competitive advantage from lower transport costs will not benefit exporters unless road and rail freight facilities are upgraded so as to exploit the conurbation’s potential for regional rail freight and transport management services.]

National Accessibility

6.7 Access to Birmingham on the national inter-city rail network is moderately good, but major upgrading of lines and services is required to many destinations [and particularly to London.] to address capacity restraints at this major interchange on the Inter City network. The franchising of rail services and the privatisation of the rail infrastructure has resulted in a planned £2 billion investment to reconstruct the West Coast Main Line as a whole, to be completed by 2005. This will potentially provide the benefits of improved capacity and journey times for passengers and freight. Even with those changes, capacity constraints on the approaches to New Street[,] the main rail station, are heavily constrained.] remain to be addressed.

6.8 The main missing elements of The national trunk road network will be completed during the plan period ([M40,) i.e. the Birmingham Northern Relief Road [the Western Orbital Route, upgrading of the M5, M1-A1 link road, M42-A42].

6.9 [A range of regular scheduled services operate from Birmingham International Airport to many domestic destinations.] Birmingham is also the hub of the national coach network.

Sub-Regional Accessibility

6.10 The size of Birmingham, and its functions as a regional capital and higher level service centre, mean that the intensity of use of its transport systems is much higher than the average Metropolitan District. As a result there is less ‘slack’ and the costs and difficulty of accommodating growth are relatively high. In particular, growth in service sector employment, concentrated in the City Centre, will lead to an increase in traffic seeking a City Centre destination where these problems are already most severe.

6.11 The City is well placed in relation to the national motorway network, but there is [an increasing] a contrast between the capacity of inter-urban roads and those within the built-up
area. [The completion of the M40 link to London via Oxford will throw this into stark relief in the south of the City.] Some limited improvements to the Strategic Highway Network within Birmingham will continue to be justified on urban economic regeneration and environmental grounds.

6.12 Deprivation is increasingly concentrated in particular areas, some of which (for example outlying Council estates) are difficult to cover effectively with attractive public transport on commercial terms. [In general the effect of deregulation of bus services could be to concentrate resources on the best patronised routes, at the expense of the wider network, with the risk that these areas will be further disadvantaged.] At the same time, the better off are commuting from ever-increasing distances, placing greater demands on the road system.

6.13 There is only a limited suburban rail network compared with similar sized conurbations elsewhere in the country, making for a higher degree of dependency on road-based transport (cars and buses). It [will] would be difficult and expensive to provide for the projected increases in [car-use] travel by major road building. Increased traffic congestion and delay threaten to have an adverse affect on all road users, the economy and the environment of areas traversed by major roads - especially residential and shopping areas. The rail network is well placed to take a greater proportion of the medium to longer distance trips, including anticipated growth, through quality services combined with increased use of Park and Ride.

6.14 The increased dispersal of population, greater journey distances and hazardous traffic conditions have tended to make walking and cycling less attractive modes of transport. However, [it is important to the economy and for environmental and social reasons, that the City is made more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.] many journeys remain short and potentially able to be undertaken by these modes. For sustainability reasons, the City Council will review and identify areas where priority should be given to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, and as new developments come forward, the needs of pedestrians and cyclists will be taken into account.

6.15 The Birmingham Unitary Development Plan is not expected to deal comprehensively with these issues [...but to provide] It will underpin the City Council’s Transport Strategy and [the framework within which further complementary work will be necessary in] successive Local Transport Plans [Policies and Programmes (TPPs) and through] prepared in partnership with the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority and others [Plans as well as the plans of other bodies such as British Rail] to achieve the City Council’s objectives.

Future Prospects

6.16 [BITS examined the period up to 2010 and drew the following Key conclusions:]

(a) Even in the context of successful regeneration of the urban economy, there will be some continued decentralisation of both population and employment and a major increase in demand on the transport system (28% overall and a 45% increase in City Centre commuting).

(b) If only existing commitments are implemented then this will lead to:-
• The spread of congestion beyond peak periods to the rest of the day, and away from major routes into currently peaceful areas.

• Increasing accident and pollution levels (especially in shopping centres) and corresponding deterioration of townscape and environment, especially in the inner areas and the City Centre.

• A general situation with levels of congestion throughout the urban area similar to those currently experienced in London. This could be expected to deter investment in the inner and central parts of the City, as well as representing a very marked deterioration in the quality of life in these areas.

• Approximately twice as much being spent on highways and highways related schemes as on public transport if current spending levels continue.

(c) A strategy which emphasised road building would deliver a poor economic performance, providing little improvement in accessibility (especially for public transport users) at very high cost and with serious environmental impacts.

(d) A strategy emphasising traffic management and the manipulation of charges for roads/parking/public transport rather than capital investment, would produce a significant benefit for the City Centre, but little elsewhere, and would require new legislation to implement.

(e) Strategies emphasising public transport investment would produce the best performance on access and economic benefit, but would still present environmental problems.

A balanced package was therefore chosen as the preferred transport strategy as set out below.

The White Paper on the future of transport, published in July 1998, sets out the way forward through an integrated transport policy. It envisages integration:

• within and between different types of transport so each works properly and people can make easy connections between them;
• with the environment, so that transport choices cause less damage;
• with land use planning, to support more sustainable travel choices;
• with policies for safety, education, health and wealth creation, so that transport helps to make a fairer, more inclusive society.

The White Paper also introduces the key to integration via local transport plans, as a core part of the Government’s proposals. It is expected that Local Authorities will set out their strategies for transport and their long term targets, for instance for improving air quality, road safety and public transport and reducing road traffic.

6.16A The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 is the first piece of legislation in the history of British transport aimed directly at tackling traffic growth as opposed to accommodating it. The Act provides powers that require local authorities to set targets for reducing traffic levels or the rate of traffic growth, and to provide policies to achieve these. Setting these targets is
one of the requirements of the Local Transport Plan, prepared jointly by the City Council, the other Metropolitan Districts in the West Midlands and the Passenger Transport Authority.

6.16B At the regional level, the Regional Transport Strategy “Accessibility and Mobility” was published in March 1998. It addresses the issues being discussed at a national and regional level regarding land-use and transport provision. This has resulted in a greater awareness of the need for sustainable patterns of development and for sustainable transport policies, which balance the freedom to travel with the need for a healthy environment and support for a competitive economy that aids urban regeneration. The aims of the Regional Transport Strategy are as follows:

• to reconcile the demand for travel with environmental concerns;
• to take account of the interaction between land use and public transport;
• to encourage a shift from private transport to public transport; and
• to provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods.

6.16C The long-term implications of increasing car usage and the continued dispersal of population and activity is one of the key issues facing Birmingham.

6.16D The ‘TravelWise’ campaign launched in 1996 is aimed at reducing dependence on the car and encouraging the use of public transport and more sustainable modes of transport wherever possible. The ‘TravelWise’ campaign will be continued as a high priority and will focus on raising the levels of awareness of the whole community.

**Policy Statement**

6.17 The central purpose of the transport strategy, as specified in [Strategic Regional Planning Guidance], is to support economic revitalisation and urban regeneration by providing good quality transport infrastructure. This recognises that transport is a means to help achieve other desirable ends.

6.18 While sustaining the City’s economic recovery is a main priority to which changes to the transport system must be directed, there are others:-

(a) Environmental improvement and protection: as well as being a high priority in its own right, a high quality environment is essential to attract a wide variety of new investment. A transport system which is energy efficient and produces low levels of pollution is clearly desirable.

(b) Social considerations: around half of all households in the City have no car (and not all members of car owning households have use of one); an important objective of transport policy is to ensure that this large section of the community is not increasingly disadvantaged in terms of its access to work, shopping, leisure and social activities. Also important is the requirement for special needs groups - such as the elderly or people with disabilities to be properly provided for.

* N.B. “Accessibility and Mobility” has now been replaced by the current Regional Transport Strategy, which is contained within Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11), published in June 2004. Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, RPG11 is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands and forms part of the statutory development plan for Birmingham.
improving safety for all road users. The need for adequate maintenance funds for both safety and environmental considerations is recognised.

