

General Certificate of Education
June 2004
Advanced Level Examination



GEOGRAPHY (SPECIFICATION B)
Unit 5 The Synoptic Unit
Advance Information Booklet

GGB5/PM

Date of Issue: 1 May 2004

In addition to this paper you will require:

- The Ordnance Survey map extract (enclosed).

Instructions

- This Advance Information Booklet will be issued on 1 May 2004 in advance of the examination for Unit 5. You should make yourself familiar with the information in the booklet.
- This material must be kept **unmarked** for use in the forthcoming examination.
- You will also be issued with an OS map extract.
- The OS map extract must be kept **unmarked** for use in the forthcoming examination.
- In order to demonstrate your synoptic ability and your decision-making skills, you should refer to a range of information, ideas and examples from the Advance Information Booklet and from other modules you have studied to show your understanding of the connections between different aspects of your course and the topic featured in this Booklet.

STUDY ALL THE INFORMATION IN THIS BOOKLET

The information in this booklet comprises the following:

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You will also need a copy of the OS map extract.

OS extract 1 50 000 Landranger 166 (northings 21 to 31 eastings 15 to 27)

Item 1 Selected Press Cuttings

From the BBC April 1998

Thousands march against Green Belt “threat”

Thousands of people have taken part in a demonstration against plans to build 10,000 homes on farmland in Hertfordshire. The plan to create the equivalent of a new town on the outskirts of Stevenage has been described by opponents as the greatest threat to the Green Belt for a generation.

Undeterred by heavy rain, thousands turned out for a three-mile march, organised by the environmental pressure group, Friends of the Earth, and the Council for the Protection of Rural England. They walked from the centre of Stevenage to a site where new development has been proposed.

Thousands of objections have already been lodged against the scheme. Hertfordshire County Council says the housing, which will cover 800 hectares and link Stevenage and Hitchin, is unavoidable because urban building has reached saturation point. The controversy encapsulates a national building problem. Experts predict that 4.4 million new homes will be needed countrywide over the next 20 years. But environmentalists and countryside lovers say the government should build homes in run-down areas of cities, and concentrate on urban regeneration.

hertsWEB Community Network Updated July 2002

Hertfordshire Structure Plan: Council Defers Decision

Hertfordshire County Council has adopted a wait-and-see policy to housing development in the county for the next five years. The authority is facing the dilemma of releasing green belt land to the west of Stevenage or promoting “cramming”¹ on brownfield sites within towns.

A recent study by the County Council sparked outrage when it identified car parks and back gardens as suitable sites for the development of 45,000 new homes in the county. District Councils countered by saying that only 35,800 could be accommodated – a shortfall of nearly 10,000.

At a meeting in May, councillors decided to adopt a “plan, monitor and manage” approach to house building. Any policy decision would be postponed until 2006.

Over the last five years, an average of 3200 new homes per year have been built in the county. Continued uncertainty over government policy also came to bear on the council’s decision.

¹ See Item 2, paragraph 2

Material selected from the BBC, The Observer and The Independent, 2002

Town planners urge Green Belt review

Should green belt land stay exempt from development?

Town planners are calling for a more flexible approach to development on green belt land surrounding urban areas. The Royal Town Planning Institute says there should be a review of the policy aimed at protecting the areas of countryside around urban fringes. It wants the Green Belt to be considered for limited development when appropriate, to free up space for housing. But the prospect of a loosening of the law has stirred up strong opposition among environmentalists.

The Green Belt was first designated to prevent British cities from creeping into the countryside, and to encourage the regeneration of urban areas. The Institute, which represents planners from all over Britain, has stressed it supports the principle of protecting the Green Belt. However, it argues this should not make the areas sacrosanct and they should be given a similar status to rural areas where limited development is allowed when appropriate. The Institute said the Green Belt should be modernised, rather than scrapped, and should not escape the review encompassing all other aspects of the planning system.

But the Council for the Protection of Rural England has warned that any compromise will open the floodgates to mass development.

