



Making post-war Manchester:
visions of an unmade city



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Exhibition Catalogue



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Richard Brook June 2016





Introduction

This exhibition has evolved from the work of students from the Manchester School of Architecture. Using archive materials collated and collected by Martin Dodge and I in our research over the past 15 years, groups of first year masters students were asked to design and create 3D models of pieces of the city that were imagined in the 1960s and early 1970s. These 3D models were exported into a games design engine and the environments on display here were formed over an intensive two week period in January 2016. As well as the 3D models, each group made a study of the history of their site and produced a web based case study of the sites' histories, including before and after the proposals on which they based their designs.

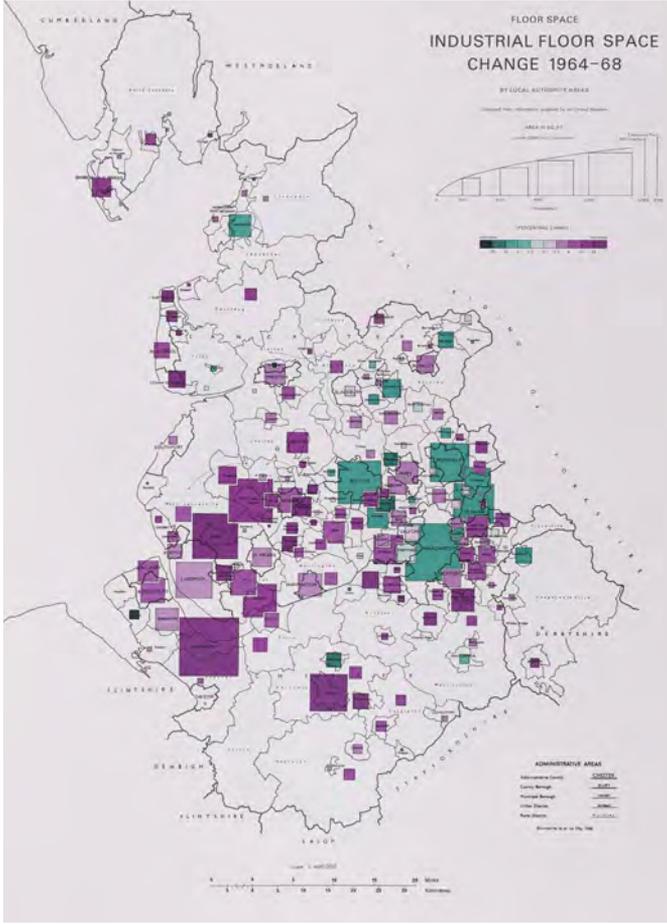
There are five sites represented in the exhibition:

- The Cathedral Area
- The Education Precinct
- Central Station
- Lower Mosley Street
- The Entertainment District

Each of these had more than one plan prepared during the period under study and some have drawn on more than one proposal to create the most exciting version of the visions dreamed up by mid-century planners and architects. The work may be broadly conceived as existing within the relatively new sphere of the 'digital humanities' and, whilst a studio design based project, has elements of architectural history and software skills embedded in its production. None of the students were familiar with the games design software prior to the workshop and they negotiated and interpreted huge amounts of information in order to produce the material on display. Each environment may be navigated with a handheld controller and a sixth monitor has the website on display. The students committed to some additional work and were willing volunteers in the lead up to the exhibition, designing both the static boards and this catalogue.

It is deliberate that there are no photographs of completed buildings on display here. We wanted to focus on the pre-construction information, the sketches, drawings, models and reports that were produced by a generation of architects and architect planners at a time when optimism prevailed and those working in the public sector were clear in their understanding of their role as promoting the public good. Some of these visions may seem too sweeping and too comprehensive from where we now view them, but the demand to 'clean' the city of its industrial and war torn past cannot be underestimated. We demolished more of our own city than that which was destroyed in the blitz in pursuit of the new service city, driven by technology.

Richard Brook, June 2016.



(Above) FIG01. Industrial floor space change 1964-68

Source: *North West Regional Atlas, 1969*. Ministry of Housing and Local Government, North West Regional Office



FIG02. Wire frame computer model of the 'Theatre Module' for Royal Exchange Theatre, designed by Levitt Bernstein

Source: Courtesy Levitt Bernstein

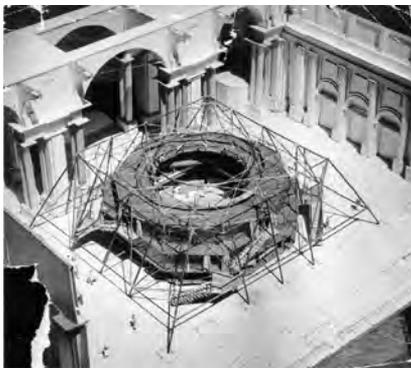


FIG03. View of physical model of the 'Theatre Module' to be installed in the main trading room of former cotton Exchange.

Source: Courtesy Levitt Bernstein



FIG04. Perspective sketch of visitors attending the theatre of the round and the unique performance space it provides.

Source: Courtesy Levitt Bernstein

From Manufacturing Industries to a Services Economy: The Emergence of a 'New Manchester' in the 1960s



Economic Decline, Social Change, Demographic Shifts

'Manchester is primarily an industrial city; it relies for its prosperity - more perhaps than any other town in the country - on full employment in local industries manufacturing for national and international markets.'

(Rowland Nicholas, 1945, *City of Manchester Plan*, p.97)

'Between 1966 and 1972, one in three manual jobs in manufacturing were lost and one quarter of all factories and workshops closed. Losses in manufacturing employment, however, were accompanied (although not replaced in the same numbers) by a growth in service occupations.'

(Alan Kidd, 2006, *Manchester: A History*, p.192)

During the post-war decades Manchester went through the socially painful process of economic restructuring, switching from a labour market based primarily on manufacturing and engineering to one in which services sector employment dominated. While parts of Manchester's economy were thriving from the late 1950s, having recovered from the deep austerity period after the War, with shipping trade into the docks at Salford buoyant and Trafford Park still a hive of activity, the ineluctable contraction of the cotton industry was a serious threat to the Manchester and regional textile economy. Despite efforts to stem the tide, the textile mills in Manchester and especially in the surrounding satellite towns were closing with knock on effects on associated warehousing and distribution functions. The impact of the terminal decline of 'Cottonopolis' in the 1960s is illustrated in FIG.01 which shows the large amount of industrial floor losses in Manchester, (and in the satellite towns of Rochdale, Oldham and Bolton) most likely the result of the closure of textile related firms. This contraction was in marked contrast to industrial growth recorded elsewhere in the North West due to new 'greenfield' factories and government subsidies favouring new businesses in Merseyside. The Manchester Cotton Exchange finally trading ceased

trading in December 1968; although within a few years ambitious plans were being advanced to use the Great Hall as the site for an innovative theatre space. The Royal Exchange Theatre (Levitt Bernstein) [FIG.02-04] opened in 1976 to great acclaim and has been an established part of the cultural economy of Manchester ever since.

Economic restructuring was accompanied by significant social change in the 1960s. For those in work, real-terms income growth and an increase in household spending was a spur to the consumer oriented lifestyles, which was characterised by the expansion of retailing and new commercial leisure provision. Changing rules on credit and the development of hire purchase facilitated many working-class households' acquisition of a suite of domestic appliances, such as fridges and televisions, along with the marked growth in car ownership. There were significant moves towards gender equality with growing female labour market participation and the pressure from feminist activists. Large scale immigration from the Caribbean and South Asia created much more ethnic diversity in Manchester, though this was spatially concentrated in a few inner wards, such as Moss Side, Longsight and Cheetham Hill, and not without racial discrimination.

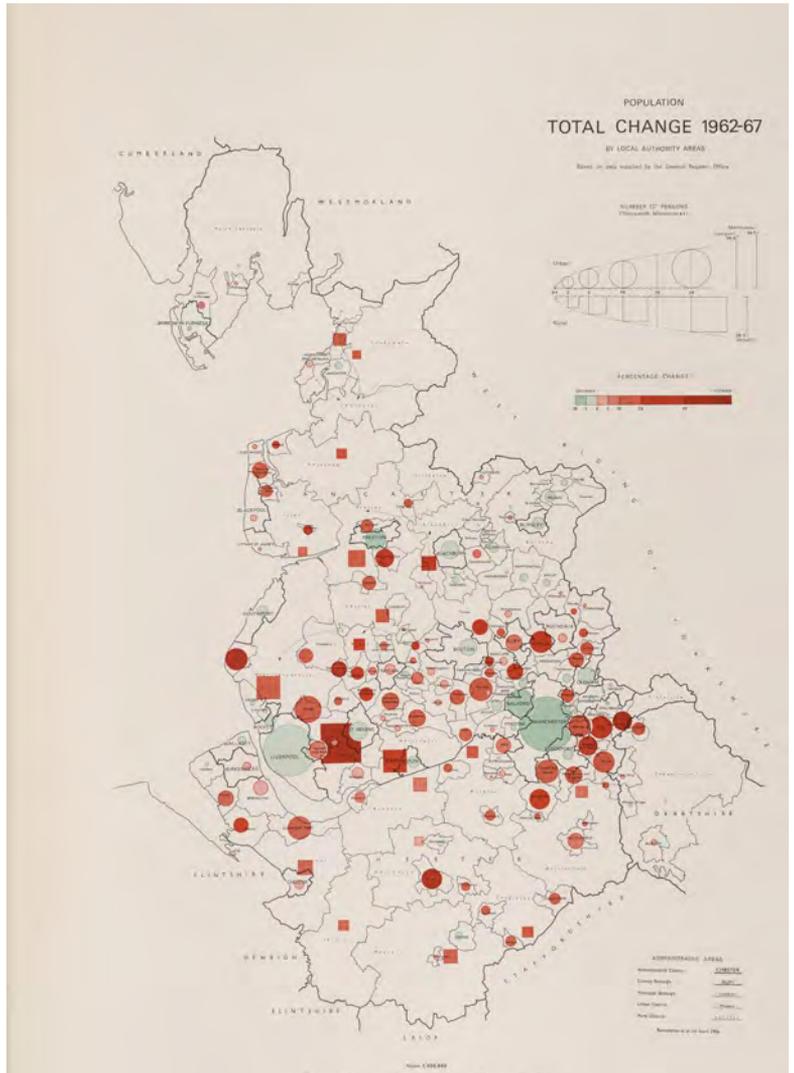


FIG05. Population total change 1962-67

Source: *North West Regional Atlas, 1969*. Ministry of Housing and Local Government, North West Regional Office

FIG06. Overview of major resident developments and new towns in the northwest region in the mid 1960s that were envisaged primarily to cope with large-scale 'deconcentration' of population from Liverpool and Manchester.

Source: *The North West: A Regional Study*. Department of Economic Affairs, HMSO, 1965, p.82

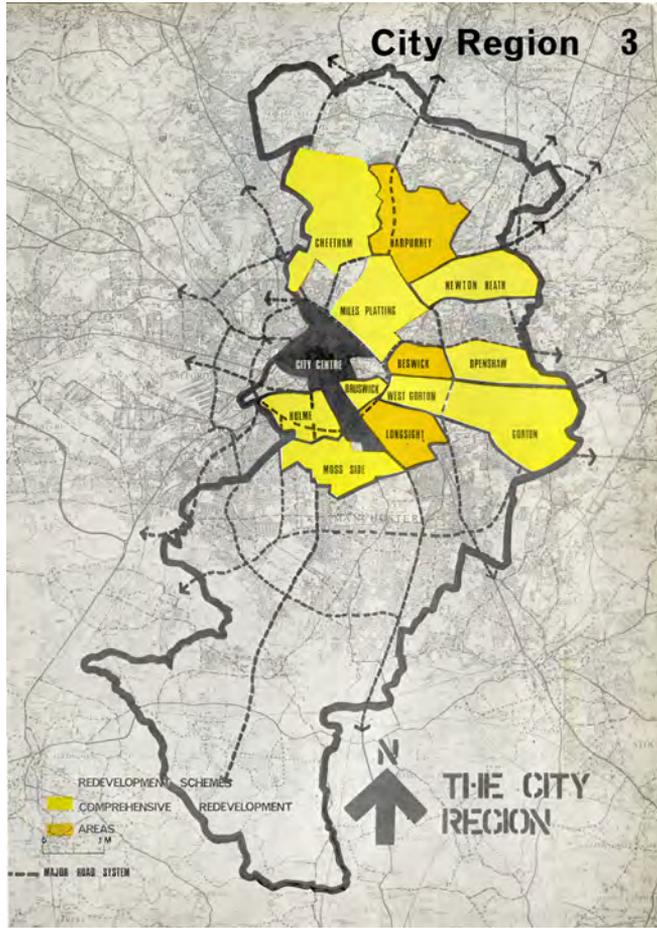


FIG07. Zoning map indicating the scale of residential redevelopment across a large swath of Manchester's inner neighbourhoods in the late 1960s.

Source: *Urban Renewal Manchester. Housing Development Group, Manchester Corporation Housing Committee, 1967, p.3*



FIG08. Overview plan showing the configuration of the Hulme Crescents, a large deck access scheme providing some 989 homes.

Source: *City of Manchester Hulme 5 Redevelopment: Report on design, Oct. 1965. Hugh Wilson & Lewis Womersley, Manchester*





FIG12. A model, made of Lego, showing the deck access scheme at Gibson Street. When completed this multi-level residential complex quickly gained the nicknamed 'Fort Ardwick'.

Source: *Urban Renewal Manchester*. Housing Development Group, Manchester Corporation Housing Committee, 1967, p.25

FIG09, FIG10 & FIG11
Perspective sketches of the spaces and landscaping around the Hulme Crescents.

Source: *City of Manchester Hulme 5 Redevelopment Report on design, Oct. 1965*. Hugh Wilson & Lewis Womersley, Manchester

Over the post-war decades the scale of population de-concentration contributed significantly to the merging together of what were separate satellite towns around Manchester and Salford as housing development spread along major road axis and sprawled out into open agricultural land in-between. Despite efforts to impose a 'green belt', particularly under the auspices of the Greater Manchester Council, many villages and smaller settlement of south-east Lancashire and north east Cheshire melded together. The Pennines constrained eastward expansion.

Within Manchester itself, large and long established residential areas on the periphery of the city centre were designated 'Action Areas' by town hall officials in the 1960s and subject to wholesale 'slum' clearances, with large numbers of streets condemned and many thousands of families had their homes taken away through compulsory purchase orders [FIG.07]. The *tabula rasa* style redevelopment of Hulme was especially prominent on the urban landscape of inner Manchester, but it was not the only residential neighbourhood to be bulldozed and completely rebuilt [FIG.08-11]. By the late 1960s experimentation with large deck access public housing using an industrial 'systems building' approach were being promoted as efficient solutions¹ [FIG.12]. As with the overspill estates, the megastructure housing blocks like the Hulme Crescents and multi-level 'lego-brick' style Fort Ardwick and Fort Beswick² suffered from a combination of physical construction faults and socio-economic problems created by poor management.

¹ Cf. *Urban Renewal Manchester*, 1967 (Housing Development Group, Manchester Corporation Housing Committee). Scanned version available online at www.mappingmanchester.org/plans

² Bendixon T, 1969, 'Man-sized Leggo', *Guardian*, 17 November, p. 6.

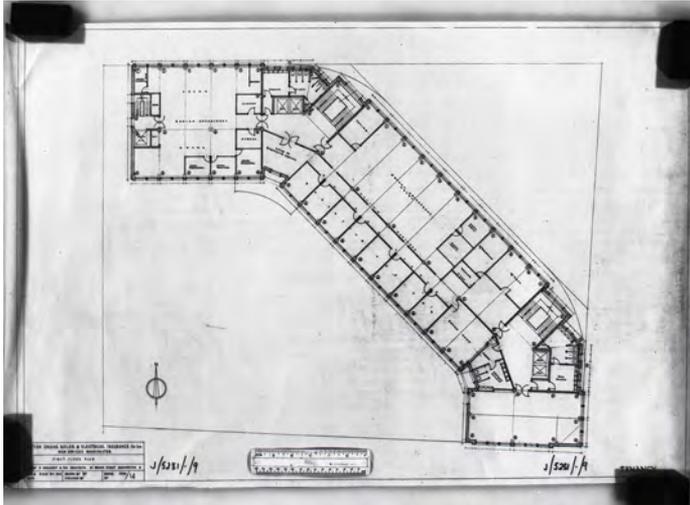


FIG13. Floor plan of Longridge House by architect Harry S. Fairhurst and Son.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, author scan from City Engineers microcards, ref. 5281/-19



FIG14. Model of the CIS Tower by architect G.S. Hay & Burnett, Tait & partners

Source: Richard Brook, Courtesy of the Co-operative Archive

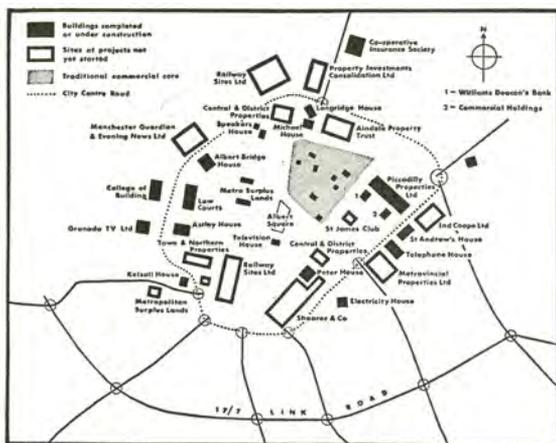


FIG15. Overview of the major new office buildings in put up in central Manchester from the late 1950s to early 1960s.

Source: "Out of centre", by Franklin Medhurst, *The Guardian*, 1963 12 July, p.12

FIG16. Office blocks as symbols of economic progress.

Source: Scan from advertisement in *Manchester Evening News*, 1964

Manchester is moving into the future ...



A model of the Market Street Shopping Precinct showing the street as a magnificent pedestrian way.

There are exciting years ahead as Manchester leads Britain into the challenge of the Sixties. As Manchester determined not to rest on its laurels as Britain's second city, it pioneered a bold new vision of urban renewal - the Market Street Shopping Precinct - a bold new vision of urban renewal - the Market Street Shopping Precinct, the City Exchange Scheme, the Damage Office Development, and the £75 million University Centre.

Manchester is a leading progressive city, rightly called 'Capital of the North'. It's the spirit of Britain's biggest regional market, where 2.1 million people spend £21 million on the great day week, and the home of Britain's biggest regional evening newspaper, **MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS & CHRONICLE**.

More people read the *NEWS* than any other regional evening newspaper in Britain. The *NEWS* is the best in sports coverage, it houses Page Magazine, fully modern letters in Portland stone the best classified section in Europe.

Here is a new vision moving the outstanding challenge of the future ...

Britain's biggest and brightest regional evening newspaper

Manchester Evening News
AND CHRONICLE



Signs and Symbols of the Service Sector Economy

Industrial decline and the development of service sector activities, from the 1950s and particularly into the 1960s, were made visible in the physical fabric of Manchester through the dereliction of manufacturing sites, redundant factory structures and the appearance of new buildings. The architectural symbols of new services activity were most evident on the skyline of the city centre as multiple office buildings appeared, full of white-collar workers engaged in banking, insurance, legal services and administration. The trend towards ever taller office blocks started with Albert Bridge House (E.M. Banks for the Ministry of Works, 1959) and Longridge House (H.S. Fairhurst & Sons, 1959) in the late 1950s [FIG.13]. However, undoubtedly it was the 25 storey CIS tower, truly a skyscraper, which was the iconic structure of the early 1960s and signified commercial office development. Its 7ft high lettering on the summit was emblematic of this new source of economic power in Manchester and was visible for miles. It was also justifiably celebrated for its architectural aesthetic at the time: 'The office tower eschews any pyrotechnics and relies solely on the excellence of its proportions for effect. [with] the curtain wall of plate glass, black vitreous enamelled steel and projecting anodized aluminium I-sectioned mullions wrap uninterruptedly around the whole block. The temptation to dabble with colours of any kind has been resisted.'³ [FIG.14].

The 'new' Manchester was literally going up in the mid 1960s - with many office towers constructed (including Piccadilly Plaza, St Andrews House, Highland House, Rodwell Tower and Gateway House). All were much taller than anything built during the pre-war period and dwarfed the Town Hall's neo-gothic clock tower, traditionally the central signifier of the power of civic Manchester. As Franklin Medhurst noted in 1963 'In place of the ponderous carbon patinated Victorian warehouses, solidly defining every central street at a regulation five or six storeys, there is now soaring a nexus of glass-curtained counting houses, squarely silhouetted against the obscured Pennine sky.'⁴ Most new office blocks were built outside of the tradition business core of the city, typically being aligned to the long-planned (but never realised) City Centre Ring Road [FIG.15]. The media celebrated these tall blocks and slabs as a positive sign of

transformation and economic progress and as symbols of the growing power of finance and new service sector employment [FIG.16]. Internally the design of these glass-walled office towers can also be seen as a reflection of changing working practices, with floor space being flexibly arranged with most employees in open plan, reflecting the loosening of hierarchy in many business operations in the post-war period. This kind of modern architecture both supported and symbolised new types of economic activity that was about information processing and was quite different to the design of industrial buildings and impressive warehouses that had been so dominant in Manchester for the previous 150 years.

The somewhat isolated office tower developments from the mid 1960s were about to give way to larger-scale mixed-use complexes on sites defined as Comprehensive Development Areas by the Planning Department. Six such designations defined much of the planning activity and were the basis for much of the speculative work referenced in this exhibition. However these mega commercial developments were stymied in Manchester in part by macro-forces as the national economy faltered in the 1970s after the 'Oil Shock'.

³ Scott, N K, 1963, 'Manchester's skyscraper', *The Architect & Building News*, 16 January, pp.83-84.

⁴ Medhurst F, 1963, 'Out of centre', *The Guardian*, 12 July, p.12.



FIG19. Model of the main building of the Granada Studio complex. Designed by architect Ralph Tubbs.

