Parklands and Precincts: Visions for Education in Manchester

James Hopkins
Part of the area that would come under plans for the education and medical area of the city, seen here in a pre-WWII map largely unchanged from the Victorian city.
The pre-war Victoria University of Manchester
The College of Science and Technology
Learning, medicine and the arts

‘Beneath their apparent inertia and philistinism lies dormant the seed of a cultural renaissance. Already before the war has stirred into restless life their intellectual curiosity and innate desire for beauty. Our task is to tend and cultivate this natural growth, to feed it and give it scope to thrive’

‘When the new buildings rise and their setting takes shape they will give Manchester something that will be the envy of all other cities.’

Excerpts from 1945 plan
The Arts library, 1937
The Dental School, 1940
The extension to the College of Science and Technology
The 1945 Plan for learning, medicine and the arts
The processional way leading to the Civic Hall
The Civic Hall, Concert Hall, Assembly Hall and Park
The 1945 Plan for learning, medicine and the arts

College of Technology and other municipal institutions

Victoria University
The area around the Victoria University
The Hospital centre
The 1945 Plan for learning, medicine and the arts
Students at Victoria University

[Bar chart showing the number of students from 1953/54 to 1973/74, with a steady increase over the years.]
View towards the city, c.1960
University buildings planned before the Education Precinct Plan

Left: Staff House, Mobberly Tower and Refectory.

Below: Williamson building
Pre-development UMIST area
Post-development UMIST area
The proposed Precinct area mid 1960s.
Education Precinct in 1984
Figure 5.1 Proposed road system and car park locations 1970’s

- primary roads
- service roads
- district distributors
- car park locations
- local distributors

Roads plan
A vision of Buchanan’s ‘Traffic in towns’
Pedestrian decking to link RNCM with student accommodation
Education Precinct in 1984
The proposed landscaping plan from the 1967 Education Precinct Plan
Brunswick Street closed and transformed to parkland
View of Maths Tower and lawn on Oxford Road
An early proposal for the Refectory crossing Oxford Road once closed
Shopping area looking south along elevated walkway to Maths Tower
Proposed University area in 1984
Proposed UMIST area in 1984
The Maths Tower, Precinct Centre and Medical School
Unrealised transport

Figure 5.1 Proposed road system and car park locations 1970's
Walkway next to the Maths Tower
Demise of the walk ways
Interruption of the Polytechnic
Back to the future? A green corridor and partial closure of Oxford Road