

Examples of Provincial Civic Design in Britain, c. 1880-1914

VOLUME TWO

Ian Morley

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The School of Architectural Studies

The University of Sheffield

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CHAPTER SIX: EXAMPLES OF PROVINCIAL CIVIC DESIGN, c., 1880-1914

Introduction

The previous two chapters have examined the civic design schemes that occurred within a number of large sized provincial settlements during the period about 1880 to 1914. In those sections of the work attention has been given to the design and planning of public buildings erected at that time. In this chapter the smallest sized settlements studied, that is those places with a population of less than 175,000 by 1901, are examined in terms of their civic design. These settlements are Bolton, Cardiff, Dundee, Aberdeen, Sunderland, Oldham and Blackburn, and they are examined according to an order based on descending demographic sizes. Bolton, as the largest of this group of provincial places, starts the chapter.

Bolton

Introduction

The urban development of Bolton during the nineteenth century into one of Britain's most foremost cotton manufacturing towns can lead to the impression that the settlement was established solely by the influence of the Industrial Revolution. In many respects such an impression is not true for the town has a history predating the late-eighteenth century although the rise of the Industrial Revolution and growth of cotton production made a significant impact on the economics, demography and urban development of Bolton from that time.

Figure 6.1.1. Bolton's town plan in 1847 (source: Ordnance Survey) with the Market Place at its centre.



At the start of the nineteenth century Bolton's population was about 17,000 (source: Census). By 1851 this figure had risen to over 61,100 (source: Census), of which 284 out of every thousand employees in the town at that time worked in textile spinning, such was the primacy of the industry in the town by the mid-nineteenth century. Fifty years later the population total of Bolton had risen still further to over 168,000 (source: Census, 1901) making it the sixteenth largest urban settlement in England and Wales.

While the population of the town grew continually throughout the Victorian period, new buildings were erected in order to accommodate the expanding Corporation and to serve the growing needs of the local population. However Bolton did not enjoy an especially good reputation for public architectural activity. Often too that activity which did take place in the town occurred before the time covered by this study with the most significant public edifices erected in Bolton during the nineteenth century other than those studied by this work being the Exchange (1825-9), the Town Hall (1826), a Dispensary (1825, by Benjamin Hick), all erected prior to a Corporation being established in the town, a Market building (1853-5, by G.T. Robinson), a Cemetery (1856), Mechanics Institute (1866), Queen's Park by William Henderson (1866), an Infirmary (1878) and a Fever Hospital (1881). In 1888, with the

passing of the Local Government Act, county borough status was conferred onto Bolton which put the settlement, at least in political terms, at the top of the urban hierarchy with the largest provincial places in England and Wales such as Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield. However it was with privately erected structures, particularly the erection of large sized mill buildings such as Dean Mill, which greatly affected Bolton's townscape, similarly to other Lancastrian towns such as Blackburn and Oldham during the nineteenth century. However many civic buildings in Bolton before to 1914 had a significant effect on the civic design of the town, arguably none more so than the new Town Hall.

Bolton Town Hall

In 1863 the Corporation decided to erect a Town Hall which would have an estimated cost of £70,000 to £80,000 (Cunningham, 1981: 271), so as to reflect the growing importance and the civic status of the town. The inspiration behind this proposal was the Mayor, J.R. Wolfenden, who championed the idea of a Town Hall despite severe opposition to the scheme, primarily on economic grounds. In 1863 a competition was held, adjudicated by Professor T.L. Donaldson, for a non-Gothic styled Town Hall building, a dictate which, stated Pevsner (1969: 81), served to illustrate the growing architectural tensions between Lancashire towns at that time. 38 competitors entered the competition, won by William Hill (1827-89) of Leeds with a design influenced by Cuthbert Brodrick's Town Hall in Leeds. Construction began in 1866, many years before the period covered by this work but such is the influence of the building upon the civic design of Bolton that it should not be ignored. The Town Hall was opened in 1873 by the Prince and Princes of Wales and the total cost of the building was put at £167,000 (Cunningham, 1981). As noted earlier, the Bolton Town Hall scheme was influenced by the Town Hall at Leeds although it by no means an imitation of this building (*Ibid.*: 81). However, similarly to the Leeds scheme, Bolton's Town Hall was constructed on an site unencumbered from other buildings and had a scale and visual impact that was unrivalled within the local environment.

Bolton's Town Hall was composed in a Classical Corinthian order based upon attached and detached columns supporting a balustrade and entablature. Thomas Mawson in his proposed plan for Bolton (1911) commented upon his admiration "for the noble proportions of the Town Hall and the sense of scale in its parts" (The Builder, 1911: 430). The building,

noted Mawson in his book 'Civic Art', was "magnificent", and presented Bolton with an "air of quiet dignity so often lacking in a manufacturing town." (1911:267) Columns and pilasters dominated all four facades of the Town Hall, pilasters being situated towards the ends of the elevations, between which were positioned in regular bays rectangular shaped windows at ground floor level and round arched windows at the first floor. The orderly disposition of the columns and pilasters on the walls of the building was noted in *The Builder* (1873: 417) as giving the building a stately impression. The vertical lines established by the columns and pilasters was continued above the main cornice line by the placing of stone urns above the rich balustrade, a feature used on the Leeds Town Hall building, while the horizontal line of the cornice was continued all the way around the building.

The main elevation of the Bolton Town Hall faced eastwards (see figures 6.1.2 and 6.1.4) and was marked in the centre by the main entrance which was placed in a position with a projected building line so to provide a degree of emphasis in the composition which was further enhanced by the introducing of design features in front of it. In addition, the principal entrance was located beneath a large portico consisting of six Corinthian columns surmounted by a pediment within which lay sculptured decoration. The main entrance and portico were reached after rising up a broad flight of stairs, over 100 feet in length, positioned directly in front of the principal doorway and the portico which helped to improve the visual impact of the building within the local environment, increased by the building being raised so that its ground floor was many feet above the level of the street. Thus by placing the building on a platform the new public building was made more visible within central Bolton and was made also dissimilar from other buildings in the surrounding environment. The visible basement level, constructed from Bolton stone, a different building material from the rest of the structure, was rusticated on all four of the main elevations which distinguished it from the rest of the composition. The principle elevation was noted by *The Builder* (*Ibid.*: 442) as being of a particular form so as "to give an impression of the dignity and importance of the structure, and leave no doubt on the spectator's mind as to its office as the municipal centre of the town." The journal also commented upon the creditable choice of general aspect of the building and the nature and arrangement of the plan (*Ibid.*: 442), discussed subsequently. Significantly too in civic design terms, a space other than that of a roadway, to be known as Town Hall Square, was established as part of the scheme in front of the principal elevation. This space was later filled with architectural elements that helped further enhance the overall impact of the building within central Bolton. Town Hall Square will be also discussed later in this section.

Figure 6.1.2. A perspective of the Town Hall, Bolton (source: Building News, 1873).



The Town Hall was erected from various building materials. Bolton stone, as noted earlier, was used for the basement level and was also used for the clock tower. The principal elevation of the Town Hall was constructed using Halifax and Darley Dale stone, the north and south fronts from Huddersfield stone and the western facade, that is the rear elevation, from Longridge stone (Builder, 1873: 442). It should be recognised that the large scale building, 204 feet in length and 177 feet in breadth, was designed with a great deal of decoration which helped add to the impact of the composition upon the on looking eye and the artistic strength of the building. The use of sculpture and rustication have, for example, already been recognised. The most visual element of the building was the 200 feet high clock tower which allowed the building to become a conspicuous architectural object which could be viewed from all parts of the settlement, assisted by, as highlighted previously, the elevated base upon which the building was erected and the fact that its site was situated within one of the more lofty parts of the settlement. The position of Bolton's clock tower was towards the east of the structure along the central axial line established by the main entrance and its portico, in so doing marking the central east-west alignment of the building in a vertical manner. The extra masonry used to support the vertical element had little impact on the general plan of the building and was used to form walls for the entrance

vestibule which was situated immediately to the rear of the principal entrance. Another important feature of the composition was the integrating into the building's composition of stone ventilation towers, just like at Leeds' Town Hall, which were located above the rooftop along the eastern elevation, sited at equal distances on each side of the elevation's central axis. The use of ventilation shafts, decorated so to disguise their practical role, reveals how the designer utilised functional features of the building for artistic purposes.

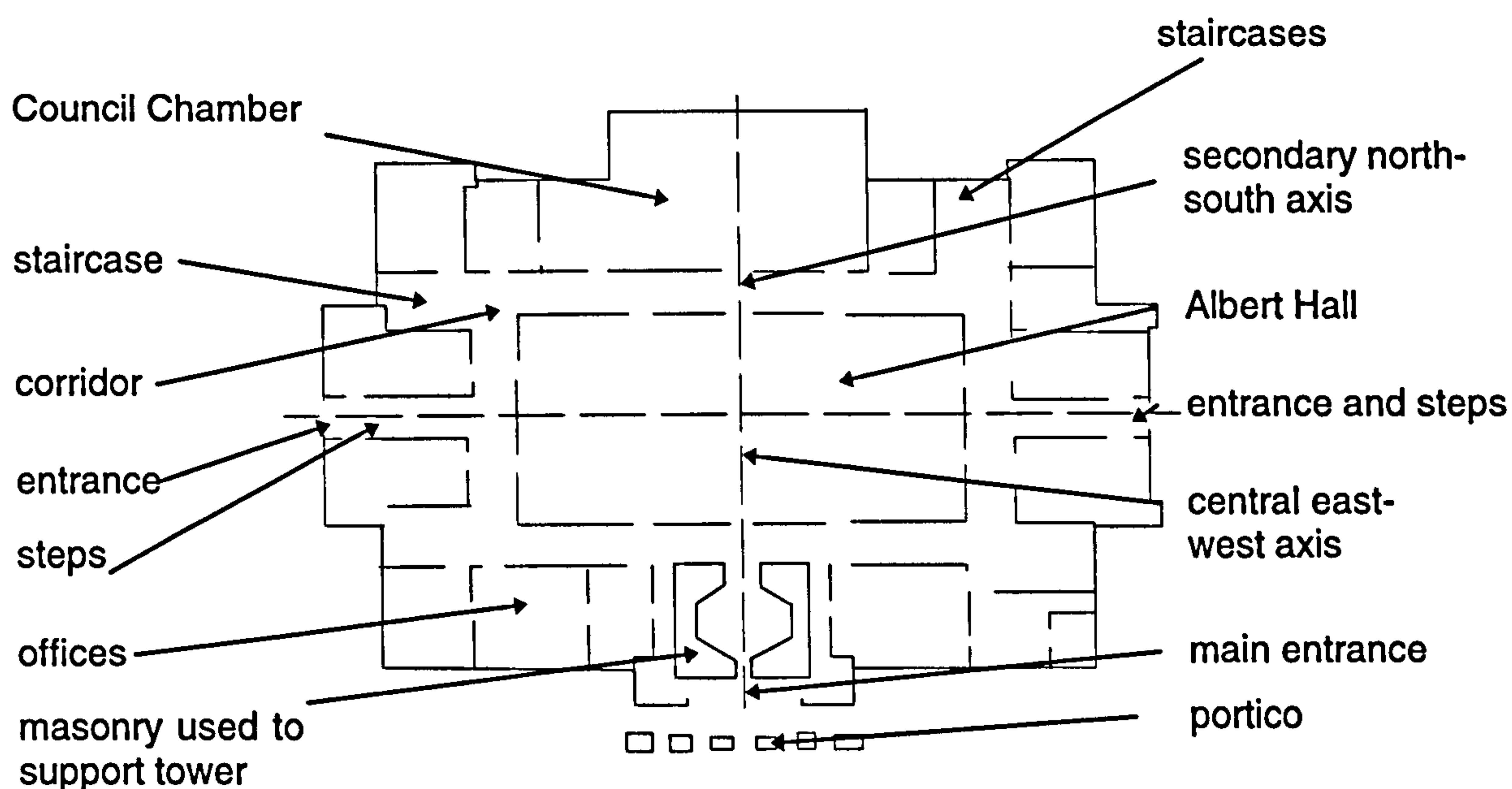
The general plan of Bolton's Town Hall (see figure 6.1.3) was rectangular in shape. The Builder (1873: 417) described the internal arrangement of the building as being "in most respects praiseworthy, especially in regard to the manner in which the corridor communication is carried right round the building". The plan of the building was composed along symmetrical lines, laid out in a simple fashion creating an arrangement which largely mirrored itself across the central east-west axis to the rear of the primary entrance at the centre of the front, east facing elevation.

The most dominant feature of the internal arrangement of the building was the public hall, the Albert Hall as it was known, a space intended to be used for public meetings and concerts that could seat up to 1800 persons. This space was positioned at the centre of the building's plan although turned at 90 degrees to the central east-west axis to the rear of the main entrance. This room was of a considerable size measuring some 112 feet in length and 56 feet in both height and width, and was surrounded on all sides by a corridor which provided access not only to the Hall from the entrances of the building, located at the centre of the north, south and east elevations, but to the many office spaces positioned against the outer walls of the building. Staircases were positioned at the corners of the building which had the effect of terminating the views and secondary alignments established along the corridors (see figure 6.1.3).

It has been noted already that the principal entrance of the Town Hall was positioned at the centre of the east facing elevation, behind which on a direct line of axis was placed a vestibule. To each side of this vestibule were positioned office spaces while at the opposite side of the building was situated the large Council Chamber, positioned parallel to the large sized Albert Hall on a north-south alignment. Spaces such as Committee Rooms were situated close to the Council Chamber but did not establish a secondary axis in the plan. Instead a secondary alignment was evident in the planning of the Albert Hall which had its central axis, running north-south, marked to the southern end by a large organ and the

stage area designed in a semi-circular form. Two flights of steps also marked this alignment within the building's plan, one of which was situated immediately behind the northern entrance of the Town Hall, an entrance that was at the street level within the rusticated basement level. The other staircase, highlighted earlier, was placed at the opposite end of the building, at the centre of the south facing elevation of the Town Hall's plan behind the stage area of the Albert Hall, also at the street level.

Figure 6.1.3. Bolton Town Hall ground floor plan.



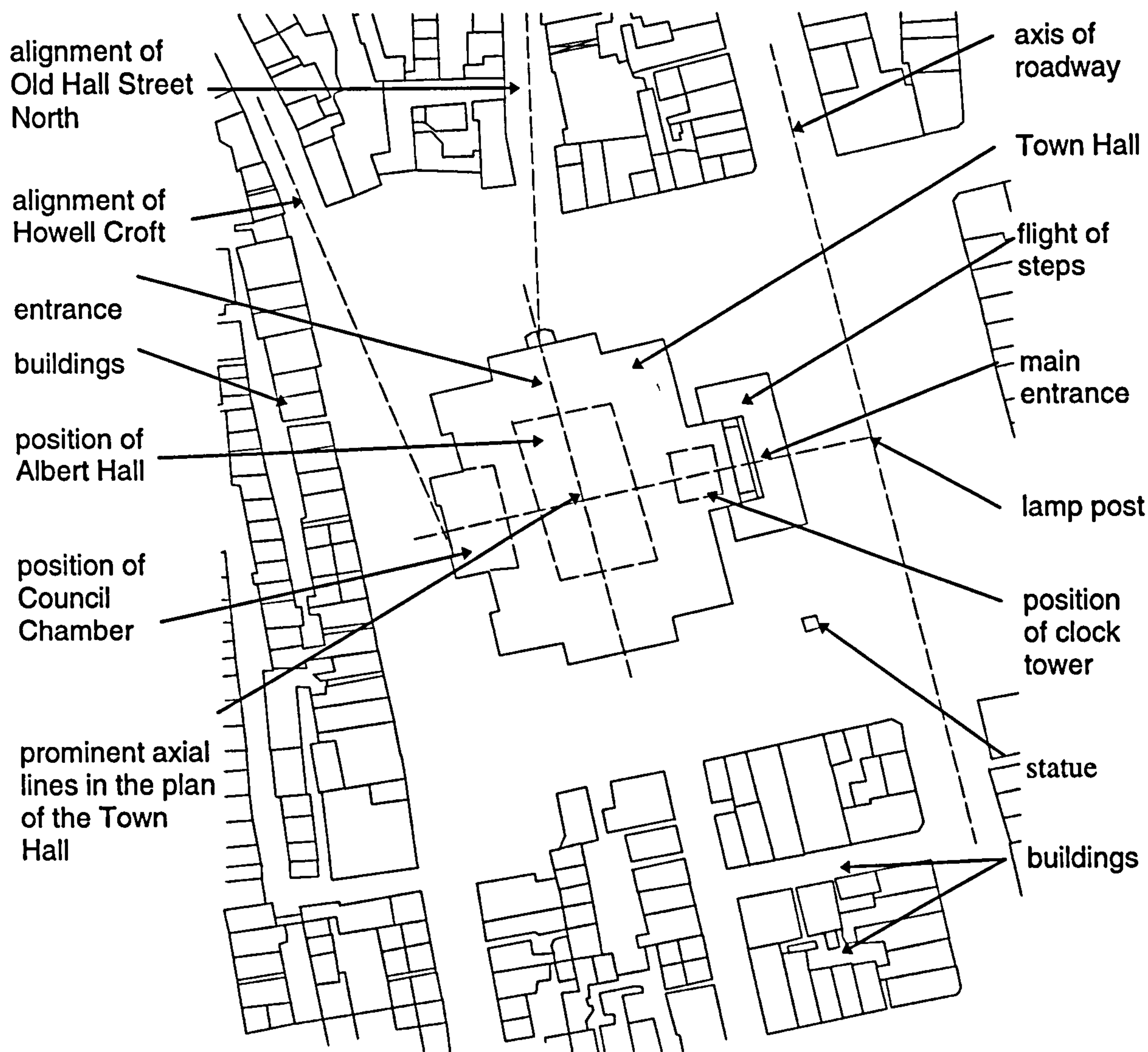
Hill, as the designer of the Town Hall, attempted to increase the impact of the public building by not using the full area of the site given but set the building back within the boundaries of the site, so as to surround it on all sides with open space other than that of roadways. This had the effect of creating a considerable area of space in front of the main elevation, which was to become known as Town Hall Square. By fitting the building within the boundaries of its site Hill introduced opportunities for placing civic design elements such as the large flight of steps in front of the main entrance and to emphasise significant parts of the building's composition by, for example, by projecting the building line forward at the centre of all four elevations so as to form end pavilions. In addition, the newly established space could be filled with architectural elements positioned in prominent locations within it which could also correspond with the design and plan of the public building situated nearby.