Source: *The Builder*, 24 June 1960, p.1178

FIG17. Model of the Renold Building that would be at the heart of the UMIST campus. Designed by W.A. Gibbon of Cruickshank & Seward

Source: MMU Special Collections



FIG18. Panoramic sketch of the UMIST campus c.1966. Drawn by Peter Sainsbury for Cruickshank & Seward

Source: MMU Special Collections

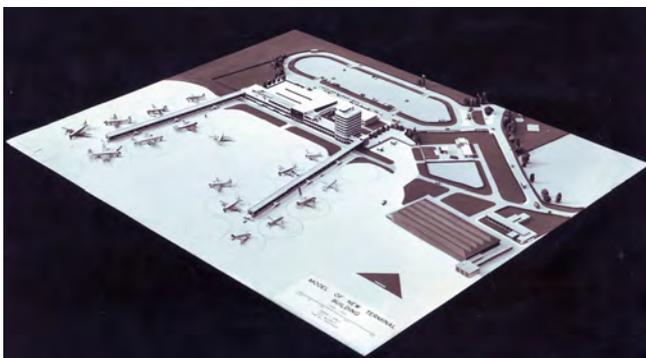


FIG20. Promotional model setting out the new airport terminal, designed by City Architect Leonard C. Howitt. For the early 1960s the scale of this redevelopment was impressive and matched the municipal ambitions of Manchester Corporation at that time.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester Airport archive



FIG21. Iconic railway poster promoting the major redevelopment of London Road Station and its reopening as Manchester Piccadilly. Drawn by Claude Buckle, 1960.

Source: <http://blog.nm.org.uk/manchester-piccadilly-a-visual-history/>

London Midland Modernisation



Developments Indicative of Post-Industrialism

In sync with the completion of the CIS office skyscraper in 1962 was the opening of the Renold Building on the new campus of the Manchester College of Science and Technology. An elegantly designed structure by architect W.A. Gibbon of Cruickshank & Seward, with its large lecture theatres and floors of teaching rooms it was another significant physical development in the city and acknowledged at the time⁵ [FIG.17]. It can now be seen to symbolise the shift to a post-industrial basis with one of its foci on higher education and academic research (what one might term as nodal points in the 'knowledge economy'). As the 1960s progressed, the institution of UMIST was forged and its impressive new education campus transformed a run-down industrial area along the River Medlock. The scale of these buildings and their design by local architects were emblematic of 1960s ideals and the desire to create a modern space for learning. [FIG.18]. Another key development in this period that can be seen as indicative of post-industrialism was the growth of Granada studios (Ralph Tubbs, 1956-65) as a major site for media production. It's most significant cultural output, *Coronation Street*, was first broadcast in December 1960 and would become a massively popular symbol for Manchester and the North [FIG.19].

There was a raft of infrastructural development in the 1960s that can be interpreted as providing support for post-industrial activities such as improved transport and the modernisation of communication associated with tertiary sector business needs. For example, the completely new airport terminal opened in 1962, which really kick started the transformation of war-time Ringway into Manchester International and was able to handle the large jet planes on trans-continental routes that would underpin global business connections [FIG.20]. In the early 1960s there was also the large scale renewal and redevelopment of Manchester's main railway station, with the grimy London Road emerging as Piccadilly Station with a new frontage and tower block as well as the sinuously curved Gateway House (Richard Seifert, 1969) [FIG.21]. Oxford Road Station was also rebuilt and reopened in 1960 with its distinctive laminated timber conoid roof structure (W.R. Headingly and M. Clendinning, 1960). The mid 1960s also saw the *Manchester Rapid*

Transit Study make a recommendation for a monorail route from airport through the city centre in a tunnel and north to Langley. This was not realised.⁶

However, in many respects transport planning in the 1960s in Manchester and across the wider region was focused on handling the demands of private motorists over public transport provision, reflected in the *SELNEC 1962 Highway Plan* and various ring road schemes and axial dual carriageways for city and satellite towns [FIG.22]. The Stretford-Eccles bypass and Barton High Level Bridge over the ship canal (the M62-M63) opened in 1960, in what would become the first segment of Manchester's orbital motorway network. Later in the decade the opening of Mancunian Way in 1967 marked Manchester's flirtation with elevated urban highways although it would turn out to be an isolated piece of motorway grade road as the rest of associated urban motorway schemes and ring roads were only partially realised. Priorities in Manchester and the SELNEC region were reflecting national trends that favoured motorway building while the 'Beeching Axe' was falling on the railway network. Disinvestment in rail infrastructure was most evident in Manchester city centre with closure of Central and Exchange stations at the end of the 1960s.

⁵ 'The successful use of white concrete in the new lecture room block', *Concrete Quarterly*, 55, Oct-Dec. 1963, pp.11-13. www.concretecentre.com/TCC/media/TCCMediaLibrary/Concrete%20Quarterly%20Archive/1962/CQ_055_Winter1962.PDF

⁶ The in-depth reports from this study have been digitised and are available at www.mappingmanchester.org/plans

S.E.L.N.E.C. THE HIGHWAY PLAN

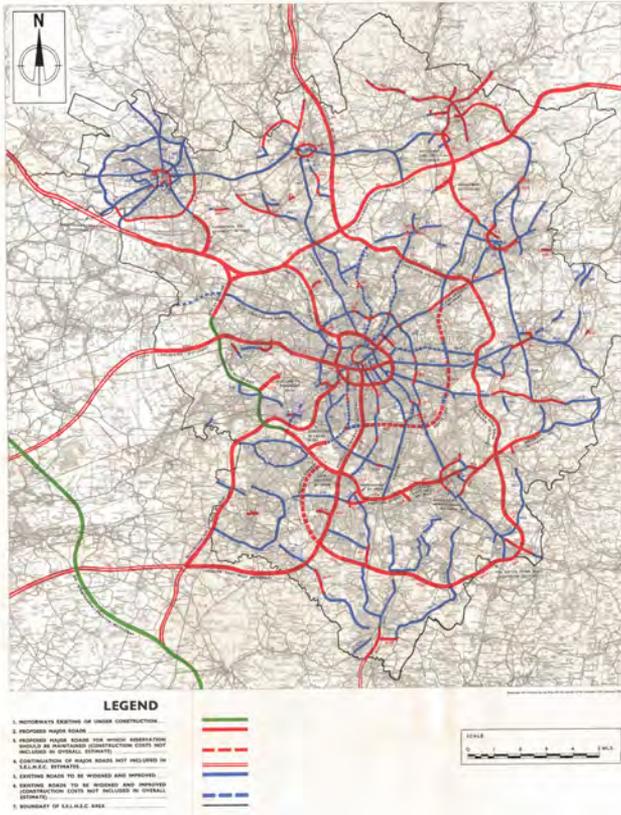


FIG22. The destructive vision of highway development in the 1960s.

Source: South-east Lancashire and North-east Cheshire Area Highway Engineering Committee

CITY OF MANCHESTER

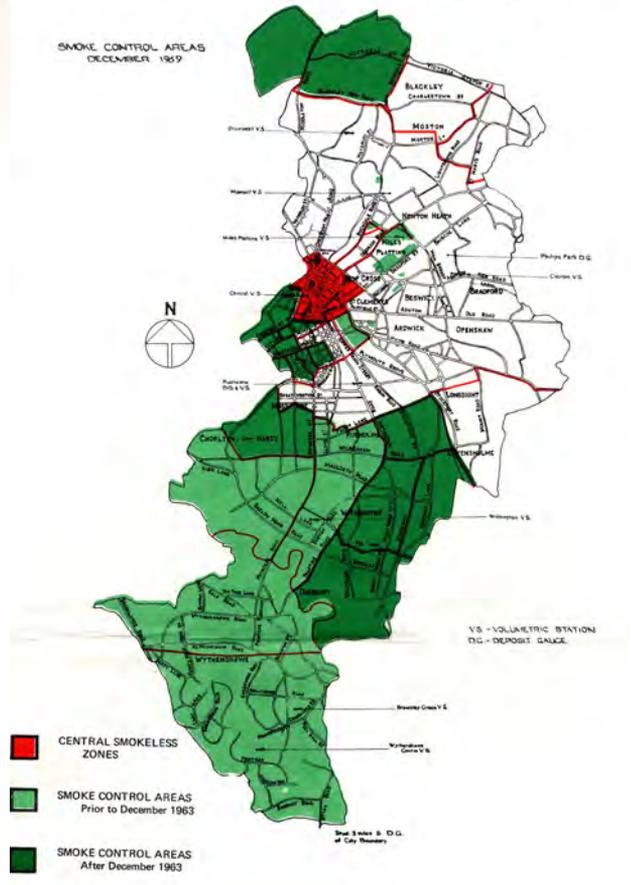


FIG23. Zone map of smoke control areas, 1969.

Source: Medical Officer of Health Report, 1969, Manchester Corporation



The application of computing to an ever wider array of business information processing tasks was a key feature of the economic transformation in the 1960s and the National Computing Centre, setup in Manchester, was meant to support this.⁷ There was also demand for more advanced telecommunications services and this was symbolised materially in the 1960s through new network of tall microwave relay towers. The Post Office Tower in central London was widely celebrated when it opened in the mid 60s as a sign of modern British technical prowess and at Heaton Park, in North Manchester, the GPO also constructed a 70m high concrete antenna structure. Its five visually striking paraboloid microwave horns were a distinctively futuristic silhouette when seen from a distance.

The new Manchester that was emerging in the 1960s would be a cleaner city and a healthier place to live. This desire was reflected in efforts amongst Manchester planning officials to improve the physical environment more generally, tackling the problem of air pollution that was still a chronic problem in the 1950s and also dealing with the legacy of years of industrial contamination of the land and the rivers. The 1960s saw the beginning of serious plans to improve the condition of waterways and to rejuvenate the river valleys penetrating the city centre. Manchester also led the country in imposing smokeless zones, firstly covering the city centre and then many surrounding neighbourhood, encouraging use of more efficient and cleaner methods of domestic heating [FIG.23].

⁷ 'Plans for computer centre', *The Guardian*, 13 November 1965, p.14.





FIG24. Example of the positive newspaper coverage for the work of the new Manchester Council Planning Department.

Source: Scan from Manchester Evening News and Chronicle, 16 March 1967, p.11



FIG25. The physical model of Manchester city centre in the Town Hall extension was a useful tool of public communication about planning in the 1960s.

Source: Courtesy of Robert Maund



A New Style of Planning in Manchester in the 1960s?

With hindsight it seems apparent that a new generation of senior personnel holding the key technical offices in Manchester Town Hall in the early 1960s were responsible for piloting a new course and pushing for new kinds of urban redevelopment, housing and highway solutions. Leadership from men schooled in the pre-war ethos of planning gave way to a younger generation with progressive ideas more suited to the 1960s. Most significantly Rowland Nicholas and his large dominion as City Surveyor and Engineer was broken up and a new dedicated town planning department formed in 1964 under the direction of John S. Millar. He assembled a team of younger planners and urban designers that sought to transform the city, within legal and logistical constraints and counter-pressures from developers, to the benefit of people, to create the 'city beautiful' [FIG.24]. Besides Millar's appointment, the mid 1960s saw a change of the City Architect with Leonard C. Howitt being replaced by S. G. Besant Roberts, which brought a markedly different style and design ethos to municipal building projects. The stoic and civilised Crown Court was Howitt's last building and the machined towers at Aytoun and All Saints heralded Besant-Roberts tenure. The behind the scenes power of Town Clerk also changed hands as long-serving (Sir) Philip B. Dingle retired in 1966 and was replaced by George C. Ogden. Austen Bent became the new director of the Housing Department in 1963.

Much of the work of these powerful technocrats in the Town Hall was around spatial management and coping with the legacy of Manchester being the first industrial city. This was expressed in a desire to erase the chaotic past, enact more orderly planning for a better future and to counteract the 'image of grime and obsolescence inherited from the industrial revolution'.⁸ To help engender greater civic pride the new planning department seemed to be conscious of the need to communicate their work more widely and a series of publications explained the processes at work in the planning and design of the new city. They also seemed to be adept at generating upbeat propaganda in the local press about the prospects for new development. The *Evening News* had, of course, its own agenda in civic boosterism of Manchester as the Second City. In this effort to communicate the potential for urban change, it is also interesting to note the centrality of the large table-top block model in the Town Hall Extension that was deployed actively to convince visitors as to the merits of the new Manchester; as in 1966 when the model was shown to PM Harold Wilson [FIG.25].

⁸ *Manchester City Centre Map*, 1967, p.39.

CITY OF MANCHESTER * CENTRAL AREA



FIG26. Zoning map for the redevelopment of the city centre as envisaged in Rowland Nicholas' post-war reconstruction plan.

Source: *City of Manchester Plan, 1945*. Manchester Corporation

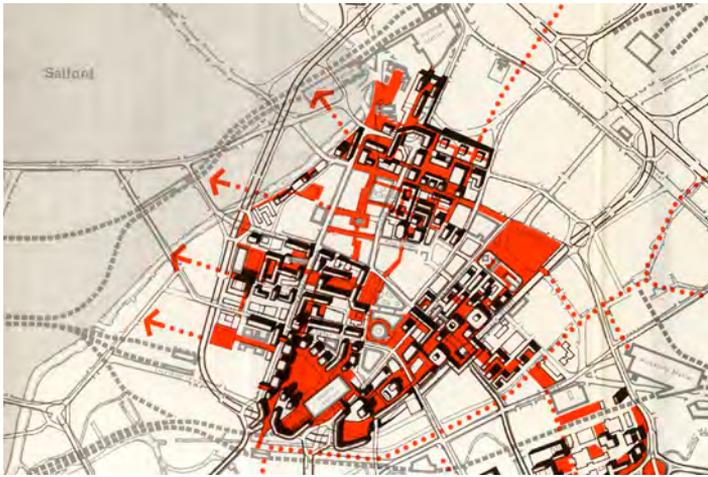


FIG27. The broad zoning of redevelopment for the city centre envisaged at the end of the 1960s showing the full extents of elevated plazas and pedestrianisation.

Source: *Manchester City Centre Map, 1967*. Manchester City Council, Map 11

FIG28. Promotional leaflet for the Market Street development.

Source: Scan from private collection

Market Street central area redevelopment

AREA A
Reconstruction on these areas will commence in 1972. In the north east sector a Covered Market Hall for the City of Manchester will be constructed. The first phase of this Covered Shopping Centre will contain major stores and shopping units, together with an office tower block containing 200,000 sq ft net of air conditioned accommodation. A Multi-Storey Car Park will commence in this phase and will eventually span Cannon Street and link with AREA C.

AREA B
Construction on this phase will commence shortly before the completion of Area A and will extend the Covered Shopping Centre to provide further stores and shops. The site on the southern side of Cannon Street will be developed to include a major Bus Station and supporting shop units.

AREA C
This will be the final phase of Manchester's new Covered Shopping complex, where further shopping in the form of major stores and shop units will be provided.

Area photographs of the 'Arcade' Covered Shopping Centre of Liverpool.

Architect's impression showing view along Market Street, Manchester.

An existing American style hotel in the Covered Shopping Centre of Liverpool.

View from front, Manchester, taken from the South of the Market Street redevelopment area.

The Hill Orchestra in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester.

Cover Photograph: Art House (Manchester) Limited.



Sorting Out The City Centre

At the heart of the new Manchester would be a transformed urban core. For the planners the need to deal more effectively with the layout, land-use and communications in the central area had been primary concern. By comparing and contrasting the visions presented on zoning plans from 1945 and 1967 one may get a sense of the common concerns for order and legibility running across the post-war decades [FIG.26,27]. In many ways very little happened in Manchester city centre for the first ten years or so from 1945. This was a time of deep austerity and investment priorities by the State in the late 1940s and into start of the 1950s were welfare orientated with building for health and schools typically in areas beyond the core.

Here were two high-level aims regarding the city centre and it is evident that the planning agenda over the twenty plus years between these key documents changed little:

'It is undoubtedly most desirable that the zoning scheme for the city centre should make possible, as opportunity serves, some sorting-out of the present indiscriminate mixture of development and some improvement in the grouping of buildings used for similar purposes. At the same time it would be foolish to attempt a rigid segregation whose enforcement would entail high compensation payments and might soon have to be abandoned on financial grounds. The zoning proposals must allow considerable elasticity, permitting the less harmful mixtures of uses to remain – unless, of course, the owners themselves decide that relocation would be desirable in their own interests.'

(Rowland Nicholas, *City of Manchester Plan*, 1945, p.192)

'The City Centre has reached a critical stage in its development with a high proportion of obsolete buildings, which presents the opportunity to renew and recreate a more efficient and convenient centre worthy of the region it serves. The object is to harness the forces of change so as to reconcile improved accessibility with higher environmental standards and to obtain maximum advantage from limited resources.'

(John S. Millar, *Manchester City Centre Map*, 1967, p.14)

Another key aspect for the city centre in terms of serving the post-industrial consumer economy was the need to develop a bigger and better shopping environment, providing more space for retailing and offering the potential for covered pedestrianised areas. In terms of prime retail in the city centre, it was conscious in minds of planners and other commentators to resolve long standing problems with Market Street; as Derek Senior noted in 1960 'we may yet see Market Street transformed, almost overnight from the country's worst example of conflict between trunk-road traffic and shopping uses, into what any Saturday afternoon shows it should be - the country's busiest pedestrian way.'⁹ The complete transformation of Market Street via the Arndale development would take well over another decade to realise and the end result would be widely regarded as an ugly and unloved environment [FIG.28].

⁹ Senior D, 1960, 'New heart for Manchester', *The Guardian*, 15 June, p.18.

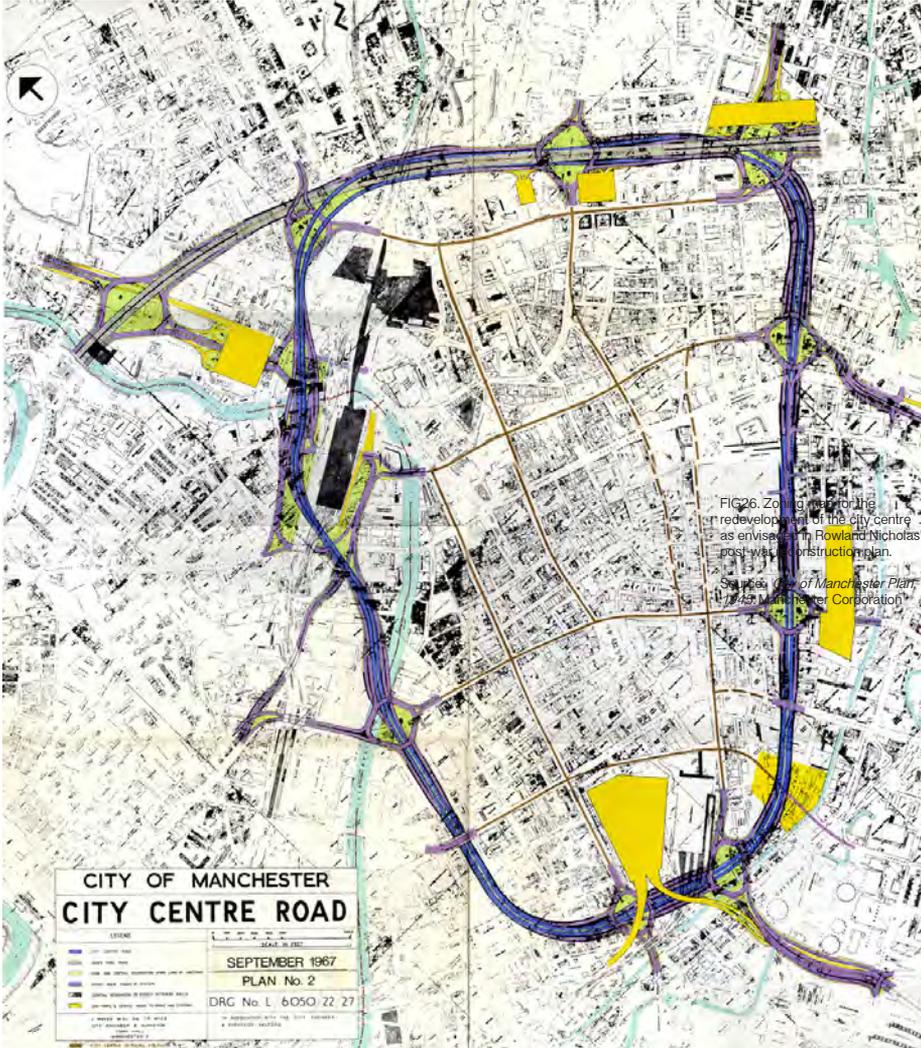


FIG29. The strong the collar that would have produced around the urban core by the ring road is captured starkly on this technical plan. The scale of the peripheral car parking provision also stands out.

Source: John Hayes (City Engineer), *Manchester City Centre Road, 1968*. City of Manchester Corporation



FIG30. Overview plan indicating the position and size of the comprehensive development areas covering the city centre as designated by the Planning Department in the 1960s.

Source: *Manchester City Centre Map, 1967*. Manchester City Council, p.55

Rising car ownership was a prominent planning concern and coping with vehicle traffic was paramount in plans for Manchester city centre in the post-war period. The problem of traffic traversing the core area was to be solved by a continuous ring road, large new car-parking facilities and restricted access on smaller streets [FIG.29]. Better dual carriageway radial routes were laid out to speed commuters in from suburbs with no delays at stop-start junction on regular streets.