(d) Transport and sustainable development: The City Council is committed to developing a transport system that minimises adverse environmental impacts and ensures the most efficient use of energy. In addition, the Plan seeks to integrate transport and land use policies to support sustainable development. Both aspects form an important part of the Local Agenda 21 process.

(e) Road space management: This means managing road space and parking facilities in such a way as to provide a balanced travel provision for all users of the City’s transport network. This approach will be pursued through future Local Transport Plans. Accordingly, the Plan seeks to encourage a greater proportion of public transport, cycling and walking trips, while maintaining the provision for essential car journeys.

(f) Modal share targets: The City Council’s Transport Strategy establishes targets for changes in the modal share of transport over the next twenty years. To ensure that new developments meet these targets, the City Council will require all proposals which will generate significant transport implications to be accompanied by Transport Assessments, in accordance with the Government’s Planning Policy Guidance on Transport (PPG13). This should explain how the actions proposed by the developer will meet the modal share targets (including access and servicing by all forms of transport) set out in the Transport Strategy, including the proportion of public transport trips. It should also show how the highway network affected by the proposed development will be improved where necessary. Alternative transport modes to the car will also be promoted through “TravelWise,” and through the City Council’s Cycling and Walking Strategies.

6.19 The transport strategy comprises the following principal elements:

(a) A balanced package, in terms of both policy and expenditure, of both road and rail of infrastructure improvements including:

- Enhancement of heavy rail lines [together with construction of new light rail/light rapid transit lines in corridors not served by rail, thus improving both accessibility and regeneration in the inner city and City Centre] both to improve accessibility and to aid regeneration in the inner city and City Centre, including making use of existing infrastructure.

- In addition to the extension of Midland Metro Line 1 from Snow Hill to Five Ways, investment in new light rail/rapid transit in corridors not well served by heavy rail is proposed to improve accessibility and regeneration, including the possibility of dual running of light and heavy rail services.

- A full range of bus improvement measures along key road corridors to improve accessibility to the City Centre and across the City.
• **Integration of transport modes where possible, through the provision of interchange facilities such as provision of Park and Ride facilities in and around Birmingham, and the investigation of a “Parkway” station in the vicinity of Longbridge.**

• Orbital highway *construction so far as is needed* *improvement to* relieve and enable the expansion of the City Centre *and improvement to its pedestrian environment* and regeneration of outer commercial areas.

• Radial highway construction *only* sufficient to improve accessibility and permit environmental relief *within corridors.*

• Selected highway investment to provide access to development/redevelopment areas from the national highway network; improve access within rather than through congested and declining areas; and where it facilitates environmental relief.

**{Car parking provision and control.}**

**(b)** A car parking policy that supports the provision of short stay parking facilities, and the control of long stay and private parking provision, the control of long stay parking provision and reduces the amount of parking in new development (and in the expansion and change of use in existing development).

**(b)** Enhancements of the wider road, rail and air links to the City taking advantage of the development of Birmingham International Airport, the Channel Tunnel and improvements to the national motorway network.

**(c)** Traffic management measures to:-

• *Increase the capacity of the existing road systems where desirable and improve bus operations particularly in corridors not served by rail.* Reallocate road space to priority uses and more sustainable transport modes.

• Divert City Centre traffic *to orbital roads.* to the Ring Road and improve conditions for pedestrians in the City Centre.

• Ensure that the environmental relief enabled by *limited* radial road construction is achieved and that traffic is diverted away from environmentally sensitive areas.

• Improve accessibility for/and safety of, vulnerable road users and pedestrians throughout the City including the development of a network of cycle routes *and Safer Routes to Schools.*

• Improve the overall environment; including the use of area traffic calming techniques to reduce the environmental impact of vehicular traffic, when these are necessary and appropriate.
Integration of services on individual public transport modes [to the extent permitted by the legislative and financial framework.] through the co-operation of Centro and operators and investment in interchange facilities.

Enhance service levels where justified by changes in patronage, while retaining an integrated fares structure at a level as close to today’s fares (in real terms) as permitted by trends in patronage and operating costs.

6.19A The needs of the mobility impaired will be taken into account in the provision of new transport infrastructure and facilities. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places new responsibilities on transport operators and local authorities to ensure that vehicles and infrastructures are fully accessible, but this will take many years to implement.

6.20 The scope for the Unitary Development Plan to address all of these issues is limited. In so far as it is able the following more detailed approach will apply.

**New Developments – Transportation Requirements**

6.20A New developments can make significant demands on the transport infrastructure of the City. Where appropriate, the City Council will seek, through planning obligations, contributions towards transport infrastructure, to secure improved accessibility by all modes. This will be particularly important in locations not currently well-served by modes other than the private car. Development will only be permitted in such locations where it is essential to meet the strategic requirements of this Plan, and will be subject to any necessary accessibility improvements. Where necessary, and where reasonably related in scale and kind to a proposed development, contributions will be sought through planning obligations towards transport infrastructure to secure improved accessibility by all modes. This will be particularly important in locations not well-served by modes other than the private car. Significant development proposals in such locations will be expected to address any necessary accessibility improvements.

**Public Transport**

6.21 There is a continuing need to improve public transport facilities including interchanges so that access to places of employment, education, shopping, medical, cultural, leisure and social facilities is [not unduly restricted] attractive for those with and without access to private transport. Of particular concern are the needs of the elderly, less mobile and people with disabilities. In addition to service levels and cost, the reliability and quality of public transport [is] are important.

6.22 While the City Council does not directly provide public transport services it has a key enabling and supporting role particularly as highway and planning authority to those agencies that do. The West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority is the policy making body for local public transport and its policies are implemented by Centro. The Passenger Transport Authority, Centro and the Strategic Rail Authority [is] are responsible for the procurement franchising of local rail services. [H] Centro also funds concessionary fares,
Chapter 6 - Transport

provides some bus [infrastructure] facilities, information, special needs transport and plans for future public transport including the local rail network and the Midland Metro project. A long-term perspective on the improvement of the public transport system throughout the West Midlands is set out by Centro in their 20-Year Public Transport Strategy. A range of private operators run public transport services.

Bus and Coach

6.23 The bus is by far the most important mode of public transport in Birmingham and is certain to remain so for the foreseeable future, with or without the introduction of light rail/light rapid transit. About 90% 85% of all public transport trips are made by bus [and the bus is particularly important with respect to the City Centre]. It has a key role as an alternative to the car and in the provision of local access for socially disadvantaged groups, especially those on low incomes, and for those people with mobility difficulties. [However, since deregulation passenger journeys have been declining.] Recent major investment, for example, through “Bus Showcase” Routes, has increased passenger journeys. Improvements in bus services are needed to ensure that the bus [remains] becomes an accessible and attractive mode.

6.24 Coach travel is also important, particularly in providing an inexpensive means of longer distance travel for those on low incomes. The adequacy and attractiveness of Digbeth Coach Station continues to give cause for great concern. The City Council will work has worked with the relevant transport providers to put forward options a proposal for a new [additional] coach station[s] at Great Charles Street within the City Centre [within the Plan period] with a view to improving the quality and quantity of acceptable facilities including improved interchange.

6.25 It is important that buses are easily accessible to and from [able to penetrate] residential areas and offer a good choice of destinations to serve the needs of passengers. Buses should continue to serve zones of high demand, which implies good accessibility to [penetration of] centres. Journey times should be [maintained] improved as far as possible, [as an] and the important aspects of safety, reliability, [and] comfort and quality should be continually improved. This will include measures to make buses more accessible to people with disabilities. Traffic management measures to aid bus operation and improved interchange and information are [an] important ways in which bus travel can be made more attractive.

6.26 The City will play its part as highway authority and as an important participant in the Passenger Transport Authority in giving priority to public transport services and aiding infrastructure provision where this can be shown to give positive benefits. Consideration will be given to [Bus Priority] comprehensive bus improvements - including ‘Showcase’ type projects in corridors either not served by heavy rail or unsuitable for light rail/light rapid transit. Proposals for such projects will be brought forward in future Local Transport Plans. [It] The City Council will co-operate with bus operators to provide the best possible service.

