

EXTRACTS FROM THE BIRMINGHAM UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Birmingham Plan
BIRMINGHAM UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2005
(incorporating Alterations approved by the City Council for adoption on 11 October 2005)

[Highway] Improvement Lines

6.49 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:-

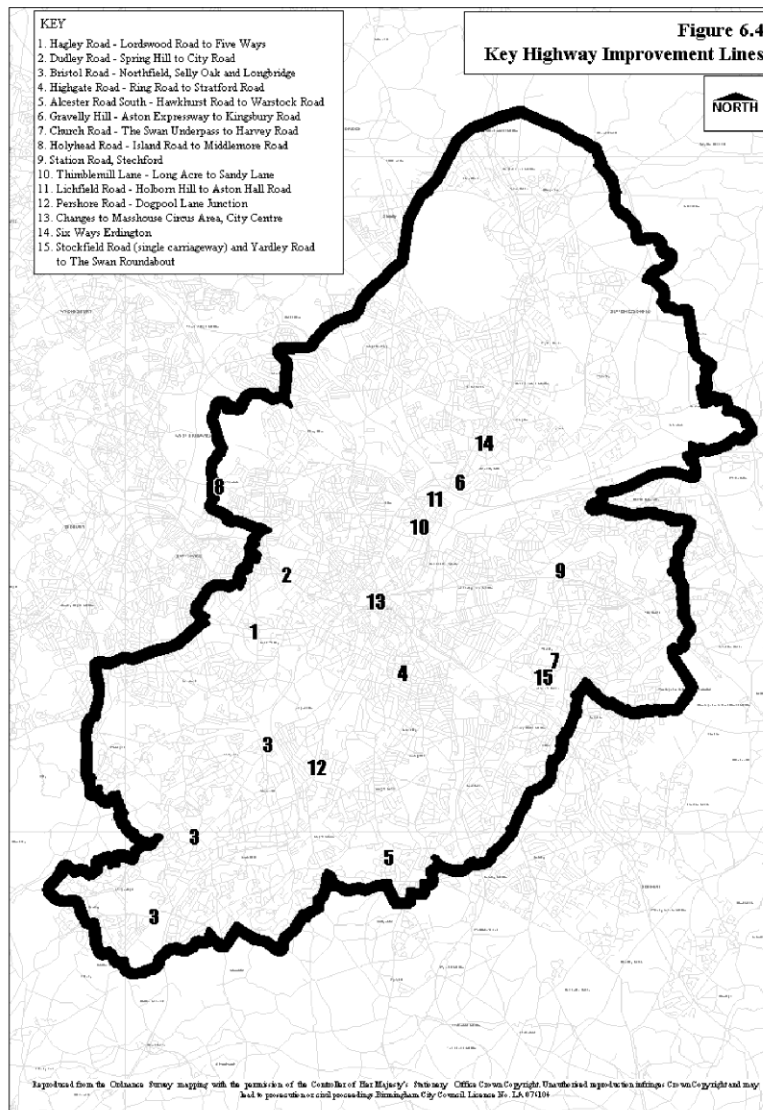
- (a) On the SHN where improvement is proposed (as set out in para. 6.41).
- (b) When required for specific schemes not on the SHN but identified in a current programme.
- (c) Exceptionally it may be appropriate for the proper planning of an area to introduce or maintain an improvement line for a scheme 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 14 - HODGE HILL

General Character

14.1 Hodge Hill Constituency stretches some 4 miles east from Saltley Viaduct to the City's boundary with Solihull. The M6 motorway, Birmingham-Derby railway and Birmingham-London railway form distinct physical boundaries to the north, west and south. Despite these good national communication routes to the area, access within many parts of Hodge Hill is poor. The orbital A4040 provides an important north-south link and is part of the Strategic Highway Network. Partial access to the M6 can be gained at junction 5 ~~[although it is hoped that the junction may be upgraded to provide full access following completion of the Birmingham Northern Relief Road]~~. The Birmingham-London railway has local stations and provides commuter services.