The City Centre Road was long planned for but never constructed. If it had been built, even in part as envisaged in the 1967 design it would have undoubtedly transformed urban mobility for drivers but at what cost to the fabric of the city, the environment and potential social life? Of course, the planners proposed a two track solution to the traffic problem; the highly engineered City Centre Road would be exclusively for fast vehicles, accompanied by an attendant system of pedestrianised streets, raised walkways and new plazas and public squares at first floor level, that would interlink many key civic buildings and busy office blocks. Derek Senior noted in 1960, 'Sooner or later, [in the city centre] it will be necessary to assign different levels to the exclusive use of the pedestrian and the moving vehicle, and to keep the stationary vehicle out of the way of both. This means that a third dimension must be added to the planning of central areas.'¹⁰

Elevated pedestrian environments, sunken vehicular carriageways, hovering monorails and 'highways-in-the-sky' were the motifs of a generation of architects and planners who sought to redefine our cities in the 1960s. The popular rhetoric, promulgated in the mainstream press, typically heralded these infrastructures as opening up a new age for British inner-urban environments. In Manchester, Rowland Nicholas in November 1961 in a report to the Town Planning and Buildings Committee that illustrated his understanding of how far urban design and commercial realities had shifted since his City of Manchester Plan of 1945. The integrated nature of traffic, comprehensive development and environment was described as 'complex and completely interrelated'.¹¹ A number of specific statements reflected the changing planning ideals of the time. Nicholas' accepted that his plan as envisaged in 1945 was no longer an appropriate framework for development and pre-empted the work eventually delivered under John Millar's direction. The prospect of

comprehensive development and its use in this interrelated landscape was 'coming to be accepted by developers' who understood 'that piecemeal building no longer provide[d] a satisfactory solution'.¹²

The segregation of traffic and pedestrians would be achieved in several ways including the 'provision of overhead pavements'. Nicholas also advocated that 'a plan in three-dimensions' should be prepared that would aid the selection of sites for CDA status and 'invoke designation procedure in order to bring about satisfactory redevelopment'.¹³ Amongst the developments under consideration as Nicholas made his report were 'several tentative schemes' around the Cathedral that were assessed to ensure that they configured to 'an ultimate scheme for the area'.¹⁴ The interrelation of CDA sites may be thus seen as one brought about by policy and popular imagination [FIG.30]. Planning policy created the situation for great swathes of cities to be conceived in their totality. The vertical programming of the city was imagined, theorised and illustrated in the early part of the twentieth century but became a vogueish reality in Britain during the Sixties.¹⁵

Martin Dodge and Richard Brook, May 2016.

¹⁰ Senior D, 1960, 'New heart for Manchester', *The Guardian*, 15 June, p.18.

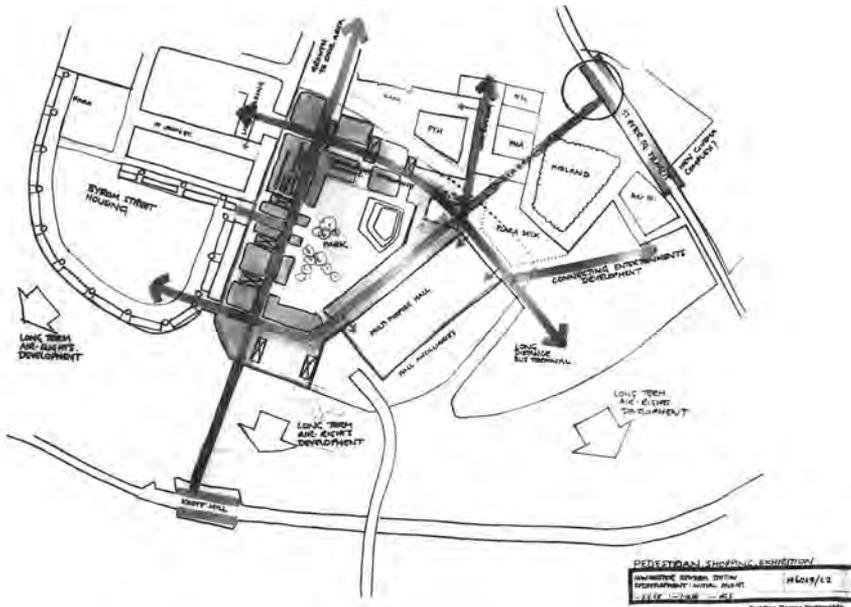
¹¹ GB127.Council Minutes/Town Planning and Buildings Committee/2/56, p.902.

¹² GB127.Council Minutes/Town Planning and Buildings Committee/2/56, p.903.

¹³ GB127.Council Minutes/Town Planning and Buildings Committee/2/56, p.902.

¹⁴ GB127.Council Minutes/Town Planning and Buildings Committee/2/56, p.907.

¹⁵ There were several notable schemes, both built and unbuilt, that influenced a generation of architect and planners, including Sergei Kadleigh's 1952 proposal for *High Paddington, A town for 8,000 people* (Architect and Building News), the design competitions for Golden Lane Estate (1952) and Sheffield University (1953). Particularly influential were the planning and construction of the Park Hill estate in Sheffield (Ivor Smith and Jack Lynn under the direction of Lewis Womersley, 1957-61) and Cumbernauld town centre (Geoffrey Copcutt under the direction of Hugh Wilson, 1958-67).

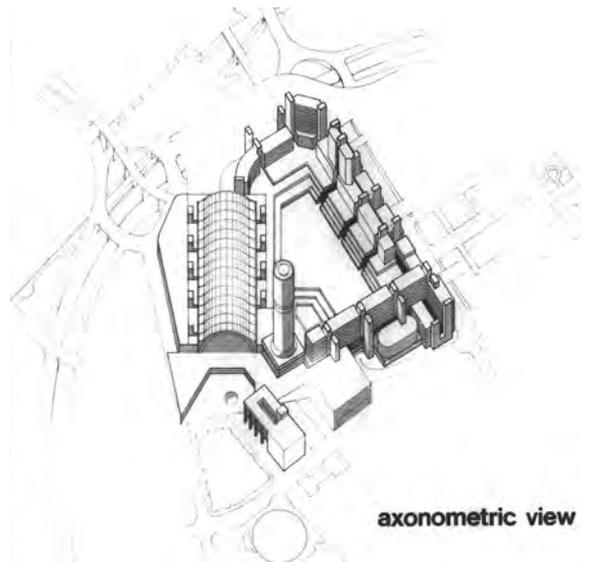


An initial sketch plan from 1968 of the possibilities for Central Station site with the Listed rail shed being converted in multi-purpose hall, a generously proportioned public part and perimeter of mixed used blocks. This scheme by BDP did not progress but was well developed and seriously promoted.

Source: Courtesy of BDP.

The axonometric view of the site shows the scale of the train shed structure and also the size of the open central area for the public park. The sunken dual carriage of the unrealised city circle ring road would have skirted close by the site.

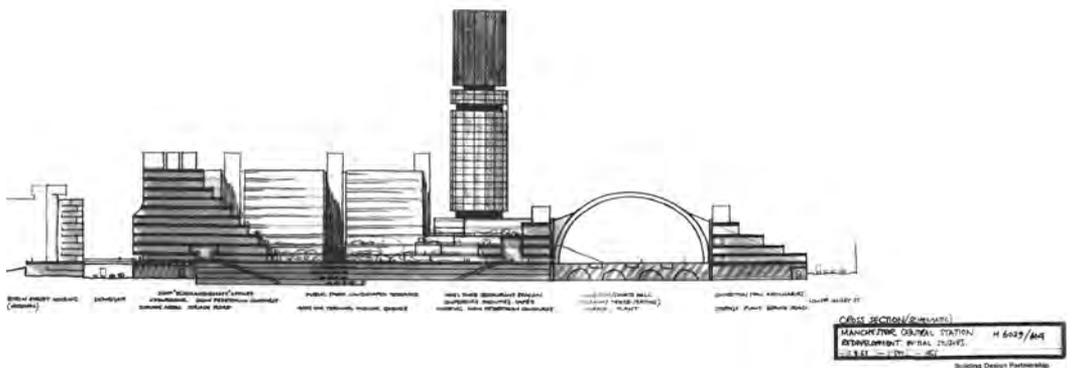
Source: Courtesy of BDP.



axonometric view

A section through the BDP scheme for Central Station with the circular hotel tower being the stand out feature along with the curving roof of the train shed providing a substantial enclosed space suitable for exhibition and indoor sporting events.

Source: Courtesy of BDP.



CROSS SECTION (SURROUND)
MANCHESTER CENTRAL STATION
DEVELOPMENT - INITIAL STUDY
M 6029/S4
Building Design Partnership



Central Station

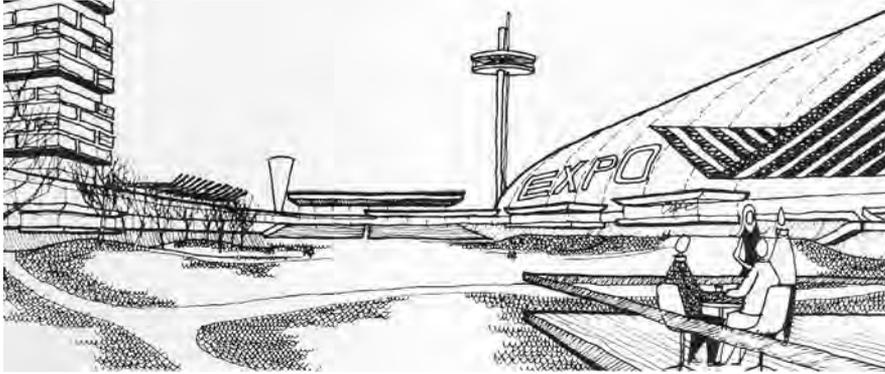
Central Station closed in 1968 under the axe of Dr. Beeching. In the ten years or more following its closure it was subject to a number of speculative schemes for its redevelopment but remained a semi-derelict site used only for car parking. Ownership of the site eventually made its way into the hands of the Greater Manchester Council (GMC) and became the G-Mex Exhibition Centre (1982), which was arguably the most significant built project realised under their short existence.

Initially a development consortia led by Taylor Woodrow made a serious proposal that was designed by Building Design Partnership and published in a lavish, boxed brochure. This was used to lobby Manchester City Corporation with a joint venture scheme in the minds of the consortia. Ideas including a permanent home for the Museum of Science and Industry and an indoor sports arena were proposed and the planning authorities viewed it as an opportunity to create something akin to the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen. Eventually, a huge scheme designed by Cruickshank & Seward (C&S) was given outline planning approval in 1974 following an extended period of design studies by the practice.

Murky financial dealings behind the scenes led to the site being acquired by in 1973 by Central and District Properties Ltd. (C&D), owned and run by a couple of rather flashy entrepreneurs, Ramon Greene and Jack Walker. The pair used to arrive in economically depressed Manchester by helicopter and wondered why they raised the heckles of the local authority officers! C&D was largely funded by the Crown Agents, a post-colonial oddity that survived decolonisation by refocusing its funds into private sector property development. The Crown Agents were previously responsible for the procurement of goods and services to the colonies and were a branch of the Civil Service, but under the control of the Crown. Some rather lax accounting and managerial practices left tens of millions of pounds in the hands of mid-level officers and the survival instinct of the organisation saw property deals across the world which kept them afloat.

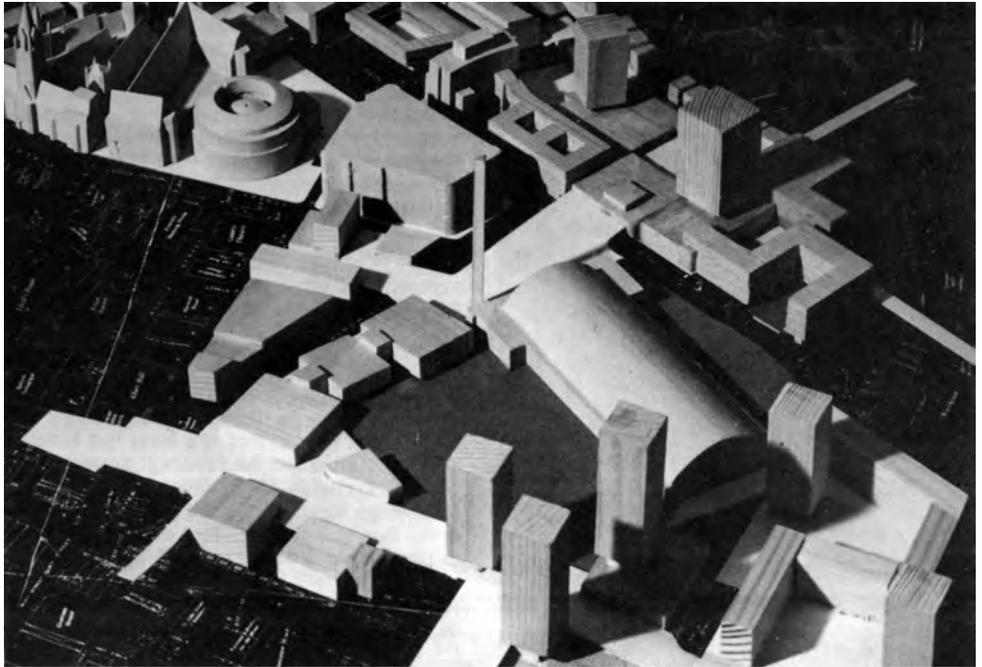
C&S's proposal is recorded in a series of surviving photographs of models that show the sequence of design development for the massive site bounded by Deansgate, Peter Street, Lower Mosley Street and the alignment of the proposed city centre ring road. Their scheme was to include offices, apartments, a hotel and a large conference centre. In some respects their unrealised design mirrors the programmatic composition of the site today. This is one of the legacies of this era of planning by the local authority department – how they selected projects to support and shape the city that unfolded over the proceeding decades. The major building proposed by C&S was a tower made of three cylindrical volumes that referenced the BMW HQ building in Munich and was similar to the Bonaventure Hotel in LA.

The funding for the project collapsed amidst the Crown Agents Affair but not before the outline planning had been approved. It is this C&S scheme of 1974 that is shown in the 3D model in the exhibition.



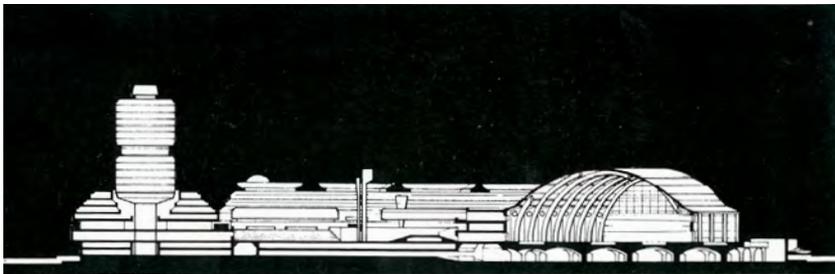
A speculative sketch of what a redeveloped Central Station as the 'expo' centre might look like, with prominent observation deck perched on a slender pinnacle structure. This vision was presented by the City Planning Department in the late 1960s to encourage creative solutions for this key site.

Source: *Manchester City Centre Map*, 1967. Manchester City Council, p.69



'An unrivalled opportunity to provide open space and complimentary activities'.
Advisory scheme by John Billingham,
Assistant City Planning Officer presenting the possibilities for the Central Station site.

Source: *Architecture North West*, no.28, April 1968, p.34

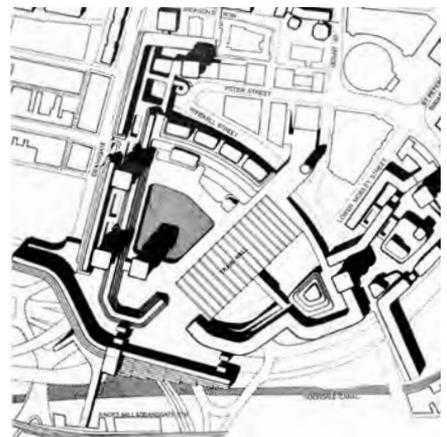


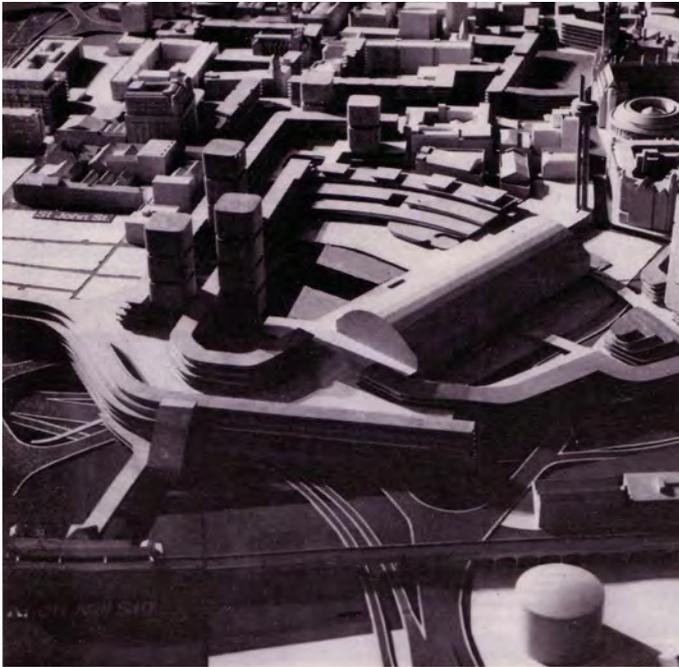
Cross section through advisory scheme.

Source: *Architecture North West*, no.28, April 1968

Plan of Advisory scheme by John Billingham. The blocks shown traversing Deansgate to the west and Whitworth Street to the south show the ambitions of the planners to connect large areas of the city.

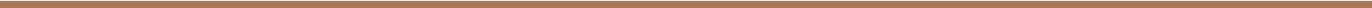
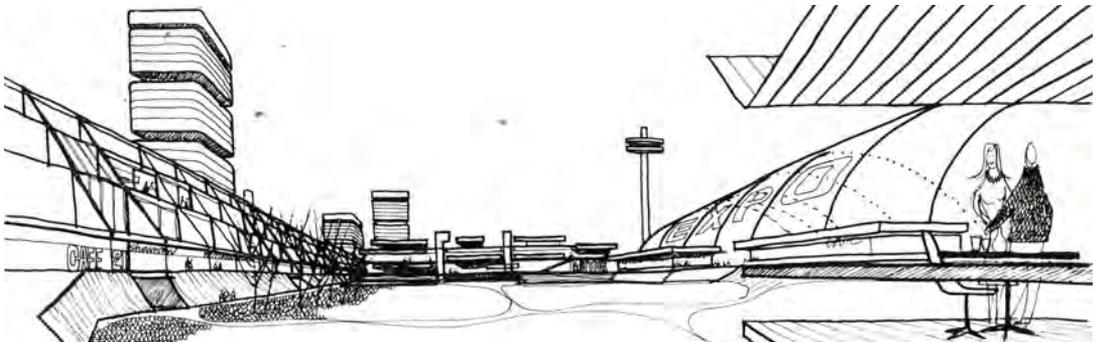
Source: *Architecture North West*, no.28, April 1968, p.34





This model and accompanying sketch, also from the office of the planners, show an alternative configuration for the commercial blocks intended to line Peter Street.

Source: *Manchester City Centre Map*, 1967. Manchester City Council, p.69





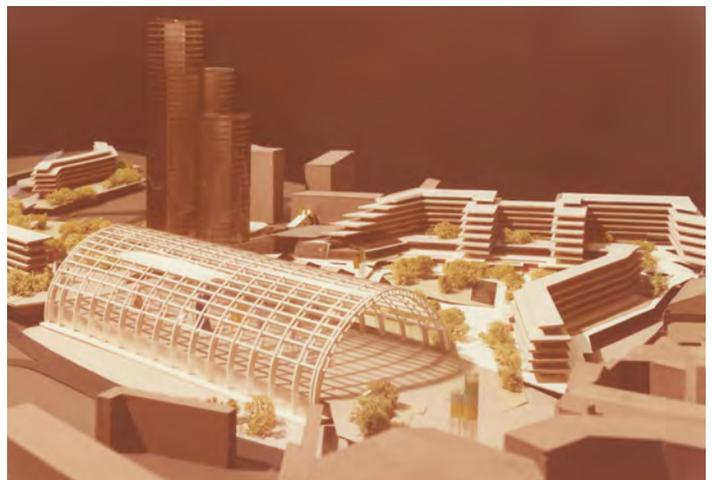
In the early 1970s Cruickshank & Seward were given free reign to envisage a range of designs for the Central Station site. This view of a model for one of their early iterations shows the demolition of Central Station in favour of entirely new structures.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



This iteration shows the arrival of cylindrical towers sat upon an extended stepped podium.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



Here is shown the tripartite tower and the train shed retained as most of the city council and planners wished.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections

Another design solution coming out Cruickshank & Seward. Little detail on this proposal beyond the photographs of the physical models survives.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



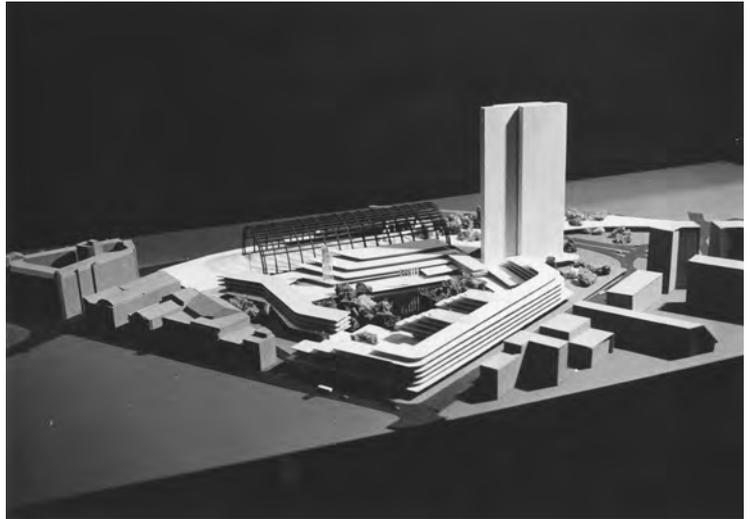
This model is recalled by those who worked on it, and the circular features in the centre of the frame are rolls of drafting tape!

