

## JUNCTION 6 INDUSTRIAL PARK (AREA 6)

### ABIGAIL WILLS

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Driving along Electric Avenue listening to Eddy Grant's *Electric Avenue*, I was wondering why the road had been given its name. Unlike the original Electric Avenue in London, named after the first electric street lights, it was named after the large General Electric Company factory that was there.

The entry into the Industrial Park requires you to switch off your engine and speak into the intercom. I think it's mainly for lorries due to it's height.

Once in the Industrial Park, it is very run down with all the plants needing a good prune. It is populated by a large number of rats that can be heard in the undergrowth. There is an overpowering smell of rotting rubbish.

The buildings are very much alike and anonymous, with from two exceptions. The Art Deco building was formerly the offices for the General Electric Company. It is just a facade with a modern empty building behind which previously had been used as warehousing. It was designed by Wallis, Gilbert and Partners whose more famous designs are Victoria Coach Station and the Hoover Building. The chimney is all that is left of the GEC factory, which at one point employed up to 18,000 people. It was the power house chimney and bears the electro magnet insignia.

I found it very disappointing that there was no documentation or signage for these two buildings, that played an important part in the history and development of Birmingham.

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