14.2 The Constituency has a distinct land use pattern. Industrial areas line the Birmingham-Derby railway while, with the exception of pockets of further industrial development at Mackadown Lane, Kitt's Green Road and Stechford, the rest of the area is overwhelmingly characterised by large residential estates interspersed with pockets of open space and playing fields. The River Cole provides a major Green Wedge into the eastern half of the Constituency and provides an important leisure, conservation and wildlife function. The residential areas comprise high density terraced housing (in Saltley and Washwood Heath), large inter-war municipal estates (at Ward End and Alston) and more recent Council estates (at Shard End, Firs Green, Bromford, Tile Cross and Cole Hall).

14.3 Saltley is the largest shopping centre in the Constituency and is a ribbon development along Alum Rock Road. There is a smaller centre at Fox and Goose, at the junction of the ~~[A47]~~ B4114 /A4040, which is more modern and has expanded rapidly in recent years. Elsewhere small purpose built centres and parades meet local shopping needs. Immediately to the east of the Constituency is Castle Bromwich Hall (a Grade 1 Listed Building) and Gardens, which are of National Historic Interest (Grade 2), as well as Castle Bromwich Wetland.

14.4 The area has a resident population of around ~~[80,000 (1987)]~~, 81,900 (1991) which includes a substantial ethnic minority population in the west of the Constituency. This latter area is typical of Birmingham's inner city and exhibits a range of socio-economic and physical problems. Some of the outer estates, however, also suffer similar problems and pockets of deprivation exist on the Firs, Glebe Farm and Kitt's Green Estates. Throughout the Constituency there is a shortage of social/community facilities. Key statistics relating to the Constituency are included in the table at the end of this chapter.

Policy Statement

Overview

14.5 Hodge Hill is a densely developed Constituency in which opportunities for investment will largely be through redevelopment. The main thrusts of the plan's policies are to improve and regenerate the inner city areas to the west; consolidate

and revitalise the key industrial areas; and, to protect and enhance the environment, in particular the valley of the River Cole.

14.6 A series of housing strategies and policies are being applied in North Saltley and Washwood Heath ~~[under a Local Action Plan]~~. These aim to improve the existing housing stock, provide new housing opportunities through selective redevelopment, provide a range of community facilities and services, and upgrade and improve the local environment. The main vehicle for these improvements ~~[will be the designation of]~~ is the North Saltley Renewal Area. This area now also forms part of the Saltley/Small Heath Area Regeneration Initiative (ARI), which has been boosted by the award of funding under the Government's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Programme, and includes a target for the provision of 1000 additional dwellings within the area over the five-year programme. Elsewhere in the Constituency, measures ~~[will be]~~ have been taken to overcome problems with existing Council housing stock, for example at the Overpool and Firs Estates.

14.7 The Birmingham Heartlands ~~[Urban Development Corporation]~~ area extends into the Constituency, including important industrial areas which contain some of the city's best known companies and largest employers. The prime objective in this area will be to ensure any future needs of these companies are met, whilst providing opportunities for new industries to locate and invest. The ~~[proposed]~~ Heartlands Spine Road ~~[will improve access to these areas, as will the proposed light rail route to Birmingham International Airport and the National Exhibition Centre, which will offer residents in the Bromford area increased access to job opportunities and easier east-west movement.]~~ and proposed improvements on the Chester Road between Kingsbury Road and the M6 Junction 5, including junctions, should improve conditions for residents in the Washwood Heath Corridor (T5). ~~[An]~~ The Environmental Action Plan for ~~[the]~~ Heartlands ~~[will]~~ has significantly improved the quality of the environment.

14.8 Stechford (part in Yardley) is an area currently undergoing change and renewal~~[- It offers excellent opportunities for both retail and commercial development, with]~~ taking advantage of improved access on the A4040 and the local rail network. The emphasis will be on realising this potential and securing environmental improvements. The provision of additional tracks on the Birmingham New Street to Coventry railway line will be supported. New park and ride facilities are also proposed at Stechford railway station.

14.9 In the east of the area the River Cole Valley is the focal point. This Green Wedge will be protected from development and will be the subject of environmental improvements. New housing development opportunities are limited in number: housing activity will concentrate on renewal and improvement.