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



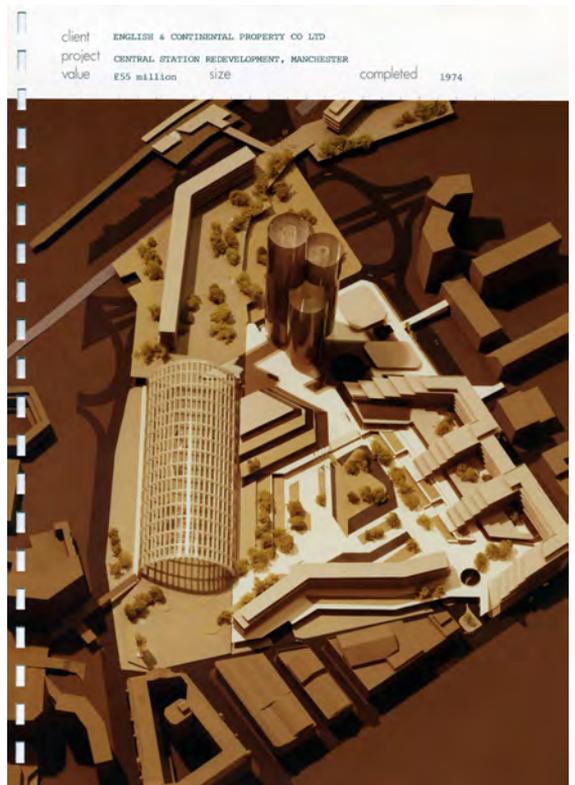
Alternative view of the early 1970s Cruickshank & Seward model for the Central Station site.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



More Cruickshank & Seward proposals, this one included several elongated multi-deck structures and three very slender tall towers. The central landscape area seems to have included a large lake.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



The scheme favoured by the client English and Continental Property Ltd from the various Cruickshank & Seward designs. The scheme was not realised.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



Two intriguing but rather impressionistic watercolour sketches of interior design of the train shed as exhibition venue for the favoured C&S scheme. Drawn by illustrator David Fricker for architects of Cruickshank & Seward.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



Painting by Peter Sainsbury of office building facing the entrance to Central Station by Essex, Goodman and Suggitt. Built as they were developing their plans for the regeneration of the entire site - soon to be demolished.

Source: Courtesy Capes Dunn Auctioneers



Cover of the brochure promoting the GMC led scheme in the 1980s for redeveloping the Central Station site. This would succeed as GMEX. The artist impression shown is a close match for actual EGS Design solution.

Source: Scan from private collection





Percy Scott Worthington's proposal for the removal of the Palatine Hotel c.1935.

Source: Royal Manchester Institution. Archives+, ref: GB127.M6/1/79/12

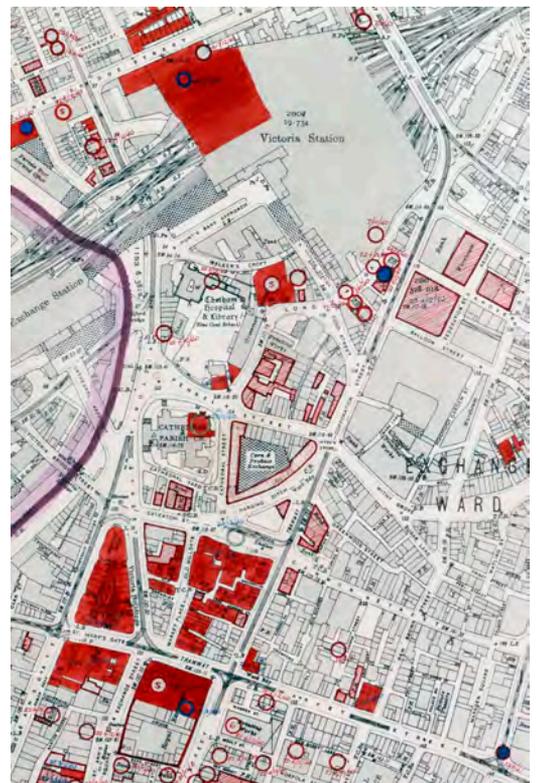


Extract from the 1945 Plan to show proposals around Cathedral.

Source: City of Manchester Plan, Plate 78

Extract from Manchester's bomb maps showing area around Manchester's Cathedral

Source: JRUL



Central Area Replanning (1947) Showing sites around Market Place available for development.

Source: City Engineers' Microcards



Cathedral Area

The redevelopment proposals for the area around Manchester Cathedral and the old Corn Exchange building were arguably some of the most insensitive plans to emerge in the 1960s. In the immediate post-war years Victorian architecture was viewed by many people as thoroughly out-dated and symbolised the dense, dirty and deprivations suffered by many of Manchester's citizens. The conservation movement at the time largely amounted to the protection of 'ancient' buildings and the value of other architectural heritage, such as spinning mills and textile warehouses, did not arrive as a major concern until the 1960s.

The 1945 City of Manchester Plan plotted the route of the city centre ring road as closely flanking the Cathedral along the line of Cateaton Street and eastwards along Cannon Street. At this juncture it was to be a surface level dual carriageway and envisaged in perspective drawings as a pleasant tree-lined boulevard. The Cathedral itself was to be set in new landscaped gardens that would cascade down to the River Irwell. By the time of the revision of plans for this area in the 1960s, assuming the vertical separation of traffic and pedestrians, the road had become a heavily engineered sunken carriageway with little in the way of provision for people!

In the 1960s visions for the area the unvalued Corn Exchange building was due to be demolished to make way for a large-scale commercial development by W.S Hattrell & Partners (1962). A multi-layered mix of shopping, mass car parking and a large hotel composed most of the space and was arranged in a substantial podium with a series of towers rising from it. It was intended to connect via pedestrian bridges to developments to the east (Arndale) and the south (Market Place) and would be a modernist backdrop to the Cathedral and Chetham's School. Minimal concessions were given to the Medieval context other than a small prestige office building in an octagonal form referred to as being 'suggestive of a chapter house'. The architects argued that to restrict the scale of development did not fit with the needs of the sixties consumer city and that a contemporary scheme to frame the historic buildings was the viable solution.

Thankfully the project stalled and the Corn Exchange, in its second post-1996 incarnation, survives. The most recent additions to this site were Urbis (Ian Simpson Associates, 2002) and Cathedral Gardens (BDP, 2002). Both of these commissions came from the planning competition that followed the IRA bombing. In several of the other short listed schemes the notion of closing Deansgate and addressing the River Irwell appeared and this harks back to the pleasure boat landing piers drawn in MCC Planning Department's 1960s visions.

The 3D model on display in this exhibition also includes the highly speculative notion for a heliport from the mid 1950s to be situated on the roof of Victoria Station. This idea collapsed under the weight of technical and economic viability in the early 1960s and inter-city helicopter travel never became part of British urban life.

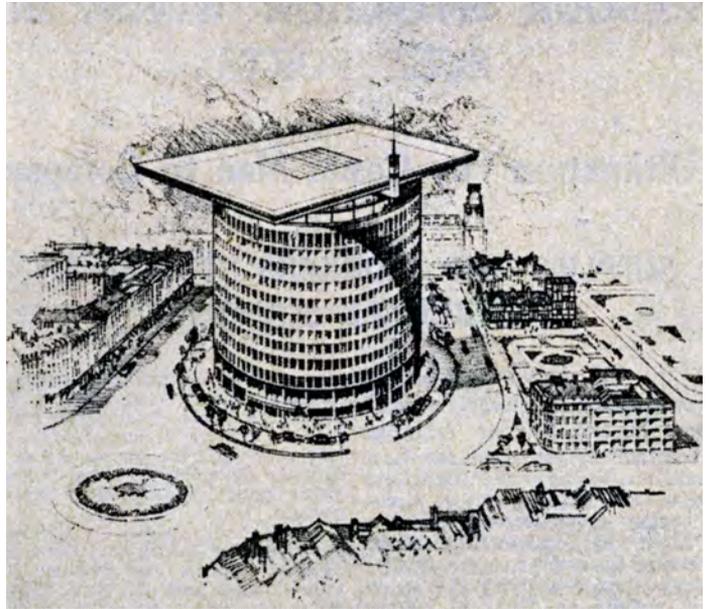


Drawing by P.D. Hepworth of the Cathedral Precinct. Above the Cathedral are shown the first illustrations of the new Market Place, a rectangular road junction and a series of orthogonal commercial blocks.

Source: *City of Manchester Plan*, Plate 80

Proposed heliport by J.J. Spyra from 1951 for site off Corporation Street.

Source: *Manchester Guardian*, 1 November 1951



Proposed heliport for roof of Victoria Station

Source: Archives+, ref: GB127.M723/81



Proposed heliport for roof of Victoria Station

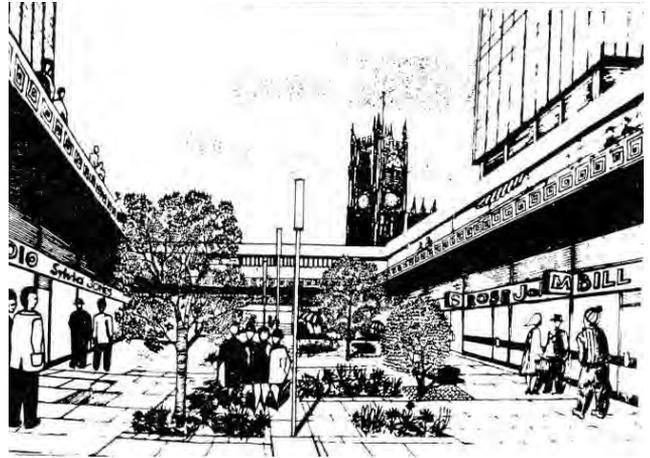
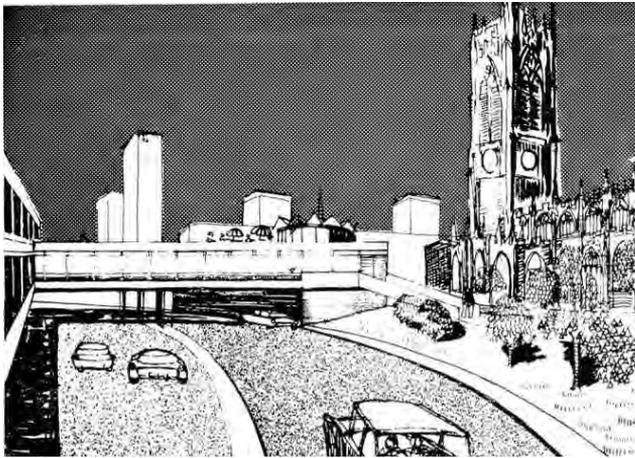
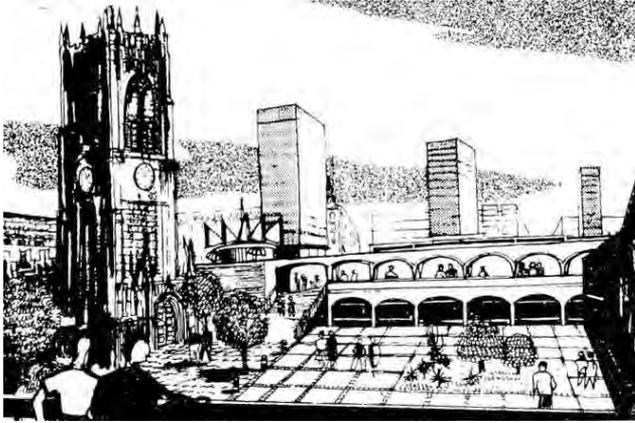
Source: Archives+, ref: GB127.M723/82



Model of masterplan by City Surveyor Rowland Nicholas for area around Cathedral. This was published shortly prior to Nicholas' retirement.

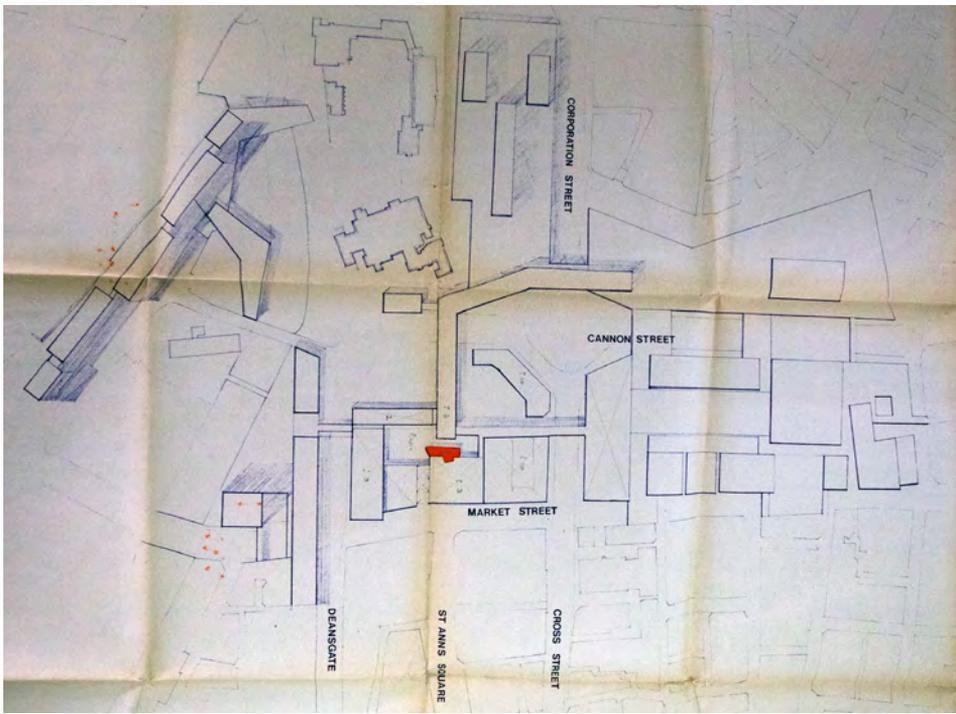
Source: 'Renewing northern city centres', *Industrial Architecture*, May 1963, p. 309-313.



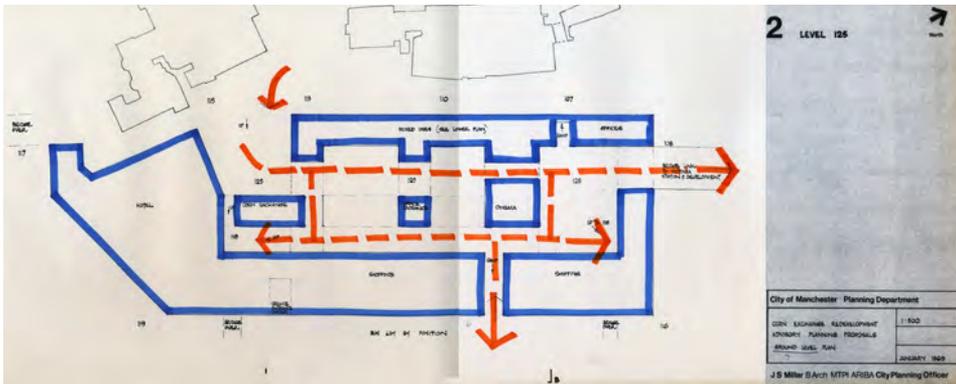


Sketches to illustrate masterplan by City Surveyor Powland Nicholas for area around Cathedral. This was published shortly prior to Nicholas' retirement.

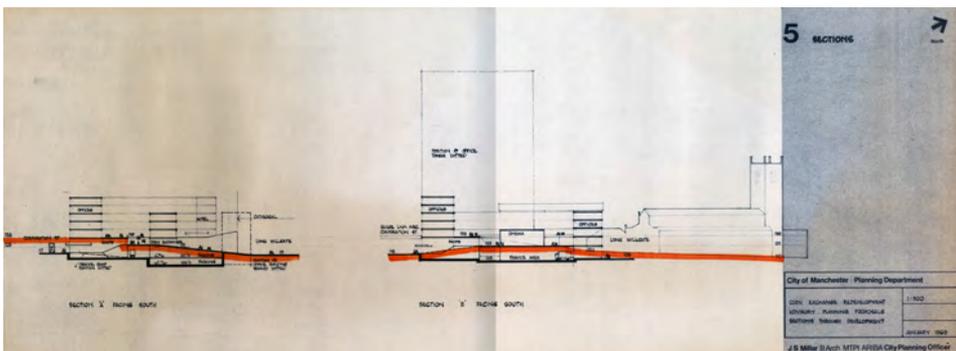
Source: 'Renewing northern city centres', *Industrial Architecture*, May 1963, p. 309-313



Advisory scheme drawing by City of Manchester Planning Department for Market Place Area
 Source: National Archives, ref: HLG/79/407

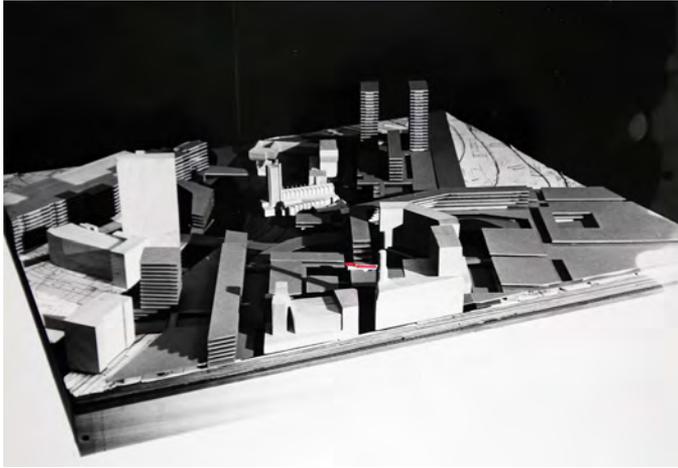


Advisory scheme drawing by City of Manchester Planning Department for Corn Exchange Area
 Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



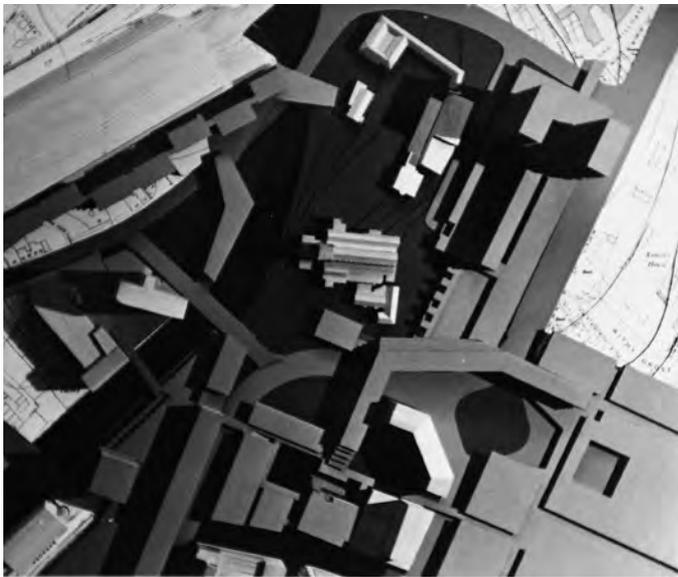
Advisory scheme sectional drawing by City of Manchester Planning Department for Corn Exchange Area
 Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections





Advisory scheme model by
City of Manchester Planning
Department for Market Place Area

Source: National Archives
ref: HLG/79/407

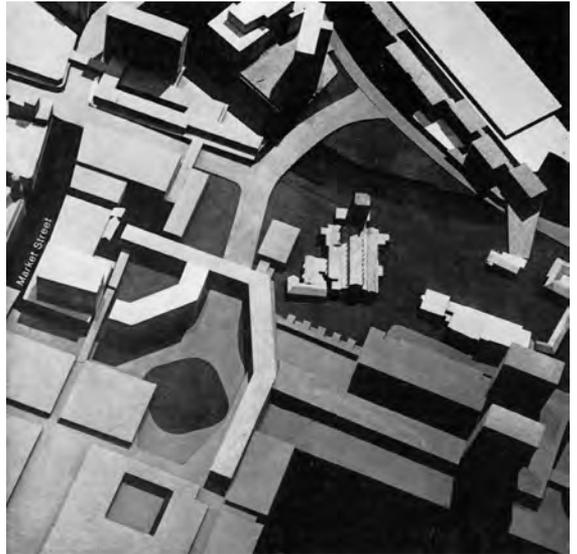


Advisory scheme model by
City of Manchester Planning
Department for Market Place Area

Source: National Archives
ref: HLG/79/407

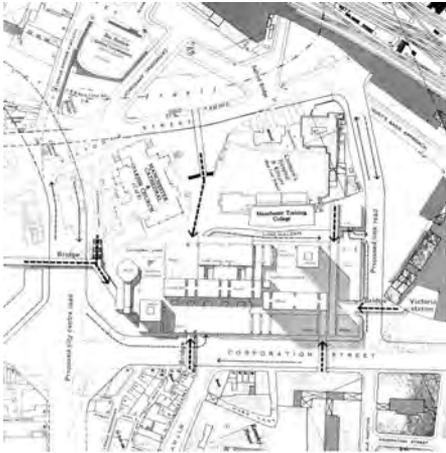
Advisory scheme model for area
around Manchester Cathedral

Source: Millar, J.S. (1967)
*Manchester Corporation. City
Planning Department 1965-67*, p.20



Advisory scheme model for area
around Manchester Cathedral

Source: Hayes, J. (1968)
Manchester city centre road,
City of Manchester Corporation,
Manchester