Rail Developments

(i) Heavy Rail
6.27 The most essential element of the transport strategy is for the complementary development of both light (Midland Metro) and heavy (BR) rail on a greatly increased scale. Because of the extreme difficulty/expense of new heavy rail provision in an urban area, this means that the emphasis will be on improving existing heavy rail services and on the provision of light rail/light rapid transit in corridors where there is no existing rail line suitable for enhancement.

6.28 Following many years of decline there have been steady increases in the number of rail passengers, both on the suburban and inter-city networks. However, the increases have been achieved from a relatively low base. The city's suburban rail network is of only limited size (eight routes) and in need of enhancement, particularly as levels of commuting are rising and journey lengths increasing.

6.29 Matters that will be addressed over the plan period include:-

- Under-utilisation of several lines.
- Capacity problems at New Street station and between Coventry and Wolverhampton.
- Rail access to the International Convention Centre.
- Poor interchange between New Street, Moor Street and Snow Hill based services.

   **Reliability of services**

6.30 Work is underway to address many of these issues and the City Council will encourage service improvements, including park and ride, on all local rail services and support the electrification of railway lines where feasible and where this is consistent with environmental objectives. Specific proposals (as shown by Figure 6.1) include: -

- To enhance New Street station as one of the city's major gateways.
- **[Electrification of] Provision of additional stations on** the 'Cross-City' (Lichfield to Redditch) line.

  **[Creation of a further Cross-City line linking Stourbridge and Solihull services via Snow Hill.]**

  **[Provision of the Soho Curve linking the Walsall and Solihull line services.]**

- The possible reintroduction of rail services serving the Moseley and Kings Heath areas (Camp Hill line).
- The reintroduction of passenger services on the existing freight-only line serving Minworth, Walmley and Sutton Coldfield [will also be investigated together with alternative light rail/light rapid transit options.]
Replacement of life-expired diesel units by modern units and improvements to signalling and track.

- Provision of additional local stations, particularly ones which to serve Birmingham Heartlands, Castle Vale/Castle Bromwich and Bordesley, including possible park and ride facilities at Star City, The Fort and Castle Vale.

- Provision of new stations on the Wolverhampton and Walsall lines to serve and provide direct inter-city rail services to the International Convention Centre, City Hospital and Soho Road area.

- The re-opening of Old Moor Street Station to help relieve pressure on Birmingham Snow Hill.

6.31 In the longer run, ways of relieving the pressure on New Street station need to be found. A key issue will be to ensure an increased capacity and an appropriate balance between national, regional and local rail services, in the corridor between Wolverhampton and Coventry. To this end, the provision of additional tracks between Wolverhampton and Coventry will be supported. The City Council will protect enhancements to serve Central Birmingham, including new chords at Soho and Bordesley, to enable greater use of the Snow Hill/Moor Street lines.

6.31A The former Wagon Works at Duddeston and the adjacent rail siding have been identified as being suitable for rail rolling stock stabling and / or maintenance. The site will therefore be reserved for rail-related uses for the remainder of the period covered by this Plan.
6.32 The City Council, the Passenger Transport Authority and adjoining local authorities are working together with British Rail, Railtrack, Network Rail and operators to improve the attractiveness of and to maximise the use of [the] rail services, to reduce congestion on roads within the City. This will include the provision of additional or new park and ride facilities [(such as those proposed at Earlswood on the North Warwickshire line) on the fringes of the City and at key interchange points, including the following stations within Birmingham:]

- Acocks Green
- Blake Street
- Bournville*
- Chester Road
- Four Oaks
- Hall Green
- Kings Norton
- Longbridge*
- Northfield
- Selly Oak
- Spring Road*
- Stechford*
- Tyseley*
- Wylde Green
- Yardley Wood

*proposed new sites

The provision of additional or new park and ride facilities will need to be subject to robust assessment, including consideration of alternative sites where relevant, the impact on local amenity and travel impacts, including traffic reduction and generation.

(ii) Light Rail/Light Rapid Transit

6.33 The development of a modern light rail/light rapid transit system (Midland Metro) complementary to the existing heavy rail network [is essential if] would further the City’s strategy for economic and urban regeneration [is to be achieved].

6.34 The [network] light rail/light rapid system [shown on Figure 6.1]) will be provided by the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority, the Strategic Rail Authority, transport operators, the private sector, and with the active support of the City Council. A study has been undertaken by Centro on the provision of High Volume Public Transport services along certain routes in the West Midlands where the main demand is during the morning peak period. The [main] initial element[s of the network being:

[(a)] will be an extension of the Midland Metro Line One from Wolverhampton to Birmingham Snow Hill [to Wolverhampton]. Station to serve the heart of the City Centre and on to Five Ways/ Edgbaston (T45). This will be promoted with Centro through the Transport and Works Act. The City Council will commission a feasibility study into tunnelling options for the City Centre. It is intended that a network of
routes from the centre will be promoted which will be complementary to the rail network.

[(b) Five Ways/City Centre/Birmingham Heartlands/National Exhibition Centre (with underground running in the City Centre).]  

[(c) City Centre Link-Birmingham Snow Hill to Bull Ring underground.]  

[(d) Other corridors are less certain and require further study, but could include:

City Centre – Kingstanding  
City Centre – Weoley  
Extension of route (b) to Quinton and Castle Vale]  

[(e) Additionally, a light rail/light rapid transit corridor to the southern sector of the City will be investigated.]  

6.34A In addition, The following corridors identified in the Local Transport Plan* will be subject to further investigations:  

• Birmingham International Airport and NEC via Coventry Road;  
• Birmingham City Centre and Hagley Road to Quinton or Halesowen, with possible spurs to Birmingham Eastside;  
• Great Barr or Kingstanding to Northfield/Longbridge.  

Additional routes may be brought forward through Local Transport Plans during the lifetime of this Plan. The details of any future routes will be subject to separate public consultation, in accordance with the Transport and Works Act.  

[6.35 In the longer run priority will be given to establishing routes in areas not served by other forms of rail. However, it is vital that improvements to existing BR services are not foregone in the intervening period.]  

6.36 As details of light rail/light rapid transit proposals are brought forward, the City Council will seek to ensure that:-  

(a) Large scale demolition is not involved other than where there is a clear planning gain to the wider community.  


(b) Segregated running is provided wherever possible; with shared running only where necessary and where the transport network can absorb the
implications. Street running is provided where appropriate to help provide improved penetration of the light rail/light rapid transit system in key areas. This may include existing or new pedestrian areas. Appropriate mitigation measures will be taken where possible, to alleviate any adverse environmental impacts, particularly in sensitive areas.

(c) When necessary land required for light rail/light rapid transit will be protected from other development.

(d) Compatible development adjacent to light rail/light rapid transit routes will be supported and that in appropriate circumstances, developers will be encouraged to contribute to the cost of light rail/light rapid transit construction.

(e) Appropriate environmental impact statements are prepared to accompany them.

**Taxis**

6.37 The important role of the taxi service (i.e. Hackney Carriages and private hire vehicles) in an international city is recognised. The service is particularly valuable when provision of safe, convenient and efficient public transport is difficult to justify. Hackney carriages have a particularly important role in helping meet the needs of people with disabilities. Allowance will be made to accommodate and where appropriate improve taxi services, particularly in the City Centre and at transport interchanges.

**Highways**

*The Strategic Highway Network*

6.38 Birmingham’s Strategic Highway Network (SHN), which has been developed as part of the transport strategy, is shown by Figure 6.2 and on the Proposals Map. The roads which make up the SHN are those limited number of major routes where the wider public interest requires high capacity, a relatively free flow of traffic and limited frontage access. These are the roads that are critical in maintaining good accessibility within the City, be it directly to the City Centre or key areas within the City. In accordance with the transport strategy, these roads are not intended to provide alternative routes to the motorway box for long distance traffic or when motorway traffic is excessive. The City Council will protect capacity and target investment to increase accessibility along selected elements of the SHN, whilst ensuring a primacy for environmental improvement and road safety.
Chapter 6 - Transport
6.39 On those roads which are not part of the SHN (the vast majority of roads in Birmingham), the presumption is that local considerations should predominate in any decision regarding those roads. Matters such as environmental impact, safety, access control, pedestrian and cyclist needs and the function of the road will be key factors in planning future development, determining planning applications, highway design and identifying routes for special types of vehicles, eg HGV's and buses. [In order to assist this work a City-wide road hierarchy will be established and kept under review, with roads categorised according to their role and functions and this may have implications for new development such as frontage access.] Continuous monitoring of noise and air pollution will be undertaken throughout the City as part of the City Council’s Environmental Strategy and particular attention will be given to the monitoring of the environmental impact of traffic along major highways.