Birmingham Heartlands: Saltley Industrial Area **(part of Washwood Heath Ward)**

14.10 This area comprises a belt of industrial land between the Birmingham-Derby railway and residential areas of North Saltley and Washwood Heath. It falls within the

Birmingham Heartlands and is part of a larger industrial area which is to undergo renewal. It is envisaged the area will provide opportunities for both new quality businesses and firms relocated from other parts of Heartlands.

14.11 There are three major land blocks in this sector:-

- ~~Saltley Trading Estate occupies a 20 hectare site, [but suffers from poor access and internal layout. It is suitable for redevelopment, and represents a major opportunity for quality business and industrial development].~~ Some redevelopment has taken place but the opportunity still exists for further redevelopment.
- ~~[Metro-Cammell] Alsthom (Railway Carriage Works) occupy another 20 hectare site. [Further land for industrial development is available adjacent to this site.]~~
- ~~[Leyland Daf] LDV occupy over 35 hectares and are a key employer within the City. Part of this block forms Heartlands Central (I64) one of the largest brownfield development sites in the City.~~

14.12 Access to all three areas [is] ~~has been~~ poor resulting in congestion and vehicular/residential conflict. The [proposed] Heartlands Spine Road [(T6)] to the north and west of the railway [may do much] has helped to alleviate problems. ~~[when] Provision of suitable links [are constructed, particularly] with Common Lane[, Aston Church Road and Saltley Viaduct.] should further reduce congestion. [Environmental improvements to screen and soften the boundary with adjacent residential areas will also be required.]~~

14.12A A site east of Bromford Lane, adjacent to the rail sidings at Bromford Gate, is allocated for industrial development and open storage (I57).

North Saltley/ Washwood Heath (part of Washwood Heath Ward)

14.13 This is a typical inner city area stretching from Saltley shopping centre (along Alum Rock Road) in the south, to the Saltley industrial area in the north and Ward End Park in the east. The area is almost wholly residential, comprising high density terraced housing, and is split by the [A47] B4114, and a freight-only rail line.

14.14 The belt of terraced housing contains some 3,500 predominantly owner occupied houses. Considerable investment has been undertaken by the Council to certain blocks of property, but ~~[the majority]~~ some still remain in poor physical condition and are in need of substantial improvement. The North Saltley Local Action Plan approved in 1989, outline[s] d a variety of housing strategies and action programmes to oversee the comprehensive renewal and improvement of the area. The designation of the North Saltley Renewal Area (HR9) ~~[will tackle]~~ has enabled social, economic and environmental problems to be tackled as well as ~~[upgrade]~~ improving local housing conditions. ~~[A housing redevelopment site has already been~~

identified] As part of this initiative, new housing has already been built at Arley Road/Hutton Road [(H21)]. There is also a particular need for larger properties for extended families.

14.15 Saltley shopping centre, along Alum Rock Road, comprises mainly small independent retailers in older premises; many serving local ethnic minority communities. ~~[There has been little recent investment in the fabric of]~~ The area [which] has a generally run down appearance, but the centre has an important local role. Encouragement [will be] has been given both to retaining its viability and upgrading its appearance via its designation as a Commercial Improvement Area. Some shop premises have already benefited from refurbishment. New retail investment will be encouraged within, rather than outside, the shopping areas, and a retail core policy will apply (S16).

14.16 The quality of the environment is poor in Saltley/Washwood Heath; in particular there is a severe deficiency in public open space. Much of this area lies within the Saltley / Small Heath Area Regeneration Initiative. The provision of new open space and the improvement of existing open areas will be considered a priority.

Ward End and Environs **(part of Hodge Hill Ward and** **part of Washwood Heath Ward)**

14.17 This district occupies the central parts of the Constituency and includes: The Firs and Bromford Estates in the north, Hodge Hill and Ward End in the centre; and Alum Rock, the Alston Estate and parts of Stechford in the south. The district is divided by two main roads: the ~~[A47]~~ B4114 and A4040. At their junction is the Fox and Goose shopping centre which expanded rapidly in the 1970's. The only sizeable industry within the area is at Stechford. Otherwise, the area is a mix of private and public housing estates interspersed with a network of parks, sports pitches and green open spaces. There is scope to improve the linkages between these spaces, offering opportunities for walkways and wildlife corridors.