Figure 6.1.4. The front elevation of the Town Hall with the raised ground floor, main entrance with portico and steps as seen when looking west across Town Hall Square.



By providing open space about the Town Hall other than that of roadways, particularly to the front of the main elevation, Hill allowed the building to have a considerable effect on the on looking eye and local townscape. Furthermore, by creating a design scheme involving both the planning of space close to the building as well as the design and plan of the structure, Hill allowed the space and structure to form a coherent composition. This combination of building and open space within the single design scheme was important to civic design and was noted by Mawson (1911) as being an ideal of the art. As a result of this uniting of the building and its surroundings, principally the open space around it, Bolton's Town Hall must be recognised as being a civic design piece of local and national significance. Such a view is further enhanced when the surroundings of the building are studied in more detail.

Figure 6.1.5. The area about the Town Hall in 1882 (source: Ordnance Survey).



There is little doubt that the architect of the Town Hall attempted to relate the design and plan of the building to the built environment of Bolton. The northern entrance of the building, for example, was not only positioned along the secondary north-south axis of the internal arrangement, that is the alignment through the Albert Hall, but its position also corresponded to the alignment on an oncoming roadway, Old Hall Street North. The projection at the centre of the western elevation, which formed the outer wall to the Council Chamber, was also a resourceful civic design feature in that it too met with the alignment of an approaching roadway, Howell Croft, in so doing terminating the approaching vista. The central form Bolton, arguably more than other Victorian towns and cities, offered civic design opportunities in that the alignment of many roadways approached the site of the Town Hall and thus could be utilised in the scheme. Hill, as architect of the Town Hall, provided evidence in the composition of the Town Hall that he understood this situation. However his

task of attempting to relate the Town Hall to the surrounding buildings was made difficult by the large scale of the building and the small scale of its setting. The Builder in 1873 said of the environment around the Town Hall consisted of buildings “of a comparatively mean and common type; and it is hoped that in time they will be rebuilt with such a degree of stateliness as to form a more suitable surrounding to the new building” (1873: 417). Even by limiting the number of main storeys of the Town Hall to only two levels the overall height, almost 60 feet, and the large scale and bulk of the Town Hall was much greater than that of the surrounding buildings. The sense of relation between the Town Hall and its setting was also restricted by the poor visual quality of the surroundings which as The Builder highlighted to be undignified for such an important public building.

Figure 6.1.6. View from the Town Hall clock tower, Bolton (source: Mawson and Atkinson in The Builder, 1911).



The importance of the open space known as Town Hall Square to the Town Hall scheme has already been noted and in 1873, the year in which the Town Hall was officially opened, a statue of Chadwick, by C.B. Birch, was placed to the south of the space in proximity to the flight of steps located at the front of the main entrance of the Town Hall. Had this element being sited in a position that corresponded with this prominent axis then the civic design quality of the building scheme would have been increased for it would have allowed the east-west alignment of the building to have continued for some distance away and would have shown how the surroundings of the building and the building enjoyed a coherent relation. In 1900 a statue of Sir Benjamin Dobson, by John Cassidy (Pevsner, 1969: 83),

was added to Town Hall Square but this feature was positioned at the northern side of the space, also in proximity to the Town Hall's steps. However its position, like the first statue in the area, bore little association to the plan of the Town Hall and this lack of association between the statuary and the Town Hall was disappointing in terms of civic design practice as their positions as recognised were not in accord with the larger built environment, that is the plan of the Town Hall or alignments of oncoming roadways. However after the Town Hall was completed the central east-west axis of the main elevation was marked in Town Hall Square by a lamp post whose position also corresponded with the north-south alignment of Oxford Street through the area. While in civic design terms the marking of the principal alignment was significant its importance was reduced by the fact that the axis is marked only by a lamp post. Had a statue or an architectural feature of a greater artistic nature been placed in the central position then the overall civic design worth of the Town Hall and Town Hall Square scheme would have been higher. Instead the relating of the lamp post, later replaced by a trough, with such a prominent building and important planning axis makes for an unusual civic design situation.

Other Developments

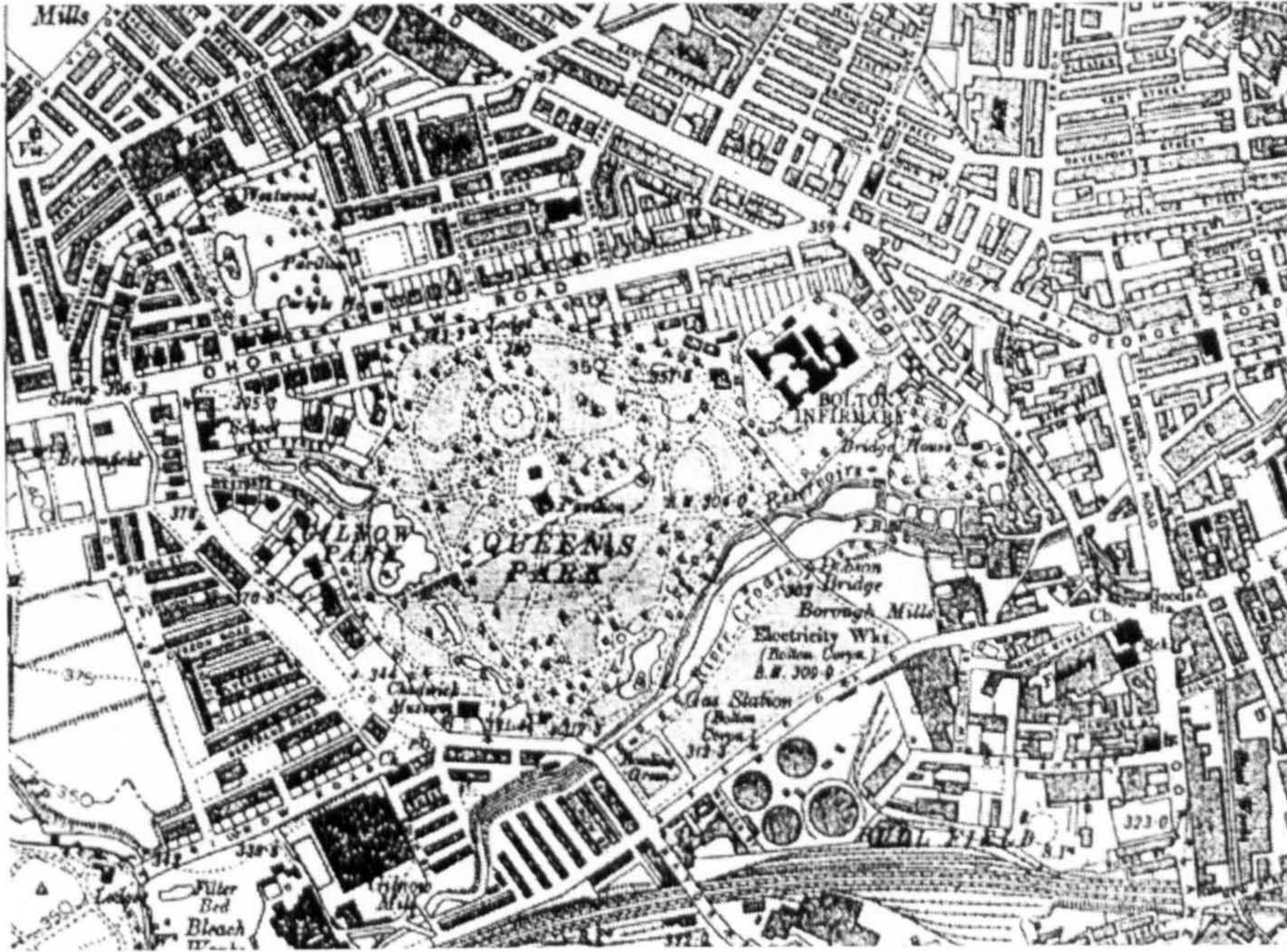
Bolton was a place of relatively little architectural and planning activity within the period considered by this work and those that public buildings that were erected received little or no coverage in the architectural press apart from the new Town Hall. However, Bolton by 1880, already possessed many public buildings, such as the Exchange (1825-9) and a Dispensary (1825), a Grecian styled building erected at the western end of Nelson Square. A Central Library building was not erected during the Victorian period in Bolton, an important public building type, as the old Town Hall building was later used as a Library once the new Town Hall was completed. Mawson in 1911 recognised that Bolton contained a great many nobly planned architectural public buildings and churches, which he noted were dotted around the settlement and so suffered from their isolation and disconnection with each other. This situation was also recognised in other large provincial settlements examined by this work. However, in the period immediate preceding World War One Mawson tried to rectify this situation with his plan for Bolton, a large scale scheme very much in keeping with the plans created under the City Beautiful Movement in America, within which the Town Hall would be a primary marker of the new road layout. Sadly this scheme, like many other town plans proposed about that time, was not undertaken.

Figure 6.1.7. Mawson's 1911 plan for Bolton with new roadways shown in the central area. The dark area shows the urban form of Bolton directly affected by the proposed scheme.



The development of Bolton park, later renamed Queen's Park, an eighteen hectare area of land bought by the Corporation in 1864, made a significant impact on the design and form of the town. Laid out in 1866 to a design by William Henderson of Birkenhead (Pevsner, 1969:82), Queen's Park, which comprised of open moor land formerly known as Bolton-Le-Moors before development, covered a large area of land situated to the west of the central core and while the Town Hall provided a municipal centre for central Bolton, Queen's Park provided a recreational one (Mawson, 1911: 265) due to its outstanding location between the centre and western periphery of Bolton. Positioned only 600 yards from Town Hall Square, a central situation which Mawson (*Ibid.*: 267) described as unique, the park nevertheless achieved a sense of isolation from the core of the town thanks to its principal entrance being placed on at the northern side of its site, near to the urban periphery, and a large wall being erected at the eastern end of its extent close to the town centre and the site of the Infirmary. However the park could be entered into from the town centre due to the building of a small bridge, Dobson Bridge, at the south eastern section of its site across the River Croat.

Figure 6.1.8. The town plan west of the town centre in 1911 with Queen's Park (source: Ordnance Survey).



Bounded to the north by Chorley New Road, to the east by the stone wall erected close to the Bolton Infirmary, to the south by the meandering River Croal and to the west by Park Road and houses, Queen's Park was designed in a relatively formal manner that sought to utilise the undulating topography of the site for visual effects, enhanced by tree layouts, architectural decoration and three statues, of Disraeli (by John Morris in 1887), John Fielding (by William Bowden, 1896) and Dr. J. Dorrian (by Cassidy, 1898), erected within the park before the end of the nineteenth century. However, only one building was erected within Queen's Park, a pavilion, situated almost at the centre of the park where the topography was most elevated. The position of the pavilion also acted as a marker for the formal planning lines employed within the park.

The Chorley New Road entrance of Queen's Park, the principal entrance, was emphasised by the placing of the Park Keeper's Lodge at the side and by the entrance being set back from the roadway positioned in front of it. Upon passing the entrance a direct view south towards the pavilion was presented which could be reached by three walkways, one leading directly to the building, the others heading eastwards and westwards respectively. The central, southern walkway followed the gentle gradient of the land before opening out into a circular form midway between the pavilion and main entrance, the centre of which was marked by plants and trees which form a small landscape feature. The southern axis of the

footpath was continued through the circular garden space until it met with the rear of the pavilion. At the front of the south facing pavilion, which faced towards central Bolton, was laid out another footpath that led southwards down the slope of the park towards an ornamental located lake situated near to the River Croal. The direct axis of this walkway provided a grand vista towards the town centre but was unfortunately blemished in the foreground by the Corporation's gas storage tanks on the opposite river bank of the River Croal. However, where the footpath terminated at the southern end of the park a statue was placed. Thus the centre of the pavilion was marked at a considerable distance away from the building by an architectural element of civic design note. In addition, directly in front of the pavilion was a walkway laid out in an east-west alignment which had its western end, at the point where it is intersected by one of the peripheral walkways in the park, marked by a statue, so as to terminate the axis and vista from the side of the pavilion.

Mawdsley Street

Bolton developed in the Victorian period with a large number of Chapels and Churches and in many respects these buildings were as importance as other public structures in the town. Along Bold Street and Mawdsley Street, roadways situated to the south east of the central core (see figure 4.15.9), was a civic composition consisting of a Mechanics Institute, later changed to a Technical and Art School (now demolished), an Independent Chapel, a School and a Roman Catholic Church. An Inland Revenue Office was later erected at the rear of the School, along Chancery Lane, but as this particular building faced in a different direction to the other buildings it played only a minor role in the composition.

The Mechanics Institute and the Independent Chapel were located on unencumbered sites situated between Back Mawdsley Street to the west and Mawdsley Street to the east. However the association between the two buildings was limited at best as the structures faced away from each other, the front of the Mechanics Institute, for example, facing south while the Institute had its main entrance on its east facing elevation. The position of this entrance did not corresponded with any surrounding buildings and the internal arrangement of this small building, elevations of the building being only 50 feet in length did not contain any prominent axial lines of any note.

Figure 6.1.9. Central Bolton in 1907. Mawdsley Street is to the south east of the area shown (source: Ordnance Survey).

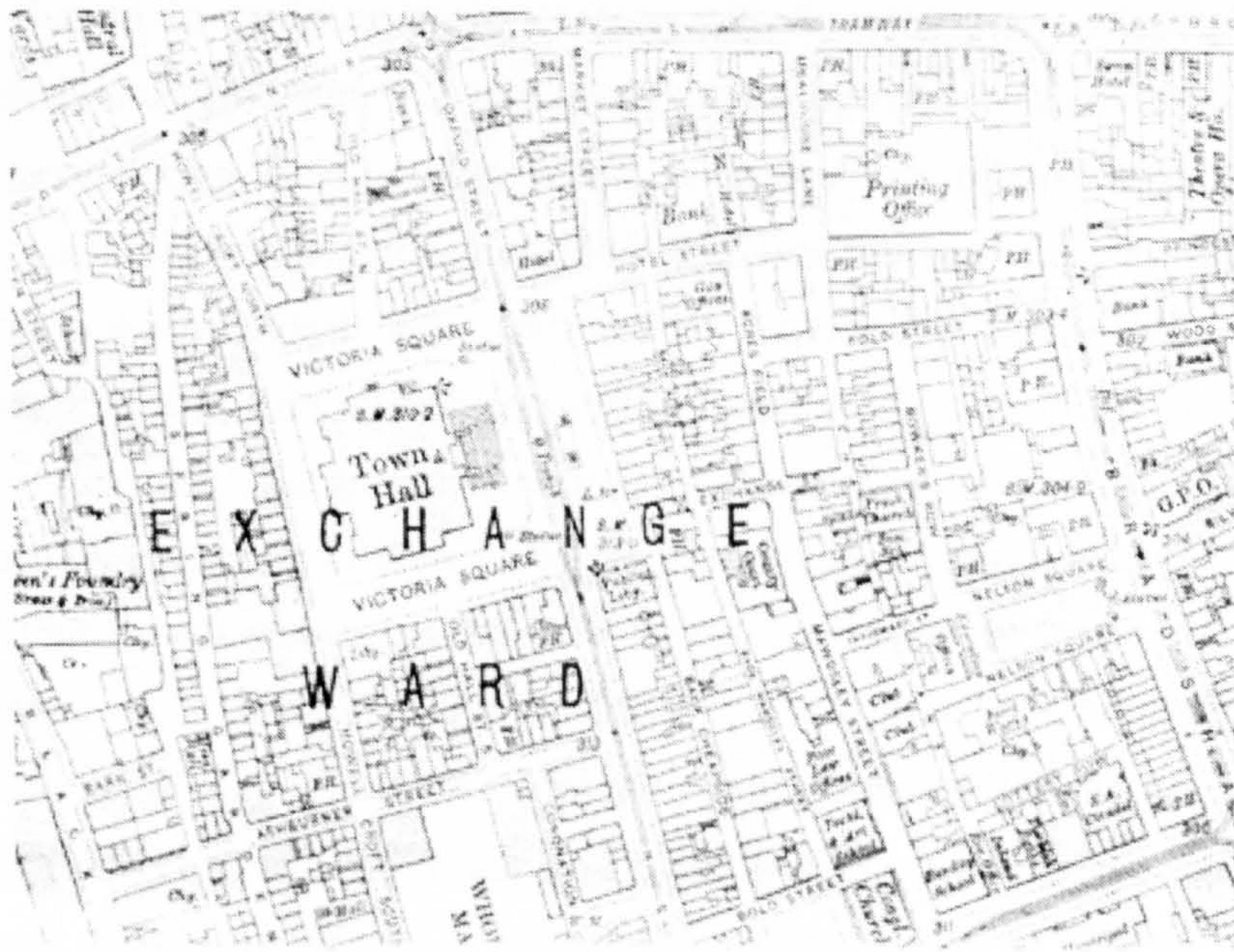
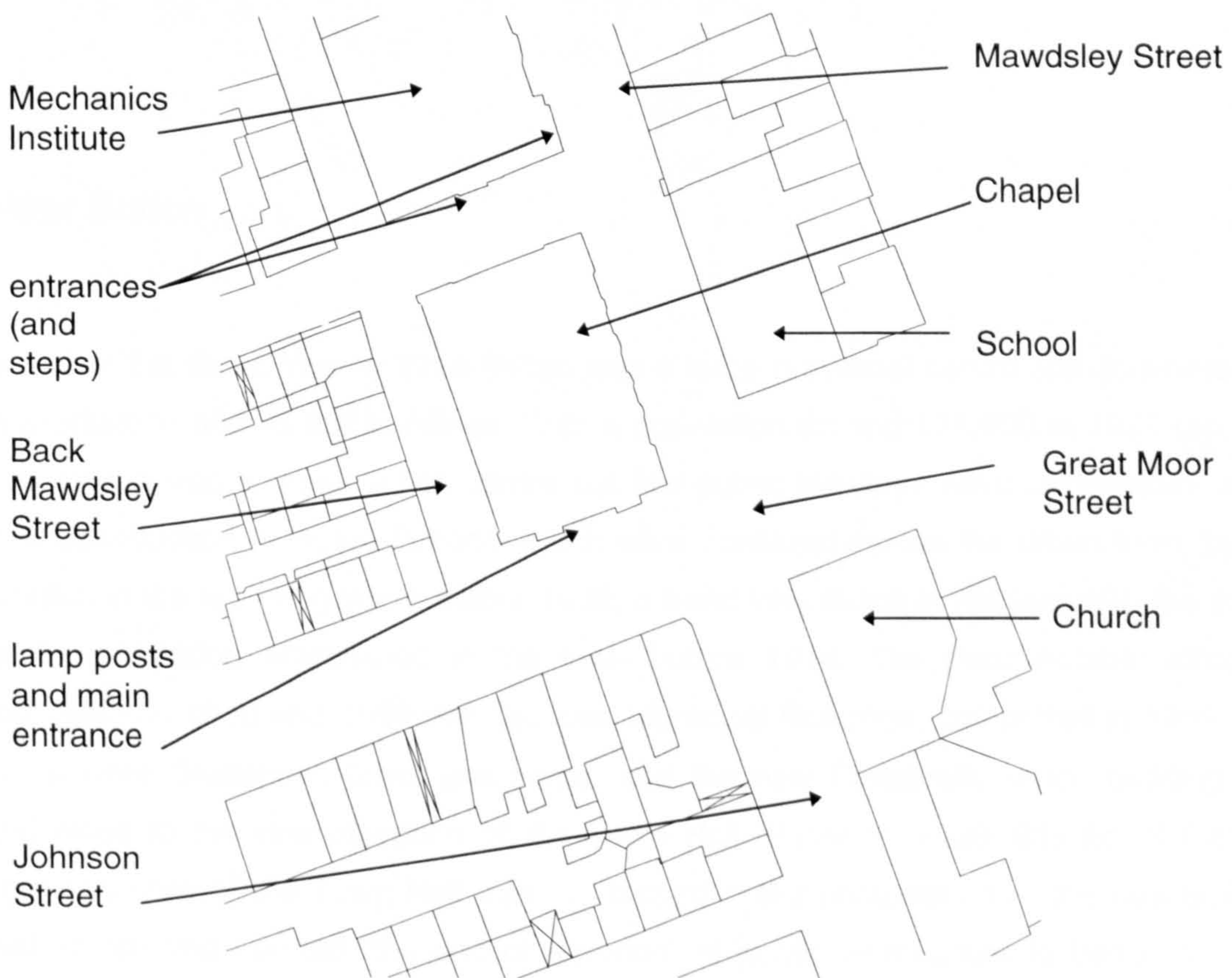


Figure 6.1.10. The Mechanics Institute's area plan in 1891 (source: Ordnance Survey).