[6.40 Improvements to the SHN will form the strategic core of the City Council’s bids for highway resources and account for the bulk of highway capital spending.]

**Improvement Priorities**

6.41 [Not all of the SHN will need major improvements in the Plan period. Those] Only limited elements [that] of the SHN will need [significant] upgrading to meet the requirements of the transport strategy and these are set out below. Elsewhere on the SHN only limited minor improvements are anticipated within available resources. Environmental Assessment Studies will be undertaken before any substantial improvements to the SHN are firmly programmed and resources allocated by the City Council. Priorities are set out below:-

(a) Ring Road/Queensway

It is important that the Ring Road can accommodate the bulk of City Centre through-traffic as well as providing good access/distribution to the inner industrial areas and the City Centre. This will enable Queensway to be converted for the most part to a City street/boulevard with surface level pedestrian crossings and allow the development of a “Bus Mall” (T46) which will provide a dedicated bus only route to serve the core of the City Centre.

(b) Bristol Road (A38)

To provide good access to major areas of activity within the corridor (University of Birmingham, Longbridge and Hospitals) and improve conditions in Northfield and Selly Oak Centres, through provision of relief roads for these centres. The Bristol Road is also vital to the effective operation of the proposed A38 Corridor Strategy for high technology development.

(c) Dudley Road (A457)

To improve access to the City Centre from the Black Country, and to channel traffic away from residential/shopping areas of Handsworth/Soho Road.

[(d) Birmingham Heartlands]
Spine Road

To provide access to the Birmingham Heartlands from M6 Junction 5 and to signal public sector commitment to the regeneration of industrial East Birmingham.

(e) Hagley Road (A456)

[To improve access to the M5 motorway and to serve commercial areas and the International Convention Centre.]

(d) South Birmingham

A series of transportation measures across the area, including traffic management, public transport improvements and road access improvements.

6.42 However, in parallel, other improvements which will take a smaller share of overall resources but nonetheless are essential for the implementation of the overall strategy will be undertaken:

(i) Industrial and Development Access

Areas such as Birmingham Heartlands and Tyseley and Witton Industrial Areas need general improvements to their local road pattern [as well as strategic connections]. In addition, other major developments and concentrations of activity such as Holford Park need supportive roadworks. When appropriate (in terms of the benefit to a specific user) developers may be expected to contribute to the cost of necessary improvements, as is currently the practice. In considering planning applications, conditions may be imposed or, where necessary, planning obligations sought, in order to secure relevant highway improvements, or financial contributions thereto, that are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed.

(ii) Environmental Improvements

Schemes are required both to make employment areas attractive and to deal with the worst aspects of traffic congestion and intrusion in sensitive areas. Smaller schemes will be required to support public transport, urban renewal, enhancing local accessibility, tourism and environmental improvement. Car parking, particularly in local centres, is also important. Improvements to the accessibility and safety of pedestrians and cyclists will be achieved by creating new routes and by traffic calming techniques.

Cycling

6.43 The City Council is committed to the promotion of safe cycling in the City and recognises the benefits that can arise from a greater use of [bi]cycles. Accordingly, its policy, [adopted in 1987, extensively revised in 1998], is based on [eight main areas of concern:] making cycling increasingly attractive as a mode, and embraces the following principles:
a) Cycling for transport, leisure and sport will be encouraged and a number of on and off highway cycle routes will be provided to form a convenient network, linking major trip generators such as shopping centres and the National Cycle Network.

[b) A network of cycle routes to improve access will be provided. New restrictions on access for cyclists will not normally be introduced unless the safety of pedestrians or cyclists is involved.]

c) Locations that are particularly hazardous for cyclists will be investigated and remedial measures taken where appropriate.

d) The safety and convenience of cyclists will be fully considered in all new highway schemes.

e) Quality cycle parking facilities (including changing and shower facilities) will be required at appropriate locations.

f) All developers (including housing developers) will be encouraged to provide cycle parking facilities and cycle friendly infrastructure.

g) The maximum integration of cycling and public transport will be sought.

[h) On new housing estates, developers will be encouraged to provide appropriate cycling facilities.]

6.44 The Birmingham Cycling Strategy contains more detailed guidance on these and other cycling-related issues, and sets out a series of targets for implementation of the City Council’s cycling policy. Progress towards implementing the policy will continue throughout the plan period. Cyclists are one of the groups of vulnerable road users identified in the Road Safety Plan Strategy, on which measures to reduce road traffic casualties will be targeted. [A network of back street and off highway routes will be further developed. Cycling within the Central Area will be encouraged by providing segregated crossings of Queensway from the City-wide cycle network; permitting two-way cycle access to pedestrianised streets; and providing secure cycle parking facilities at major attractions.] The following strategic cycle routes have been identified:

Millennium Cycle Route (incorporating Birmingham (Main Line) Canal Route and Rea Valley Route) (T29)
North Birmingham Cycle Route (incorporating New Hall Valley Route) (T36)*
Tame Valley Canal (T36A)
Harrier Run (T39)
Birmingham & Fazeley Canal (T39A)
East Birmingham Route (T40)
Ward End Route (T41)
Cole Valley Route (T42)  
City Ring (T43)  
Grand Union Canal (T44)**  
Bristol Road (T47)  
Worcester & Birmingham Canal (T47A)*  
Stratford Road Parallel (T49)  
Moseley-University (T50)  
Stratford-on-Avon Canal (T50A)*  

These routes are shown on Figure 6.3 and are also identified in the List of Proposals in the appropriate Constituency statements. Additional routes have been identified in the Birmingham Cycling Strategy, but details of these routes are less advanced. These will also be brought forward as appropriate during the Plan period. Further cycle routes may be identified in due course, through future reviews of the Cycling Strategy.

Pedestrians

6.45 The needs of pedestrians, particularly in the City Centre, have in the past often taken second place to road vehicles in the design of highways and the redevelopment of areas. Positive steps to improve the pedestrian environment have already started (e.g. with the lowering of Paradise Circus) and there is a clear commitment to radically improve the city centre [for pedestrians] environment through expanding pedestrianisation, replacement of subways with at grade crossings and improved priorities and lighting. Outside the city centre, particularly in suburban centres, pedestrian movement and facilities can also be improved considerably. A policy of implementing suitable measures will be pursued, often through local planning studies. These issues will be addressed in a walking strategy for Birmingham. [The need for further improvements for special needs groups such as textured surfaces at pelican crossings for the sight impaired will be of particular concern.]

Motorcycling

6.45A In an increasingly congested city, motorcycles (which include all powered two wheelers) have a role to play in that they are often the quickest means of moving around the city. The City Council will seek to make provision for the parking and safety of such vehicles, including encouraging measures to reduce any adverse environmental impact.

* Part of proposed National Cycle Network Regional Route
+ Part of proposed “Lapworth Loop”
Chapter 6 - Transport
Traffic Management and Minor Highway Schemes

6.46 Traffic management measures are often a cost effective way of improving highways. They have a strategic role in ensuring that maximum use is made of limited road space, protecting environmentally sensitive areas, and assisting buses [(especially in areas not served by rail)] and vulnerable road users. Low cost schemes can be introduced to reduce congestion at critical points in the highway network and alter the function of local streets as well as to improve road safety and reduce road accidents.

6.47 Urban Traffic Control will play a major role in ensuring that efficient use is made of the main road network [as could new technologies. However, the impact of the higher traffic levels on safety and the environment needs to be considered.] and the newly developed facilities of Urban Traffic Management and Control should allow the City Council to use this flexibility to give priorities at different locations to particular types of vehicles, cycles or pedestrians.