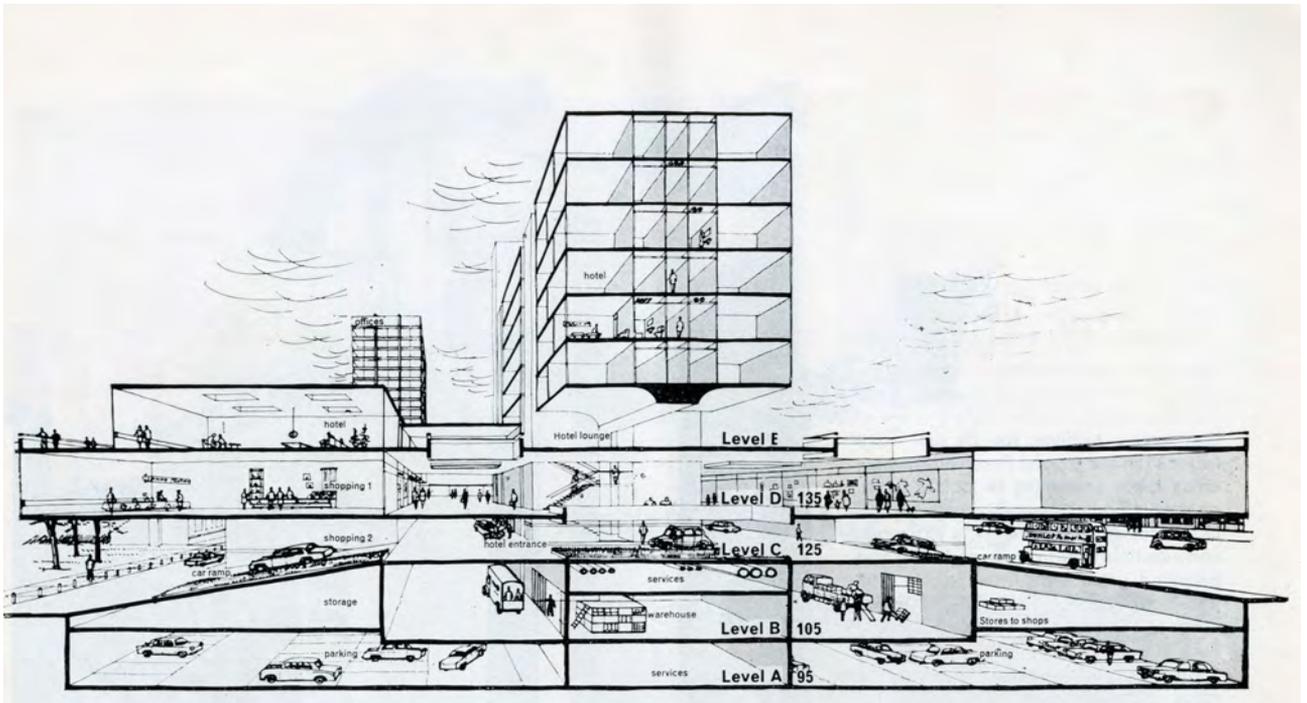
Plan for the development of the Corn Exchange by W.S. Hattrell & Partners

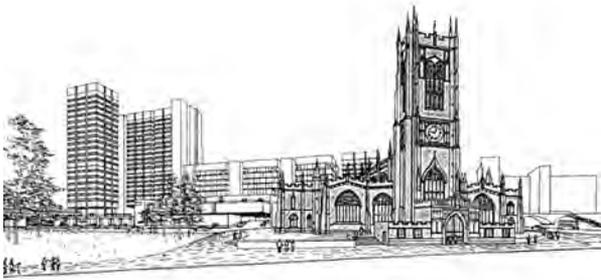
Source: *Architects' Journal*, 24 October 1962, p.946



Sectional perspective for the development of the Corn Exchange by W.S. Hattrell & Partners

Source: *Architecture North West*, no. 11, June 1965, p.15





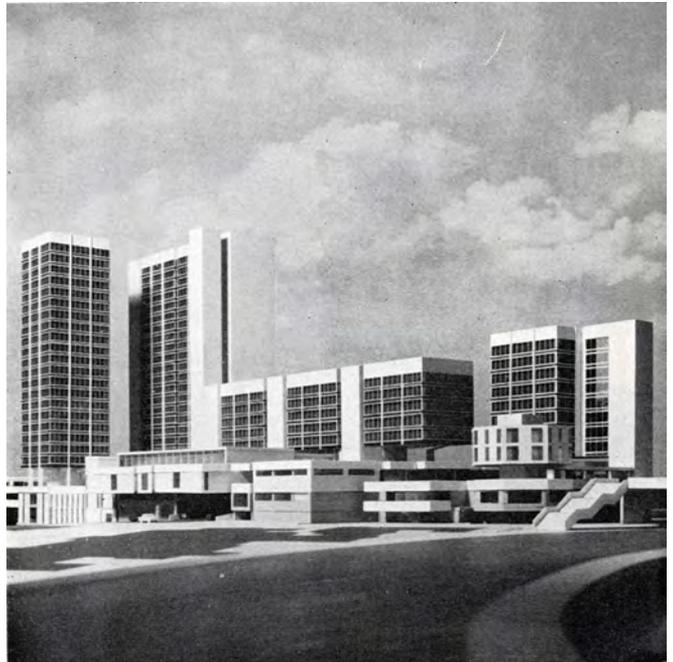
Sketch view from Deansgate for the development of the Corn Exchange by W.S. Hattrell & Partners

Source: *The Builder*, 19 October 1962, p.773



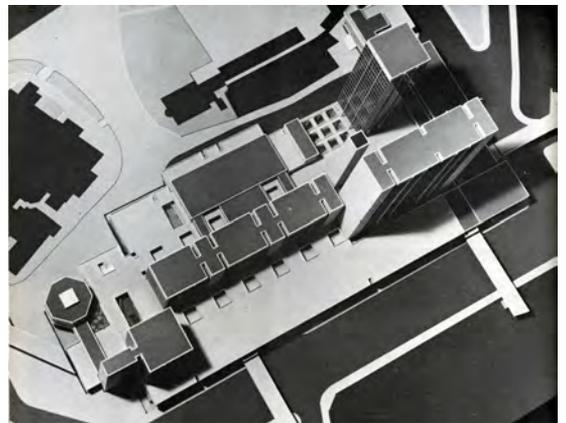
Sketch view towards the Cathedral for the development of the Corn Exchange by W.S. Hattrell & Partners

Source: *The Builder*, 19 October 1962, p.773



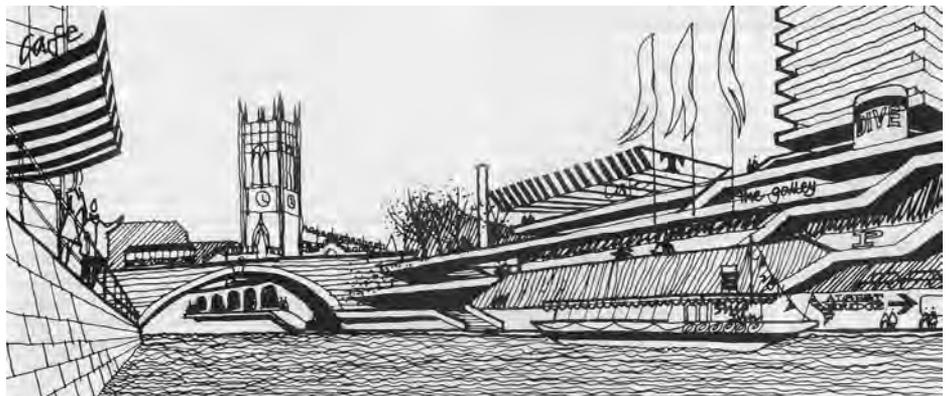
Model of proposed development for the Corn Exchange by W.S. Hattrell & Partners

Source: *Architecture North West*, no. 11, June 1965, p.15



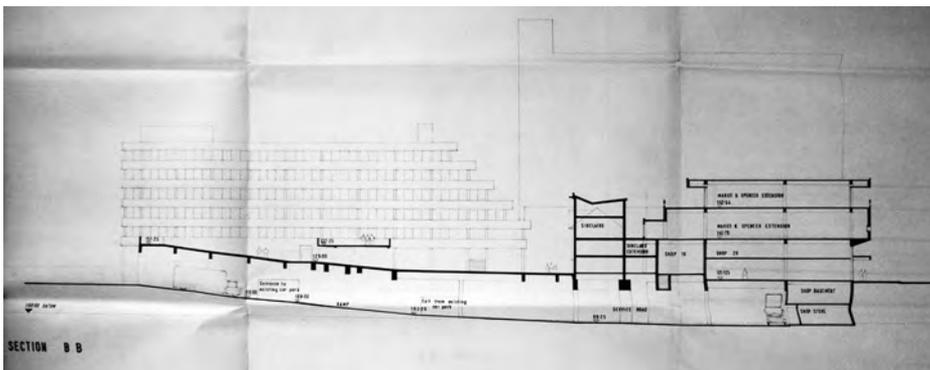
Model of proposed development for the Corn Exchange by W.S. Hattrell & Partners

Source: *Architecture North West*, no. 11, June 1965, p.14



Sketch view of the River Irwell and pleasure boat docks

Source: Millar, J.S. (1967) *Manchester Corporation. City Planning Department 1965-67*, p.26



Sectional drawing of scheme for Market Place by Cruickshank & Seward

Source: National Archives ref:HLG/79/407



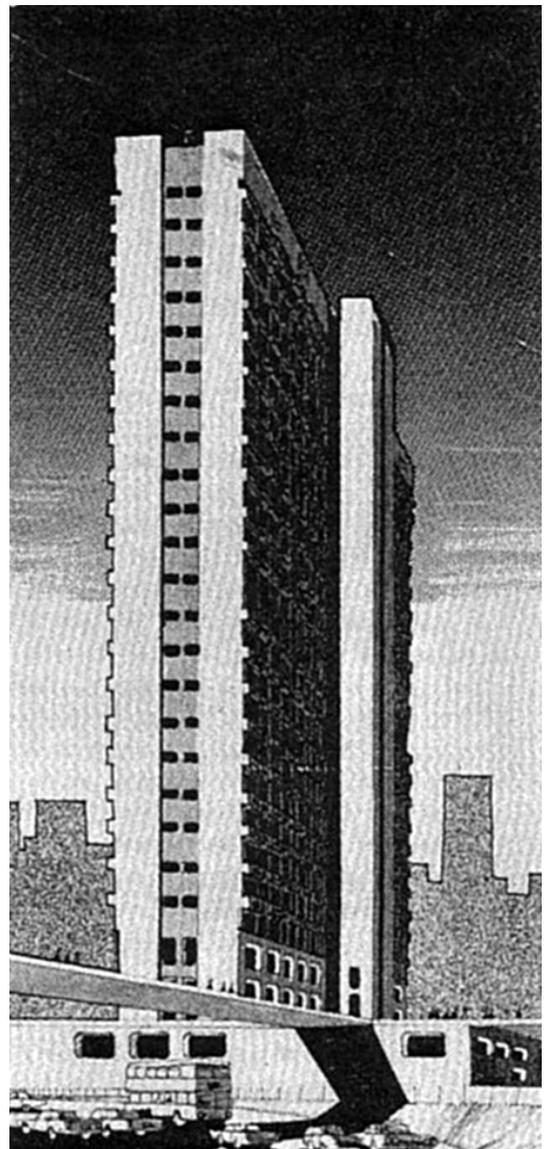
Perspective painting of Market Place development by Cruickshank & Seward

Source: Chetham's Library flickr, cropped from photo by Margaret Newbold



Illustration of rear of Cobden House (Market Place) showing the bridge link over Deansgate

Source: Scan from private collection



Sketch of Highland House by Leach Rhoades & Walker. The ring road beneath is shown to assume the line of the River Inwell

Source: *Architecture North West*, no.22, May 1967, p.16



Painting by Peter Sainsbury of the proposed development of Shambles Square

Source: *Manchester Evening News*, 15 October 1970



Marketing brochure showing plan of Market Place

Source: Scan from private collection

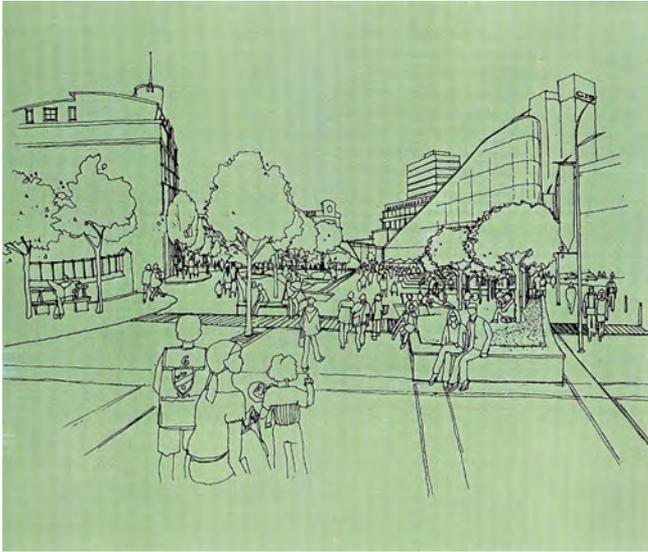


Painting by Peter Sainsbury of the proposed development of the Renaissance Hotel, phase 2 of Market Place

Source: *Environment North West*, March 1972, p.2

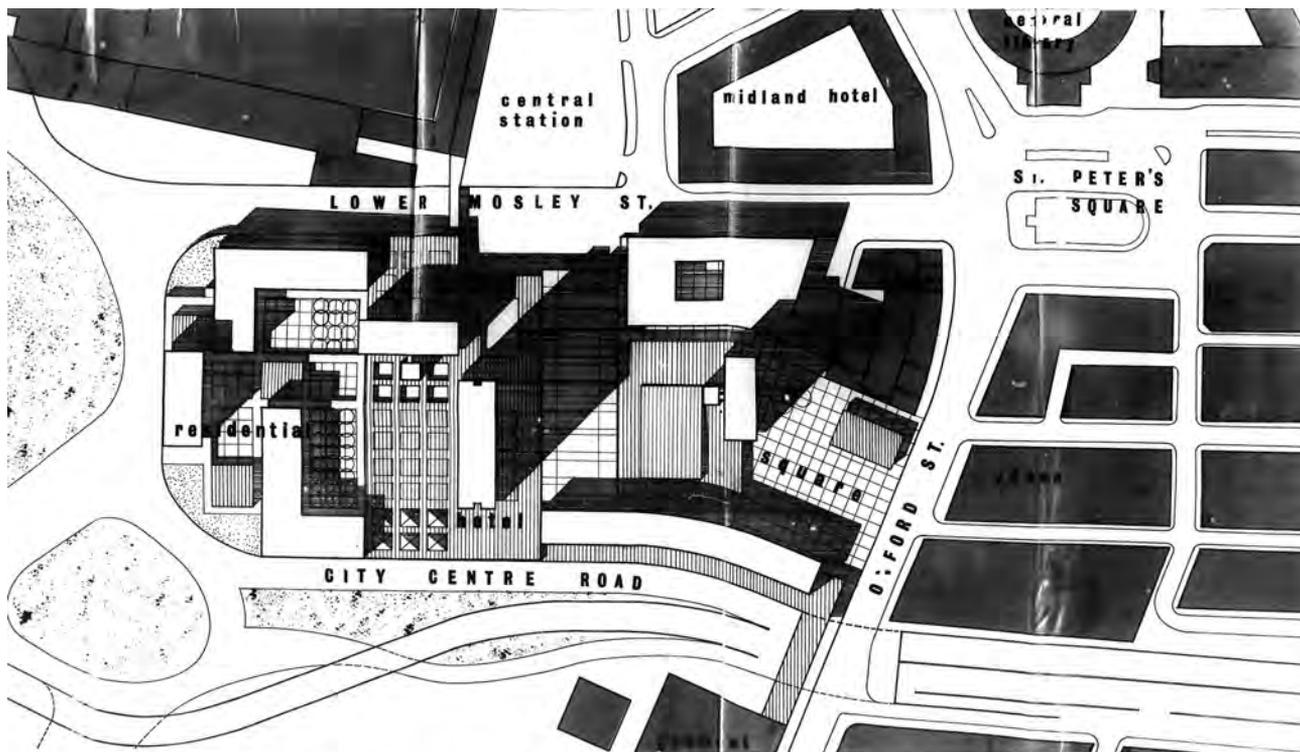






Sketches for Cathedral Gardens
1996 by BDP.

Source: Courtesy BDP



PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

An early plan of the concept for Lower Moseley Street site from 1961 by architects Grenfell-Baines & Hargreaves, with multiple blocks mixing residential, office and leisure components, along with generous public circulation space and open squares.

Source: Courtesy of BDP



(Top) A perspective sketch indicating the scale and shapes of buildings and their mixed uses that might have fronted onto the main public square if this development proposed had been realised. Drawn by S A Cobb for architects Grenfell-Baines & Hargreaves

(Middle) A sketch of the covered shopping plaza with its public statue and expresso [SIC] bar. Drawn by S A Cobb for architects Grenfell-Baines & Hargreaves

(Bottom) A sketch detailing the shape of the residential flats and multi-level pedestrian circulation. The core of the development would have been car-free. Drawn by S A Cobb for architects Grenfell-Baines & Hargreaves

Sources: Courtesy of BDP



Lower Mosley Street

The route of the proposed city centre ring road that first appeared in the 1945 *City of Manchester Plan* largely defined the site at Lower Mosley Street. It is now the location of the Bridgewater Hall and the offices of Barbirolli Square (1996). In the post-war years a number of functions were supported across the site including the Lower Mosley Street Bus Station, used by long distance coach companies. It served passengers alighting from Central Station, but was itself demolished in 1972, after Central Station closed in 1968.

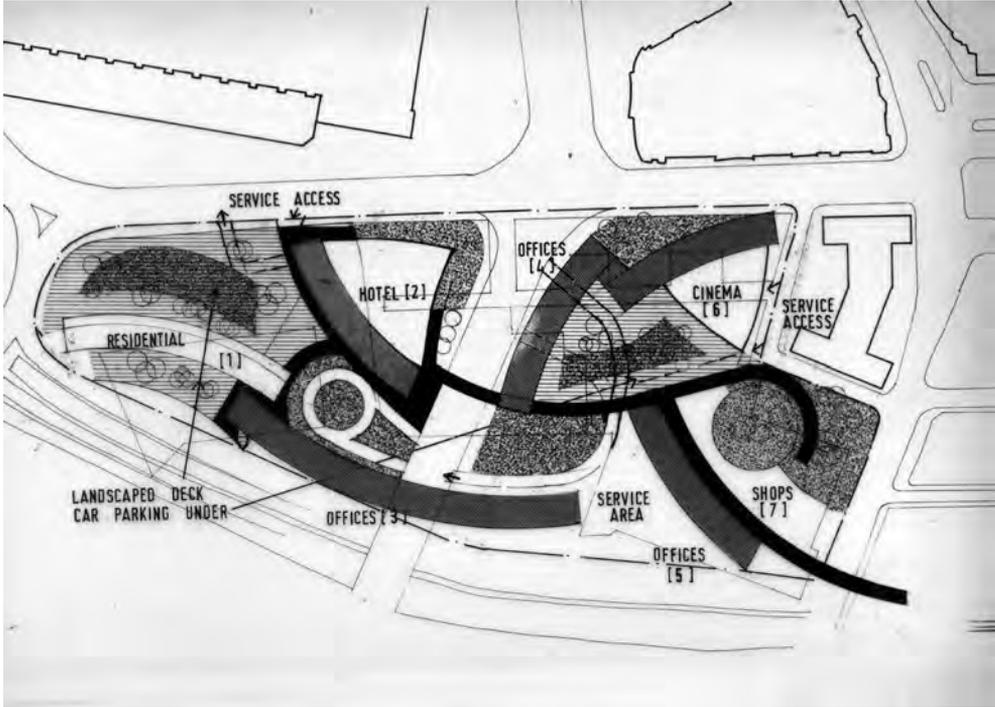
In planning terms the programme for the Lower Mosley Street site was subject to much speculation and uncertainty, and it was connected to the larger comprehensive planning for the ring road, Central Station and the area between Piccadilly and Oxford Road. Central Station was perennially imagined as a conference and event centre in the 1970s prior to the realisation of the G-Mex. The area around Piccadilly and along Portland Street had been proposed as an entertainment district since the early part of the twentieth century, largely hinged upon the existing art gallery and cinemas that characterised the area. Thus, the plans advanced for Lower Mosley Street often considered it as an exhibition and commercial leisure hub to compliment and serve these other two ideas.

The scheme modelled in the exhibition references a 1961 proposal by Grenfell-Baines & Hargreaves, the architectural practice that morphed into Britain's first multi-disciplinary firm, Building Design Partnership (BDP). Included in the scheme were a new bus station, hotel, offices, restaurants, arcades, entertainment and an air terminal to directly service Ringway Airport. The position of the ring road and its provision of rapid access in and out of the city centre was cited as one of the reasons for the speculative proposal. The architects imagined the development as a 'West End' for Manchester with 'bright shops, restaurants, coffee bars, public houses and cinemas, neon lights, seating, planting and fountains' that would form 'a focus of resurgent civic life and activity'¹. Some 185 residential apartments were also part of the scheme and signalled an early intent to bring housing back to the city centre that only really emerged in the wake of the IRA bomb in 1996.

The 1961 scheme was never built and successive ideas for the Lower Mosley Street site by Cruickshank & Seward and Leach, Rhodes & Walker also remained unrealised. The C&S scheme could best be described as a heroic Brazilia styled landscape of curving towers and aerial plazas punctuated by foliage rising from the ground level. The architect partner in charge, Arthur Gibbon, was known to be a fan of Oscar Niemeyer and Pierre Luigi Nervi and it is this admiration that appeared to have been drawn into the proposal. In contrast LRW's scheme of 1973 adopted a more angular geometry, but was composed largely of the same functional components of its predecessors.

Eventually the site was developed in two phases, the faux-Georgian town houses of Oxford Court in the mid 1980s and the aforementioned Barbirolli Square masterplan, which included the Bridgewater Hall by RHWL Partnership, 1993-96.

