

Urban land use models

Urbanisation means an increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities. Although towns were important even in the early civilisations of Mesopotamia and in the valleys of the Nile, Indus and Huang-He (China), most people tended to live and work in rural areas. It was not until the rapid growth of industry in the nineteenth century that large-scale urbanisation began in parts of western Europe and north-eastern USA. During the twentieth century, people continued to move to urban areas mainly for:

- more and better-paid jobs
- nearness to places of work and entertainment
- better housing, services (schools and hospitals) and shopping facilities.

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A model is a theoretical framework which may not actually exist, but which helps to explain the reality. It has been suggested that towns do not grow in a haphazard way, but rather they tend to develop with recognisable shapes and patterns. Although each urban area is unique, with its own distinctive pattern, it is likely to share certain generalised characteristics with other settlements. Two of the earliest land use models to be put forward, and which are still the easiest to apply, are shown in Figure 3.19.

- **Burgess** claimed that in the centre of all towns and cities there was a **central business district (CBD)**. He suggested, initially using Chicago as his example, that towns grew outwards from this CBD in a concentric pattern. The resultant circles were based on the age of houses and the wealth of their occupants, with building becoming newer and the occupants more wealthy with increasing distance from the CBD.

Figure 3.20
Land values across a British city

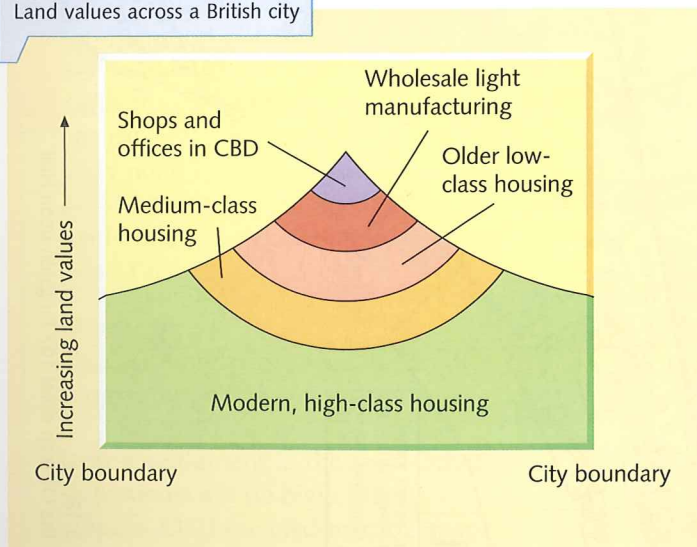
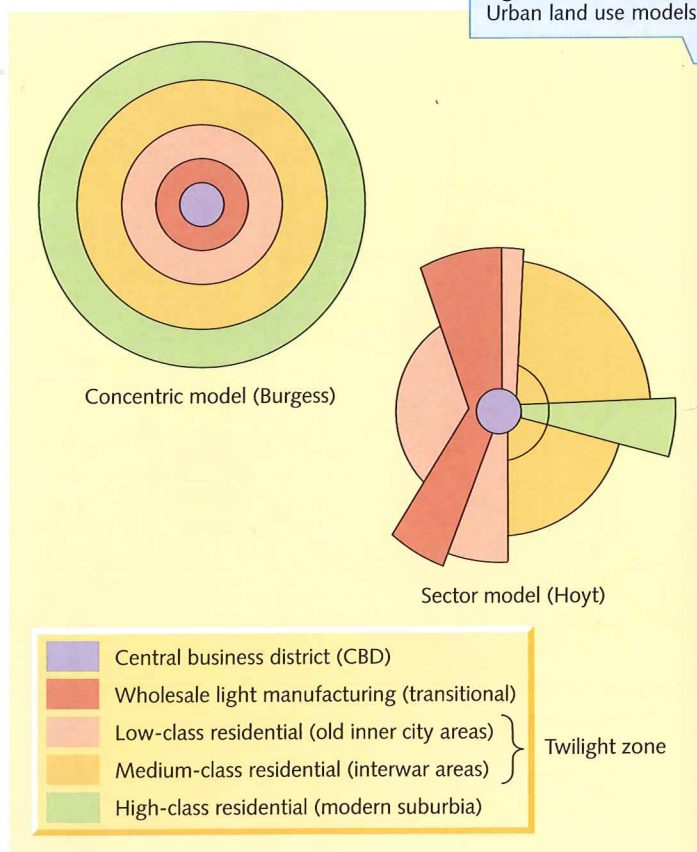


Figure 3.19
Urban land use models



- **Hoyt** proposed his model after the development of public transport. He suggested that urban areas developed in sectors, or wedges, alongside main transport routes into and out of a city. He also claimed that if, for example, industry and low-cost housing developed in one part of a town in the nineteenth century, then newer industry and modern low-cost housing would also locate in the same sector.

