



Historic England

Coventry City Centre Historic Area Assessment

Locus Consulting

Jack Hanson, Adam Partington, Olivia Morrill and Thomas Linington

Discovery, Innovation and Science in the Historic Environment



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SUMMARY

This report details the findings of an historic area assessment undertaken as part of the Coventry City Centre Heritage Action Zone.

The report outlines the heritage significance of the distinctive character of the city centre's historic townscape, encompassing the legacies of Coventry's history as a major medieval town, a booming industrial powerhouse, a centre of innovation in post-war redevelopment and as a city of rich cultural heritage.

The report provides: a Statement of Significance for the city centre, in both national and international contexts; an historical overview of the centre's development; a detailed description of components of local townscape character including topography and urban form, forms of historic development, historic open spaces, public artwork, views and landmarks, and the centre's relationship with its surroundings (setting).

CONTRIBUTORS

Research and fieldwork were undertaken collaboratively by Jack Hanson, Adam Partington, Olivia Morrill and Thomas Linington.

Adam Partington acted as project executive. Jack Hanson acted as project manager and was principal author and researcher. Olivia Morrill was involved in all areas of research and reporting. Thomas Linington providing additional research support.

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Other: The assessment makes extensive use of previous research undertaken by experts in both Coventry's heritage and post-war townscapes across the country. Considerable thanks are due in this regard, notably Jeremy and Caroline Gould, Elain Harwood (Historic England), Geraint Franklin (Historic England), George Demidowicz, Damien Kimberley, and Junichi Hasegawa. Further insights were gained through interviews with Peter Larkham (Birmingham City University), Tess Pinto and Anna Douglas (20th Century Society), Jo Gibbons (J & L Gibbons), Kelley Christ (A&RME Architects), and Mark Webb (Historic Coventry Trust). The Heritage Action Zone Programme Board provided valuable direction.

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Front cover: St Michael's Cathedral. *Historic England (DPI 64703)*

METHOD

Historic Area Assessment (HAA) is a practical tool developed to help understand and explain the heritage interest of an area and how this significance is experienced through local character, focussing principally on the built environment. The HAA method also highlights issues that have the potential to affect this significance and character.

The HAA for Coventry City Centre has been undertaken to a 'Level 2' standard of assessment, relative to the framework established within Historic England's advisory document *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments*. The approach included extensive desk-based assessment paired with field-based townscape appraisal, across the city centre. For more information on the background, principles and processes of Historic Area Assessment see:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-area-assessments/>

The assessment process was complimented with a programme of consultation with relevant experts and stakeholders, identified within the acknowledgements to provide additional insight where required.

A gazetteer of heritage assets discussed within this report has been provided to the Coventry Historic Environment Record, with summary in the Appendix.

ARCHIVE LOCATION

Archaeological Data Service (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>) & Historic England (<https://research.historicengland.org.uk/>)

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I INTRODUCTION

I.1.1.1 The **Coventry City Centre Historic Area Assessment (HAA)** provides an evidence base for the centre's historic environment.

I.1.1.2 It can be used to:

- Understand what defines the **heritage significance** of the city centre.
- Identify the **architectural, historic, artistic and archaeological interest** of the city centre's heritage assets.
- Understand the distinctive **historic character and appearance** of the centre and how the legacies of the past continue to contribute to the modern townscape.
- Highlight **issues and opportunities for change** for the centre's historic environment and heritage assets.

I.1.1.3 This understanding can be used to:

- Achieve more **informed management** of Coventry's heritage.
- Assist planners, property owners, developers, heritage specialists, local communities and others in **shaping a sustainable future for the city centre**.
- **Celebrate the centre's distinctive sense of place** which is composed of people, stories, spaces and buildings that embrace a legacy of centuries of growth, change and prosperity.
- **Capitalise on existing and potential roles that heritage plays in the city centre**, ensuring it plays active roles in Coventry's social, economic and environmental future.

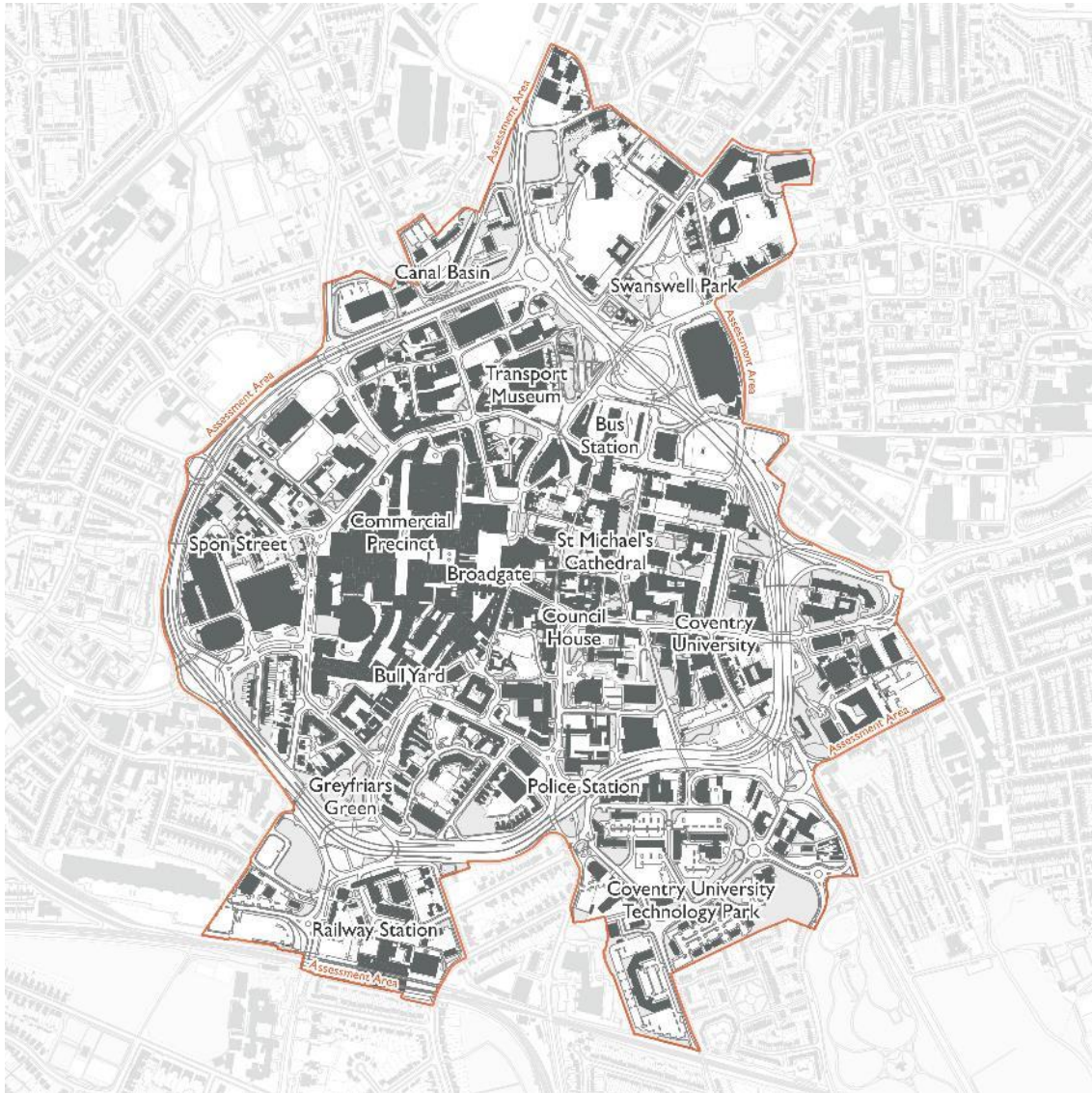


Fig 1: HAA assessment area

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2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

2.1 Overview

2.1.1.1 Coventry city centre has a rich history, seen not only within its streets, buildings, and spaces, but also the collective memories and culture of both its population, and the nation at large. The legacies of the past create an intriguing, and at times remarkable, city centre fabric and a unique sense of place. Coventry is a city of national importance and of international repute.

2.1.1.2 The city centre's heritage significance encompasses four core themes, summarised in this section and examined in detail throughout the report.

The Medieval City

2.1.1.3 The legacies of Coventry's historical status as a major medieval centre, including monumental ecclesiastical and defensive architecture, fine timber-framed buildings built by a prosperous mercantile population, internationally renowned artwork and archives, a rich archaeological record, and a continued embrace of myths and legends through cultural and artistic expression.

City of Industry

2.1.1.4 The heritage of a manufacturing powerhouse built upon a spirit of industriousness that has pervaded the city for centuries. Coventry has been a vital cog in the nation's economy, developing its reputation as a centre of innovation. Its inventions continue to shape the modern world.

Post-War Planned City

2.1.1.5 As the nation reflects, with greater perspective, on its 20th century history, appreciation of the significance of Coventry's pioneering post-war townscape is gathering pace. The legacies of the centre's reconstruction and renewal are the products of nearly half a century of innovative and radical approaches to town planning and architectural practice. The planned city was a forerunner of urban regeneration, helping to build the ways in which we design and develop places today.

City of Reconciliation

2.1.1.6 The city's experience of both wartime destruction and efforts for post-war reconciliation are integral to Coventry's cultural heritage. The internationally significant St Michael's Cathedral embodies the city's story through its remarkable marriage of ruinous-medieval and Modernist architecture. Coventry's pursuit of international peace and reconciliation is woven into the public realm through a collection of public art of artistic and historic interest. The theme is also expressed through acts of performance and commemoration within the city centre.

2.2 The Medieval City

2.2.1.1 Coventry's significance as a medieval city is manifest in some of the finest examples of surviving medieval architecture in the country. Examples include monumental ecclesiastical landmarks, legacies of a prosperous mercantile class, remnants of the city's defences, relics of manorial land ownership and an outstanding collection of vernacular timber-framed buildings. Medieval myths and legends remain central to Coventry's cultural identity, celebrated within modern public artwork. The city centre is host to medieval art, archaeology and archives of international significance. Coventry enjoys a status as a medieval city of national significance, albeit one that is relatively unsung.

Coventry: Medieval City

2.2.1.2 Within the city centre, legacies of ecclesiastical and mercantile institutions, dominant for centuries, are arguably the most striking of its medieval heritage assets.

2.2.1.3 Ecclesiastical heritage plays a central role within the city centre, incorporating a striking collection of monuments that illustrate the special status held by the church and mendicant Christian orders. Their influence over the development of the town into one of the most important in the country was fundamental. The "Three Spires of Coventry" (St Michael Cathedral, Holy Trinity Church, and Christchurch) have very high levels of architectural and historical interest in their own right and their monumental construction is testament to both the wealth and skilled craftsmanship in the medieval town. The monuments are central to Coventry's iconography, gaining even greater significance as a triumvirate of ecclesiastical landmarks that have dominated its skyline for centuries. The spires are joined by the remains of once prominent mendicant Christian orders, and public and private spaces inherited from the arrangement of religious landownership.

2.2.1.4 Joining with ecclesiastical architecture are significant legacies of Coventry's mercantile success. The city's wool and cloth industry were central to the nation's Late Medieval economy, creating a level of prosperity that permeated the town centre and beyond, acting as catalyst to the development of many other settlements. Within the city, Coventry's Guildhall is considered to be one of the best examples of its type in the country. It is joined by a selection of high-status dwellings, cellars and undercrofts, and philanthropic hospitals, which illustrate this influence of the mercantile class.

Vernacular Architecture

2.2.1.5 Away from the city's Three Spires and mercantile heritage, the story of Coventry's medieval heritage is often one associated with a narrative of loss. Its former treasures are said to have been demolished to make way for industry, obliterated by the Luftwaffe's air-raids, or swept away by post-war planners. Whether through destruction, reconstruction, or reinvention, much of the city centre's pre-industrial townscape does appear, on first impression, to have been over-written. Closer

inspection reveals that an exceptional collection of vernacular architecture survives within the city centre, which is recognised for its national significance. Outstanding examples of timber-framed architecture are commonly encountered, with those dating back to the 14th and 15th century considered by experts to be amongst the best examples of contemporary structures. Many of these buildings are exemplar of Late Medieval construction techniques, with the examples of the 'Wealden Hall House' type of particular note to Coventry.

- 2.2.1.6 The conservation of Coventry's vernacular architecture holds further historical interest. The fate of the city's early building stock was at the forefront of debates on the conservation of heritage assets in the post-war decades, becoming emblematic of struggles between the ideals of a growing cohort of conservationists, and local authority architects whose visions of urban renewal left little room for nostalgia. A radical example of urban planning, the Spon Street townscape scheme was amongst the first of its kind. Whilst the controversial approach has rarely been replicated in an urban context, the insights gleaned through the detailed investigation and restoration of Coventry's threatened timber-framed vernacular, continue to inform our understanding of both architectural construction and practices of its preservation to this day.

Myths and Legends: The Iconography of Medieval Coventry

- 2.2.1.7 The history of Coventry and Warwickshire is steeped in myth, from the escapades of Sir Guy of Warwick across the county, to Lady Godiva's ride through the medieval town. Whilst legendary, these historical narratives remain an important component of the experience of Coventry's medieval heritage. Local nomenclature makes an important contribution, particularly the naming of public houses, streets and public places. Legends are also encountered within the built environment, immortalised within statuary, public artwork, and architecture. Reverence to medieval legend is particularly acute within the precincts of the city's post-war reconstruction, where the memorialisation of historical myths has sought to (re)establish a local sense of place, anchoring an ostensibly modern townscape within the ancient city. Medieval legends also inspire many communal activities and events that adopt the city centre's public spaces and buildings as arenas for celebration of tales which help reinforce the local cultural identity.

Archaeology

- 2.2.1.8 The centre's archaeological resource is widely recognised as amongst the most significant assemblages of urban medieval deposits in the country. Excavations (particularly in recent decades) are shining new light on the growth of medieval industry within the city and are providing a more nuanced understanding of the wider phenomenon of Late Medieval urban decline. Areas of the city centre are now appreciated for their high levels of archaeological potential, particularly pertaining to the survival of organic materials (with emphasis on textiles within Coventry) within waterlogged deposits.

Art and Archives: An Internationally Significant Heritage Resource

2.2.1.9 Coventry's medieval buildings play host to significant medieval artwork of high artistic interest, reinforcing the city's national and international significance as a focal point for medieval heritage. The late 15th century Coventry Tapestry in the Guildhall (see Fig 3) is perhaps most significant, pre-dating Henry VIII's internationally famed *Story of Abraham* collection at Hampton Court by at least three decades. The early 14th century Doom Painting of Holy Trinity Church is also considered amongst the nation's best, whilst the wall paintings at the Charterhouse (beyond the city centre) and stained glass of famed 15th century master glazier, John Thornton, add further artistic interest. Archival records pertaining to Coventry's Late Medieval period are amongst the most complete in the country, held up internationally for their contribution to the understanding of urban life in the late 15th and early 16th centuries in particular.

2.3 City of Industry

2.3.1.1 The industrialisation of Coventry transformed its centre from mercantile town into manufacturing powerhouse. The city reaffirmed its position as a vital cog in the nation's economy - a status that would be sustained through centuries of ensuing innovation. The spirit of industriousness that pervaded the medieval city was renewed, leading to globally significant inventions, including the Safety Bicycle and turbojet engine amongst many others. The city's sense of innovation, skills and entrepreneurship has resulted in the emergence some of the most renowned companies of British industry, such as Jaguar and Rover.

2.3.1.2 The buildings of the city centre's historical textile weaving, watchmaking, bicycle manufacturing, munitions industry and automotive and aeronautical engineering firms are of considerable heritage interest. Often of national significance, and occasionally of international importance, their inventions and innovations have helped shape the modern world.

Legacies of Invention and Innovation

2.3.1.3 Despite the importance of industrialisation to Coventry's historical development, the majority of its centrally located factories, workshops and warehouses have been swept away by the combined effects of targeted wartime bombing and post-war redevelopment. What remains is dispersed across a largely post-industrial townscape, located in areas of the centre where the focus of post-war regeneration was less acute. The surviving buildings provide a cross-section of the city's 18th and 19th century industries.

2.3.1.4 Legacies of Coventry's fine-textile and small-scale engineering industries are encountered within a number of distinctive buildings, including the top-shop style workshops - hybrid buildings that combined domestic and utilitarian functions under one roof and a single surviving factory at New Buildings. Relics of heavy industry are encountered through just two examples of what were once prevalent factories: a surviving wing of the Morris Engines Ltd. factory located prominently off Gosford Street and the former Quinton Bicycle (and later Swift Cars) factory to the south. Beyond the ring road, the Coventry Canal and Canal Basin illustrate the importance of water-based infrastructure to the growth and prosperity of the city, with notable associations with the famed 18th century canal engineer, James Brindley.

2.3.1.5 The centre's industrial-era buildings and spaces are locally exceptional by nature of their survival alone and hold national significance through their embodiment of Coventry's contributions to both British and global industry. Individual buildings are now often the legacies (within the centre) of industries that once defined Coventry on both the national and international stage and are the final components of the city centre's once booming, but now largely dismantled, industrial machine.

Celebration and Commemoration

- 2.3.1.6 Although physical traces of Coventry's industrial heritage are limited, the legacies of manufacturing and engineering remain at the heart of local cultural heritage. The centre today plays host to events and activities that embrace the city's significance as a place of great innovation and invention, with particular emphasis on Coventry's contribution to automotive and aeronautical engineering. The Coventry Transport Museum is amongst the city's premier tourist attractions, educating visitors through permanent exhibitions and special events. The annual *MotoFest* adopts public spaces across the city centre to showcase the city's industrial heritage. This includes the temporary conversion of the ring road into a racetrack, appropriating a major component of the post-war townscape, the construction of which was responsible for the demolition of swathes of factories and workshops.
- 2.3.1.7 Industrial heritage has also proven to be a rich vein of inspiration for acts of commemoration and artistic expression. Public artworks are of particular note, having been used frequently to help anchor new developments within the city's past, helping to sustain or re-establish a local sense of place. Examples range from statuary of the Victorian era (such as the James Starley Monument of Greyfriars Green) and the abstract pieces of the post-war townscape such as William Mitchell's concrete mural at the former Three Tuns Pub, through to artworks of the modern day such as the [Frank] Whittle Arch and Statue of Millennium Place. Places and buildings are commonly named after prominent historical figures and organisations. Notably, many examples belong to Coventry University, who have been active in the adoption of the iconography of innovation and invention that has defined the city for centuries.

A Prosperous Population

- 2.3.1.8 Whilst few factories and workshops survive within the centre, Coventry's industrial prosperity has left other tangible legacies, experienced through a selection of significant individual buildings. A collection of heritage assets derives their interest from their historical roles within the financial services sectors, particularly banks. National banking organisations established firm footholds within the prospering centre and NatWest of 24-25 Broadgate and Lloyds Bank of 30 High Street survive as some of the city's grandest commercial buildings, illustrating the sustained success of the city into the early 20th century. An appreciation of the wealth pervading the city can also be found through high-status residential developments, with the most notable being three properties (7 Little Park Street, Kirby House (16 Little Park Street), and St Michael's House (11 Priory Row), constructed by 17th and 18th century textile magnates, alongside a selection of early suburban developments located around Greyfriars Green. Other examples include Victorian retail premises, recreational facilities and a limited number of civic and ecclesiastical developments.

2.4 Post-War Planned City

A “Bold and Comprehensive” Local Plan

- 2.4.1.1 The post-war townscape illustrates the emergence of architecture and planning principles that would help define both disciplines across the latter half the 20th century. It reflects a key juncture in the nation’s social, political and economic history, manifesting the radical approaches adopted for the rebuilding of the nation in the years following the Second World War*, with both national and local government aspiring to lead Britain into a better and brighter future.
- 2.4.1.2 Coventry is one of only two English city centres that assiduously applied the “plan boldly and comprehensively” mantra promoted by Lord Reith, the Minister for Works. The plans of many contemporaries were diluted in scope and ambition, with only two persevering to deliver schemes reflecting the original aspirations of their architects. Coventry is distinctive in having sustained delivery of its plan over many decades, as was originally envisaged, pursued with vigour by local leaders and the city’s Architects Department, in spite of the many social and economic challenges of the second half of the 20th century.

A Pioneering Townscape

- 2.4.1.3 The politicians, architects and planners of Coventry City Council were pioneers in mid-20th century urban planning and design. They embraced emerging planning theories and used Coventry as a testing ground to translate them into planning practice. For a time, this positioned Coventry at the forefront of architectural innovation. The lessons learned in Coventry informed delivery of many other regeneration schemes over the following decades, with the core tenets of the city’s radical approaches to planning becoming part of the established norms in urban design. For instance, the pedestrianised precincts of Gibson’s pioneering Upper Precinct directly inspired many of the commercial centres of the New Towns movement.
- 2.4.1.4 Coventry’s zonal planning system, with areas delineated according to function (commercial, civic, services, industrial, cultural etc.), represents one of the earliest applications of the principle in the country.† Most innovative are the commercial precincts, with their pedestrianised plazas, arcades, canopy-covered walkways, and roof-top car-parking systems being very early examples of the planned segregation of people and vehicles. It joins a select group of developments (such as Rotterdam’s Lijnbaan precinct) as exemplars of the highly innovative mid-20th century schemes that would inform commercial redevelopment across the following decades. The civic precinct (now largely the Coventry University Campus) is also of interest, with its

* Including new approaches to healthcare, infrastructure, and education (etc.) within a new welfare state.

† The concept originally conceived during the early 20th century and Inter-War years in prominent works by renowned figures such as Le Corbusier, Lewis Mumford and Patrick Abercrombie.

'outdoor rooms' approach being inspired by the Mies van der Rohe's Illinois Institute of Technology.

- 2.4.1.5 The city centre has a unique urban composition featuring a compendium of post-war architecture encapsulating four decades of the Modernist movement. The architecture illustrates the sustained spirit of Modernism within the city, embraced by local leaders, planners, and architects through innovation in the forms and functions of the built environment. Basil Spence's masterpiece of St Michael's Cathedral is perhaps the pinnacle, recognised as of international significance for its architectural splendour. Donald Gibson's Scandinavian-inspired blend of Classicism and Modernism, today encountered in Broadgate, the Upper Precinct and elsewhere (e.g. the Police Station and Belgrade Theatre), makes a valuable contribution, with its scale and materiality embodying the humanistic approaches to architecture and planning adopted by the first generation of the city's planners. The local authority's ambition to experiment with new styles and technologies as the 20th century progressed, is reflected in buildings constructed during the tenures of Arthur Ling and Terence Gregory, whose more laissez-faire attitudes to form and materials has created a variety of architectural forms. Whilst these individual buildings may be, at times, of local rather than national significance, collectively the centre's architecture forms a relatively rare and significant collection.
- 2.4.1.6 The redevelopment of Coventry city centre is also amongst the country's earliest examples of a major regeneration scheme undertaken with an extensive programme of public engagement. The programme brought the principles town planning to a wider audience with the council's 'Coventry of Tomorrow' (1940) and 'The Future of Coventry' (1945) exhibitions, championing the authority's vision for the city and attracting thousands to comment upon the developing plans. These exhibitions pre-empted the much celebrated and highly influential Festival of Britain (1951), which firmly established issues of architecture and urban renewal within the public sphere.
- 2.4.1.7 Finally, Sir Basil Spence's design for the 'New' St Michael's and its union with the 'Old' is considered amongst the finest examples of Modernist architecture in England. Internationally celebrated, the building establishing Spence as one of the nation's most recognised architects. The first of England's post-war buildings to be granted statutory protection, it is designated at Grade I for its exceptional levels of architectural and historical interest.

Public Artwork

- 2.4.1.8 The city centre is a focal point for the post-war public art movement, as an early adopter of new ideals on the enrichment of the public realm with artistic interest. New streets and plazas became galleries for artistic endeavour, with media including sculpture, statuary, and murals dispersed across the centre, again with innovative techniques, new materials, and Modernist forms. Whilst there are numerous works by artists of national reputation (including Jacob Epstein, Elizabeth Frink, and William Mitchell), the collection of public artworks is distinctive in its local focus, with large quantities designed and delivered by local figures and groups.

2.5 City of Peace and Reconciliation

2.5.1.1 The Second World War reshaped the city both physically and culturally, devastating the city centre and traumatising its populace. Coventry's response was exemplary, taking major strides in promoting peace and reconciliation amongst international communities. It is both the most twinned city in the world and was the first to do so, twinning with Stalingrad (now Volgograd) in 1944.

St Michael's Cathedral: Embodying resilience, renewal, and reconciliation

2.5.1.2 St Michael's Cathedral is a building of international significance, renowned as a physical manifestation of Coventry's historic role in promoting peace and reconciliation in the aftermath of global conflict.

2.5.1.3 The preservation of the ruins of 'Old' St Michael's was amongst the most innovative approaches to post-war memorialisation in Europe. The ruins remain as testament to the Second World War's reach beyond the front lines and into the most sacred aspects of civilian life, commemorating not only the impact of warfare on the city of Coventry and its people, but also the nation as a whole. The roofless interior and views of open skies through bombed-out windows speak of the consequences of aerial combat, including the air-raids in the early years of the 1940s.

2.5.1.4 The architectural marriage of the 'Old' and 'New' St Michael's Cathedral embodies the remarkable story of the city during and after the Second World War. The ruinous Late Medieval Cathedral illustrates the devastation wrought on the historic city by the Blitz, whilst its neighbouring Modernist masterpiece is emblematic of the capacity of Coventry and mankind to overcome adversity through the power of communal faith and physical regeneration. St Michael's and the city it serves have emerged as leaders in international efforts for peace and reconciliation, achieved through programmes of cultural interchange and advocacy. For decades, the church and city have been focal points for acts of commemoration, establishing and maintaining new social unions which transcend political and geographic borders. This is expressed within the built environment through public artworks, many of which are inspired by the shared experiences of twinned cities (such as Dresden and Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad)), and is brought to life through events, conferences and other communal activities within the cathedral which help sustain a shared ambition for a better future

2.5.1.5 Today the grand interior of the 14th century Cathedral has been renewed as a vibrant communal public space, within which the dramatic narratives of warfare, peace and reconciliation that have pervaded the recent histories of Coventry, are experienced through public artwork.

Public Expression and Commemoration

- 2.5.1.6 The pursuit of international peace and reconciliation has been a largely cultural phenomenon, anchored on the interaction between people and institutions across geographic and political borders.
- 2.5.1.7 Narratives of international friendship have been laced into the city's public realm since the mid-20th century. Public artwork is widely used to commemorate the city's international relationships. Many such pieces, beyond the ruins of St Michael's Cathedral, are distributed across the city centre, created by local artists inspired by the cities post-war renaissance, or as local government commissions. Several public spaces have also been dedicated to the city's international relations, such as Volgograd and Lidice Place, which highlight the deep links forged between these distant cities who share a close bond through mutual histories of both war, and post-war reconciliation. The theme of peace and reconciliation is also frequently encountered within local nomenclature, with places and buildings named in commemoration of associated places and events, such as the Belgrade Theatre.

City of Culture

- 2.5.1.8 Local art, theatre, and music have arisen out of Coventry's international connections, with many specific pieces of art, curated exhibitions and acts of musical or theatrical performance arising from local artists. The Herbert Art Gallery, for instance, is a focal point, hosting a permanent exhibition on the theme of peace and reconciliation. In the performing arts, Coventry's famed Two Tone genre of music was deeply embedded in movements of international advocacy, exemplified in *The Specials*' *'Free Nelson Mandela'* - perhaps one of the city's most recognised cultural exports of the last fifty years. Once again, although there are few direct physical legacies of these aspects of local cultural heritage, the resonance to local people ensures that they are actively commemorated within the public sphere, through both static features (e.g. commemorative plaques) and special events. The forthcoming *Coventry City of Culture 2021* initiative is primed to continue to embrace this theme.

3 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 Prehistory and Early History

- 3.1.1.1 Archaeological evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the area defined by the modern city centre is sparse. The centre lies within the historical extent of the Forest of Arden, once a wooded and marshy landscape which, in conjunction with its relatively infertile soils and distance from any (known) Roman roads or major settlements, suggests that it was not an area of extensive or extended habitation.¹

3.2 Medieval to Post-Medieval

From the Cofa's Tree to Established Settlement

- 3.2.1.1 Permanent settlement is thought to date back to the establishment of a Saxon nunnery dedicated to St. Osburga in c.700 AD. Whilst debate persists, the settlement's name is generally accepted to have been derived from a conglomeration of 'Cofa' and 'trow' – referring to some form of tree, post or ceremonial timber-feature in the ownership of Cofa, possibly a local elite or landowner. The nunnery lasted until 1016, when it was destroyed by the armies of Canute. By 1043, a Benedictine monastery dedicated to St. Mary had taken its place, founded by Leoferic and Godiva, (with whom the legend of the naked horseback ride through the town is associated) the Earl and Lady of Mercia. The settlement grew around this new anchor and was recorded as consisting of 69 households (50 villagers, 12 smallholders, and 7 slaves), 20 ploughlands, with taxable assets worth 5 geld units at the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086. The lord was still recorded as the Countess Godiva in 1066, transferring to Nicholas (the bowman) by 1086.²

A Town Divided

- 3.2.1.2 Shortly after 1086, Coventry was granted to the Earl of Chester. By 1102 the Bishop, Robert de Limesey, had transferred his episcopal see from Chester to Coventry, declaring the monastery a cathedral. This ratified Coventry's status as a significant town, heralding the start of extensive development but also a rivalry for authority between the Earl and Priory. By 1113 the Priory claimed the northern half of the city, the Earl the south. The power-struggles and a castle (a motte and bailey) constructed around 1130 by Early Ranulph II, illustrate Coventry's increasing strategic significance within the country. The townsfolk were granted greater liberties by charters of the 1140s and 1182, and growth and inward investment incentivised by reductions in taxation, which marked the early origins of Coventry's civic and mercantile classes.³

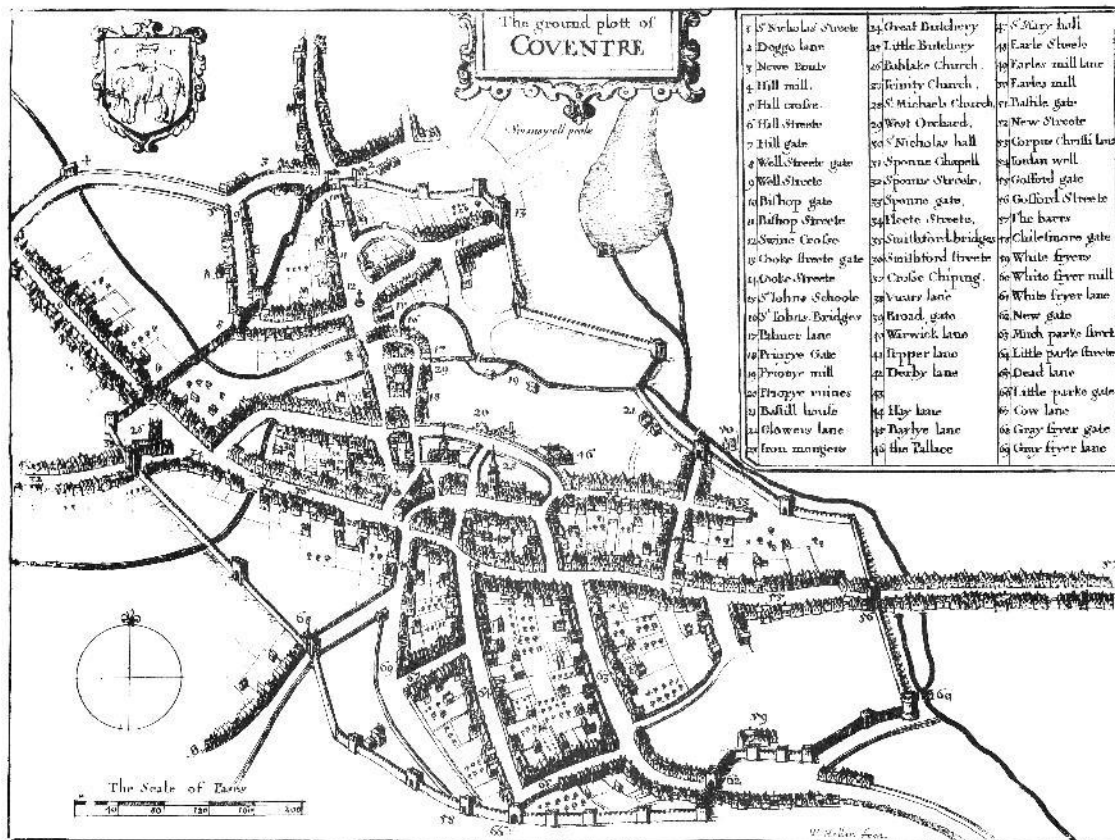


Fig 2: John Speed's 'The ground plot of Coventre' of 1610, with street plan much as it would have been in the medieval period. Coventry Archive

3.2.1.3

Whilst the 12th century Civil War would hinder growth, including through the besieging of Ranulph's castle, the town continued to grow in both size and status following its resolution. The establishment of two abbeys by the Cistercian order five miles to the east and four miles to the south (at Coombe and Stoneleigh respectively) was a turning point, bringing considerable expertise in sheep farming to the area. Their arrival was the catalyst for rapid growth in the local wool trade, with Coventry steadily establishing itself as a major market centre for cloth. The status was enhanced by the establishment of major roads through the town in the late-12th or early-13th century which defined the historic layout of the old town and reinforced Broadgate's (located adjacent the main castle gate) status as the major commercial focal point and its principal crossroads. The local red sandstone was used in the construction of important buildings, including new churches, hospitals, halls and houses, reflecting the burgeoning wealth and status of both the Church and merchant classes. A friary, this time of the Franciscan order (Greyfriars) was founded in the 1230s. In 1250 the Earl of Chester, Roger de Mold, sold the Earl's half of the city to the Priory, unifying much of the town under one landlord.⁴ The Church's dominance in Coventry would be sustained for just short of a century, and during this time Greyfriars was enlarged (1289), a Carmelite Friary (Whitefriars) founded (1342), and a Carthusian friary established on the outskirts of the town (1380s).⁵

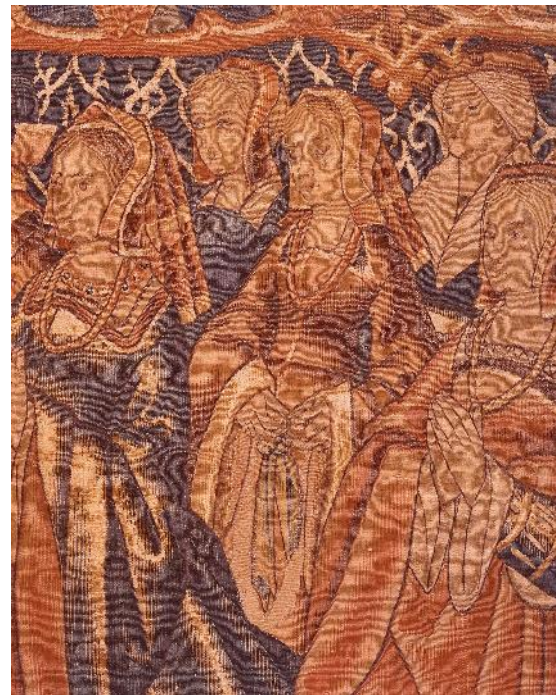


Fig 3: The famed late 15th century Coventry Tapestry, hanging in the Guildhall. Coventry City Council

Heyday

- 3.2.1.4 Queen Isabel came into possession of some of Coventry's manorial rights in 1330, with Cheylesmore Manor becoming a royal property. This reignited the contest for power between the town's secular and religious authorities, exacerbated by the growing status of the town nationally. Frictions reached a climax in 1345, when the city was granted a charter by Edward III, declaring Coventry a corporation. The act endowed greater rights for self-governance, considerably weakened the grip of the church and ushering in an age of great prosperity for the townsfolk.⁶
- 3.2.1.5 Coventry's wool and cloth trade continued to grow exponentially into the 14th century, making Coventry into one of the most important settlements of late medieval England.⁷ The ample grazing lands of its hinterland enabled vast quantities of wool to

flow into the city, where it was turned into a number of high-value products by a cohort of cloth manufacturers. The most renowned was the Coventry Blue cloth, valued internationally for its exceptional quality and exported out of London, Bristol, Southampton and Boston, Lincolnshire. A powerful and wealthy mercantile class emerged, forming merchant guilds that joined the church and landed aristocracy as a major power in the city. Four of these would amalgamate into the Trinity Guild in 1392, which became the most influential.⁸

- 3.2.1.6 Prosperity allowed for buildings to be enlarged and rebuilt, much led by major investment by the empowered townsfolk, with the emphasis spread from religious houses to the civic. The parish churches of St Michael's and Holy Trinity were extensively rebuilt, becoming amongst the largest in the country. Trinity Guild developed and ornately furnished St Mary's Guildhall, again recognised as one the country's most significant important. A town wall and ditch encapsulated the city, complete with twenty towers and twelve gates. The quality of timber-framed architecture evolved, seen today through the three-storey jettied Lych Gate Cottages and Nos. 114-115 Gosford Street. The town's plan steadily increased in density, with streets laid out within the existing plan, alongside some outward expansion. This established a medieval street pattern that would largely prevail within the centre until the radical redevelopments of the 20th century. All of this was achieved despite the impact of the plague on the city, with the Black Death, in 1349, having a mortality rate of over 50%, with further epidemics in 1360 and 1386.⁹

Decline and Stagnation

- 3.2.1.7 Coventry's status waned through a phased decline from the latter 14th century. Many factors were responsible, including the steady drop in returns from the textile industry, the drain on resources by the War of the Roses, a subsistence crisis and the lasting impacts on the local population through major epidemics. Whilst the end of the 15th century saw some degree of recovery, the city soon returned to economic crises as a national trade depression set in, food prices surged, and large sums of capital were withdrawn from the city creating a shortage of coinage. The sustained economic depression would be compounded by the 16th century dissolution of the monasteries. First to be suppressed were Whitefriars and Greyfriars in 1538, followed by the Benedictine Priory of St Mary in 1539. The long-standing monastic influence over the city was irreversibly broken and with it, went one of the key sources of wealth and trade within the city. By the mid-16th century the population had fallen dramatically.¹⁰
- 3.2.1.8 Coventry entered a long period of stagnation, with the city's efforts for economic recovery frustrated by external factors. The Civil War was a significant drain on the city's resources and capacity for commerce. Fortified and strategically located, the city attracted a garrison of Parliamentary forces, with many of Coventry's (often redundant) guild buildings converted into prisons and garrisons. Whilst the forces of Charles I were repelled in 1642, the defence of the city would live in the memory of Royalists, who tore down much of the fortifications in 1662, following the restoration of the monarchy.¹¹

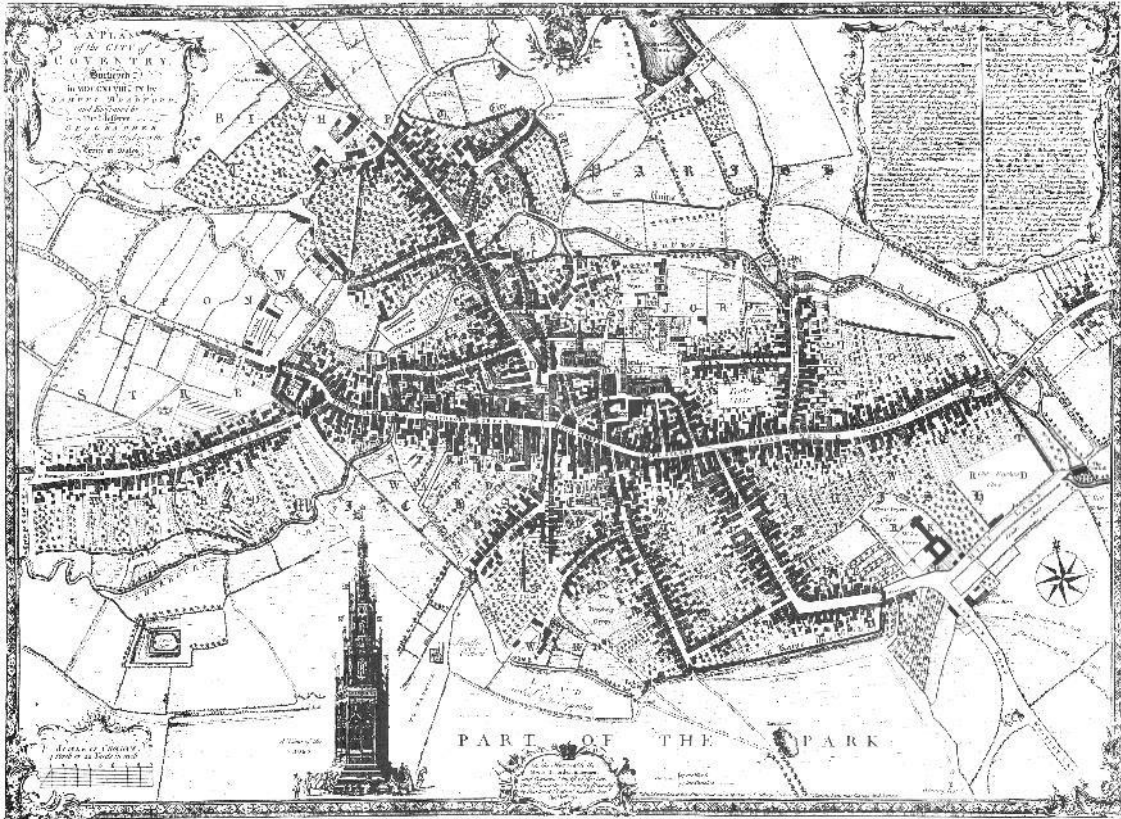


Fig 4: Samuel Bradford's Map of Coventry 1748-49. Coventry Archive

3.2.1.9

Although the growth of Coventry was curtailed through much of the post-medieval era, the city was far from destitute. Wool and cloth trades remained the city's staple industries from the 16th through 18th centuries. Production was both greatly reduced and less profitable but remained sufficient to support a wealthy and influential mercantile class. Whilst the layout of the city did not witness significant expansion between maps of 1610 (Speed's, Fig 3) and 1748 (Bradford's, Fig 4), the development of significant individual buildings was still occurring, such as the Fords and Bond's Hospitals and the Bablake School. The fabric of the city began to include brick and other forms of stone, as properties of high-status textile magnates were interlaced with the medieval timber-framing and sandstone that defined the local material palette.¹²

3.3 Industrial

3.3.1.1 After the gradual decline of Coventry's wool and cloth trade, the city economy diversified. The Industrial Revolution saw Coventry's spirit of innovation and industry renewed, turning its craft to the creation of refined products often requiring skilled engineering. The change of course restarted a cycle of economic prosperity, decline, and renewal that would be sustained long into the 20th century.

Light Industry: Ribbons, Watches, and Bicycles

3.3.1.2 Coventry's historic association with textile manufacturing continued through the growth of the silk weaving trade, with particular emphasis on fine ribbons woven with silk imported from France, Italy, Turkey and the Far East via the merchants of London and Manchester. National policy enforcing a prohibition on the import of European (mainly French) ribbons ensured that the town's new industries were insulated from foreign competition. The trade became the city's principal employer between the mid-18th and mid-19th century. The cosseted position bred a degree of complacency, with the town's cohort of largely independent weavers generally resistant to new technological innovations such as the Dutch engine loom (1770), Jacquard loom (1795) and later steam-powered factories. Whilst home-weaving would gradually make way for new collective enterprises and cottage industries, the industry remained generally slow to adapt to innovation. Production declined dramatically in the face of fierce international competition which, following the removal of importing restrictions following the Cobden Treaty (1860), brought more exotic and often cheaper products to the market.¹³ Aspects of the ribbon industry did however continue to prosper, with many still listed in trade directories of the late-19th and early-20th century, albeit focussed into smaller groups of traders producing specialised goods such as medal ribbons and other military regalia.¹⁴

3.3.1.3 The late 18th- and early 19th centuries also witnessed the growth of the watch and clockmaking industries, further developing the city's reputation for skilled engineering and intricate manufacturing. By 1830 there were at least 53 watchmakers deemed sufficiently influential to be listed in the West's Directory, and a period of sustained growth over the following three decades brought the total number to over 2000. Like the ribbon weaving trades however, decades of prosperity gave way to steady decline as competition from international producers (particularly watches mass-produced from factories in America and Switzerland) curtailed the trade's domestic success.¹⁵

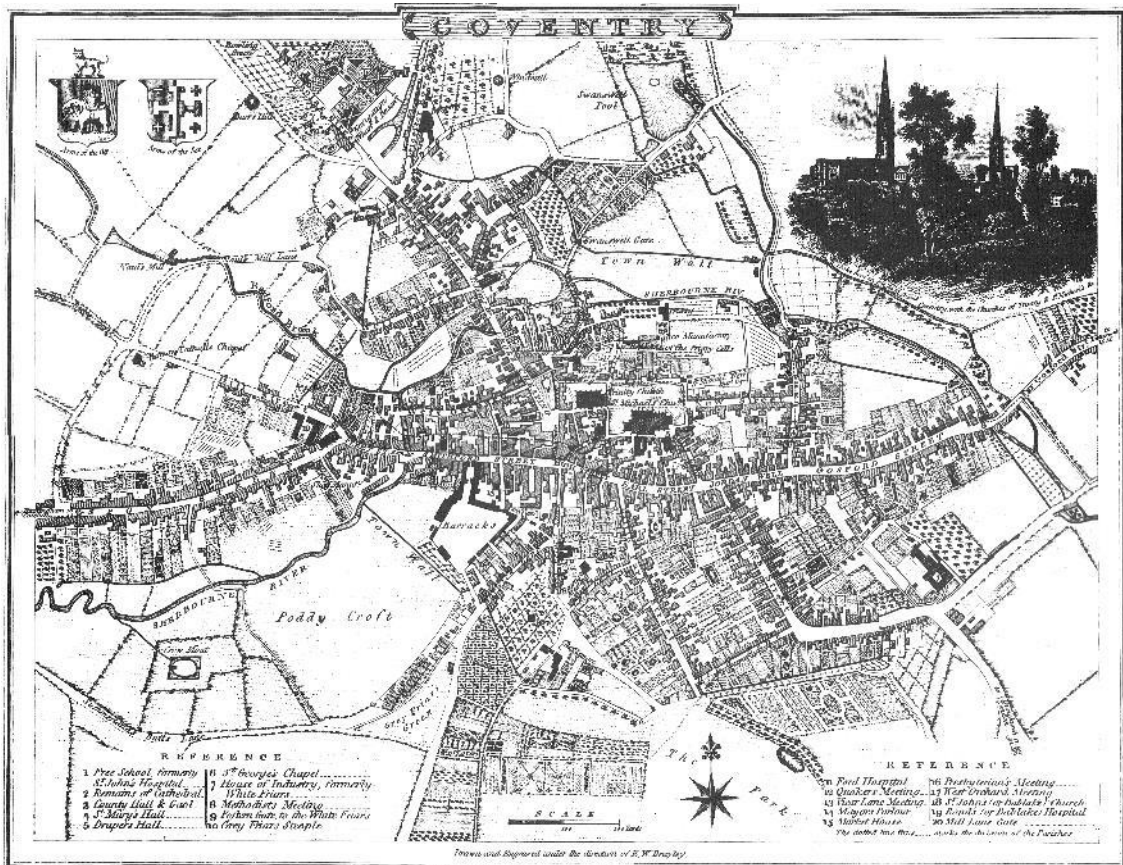


Fig 5: Thomas Sharp's Map of Coventry 1807. Coventry Archive

3.3.1.4

The steady decline of ribbon weaving and watchmaking through the mid-to-late 19th century resulted in stagnation of the local economy and a period of contraction of the local population. However, the city had retained a cohort of skilled workers whose specialisms in intricate engineering were readily adapted for new tasks. At first, sewing machines were favoured (perhaps linked to the city's textile-manufacturing heritage), but it was progression into the manufacturing of bicycles (at the time a relatively new invention) that had a defining impact. The pioneers were Josiah Turner, James Starley, and Silas Covell Salisbury, founders of the Coventry Sewing Machine Company in 1863. Recognising the commercial potential of the bicycle, the company became the Coventry Machinists Company in 1869, and led the way in the development of the city's famous industry over the following two decades. Their success permeated across the city, with hundreds more traders establishing companies seeking to capitalise on surging demand. Several of the most famous names of British industry emerged out of the rush, including Humber, Rover, Singer and Triumph. By 1881 Coventry featured over 400 bicycle manufacturers who collectively employed a workforce of over 3000 and produced thousands of new bicycles each day. Whilst there was a range of products, including penny-farthings and the popular 'Ordinary' model, the invention of the Rover Safety Bicycle by John Kemp Starley (nephew of James Starley) was fundamental (Fig 6). The chain-driven mechanism, two rubber tires, and diamond frame formed the blueprint for the modern bicycle, which has since been manufactured by the billions and used across the world. It is perhaps Coventry's greatest legacy.¹⁶



Fig 6: 1890 advertisement for J.K. Starley & Co. Ltd bicycles. The advert includes a version of the famed 'Rover' safety cycle, produced at the Meteor Works of West Orchard and perhaps the most significant of Coventry's many inventions. Wikimedia

3.3.1.5

Initially small in scale, light-manufacturing had a profound impact on Coventry's built environment. Early industrialisation was propelled through the development of the Coventry Canal. Built in 1769 and designed by canal engineer James Brindley, the Coventry Canal served as a catalyst for expansion, enabling the import of raw materials and export of manufactured goods. The canal established the city as a major conduit for goods and materials, located at a key juncture of major routes between Birmingham and London.¹⁷ A wave of economic migrants led to a rapid increase in the local population, creating an acute demand for housing within the city. Space was limited, curtailed by medieval land agreements pertaining to Lammas and Michaelmas land, leaving only small areas crammed between the town's medieval streets. Court housing became common within the centre, developing behind medieval streets and infilling historic burgage plots.¹⁸ The limited space also stifled the capacity for workshops and factories. Hybrid buildings, that combined domestic and utilitarian functions (most particularly the top-shop form of development), became distinctive of Coventry's prospering cottage industries (Fig 7). The early workshops and factories of bicycle manufacturing were larger but remained relatively modest in scale comparative



Fig 7: Rotherham's Watch Factory within a 'top-shop', 1890. Historic England (BL09921)

to the more monumental enterprises emerging in other major cities.¹⁹ In response, new satellite settlements developed beyond the common lands, attracting skilled workers from the overcrowded city centre and becoming focal points for cottage industries. Examples include Hillfields (originally called New Town), the first of Coventry's industrial suburbs established from 1828 as a centre for ribbon weaving, and Earlsdon and Chapelfields which both developed from the mid-19th century principally as centres for watchmaking.²⁰ Common lands were enclosed from 1860, with the first official city boundary extensions occurring in 1890 and 1899, enabling a period of sustained, outward growth.

