

We have decided to investigate the land use patterns in a central business distri...

[Business](#)



We have decided to investigate the land use patterns in a Central Business District (CBD). The location that we chose for this study was central Croydon. Croydon is a suburban town with a population of just over 330000, to be precise 330688, according to 2002 Census.

Central Croydon is located in Outer London in the borough of Croydon, though it used to be a Surrey Urban District. It is approximately 9.5 miles south of London. It is surrounded by numerous other towns located in the London Borough of Croydon, for instance Norbury which is just North from Central Croydon, Purley which is just South-West of it and a handful of other small towns which are illustrated in Figure 1 below. With over 2.5 million sq. ft of retail space, Croydon is one of the principal shopping centres South of London.

Figure 1

It is likely that the placement of Croydon's CBD, conforms to a specific urban model, which was produced to generalize the patterns of urban land use found in cities. The models in question are the Burgess and Hoyt models, illustrated below (Figure 2). CBD's are a characteristic in all towns and cities. It is the part of the city where most business is conducted. The Central Business District (CBD) is generally located in the centre of a town or city with all route ways leading to it, making it the most accessible place in the city. As a result, it is the most intensively used part of the city and consequently, competition for space to conduct business is great; therefore land values are high and only large businesses can locate there. This is why no houses can locate there.

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One of my aims in this study is to investigate test how accurately Croydon's CBD corresponds to the core-frame model of CBD's, which indicates the layout of various different land uses within a CBD. (see Figure 3 below)

According to this model, department stores, specialist shops, banks, and high rise office blocks are found in the core (centre) of the CBD.

In the frame (the area surrounding the core) bus and coach stations, smaller shops, theatres and cinemas, multi-storey car parks, universities, car sales and service and railway stations, are found here.

The CBD of a city is a dynamic area going through changes; it isn't static. Certain parts of the frame, and sometimes including the core, go through a phase of decline: closed shops, numerous charity and budget shops and a neglected appearance are features of a zone of decay.

A different area of a CBD may benefit from the development of new businesses. These particular areas, called zones of improvement, are becoming spirited, more pleasant and more profitable. The condition of buildings and general appearance of the area are also progressing.

Having planned where the investigation is to take place, I have constructed a list of the hypotheses I shall be analyzing;

1) Certain retail land uses will cluster e. g. Comparison shops such as ladies' clothes shops, shoe shops and jewelers, whereas others will disperse i. e. Convenience shops (newsagents) and specialist shops (camera shops).

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Comparison shops, for instance clothes and shoe shops, are expected to cluster so that customers are not obliged to travel very far to the next shop "comparing" prices, quality, and/or style of the goods that they have come to purchase. As these shops sell items that are usually bought rarely the shopper is willing to visit a handful of different shops before deciding where to buy the item they want. Therefore, I presume these shops will be nearby each other in order to make it easier for consumers to obtain what they are looking for.

As for convenience shops, such as newsagents, general stores and corner shops, these are expected to be dispersed since their profits would suffer under the influence of competition if such stores were positioned in nearby vicinity to each other. As these stores mainly sell low-order goods, such as bread, milk, eggs etc. which are needed frequently, people are not willing to travel long distances for. Therefore, as these stores have low spheres of influence, it would be bad for business to say the least, if they were to cluster together and generate competition against one another.

Like convenience shops, specialist shops, which concentrate on selling only one type of good such as cameras or arts materials, are also dispersed. This is due to the fact that they need to attract a large number of customers in order to make a profit; they need a high threshold population and they will consequently have a large sphere of influence. Another attribute similar to that of the convenience shops, is the actuality that if more than one type of the same store were located close together, they too would have to endure some rivalry.

2) Chain stores, department stores will locate in the core of the CBD, whereas smaller, privately owned businesses will locate in the frame of the CBD

Chain stores and department stores are typically more successful and profitable, due to having large spheres of influence and large threshold populations to match, than those of the smaller businesses. They can therefore afford to buy land in the core where it is more often than not, more expensive. Whereas, the smaller businesses are not so well-off and are forced to set up the businesses around the frame of the CBD.