The Mechanics Institute had a sense of association with other public buildings erected close to it due to the structure being erected from a stone material, also employed for the other buildings, and due to its scale being in keeping with its setting even though their detailed designs were dissimilar. However this sense of relation by scale and material alone does not represent comprehensive civic design when compared to other civic design schemes undertaken in provincial Britain about that time. Significantly too, the plan and design of the buildings in the area provided little evidence to highlighted that these public buildings related. For example, the School building which faced west toward the side of the Chapel displayed no features such as an entrance that corresponded with prominent sections of the Chapel's eastern elevation. Therefore while the composition superficially offered civic design potential by allowing four public buildings to be situated near to each other and to relate together other than by means such as similarity of scale and floor heights, this simply did not happen in the Mawdlsley Street area and the close positioning of the buildings in this part of the settlement may be have as much an outcome of the availability of sites as much as the Corporation's desire to establish a civic centre in that district of Bolton. Thus while there is an effort to situate many of Bolton's public buildings together there was on the other hand no conscious attempt to design the buildings to harmonise or relate together. The outcome of this was that the civic design of the area can be summarised as being poor.

Inter-War Bolton

At the end of the Great War in 1918 Bolton was a large provincial centre still dominated by cotton production and its mill buildings. With a population around 178,000 in 1921 (source: Census) Bolton was a major urban centre but few public buildings were undertaken, apart from the construction of Board Schools which were scattered across the urban form, by the Corporation in the following years before 1939, a trend very much in keeping with the public architectural tradition established in the town before 1914. The most notable structure erected between 1918 and 1939 was the new Municipal Buildings, completed in 1939. The architects were Bradshaw, Gass and Hope, and the new Classically styled building was situated close to the rear elevation of the Town Hall. Pevsner (1969: 81) noted that the swagger and style of the Town Hall was maintained in the composition of the new building but that its opening marked "the end of a period" of public architecture in Bolton for after 1945 new modern architectural styles prevailed in the settlement.

Conclusion

The most important of all the civic design schemes in Bolton during the Victorian and Edwardian period was the Town Hall although its importance was enhanced somewhat by the lack of public architecture in the town during the period examined. However this should not detract from the significance of the Town Hall for without the building the town would generally be of far less civic design worth. Significantly too for the civic design of Bolton the design and plan of the Town Hall involved the use of open space other than roadways about the structure, a space that was filled with architectural elements after the construction of the building had been completed. In terms of its design the Town Hall employed many features that were prevalent in provincial civic design, such as the use of symmetry in the composition of the plan and the main elevations and the placing of prominent spaces within the internal arrangement in correspondence with the main axial lines of the plan. Prominent planning lines such as the central east-west axis were also noted to be marked by features such as flights of steps, a portico, and a clock tower. Furthermore the central east-west axis was marked by a feature, albeit a lamp post and then later a trough, at some distance away from the building which is of civic design note. The alignments of oncoming roadways also utilised and so corresponded with the form and plan of the edifice.

In contrast to the Town Hall scheme and the development of Town Hall Square, Bolton provided little evidence of civic design principles being applied elsewhere in the town during the period considered by this study and where such features were put into practice they were applied to buildings of a much smaller scale than the Town Hall. In many respects the development of the buildings in the Mawdsley Street district was somewhat characteristic of civic design in Britain at that time with the possibilities for civic design not being fully understood by the Corporation and architects involved, who failed to utilise the opportunities for associating four public buildings to each other apart from by similarities of their building sizes. As a consequence of this lack of design understanding along Mawdsley Street and the lack of architectural features being used for each building, such as the raising of the buildings above the street level, the use of arched window openings placed in regular bays and the placing of features such as steps or lamp posts in front of the building's entrances, an example was provided of four similarly sized buildings being erected in proximity to each with almost no sense of association being apparent in their design or planning forms. This at best was a poor civic design situation and is even more disappointing given the potential for design and planning association in the area.

Cardiff

Introduction

The architectural and demographic development of Cardiff is a fairly dramatic episode in the history of Victorian urbanisation. In demographic terms Cardiff experienced a rate of growth in the period considered by this work that not even the industrial towns of northern England matched. At the start of the nineteenth century Cardiff's population stood at below 2,000. By 1851 this had increased to just over 20,000 (source: Census). Fifty years later the figure had risen a further eight-fold to over 164,000 (source: Census, 1901), the greatest increase occurring between 1881 and 1901 when the population for the settlement doubled. As a consequence of this urban growth relatively late in the nineteenth century Cardiff had not erected a large number of public buildings before the date covered by this study. The most prominent building erected before the late-Victorian period included the Town Hall (1847 by Horace Jones) and a Cemetery laid out in 1857 by E.G. Thomas. Due to the rapid growth of the settlement in the period considered there was an increase in the needs of the local population and the pressures upon existing public buildings as well as Cardiff's rise in status to Welsh capital and county borough after the passing of the Local Government Act (1888). As a consequence of all these factors the demand for new public buildings increased by the end of the nineteenth century.

The significant demographic changes occurring in the second half of the nineteenth century accompanied the emergence of Cardiff as a port of world importance due to the exportation of coal from South Wales (Daunton, 1977: 255). Cardiff was described (1897: 239) as having a "very straggling and irregular plan", but from the 1890s there occurred the growth of a distinct civic district within a defined area of the settlement. This centred around the activities of the Corporation and Lord Bute, which began in the 1850s when the municipality questioned the suitability of Bute's land for public recreation. The subsequent development of this land gave some prestige to Cardiff thanks to its monumental display of large neo-Classical buildings (Hilling, 1976: 194), the nearest that Britain came to producing a scheme such as those manifested under the City Beautiful banner in contemporary America.



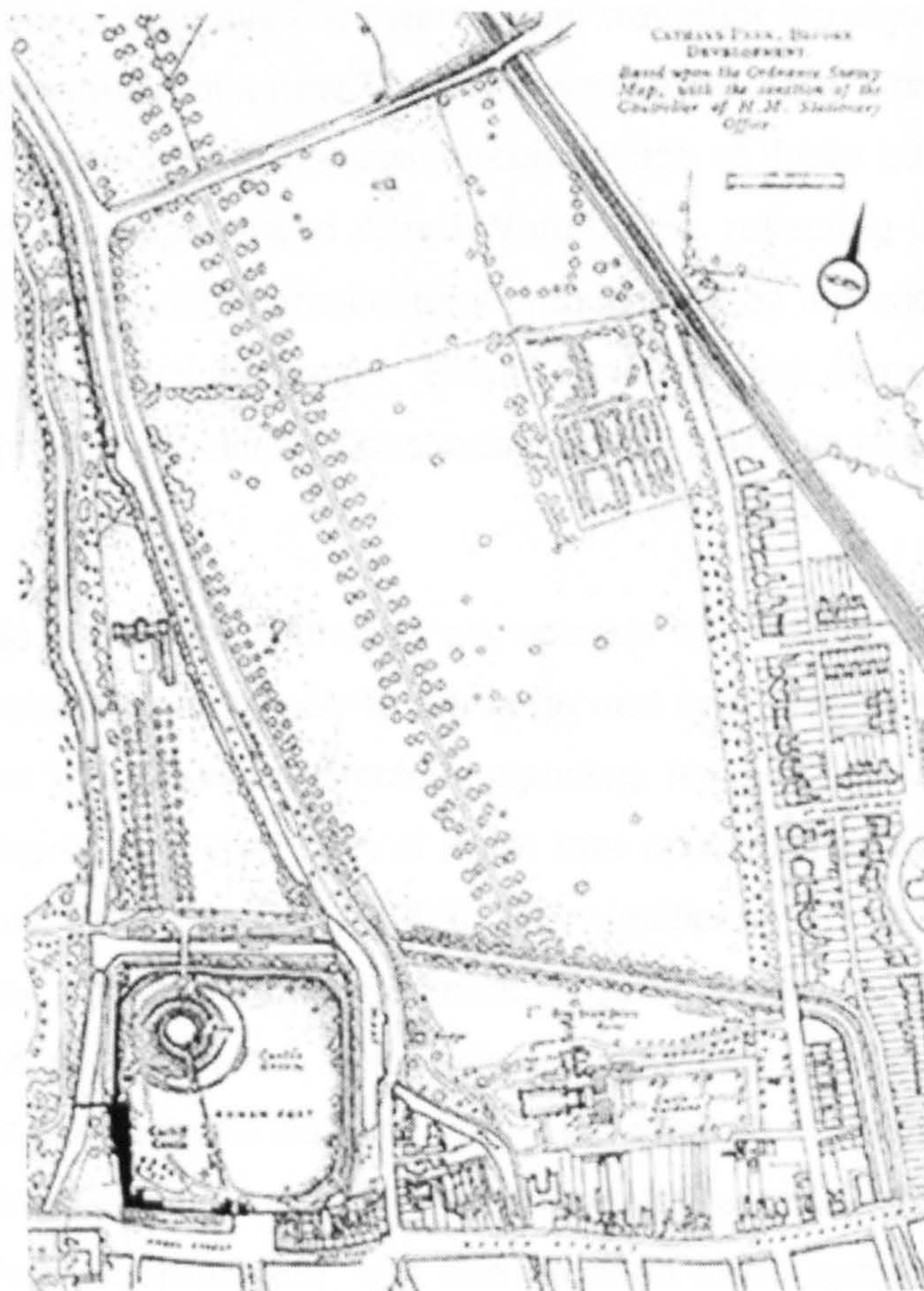
Figure 6.2.1. Cardiff's town plan in 1898 (source: Ordnance Survey), with the dock lands to the south and Cathays Park to the west.

In the decades from the 1850s the matter of procuring land from Lord Bute for the benefit of the local public was persistent in Cardiff's politics. Of importance eventually too was the fact that the town's administrative, educational and judicial institutions had become inadequate for the increasing needs of the local public by the late-Victorian period. "Sites were sought for a new Town Hall and Law Courts, Museum, Intermediate and Technical Schools, as well as for the proposed new University College." (Chappell, 1946:13)

In April 1892 Lord Bute was approached officially for the first time by the Corporation, when Councillor Price inquired whether he would consider selling a large area of land in the Cathays Park district immediately to the north-west of the city centre close to Cardiff Castle (1868-1881 by William Burges) for a sum in the region of £100,000. This land was to be used to accommodate a number of public buildings (*Ibid.*: 14). This proposal, argued Price, would perform not only a functional role but would play an important artistic role too: "we could make Cardiff one of the most beautiful towns in the country", he argued. While the plan was favourably received the proposal was to lay dormant for a further four years. This was an outcome of questions being raised concerning Bute's attitude to the Corporation's idea and the restrictions which he wished to impose upon any development, as well as questions being raised about costs, the amount of land necessary and whether the choice of Cathays Park was suitable for public building (*Ibid.*: 15). However by March 1897 a provisional agreement was reached between Bute and the Corporation, the Corporation

agreeing to pay £161,000 for 59 acres of land, which were subject to conditions, for example, regarding the use of the land, public use only, and the preservation of Elm trees in the area (see figure 6.2.2). This latter factor was to be influential in the subsequent layout of the roads and the disposition of the buildings, which were largely determined by the rules laid down by Lord Bute.

Figure 6.2.2. Cathays park prior to development by the Corporation with lines of Elm trees evident through the open area (source: Chappell, 1946).



By April 1897 a conditional purchasing agreement was signed between Bute and the Corporation and Parliamentary consent to the purchase was obtained in July of the same year. In December 1897 the costs of acquisition were paid and Cathays Park passed into the possession of the Corporation, although the area was not open to the public until March 1898. It should be said that the scheme formed an important part of Corporation's wider attempt to improve the condition of the city after the passing of 1898 Corporation Act, which involved a general improvement process based upon massive financial expenditure,

£800,000, to pay not just for public buildings but a new sewerage system for the western end of the settlement, a new asylum and electrified extensions to the existing tramway system (Daunton, 1977: 162). The Corporation had previously made piecemeal attempts to improve the architectural and environmental condition of Cardiff, as the Free Library (1880) and Roath Park (1889) indicated, but when compared with other provincial settlements at that time Cardiff grew and developed with relatively little public assistance. Only from the late 1890s did this situation alter to any marked extent.

Throughout 1897 plans for Cathays Park were under way after the signing of the purchasing agreement for the preparation of a new Town Hall and Law Courts (Chappell, 1946: 21). Not only was an assessor selected for the design competition of these buildings, the individual being the celebrated and experienced Alfred Waterhouse, reflecting the importance of the scheme to both local and national architectural practice, but by the end of 1897 the London based partnership of Henry Lanchester, Edwin Rickards and James Stewart had been awarded first prize in the competition. Construction of the buildings began in October 1901.

There can be little doubt that the Cathays Park episode offered Cardiff a situation for visual display and civic design thanks largely to the large and open site provided which offered a realistic possibility for impressive architectural planning. As the Daily Mail noted in 1909, the Cathays Park development offered “one of those rare opportunities which occur perhaps at intervals of centuries.” (7th January, 1909) The significance of the site should not be underestimated in the subsequent development of Cardiff’s civic centre, in particular for its openness and large spatial extent which allowed new public buildings to be erected in unencumbered positions at some distance from each other. It was noted that the “park land would provide the ideal setting for buildings representative of Cardiff’s new-found position and importance” (Fellows, 1995: 88), and can be seen to be reminiscent of the schemes constructed overseas at that time, particularly in America (Lanchester and Rickards in *The Architectural Review*, 1906: 233). Thomas Mawson (1911: 42) emphasised that the end result was spectacular for Cardiff and was to provide Edwardian Britain with a diminutive Washington D.C which was: “Unquestionably the finest example of forethought, enterprise and the grasp of the underlying principles which make for civic art.” In broader terms, the creation of a civic centre at Cathays Park reflected the flourishing importance of the settlement and marked Cardiff’s progress from small town to national capital by the end of the nineteenth century (Hilling, 1976: 94). Adshead in the *Town Planning Review* noted that: “No other provincial town can boast of having a City Hall, Law Courts, a County Hall, a

University and a National Museum grouped together amidst spacious surroundings and uncontrolled by any considerations other than those which conduce to a fine architectural scheme.” (1910: 147)

The Civic Centre, Cathays Park

The first pieces of architecture to be designed and constructed at Cathays Park were the Town Hall, known from this point as the City Hall due to Cardiff's city status being awarded in the early 1900s, and the Law Courts, which were to occupy the most prominent sites at the southern edge of the district (Chappell, 1946: 21). The total costs of construction of the two buildings totalled over £225,000, £129,700 for the City Hall and £96,500 for the Law Courts. The contractor was a local firm, E. Turner and Sons. Both buildings, designed by the partnership of Lanchester, Rickards and Stewart, were in a style that was to become known as Edwardian Baroque by the turn of the twentieth century.

The siting of the new buildings within Cathays Park was largely determined by the layout of the roads for the area by Borough Engineer William Harpur. This was influenced by the four lines of elm trees running north to south in the park grounds, planted between 1878 and 1890 by Lord Bute. These trees, which had to be preserved as part of the agreement made by Bute and the Corporation, “determined the site of the main road, King Edward VII Avenue” (Chappell, 1946:18), the roadway which separated the City Hall and Law Courts buildings from each other. The Avenue's planning role did not simply end at this point for it also acted as the primary marker for the lines of subsequent construction. However Lanchester, Rickards and Stewart did not comprehend this situation to be any sort of architectural problem for they utilised the direct form of the roadway by designing and planning their buildings beside it in a grand manner (Fellows, 1995:88). In so doing they presented Cardiff with a formal City Beautiful styled layout. In order to ensure that the sense of spaciousness was retained in the Park the minimum width of all roadways was set at 50 feet while the main approach to the area from the town centre, Kingsway, was given a width of 90 feet. The sense of space in the area was further increased by the designers of the buildings setting them back within the boundaries of their sites. This is significant for it allowed civic design elements to be introduced in prominent positions relating to the buildings' compositions.