The Age of the Machine

- 3.3.1.6 The cycle of industrial decline and innovation continued long into the 20th century. Whilst the bicycle industry was booming towards the end of the 19th century, many of the city's entrepreneurs turned their attentions to the internal combustion engine. Engineers such as William Hillman, George Singer, James Starley and Thomas Bayliss established their own ventures, all wielding their experience gained in the city's bicycle manufacturing workshops. International patents were acquired, bringing in the latest technologies, most notably the Daimler licenses acquired by Henry John Lawson, founding member of the British Motor Syndicate. Major automotive engineering companies and facilities grew and prospered (e.g. Fig 8), with the likes of Singer, Swift, Daimler, and Triumph becoming household names. A host of subsidiary companies also arose, such as body builders, motor engineers, side-car makers, machine-tool producers, and pneumatic tyre and chain producers amongst many others. Scales of production grew exponentially with, for instance, Triumph seeing a near-twenty-fold increase in motorbike sales between 1906 and 1909.²¹
- 3.3.1.7 At the outbreak of the First World War, Coventry's workforce was called upon to supply the British army with engines, motorcycles and all forms of munitions, ranging from machine guns to high explosives. What had been a notable but subsidiary ordnance industry grew to meet the enormous demands of the war effort, promoting military manufacturing amongst the city's staple industries. The role would be resumed in the Second World War, including the mass production of components for tanks, armoured cars, and aeroplanes both within established factories and new 'shadow' facilities on the outskirts of the city.²²
- 3.3.1.8 Industrial expansion precipitated another wave of major growth, sustained through economic migration. The city expanded in response, with new factories and estates of terraced houses built around its edges, engulfing the former satellite villages formed around lighter manufacturing industries. Many new factories were constructed in the city centre including some located at its historical core (e.g. The Triumph Works of Priory Street, immediately north of St Michael's Cathedral and the Meteor Works between Warwick Row and Queen Victoria Road). The city's famous Three Spires were joined by towering chimneys, transforming the skyline. Smaller works did however continue to proliferate across the city, housing subsidiary manufacturers supplying the major automotive companies.



Fig 8: Automotive manufacturing at the Standard Works of Much Park Street. 1907. Historic England (4064_235 & 4065_237)

The Rise and Fall of the 'Motor City'

- 3.3.1.9 The inter-war years witnessed a marked rationalisation of local industry, as firms merged into larger conglomerates able to standardise both products and methods of production. Independent companies declined in response and the industry was distilled into a core group of highly productive and prosperous corporations, including Swift, Rover, Standard, and Armstrong-Siddley (Fig 9). By 1931 only 25 remained in the city, responsible for nearly a third of the country's entire output of cars. A remarkable enthusiasm for car ownership grew amongst Coventrians, with nearly one in five in possession by the end of the 1930s, a figure only matched nationally in the 1960s.
- 3.3.1.10 After an initial phase of austerity and material-rationing in the early post-war years, the city would renew its industrial growth. Coventry was at the forefront of a national boom in car manufacturing that elevated Britain into the world's leading exporter. Coventry thus adopted the moniker of Britain's 'Motor City' in recognition of its enormous and sustained contribution to national motoring, drawing conscious comparison to Detroit. The city continued to grow in population, now attracting swathes of international migrants; the need to cater for this expanding and increasingly affluent populace becoming a key driver for efforts by the local authority to comprehensively overhaul the city centre in the post-war years.²³
- 3.3.1.11 Once again, however, Coventry's cycle of boom and bust would be fulfilled. From the 1970s onwards, the city's automotive industry suffered significantly in the face of competition from international markets, as the easing of tariffs on imports brought more options to market and British industry at large witnessed a marked drop in demand from overseas. By 1974 Britain had fallen from second to fifth in global rankings for car production. Coventry was particularly exposed, with so much of its local economy tied to a small number of private entities.* By 1982 the city's major companies had reduced their workforce by almost a half. This affected almost every aspect of social, economic, and political life, and was a key factor in bringing to a halt the near unremitting redevelopment of the city centre and its environ by the local authority. After a brief recovery in the 1990s and early 2000s, all of the city's major car factories closed, leaving no large-scale motor manufacturing companies within the city boundaries for the first time in a century.²⁴

* The trend of the amalgamation of companies, initiated in the inter-war years had continued. By 1950 only 12 companies were in operation, and even fewer by the 1970s, but these collectively employed thousands of Coventrians, representing a significant percentage the local workforce.



Fig 9: The scale of the city's factories and works increased dramatically in the 20th century:

Top and bottom left: 1920s historic mapping and aerial photograph of the Armstrong Siddley Works and Burlington Works that dominated the southeast of the city centre. Historic England (EPW021003); © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2020) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

Right: 1939 aerial view of the Hill Top from the west (St Michael's spire on the right) showing the close proximity of major works, which were interlaced into the historic street pattern. The Triumph factories are visible centre-left. Historic England (EPW061106)

3.4 Inter-War, Wartime, and Post-War

NB. A detailed history of the re-planning of Coventry, and the post-war implementation of these schemes has been undertaken by Jeremy and Caroline Gould and collated into two publications.

The 2009 report ‘Coventry Planned: The Architecture of the Plan for Coventry 1940-1978’ provides a comprehensive account of the evolution of the city plans, analysis and descriptions of the surviving townscape and a detailed chronology of the development of individual buildings and areas, with information on their patrons and architects, all based on extensive archival research. The research has been summarised within a 2016 book, commissioned by Historic England, titled ‘Coventry: The making of a modern city 1939-73’, which again provides a fully illustrated account and analysis of the post-war townscape.† These should be viewed as the current authority on the history of the post-war townscape. With that in mind, and to avoid repetition, this section provides a summary. Endnotes are used to highlight sources used in addition to Gould & Gould 2009 and 2016.*

Inter-War Planning

- 3.4.1.1 By the 1930s Coventry city centre was creaking under the weight of its booming industries. Historic streets were unable to cope with the increased demand for vehicular traffic. Old infrastructure led to poor drainage and insufficient water supplies and the city’s existing architecture could not meet the demands of a burgeoning population.²⁵ Efforts to rectify these issues had been limited in scope, with the most notable being the development of two new roads - Corporation Street (1929-1931, Fig 10) and Trinity Street (1939), both delivered under the leadership of Ernest Ford, City Engineer from 1924. The city also lacked the civic, municipal and institutional hallmarks of a successful early 20th century centre such as major police stations, courts, libraries, museums, or municipal offices, with the major Victorian investment experienced by other centres distinctly lacking.²⁶
- 3.4.1.2 The election of the Labour Party to control of the council in November 1937, marked a turning point. Led by three prominent councillors (George Hodgkinson, Sidney Stringer and George Halliwell), the party established a hegemony of key positions overseeing housing and welfare, power, transport, and land, enabling a new, socialist 30-year plan for the city to take form. The new Policy Advisory Committee (controlling capital expenditure and council priorities) established a City Architects Department, recruiting Donald Gibson at its helm – an architect of just 30 years of age, formerly of the Manchester School of Architecture, Harvard, and the University of Liverpool. Gibson, in turn, forged a multi-disciplinary team of architects, structural

* Available on request from the Coventry Historic Environment Record.

† The publication has been made freely available online at:

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/coventry-making-of-modern-city-1939-73/coventry-making-of-modern-city-1939-73.pdf/>



Fig 10: 1931 aerial view of the development of Corporation Street looking from the west above Spon Street. Historic England (EPW035765)

engineers, and quantity surveyors, many also young and relatively untested, bringing with them the newest ideas from the rapidly evolving disciplines of town planning and urban design. Many studied under Patrick Abercrombie, perhaps the nation's most renowned planner of the era, whilst international influences (particularly in areas such as the use of zonal planning, ring roads, and pedestrianised precincts) came via the writings of Le Corbusier, Lewis Mumford, and Gropius. Once again, a spirit of innovation was instilled within the city.²⁷

3.4.1.3 Whilst initial progress was slow, the attention of the department principally occupied with the provision of housing for the burgeoning population. Four key members of the department (led by the city's first Principal Planning Officer, Percy Johnson-Marshall) were tasked with creating a masterplan for a new city, producing a display model for the 'Coventry of Tomorrow: Towards a Beautiful City' exhibition of 1940. This plan was largely aspirational, with little scope for delivery at the time, but would go on to be of great influence - the plan and exhibition immediately predating the major turning point in the city's modern history, the Second World War and the bombing of the city centre.

“Opportunity out of Adversity”: The Coventry Blitz and the ‘Ultimate Plan’

- 3.4.1.4 For the second time in thirty years, Coventry’s industrial infrastructure and local expertise in manufacturing was repurposed for the national war effort. This made the city a target for aerial bombardment, and it was attacked during the major Blitz offensives of 1940 to 1942. The night attack of the 14th November 1940 was most cataclysmic, being amongst the most ferocious and infamous of the raids of the war. Whilst the targets of the raid were the city’s industries, the damage from high explosive ordnance and incendiary devices was indiscriminate, leaving swathes of the historic townscape in ruins (Fig 11). Emblematic of the city’s suffering was the destruction of St Michael’s Cathedral, which was left as a ruinous shell (Fig 16). In total, fifty raids resulted in over 1000 deaths, the loss of over 23,500 homes, and the destruction of over 1000 factories, shops and other commercial buildings.²⁸ The destruction wrought by wartime bombardment provided the catalyst, removing significant barriers to development, enabling the radical transformation of an industrialised medieval town into a Modernist metropolis. Gibson himself stated: “We used to watch from the roof to see which buildings were blazing and then dash downstairs to check how much easier it would be to put our plans into action...”²⁹.
- 3.4.1.5 The visceral imagery of the impact of the Blitz on the city also brought significant national attention, which was in turn appropriated by national government as a means of propaganda, both in opposition to Nazi aggression, but also to promote a vision of a brighter future beyond the physical and psychological oppression of the war. What had been just the aspirations of a small group of local architects and councillors received national attention, held up as exemplifying the “plan boldly and comprehensively” mantra promoted by Lord Reith of the Minister for Works.^{30*} Enthusiasm from national government would wane as the economic realities of mass reconstruction became clear. Coventry and Plymouth were however successful in sustaining active interest for their respective plans, with the leaders of Coventry in particular wielding the symbolism of the Blitz that had been so robustly promoted by the national government, looking to sustain public opinion and political pressure for the major regeneration programme.³¹
- 3.4.1.6 Coventry’s leaders pressed ahead placing renewed emphasis on the work of Donald Gibson and Ernest Ford to deliver a new plan. Whilst initially encouraged to work in tandem, rival approaches emerged, with Gibson’s ‘Ultimate Plan’ gaining favour. This included an entire reconfiguration of the central road system including a ring road, proposals for the demolition of swathes of existing townscape, the reorganisation of the city into functional zones (commercial, civic, industrial etc.), and the strict segregation of people and vehicles (the first proposed in the United Kingdom). The plan would evolve through wartime years, resulting in a degree of compromise, but the core tenets were sustained, culminating in a widely accepted vision for the city centre by 1945 (Fig 12). The ‘Coventry of the Future’ exhibition of October 1945 was the pinnacle, attracting tens of thousands of people. Support was further bolstered by royal visits.

* For instance, the 1945 documentary ‘A City Reborn’ produced by the Ministry, which chose Coventry to epitomise the forthcoming rebirth of British towns and cities, and the role of town planning in achieving this.

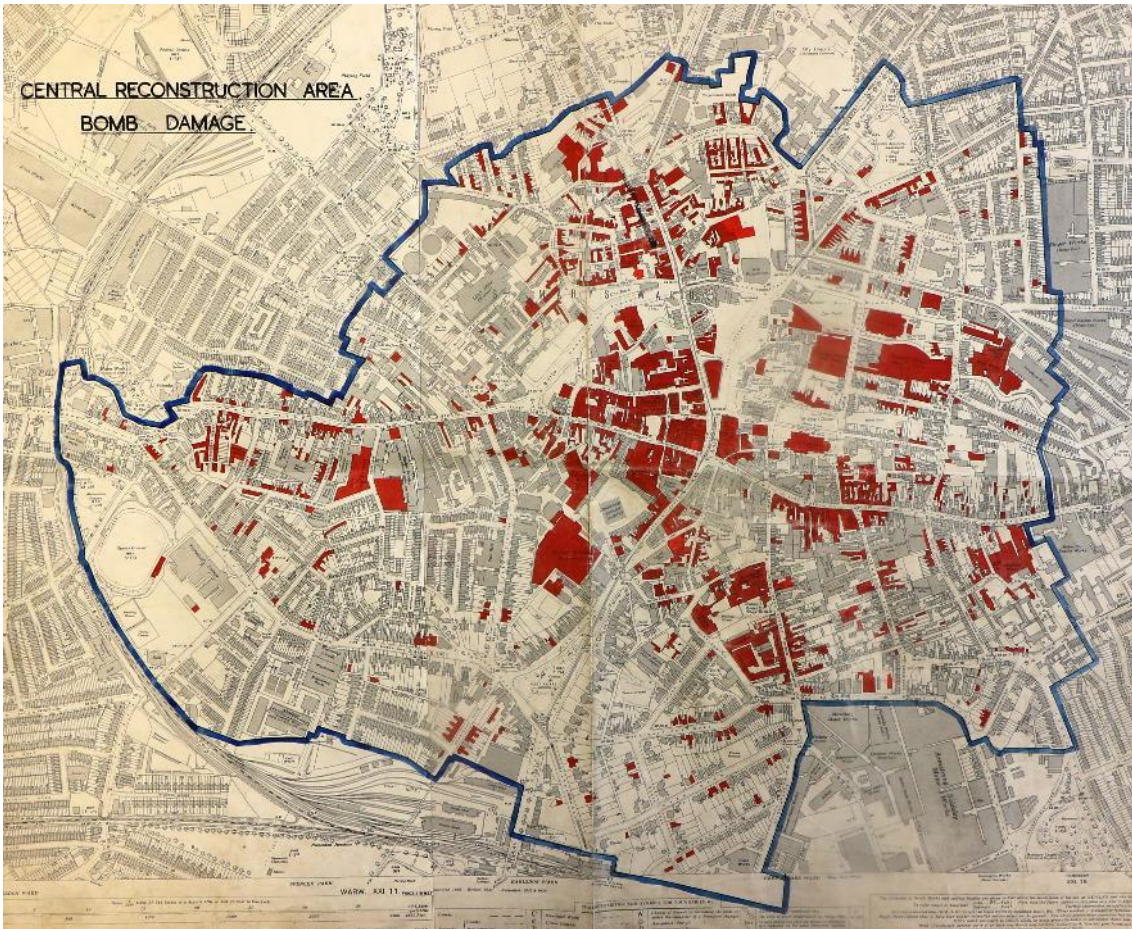


Fig 11: Top: Widespread bomb damage around Broadgate in the aftermath of the November 1941 raids. Coventry Archive. Bottom: Central Reconstruction Area Map showing bomb damaged buildings in red. Coventry Archive

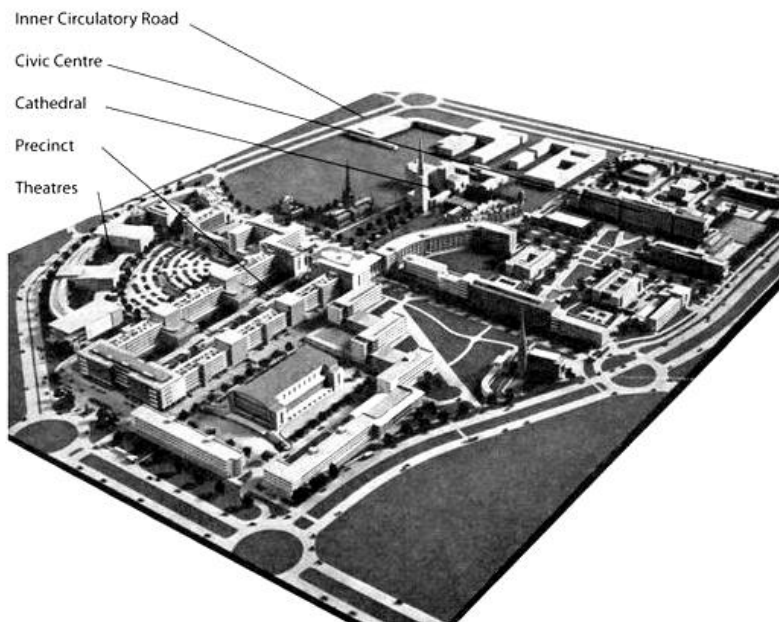
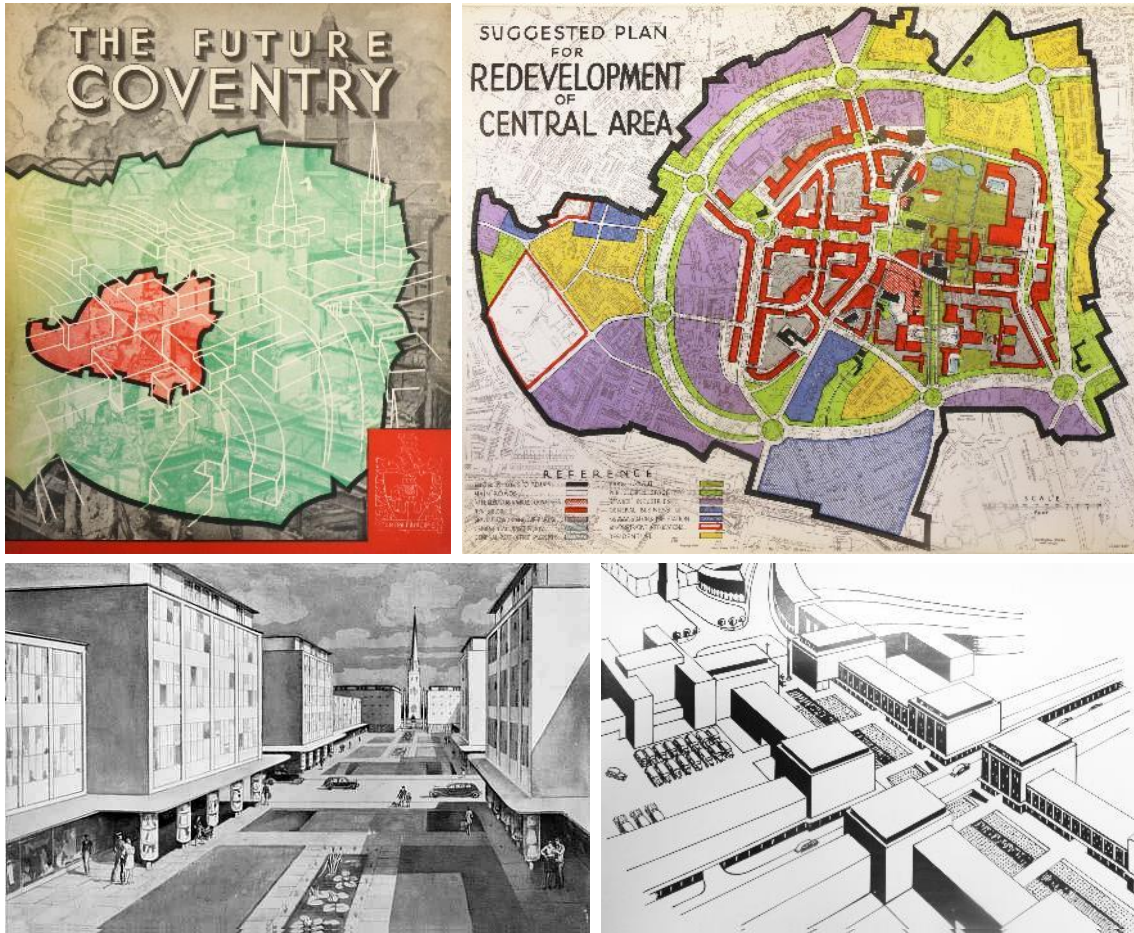


Fig 12: Top four images: Illustrations from *The Future Coventry* (1945); Bottom: 1942 Model of the proposed city centre redevelopment. Coventry Archive

Enacting the Plan

- 3.4.1.7 The delivery of the Coventry plan spanned over three decades, requiring successive generations of local experts and leaders to adopt the mantle of redevelopment. Whilst the core principles of the original plan were sustained, each generation brought their own idiosyncrasies, particularly influenced by changing architectural idioms and the town-planning principles that emerged through the latter-half of the 20th century. Distinctive phases of redevelopment can consequently be identified, linked heavily to the approaches of those at the helm of the City Architects Department. This sub-section is divided relative to their tenures.

1945-1955 (Donald Gibson)

- 3.4.1.8 The early pace of development was slowed by the wider economic and political impact of six years of total warfare. By 1947 the public enquiry was discharged, compulsory purchase of land approved, and a ceremony undertaken to commemorate the start of development.
- 3.4.1.9 The initial phase of development focussed on Broadgate and the commercial precinct (Fig 13). Broadgate was laid out in 1947 and opened on 22 May 1948 by the then Princess Elizabeth, with the Godiva statue introduced in 1949. Broadgate House was the first building to be constructed between 1949-1953, closely followed by the Owen department store (1951-1954) and Hotel Leofric (1953-1955) to enclose Broadgate plaza. The North and South Link Blocks (1954-1956) and three commercial units hosting Marks and Spencer, British Home Stores, and Woolworths (1952-1955) then formed the Upper Precinct. A new Police Station and municipal offices were instigated as the start of the Civic Precinct, and a competition was launched for the design of the city's flagship development – a new cathedral (both were to be delivered under Arthur Ling).
- 3.4.1.10 By 1955, Gibson's plans for the commercial precinct had thus progressed significantly, whilst other elements of the plan, particularly the new civic zone remained imminent but still in gestation. Despite the generally positive results of the city's early redevelopment, and the broadening of his powers and responsibilities consequent to the retirement of Ernest Ford in 1949, Donald Gibson resigned in 1955 seemingly after one too many battles to enact his vision.



Fig 13: The Leofric Hotel (top) and Upper Precinct (bottom) under construction c.1953-55. Coventry Archive

1955-1964 (Arthur Ling)

- 3.4.1.11 Gibson was succeeded by Arthur Ling*, who embraced the principles of the original plan at a broad level. The delivery of the plan did evolve in some important areas, the product of both practicality and ideology. Practically, the country's emergence out of post-war austerity and into affluence resulted in population growth, with renewed economic migration to work in renewed industry and the major redevelopment programmes. An increasingly young and prosperous demographic brought new demands (e.g. for private car ownership) that had not been considered by the original plan. Materials and labour also became more affordable, accelerating the pace of development. Ideologically, Ling's interest in planning principles over details encouraged a more stylistically diverse approach to design, embracing new materials (such as precast concrete) and technologies (such as pre-fabrication).
- 3.4.1.12 The commercial precinct continued to develop, including the Lower Precinct (1955-1960), Market Way, the Locarno Dancehall (1958-1960), new tower blocks (e.g. Mercia House, and Hillman House), the City Arcade, Shelton Square, and the City Market. The precincts' pedestrianised zones were expanded, and the Belgrade Theatre and Coventry Telegraph building constructed as the start of what was intended to be a new entertainment precinct. Major development began on the civic precinct in the west of the centre, including the new Police Station and Civic Offices, a telephone exchange, Herbert Art Gallery, a central swimming baths, and the first buildings of the Lanchester College campus. Coventry's Modernist St Michael's Cathedral was delivered, its design celebrated internationally. Other major developments included the railway station and the ring road, the construction of which cleared swathes of townscape and encapsulated the city centre within its "concrete collar".
- 3.4.1.13 Ling departed Coventry in 1964, by which point the delivery of the city plan had progressed significantly (Fig 14; Fig 15). The main strategic objectives laid down in the mid-1940s had been achieved, notably the completion of the commercial precincts, establishment of a civic zone, and the wholesale transformation of the central road network. Many of the planned characteristics that define the centre to this day were in place.

* Ling was a graduate Bartlett School of Architecture and had worked under Patrick Abercrombie on the County of London Plan of 1943. He was Chief Planning Officer for London County Council from 1945 and Senior Lecturer in town planning at University College from 1948. He was an experienced and respected professional, illustrating Coventry's sustained attraction as a place of innovation in architecture and urban design in the post-war years.

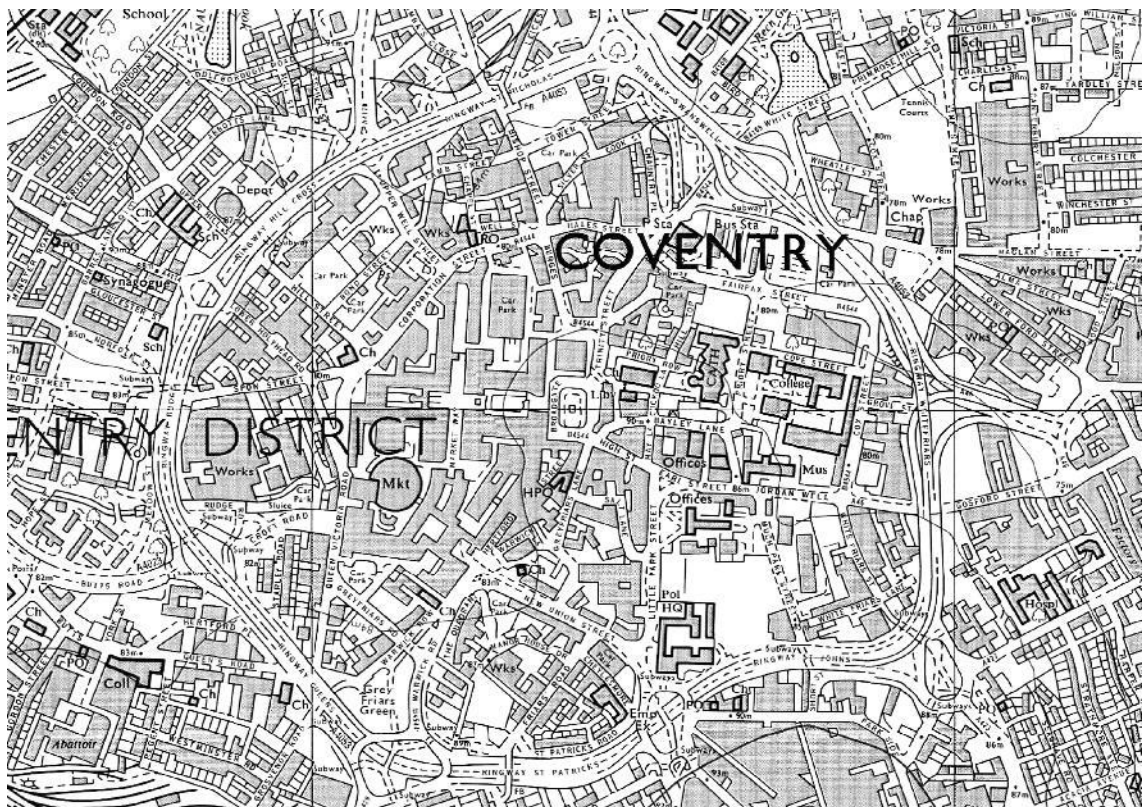


Fig 14: Wholesale transformation of the city centre. Top – the 1906 townscape; Bottom – the 1970 townscape. © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2020) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

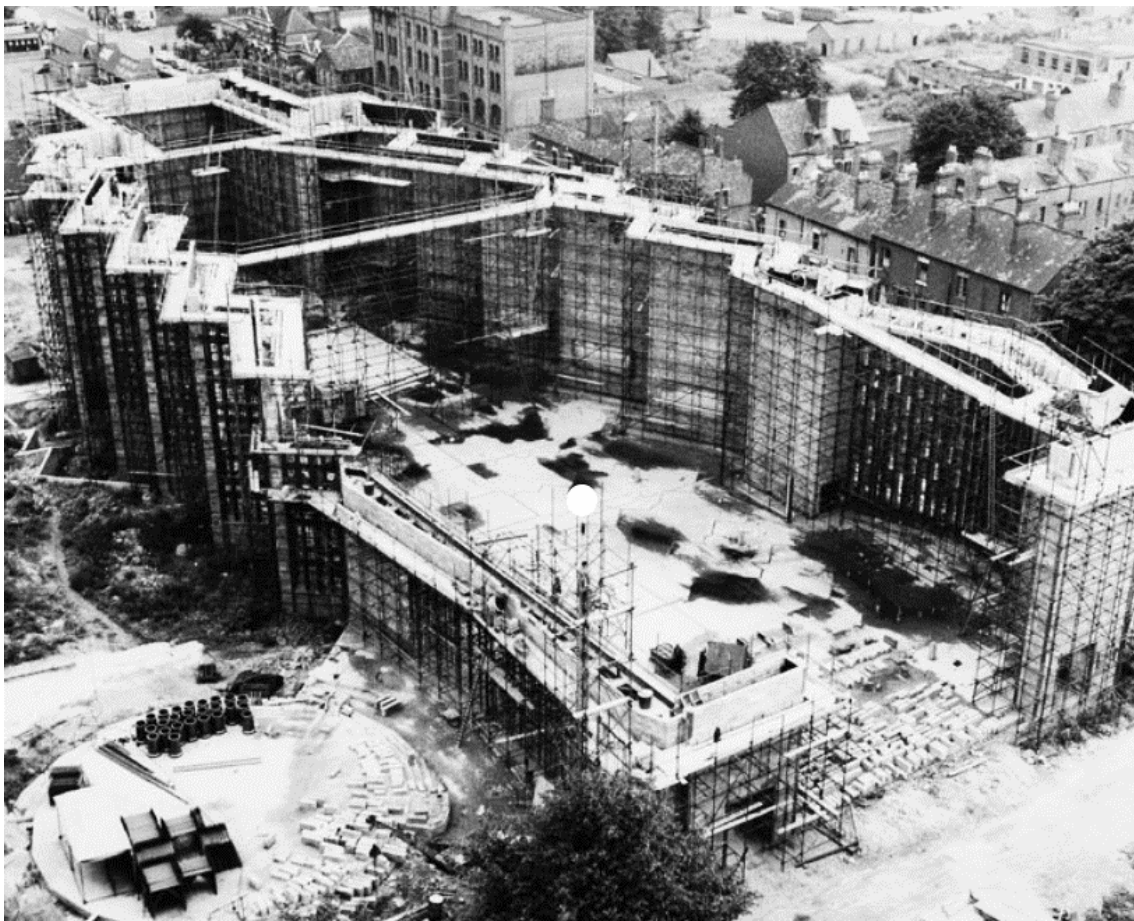


Fig 15: Top: 1969 aerial view of the city centre from the southwest. By this stage the major components that define the modern townscape were in place, including the extended commercial precinct, the civic precinct, and the ring road. Historic England. Bottom: Basil Spence's St Michael's Cathedral under construction. Historic England (01_026_09)

1964-1994 (Terence Gregory (1964-73); Harry Noble (1973-94))

- 3.4.1.14 Terence Gregory replaced Ling, having worked at the City Council since 1960.* Whilst redevelopment continued, the 1960s marked a significant turning point, with the original, radical vision increasingly constrained by the emergence of new political, social and economic forces. Locally, Labour's 30-year control of the local authority ended in 1967, with key political advocates for the plan including George Hodgkinson not re-elected. A degree of public apathy to redevelopment had also emerged, after 20 years of sustained construction. Nationally, an emergency budget froze public investment in redevelopment in the face of a major economic downturn. Coventry was not immune and entered another cycle of industrial decline. Despite all of these factors, some notable schemes were delivered, including further development of Lanchester Polytechnic (now Coventry University) including a new Sports and Recreation Centre and the Arts College, expansion of the Municipal Offices, the De Vere Hotel (now Britannia), the Hertford Street Precinct, and Coventry Point.
- 3.4.1.15 At the same time, the emphasis on urban renewal was diminishing and concern for the preservation of Coventry's historic architecture was growing. Architectural conservation had generally been dismissed as sentimental by both Gibson and Ling, with the development of their commercial precincts and the ring road particularly impactful upon traditional fabric. The scale of loss inspired advocacy for preservation of what remained, led by architect F.W.B Charles. This bore fruit under Terence Gregory who (at least in part) accepted the inherent value vested within the local historic townscape. This culminated in the Spon Street townscape scheme, an innovative approach to the rescue of threatened buildings, physically relocating them to the periphery of the centre.³²

International Relations

- 3.4.1.16 The Second World War was not only a catalyst in the transformation of Coventry's urban environment, but also its identity on the world stage. Like the phoenix - now a symbol of Coventry - out of the fires of war ambition rose to promote international peace and reconciliation to ensure that the suffering of Coventry would never be inflicted on other cities. This began in the immediate aftermath of the 14th November 1940 raids, with the Reverend Richard Howard, Provost of Coventry Cathedral, scribing "Father Forgive" on the charred walls of the ruined St Michaels. Just six weeks later Howard would broadcast live across the nation from the ruins, promoting a vision for peace and declaring: "...we are trying, hard as it may be, to banish all thoughts of revenge. We are bracing ourselves to finish this tremendous job of saving the world from tyranny and cruelty. We're going to try and make a kinder, simpler, a more Christ-child like sort of world in the days beyond this strife." (Fig 16) Local civic leaders and community groups would embrace this message with gusto.³³

* Gregory was the first of the city's chief architects to have been born in the West Midlands. He graduated from Birmingham School of Architecture in 1939, continuing his studies post-war at Wolverhampton and Staffordshire Technical College. He had been Chief Assistant Architect at Wolverhampton Borough (1949-1954) and Deputy City Architect at Gloucester City (1954-1960).



Fig 16: Top: Provost Richard Howard broadcasts a message of peace and reconciliation live from the ruins of St Michael's via the BBC Home Service, December 1940; Bottom: Crowds gather to commemorate VE Day, 8th May 1945. Coventry Archive

- 3.4.1.17 In the immediate aftermath of war, the symbolism of this movement was explicitly linked to that fateful night in November 1940. The cathedral stonemason, Jack Forbes, bound two charred beams from the medieval roof to form the Charred Cross. Another cross was formed from extracted from burned medieval timbers, today forming the symbol for an international community of over three-hundred religious organisations, community groups, charities, centres and educational organisations. This includes a Ministry for Reconciliation, the Community of the Cross of Nails, the Coventry Peace House, Coventry Refugee Centre, the Multi-Faith Forum and Coventry University's Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations.
- 3.4.1.18 Since the 1940s, the community has been responsible for a range of activities and advocacy which promote themes of peace and forgiveness on the international stage. Early initiatives included initiatives such as the 'German Circle', aimed at expanding knowledge of German language and culture and the Coventry Tablecloth, a major local fundraising exercise to help the civilians of Stalingrad. Over the following decades peacekeeping endeavours have included visits to and from Coventry by local dignitaries and students, programmes of cultural exchange have resulted in mutual gifting of public artwork (some of which still adorns the city centre) and the curation of exhibitions in museums and cultural centres have ensured shared narratives are sustained into the 21st century. Bombed towns and cities have also played active roles in one another's reconstruction, with Coventry's own Belgrade Theatre named in honour of materials donated from the Serbian capital.
- 3.4.1.19 Across the decades Coventry has established connections with towns and cities across the world. Amongst the first were Stalingrad and Dresden, known widely for the damage wrought upon them by the Second World War. Over time, the number has expanded dramatically, now representing a global network. Several of these links are formalised as "twinned cities", with Coventry and Stalingrad the first to be unified.

4 TOPOGRAPHY AND HISTORIC URBAN MORPHOLOGY

4.1 Topography

- 4.1.1.1 The assessment area lies upon a bedrock largely formed of Keresley member sandstones of the Warwickshire group.³⁴ This distinctive Warwick Stone was extensively quarried for use as a construction material, and is today still encountered within several of Coventry's most prominent and high-status medieval buildings.³⁵ Amongst the most striking are the ruins of the Cathedral Church of St Michael, St Mary's Guildhall (Bayley Lane), the Old Grammar School (Hayle Street), surviving sections of the old city wall and the Whitefriars Priory.
- 4.1.1.2 The experience of the city centre's historic environment is intimately linked to its terrain. The local landscape gently undulates, rising gradually to a low hill which peaks around the site of the cathedral (Fig 17). This area is appropriately known as Hill Top and is thought to be the site of Coventry's earliest settlement.³⁶ Hill Top has sustained its status as the geographic, cultural, and spiritual locus of the historic city, and still hosts some of the most significant historic buildings and areas. The elevated position affords the structures a relative prominence over large parts of the historic townscape.
- 4.1.1.3 The assessment area is situated within the catchment of the River Sherbourne, which meanders through the city centre from west to east, descending from escarpments to the northwest down to its confluence with the River Sowe near the village of Baginton in the southeast. Today, however, the Sherbourne's longstanding significance within the town, as a focal point for centuries of human settlement and industry, is relative difficult to discern. The watercourse and its tributaries are largely concealed from view, having been extensively culverted during the centre's post-war redevelopment.

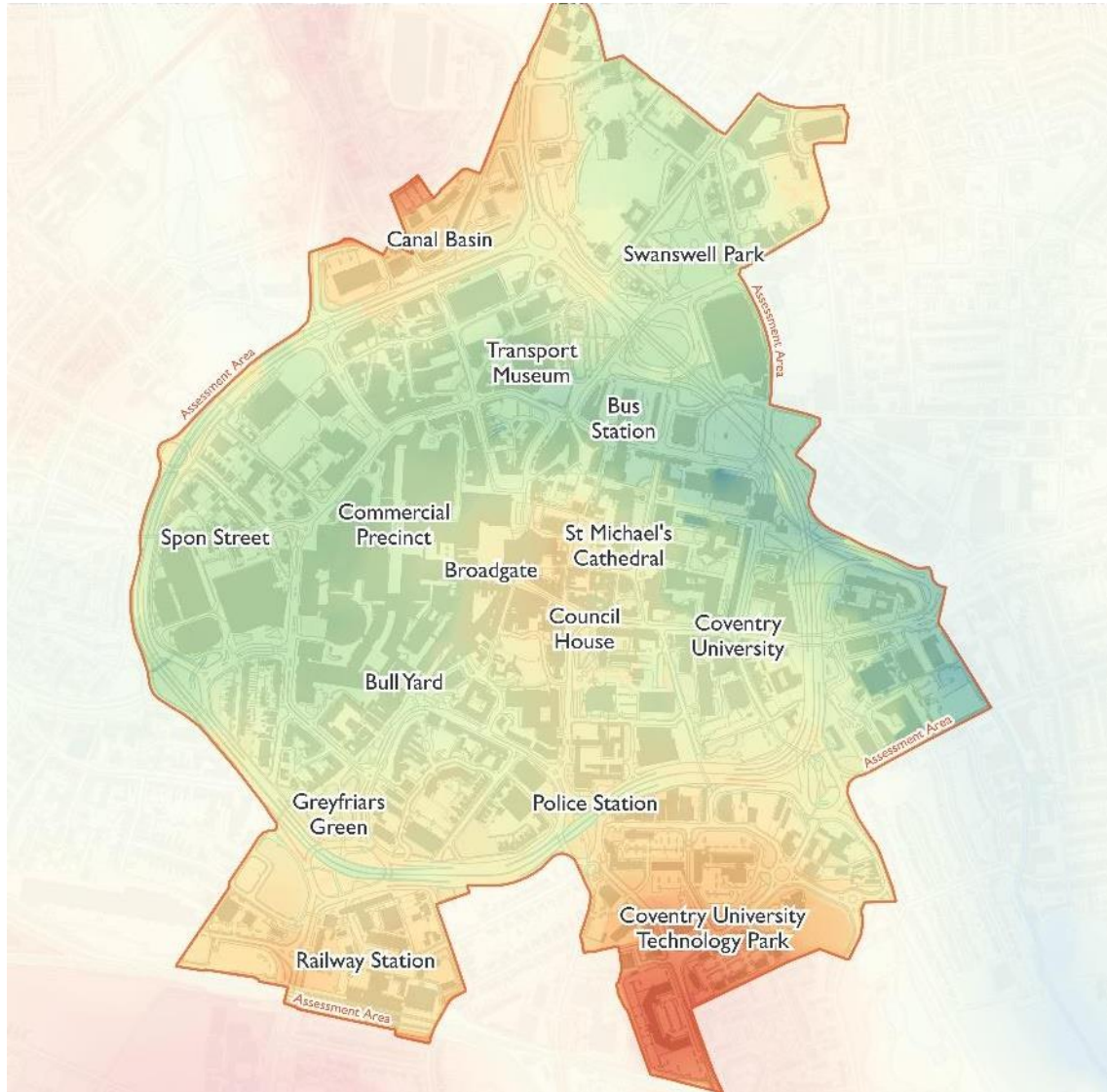


Fig 17: Local terrain. Reds and orange = higher ground, Blues and greens = lower ground
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4.2 Morphology

4.2.1.1 This section provides a broad overview of the morphology of Coventry city centre, focussing on distinctive historic townscape characteristics including density, grain and street patterns. The form and experience of the centre's architecture, public realm and open spaces are touched upon here and examined in finer detail within their respective sections.

4.2.2 *Urban Form*

4.2.2.1 The morphology of the centre varies considerably, featuring a juxtaposition between areas of townscape created in the post-war decades and those that have been inherited from the pre-war settlement (Fig 18). This section examines several key areas of the city centre to illustrate the contrast. Both types of area have their own distinct historical and architectural interest. How they interrelate, interact and, in places overlap, are key experiences of the city centre's historic environment. They bring a sense of dynamism when navigating from area to area and help define series of distinctive localities.

4.2.2.2 The most prominent area of townscape inherited from the city's medieval and post-medieval eras is the Hill Top, retaining high levels of historical integrity. Hill Top's sense of place is remarkable, and distinct from any other area of the centre. Despite its relatively limited extent, it affords an experience of the special character of an old English town to a level comparable with many the nation's more famed medieval settlements. The area retains not only a notable assemblage of historic buildings (many designated for their national significance), but also the spaces and streets with which they share important relationships.

4.2.2.3 The Cathedral, Holy Trinity Church and their respective precincts dominate the space (Fig 20) but are surrounded by a collection of narrow historic streets, lined with a high density of historic buildings of a modest scale that abut the footway. Small urban blocks create a finely grained townscape, with narrow alleyways and passages between buildings unveiling further historic interest within back yards and courtyards to the rear. The Hill Top's inherited character is perhaps best experienced at the junction of Hay Lane with Bayley Lane. Other pockets of surviving historic townscape are located in areas outside of, between, and at the fringes of the major focal points of post-war redevelopment. Spon Street and its immediate surroundings and The Burges are the centre's other principal areas of inherited townscape, again with small semi-regular plots, high building density, modest structural scale and a fine urban grain. These areas illustrate a now rare morphology that was once prevalent across the entire city centre. In the south, focussed around Greyfriars Green, are areas of a more suburban character. These are laid out in a manner which reflects their historical status as attractive residential areas outside the immediate focus of 19th and early 20th century industry. The areas are notably lower in density, with wide semi-regular streets accompanied by a relatively generous provision of private space in rear gardens.



Fig 18: The juxtaposition of the urban form between modern and medieval Coventry. Left: the regular planned broad streets, bulky massing, and coarse grain of the Upper Precinct. Right: The irregular narrow streets, high density, and fine grain of the historic Hill Top area, viewed along Bailey Lane.

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4.2.2.4 Much of the remainder of the city centre is dominated by post-war redevelopment. In these areas the urban form is heavily influenced by the rigid use of a zonal planning system. The scale and massing of buildings increases considerably comparative to earlier areas, with very large footprints of individual buildings common. The more informal arrangement of the early city gives way to a regular geometry in the layout of streets and plots, which clearly reflect their genesis within a city centre masterplan.

4.2.2.5 Exemplar is the layout of Broadgate and the Upper Precinct, which portray the influence of the Beaux-Arts movement on the principal architect, Donald Gibson. Buildings are arranged with a symmetrical geometry orientated on a slightly offset cardinal axis that is anchored on views of St Michael's Cathedral spire. Modernist buildings enclose plazas, surrounded by multiple-layers of shops and with corner-blocks breaking forward from the building line to define gateways. The commercial precinct as a whole is formed of one expansive urban block, with a near-continuous connectivity, from one structure to the next, creating a strong and pervasive sense of enclosure and a coarse urban grain (Fig 18). Despite this, the precinct is highly permeable to pedestrians, facilitated through numerous routes connecting through to the wider city. From the outside however, the commercial precincts appear near indomitable, with the blocky massing, inward-facing layout, expansive and sometimes blank outward-facing facades, and concealed entrances.

4.2.2.6 The Modernist civic precinct and university campus are also highly distinctive but vary in form from the commercial areas, largely due to a difference in function and the subtle but significantly different planning philosophies of the architects responsible. Here, a more loosely geometric campus-style layout has been created. Individual buildings are often detached in form and are sited within dedicated plots and/or around courtyards. The morphology creates a marked sense of openness across the wider area, whilst recognisable designed "places" are enclosed within courtyards or defined by landscaping and streets.* The layout ensures the density of the built form is relatively low, but there is a marked increase in structural scale and massing, with the area featuring the highest concentration of tall buildings (above ten storeys) in the centre.

