



**Information Governance Team**

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)  
Request ID: FOI663563101**

Thank you for your request for information relating to vacant commercial property.

You have requested the following information:

**1. A list of all commercial properties currently vacant in the Council region. I am only requesting information for vacant commercial properties though.**

This request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We can confirm that Coventry City Council holds the information you requested. However, we are withholding that information since we consider that the following exemption applies to it.

Regarding disclosure of the addresses for the commercial properties known to the Council which have been vacant or empty for long term, the Council believe that Section 31(1)(a) of the Act is engaged and therefore will not be disclosing the requested information.

The Council maintains the view that disclosure of the addresses would constitute information whose disclosure to the wider world would raise concerns around Law Enforcement.

To use this exemption, we are required to undertake a public interest test. The matters which were considered in applying the public interest test are as follows:

In considering the public interest for and against disclosure in this case, the Council has considered the public interest in disclosing a list of commercial properties in the City in terms of the contribution to demonstrating transparency of processes followed, allowing accountability for decisions taken and money spent and scrutiny of decisions made.

The Council considers that any disclosure made under the Act is a disclosure to the wider world and not to a specific individual for a particular purpose. It is therefore concerned to avoid the risk of adding to the sum of criminal knowledge concerning empty commercial properties within the City. The Council takes the view that there is a significant increased risk of crime to empty properties.

Disclosure of addresses increases visibility of vulnerable targets to motivated offenders and thus increases the risk of crime, and resultant negative effects, including but not limited to increased costs to both the public (and private) sectors and individuals which will be required to both make good damage and losses resulting and take preventative measures to combat such activity.

The Council judges that the public interest in withholding details of empty properties and in avoiding prejudice to the prevention of crime and the effect of this on both individuals and other organisations, would outweigh the public interest in disclosure at this time.

We would also highlight decision notices by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) upholding the use of Section 31(1)(a) in response to requests of this nature:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notices/2022/4022733/ic-145374-s4z7.pdf>

<https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notices/2019/2615022/fs50786336.pdf>

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

**Information Governance**