

The Roman Town

*"Chester was founded by the Romans in about AD 60 as a strategically vital fort at the head of the estuary of the River Dee. It was an important harbour and served as the northern base for the conquest of Wales"*¹

The fortress of Castra Devana was sited on a sandstone ridge in a meander loop of the River Dee. It was ideally located for a military base, since it had a deep water harbour and served as a base for the Roman fleet. It also commanded one of the crossing points of the river, and was both a wet point and a dry point site. It was the main staging point for attacks against the Welsh, and was linked to the military capital of Roman Britain, York, by a road which is now known as Foregate Street. It became the headquarters of the 20th Valeria Victrix Legion, which served in Chester for 200 years. The map overleaf gives an indication of layout and position.

Deva was a typical Roman fortress, rectangular in shape with the Principia in the centre. This site is now partially covered by St. Peter's Church. The walls of the city are broken by four main gates. The two main streets of Chester lead from diametrically opposed gates, and cross at right angles. They were cut out of the underlying sandstone by the Romans, and lie below the level of the houses.

Eastgate Street was the main East-West road of Chester. During Roman times it was known as the Via Principalis. It remains as one of the principal roads of Chester in to the present day. It is now pedestrianised, and provides access to the Rows and the central shopping area of Chester. This may perhaps be due to the quality of the Roman masonry. Northgate Street was the Roman Via Decumana. The barrack blocks of the fortress were near the Northgate itself. Naturally, the majority of the Roman settlement is now long gone. The remnants of the ancient fortress are spread over much of the city. The city walls are mainly medieval, but on the northern and eastern sides, Roman work can be seen. In 1880, when the walls were repaired, some tombstones of Roman origin were found.

The principal Roman remains are to be found outside the walls. The remains are clustered together around the gate in what appears similar to Fauberg development.

Just outside the Wolf Gate, the foundations of the South east corner of the Roman fortress can be seen with traces of the tower. On the other side of the road, just outside Newgate, the Roman Garden was laid out in 1949. It contains many Roman stones discovered elsewhere in the city. There is also a reconstruction of a Roman hypocaust. Slightly further away from the City Walls, the northern half of the Roman Amphitheatre is to be found.

*Figure 1; The Roman Gardens*²

Originally discovered in 1928 and excavated in the 1960s, the amphitheatre was built by the Roman legionaries as a practice ground for weapons training. It was probably also used for the more traditional entertainments on public holidays. The amphitheatre was the largest stone arena in Britain; measuring approximately 190 by 162 ft and with seating accommodation for 7000 people.

*Figure 2; The Roman Amphitheatre*³

The size of the amphitheatre is indicative of the relative importance of Chester. For a small fortress town, an amphitheatre seating 7000 is larger than expected. The south side was used as a site for a Girls' School, now derelict. Recently it has been suggested that the amphitheatre was actually a Colosseum, and that it should be excavated as such. However, the site is currently being developed as the new City Council Offices.

An interesting point to note is the application of Conzen's theory (Chapter 4) to the use of the Colosseum. Originally a Roman training ground, then an entertainment centre, it was used as a bear baiting pit in the 18th Century.⁴

However, this extract from 'The Times' shows an alternative view which would explain parts of Chester which are unknown.

"ROMAN Chester may have been a much more important and grander outpost of the Empire than previously thought, according to new research.

Archaeologists have traditionally believed that by AD 120 Chester, known as Deva, was essentially a military fortress, albeit the largest in Britain, and was used as a frontier base from which to quell savage tribes to the West and north. But the city's Roman experts speculate that Emperor Hadrian ordered the construction of a "beautiful new city", home to the Roman Governor in Britain, with grandiose buildings to be built as a reflection of Rome's glory.

The first complete survey of the Roman walls, to be published later this summer, shows that they were constructed with unusually large blocks in a manner designed to impress, with imposing, ornamental gateways.

Tim Strickland, a former city archaeologist, who has spent 20 years investigating Chester's Roman roots, said: "It seems that a beautiful new city, using the fortress as a basis, was decreed at some stage, enhanced by a wonderful wall."

A strange elliptical building, which consisted of 12 wedge-shaped rooms around a courtyard and built inside the walls, has long baffled archaeologists. A fresh look at the structure suggests that it may have been built as a shrine to the glory of Rome, its shape mirroring the geography of the Roman Empire spreading outwards from the Mediterranean.

David Mason, secretary of the Chester Archaeological Society, said: "If you take the unusual style of the walls, the elliptical building and the fact that Roman Chester was ten acres larger than any other legionary fortress, then it is clear that it was unusual, perhaps intended to be the headquarters of the Roman Governor in Britain. "It was built so that its structures were seen to be in honour of Rome itself."

¹ From 'History of Urban Form before the Industrial Revolution' by A. E. J. Morris, 1994. 3rd ed.

² Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

³ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁴ From 'Chester-Attractions-Roman Amphitheatre', at www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism.htm

All physical evidence of the elliptical building, including baths, heating systems and colonnades were lost forever in the late 1980s when developers built the Forum shopping centre. However, fragments of the Roman legions' sojourn in Chester, dating back to AD 79, still survive in the city's busy Victorian thoroughfares.

In the unlikely setting of the Spud-U-Like shop in Bridge Street is a large and well-preserved section of a hypocaust, which heated the garrison bath house.

An amphitheatre lies half excavated in the city centre. In a clothes store in Northgate Street, you can see the column bases and shafts from the fort's headquarters building. From here the XXth Valeria Victrix legion set out first to subjugate the tribes of North Wales and then the Brigantes to the North and east.

Later the legions were virtually to abandon Chester in the quest to bring the Picts to heel.

The 200-page paper, entitled *The Roman Defences of Chester* and funded by English Heritage, was written by Charles le Quesne in conjunction with the Chester-based archaeologists Gifford and Partners.

The massive sandstone blocks used in the construction of Chester's walls differed markedly from the small blocks used at York or on Hadrian's Wall. Mr. Le Quesne, a freelance archaeologist, said: "The ashlar without mortar was normally used only for buildings like temples and aqueducts. These walls were definitely built to impress."

According to the survey, the walls were started shortly before AD 120 but there was a lull when the 20th Legion was drawn north to Scotland.

Mr. Strickland said: "We know that Hadrian visited the nearby camp in Wroxeter, and he may well have come to Chester 50 miles away, around AD 120, and decided it was no longer to be an army base, but a focal point for civilisation in the North West of England, while military capability was transferred further north to Scotland. "He may have ordered the new city, with the wall built specially by the 20th Legion before it departed." ⁵

The idea of Chester as a showcase town corresponds with the size of the amphitheatre, which is considered as slightly large for a town the size of Chester.

Figure 3; [The Governor's House](#)⁶

Also to be found close to the walls is the remains of the Governor's house mentioned in the article. The house is just outside the walls near to the amphitheatre. All that remains of the house is approximately a metre of foundation stone, which shows the layout of the rooms, and the approximate size of the building. Assuming that there was not a major wooden extension to the building, then the house appears small in size, especially considering the fact that it is the home of the Governor, and if the article is to be believed, the home of the Governor of a Roman showcase city. Notice the fact that the foundations are not made of the local sandstone. This suggests that the stones were imported, which adds to the significance of Chester as a Roman base.

The city of Chester bears witness to the Roman foundations it has inherited. Unfortunately, the best remains were buried in the development of 'The Forum' Shopping Centre, those remains mentioned in the article as pointing towards the importance of Chester as the cultural capital of Roman Britain. This is a sad loss for Chester, and for us who study the Roman city of Deva.

The Medieval Town

When the Roman forces pulled out of Britain in the early 5th century, their encampments were largely abandoned. The Anglo-Saxons reconquered and refortified them over a number of years, and Anglo-Saxon Chester became a rich and prosperous community and a thriving port.

After the Battle of Hastings of 1066, William began his conquest of the whole country. He laid waste to Cheshire in the winter of 1069-70 and gave responsibility for controlling it to Hugh of Avranches, who became Earl of Chester in 1071. Chester Castle, begun by William the Conqueror became the centre of the Earldom of Chester.