4.2.3 **Street Pattern**

4.2.3.1 Historically, two major routes bisected the city from east-to-west (Spon Street connecting through to Gosford Street) and northwest-to-southwest (Bishop Street connecting through to Warwick Road). From the northwest also came Holyhead Road, a major coaching route carrying traffic going to or returning from London from the 16th century onwards. The major routes culminated at Broadgate, the settlement's principal junction and a thriving focal point. Off these major routes branched an irregular network of streets, having evolved piecemeal over time. This medieval street-pattern largely prevailed up to the early decades of the 20th century and (as discussed in the Historical Overview) was blamed for the crippling congestion within the centre - unable to meet the surging demand from the city's booming industries.

* These areas were known as the "outdoor rooms", a principle inspired by the Mies-designed campus for the Illinois Institute of Technology.

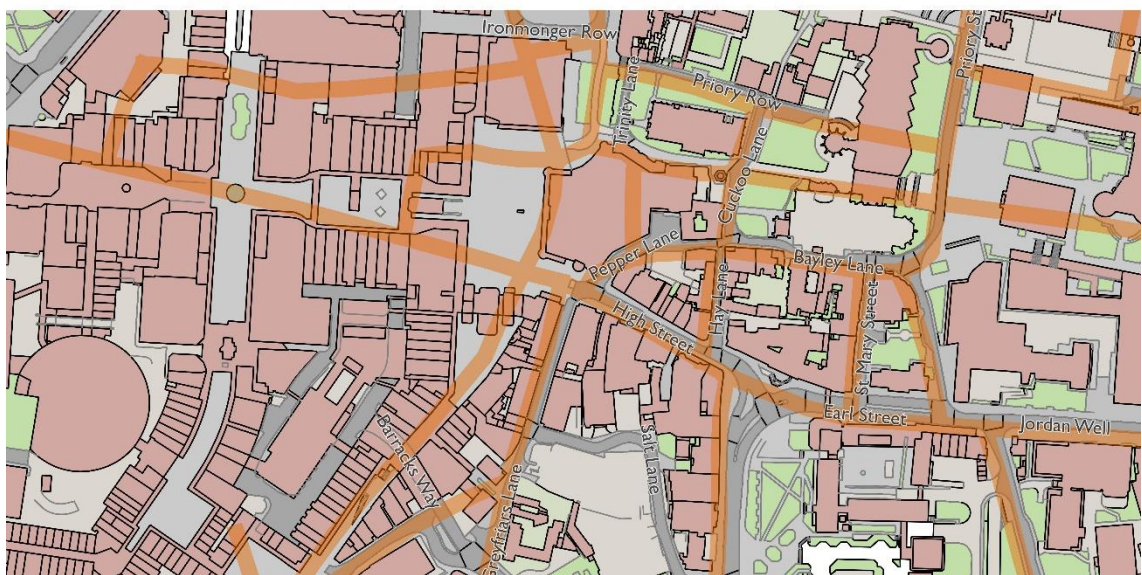
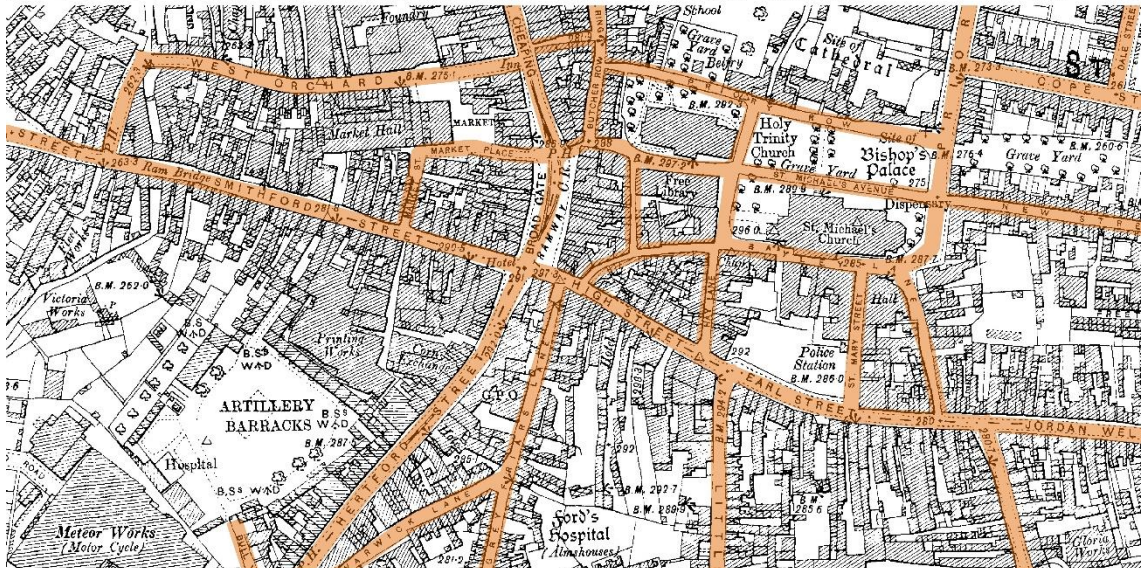
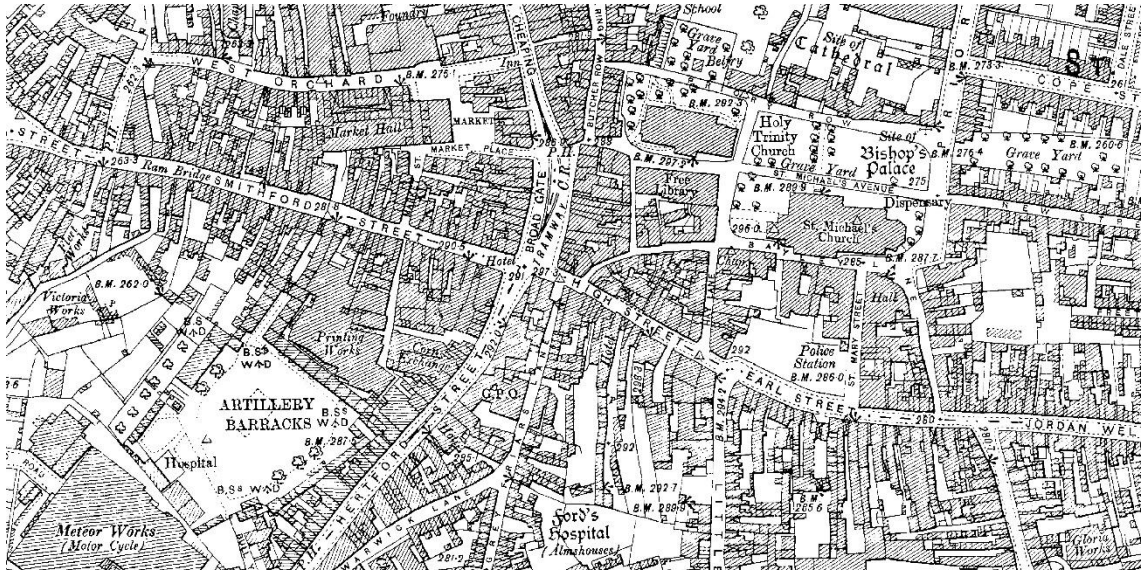


Fig 19 (previous page): The same extent of townscape mapped in 1905 (top) and today (bottom) showing the transformation of the local urban form and street network in the west of the centre and in contrast, the inheritance of the broad historic layout in the east. The historic radial street-layout that bisected the city and converged on Broadgate (marked in orange) has been largely overwritten, but many of the historic urban blocks remain tangible, particularly in the Hill Top area and in the east of the centre, now defined by the university campus.

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- 4.2.3.2 The city centre's street system has, however, been affected greatly by the major re-engineering of the local highways infrastructure, delivered as a key objective of the city's post-war redevelopment. Significant change has occurred, with the development of the commercial precincts and the ring road most influential.
- 4.2.3.3 Occupying a large swathe of the central area, the precincts' designs showed little reverence for the historic street pattern, wholly truncating the major east-to-west route through the city. Vehicular movement has been pushed to the fringes, with Corporation Street (Fig 10) and Queen Victoria Road forming an inner trunk road. The precincts themselves are wholly pedestrianised, a key tenet of their design philosophy and heritage significance. The approach made a radical and highly influential contribution to town planning in the post-war years, with Coventry's precinct setting an exemplar later mirrored within the New Towns of the 1960s and 1970s, and still has influence today.
- 4.2.3.4 The ring road was the cost of the celebrated pedestrianisation, diverting vehicular traffic around and away from once heavily congested central areas. Constructed between 1959 and 1974 it encapsulates the city centre within a concrete collar, negotiated by raised or sunken highways and roundabouts. The ring road overwrites many aspects of the historical street pattern, wholly bisecting and/or relegating once major routes, with Spon Street and Bishop Street notable examples. Many other historic streets also became disconnected, marginalised or isolated, surviving as only localised vestiges of the historic townscape. Areas around Greyfriars Green are a good example, featuring rare remnants of the industrial suburbs which grew within proximity to the city centre in the 18th and 19th centuries. The ring road also fragments historical relationships between the centre and its surrounding suburbs. In places historic routes leading into the centre have been retained but replaced by bridges and underpasses that cross the highway. Whilst these are used far less frequently (widely recognised as a relatively hostile environment) they remain features of interest inherited from the Modernist townscape.
- 4.2.3.5 Whilst the impact of 20th century redevelopment has been significant, the layout of large areas of the centre remains vested in the city's historical layout. Traces are at times very subtle, with the historic provenance of streets regularly concealed by modern highway engineering (e.g. straightening and widening of carriageways), the redevelopment of adjacent building plots with modern architecture and the truncation of historically significant through-routes.

- 4.2.3.6 Nonetheless, areas of historic street pattern remain important aspects of the architectural and historical interest of areas, albeit at times in ways hard to discern on the ground.
- 4.2.3.7 The Hill Top contains the best-preserved elements of the city centre's historical street pattern, with its irregular arrangement of streets focussed around the ecclesiastical focal point of the medieval town. Priory Row, St Michael's Avenue, Bayley Lane, and Hay Lane are all broadly laid out, and interrelate in much the same manner evident on 17th and 18th century mapping.
- 4.2.3.8 More subtle, are the inherited street patterns found in areas within the ring road, but away from the Hill Top and the commercial precinct. In the east, within the area today largely comprising Coventry University campus, the majority of streets were again laid-out by the 17th century. Jordan Well to Gosford Street constitute part of the old east-to-west route bisecting the city, whilst Little Park Street, Much Park Street and Cox Street all once formed busy roads leading to and from gates of the city walls. In the north of the city centre the experience is similar, with once-prominent streets such as Cook Street, Bishop Street, and Well Street still marking the historic layout of the city, but now relegated in the hierarchy.

5 FORMS OF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

NB. This section is intended to provide an overview of the diverse forms of development encountered within Coventry city centre. A building's absence from this section should not therefore be taken as a statement of a lack of historical and/or architectural interest.

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1.1 Specific elements of Coventry's historic built form make defining contributions to the centre's character, today illustrating centuries of the city's evolution from medieval city to Modernist townscape. Collectively, these buildings' architectural and historical interest create an intriguing and distinctive sense of place, which has in place become closely linked to local cultural identity as well as defining key aspects of the city's iconography.
- 5.1.1.2 Distinctive eras of Coventry's historical development are encapsulated within the assessment area, although to different extents. They include the monumental red-sandstone and vernacular timber-framing of its medieval and post-medieval heritage, the engineered-brick factories of a once heavily industrial centre, and the compendium of Modernist styles that arrived with the sustained redevelopment as witnessed across the post-war decades.
- 5.1.1.3 Differences in the aesthetics and forms of development between the three major eras are many, with each highly distinctive from the next. Whilst this is not in itself unusual within historic city centres, the way in which these differences manifest within Coventry is interesting. These shifts in architectural styles and materiality between the eras has been stark, with buildings more often sharing characteristics with other structures that were constructed contemporarily, than buildings of different eras but shared functions (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial etc.). For these reasons, this section is presented chronologically, from medieval through to the modern day.

5.2 Medieval and Post-Medieval Eras

Background

- 5.2.1.1 Coventry was amongst the most significant of England's medieval towns, reaching its zenith in the 14th century. It therefore became a place renowned for its medieval townscape, encompassing a rich assemblage of historic buildings, ranging from the city's Three Spires to some of the best-preserved timber-framed vernacular architecture in the country.
- 5.2.1.2 Whilst the city encountered today might be considered as almost unrecognisable to its inhabitants of a century or more ago – the result of the transformative forces of industrialisation, wartime destruction and post-war redevelopment - there remains a highly notable collection of pre-industrial architecture from ecclesiastical landmarks, commercial and residential premises of a flourishing mercantile class; and relics of a once dominant city wall, to one of the finest collections of 14th through 16th century timber-framed vernacular in the county. All of these remain as testament to the city's extraordinary wealth and prosperity during the medieval era. Whilst this assemblage is certainly fragmented, often marginalised, and occasionally concealed from plain sight, closer inspection reveals this exceptional collection of heritage assets, many of which are recognised as amongst the most significant in the country.

Distribution

- 5.2.1.3 The locus of the city's medieval heritage is Hill Top. A historical focal point for the city, the area still features numerous nationally significant ecclesiastical, civic and institutional heritage assets arranged around open spaces and lanes, many of which date back to the centre's medieval development. Beyond Hill Top, a number of individual streets also feature localised concentrations of pre-industrial buildings. Spon Street is best-known, featuring an assemblage of timber-framed architecture, much of which was relocated from other areas of the city. Elsewhere, the city's medieval heritage is less evident to the untrained eye. For example, The Burges and Gosford Street both feature rows of buildings whose timber-framing is hidden behind later, external alterations.³⁷ Other heritage assets are wholly concealed, including medieval cellars and undercrofts which provide a subterranean dimension to the city's architectural interest.
- 5.2.1.4 The remainder of the city centre's pre-industrial buildings are largely dispersed. Many have been marginalised through the extensive post-war transformation of the centre, with once prominent local streets relegated in the local hierarchy, reducing the likelihood of these assets being encountered and appreciated today.



Fig 20: Holy Trinity (left) and St Michael's Cathedral (right) form a striking partnership at the 'Hill Top' – the focal point of the city centre's medieval and post-medieval heritage. Historic England (33180_029)

5.2.2 Ecclesiastical

- 5.2.2.1 The centre features a number of nationally significant ecclesiastical heritage assets, including churches, cathedrals, and the remnants of Christian monastic orders. Some are landmark buildings, associated to important historic public spaces and streets. Others have become relatively peripheral within the townscape, their influence within medieval society disguised by the 20th century re-organisation of the city centre. As a collection they illustrate the long-held influence of the church over the city's development, jostling for authority with the secular forces of manorial landowners and mercantile guilds. Their architectural interest also portrays the city's prosperity, the materials and craftsmanship engaged in their construction illustrating the immense wealth and status of the city during the era.
- 5.2.2.2 The city's Three Spires are the most celebrated, comprising the Cathedral Church of St Michael, Holy Trinity Church, and Christchurch.*
- 5.2.2.3 The ruined Cathedral Church of St Michael is perhaps the city's most recognisable historic building (front cover; Fig 60). The current building was largely constructed in the 14th and 15th centuries, although a church is believed to have been on the site since at least the 12th century. The cathedral is constructed in the distinctive local red

* Whilst these landmarks of the medieval town continue to be of great influence, their prominence has been steadily eroded by a succession of major changes within the centre. This discussed in detail in section 8.1.2.

sandstone, with its most striking feature being the off-centre 90 metre spire that towers above the western end. The cathedral was heavily damaged during the air raids of November 1940 and left as a monument to the devastating period of the city's history.³⁸ Arguably the most evocative manifestation of Coventry's cultural heritage, the surviving tower (which still also houses the cathedral bells), masonry and tracery stands as testament to the city's medieval status, whilst the ruins provide stark illustration of the city's extensive destruction during the Blitz, and the resilience of the local community to both rebuild and to reconcile in its aftermath.

- 5.2.2.4 Holy Trinity Church (Fig 21) features a cruciform plan with tower to the centre. Originating in the 13th century (succeeding a Norman building destroyed by fire in 1257), the church has undergone several phases of reconstruction and remodelling spanning the 15th through 19th centuries. Restored in the 19th century, it features an agglomeration of architectural styles and fabric.³⁹ Located immediately west of the cathedral, Holy Trinity forms a striking partnership with St Michael's, together dominating the cathedral precinct, and regularly appearing together within local views.
- 5.2.2.5 Adjacent to St. Michael's and Holy Trinity are the exposed archaeological remains of Coventry's first cathedral. Dedicated to St. Mary and first endowed as a monastery in 1043, the church was the focal point of both its Benedictine Priory, and the town as a whole, until its demolition in the early 16th century consequent to the Dissolution.⁴⁰ Today the priory church is experienced within the 'Priory Gardens' designed open space, with excavated features of its nave and colonnades forming points of interest.
- 5.2.2.6 The centre's other ecclesiastical monuments are located away from the Hill Top. Completing the trio of spires is Christ Church (Fig 22). Today only the steeple stands as the last surviving element of a 14th century Franciscan friary. Against the odds, the spire has withstood repeated attempts at its demolition*, remaining a key landmark at the northern extent of Greyfriars Green. Like St. Michael's Cathedral, the spire's significance has evolved in the last century, its (partially) ruined form now testament to both the city's ancient and more recent past.⁴¹
- 5.2.2.7 The mid-14th century Whitefriars Priory partially survives, located in the southeast of the assessment area, beyond the ring road (Fig 22). Today only the red sandstone eastern Cloister wing stands, surrounded by an area of landscaped green space which incorporates several excavated archaeological features.⁴² The 1960s construction of the ring road has heavily compromised the priory's setting, isolating the building from the modern city centre. This is exemplified by the priory's other standing component, a gatehouse, which is now found at 36 & 37 Much Park Street, 250 metres due west of the priory. The gatehouse's historical functional relationship and visual connectivity with the priory has however been wholly fragmented, diminishing both the ability to appreciate their contributions to one another's significance, and more broadly the layout of the medieval town. The survival of both the cloister section and the gatehouse are highly exceptional, both individually, but even more so as a pair. Such

* First, the demolition of the church after the dissolution of the Friary in 1542, surviving alone until the construction of a new church by Rickman and Hutchinson 1830-32. Second, the destruction of this second church during the air raids of 1941, which necessitated demolition of all but the spire in 1950.



Fig 21: Holy Trinity Church. Photograph by authors

buildings were particularly vulnerable from destruction post-dissolution, and their significance is thus elevated considerably by their rarity.⁴³

5.2.2.8 The guild Church of St. John the Baptist (Fig 23) is located at the junction of Corporation Street and Spon Street. First constructed in 1342, much of its current form is the product of the late 15th to early 16th centuries, with extensive 19th century restoration to its red sandstone, and later additions of flying buttresses and battlemented parapets by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.⁴⁴ The church is a landmark building in the west of the city centre, although its modern context is much altered from its historical setting, again the product of the city's post-war transformation.*

5.2.2.9 The red sandstone Old Grammar School of Hales Street still displays an ecclesiastical character inherited from its original function as a chapel of the Hospital of St John. The hospital was first constructed in the 12th century, rebuilt in the 14th, and converted to the school in the mid-16th.⁴⁵ The old church bookends the northeast of Corporation Street (in conjunction with the aforementioned Church of St John to the southwest). Again, its context was significantly altered by the post-war re-engineering of the townscape.†

* Discussed further in section 8.1.2.

† Bishop Street was once the major route into the city from the north, with the Grammar School prominent at its crossroads with Hales Street, The Burges, and Corporation Street (previously Well Street). Bishop Street has however been relegated in the local street hierarchy due to its truncation by the ring road in the mid 20th century.



Fig 22: Clockwise from top: Christ Church Spire; St Michael's Cathedral Spire looking east along Pepper Lane past County Hall; the gatehouse of Whitefriars Priory, Much Park Street; The standing eastern cloister wing of Whitefriars Priory with adjacent exposed archaeology of other structures. Photographs by authors



Fig 23: Church of St John the Baptist. Photograph by authors

5.2.3 **Institutional**

5.2.3.1 The influence of Coventry's once powerful merchant guilds can still be appreciated through a number of heritage assets, inherited from an era of great prosperity and influence, sustained by a booming wool and cloth industry. These buildings reflect the city's once central position within the nation's economy, one which not only benefited the city itself (for instance, funding the construction of its renowned stone and timber-framed architecture) but also many others, as the wealth garnered in Coventry's markets pervaded the region.

5.2.3.2 Most celebrated is St Mary's Guildhall, first built in c.1340-42 and enlarged in 1460, located along Bayley Lane at the Hill Top (Fig 24). The Guildhall stands as testament to the wealth and influence of the city's mercantile institutions, with its sandstone and timber-framed structures and extensive undercrofts amongst the best preserved of the city's medieval fabric.⁴⁶ The hall remains a focal point for those seeking to experience Coventry's medieval history, with its Great Hall still actively in community use, and furnished with a host of medieval artworks including the famed *Coventry Tapestry* (c.1500, see Fig 3).

5.2.3.3 Almost all of the higher-status dwellings pertaining to Coventry's most influential medieval and post-medieval merchants have been lost, with only the ruinous 14th century 'Stone House' of Much Park Street remaining (Fig 24).⁴⁷ The wealth and status of the mercantile class is however reflected through two of Coventry's most significant timber-framed buildings, both the products of local philanthropy.



Fig 24: 'The Stone House', Much Park Street (top left); St Mary's Guildhall, Bayley Lane (top right); Ford's Hospital, Greyfriars Lane (bottom). Photographs by authors

5.2.3.4

Ford's Hospital Almshouses (Greyfriars Lane, Fig 24) and Bond's Hospital (Hill Street) are early 16th century hospitals endowed by merchants in 1506 and 1509 respectively. Both feature distinctive close-studded timber-framed structures and fine detailing, illustrating the wealth of Coventry's medieval merchant class and the broader

prosperity of the city during the era.⁴⁸ Both also retain a relatively high level of historical integrity, having undergone successive phases of conservation and restoration.*

5.2.3.5 Bond's Hospital forms one side of a courtyard that also features the Bablake School and Coventry School Former Pupils' Association Headquarters. Bablake School is of particular interest, built in the 14th century as priests' quarters for the Collegiate Church of St. John, and remodelled in 1560 as a boys' hospital and later a school. Like its neighbour, the Bablake School features timber-framed architecture of the highest quality, alongside a stone ground floor and mullioned windows.⁴⁹ Whilst the Pupils' Association Headquarters is of much later date (1898), its conscious efforts to reflect the timber-framed aesthetic completes a highly attractive trio of period buildings. Despite their clear architectural and historical interest (at both national and local level), both hospitals have been marginalised through the relegation of their respective streets (Bond's Hospital along Hill Street, Fords along Greyfriars Lane) during post-war re-engineering of the centre's transport infrastructure. As with many other aspects of the city's medieval heritage, the ability to appreciate the roles of these significant buildings within the town is often concealed to the uninitiated.

5.2.4 **Vernacular**

5.2.4.1 Whilst many of the country's major medieval centres have experienced widespread loss of their medieval vernacular buildings (for instance, major fires claiming much of the assemblage of London and Norwich), Coventry retains a rare and exceptional concentration of timber-framed architecture, which represents an extremely significant assemblage of late medieval buildings that collectively contain invaluable information on how people lived in Coventry. Once again, these buildings illustrate the extraordinary prosperity of the town in the medieval era, with the most skilled of craftsman brought to, and operating in, the area on commission from a prosperous mercantile population.

5.2.4.2 Many vernacular buildings are located along Spon Street, which retains a distinctly medieval character through a fine collection of 14th through 16th century architecture that feature distinctive close-studded framing and jettied elevations (Fig 25). Whilst all buildings are recognised for their architectural interest (each Grade II listed), a number have noteworthy idiosyncratic qualities. The Old Windmill (22-23 Spon Street) is a rare surviving public house (one of 126 licensed premises which once lined the street) with a brewhouse and brewing equipment surviving *in situ*. 11-12 Spon Street is the best surviving example of a Wealden hall house, a type of timber-framed construction that was likely to have been once prevalent in the city. Numbers 9, 16 and 163-164 Spon Street have all been relocated here, having been moved in their entirety from other areas of the centre to save them from impending demolition during the city's post-war transformation.^{50,†}

* Notable are the 1832-34 restoration of Bond's Hospital, and the repair of Ford's Hospital undertaken by W.S. Hattrell & Partners following severe bomb damage incurred on the 14th October 1941.

† Numbers 9 and 163-164 Spon Street were once located along Much Park Street, whilst 16 Spon Street was once 142-143 Spon Street. All were moved to enable construction of the ring-road.



Fig 25: Clockwise from top: The Golden Cross public house, Pepper Lane. Photograph by authors.; East side of Hay Lane, with medieval timber-framing concealed (from the front) by 19th century re-fronting with brick. Historic England (DP219807); 169 Spon Street. Photograph by authors; 163-169 Spon Street. Historic England (DPI64668)

5.2.4.3 Hill Top also features significant vernacular architecture, which nestles below the towering spires of St. Michael's and Holy Trinity. Both the Golden Cross Inn and The Cottage are located on Bayley Lane (nos. 8 and 22 respectively). The Cottage dates to the late-15th or early-16th century, featuring a jettied first storey, and a finely detailed carved corner post. The Golden Cross Inn (Fig 25) is a heavily restored later-16th century public house, striking in its double-jettied form (only one of three such buildings left in the city), and holding a subtle prominence as the corner-building of the Bayley Lane / Hay Street / Pepper Lane junction.⁵¹ Lych Gate Cottages are located at 3-5 Prior Row, featuring double-jettied close-studded timber framing and diagonal braces with elements dendrochronologically dated back to 1414-1415.⁵²

5.2.4.4 Away from Spon Street and the Hill Top, the centre's medieval vernacular can be more challenging to discern. Several buildings have had their medieval structures concealed (from the front) through later remodelling, their distinctive timber-framing and layout only experienced from within, or to the rear. The extensively altered Nos.18-30 of The Burges are exemplar, with later-18th through 19th century frontages constructed upon timber-framed structures, some of which are thought to date back to the 15th century (Fig 83).⁵³

5.2.5 Other Features

5.2.5.1 Other elements of pre-industrial Coventry manifest through striking but again geographically peripheral heritage assets.

5.2.5.2 Today it is relatively difficult to discern Coventry's manorial heritage and the great influence wielded over the town by its wealthiest landowners, with tangibility diminished by the loss or marginalisation of key buildings through successive phases of city centre redevelopment. The 16th century Cheylesmore Manor Gatehouse of Manor House Drive is a rare surviving feature, once forming the entrance to the palace.* The gatehouse incorporates elements of the 14th century palace, but its modern setting hinders the ability to appreciate its occupant's historical prominence within the medieval city.^{54,†}

5.2.5.3 Two gates of Coventry's medieval defences survive in the northeast of the assessment area at Cook Street Gate and Swanswell Gate. The gates are connected by the most substantial surviving (above-ground) section of the city wall which stands up to 3 metres in height (Fig 26).‡ Today these features are located within Lady Herbert's Garden, in the northeast of the assessment area. As well as for defence, the city walls were a crucial symbol of status in the medieval period, signifying the wealth of Coventry. Their survival is rare in the national context.⁵⁵

* Cheylesmore Manor was the only manor house located within Coventry's city wall, and the seat of the powerful Earls of Coventry. Built by the Earl of Arundel in 1237, the manor and its parkland passed to Queen Isabella (wife of Edward II), and later to her grandson Edward, the Black Prince.

† Like many of the centre's other medieval assets, the gatehouse has been marginalised by the 20th century re-planning of the townscape, relegating Manor House Drive to a secondary street and encapsulating the gatehouse by post-war development. The gatehouse has however been converted for use as the city's registry office, affording opportunities to appreciate its architectural and historical interest.

‡ The city wall is also encountered in other areas, including a section at Upper Well Street, and another along Gulson Road. Significant elements have also been identified through archaeological investigation across the city.

5.2.5.4

Also concealed from view are several highly significant medieval undercrofts and cellars. Most of those that have been rediscovered are associated with historical high-status buildings. St Mary's Guildhall sits above the grandest of the centre's known undercrofts, with other examples including the cellar of the lost Palace Yard at Earl Street, and the later-medieval stone-vaulted basement of 38-39 Bayley Lane.



Fig 26: 'Remnants of the medieval wall are found in localities across the centre, the largest section in Lady Herbert's Garden (top-left), and others including this example (bottom) adjacent Corporation Street. The Cook Street Gate (top-right) is one of only two surviving. Photographs by authors

5.3 Coventry's Industrial Era

NB. the "Industrial Era" as defined here encompasses the sustained development of Coventry's industries from the mid-18th century up till the Second World War. There is consequently a modicum chronological of overlap with the preceding section.

Background

- 5.3.1.1 The built legacies of Coventry's historic textile weaving, watch making, bicycle manufacturing, and automotive and aeronautical engineering industries illustrate Coventry's heritage as amongst the nation's most influential industrial cities, that helped shape the modern world through invention and innovation.
- 5.3.1.2 Overall survival is however relatively low in comparison to other historically industrialised centres, with targeted aerial bombing of factories and the clearance of swathes of the city centre in the inter-war and post-war years having significant impacts. The majority of the centre's major factories, works, and warehousing were demolished by the 1970s, with those encountered today only fragments of what was once a far more prevalent form of development. The city centre does however retain an interesting cross-section of its industrial past, including a small number of factories, workshops, and warehouses, which illustrate the evolution of Coventry's economy from light industries through to heavy engineering. The buildings are varied in form, testament to the confines of development within an historic city. Industrial prosperity is also reflected in buildings associated to an expanding middle class, as skilled workers found themselves in possession of increasing wealth, also resulting in increased commercial and residential development. Civic buildings survive in limited numbers.

Distribution

- 5.3.1.3 Unlike the centre's medieval and Modernist heritage, there are few identifiable focal points of industrialised townscape. Several individual streets retain some level of historical integrity, most commonly relating to commercial (e.g. High Street, Fig 31) or residential (e.g. Warwick Road) areas that serviced the city's growing skilled working classes and middle classes. Levels of preservation are also not proportionate across the centre, again influenced by both wartime bombing and post-war regeneration initiatives.* Like the centre's medieval heritage assets, Coventry's industrial legacies are often encountered today in quite marginal contexts, with many of the assets' modern settings at least partially concealing their historical functionality and significance within the city.†

* Loss has been particularly acute within the more central areas of the assessment area, especially in and around the post-war commercial and civic precincts. Preservation is improved elsewhere but still not particularly strong. For instance, northern and north-western areas of the centre designation for light industry by city planners have also been largely over-written by later redevelopment despite continuity in function.

† Again, the construction of the ring road has been particularly impactful, creating a significant barrier between surviving factories and working buildings, and the residential housing and suburbs which once sustained them.

5.3.2 **Industrial**

Infrastructure

- 5.3.2.1 The Coventry Canal Basin is the start/end of a 38-mile waterbody leading to the Fradley Junction of Lichfield, via connections with the both the Ashby and the Birmingham and Fazeley Canals. Built in 1769 it formed the major conduit for goods and materials flowing through Coventry's during its early industrialisation. It had additional status as a key stopping point along a once major route for good travelling between Birmingham and London.
- 5.3.2.2 The basin holds high levels of historical associative value through its connections to James Brindley, the famed canal engineer, who was commissioned to oversee its construction.⁵⁶ The complex retains most of its historic structures, including the wharfs, the weighbridge and weighbridge office (built in c.1810), two 18th century brick-built coal vaults, a mid-19th century Canal House, and an extensive row of 18th through early-20th century canal warehouses (Fig 27).⁵⁷ These heritage assets are joined by later-20th century developments, constructed with a marina-inspired aesthetic.
- 5.3.2.3 Today the gentrified basin and canal provide opportunity to appreciate the vital role the construction of the waterway played as a catalyst for Coventry's industrial development, although the historical functional relationship with the city centre has been somewhat concealed by their separation by the post-war development of a ring road.



Fig 27: Coventry Canal Basin, with the Grand Union wharf and warehouses. Photographs by authors

Light Industry

- 5.3.2.4 Coventry's industrial development started with the lighter industries of fine-textile weaving (particularly ribbon and silk manufacture) and small-scale engineering (particularly watch-making, later evolving towards gear, bicycle, and engine-component manufacturing). Whilst more modest in scale, these buildings housed the companies of some of both the region's and the nation's most influential early engineers, the inventions of which continue to influence aspects of global manufacturing to this day. This modest scale of industry is reflected in the surviving architecture. Small hybrid buildings were the most common form of development, with workshops on upper-storeys (in top-shops or middle-shops) and associated accommodation below (Fig 7).⁵⁸ The city centre (and its environs) feature rare surviving examples of such buildings.
- 5.3.2.5 Legacies of the watch-making industry are located in proximity to one-another in the east of the assessment area. 13-29 Lower Holyhead Road (1837, Fig 28) have the highest level of integrity*, with their combined industrial and residential functions illustrated by large second-storey top-shop windows located above two-floors of terrace housing.⁵⁹ 34-44 Hill Street are earlier examples, built at some point between 1767 and 1799, with their top-shops at the upper-floor of two storeys.⁶⁰ The city's other surviving watch-making factory at 26-28 Spon Street (originally built in 1750) is more concealed. The polite façade illustrates the building's original function as a house of a prominent local watch-making family but conceals surviving elements of large workshops that were constructed to the rear following its conversion during the later-19th century.⁶¹
- 5.3.2.6 The historical significance of the textile industry is represented by Drapers Hall, Bayley Lane. The neo-classical structure encountered today dates to 1832 (design by Rickman & Hutchinson), although its asymmetrical façade is the result of modification in both 1864 and 1890.⁶² The historic headquarters of the Drapers' Company, who date back to the medieval guilds, the building illustrates the sustained contribution of textile manufacturing towards the city's economic prosperity, from the medieval wool merchants and "Coventry blue" dyed cloth, through to the ribbon weavers of the 18th and 19th centuries. Whilst there are no surviving ribbon-making top-shops within the centre, a single purpose-built factory and associated manager's house are found along New Buildings, off Trinity Street, both of which were built in 1849 (Fig 29).[†] The factory was relatively short-lived (closed by the late 1850s following the industry's decline), and has had a series of uses, becoming a school, later a drill hall, and now a restaurant and apartments.⁶³ The façades retain relatively good levels of historical integrity, featuring a combination of restored and replica industrial fenestration across three storeys. Whilst the factory's setting is much altered, its modern accessibility (granted by its modern service and residential functions), proximity to community assets (the Priory Visitor Centre and Gardens), and siting immediately adjacent to a recently created public thoroughfare (which bisects the building's historical yard), has enhanced the ability to appreciate its historical and architectural interest.

* Partially extant, with half of the original terrace demolished to enable construction of the ring road.

† The factory illustrates the mid-19th century shift from home-production of silk and ribbon to factory-production, enabled through the invention of steam-powered looms. (McGrory 2017, 68)



Fig 28: A small but notable collection of the mixed use 'top-shops' that were once common in the centre survive today such as 13-29 Lower Holyhead Road. Photograph by authors



Fig 29: Former ribbon factory at 1-6 New Buildings. Photograph by authors



Fig 30: 90-94 Gosford Street (William Morris Building). Photograph by authors

Heavy Industry

- 5.3.2.7 Despite their later arrival, buildings constructed for centre's heavier industries have not fared well. Only two survive within the assessment area, thus representing very rare illustration of the booming automotive-engineering sector that both geographically and economically dominated swathes of the city centre in the 19th and early 20th century.
- 5.3.2.8 90-94 Gosford Street* (built in 1917-1923, known as the William Morris Building, Fig 30) is the five- (historically four-) storey northern wing of a once more extensive facility that produced first machine-guns and later car engines.⁶⁴ The building remains prominently located immediately adjacent Gosford Street and at a modern gateway to and from the city centre, passing under the ring road. Whilst the building's surroundings have been transformed by 20th redevelopment, it continues to make a positive contribution within the townscape, bringing an industrial aesthetic to an area now characterised by high levels of architectural eclecticism.
- 5.3.2.9 In the south of the assessment area is an 1890-built works designed by Samuel Gorton, now converted to a hotel. Located on Mile Lane, the building started life as the Quinton Bicycle factory, later adapted in 1905 for the assembly of Swift motorcars,

* The building is today occupied by the University and is known as the 'William Morris Building', named after the founder of Morris Engines Ltd., mass producers of engines and gearboxes.

and later again for a printing works.⁶⁵ Only the office blocks remain, their red brick Italianate-style facades facing Mile Lane junction (Fig 84). The works were once part of an extensive area of factories producing components for Coventry's booming automotive industry, with dedicated workshops and assembly lines for engines, gears, pressed panels and valves. Today, only this building and a former school to the south survive of the complex, with all other factories cleared for 20th century redevelopment.

5.3.3 **Commercial**

5.3.3.1 The growth and prosperity of the city's middle-classes (formed of skilled workers, entrepreneurs, and new service professionals) brought new demands for services, which in turn brought about new forms of development. These included financial services (especially banks, and dedicated insurance/assurance offices), retail (including shopping parades and department stores) and various forms of entertainment (especially cinemas and theatres). These buildings held an increasingly significant role within many town and city centres from the 19th century onwards, with Coventry no exception. Many of these buildings have a distinctive, local heritage significance, exemplifying the growing wealth of the city during its industrial renaissance.

Financial Services

5.3.3.2 The growth of a local banking sector is evident through a number of grand custom-built premises, that today stand as testament to the city's industrial prosperity. These often demark themselves in the townscape through their polite classical form and materiality (the quality of some of which is recognised through national designation). High Street is the focal point, a rare pocket of industrial-era integrity, featuring multiple high-status late 19th and early 20th century assets.*

5.3.3.3 Most notable are the National Westminster Bank of 24-25 Broadgate (built in 1929-30, design by Palmer and Holden), its neighbour the Lloyds Bank of 30 High Street (built in 1932, design by Buckland & Haywood), and the former Midlands Bank at No. 18 High Street (built in 1896, design by Frank Barlow Osborn) (Fig 31).⁶⁶ The National Westminster features grand colonnaded porticos and ornate stainless-steel doors facing both Broadgate and Hertford Street[†]. The neighbouring Lloyds Bank challenges the National Westminster for prominence through use of Portland stone, eye-catching arched openings, and a tympanum. A former London Midlands Bank (built in 1897 with design by F.B. Osborn, and now the Earl of Mercia public house) sweeps gracefully around its corner plot, prominently facing the historic junction of Earl Street, High Street, and Little Park Street. It embellishes the townscape through its extensive use of Staffordshire stone decoration. Other ornate banking buildings include the classical Yorkshire Bank at Nos. 7-11 High Street (built in 1919-23 by Barclays Bank, design by Peacock, Bewlay & Cooke), No. 22 High Street, and No. 29 High Street.⁶⁷

* The survival of much of High Street's historical buildings is somewhat fortuitous, having narrowly escaped demolition to enable the widening of the road during the 20th century re-planning of the city centre.

† The National Westminster was once one of Broadgate's most prominent buildings but has been somewhat relegated in the local architectural hierarchy with the post-war redevelopment of Upper Precinct.



Fig 31: Lloyds Bank at 30 High Street (top left); the National Westminster Bank at 24-25 Broadgate (top right); View along the northern side of High Street from its western end. Historic England (DPI 64616-18)

Retail

- 5.3.3.4 The High Street banks are interspersed by the centre's only remaining higher-status late-19th and early-20th century retail premises. Known as 'Maycock's Corner', 16-17 High Street is a grand four storey former furniture store built between 1898 and 1909. The building loosely mirrors the old Midland Bank (opposite), its red brick, stone dressings and window surrounds set decoratively within its principal elevations, which curves around the junction of High Street and Hay Lane.⁶⁸ Nos. 12-15 High Street complete High Street's collection of historic commercial architecture, with Nos. 14 and 15 characteristic of the prevailing Italianate styles of shopping terraces and parades encountered in many prospering town centres towards in the latter decades of the 19th century.⁶⁹ Beyond High Street there are few remaining commercial buildings of the industrial era. The Burges features an interesting row, including a former furniture manufacturer and retailer at No. 3 (built in 1913), and two steel-framed stores constituting Nos. 5-13. Opposite, Nos. 18-30 are timber-framed structures re-fronted for commercial use in the 18th and 19th centuries, together creating another small a pocket of industrial-era integrity within the townscape.

Recreation

- 5.3.3.5 A growing middle class and increasingly prosperous skilled working class brought about increased demand for, and provision of recreational, leisure and cultural facilities including cinemas, theatres, public baths and dance halls. The assessment area contains three such surviving buildings. Two now form the Ellen Terry building (Fig 32), located side-by-side at the corner of Jordan Well and Whitefriars Street. The stone corner building is the surviving frontage of the former Coliseum theatre, dance hall and café (built in 1921-3).⁷⁰ Its neighbour is the former Gaumont Picture Palace and Café (later the Odeon, built in 1928-30, designed by M. H. Watkins of Bristol), featuring a distinctively Art Deco façade consisting of three large glazed bays separated by pilasters with painted stylized Egyptian capitals.⁷¹ The two buildings form a striking pair, their inter-war aesthetic making a positive contribution an area defined by a high level of architectural eclecticism. The old cinema at 50 Primrose Hill completes the set, an early example of a custom-built picture theatre built between 1912 and 1923.
- 5.3.3.6 Public houses were another focal point for the industrial community. Two surviving examples of the once-prevalent workers' pubs are the 'Town Wall Tavern' of 25-26 Bond Street and 'The Admiral Codrington' of 1 St. Columba's Close (Fig 32). The former was built (c.1823) to service workers of the mills and workshops located in the northwest of the city centre. Whilst it remains in use as a public house, its modern context is significantly altered, with industries, housing and even roads that it once serviced over-written by post-war redevelopment. The latter retains its historical relationship with the canal basin and has been converted to apartments. Early-20th century public houses are more ornate, constructed with the mock-Tudor aesthetic so characteristic of the inter-war period. The 'Flying Standard' (also previously 'The Priory Gate', Fig 32) of 2-10 Trinity Street is arguably best known. The building is sited prominently at the junction of Priory Street and Ironmonger Row and is of a steel-frame construction dressed in half-timbered 'Tudorbethan' cladding to match the

adjacent Lych Gate Cottages.^{72,*} The 1928-1931 'Tudor Rose' (formerly the 'Tally Ho' and before the 'Wine Lodge', design by Hattell & Wortley) is another, again prominently sited at a junction - the corner building of The Burges and Hales Street.⁷³ Other notable examples within the assessment area include 'The Stag' of Bishops Street (1920s), 'The Phoenix' (formerly the 'Sir Colin Cambell') of Gosford Street, and a now public house of Primrose Hill Street.



Fig 32: Ellen Terry Building, Jordan Well (top left); The Admiral Codrington, St Columba's Close (top right); The Flying Standard (bottom). Photographs by authors



Fig 33: St Michael's House, 11 Priory Row (top); 6-8 Priory Row (bottom left); Kirby House, 16 Little Park Street (bottom right). Photographs by authors

5.3.4 Residential

5.3.4.1 A collection of 18th through early 20th century houses are located within the assessment area. Overall, there have been high levels of loss of residential properties, with the focus of post-war city planners on providing new commercial and civic buildings. Several streets survived the large-scale clearances of townscape, being located away from the major zones of redevelopment. Today these provide localised snapshots into the domestic life of industrial Coventry, with surviving examples spanning the spectrum of working to wealthy societal classes.

High-Status Housing

- 5.3.4.2 The centre features a small selection of high-status houses associated with some of Coventry's most successful industrialists, many of which illustrate the wealth and status of the town's 18th century textile magnates.
- 5.3.4.3 Three houses are notably similar in form, distinctively Georgian in their aesthetic (brick built, with three-storeys of five symmetrical bays divided by colonnaded pilasters, and with stucco detailing) and with two of the three distinguished through their set-back behind ornate gates and railings (Fig 33).^{*} Two are located along Little Park Street. No.7 is an early to mid-18th century property built by or for Thomas Bird, a prominent local silk merchant. It features Corinthian pilasters and fluted capitals.⁷⁴ Kirby House (No.16) was built in the early decades of the 18th century, probably by Francis Smith, and remodelled around 1780 with Ionic pilasters.⁷⁵ The third is St Michael's House at 11 Priory Row, perhaps the grandest, its status reflected through its ornate façade (remodelled 1820-1830) featuring fluted Ionic columns, and through its greater set-back than its neighbours. Although the façade is preserved, the house to the rear was entirely rebuilt from 1953 having been destroyed in the Blitz (design by A.H. Gardner & Partners).⁷⁶ Survival of such houses is relatively rare for a city of Coventry's size, adding to their interest.
- 5.3.4.4 Priory Row features other examples of high-status housing, notable being No. 7 (Pelham Lee House, c 1800) through to No.11. These buildings, which span the mid-18th through early 19th century, are each built of red brick and are of three storeys, and feature a range ornate decoration including rusticated pilasters, open pediments on console brackets and fanlights, reflecting their status (and that of Priory Row) within the historic settlement.⁷⁷

Middle-Class Housing

- 5.3.4.5 Middle class housing is well represented, with surviving examples highly localised around Greyfriars Green and its adjacent roads.[†] Along the north-western side of the green, Nos. 6 through 31 Warwick Row include excellent examples of late 18th and early 19th century terraced houses[‡], with shared characteristics including their three-storey brick-built forms, stucco and/or ashlar detailing, and occasional use of render. The north-eastern side of the green is framed by the curving facades of The Quadrant, a mid-19th century row of Italianate three-storeyed stuccoed terraces.⁷⁸ Nos. 25 and 29 Warwick Road are the last of what were once nineteen Victorian villas, exemplars of developments cropping up across the country to take advantage of plots in proximity to newly constructed railway stations. Later 19th and early 20th century middle class housing is also located along Queen Victoria Road (Nos. 2-8; Nos. 5-13), Starley Road (Nos. 1-46), Friars Road (Nos. 2-32), St. Patrick's Road (Nos. 33-35), Lower Holyhead Road (Nos. 18-32), and Norton House of White Street.

* A local legend suggests these properties were the result of three brothers competing to build the best house.

† The character and history of the green is discussed in section 6.2.2.

‡ The majority have been converted to commercial premises, with shopfronts added at the ground floor.



Fig 34: 9-17 Warwick Row (top); Norton House, White Street (bottom left); The Quadrant, Warwick Road (bottom right). Photographs by authors

Working-Class Housing

5.3.4.6

Most of the centre's working-class housing has been lost, cleared to enable development of the vast commercial and civic precincts in the post-war years. Of greatest historical interest are Lady Herbert's Homes, and Nos. 1-19 Chantry Place, constructed in the 1930s as almshouses and terraced housing respectively. Both are attributed to prominent local industrialist Sir Albert Herbert, constructed as an act of philanthropy and as part of the commemorative Lady Herbert's Garden.⁷⁹ Elsewhere, only small pockets of working-class housing remain, including Nos. 8-44 Short Street,



Fig 35: The Council House, Earl Street. Historic England (DPI 72629)

Nos. 44-62 White Friars Street *, and 115-117 Gosford Street. The mixed-use top-shops would have also provided significant housing capacity within the centre, as discussed in the Light Industry sub-section.

5.3.5 **Civic and Ecclesiastical**

5.3.5.1 Relatively few civic buildings were constructed within Coventry during the Georgian, Victorian or Edwardian eras comparative to other successful industrial towns. Much of what was built does however survive, with a number remaining focal points of local community and governance.