6.48 Traffic management and minor highway schemes covers a host of initiatives such as bus priority schemes, pedestrian facilities, facilities for people with disabilities, road safety, cycle routes and facilities and car parking. Priority will be given to:-

- Improving safety, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- Improving traffic flow
- Improving the environment, especially in the inner city.
- Improving access for industry and commercial premises, especially in the inner city.
- Producing a high economic rate of return.
- Ensuring the efficient operation and attractiveness of public transport services.
- Contributing to reduction in crime.
- Improving access for emergency vehicles
- Reducing pollution levels.
The purpose of improvement lines is to protect land required for highway and public transport schemes from other development. To avoid the unnecessary and costly sterilisation of land, improvement lines will only be maintained:

(a) On the SHN where improvement is proposed (as set out in para. 6.41).

(b) When required for specific schemes not on the SHN but identified in a current programme.

(c) Exceptionally it may be appropriate for the proper planning of an area to introduce or maintain an improvement line for a scheme even though it is not in a current programme.

(d) For the provision of appropriate public transport infrastructure and car parking facilities.

Improvement lines will continue to be reviewed to ensure they reflect the transport strategy of the UDP. It is the City Council’s intention to progressively lift past improvement lines as and when detailed SHN proposals are adopted. The following strategic improvement lines will be protected for transport improvements and development that would prejudice the proposed improvement will not be permitted:

1. Hagley Road – Lordswood Road to Five Ways
2. Dudley Road – Spring Hill to City Road
3. Bristol Road – Northfield, Selly Oak and Longbridge
4. Highgate Road – Ring Road to Stratford Road
5. Alcester Road South – Hawkhurst Road to Warstock Road
6. Gravelly Hill – Aston Expressway to Kingsbury Road
7. Church Road – The Swan Underpass to Harvey Road
8. Holyhead Road – Island Road to Middlemore Road
9. Station Road, Stechford
10. Thimblemill Lane – Long Acre to Sandy Lane
11. Lichfield Road – Holborn Hill to Aston Hall Road
12. Pershore Road - Dogpool Lane Junction
13. Changes to Masshouse Circus Area, City Centre
14. Six Ways, Erdington
15. Stockfield Road (single carriageway) and Yardley Road to The Swan Roundabout

The locations of these key improvement lines within the City are shown on Figure 6.4 and are listed in the List of Proposals in the relevant Constituency statements. In addition, there are a number of smaller-scale improvement lines which will continue to be protected. Details of these are held by the City Council, and are available on request.
Chapter 6 - Transport
Car Parking

6.49A The City Council’s policy is to maintain adequate provision of car parking for essential car journeys while encouraging a greater proportion of public transport, walking and cycling trips. The City Council however, recognises that the type of parking required is related to the location and the local situation, particularly in terms of the availability of public transport. For example, in centres, there will be a specific requirement for short-stay parking for shopping and business trips, and along transport corridors, there will be a need for park and ride facilities, particularly for commuting trips.

6.49B For new developments, the City Council will expect adequate provision to be made to meet all the transport needs. To assist in the provision of car parking facilities, the City Council has produced appropriate Car Parking Guidelines for different types of development and locations, and a Car Park Design Guide, which has both of these been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The City Council will also produce car parking standards for different types of development and locations and will adopt these as a Development Plan Document. Pending the adoption of car parking standards for Birmingham, the City Council will assess development proposals against the maximum parking standards set out in Annex D of PPG13 – Transport (or any subsequent replacement), and for residential developments, the general guidance in PPG3 – Housing (or any subsequent replacement). In assessing the parking provision proposed in planning applications, the City Council will take into account local factors such as the availability of public transport as well as public parking facilities. In addition, the City Council will impose a condition that requires the organisation to be affiliated to “Company TravelWise in Birmingham” when granting planning permission for a development employing a significant number of employees, and/or where a proposed development may have a significant transport impact on the local area.

Parking in the City Centre Core*

6.50 As part of the balanced approach advocated by BITS the need for further car parking in the wider city centre was identified. The demand for car parking facilities differs considerably between areas of the City. In the City Centre Core activity levels are such that it is not possible to satisfy all parking demands and priority is given to short stay shopping and business visitors whose trips are responsive to parking availability. Emphasis is placed upon improving the environment and requiring only limited off-street parking provision for new development. Developers will be expected to contribute to the provision for enhanced public car parking facilities outside of the Core. The concentration of activity in the City Centre creates a significant demand for car parking. To accommodate the parking needed for all car journeys would require destroying the fabric and environment of the City Centre to such an extent that activity would be driven away. However, the City Council recognises that it needs

* Currently the area within the Queensway, or such an area as is from time to time defined by Supplementary Planning Guidance.
to ensure that adequate provision is made for trips that may go elsewhere if they cannot be made to the City Centre. The priority for publicly-provided parking will be, therefore, to provide for those whose trips are particularly responsive to parking availability, i.e. shoppers, business visitors and other short-stay visitors. The provision of long-stay parking facilities within the City Centre Core will be resisted.

6.50A However, the parking demand from people using the City Centre Core cannot be met from the available spaces located within the Core. Public provision of long-stay facilities will be made outside the Core, either on the edge of the City Centre or in Park and Ride sites further out. Additionally, it is recognised that as public transport services improve, and offer a real alternative to long-stay commuters and other long-stay visitors, it will be possible to reduce the provision of long-stay parking without adversely affecting the overall accessibility and viability of the City Centre.

6.50B Within the Core, short-stay on-street parking provides a convenient choice for people who want or need to park close to particular destinations. A balance needs to be struck between the requirements of those who need to park close to particular destinations (e.g. people with mobility difficulties, or those who need to collect bulky purchases), and the need to create a safe, attractive City Centre environment where businesses can flourish.

6.50C The additional provision of private non-residential parking facilities will be determined through the development control process. Within the City Centre Core, only essential on-site parking will be allowed, to enhance and maintain the high quality environment of the area. Existing site owners will be encouraged to enhance the quality of their stock in accordance with the City Council’s published Car Parking Guidelines.

Parking in the Remainder of the City Centre (defined as out to, and including, the Ring Road)

6.51 [Elsewhere, around the Queensway there is a need to make provision for parking to serve central area activities, and opportunities will be taken to combine commercial development with the provision of additional short stay public car parking. Beyond this ‘moat’ of public car parks new development is required to make provision to meet its own needs. Public provision will be made where it is necessary to serve urban regeneration, assist shopping centres and promote environmental improvements. Residents only parking schemes will be considered and implemented in appropriate circumstances.] Within the remainder of the City Centre outside the Core, there is a multiplicity of uses, and the different Quarters have distinctive needs, e.g. the Gun Quarter is predominantly a manufacturing area, whereas the Bull Ring/Markets Quarter is a leisure, wholesale market, residential and industrial area. The City Council will develop specific detailed parking policies for each of these areas to meet local needs. Immediately around the Core, existing parking provision currently supports the Core activities. As alternative provision is made (e.g. by the development of strategic Park and Ride sites), it will be possible to reduce the amount of long-stay parking without reducing City Centre accessibility. The City Council will review the role that car parking standards can play in stimulating development whilst helping to meet modal split targets. In addition, the City Council will review and
extend the existing on-street Controlled Parking Zones in order to promote vitality and increase priority access to and within the City Centre.

**City-Wide Parking**

6.51A On-street parking presents a multiplicity of problems throughout the City. In local centres, adjoining roads can be overrun by visitor parking, emergency vehicles have problems reaching calls where narrow roads are heavily parked, and verges are disfigured and pedestrians hindered. These problems require detailed local solutions that are responsive to local needs, such as residential parking schemes. The City Council will, therefore, develop local parking policies for distinctive areas of the City to meet their particular needs. Where appropriate, new developments that are likely to generate a significant amount of on-street parking in residential areas will be required to contribute towards parking management measures, such as public car parking and/or residents’ parking schemes. They may also be required to be affiliated to "Company TravelWise in Birmingham."

6.51B As parking provision is a major factor influencing modal choice, this will be an important feature of future planning agreements in respect of new developments, in order to achieve the modal choice targets as set out in the Local Transport Plan. The City Council will continue to review its prepare new Car Parking Guidelines as a Development Plan Document taking into account the needs of particular areas and the operational needs of certain developments. These will be in line with the Government’s Planning Policy Guidance (PPG13) and Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11), with maximum standards in terms of the numbers of parking spaces to be provided for new developments. These will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to this Plan.