The comprehensive planning opportunity offered at Cathays Park was made possible early on in the development of the area by the twin City Hall and Law Courts buildings being conceived as one homogeneous design scheme:

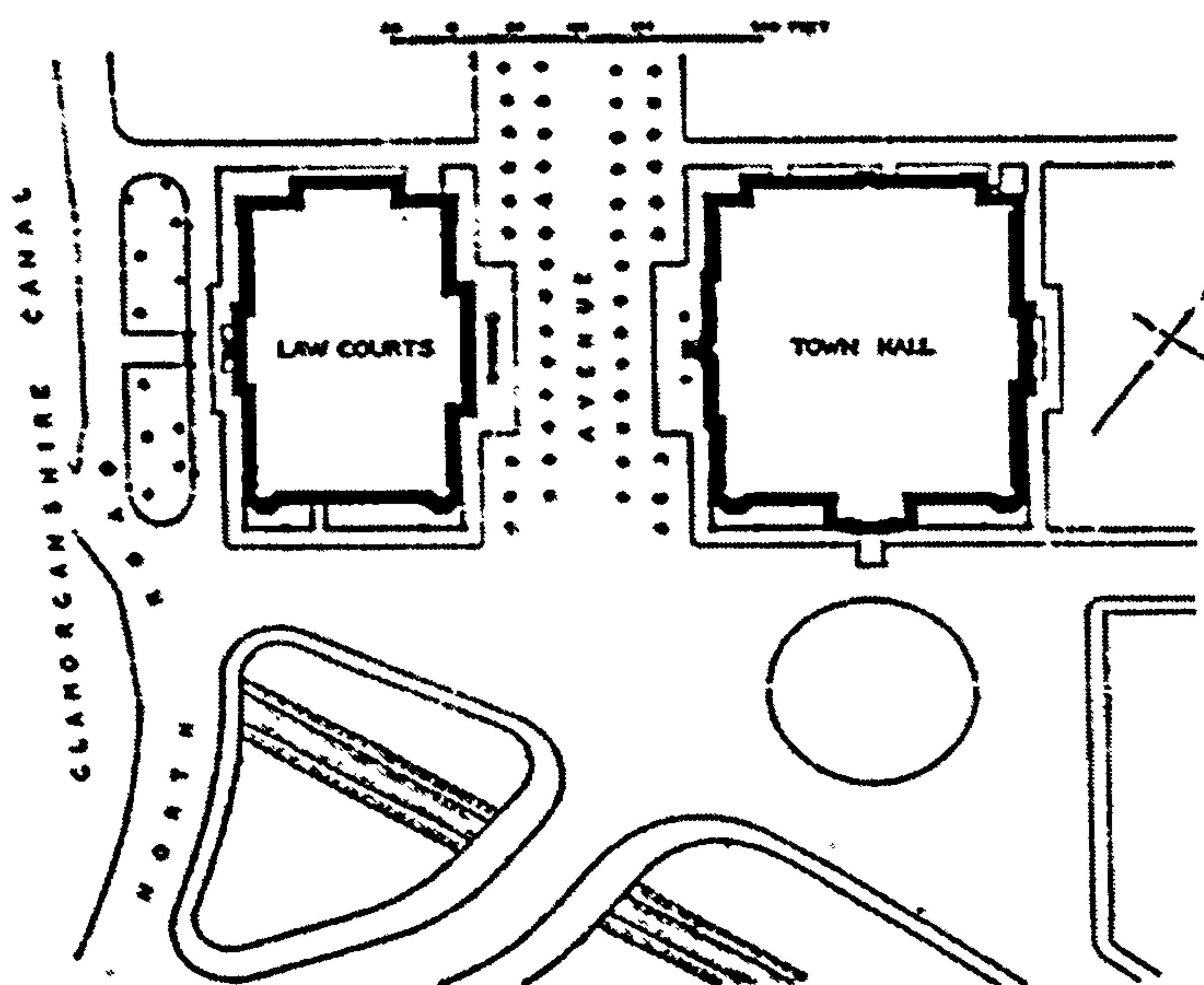
“The two buildings, as you walk around them, form a homogenous mass, and a beautifully animated skyline, from whichever point of view they are considered. Symmetrical in detail - that is to say, in the planning of each elevation - they are rhythmically varied when viewed in their totality.” (The Daily Mail, 7th January 1909)

The design of the City Hall is acknowledged, along with winning competition designs for Colchester Town Hall by John Belcher and Belfast City Hall by Brumwell Thomas, both designed in 1897, as being a high point in the revival of English Baroque architecture during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. In terms of the Cathays Park development the City Hall was the most dominant building and this was reflected not only in architectural terms, that is in the light of its design elements, but also the planning of the district, for it was placed on an alignment which passed directly through the centre of the district (see figure 4.16.15). The Law Courts building, facing the centre of the side of the City Hall, was designed in such a manner as to conform with the City Hall (Chappell, 1946: 21), aided by the fact that both buildings were constructed of the same material, Portland stone. Reilly (1931: 114) said of the two structures: “Here is a fine monumental layout of two remarkable buildings.”

The success of the City Hall design (see figures 6.2.3, 6.2.5 and 6.2.6) should not be taken lightly as Cunningham (1981: 157) argues that its Baroque form was responsible not only for a resurgence in Baroque architecture but that it “brought drama back to municipal buildings with a vengeance”. Hilling (1976) has remarked that the vigorously modelled building was a bravura statement while Cunningham (1981: 156) also described it as “a palace complete with domes, sculpture and a tall tower”. He added that it was also “a thoroughgoing piece of civic pride and a fitting beginning to the development of the sixty acre Cathays Park” (*Ibid.*: 156), a successful endeavour to merge a grand design on a large scale against the constraints of function and economic cost (Fellows, 1995:92).

The main concept of the Cardiff layout involved the positioning of two buildings of rectangular form on each side of a main avenue with their combined elevations fronting a large square (Service, 1975: 344). The most prominent civic design elements, such as vertical elements, the rusticated stonework and approaches to the main entrances, were positioned along the principal elevations of each building but “as far as possible the character of these fronts has been continued on all the various elevations.” (Lanchester and Rickards in *The Architectural Review*, 1908: 234) Other significant civic design features which linked the Law Courts and the City Hall included the similarity of each building’s scale and the use of the same design style and building materials. The link was further enhanced by axial planning lines that helped to relate the internal arrangements of each building together.

Figure 6.2.3. Block plan of the Law Courts (left) and City Hall, Cathays Park.



The main, south facing elevation of the City Hall (see figure 6.2.4), contained three principal masses, “the central one being occupied by the main entrance, with its richly treated porte-cochere which is used on ceremonial occasions.” (Purchon 1939: 34) Both the entrance and porte cochère were located on the central axis of the main elevation, which was marked by additional elements such as an entrance vestibule and one of the building’s most important rooms, the Council Chamber, above which sat the huge lead covered dome. The central (north-south) axis of the City Hall was maintained outside the edifice, the alignment marking the central point of the five acre open space to the north of the building called Alexandra

Gardens, the heart of the civic centre (Hilling, 1973: 152), and the centre of a circular garden area to the front of the City Hall.

Figure 6.2.4. The main elevation of the City Hall.



The visual success of the City Hall was achieved not only by the large dome but by the lantern, topped by a leaded figure of a dragon, by J.W. Singer and Sons, that allowed the structure to have additional height and therefore scale. However the dome was perhaps only a secondary feature in the composition of the building which reached its climax in the clock tower positioned at the centre of the west elevation. The position of this vertical element has civic design implications which will be discussed subsequently. The usage and design of the clock tower was universally praised not only for enhancing the overall composition of the building but due to it forming a landmark that added “beauty to many a prospect in Cardiff and the surrounding district.” (Purchon, 1939:34) The design was said to be “one of the most successful of all nineteenth-century Classical towers in Britain” (Hilling, 1973: 148).

The rich decoration of the 200 feet high clock tower, particularly on its upper sections, provided a considerable visual contrast with the rest of the City Hall structure upon which it stood. This decoration, of four figures and the city’s coat of arms, very much formed part of a conscious effort to make the tower somewhat individual, not only giving the settlement a landmark that local people could visually relate to but through its distinct design, which had sculptured figures symbolising both Cardiff and Wales, giving the settlement something which very much belonged to it. The stone decoration of the exterior formed an integral element in the building’s design and “while serving the same purpose in effect as the

traditional architectural ornament, has an interest derived from the purposes and environment of the buildings which it adorns.” (Lanchester and Rickards in *The Architectural Review*, 1908: 236) The decoration of the City Hall and the Law Courts too was also enhanced by the placing of a balustrade at roof level, with its decorative elements being placed directly above the window openings which were located in regular bays. This had the effect of establishing minor vertical axes along the symmetrically composed elevations of both buildings, which helped to complement the vertical alignments established by the clock tower and the dome.

The corners of the City Hall and Law Courts were marked by the placing of square pavilions, with raised roofs projecting above the normal roof line so to articulate them and forming settings for further sculpture. The rusticated pavilions, all of identical design, projected slightly from the main building line, like the main entrance (*Ibid.*: 234). The employment of pavilions established a symmetrical effect and, in addition, assisted in concealing the general fenestration differences between the Law Courts and City Hall while concurrently giving a sense of unity in architectural effect that:

“would otherwise have been impossible owing to the varied forms and requirements of the interiors of two buildings of such opposite character. This is especially to be felt in the facades towards the Avenue, which enclose interiors widely differing in purpose and entirely differing as to levels. Yet they are brought into line and enclosed by the pavilions which, beyond the ornament imposed, correspond in all their architectural forms.” (*Ibid.*: 236)

Figure 6.2.5. The Law Courts building, Cathays Park.

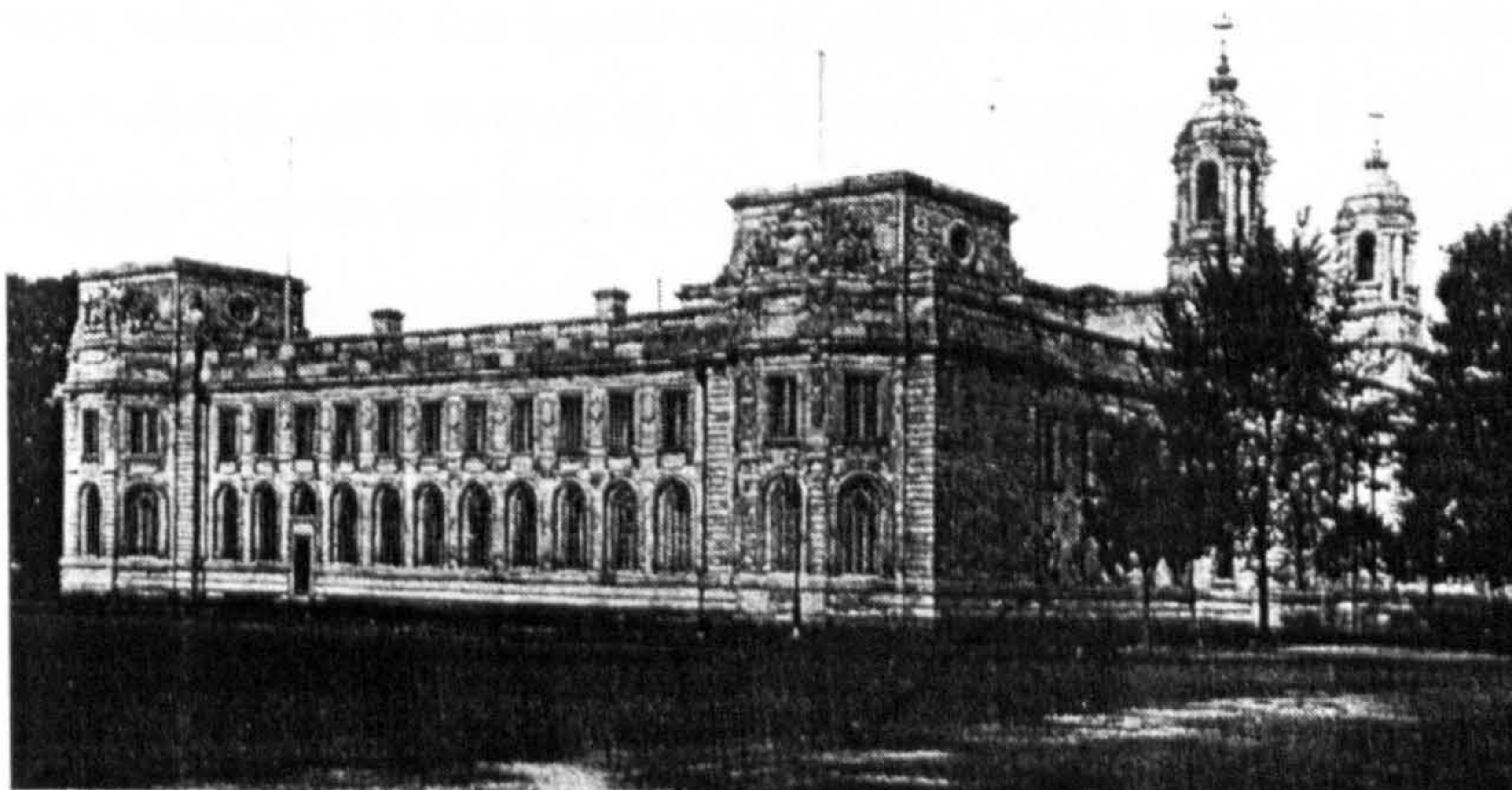


Figure 6.2.6. The City Hall with Law Courts in the background.



Other design means were employed by Lanchester, Rickards and Stewart, some of which have been mentioned previously, to bring about an impression of togetherness between the Law Courts and City Hall. These included the use of rustication, the raising of the buildings above ground level, the use of the same shaped window openings on both edifices, the southern elevations of both building sharing the same building line and the similarity of heights of the cornice lines of each building. Other means used by the architects related to the planning form of each building and involved the positioning of prominent spaces and design elements in locations that related to the form and plan of neighbouring edifices. The plans of both buildings will be discussed later.

Designed in a Baroque style, like the City Hall, the Law Courts (1898-1903) was a building of large scale and strong form. As Chappell (1946: 23) has shown: "The Civic Buildings, however, were not designed primarily as objects of architectural interest; the chief consideration was suitability to the functional purpose which they were intended to serve". The Law Courts building was divided by its internal arrangement into two sections, one containing two Assize Courts, the other containing two Police Courts, a Wreck Court and a Court which dealt with nautical matters, as well as Police offices and rooms for Magistrates.

While the Law Courts building appeared to have its principal elevation facing south like the City Hall in fact it was at a right angle to this, thus facing east. It was also designed with many interesting civic design features such as the recessed main entrance, positioned at the centre of the facade, that allowed for the introduction of architectural elements in front of

it, for example, a Doric portico and a loggia positioned on each side of the entrance doorway. This entrance block, used only by judges and not the public, was further emphasised in the design process by a large flight of steps being positioned in front of it. The axis from this entrance was continued not only within the building's internal arrangement but away from it too, emphasised by the position of the City Hall's clock tower to the east and the siting of the large Assembly Room at the centre of the building. Thus a strong east-west alignment through the two buildings' plans was established.

Figure 6.2.7. The main entrance of the Law Courts building.

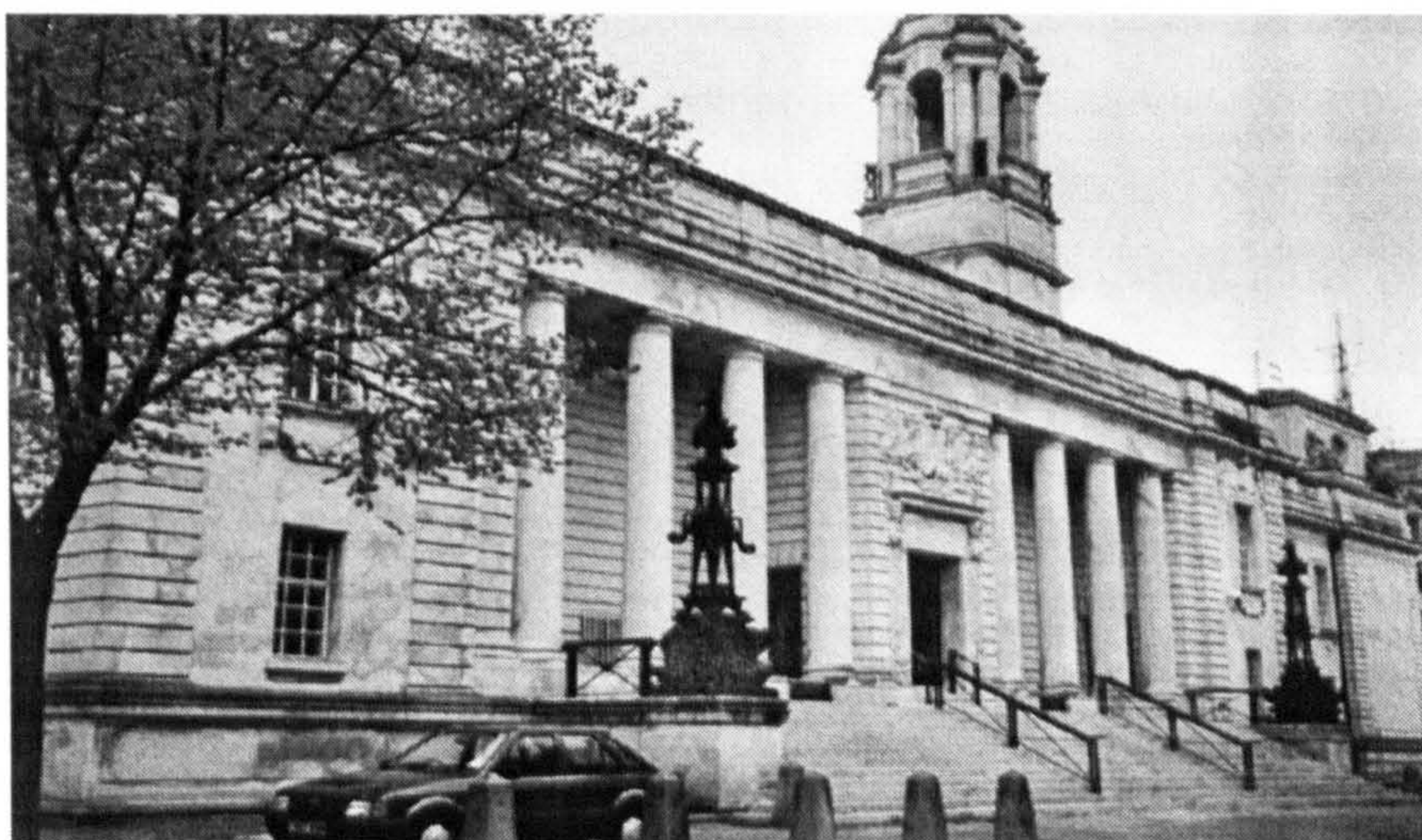


Figure 6.2.8. The side entrance of the City Hall. This entrance faces the Law Courts entrance across King Edward VII Avenue.