5.3.5.2 The history of local governance is most clearly represented by two buildings located at Hill Top. Old County Hall and County Court combine as the centre's oldest surviving civic building, marking the south-western corner of the Cathedral Precinct at the junction of Cuckoo Lane with Bayley Lane. The 1784 building (designed by Samuel Eglinton) has two contrasting facades, with the red-brick and stone-dressed former prison governor's house facing Bayley Lane, and an ashlar neo-classical frontage facing Cuckoo Lane.⁸⁰ The local administration moved to the Council House following its completion in 1920 (design by Edward Garrett and H.W. Simister of Birmingham). The Council House (Fig 35) is a red sandstone Elizabethan-styled building with a richly decorated and symmetrical fifteen-bay frontage facing Earl Street. It is adorned with features including oriel windows, gables, heraldic devices, statuary, a central belfry, and

* At time of writing 44-62 White Friars Street was scheduled for demolition.



Fig 36: The Old Fire Station, Hales Street. Photograph by authors

a tower positioned asymmetrically at the southeast corner.⁸¹ The Council House has a clear prominence within the townscape, fronting an area of open space at the junction of Earl Street and Little Park Street, and terminating views when travelling northwards along the latter (Fig 35).*

5.3.5.3

19th and early-20th century civic services are encountered through three sites. The Old Fire Station on Hales Street (Fig 36) is an attractive 1902 two-storey structure which today encloses the eastern side of Millennium Place. It was designed by city engineer W.E. Swindlehurst in a Revival-style, with features including a central Dutch gable (featuring a fine example of the city's elephant and castle crest), oriel window, striped stone dressing and broken pediments.⁸² The stone arches of its former engine sheds span the ground floor and continue to illustrate the historical functionality of the building (several of these have been converted to cafes and restaurants). In the northeast of the assessment area, beyond the ring road and west of Stoney Stanton Road, are two surviving buildings of the former Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital. The hospital was first constructed in 1864 in response to the city's rapidly growing population, with the surviving buildings part of later extensions dating to the early 20th century. Surviving are the nurses' home and the octagonal outpatient's clinics, built between 1907-1909, with designs by Alfred Hessel Tiltman and Herbert William Chattaway respectively. Both buildings display a good quality in their architectural detailing, and relatively high levels of historical integrity despite a prolonged and ongoing period of vacancy.⁸³

* This landmark status is the product of post-war reengineering of the townscape, discussed in section 8.1.2.

- 5.3.5.4 Coventry's evolving demographics are reflected in a modicum of ecclesiastical development, responding to an expanding population, and catering for a diversifying congregation. The Church of England Church of St Mark is located opposite the former hospital at the corner of Stoney Stanton Road and Bird Street. Its Gothic Revival-style, built of rock-faced sandstone with ashlar dressings, was designed by Paull and Robinson and completed in 1869.^{84*}
- 5.3.5.5 Only two of the centre's non-conformist centres survive, with most lost to bomb-damage or later demolition. The elaborate Renaissance-styled United Reformed Church (1889-1891, by G and I Steane of Coventry), and the 1931 Methodist Central Hall are both located at Greyfriars Green, off Warwick Row and Warwick Lane respectively.
- 5.3.5.6 Two Industrial Era schools survive in the assessment area: The Blue Coat School of Priory Row (built in 1856, Fig 38), and the (former) Cheylesmore Council School of Mile Lane (built in 1911, Fig 37). Although the schools' architecture differs significantly, they share a common characteristic, with both designed using styles and materials that actively responded to the environments in which they were built. For the Blue Coat School, local architect James Murray embraced historicism through a Gothic Revival chateau-styled design. His extensive use of rock-faced and rusticated masonry seeking to mirror the medieval character that pervades Hill Top.⁸⁵ The Cheylesmore Council School mirrored its industrial surroundings, featuring the red-brick, stone dressing and large windows. Today the Blue Coat School's historical setting has been broadly preserved (and in turn the ability to appreciate its local design influences), however the demolition of the majority of the Cheylesmore factories has left the old Council School's historical relationship with the city's industrial workforce harder to interpret.

* St Mark's also holds more contemporary heritage interest, containing a high-quality mural by Hans Feibusch, a nationally significant mural artist of the mid 20th century.



Fig 38: The old Blue Coat School, Hill Top. Wikimedia



Fig 37: Cheylesmore Council School, Mile Lane. Photograph by authors

5.4 Post-War Era

NB. A comprehensive study of Coventry's post-war redevelopment has been undertaken by Jeremy and Caroline Gould. The research has been collated into two publications which chronicle the history and architecture of the era.

*The 2009 report 'Coventry Planned: The Architecture of the Plan for Coventry 1940-1978' * provides a detailed account of the evolution of the city plans, analysis and descriptions of the surviving townscape, and a detailed chronology of individual buildings and features (including their patrons and architects) based on extensive archival research.*

The research has been summarised within a 2016 book, commissioned by Historic England, titled 'Coventry: The making of a modern city 1939-73', which again provides a fully illustrated account and analysis of the post-war townscape.†

These publications should be viewed as the current authority on the post-war townscape. With that in mind, and to avoid repetition, this section provides a non-exhaustive summary, with some additional insights drawn from further research around identified gaps in knowledge.

Endnotes are used to highlight sources used in addition to Gould & Gould 2009 and 2016.

Background

5.4.1.1 The extensive and often comprehensive redevelopment of Coventry city centre following the Second World War has created a somewhat idiosyncratic assemblage of architecture. The diversity stems from the four-decade long process of the urban renewal, with fashions for architectural styles and materials evolving in line with the changing philosophies of successive generations of planners and architects. Buildings are often archetypes of their respective phase of the centre's regeneration, from the modest Scandinavian forms characteristic of Donald Gibson's stewardship (1939-1955), through to the unapologetic Modernism of Arthur Ling (1955-1964) and Terence Gregory (1964-1973). As a group, the city's post-war architecture provides a chronology of the centre's radical change, illustrating the vigorous and sustained ambitions for urban improvement by successive councils across the latter half of the 20th century.

5.4.1.2 Throughout the architectural eclecticism however, shines a continuity in the underlying design principles of the city's post-war masterplan. Underpinning four decades of redevelopment (and the inevitable turn-over of personnel and local stakeholders) are the core tenets laid down in the 1940s, with particular emphasis on a shared vision for the creation of a well-designed, human-orientated environment that, above all else, enables a safe, spacious and pedestrian-friendly centre in which to thrive.

* Available on request from the Coventry Historic Environment Record.

† The publication has been made freely available online at:

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/coventry-making-of-modern-city-1939-73/coventry-making-of-modern-city-1939-73.pdf/>

5.4.1.3 Where successful, the translation of these principles into the built form is central to the significance of the post-war townscape. Its architecture represents a clarity and consistency in the design and execution of a planned urban environment, arguably seen in few of Coventry's contemporaries. Whilst the impacts of cumulative alterations and, in places, low levels of upkeep serve to conceal the city's post-war heritage interest, the commercial and civic precincts retain an exceptional and nationally significant collection of buildings and remain defining characteristics of Coventry's built environment.

Distribution

5.4.1.4 A strict adherence to a system of functional zoning by Coventry's post-war planners remains the defining characteristic of the distribution of its Modernist heritage assets. This is particularly evident in respect of commercial and civic architecture, which both occupy clearly defined localities, developed as two precincts dedicated to their respective roles. The commercial precinct occupies the core of the city centre, loosely defined by Corporation Street in the west and north, and Greyfriars Green to the south. The civic precinct* dominates the eastern third of the assessment area and is largely defined by the 'Whitefriars' and 'St Johns' sections of the ring road. The commercial and civic precincts do not flow seamlessly from one to the other, nor is there a hard boundary. Instead they are divided by the Hill Top area and High Street, with both being surviving elements of the pre-war Coventry townscape. This spatial arrangement creates an interesting juxtaposition between the old and the (relatively) new when traversing laterally across the city centre between the two precincts. Beyond the precinct there are a small number of pockets of post-war townscape, including Corporation Street and around the railway station.

5.4.1.5 The stark delineation of the Modernist townscape is also experienced at a broader scale, with the ring road encapsulating both the civic and commercial precincts within a clearly defined city centre area. Beyond the ring road there are other, more localised, focal points of Modernism, including a number of housing estates (e.g. the Spon End Estate and Hillfield Estate) which, whilst beyond the assessment area this of research, are nonetheless of significance towards appreciating the plan as a whole.†

* The civic precinct is now in effect the educational precinct, with the University occupying and/or owning the large majority of buildings, including many of those originally constructed for civic functions.

† Gould & Gould 2016 also features dedicated sections on the post-war housing estates and suburbs of Coventry.

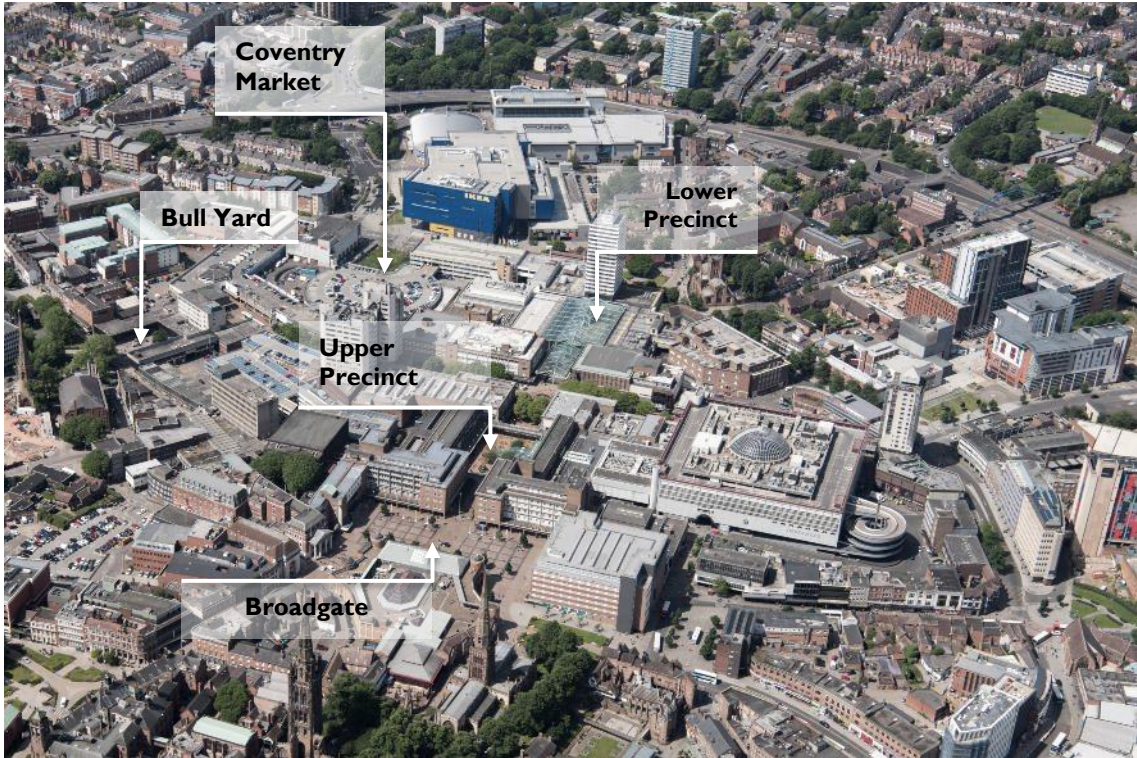


Fig 39: Aerial view looking across Coventry's post-war commercial precincts from the southeast. Historic England (33181_027)



Fig 40: The Upper Precinct, looking east from the southwest corner prior to 2018-19 redevelopment. Historic England (DPI64624)

5.4.2 Commercial

Broadgate, Upper Precinct, and Lower Precinct *

- 5.4.2.1 The architecture of Broadgate and the Upper Precinct display a consistency in form and materials. An architectural vocabulary laid out by Gibson is expressed within the precinct's other buildings, creating a coherent composition which, with its symmetrical alignments and sense of enclosure, create a markedly defined sense of place. The scale of buildings is consistent, most often of four to five storeys. The pedestrian-friendly philosophies of the precinct's planners manifest through provision of covered space, formed by the set-back of the ground-floor frontages under walkways or offices above (supported by colonnades), or by cantilevered canopies projecting from facades.[†] Styles and materials are influenced by Scandinavian Modernism, with a functionalistic aesthetic achieved through moderation of decoration and embellishment.[‡] Buildings are formed of reinforced-concrete or steel framing[§], clad with red Blockley City mix brick, and detailed in stone (including Blue Hornton, Clipsham, and Travertine) and a distinctive green Westmorland slate. Fenestration is a defining characteristic of buildings with three principal forms: square 'hole-in-the-wall' windows framed in thin metal casements; bands of spandrel windows with Travertine panels; and grand windows located on the western corner-blocks that span two-stories, divided by stone-clad mullions. The buildings' colonnaded arcades are most often clad with Hornton Stone, whilst the projecting canopies again feature the distinctive Westmorland slate. The quality of the material form is an important element of the buildings' architectural interest, having been achieved despite the austerity of the 1940s and 1950s.
- 5.4.2.2 Whilst sharing an architectural 'DNA', the buildings of Broadgate and the Upper Precinct show sufficient variety to readily differentiate one commercial unit from the next (Fig 41). Broadgate House (1948-1953, design by Donald Gibson) was the first building constructed within the precinct and established an architectural vocabulary, featuring the characteristic forms and materials described in the previous paragraph. The former Hotel Leofric (1953-1955, design by W.S. Hattrell & Partners) is the opposing corner-block to Broadgate House, defining the passage between Broadgate and the precinct's square. The old hotel mirrors much of the scale and form of its neighbour but alters the arrangement of fenestration to include a Travertine infill, reflecting the two buildings' different functions (accommodation and offices respectively). The former Owen Department Store (1951-1954, design by Hellberg & Harris - now a Primark store) was developed just prior to Hotel Leofric and is perhaps the clearest departure from the precinct's house style – featuring an expansive glazed curtain wall (now simplified from the original).

* For a description of the public realm and the historic spaces within the precincts see sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.5.

† At time of writing, the demolition of the canopies has received planning permission and listed building consent but development has not commenced (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/2767 & LB/2018/2494).

‡ While not architecturally extravagant, room was left for creative expression through public artwork adorning these buildings, as discussed in Section 7.

§ The use of reinforced-concrete framing reflecting the nationwide steel shortages experienced in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War.



Fig 41: The distinctive forms and materiality of the 'Broadgate House' vocabulary. Clockwise from top: Broadgate House; Detail of the Godiva Clocktower and Broadgate House; Marks and Spencer corner block; Fenestration detail of Upper Precinct Link Blocks; Pedestrian canopy, corner of Smithford Way; Former British Home Stores corner block; Former Leofric Hotel. Historic England (DPI 64-601/603/605/625/636/617/621)

- 5.4.2.3 The North and South Link Blocks (1954-1956, design by Gordon Hammond and Paul Beney, City Architects Dept.) bound the precinct's square. They are designed as two symmetrical units with ten bays of metal-framed casement windows and Travertine Panels divided by Westmorland slate mullions which extend down to the upper level of two stacked shopfronts. The ground-floor shopfronts of the Link Blocks are subdivided by Horton stone pilasters, with the projecting first-storey walkway doubling as a pedestrian canopy. Three of the near-symmetrical corner-blocks that mark the gateways between the Upper and Lower Precincts, Market Way and Smithford Way also followed the vocabulary of Gibson's early work and have been included here accordingly. Again, however, they have their own idiosyncrasies which add to the area's architectural interest. The Marks and Spencer (1953-1955, designed by Norman Jones Sons & Rigby), former British Home Stores (now Carphone Warehouse, 1951-1955, design by George Coles), and former Woolworths (now Boots, 1952-1954, design by Harold Winbourne) vary through their fenestration, each using a combination of a grand two-storey spanning aperture with ancillary hole-in-the-wall windows, but laid out within bespoke arrangements and materiality.
- 5.4.2.4 The Lower Precinct (1955-1960, City Architects Department with North & Partners) shares many characteristics with its predecessor, with a central plaza defined by symmetrical rows of dual-levelled shops again accessed via pedestrian ramps (albeit of a different arrangement to the Upper Precinct). The upper levels are also set back to create means of access to the shopfronts above, and concurrently to create covered walkways below. The architects of the Lower Precinct have however rejected the materials of the Upper Precinct, introducing a dark Serpentino marble and anodized aluminium, whilst individual units are delineated by shallow pitched gables.⁸⁶ The Lower Precinct contains the circular *Lady Godiva Café* (design by Bill Pearson of the City Architects Department⁸⁷) located prominently at the centre of its plaza, and reflecting Arthur Ling's ambition to create points of interest within the new townscape. The character of the space today has been much altered by the 2002 introduction of a glass and steel covered roof (by Aukett Associates).⁸⁸
- 5.4.2.5 Adjoining the Lower Precinct are two buildings of further interest, both illustrating the gradual evolution in the underling design-philosophies of the City Architect Department as it transitioned between Gibson's and Ling's leadership. At the Lower Precinct's north-eastern extent is the former Locarno Ballroom (City Architects Department with Kett & Neve, 1958-1960; now the Central Library), which completes the four corner-blocks defining the precincts' central gateways. Whilst it borrows its broad form from its predecessors, it strikes out in new directions through bespoke fenestration, including glass mosaic decoration.* The old Locarno is therefore something of a hybrid between Gibson and Ling's approach to form and materials, and also highlights attempts to enliven the centre in the evenings, after retail traders had closed. At the western extent of the Lower Precinct is Mercia House (built in 1962-1967, design by City Architect Department with North and Partners), which was originally a commercial and residential mixed-use tower block, again designed to bring greater vibrancy to the centre beyond retail trading hours.

* The Locarno also introduced a striking glass stair entrance at the centre of Smithford Way, which has been demolished.

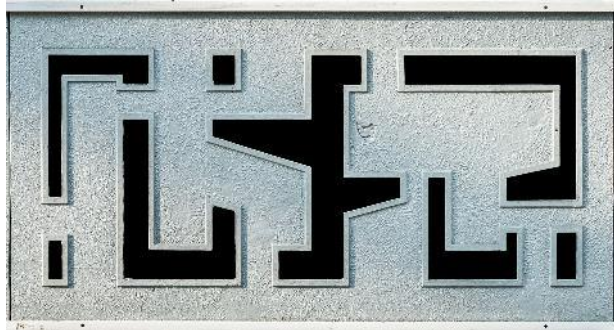


Fig 42: Clockwise from top: The Lower Precinct; Detail of the Central Library (formerly the Locarno dancehall); Modernist forms within second-level barriers within the Lower Precinct; Hillman House. Historic England (DPI64-628/634/637)

5.4.2.6 Unlike the Locorno, Mercia House wholly embraces Modernist forms and materials, and stands out as a landmark building which sits prominently, terminating views along the precincts' east/west axes. It would be joined by two further towers along the precinct's north/south axes (Hillman House and Coventry Point), discussed in the following section. The towers are clear deviations from the more modest architectural principles laid down by Gibson and reflect the willingness of successive generations of Coventry's planners to adapt the local plan to match their own ambitions, embrace new zeitgeists into planning principle, and apply new materials and technologies as they emerged.

Market Way and Smithford Way

5.4.2.7 The expansion of the centre's commercial precinct along and adjacent to both Market Way and Smithford Way created a north/south axis to bisect the east/west alignment of the Upper and Lower Precincts. Moving along the routes, the centre's commercial architecture evolves in intriguing directions, increasing in the diversity of form and material construction, illustrating the evolving design philosophies of those overseeing the city's continued redevelopment.

5.4.2.8 Travelling along Market Way, away from the precincts, Coventry Point (built under oversight of Terrance Gregory in 1969-1975, design by John Madin Design Group), is the southern-most of the precinct's three tower-blocks. Its towers are unashamedly Brutalist and, of all buildings built in the latter-half of the 20th century, it is perhaps the clearest rejection of the understated, human-scale townscapes originally advocated by Gibson. Beyond Coventry Point, Market Way is lined by more modest rows of two-storey shops (1958-1960, City Architects Department), which again feature colonnaded arcades and canopies to shelter pedestrians.⁸⁹ Market Way leads on to Shelton Square, a planned plaza enclosed by post-war buildings, most prominent being the six-storey office building clad in white Portland stone and supported on six slender double-height mosaic-clad columns (1958-1960, by City Architects Department with Ardin & Brooks), bringing further variety to the local material pallet. Beyond Shelton Square, the precinct connects to Queen Victoria Road through the City Arcade (City Architects Department, 1960-1962, Fig 43). The arcade begins with an open hexagonal space with light cascading down through a large glazed roof, before narrowing along rows of offset bay-windowed shops, below a cross-axial barrel vaulted roof.⁹⁰ Immediately west of Market Way and north of the City Arcade is the Coventry Retail Market (1957, design by Douglas Beaton, Ralph Iredale and Ian Crawford of the City Architect Department, Fig 44). The market is of interest as one of the country's earliest surviving examples of a post-war market building, its circular design (84 metres in diameter) a Modernist translation of a more traditional market form. The buildings enclose concentric rings of timber market-table style stalls under a roof supported by distinctive V-shaped concrete columns.⁹¹



Fig 44: Coventry Market. Historic England (DP059596)



Fig 43: Coventry Arcade. Historic England (DPI64656)

- 5.4.2.9 Many of the buildings found along, and adjacent to, Market Way are designed with a network of integrated roof-top carparks, including the City Market, the City Arcade, both sides of Market Way, and the custom-built Barracks Car Park. Whilst perhaps not particularly inspiring on first impression, these spaces do hold a degree of historical and architectural interest, representing early innovations in practices of planning centres as a response to a period of rapid and sustained increase in private car ownership.* Their design would go on to be of influence in the development of a number of New Town centres in the 1960s through 1970s.
- 5.4.2.10 Smithford Way offers fewer features of architectural or historical interest once one has moved beyond the corner-blocks of the Upper and Lower Precinct.† Most prominent is Hillman House (built in 1958-1965, design by the City Architect Department with Arthur Swift and Partners, Fig 42), one of the three Modernist towers built under Arthur Ling to establish terminating views along the precinct's axes. A row of shops (built 1954) follows the aesthetic of the Upper Precinct, with set-back ground-floor shops fronting a covered walking formed of a projecting upper-storey supported by tapering stone columns. The eastern side of Smithford Way is today dominated by the West Orchards shopping centre (1986-1991, design by John Clark Associates).

Corporation Street

- 5.4.2.11 Corporation Street was laid out between 1929-1931 as part of Ernest Ford's (the City Engineer) attempts to improve local traffic congestion (Fig 10). The street had not fully developed by the outbreak of war, leaving a number of undeveloped plots which, alongside the clearance of adjacent bomb-damaged areas, provided additional opportunities for development at the fringe of the commercial zone. The commercial architecture of Corporation Street reflects the characteristics of Broadgate and the Upper Precinct, with their private-sector architects again willing to follow the vocabulary laid down by Gibson. Most notable are the Co-Operative building (1954-1956, design by C.S. Hay, Fig 45) and the Coventry Evening Telegraph (CET) Offices (1956-1960, design by L.A. Culliford & Partners, Fig 46). The Co-Operative features the Broadgate House -style brickwork, hole-in-the-wall square windows on secondary elevations and colonnaded arcade supporting a set-back ground-floor. Its grand projecting window of the principal elevation (spanning nine of eleven bays) is however more closely related to those of the corner-blocks sited between the Upper and Lower Precinct. Similarly, the design of the CET Offices adopts the Scandinavian-Modernist form, with Westmorland slate and Travertine detailing.

* The increased demand to accommodate personal vehicles was felt acutely within Coventry, where the relatively young and prosperous population were especially inclined towards private car ownership, and away from public transportation.

† The demolition of the Locarno Ballroom's original glass-framed entrance, and relocation of public artwork from the public realm (discussed in the respective section) have removed key original design features.



Fig 45: Co-operative Building, Corporation Street prior to 2018 redevelopment. Historic England (DPI 72631)



Fig 46: Coventry Telegraph Building, Corporation Street. Historic England (DPI 64672)



Fig 47: Hertford Street, looking west towards the Bull Yard. Historic England (DPI 64646)

Hertford Street and the Bull Yard

- 5.4.2.12 The Bull Yard (1963-1965, design by Brian Berrett and Rex Shell of the City Architects Department, Fig 61) links Hertford Street to Shelton Square. The three-sided plaza is enclosed by a two-storey structure featuring the city's characteristic arrangement of ground-floor shops below slightly a projected first floor of offices. This creates yet another iteration of the centre's characteristic covered pedestrian walkways. The upper storey has a distinct aesthetic, faced with bronze-clad projecting mullions interspersed by windows and black enamelled-steel sheets.⁹² The materials and their arrangement are unique within the centre, creating a relatively bespoke architectural identity for the Bull Yard, adding another layer to the centre's Modernist architecture.
- 5.4.2.13 Hertford Street was partially redeveloped between 1965 and 1974, pedestrianising the southern approach to Broadgate, whilst adding further modern retail units. Like much of the centre's architecture which dates to the late 1960s and 1970s, the buildings are consciously designed with a material palette that moves away from the classicisms that anchored Gibson's earlier works (Fig 47). Numbers 36-48 Hertford Street (1967-1969, design by W.S. Hattrell & Partners) are perhaps of most interest, with their upper-floors clad with 54 fibreglass panels moulded by William Mitchell. Nonetheless, these buildings continue to show respect for the early principles of the city plan, providing covered walkways under canopies to shelter pedestrians.

5.4.2.14 Immediately southeast of the Bull Yard is the Litten Tree public house, built as an A D Foulkes store in 1956 (design by Hellberg & Harris). In form and material construction, it follows the Broadgate House vocabulary.

5.4.3 ***Civic, Cultural & Institutional***

The Civic Precinct and Coventry University Campus

5.4.3.1 The civic precinct is notable for its great diversity in architectural form, experienced from one building to the next. The modesty of the Broadgate House vocabulary, that is so distinctive of the buildings of the Upper Precinct, only makes a partial contribution to civic precinct's architectural character. Adherence to this design-template is replaced by far bolder concepts, encouraged by the more liberal approach to form and materials of Arthur Ling (and later Terence Gregory), who were more interested in planning principles than finer details. The development of the civic precinct and Lanchester College / Coventry University encouraged architects to explore and experiment, creating the highly eclectic townscape experienced today. Collectively, the buildings of the civic precinct and university chronicle several decades of changing fashions for styles and materiality within architectural practice, forming a compendium of the post-war movements. Together they stand as a stark illustration of the sustained ambitions of Coventry's planners to stand on the international stage, looking outwards for inspiration as to how to enhance their city.

5.4.3.2 Four buildings represent Gibson's brand of Scandinavian-inspired Modernism. The Police Station (1954-1957, design by City Architects Department, Fig 49), the southern and western wings of Civic Centre 1 (1951-1957, design by City Architects Department, Fig 48)* and the Telephone Exchange (1955, design by Ministry of Works) which are all located off Little Park Street. They show traces of the Broadgate style, with features that include light-red brickwork, regularly spaced repeating square windows and relative modesty in decoration. The police station, offices and exchange set themselves apart from contemporary commercial buildings through their lower-pitched copper roofs and, with exception of the latter, their arrangement around courtyards. The Herbert Art Gallery (1954-1960, design by Herbert, Son & Sawdey, Fig 48) is another example, its unity with Gibson's wider scheme expressed through the use of the modestly scaled block-like form, Blockley brick, Portland stone panels and Hornton stone columns.⁹³

5.4.3.3 Architecture dating from Arthur Ling's tenure at the helm of the City Architects Department looked further afield for inspiration, abandoning Gibson's Scandinavian reverence for a more transatlantic approach. The Alan Berry Building (formerly the Administration and Library building), the Priory Building (formerly the Students Union), the Charles Ward building (formerly the Teaching Centre and Art College, Fig

* At time of writing, 'Civic Centre 1' has received planning permission for demolition but development has not commenced (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/3089).

48), and the James Starley Building* (formerly the Lanchester College Laboratories, Fig 49) (all designed by the City Architects Department between 1957 to 1965) all have a distinctly 'Miesian' form, again inspired by the architectural vocabulary of Mies van der Rohe's famed Illinois Institute of Technology. They feature simple, glazed structures with projecting I-beam mullions set on solid plinths.⁹⁴ Civic Centre 2 is perhaps the most significant building of Ling's tenure, constructed 1958-1960 adjacent to Civic Centre 1, facing Earl Street (design by George Sealey of the City Architects Department). The building was home to the Architecture and Planning Department and features a curtain-walled studio block with concrete frame, supported on pilotis. Its glazed principal elevation and metallic mullions are also somewhat reminiscent of the aforementioned 'Miesian' aesthetic. Civic Centre 2 is considered a very good example of the refined Modern movement and is of further historical interest through its purpose-built exhibition space, illustrative of a spirit of public inclusivity and engagement that pervaded Coventry's continued redevelopment.⁹⁵

5.4.3.4 The Brutalist movement is observed within several buildings, mostly brought to the centre under the leadership of Terence Gregory. At the time of writing, however, one is being demolished, and application has been made to level a further. The demolished building was 'G Block' of Priory Hall (formerly the Lanchester College Hall of Residence; built in 1963-1967, design by City Architecture Department), sited prominently to the northern end of University Square (the only one of Ling's terminating blocks constructed in the civic precinct), formed of a twenty-storey tower built of precast concrete. Under consideration is the Civic Centre Municipal Offices (also known as Civic Centre Tower, built 1971-1973). The fifteen-storey tower is again of pre-cast concrete and features chamfered corners and an elegant arrangement of concrete mullions and rails delineating the gridded fenestration.⁹⁶ The Graham Sutherland Building (formerly the Art College, 1966-1967, design by City Architects Department, Fig 48) sits prominently at the corner of Gosford Street and Cox Street, featuring an interesting arrangement using concrete columns defining bays with set-back glazing and brown panels, below upper-stories featuring windows divided by distinctive projecting concrete-mullions. Like Ling's 'Miesian' inspired buildings, the design of the Art College illustrates a desire to align Coventry's new architecture to the international sphere, in this case referencing Le Corbusier's monastery of La Tourette and the City Hall of Boston, Massachusetts. Completing the precinct's collection of monumental concrete structures are the Britannia Hotel (1972-1973, design by G R Stone & Associates) and Quadrant Hall (1969-1974, design by City Architects Department), both located off Fairfax Street.

5.4.3.5 The area's recreational facilities took on more individual designs. The Sports and Leisure Centre is particularly impressive and is now recognised as a building of national significance. Designed in 1956 and built between 1962-1966 (City Architects Department, Fig 49) it is a striking building, featuring an expansive glazed southern elevation and a W-shaped cantilevered-wing roof. At time of construction it was considered amongst the finest new municipal swimming baths in Europe. Today, however, this architectural interest is hard to appreciate from outside, with its grand

* At time of writing, the James Starley Building has received planning permission for demolition but development has not commenced (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2018/0397).

southern elevation hemmed in by other buildings along a minor street and somewhat concealed behind overgrown trees. The building is best viewed from Fairfax Street (and historically the ring road, until a recent development in the car park opposite), however the façade features a far plainer brick-clad elevation.⁹⁷ The leisure centre's neighbour is a "different beast" entirely, stretching Terence Gregory's laissez-faire attitude to architectural form to perhaps its furthest extent. The Sports and Recreation Centre (1973-1976, design by City Architects Department, Fig 49) is a bulky silver-grey zinc clad building that strides above Cox Street on tapered concrete legs. Affectionately known locally as 'The Elephant', its design playfully borrows from the city's coat of arms as inspiration for its somewhat abstract Modernism.⁹⁸

5.4.3.6 The neighbouring Magistrates' Court (1984-1987, City Architects Department) and Crown Court (1986, PSA Midland Region with John Madin Design Group), located north of St John's Street, bring the local architectural chronology into the latter-decades of the 20th century. The Magistrates' Court shares characteristics with many contemporary civic buildings (heavily influenced by the works of James Stirling), with deep-red brick, relatively bulky massing, chamfering to corners and a shallow hipped roof. The Crown Court (Fig 48) also has a distinctive bulk, standing out from its surroundings through use of Portland stone, with its three-bay two-storeyed glazed entrance contrasting to the far more austere provision of fenestration around its secondary elevations. Civic Centre 3 (1974-1976, City Architects Department) completes the set, sited at the north-eastern corner of the Civic Centre courtyard. It shares the blocky massing, chamfering and use of bold-red brick with the Magistrates' Court, but also calls back to early phases of the centre's redevelopment through its pyramidal copper roof and set-back ground-floor supported by splayed brick-colonnade to provide a sheltered pedestrian walkway.^{99*}

5.4.3.7 The evolution of the civic precinct and Lanchester College into the Coventry University city campus has ensured the continued redevelopment of the area with bespoke buildings into the modern day, which in turn continues to broaden its architectural eclecticism. Perhaps challenging 'The Elephant' for the centre's most idiosyncratic of design concepts is the Frederick Lancaster Library (1998-2000, design by Short & Associates), located just outside the ring road off Gosford Street. The honey-coloured brick-clad building is innovative through its principles of energy conservation and sustainability, which manifest most strikingly through its ten striking ventilation towers.¹⁰⁰ Joining the library is its neighbouring University Engineering and Computer Block (2012, design by Arup Associates) clad in interlocking hexagonal aluminium panels across an interlocking L-shaped structure with irregularly shaped canted façade.¹⁰¹ Other modern buildings include the L-Plan The Hub (2011, design by Hawkins/Brown), the glass and laminated-timber framed Herbert Art Gallery extension (2002-2008, design by Pringle Richards Sharratt), and the seven-storey Severn Trent Water Operations Centre (2008-2010, Associated Architects and Webb Grey).

*At time of writing, 'Civic Centre 3' has received planning permission for demolition but development has not commenced (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/3089).

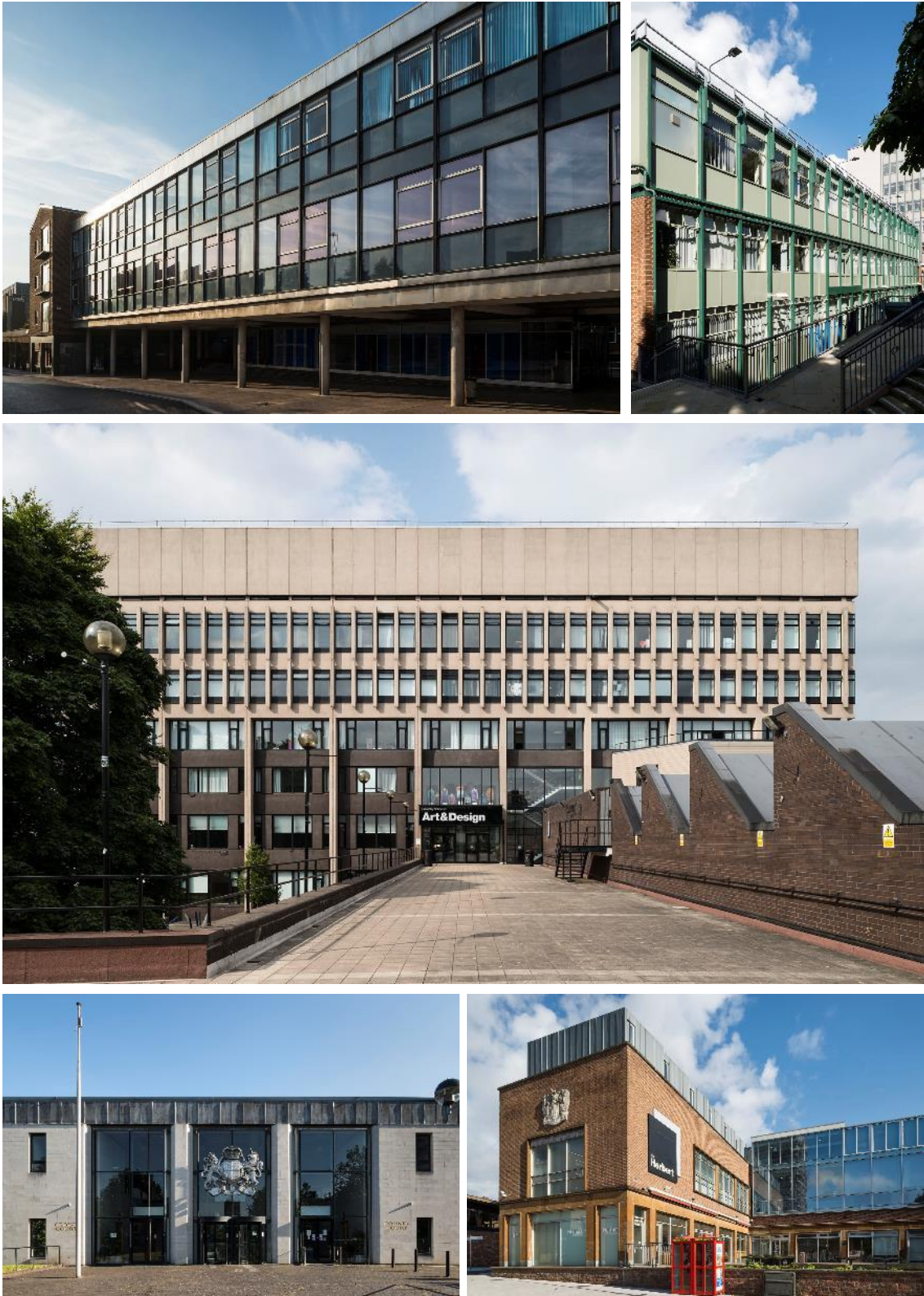


Fig 48: Architectural eclecticism in the civic precinct and university campus: Civic Centre and former City Architects Department (top-left); the Mies inspired Charles Ward Building (top-right); Graham Sutherland Building (centre); Herbert Art Gallery (bottom-right); Crown and County Courts (bottom-left). Historic England (DPI 64-688/690/706/716/721)



Fig 49: Architectural eclecticism in the civic precinct and university campus: Coventry Police Station with Civic Centre 4 (Municipal Offices) and Severn Trent Operations Centre in the background (top); Sports and Leisure Centre (centre-left); Sports and Recreation Centre (“The Elephant”) (centre-right); The Hub and James Starley Building (bottom-left); Frederick Lanchester Library (bottom-right); Crown and County Courts. Historic England (DPI 64-682/686/694/726)



Fig 50: Belgrade Theatre, Corporation Street Historic England (DPI64669)

Belgrade Theatre

5.4.3.8

Gibson originally envisaged Corporation Street to feature an entertainment precinct, however ambitions were quickly scaled back, with only one such building developed - the Belgrade Theatre (Fig 50). Nonetheless, the theatre is amongst the most significant of the centre's post-war architecture. Built between 1955 and 1958, having been conceived under Gibson but delivered under Ling, it is a hybrid of their respective styles. The Broadgate House vocabulary is evident on the south-eastern elevation (facing Corporation Street), through its use of Blockley mix brick, regularly spaced hole-in-the-wall windows, modest detailing and the set-back of ground floor shops under covered walkway supported by a colonnaded arcade. Other aspects of the theatre illustrate Ling's broadening of the city's material palette, with variations including the use of whitbed and roach Portland stone with spar dash finish on the north-eastern façade and features a double-height five-bay window. The theatre takes its name from the eponymous city, a delegation from which had donated the Yugoslavian beech used for curved sound reflectors in the ceiling. The connection is celebrated through the moulded-concrete *Belgrade Relief* adorning the south-eastern façade.¹⁰²

5.4.4 **Infrastructure**

5.4.4.1 Coventry Station (1960-1962, design by W.R. Headley with the City Architects Department, Fig 85) is a fine example of a post-war railway stations, outstanding architecturally for its spatial qualities and detailing. Mirroring the principles of the commercial precinct, the station had a passenger-centred design giving primacy to pedestrian not vehicle, and its aesthetics were actively influenced by Scandinavian models. The two-storey booking hall is most striking, formed of a concrete frame, wholly glazed elevations, with a cantilevered roof projecting forward and finished with glazed tiling to the columns and varnished hardwood strip boarding at the ceiling.¹⁰³

5.4.4.2 The case could readily be made that the development of Coventry's ring road has, for better or worse, had the most significant impact on the cityscape. Constructed in phases between 1959 and 1974, it serves as both an undulating conduit and barrier within and around the city centre, with its highways elevated high on concrete pillars or sunk into the ground along extensive excavated channels. Whilst generally seen as an unwelcome addition to the city's architectural character, it nevertheless holds a degree of architectural interest, representing an early example of post-war highways innovation.

5.4.5 **Ecclesiastical**

5.4.5.1 Designed by Sir Basil Spence and built between 1951 and 1962, the modern Cathedral of St Michael stands amongst the most significant buildings in the country (Fig 51). Constructed of red Hollington sandstone with Westmorland slate and copper roofing, it aligns to many aspects of the materiality of Donald Gibson's townscape, whilst also integrating well within the historic architecture of the Hill Top area. Its interior includes an abundance of interesting features, many by artists of international repute, including the famed stained-glass baptistry window by John Piper, and John's Hutton's vast glazed wall occupying much of the cathedral's western end.¹⁰⁴ The cathedral makes many positive contributions beyond its architectural interest.

5.4.5.2 Key is its symbiotic relationship to the bombed-out medieval cathedral, connected gracefully under a lofty porch. It is a landmark building within the townscape, with the view along its eastern façade across University Square, one of the city's most recognised. The porch between the old and new cathedral acts as a distinctive gateway between the Hill Top and the Civic Precinct / University area. It is an important focal point for artistic and cultural expression, particularly around themes of peace and reconciliation, hosting a number of highly significant pieces of public artwork, including the Jacob Epstein *St Michael and the Devil* sculpture (Fig 65).

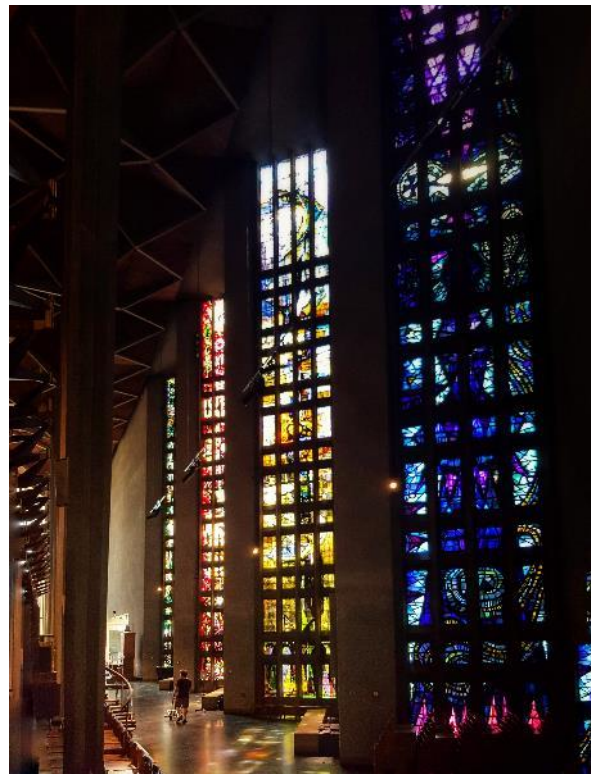
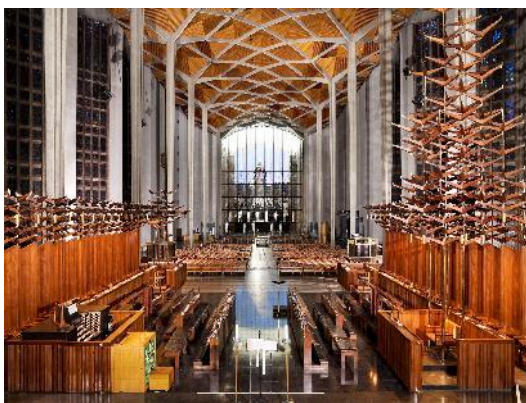
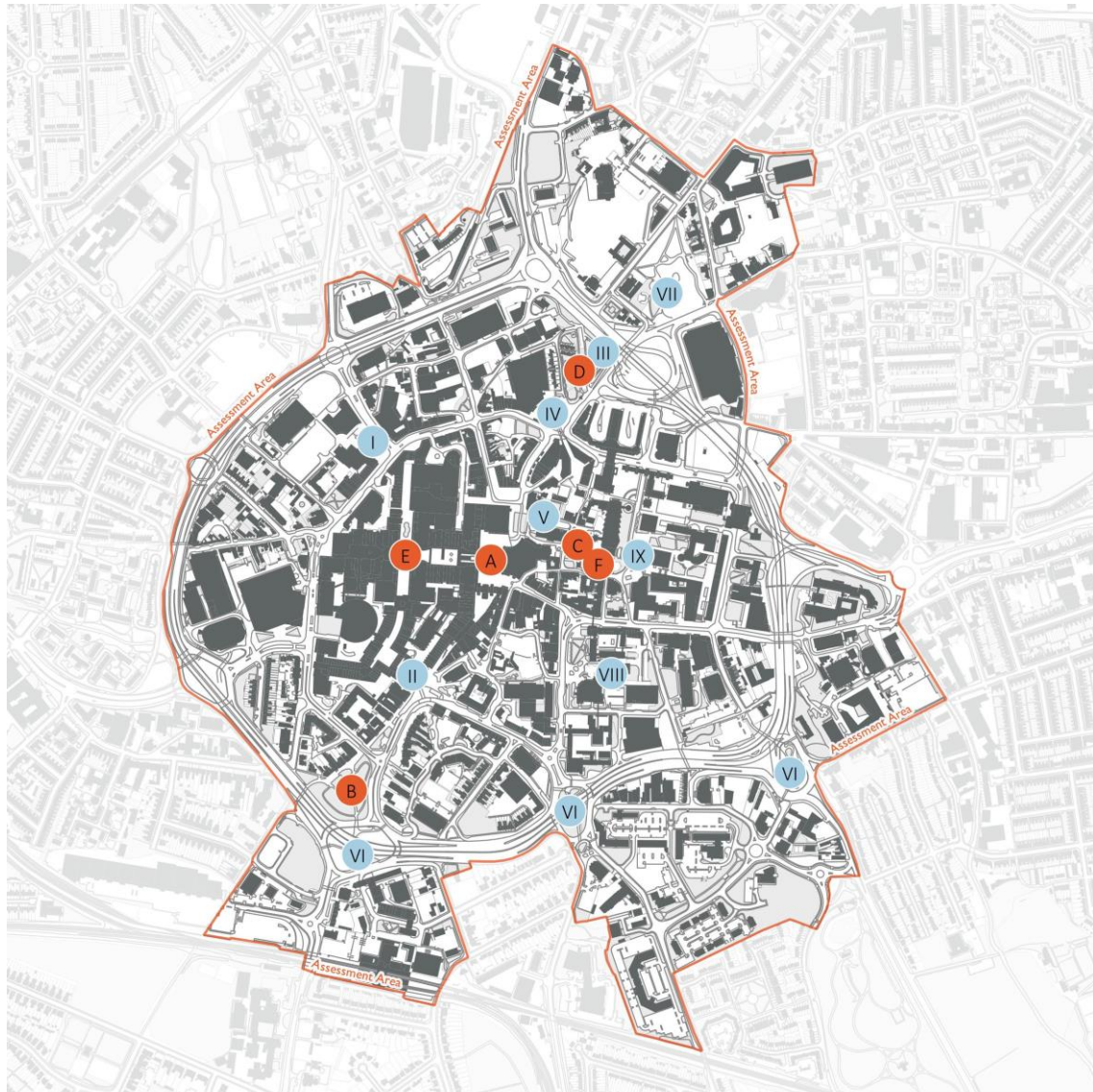


Fig 51: The Modernist Masterpiece – Basil Spence's St Michael's Cathedral. Historic England (DP082342; DPI64704)

6 HISTORIC OPEN SPACES

6.1 Overview

- 6.1.1.1 The city centre features an eclectic collection of historic spaces. Often significant in their own right, they also provide focal points for the experience of Coventry's architectural, artist, historical, and archaeological interest.
- 6.1.1.2 The use of a zonal planning system has resulted in varied levels of preservation of historic spaces pre-dating the mid-20th century, with some areas totally transformed, and others experiencing far less redevelopment. What survives is therefore often located in proverbial islands of historic townscape, containing features and buildings of heritage interest marginalised or isolated by the extent of redevelopment in their immediate environs. Overall, the assessment area has lost significant open space evident in late-19th century mapping, but there remain some notable and significant exceptions.
- 6.1.1.3 Hill Top retains several small historic green spaces. The most prominent are associated with the ecclesiastical institutions and private gardens of high-status dwellings (although these are mostly much altered in form). Swanswell Pool and Greyfriars Green also survive, ostensibly Victorian in character, but both inherited from the medieval city.
- 6.1.1.4 Public spaces of the post-war townscape are often key elements of its design, illustrating the underlying design principles which drove decades of innovation and redevelopment. Several spaces are repurposed from the old city, now almost unrecognisable in terms of their form and material composition (with hard surfacing predominant) but constructed upon the pivots around which Coventry has operated for centuries. The principal examples are Broadgate and the ruined Cathedral of St Michael - two very different environments but both transformed by a force for change that led to the adaption of their defining characteristics and function. Other areas have been created as new, with the public realm of the commercial precinct of particular significance.
- 6.1.1.5 This section provides a background, rapid characterisation, and a consideration of the significance of these principal historic spaces, before highlighting the several other open areas that contribute to the centre's historical and architectural interest.