14.18 Stechford (part in Yardley Constituency) straddles the Birmingham-London rail line and contains a mix of uses, many in conflict with each other. The area is in need of renewal, ~~[but offers excellent opportunities for new investment, with the potential for regeneration and revitalisation. This is based on two attributes: firstly, there are pockets of land available for development (and scope for redevelopment), and secondly the area]~~ and has an excellent location on the A4040. However, ~~[its full potential cannot be realised until the completion of the Heartlands Spine Road, and some local upgrading of the A4040 itself.]~~ it suffers from traffic congestion and safety problems in the Station Road area. [Commercial uses and non-food retail warehouses would be particularly suitable (C12).] The former Parkinson Cowan Works on Flaxley Road is a mixed use scheme of about 8.6ha, comprising an industrial development, a retail park, and a new area of open space (M22). Most of this has been developed. Environmental improvements and improved access to the River Cole Walkway (E51) will also be encouraged as will policies to protect and enhance the nature conservation value of the area.

14.19 The Fox and Goose and Pelham (Alum Rock) shopping centres ~~[are similar in size]~~ fulfil an important local shopping role. The Fox and Goose has an excellent location and offers better servicing and car parking and the opportunity exists to expand this centre to include a ~~[large foodstore]~~ retail or mixed use development. A local planning framework has been prepared to identify an appropriate development opportunity and to bring about improvements in and around the centre. The Primary Retail frontage ~~[policies will apply]~~ policy has been revised (S17). Smaller local shopping centres are to be found at Ward End and on the Firs Estate.

14.20 A wide range of housing types, styles and ages are to be found in the area, and many of the private and public estates are in need of investment. This applies equally to the post war developments as it does to the pre-1919 and inter-war properties. A variety of housing strategies will be appropriate to upgrade the housing stock and the general environment. Estate Action Schemes ~~[will]~~ have addressed the poor housing and environmental conditions found on post-war Council estates at Overpool ~~[(HR10)]~~ and The Firs. The majority of works on the Firs Estate are complete, but some improvements remain to be implemented (HR11).

~~[14.21 The proposed Light Rail route between the City Centre and Airport/NEC is likely to pass adjacent to the Bromford Estate (T12). High quality landscaping and environmental works will be required to ensure minimum intrusion in the area and that the residential area and community facilities will not be adversely affected, whilst offering improved access to job opportunities and locations along its route.]~~

Cole Valley and Eastern Suburbs **(part of Hodge Hill Ward and** **part of Shard End Ward)**

14.22 This large area, bounded by the A47 in the north and the London rail line in the south, is dominated by the River Cole which runs through its centre. The Cole Valley comprises a series of open spaces and recreation grounds which extend deep into the City. Accordingly the Valley is proposed for designation as a Green Wedge and will be protected. The Valley provides an important recreational, leisure, conservation and wildlife resource, and is supported by a variety of policies and action programmes. Project Kingfisher, for example, covering the Cole Valley from Coventry Road to the City boundary and beyond, is a joint initiative by public and private bodies aimed at enhancing its potential whilst protecting its environment. A significant part of the Valley is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (E53), whilst a linear walkway is proposed linking the inner city with the countryside to the east (E51). This area also includes the proposed Cole Valley Cycle Route (T42). ~~[Adjoining the Cole Valley Green Wedge is Sheldon Hall and grounds which are proposed for hotel development s ubject to the retention of the Hall which is a Listed Building.]~~

14.23 A large site to the rear of Alcan Plate Works is proposed for industrial development (I35), subject to the need to ensure that the amenity of the local

residents as well as the environment will not be adversely affected and satisfactory access arrangements.

14.24 Part of the former Yardley Sewage Works has remained vacant for some years. The site offers scope for a mixed development: part of it is proposed for small scale business and industrial uses (I34), while the remaining area would remain as open space reflecting its important nature conservation value (E52).

14.25 The area almost exclusively comprises purpose designed inter and post war housing estates. ~~[Being fully developed to the boundary with Solihull, any new housing opportunities will be through redevelopment or the reclassification of green land; for example at Alderpits Road (H22).]~~ Housing regeneration initiatives are proposed in Shard End. It is proposed to demolish the "Australian Blocks" and other unfit homes in Longmeadow Crescent and Nearmoor Road (HR11A). The cleared sites will be developed with new housing. At Buckland End, around 250 unfit houses will also be cleared and redeveloped (HR11B). ~~[The objective for the former Longmeadow School will be to secure a community facility on the former school site (CF7) together with]~~ There is potential for the provision of housing/ community facilities on the site of the former Longmeadow School (H52) subject to the retention of the equivalent area of the existing playing fields in open space/leisure use. [Housing is also proposed at Gossey Lane (H23).]