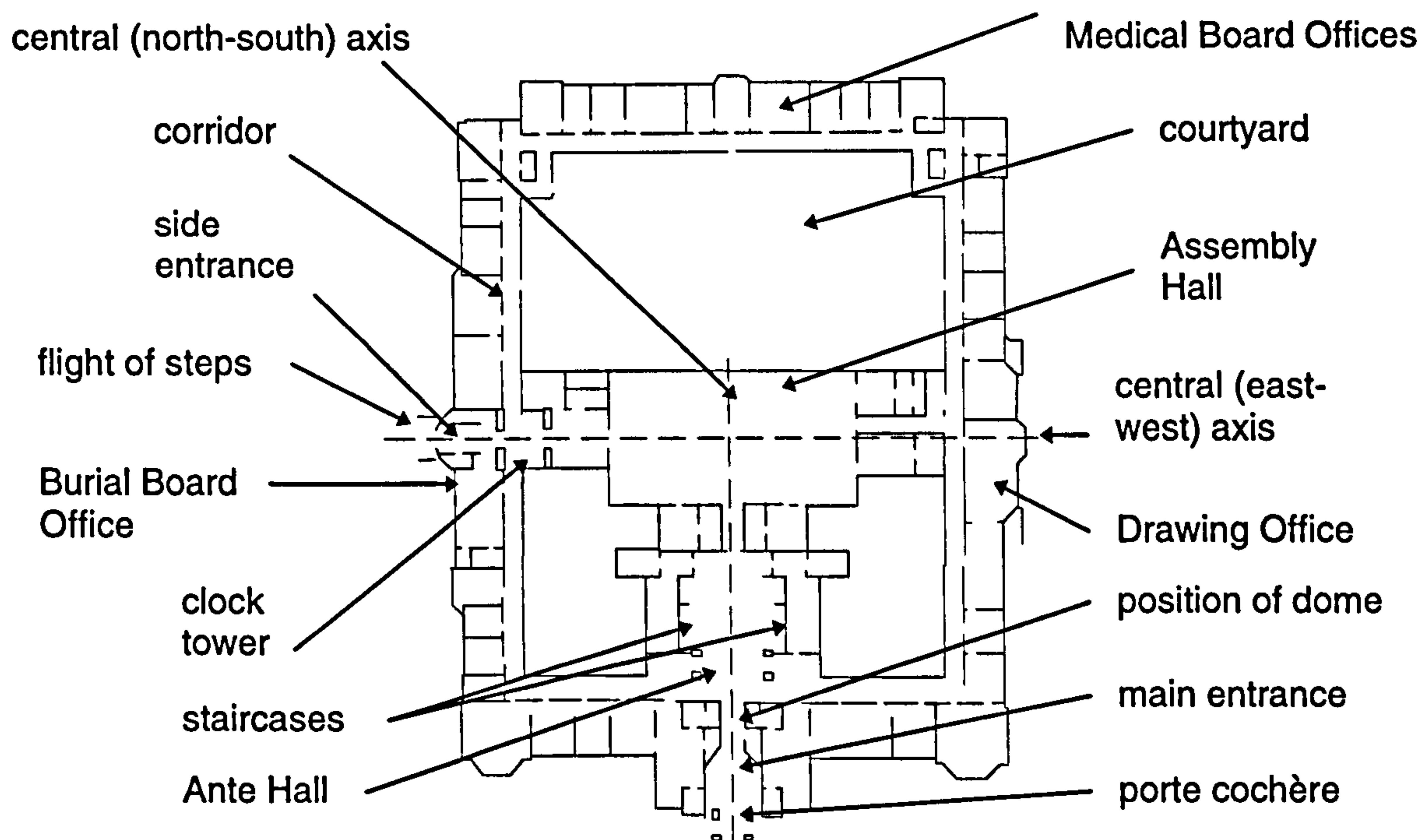


Inasmuch as the external planning arrangement was admirable so too were the internal arrangements of the City Hall (figure 6.2.9) and Law Courts (figure 6.2.10): “it is also generally agreed that the internal arrangements were also skilfully planned.” (Chappell, 1946:23) The dominant element in the planning of the City Hall was the need for the building to have spaces occupied with offices used to accommodate local authority staff, and spaces within which public activity and civic ceremony (Fellows, 1995: 88) could take place. Thus the internal planning had to be of a rational nature in order to fulfil functional demands placed upon it.

The plan of the City Hall followed a symmetrical form and comprised a centrally positioned ‘T’ shape at the southern end of the plan within an outer rectangle. The plan contained a number of interesting civic design elements, such as the positioning of important spaces, for example, the Assembly Hall and Council Chamber, within prominent parts of the plan. The centre of the front elevation was marked by a porte cochère, the recessed double door main entrance and an entrance vestibule whose walls were used to support the extra masonry needed to support the dome positioned directly above. Importantly in terms of civic design the central axis was continued outside of the building, although it did only corresponded with the central point of a circular garden area to the south, as noted previously. The central axis of the City Hall’s plan was continued inside the building as well beyond the main entrance and entrance vestibule due to the positioning of the long Hall area, within which two grand staircases were positioned opposite to each other. While the Hall gave access to the Assembly Hall, the largest space in the plan, 120 feet in length by almost 60 feet in width, which was located at the centre of the plan at ninety degrees to the central north-south axis and along the central east-west axis which corresponded with the main entrance of the Law Courts building. This east-west alignment was also marked by a side entrance and associated features such as a flight of steps and by the clock tower to the west of the City Hall’s plan. The importance of the Council Chamber led it to being handled as a special feature within the internal arrangement, hence it was placed in a prominent position at the centre of the front elevation above the entrance vestibule. Inside the Council Chamber seating was arranged in three tiers following the lines of the dome situated above it (The Builder, 1905: 494), while Committee Rooms and rooms to be used only by the Lord Mayor were placed on each side from the Council Chamber. Office spaces within the building were placed against the outer walls of the building and a ring corridor of the type first employed by Alfred Waterhouse in Manchester’s Town Hall was placed inside the office spaces so as to allow circulation around the building for the Corporation’s staff. The planning system

employed was particularly practical, given the large scale of the building and the opulent effect required by the Corporation within the context of Cathays Park.

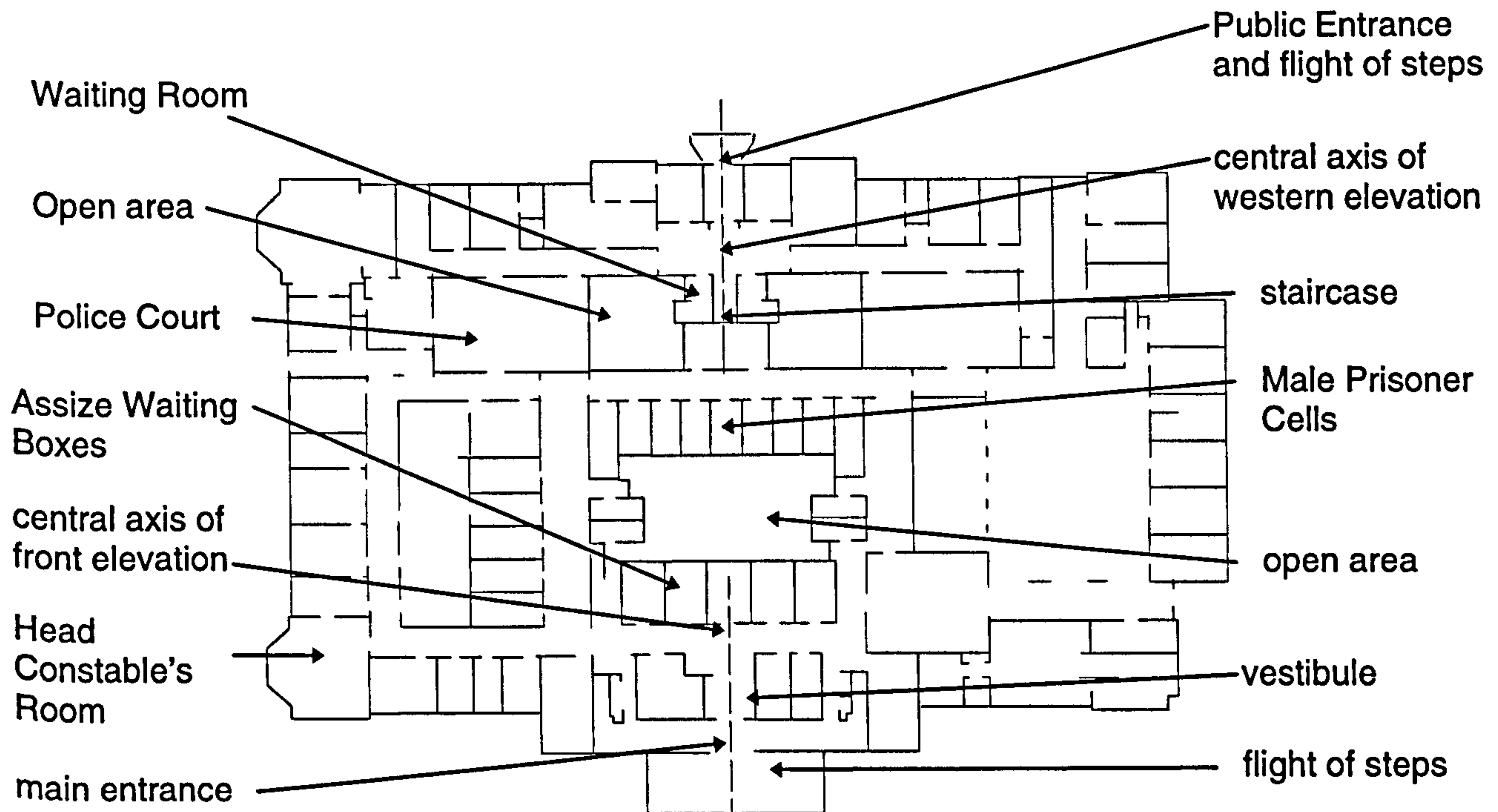
Figure 6.2.9. City Hall's ground floor plan.



The internal planning of the Law Courts building was also based on symmetrical lines although it had a considerably different internal layout. The plan of the building was based largely on the central axis running east to west through the building, an alignment that corresponded with the central axis of the western elevation of the nearby City Hall, which as noted previously, was marked by the main entrance and a broad flight of steps in front of the building and by a smaller flight of steps, a side entrance and the clock tower on the City Hall. Two loggias were also placed near to the main entrance, both located so as to correspond with the central axis of the front elevation of the Law Courts. Also evident in the internal arrangement was a minor axis running north to south in the western most or rear part of the building which was associated with the layout of a number of prominent spaces, such as two Police Courts, two open areas, a prisoner consulting room and a prisoner's waiting room, all located in proximity to each other. It was in this western part of the plan, where the layout was most symmetrical in form, that public access was most open. On the opposite side of the building's plan, that is the part of the plan nearest to the grand entrance at the centre of the eastern elevation, was where public access was very limited. However both the public and non-public sections of the plan were situated on each side of the large Court spaces

positioned towards the centre of the internal arrangement, although these court spaces were not located so as to form a strong central axis.

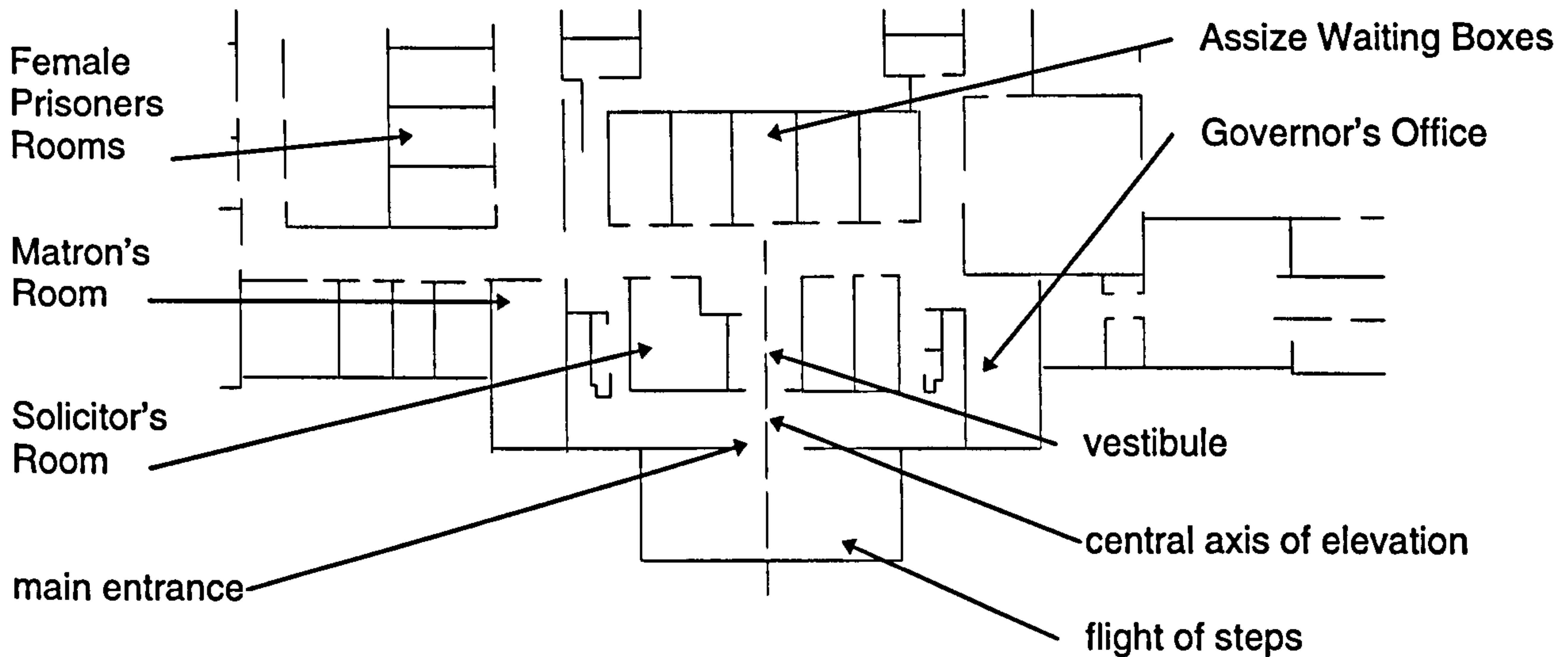
Figure 6.2.10. The ground floor plan of the Law Courts.



As stated earlier, the magistrates were provided with their own entrance at the centre of the main elevation in front of which were positioned features like steps that were marked on each side by a low stone wall and sculptures placed on plinths. Behind the entrance was positioned a vestibule. The public entrance was placed at the opposite side of the plan at the centre of the west facing elevation, and was also marked by a centrally placed broad flight of steps, albeit of a smaller scale than that of the other entrance, with the axis of the entrance terminated inside the building by the placing of a grand staircase behind it. The central area of the building, that is the area that was approached immediately upon entering the building from each side, consisted of waiting rooms for the Assize Courts and the male prisoner cell rooms. The importance of the Governor and Matron was reflected by their rooms each being placed alongside the judge's entrance (see figure 6.2.11), positioned directly beneath the loggias with the extra masonry used to support the vertical elements being used as walls for the spaces. Thus the extra masonry used to support the vertical element had small effect on the plan of the building, while the importance of the Head Constable was highlighted by him being given a room in the prominent south eastern corner pavilion. Clerks of the Courts, such as the Deputy Sheriff and High Sheriff, were given rooms at the southern end of the building. Judges rooms and jury retiring rooms were

positioned in a line at the side of the assize court rooms which occupied central positions in the first floor plan.