A Principal Spaces

- A Broadgate
- B Greyfriars Green
- C Hill Top
- D Lady Herbert's Garden
- E Commercial Precinct public realm
- F Ruins of St Michael's

A Other Notable Spaces

- I Belgrade Square
- II Bull Yard & Shelton Square
- III Garden of International Friendship
- IV Millennium Place
- V Prioory Gardens and The Cloister Garden
- VI Ring Road Interchanges
- VII Swanswell Park and Pool
- VIII The 'Outdoor Rooms'
- IX University Square

Fig 52: Historic open and public spaces

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6.2 Principal Spaces

6.2.1 Broadgate

Background

6.2.1.1 Named after the 'broad gate' of Coventry Castle, Broadgate is a long standing socio-economic focal point of the city, located at the convergence of two major historical routes. Broadgate formed an open area within which the town's medieval marketplace flourished, demarcated by an ornate market cross*.¹⁰⁵ Over time, buildings encroached into the space, culminating in a relatively narrow street. The area was re-widened between 1820-1823 to improve traffic flow and once again in the later 19th century to allow capacity for a new tram system that converged at this strategic location.¹⁰⁶ By the late 19th and early 20th century buildings were again jostling for status, with the National Westminster Bank (built 1930, Fig 31) built as a landmark building terminating views looking south across the space. Broadgate was heavily damaged during the Blitz and large swathes of buildings were cleared, making way for the new Broadgate, designed as the focal point of Donald Gibson's Modernist commercial precinct. The new public space was laid out in 1947, again designed as the point of convergence for local public transport (albeit now buses, with the trams discontinued), with Modernist buildings built to enclose the area, and a new road constructed that encircled a new open green space at the centre.[†] Further alteration has occurred over the latter decades of the 20th and early decades of the 21st century, notably the development of Cathedral Lanes shopping centre at its eastern extent, and the wholesale pedestrianisation of the area together with the consequent introduction of hard-surfacing in place of the former landscaped green space.¹⁰⁷

Character

6.2.1.2 Broadgate is today experienced as part of the post-war planned townscape, situated at the western extent of the commercial precinct. It has retained its status as the principal communal space of the city centre, whilst also acting as the informal point of transition between the commercial precinct, civic precinct and the old town centre at the Hill Top. A strong sense of enclosure is formed by buildings facing into the plaza, with three sides defined by 1950s Modernism (Broadgate House, Leofric Hotel and old Owen Department Store (now Primark)), and the fourth by the Cathedral Lanes Shopping Centre (built in 1989, design by Chapman, Taylor and Partners¹⁰⁸). These buildings have appropriated the prominence once held by the early 20th century banking buildings (particularly the National Westminster Bank), which are now relatively marginal to the area.

* A 20th century replica of which now stands at the Hill Top adjacent Trinity Church, erected in 1976.

† Designed by the city's Parks Director, William Shirran



Fig 53: Broadgate today. Photograph by authors

- 6.2.1.3 Designed views are significant to the experience of Broadgate; a key example is the view looking into the precincts, along the east-to-west axes through the gateway formed by the corner-blocks of Broadgate House and the former Leofric Hotel. Views towards the Cathedral spire have been partially truncated by the Cathedral Lanes shopping centre, which now dominates eastern aspects. The demolition of the infill block within Broadgate House (leading through to Hertford Street) has re-established views out looking south.
- 6.2.1.4 The pedestrianisation of Broadgate has allowed for relatively uninhibited movement across the area. Although this makes it harder to appreciate the area's historical status as the centre's key transport junction, this helps sustain a sense of communal vibrancy.
- 6.2.1.5 The space is focal point for public art and local points of interest.

Summary of Heritage Significance

The Medieval City

- Broadgate's status as a major focal point of the medieval city is sustained, remaining the centre's principal communal space. The more ancient provenance of the space is, however, today largely concealed (to the uninitiated) due to the centre's 20th century transformation.

- Public sculpture manifests the city's historical associations to the legendary tales of Lady Godiva and Peeping Tom.
- The name Broadgate provides a tangible link to the 'broad gate' of Coventry Castle that, whilst long lost, remains culturally prominent within the city as a key aspect of its iconography.

Post-War Planned City

- Broadgate is enclosed on three sides by Coventry's earliest, and amongst the most significant, Modernist buildings. They are the exemplars of the Broadgate House style that characterised Donald Gibson's planned townscape.
- The experience of the space, particularly views in-and-out, illustrate the core planning principles adopted by city planners in the post-war years. This is enhanced by the modern pedestrianisation, expanding the commercial precinct's extensive vehicle-free environment.
- The concentration and quality of post-war public artwork display the city's innovative approaches to formulating an interesting, memorable, and dynamic Modernist townscape.
- Broadgate has been a focus of celebration and commemoration surrounding the city's reconstruction. The space was formally opened by the then Princess Elizabeth (22nd May 1948), adding associative historical value.

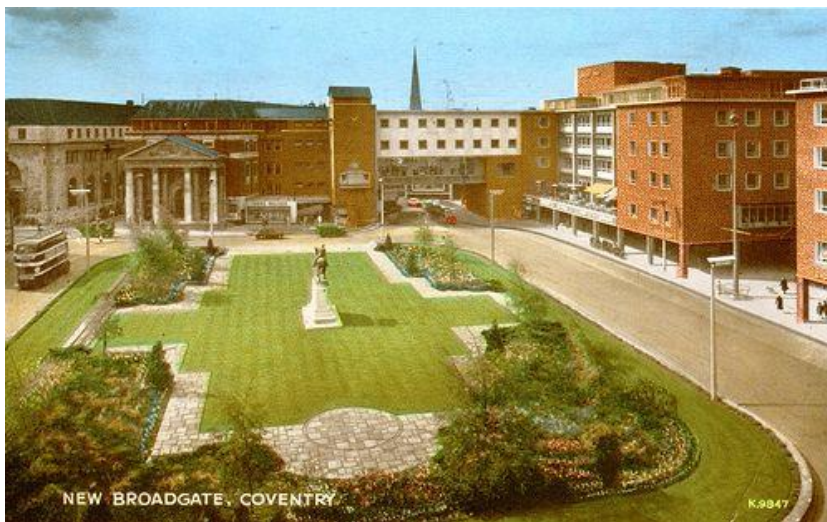
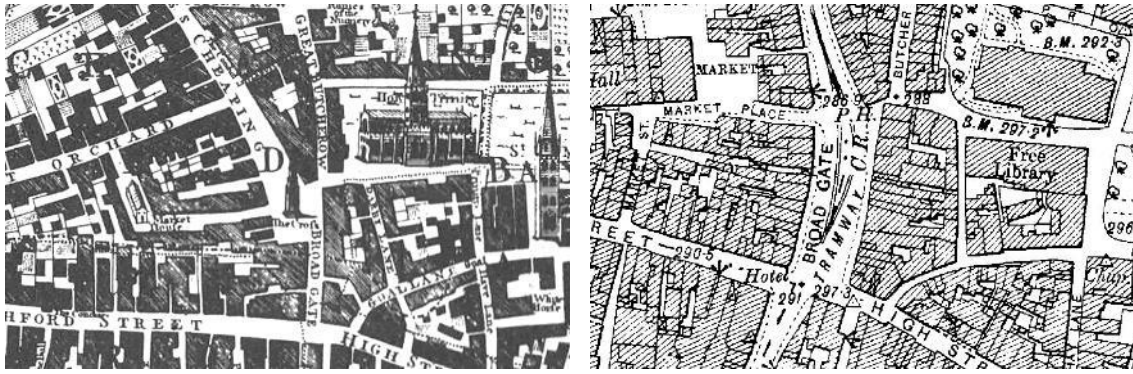


Fig 54: Clockwise from top-left: Broadgate market as Samuel Bradford map of 1748-49; Broadgate in 1904-05 2nd edition Ordnance Survey; Broadgate in c1939, with active tram network and the National Westminster Bank standing as a landmark building at its southern extent; the Market Cross as depicted on the 1748 Bradford map; Mid-20th century postcard depicting the original scheme for the 'New Broadgate'. Coventry Archive

6.2.2 Greyfriars Green

Background

6.2.2.1 Early maps of Coventry show an area of similar location and extent to the modern Greyfriars Green. The space was almost certainly a busy one, located immediately outside the 'Gray Fryer Gate', the principal gateway leading through the city walls from the south. Its wedge shape may therefore be inherited from the funnelling of traffic into the gateway. It is depicted on Samuel Bradford's map (1748-1749, Fig 4) as an unnamed open space containing the 'The Horse Pool'. Sharp's map of Coventry (1807, Fig 5) is the first to depict the space in something akin to its modern context, named 'Grey Friar's Green', with Warwick Road and Warwick Row laid out to either side. The name 'Greyfriars' may therefore be simply the product of its proximity to the old gate, and the local prominence of the Priory spire, rather than any direct historical association to the monastic institution and its land-ownership.¹⁰⁹ The area came into local authority ownership in 1860, donated by Edward James Smith on condition of commitment to its maintenance as a public amenity. Re-landscaping occurred in 1876, with the green's semi-rural setting also attracting development facing into the space, mainly large suburban houses offering an escape from the increasingly polluted and heavily urbanised centre, and proximity to the major routes leading away/into Coventry (via the Warwick Road and later the railway station, arriving 1838).¹¹⁰ The construction of the inner ring road in 1975 created a significant physical boundary at the Green's south-western extent. The area was concurrently slightly extended to the south, with new planting and landscaping to improve accessibility. The modern (and ongoing) remodelling of the city's southern gateway (an area defined as between the station and the commercial precincts) has included a scheme to build-over a short stretch of the ring road, re-establishing an historical connectivity between Warwick Road, the station, and Greyfriars Green.

Character

6.2.2.2 Greyfriars Green is a *circa* 1.5ha wedge-shaped area of landscaped green space. It inherits much of its character from its re-landscaping into a Victorian civic park. Undulating lawns are bisected by paved footpaths, the principal of which runs south to north. The Green has a distinctly sylvan character, with a notable density of mature specimen trees (including beech, oaks, and cherry), many of which are again legacies of Green's initial landscaping as a civic amenity in the mid-19th century. Large flower beds feature within the lawns and hillocks.

6.2.2.3 A sense of enclosure is created by the 18th and 19th century architecture, which faces onto Greyfriars Green from Warwick Road and Warwick Row. The sense of enclosure to the south west, which would have created a more enclosed residential square, was lost with the construction of the bypass. Many residences have been converted to commercial functions (including installation of shop frontages), however they remain identifiable as 19th century and early 20th century suburban houses. Interspersed amongst these are a number of other buildings of architectural interest,

including the Renaissance-styled United Reform Church (built in 1889-1891, design by G and I Steane)¹¹¹, and the Modernist Litten Tree Public House (built in 1956, design by Hellberg & Harris).¹¹²

6.2.2.4 The modern environment is relatively genteel, with vehicular traffic diverted around its edge, and the softy undulating lightly wooded terrain used ephemerally by local workers and residents. The tranquil use is in stark contrast to the space's earlier origins as a vibrant medieval gateway and later location of the Coventry Fair. Greyfriars Green has been an historically significant location for views of the Three Spires of Coventry, although these are now largely concealed. The green features a collection of public sculptures and monuments commemorating famed local figures which add artistic interest to the space.

Summary of Heritage Significance

The Medieval City

- The continued use of the area as an open public space sustains its historical significance as a public gathering point outside of the key 'Grey Fryer Gate' of the old city wall.
- Glimpsed views of the city's Three Spires of Coventry allow appreciation of their historical status within the medieval town.

City of Industry Theme

- Although modified, the design and layout of Greyfriars Green remains distinctive of the civic parks movement of the Victorian era.
- Large 18th and 19th century houses (now largely converted) illustrate the growing prosperity of Coventry's skilled-working classes and middle classes, and the emerging status of the railway station within the industrial townscape.
- A commemorative sculpture celebrates the achievements of James Starley (1830-1881), one of the earliest and most significant innovators of the bicycle industry.

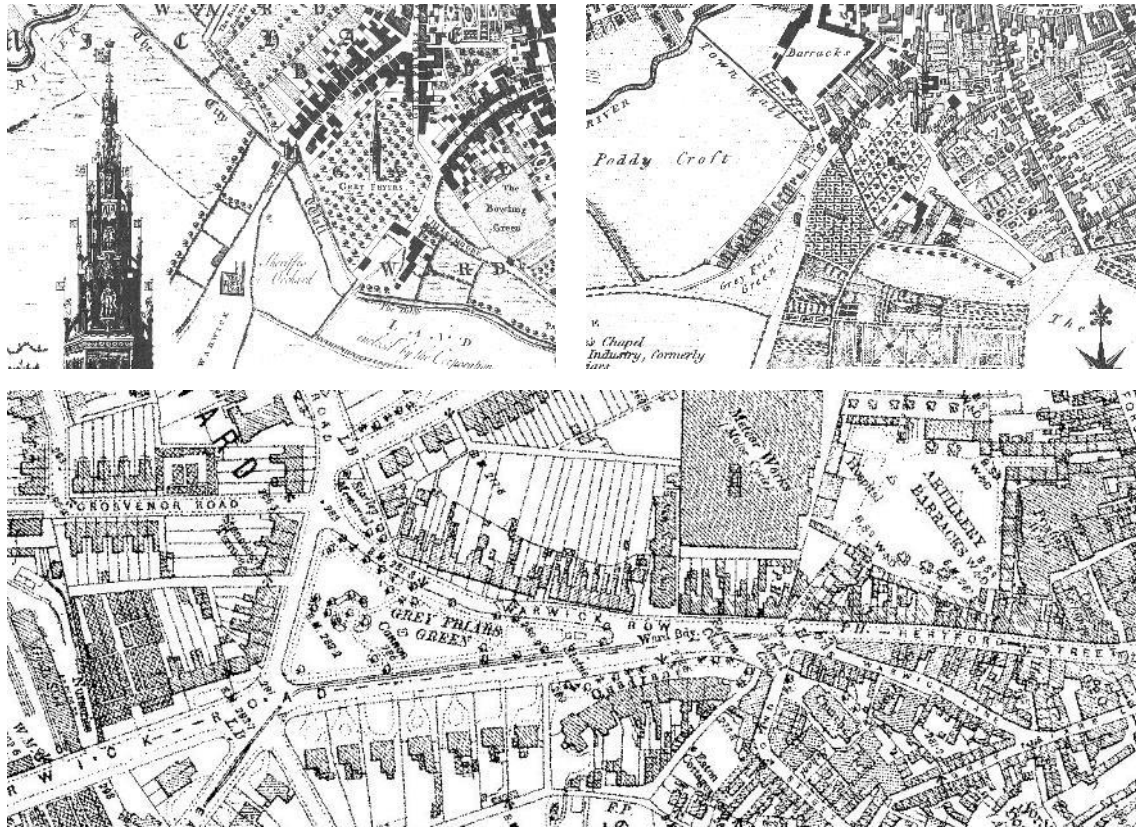


Fig 55: Clockwise from top-left: The area as depicted on the 1748-49 Bradford map; 'Grey Friar's Green' on Sharp's map of 1807 (Fig 5); 1904-05 2nd edition Ordnance Survey; Greyfriars Green today

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6.2.3 Hill Top

Background

6.2.3.1 The cathedral precinct encountered today represents only the western half of an historic space that once encompassed around one hectare of ecclesiastical land. The area was first enclosed in the medieval period, defining the graveyards and precincts of St Michael's and Holy Trinity. 17th century mapping displays a large open area spanning the northern side of the Cathedral Church of St Michael, bound by Priory Row (north), Cuckoo Lane (west), and crossed from east to west by what is now known as St Michael's Avenue. Like many such spaces, it attracted the construction of other high-status and high-quality buildings, which would steadily enclose the spaces and establish the broad character and layout by the turn of 18th century. The construction of Basil Spence's celebrated post-war cathedral and its adjacent square was a major development, occupying much of the eastern extent of the old cathedral precinct, and creating the smaller, and more intimate, environment encountered today.

Character*

6.2.3.2 The area encompasses three small grassed areas - Unity Lawn, St Michael's Graveyard, and Holy Trinity Graveyard. These spaces are bound by a combination of low sandstone walling and modern railings which serve to compartmentalise the space, channelling pedestrian and occasional vehicular access. The area has a sylvan character by virtue of mature lime trees lining Cuckoo Lane and St Michael's Avenue amongst other planting. A rectilinear pattern of narrow streets subdivides the area, with hard surfacing including cobbles with sandstone and granite slabs. An assortment of heritage-inspired street furnishings has been added to enhance interest, with other points of interest including the reconstructed *Coventry Cross* (1976, designed by Rolf Hellberg with Phillip Bentham¹¹³), and various commemorative monuments within the Holy Trinity Churchyard.¹¹⁴

6.2.3.3 The area has a strong sense of enclosure, framed to all four sides by nearly 650 years of architectural development. The post-war cathedral defines the eastern side (set perpendicular to the ruins of St Michael), the 17th through 19th century townhouses of Priory Row line the northern, Holy Trinity Church and County Hall feature immediately west, and the stone and timber-framed buildings of Bayley Lane form the southern extents.

6.2.3.4 Views of surrounding building façades are an important aspect of the experience. Ecclesiastical buildings dominate, particularly when viewed across the lawn and graveyards and at points of arrival into the area (e.g. the junction of Hay Lane, Pepper Lane, and Bayley Lane). Key outward views include those looking through and beyond the cathedral and church, including vistas along St Michael's Avenue and through the

* A detailed appraisal of the character of this area and its contribution to the setting of St Michael's Cathedral has been undertaken by J & L Gibbons (2018) as part of the Coventry Cathedral Conservation Management Plan.

Modernist porch, and those looking into the ruins through its bombed-out doorways and windows.¹¹⁵

Summary of Heritage Significance *

The Medieval City

- The spaces offer amongst the best opportunities to appreciate the form of Coventry's pre-industrial townscape that once pervaded the city centre but is now only found in localised pockets.
- Proximity to a wide spectrum of nationally significant buildings which provide glimpses into life within the historic city, ranging from timber-framed to sandstone structures. These areas are amongst the best places to appreciate the architectural grandeur of St Michael's Cathedral and Holy Trinity church in tandem.
- High levels of communal value, having been a social focal point of the city, and the site of many local historically significant events, from fares to protests, acts of commemoration and artistic expression.
- The area has high levels of both known and potential archaeological interest, as the focal point of the city since its foundation.

City of Industry

- The houses to the eastern end of Priory Row, best appreciated from within this area, are amongst the finest surviving higher-status properties in the city, illustrating the wealth and prosperity of its industrial elite.

Post-War Planned City

- The area contains a number of the designed views of Sir Basil Spence's Modernist masterpiece, including the sawtooth articulation of its western elevations, and the elegant cone-like structure and Westmorland Slate cladding of Unity Chapel.

* Full statements of heritage significance for the cathedral precinct landscape and cathedral quarter more broadly can be found in J & L Gibbons 2018 and Baxter 2013.

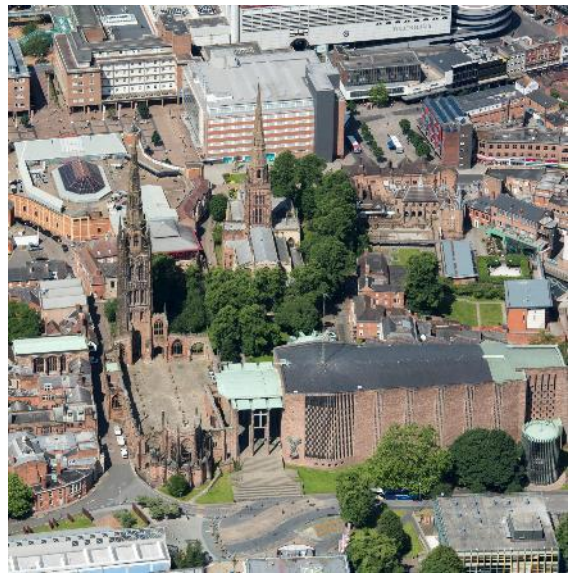
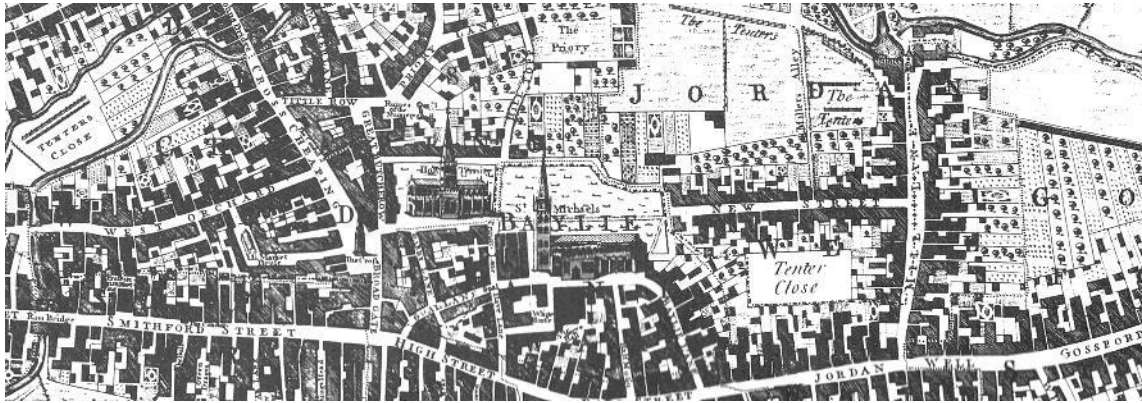


Fig 56: Top to bottom: The Hill Top area as depicted on the 1748-49 Bradford map (Fig 4). Coventry Archive; Comparative aerial view of Hill Top area looking from the southeast, showing the extant open area north of St Michael's in 1949 (left; Historic England EAW024987) and the modern context with construction of the 'new' St Michael's (right; Historic England 33179_044); Eastward view along St Michael's Avenue. © J & L Gibbons | Sarah Blee



Fig 57: Lady Herbert's Garden from the southeast, flanked by Millennium Place (left) and the Garden of International Friendship (right). Historic England (33178_030)

6.2.4 Lady Herbert's Garden

Background

- 6.2.4.1 The area is located at the north-eastern extent of the medieval town, occupying the area between the Cook Street and Swanswell Gates of the city wall. Early maps of Coventry show the western extents of the gardens as open land used for orchards between at least 1749 and 1807. The area was developed during the city's industrialisation, by the mid-19th century containing an assortment of workshops, housing and a rope walk adjacent the city wall. Lady Herbert's Garden was laid out in two phases between 1930-1931 and 1935-1937, commissioned by Sir Alfred Herbert (1866-1957), one of the city's most significant industrialists and philanthropists, in commemoration of his late wife, Florence.¹¹⁶

Character

The area is an intimate space constituting approximately 0.6ha of landscaped gardens featuring ornamental flowerbeds, lawns, rockeries, shrubberies, and specimen trees. Narrow York stone-flagged paths cross the area with stone flights of steps allowing for changes of levels. The garden is enclosed by a low concave wall with ornamental

coping surmounted by railings, built of sandstone to respect the historic defences. The area is furnished with ornamental lampposts, commemorative benches and plaques, and a Portland stone bird bath. In the north of the gardens are the Lady Herbert Homes (also designed by Albert Herbert), formed of single-storey cottage-style almshouses built in a late Arts-and-Crafts style, using brick with sandstone details, tall brick chimneys, and hipped slate roofs.¹¹⁷

The best surviving section of Coventry's city wall are found within the gardens. Integrated into the original garden design, the wall forms a striking linear feature that bisects the area from north to south, bookended by two 14th century sandstone gateways. All clearly attest to the status of Coventry within medieval England.¹¹⁸

The garden's setting has been transformed by successive phases of 20th century redevelopment in the immediate environs. Originally located adjacent to a busy road traffic junction, today it is surrounded by other open amenity spaces, varying in form and provenance. Millennium Place is located immediately to the southwest, whilst the Garden of International Friendship bounds the east of the site, immediately followed by Volgograd Place (under the ring road) and then Swanswell Pool. The result is a succession of public open spaces leading into/out of the city centre, each highly distinctive in both their character and capacity to illustrate different facets of the centre's historical development. A major intervention into the space has been the construction of a bridge (by MacCormac, Jamieson, and Prichard, 2003), crossing the site at height between Millennium Place and the Garden of International Friendship.¹¹⁹ Its distinctly modern form and glass and steel materiality contrasts starkly to the more Romantic landscaping and sandstone structures of the gardens below.

Summary of Heritage Significance

The Medieval City

- The gardens contain the best surviving section of the city's once dominant city wall, enabling appreciation of its original form and construction, and highlighting Coventry's historical status as one of the country's major towns.

City of Industry

- The gardens have considerable historical associative value through their connection to the Herbert family, founders of the Alfred Herbert Ltd. company, once one of the world's largest machine tool manufacturers.
- The gardens, and the almshouses within, are exemplars of industrialist philanthropy, which became a driving force for urban improvement in the 19th and early 20th century.

6.2.5 Commercial Precinct (Public Realm)

Background

- 6.2.5.1 The design of the public realm was a principal consideration for Coventry's post-war city architects, with several core design principles steering the development of the commercial precinct's open space over a period of thirty years. Central amongst these was an ambition for wholly pedestrianised public precincts, allowing shoppers to move freely along canopied streets, linger within plazas and shop without impediment from vehicular traffic. Spaces were designed to retain a "human scale", most buildings kept to three-to-five stories. The material palette of both buildings and surfaces was (loosely) aligned to the local vernacular, whilst the design of facades avoided excessive detailing - creating a "neutral background" for human activity.¹²⁰ Points of visual interest were added to enhance the local aesthetic and aid in navigation, achieved through the strategic positioning of landmark buildings and public artwork.¹²¹
- 6.2.5.2 These core principles would persist through multiple iterations of the local masterplan, despite at times significant opposition from established local retailers, with the character and functionality of the public realm within completed Upper Precinct a close reflection of the original ambitions of the city's architects - an achievement replicated in few other reconstructed cities.¹²² The principles were also broadly sustained over a further twenty years of expansion, with the development of the Lower Precinct, Market Street, Smithford Way, Coventry Market and the City Arcade all adhering to a pedestrian-first philosophy.^{123,*}

Character

NB. The architectural character of the commercial precinct is discussed in the 'Forms of Historic Development' section

- 6.2.5.3 The precinct is formed of two rectangular plazas to the east and west (the Upper and Lower Precincts respectively) bisected by long commercial streets to the north and south (Smithford Way and Market Way respectively). All converge at a central pedestrian crossroads, marked by a fountain. The area's urban form is anchored upon a geometric design with axial layout and strategically located landmark buildings which starkly portray the planned nature of the space when within.
- 6.2.5.4 There is a sustained sense of enclosure formed by the encapsulation of the public realm by post-war buildings that form a near-continuous buildings line, and the total lack of views out of the area from within.[†] Buildings are not generally overbearing however, due to their relative restraint in scale, whilst the breadth of the

* The materiality and (in places) scale of these developments would however evolve, in line with changes in leadership and, in turn, defining design principles, of the city architecture and planning department. For instance, Arthur Ling's desire to see experimentation with new materials and construction technologies, and his desire for landmark tower-blocks terminating views along the precinct's axes. These are discussed further in section 5.4.

† The designed eastward views out of the Upper Precinct into Broadgate and towards the St Michael's spire being the major exception.



Fig 58: Pedestrianised retailing - the Upper Precinct and Lower Precinct. Coventry Archive

pedestrianised streets affords a sense of openness. Hard-surfacing covers the entirety of the public realm, with minimal impediment or barriers to movement, enabling “... pedestrians to meet and linger...” as was originally envisaged.¹²⁴ Canopies and arcades front the public realm above ground floor level, spanning the majority of premises facing into both the precinct plazas, Market Way, and Smithford Way, providing continuous shelter for shoppers from the elements.*

6.2.5.5 Designed views are a key characteristic, notably of four landmark buildings terminating views along the precinct’s cardinal axes - the spire of St Michael’s (framed by the Upper Precinct) and the three tower-blocks (Mercia House, Hillman House (Fig 42), and Coventry Point). Other points of visual interest include the cylindrical café within the Lower Precinct (formerly the Lady Godiva Café). These views are periodically obscured by the dense canopies of the mature street trees (that have grown significantly since their planting in the mid-20th century), adding a seasonality to the townscape. Most of the precincts’ post-war public artworks have been relocated from their original context, although there are sufficient exceptions to sustain a positive influence on local character, such as the *Levelling Stone* (Fig 71).

* At time of writing, the demolition of the canopies has received planning permission and listed building consent but development has not commenced (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/2767 & LB/2018/2494).

A series of modern interventions have impacted upon the designed aesthetic of the public realm. Most notable is the glass escalator that projects clumsily into the Upper Precinct, undermining the sense of openness, and interrupting the view into Broadgate and towards St Michael's spire (see Fig 40). Ramps and stairs leading to the upper-level premises, and the linking bridges have also been altered, changing the experience of moving around the plaza, introducing new materials that fall outside those originally prescribed and resulting in the removal of once key pieces of public artwork and street furnishings.* A large steel and glass canopy also now covers the Lower Precinct. The character of the space is also now more sylvan than originally envisaged, with street trees matured to such an extent that they create substantial canopies along short sections of Market Way and Smithsford Way.

Summary of Heritage Significance

City of Industry & The Medieval City

- Although the public realm and its enclosing architecture, is entirely dated from after the mid-20th century onwards, opportunities to appreciate the more ancient heritage interest of Coventry are provided through public artwork which celebrates the city's medieval and industrial legacies.

Post-War Planned City

- The wholly pedestrianised public realm was both an ambitious and innovative approach to urban planning that became highly influential on the development of commercial centres for decades.
- The Upper Precinct is amongst both the city's and the country's most comprehensively realised visions for a new public space within a post-war planned townscape. Whilst some of its key elements are in poor condition, and later interventions have eroded the ability to appreciate its innovative layout (e.g. the Upper Precinct plaza glass escalator), much remains *in situ*.
- A rich collection of post-war architecture, delivered by multiple generations of architects and planners during the sustained redevelopment of the centre across the second half of the 20th century.
- The precinct's public realm is a focal point for the city's nationally significant collection of post-war Public artwork, although significant elements have been relocated away from the area.
- The designed view of St Michael's spire along the precinct's axis illustrates the influence of the Beaux-Arts movement.

* At time of writing, the demolition of the escalator and ramps have received planning permission, but redevelopment has not commenced (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/2767).



Fig 59: Clockwise from top: View along Smithford Way from its southern extent; View across the Upper Precinct towards St Michael's from the fountain; Upper Precinct from the northeast, second tier. Historic England (DPI 64621)

6.2.6 **The Ruinous Cathedral Church of St Michael**

Background

6.2.6.1 The St Michael's encountered today is the ruinous shell of what was once the country's largest parish churches (becoming a cathedral in 1918). Set ablaze by incendiary devices during the Blitz of 14th November 1940, its roofs, internal colonnades and elements of its celebrated stained-glass windows were destroyed.¹²⁵ The landmark spire however remained standing, as did most of its walls, many of the windows and the ornate tracery therein.¹²⁶ The now skeletal cathedral became emblematic of the nation's suffering and became a symbol of not only the damage wrought by the bombing, but also the resilience of the local population in the face of such adversity. Following the war, the Cathedral was retained in its ruinous state as a memorial garden to those lost and to the resilience of the local community. The walls were made safe and the tower stabilised, but the burnt-out roof and blown-out windows were left open to the skies. Basil Spence's new cathedral was built adjacent, connected via a lofty porch which intersection with the old cathedral's northern wall. A new open public space was thus created at the heart of the old town. Over time, features have been periodically added to, and removed from the space but the broad character has been sustained, with the only major intervention being re-landscaping to introduce hard surfacing across its entirety.

Character

- 6.2.6.2 The space is clearly defined, with the footprint and layout of the historic cathedral still legible through its sandstone walls and the bases of colonnades that once subdivided the nave and aisles. The sense of enclosure (as an historically internal space) is juxtaposed by the sense of openness afforded by the absence of a roof, and the lack of glazing within the vast windows. Visitors are exposed both visually and physically to the skies, an experience that resonates St Michael's deeply evocative relationship with the aerial theatres of warfare.
- 6.2.6.3 The Gothic arched windows ornately frame views out into the surrounding townscape. Southern and eastern aspects frame nearby heritage assets and other historic spaces within the Hill Top. Northern aspects look through to Basil Spence's Modernist cathedral. Westerly views are arguably of particular significance, towards the east end of the cathedral, looking at and beyond the altar through the windows of the nave. The loss of the roof has also afforded excellent views of St Michael's spire, located off-centre at the western end, accompanied by the spire of Holy Trinity in its background.¹²⁷
- 6.2.6.4 The space's unique form and exceptional commemorative value has lent itself to artistic creativity, evolving into a *de facto* gallery for public sculpture, today a focal point for pieces commemorating the city's status as a centre of international peace and reconciliation.



Fig 60: Panorama of the ruins of St Michael's looking east from the north-western corner. Photograph by authors

6.2.6.5

Materials remain partially anchored in Coventry's geological heritage. Whilst the wall's distinctive red sandstone masonry and tracery frame the space, the hard surfacing is formed of a mix of stone slabs and cobbles. Other furnishings within the area (aside from the colonnade-bases and public artwork) are of minimal interest, largely wooden municipal benches.

Summary of Heritage Significance

The Medieval City

- A dramatic environment within which to appreciate the grandeur of Coventry's medieval architecture, amongst the most unique experiences of ecclesiastical heritage in the country.

Post-War Planned City

- An area which starkly illustrates the impact of the Second World War on the city, but also the resilience of its population to both commemorate and move forward in the post-war years.
- A fine collection of post-war public artwork, containing sculpture of great local resonance, some by artists of international reputation.



Fig 61: Bull Yard. Historic England (DPI64659)

6.3 Other Notable Spaces

Belgrade Square

- 6.3.1.1 Located between the Belgrade Theatre and Upper Well Street. Developed contemporarily with the Belgrade Theatre (1955-1958, by Arthur Ling and the City Architect Department), creating a new public plaza.¹²⁸ The theatre's commemoration to Coventry's post-war political friendship with Belgrade and the city's broader efforts for international friendship and reconciliation, were echoed through the *Belgrade Fountain*.¹²⁹ The fountain was removed during a major re-landscaping initiative in 2008. The modern space is furnished with public artworks including Helaine Blumenfield's *Two Sides of a Woman* (1985) and *Bryan Bailey Memorial* sculpture (by Norelle Keddie, 1962).¹³⁰

Bull Yard & Shelton Square

- 6.3.1.2 Two inter-connecting plazas located at the southern extent of the commercial precinct. They are characteristic of the later 1950s and 1960s phases of the city's post-war redevelopment and illustrate a continued adherence to the core planning policies laid out within Gibson's original plans (particularly the primacy of pedestrian use), whilst also displaying a more open approach to the use of less traditional architectural

materials and forms, as encouraged by his successor, Arthur Ling. Shelton Square acted as a junction for traffic travelling to and from the City Arcade, Coventry Market, Hertford Street and the main precincts. They are enclosed on the north-western and south-western sides by understated buff brick buildings and to south-eastern side by an office block.¹³¹ The Bull Yard links Hertford Street and Greyfriars Green through to Shelton Square and the precincts beyond. It is formed by a three-sided plaza (with open side towards Hertford Street) with ground floor shops below first floor offices (Fig 61). Both spaces feature notable post-war public artworks, including the nationally significant concrete-moulded mural by William Mitchell adorning the former Three Tuns Pub of the Bull Yard (Fig 66), whilst a sculpted relief of the legend of Sir Guy and the Dun Cow faces into Shelton Square.

Garden of International Friendship

- 6.3.1.3 Located between Lady Herbert's Garden and Volgograd Place (under the ring road) and linked to Millennium Place via the raised steel and glass bridge, this was developed as part of the millennium Phoenix Initiative, unveiled in 2000 and designed by Kate Whiteford and Rummey Design Associates. Like its neighbouring Volgograd Place, the garden celebrates Coventry's heritage as a city of international reconciliation, expressed through artwork and sculpture. The elaborate floor design, with radiating concentric rings, echoes maze patterns thought to have also been identified within the landscape of Coventry's lost Cathedral of St Mary.¹³²

Millennium Place

- 6.3.1.4 Developed as part of the Phoenix Initiative, the city's millennium project aimed to create a new series of public spaces between the Coventry Transport Museum and the Hill Top. A mid-sized open area of hard surfacing provides a new functional public amenity fronting the Transport Museum. Whilst relatively sparse in detail, its open, uncluttered design enables a range of events to occur within the city centre, many of which celebrate the city's heritage. Around the space are several pieces of public sculpture, by far the most striking of which is the *Whittle Arch*, formed of a monumental twin-arch tubular structure that spans sixty metres, over Hales Street (Fig 70).



Fig 62: Swanswell Park and Pool. Photograph by authors

Priory Gardens and The Cloister Garden

- 6.3.1.5 The design of the Priory Garden and the Priory Cloister (designed by MCT Architects with Rummey Design Associates) were both inspired by their siting on the excavated 11th century Priory Cathedral, that was destroyed during the Dissolution in the 16th century. The Priory Gardens is designed as a sunken garden, inserted into the nave of the priory and punctuated by features including the exposed foundations and column-bases of the lost cathedral, identified during archaeological investigation. The ruins can be viewed from above along a raised bridge which crosses the site from Priory Row. The Cloister Garden is laid out on the site of the late 12th century cathedral cloister (the modern garden is of a smaller footprint)¹³³. The quadrant form and regular spaced trees around the perimeter allude to the cloister's arcaded form and exposed archaeological features are used as a centrepiece.¹³⁴
- 6.3.1.6 The Priory Garden's bridge affords visitors a relatively rare experience of Coventry's historic environment, offering up a full cross-section of the city centre's diverse forms of historical development from one location. The city's medieval heritage is experienced through the exposed ruins of St Mary's Cathedral; Holy Trinity Church which dominates southern aspects; the striking partnership of the spires of Holy Trinity and St Michael's Cathedral and the medieval timber-framed and jettied buildings of the Lych Gate Cottages at the area's south-western extent. Coventry's industrial heritage is displayed through three very different buildings. The prosperity of the city is

manifested in the Blue Coat school (built 1856 in a Gothic Revival-style, Fig 38) and the side-elevations of Pelham Lee House, a high-status residence. The mid-19th century ribbon factory of New Buildings (Fig 29) provides a more utilitarian character, looking north. The post-war planning and reconstruction of the city centre is identifiable through glimpsed views of the Scandinavian-Modernist architecture of Gibson's commercial precinct, and views of the north-western elevations of Spence's modernist cathedral. Finally, the Priory Visitor Centre and a number of apartment-blocks beyond portray more modern efforts for city centre regeneration.

Ring Road Interchanges

- 6.3.1.7 The ring road, as originally conceived in the 1945 city plan, was to be a far more pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment than the busy highway encountered today. Cycle ways and footpaths were intended to run alongside the new "boulevard" at length, connecting into and out of the city centre via interchanges located within and below the ring road roundabouts.¹³⁵ Whilst the cycleways were dropped from the plans, areas within several of the interchanges were landscaped for pedestrian access from suburb to centre. Today, these are largely unremarkable green spaces, marooned within roundabouts. The St Patrick's and St John's interchange are somewhat more successful, retaining pedestrian links. The former contains the *Coventry Martyrs Memorial*, a 1910 memorial cross moved to its current site from Quinton Road to embellish this new inter-ring-road amenity space.¹³⁶

Swanswell Park and Pool

- 6.3.1.8 Swanswell Pool (Fig 62, Fig 82) is a large body of water situated within a park located northeast of the city centre, adjacent White Street. The pool, which dates back to the 12th century, was formerly a mill pond and fishpond associated to St Mary's Priory until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539. White Street is aligned to the former mill bank.¹³⁷ The area around the pond is a landscaped recreational ground, first laid out in the mid-19th century, featuring a semi-geometric arrangement of paths interspersed by specimen trees. These features have been broadly sustained, giving the area a Victorian-municipal character, somewhat concealing the more ancient provenance of the pool.

The 'Outdoor Rooms'

- 6.3.1.9 Like the commercial precincts, the design for Coventry's civic precinct and Lanchester College (later Coventry University) was anchored on several planning principles laid out from the early phases of their design. Arthur Ling, heavily influenced by Mies van der Rohe's campus for the Illinois Institute of Technology, proposed the concept of the 'outdoor rooms', a series of planned open spaces threading between and around the new buildings that provided places to meet, dwell and in turn appreciate the modernist townscape.¹³⁸

6.3.1.10 Consequently, the civic and educational campus became amongst the greenest and most open parts of the city centre. There are numerous small open spaces (both soft- and hard-surfaced), with a selection standing out for their historical and architectural interest. Both the Police Station and Civic Offices are constructed around dedicated courtyards, exemplifying the philosophies of Gibson and Ling to local landscaping. The Civic Offices acted as a garden for the City Architect's Department, containing two pools and mosaics of various hard-landscaping materials, thought to have been the prototypes for features and surfacing intended for the redevelopment of the city centre.¹³⁹ An open area immediately west of the Civic Offices, at the south-eastern corner of the junction of Little Park Street and Earl Street, also provides heritage interest via an ability to appreciate nearby heritage assets. The clearance of buildings to create the space provides a far more open environment than historically, granting open views of the Tudor Revival-styled Council House, and the 17th through 19th century architecture fronting Little Park Street's western extent.

University Square

6.3.1.11 An open area that acts as a bridging point between the historic areas of the Hill Top to the university campus. It is largely formed of mixed hard surfacing with small areas of lawn to the fringe.

6.3.1.12 Its principal heritage interest derives from one's ability to appreciate the architectural grandeur and international significance of Coventry's twin cathedrals from within the space.¹⁴⁰ The plaza affords views along the full extent of the eastern elevations of the cathedrals. Importantly, the views encapsulate the dynamic relationship that exists between the cathedrals' medieval and Modernist characters. They are perhaps the most quintessential views of the cathedrals, having significance both as those perspectives often first encountered by visitors, and as a principle perspective drawn by Spence throughout his design process. The impressive geometry of the building is bookended by the grand cathedral porch, and the Chapel of Christ the Servant, whilst the *St Michael and the Devil* sculpture (Sir Jacob Epstein, 1960, Fig 65) adorns the wall immediately adjacent the steps. The area also affords views of, and into, the ruined cathedral through its eastern sanctuary windows. The window frames an open sky (the roof destroyed by the Luftwaffe raids), with the grand spire of St Michael's highly prominent to the rear.

6.3.1.13 North, east and south of the area are buildings of the civic precinct and University campus. Their architecture is highly eclectic, reflecting the diversity of materials and forms applied across this area from the mid-20th through early 21st centuries. Buildings include the sandstone, glazed and timber-framed façades of the Herbert Art Gallery's modern extension (Pringle Richards Sharratt, 2002-2008), and a number of (partially re-fronted) buildings inspired by Mies' Illinois Institute of Technology (City Architecture Department, 1957-1964).¹⁴¹

6.3.1.14 Again, post-war public artwork makes an important contribution to the space. Joining the aforementioned Epstein sculpture are the *Coventry Boy* (Philip Bentham, 1966) and *The Enfolding* (Jean Parker, 1986, Fig 72).¹⁴²

Volgograd Place and Lidice Place

- 6.3.1.15 Two broadly contemporary spaces created to commemorate and celebrate Coventry's efforts for international reconciliation, understanding and peace in the decades following the Second World War.
- 6.3.1.16 Volgograd Place (Fig 63) is located below the Swanswell Ringway section of the ring road, adjacent to White Street. The area was designed by Douglas Smith Stimson Partnership in 1970 to commemorate Coventry's early efforts for international reconciliation, through the twinning of Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) and Coventry, the first pair of international twinned cities.¹⁴³ The design (by Douglas Smith Stimson Partnership) incorporates interlocking fountains formed of concrete and cobbles, with painted murals.¹⁴⁴ A commemorative plaque commemorates the areas opening by visiting dignitaries from Volgograd on 25th November 1972.
- 6.3.1.17 Lidice Place is a small green space located at the Corporation Street / Fleet Street junction. It commemorates Coventry's connections to the village of Lidice, Czech Republic. Although re-landscaped in 2015, the commemorative plaque has been retained and rededicated in the new setting. It is similar in form and wording to the



Fig 63: Volgograd Place. Historic England (DPI 64679)

Volgograd Place plaque, again commemorating the visit of dignitaries from Lidice on 19th June 1972.

Whitefriars

- 6.3.1.18 An area of landscaped green space encompassing the remains of the mid-14th century Whitefriars Carmelite Priory. The space allows circumnavigation of the surviving eastern Cloister wing, allowing for appreciation of its distinctive red sandstone architecture. Excavated archaeological features of the priory's lost church add an additional element of heritage interest. The ring road creates a hard boundary to the area, dominating (physically and visually) the western aspects.



Fig 64: Sir William Reid-Dick's 1949 statue of Lady Godiva in Broadgate, a landmark of the city centre and perhaps its most recognisable piece of public artwork. Historic England (DPI64602)

7 PUBLIC ART

7.1 Overview

7.1.1.1 Public art* holds a particular importance to Coventry. Commissioned works have proliferated across the city, with centre's post-war reinvention a particularly vibrant period. Whilst many of the works are significant in their own right (for their artistic qualities and associations to notable artists), all of the works hold added special interest as a part of a collection of at least national, and arguably international significance.

7.1.1.2 Public art has become one of the principal mediums for commemorating the city's history, embracing the different themes associated with Coventry's cultural heritage. Artwork forms distinctive and often prominent components of the local townscape character, with an array of seemingly permanent exhibits enriching the public realm through their highly distinctive forms and materials.

* Defined here as per Historic England's Introduction to Heritage Assets: Public Art 1945-95 (Pearson & Stamper 2016) "...fixed artworks which members of the public are able to access and appreciate. Works may be sited in the public, civic, communal or commercial domain, in semi-public or privately-owned public space, or within public, civic or institutional buildings. Artworks which form part of the structure or decoration of buildings may also be categorised as public art."