3) Pedestrian flows will be higher near the PLVI (in the core) of the CBD.

In theory, as there are a greater number of stores with high sphere's of influence, such as department stores, chain store etc., it is likely that a greater number of people will be drawn to that area of the CBD than the outer frame of the CBD. As the route-focus is situated at the PLVI, that particular area is likely to be to most accessible point of the CBD, therefore attracting furthermore people there.

Many companies, businesses and offices are located in the CBD, so the surrounding area outside these buildings may be busy with employees or customers entering and exiting the buildings.

In Croydon's CBD there is also a large number of entertainment amenities, such as night clubs, bars, cinemas and so on, which have large spheres of influence, drawing customers from neighbouring towns that enjoy going out during evenings and weekends etc. The bars, pubs and restaurants also

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appeal to those who work in close vicinity to, and also within, the CBD and do not have to travel far during lunch breaks and coffee breaks.

Finally, the entire CBD of Croydon is amazingly served by countless forms of transport; it is the centre of Tram networks, has at least 3 different train stations with frequent links to London and several other places, and over 50 different bus routes passing through the town every day. As a result of these services masses of people are likely to travel or pass through Croydon commuting, on their way to work, school etc., thus resulting in large numbers of individuals by bus and tram stops, train stations etc. particularly in the mornings and afternoons.

4) Environmental quality will be highest near the PLVI of the CBD in the core and become lower towards the frame. Environmental quality may be higher in a zone of improvement and lowest in a zone of decay.

As shops that are mainly located near the PLVI in Croydon's CBD are usually rich, successful chain and department stores, they can afford to maintain their shops and surrounding area at a high standard. The reason for them doing this would be to attract customers, who would supposedly be impressed by perhaps the architecture and cleanliness of their buildings. In view of the fact that these stores have large spheres of influence and draw many people into Croydon, the council probably invests more time and money to keep that area to a high standard by planting trees, installing benches, hiring road sweepers etc, in order to keep the number of visitors coming into Croydon elevated.

Environmental quality will obviously be higher in a zone of improvement than in a zone of decay, probably due to a number of factors such as crime and vandalism due to a lack of security, lack of funds being spent on the area by the council as it doesn't attract many people into Croydon. Also, a characteristic of zones of improvement is that the area is progressing and improving, perhaps by opening well known coffee shops such as Starbucks, Costa etc., that will bring in more trade.

Also, people probably have more respect for attractive areas that have security and look pleasant, than they do for run-down, grotty areas where it is possible to get away with law-breaking and sabotage.

5) Building height will decrease with distance from the CBD

In my opinion the explanation of this hypothesis is relatively straightforward. As the price of land grows more expensive in the CBD (most probably because of the prestigious, prime location in the most busy spot in the CBD), owners build on the land they already own to avoid buying more land and also to make the most of what they already own. Consequently, the further away from the CBD, the lower the building will be, for the reason that owners are able to meet the expense of increasing the amount of land the purchase, as the area is further away from the kudos and popularity of the CBD.

6) The public's general opinion of the frame of the CBD is negative and dissatisfied compared to that of the core

According to the core-frame model of the CBD, the frame contains areas of a lower standard than in the core; the zone of improvement and the zone of

decay. I would imagine the public's opinion of the outer CBD to be a lot lower and more downbeat than that of the PLVI, purely because the area is in worse condition and less appealing to the individuals in Croydon. As basically all of the department stores, businesses, places to eat, amenities and so forth, are located deep within the centre of the CBD there is little reason for people to visit the outer CBD which consists of little of interest or appeal. Not compared to core at any rate.

There are a handful of factors that result in the frame of the CBD being less likable and attractive than the core, such as environmental quality being less than satisfactory, shops being less appealing and attractive, higher crime rates, distance from the core, being less accessible and so on.

Generally speaking, I think the public would much rather visit a safe, visually pleasing, clean, and on the whole, a higher standard area than a vandalized, potentially dangerous, run-down area.