Urban land use and functional zones

Each of the zones shown in Figure 3.19 has a function. The four main types of function are shops and offices, industry, housing, and open space. The location of each zone and the distribution of each functional zone are related to several factors.

Land values and space Land values are highest and available sites more limited in the CBD where competition for land is greatest. As land values decrease rapidly towards the urban boundary then both the amount of space and the number of available sites increase (Figure 3.20).

Age As towns developed outwards, the oldest buildings were near to the city centre (although many of these have now been replaced) and the newest ones in the outskirts.

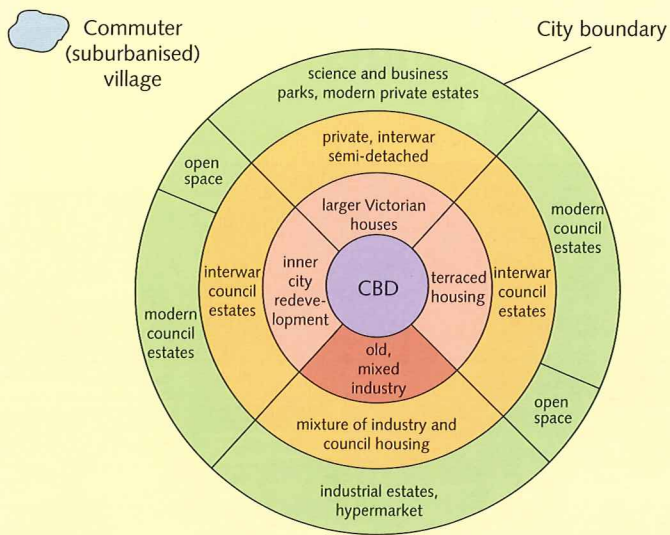
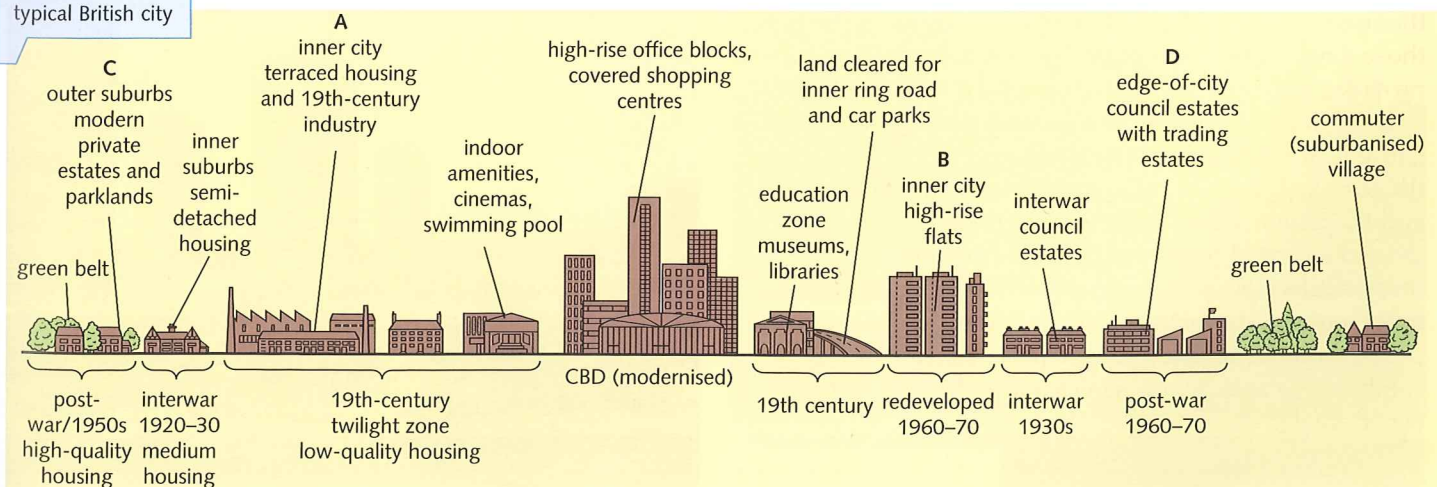


Figure 3.21
Land use in a modern British city showing a combination of the concentric and sector models

Accessibility The CBD, where the main routes from the suburbs and surrounding towns meet, has been the easiest place to reach from all parts of the city although this ease is now often reduced due to increased congestion.