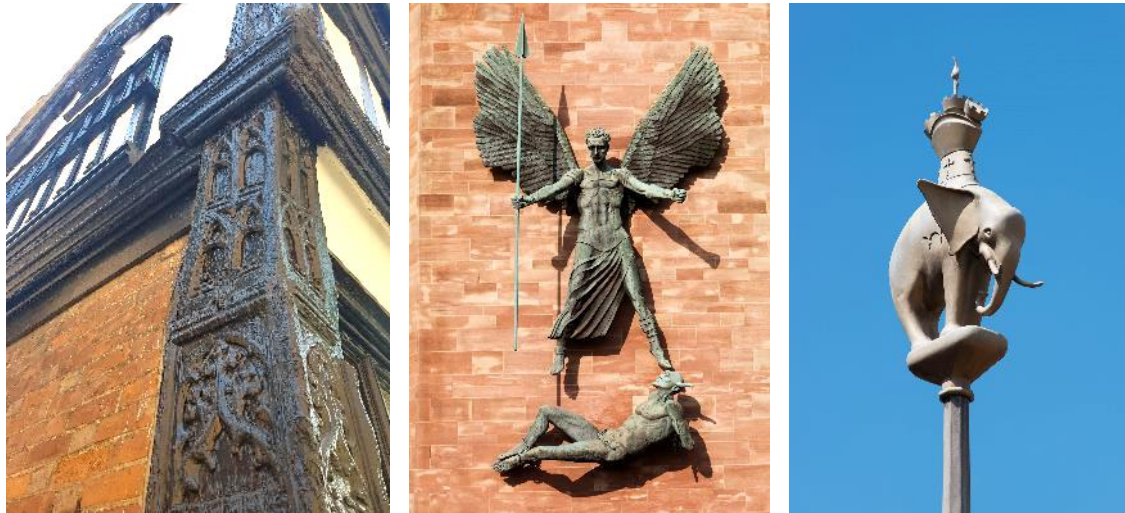


Fig 65: Left to right: carved timber-framing at 22 Bayley Lane. Photograph by authors; cast Bronze St Michael and the Devil by Jacob Epstein, St Michael's Cathedral. Historic England (DP082260); pressed aluminium Broadgate Standard, Broadgate. Historic England (DPI64614).

7.1.1.3 However, the city's artworks have been far from static, having regularly been relocated across the townscape as the centre has continued to evolve, increasingly gravitating to focal points that create nodes of artistic interest. Common themes of significance, forms and materials of works and the distribution of pieces today, are discussed in turn within this section.

7.1.1.4 Extensive reference is made throughout the following sub-sections to specific pieces of public artwork. The number and density of works within the centre is however prohibitive to providing an exhaustive record within this report. Those mentioned should therefore be seen as exemplars of the themes, forms, and materials encountered today, not as a definitive list of works of significance.*

7.2 Form and Construction

7.2.1.1 A rich variety of forms and materials are encountered within Coventry's public artworks.

7.2.1.2 Those of pre-war artworks generally reflect national trends, with most dating from, and being fairly typical of, the Victorian and Edwardian eras. These are principally bronze-cast or stone-sculpted statuary that immortalise prominent historical figures (e.g. the *James Starley Memorial* (Fig 70), the *Sir Thomas White Memorial*, and Henry Wilson's statuary adorning the Council House). There are some notable exceptions, including a commemorative stone animal-trough^{145,†}, and the *Peeping Tom* statue of Hertford Street (Fig 69). Others features of interest include a number of decorative carvings that adorn the centre's surviving timber-framed buildings, with the carved

* A catalogue of the city's notable public artwork can be found in Noszlopy 2003.

† Dedicated to Caroline Bray founded the Coventry Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

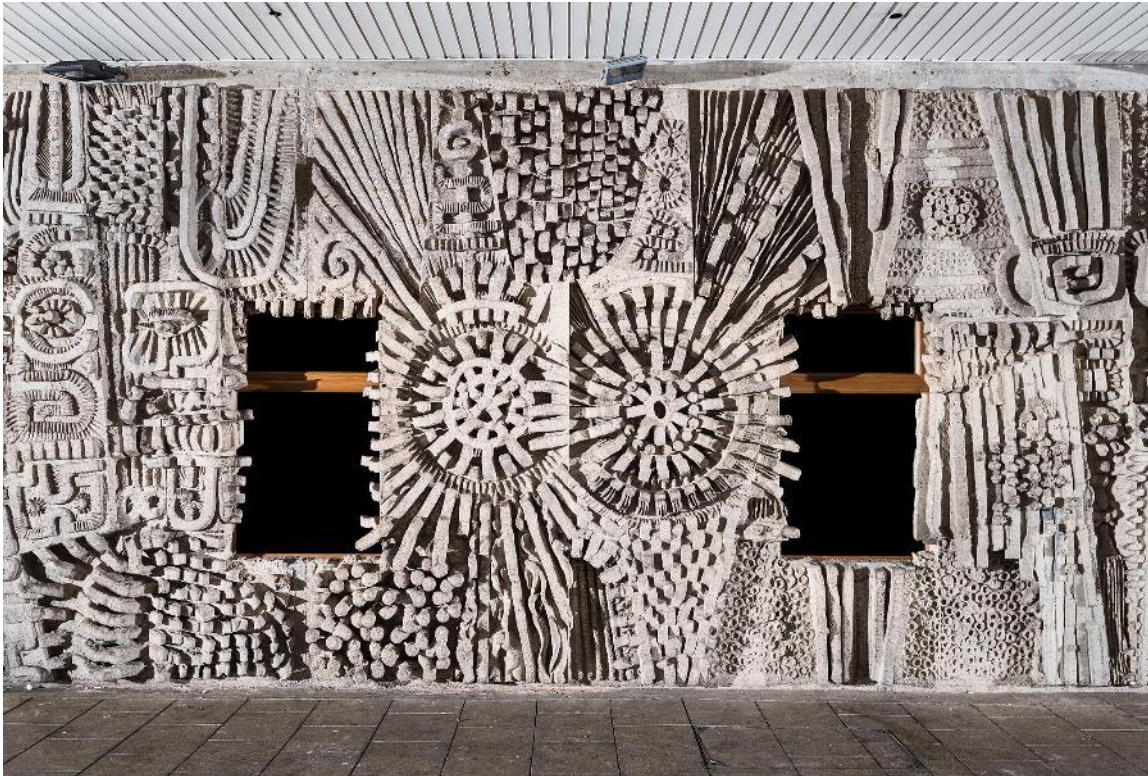


Fig 66: William Mitchell's abstract concrete-moulded relief affixed to the old Three Tuns Pub of the Bull Yard. Historic England (DPI 64663)

timberwork of 22 Bayley Lane (Fig 65) and Ford's Hospital fine examples, and the ornate sculpted-relief metalwork of the National Westminster Bank door on High Street.¹⁴⁶

- 7.2.1.3 It is in Coventry's post-war public artwork that high levels of artistic innovation in forms and materials are encountered. This was the direct result of the sustained local government patronage of the arts across the 1950s through 1980s, bringing new artists to the centre to create a rich assemblage of Modernist sculpture, statuary, murals, and mosaics. The evolution of this artwork mirrors that of Coventry's post-war architecture – with Moderne but classically-influenced pieces defining the 1950s, giving way to more overtly Modernist and experimental forms and materials in the 1960s through 1980s.
- 7.2.1.4 The city's earliest surviving post-war artworks, commissioned under Donald Gibson, are relatively traditional comparative to what would come in later decades. Indeed, the city's best-known sculpture, William Reid-Dick's *Self Sacrifice*, is a bronze-cast figure on horseback, among the most common of commemorative forms encountered in England (Fig 64). Hugh Richard Hosking's 1952 *Martyr's Mosaic* also adopted a traditional form.
- 7.2.1.5 Generally, the artwork of Gibson's townscape displayed the same combination of classicism and Modernism encountered in the architecture of the Upper Precinct. The *Godiva and Peeping Tom* clocktower is a playful interpretation of European clockwork clocktowers, with its hourly display of animated figurines (sculpted by Trevor Tennant)

acting out the city's medieval legend (Fig 69).¹⁴⁷ Walter Ritchie's 1959 *Man's Struggle* panels (Fig 72) (historically located in the Upper Precinct) and Trevor Tennant's 1953 *People of Coventry* were more overly Modernist, both sculpted from stone.¹⁴⁸ Together, these early works join the Upper Precinct in illustrating a key design philosophy that guided the development of Gibson's townscape – that the built environment should be just a backdrop to human activity, something that was interesting but not ostentatious and prominent but not overbearing.¹⁴⁹

- 7.2.1.6 Artwork dating from the 1960s onwards however, takes on increasingly abstract forms. Again, the step change can be associated with the changing philosophies of the city's leading architects, with Arthur Ling actively promoting wider use of the most contemporary materials in his commissioned works (both architecture and artistic). A nationally significant example is the concrete mural by William Mitchell that adorns the former Three Tuns Pub. Designed in 1966 it features a moulded design in his distinctive abstract-Aztec style (Fig 66).¹⁵⁰
- 7.2.1.7 Whilst the form of Coventry's post-war public artworks may have evolved markedly from Moderne-classicism into the more abstract, the materiality is more consistently grounded in traditional media. Sculpture and statuary are generally of cast-bronze (e.g. *Self Sacrifice* and *St Michael and the Devil* (Fig 65)) or stone (e.g. Jean Parker's 1986 *The Enfolding* (Fig 72), and Trevor Tennant's *People of Coventry*), with ceramics also used extensively (e.g. Cullen's mural of the Lower Precinct, and the *Martyr's Mosaic*). The extent and ambition of the centre's redevelopment did however provide ample opportunities for both artistic tradition and innovation. Several pieces survive, made of materials and developed using techniques closely associated with the Modernist era. A number are significant in their own right for their exceptional artistic interest, whilst all making valuable contributions to the townscape.
- 7.2.1.8 Joining the city's concrete post-war buildings, are a number of sculpted-concrete artworks, the most notable being the aforementioned William Mitchell moulded-concrete panels at the Bull Yard (Fig 66). Other examples include the *Belgrade Relief*, again in moulded-concrete (designed by James Brown of the City Architects Department in 1958, Fig 68), and the replica *Coventry Cross* which is a conglomeration of concrete and stone (George Wagstaffe, 1976).¹⁵¹ Innovations in fibreglass moulding are also evident, encountered in the cladding of Nos. 36-48 Hertford Street, where William Mitchell was again commissioned to create 54 moulded panels to adorn the W.S. Hattrell & Partners' scheme (1967-1969, Fig 47).^{152,*} Ling's use of neon-tube lighting in the Lower Precinct is also highly distinctive of the materiality of the early 20th century (Fig 70).
- 7.2.1.9 Jumping forward in time, the turn of the 21st century has witnessed a renewed interest in material-innovation, with steel and glass installations characterising the artwork installed within spaces created for the Phoenix Initiative millennium scheme.

* George Wagstaffe's 1962 *Phoenix* and Norelle Keddie's 1962 *Bryan Bailey Memorial* were also originally fibreglass and resin sculptures but have been recast in bronze following their gradual degradation.



Fig 67: A portion of Gordon Cullen's Coventry Mural, depicting key aspects of the city's history, including its ribbon making heritage (right), bicycle industry (centre) and post-war re-planning (left). Historic England (DPI64631)

7.3 Themes

- 7.3.1.1 Perhaps more than any other element of the built form, the design of public art often seeks to embody local cultural heritage, proactively drawing on the past, to immortalise local heroes, celebrate key events, or find inspiration through which to channel artistic creativity. Coventry is no exception, with an intimate relationship between art and heritage being one of the defining characteristics of the city centre.
- 7.3.1.2 The iconography of the city has been regularly embraced, with artists drawing a deep and sustained inspiration from the city's historical narratives, its renowned figures and its myths and legends. This is particularly evident within artwork dating from the post-war decades, where pieces have been used in attempts to anchor the radically modernised townscape to the city's deeper and fascinating history.¹⁵³
- 7.3.1.3 Many aspects of Coventry's heritage significance can be experienced through mediums such as sculpture, statuary and mosaic. Examples include its status as a powerful medieval city, its growth as an industrial powerhouse, its suffering as a wartime casualty and its efforts as a city of international reconciliation and as a centre of innovation in planning and architecture. This sub-section examines public art relative to these 'themes' of significance, as described in the Statement of Significance within this document.

City of Peace and Reconciliation

- 7.3.1.4 Coventry's post-war emergence as a centre for peace and reconciliation is central to its modern civic identity. This identity is however principally orientated around the results of social interactions that leave few physical legacies in the built environment. Public artwork has therefore become a well-established route along which Coventry has sought to memorialise its international connections, enabling the city to celebrate and commemorate key events, movements and individuals. This has been achieved to such an extent that alongside the ruinous cathedral and the city's museums, public artworks are today amongst the principal mediums through which to experience this aspect of local heritage.
- 7.3.1.5 As the icon of both the Coventry's Blitz and consequent recovery, the ruinous shell of St Michael's Cathedral has become a focal point for public sculpture. The *Charred Cross* is constructed of burnt roof timbers bound as a crucifix,^{*} and behind the cross are the words "Father Forgive" embossed in gold (Fig 68), permanently affixing the phrase first scribed onto the wall of the cathedral sanctuary by Provost Richard Howard in the immediate aftermath of the bombing. Other sculptures include *Reconciliation*, a bronze statue (Josefina de Vasconcellos, 1995, Fig 68) which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War^{154,†} and the *Choir of Survivors* (Helmut Heinze, 2012, Fig 68) commemorating the city's connections to Dresden, Germany and the loss of civilian life suffered by both during the war.
- 7.3.1.6 Several other artworks embracing the theme of peace and reconciliation are distributed across the centre. This includes (but is far from limited to) the Belgrade Theatre, named in commemoration of connections with the Serbian capital and featuring a 'ciment fondu' moulded model of a 17th century engraving by Giacomo de Rossi (1958, designed by James Brown, Fig 68)¹⁵⁵; *Phoenix* (George Wagstaffe, 1962, Fig 72) and the Upper Precinct's *Levelling Stone* (Fig 71) both share the "Phoenix rising from the flames" iconography and Coventry Market contains a painted mural in the Socialist Realist style designed in 1961 by Jurgen Seidel of Coventry's twinned city, Dresden (Fig 68).¹⁵⁶ Other commemorative features are located within spaces dedicated to the peace and reconciliation movements, such as Volgograd Place.[‡]

* The cross found today is a 1964 replica, with the original relocated within the modernist Cathedral.

† An identical cast was presented on behalf of the people of Coventry in the Peace Garden in Hiroshima, Japan.

‡ These are discussed in the 'Historic Open Spaces' section.

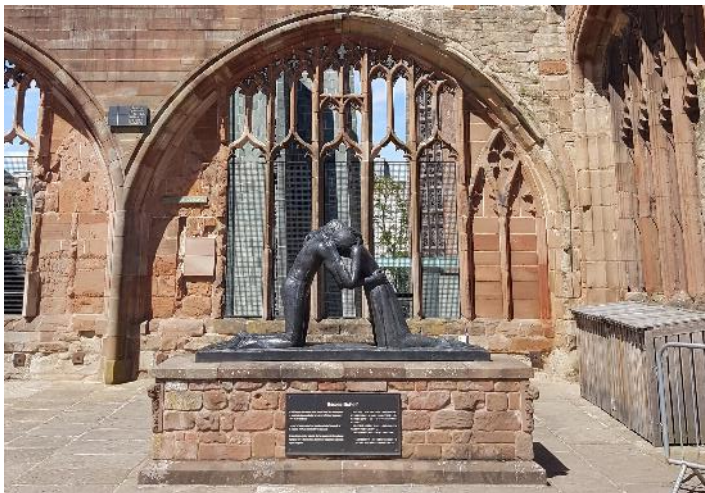


Fig 68: Clockwise from top-left: The Charred Cross and Father Forgive inscription, St Michael's. Diocese of Coventry; James Brown's commemorative relief, Belgrade Theatre. Historic England (DPI64671); Choir of Survivors, St Michael's; Reconciliation, St Michael's; Panel of Jurgens Seidel's mural in Coventry Market. Historic England (DP059624)



Fig 69: Peeping Tom, Hertford Street. Photograph by authors; Godiva and Peeping Tom Clocktower, Broadgate. Historic England (DPI 64601)

The Medieval City

- 7.3.1.7 Much of the statuary and sculpture inspired by Coventry's medieval heritage draws from the city's legendary tales, with Lady Godiva's mythical ride through the streets most frequently referenced. Donald Gibson actively embraced Coventry's medieval iconography as a means to enliven Broadgate and the Upper Precinct with public artworks. The *Self Sacrifice* statue of Lady Godiva (Fig 64) became the focal point of Broadgate in 1949, designed by Sir William Reid-Dick (now turned 90 degrees from its original axis).¹⁵⁷ The *Godiva and Peeping Tom* clocktower (1949, designed by Trevor Tennant, Fig 69¹⁵⁸), and a sculpted relief depicting the legend of *Sir Guy and the Dun Cow* (1952, by Alma Ramsey)* joined Godiva in Broadgate as more playful depictions of the Coventry legends.¹⁵⁹ Other examples include a large number of decorative features inspired by the city's Elephant and Castle coat of arms, including the pressed-aluminium *Broadgate Standard* (1948, Fig 65).¹⁶⁰
- 7.3.1.8 Other notable examples of artwork celebrating Coventry's medieval heritage include: Henry Wilson's statuary fronting the Council House, the *Martyrs Mosaic* at Broadgate House; the *Coventry Martyrs Memorial* (1910 design by G. Maile and Sons)¹⁶¹; the playfully grotesque *Peeping Tom* statue gazing down onto Hertford Street (Fig 69)[†]; sections of the Gordon Cullen tiled mural in the Lower Precinct (designed in 1958)¹⁶²; the *Sir Thomas White Memorial* (1833 by W.W. and T.W. Wills) at Greyfriars Green;

* The *Sir Guy and the Dun Cow* relief has subsequently been relocated to Shelton Square.

† The statue was moved from the Peeping Tom public house following its demolition.

and the stylised bollards used by the local authority within the centre's conservation areas, modelled on the elephant-and-castle iconography.¹⁶³

City of Industry

- 7.3.1.9 Whilst Coventry's post-war architects were focussed on relocating heavy industries outside of the centre, they were not averse to using art to celebrate the significant contribution of manufacturing and engineering to the economic prosperity of the city. Several such pieces survive, including the decorative neon-lighting installations of the Lower Precinct (City Architects Dept. 1958-1961, Fig 70) which depict the various facets of Coventry's industrial economy through time – cars, watches, textiles, bicycles, electrical engineering, aircraft, machine-tools, and space research.¹⁶⁴ Also in the Lower Precinct is Cullen's tiled mural which chronicles the history of the city, including its industrialisation and a series of abstract aluminium panels within the gallery balustrade based on motor crankshafts.¹⁶⁵ The concrete cast sculpture by William Mitchell at the Three Tuns Pub has also been interpreted, by some, as depicting cogs and gears in a highly abstract form (Fig 66).
- 7.3.1.10 Today, the people of Coventry continue to pride themselves on the city's centuries-long status as an industrial powerhouse. Responding to the rapid decline of industry in the later 20th century, there has been a steady increase in moves to both commemorate and celebrate a once dominant component of local society. As with many other former industrialised centres, public artwork has emerged as a principal means through which to achieve this, with several introduced in the last three decades. The modern focal point for industrial heritage is the Coventry Transport Museum, fronting which is Millennium Place that contains a number of pieces. Two of the most notable are dedicated to Sir Frank Whittle, the Coventry-born pioneer of the jet engine, including a towering twin-arched structure and a bronze statue (by Faith Winter, 2007, Fig 70). The Canal Basin, once a major conduit for goods moving in and out of the city, has been gentrified in recent decades with the addition of commemorative artwork, including a statue of James Brindley (design by James Butler, 1998, Fig 70), and a mosaic celebrating industrial heritage (design by Rosalind Wates, 1997).¹⁶⁶ The *Thread Through Time* sculpture at the Bull Yard (design by Robert Conybear and Uta Molling, 1999) is commemorative in both form and material, spinning the stories of Coventry's rich histories. It is cast as a spool of thread formed of recycled concrete, stone and brick sourced from a demolished Rolls Royce (and former Armstrong Siddley) factory.¹⁶⁷

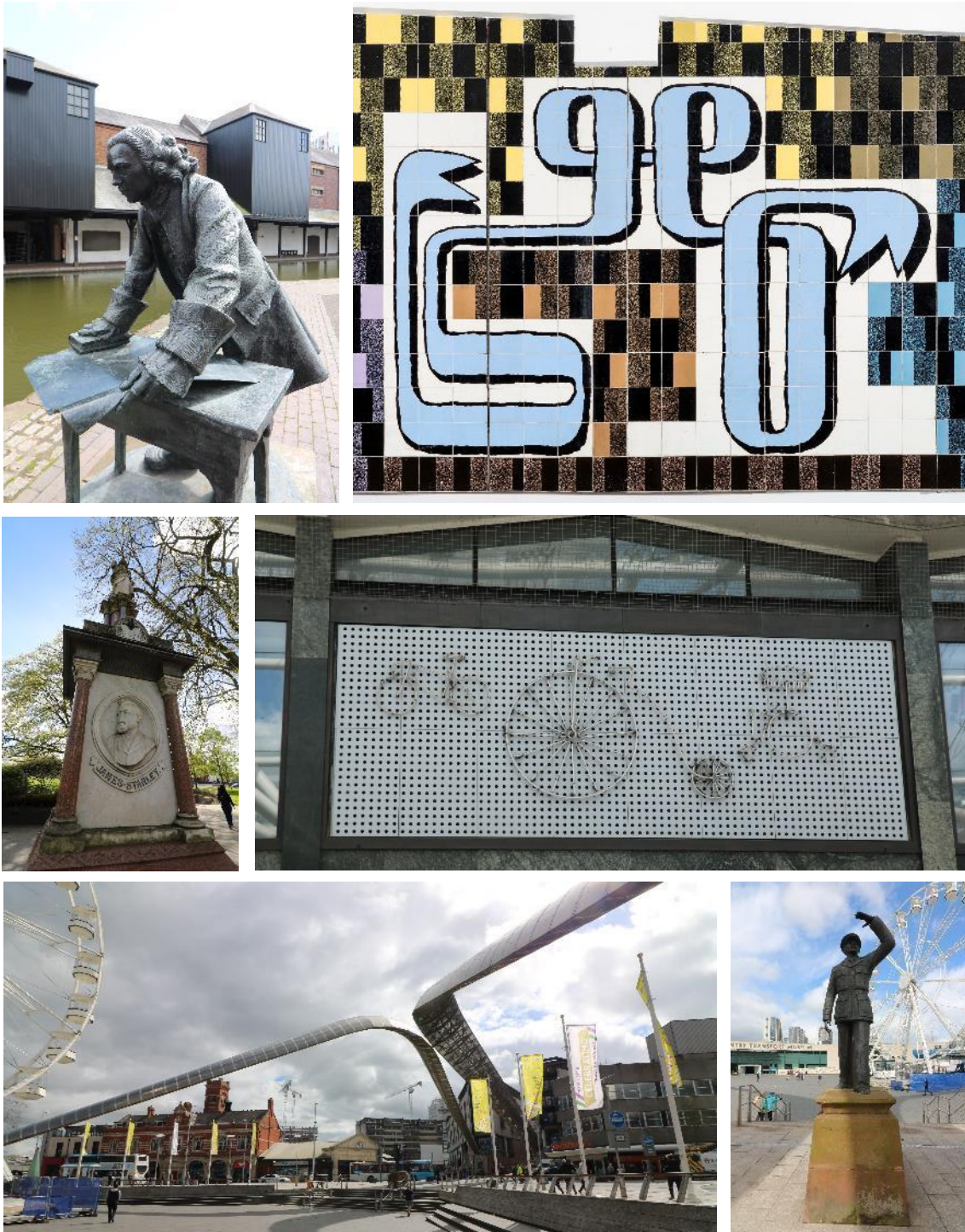


Fig 70: Clockwise from top-left: James Brindley statue, Canal Basin; Detail of the ribbon-making portion of Cullen's mural. Historic England (DPI 64633); Neon signage of the Lower Precinct commemorating the bicycle industry; Frank Whittle Statue, Millennium Place; Whittle Arch, Millennium Place; James Starley Memorial, Greyfriars Green. Photographs by authors

Post-War Planned City*

- 7.3.1.11 The scale of ambition for the redevelopment of Coventry was recognised widely at the time, leading to acts of commemoration to mark key events and individuals, including commissioned artwork for the public realm. Today these pieces stand as reminders of a time when the emerging Modernist townscape was seen to be heralding a new age for the historic town. Unsurprisingly these works are located within the focal points for the city's regeneration - the commercial and civic precincts.
- 7.3.1.12 The *Levelling Stone* of the Upper Precinct (designed by Gibson, sculpted by Trevor Tennant, 1946, Fig 71) was placed both to celebrate Victory Day in June 1946 and to commemorate the official inauguration of the re-building of the city.¹⁶⁸ In a similar vein, *Princess Elizabeth's Pillar* (design by James Brown, John Skelton[†], and Donald Gibson) commemorates the ceremonial laying of the first stone of Broadgate House, the first of the centre's post-war modernist buildings on 22nd May 1948. The pillar is inscribed with various sculpted motifs, celebrating both the Princess's visit, and a visit by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.^{169,‡} Further commemorative examples are found within Gordon Cullen's tiled mosaic, a part of which depicts a masterplan for the new centre.¹⁷⁰ A modern information board at the eastern ramp of the Upper Precinct discusses the influence of Donald Gibson on the emergence of the new townscape.
- 7.3.1.13 Within the civic precinct, specifically the courtyard within the old Civic Offices (occasionally referred to as 'Palace Yard'), are a number of interesting features which loosely fit the definition of public art. Around the courtyard are arranged a number of panels and surfacing, using a mixture of materials labelled by name. These were designed as a visual reference point for the city architects and as a means of communicating different options for the material construction of the new townscape to councillors and members of the public.¹⁷¹ The features concisely illustrate the broader philosophies, or even doctrine, of Donald Gibson and his team, actively encouraging public engagement with the planning and design processes. The courtyard also contains two drained pools which were prototypes for features that would adorn the Upper Precinct (now removed).[§]

* The significance of the forms, materials and history of the centre's post-war public artwork is discussed overleaf.

† Skelton also sculpted the row of pillars that front the Co-operative building on Corporation Street, which celebrate the organisation's various commercial offers (grocery, transportation, recreation etc.).

‡ The pillar also includes Ancient Egyptian iconography in the form of the symbol of Akhenaten, the pharaoh who abandoned his capital at Thebes to create a new, wholly planned city. The symbol was appropriated by the city architects as a playful piece of historicism, reflecting their ambitions for the wholesale renewal of Coventry over three millennia later.

§ One of the pools once also featured *The Naiad*, a locally renowned sculpture by George Wagstaffe in 1958 who also sculpted Phoenix and elements of the reconstructed Coventry Cross.

Post-War Public Artwork in Coventry

The post-war decades heralded a golden era for the integration of public art within planning and urban design. The artistic enrichment of public spaces was seen as a direct route by which to enhance people's day-to-day lives, bringing extraordinary features into everyday spaces. These philosophies were closely linked to the national agenda for civic renewal and the increasingly progressive thinking permeating the planning and architectural professions. Public art thus emerged as an intrinsic component within many programmes for urban regeneration, with local government authorities becoming major sources of artistic patronage from the 1950s through to the 1980s.

Public art was often commissioned as a means of helping mitigate the impact of the often large-scale of change incurred within urban centres, ensuring "human interest" and "aesthetic pleasure" were interlaced within the new environments. Like the Modernist movement as a whole, the artworks were exceptionally diverse in both form and materials, actively embracing new technologies and media as they emerged throughout the second half of the 20th century. Works ranged from abstract statuary, fine art bronze sculptures and concrete reliefs, to fibreglass murals. Many works were also located away from the traditional settings for public art (such as civic squares), with an increasing focus on the enrichment of other domains of public life, such as schools, housing estates and retail centres.

Under Gibson's leadership, the Architect's Department paired its high ambitions for a radical 'new' Coventry, with a desire to retain a distinctive civic identity for the city. Coventry's post-war planners thus proactively embraced public art, seeing it as a key medium through which to achieve this. Public artwork was seen as a means of creating a *local* sense of place in an ostensibly new environment - establishing new landmarks, acting as focal points, broadening the local material palette and helping to reinforce a distinctive townscape character. With this in mind, commissioned artists were actively encouraged to adopt the established historical iconography of the city, to help re-orientate the local population within their comprehensively revamped city centre.

The principles laid down by Gibson's team would be sustained through subsequent generations of local planners and architects, with public artwork an equally significant element of the townscapes crafted under Arthur Ling (1964-1973), and to a continued but lesser extent, under Terence Gregory (1973-1994). Like the centre's post-war architecture, its surviving public artworks have therefore come to manifest several decades of the evolving styles, materials and fashions that defined the Modernist era.

For a broader context and further information on the emergence of the post-war public art movement, see Historic England's Introduction to Heritage Assets: Public Art 1945-95 (Pearson & Stamper 2016) and Post-War Public Art: Protection, Care and Conservation (Franklin 2016).



Fig 71: The Levelling Stone of the Upper Precinct commemorates the official start of the city's post-war reconstruction. Top-left: The Levelling Stone today, featuring its phoenix-from-the-flames iconography; Top-right: Boy examining the stone at some point between 1960-1969. Historic England (AA98_06069); Bottom: Unveiling of the Levelling Stone, V-Day 8th June 1946. Coventry Archive

7.4 Distribution

Changing Contexts

- 7.4.1.1 A consistent trend across Coventry's public art is that remarkably few of its sculptures, statues, mosaics and murals are today found in the location they were originally designed to occupy.
- 7.4.1.2 This is unsurprising in the context of its Victorian and early 20th century features, given the radical transformation of the townscape in the post-war decades. Numerous and once prominent, artworks were removed as the streets and spaces within which they were sited were cleared for the transformative post-war redevelopment of the city centre. Whilst Coventry was never widely renowned for the quantity or quality of its historic statuary*, this nonetheless has resulted in a disproportionate impact, with exceedingly few (if any) pre-war artworks encountered in their original settings.
- 7.4.1.3 More surprising, however, is the extent and frequency in which the centre's post-war artworks have been relocated. Many pieces have been re-sited as the public realm within the Modernist townscape has been redesigned by successive generations of city planning and highways departments. With the strategic positioning of artwork an integral design feature of the post-war schemes (as discussed in the 'Post-War Public Art in Coventry' insert), the sustained removal of post-war art from the public realm has represented an incremental but notable erosion on the ability to appreciate the design principles that underpinned the city's reconstruction.
- 7.4.1.4 The commercial precincts have been particularly affected. A notable loss has been that of Walter Ritchie's *Man's Struggle* panels, which once featured prominently within the Upper Precinct (Fig 72). They are now affixed to the southern façade of the Herbert Art Gallery (facing onto Jordan Well), having been relocated consequent to the redesign of the Precinct's ramps and staircases. Similarly, Cullen's *Coventry Mural* (Fig 67) has been relocated to the periphery of the Lower Precinct. All of the once multiple sculptures that lined Smithford Way and Market Way have also been removed, originally designed to punctuate the precinct's north/south axis with nodes of artistic interest. *The Enfolding* and the *Mother and Children* sculptures, (by Jean Parker and Gary Galpin respectively) were both introduced to Smithford Way in 1986 but have now joined *Man's Struggle* at the Herbert Art Gallery (Fig 72).¹⁷² George Wagstaffe's 1962 *Phoenix* sculpture once resided on Market Way but has since been re-cast and relocated to the Bull Yard (Fig 72).¹⁷³ Others have been wholly lost, including Market Way's *Abstract Forms*, by Elizabeth Greenwood (1961).¹⁷⁴

* The relatively low density of Victorian statuary is quite unusual, given the era is generally seen as the 'golden age' of commemorative sculpture. This is linked to a broader lack of Victorian-era development of the city centre, which concurrently resulted in the lack of sufficient civic provisions and modern infrastructure that were seen to be of great hindrance to the city's prosperity in the early decades of the 20th century.

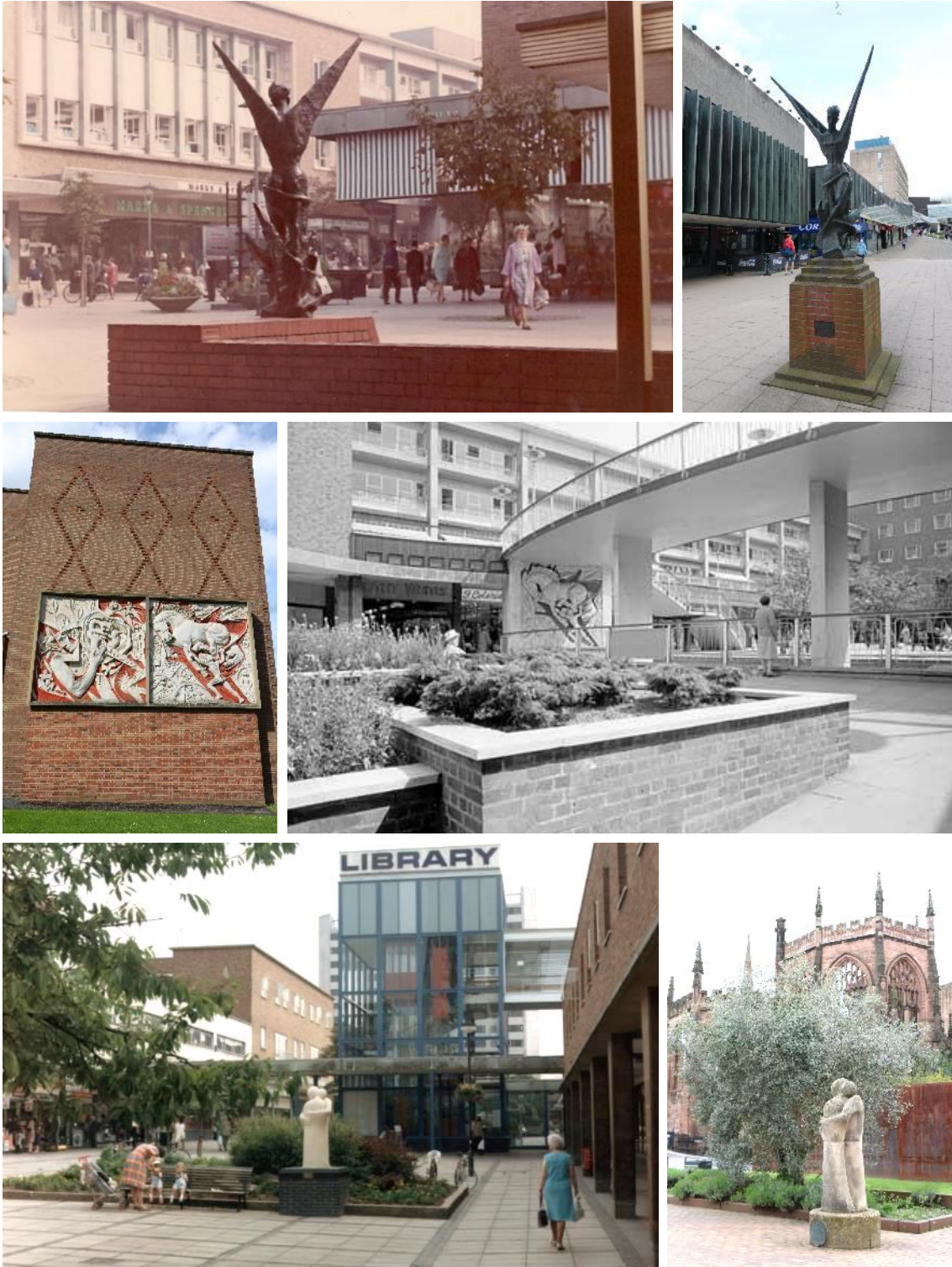


Fig 72: Changing contexts of Coventry's post-war public art. Top to bottom: The Phoenix, originally at the northern extent of Market Way (left), now Hertford Street (right); Man's Struggle, originally of the Upper Precinct (right; Historic England (AA98_06070)), now affixed to the southern façade of the Herbert Art Gallery (left); The Enfolding, originally of Smithford Way, photographed 1986 (left; Coventry Archive / Culture Coventry Trust), now found in University Square (right).

Modern Focal Points

- 7.4.1.5 Whilst still spread broadly across the assessment area, the persistent relocation of the centre's statuary and sculpture has resulted in something of a densification of the assessment area's public artwork. Today, these works are generally encountered clustered around significant buildings and spaces, moved to their new locations on an ad-hoc basis, and informally curated into new focal points of artistic interest.

Commercial Precinct and Broadgate

- 7.4.1.6 Whilst somewhat thinned-out, the commercial precinct retains a notable collection of artworks. The *Levelling Stone* is still located within the Upper Precinct (Fig 71), whilst the Lower Precinct also retains the distinctive neon-lighting installation, *Coventry's Industries* (Arthur Long, 1958-1961, Fig 70) which celebrate the city's industrial heritage, alongside the aforementioned *Coventry Mural* (Fig 67).¹⁷⁵ A glass mosaic features on the façade of the Coventry City Library (formerly the Locarno ballroom), designed by the artist Fred Millett between 1958 and 1960.¹⁷⁶
- 7.4.1.7 In contrast to the commercial precincts, Broadgate (the Modernist townscape's major public space) has fared relatively well in the retention of its post-war artwork. The majority of the pieces introduced by Gibson remain in place, including the *Self Sacrifice* statue of Lady Godiva (Fig 64), the *Godiva and Peeping Tom* clocktower (Fig 69), the commemorative carved *Princess Elizabeth Pillar* of Broadgate House and the *Broadgate Standard* (also known as the *Elephant Mast*) sited between Broadgate House and the old Leofric Hotel (Fig 65).¹⁷⁷

St Michael's Cathedral

- 7.4.1.8 The ruined St Michael's Cathedral hosts a rich assemblage of significant artistic works, with many focussing on the city's links to international reconciliation. The commemorative monuments are joined by a number of other pieces, most notable of which are two sculptures by renowned Modernist artist Sir Jacob Epstein most prominent of which is his *St Michael and the Devil* sculpture (1960, Fig 65), which adorns the eastern façade of Sir Basil Spence's cathedral, and *Ecce Homo* (created 1934, erected 1969) which is located within the ruins.¹⁷⁸

Herbert Art Gallery and University Square

- 7.4.1.9 Immediately adjacent to the cathedral, the gallery and square have become natural points of gravitation for both new public sculptures, and for existing pieces that required relocating during the aforementioned processes of urban renewal. Joining *Man's Struggle* in its move from the commercial precincts are *The Enfolding* and *Mother and Children* sculptures. A statue of Elizabeth Frink (design by F.E. McWilliam in 1956), herself the sculpture of the Modernist cathedral's eagle lectern¹⁷⁹ is located at the gallery's former entrance, alongside *Barra Suite No. 5* (Tim Threlfall, 1992)¹⁸⁰ and a number of more recent pieces commemorating both the city's lost historic buildings,

and its international connections through twinned cities. University Square's most notable artwork is the *Coventry Boy* (1966 by Philip Bentham), although Epstein's *St Michael and the Devil Sculpture*, affixed to the cathedral (Fig 65), is most readily appreciated from within this space.

Other Focal Points

- 7.4.1.10 Greyfriars's Green - Notable for a collection of Victorian statuary (unique within the assessment area) including the *James Starley Memorial* (1884 by James Whitehead and Sons, Fig 70)¹⁸¹, the *Sir Thomas White Memorial* (1883) and the *Memorial Trough to Caroline Bray* (1878).¹⁸²
- 7.4.1.11 Millennium Place – Including the towering Whittle Arch (1999-2003, design by MJP with Whitbybird, Fig 70), a bronze statue commemorating Sir Frank Whittle (Fig 70), the Coventry-born pioneer of the jet engine and a commemorative public bench (design by Jochen Gerz).¹⁸³
- 7.4.1.12 Bull Yard – Featuring William Mitchell's famed concrete-moulded mural (Fig 66), which is joined by a relocated *Phoenix* (George Wagstaffe, 1962, Fig 72) and the *Thread Through Time* (Robert Conybear and Uta Molling, 1998).
- 7.4.1.13 Corporation Street and the Belgrade Theatre - Featuring the Co-Operative Store columns (Coventry and District Co-Operative Wholesale Society, 1956), the *Belgrade City Relief* and other commemorative sculptures such as the Bryan Bailey memorial (Norelle Keddie, 1960).¹⁸⁴
- 7.4.1.14 Coventry Market – Including a range of notable features such as a terrazzo mosaic floor, the aforementioned Socialist Realist-style mural by Jurgen Seidel (Fig 68), colourful figures of mermaids, sailors and Neptune (by Jim Brown, late 1950s) moved from the demolished fish market and a children's merry-go-round inherited from the pre-war market place (designed by David Mason) which celebrates the city's industrial heritage.¹⁸⁵
- 7.4.1.15 Coventry Canal – The Canal Basin (located within the assessment area) features a number of commemorative pieces including a bronze statue of James Brindley (James Butler, 1998, Fig 70) a mosaic (Rosalind Wates), which begin a 5.5 mile of art stretching from the basin to the Hawkesbury Junction.¹⁸⁶

8 VIEWS, LANDMARKS AND SETTING

8.1 The Visual Experience of the City Centre

8.1.1 Views of National Significance

8.1.1.1 A number of views have come to define Coventry at a national and sometimes international level. These encapsulate key elements of the city's history and are symbolic of Coventry's rich cultural heritage and are now central to its iconography in their own right. The views largely anchor on the centre's ecclesiastical heritage assets, particularly St Michael's Cathedral.

8.1.1.2 The Three Spires of Coventry are particularly iconic, having dominated the city's skyline for centuries, reflected in a wealth of depictions within historical artwork, photography and literature. Whilst the experience of these towering heritage assets has been much altered, following decades of intensive redevelopment within the city centre, they remain at the heart of Coventry's visual identity, with several important viewing points surviving across the assessment area. The Three Spires are discussed in further detail in the Landmark Buildings section (8.1.2).

8.1.1.3 For many in England, the first images of the damage wrought upon the centre by the Blitz were newspaper photographs taken from within the bombed-out St Michael's Cathedral, looking across the rubble-strewn interior towards the eastern sanctuary, with open-sky viewed through its bombed-out windows and roof. These visceral images were splashed across front pages across the country and used frequently within newsreels, with the ruinous shell embodying the suffering of the city, but also the resilience of its population in the face of adversity. In the aftermath of the bombing, the view would again be captured in artworks that have consequently become much celebrated historical pieces, such as John Piper's 1940 oil *Interior of Coventry Cathedral*. The composition was also frequently revisited, including in the framing of one of the city's most widely recognisable historical photographs, depicting Churchill's visit to the city in November 1940 (Fig 73). The retention of the ruined cathedral, as a monument to Coventry's wartime devastation, has preserved the view, allowing this turning point in the city's history to be understood and appreciated by subsequent generations of locals and visitors.

8.1.1.4 Famous views have also been created from the reconstruction of the centre. Unsurprisingly, views of Basil Spence's cathedral are renowned at both national and international level, with the building's clean, newly constructed, Moderne aesthetic, providing a visual metaphor for the city's rebirth, sitting in stark juxtaposition to the aforementioned wartime imagery of its ruinous sibling. Particular perspectives are of heightened significance, including those that were frequently depicted by Spence during the design of the cathedral, and consequently used in the promotion of the building and the wider city during the post-war decades. Perhaps most notable are views along the eastern elevation facing into University Square (Fig 74).¹⁸⁷



Fig 73: The ruins of St Michael's Cathedral today (top) and framing Churchill's visit in the immediate aftermath of the November 1940 attacks. Coventry Archive



Fig 74: The union of 'Old' and 'New' St Michael's Cathedral as envisaged by Sir Basil Spence in 1951 (top) and delivered (bottom) Sir Basil Spence. Historic Environment Scotland; © J & L Gibbons | Sarah Blee

8.1.2 **Landmark Buildings**

City of the Three Spires

- 8.1.2.1 For centuries, the city's skyline was dominated by a triumvirate of towering ecclesiastical landmarks - the famed Three Spires of Coventry (Fig 75). These are the spires of St Michael's Cathedral, Holy Trinity Church, and Christ Church, all standing as testament to the grandeur of the old town. Their dominance was the result of their vertical scale (by far the town's tallest buildings), striking architecture, and the local topography.* The Three Spires have, therefore, become central to Coventry's identity, drawing many to visit the city, and featuring in an array of artwork, literature and photography.
- 8.1.2.2 The physical prominence of the Three Spires (as a group) has however been notably diminished over the last fifty to sixty years, to such an extent that it is now a rare privilege to encounter views which encapsulate all three.†
- 8.1.2.3 The principal cause has been the post-war redevelopment of the city centre (Fig 76). The ring road has introduced an extensive and pervasive visual barrier that hinders inward views from all directions, including many historic viewpoints on approaches to and from the city centre. The ring road does however provide an elevated (and exclusively vehicular) viewing platform encircling the city centre, allowing appreciation of the Three Spires, and the modern eclecticism of the centre's skyline. In some places it has also appropriated historic viewpoints that were once experienced along routes leading into/away from the centre. Within the ring road post-war development has brought numerous buildings of ten-storeys and upwards with several more under construction), usurping the spires' once total dominance of the skyline. Within the city centre, the majority of the post-war buildings have also pushed above four-storeys, creating a step-change in urban scale and massing and again obscuring many historic local views.
- 8.1.2.4 Today, the experience of the Three Spires is therefore transformed from that which granted them such an iconic status. Their once immense collective influence over the townscape is now more discrete and, like much of the centre's medieval heritage, is often concealed. The proximity of St Michael's and Holy Trinity does ensure the two remain visible as a striking pair in several locations, although these views are again occasionally intruded upon by post-war architecture.

* Both St Michael's and Holy Trinity are located at the Hill Top, enhancing their sense of scale relative to buildings in surrounding, lower-lying areas. Further, to the north, south and west of the centre, the land rises in escarpments to higher ground, which would have provided sweeping vistas of the city (and the Three Spires' dominance) as one approached or departed.

† Detailed assessment and mapping of views of the Three Spires has been undertaken by preceding projects. See: the Coventry View Management Framework (Coventry City Council, 2011) for visual analysis of views of the Three Spires within approaches to the city centre.