During the Middle Ages, Chester became the most important sea port in north west England, and trade flourished. At its pinnacle, the port of Chester welcomed merchant ships from Spain, Germany and Ireland. Cestrians exported locally produced salt, cheese and candles.

This redevelopment and redirection of Chester's role required infrastructure development, although the primary Roman cross axes were retained.

In the Medieval period, the first priority was defence. The Roman walls were adequate, but needed to be augmented. In addition, the River had moved since the Roman times, and it was no longer quite as close to the walls as it once had been.

Hence, the walls were strengthened in parts, and extended in others. They now continued southwards to the Dee itself, and eastwards to the extent of the sandstone ridge, approximately doubling the internal space within the walls.

The next defensive priority was the construction of the castle. Begun by William the Conqueror, the castle was located in the site which was easiest to defend. The castle is built on the sandstone ridge, and was located in the South west corner of the town, in the apex of the meander loop of the River Dee. The ridge and river make it impregnable from the south, and much of the east and west, leaving only a 100° arc to defend against attack. As a result, the north side of the castle is the most fortified. It is built in typical medieval style with arrow loops, and a concentric form. There does not appear to be evidence of a moat, although the artificial mound on which the castle is sited must have come from a major excavation.

The feudal system resulted in the local landlord being very wealthy, even after tax. With a strong religious culture, the perceived belief in practicable salvation meant that the next priority for the Earl would be a cathedral.

⁵ Extracted from 'The Times', using the website 'www.the-times.co.uk/news/pages/tim/99/06.07.html'

⁶ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

Not only would it be a shining monument to the glory of God, it would also be an easy way to Heaven and an incidental display of personal grandeur and wealth. The cathedral was usually built in the most easily defended site after the castle, since it often contained valuable chalices, and gold ornamentation on the statues, engravings, mosaics and other embellishments in the cathedral.

Chester Cathedral stands on the site of a 10th Century Saxon Church dedicated to St. Werburgh. In 1092 it became a Benedictine Abbey, and a new Church in the Norman style was built, parts of which can still be seen. This church was rebuilt from about 1250 onwards. This process took 250 years, resulting in the current building. It was interrupted by the outbreak of the plague, which caused a change of architectural style to Perpendicular, since the skilled workmen needed to create the intricate windows of the Romanesque period had died. Due to the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII, the Abbey was closed in 1540, but became the Cathedral of the newly created diocese of Chester the next year. Many of the stalls date from the Medieval period, with each of the canopies different from the next. The Shrine of St. Werburgh dates from c.1340, after being restored in the nineteenth century. The Lady Chapel dates from 1250 - 1275.

Figure 1; [Chester Cathedral](#)⁷

The majority of the Cathedral retains the layout and many of the features of the medieval Abbey, but many changes have been made since. The influence of the Victorian architect Sir George Gilbert Scott is most obvious; he added the flying buttresses and battlement parapets between 1868-1876 in keeping with the neo-Gothic style of the period.⁸ The next priority on the list, after the castle and walls, and the cathedral would be a market.

Usually sited in the most central place, a market was a good idea because it gave an extra layer of local tax - an early form of VAT! The market had to be granted a Charter by the King - which meant that taxes were paid to the Crown as well.

The franchisement of the markets was a direct result of the diversification of local talent and a reaction to the barter economy of the period. Instead of exchanging goods, there was now an official place to purchase and sell goods. This involved money, and thus tax. The city was granted its first charter in c.1175 and incorporated in 1506 to hold a market.⁹ Markets were held in the most accessible point in the city. Because of the Roman layout of the town, this was sited at the Cross.

Figure 2; [The Cross](#)¹⁰

The people came in from the surrounding area to sell their goods, and buy other goods. They were then forced to travel home, since a local law stated that only those who lived within the city walls could be within them after the gates had shut in the evening. Any one found within the walls could be sentenced to death.

Figure 3; [The Water Gate Inn](#)¹¹

So a variety of inns and taverns were developed just outside the gates of the city, in what is now known as Fauberg development. An example of this development would be the inn shown here, the Watergate Inn just outside the Water Gate.

Fauberg Development was used of a Parisian suburb, but comes from Medieval Latin *falsus burgus* - meaning 'not the city proper'¹². The market at The Cross led on to the primitive development of a Central Business District around this area. Soon, the land around the Cross was probably the prime business site in the whole of Cheshire.

At some stage during this time, and for some reason, the Rows were constructed. They are composed of several elements. First is the first floor walkway, reaches by steps from the streets. Below, at street level, are undercrofts, originally used as shops or warehouses. In the Middle Ages, the Rows were used as homes.

The basic arrangement of the Rows is not uncommon in medieval architecture. However, the undercrofts are usually underground, whereas they are at street level in Chester. This is partly due to proximity of the bed rock, and partly due Unique to Chester, the Rows' layout dates back to approximately the 13th Century. A system of covered galleries above the shops at street level, they survive best in Watergate, Eastgate and Bridge Street. It is clear that the origin of the Rows lies in the Middle Ages.

Figure 6; [The Rows and the Cross](#)¹³

to the Roman building debris raising the ground level. As the frontages built up, it became practicable to link the walkways to form a continuous Row. In the 16th and 17th centuries, the chambers above the Row were often extended forward, supported by posts set in the street. The gap between the street and the walkway were filled in to create a 'stall board' on which goods could be displayed.

Figure; [The Rows](#)¹⁴

⁷ Photograph courtesy of Chester Cathedral, at 'www.chestercathedral.org.uk'

⁸ Extracted from 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm' and 'Chester Cathedral' by the Chester Cathedral.

⁹ Market data from Microsoft Encarta 1999 'Chester'.

¹⁰ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

¹¹ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

¹² From Microsoft Encarta 1999, Dictionary.

¹³ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

¹⁴ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

Many of the lost Rows disappeared between 1600 and 1750, although some were demolished in the Victorian era. Row losses were particularly marked in Lower Bridge Street. Many of Chester's richest families lived there, and so the pressure to rebuild or alter houses was strongest in this area. Those remaining continued to be lived or worked in, strong enough to survive, and being rebuilt in timber and stone as necessary.¹⁵

The region inside the walls is planned in a form similar to the Hoyt model of urban planning, that is to say that there is a retail core around the cross, and extending along the principal cross axes left by the Romans, and after this core, the land is used for different purposes in a strict hierarchy.

Immediately after the shops come the offices, which would not have existed in Medieval times, but would probably have been the workshops. After the workshops comes the almshouses and the housing for the rich.

The upper class homes of the Medieval period have long gone, to be replaced by more modern architecture, but a row of almshouses remains.

Almshouses were an early form of nursing home. They were run by the local parishes, and were free accommodation for the elderly or infirm who could not afford their own housing after retirement. Only the most pious of the elderly and infirm would have been accommodated in these almshouses.

*Figure 4; Medieval Almshouses*¹⁶

They were amongst the first buildings to be restored in the 1960s by Chester City Council.

The almshouses and the Cathedral are both a testimony to the relative importance of the Church to life in the Medieval period. The Church was not only something to give money to in the hope of eternal reward for the rich, but it was the sole supporter of the poor and needy.

The rich built the Churches, but looked after themselves in their dotage, whereas the poor could not afford to support themselves in retirement. Thus, the almshouses were set up. Not quite the Dickensian workhouses, these almshouses were provided for a 'select' poor, probably those who had been very pious and affiliated to the Church, perhaps as servers or cleaners. They were provided for in the houses, and there would perhaps have been more of these almshouses along the edges of the City walls.

The product of the Medieval alterations to the layout and plan of Chester can be seen here. The retention of the Roman cross axes is obvious, and logical. The extension of the walls required new gates, and indeed new bridges to be constructed. The primary retail district of the present day matches that of

*Figure 5; Map of Chester showing Medieval Influences*¹⁷

Medieval Chester. The Fauberg development is marked on the map, as are the rest of the medieval city 'elements'; the castle, walls, cathedral and market centre.

