

Account for the decline in CBD's since the 1980's. What have town planners done to address the problem?

The central business district (CBD) is regarded as the central place for retailing, office location and service activities. But since the 1980's there has been a decline in some CBD's but not all. This is mostly due to threats from the changes in shopping behaviour and deindustrialisation.

Over recent years there has been growing concern about the damaging impact of out of town shopping centres on city centre retailers as the market is somewhat static or even declining. Whereas banks and offices are increasing in terms of space taken so are moving out of the CBD. Such as AXA on white Lund industrial estate, even though it is a nation wide company it still rents cheap premises as no one walks past it or impulse buys from it as all their business is carried out on either the telephone or the internet.

Deindustrialisation happened as many large traditional industries concentrated in the inner cities and had employed large numbers of inner city residents. When these industries left large areas of derelict land and unemployment arose such as central Manchester where a derelict industrial area was left comprising of the bridge water canal basin, Victorian railway and disused warehouses and factories until 1988.

We have to make sure that we do not place all CBD's into a declining category. As some CBD's are still growing such as Manchester who dealt with there problems at an early stage such as investing in urban development to make the CBD more appealing this is why Manchester's CBD is still as popular as the out of town shopping centre – the Trafford centre.

The CBD used to be multifunctional with every service and amenity there so there was no need to travel anywhere apart from there to find what you were looking for. Industries were located in city centres for access this meant that people lived close to work as people had little incomes to purchase cars to travel to work. With people living close to work there was little need for transport apart from in and out of town.

The decline in the CBD arose from the changes over the decades in industry, technology, living and socio economic factors. A main factor is the access to CBD as it was difficult due to poor, irregular and not reliable transport.

An additional factor is that Old buildings, warehouses and factories not suitable for modern retail and it would prove expensive for companies to knock down and build again or even modernise.

Another factor is the congestion and traffic within the CBD this also leads to not suitable access for HGV and deliveries to shops and office etc.

With little space within the CBD there is not adequate parking available and if there is it tends to be very expensive.

People tend not to visit the CBD in adverse weather as it is unprotected from the environment outside.

People also tend to feel anxious in CBD's with high rates of crime and vandalism which make it an unpleasant environment to visit.

These factors lead to retail to take it upon themselves and move out of the CBD and make things more convenient for their customers.

Low order and convince stores such as supermarkets moved away from the CBD and inner city retail outlets opened on Brownfield sites as well as the out of town high threshold, high order retail outlets. These were designed as Consumers prefer to use them because:

- Their location in the suburbs or on the edge of the urban area allows shoppers to avoid the inner city traffic congestion and if they are travelling from outside the city they can avoid the city completely.
- The shopping centres are often located close to motorways or other main routes allowing fast access from other areas.
- They have large free car parks
- Have a large variety of shops/goods which are located in a compact area
- They can feel secure because of security guards and video surveillance and because of the traffic free environment.
- They are protected from the weather by the air conditioned environment.
- A variety of other entertainment and leisure faculties may be available in or around the same area such as restaurants, cinemas and crèches.

In response to the decline in CBD's planners have Slowed down or stopped Greenfield sites being built on meaning that developers will have to find Brownfield sites to build on It also means that urban sprawl will slow down or hopefully stop.

Planners have also introduced the redevelopment of CBD's. Such as Southampton where the city council have produces an action strategy. This strategy includes the predestination of shopping streets, the introduction of CCTV and improving public transport links to the centre.

Also they believe that changes in function of a CBD will help revive it such as introducing new tourist attractions and encouraging the location for new leisure and entertainment activities.

Another response by planners is to introduce the 24 hour city this would mean shops staying open later in the evening and leisure facilities attracting a wider range of users thus the local economy benefiting from the higher spending. Also the city being seen as lively and attractive in the evening could also attract more people from out of town to visit.