**Air**

6.52 [Studies by the Civil Aviation Authority have indicated the potential for traffic at Birmingham International Airport] Birmingham International Airport’s Masterplan Master Plan, published in 1995, forecasts annual passenger traffic at the Airport to grow from [its present 3.6 ] about 4.8 million passengers per annum in 1994 to [some 8.5 to 13.5] about 10.6 million passengers per annum by 2005. In 2000, the passenger throughput was about 7.6 million passengers per annum. [In the longer run, BITS has shown that the airport has potential to handle 20 million passengers.] The Airport has published targets for enhancing the share of increasing surface access by public transport modes between Birmingham and the Airport. The Airport is committed to enhancing the share of public transport (heavy rail, light rail, coach and bus), both for workers at the Airport and passengers, between the Airport and other destinations, including Birmingham.

6.53 The City Council will seek to:

(a) Encourage the sustained and balanced growth of Birmingham International Airport leading to an increased range of direct long and short haul services.
(b) Secure appropriate and complementary improvements in public transport links to the City and to the motorway/trunk road network and in terms of interchange at the rail station.

(c) Ensure that the expansion is achieved with protection of the local environment.

(d) Ensure that any new parking facilities provided in Birmingham specifically to serve Airport users will not undermine the Airport’s published targets for public transport usage.

**Rail-Freight Transport**

6.54 The City Council [and all the other West Midlands Metropolitan Districts] supports the provision of a major rail freight terminal for Channel Tunnel traffic at Bescot in Sandwell. The City Council accepts that there may have to be increase in traffic at the existing Rail Freight terminal at Landor Street in the initial years of Channel Tunnel operation. The increased use of rail for the movement of goods. The City Council is therefore encouraging existing and new businesses to take advantage of the intermodal terminals at Hams Hall and Landor Street as well as retaining/reserving sites for direct rail services. As there are only a limited number of sites with good direct rail access, the City Council considers that such sites should be safeguarded from other development which would prejudice their use for railfreight purposes in the future. However, where these sites are close to existing residential areas, their amenity should be protected, and planning applications for new railfreight development will be expected to address this, and any other relevant environmental issues. For example, the impact of the proposed operations on the visual amenity of the area will be an important consideration, particularly if the site is close to residential areas. An environmental impact assessment may be required for certain types of development.

6.55 At present, there are several existing railfreight facilities in Birmingham, including the Landor Street Container Terminal, Washwood Heath Sidings and Small Heath Sidings. These should be retained and enhanced where necessary. The development of any existing railfreight facility outside the City Centre with other uses will not be permitted. The route of the rail chordline to link Washwood Heath Marshalling Yard with the Aston to Stechford railway line will be safeguarded to facilitate potential future railfreight improvements.

6.56 In addition to the railfreight sites currently in use, there are several locations within the City with good direct rail access. These include Fort Parkway, Bromford, land adjacent to Bromford Gate, land adjacent to Adderley Park Station, Saltley, the former Wagon Works, Duddeston, land at Landor Street, Nechells, the former Queen’s Head Sidings, land at Hay Hall Road, Tyeley, land at Station Road, Kings Norton and land at Longbridge. Such sites will be reserved for future railfreight use, and the permanent development of these sites for uses not directly related to the transportation of goods by rail with the exception of park and ride facilities will not be allowed, unless there is clear evidence that they will not be developed for railfreight purposes within the life of the Plan. Interim uses such as park and ride may be
appropriate in some cases. The location of existing and committed railfreight sites is shown on Figure 6.1.

6.57 The development of new railfreight facilities will be encouraged in other suitable locations. In such locations, development with other uses will only be allowed if all options for railfreight use have been exhausted, and if it can be demonstrated that there is no realistic prospect of railfreight use within the life of the Plan.

6.58 As the recycling of land takes place, other sites which have potential to provide both good direct rail access, and the development of railfreight facilities, may be identified in future reviews of the Industrial Land Strategy. Such sites will be reserved for future railfreight use, and will be subject to the policy set out above in paragraph 6.56.

[6.55] 6.59 The City Council will support the use of “Section [8] 139” grants [under the 1974] of the Railways Act 1993, to encourage the construction of private sidings, particularly as environmental benefits will accrue from the use of rail rather than roads.

**Canal Freight**

6.60 The existing network of canals in Birmingham offers some potential for freight transport. The City Council will work with British Waterways to investigate the feasibility and benefits of using the canal network as a means for the transport of freight, alongside its potential for tourism, recreation and leisure.
Chapter 6 - Transport
CHAPTER 7 – SHOPPING AND CENTRES

Context

7.1 Shopping is the means whereby people obtain the commodities which they need or desire. Access to a range of shops with competitive prices, and the ability to shop in convenient and pleasant surroundings, is an important component of the quality of life. Restricted access to shops, or a poor choice of shops, is a form of deprivation, which may exacerbate other inequalities.

7.2 The pattern of shopping provision is determined largely by market forces. Retailers will only continue to trade in locations where they are able to make a profit and they will only open new outlets in locations where they expect to do so. New shopping developments will only take place where developers expect to achieve an adequate return on their investment. However desirable they may be on social grounds, new shops will not be built and existing shops will not continue to trade unless these conditions are met. A retail strategy which ignores this has no prospect of success.

7.3 The existing pattern of shopping is the result of historic capital investment decisions and has arisen primarily from the need for shops to be accessible. The precise requirement for accessibility varies depending on the type of retailer. Consumers will be willing to travel longer distances to shops selling goods bought only occasionally, than to shops selling goods bought on a regular basis, and will seek a greater choice in the case of more expensive, less regular purchases. The result is a pattern consisting of shopping centres in accessible locations (eg at the centre of a transport network or on a main transport corridor) complemented by local shops close to, or within residential areas. The balance between convenience and comparison sales within centres varies, depending on the particular function of the centre.

7.4 The existing pattern of shopping has been under increasing pressure for change since the 1960’s, primarily as a result of four pressures:

- Population decentralisation.
- Increasing car ownership.
- Growth in retail sales - especially in durable goods.
- Changes in the retail industry - such as the increasing domination by multiple retailers and pressures for new development out-of-centre.

7.5 In Birmingham these changes have been reflected by:

- An increase in total retail floorspace, but a decline in shop numbers, particularly of ‘corner’ shops.
- A reduction in employment in retailing.
- Increased concentration of retail sales in larger centres and especially in the City Centre.
• Decline (both relative and absolute) in many inner area centres, some of which have developed a specialist role serving particular ethnic minority groups in addition to their general retail function.

• The emergence of large food stores/retail warehouses, some on out-of-centre sites.

• Competition from retail uses wishing to utilise high quality industrial land.

A more detailed analysis of recent shopping trends is contained in the ‘Shopping in Birmingham’ Report.

**Future Prospects**

7.6 Consumer expenditure, particularly on durables, will continue to grow in real terms. The rate of growth will vary from year to year, reflecting in particular the economic success of the region; the proportion of disposable income directed to retailing; and the extent of consumer credit growth. This growth in the volume of sales will result in continued pressure for additional retail floorspace. However, in Birmingham these pressures will be tempered by continued slight decline in the City’s population. Expenditure on convenience goods is likely to remain static.

7.7 Retailers will continue to seek locations which are accessible and accessibility will continue to determine the pressure points for future retail development. There will be a continuing pressure from retailers for the advantages of easy car access and car parking, but this will be balanced by the growing recognition that shopping locations should be readily accessible by a choice of means of transport.

7.8 The trend towards superstores and retail warehouses will continue. There is likely to be further pressure for retail warehouse ‘parks’ in locations with good road access. Some of the older, less well-located warehouses, may close as the market for this type of retailing reaches saturation.

7.9 More retailers, including some established High Street names, may consider new forms of operation in order to: increase their market share, meet the needs of car-borne shoppers, and obtain more space-extensive facilities. Few are likely to seek to abandon the High Street completely, providing that High Streets continue to act as important centres for shopping activity.