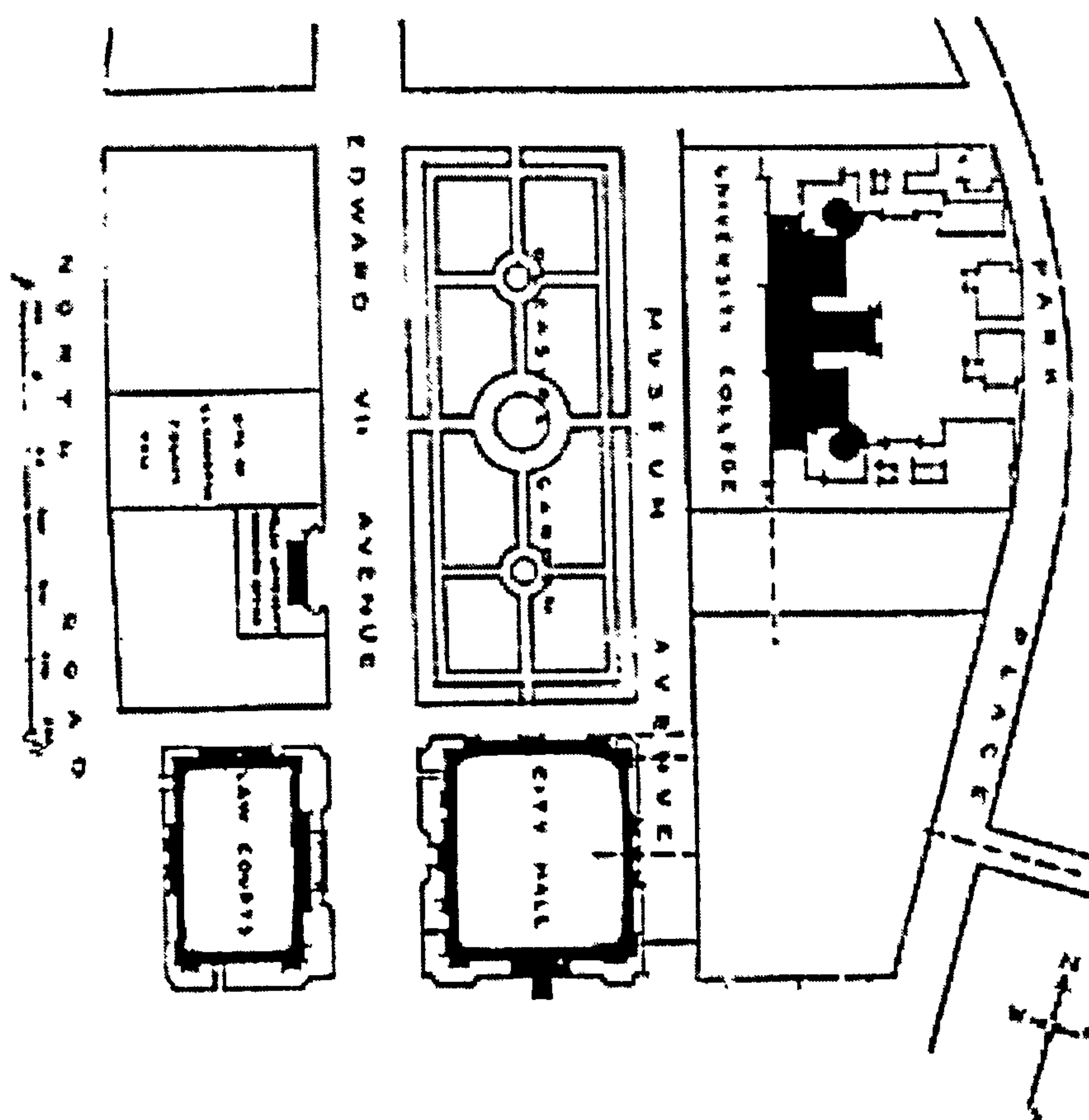
Figure 6.2.11. Enlarged plan of the central section of the Law Courts' front elevation.



South Wales University College

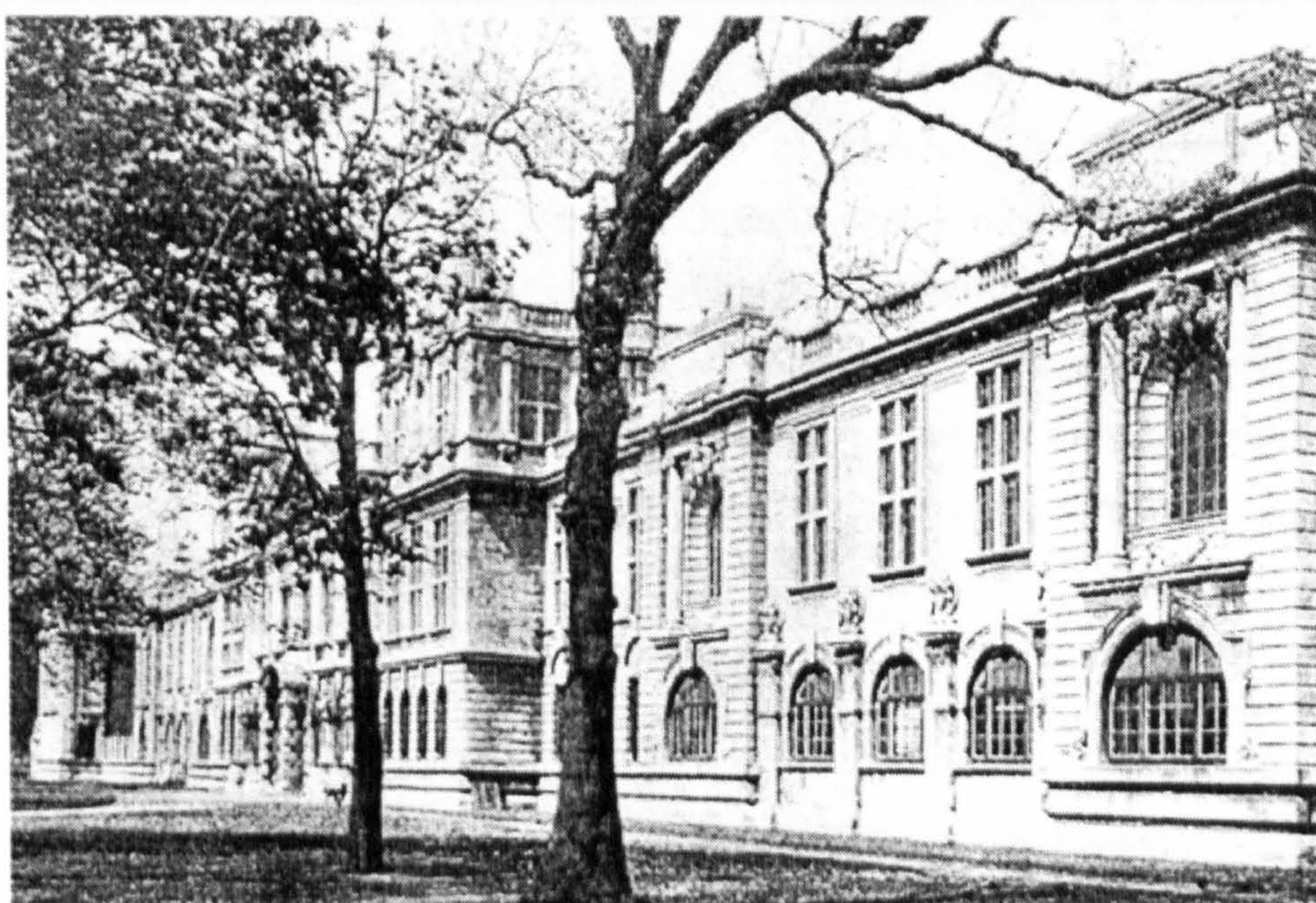
The next civic building to be erected in Cathays Park was that of the South Wales University College. In 1900 the Corporation granted a five acre site to the University College authorities between Park Place and the proposed Museum Avenue for the building of a College (see figure 6.2.12). Adshead criticised the decision to site the University College to the east of Cathays Park on civic design grounds and argued that the Corporation was not treating the development of the district as a whole: "The University, therefore, which ought, as a building practically of equal importance and competing on equal terms with the City Hall, to have been placed on the same axis and on the main axis of the site, was eventually placed on the east side, the idea being to get greater width for its facade." (1910: 147)

Figure 6.2.12. Block Plan of Cathays Park showing the site of the University College.



By 1903 the College's administrators had established a design competition, won by W.D. Caroe in May of the following year. Turner and Sons were the building contractors and the estimated cost of construction was about £225,000. *The Builder* (1904: 495) described the new building as follows: "we consider this one of the best thought-out plans for a large and complicated building which we have seen of late years, and it is probably to this element in the design that its selection was largely due." The design of the building, summarised by Freeman (1990: 209) as being based upon 17th century metropolitan and provincial Classicism and laced with well-honed elements from continental Baroque models, was in a manner similar to that used for the Law Courts and the City Hall and suggests that there was a common approach to the design of the buildings in Cathays Park. The style was somewhat reinforced by the competition regulations which demanded that all external elevations should be faced with Portland stone (*Ibid.*: 209), the material used on the Law Courts and City Hall. Furthermore the competition rules stated that the heights of plinths and cornices should be the same as those of the nearby City Hall (*Ibid.*: 209). "In the architectural design harmony with the new Municipal buildings has been considered. Simplicity and reserve in form and feature have been the aim, and no costly dominating note, such as a tower or cupola, has been introduced." (*The Builder*, 1904: 495)

Figure 6.2.13. The front elevation of the University College.



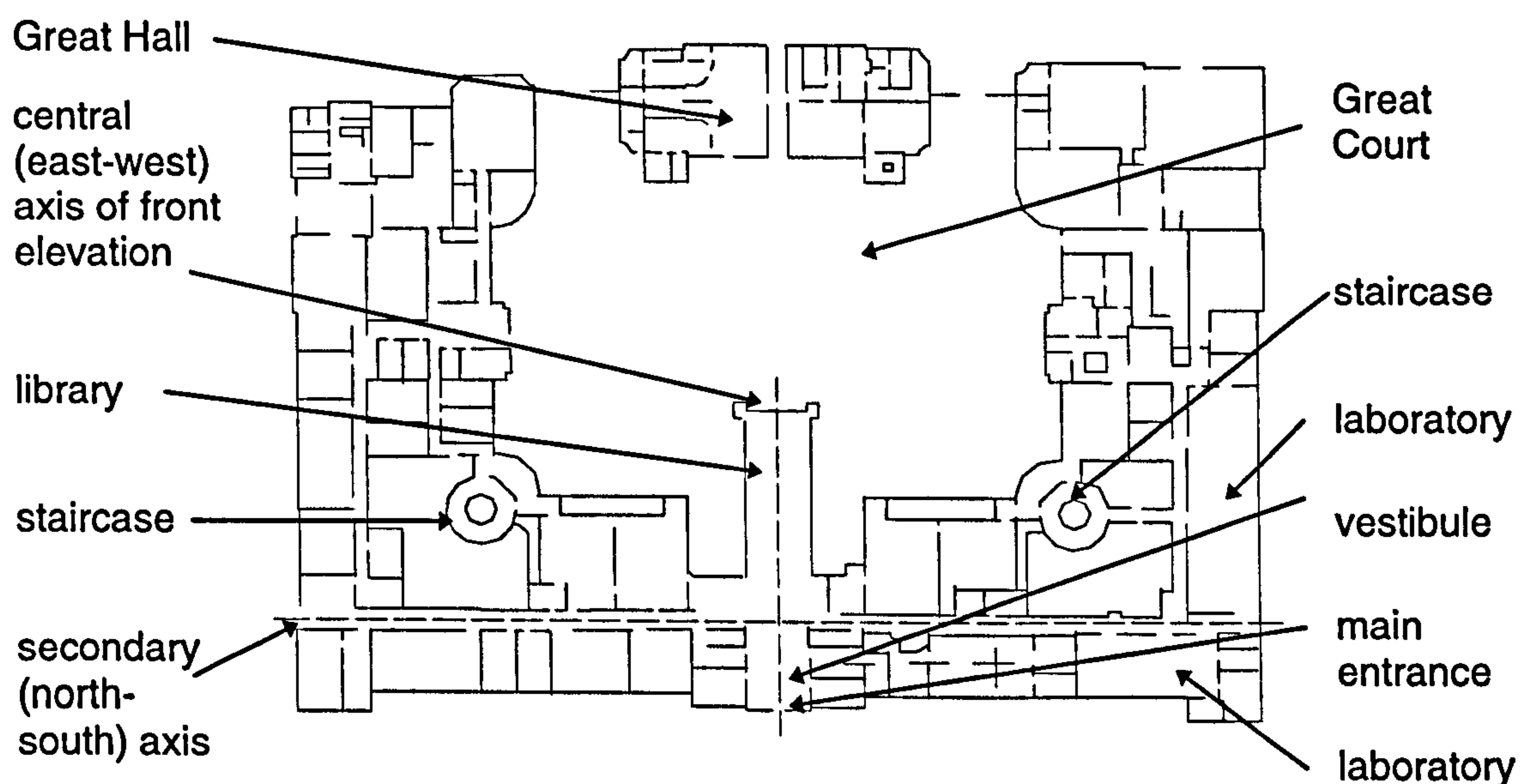
The University College building like those already erected in Cathays Park was huge and the main elevation, for example, covered a distance of more than 400 feet. The front elevation was marked at its centre by the recessed main entrance. The building line of the whole of this part of the structure was brought forward beyond the main building line of the front elevation and above were placed two porticos, a small arched one at ground floor level and a large, triangular one above the first floor. In addition, the central axis of the building was marked in front of the structure by a statue of Henry Austin Bruce, first Lord Aberdare, positioned in Alexandra Garden, a formal garden situated west of the College across a roadway later known as Museum Avenue, a feature of civic design significance. Two turrets were also placed towards the centre of the building, located relative to the central axis of the main elevation. The ends of the main elevation and certain intermediate sections were marked by rustication while window openings were round arched at the ground floor level and rectangular at the first floor level, apart from at the ends of the elevation where they were rounded. They were however placed in regular bays along the symmetrically composed main elevation.

By situating the building away from the boundary of its site Caroe permitted the introduction of civic design elements and also allowed for the laying out of a carriageway of semi-circular plan that led from Museum Avenue to the main entrance, laid out in a manner which

corresponded with the central (east-west) axis of the building and its plan. Museum Avenue went past the front of the University College and not directly towards it, which meant that Caroe's composition had to be appreciated at an acute or sharp angle, yet Caroe was still able to draw the eye to the elevation through establishing an alternation based on recessions and projections, varying the height of the building and creating an arcade at the centre of the facade. End pavilions emphasised the importance of the corners to the overall symmetrical composition. Thus through practising intelligent design based on the assembly of geometric form Caroe was able to make the building have an impact which reached its climax in the central portion of the elevation where the rhythm drew any sense of movement inwards to the portico and main entrance and then up towards the cupola.

The general plan of the College was of a three sided block, the fourth wall supposedly being the Great Hall which was never built. The plan of the College was dictated by symmetry, the dominating feature being the formation of the Great Court, a open space of over 200 feet by 200 feet, and the general duality of the planning form, a consequence of the need to provide men and women's accommodation separately.

Figure 6.2.14. The ground floor plan of the University College.



The planning of University College was based initially on a central alignment, the main entrance and the vestibule being linked to the large library space. Located at ninety degrees to the library space was a secondary axis, a corridor whose alignment was similar to that of the central axis of the subsequent National Museum of Wales, erected from 1910. The

interior planning and organisation has been considered to be “exceptional” (*Ibid.*: 211) due to its ability to permit the free circulation of large numbers of students within it. In civic design terms, however, it has perhaps far less worth:

In 1910 the Town Planning Review (1910: 75) noted that “Cardiff...almost alone of English cities, has been grouping its new public buildings so as to create an architectural centre”. This core was subsequently to be enhanced by other proposals, including a combined Museum and Art Gallery building which was initially proposed in February 1905 (*The Builder*, 1905: 155), a structure to be “built of Portland stone, to harmonise with the new town hall and law courts.” (*Ibid.*:155) However it was not until 1911 that construction on the new building, named the National Museum of Wales, was begun.

The National Museum of Wales

In 1910 the Corporation launched a competition for the design of the new national museum, to be composed of six departments, at an outlay of £250,000 excluding decorative sculpture costs. The rules of the competition again put an emphasis on relating the new structure to the existing buildings in proximity to it:

“From the position of the site on the east side of the City Hall and the relation of the Law Courts on its west side, it is thought desirable that externally the museum building should be designed in harmony with these buildings, that, as far as possible, it may be in sympathy with the general scheme adopted. All elevations must be executed in best Portland stone.” (*The Builder*, 1910: 405)

The London based partnership of Smith and Brewer was selected as competition winners by assessors Sir Aston Webb, J.J. Burnet and Edwin Hall, for a design and plan which had a strong association with the existing public buildings in Cathays Park. The new Museum’s front elevation at the southern end of its site, for example, aligned with the building lines of the adjacent City Hall and Law Courts. In addition, the Museum was designed with plinths, cornices, window openings and parapets of the same general height as the City Hall, “and the outline of the angle pavilions repeated.” (*Ibid.*: 382)

Figure 6.2.15. The National Museum of Wales (source: *The Builder*, 1910).



The end pavilions, like those of the City Hall, would accommodate sculpture galleries, articulated in a “severe simple manner” (The Design Report by Smith and Brewer, *The Builder*, 1910: 382). The National Museum’s design, more Classical than Baroque, and scale was similar to that of the City Hall and it employed many of its features. The utilising of such design characteristics can be perceived to represent a deliberate policy on the part of the designers of the new building to retain the effect of symmetry in relation to the form of the nearby City Hall and the Law Courts (*Ibid.*: 464).