14.26 Apart from the Cole Valley, there are few open spaces in the area. Wherever possible, opportunities should be taken to provide small play areas/pocket parks or to upgrade the quality of existing public open space. [New public open space is proposed at Fastmoor Oval (E54).]

14.27 Parts of the Constituency fall close to Birmingham International Airport. Applications for development within this area will be assessed against the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Aircraft Noise and New Development, and the guidance set out in PPG24: Planning and Noise. Public Safety Zones are in the process of being redefined and will need to be taken into account when determining planning applications in these areas.

List of Proposals

This list provides a brief reference to the proposals indicated on the Proposals Map. It must be read in conjunction with the accompanying Constituency Policy Statement in the context provided by Chapters Two to Eight.

Environment

The following Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) will be protected:-

E53: Cole Valley - para. 14.22

The following proposal will form part of a network of linear open spaces across the City:-

E51: River Cole Walkway - paras. 14.18 and 14.22

The following sites will be laid out as open space:-

E52: Part of former Yardley Sewage Works (about 6 ha) - para. 14.24

[E54: Fastmoor Oval/Railway (1.6 ha) - para. 14.26]

Mixed Use

The following site will be developed with mixed uses:

M22: The former Parkinson Cowan Works at Flaxley Road, Stechford, will be redeveloped with mixed uses (para 14.18) comprising:

- **Industrial development (5.7ha) Good Urban (part completed)**
- **Retail development - Stechford Retail Park (not more than 10,000sqm) (completed)**
- **Public Open Space**

Industrial Regeneration

Industrial regeneration initiatives are proposed in the following area:-

IR3: Saltley - para. 14.11

Industry

The following sites will be developed for industry:-

[I33: Aston Church Road (1.6 ha) Good Urban]

I34: Part of former Yardley Sewage Works (about 9 ha) - para. 14.24 (part completed)**

I35: R/O Alcan Plate Works (6.9 ha) - para. 14.23 (part completed)**

I57: Adj Rail Sidings, Bromford Gate (1.4ha) Best Urban - paras 11.30A & 14.12A

I64: Heartlands Central (16ha) Best Urban - para 14.11 (part completed)

[Commerce]

[The following commercial development opportunities are identified:-]

[C12: Stechford - para. 14.18]

[C13: Sheldon Hall - para 14.22]

Housing Regeneration

Housing Regeneration Initiatives are proposed in the following areas:-

HR9: North Saltley - para. 14.14 (underway)

~~[HR10: Overpool Estate – para. 14.20]~~
~~HR11: Firs Estate - para. 14.20 (mostly completed)~~
~~HR11A: “Australian Blocks” and Environs – para 14.25~~
~~HR11B: Buckland End – para 14.25~~

Housing

~~[The following sites will be developed for housing:-~~

~~H21: Arley Road/Hutton Road (1.3 ha) – para. 14.14~~
~~H22: Alderpits Road (3.7 ha) – para. 14.25~~
~~H23: Gossey Lane (3.7 ha) – para. 14.25]~~

~~The following site will be developed with housing/ community uses and open space:~~

~~H52: Former Longmeadow School (subject to retention of former playing fields in open space use) – para 14.25~~

Transportation

~~[Public transport proposals include:-]~~

~~[T12: A light rail route linking Five Ways, City Centre and Birmingham International Airport – para. 14.21]~~

~~The following road improvement is proposed:-~~

~~T5 : Chester Road - key junction improvements - para 14.7~~
~~[T6: Heartlands Spine Road – para. 14.12]~~

~~The following cycle routes will be developed:~~

~~T40: East Birmingham Route~~
~~T41: Ward End Route~~
~~T42: Cole Valley Route – para 14.22~~

