



## Urban Densities, Quality of Life and Local Facility Accessibility in Principal Japanese Cities

### Introduction

The compact city is an important urban spatial model that has emerged since the Commission of the European Community published its *Green Paper* on the Urban Environment in 1990 (Frey, 1999). Urban compactness is perceived as one of the essential elements that make up the sustainable city. According to Williams *et al.*, urban forms that are more sustainable than typical traditional forms are ‘in the main ... characterized by compactness (in various forms), mixed uses and interconnected street layouts, supported by strong public transport networks, environmental controls and high standards of urban management’ (2000, p. 355).

This chapter will examine the relationship that high urban densities of the compact city have in relation to the quality of life of its residents and the levels of accessibility to local facilities in Japanese cities. Firstly, the relationship between urban densities and selected aspects of quality of life in sample cities will be examined, using governmental statistical data. Secondly, the conditions and range of levels of accessibility to local facilities in relation to various urban densities will be investigated, with reference to statistical data relating to the case study. Forty-nine Japanese cities have been investigated in this case study analysis. For the purpose of this study, the cities