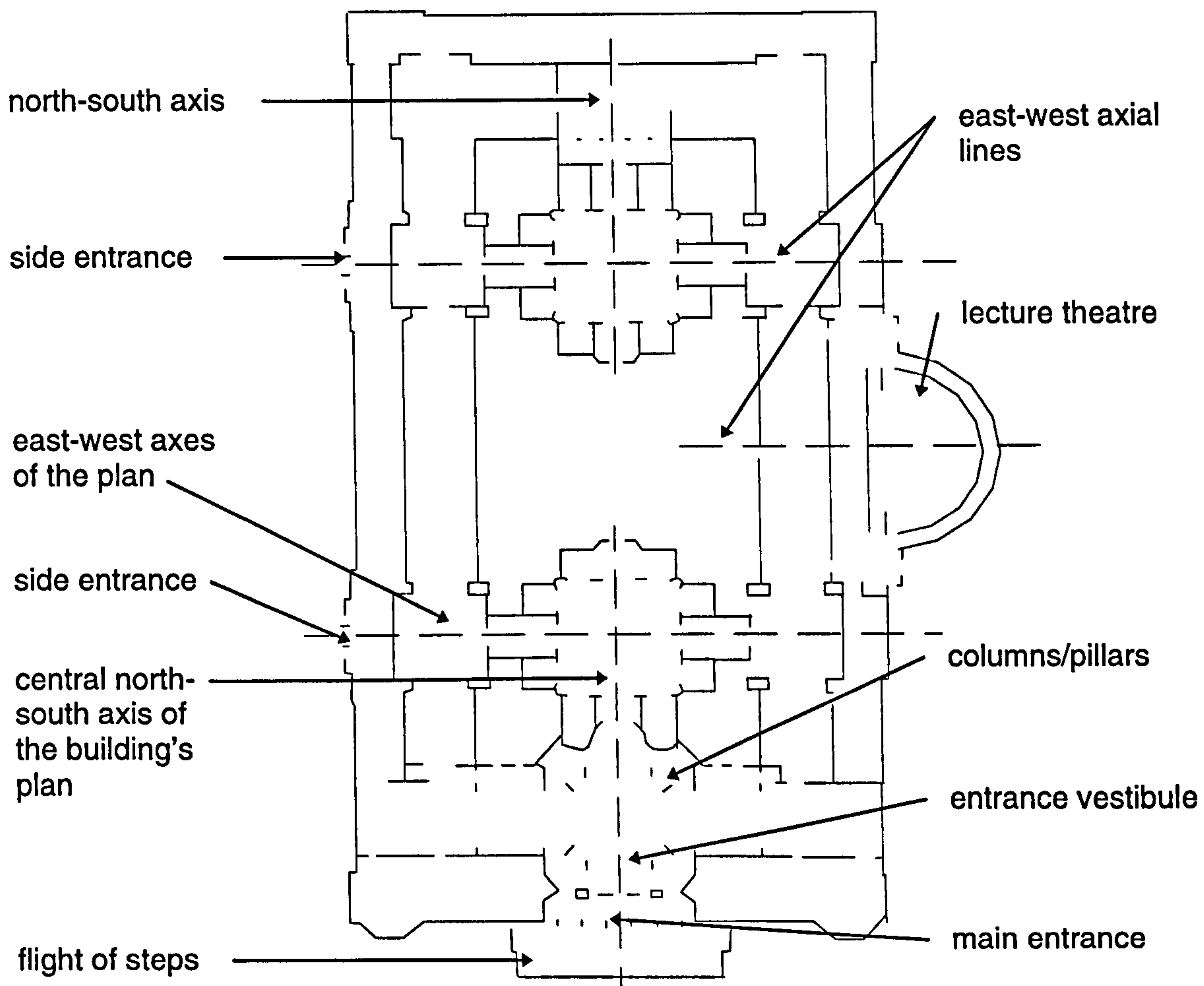
Smith and Brewer apparently realised that they could secure a collective sense of symmetry in the facades of the three buildings facing south towards Gorsedd Gardens and the centre of Cardiff, that is the new Museum, the City Hall and Law Courts. Chappell (1946: 33), through using particular design and planning elements. Writing of this particularity, *The Builder* (*The Builder*, 1910: 464) noted of the National Museum: “Its stately facade harmonises well with the City Hall and with its attractive surroundings.” In addition, the distance between the Museum and the City Hall was approximately equal to the distance between the Law Courts and City Hall, which had the effect of making the facade of the Museum seem roughly equal to that of that of the Law Courts.

The style of the large scale National Museum, in keeping with the scale of its surroundings was essentially Baroque, influenced perhaps by the Grecian styled structures of Otto Wagner and the neo-Classical works of American City Beautiful patrons McKim, Mead and White. (Hilling, 1973: 151) This produced a “very fine and powerful building with an almost sphinx-like appearance.” (*Ibid.*: 150) The Builder, taking a more matter-of-fact attitude, noted that the “elevations are dignified, though not remarkable” (1910: 344) and that the recessed main entrance at the centre of the rusticated south elevation, indented in order to allow for the introduction of civic design elements, was marked by a Doric portico supported by four pairs of double columns placed relative to the central axis of the elevation. The main entrance was approached by a broad flight of stairs which led into a vestibule and an entrance hall at the rear of the doorway. The most noticeable feature of the building was, akin to the City Hall, a 90 feet high dome that was situated directly above the monumental Main Hall on the central axis of the front elevation. Additional civic design elements that assisted the new building to fit in with its surroundings included the raising of the building above the street level and the marking of the ground floor level with banded stonework. Such features were also found on the nearby Law Courts and City Hall buildings.

Smith and Brewer’s design took the form of a symmetrical plan based around a garden court, the principal means to light the galleries situated around it. The garden also served a practical purpose by forming the roof of the aquarium placed in the basement, so as to shield it from the influence of external changes of temperature. The plan of the building contained a number of prominent axes. The first ran centrally from the southern, front end of the building to the northern, rear elevation through the court in the centre of the plan in a position related to the principal north-south corridor in the University College. Along this axis were placed prominent features such as the main entrance, a vestibule, a dome and a large gallery space. Three other axes could be seen in the plan, running east-west across the building, two of which were marked by side entrances on the elevation facing the City Hall, behind which were placed galleries. The third east-west axis ran from the lecture theatre situated at the centre of the east elevation. In addition, the plan of the National Museum was of such a form that it related to the composition of the nearby City Hall, which is of some note in terms of civic design. For example, the central east-west axis of the City Hall, marked by the clock tower and Assembly Hall, which aligned with the centre of the Law Courts and its design elements, may have been employed as a marker to help position an entrance and pavilion on the western elevation of the new Museum. Thus as a consequence of the axis being marked on the side facade of the National Museum a major alignment was established through the south of Cathays park, along which important architectural and

planning elements were found. A major axial line occurring through three neighbouring public buildings was not seen elsewhere in Britain during the period examined by this work.

Figure 6.2.16. The ground floor plan of the National Museum of Wales.



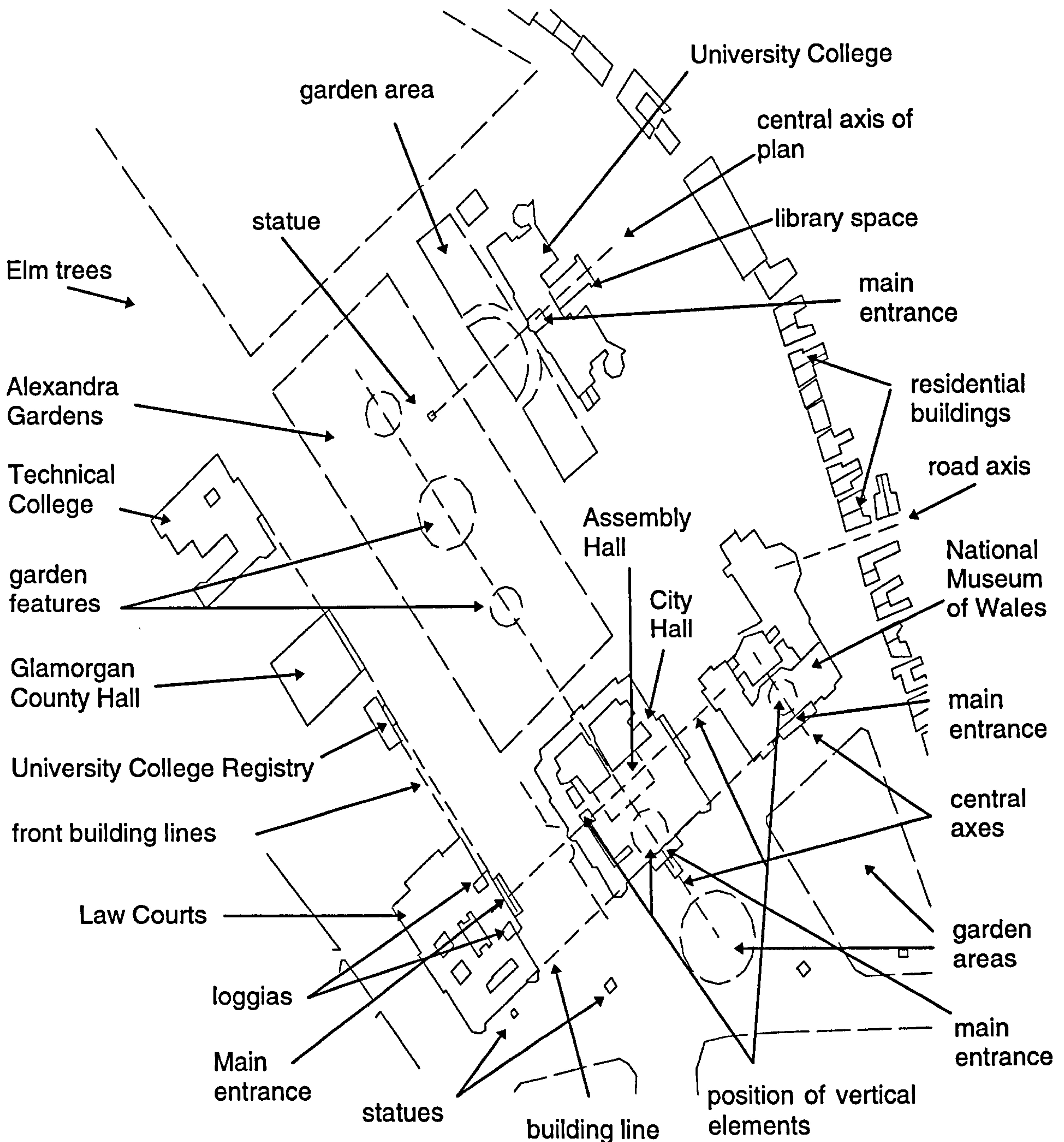
All the public galleries in the National Museum were contained on the ground floor while the shape of the building left ample space to the east of the site for further additions to occur. The space was used in the meantime for the placing of sculpture, a significant artistic element in Cathays Park, and Chappell (1946: 27) noted: "Probably few cities can boast of such a large amount and variety of architectural carving and sculptured work within such a limited area as are contained in Cathays Park." The spaces surrounding the central court were occupied solely by the 'Gallery of Industries' and 'Geology and Mineralogy Galleries'. A separate public entrance was provided to give access to the art galleries. The simple form of the plan ensured that upon passing through the main entrance visitors entered into the main hall that opened into various gallery spaces. These galleries then led onto further gallery

spaces with, for example, the range of Industries and Geology Galleries acting as “a broad artery of communication round the whole building” (*Ibid.*: 344).

The central (north-south) axis of the Museum was marked by a staircase at each end of the internal arrangement. The secondary east-west axes in the building’s plan were of almost equal significance and marked by pavilions on the side elevations of the Museum. The positioning of these pavilions and their axes, related directly to the axes of the City Hall and Law Courts. For example, the most northern east-west axis in the Museum corresponded to the building line of the northern elevations of the Law Courts and City Hall. Such was the strength of these three axes commented Adshead in the Town Planning Review (1910: 150), that it changed the axial balance of Cathays Park, removing the primacy of the north-south axis through the centre of the City Hall. At the centre of the east facing elevation Smith and Brewer placed a semi-circular lecture theatre, the position of which corresponded to the alignment of the roadway (see figure 6.2.17). Thus the central east-west axis of the Museum continued away from the building and in so doing helped the building to relate to its surroundings.

By the time of the first section of the National Museum was completed in 1926, the process of building was suspended between 1915 and 1920 partly due to the War effort, additional buildings had been erected in Cathays Park. These structures included the University College Registry Offices, a building of small size designed by Wills and Anderson that was opened in 1904, and the Glamorgan County Hall which was built so as to provide accommodation for the Glamorgan County Council. This building was established as a result of the passing of the Local Government Act of 1888 and was erected on a site to the west of Cathays Park. Designed by competition winners Vincent Harris and T.A. Moodie in 1908, the building was “a remarkably competent design by any standards and the more so for being the first independent work of a young architect.” (*Ibid.*: 153) The cost of the scheme was almost £68,000.

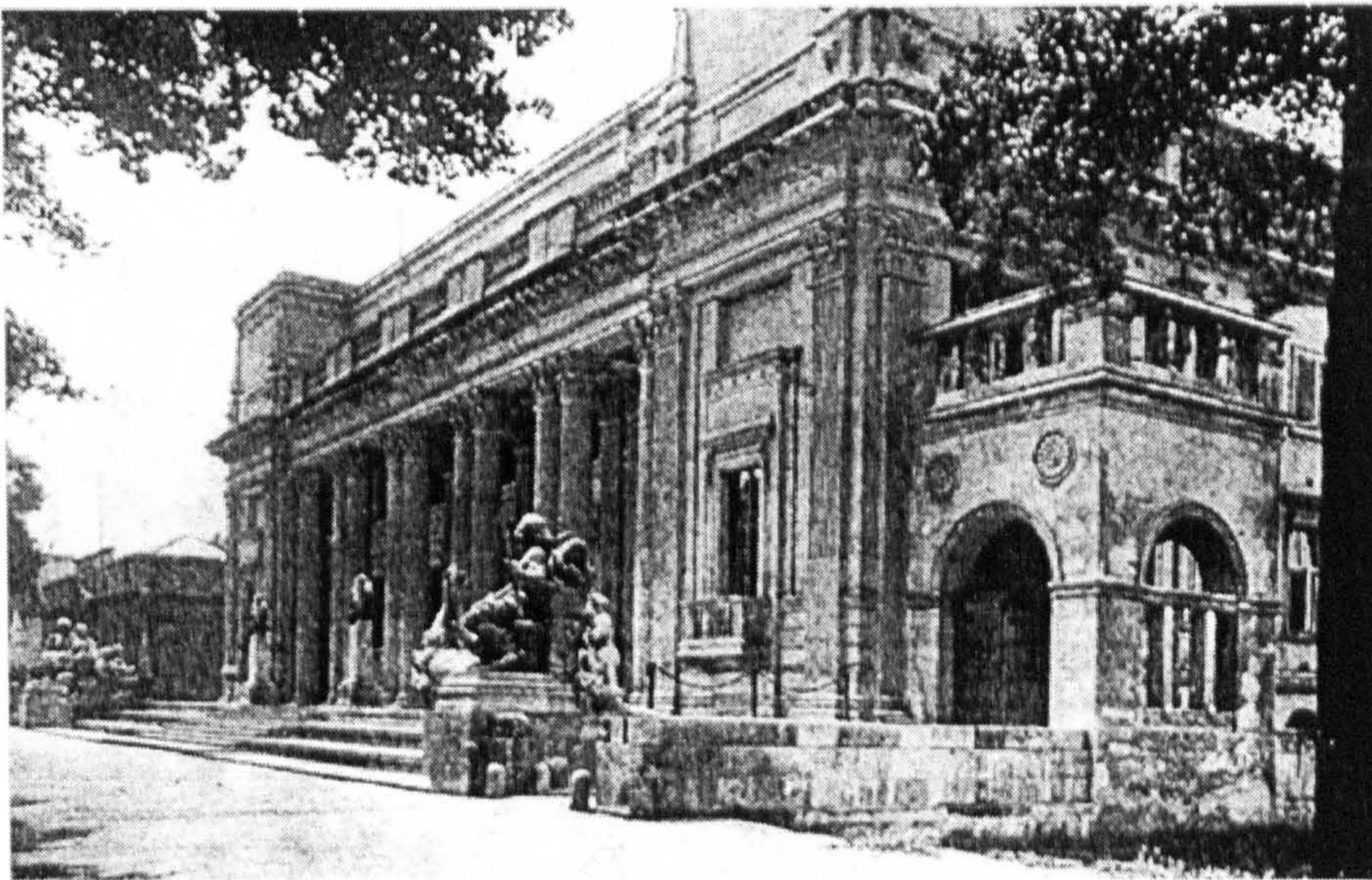
Figure 6.2.17. A plan of Cathays Park in 1920 with the axial planning lines and architectural features of the public buildings shown.



Standing north of the University Registry Office on King Edward VII Avenue, Hilling (1973: 153) described the two storey Glamorgan County Hall as being “small and unpretentious, it is a pleasant building in the Classical mode with Ionic columns fronting the entrance and a small semicircular court inside.” Hilling (*Ibid.*: 153) suggested that the County Hall was the

“best of the strictly Classical buildings” in the district, erected “at a time when Lanchester, Stewart and Rickards had astonished their contemporaries with their neo-Baroque City Hall and Law Courts at Cardiff; the more classic lines of Harris and Moodie’s County Hall was a sign that the classical idiom from Paris and America had arrived.” (Gray, 1985: 207)

Figure 6.2.18. The front elevation of the Glamorgan County Hall.



The symmetrical main facade of the County Hall, which faced east, was marked at the centre by a recessed main entrance and portico with paired Corinthian pillars, flanked by end pavilions. A flight of stairs led up to the principal elevation and the entrance, and a stone wall of low height was evident at the sides of the steps. The steps were brought forward from the building to such an extent that they aligned with the steps of the central section of the Law Courts to the south of the site where that building’s main entrance was positioned. The columns along the front of the building supported a cornice and a balustrade parapet between the corner pavilions that were decorated by pilasters. Two sculptured groups, called Navigation and Mining, symbolising the two staple industries in the South Wales region, were positioned on stone podiums at each end of the eastern elevation at the side of the flight of steps in front of the main entrance.

In terms of its internal arrangement the building was not particularly innovative, with a symmetrical square form being employed, the centre of which was marked by the circular Council Chamber to the rear of the main entrance. The plan was of a simple form

incorporating two axes, one from the centre of the front facade which was marked by a large entrance vestibule, with a Porter's Lodge and Office to each side, and a flight of steps leading to the front of the Council Chamber. The other axis consisted of a passageway, crossing the main one within the entrance vestibule at a ninety degree angle. This corridor alignment provided access to the many office spaces positioned at the front and sides of the building. An arched dome on the roof also marked the central axis of the building above the Council Chamber. The rest of the building was surmounted by a flat roof.

Further developments in Cathays Park

Civic design developments continued in Cathays Park along King Edward VII Avenue when in 1914 the Lord Mayor laid the foundation stone for a new Technical College on a site to the north of the area close to College Road. Designed by locally based architects Ivor Jones and Percy Thomas, whose Classical design was selected from the open competition. The Architectural Review noted the influence of foreign design practice in Cardiff, stating that the new building was "reminiscent of that scholarly type of classical architecture which has distinguished the public buildings of the United States" (1916: 105). Thus the 'city beautiful' of America was evident within Edwardian Cardiff. However the College's design was perceived to be more severe than that of its neighbours, (Chappell, 1946: 45) relying on beauty by means of "architectural form and proportion rather than on ornament and sculpture." (*Ibid.*: 45) Portland stone, already well prescribed in Cathays Park, was used for construction of the main elevations (The Builder, 1913: 346). The principal elevation, facing eastwards, was marked at its centre by a Doric portico of six columns. Behind the portico was positioned the main entrance and a vestibule. Rustication was applied to the ends of the front elevation and the ends of the projecting central section of the principal facade. A flat stone plinth surmounted the central section of the building at the roof level. Window openings were positioned in regular bays along all elevations.