Figure 6; The Medieval Bridge

The shifting of the Dee southwards required the construction of a new bridge, which is just downstream of the weir and constructed of local sandstone.

How has the relic land use and buildings of Chester affected modern day land use in the central area?

Answer with reference to the shape of the modern delimited CBD.

The modern model of the CBD has come about through various stages, the most notable being that of Burgess (1924), Hoyt (1939), and Mann (1965). The most complex model is that of Ullman and Harris, in 1945.

This model set out to produce a more realistic model than Burgess and Hoyt, but resulted in a very complex model.

The basic assumptions include the premise that each nucleus has a different function and acts as a growth point.

Multiple nuclei develop as a response to the need for maximum accessibility to a centre, to keep certain types of land use apart, for differences in land value, and more recently, to decentralise.¹⁸

*Figure 1; the Ullman Harris Multiple Nuclei Model*¹⁹

The key flaw in applying this model to Chester lies in the fact that the model assumes that the city is unconstrained, or delimited. In Chester, the centre is restricted by the walls.

In addition to this, a look at the work of Ganshof²⁰ in his study of the growth of towns between the Loire and the Rhine in the Middle Ages may appear to define the nuclei.

The key to the physical pattern is seen by Ganshof to reside in the 'pre-urban' nucleus, which was a strong point; most often a Roman town or fort which survived the turbulence of imperial collapse to provide a point of security in later times. Thanks to their fortifications, these *civitates* and *castra* acted as pre urban nuclei in the formation of medieval towns. In other words, the Medieval town formed around the pre-existing Roman element. Other nuclei were found in the castles of the nobility, particularly in Flanders and Brabant, whilst a third type was centred on the residences of the emerging ecclesiastical hierarchy.

All these had a common element of offering physical protection. The catalyst for growth was the new merchant or commercial areas added to them. the post Dark Age commercial revival needed security above all else, and became

¹⁵ Adapted from 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm' 'The Rows'.

¹⁶ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

¹⁷ From the Chester City Council website, www.chestercc.gov.uk. Adapted and annotated by the author.

¹⁸ From 'Geography - An Integrated Approach' by David Waugh. 3rd edition, published by Nelson and 'Urbanisation; Changing Environments' by Corrin Flint and David Flint. Published by Collins Educational, first edition.

¹⁹ From 'Geography - An Integrated Approach' by David Waugh. 3rd edition, published by Nelson p.390.

²⁰ F. L. Ganshof (1943): 'Etude sur le developpement des villes entre Loire et Rhin au moyen-age' (Paris/Brussels)

attached to the earlier nuclei which could provide protection. These suburbs (sub urbium) had distinctive names; portus (poort), vicus (vik) or the French burgus (bourg). Thus emerges the fundamental and idiosyncratic difference between the *cite* and *bourg* in France, and between the older protective core and the new merchant area; the bourgeoisie²¹

*Figure 2; Bid Rent Curves for the CBD*²²

The alternative land use model is the bid rent theory. The main assumption is that in a free market, the highest bidder will obtain use of the land. The highest bidder is likely to be the one who can obtain the maximum profit from the site, and so can pay the highest rent.

The most expensive, or prime sites, in the city are in the CBD, mainly because of its accessibility and the shortage of space there. Shops, especially department stores, conduct their business using a relatively small amount of ground space and due to their high rate of sales and turnover, they can bid a high price for the land. They try and compensate for this by building upwards and using the land intensively. The most valuable site in the CBD is called the peak land value intersection (PVL) and is usually occupied by a Marks and Spencer's store. Competing with retailers are offices which rely on proximity to other commercial buildings.²³

*Figure 3; Central Chester*²⁴

In Chester, relic land use means that buildings are built in the traditional style. This limits the height of the buildings to a maximum of 4 storeys. With a limit on floor space imposed by the legislation on height, the retailers are further restricted by the mock Tudor buildings themselves, whose small design does not lend itself to large retail floor space.

The result is twofold. In the Rows, the larger shops take over both storeys, and shops sideways as well. The Camping and Outdoor Centre was nominally one shop, but in fact three buildings, each with its own entrance and facade. However, there is a maximum floor space, and larger stores are forced to devolve to Foregate Street. This is no major problem; it is estimated to have a greater foot passenger turnover than London's Oxford Street. Just outside the Eastgate, on Foregate St., Marks and Spencer's department store has been forced to develop a two site store, on opposite sides of the road. So the retail core of the CBD which may be said to centre around the Cross, does not contain a Marks and Spencer's.

*Figure 4; Foregate Street*²⁵

The retail core has its centre around the cross and the Grosvenor Shopping Centre, and extends along the arterial roads to the four gates by means of the Rows and mock Tudor shop centres, alongside modern architecture in a neo Georgian style. The majority of the stores are small floor space retail centres, mainly concentrated in service and technology retailers, i.e. mobile phone stores and estate agents. As in most CBDs the retail groups clustered together, for example, the communications (mobile phone) stores seemed to be centred around the entrance and immediate vicinity of the Grosvenor Centre. In addition to this, the department stores are clustered together. Marks and Spencer's, BHS and C & A are all within a short distance of each other, for ease of price comparison.

The Grosvenor Centre is a modern mall-type shopping centre which is an offshoot of the main retail street.

*Figure 5; The Grosvenor Centre*²⁶

It comprises many high street stores in an undercover area. Since it was purpose built, and is modern, the limit to floor space found in the Tudor Rows does not apply. It is not, however, large enough to accommodate department stores like M&S.

Land use then rapidly changes to office spaces as soon as accessibility decreases. The principal office areas are those former Georgian residences, whose spacious ground and first floor accommodation is ideally suited to office layout. It also has a prestigious feel to it.

Figure 6; Professional offices

Figure 7; Offices of Granada Television

The offices along the arterial routes seemed to be principally based around the professional side of the service sector. There were several lawyers, solicitors, accountants and surveyors in evidence. There were also high order goods shops, and expensive specialist shops. Examples of this are the offices of Granada Television, and the solicitors mentioned earlier.

Note that both of these offices are in old Georgian residential buildings - another application of Conzen's theory to land use in Chester (see Chapter 4).

Perhaps the best way to show land use in Chester is to look again at the map used to illustrate the key elements of the Medieval city. Based on the author's experience of Chester on the field trip, the two cores of office and retail overlap south of the Cross.

This suggests a multiple nucleus city, but one which has been constrained by the limits of the city walls. It is similar to the idea of two independent secondary land value peaks forming an arete in this area near the Cross.

However, it is obvious that the retail land use on Foregate St. has a far higher land value than the office use.

The retention of Chester's history has put limits upon the retail and office space, but has simultaneously created a unique environment to shop and conduct business in. The aesthetic and locational values of these sites cannot be justifiably valued, and as such, are more sought after than your average Central Business District.

²¹ Details of this study extracted from 'The Study of Urban Geography' by Prof. Harold Carter. Published by Arnold, 3rd ed.

²² From 'Geography - An Integrated Approach' by David Waugh. 3rd edition, published by Nelson

²³ Adapted from 'Geography - An Integrated Approach' by David Waugh. 3rd edition, published by Nelson, pp. 390-2.

²⁴ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

²⁵ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'.

²⁶ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

Figure 8; Map Showing Retail and Office Cores of Chester, based on a map from Chester City Council at <http://www.chestercc.gov.uk/>

Discuss an application of Conzen's Theory that street plan, building and land use vary with time, land use most easily, and street plan most slowly

Described quite succinctly in the title of this Chapter, Conzen's Theory states that the three aspects of planning; the road layout, the building use and the land use vary dependent on each other. It also suggests that they have different periods of variation, with land use varying most easily, and street plan varying most slowly. This is a rather simplified approach to what is a complex and detailed study.

In the 1960s M. R. Conzen attempted to establish 'some basic concepts applicable to recurrent phenomena in urban morphology'²⁷. There is, however, a considerable conceptual gap between the isolation of a 'recurrent phenomena' and the 'provision of a theoretical basis yielding concepts of general application'. Conzen's main contribution lies in the way in which the interaction between phases of extension are explored, as opposed to merely added on successively. He demonstrates at the outset that the major townscape aspects; plan, build and land use - react at different rates to the forces of change brought to bear on them.