~~The following key highway improvement line will be protected:~~

- ~~• Station Road, Stechford~~

~~In addition, new park and ride facilities are proposed at Stechford railway station. The provision of additional tracks on the Birmingham New Street to Coventry railway line will also be supported (para 14.8).~~

Shopping

~~A retail core policy will apply in the following centre:-~~

~~S16: Saltley (Alum Rock Road) - para. 14.15 (policy not yet prepared)~~

Primary retail frontage policies will apply in the following centre:-

S17: Fox and Goose - para. 14.19 (policy adopted)

[Community Facilities]

[The following site will be developed for community, open space and leisure uses:-]

[CF7: Part of former Longmeadow School - para. 14.25]

** In bringing forward development proposals developers will need to take account of former landfill operations on part of this site.

NB With the exception of some commitments carried forward from adopted Local Plans the UDP only refers to land use proposals on sites of more than one hectare in size and to highway improvements costing more than £1 million.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG)*

LOCAL ACTION PLANS, DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS AND STRATEGIES

Development Strategy For Birmingham Heartlands

The Fox And Goose Centre Framework (draft) – includes Primary Retail Frontage Policy

Nechells Development Framework

North Saltley Local Action Plan

Saltley/Small Heath ARI Framework**

DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS

Former Parkinson Cowan Works, Flaxley Road, Stechford

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES

Airport Noise and New Development

ENVIRONMENTAL, DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

Birmingham Heartlands Environmental Strategy

Saltley Commercial Improvement Area Design Guide (draft)

*** This list was accurate at the time that the UDP Alterations were prepared early in 2001. An up-to-date listing of SPG currently in use and new Local Development Documents (LDDs) in preparation may be found in the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Birmingham.**

**** in preparation/to be prepared.**

The Swan Centre and Yardley **(part of Yardley Ward and** **part of Acocks Green Ward)**

18.20 This large district includes the whole of Yardley Ward and those parts of Acocks Green Ward around the Swan Centre. It is predominantly a residential area with several house types and tenures interspersed with a network of green open space. Two strategic highways, the A45 Coventry Road and A4040 [outer ring road], meet at the Swan Centre, a notable retail and office centre. Other local centres are to be found at Hay Mills, North Yardley, Stechford, The Radleys and the Meadway. The River Cole provides a continuous green walkway and recreational space to the west (see Chapter [Thirteen] Seventeen). There are no major industrial areas within the District. Stechford and Lea Hall both have railway stations. There is a park and ride facility at Lea Hall Station. New park and ride facilities are proposed at Stechford.

18.21 The Swan Centre comprises a refurbished 1960's shopping centre with multi-storey car park, and striking office development. Proposed improvements to the A4040 will relieve north-south congestion and create further development opportunities - both of which should increase the attractiveness and potential of the centre. Primary retail frontage policies will apply (S25). Its strategic location makes it ideal for further retail, office and commercial growth and recent investment and redevelopment suggests this has already started. Retail [warehousing] development may be particularly appropriate in this location and a site rear of Church Road will be made available through road widening (C25). Widening of the A4040 will be from its junction with Harvey Road to its junction with the A45 Coventry Road (T32). Measures to ease pedestrian access across roads and junctions and ensure an integrated centre are required, and quality developments, incorporating landscaping and environmental improvements will be encouraged. A planning framework has been prepared as Supplementary Planning Guidance to encourage and guide new investment in, and development at, the Swan and Yew Tree shopping centres and the surrounding area.

18.22 North Yardley is a thriving local centre, but those at Stechford and the Meadway show signs of decline. These centres together with Hay Mills and The Radleys have an important shopping function. Efforts will be made to retain and support this. A retail core policy will operate in Stechford (S24).

18.23 Yardley contains one of the city's oldest and best Conservation Areas: Yardley Old Village. [Various improvements and visitor facilities are to be provided as part of an enhancement programme.] Nearby Blakesley Hall forms one of the Museums highlighted in the city's Heritage Strategy. [and] Further improvements are proposed to upgrade and enhance its tourist potential, including a new visitor centre (To3).

18.24 Yardley has a significant number of parks, playing fields, allotments and sports pitches which enhance its character and appearance. [Recently,] However, there has been considerable pressure to approve the release of some of these for residential development. [Permission,] For example, development has already [been