7.10 The present uncertainty over the impact of new regional shopping centres in the West Midlands will be resolved by the early 1990’s. Merry Hill already exists. Whether pressure for such centres is renewed in the future will depend on the commercial success of those centres which are built in the next few years, and the extent to which existing centres are able to adapt to meet the changing requirements of retailers. The strong emphasis of national retail policy on supporting existing town centres means that there are unlikely to be any further successful proposals for new regional shopping centres within the region. This will create a major opportunity to redirect retail investment pressures to support and strengthen the role of existing centres.
7.11 If population decline in the inner areas is halted, or even better reversed, there will be an opportunity to stabilise inner area centres. Improvements in the economic prospects of residents in the inner areas will also assist in this process. However, all existing centres will continue to face increased competition from newer forms of shopping, and inner area centres will be particularly vulnerable because of the marginal commercial viability of many inner area businesses. Some centres will continue to lose trade and will need to adjust to a reduced role.

7.12 The relationship between shopping and leisure is likely to grow closer with the development of themed shopping, food courts, etc. Style and image will be fundamental to this process. There will be continued pressure for the modernisation/refurbishment of shops, shopping malls and centres and a need for high environmental standards in centres seeking to compete for this sector of the market.

Policy Statement

General

7.13 In line with the requirements of [the Secretary of State’s Strategic] Regional Planning Guidance, the role of existing shopping centres, and in particular Birmingham City Centre, as the Regional Shopping Centre for the West Midlands, will be maintained and enhanced. Existing centres* will continue to be the main focus for new retail development. This reflects the importance of centres in the life of the community, not simply as locations for shops, but also as a source of employment, cultural, social and business services. However, there must be a balance between the need to maintain centres; and the need to accommodate new types of retailing generated by changing consumer preferences (in particular retail warehouses) which cannot always readily be accommodated in centres.

7.14 No attempt has been made to predict future floorspace requirements: this cannot be achieved with any accuracy. There will, however, continue to be a need to relate the provision of new floorspace to growth in the volume of retail sales. This will be achieved by continuing the existing practice of requiring major new retail proposals to be supported by a retail impact assessment. A portfolio of retail development opportunities will be maintained and regularly updated.

7.15 Emphasis will also continue to be placed on the positive promotion and enhancement of existing shopping centres. Particular attention will be placed on:-

- The need for centres to be as accessible as possible by public and private transport and also on foot, including the provision of conveniently located bus stop facilities and car and cycle parking;

*References to centres do not include small parades of shops.
The need to provide a pleasant, safe pedestrian environment within and on the approaches to shopping centres, taking account of the needs of cyclists, disabled people, parents with young children and others with restricted mobility;

The need for a high standard of design in all new developments.

7.16 The resources likely to be available for environmental enhancement will be limited, and the following priorities will therefore apply:

1. The Regional Shopping Centre

2. Inner City Centres, especially where there is a reasonable prospect that private sector investment may be attracted as a result.

3. Other centres where enhancement may encourage private sector investment.

**Retail Need**

**7.16A** The City Council considers that committed developments and the specific proposals contained within this Plan are sufficient to satisfy the probable quantitative requirement for additional comparison retail floorspace over the Plan period. It is not envisaged that there will be a need for significant additional provision to be made for this purpose before the end of the Plan period, and before the substantial completion of the Bull Ring and Martineau Galleries schemes in the City Centre. The City Council proposes to undertake a retail need assessment to establish the scale of any longer term requirements for additional comparison retail floorspace. This will take account of work being undertaken at the regional level in the context of the Regional Spatial Strategy, and its results will be taken forward through a review of the UDP retail policies.

**7.16B** It is, however, recognised that there will be a continued justification for smaller scale comparison retail schemes in the following circumstances:

(a) Proposals for specialist or ‘niche’ retail developments in the City Centre, consistent with the principles established in paragraphs 15.12 – 15.12B, and but not of a scale which would threaten the successful implementation of the Bull Ring and Martineau Galleries schemes;

(b) Proposals aimed at improving local shopping choice within other centres, in line with the principles set out in paragraph 7.23.

**7.16C** It is recognised that there is a continuing demand for additional floorspace for the sale of genuinely ‘bulky goods’ (e.g. DIY/building materials, plants and garden products) which could not reasonably be sold from sites within centres. The Plan identifies a number of sites and locations where this type of development will be acceptable. Any proposals for this type of development will be considered against the policies set out in paragraphs 7.27 – 7.28 which are not within an established...
centre will be considered against both national policy towards retail development not located within a centre and the policies set out at paragraphs 7.27-7.28 below.

7.16D No significant growth is expected in expenditure on convenience goods, and so it is not considered that there is any overall need for a significant increase in convenience retail floorspace over the Plan period. Any longer term quantitative requirements will be established through the retail need assessment referred to in paragraph 7.16A. However, it is recognised that access to supermarkets and food shopping facilities varies across the city. The City Council’s priority is therefore to provide improved food shopping opportunities in areas where local access to food shops is poor. To this end, the City Council will seek to identify standards of access to food shopping, including direct access on foot, by cycle or by public transport, and will identify areas of deficiencies across the City. The City Council will then seek to identify the most appropriate means of addressing this.

7.16E Therefore, any proposals for new supermarkets or large foodstores will be considered against the criteria set out in national retail planning policy and paragraphs 7.27 - 7.28 below. In assessing whether a need for such proposals exists, the City Council will take particular account of the quality of existing access to food shopping within the catchment of the proposed store, and the extent to which the proposal is likely to remedy any deficiencies.

The City Centre

7.17 Recognition of the importance of the City Centre as the most important concentration of economic, cultural and administrative activity in the West Midlands is an essential element of the Strategy. The continued success of the Regional Shopping Centre is fundamental to the success of the City Centre as a whole and the retail aspect of the City Centre’s role will accordingly be maintained and enhanced through:-

- improvements to the range and quality of shopping facilities, together with the retention of the existing range of shops and in particular the retail markets;
- improvements to the centre’s accessibility, by both public and private transport, including improved car parking;
- improvements to the quality of the environment, including pedestrianisation;
- improvements to the links between the main shopping area and other activities in the City Centre.

7.18 Appropriate new retail development or renewal within the Regional Shopping Centre will be encouraged in accordance with more detailed policies set out in Chapter 15, paragraphs 15.12-15.12B. Schemes already in the pipeline, including the proposed redevelopment of the Bull Ring and the proposed Martineau Galleries scheme will produce a substantial increase in shopping floorspace in the Regional Shopping Centre and it is anticipated that there will be scope for only limited
additional growth in the next decade. However, it is not envisaged that there will be scope for a substantial further overall increase in retail floorspace in the Regional Centre at least until towards the end of the Plan period.

7.19 Specialist retail provision will be appropriate in connection with other uses in the wider City Centre, such as the Convention Centre, Jewellery Quarter and Chinese Bull Ring / Markets Quarter, at a scale appropriate to the primary use of these areas.

7.20 Retail warehouse development will not be permitted in the core of the City Centre, but will be encouraged in locations adjacent to the Ring Road. It is recognised that the City Centre should provide opportunities for all forms of retail development. However, it is also acknowledged that developers may not be able to find sites that are suitable for the sale of certain types of goods may be impossible from within the central retail areas. For example, this may be the case with “bulky” goods such as DIY and gardening materials. Provision for the sale of such goods may therefore be permitted on the edge of the City Centre in appropriate locations adjacent to the Ring Road. More detailed guidance on suitable locations is contained in Chapter 15 and in Supplementary Planning Guidance. Any such proposals will be required to be supported by evidence demonstrating that there is a clear need for the proposal, and that it could not reasonably be located within the central retail areas of the City Centre, or in any other centre, taking account of the PPG6 requirement for retailers to be flexible over the format and design of their proposals. However, the Ring Road is an out-of-centre location, and planning permission will therefore only be granted for such proposals where it can be demonstrated that they are consistent with national policy towards retail development not located within a centre. Specifically, it will be necessary for prospective developers to demonstrate that:

- A clear need for the proposal exists;
- The sequential approach has been applied;
- There will be no unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of an existing centre; and
- The site is accessible by a choice of means of transport.