Land use is the most volatile and can respond rapidly. The buildings themselves can be adapted to alternative uses without replacement, and the necessity for capital investment means that this takes place at a slower rate than land use. But the layout of a town, the streets themselves, cannot be destroyed and rebuilt as easily as single buildings, and hence remain relatively permanent. The result, argues Conzen, is that plan is the most conservative aspect of townscape and thus requires an historical approach.

His work is conventional in so far as it involves the identification of growth phases. It is only within this approach that fundamental concepts are introduced which are claimed to be microcosmic.

In the case Conzen analyses, the small town of Alnwick in Northumberland, the medieval wall is considered as constituting a fixation line. In relation to it, two processes take place; repletion within the wall and accretion outside it. Accretion takes place within the fringe belt through the development of the open fields outside the fixation line.²⁸ The distinct application of this to Chester, with its medieval walls and in particular the ribbon development along Foregate St. is very obvious. The exploitation of Chester as a Heritage Site has presumably resulted in an artificially high land value within the walls area. The accretion can be seen in the expansion east, particularly following Fauberg-style ribbon development along Foregate St.

There are several examples of the application of this theory to be found in Chester.

The first is the base for the fieldwork studies in Chester; The Mill Hotel. Built in the nineteenth century, and used as a Victorian corn mill, the building has a Roman road past it and is now a four star hotel

Conzen's Theory can be seen in the example of the City of London, before and after the Great Fire. He recognised that during the aftermath of the Great Fire of 1666, the areas which were burned down were cleared and rebuilt, but using the same road layout as before.

Figure 1; [The Mill Hotel](#)²⁹

Another example is that of the buildings on Watergate Road. The road itself follows the original Roman layout, and the present buildings are Georgian. The Roman buildings are long gone. The Georgian buildings were originally used as family residences, and are now offices for those in the 'professional' sector, e.g. solicitors or surveyors.

Figure 2; [St. Michael's Church - Heritage Centre](#)³⁰

Other examples of such development in Chester include the buildings now used as tourist and heritage centres. Chester Visitor Centre is on land space surrounded by Roman roads, on the site of the former Grosvenor St. John's School which dates from 1813. The other notable site is that of Chester Heritage Centre in the former St. Michael's Church. First mentioned in a charter in 1154-60, the majority of the church dates from the late 14th and early 15th century. It is on the site of the Cross where the original church of the Medieval time would have stood.

Another conspicuous site is the current Town Hall which was built on the site of a former Town Hall which was destroyed by fire in 1862. It was built in 1865-69 and opened in late 1869. It was built in Gothic style with a 160 ft high central tower.

Figure 3; [The Town Hall](#)³¹

Indeed, the city within the walls exhibits classic Conzen behaviour. The retention of the Roman primary cross axes agrees with the slow change of street plan, and the gradual transition from market to retail/office centre has been punctuated with dynamic changes in individual site uses over time.

Conzen's work is applicable on both a micro (site specific) and macrocosmic scale to Chester; in the area within the walls. The application of Conzen's Theory to Chester agrees with the theory of Ganshof in definition of the Medieval nuclei around which the street plan and building use was formed.

²⁷ M R G Conzen (1960); Alnwick: a study in town plan analysis. Trans Inst. Br. Geogr.. Extracted from 'The Study of Urban Geography' by Prof. Harold Carter. Published by Arnold, 3rd ed.

²⁸ From 'The Study of Urban Geography' by Prof. Harold Carter. Published by Arnold, 3rd ed.

²⁹ Photograph courtesy of the Mill Hotel website at 'www.millhotel.co.uk'

³⁰ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

³¹ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

The work of Conzen is particularly applicable to the study of Chester since it was based upon Alnwick, a town with a partially complete Roman/Medieval wall. The parallels between this town and Chester are remarkable, and useful to us for theoretical rationale, although this was not what was intended by Conzen's work.

What evidence did you collect of Tudor, Stuart, Georgian and Regency architectural styles in Chester?

The Tudor Style, in English art and architecture, is the designation for the period covering the reigns of the Tudor monarchs. The Tudor period began with the accession of Henry VII in 1485 and ended with the death of Elizabeth I in 1603. It was a period in which medieval forms began to give way to Renaissance ideals.

*Figure-1; Tudor Style buildings, Chester*³²

Although the decorative arts flourished during this period, as did painting—particularly in the work of the German painter Hans Holbein the Younger at the court of Henry VIII—the Tudor style was expressed mainly in residential domestic architecture. In architecture, Tudor style is identified with half-timbered houses and large brick-built palaces. Hampton Court Palace (begun 1514), Old Somerset House (1552, London), Compton Wynyates (c. 1520, Warwickshire), and others were basically medieval structures with paved courtyards. These contained asymmetrical brick buildings with mullioned, leaded windows and uneven roof lines with towers, ornamental battlements, and chimneys that were occasionally overlaid with Renaissance decorative details such as medallions and terracotta busts.³³

Much of Chester's Tudor buildings are mock Tudor, built in the Victorian era, with Flemish influences.

*Figure 2; Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire*³⁴

The late Tudor period is generally known as the Elizabethan period. Elizabethan style was eclectic, borrowing decorative motifs from Continental Gothic, Italian, and Flemish design; exteriors and interiors of the great houses were elaborately ornamented with relief work, mullions, ornate chimneys, and friezes. The main impulse of Elizabethan architecture was towards a well-ordered symmetry; symmetrical Elizabethan façades, often pierced by relatively large windows, were different from those of the heavy castle-like Gothic and early Tudor country residences. A typical building of the period is Wollaton Hall (1588), Nottinghamshire, built by Robert Smythson; it was the first English house in which the traditional central courtyard was abandoned and replaced by a high-ceilinged great hall lit by gallery windows and surrounded by classically proportioned wings with series of windows.³⁵

There are several important Tudor buildings in Chester.

The first of these is the Bear and Billet public house, which dates from 1661-1664, just inside the Bridge Gate. It was once the town house of the Earls of Shrewsbury. It is now a re-opened public house and restaurant. It is said to have more than 1000 window panes. The Flemish influence can be seen in the loading panel and arm at the top of the building.

*Figure 3; The Bear and Billet*³⁶

Adjoining it is the Three Kings Studio, which has an 18th century facade concealing a timber framed building.

*Figure 4; Ye Olde King's Head*³⁷

Another of the Tudor buildings in Chester is Ye Olde King's Head, a public house which has been retained in its format. It stands on the corner of Lower Bridge Street and Castle Street, and was the home of the Randle-Holmes of Chester in the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Yet another public house in Chester is a restored Tudor building. A curious trend, which seems to have no explanation, except, perhaps, because of their unsuitability for commercial retail use, and their character makes them ideal for 'theme' pubs. The Falcon, at the corner of Lower Bridge Street and Grosvenor Street was re-opened as an inn in 1982 following major restoration. It was once the town house of the Grosvenor family. In 1643, Richard Grovesnor petitioned the City Assembly for permission to enlarge the house by enclosing the Row beneath it, claiming that it was too small for him and his family.³⁸

*Figure 5; The Chester Grosvenor*³⁹

On the south side of Eastgate Street, adjoining the East Gate is the Grosvenor Hotel. Built between 1863 and 1866 on the site of the Royal Hotel, it was named in honour of its new owner, Richard Grovesnor, the 2nd Marquess of Westminster. The architect was T M Penson, who was one of the exponents of the half timber revival in the Victorian Period. It is for this reason that this has been looked at. Notice particularly the difference between this and true Tudor buildings, which do not use red brick and limestone lintels. There is also a distinct influence of later architectural styles, in the Greek Revival style colonnade underneath the front of the hotel.

