

# URBAN LAND ECONOMICS

*By the same author*

**THE SOCIAL ECONOMY OF WEST GERMANY  
THE ECONOMICS OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY  
HOUSING AND LAND POLICIES IN WEST GERMANY AND  
BRITAIN**

# URBAN LAND ECONOMICS

*Principles and Policy*

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*To Isabel*

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# Foreword

In this book, I have attempted to bring together simple economic theory, empirical data and a little history in such a way as to illuminate some current issues in urban policy. In this field, there is today a crying need for more dialogue between specialists, and between specialists and a wider audience. Economists, architects and town planners are now viewed by the public with considerable scepticism, which they have done much to deserve. The reaction against town planning is indicated by books with titles like *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*; *The Failure of Town Planning* or *After the Planners*. Even if their analysis is often questionable, these *critiques* reflect what many people would regard as failings in post-War town planning, especially in Britain where ‘town planning’, – and attacks on ‘land speculation’, and slum clearance – have been carried further than in most other countries. To accept these criticisms does not necessarily imply a rejection of town planning and other aspects of urban policy. (I can remember being deeply influenced by a war-time Penguin, *Town Planning* by Dr Thomas Sharp, and would not wish to throw out the baby with the bath-water). But the time seems ripe for the development of a new synthesis on urban development, which gives greater weight to practitioners’ knowledge, takes a more historical perspective, is less pretentious, and less subject to blinkered specialisation.

When I taught urban economics, I found it difficult to find one comprehensive book which I could recommend to students, and so decided to try to write one myself. It reflects in part my own experience: for example, my references tend to be confined to the countries I know best – the UK, West Germany, the USA and Canada. I hope it will be useful for both professional and amateur students.

Graham Hallett

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