More detailed guidance towards Edge- and Out-of-Centre Shopping developments is set out in paragraphs 7.27 – 7.28. In applying this approach, the City Council will expect developers and retailers to comply with the national policy in PPG6, requiring flexibility over the format, design and scale of such proposals.

7.20A Any such developments proposals will be expected to be of high quality design, reflecting the prominence of their location and to directly address the Ring Road. Proposals will also be expected to provide for access by a choice of travel modes. Any permission granted will be subject to conditions limiting the range of goods permitted to be sold to the appropriate ‘bulky’ goods categories and preventing subsequent sub-division of units.
Other Centres

7.21 A network of local centres will be supported throughout the City, in order:-

- to provide for the majority of day to day shopping trips and ensure that a range of shopping facilities is retained to suit all needs;
- to provide a focus for local community life and to give a sense of identity to local areas.

7.22 Individual centres will be encouraged to evolve in line with local circumstances. Where centres have a capacity for additional growth, this will be encouraged: in other cases, some reduction in floorspace may be necessary. In all cases the objective will be to ensure that centres remain as attractive as possible. Wherever possible, consistent with the highway needs set out in the Transport Chapter, the blighting effect of highway improvement lines will be removed.

7.23 Proposals for additional retail development/redevelopment in existing centres will normally be encouraged. Proposals should:-

- be of an appropriate scale in relation to the size and function of the centre;
- be integrated with the existing shopping area;
- have no significant adverse effect on the continued vitality and viability of an existing shopping centre as a whole;
- help to maintain a range of shops to meet the needs of the local community within the centre, including premises appropriate to the needs of independent retailers as well as national multiples.

7.23A Centres are important, not only just as places to shop, but also because they provide the opportunity for a wide range of services to be delivered locally, in locations accessible by a choice of means of transport. Mixed use schemes of an appropriate scale, including, for example, leisure, health care, community uses, housing and local offices, as well as retail, will therefore be supported in centres, provided that they do not harm the vitality and viability of the shopping function of the centre.

7.24 [Service] Uses which provide a direct service to a customer, such as professional and financial services and restaurants (ie broadly uses falling within Use Classes A2 and A3), leisure uses and community uses (such as doctors’ surgeries, dentists, post offices, local council offices and libraries) now have an established place in many shopping centres, including the City Centre. Such uses will be encouraged as complementary to the retail function of these centres, subject to the need to ensure that an over-concentration of such uses does not create significant areas of dead frontage, and does not prejudice the viability of the centre as a whole.
7.25 However, where there is evidence that the future growth of service uses is likely to be at the expense of the primary retail function of a shopping centre, restrictions will be placed on their further expansion in line with the advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6. This will be through the identification of ‘primary retail frontages’, within which proposals for additional non-retail uses (ie uses not falling within Use Class A1) will normally be refused. Service uses will continue to be accepted in the remainder of these centres. The centres within which this policy will apply are shown on the Proposals Map and Figure 7.1. Detailed policies for these centres will be included in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

7.26 In the case of shopping centres which are likely to experience a reduction in floorspace, a retail core will be identified. The objective will be to concentrate new retail investment within the retail core, and to improve its attractiveness to shoppers. Service uses will normally continue to be accepted within the retail core, particularly where vacancy rates are high. Outside the core, the conversion or redevelopment of vacant retail units to other suitable uses (such as housing) will be encouraged. The centres where this policy will apply are shown on the Proposals Map and Figure 7.1. Detailed policies for certain centres have been included in Supplementary Planning Guidance. These will be reviewed, and boundaries for all the proposed primary and core areas will be included in a forthcoming Development Plan Document. This will also include a list and classification of established centres.

**Edge and Out-of-Centre Shopping**

7.27 [Large food stores and retail warehouses are regarded as legitimate forms of shopping. In line with the general principle that the majority of new retail development should be located in centres, this type of retail facility will be encouraged to locations within or immediately adjoining existing shopping centres, and efforts will be made to identify and promote appropriate sites. However, it is recognised that it is unlikely to be possible to accommodate all of the requirement for this type of retail use on such sites and that it will be necessary for some provision to be made out-of-centre.] In line with previous policies and in accordance with PPG6, the principle is that wherever possible, proposals for new retail development, including large foodstores and retail warehouses, should be accommodated in centres. However, it is accepted that there may be exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, and that it may not always be realistic for certain types of goods (e.g. DIY and gardening materials) to be sold from town centres. The City Council may therefore be prepared to support retail proposals which are not within a centre, provided that:

- A need for the proposal has been clearly demonstrated;
- The principles of the sequential approach have been followed. This means that it must first be demonstrated that no suitable in-centre locations are available which could accommodate the proposed activity. If this is the case, first preference should then be given to edge-of-centre sites, with out-of-centre
sites only being considered in the absence of any suitable in- or edge-of-
centre locations.

In applying this policy, the City Council will expect developers and retailers to comply
with the national policy in PPG6, requiring flexibility over the format, design and
scale of such proposals.

7.28 [In] Where these circumstances [therefore] apply, [retail-warehouses and
superstores will be acceptable on out-of-centre sites, where] retail development
proposals should also satisfy the following conditions [are met]:-

- There is no major impact on the vitality and viability of an existing shopping
centre as a whole.

- Investment in existing shopping centres will not be deterred.

- There would be no loss of industrial land [(premium and Best Urban
categories)] contrary to paragraph 4.31.

- There would be no major loss of non-retail employment as a result of the
  displacement of existing viable businesses.

- The site is widely accessible by public transport, including services provided
  through planning obligations, and is likely to facilitate multi-purpose trips, in
  order to reduce reliance on the car and minimise traffic generation.

The policies in paragraphs 7.28 and 7.29 7.27 and 7.28 will be applied to all proposals
for key town centre uses (e.g. leisure, entertainment, commercial and public offices,
and community uses) as well as to retail proposals. In order to assist in the
application of this policy, the City Council will prepare a list and classification of
established centres and will incorporate this in a forthcoming Development Plan
Document (see also paragraph 7.26).

7.29 Because of their high turnover, the majority of which is diverted from existing
shops, the City Council will expect proposals for large food stores to be accompanied
by a retail impact assessment, to demonstrate the effect on the continued viability of
existing centres. In assessing this, account will be taken of the need for such centres
to continue to attract new investment in order to maintain their vitality. Impact
assessments will also be required in the case of proposals for major new retail
warehouse developments to demonstrate the effect on the continued viability of an
existing centre or centres, as a whole.

7.30 Appropriate sites for additional retail warehousing will be identified and
included in the portfolio of retail development opportunities. Where If, after rigorous
consideration against national retail planning policies and the policies of this Plan,
retail warehouses are approved on out-of-centre sites, a minimum unit size of 5,000
sq.ft [1000m\(^2\) (gross) will normally be required and a condition will normally be
imposed to prevent subsequent sub-division of units. Limitations [may] will also be
placed on the range of goods to be sold from the development, in order to reduce trade diversion from existing centres as a whole.

7.31 Proposals for new regional shopping centres which would simply reproduce the type of shopping already found in centres will not be supported. This approach will apply throughout the City, including the Birmingham Heartlands area. Any major retail proposals within Heartlands should not have a materially detrimental effect on the vitality and viability of any existing shopping centre, and in particular of the City Centre.

7.31A The importance of corner shops and local parades of shops, is also recognised. So far as its powers permit, the City Council will seek to support such facilities. However it is recognised that in some instances small parades may lose their commercial viability, fall vacant, and become a blight to the local area. Where it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a demand for the continued retail or local service use of such parades, the City Council will support their redevelopment or conversion to a more appropriate use.

**Leisure and Entertainment Uses**

7.32 The City Council is keen to encourage diversity of uses within centres, and recognises the important role which leisure and entertainment uses can play in achieving this. Leisure and entertainment uses will therefore be encouraged to locate in existing centres and particularly the City Centre.

7.33 Out of centre proposals for leisure and entertainment uses of a significant scale will be considered on the same basis as proposals for out of centre retail development, that is in line with the principles set out in paras 7.27 and 7.28. Such proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of their impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres, including their impact for the evening economy, and by an assessment of the qualitative and quantitative need for the proposed use.