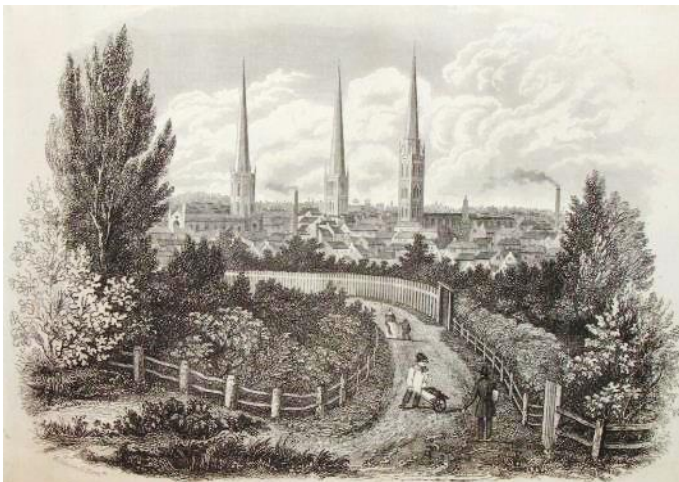
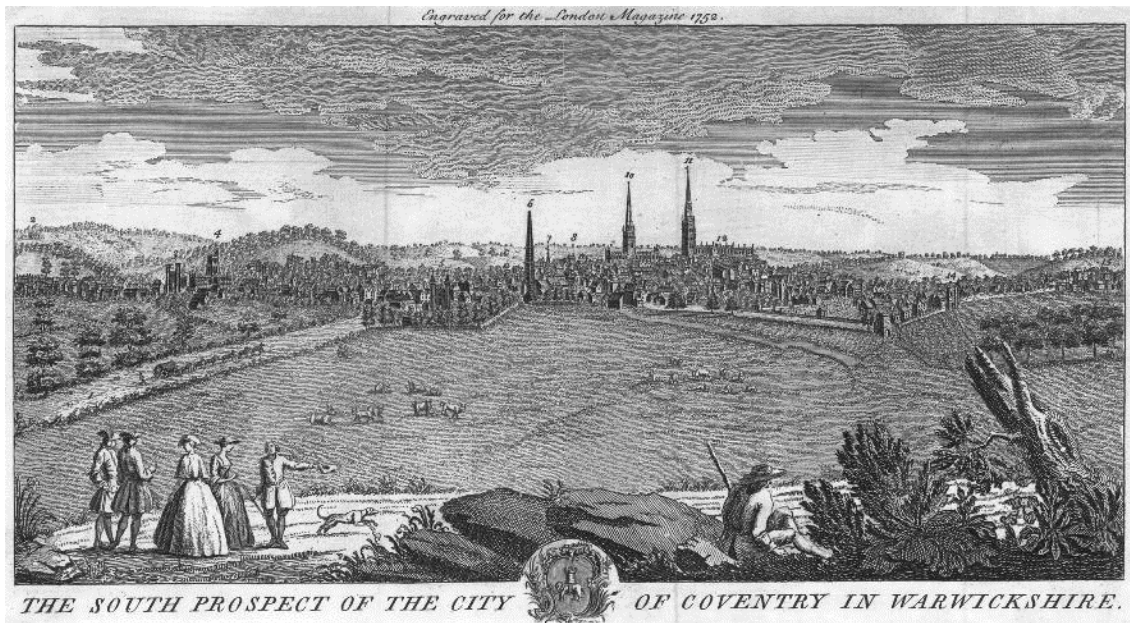


Fig 75: The city's famed Three Spires have been captured in a plethora of historical artwork and photography, illustrating their iconic status to Coventry. For instance (clockwise from top): A 1752 engraving by John Hinton of the city from the south. Coventry Archive; View from Warwick Row, 1895. Historic England (4063_070); Postcard depicting the view looking across Greyfriars Green in early 20th century; c.1848 engraving View from the Park by Wilkinson; Lammas Day by David Gee c.1842. The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry



Fig 76: Coventry's skyline has changed dramatically since the Second World War, with the Three Spires now, with few exceptions, largely only visible together from the rooftops of new tower blocks (e.g. bottom image, taken from the new Coventry City Council offices). Historic views, where surviving, have often been impacted upon, exemplified by views from Bishop Street (shown top-left in the 1945 documentary A City Reborn), which was impeded by the development of municipal offices (top-right). Photographs by authors

8.1.2.5

Each of the trio do, however, remain undisputed landmarks of the city centre, highly conspicuous through their scale and form, and regularly glimpsed above building-lines, along historic streets, and from key public spaces. Within the assessment area they are experienced in numerous locations with examples including significant historic vistas (such as views along Hay Lane, Little Park Street, and across Greyfriars Green), and those created in both the post-war (e.g. the axial view of St Michael's through Upper

Precinct) and modern era (e.g. views along the northern façade of Coventry University's new 'The Hub' building).*

- 8.1.2.6 Whilst attention is usually on views towards the spires, views from them are also significant. The opportunity to climb St Michael's tower is now offered to visitors to the cathedral, who are rewarded with magnificent panoramic views across the city centre. This relic of the old town thus provides the best means of appreciating the rigidly planned layout of the new, with the full extent of the modernist townscape revealing itself only from this top-down perspective.

Other Landmarks

- 8.1.2.7 A number of other buildings join the Three Spires and Modernist towers as physical landmarks within the city centre.
- 8.1.2.8 Several landmark tower-blocks remain from the centre's post-war development boom. All were the product of the tenures of Arthur Ling and Terrance Gregory, the city's second and third Chief Architects respectively. Both enthusiastically pursued the use of tall buildings at strategic points within their schemes, using terminating buildings as a means of creating a sense of intrigue and/or a sense of enclosure.¹⁸⁸ Three tower-blocks terminate views along the commercial precincts' cardinal axes, with Mercia House to the west, Hillman House to the north, and (soon to be demolished) Coventry Point to the south (Fig 77). Two other terminal tower-blocks are encountered within the Civic Precinct – 'G Block' of Priory Hall which sits prominently to the northern end of University Square, and the Municipal Offices of the Civic Centre (also known as Civic Centre Tower located off Little Park Street).[†]
- 8.1.2.9 Whilst designed without the grand spires that characterise many cathedrals, Sir Basil Spence's cathedral is an undoubted landmark of the townscape, both physically and culturally. Due to its lack of vertical prominence, it is largely experienced from within its immediate environment, but achieves landmark status through its positioning within some of the city's (aforementioned) historically significant views and the active gravitation of visitors towards it, as often the first port-of-call to those seeking to appreciate its internationally renowned architectural and historical interest. There are occasional glimpsed views of its relatively minimalist, metal spire, but these are relatively fleeting.
- 8.1.2.10 The Church of St John the Baptist (Fig 23) is a landmark in the west of the assessment area, terminating views when looking north along Queen Victoria Road. The church's prominence was however once far more striking, acting as the gateway building at a

* Localised views of the historic landmarks are mapped in detail in the 'Landscape and Urban Design' section of the Coventry Cathedral Conservation Management Plan (*in prep*), the City Centre Area Action Plan (Coventry City Council 2017, 52-102) and City Centre Urban Design Framework (Coventry City Council 2009, 19-23).

† At the time of writing, 'G Block' was scheduled for imminent demolition (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/0362) and the proposed demolition of the Municipal Offices (and other elements of the Civic Centre) was pending decision (LPA Planning Reference FUL/2017/3089).



Fig 77: The “Terminating Blocks”, from left to right: Mercia House, Hillman House, and Coventry Point. Historic England (DPI 64634; DPI 64643; DPI 72622)

key junction when entering the medieval city from the west. The post-war reengineering of the city centre has altered this landmark status considerably.*

8.1.2.11 The Council House acts as a landmark both physically and politically (Fig 35). Contrary to the experience of the Church of St John the Baptist, the landmark status of the Council House was elevated during the post-war development of the Civic Precinct, with the buildings that once lined the eastern side of Little Park Street (leading south away from Council House) cleared away, significantly broadening views of the Tudor Revival-styled frontage on approach from the south.

8.1.2.12 Although the ring road is undoubtedly a barrier for movement to and from the city centre, its construction did, in places, create interesting new gateways, with adjacent buildings sometimes elevated to landmark status. The Gosford Street approach is perhaps the most notable for its architectural interest, marked by the eclectic partnership of the early 20th century engine factory (90-94 Gosford Street), and its neighbouring Frederick Lanchester Building.

8.1.3 **Visual Experiences of the Planned Townscape**

8.1.3.1 The visual experience of the post-war townscape was an important consideration of its design. This is particularly apparent within the commercial precincts, where today there remains a strong sense of visual control – a sense that views and vistas have been carefully designed to aid in navigation, and curate the experiences of the place.

* The church once marked the junction of routes leading into the city from the west (along Spon Street, Holyhead Road or Hill Street), which conjoined to form Fleet Street and the start/end of a major east-to-west artery that bisected the city. The post-war redevelopment of the centre altered the local highway-infrastructure significantly, creating a new ring road system which, in places, wholly over-wrote the east-to-west route. Development along Corporation Street and Queen Victoria Road introduced a long and largely impermeable building-line between church and centre. These combine to diminish St John’s historical status as among the city’s most important notable landmarks.



Fig 78: The Beaux-Arts inspired axial layout of the commercial precinct creates a number of distinctive views. Most striking is the view of the spire of St Michael's Cathedral, onto which the Upper Precinct was intentionally orientated by its architects (bottom). Later, the later 'terminating blocks' were also aligned to the axis, for instance Mercia House sited to the west and visible when looking down the precincts' east/west route between Broadgate and Lower Precinct (top). Historic England (DPI64313; DPI64623)

- 8.1.3.2 Most eye-catching are the precinct's landmark terminating buildings, as discussed above, but the effect is largely created by more subtle characteristics. Despite the precinct's relatively humanistic scale, its axial layout, the relative consistency in form and massing, pervasive buildings lines, and lack of gap sites, create strong visual enclosure, with very few views afforded out from streets and plazas into other areas of the centre. Views within the precincts are consequently dominated by 20th century development (the view across Broadgate to St Michael's being the very notable exception (Fig 78)), plainly illustrating the planned nature of the space, contrasting markedly to the far more organic, and less curated views of the Hill Top and other surviving historic areas.
- 8.1.3.3 The visual enclosure of the commercial precinct does however reduce the ability to appreciate its designed layout as a whole, amongst key element of its architectural and historical interest, with few views encapsulating large swathes of the townscape and its morphology. Somewhat ironically, the main exception is granted by Coventry's medieval heritage – the view from atop St Michael's spire (now open to the public as a tourist attraction), with panoramic views across the city, including the commercial precinct. This is the only place within the city where the full extent and layout of the centre's post-war redevelopment can be understood and appreciated in person.
- 8.1.3.4 Navigation of the precincts is also a carefully designed experience. Donald Gibson, in particular, was interested in creating specific points of visual interest, to aid in navigation through memorable points of visual interest. This has been achieved in a large part through the strategic positioning of public artwork (discussed in further detail in the respective section of this report).¹⁸⁹ Today a much smaller collection of works survives in their original context*, most notably the *Self Sacrifice* statue of Lady Godiva of Broadgate (Fig 64), and the Godiva and Peeping Tom clocktower of Broadgate House (Fig 69).

8.2 Relationships with the Wider City

- 8.2.1.1 Whilst Coventry's commercial precincts are most often the focus of discussion pertaining to the legacies of the city's post-war planning, the reengineering of its central road network has been of at least equal, if not greater impact, on the experience of heritage within the townscape.
- 8.2.1.2 Coventry was once a city laid out around major routes running into the city from north, east, southwest and west, all converging on the major crossroads at Broadgate. This historic layout was however overhauled in the post-war decades, with the comprehensive reorganisation of the local road system, with planners seeking to overcome the chronic issues with traffic congestion and overcrowding through a more contemporary approach to highway design.¹⁹⁰

* Many, however, have been removed or relocated such as Walter Ritchie's *Man's Struggle* that once adorned the Upper Precinct (now located at the Herbert Art Gallery).

- 8.2.1.3 The impact of these changes on the experience of the centre's historic environment has been profound (see Fig 79).
- 8.2.1.4 These historical road axes have been largely over-written. The major east-to-west road through the city centre* has been truncated and, whilst the north-to-south route† survives, it has been fragmented to such an extent that its historical primacy in the townscape has been largely concealed. This has resulted in quite significant changes to the experience of a number of heritage assets, an exemplar of which is St John the Baptist Church‡.
- 8.2.1.5 Coventry's historic core (and its constituent heritage assets and historic areas) are today encapsulated within the concrete collar of its circulatory ring road. Many of the historic arteries into the city have been (at worst) wholly truncated, or (at best) relegated in the local hierarchy, often only notionally sustained as footbridges or (rather unwelcoming) underpasses. The city centre could therefore be argued to have returned to its "walled city" status, with access again heavily limited by a barrier, albeit one now built of reinforced concrete in place of stone.
- 8.2.1.6 The legibility of historical functional relationships between the centre and surrounding areas have also been diminished (as discussed in the following sub-sections), whilst the extent of many historic views into and out of the city centre have been curtailed (as discussed in the preceding section). The townscape character of the centre's more immediate environs has also been heavily modified, with swathes of townscape demolished to enable construction of the ring road and adjacent modernist estates, eroding a once more seamless transition between the centre and its surroundings.

Industrial Environs

- 8.2.1.7 The majority of Coventry's industrial historic environments are today encountered outside of the city centre. This includes several 19th century working suburbs and the Coventry Canal, which all retain many distinctive characteristics and significant heritage assets that collectively illustrate this pivotal epoch of Coventry's history.
- 8.2.1.8 Many of Coventry's industrial suburbs (e.g. Earlsdon, Hillfields and Chapelfields) have retained an integrity of historic character, testament to their genesis as combined productive and domestic communities which helped the city flourish through ribbon weaving and watchmaking in the 18th and 19th century. Within these historic settlements there is a relatively good level of survival of utilitarian buildings including former workshops, and examples of the mixed-use top-shops that became synonymous with the city's textile and light-manufacturing industries. The suburbs also retain large quantities of Victorian era housing, particularly the villas and terraces developed to cater for the demands of a rapidly growing industrial middle-class.

* Formed of (west to east) Spon Street, Fleet Street, Smithford Street, Broadgate, High Street, Earl Street, Jordan Well, and Gosford Street.

† Formed of (north to south) Bishop Street, The Burges, Cross Cheaping, Broadgate, Hertford Street, and Warwick Road

‡ Discussed in detail in the Landmark Buildings section (8.1.2).



Fig 79: The city centre with its 'concrete collar'. Aerial view from the southeast (top). The 'Hill Cross' section of the ring road (bottom). Historic England (33181_013; DPI64733)

- 8.2.1.9 The Coventry Canal (built between 1769-1790) extends over thirty-eight miles from the central canal basin to the Fradley Junction, forming a dominant feature in the north of the city. When navigating the canal today by foot or water, one encounters many features of historical and architectural interest. The canal (itself a pioneering piece of engineering), retains many of its original bridges and mileposts, whilst many buildings survive adjacent to the canal pertaining to ribbon weaving (e.g. Cash's Model Factory, Cash's Lane ¹⁹¹), automotive and bicycle manufacturing (e.g. the former Challenge Cycle and Motor Works, Foleshill Road ¹⁹²), chemical production and munitions manufacturing. The layout of several of the neighbouring areas (such as Longford) have also been strongly influenced by the canal.¹⁹³
- 8.2.1.10 The post-war encapsulation of the city centre has, however, diminished the ability to appreciate historical functional relationships between these surviving industrial areas and the city centre, in turn exacerbating the effects of the centre's relatively low levels of survival of industrial heritage assets. Historical routes, that were once the arteries for the movement of people and goods between these areas and the industrial heart of Coventry, have been fragmented. For instance, the experience of navigating between the centre and the canal basin along Bishop Street (once the major northern route into and out of the city) has changed dramatically, now requiring the use of a raised footbridge over the ring road, whilst Bishop Street itself has been relegated significantly in the local street hierarchy. It is consequently hard to appreciate the enormous scale of Coventry's industrialisation, and the historical interdependency between the centre and its environs, while within the city centre. This compounds the low levels of legibility of the pivotal role manufacturing and engineering played in the story of Coventry, when examining its physical form alone*.

Green Space and Trees

- 8.2.1.11 Coventry's central areas have, for centuries, been dense urban environments, with open green spaces being relatively small and localised. Much of the city's green space provision has been historically located towards the outskirts of the centre. Whilst the gradual expansion of the city has engulfed much of a once rural landscape that surrounded the centre, significant green spaces have been preserved to illustrate Coventry's history, through both their surviving forms and features, which include a range of significant heritage assets. These include areas remnant of Coventry's Christian monastic orders (e.g. Greyfriars Green, Charterhouse Fields ¹⁹⁴), common lands (e.g. Hearsall Common ¹⁹⁵, Whitley Common ¹⁹⁶), rural enclosures (e.g. Lake View Park), Industrial-era philanthropists (e.g. Lady Herbert's Garden ¹⁹⁷), allotments (e.g. Stoney Road Garden ¹⁹⁸), and municipal provision (e.g. War Memorial Park ¹⁹⁹, London Road Cemetery ²⁰⁰).

* Coventry's industrial heritage is however presented prominently by the Coventry Transport Museum, located in the north of the city centre.



Fig 80: Aerial view looking towards the city centre from the southeast. Labelled places of historic significance that, whilst peripheral to the centre, have held close historical connections, both physically and cognitively. The ring road can be seen to have created a clear boundary between the centre and this environ. Historic England (33181_027)

8.2.1.12 Again, the encapsulation of the centre has had a notable impact on the ability to engage with, and appreciate, its heritage through these historic open areas. In places this impact has been more direct, with the ring road bisecting large swathes of townscape, creating physical barriers between open spaces (such as Lady Herbert's Garden and Swanswell Pool (Fig 82)) from the communities they once served. The overhaul of the local highways infrastructure, discussed in the preceding sections, has also had an impact, again truncating and fragmenting historical routes which connected central areas to these more marginal amenities. In recent years there have, however, been some successful attempts to re-establish connectivity between historic open areas and the centre, most notable being the reengineering around the station and Warwick Road approach, which buries the ring road and re-establishes Greyfriars Green as a principal pedestrian gateway to the city centre.

8.2.1.13 Mature trees make a valuable contribution to the townscape in specific areas of the city centre. Green spaces such as Greyfriars Green, Lady Herbert's Garden and Swanswell Park all retain a good number of trees, mostly planted during Victorian re-landscaping. The Civic Precinct / University Campus area is perhaps the most sylvan of the urban areas, with a far denser collection of arboricultural features, many planted within the 'outdoor rooms' that surround post-war buildings. The Commercial Precinct also features short runs of trees that have matured into dense canopies above the pedestrian streets.

9 ARCHAEOLOGY

NB. The Coventry City Centre Heritage Action Zone programme includes a dedicated project examining the area's below ground heritage. The project will synthesize the results of historical archaeological excavations across Coventry to enhance overall understanding, create a deposit model, and identify gaps in knowledge to prioritise future investigation. As such, this section provides a summary of the known nature and potential of the archaeological resource within the city centre, to provide context to the wider report.

- 9.1.1.1 There is a rich history of archaeological investigation within the city centre. For much of the 20th century, programmes of fieldwork were led by a succession of pioneering local heritage champions.^{201,*} Since 1991 however, most investigation has been “development-led”, delivered to fulfil planning conditions prescribed by Coventry City Council, and have included amongst the largest excavations undertaken to date. Grassroots and volunteer-led schemes have also played a significant role, with the Coventry and District Archaeological Society (CADHAS) active since 1960.²⁰²
- 9.1.1.2 In total Coventry has been subject to over three-hundred archaeological investigations since the 1950s. Many focussed on the city centre, establishing a fairly robust understanding of both the nature of, and potential for, below-ground deposits. Generally, the centre's archaeology is shallow comparative to the deep stratigraphy that characterise other medieval towns. Areas of exception are located adjacent to the river and within the cut of the former city ditch, in both cases where waterlogged deposits have been identified, favourable for the preservation of artefactual and environmental materials. Levels of survival vary considerably, closely linked to the uneven nature of the Coventry's redevelopment since the 18th century. Of greatest impact have been the post-war regeneration schemes where deep excavations of foundations and basements impacted substantially on the shallow deposits. In areas where regeneration was less intensive, levels of survival are often good to excellent - largely undisturbed by both the 20th century schemes, but also, fortuitously, low levels of 18th and 19th century development.²⁰³
- 9.1.1.3 To date there has been a focus on the city's medieval archaeology, particularly the major religious and mercantile sites and stone buildings of the 14th through 16th centuries. Excavation has transformed our understanding of some of the centre's most significant sites, including St. Mary's Cathedral and Priory and at Whitefriars, granting great insight into their form and the functions of the institutions they housed. Work beyond the major sites has revealed a rich resource for understanding life within medieval Coventry and its hinterlands. Notable are excavations adjacent to Much Park Street, Priory Street, Gosford Street, Bayley Lane, Hay Lane and Hill Street, each steadily developing our knowledge of the spatial, economic and social development of the town. Collectively these sites demonstrate the national significance of Coventry's

* Including John Shelton, Charmian Woodfield (the first City Archaeologist), Brian Hobleby, Bill Foard, and Margaret Rylatt

medieval archaeological resource, justifying the substantive designation of large Archaeological Constraint Areas that cover much of the medieval town and its suburbs.²⁰⁴

- 9.1.1.4 There has been a lesser degree of focus on the industrial and post-medieval archaeological deposits within the centre. Much has been uncovered fortuitously, often during excavation required by planning conditions ahead of new development. Examples includes excavations at the Ikea site in 2006, Bond's Hospital in 2007, and Whitefriars Street in 2006, all of which identified building foundations and industrial features, such as tanning pits.²⁰⁵ Known archaeological evidence of the prehistoric, Roman and pre-conquest eras is sparse within the centre. Notable are the possible late Saxon structures which were identified during investigation of the Benedictine priory cloister and artefactual evidence for a possible Roman farmstead identified within a ditch excavated in 2006 near the Herbert Art Gallery.²⁰⁶
- 9.1.1.5 Whilst a wealth of information has already been uncovered, there remains much to be investigated. Areas around the Franciscan Friary have been examined to a much lesser degree than Whitefriars or St. Mary's. The constraints on development within the Hill Top area minimise the potential for excavation necessitated by planning conditions. There is much still to understand about the town's early medieval development, with several medieval streets yet to be investigated in detail, including Bishop Street, Spon Street, Hill Street, Little Park Street and Smithford Way. The exact location and form of Coventry Castle remains elusive. Less than 10% of the defensive ditch, and only small areas near the river, have been excavated, with the evidential value of significant waterlogged deposits remaining untapped. And, although much was lost during the post-war redevelopment of the city, some elements of the Modernist townscape have been favourable for the preservation of the shallow deposits, such as the large municipal open spaces and areas of low built density (such as the "outdoor rooms", discussed in section 6.3). As such, the city centre remains a place of great archaeological potential.

10 AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST AND HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE VALUE

10.1 Overview

10.1.1.1 The heritage significance of Coventry is experienced to varying degrees across the city centre. In places, architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest is highly tangible, playing a central role in how the city is experienced and representing formative elements of local townscape character. In other areas, heritage significance is more distilled, encountered in specific localities or exemplified in individual buildings, providing pockets of interest within areas of a seemingly modern character. Elsewhere, significance can be intangible, manifesting in (for instance) buried archaeology, or remembered through cultural associations and historical narratives.

10.1.1.2 A distinctive aspect of the city centre is how the ‘themes’ significance can be acutely focussed into definable localities. For instance, the experience of the medieval and post-medieval townscape is principally concentrated within the Hill Top and Spon Street areas, whilst the post-war interest is largely encapsulated within the Commercial Precinct and Civic Precinct/University Campus. The boundaries between these areas can be stark, with little gradient from the historic town to Modernist townscape.*

10.1.1.3 This section summarises the historic characteristics of identified areas of significance, providing reference to finer details outlined in previous sections of the report (e.g. [2.3.1]). Please note, however, that as a Level 2 Historic Area Assessment, the report has provided a “rapid assessment” of the centre’s historic environment. These summaries therefore represent a non-exhaustive representation of what constitutes special interest within the areas.

10.1.1.4 The city centre has been sub-divided through an assessment of the nature, level and extent of the special interests encountered across the city. Three tiers of interest have been defined, as follows:

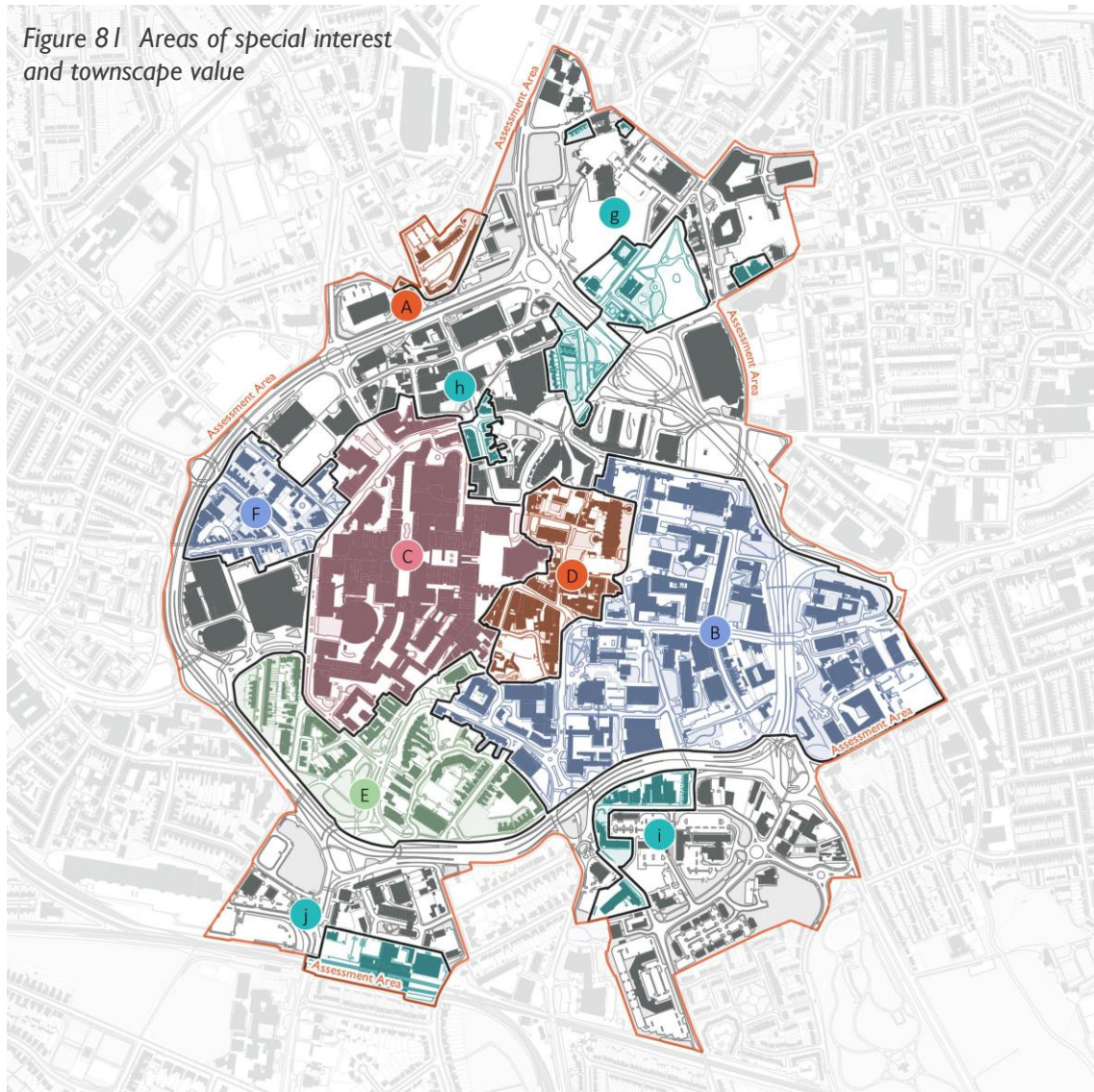
10.1.1.5 **Tier 1: Areas of special interest** – Areas where architectural, historic, archaeological and/or artistic interest make a defining contribution to the city centre townscape.

10.1.1.6 **Tier 2: Localities of historic townscape value** – Pockets of historic townscape that, whilst not located within distinct areas of special interest, actively enrich the locality with heritage value and may contain assets of both national and local significance.

Tier 3: Areas of unknown or intangible interest – Areas where tangible townscape heritage value is low, concealed or unknown. Whilst of potentially low architectural, historic and artistic interest, potential archaeological interest may be present. These areas may still be sensitive to change, by nature of forming parts of the setting of adjacent, more significant areas.

* The pattern is a legacy of the design of the post-war reconstruction of the city centre, with the application of the zonal planning system focussing redevelopment into tightly defined zones.

Figure 81 Areas of special interest and townscape value



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Tier 1: Areas of special interest

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| A | Canal Basin | D | The Old City: Hill Top and High Street |
| B | Civic Precinct and University Campus | E | The Old City: Greyfriars Green and Surroundings |
| C | Commercial Precinct | F | Spon Street and Surroundings |

Tier 2: Localities of historic townscape value

- g City Centre Northeast
- h Burges & Bishop Street
- i Parkside
- j Railway Station

Tier 3: Areas of unknown or intangible interest

Areas not coloured

10.2 Areas of Special Interest

10.2.1 Canal Basin

The Medieval City



Low levels of interest

City of Industry



Very high levels of interest

Post-War Planned City



Low levels of interest

City of Peace and Reconciliation



Moderate levels of interest

The Coventry canal basin is located immediately north of the city centre, beyond the 'St Nicholas' stretch of the ring road. The basin is the southern extent, and terminal point of, a 38-mile watercourse connecting to the Fradley Junction of Lichfield. The canal and its buildings illustrate a key turning point in the city's early industrialisation, having allowed a steady flow of materials to be imported and manufactured goods to be exported, both domestically and internationally via major ports. The basin holds historical associative value through its connections to James Brindley, canal engineer, who was commissioned to oversee its design (a relatively pioneering contour-canal style) and early construction.

10.2.1.1 This area's distinctive sense of place is formed through historic townscape characteristics including:

- A Y-shaped canal basin with an elevated position in the landscape due to the cut-and-fill landscaping required for its construction. It appears terraced into the hillside as the northern slope was cut away, leaving an upper terrace retained by a high brick wall, into which coal vaults were inserted.²⁰⁷

- 18th through early-20th century industrial buildings, including wharfs and warehouses. Historic buildings are joined by a series of modern offices and accommodation of design and materials inspired by their earlier neighbours, with red and blue engineering brick and slate roofing prevalent. Buildings form a boundary around the basin, establishing a strong sense of enclosure, a low permeability and alluding to the importance of security to the site's historical functionality (for the protection of goods). [5.3.2]
- A utilitarian collection of street-furniture, combining preserved historical industrial features including small cranes and mooring points, joined by inspired modern lighting, bollards and trees that gentrify the space.
- Commemorative statuary and other public artwork, around the basin and canal that celebrate the city's industrial significance at local and national levels. The basin also marks the start of a public art trail that extends north along the Coventry Canal. [7.4.1.15]
- A (now converted) historic public house, the Admiral Codrington, is a rare surviving example of a once commonplace social amenity that helped sustain the city's cohort of workers. [5.3.3.6]

10.2.2 Civic Precinct and University Precinct

The Medieval City



Notable levels of interest

City of Industry



Moderate levels of interest

Post-War Planned City



Very high levels of interest

City of Peace and Reconciliation



High levels of interest

10.2.2.1 Defining the west of the city centre, the Civic Precinct was an important aspect of the post-war city plan and was laid out in the second major phase of the centre's redevelopment. Although still containing several of the city's key municipal buildings, Coventry University (formerly Lanchester College/Polytechnic) now has a dominant presence, with a campus formed of distinctive buildings and spaces.

10.2.2.2 This area's distinctive sense of place is formed through historic townscape characteristics including:

- An underlying street pattern partially inherited from the pre-war city centre. The east/west aligned Earl Street, Jordan Well and Gosford Street are remnants of the once major road bisecting the city and remain at the top of the local street hierarchy. In the far eastern extent, Gulson Road is aligned to a section of the historic town ditch and city walls. [4.2.3]
- A campus-style loosely geometric urban morphology based on a combination of inherited urban blocks and those established in the post-war years. Developed piecemeal around the concept of "outdoor rooms" (inspired by Mies's Illinois Institute of Technology) with individual buildings often detached and sited within dedicated plots and/or around courtyards. Buildings often have a sense

of prominence within their immediate environs. This creates a low density and a relatively constant sense of openness and permeability, contrasting to the tighter grain of the 'Old City: ...' areas and high density of the Commercial Precinct. [4.2.2, 6.3.1.9]

- A notably eclectic architectural form, the result of decades of experimentation and exploration with changing styles and technologies. Collectively, buildings chronicle decades of post-war architecture, comprising of a compendium of styles and uses (principally civic, cultural, and educational). The diverse character is further embellished by a number of prominent buildings inherited from the pre-war townscape. [5.4]
- A generally higher overall structural scale than other areas of the city centre, with many structures above five storeys, although more modest three to five storey buildings remain the most common. [5.4, 8.1.3]
- Remnants of the old city dispersed throughout the area creating nodes of historical and architectural interest. This includes the surviving cloister wing the mid-14th century Whitefriars Priory set within a landscaped garden featuring exposed archaeological features, and the priory gatehouse and 'Stone House' of Much Park Street. [5.2, 5.3]
- The large northern wing of the William Morris Building (90-94 Gosford Street), a gateway building to/from the area and is amongst the last components of major industry left within the city centre. [5.3.2.8]
- Buildings around the junction of Jordan Well with Gosford Street illustrate increased demand for pre-war entertainment and recreation, including old theatres, cinemas, and public houses. [5.3.3.5]
- University Square, an important public space providing some of the best views of St Michael's Cathedral. This includes the view along its eastern elevation, dramatically encapsulating the unique and dynamic union between the ruinous medieval cathedral and its Modernist post-war sibling. The square and areas around the adjacent Herbert Art Gallery feature a concentration of public artwork. [6.3.1.11]
- A generally higher level of greenery within public spaces and the street scene relative to most other areas of the city centre. Largely introduced in the post-war decades through re-landscaping, creating a unifying thread between the highly eclectic architecture. In some places this has become over-grown, concealing facades.

10.2.3 Commercial Precinct

The Medieval City



Notable levels of interest

City of Industry



Moderate levels of interest

Post-War Planned City



Very high levels of interest

City of Peace and Reconciliation



High levels of interest

10.2.3.1 The focal point for Coventry's post-war renewal, today the precinct illustrates half a century of commercial redevelopment within the city centre. The area has a marked sense of place, clearly and precisely defined from other areas of the townscape. It contains several distinctive areas, including Broadgate in the east, both the Upper and Lower Precincts, Smithford Way and Market Way, the Coventry Market, Coventry Arcade, and the Bull Yard.

10.2.3.2 This area's distinctive sense of place is formed through historic townscape characteristics including:

- An urban morphology which manifests a number of historically significant planning principles ranging from those of the 19th century to the (at the time) radical philosophies advocated by the likes of Le Corbusier, Gropius and Cullen. Most distinct is the axial, loosely symmetrical, and largely geometrical layout, underpinned by the first city plan's loose adherence to Beaux-Arts principles. [4.2, 5.4]
- A dominance of post-war commercial architecture, including an at times idiosyncratic assemblage of styles that are highly distinctive of their respective phase of the centre's regeneration. Most notable are the Moderne-Scandinavian

aesthetic the Broadgate House vocabulary that characterises Broadgate, the Upper Precinct, and the Entertainment Precinct adjacent Corporation Street, alongside the more overt Modernism of buildings dating from the mid-1950s onwards that distinguish the buildings of Lower Precinct, Market Way, Smithford Way, Hertford Street, and the Bull Yard. [5.4.2]

- One expansive urban block that creates a strong and pervasive sense of enclosure. The high urban density and massing creates a near-continuous connectivity from one structure to the next. Long building lines which wrap around the entirety of the inner circumference. [4.2, 5.4.2]
- A wholly pedestrianised public realm, with vehicular traffic marginalised to the surrounding roads and facilitated through a network of roof-top car parks. Canopies and colonnaded arcades extend from building lines to provide shelter. [5.4.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.5]
- A series of designed open public plazas. Within the commercial precinct, these are strongly enclosed by the shops and offices, including those of the Upper Precinct, Lower Precinct, Shelton Square and the Bull Yard. Belgrade Plaza and Lidice Place are other locally significant examples adjacent to Corporation Street. [6.2.5, 6.3]
- Broadgate is the most ancient of the city's public spaces and a key point of convergence within the city for centuries. Today it has a municipally landscaped character and is furnished with some of the city's best-known pieces of public art, including the Godiva Statue. [6.2.1, 7.4.1.6]
- A generally human scale to building heights, restrained to three to five stories, but punctuated by three terminating blocks. [6.2.5]
- A series of designed views and visual experiences, both large and small. Long views use the precinct's axis, such as the vista of St Michael's Cathedral through the Upper Precinct blocks and the terminating view of the three modernist tower blocks. [6.2.5, 8.1.3]
- Modernist reinterpretations of historical commercial forms, including Coventry Market and the Coventry Arcade. [5.4.2]
- A high number of distinctive post-war artworks to both buildings (internally and externally) and the public realm. Many pieces draw inspiration from Coventry's histories and themes of heritage significance. [Section 7]

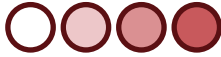
10.2.4 **The Old City: Hill Top and High Street**

The Medieval City



Very high levels of interest

City of Industry



High levels of interest

Post-War Planned City



Very high levels of interest

City of Peace and Reconciliation



Very high levels of interest

10.2.4.1 The Hill Top and High Street areas represent both the historic centre and the best-preserved area of Coventry's pre-war townscape. Despite its relatively small size, the Hill Top affords an experience an old English town comparable to more famed medieval centres, through a notable assemblage of traditional buildings (including amongst the city's most historically significant) arranged around a medieval street pattern. The High Street is amongst the centre's best locations within which to encounter the legacies of the city's industrial prosperity.

10.2.4.2 This area's distinctive sense of place is formed through historic townscape characteristics including:

- An elevated setting, making the area the highest point in the centre and creating a subtle prominence over the surrounding townscape. This enhances the impact of its landmark spires, a key factor in establishing their status as integral to the city's iconography. [4.1, 8.1]
- A high level of historical integrity to both buildings and public realm, creating the most complete impression of Coventry's pre-industrial expansion and post-war renewal.

- A morphology inherited from medieval Coventry. A narrow sinuous arrangement of streets, with a fine grain of largely pre-industrial buildings creating a dense but still permeable historic townscape. [4.2]
- Monumental ecclesiastical medieval architecture that is highly prominent both locally and across the city centre. The ruinous St Michael's Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church were once the largest parish churches in the country and remain striking landmarks as two of the city's 'Three Spires'. The ruined St Michael's now forms a key public space of the city centre and acts as an outdoor gallery for public artwork, with particular emphasis on the theme of peace and reconciliation. [5.2.2, 6.2.6, 8.1.2]
- Remnants of the old town's powerful textile industry and mercantile class. Most notable is the St Mary's Guildhall which is considered amongst the most significant surviving examples of its type in the country. Also, the neoclassical Drapers Hall, Ford's Hospital (built as a philanthropic endeavour), high-status Georgian properties along Priory Row and Little Park Street and the centre's only surviving ribbon-weaving factory. [5.3]
- A nationally important collection of vernacular timber-framed buildings, particularly the Golden Cross Inn and The Cottage with double-jettied forms. [5.2.4]
- High Street, a focal point of the city's historical financial services including grand banks dating to the early 20th century, illustrative of the city's industrial prosperity. The High Street banks are interspersed by high status late 19th century and early 20th century retail premises. [5.3.3]
- Buildings illustrative of the development of Coventry's pre-war civic and municipal infrastructure including the late-18th century Old County Hall and County Court, the mid-19th century Blue Coat School, and the early-20th century Council House. The latter is a landmark building, located prominently adjacent to Earl Street and in views along Little Park Street. [5.3.5]
- The zenith of Coventry's post-war architecture in the form of Sir Basil Spence's internationally renowned Modernist Cathedral that, together with the ruinous shell of medieval St Michael's, creates a striking contrast of old and new Coventry. [5.4.5]
- High levels of archaeological interest, including both exposed remains of the first St Mary's Cathedral and Priory and a wealth of buried deposits. [Section 9]
- A material palette that remains largely dominated by the red sandstone and timber-framing that defined medieval Coventry, supplemented by the red-brick and ashlar-stone of the properties of the city's wealthy industrialists. Slate, pantile, limestone and plaster are other traditional materials.
- A subterranean heritage interest through significant stone-vaulted undercrofts and cellars pertaining to (largely now lost) high-status buildings. [5.2.3.2, 5.2.5.4]

- A series of landscaped open spaces and gardens between the Cathedrals and Holy Trinity Church. First laid out in the medieval period, these are the legacies of once, more open surroundings and the graveyard. They create a genteel and sylvan setting within which to appreciate the monumental and significant historic architecture of the area. These are often defined by hard boundaries, including railings and walling. [6.2.3, 6.3]
- Important views both within and looking out of the area, often glimpsed down historic streets framed by characterful buildings. A number of these view are of high historical integrity, a rare occurrence in the centre due to the alteration of many vistas, both short and long, through the extensive post-war development. Views in to, and out of, the ruined St Michael's are also key, having become a famous image of the impact of the Blitz. [Section 8]

10.2.5 **The Old City: Greyfriars Green and Surroundings**

The Medieval City



High levels of interest

City of Industry



High levels of interest

Post-War Planned City



Moderate levels of interest

City of Peace and Reconciliation



Low levels of interest

10.2.5.1 Located in the southwest of the city centre, this area encapsulates remnants of the pre-war townscape that avoided clearance during the major post-war redevelopment. The area was once the location of the Greyfriars Franciscan friary, whilst Greyfriars Green is a relatively large public space (for the city centre) originally inherited from the city's Late Medieval era, but much adapted in the 19th century. The area also incorporates rare surviving central residential developments, largely pertaining to the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

10.2.5.2 This area's distinctive sense of place is formed through historic townscape characteristics including:

- Greyfriars Green, amongst the centre's most ancient public spaces, loosely defining an open area once outside one of the principal gates through the city wall. Today its character is principally defined by a genteel aesthetic created through late Victorian landscaping comprising undulating lawns, paved footpaths, flower beds and lightly sylvan character. [6.2.2]
- The surviving steeple of the 14th century Christ Church, a landmark building. It is one of the city's 'Three Spires', which historically could be viewed from

Greyfriars Green, but are now largely concealed by 20th century development. [8.1.2]

- The 16th century Cheylesmore Manor Gatehouse, a rare structural legacy of the great influence wielded over the medieval town by land-owning aristocracy. [5.2.5.2]
- Many fine examples face into Greyfriars Green creating a distinctive sense of enclosure through buildings lines rich in historic architectural detail. These are largely of red-brick or white render with tile or slate roofs, with high-status buildings featuring stone dressings. Set-backs further illustrate their historical status.* These make the area a focal point for surviving housing associated with Coventry's prosperous industrial-era middle classes and skilled-working class. [5.3.4]
- Rare surviving examples of the growth of non-conformism in Victorian Coventry. [5.3.5]
- A concentration of commemorative monuments and notable for Victorian statuary, including a memorial commemorating Thomas White (major 16th century benefactor) and James Starley (considered the “father of the bicycle industry”). [7.3.1.9]
- Warwick Road, an historically significant arterial road leading into/out of the city from/to the southwest. The ring road has relegated its modern status within the local street hierarchy.

* The buildings of Warwick Row have lost their historical set-back from the roadside, once feature small forecourts defined by low walling. These were lost during the pedestrianisation of the street and through conversion of the properties for commercial use, adding shopfronts.

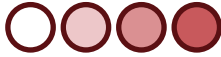
10.2.6 **Spon Street and Surrounds**

The Medieval City



Very high levels of interest

City of Industry



High levels of interest

Post-War Planned City



Notable levels of interest

City of Peace and Reconciliation



Low levels of interest

10.2.6.1 Located in the west of the city centre, this area is a remnant of the medieval and industrial era townscape that avoided clearance during the major programmes of post-war redevelopment. It is largely defined by a collection of historic buildings, some of which are in their original locations, but others relocated to the area from other parts of the centre during a townscape-conservation scheme in the latter-decades of the 20th century. It is a focal point for medieval, post-medieval and industrial era heritage assets.

10.2.6.2 This area's distinctive sense of place is formed through historic townscape characteristics including:

- An exceptional collection of vernacular timber-framed buildings that once pervaded the city, but which are now fragmented. Dating particularly to the 14th through 16th century, they are considered of high quality and feature distinctive close-studded framing and jettied elevations. [5.2.4]
- Rare surviving examples of workshops and the mixed-use top-shops of the city's early industrialisation, illustrating the significance of light-industries, particularly watch-making and textile weaving, to the city's historical economic development. [5.3.2]

- The Church of St. John the Baptist, a landmark building adjacent to Corporation Street that demarcates the western extent of the medieval town and a key juncture of once major routes. [5.2.2.8]
- A collection of timber-framed buildings, illustrative of the influence of medieval institutions within the city. Philanthropy of the city's wealthy mercantile class is expressed by the early 16th century Bond's Hospital, whilst the status of the church is reflected in the 14th century Bablake School (former priests' accommodation). [5.2.3.4, 5.2.3.5]
- A street pattern relic of the old town, with Spon Street and Hill Street once being major conduits for traffic into Coventry from the west. Their truncation by the ring road (west) and commercial precinct (east), and modern-day marginalisation within the townscape, is in itself illustrative of the radical overhaul of the centre in the post-war decades. [4.2]
- A townscape curated by an innovative townscape heritage scheme (amongst the first of its kind), relocating and re-contextualising historic architecture threatened by major redevelopment. [5.2.4.2]



Fig 82: Aerial view from the northeast of: Swanswell Park and Pool (centre), Lady Herbert's Garden (top-right), and the remnants of the old hospital (right). Historic England (33178_019).

10.3 Localities of Historic Townscape Value

City Centre Northeast

- 10.3.1.1 Characterised, in part, by vestiges of pre-war Coventry including legacies of municipal development of the industrial era. This includes: Swanswell Pool, of 12th century origins as a mill pond of St Mary's Priory, but now municipal in character due to the 19th century landscaping as a public park [6.3.1.8]; the remnants of the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital [5.3.5.3]; Lady Herbert's Gardens and almshouses, a product of industrialist-philanthropy [6.2.4], and the 1902 fire station (Fig 36), a rare surviving example of Coventry's early-20th century civic buildings [5.3.5.3]. The area also features the largest standing section of the city wall [5.2.5.3] and an historic cinema, public house and terraced housing on Primrose Hill Street, Harnall Lane West, and Howard Street [5.3.3.6]. There has been significant post-war redevelopment, particularly the Swanswell Ringway that bisects the area and divides Swanswell Park and the hospital site from an historically city-central context [8.2].



Fig 83: View down The Burges from Bishop Street with the Old Grammar School on the left.
Photograph by authors

The Burges & Bishop Street Junction

10.3.1.2

An area of historic architecture pertaining to both Coventry's medieval and industrial development, clustered around the crossroads of Hales Street, the Burges, Corporation Street and Bishop Street. The sandstone Old Grammar School is one of the finest medieval buildings in the city [5.2.2.9] and illustrates the historic significance of Bishop Street as the principal road leading into the city from the north towards Broadgate (a status lost following the overhaul of the central road network in the post-war years). Many of the buildings of the eastern side of the Burges are of high levels of architectural interest, being of medieval origin but featuring 18th and 19th century re-fronting that conceals their timber-framing [5.2.4.4]. Opposite the terraces are a row of distinctive inter-war commercial properties, and the Tudor Rose public house on the corner [5.3.3.6].



Fig 84: Surviving elements of an early 20th century factory facing onto Mile Lane. Photograph by authors

Parkside

10.3.1.3

An area that has been transformed quite radically on several occasions in recent centuries. Originally a component of the manorial parkland that occupied much of the land south of the medieval city, the area was converted to orchards, allotments and small holdings in the 18th through mid-19th century, before a steady process of industrialisation culminated in its occupation by the vast factories and works of the city's automotive industries. The area found today has again been transformed, with the historic factories replaced by a modern business and education zone. A small number of heritage assets and historic townscape characteristics have been inherited. Notable are a scattering of industrial-era buildings, including a late-19th century factory and early-20th century school off Mile Lane [5.3.2.9, 5.3.5.6], a row of small works, a church, and public hall on Parkside, and a rare surviving row of late-19th or early-20th century terraced workers' housing on Short Street [5.3.4.6]. More subtle, Parkside (the street) is loosely aligned to the medieval town ditch and city wall.



Fig 85: Aerial view of Coventry Station from the southeast. Historic England (33181_021).

Railway Station

10.3.1.4

A long-standing and significant node within the townscape. The first railway station was established in 1838 but today the area is characterised by the architecture of its 1960s redevelopment. The main station buildings, platform and concourse all exemplify the architectural and historical interest of the city centre's significance as a post-war planned city, mirroring the principles and practices of the commercial precinct as a passenger-centric design, within Scandinavian influences in the aesthetics [0]. The area around the station has received considerable investment in recent years including (ongoing) development of a cluster of tall commercial buildings. The arrival experience between station and centre has been enhanced by a new landscaped pedestrian "gateway" to the city, crossing above the ring road and re-establishing the historically strong links between the station and Greyfriars Green [8.2].

11 APPENDIX

11.1 Gazetteer of Heritage Assets

- 11.1.1 This gazetteer lists those buildings within the study area that were examined during the Historic Area Assessment and have been discussed within this research report. NB. The absence of an asset from this gazetteer does not necessarily reflect an absence of historic or architectural interest or a neutral/negative contribution to the historic townscape.