¹ 'Big development plan for Manchester. "A focus of civic life"', *The Guardian*, 13 April 1961, p.22

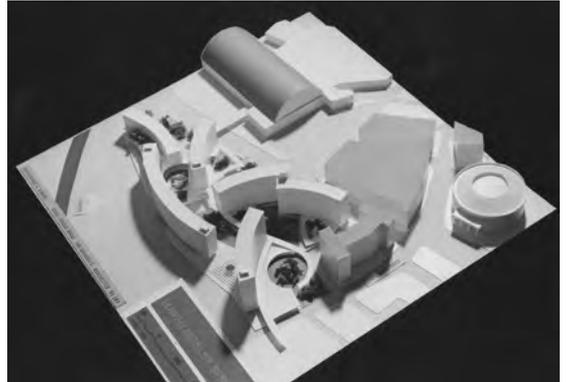


Plan view of the Cruickshank & Seward scheme the mix of commercial and leisure uses assigned to the various blocks with car parking hidden beneath public spaces that would be landscaped to soften the urban density.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections

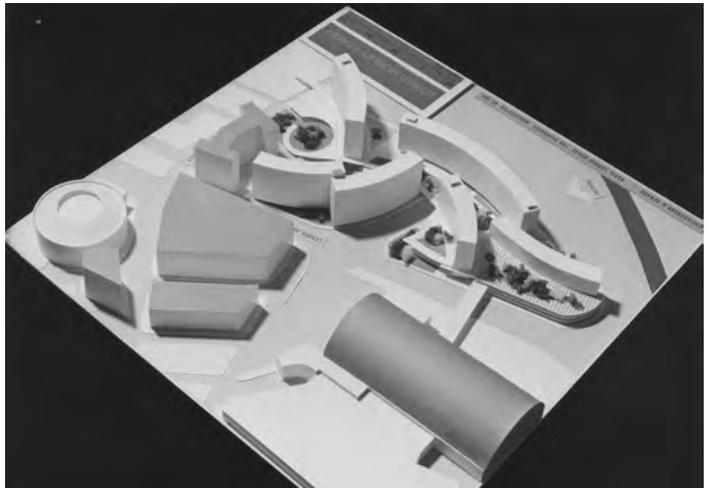
A model of radically different scheme for Lower Mosley Street that was proposed by local architects Cruickshank & Seward c.1965 with its sequences of interleaved curving blocks

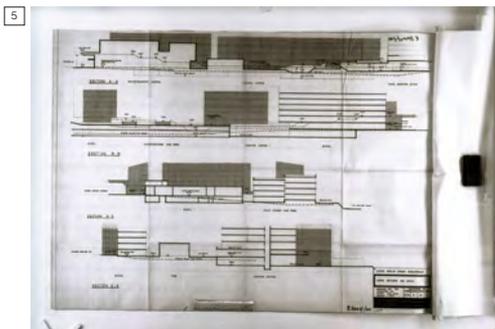
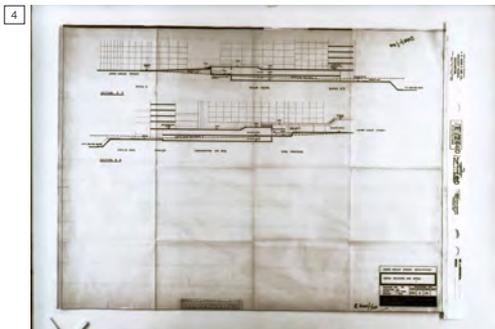
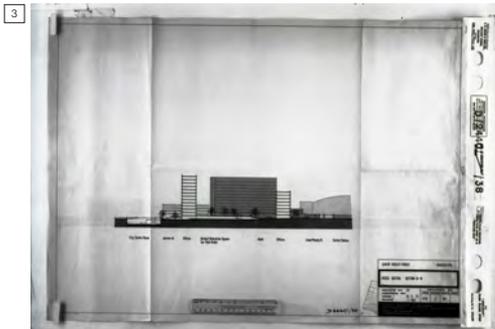
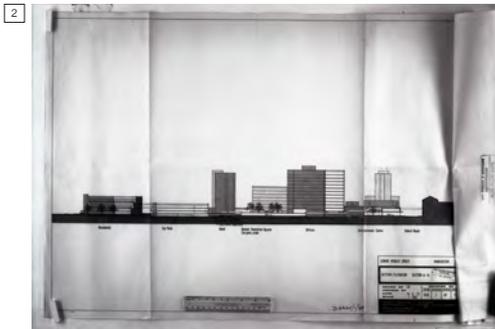
Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



The model of the Cruickshank & Seward scheme viewed from reverse viewpoint and helping to pinpoint the Lower Mosley Street area in relation to the Main Library in St Peter's Square and the large Central Station shed.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections





(1) A plan of the third distinct scheme put forward for Lower Mosley Street site in the early 1970s. This one was proposed by architects Leach, Rhodes & Walker and contained many of the same elements as earlier designs in terms of the mixture of leisure, commercial and residential uses along with car-free pedestrian circulation on raised decks.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, author scan from City Engineers microcards, ref. 2440/-41

(2) A section through the Leach, Rhodes & Walker 1973 scheme showing the range of verticality involved.

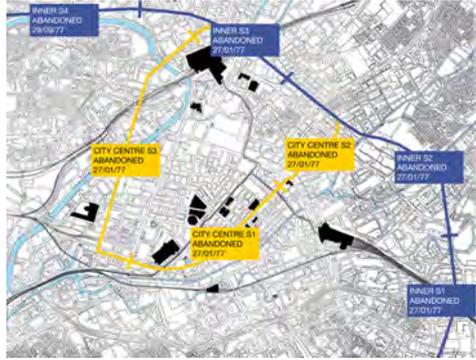
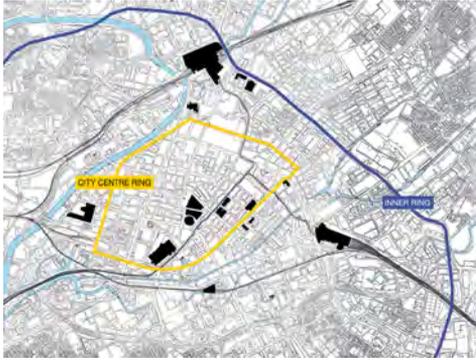
Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, author scan from City Engineers microcards, ref. 2440/-38

(3) The Leach, Rhodes & Walker blocks shown in cross-section, with their scale against the Central Station clearly indicated.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, author scan from City Engineers microcards, ref. 2440/-38

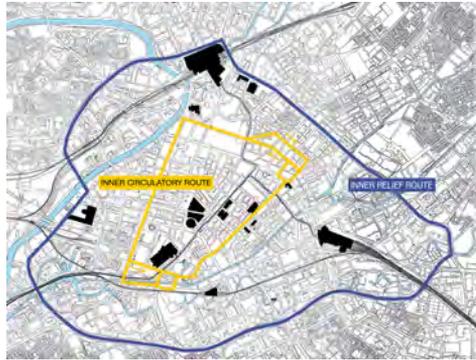
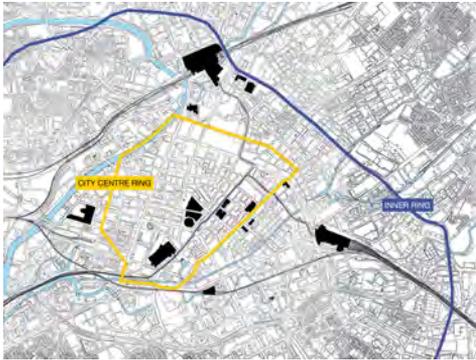
(4 & 5) Further details on the multi-level nature of the Leach, Rhodes & Walker scheme for Lower Mosley Street with services access and car parking buried beneath the pedestrian circulation on 'ground' level.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, author scan from City Engineers microcards, ref. 2440/-40



The evolving status of the ring road around the city centre. Iterations shown are based on details from the 1945 *City of Manchester Plan* (top left), the 1961 *Development Plan* (middle left) and the 1967 *Manchester City Map* report (bottom left).

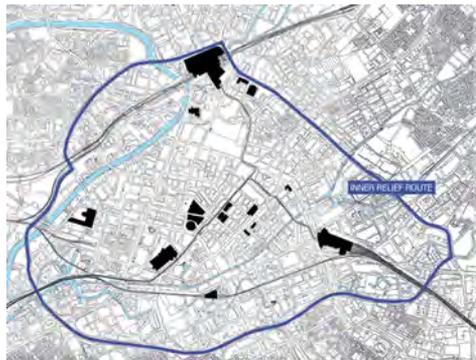
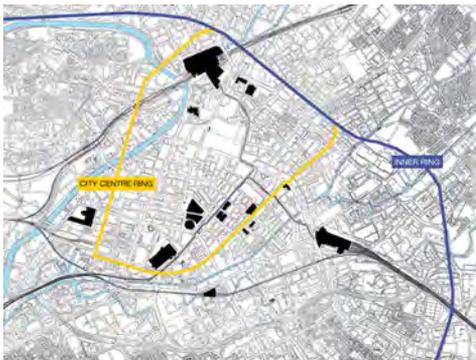
(Top right) Details on when segments of the city circle road were finally abandoned by Manchester's highway planners in the second half of the 1970s.

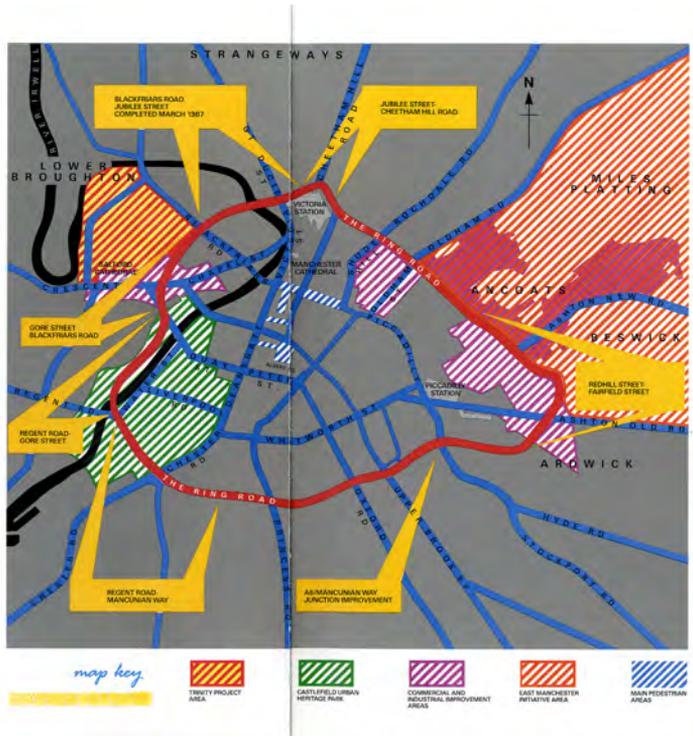
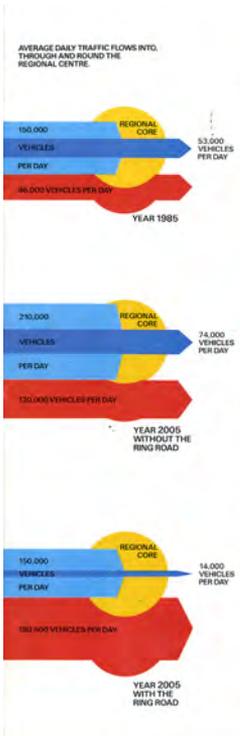


(Middle right) The notion of inner ring road returned in the early 1980s. Plotted here the inner relief road as set out in the 1984 *Manchester City Centre Local Plan*. It was routed slightly further out than earlier city circle roads but would have served the same purpose of diverting large volumes of traffic around the core area.

(Bottom right) The ultimate configuration of the inner relief road as completed in 2006.

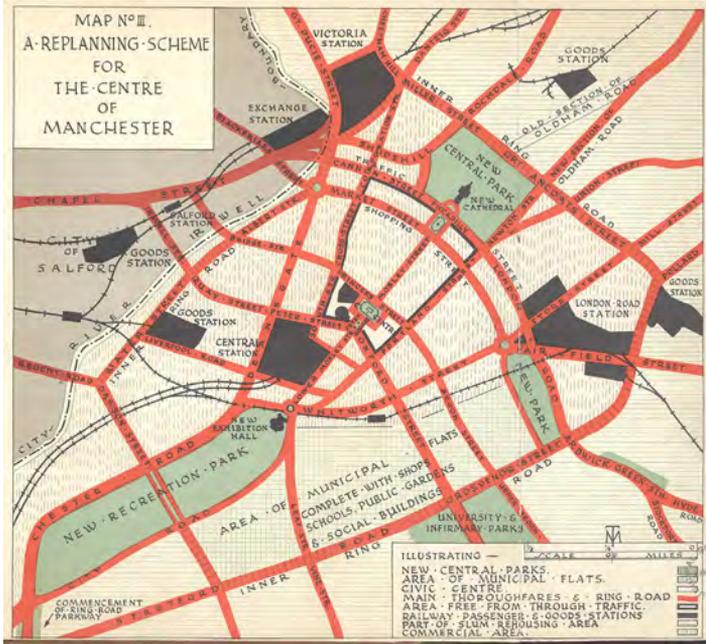
Courtesy of Matthew J. Jarvis, 2013, *Manchester: A Disconnected City*, Masters thesis, Manchester School of Architecture.





The completion of the inner relief route took about twenty years. This plan plotted the progress on construction in the late 1980s.

Source: brochure, *The Ring: The Manchester and Salford Ring Road, A Relief Route for the Regional Centre, 1987*



An intriguing 1930s proposal to improve the city centre, with notable changes around Piccadilly and Market Street through the addition of large park with new cathedral. The ideas were conceived by architect Max Tetlow as part of an agenda by influential local industrialist and politician Sir Ernest Simon to transform Manchester's built environment.

Source: Simon, E.D. and Inman J, 1935, *The Rebuilding of Manchester*. Longmans, Green and Co, p.138

An element of Fairbairn's plan was for a new statue to celebrate the canal pioneer the Duke of Bridgewater looking out into Piccadilly Gardens from the top of Market Street.

Source: Fairbairn, W., 1836, *Observations on improvements of the town of Manchester*, particularly as regards the importance of blending in those improvements, the chaste and beautiful, with the ornamental and useful



The elegant new circular Exchange building and the curving Quadrant, conceived in a classical architectural style, would Fairbairn believed, bring some much needed sophistication to Piccadilly Gardens and signal that Manchester was improving its environment.

Source: Fairbairn, W., 1836, *Observations on improvements of the town of Manchester*, particularly as regards the importance of blending in those improvements, the chaste and beautiful, with the ornamental and useful

The desire to transform the Piccadilly area through architecture can be traced a long way back, for example in William Fairbairn's ideas set out on this plan from first half of the nineteenth century.

Source: Fairbairn, W., 1836, *Observations on improvements of the town of Manchester*, particularly as regards the importance of blending in those improvements, the chaste and beautiful, with the ornamental and useful



Entertainment District

The area between Piccadilly and Oxford Street was long considered as suitable for culture and popular entertainment by the City Corporation. A competition in 1911, for example, sought designs for a new art gallery on the site of the former infirmary in Piccadilly. In the 1920s and 30s cinemas began to appear on Oxford Street. The 1945 *City of Manchester Plan* also saw this area as a natural home for entertainment related land uses. In 1965, under the banner 'From commerce to culture', the *Guardian* reported that 18 acres of 'old property' were designated as a Comprehensive Development Area and subject to compulsory purchase to make way for long-term planning proposals. Manchester's first chief planner, John Millar, stated that these were 'the sort of developments we envisage to confirm Manchester's position as Metropolis of the North-west'.¹

As with many of the mid 1960s masterplans in British cities the intent was to 'give complete segregation between pedestrians and traffic, mostly by providing footpaths and pedestrian squares at first floor level with traffic flowing beneath them'.² Millar imagined that these masterplans and signature buildings could link together to connect most of the city centre as a stratified and segregated landscape. With hindsight it is easy to see that such a total vision was never feasible and in reality very little of it emerged due to innumerable factors including the difficulties of land assembly, the availability of private finance, the anticipated, but never realised, ring road and its physical parameters and the rise of the conservation movement that began to recognise the value of Manchester's Victorian fabric.

However, with this notion of elevated connectivity and a new city datum it is easier to understand the physical situation of a number of buildings that were constructed in the area modelled and under study in this exhibition. For example, Covell and Matthews' Piccadilly Plaza had the entrance to the hotel from the upper car parking deck accessed by the dramatic spiral ramp on (New) York Street. The headquarters of Williams Deacon's Bank (H.S. Fairhurst, 1965, now demolished) had Manchester's first roof garden, the Bank of England (Fitzroy Robinson & Partners, 1971) and

St. James's House (Grunton & Grunton, 1964) also made provision for first floor pedestrian connections. On Portland Street itself the Eagle Star Insurance building (Cruickshank & Seward, 1973, now demolished) had a recessed area at first floor to accommodate the proposed walkway system.

The 3D computer model in the exhibition draws upon a number of existing and demolished buildings as well as a plan drawn by City Architect, S.G. Besant-Roberts, (c.1967). Included in the model is also the Chinese Arch of Faulkner Street (1987) which is something of an historical anomaly, but a rather fun addition to this imagined past.

¹ 'Long term plans for city centre. From commerce to culture', *The Guardian*, 17 February 1965, p.18.

² *Ibid.*



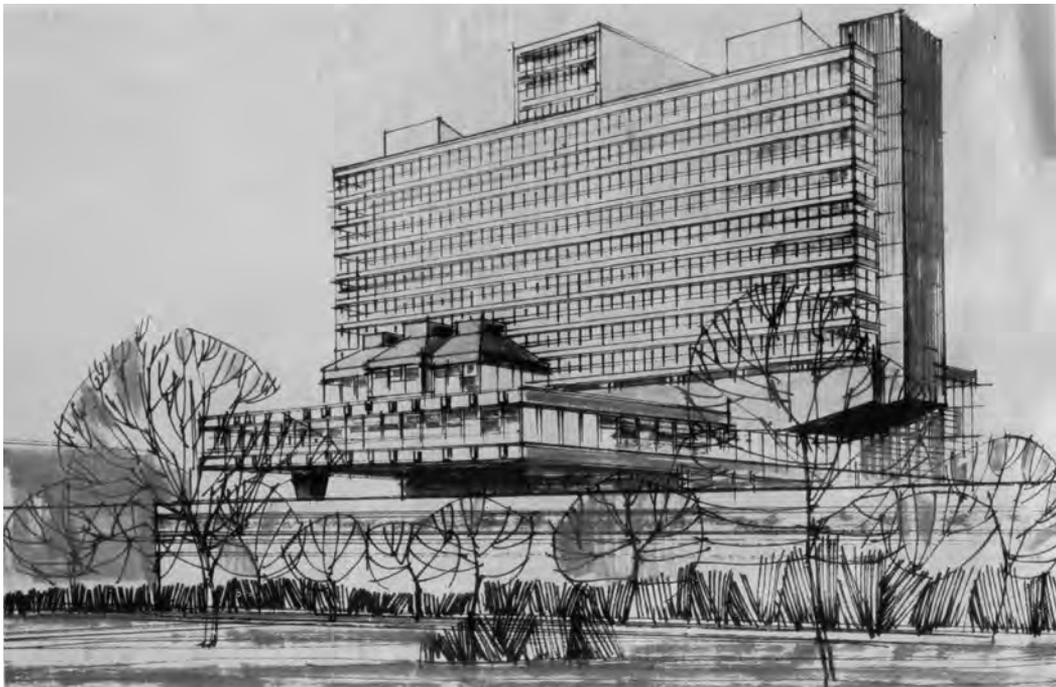
A 1940s era sketch of the modernist transformation envisaged for the corridor from Piccadilly along Portland Street. The ideas in the configuration of rectangular blocks and wide straight roads would be further expressed in Nicholas' 1945 City of Manchester Plan.

Source: Archives+, GB127.M507/5664



Views of an early model from architects Covell & Matthews detail their successful design for Piccadilly Plaza development with its long ground slab containing shopping and leisure, and projecting upwards three towers with distinct orientations, providing office space and hotel accommodation.

Source: Unknown



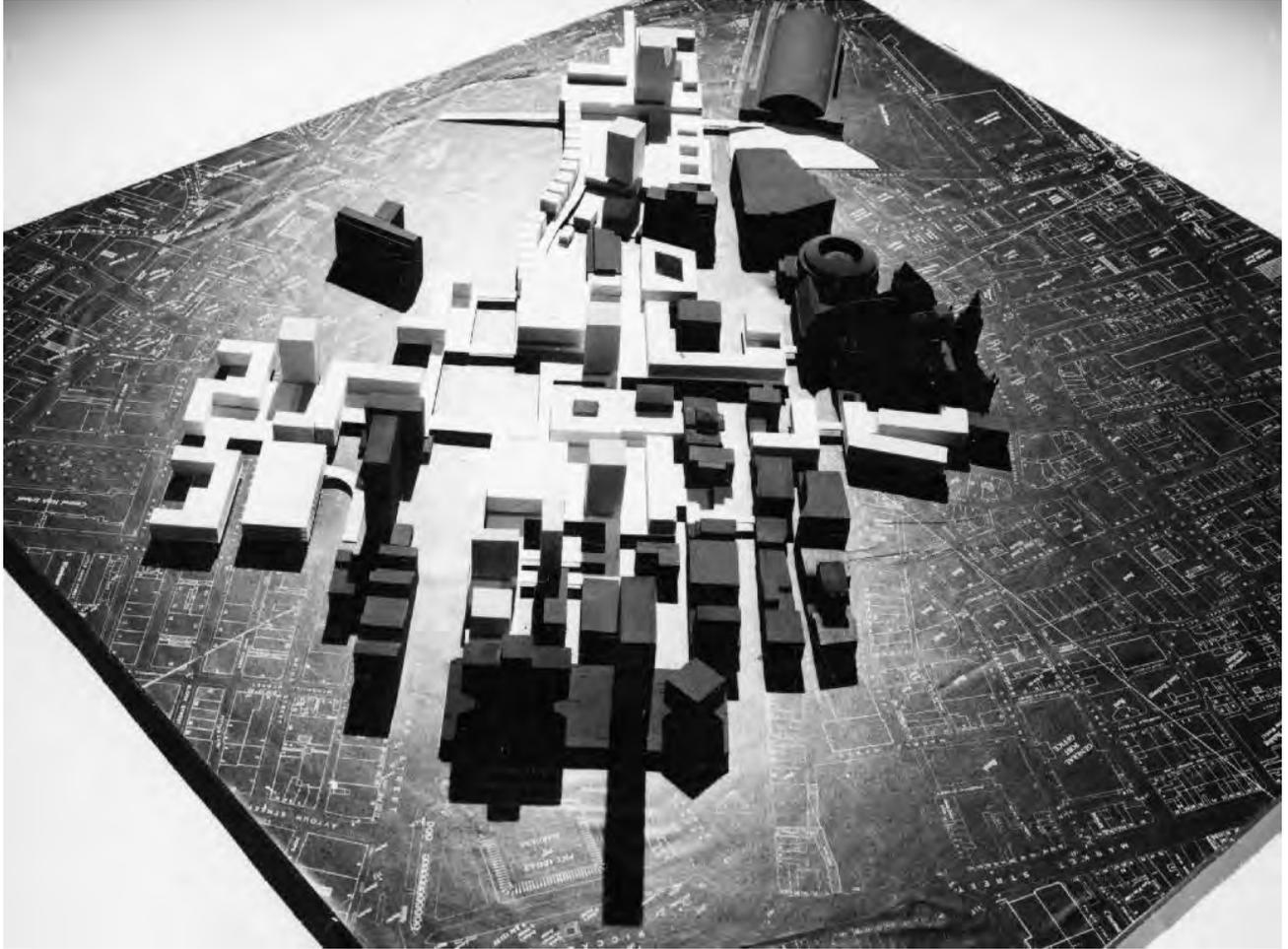
A perspective sketch of Piccadilly Plaza building. This was designed in competition by Covell, Matthews & Partners.

