

## Environmental quality change and land use change

It is recommended that for those living in or close to towns/cities, that your urban fieldwork be a full and actual investigation combining environmental quality change and land use change. For those undertaking a virtual investigation it is advisable to follow the four-stage enquiry sequence of planning through to concluding with the data coming from secondary sources, rather than being gathered in the field from primary sources.

The basis of this combined study has to be a transect – a detailed survey along a line carefully chosen to ensure that it crosses different types of areas, urban and/or rural (rural-urban fringe). Your transect needs to be a street route along which you can walk. 3–4 km transects are usual. They could, for instance, run between the suburbs and the CBD, crossing the inner city of a town or for a larger town/city, run between the inner city and core of the CBD. Rural-urban fringe transects running from rural areas into the outer suburbs may be possible.

The planning stage of this investigation involves acquiring:

- large-scale base maps of the streets/roads along and around your chosen transect
- an environmental quality (EQ) index (see Source 1)
- an urban land use key (see Source 2)
- a clipboard and pencil/crayon

Before walking the transect, perhaps in a pair familiarise yourself fully with both the EQ index and land use key. Decide upon a procedure for using these two on your walk e.g. every 100 metres at predetermined points; continuous land use recording with EQ assessments every time there is a noticeable change in EQ; recordings only when land use changes. The second of these procedures may be the best. Make sure that your subjective EQ scores are realistic and can be compared with each other and that you have sufficient scores for later presentation and analysis. EQ scores can change along a transect even when land use does not. Record on your base maps as you walk both land use and EQ. This investigation should prove to be very data-rich and provide plenty of opportunities for presentation, analysis and conclusions. You should be able to produce from the fieldwork:

- an annotated individual transect, and/or
- an EQ-land use map if other students have developed transects along other routes

Try to evaluate your fieldwork, especially the methods for collecting the data that you used. What might have improved the outcome?

Remember that any one urban environment examination question will focus on only one aspect of your transect – land use or EQ.

		3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
<b>BUILDINGS</b> Other comments	Old		✓				✓		New
	Neglected		✓				✓		Smart
	Clean	✓				✓			Dirty
	Ornate		✓			✓			Plain
	Ugly				✓				Beautiful
<b>TRAFFIC</b> (vehicular) Other comments	Busy	✓				✓			Quiet
	Slow		✓					✓	Fast
	Dangerous	✓				✓			Safe
	Smelly		✓			✓			Clean
	Noisy				✓				Quiet
<b>PEDESTRIANS</b> Other comments	Many			✓				✓	Few
	Sparce		✓				✓		Crowded
	Hurrying	✓				✓			Sauntering
	Safe	✓				✓			In danger
	Relaxed								Tense
<b>STREET/ROAD</b> Other comments	Colourful								Drab
	Dirty								Clean
	Cluttered							✓	Uncluttered
	Pleasant		✓			✓			Unpleasant
	Blocked		✓			✓			Clear

**Source 1** *An EQ index*

**Residential**

P1 – Old terraced housing  
P2 – Old large/semi-detached  
M1 – Public housing  
M2 – Other modern housing

**Industry**

1 – All types of industry  
Commercial  
S – Shops  
O – Offices

**Transport**

"T – Railway, car park, bus station"

**Public Buildings**

"PB – Schools, hospitals etc."

**Open Space**

F – Farmland  
R – Recreation  
C – Cemetery  
CP – Car Park

**Entertainment**

"E – Cinemas, pubs etc."

**Source 2** *An urban land use key*