

Urban Development

What do we mean by urban development? It doesn't just mean building new houses. In what other ways could a city be 'developed'? People and money largely affect how a town or city changes. Can you think how?

Re-development

Sometimes, areas of cities go into decline. This often happens if they are situated near a coast and have a dockland area. Why do you think the reason could be for the decline?



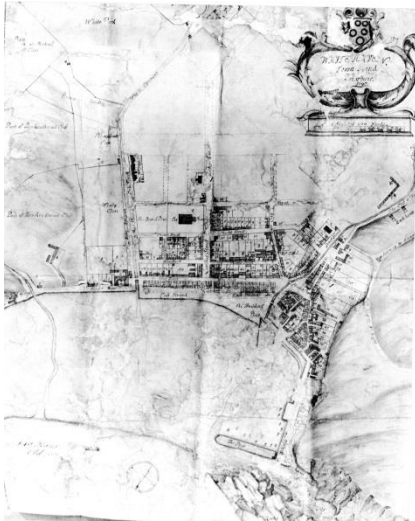
Whitehaven

Let's go back a few hundred years and see if we can find clues on old maps as to how and why a place develops. We'll choose Whitehaven - a town on the north-west coast of England.

17th Century

This old map of Whitehaven dates back to the 17th Century. It looks a lot different to the modern map doesn't it? Looking at the houses, how many people do you think live here? Is there anything which may give a clue about the sort of work people do?

The town was located in a major coal-rich area, and its port meant it could ship coal easily to Ireland. As business grew, more ships had to be built. How do you think this changed the town and why?



18th Century

Now look at a map of the same area in the 18th Century. What do you notice? More homes were built for the workers who came into the town to build the extra ships. The town also grew because they started to manufacture mining equipment, and iron ore was discovered here which could produce valuable steel. Whitehaven began trading with America and shipments of rum, sugar and tobacco arrived at the port regularly. How do you think this increased trade affected the port?

Are there any features on the first map that have now disappeared?



19th Century

Around 1,000 ships were built at the port of Whitehaven, and as trade grew, there was a demand for bigger and bigger ships. However, there were shallow waters at the port which couldn't accommodate these bigger ships.



What do you think that meant for Whitehaven?

Larger ports on the western coast such as Liverpool, Glasgow and Bristol took away a lot of the town's trade. However, in 1847 something was built that eased the transport of coal from the pithead to the port. What was it? Can you see this on the map?

20th Century

Around 300 pits were dug in the Whitehaven area, but it was a dangerous job and 500 miners were killed in pit disasters. Coal also became harder to find and the industry declined. The last mine closed in 1986 and new industries began to take over. These included silk making and chemical processing.

The re-development of Whitehaven

At Whitehaven, millions of pounds have been spent on regeneration, in particular making the coastal area a large leisure and fishing harbour. The port is also the centre of the local tourist industry, with a large visitor centre and museum on the waterfront. This modernisation will sustain the future growth of Whitehaven.