³² Tudor-style buildings, Chester, courtesy of 'www.chestercc.gov.uk'

³³ "Tudor Style" Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved

³⁴ Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire, from "Elizabethan Style," Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

³⁵"Elizabethan Style," Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

³⁶ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

³⁷ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

³⁸ Adapted by the author from 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

³⁹ Photograph courtesy of the Chester Grosvenor Hotel, at either 'www.chestergrosvenor.co.uk' or www.slh.com.

It is hard to pick out the authentic Tudor and Elizabethan buildings of Chester at a glance, without confusing them with the Victorian mock Tudor which dominates the CBD. The true Tudor heritage of Chester is varied and distinguished, and deserves recognition.

Figure 6; [Chester County Courts](#)⁴⁰

In terms of Stuart style, very little can be found in Chester. It is likely that the facade of the County Court is of the Stuart Period, but this may not necessarily be so. It is very similar in outward appearance to Greek Revival architecture, with its Doric columns and plinths. Although it cannot be seen in the photograph here, the full building is designed in a winged format, around a central block, shown here.

In my research, I have found very little mention of Stuart style. Reference is given instead to a time period which coincides with the Stuart rule, and also the continental Baroque period; the Jacobean Period. In architecture, it is characterized by large mullioned windows and heavy external and internal decoration. By contrast to the Elizabethan house, the Jacobean building was usually constructed of brick rather than of stone, and gables tended to take the place of flat cornices. Interiors usually featured an ornate, carved wooden staircase rising in flights around a rectangular open well; extravagant plaster decoration ornamented the ceilings and walls of the rooms.⁴¹

Figure 7; [Abbey Street](#)⁴²

Figure 8; [Stanley Place](#)⁴³

Georgian style is more readily apparent in Chester, and more easily defined. The Georgian Style was a Neo-Classical style of architecture and interior design, fashionable in Great Britain from the accession of George I (1714) to the death of George IV in 1830. The style developed from the Roman Palladian style used by the 17th-century English architect Inigo Jones, and was largely employed in domestic architecture and in planned sections of towns, such as the Adelphi section of London designed by the 18th-century Scottish-English architect Robert Adam, the Circus and the Royal Crescent built by the English architects John Wood the Elder and John Wood the Younger in the resort town of Bath, and the whole of New Town in Edinburgh. Among the finest examples of the style used for a public building in the second half of the 18th century is Somerset House, London, designed by the English architect Sir William Chambers. The Customs House, the Four Courts, and other Georgian buildings that give Dublin its 18th-century character were designed by the English architect James Gandon. The style was superseded in England by the Greek Revival and Gothic Revival styles of the 19th century.⁴⁴

Figure 9; [Sedan Porch](#)⁴⁵

Stanley Place, shown here, was an area or town houses for the landed gentry, when they visited the city. One of the houses has a sedan porch, which would have been used to bring in a sedan chair, without the home owner getting wet, and to then be carried about. Such a feature was not typical of the period, and would have been added at the owner's request.

The majority of the area around the exterior of the retail core of the CBD is Georgian in design. It is the part of Chester where the professional sector workers have their offices. A good example of a Georgian area in Chester is Abbey Street. Another good example of Georgian architecture can be found opposite the Bear and Billet, where several Georgian buildings have been converted in to prestige offices. One of them, shown here, is the offices of Granada Television. It is used as a type example for a Georgian residence.

It is also worth noting that the Georgian period mimicked the neo Classical, and because of this, parapets were added to conceal the drainage and to give the impression of a flat roof from ground level.

Chester does not have a large Regency area like Bath, Cheltenham, Brighton or Bristol, where large elegant terraces of Regency period accommodation can be found. Regency accommodation can also be found on a more grand scale, as here at Wimpole Hall, in Cambridgeshire, is an example of the Regency style in a grand yet restrained manner. The mansion, which has very fine interiors, stands in grounds laid out by Humphry Repton.⁴⁶

Figure 10; [Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire](#)

So what is Regency style? It is a late Neo-Classical style in English architecture, furniture, and decorative arts of the period 1800-1830; associated with the time (1811-1820) when the future George IV was Prince Regent and also by extension, with his reign (1820-1830). The style, characterized by lightness, elegance, and refinement, is based chiefly on a vocabulary of ancient Greek and Roman elements that had been made fashionable by Robert Adam in the second half of the 18th century. However, Regency style differs from 18th-century Neo-Classical style in that it moved away from 18th-century purity towards exoticism and greater richness, and incorporates elements of Gothic, Rococo, Chinese, and Egyptian style. It is essentially a lighter, and more refined version of the Georgian style.⁴⁷

Both Regency and Georgian styles rely heavily for their inspiration upon the Neo Classical style, which may need some definition for clarification.

⁴⁰ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁴¹"Jacobean Style," Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

⁴² Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

⁴³ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁴⁴"Georgian Style," Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

⁴⁵ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁴⁶"Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire," Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

⁴⁷"Regency Style," Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Neo-Classical Style, a style in art, architecture, and the decorative arts that flourished in Europe and North America from about 1750 to the early 1800s, marked by the emulation of Graeco-Roman forms. More than just an antique revival, Neo-Classicism was linked to contemporary political events. Neo-Classical artists at first sought to replace the sensuality and what they viewed as the triviality of the Rococo style with a style that was logical, solemn in tone, and moralizing in character. When revolutionary movements established republics in France and America, the new republican governments adopted Neo-Classicism as the style for their official art, by virtue of its association with the democracy of ancient Greece and republican Rome. Later, as Napoleon I rose to power in France, the style was modified to serve his propagandistic needs. With the rise of the Romantic movement (see Romanticism), a preference for personal expression replaced an art based upon fixed, ideal values.⁴⁸

Before the discoveries at Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Athens, had been made, the only classical architecture generally known was that of Rome, largely through architectural etchings of Classical Roman buildings by the Italian artist Giovanni Battista Piranesi. The new archaeological finds extended classical architecture's formal vocabulary, and architects began advocating a style based on Graeco-Roman models.

The work of the Scottish architect and designer Robert Adam, who in the 1750s and 1760s redesigned a number of English country houses (among which were, Sion House, 1762-1769, and Osterley Park, 1761-1780), introduced the Neo-Classical style to Great Britain. The Adam style, as it became known, remained somewhat Rococo in its emphasis on surface ornamentation and refinement of scale, even as it adopted the motifs of antiquity.⁴⁹

The evidence of all the styles discussed here is easy to find in Chester. The brief walls walk will display a wide variety of architectural styles, and a huge range of building styles for such an enclosed area. In addition, there are views from the walls of styles which occur at some distance from the walls. The evidence may occur in various forms, for example an estate agent's brochure would be ideal for viewing the range of styles available for purchase in Chester. As another source of evidence, some of the photographs found in this section are from our visit, and serve as useful sources of evidence.

Describe what evidence you have collected on the emergence of Chester as an industrial town of the 18th and 19th Century. Discuss evidence of 19th century bye-law terraced housing and the great Victorian buildings such as the Town Hall and railway station.

By the eighteenth century, Chester had already become a retailing and service centre for much of the North West.

There was a decline in secondary industry in the region, for example in the ship building industry, in leather working from the Middle Ages and in the manufacture of goods like gloves and snuff. These industries were not replaced.

The only heavy industries left in Chester were the foundry, in Charles St., and the two lead works, one in Commonhall St. and the other near the Mill Hotel, on the north bank of the canal in the east of the city. Both of these were small scale developments, in comparison to the modern lead and steel works.

Such works required housing for the numerous workers required in the labour intensive jobs of the industry. The housing built was cheap, Jerry-built, back to back terraced housing, with very few amenities. The main areas of housing around Commonhall St. and the leadworks still survives.

This housing fits in with the working class housing zone of the CBD of Chester.

*Figure 1; Albion St. housing*⁵⁰

Albion Street is the principal area of bye law housing near to where the Commonhall St. lead works was. It is typical of the housing of the class and period. The houses are terraced, using ordinary bricks. The roof is local slate. The house is a two up, two down layout, with a w/c in an outhouse in the back yard. Each house has a small back yard, and an alley separates the back yards of each row. The frontage of the house egresses immediately on to the street. The roads are fairly wide.

