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IGCSE Geography Land use in Urban Areas – Help Sheet

CBD Characteristics

The CBD or Central Business District is the commercial centre. It contains the main shops, offices and financial institutions of the urban area. It is usually the most accessible (easy to get to) part of the city. This is because most of the main transport routes lead here. Due to high land values, buildings tend to be tall and building density is high. There is little open green space and you might expect to see many people and cars. This zone can suffer from air and noise pollution. You may see evidence of large and well-known global brands such as clothing, banking and fast food companies.

Small Industrial Zone Characteristics

An industrial sector would remain industrial as the zone would have a common advantage - perhaps a railway line, canal or river or an area of flat land. Related industries locate in close proximity to each other to share skills and workforce. The area might be categorised by a mixture of old factory units and new factory units, mostly made from metal frame structures. You might see an abundance of trade vans, lorries etc.

Note how the low quality housing is generally next to the industrial zone, middle class next to low class and high class as far as possible from industry and low class.

Industrial Wedge Characteristics.

Expect to see large-scale industry, perhaps concentrated around one particular product or service. Large factory buildings may indicate the production of complex and high value goods. Expect to see a clustering of industry where suppliers surround the main industry. If the product is complex, you may expect the industrial area to include office buildings and other facilities where research and development may take place. The area may also be close to an urban area so that skilled workforce are close by. It may also be close to a university where a continuous supply of skilled people may be required to fill positions. Large developments also require flat land.

Communication should be excellent to allow for the easy import of component parts and export of the finished product.

Low Class Residential Characteristics

This area tends to contain high density housing and wholesale manufacturing. Housing is usually linear or in large blocks of apartment flats that were built in the 1960's or 1970's . This area tends to be run down unless housing has been redeveloped or gentrification has occurred. This area usually experiences social and economic problems. Low cost alcohol shops and bookmakers (gambling) establishments are often found in these areas. Cars parked in the area may be older models indicating a lower average income of many residents. There may be graffiti and evidence of gang activity.

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High Class Residential – Characteristics

The urban rural fringe (on the boundary between the city and the countryside) contains a mixture of land uses. This includes residential areas, recreational facilities such as golf courses and commercial.

These areas tend to contain areas of better quality and often newer housing developments. Gardens and houses are larger due to lower land values and more open space. The houses may be detached (standalone) and may have a pool too. There is usually a mixture of private and council-owned housing (HLM).

Areas of private housing usually consist of low density, high quality and high cost housing. The layout of these areas are usually crescent shaped and they have grass verges outside the house with a driveway and either single or double garages indicating a higher level of car ownership per household.

Adapted from this model below (note that it is UK centric)

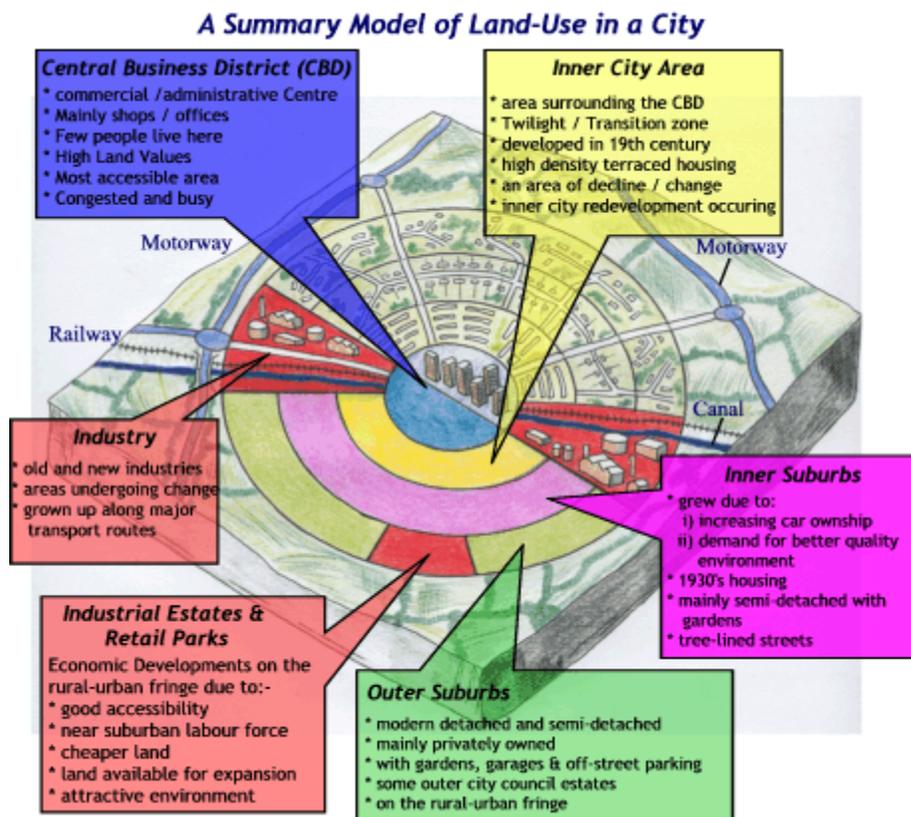


Diagram based on an idea from: The New Wider World (Foundation Edition) Waugh, D. and Bushell, T. (2001)