Housing pressures are mounting on green belt land, especially in the south east. Last year, there were fewer homes built than at any time since 1924. Since the late 1990s, county councils have been resisting government demands for house building on a massive scale, particularly in the south east, where the pressure to develop is most intense.

In Surrey the government wants 35,000 houses to be built during the next 15 years, and expects two out of five to be in the countryside. The county council insists that it has room for 22,000 and that only one in five should be on green fields. The picture is much the same in Kent where the government says 5,700 houses should be built each year for the next 15 years. The council says it can cope only with 4,700 a year and is resisting government calls for many of them to be on green fields.

The National Housing Federation, which represents housing trusts catering for lower-income tenants, says change is inevitable. "Green Belt as it is presently shaped in the south east is an increasingly artificial construct from the past," says policy officer Sharon Hedges. "It needs reviewing. There is a crisis in the provision of affordable housing in the south east. This contributes to recruitment and retention problems. There is too much emotion in the arguments against some level of greenfield building."

Item 2 From the Campaign Against Stevenage Expansion (CASE)¹ website

December 2001

The Urban Capacity Study/County Structure Plan

The updating of the County Structure Plan continues. With regard to housing the results of the Housing Capacity Study are vital. The Study strongly suggests that Hertfordshire can meet its housing needs up to and beyond 2016 without having to rely on large strategic greenfield sites such as West of Stevenage.

Needless to say, however, the proponents of the West of Stevenage Development are fighting a furious rearguard action. In particular they are trying to convince people that the alternative proposals to make better use of urban sites will lead to nothing but town cramming with every available piece of urban green land being built on. These arguments are based on a total distortion of what the Urban Capacity Study found. In order to clarify the position the chairman of CASE recently wrote to the *Comet* (a local newspaper) as follows:

“The County Council has (as they are required to do by the Government) conducted an Urban Capacity Survey. The purpose of this exercise is to help assess the amount of dwellings that can be satisfactorily built in the County’s urban areas. The results will be used to make decisions on how Hertfordshire’s future housing needs should be met. In conducting the study the consultants looked at a huge number of potential sites. The large majority of these were discounted immediately as being unsuitable or unacceptable. Many of those sites that were excluded from the outset appear to be the ones causing so much concern. The remainder are merely identified as potential or possible sites.

The exercise went far further than merely looking at green spaces. For example, it included looking at every shop in the locality and seeing how many had floors above them that were empty. A view was then taken as to how many of these empty spaces would be suitable for converting into flats and how many of those suitable would be likely to be converted during the next 15 years. A further exercise was carried out to see whether there was surplus employment space in the area that could be better used for housing. It will come as no surprise to those who can see the large number of acres of derelict industrial areas in Stevenage that the Urban Capacity Study concluded that a substantial number of houses could, over the next 15 years, be built in Stevenage on these sites. Similar exercises have been done to see whether the numerous acres taken up by car parks cannot be better used. On certain sites it is perfectly possible to have parking at ground level and sub ground level and a mixed development including housing at a higher level. The study looks at numerous other possibilities such as how many large Victorian or Edwardian houses are likely to come on the market that are suitable for conversion into flats (very few in Stevenage) and so on.

At every stage a view has been taken as to how many of these potential sites will be likely to become available for housing within the next 15 years and the figures have been discounted to reflect the fact that very many potential sites will not, in fact, become available. There is, accordingly, no question of properties being compulsorily purchased or community groups being thrown out without specific consultation as some of your readers fear. When all these discounted possibilities are added together it is clear that there is a tremendous potential to meet our housing needs without having to develop large amounts of our Green Belt and green fields.

There are real benefits to this approach.

Chairman, Campaign Against Stevenage Expansion.”

¹ CASE is a pressure group of local residents.

Item 3 Extracts from the Hertfordshire County Council – Structure Plan Review, February 2000

Note: In this Item the symbol is used to show that material has been edited out.