The houses were built in typical style, with groups of houses having a local shop and entertainment centre. In Albion Street, there is a local public house.

*Figure 2; Albion St. Public House*⁵¹

But the economy of Chester was thriving. The population of 1780 was employed in over one hundred separate trades and crafts, with the emphasis on high standards of skill and workmanship.

Chester was noted for its clock makers, silversmiths, pewterers and cutlerers. Whilst these were high level secondary industries, they did not employ a large number of people per producing unit. And with the focus on high quality goods, they were most likely handmade. Thus there was no need for a large number of tools and machines to mass produce the products. Nor was there any way of powering and utilising such machines effectively. More like cottage industries than true secondary industry, these workshops would have been owned and run by one or perhaps two members of the City Guilds.

The consequence of this was that the space required by each 'factory unit' was likely to be quite small. They could fit in one of the basement level Rows, and use the space as a workshop, and hence obviate the need for large factory units to be constructed.

At the same time, there was a marked increase in the amount of service and specialist goods shops in Chester. Examples given include wine and spirit dealers, hatters, mercers (dealer in textile fabrics, esp. silk), drapers, periwig makers and booksellers. By 1784, there were at least 16 hairdressers in Chester.

⁴⁸"Neo-Classical Style," *Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia*. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

⁴⁹"Neo-Classical Style," *Microsoft® Encarta® 99 Encyclopedia*. © 1993-1998 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

⁵⁰ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁵¹ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

The markets and fairs of Chester remained an important feature of commerce until the 18th Century. The Michaelmas and Midsummer fairs attracted wholesalers and retailers from all over the country, trading in clothing, textiles and other manufactured goods. Hop fairs were held in the large warehouses behind Blossoms and Hope Pole inns in Foregate Street.

Chester also developed as a tourist centre. Alongside the services to North Wales, the city was linked to the Mersey and Liverpool at Ellesmere Port in 1797. A new canal basin was built at Tower Wharf, with warehouses, a dry dock, a bridge and tavern. This success established Chester as a canal port. Passenger trade between Chester and Liverpool was very popular, and only took three hours to complete.⁵²

The Victorian architecture of Chester was confined, in the most part, to grand public buildings. Already, the Victorian additions to Chester cathedral have been discussed. The other two key buildings in Chester of the Victorian era are the Railway Station, and the Town Hall.

The general station was opened in 1848, and was designed by the railway architect Francis Thompson in collaboration with Robert Stephenson. Its Italianate facade was estimated to be the largest in the world at the time, at a length of 1160 ft. It was estimated that 140 people were employed there and 98 passenger and 76 goods trains passed through it in 1856. Unfortunately, we were unable to visit the station.

The other key building was the Town Hall, which we did visit. Chester Town Hall, Market Square, was built in 1865-69 and opened by Edward, Prince of Wales in 1869. It replaced a late 17th Century Town Hall, known as the Exchange, which was destroyed by fire in 1862. The new Town Hall was designed by the architect William Henry Lynn of Belfast, who won the commission by public competition. Built in gothic style, the exterior consists of bands of red and grey sandstone with a central tower 160 ft high.⁵³

*Figure 3; Chester Town Hall*⁵⁴

The building on the left of the picture is the old market, which has long since been knocked down.

Describe the evidence you have collected of the enlightened industrialists' utopian ideas, e.g. Pricetown and Port Sunlight.

During the nineteenth century, there were ambitious attempts at planned villages. These were largely carried out by industrialists, with the best known 'company towns' dating from the late nineteenth century; Cadbury built Bournville and Lever built Port Sunlight. In Germany, the armaments firm of Krupp built towns in the Ruhr region at Essen.⁵⁵ But as Flint and Flint point out in their book, the motives of the industrialists varied from a real intention to improve social conditions to merely maximising profits.⁵⁶

Among nineteenth century reformers and philanthropists, a great deal of importance was placed on nature and scenery, and village life was highly romanticised. Company towns and planned settlements were both attempts to create a better living environment and a more just society. There were a number of reasons for creating planned settlements, including the idea of creating a healthy, stable and loyal workforce for the industrialist, and the concept of philanthropy.

The creation of a hard working, loyal workforce was made easier by providing them with good housing and living conditions. It was not that different from agricultural labourers who had been provided with houses and a small plot of land in return for their labours. In urban areas, rapid urbanisation led to poor quality housing and low life expectancy. High rates of illness and absenteeism lowered productivity. The company needed a healthy, and happy workforce.⁵⁷

The two reasons for building a new company town are either philanthropy or economic. The first of the towns looked at was built purely for philanthropic reasons.

Before the 1850s, Price's Patent Candle Company was centred in London. Productivity was always threatened by epidemics caused by bad drainage and poor housing in the city. The two brothers determined that when the time came to expand their plant, they would build better homes, and in a healthier setting.

It was determined that the new plant should be built in the Liverpool area. Two factors determined this choice. At the Great Exhibition, the Wilsons met French industrialists, and acquired the French patent for textile lubrication. The sale of 'cloth oil' to the textile based towns of the North became a major part of Price's business. This development in conjunction with the growing importance of Liverpool as an import centre for West African palm oil, found to be superior to animal oil in candle manufacture, the main raw material used by the company led to the decision to build in the vicinity of that city.

Search for a suitable site switched to the Cheshire banks of the Mersey after the rapid urbanisation caused worse health problems than in London. As the river was unbridged, it was essential that the site be close to the bank so that raw materials and finished products could travel by boat to Liverpool. Investigation of the bank frontage revealed a suitable site on the south bank of Bromborough Pool.

⁵² The source for the majority of this section on Industrial Chester is the following book. English Heritage 'Book of Chester', by Peter Carrington. Published by B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1st edition.

⁵³ Adapted from 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

⁵⁴ Photograph courtesy of 'www.io-ltd.com/chester/tourism/attractions.htm'

⁵⁵ 'Changing Settlements' by Garrett Nagle. Published by Nelson, 1st edition.

⁵⁶ 'Urbanisation; Changing Environments' by Corrin Flint and David Flint. Published by Collins Educational, first edition.

⁵⁷ 'Changing Settlements' by Garrett Nagle. Published by Nelson, 1st edition.

From the start, the Wilsons were determined to build a village as well as a factory. They wanted to erect a village, a community in which their employees would be happy and proud to live.

A site of 42 acres became available to the company. It was a swamp, with a disused marl pit as its nucleus. There were no local brickworks available to supply the amount needed for the plant and the village. Bricks would have to be made on the spot from the clay lying between the marl pit and the river, reducing the amount of land available to build upon. This led the Wilsons to ask the local landowner, Mainwaring, for a further 19 acres. He agreed to sell. On the 2nd of August 1853, the final agreement was signed, Price's paying £12,267 10s 0d. Building began immediately. From the beginning, arrangements were made for each house to have front and rear gardens.

Figure 1; [A typical house in Pricetown](#)⁵⁸

The plans laid down in 1853 were well in advance of contemporary designs. The houses were larger than the average artisan house and more solidly constructed. Each house has water borne sanitation at a time when a cesspool or pail was the usual form of sanitation. Sewers were laid by the company.

Figure -2; [Looking across the cricket pitch to the Manor House](#)⁵⁹

The population of the village was rising, and a start was made in providing the social, educational and recreational amenities which were to give the village its character. Land adjoining the village was set aside for allotment garden use. A cricket pitch and bowling green were set up on the meadow to the east of York Street. Children's swings and roundabouts were provided on the Green. In 1858 a school was opened, and a cricket pavilion was added to the sporting amenities. By then, the village had a population of 460 and 76 houses.

It was the prosperity of the 1850s that forced the Price's to expand, and it was the poverty of the period that made the company decide to build its plant and village in the country instead of Liverpool. It was their prosperity which enabled them to do so. It was the poverty of the housing conditions which encouraged them to build well, and their prosperity which allowed them to do so.

The size of the village makes its three institutions remarkable. By the turn of the century the village possessed a school, a hospital and a church.