Source: Scan from marketing brochure, *Hotel in Space*.



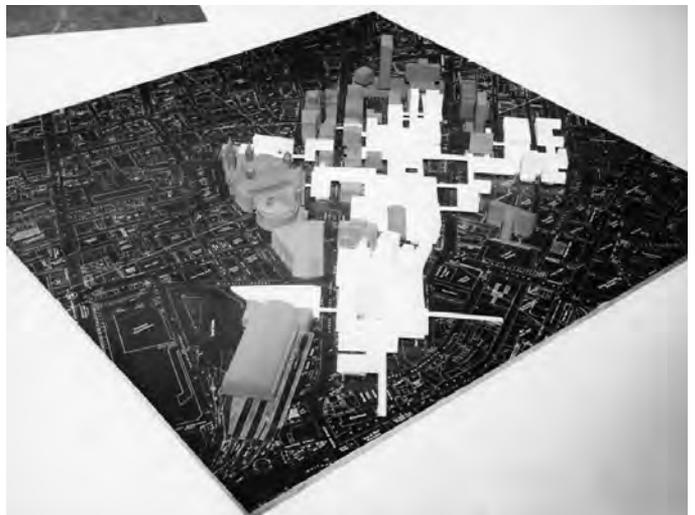
The range of possible building development and their heights are recorded on this overview map from the late 1960s produced by the City Planning Department.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives



Plather stark block massing model of the development strip from Piccadilly Gardens down to the Central Station site. Dated 1972.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, Manchester Local Image Collection, ref. m58793



Reverse view onto block massing model looking back Piccadilly Gardens from the Central Station site.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, Manchester Local Image Collection, ref. m58794



The view of the Portland Street – Piccadilly area on the large physical model produced by the City Planning Department in the late 1960s and updated through the 1970s.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, Manchester Local Image Collection, ref. m58788



Another block massing model by the City Planning Department covering the Portland Street to Piccadilly redevelopment area.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, Manchester Local Image Collection, ref. m58795



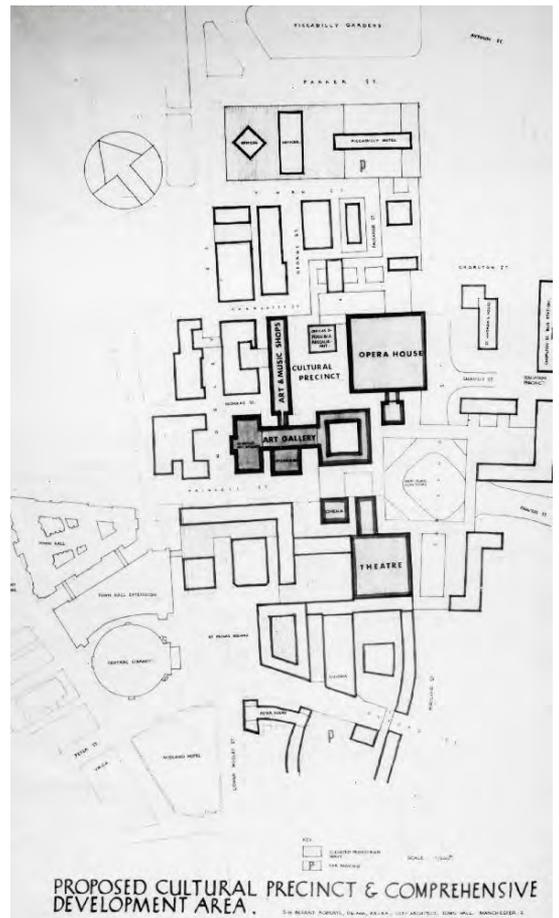
The model provides a fascinating view down Portland Street from Piccadilly as it might have become had the elevated pedestrian walkways been built and the widened road been sunken into highway canyon.

Source: Hayes, J. (1968) *Manchester city centre road*, City of Manchester Corporation, Manchester



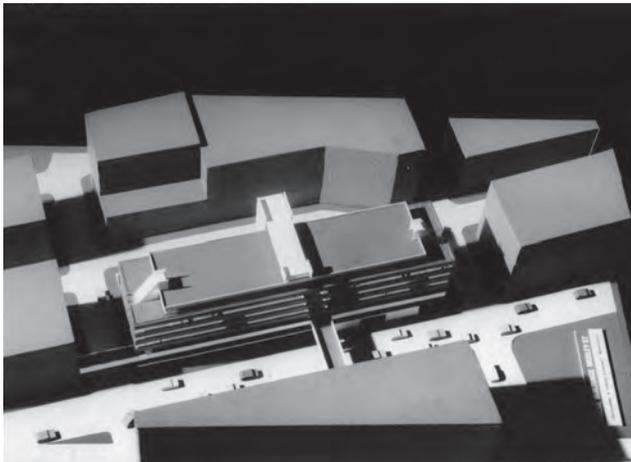
Model for the Bank of England Building, design by architects Fitzroy, Robinson & Partners, that very clearly illustrates the planned vertical separation of vehicle traffic and pedestrian movement along Portland Street.

Source: Manchester Corporation City Planning Department, *Report of the City Planning Officer J. S. Millar, 1965-67*, p.22



Proposal drawn by S.G. Besant-Roberts, City Architects, from the early 1970s. This shows that the idea of an entertainment district remained a dream for the planners for nearly three decades.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, Manchester Local Image Collection, ref. m58797



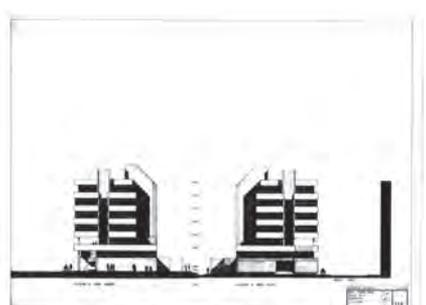
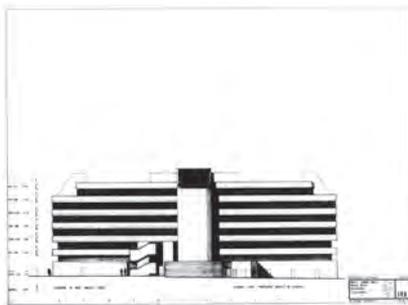
Birds-eye view of physical model for Eagle Star House, designed by architects Cruickshank & Seward in the early 1970s, indicates the deepening of Portland Street and the provision of pedestrian walkways to the building at first floor level.

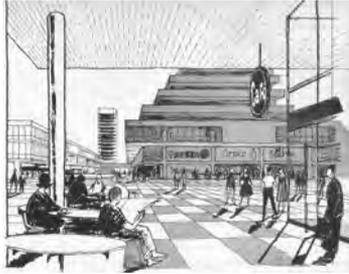
Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections



Elevation drawings for Eagle Star House with lack of definition for the ground floor as it anticipated that it would be facing fast flowing traffic.

Source: Courtesy MMU Special Collections





'View south from shopping square along pedestrian deck'



'Mathematics Tower and the lawn in front of Owens'



'Site for University church'



'Extension of refectory across Oxford Road'



'View south over Grosvenor Square'



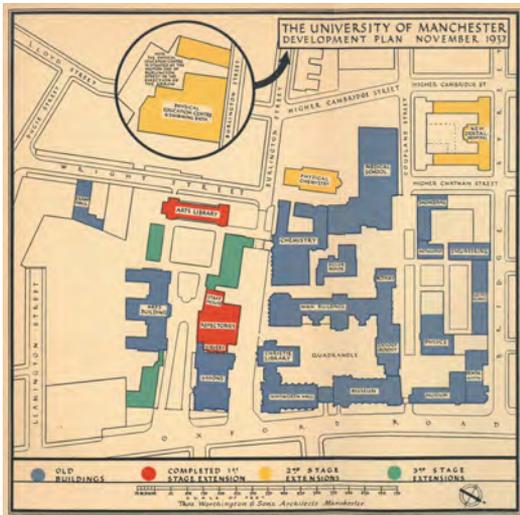
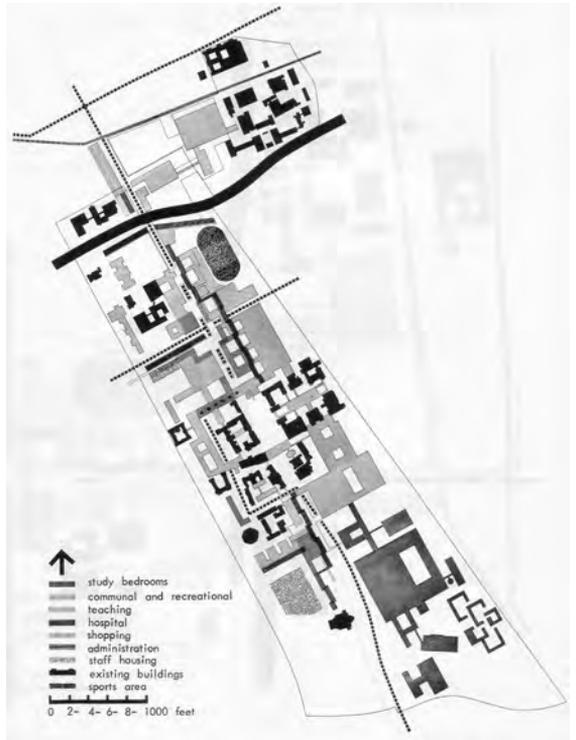
'Pedestrian deck linking College of Music with student housing'

Sketches by Peter Wright

Source: *Manchester Education Precinct: Interim Report of the Planning Consultants*, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, Manchester, September 1964, plate 15-20, 23

Overview plan of the initial Education Precinct configuration from 1964 detailing major land uses and changes to road layouts.

Source: *Manchester Education Precinct: Interim Report of the Planning Consultants*, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, Manchester, September 1964, plate 12



The extent of the Victoria University of Manchester in 1937 with anticipated expansion detailed as yellow and green shaded building outlines.

Source: *A Time for Expansion: The New Buildings - and the Future*, by Ernest D Simon. The Journal of the University of Manchester, 1937



The Education Precinct

The value of scientific training and higher education to the future economic success of Manchester was made explicit in the plans put forward after the blitz of 1940 and published in 1945. Earlier schemes for the expansion of the University were made in the 1930s and supported by influential figures like Sir Ernest Simon, but were not achieved. It was in the 1940s the City Corporation saw the opportunity to work collectively towards a centre for 'culture, education and medicine' in a 'formidable and ambitious undertaking' that would run along the Oxford Road axis from the MRI to the edge of the existing city centre.¹

Little concrete emerged from the vision of the 1945 Plan, certain areas of the University were planned in the 1950s by Sir Hubert Worthington and buildings flanking Brunswick Street for the sciences emerged to designs by H.S. Fairhurst & Sons. Whilst new, these buildings were not necessarily modern in their aesthetic and, in the early 1960s, the Corporation intervened and proposed that an external consultant was appointed to replan an area much wider than the University.

Sir Leslie Martin was considered for the masterplanning role, but eventually Hugh Wilson, chief planner for the new towns of Cumbernauld and Skelmersdale, was appointed. He invited Lewis Womersley, City Architect of Sheffield, to join him and the practice of Wilson Womersley (WW) was born as a result. Wilson Womersley released a series of reports between 1963 and 1967 as they developed their plan. In the interim a number of buildings that were already procured were constructed, including the Roscoe Building (Cruickshank & Seward, 1964) and had to slot neatly into the broader ambitions emerging on the drawing boards.

The 3D computer model realised in this exhibition draws upon the most architecturally adventurous and invigorating elements of a number of plans including those for a large sports centre fronting Oxford Road that was never built on the site of what is now the Aquatics Centre. Alternative visions by Wilson Womersley in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the plans for the Polytechnic by Sheppard Robson (1972-78) have also been plundered for their content. The major characteristic of this

imagined reality are the vast extents of elevated pedestrian walkways, which captured the prevailing mood for the separation of people and traffic as advocated in the *Buchanan Report, Traffic in Towns*, in 1963. It should come as no surprise that WW readily adopted this model as they had each worked on significant stratified projects at Cumbernauld and Park Hill.

The building where this exhibition is situated also features in the computer model. Before it became the Manchester Technology Centre it was the National Computing Centre (NCC). The NCC was commissioned in the 'white heat' era of high-technology by the Harold Wilson government, but took over seven years to procure and construct, it eventually opened in a low-key way in 1974. Next to the NCC was a site for the BBC North HQ, eventually built to designs by R.A. Sparkes, the BBC's architect, in red brick. Earlier, Building Design Partnership had proposed a more heroic scheme (modelled here) that had more in common with the NCC and the overall 'concrete' aesthetic of the Oxford Road corridor in the 1960s.

¹ Nicholas, R. (1945) *City of Manchester Plan* (Norwich: Jarrold & Sons) p.100



Sketch of the new 1960s Medical School that would be named the Stopford Building in honour of the influential Vice-Chancellor John Stopford when it opened in 1972. The linear scale of 180m long building is captured well in the sketch in relation to the adjacent Holy Name Church and the Maths Tower in the distance. The grassed area in the foreground was to be route of the unrealised ring road. Drawn for architect Harry S. Fairhurst and Son.

Source: Cover of brochure *Manchester Medical School*, September 1973



Impressionistic sketch of the Maths Tower from the mid 1960s. The plinth structure with the lecture theatres is shown larger than was built as is the wide pedestrian access ramp from up from Oxford Road. Drawn for architects Scherrer and Hicks.

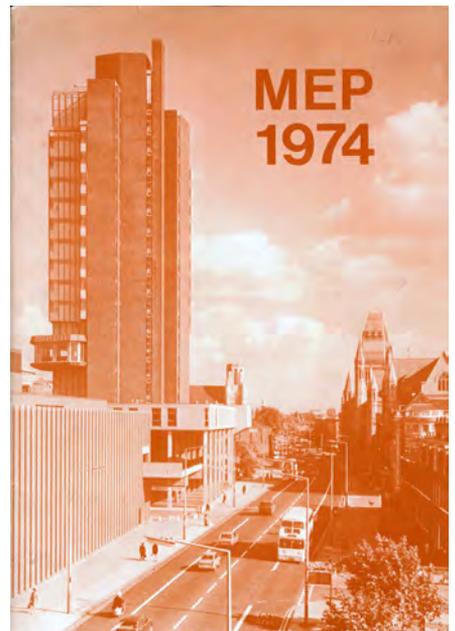
Source: Scan from private collection

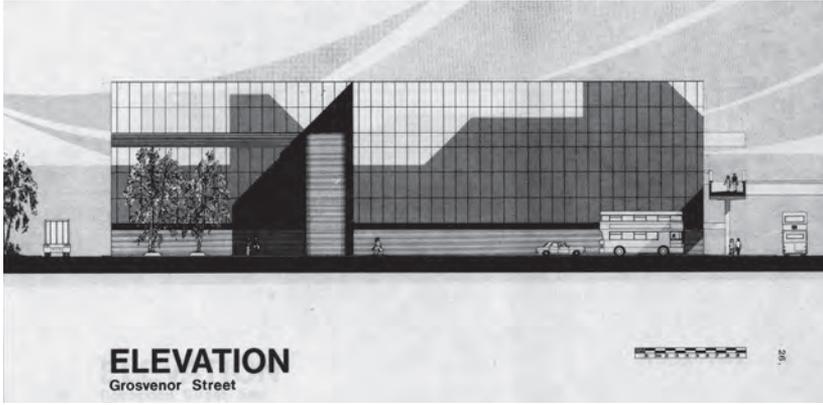
(Left) Cover of the *Manchester Education Precinct* main report, 1967. Corporation of Manchester for Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley

(Middle) The future configuration of the sprawling Education Precinct as plotted in 1967. Extensive grassed areas would be built upon. The upper level walkway system, shown in yellow, was partially realised around the Precinct Centre.

Source: *Manchester Education Precinct*, 1967. Corporation of Manchester for Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, plan 6.7, p. 29

(Right) Cover of the *Manchester Education Precinct, Summary of 'A Review of the Plan, 1974'*. Manchester City Council for Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1975





(Top) Side elevation of the unrealised Sports Centre and including the upper level walkway along Oxford Road.

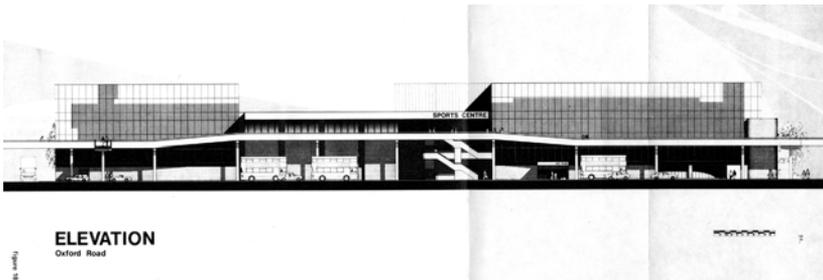
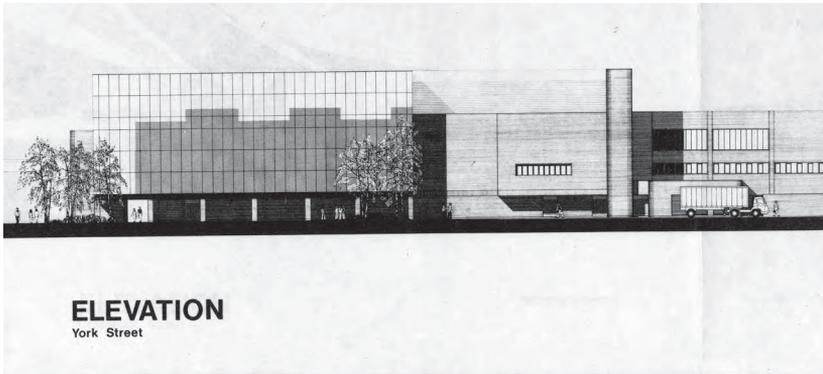
Source: *The Sports Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester: Final Design Scheme Report*, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1974, figure 20, p.26

(Middle) Rear elevation of the unrealised Sports Centre.

Source: *The Sports Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester: Final Design Scheme Report*, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1974, figure 20, p.26

(Bottom) Oxford Road frontage to the unrealised Sports Centre with pedestrian access walkway well above the height of the double decker buses.

Source: *The Sports Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester: Final Design Scheme Report*, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1974, figure 18, p.24

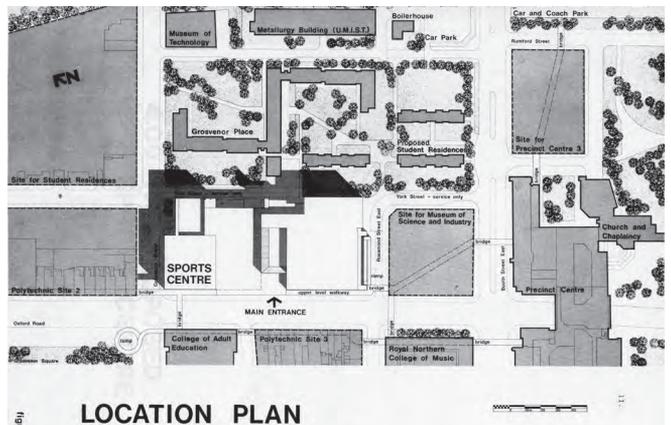


Sports Centre and surrounding buildings along Oxford Road envisioned in the early 1970s. Some of the proposed development would eventually occur although the site for the Museum of Science and Industry would be occupied by the extension to the Business School.

Source: *The Sports Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester: Final Design Scheme Report*, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1974, figure 6, p.11

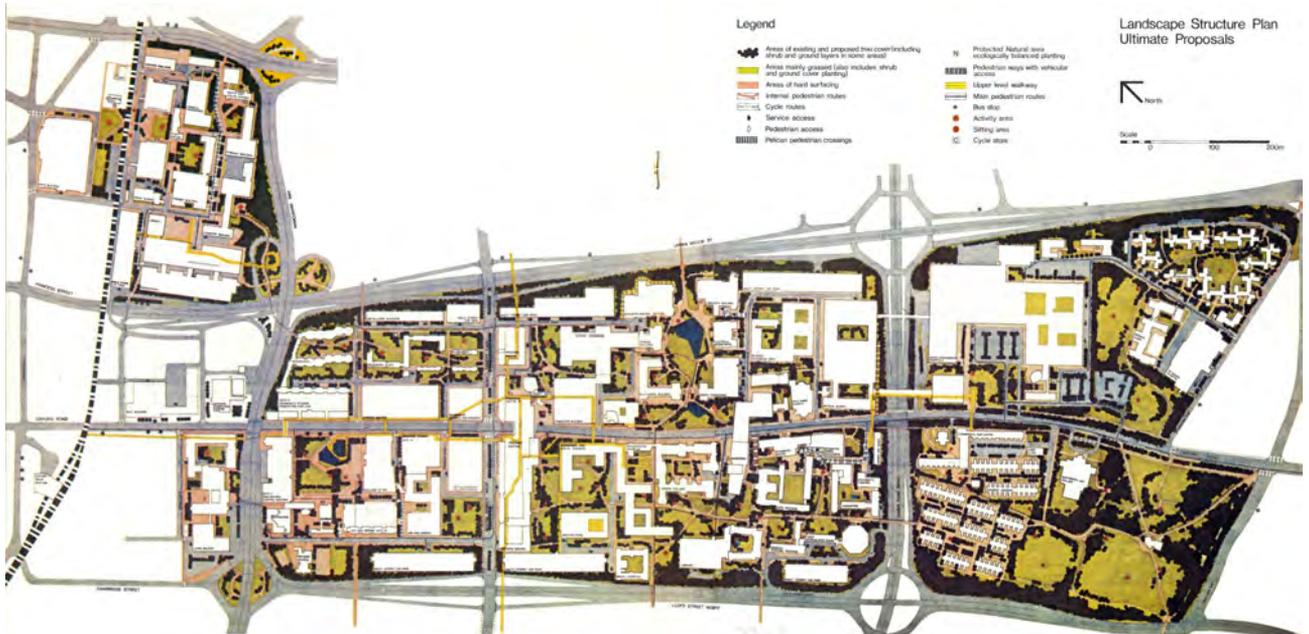
Sport Centre perspective sketch. This building would be unrealised. Drawn for architects Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley.