Name / Location	HER Reference	Description
Abstract Forms, Market Way	N/A	Public artwork designed by Elizabeth Greenwood, 1961. Formed of three crescent-shaped sculpted stones (marble?), appearing as a balanced stack. Once prominent in Market Way, the artwork has been lost subsequent to its removal during re-landscaping of the street.
Admiral Codrington, No. 1 St. Columba's Close	N/A	19th century public house, historically associated to the canal basin. Two stories, rendered brick with stone dressings.
Alan Berry Building (formerly the Administration and Library Building), No. 1 Priory Street	MCT17157	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17157&resourceID=1029
Bablake School, Hill Street	MCT863	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT863&resourceID=1029
Belgrade Fountain, Belgrade Square	N/A	Fountain designed by Rawstorne Associates, constructed 1986. Included three cascades shaped as "the heart of a fish". Removed and replaced during a major re-landscaping initiative in 2008.
Belgrade Relief, Belgrade Theatre	N/A	Public artwork. Cast 'ciment fondu' construction. Stylised aerial view of Belgrade based on a 1685 engraving by Giacomo de Rossi. Designed by

		James Brown of the City Architects Department, 1958.
Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square	MCT320	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT320&resourceID=1029
Blue Coat School, Priory Row	MCT895	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT895&resourceID=1029
Bonds Hospital, Hill Street	MCT864	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT864&resourceID=1029
Broadgate	MCT15173	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15173&resourceID=1029
Broadgate House, Broadgate	MCT16019	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16019&resourceID=1029
Broadgate Standard (also known as the Elephant Mast), Broadgate	MCT16899	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16899&resourceID=1029
Bryan Bailey Memorial, Belgrade Square	MCT16926	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16926&resourceID=1029
Bugatti Building and Graham Sutherland Building, Corner of Gosford Street and Cox Street	MCT17173	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17173&resourceID=1029
Bull Yard	MCT17146	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17146&resourceID=1029
Canal Basin	N/A	The Coventry canal basin is located immediately north of the city centre, beyond the 'St Nicholas' stretch of the ring road. 18th through early-20th

		century industrial buildings, including wharfs and warehouses. Historic buildings are joined by a series of modern offices and accommodation of design and materials inspired by their earlier neighbours, with red and blue engineering brick and slate roofing prevalent.
Canal Basin Industrial Buildings and Works, Leicester Row	MCT193	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT193&resourceID=1029
Canal Basin Industrial Buildings and Works, Leicester Row	MCT789	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT789&resourceID=1029
Canal House, Canal Basin	MCT82	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT82&resourceID=1029
Carphone Warehouse (formerly British Home Stores) , No. 47 Upper Precinct	MCT17134	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17134&resourceID=1029
Charles Ward Building (formerly the Teaching Centre and Art College), Cope Street	MCT17155	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17155&resourceID=1029
Charred Cross, St Michael's Cathedral	N/A	Public artwork. Constructed of burnt roof timbers from the Cathedral, bound as a crucifix. Behind the cross are the words "Father Forgive" embossed in gold permanently affixing the phrase first scribed onto the wall of the cathedral sanctuary by Provost Richard Howard in the immediate aftermath of the WW2 bombing. The cross found today is a 1964 replica, with the original relocated within the new Modernist Cathedral.
Cheylesmore Council School / Elm Bank Teachers' Centre,	MCT364	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT364&resourceID=1029

Mile Lane		
Cheylesmore Manor Gatehouse, Manor House Drive	MCT887	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT887&resourceID=1029
Children's Merry-go-around, Coventry Market	N/A	The 'Market Roundabout'. Public artwork designed by David Mason, 1958.
Choir of Survivors, St Michael's Cathedral	N/A	Public artwork. Bronze sculpture designed by Helmut Heinze, 2012, commemorating the city's connection to Dresden, Germany, and the loss of civilian life.
Christ Church Steeple, New Union Street	MCT192	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT192&resourceID=1029
Church of St Michael (Coventry Cathedral), Priory Street	MCT572	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT572&resourceID=1029
City Arcade	MCT17145	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17145&resourceID=1029
Palace Yard (courtyard within the old Civic Offices)	MCT15338	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15338&resourceID=1029
Civic Centre 1, Earl Street	MCT17150	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17150&resourceID=1029
Civic Centre 2, Earl Street	MCT17151	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17151&resourceID=1029
Civic Centre 3	N/A	Municipal building built 1974-1976 with design by City Architects Department. Constructed in a bold-red brick. Blocky massing and chamfered corners and set-back ground-floor supported by splayed brick-colonnade to provide a sheltered

		pedestrian walkway. Pyramidal copper roof.
Civic Centre Municipal Offices	N/A	Fifteen-storey tower made of precast concrete, featuring chamfered corners and an elegant arrangement of concrete mullions and rails delineating gridded fenestration. Built 1971-1973, with design by City Architects Department.
Cloister Gardens, Priory Cathedral Visitor Centre	N/A	Designed by MCT Architects with Rummey Design Associates. Located on the site of the late-12th century cathedral cloister. The quadrant form and regular shaped streets allude to the historical arcaded form, with exposed archaeological features as the centrepiece.
Commemorative Public Bench, Millennium Place	N/A	Commemorative public bench designed by Jochen Gerz.
Commemorative Stone Animal- Trough, Greyfriars' Green	N/A	Public artwork. Circa 1878. Commemorative stone animal-trough, dedicated to Caroline Bray, who founded the Coventry Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
Cook Street Gate, Cook Street	MCT793	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT793&resourceID=1029
Co-Op Bank, No. 7 Warwick Row	MCT951	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT951&resourceID=1029
Corporation Street	N/A	Laid out between 1929-1931, delivered by Ernest Ford, City Engineer from 1924, in an attempt to improve local traffic congestion. Amongst the first 20th century planned improvements enacted within the city centre, pre-empting the major post-war schemes.
Coventry Canal	N/A	Constructed between 1769-1790 and designed by canal engineer James Brindley. The Coventry Canal Basin is the terminus of a 38-mile waterbody leading to the Fradley Junction of Lichfield, via connections with the both the Ashby and the Birmingham and Fazeley Canals. The canal (itself a pioneering piece of engineering), retains many of its original bridges and mileposts, whilst many buildings survive adjacent to the canal associated with ribbon weaving, auto-motive and bicycle manufacturing, chemical production, and

		munitions manufacturing.
Coventry Central Police Station, Little Park Street	MCT17149	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17149&resourceID=1029
Coventry City Library (Formerly Locarno Dancehall or Ballroom), Smithford Way	MCT17138	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17138&resourceID=1029
Coventry City Walls, Lady Herbert's Garden	MCT629	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT629&resourceID=1029
Coventry Evening Telegraph Building (CET), Corporation Street	MCT17147	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17147&resourceID=1029
Coventry Mural, Lower Precinct	N/A	Public artwork. Tiled mural designed by Gordon Cullen, 1958. Depicting images of ancient and modern Coventry. Originally located to the sides of ramps down into the Lower Precinct. Part demolished during relocation but majority remains.
Coventry Point, Market Way	N/A	Designed by John Madin Design Group in the Brutalist style and constructed under Terrance Gregory's stewardship of the City Architects Department (1969-1975). It is the southern-most of Coventry precinct's three "terminating block" structures (the others being Mercia House and Hillman House).
Coventry Railway Station, Station Street	MCT8113	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT8113&resourceID=1029
Coventry Retail Market, Queen Victorian Road	MCT6707	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT6707&resourceID=1029
Coventry Ring Road	N/A	Constructed in phases between 1959 and 1974, it serves as both an undulating conduit and barrier within and around the city centre, with its highways elevated high on concrete pillars or sunk into the ground along extensive excavated

		channels.
Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, Fairfax Street	MCT16020	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16020&resourceID=1029
Crown Court, North off John's Street	N/A	Built in 1986, designed by PSA Midland Region with John Madin Design Group. Features Portland stone, with a three-bay two-storeyed glazed entrance, which contrasts with the use of fenestration around its secondary elevation.
De Vere Hotel (currently Britannia), Fairfax Street	N/A	Brutalist hotel built 1972-1973, designed by G. R Stone and Associates with oversight by Terence Gregory.
Drapers Hall, Bayley Lane	MCT552	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT552&resourceID=1029
Ecco Home, St Michael's Cathedral	N/A	Public artwork. Marble sculpture of Christ, perhaps inspired by Mexican or Totec traditions. Designed by Sir Jacob Epstein, 1934.
Ellen Terry Building, Corner of Jordan Well and Whitefriars	MCT340	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT340&resourceID=1029
Figures of mermaids, sailors and Neptune, Coventry Market	N/A	Public artwork. Designed by Jim Brown, late 1950s. Moved from the demolished fish market.
Fords Hospital Almshouses, Greyfriars Lane	MCT849	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT849&resourceID=1029
Former Nurses' Home and Outpatients' Clinic at Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital, Stoney Stanton Road	MCT15274	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15274&resourceID=1029
Former Woolworth Department Store	MCT17135	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17135&resourceID=1029

(currently Boots), Upper Precinct		<u>9</u>
Frederick Lancaster Library, Gosford Street	N/A	University library built in 1999-2000, designed by Short and Associates. Highly distinctive form, featuring multiple, striking ventilation towers and honey-coloured brick-cladding.
Garden of International Friendship, Between Lady Herbert's Garden and Volgograd Place (under the ring road)	N/A	Designed in 2000 by Kate Whiteford and Rummey Design Associates. Developed as part of the Millennium Phoenix Initiative. Landscape features include a low semi-circular hedge maze, 'viewing tower', and the best surviving elements of the medieval city wall, integrated into the scheme. Linked to Millennium Place via the steel and glass bridge.
Gatehouse, Nos. 36-37 Much Park Street	MCT890	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT890&resourceID=1029
Godiva and Peeping Tom Clocktower, Broadgate	MCT16019	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16019&resourceID=1029
Golden Cross Inn, Bayley Lane and Hay Lane	MCT587	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT587&resourceID=1029
Greyfriars Green	N/A	Public green space first depicted as 'Graffery Much Hill' in 1748-1749, with an open space known as 'The Horse Pool'. It took the name 'Grey Friar's Green' in 1807. The area came into local authority ownership in 1860, donated by Edward James Smith. Re-landscaping occurred in 1876, with the railway station arriving in 1838 creating the existing Victorian-esque aesthetic. Contains multiple pieces of commemorative sculpture and public artwork.
Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Jordon Well	MCT17152	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17152&resourceID=1029
Hillman House, Smithford Way	MCT17143	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17143&resourceID=1029

Holy Trinity Coventry	MCT469	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT469&resourceID=1029
Hotel Leofric, Nos. 1-15 Cross Cheaping / Ironmonger Row	MCT17109	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17109&resourceID=1029
James Brindley Statue, Canal Basin	N/A	Public artwork. Bronze statue of famed canal engineer, James Brindley. Designed by James Butler, 1998.
James Starley Building (formerly the Lanchester College Laboratories), No. 213 Cox Street	MCT17158	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17158&resourceID=1029
James Starley Sculpture, Greyfriars Green	MCT16887	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16887&resourceID=1029
Lady Godiva Café, The Lower Precinct	N/A	Circular café designed by Bill Pearson of the City Architects Department, 1957-1958. Cylindrical pillbox shape cantilevering from a structural foot and accessed from the gallery via a bridge. The curved glass windows were divided by black external mullions and retractable blinds projected from the southern perimeter.
Lady Herbert's Garden	MCT1000	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT1000&resourceID=1029
Lady Herbert's Homes, Chantry Place / Lady Herbert's Gardens	MCT285	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT285&resourceID=1029
Lidice Place, Junction of Corporation Street and Fleet Street	N/A	Small green space commemorating Coventry's connection to Lidice (Czech Republic) and the visit of dignitaries on 19th June 1972. Re-landscaped in 2015, but the commemorative plaque has been retained and rededicated.
Lloyds Bank, No. 30 High Street	MCT329	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT329&resourceID=1029

		ults_Single.aspx?uid=MCT329&resourceID=1029
London Midlands Bank (currently Earl of Mercia Weatherspoons), No. 18 High Street	MCT349	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT349&resourceID=1029
Lych Gate Cottages, Nos. 3-5 Priory Row	MCT15894	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15894&resourceID=1029
Magistrates Court, North off John's Street	N/A	Built in 1984-1987, designed by City Architects Department. Deep-red brick with a bulky massing, chamfering to corners and a shallow hipped roof.
Man's Struggle, Southern façade of Herbert Art Gallery	N/A	Public artwork. Painted Portland stone panels carved in relief. Designed by Walter Ritchie, and commissioned by Donald Gibson of the City Architects Department, 1959. Once featured prominently in the Upper Precinct, designed as a premier piece of public artwork within the original design of the public realm. Now affixed to the southern façade of the Herbert Art Galley (facing Jordon Well).
Market Way	MCT144	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT144&resourceID=1029
Marks and Spencer, The Precinct, Smithford Way	MCT17133	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17133&resourceID=1029
Martyr's Mosaic, Broadgate House	N/A	Public artwork. Tiled mosaic depicting the Coventry Martyrs. Commissioned by Donald Gibson, and designed by Hugh Richard Hosking, head of Coventry College of Art, in 1952.
Mercia House, Lower Precinct	MCT17141	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17141&resourceID=1029
Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane	MCT416	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT416&resourceID=1029

Millennium Place	N/A	Developed as part of the millennium Phoenix Initiative, contains the Whittle Arch and various commemorative structures including the Whittle Statues, The Glass Bridge, and a commemorative bench, amongst others.
Mosaic, Canal Basin	N/A	Public artwork. Tiled mosaic set into the floor, adjacent Coventry Canal Basin. Designed by Rosalind Wates in 1997.
Mother and Children, Herbert Art Gallery	N/A	Public artwork. Bath stone sculpture with abstract figures of a mother with two children. Designed by Gary Galpin. Originally located in Smithford Way, it is now at the Herbert's Art Gallery.
Mural at the Three Tuns Pub, Bull Yard	MCT16935	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16935&resourceID=1029
Mural in Coventry Market, Coventry Market	N/A	Public artwork designed by Jurgen Seidel, 1961 in the Socialist Realist style, commemorating Coventry's twinned city status with Dresden, Germany.
National Westminster Bank (NatWest), Nos. 24-25 Broadgate	MCT276	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT276&resourceID=1029
No. 10 The Quadrant	MCT906	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT906&resourceID=1029
No. 11-12 Spon Street	MCT918	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT918&resourceID=1029
No. 117 Gosford Street	MCT846	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT846&resourceID=1029
No. 13 Spon Street	MCT15407	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15407&resourceID=1029
No. 14-15 Spon Street	MCT919	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT919&resourceID=1029

No. 16 Little Park Street	MCT875	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT875&resourceID=1029
No. 16 Spon Street	MCT919	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT919&resourceID=1029
No. 166 Spon Street	MCT926	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT926&resourceID=1029
No. 169 Spon Street	MCT928	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT928&resourceID=1029
No. 17-18 Spon Street	MCT8750	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT8750&resourceID=1029
No. 21 Spon Street	MCT399	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT399&resourceID=1029
No. 21-22 High Street (currently Halifax)	N/A	Early 20th century bank. Two storey faced with stone and classically detailing including pilasters with Corinthian capitals.
No. 25-27 Spon Street	MCT922	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT922&resourceID=1029
No. 29 High Street (currently Santander)	N/A	Early 20th century bank. Three storey faced with stone. Semi-classical, Art Deco detailing including simple pilasters with Doric capitals.
No. 5 The Quadrant	MCT902	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT902&resourceID=1029
No. 5 Whitefriars Street	MCT16892	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16892&resourceID=1029
No. 50 Primrose Hill	N/A	Early example of a custom-built picture theatre built between 1912 and 1923. Classically inspired façade.
No. 7 Little Park Street	MCT874	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Res

		ults_Single.aspx?uid=MCT874&resourceID=1029
No. 7 The Quadrant	MCT903	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT903&resourceID=1029
No. 8 Priory Row	MCT897	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT897&resourceID=1029
No. 8-9 The Quadrant	MCT904	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT904&resourceID=1029
North Link Blocks, Nos. 44-8 Upper Precinct	MCT17129	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17129&resourceID=1029
Norton House, White Street	N/A	Detached late 19th or early 20th century villa. Shallow L-plan, brick construction with stone dressings. Symmetrical façade arranged across three bays with central doorway flanked by bay windows. Shallow hipped roof.
Nos. 1-19 Chantry Place	MCT15404	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15404&resourceID=1029
Nos. 1-2 Spon Street	MCT449	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT449&resourceID=1029
Nos. 12-15 High Street	N/A	19th century Italianate style shopping terraces and parades. Rare examples of their type within the city centre, with much lost to bomb damage and 20th century regeneration. Poor survival of shop frontages but good degree of integrity above.
Nos. 1-3 The Burges	MCT15254	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15254&resourceID=1029
Nos. 13-23 Lower Holyhead Road	MCT973	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT973&resourceID=1029
Nos. 1-4 The Quadrant	MCT901	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT901&resourceID=1029

		ults_Single.aspx?uid=MCT901&resourceID=1029
Nos. 1-46 Starley Road	N/A	Late 19th century and early 20th century middle class housing. Terraced, two-storey, and red brick construction. Prominent detailing including stone dressings to windows and doorways, ornate dentilation at the eaves. Bay windows.
Nos. 16-17 High Street	MCT8747	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT8747&resourceID=1029
Nos. 163-164 Spon Street	MCT15276	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15276&resourceID=1029
Nos. 167-168 Spon Street	MCT927	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT927&resourceID=1029
Nos. 18-30 The Burges	MCT433	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT433&resourceID=1029
Nos. 18-30 The Burges	MCT437	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT437&resourceID=1029
Nos. 18-32 Lower Holyhead Road	N/A	Late 19th century or early 20th century middle class housing. Three-storeys, terraced, with red-brick construction. Stone dressings to doorways and windows. Bay window extending to first storey. Shallow pitched gabled roof.
Nos. 2-32 Friars Road	N/A	Early 20th century middle class housing. Semi-detached and terraced forms. Brick construction with harling to principal elevations. Bay windows extending to first storey, with gabled roofs some featuring mock-Tudor styled cross-gable to front.
Nos. 25-29 Lower Holyhead Road	MCT885	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT885&resourceID=1029
Nos. 25-29 Warwick Road	N/A	Detached 19th century villas. Two-storeys and shallow hipped roofs. Brick built with stone dressings and render to number 25. Principal elevations feature a symmetrical arrangement of three bays, with bay windows extending to first storey at either side of a central entrance. Last

		remaining elements of a row of nineteen villas developed to take advantage of prime plots in proximity to the railway station, soon after its construction.
Nos. 2-8 Queen Victoria Road	N/A	Pair of semi-detached late 19th century brick-built villas that are rare examples of their type within the city centre. The villas have a relatively good level of historical integrity, aside from the replacement of traditional windows with uPVC.
Nos. 33-55 St Patrick's Road	N/A	Early 20th century middle class housing. Terraced form brick construction with harling to principal elevations. Bay windows, some extending to first storey, with gabled roofs some featuring mock-Tudor styled cross-gable to front.
Nos. 34-44 Hill Street	MCT861	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT861&resourceID=1029
Nos. 36-48 Hertford Street	N/A	Built 1967-1969 with design by W. S Hattrell and Partners. The upper storey is clad with 54 fibreglass panels, moulded by William Mitchell.
Nos. 5-13 Queen Victoria Road	N/A	Later 19th and early 20th century middle class housing. Detached and semi-detached villas, brick built with stone window and doorways dressings. Shallow pitched roofs and bays extending to first storey.
Nos. 5-13 The Burges	N/A	Early 20th century steel-framed commercial properties. Three storeys faced with stone. Classically influenced aesthetic. Poor survival of shopfronts.
Nos. 8-44 Short Street	N/A	Row of late 19th or early 20th century red-brick terraces. Two-storeys with stepped pitched roofs. Stone window dressings and interesting carriage-style arches above front doorways.
Nos. 44-62 White Friars Street	N/A	Row of six late 19th or early 20th century red-brick terraces. Shallow-pitched gabled tile roofs. Stone window dressings. Central two units heavily altered.
Old County Hall, Old Court Hall, Bayley Lane	MCT814	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT814&resourceID=1029

Old Fire Station, Hales Street	MCT323	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT323&resourceID=1029
Old Grammar School, Hales Street	MCT851	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT851&resourceID=1029
Old Windmill Inn, Nos. 22-23 Spon Street	MCT921	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT921&resourceID=1029
Peeping Tom, Hertford Street	N/A	Public artwork. Painted wood sculpture of the legendary 'Peeping Tom'. Unknown artist, 1972. The statue was moved from the Peeping Tom Public House following its demolition.
Pelham Lee House, Nos. 6-7 Priory Row	MCT896	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT896&resourceID=1029
The People of Coventry, Broadgate House	N/A	Public artwork. Four stone sculpted panels depicting pairs of standing figures representing the people of Coventry in past, present and future. Designed by Trevor Tennant, 1953.
Owen Owen Department Store (now Primark), Broadgate	MCT17137	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17137&resourceID=1029
Princess Elizabeth's Pillar, Broadgate	N/A	Public artwork, 1948. Designed by James Brown, John Skelton and Donald Gibson. Commemorates the ceremonial laying of the first stone of Broadgate House on 22nd May 1948 by Elizabeth II (then Princess Elizabeth). The pillar is inscribed with various sculpted motifs including: those celebrating the Princess's visit, and an earlier visit by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth; references to the city's historical cloth and wool trades; and Ancient Egyptian iconography (the symbol of Akhenaten) as a playful reference to the pharaoh's renown as a city builder.
Priory Gardens, Priory Cathedral Visitor Centre	N/A	Exposed archaeological remains of Coventry's first cathedral and priory. Dedicated to St. Mary and first endowed as a monastery in 1043. The church was the focal point of both its Benedictine Priory, and the town as a whole, until its demolition in the early 16th century due to the Dissolution.

		Today, the church is experienced in the Priory or Cloister Gardens as a designed open space, with excavated features of its nave and colonnades. The modern landscaping is designed by MCT Architects with Rummey Design Associates.
Priory Hall (G Block), Priory Street	N/A	Built in 1963-1967, designed by City Architecture Department, formed of a twenty-storey tower built of precast concrete. Formerly the Lanchester College Hall of Residence. Now demolished.
Quadrant Hall (University Residence), No. 11 Manor House Drive	N/A	Halls of residence built 1969-1974. Designed by the City Architects Department with a Brutalist form.
Quinton Bicycle Factory, Mile Lane	N/A	Late 19th century factory. Constructed 1890 with design by Samuel Gorton. Red-brick Italianate-style. Originally the Quinton Bicycle Factory, but adapted soon after construction, in 1905, for an assembly factory of Swift Motorcars. Again converted in the early 20th century to become a printing works. It is currently an Ibis Hotel.
Reconciliation, St Michael's Cathedral	N/A	Public artwork. Bronze sculpture on masonry plinth. Depicts two kneeling figures in an embrace. Designed by Josefina de Vasconcellos, 1995. Commemorated the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. An identical cast was presented on behalf of the people of Coventry in the Peace Garden in Hiroshima, Japan.
Reform Club, No. 5 Warwick Row	MCT950	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT950&resourceID=1029
Ribbon Factory, Nos. 1-6 New Buildings	MCT15902	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15902&resourceID=1029
Ruins of 'Old' St Michael's Cathedral, Bayley Lane	MCT473	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT473&resourceID=1029
Self-Sacrifice, Broadgate	MCT16991	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16991&resourceID=1029

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Shelton Square	MCT17146	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17146&resourceID=1029
Sir Guy and the Dun Cow, Shelton Square	N/A	Public artwork. Sculpted painted stone relief of the legendary story of Sir Guy of Warwick slaying of the Dun Cow. Designed by Alma Ramsey, 1952.
Sir Thomas White Memorial, Greyfriars Green	MCT17120	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17120&resourceID=1029
South Link Blocks, Nos. 41-11 Upper Precinct	MCT17129	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17129&resourceID=1029
Sports and Recreation Centre ('The Elephant')	N/A	Built 1973-1976, designed by Granville Lewis of City Architects Department with oversight from Terrance Gregory and Harry Noble. Known locally as 'The Elephant', the structural frame, based on triangular modules formed of steel struts, and silver-grey zinc cladding give the building its distinctive aesthetic.
St John Baptist Church, Fleet Street	MCT842	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT842&resourceID=1029
St Mary's Guildhall, Bayley Lane at the Hill Top	MCT557	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT557&resourceID=1029
St Michael's House, No. 11 Priory Row	MCT898	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT898&resourceID=1029
Sir Frank Whittle Statue, Coventry Transport Museum	N/A	Public artwork. Bronze sculpture of Sir Frank Whittle (1907-1996), famed for developing the fundamental concepts underpinning invention of the turbojet engine. Designed by Faith Winter, 2007.
Statue of Elizabeth Frink, Herbert Art	N/A	Public artwork. Bronze sculpture of Dame Elizabeth Frink (1930-1992). Designed by F. E McWilliam,

Gallery		1956.
Stone House, Much Park Street	MCT202	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT202&resourceID=1029
Swanswell Gate, Hales Street	MCT852	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT852&resourceID=1029
Swanswell Park and Pool, Stoney Standton Road	N/A	Mid-19th century municipal park. Laid out with a semi-geometric arrangement of paths, lawns and beds.
Swanswell Pool	MCT16335	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16335&resourceID=1029
Telephone Exchange, Little Park Street	MCT17153	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17153&resourceID=1029
The Church of England Church of St Mark, Bird Street, CV1 5FX	MCT936	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT936&resourceID=1029
The Co-Operative Building, Corporation Street	MCT17125	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17125&resourceID=1029
The Cottage, No. 22 Bayley Lane	MCT2370	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT2370&resourceID=1029
The Council House, Earl Street	MCT816	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT816&resourceID=1029
The Coventry Boy, University Square	MCT16932	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16932&resourceID=1029
The Coventry Cross, Junction of Cuckoo Lane and St Michael's	MCT16478	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16478&resourceID=1029

Avenue		
The Coventry Martyrs Memorial, St Patrick's Interchange	MCT16889	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16889&resourceID=1029
The Enfolding, Herbert Art Gallery	N/A	Public artwork. Stone sculpture of two embraced figures. Designed by Jean Parker, 1986. Originally located in Smithford Way, it is now at the Herbert's Art Gallery.
The Flying Standard, formerly 'The Priory Gate', Nos. 2-10 Trinity Street	MCT382	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT382&resourceID=1029
Bridge, Lady Herbert's Garden to Millennium Place and the Garden of International Friendship	N/A	Commemorative glass and steel bridge built 2003 with design by MacCormac, Jamieson and Prichard.
The Levelling Stone, Upper Precinct	N/A	Public artwork, 1946. Designed by Donald Gibson and sculpted by Trevor Tennant to celebrate Victory Day in June 1946. Westmorland green slate central panel with hopton wood stone perimeter and bronze plate. Slate inscribed with phoenix rising from flames and compass points. Commemorative inscriptions around perimeter.
The Litten Tree, No. 1 Warwick Row	MCT17161	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17161&resourceID=1029
The Lower Precinct	MCT17139	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17139&resourceID=1029
The Phoenix, Bull Yard	MCT16923	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16923&resourceID=1029
The Phoenix (formerly Sir	MCT423	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Res

Colin Campbell), Gosford Street		ults_Single.aspx?uid= MCT423&resourceID=1029
The Priory Building (formerly the Student's Union), Priory Street and Cope Street	MCT17156	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17156&resourceID=1029
The Stag Public House, Bishop Street	MCT17111	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17111&resourceID=1029
The Upper Precinct	MCT17136	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT17136&resourceID=1029
Thread Through Time, Bull Yard	N/A	Public artwork. A conical spool of thread is formed of recycled concrete, stone and brick sourced from a demolished Rolls Royce (and former Armstrong Siddley) factory. Designed by Robert Conybear and Uta Molling, 1999.
Three Shuttles Public House, No. 1 Howard Street	MCT15316	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT15316&resourceID=1029
Town Wall Tavern, Nos. 25-26 Bond Street	MCT432	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT432&resourceID=1029
Tudor Rose Public House, Junction of The Burges and Hales Street	MCT280	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT280&resourceID=1029
Two Sides of a Woman, Belgrade Square	N/A	Public artwork. Bronze sculpture with abstract, interwoven representations of female figures. Designed by Helaine Blumenfield, 1985.
United Reformed Church, Warwick Road	MCT952	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT952&resourceID=1029
Volgograd Place, Swanswell Ringway, adjacent	N/A	Built 1970, designed by Douglas Smith Stimeson Partnership, commemorating the twinning of Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) and Coventry, the

White Street		first pair of international twinned cities. Features fountains formed of concrete and cobbles with painted murals. A commemorative plaque was laid for the opening of Volgograd Place by visiting dignitaries from Volgograd on 25th November 1972.
Whitefriars Priory	MCT850	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT850&resourceID=1029
Whittle Arch, Hales Street	MCT16005	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT16005&resourceID=1029
William Morris Building, Nos. 90-94 Gosford Street	MCT8745	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT8745&resourceID=1029
Yorkshire Bank, Nos. 7-11 High Street	MCT8746	See https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCT8746&resourceID=1029

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13 ENDNOTES

Abbreviations

CHER – Coventry Historic Environment Record
(accessible via www.HeritageGateway.org.uk)

NHLE – National Heritage List for England
(accessible via <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>)

VCH – Victoria County History
(accessible via <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol8>)

¹ VCH, paragraph 18

² Bassett 2001; Walters 2013, 9-23; <http://opendomesday.org/place/SP3379/coventry/>

³ Walters 2013, 24-43

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Demidowicz 2003, 34-36

⁶ VCH, paragraph 15

⁷ Hoskins 1984, 174-177

⁸ Demidowicz 2003, 49; Hoskins 1984, 174-177; VCH, paragraph 9-12

⁹ Soden 2005, 236-238; Soden 2011, 13

¹⁰ See Phythian-Adams 1979

¹¹ Demidowicz 2003, 50; Phythian-Adams 1979, 15

¹² Demidowicz 2003, 54-56; Phythian-Adams 1979, 15

- ¹³ Prest 1960, 82; VCH 162-189; Walters 2013, 149-174
- ¹⁴ See Kelly & Co Ltd. 1896
- ¹⁵ Demidowicz 2003, 18; McGrory 2017, 19; Prest 1960, 43-52; VCH 162-189; Walters 2013, 149-174
- ¹⁶ Caunter 1955, 27; See Kimberley 2015; Walters 2013, 192-194
- ¹⁷ Coventry City Council 2012, 4-7; Walters 2013, 151-152
- ¹⁸ Demidowicz 2003, 17-18; Prest 1960, 23-26
- ¹⁹ Demidowicz 2003, 89-90
- ²⁰ See Kimberley 2015; Fry & Smith 2011; Demidowicz 2003, 18; Prest 1960, 40-42; Walters 2013, 465; See Coventry Society 2018, 'Coventry's Neighbourhoods' section
- ²¹ See Kimberley 2009 & 2012
- ²² Walters 2013, 204 & 216-221
- ²³ Kimberley 2016, 8-11; VCH, 162-189
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Grindrod 2013, 103-104; Hasegawa 1992, 22-25
- ²⁶ Flinn 2003, 83-97
- ²⁷ Campbell 2007; Hasegawa, 24-25
- ²⁸ Hasegawa 1992, 26-29; Walters 2013, 222-224
- ²⁹ Interview with Donald Gibson, *Coventry Evening Telegraph* 13 January 1972. Quoted in Gill 2006, 62
- ³⁰ Walters 2013, 225
- ³¹ Cowan 2013, 73-87; Flinn 2003, 87-97; Gould 2010; Hasegawa 1992, 3-16; Hasegawa 2013, 276-278
- ³² See Gill 2006; Webb in prep.
- ³³ Herbert Art Gallery 'Peace and Reconciliation' [Museum Exhibition]; Walters 2013, 247-248

- ³⁴ See Old et al. 1990
- ³⁵ English Heritage 2011, 7
- ³⁶ Coventry City Council 2015, 3-4
- ³⁷ See O'Connor 2017
- ³⁸ Demidowicz 2003, 27-29; McGrory 2017, 78-81; NHLE, '*Ruined Cathedral Church of St Michael*'. List Entry # 1076651; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 224-227
- ³⁹ Demidowicz 2003, 29-30; Monkton & Morris 2011, 206-222; NHLE, '*Holy Trinity Church*'. List Entry # 1342893; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 240-243
- ⁴⁰ Monkton & Morris 2011, 15-20; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 234-237; Rylatt & Mason 2011, 28-30
- ⁴¹ Demidowicz 2003, 34-35; NHLE, '*Christchurch Steeple*'. List Entry # 1076628; McGrory 2017, 49-52
- ⁴² NHLE, '*Church of St John the Baptist, Fleet Street*'. List Entry # 1322889; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 237-238; VCH, 337-339
- ⁴³ See Lane 2017
- ⁴⁴ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 243-245
- ⁴⁵ Demidowicz 2003, 33-34; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 268-269
- ⁴⁶ NHLE, '*St Mary's Hall*'. List Entry # 1116402; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 247-249
- ⁴⁷ See CHER, *The Stone House; Rear of 28 Much Park St*'. Reference # MCT202
- ⁴⁸ Demidowicz 2003, 54-57; McGrory 2017, 16-18 & 45-46; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 262 & 267
- ⁴⁹ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 266-267
- ⁵⁰ Demidowicz 2003, 23-53; See Gill 2006; NHLE; Pickford & Pevsner 265-266
- ⁵¹ Demidowicz 2003, 57-58; McGrory 2017, 48-49; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 256
- ⁵² Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 255
- ⁵³ See Coventry City Council 2014 & O'Connor 2017

- ⁵⁴ NHLE, '*Cheylesmore Manor*'. List Entry # 1299033
- ⁵⁵ Demidowicz 2003, 50-51
- ⁵⁶ Coventry City Council 2012, 4-7; Walters 2013, 151-152
- ⁵⁷ Coventry City Council 2012, 11-17; NHLE, '*Canal Warehouse*'. List Entry # 1076584; NHLE, '*Canal House*'. List Entry # 1342940; NHLE, '*Weighbridge and Weighbridge Office at Coventry Canal Basin*'. List Entry # 1433094
- ⁵⁸ Demidowicz 2003, 89-90
- ⁵⁹ CHER, '*13-23 LWR Holyhead RD*'. Reference # MCT973; CHER, '*25-9 LWR Holyhead RD*'. Reference # MCT885; Demidowicz, 90; NHLE, '*13-23, Lower Holyhead Road*'. List Entry # 1226784; NHLE, '*25-29, Lower Holyhead Road*'. List Entry # 1076626
- ⁶⁰ CHER, '*33-34 Hill St*'. Reference # MCT861; CHER, '*1-3 Ryley St*'. Reference # MCT908; NHLE, '*Nos 34 to 44 Hill Street*'. List Entry # 1076614; NHLE, '*Nos 1 and 3 Ryley Street*'. List Entry # 1076598
- ⁶¹ Demidowicz, 90-91; NHLE, '*No 27 Spon Street*'. List Entry # 1086965; Singlehurst & Demidowicz 1993, 4
- ⁶² Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 256-257
- ⁶³ Coventry City Council 2015, 8; CHER, '*Former Ribbon Weaving Factory, New Buildings*'. Reference # MCT15902; McGrory 2017, 68; NHLE, '*Former Ribbon Factory and Office*'. List Entry # 1265695
- ⁶⁴ CHER, '*Nos 90, 92 and 94 Gosford Street*'. Reference # MCT8745; Demidowicz, 120; Kimberley 2012, 75-76
- ⁶⁵ CHER, '*New Beeston/Swift Works; Mile Lane; Quinton Rd; Coventry*'. Reference # MCT363; Collins & Stratton 1994, 98; Kimberley 2012, 135-136; Kimberley 2015, 129
- ⁶⁶ Demidowicz 2003, 122; Gould & Gould 2009, 114; Gould & Gould 2016, 2-3; McGrory 2017, 59; NHLE, '*Natwest Bank*'. List Entry # 1393838; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 260
- ⁶⁷ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 260
- ⁶⁸ CHER, '*Nos. 16 and 17 High Street and 1 and 2 Hay Lane*'. Reference # MCT8747; Coventry City Council, Various
- ⁶⁹ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 260
- ⁷⁰ Coventry City Council 1980, 26

- ⁷¹ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 253
- ⁷² CHER, '*H Samuel Building, 2-10 Trinity St.*'. Reference # MCT8747; McGrory 2017, 43-44; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 271
- ⁷³ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 268
- ⁷⁴ McGrory 2017, 21; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 260-261
- ⁷⁵ McGrory 2017, 56-57; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 261
- ⁷⁶ McGrory 2017, 82; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 256
- ⁷⁷ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 255
- ⁷⁸ NHLE, 'The Quadrant'. List Entry # 1076594 to 1076597, 1342943, and 1342944
- ⁷⁹ Coventry City Council 2014
- ⁸⁰ Demidowicz 2003, 65; NHLE, 'County Hall'. List Entry # 1076642; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 256
- ⁸¹ Coventry City Council 2008, 25; NHLE, 'The Council House'. List Entry # 1342927; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 249-250
- ⁸² Demidowicz 2003, 105-106
- ⁸³ NHLE, 'Former Nurses' Home and Outpatients' Clinic at Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital'. List Entry # 1033364
- ⁸⁴ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 245
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 255
- ⁸⁶ Demidowicz 2003, 124-125
- ⁸⁷ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 259
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁹ Historic England 2018c, 2
- ⁹⁰ Historic England 2018d, 1-2
- ⁹¹ Harwood 2008; NHLE, 'Coventry Retail Market'. List Entry # 1393334

- ⁹² Historic England 2018b, 1-2; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 259-260
- ⁹³ Demidowicz 2003, 109; McGrory 2017, 52-53; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 250-251
- ⁹⁴ Asset Heritage Consulting 2017, 18; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 252
- ⁹⁵ NHLE, 'Coventry Civic Centre 2'. List Entry # 1447093; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 250
- ⁹⁶ Historic England 2018f, 1-3
- ⁹⁷ Demidowicz 2003, 112; NHLE, 'Coventry Central Baths (original part including sunbathing terraces), part of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre'. List Entry # 1021930; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 251
- ⁹⁸ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 251
- ⁹⁹ Historic England 2018e, 1-3
- ¹⁰⁰ Demidowicz 2003, 113; McGrory 2017, 46-47
- ¹⁰¹ McGrory 2017, 89-90
- ¹⁰² NHLE, 'Belgrade Theatre'. List Entry # 1323696; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 267-268; McGrory 2017, 12
- ¹⁰³ Demidowicz 2003, 111; NHLE, 'Coventry Station, Including Attached Platform Structures'. List Entry # 1242849; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 263-264
- ¹⁰⁴ Demidowicz 2013; J & L Gibbons 2018; NHLE, 'Cathedral of St Michael'. List Entry # 1342941; Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 224-234;
- ¹⁰⁵ Prest 1960, 25
- ¹⁰⁶ VCH 1969, 1-23
- ¹⁰⁷ Gould & Gould 2016, 19-34
- ¹⁰⁸ Gould & Gould 2009, 71
- ¹⁰⁹ See Coventry City Council 1985, Accessed via <http://www.coventry-walks.org.uk/conservation-areas/greyfriars-green.html>
- ¹¹⁰ VCH 1969, 20
- ¹¹¹ NHLE, 'United Reformed Church. List Entry # 1325988

- ¹¹² Gould & Gould 2016, 75
- ¹¹³ Coventry City Council 1980, 91-92; Noszlopy 2003, 148-149
- ¹¹⁴ Coventry City Council 2015, 21-31
- ¹¹⁵ J & L Gibbons 2018
- ¹¹⁶ Coventry City Council 2014, 6-8 & 18-32
- ¹¹⁷ Demidowicz 2003, 115
- ¹¹⁸ See Keevil Heritage Ltd. 2013; NHLE, 'City Wall To North Of Swanswell Gate Swanswell Gate'. List Entry # 1076649
- ¹¹⁹ Coventry City Council 2014, 18; Gould & Gould 2016, 129
- ¹²⁰ Campbell 2007; Gould & Gould 2016, 11, 26-27 & 103-104
- ¹²¹ See Campbell 2007
- ¹²² Campbell 2007; Grinrod 2013, 106; Gould & Gould 2009, 3-22; Hasegawa 1992, 35; Hasegawa 2013, 276-278
- ¹²³ Gould & Gould 2016, 37-42
- ¹²⁴ Ibid. 31
- ¹²⁵ For more information see <http://www.lincolnconservation.co.uk/projects/coventry-stained-glass/>
- ¹²⁶ Hasegawa 1992, 26-29; Walters 2013, 229-230
- ¹²⁷ For a detailed analysis of views in and around St Michaels see J & L Gibbons 2018
- ¹²⁸ Demidowicz 2003, 109-110
- ¹²⁹ Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx102
- ¹³⁰ Coventry City Council 1980, 71; Noszlopy 2003, 119; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx016
- ¹³¹ Gould & Gould 2009, 41-43; Historic England 2018a
- ¹³² MJP Architects 2012, 10; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx223

- ¹³³ See Rylatt & Mason 2003
- ¹³⁴ MCT Architects, 7-9
- ¹³⁵ Gould & Gould 2009, 55
- ¹³⁶ Coventry City Council 2008, 23; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx079
- ¹³⁷ CHER, 'Swanswell Pool'. Reference # MCT16335; CHER, 'Mill Bank'. Reference # MCT16332
- ¹³⁸ Gould & Gould 2016, 52
- ¹³⁹ CHER, 'City Architects' Department Garden (Palace Yard), Jordan Well'. Reference # MCT15338
- ¹⁴⁰ For a full assessment of the cathedral's immediate setting, including keys views and experiences see J & L Gibbons 2018.
- ¹⁴¹ Gould & Gould 2016, 154-156
- ¹⁴² Coventry City Council 1980, 77; Noszlopy 2003, 179-180; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx013; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx095;
- ¹⁴³ Gould & Gould 2016, 59
- ¹⁴⁴ Gould & Gould 2009, 67
- ¹⁴⁵ CHER, 'Memorial trough, Grey Friars Green, Coventry'. Reference # MCT17120
- ¹⁴⁶ Noszlopy 2003, 115-116, 156-157 & 162-163
- ¹⁴⁷ Coventry Society - <http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/public-art-in-coventry/martyrs-mosaic.html> ; Noszlopy 2003, 121-123
- ¹⁴⁸ Coventry City Council 1980, 47; Gould & Gould 2016, 31; Noszlopy 2003, 165-166; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx111; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx127
- ¹⁴⁹ Gould & Gould 2016, 26
- ¹⁵⁰ Coventry City Council 1980, 81; NHLE, 'Mural At The Three Tuns Pub'. List Entry # 1393443; Noszlopy 2003, 126-127
- ¹⁵¹ Noszlopy 2003, 118; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx020

- ¹⁵² Coventry City Council 1980, 82
- ¹⁵³ See Hubbard et al. 2003,
- ¹⁵⁴ CHER, 'Reconciliation Statue, Old Cathedral of St. Michael'. Reference # MCT16001
- ¹⁵⁵ Gould & Gould 2009, 67
- ¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 66
- ¹⁵⁷ Coventry City Council 1980, 40; NHLE, 'Lady Godiva Statue'. List Entry # 1031589; Noszlopy 2003, 124-125
- ¹⁵⁸ Coventry City Council 1980, 48; NHLE, 'Broadgate House'. List Entry # 1399994
- ¹⁵⁹ Coventry City Council 1980, 46; Noszlopy 2003, 181-182; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx103
- ¹⁶⁰ Noszlopy 2003, 120-121
- ¹⁶¹ Coventry City Council 2008, 23; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx079
- ¹⁶² Ibid., 56
- ¹⁶³ Coventry City Council 1980, 19; CHER, 'The Sir Thomas White Memorial'. Reference # MCT16885
- ¹⁶⁴ Coventry City Council 1980, 58
- ¹⁶⁵ Gould & Gould 2016, 37-40
- ¹⁶⁶ Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx025
- ¹⁶⁷ Coventry Society - <http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/public-art-in-coventry/thread-through-time.html> ; Noszlopy 2003, 126-126
- ¹⁶⁸ Gould & Gould 2016, 24
- ¹⁶⁹ Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx121
- ¹⁷⁰ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 259
- ¹⁷¹ CHER, 'City Architects' Department Garden (Palace Yard), Jordan Well'. Reference # MCT15338

- ¹⁷² Coventry City Council 1980, 77; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx013; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx055;
- ¹⁷³ Noszlopy 2003, 159-160
- ¹⁷⁴ Coventry Society - <http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/public-art-in-coventry/public-art-thats-not-there-any-more.html>
- ¹⁷⁵ Noszlopy 2003, 175
- ¹⁷⁶ Ibid. 37-38; NHLE, 'Coventry City Library building (former Locarno Dancehall)'. List Entry # 1449628
- ¹⁷⁷ Noszlopy 2003, 123-124
- ¹⁷⁸ Coventry City Council 1980, 62-63 & 84; Noszlopy 2003, 146-147
- ¹⁷⁹ Coventry City Council 1980, 76
- ¹⁸⁰ CHER, 'Barra Suite No. 5 Sculpture, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Bayley Lane'. Reference # MCT 16003
- ¹⁸¹ Coventry City Council 1980, 20; CHER, 'The James Starley Memorial, Greyfriars Green'. Reference # MCT16887
- ¹⁸² Noszlopy 2003, 156
- ¹⁸³ Pickford & Pevsner 2016, 269-270
- ¹⁸⁴ Noszlopy 2003, 131-132; Public Monuments & Sculpture Association NRP database, Ref # WMcvCVxx069
- ¹⁸⁵ Coventry City Council 1980, 53-55 & 66; Gould & Gould 2016, 43-44; NHLE, 'Coventry Retail Market'. List Entry # 1393334
- ¹⁸⁶ See Noszlopy 2003, 134-141
- ¹⁸⁷ See J & L Gibbons 2018, 20-21
- ¹⁸⁸ Gould & Gould 2016, 47
- ¹⁸⁹ See Campbell 2007
- ¹⁹⁰ See Gould & Gould 2009, 59-63

- ¹⁹¹ See Demidowicz, 19-20; NHLE, '52-58, Cash's Lane'. List Entry # 1226779; NHLE, '64 to 94, Cash's Lane'. List Entry # 1342923; NHLE, '251, Kingfield Road, 112-140, Cash's Lane'. List Entry # 1265693
- ¹⁹² See Collins & Stratton 1994, 57-58; Kimberley 2012, 34-35; Kimberley 2015, 36
- ¹⁹³ See Coventry City Council 2012
- ¹⁹⁴ See CHER, '*The Charterhouse, London Road*'. Reference # MCT876
- ¹⁹⁵ See CHER, '*Hearsall Common and roads thereon*'. Reference # MCT9476
- ¹⁹⁶ See CHER, '*Whitley Common and roads thereon*'. Reference # MCT9566
- ¹⁹⁷ See Coventry City Council 2014, 18-32; NHLE, 'Lady Herbert's Garden'. List Entry # 1001449; O'Connor 2017
- ¹⁹⁸ See NHLE, 'Stoney Road Allotments'. List Entry # 1001494
- ¹⁹⁹ See NHLE, 'War Memorial Park, Coventry'. List Entry # 1408915
- ²⁰⁰ See NHLE, 'London Road Cemetery, Coventry'. List Entry # 1001205
- ²⁰¹ Soden 2011, 1-6
- ²⁰² Patrick 2011, 21-23; Soden 2011, 2 & 6
- ²⁰³ Patrick 2011, 21-22
- ²⁰⁴ Soden 2011, 1-18; See Soden 2005
- ²⁰⁵ See CHER, '17th Century Tanning Pits, IKEA'. Reference # MCT2087; CHER, '19th century brick foundations found on IKEA evaluation site 2006'. Reference # MCT16619; CHER, 'Late 17th/early 18th century building remains, Hill Street'. Reference # MCT2105
- ²⁰⁶ See CHER, 'Possible Roman farmstead, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Priory Street'. Reference # MCT15989; CHER, 'Late Saxon Structure below Priory Garden site'. Reference # MCT16992
- ²⁰⁷ Coventry City Council 2012, 1