Figure 3; [Pricetown Church](#)

The village has a wider significance which is threefold. It is the second oldest village of its kind in Britain. It is predated only by Saltaire, founded by Sir Titus Salt. Their motives, in common with Sir Titus Salt and later philanthropic entrepreneurs, were a mixture of humanitarian or religious idealism and commercial common sense. Men like the Wilsons were more religious than radical in aim, and their means were more commercial than political. Indeed, James Wilson admitted that his purpose was religious;

*'If I had no higher hope for our boys ... than that of making them responsible and educated for this world, I am afraid I should have come to the factory for business alone'*⁶⁰

It has been said of the Wilsons that they were practitioners of commerce and Christianity. The former made feasible the practical application of the latter. The latter saved industry from insensitivity and social irresponsibility.

The significance of Bromborough must come from the fact that it represents one of the first major attempts in the Industrial Revolution to use commercial power in a socially responsible way, and creatively and with imagination.⁶¹

Figure 4; [Lord Leverhulme](#)⁶²

The other example of such a company town is Port Sunlight. The dirt of Britain's industrial cities had increased demand for more frequent washing, and for more powerful soaps. In 1853, Gladstone removed excise duty on soap, and total consumption doubled in the next two decades from 100,000 tons to 200,000 tons p.a. helped partly by the message from Church that cleanliness was next to godliness. William Lever entered in to the soap business in 1884.

Soon, Lever was dissatisfied with the quality achieved by his suppliers, and decided to make his own soap, now called Sunlight soap, himself. He raised the capital of £27,000, and took a six year lease on a soap factory in Warrington. The first experimental boil took place in October 1885, and by the following January, the factory was producing 20 tons a week. By 1887, production was up to 450 tons a week, and Sunlight soap was selling better than any other in the UK. The Warrington factory had to be expanded considerably to cope with increased demand. Unhelpful site landlords refuse permission for an extension. Lever put up the buildings anyway. But it rapidly became clear that even with the new buildings, the Warrington works would be inadequate. Lever resolved to find a new site.

Figure 5; [Sunlight Soap](#)⁶³

He cashed in his shares in the family grocery business, and explored the banks of the Mersey. Soon, a suitable site was found, very close to where Pricetown was established. It was close to the river, and far enough up to be exempt from Liverpool harbour dues, but deep enough to provide an anchorage where blue water ships could transfer their cargo to barges, which could then travel to the factory wharves.

The proximity of the river enabled negotiation with railway companies, whom Lever could always threaten with transferring distribution rights if they tried to charge too much.

⁵⁸ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁵⁹ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶⁰ James Wilson in a letter to the Belmont Mutual Improvement Society, 1852.

⁶¹ The source for the majority of this section on Pricetown was a handout prepared by Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys. Acknowledged with thanks.

⁶² Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶³ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

Towards the end of 1887, Lever bought 56 acres of land, and building work started on the factory, later named Port Sunlight. Production began in January 1889, and in the first full year, 16,000 tons of soap were manufactured.

Figure 6; [Lever's factory](#)⁶⁴

With output rising by 3-5,000 tons every year, it was not long before the Port Sunlight works had to be extended. In order to finance the development, the firm became a private limited company in 1890 with £300,000 authorised capital. In 1897, Lever Bros. became a public limited company with a commencing capital of £1,500,000. In his first ten years as a soap producer, Lever had increased his annual output from 3,000 to over 40,000 tons.

This expanse of capital which Lever had at his disposal enabled him to exercise some of his philanthropic desires. By 1913, he was estimated to have a fortune of around £3 million. As he wrote;

"No employer-capitalist with a true feeling of brotherhood can be entirely happy in the fullest sense in the enjoyment of wealth without feeling a strong sense of dissatisfaction with the present industrial conditions and a strong desire to improve them so that the employee-workmen may be raised to a higher level in social well being."

Lever first expressed his desire to create a community in a speech after the first sod was cut in 1888.

"It is my hope, and my brother's hope, some day to build houses in which our work-people will be able to live and be comfortable - semi detached houses with gardens back and front, in which they will be able to know more about the science of life than they can in a back slum, and in which they will learn that there is more enjoyment in life than in the mere going to and returning from work and looking forward to Saturday night to draw their wages."

By the end of 1888, William Owen, the architect, had been instructed to prepare plans for 28 cottages. Work began the following spring, and the village expanded as more money became available. Lever described his purpose as being

"to socialise and Christianise business relations and get back again in the office, factory and workshop to that close family brotherhood that existed in the good old days of hand labour"

Unlike the Wilsons, Lever's village was built using profit sharing. The workers invested their own money in the village. Lever was a business man first of all. Wilson invested so much money in Pricetown, without cost to the workers, that he went bankrupt.

Altogether, 800 cottages were built at Port Sunlight between 1889 and 1914. Most conformed to one of two designs; parlour cottage and kitchen cottage, but were finished in wide range of styles.

Figure 7; [Housing](#)⁶⁵

Predominantly mock Tudor, there was also Flemish, French, German and pebble dash. The cottages were grouped around greens, and all had gardens. There was also plenty of allotments and public buildings. Two examples are shown here. They both exhibit very different styles, but fit in with the overall ideas of the village.

The public buildings ranged from theatres to halls. A recreation and dining hall for men was named the Gladstone Hall, and opened by him in 1891.

Figure 8; [Flemish housing](#)⁶⁶

In 1900, a similar building for women, the Hulme Hall was opened. Other public buildings included a cottage hospital, schools, a concert hall, and an open air swimming pool.

A temperance hostel was opened in 1900, and 80% of villagers voted to allow it to sell alcohol in 1902, much against the wishes of Lever.

Figure 9; [Bowling Green at Port Sunlight](#)⁶⁷

Considerable provision was made for religion. In 1891, a series of sacred concerts and lectures was arranged at the Gladstone Hall. When the village school was built in 1896, a chancel was built in the central hall so it could be used for worship. Two years later, a Sunday School was established, and Lever laid aside an hour to speak to the children.

Figure 10; [Port Sunlight Church](#)⁶⁸

In 1902, a church for Port Sunlight was started. The building reflected Lever's love of Anglican architecture, but principles of Congregationalism. It is built in late Perpendicular Gothic Style and appears like an English parish Church. Lever insisted that worship was interdenominational and a service was drawn up to reflect this.

By 1906, Lever owned a total of 330 acres near Port Sunlight. The works, with its railway sidings, wharves and docks took up 90 acres, the village, with a population of 3,500, took up 140 acres, and the remaining 100 acres were held in reserve for further development.

Lever's philanthropy was not limited to Port Sunlight. He gave money for redevelopment to his native town of Bolton, and to his new home of Thornton Hough, where he built houses, a school, an orphanage, shops and a recreation ground. In 1900, he gave a large park to the city of Liverpool. In 1907, he used the money he won in a court case to endow schools of town planning, tropical medicine and Russian studies at Liverpool University.

In 1913, Lever, now a baronet, and his wife dined with King George V and Queen Mary. Within a few months, his wife died. Lever decided to build an art gallery in Port Sunlight in her memory. The foundation stone was laid by King George V in March 1914, during a royal visit.⁶⁹

Figure 11; [Lady Lever Gallery](#)⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶⁵ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶⁶ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶⁷ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶⁸ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁶⁹ Much of this section is sourced from 'Enlightened Entrepreneurs - William Hesketh Lever', a handout prepared by Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

The Lady Lever Art Gallery is a lasting memorial to Lever's wife, and contains most of Lever's personal art collection. A collection of Pre-Raphaelite masterpieces including works by Millias, Ford Madox Brown and Rossetti as well as dramatic landscapes by Constable and Turner. There are also collections of Wedgwood China, carved and inlaid 18th century furniture, tapestries, Greek vases, Roman sculpture, and delicate porcelain.⁷¹

Lever Brothers continued to managed Port Sunlight until the mid 1960s when UML Ltd. took over the administration of the village. By 1980, UML decided to sell properties on the open market when tenancy expired, and to offer existing tenants the right to buy.

