

Enquiry 1: An industrial estate

Aim: To investigate the location and functions of an industrial estate.

Research questions

1. Where is the industrial estate located, in relation to the urban area?
2. What are the advantages of this location for an industrial estate?
3. What industrial and commercial activities is this estate involved in?
4. Do parts of this park specialise in certain types of activity?

Geographical context

During the Industrial Revolution, factories and mills concentrated in inner city locations and along transport routes such as canals and railways. During the second half of the last century, road eclipsed rail for industrial transport; also, new industrial and warehousing developments were located in specialised industrial estates with efficient road transport links.

Location identification techniques

- Map to locate the town chosen for the enquiry within its region.
- Map to locate the urban area, the industrial estate and the main transport links that serve both.

Main health and safety issues

- Work in groups – never alone.
- Know where your teachers and their transport are located.
- Always carry a mobile phone in case of emergencies.
- Be aware of moving vehicles at all times – especially large lorries that are reversing.

Data collection activities

- Completing a plan of the industrial estate to locate and name all the site occupiers and their main activities.
- Interviewing a representative of each business, using a questionnaire and having obtained prior permission to do this.

Data collection resources required

- Plan of the industrial estate.
- Questionnaire for use with company representative interviews.

Suggested sources of secondary data

- Internet sites of the estate proprietor to obtain information about its origins and subsequent history.
- Internet sites of companies occupying industrial estate sites.
- Timetables for bus routes serving the industrial estate.

Recommended data presentation and analysis

- Map to locate the survey town within its region, including all motorway routes in the area.
- Plan of the town to highlight all major roads within it, the estate's location and bus routes serving the estate.
- Plan of the estate and the locations of its occupiers. Different types of industrial and communication activities could be highlighted in different colours.
- Annotated photographs to illustrate the full range of the estate's activities, road access and the relief of the land on which it is built.