Wealth of the inhabitants The poorer members of the community tend to live in cheaper housing near to the CBD (with its shops) and the inner city (where most jobs used to be found). These people are less likely to be able to afford the higher transport (private or public) and housing costs of places nearer the city boundary.

Figure 3.22
Transect across a typical British city



Changes in demand Land use and function change with time. For example:

- Nineteenth-century industry was located next to the CBD whereas modern industry prefers edge-of-city sites.
- The main land use demand in the nineteenth century was for industry and low-cost housing. Today it is for industry, shops and better-quality housing, all in a more pleasant environment, and open space.

Figure 3.21 is a more realistic model showing land use patterns and functional zones in a British city. Figure 3.22 is a transect, or cross-section, across a city. Figure 3.23 is a simplified land use map of Burnley in Lancashire.

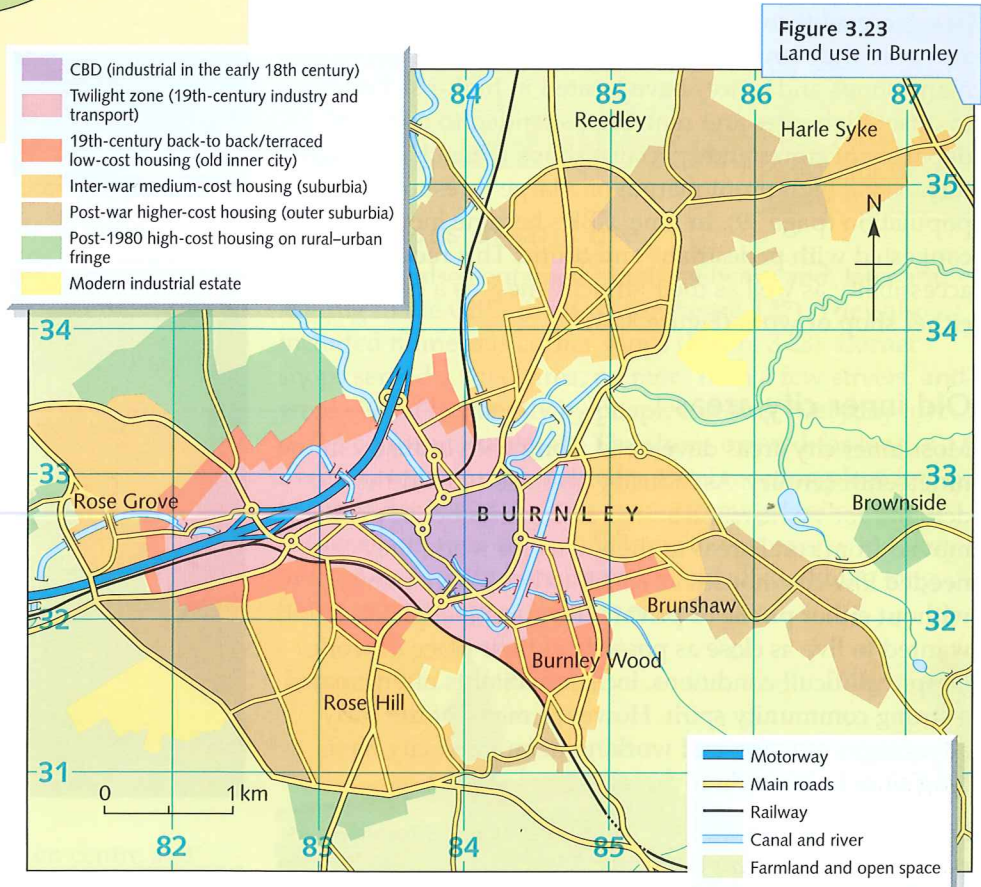


Figure 3.23
Land use in Burnley