In 1999, UML handed over the management of the village to The Port Sunlight Village Trust, an independent charitable organisation established to look after the long term future of the historically important Conservation Area.

The objectives of the Trust are to preserve and maintain the land and buildings of the village, and to promote understanding of the ideas underlying the foundation and development of the village.

The policy of selling homes has continued, and now around two-thirds of the homes in Port Sunlight are privately owned. Almost all buildings are Grade II Listed, and planning restrictions operate on the exterior of the properties.

It retains its aesthetically pleasing appearance, and its character.⁷²

Both villages remain as important marks on the landscape of the entrepreneurs of the Victorian period. The less avaricious philanthropy of the Wilsons is certainly more commendable than the exploitative nature of Lever's ideal working conditions to increase productivity. The motives of these great men are only as we know them from their writings and speeches. But whatever their motive, the results can be seen in a visit to either village, and they are truly magnificent results.

Describe the evidence you have collected on the presentation, development and exploitation of aspects of urban landscapes as a source of tourist information, as a means of preservation, as an educational resource or as an integral part of modern development. Discuss also what you consider to be the exploitation and marketing of Chester by the 'Heritage Industry'.

exploit 1. make use of (a resource etc.); derive benefit from. 2. usu. derog. Utilize or take advantage of (esp. a person) for one's own ends.

Heritage 1. Anything that is or may be inherited. 2. Inherited circumstances, benefits, etc. 3. A nation's historic buildings, monuments, countryside etc., esp. when regarded as worthy of preservation.⁷³

Certainly, the use of aspects of the past is a revenue generator, but it is neither monopolised, nor is the profit used for private purposes. Generally, the majority of tourist attractions are run by Trusts, like English Heritage or the National Trust.

For example, the National Trust owns many properties throughout the UK. It has looked after them in order that everyone can enjoy them. The National Trust cares for over 611,000 acres of countryside and 582 miles of coastline. It owns over 300 houses, 180 gardens, 1000 scheduled monuments, 25 wind and water mills, and 25 industrial monuments. In addition, it is responsible for 443 SSSI's (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), and 32 National Nature Reserves. It is a registered charity, and depends upon public support. With membership available, for free admission to all the buildings, at £720 for an individual life membership, and a family membership at £970, heritage does not come cheap.

Staying with the National Trust, one of the properties which it owns is Erddig Country House.

Just south of Wrexham, Erddig is preserved principally because of its immaculate servant's accommodation. With entrance at £6/£4 for adults/children respectively, the price of entrance appears relatively expensive.

Figure 1; [Erddig Hall](#)⁷⁴

What is the purpose of heritage? Surely it is to help us, and further generations to understand the past, and how it helped shape the present. It was said that he who controlled the past controlled the present, and that he who controlled the present controlled the future. There are many lessons to be learned from the past.

However, it is more than that. The properties owned by the Trusts are restored to something approaching their former state. They recreate the past for us. And instead of viewing the artefacts they contain out of context in a museum, viewing these artefacts in situ, and with similar and relevant items is far more beneficial.

But for what purpose? The majority of the people who visit National Trust properties are students, and those members of the public with a specific interest in something there, e.g. architecture, or a particular historical period. There are very few who just drop in on impulse. The National Trust is not designed as something for everyone. There are many people who would never consider visiting an old building, purely out of interest. The National Trust is used as an educational resource, both for school students, and those who are interested, for them to learn about the past.

The education of today relies on the inspiration of yesterday. We cannot teach about history without some reference to a place, or a building. These areas are preserved, so that in the future, people can see where history was decided, where

⁷⁰ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

⁷¹ Courtesy of 'Lady Lever Art Gallery' Information leaflet, issued by the Lady Lever Art Gallery.

⁷² Adapted from 'Port Sunlight Village', produced by the Port Sunlight Village Trust.

⁷³ Definitions from 'The Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder' Published by OUP, 4th edition.

⁷⁴ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.

peace was signed, or where wars were fought. The physical forms which have borne witness to the alteration of the course of history are surely significant to show the generations of the future. The memorials and cemeteries of the First World War stand as a monument to the courage, and futility of the Great War, and hopefully, for generations in the future to learn from.

Preservation of the past is acknowledged as important, without real consideration as to why it is done. Perhaps the building may be connected with a famous person, or event, which is why it is conserved, e.g. the Globe Theatre or Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford upon Avon. Maybe the building is idiosyncratic, or unique, or a perfect type example, e.g. Conway Castle.

In Chester, the 'heritage factor' lies in the state of totality which the walls and interior of the walled city has been preserved. It is virtually unique among Britain's cities. It is unique in the way in which every character of the city, from Roman, to Medieval right through to Victorian, has been preserved virtually intact. The city is a virtual gold mine for educationalists and those who are curious about the past. It covers all ages of civilisation and has preserved areas from all of them. All of this is contained within a 2 ½ mile perimeter, in terms of the walls of the city.

In 1969, the City Council designated the whole of the walled city and some adjacent areas as a conservation area, covering 200 acres and containing over 700 buildings of 'special architectural or historic interest'. In 1971, a conservation officer was appointed, and a conservation fund established. These were all national firsts.

In 1975, Chester was one of the four United Kingdom 'pilot projects' in European Architectural Heritage Year. To celebrate Chester's achievements in conservation, St. Michael's Church was purchased from the Church Commissioners. With financial help from the Department of the Environment, it was converted into a heritage centre, and opened by the Duke of Gloucester on 25 June 1975.

The displays in the Heritage Centre were updated in 1991 to present an introduction to Chester's history and buildings. An audio-visual presentation describes how Chester developed, while information panels focus on particular aspects, e.g. the Rows, or the walls. Other displays focus on archaeological and architectural themes, highlighting further incidents in the history of the City.

Figure 2; [Chester Heritage Centre](#)⁷⁵

As well as the Heritage Centre, Chester Visitor Centre is opposite the amphitheatre. It is the former Grosvenor St. John's School, dating from 1813. The building now houses a Tourist Information Centre, a restaurant, a video show, and a life size reconstruction of the Rows of Chester in Victorian days.

The education value of Chester is not confined to school children. Students of architecture visit Chester to learn about the variety of styles which they can work in, and draw inspiration from the past.

The heritage industry is one which has only been of prominence in more recent centuries. The Elizabethans did not seek to preserve the buildings of the Tudor period for future use. Indeed, many superb buildings of the past have been completely redesigned in keeping with the modern style. Lord Lever was famous for rebuilding every house he lived in, thirteen in total!

The concept of conservation for the future is a recent one, and has changed over time. No longer are the buildings available, they now must include a gift shop, and a restaurant, and the obligatory tour guides etc. in order to increase the accessibility. Services must be provided for all, including those with disabilities. All this serves to increase the cost of the entrance to the properties, which paradoxically decreases the number of people who will visit the property.

The National Trust aims its promotional material squarely at the educated section of society. Visiting old houses is perceived as something for certain categories of society to do. It is not, generally, something teenagers volunteer to do at the weekend. This bias can be found in the advertising material. Leaflets stress the high brow aspects of the National Trust which will only appeal to certain strata of society. For example;

'You could walk in to a fantastic costumed drama, or be stirred by a classical candlelit concert in some of the most beautiful settings in the country'

Hardly a unilateral appeal. But as an educational resource, students are forced to visit the properties, and because of this, they must have items to appeal to them.

The principal source of income from National Trust properties is either school parties or foreign tourism. A brief look at the number of languages in which leaflets are printed shows the multi cultural appeal of British Heritage. To those countries who do not have a monarchy, or have had an aristocratic land owning class, the trappings of wealth are a curio. They are something the Americans, in particular, find immensely interesting, especially since they do not have a history to the extent which the British do. Thus, the National Trust provides an insight into the past for others as well as those who come from this country.

Heritage is an important part of our traditions. Without some form of conservation, there would be no style, and no difference to faceless concrete. The diverse nature of our past provides something interesting and intellectually stimulating for our present. And, perhaps, our future.

⁷⁵ Photograph courtesy of Keith Phipps, Geography Dept., King Edward VI Camp Hill School For Boys.