Source: *Manchester Education Precinct*, Summary of 'A Review of the Plan, 1974' Manchester City Council for Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1975



Future vision of the configuration of the MEP and how it might be landscaped as plotted in 1974. Much of this vision was not realised including the inner ring road and closing of Brunswick Street.

Source: *Manchester Education Precinct, Summary of 'A Review of the Plan, 1974'*, Manchester City Council for Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, 1975





A model view of an unrealised BDP design for the BBC building on the Oxford Road site, 1966.

Source: Courtesy of BDP



Perspective sketch of the unrealised BBC headquarters in Manchester. Drawn for architects BDP.

Source: Courtesy of BDP

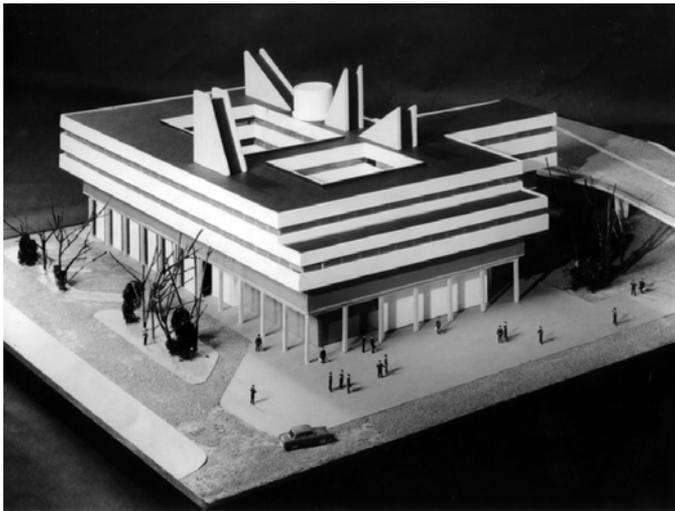


Perspective sketch of the BBC North scheme designed by architect R.A. Sparks. Artist not known.

Source: www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/new-headquarters-oxford-road-manchester-216653

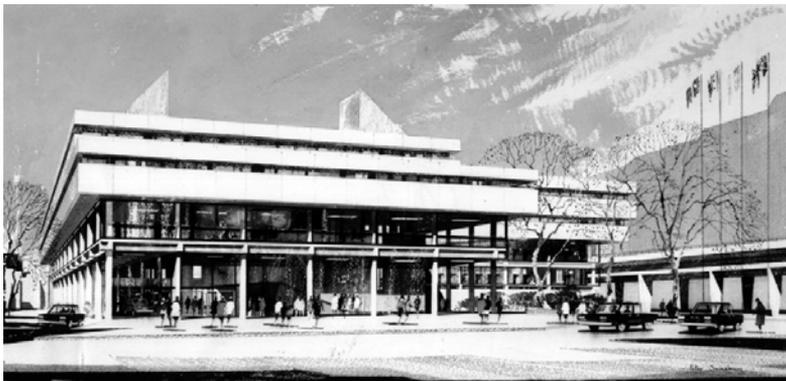
Model view of the National Computer Centre, 1967. Note adjacent Mancunian Way. Architects Cruickshank and Seward.

Source: MMU Special Collections



Configuration of space across the ground floor of the National Computer Centre, 1967. Architects Cruickshank & Seward.

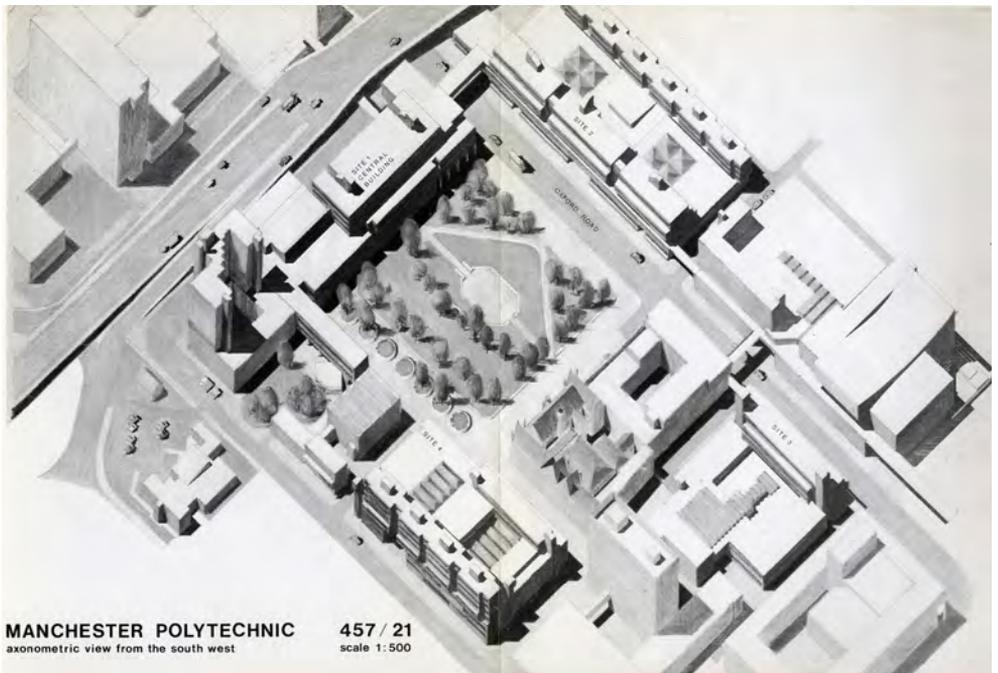
Source: MMU Special Collections



Perspective sketch of the National Computer Centre, 1967. Drawn by Peter Sainsbury for architects Cruickshank & Seward.

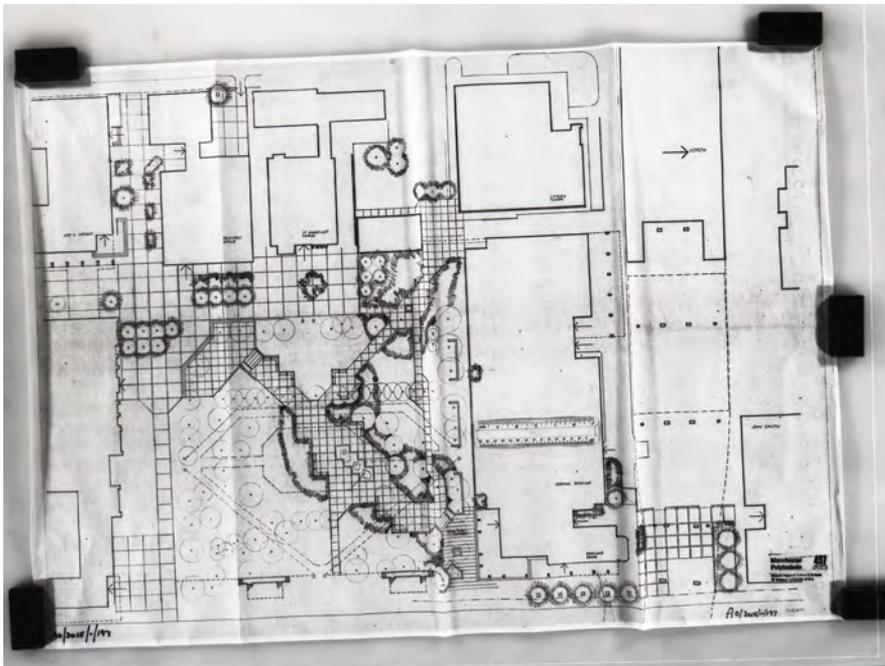
Source: MMU Special Collections





Sketch of the planned campus of Manchester Polytechnic with cluster of buildings around the park at All Saints, 1972. Architects Richard Sheppard, Robson Partners.

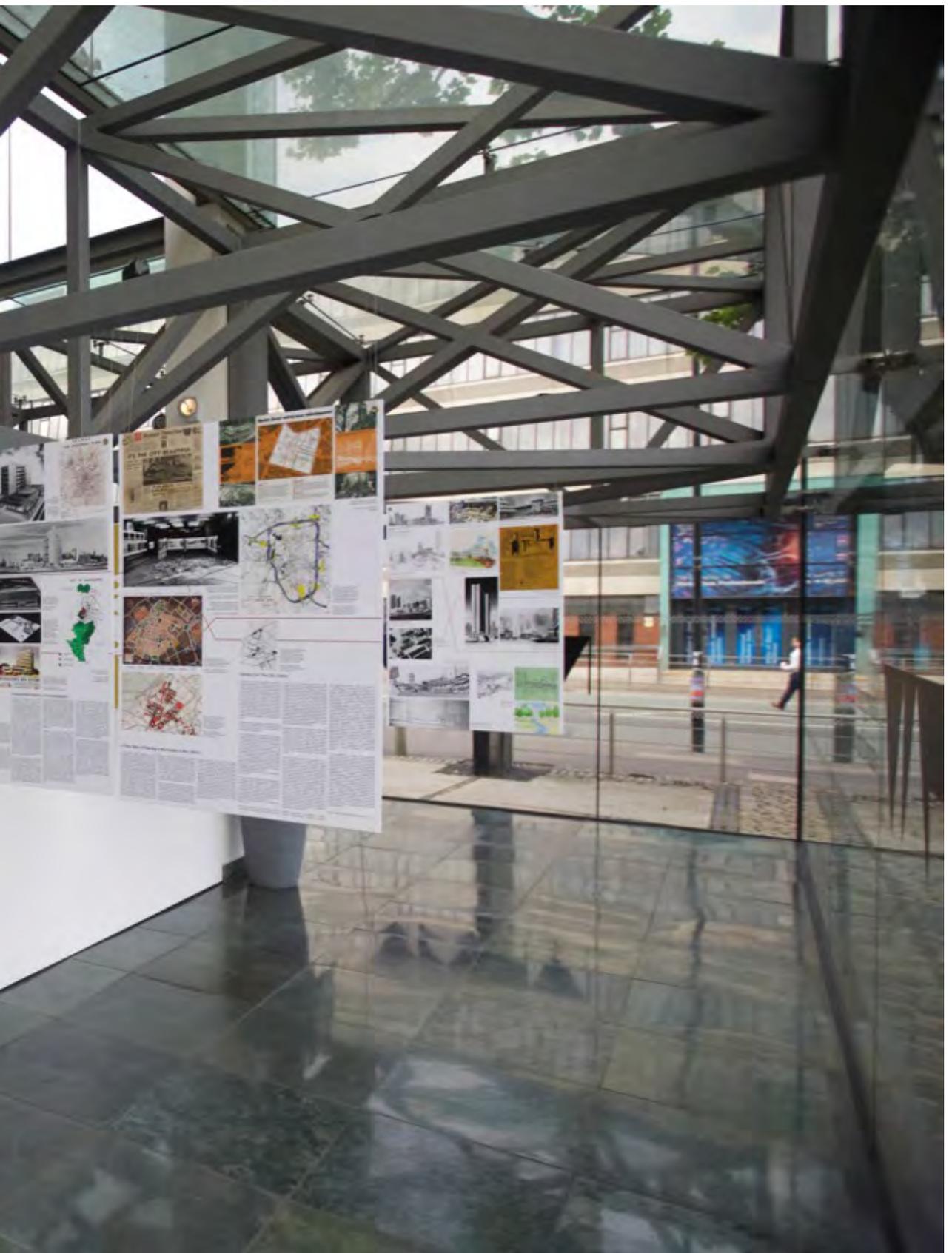
Source: *The Making of a Polytechnic Building, Manchester Polytechnic, 1978.*



The landscaping of Grosvenor Square in the mid 1970s by architects Richard Sheppard, Robson Partners.

Source: Courtesy of Manchester City Archives, author scan from City Engineers microcards, ref. 3015/-/197

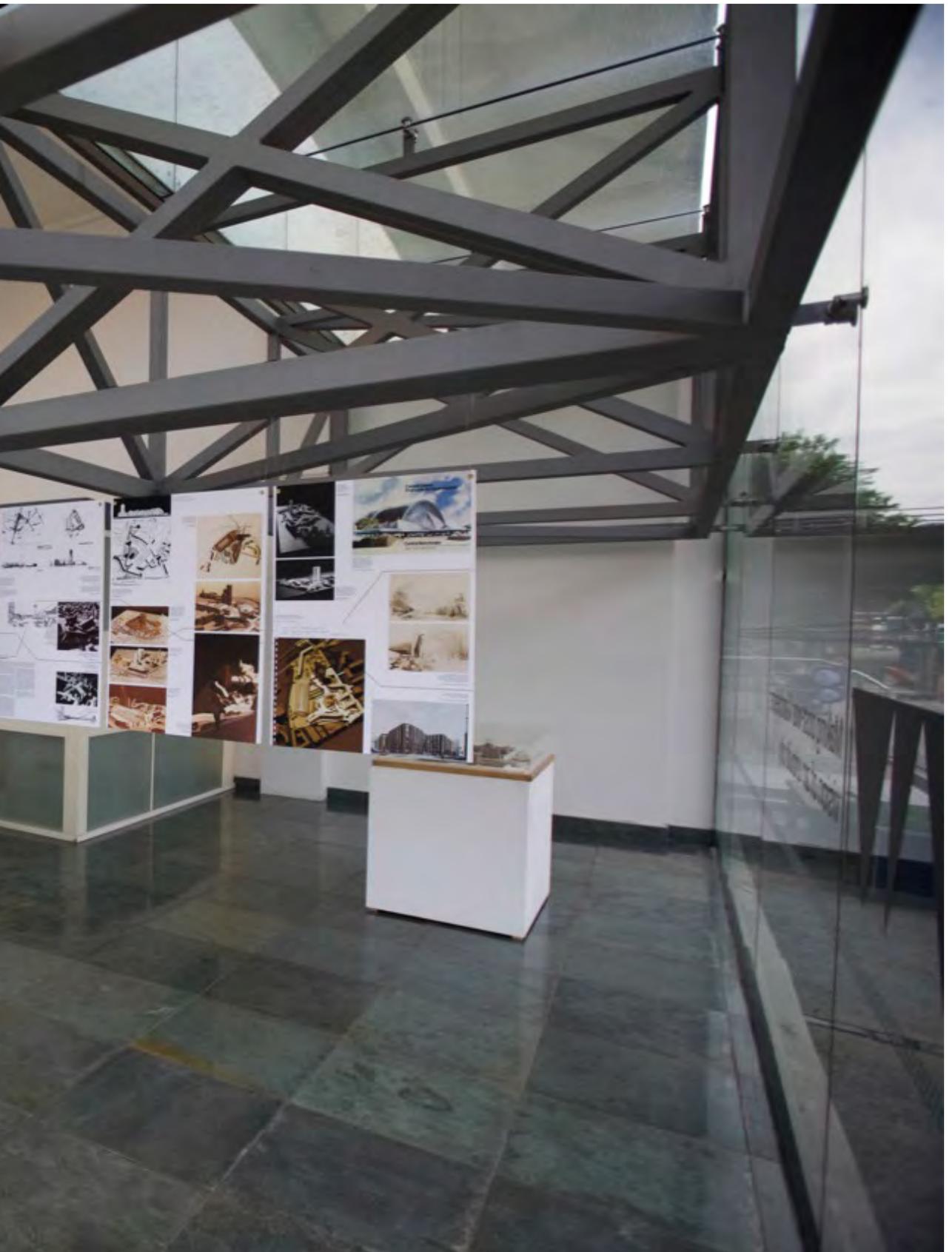


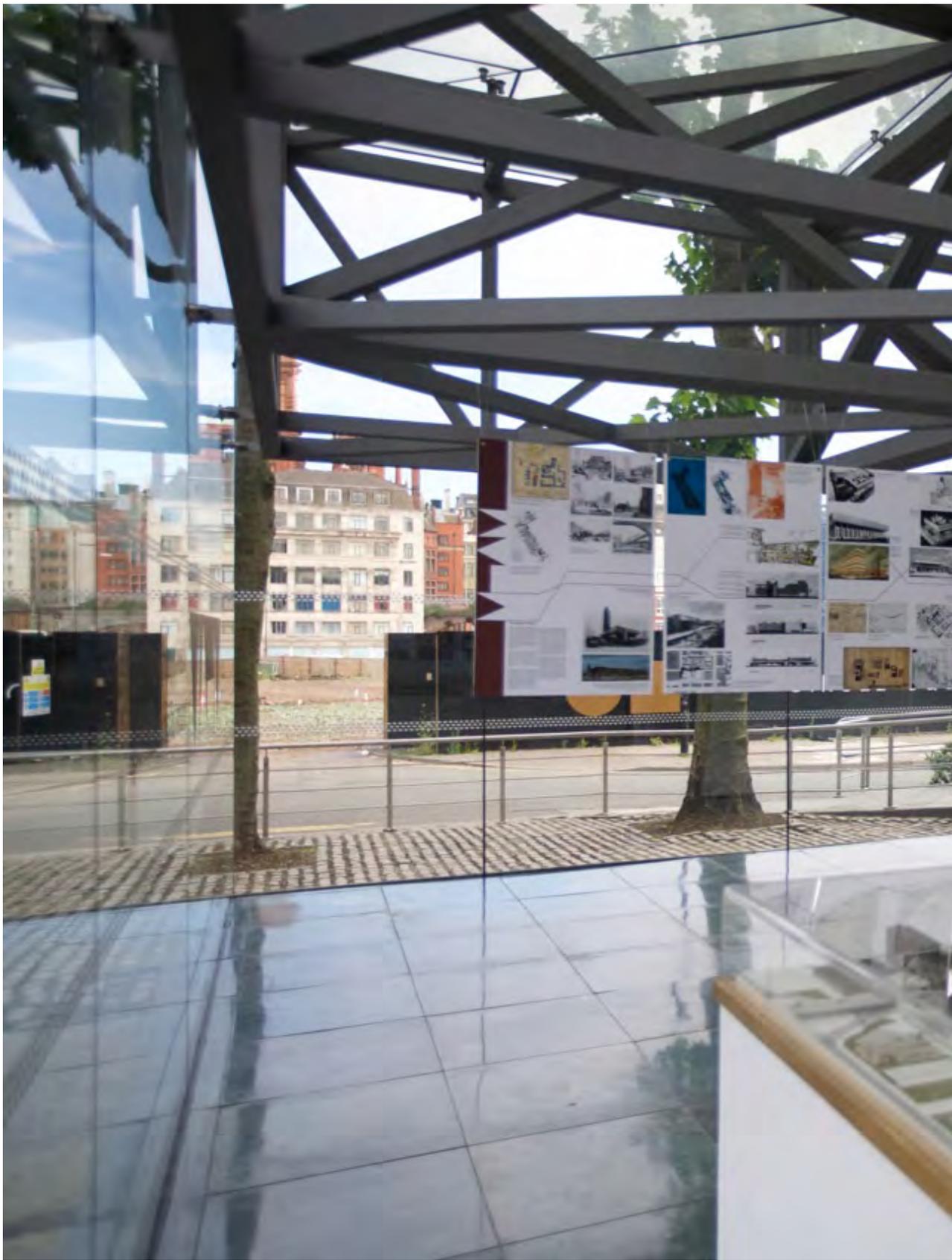




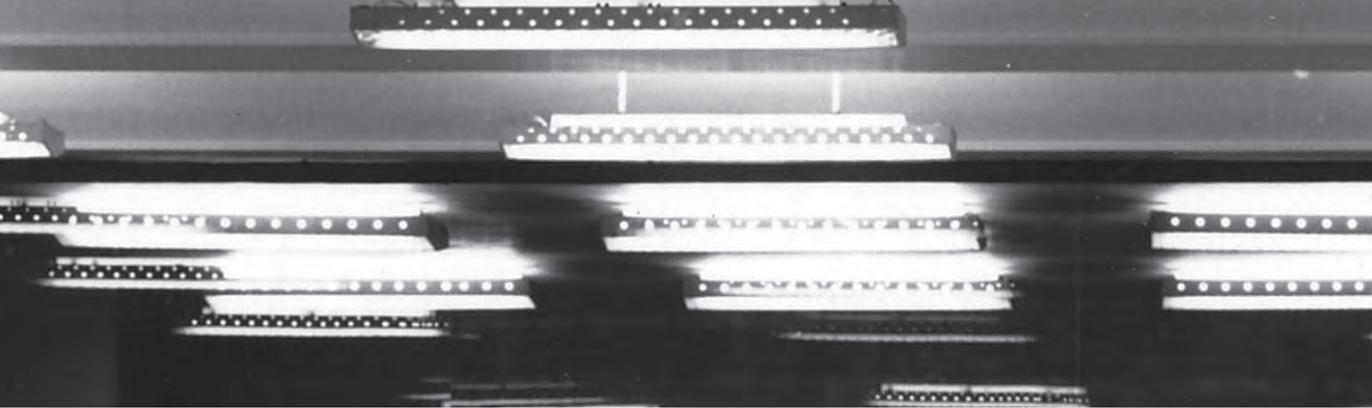












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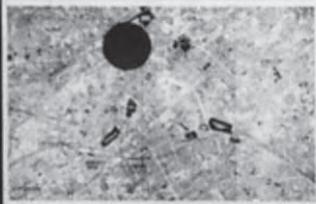
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Cathedral Area



1 Cathedral and
Cathedral
2 The Warehouse
3 Cathedral Area
4 Cathedral Area
5 Cathedral Area
6 Cathedral Area



the existing potential of the area