Boundaries of the Green Belt around towns may be reviewed in local plans to identify land for the purposes of limited peripheral development (i.e. building on, or close to, the edge of an existing built up area). In addition, minor adjustments may be considered in reviews to secure a more sustainable pattern of development and activities within these settlements.

Individual adjustments to the Green Belt will need to be fully justified by reference to the criterion of exceptional circumstances indicated in the government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 'Green Belts'. Proposals should demonstrate that they contribute to sustainability objectives, and must be part of a comprehensive planning approach to deliver these objectives. In particular, housing, employment and retailing development will only be appropriate as part of this comprehensive approach, and where it can be clearly demonstrated that the relevant needs can best be accommodated by development as proposed.

Green Belt boundaries will be reviewed to allow for strategic housing developments. In the case of development west of the A1(M) at Stevenage the review will take account of the long term possibility of a total development of 10,000 dwellings. The following proviso applies to areas for exclusion from the Green Belt:

the limits of the area west of the A1(M) at Stevenage shall be set north of Langley and Newton Wood, east of the B656 and south of St. Ippollytts, and be defined so as to preclude coalescence with nearby settlements.

Safeguarded Land

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Any land released from the Green Belt in accordance with this policy but not planned for development during the period of the local plan should be safeguarded in that Plan, and generally referred to as 'a Special Restraint Area'

Development will be brought forward mainly through planned regeneration in the towns. Ways to increase the potential for high quality development through regeneration will be advanced and kept under continuous review in local plans.

Limited peripheral development will only be acceptable:

- (a) where planned regeneration opportunities have been fully explored; and
- (b) where this can provide demonstrable sustainability benefits to the town; and
- (c) where this development is planned within the context of the town as a whole.

All proposals will be brought forward through the local plan process. Proposals will be demonstrably practicable, based on the sustainability aims and land use objectives set out in this plan and include wide community involvement in the planning process

The type and level of need for affordable housing will be identified from local authority housing needs surveys and housing strategies, and targets will be indicated in local plans. In rural areas beyond the Green Belt, local plans should include policies to support small scale affordable housing to meet local needs on land within or adjacent to settlements. In rural areas within the Green Belt such development should be within settlements.

Item 4 Map of proposed area for building houses west of Stevenage

Map of proposed area for building houses west of Stevenage (map copied from an original planning document). Has not been reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

Turn over ►

Item 5 Total dwellings in Hertfordshire 1991–2000

Map of Hertfordshire showing settlements and Local District Council Areas
Ordnance Survey Map Extract - 166 Luton. Has not been reproduced here
due to third-party copyright constraints.

Turn over ►

Item 6 Population figures for Hertfordshire**Census figures 1991**

Males	Females	total
478 643	497 186	975 829

6a**Estimates for 2000**

Males	Females	total
520 727	530 101	1 050 828

6b

These estimates are based on the 1991 census. They have been adjusted to take into account the births and deaths registered in the county, together with estimates for net movement of people into the county. Between the 10 year censuses these figures are the best that are available to national and local planners.

Census figures 2001 (published November 2002)

Age	Total	Males	Females
0-4	64 979	33 135	31 844
5-9	68 667	34 623	34 044
10-14	68 234	34 767	33 467
15-19	59 717	30 305	29 412
20-24	55 154	27 497	27 657
25-29	68 079	33 119	34 960
30-34	82 211	40 303	41 908
35-39	88 234	43 606	44 628
40-44	78 355	39 737	38 618
45-49	68 304	34 622	33 682
50-54	71 819	35 635	36 184
55-59	56 790	28 304	28 486
60-64	46 990	22 999	23 991
65-69	43 899	21 186	22 713
70-74	39 198	17 863	21 335
75-79	32 703	13 843	18 860
80-84	21 687	8 138	13 549
85-90	12 714	3 969	8 745
90+	6 243	1 401	4 842
Total	1 033 977	505 052	528 925

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Item 1: *Source* Discover Hertford Online via hertford.net
Source BBC News Website

Item 3: *Source* www.case.org.uk
Item 3: *Source* www.hertsdirect.org/hcc/environment/planning/forward . . .

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