The 3½ acre site of the Technical College, three sides of the building were completed by 1916, was arguably one of the best sites in Cathays Park, "having frontages to King Edward VII Avenue, College-Road, and the North-Road" (*Ibid.*: 345). The public building, like others in Cathays Park, was set back within its site and Jones and Thomas were able to not only introduce civic design elements such as those situated in front of the main entrance, but

they were also able to make use of air and light from the vacant land around the building. This had the additional effect of enhancing the sense of space about the structure as well as the sense of scale of the building which was set back from the broad roadway, King Edward VII Avenue, that was situated at its front. A plan of the Cathays Park area of Cardiff in 1920 is shown overleaf (figure 6.2.21).

Figure 6.2.19. The Technical College's front elevation as seen from King Edward VII Avenue.

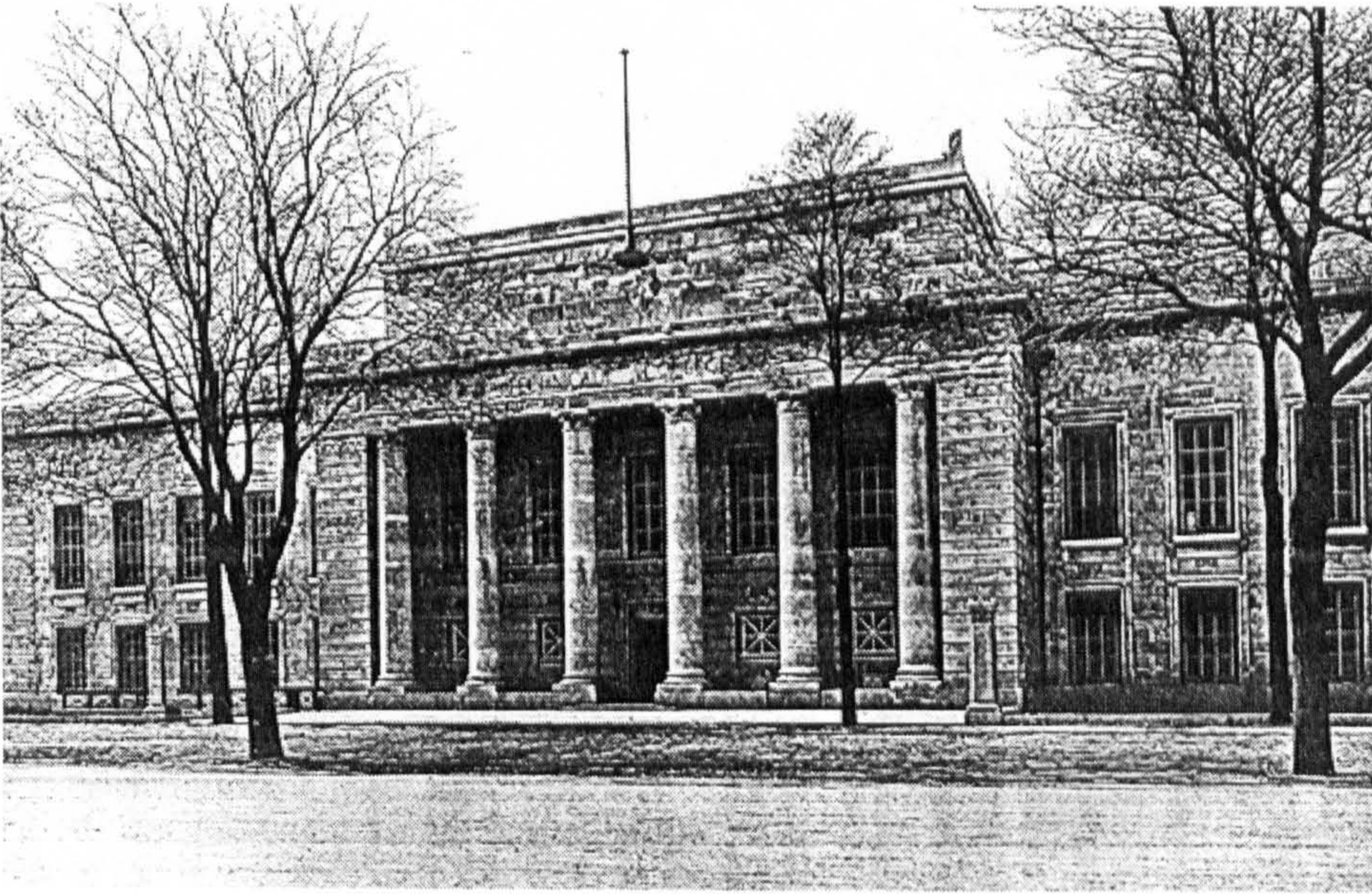


Figure 6.2.20. Transverse and longitudinal sections of the Technical College (source: The Architectural Review, 1916).

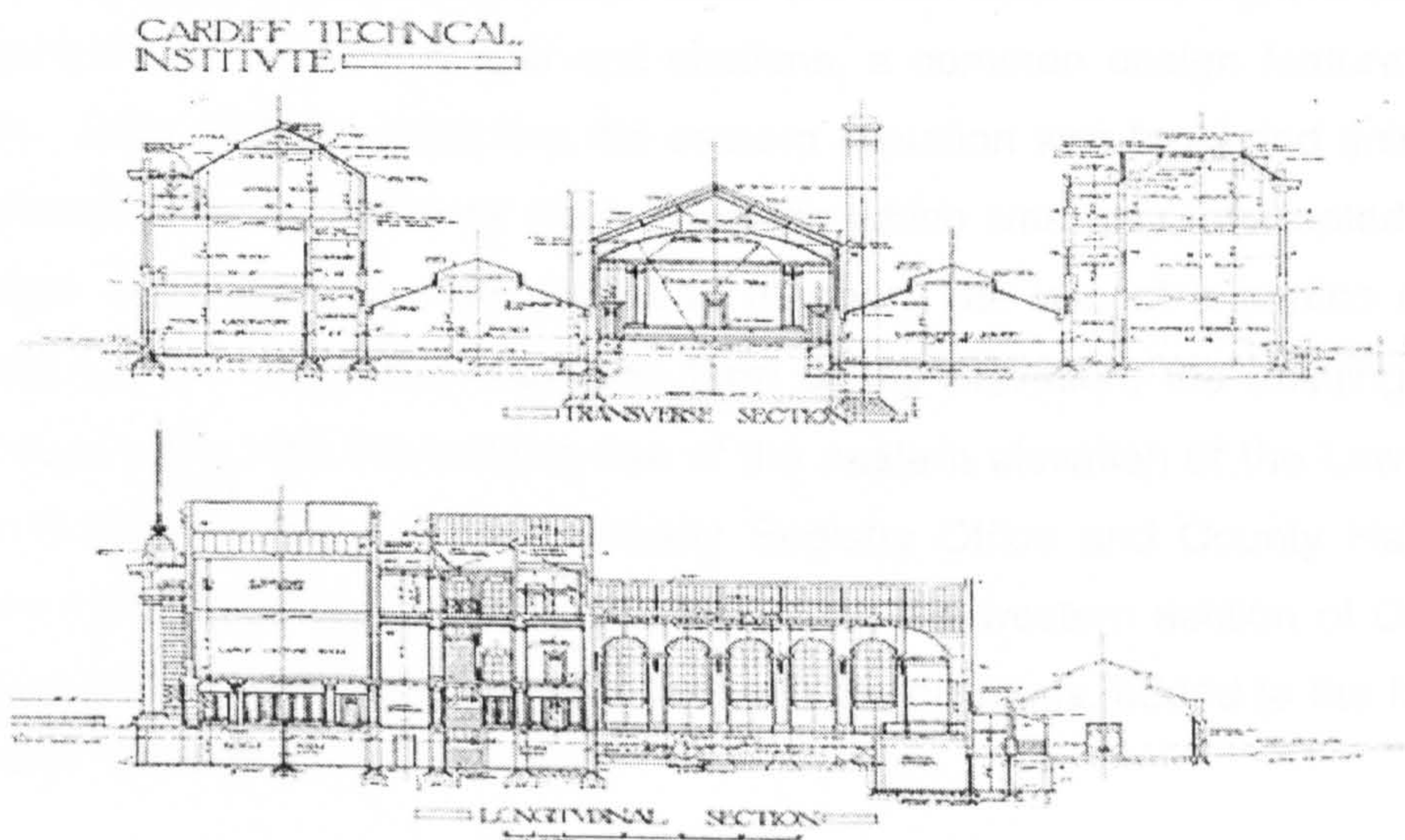
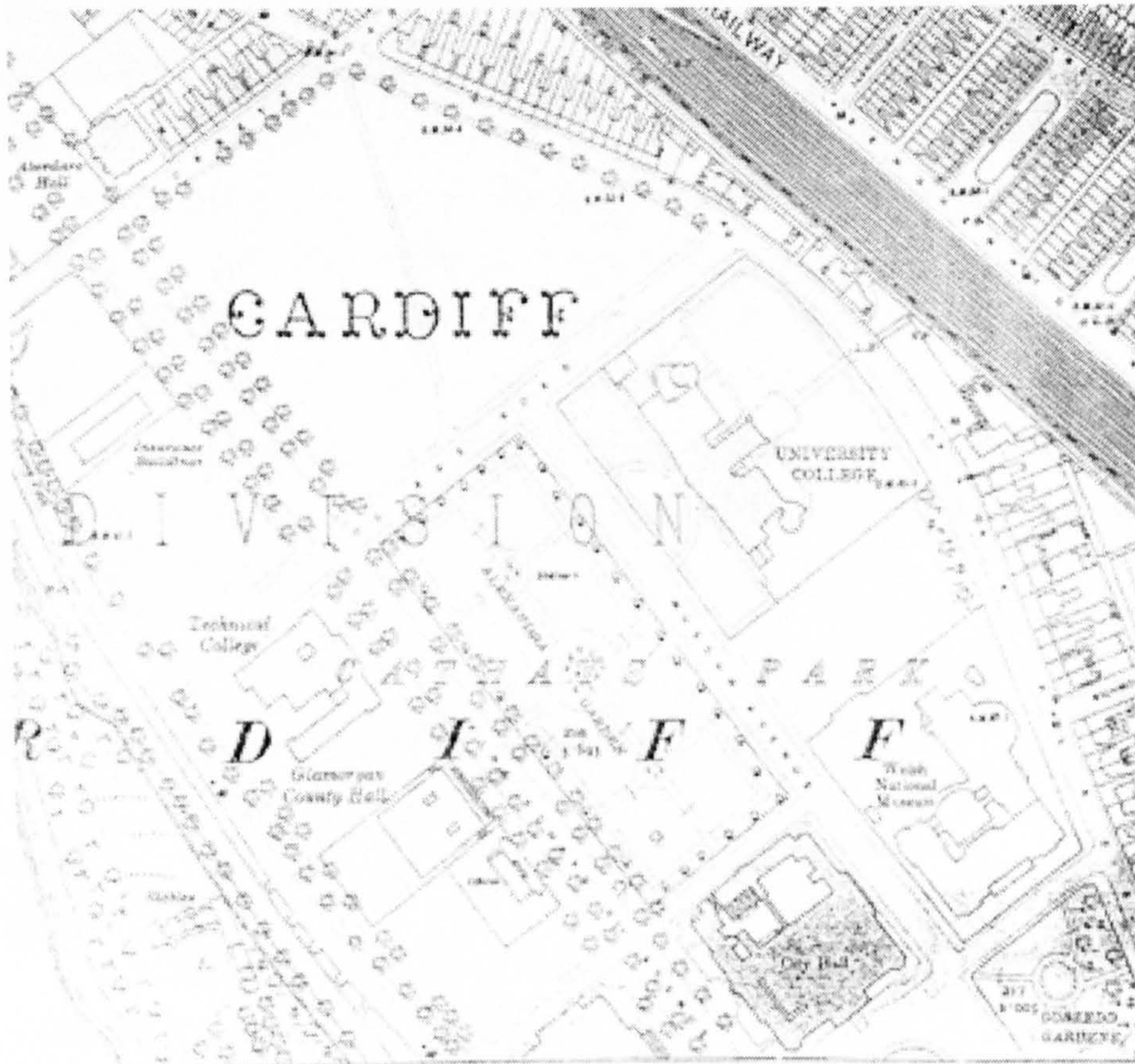


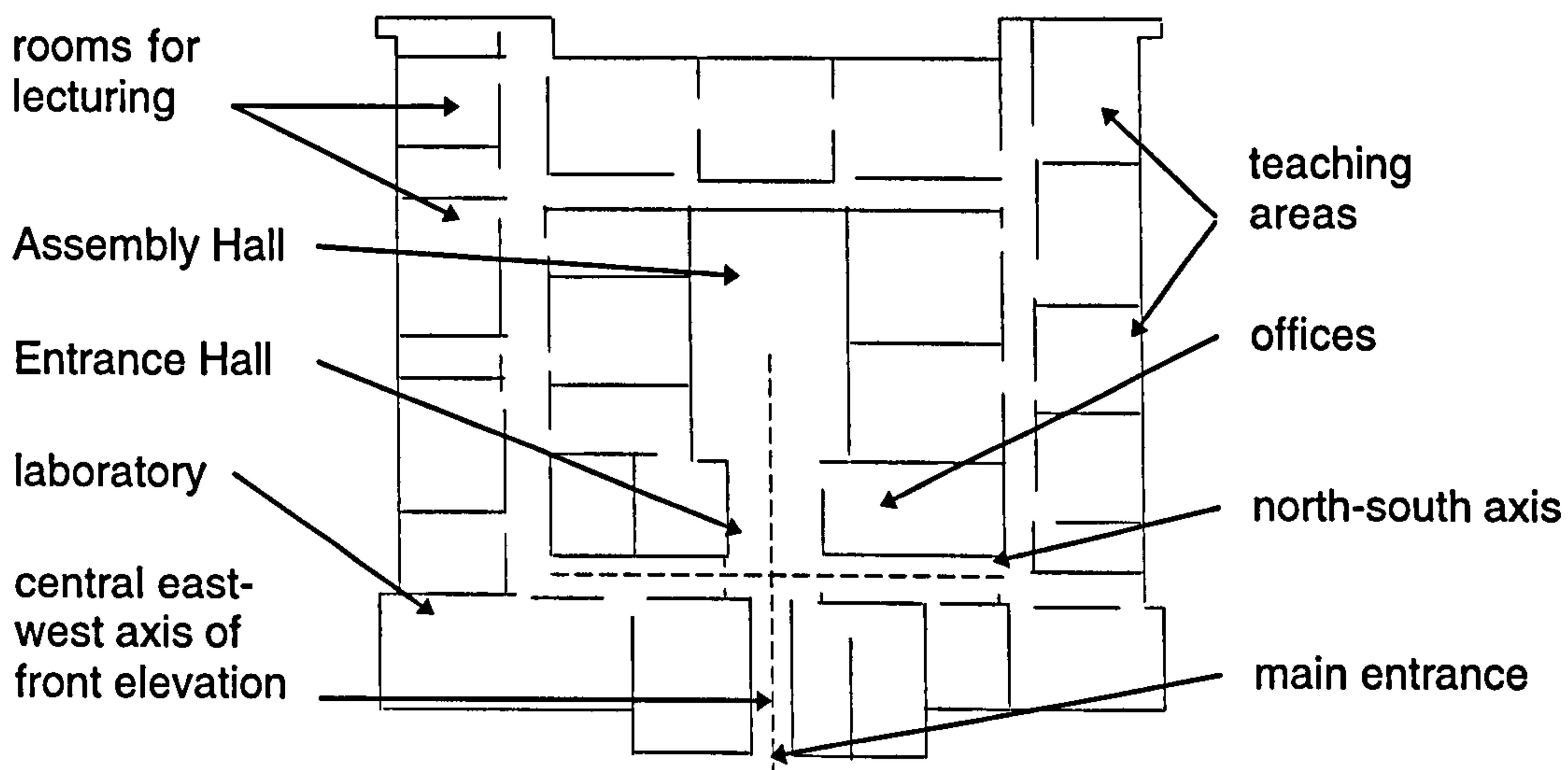
Figure 6.2.21. The area surrounding the Technical College (source: Ordnance Survey, 1920).



The design and plan of the Technical College employed comparatively few civic design principles which had the outcome of making the scheme comparatively weak, the most notable features being the centrally placed main entrance, recessed behind a portico, the marking of the primary entrance by design elements such as a broad flight of steps and the use of rustication on the central and end sections, a common design feature in Cathays Park. Hilling (1973: 155) declared that the eastern elevation was “cold and unimaginative”, with the elevations being generally plain in design which was only interrupted by rows of large windows arranged in a very organised manner. The use of a portico on the front facade broke up the somewhat mundane form of the elevation, the building line of the portico corresponding with the building line of the eastern elevation of the Law Courts and the east elevations of the nearby University Registry Office and County Hall. Thus the buildings were arranged in an ordered manner along the western section of Cathays Park which, apart from the stylistic association between the buildings, added to the homogenous appearance of the district.

Behind the main entrance of the Technical College a major axis was established, running in an east-west direction, through the internal arrangement. The axis was created behind the primary entrance along which was placed a vestibule space that led through to the Entrance Hall, to one side of which was placed the Principal's Office and to the other a Porter's Room, Clerks' Office and Waiting Room. Towards the end of the Entrance Hall, that is placed towards the centre of the building's plan, facing towards the main entrance was situated the Assembly Hall, one of the largest spaces in the internal layout (The Architectural Review, 1916: 105-110). Collectively these spaces established a central east-west alignment in the plan, as noted earlier, in so doing helping to reinforce the central axis of the front elevation which was marked by a large flight of steps and the main entrance. However, in addition, the large scale, Classical design style and use of Portland stone helped the Technical College to fit in with its surroundings.

Figure 6.2.22. The ground floor plan of the Technical College, Cardiff.



Inter-War Cardiff

The onset of War in 1914 significantly affected the process of development occurring in Cathays Park. Not only did it effectively stop any construction that was undertaken at that time, apart from the district's seventh building designed before 1914, the Technical College, finished in 1916, but it also brought the suspension of any proposed schemes at that time. A planned Government Office, for example, was postponed in 1914 and it was not until 1938

that the Classical styled building, renamed the Welsh Office (design by P.K. Hanton), was completed on a site to the north of Alexandra gardens. However in the Inter-war period further construction did take place in Cathays Park, in so doing enhancing Cardiff's reputation as a provincial capital (population size was about 210,000 in 1921. Source: census), not only due to the erection of the new Welsh Office but also with the construction of the Welsh National War Memorial in 1924, by Sir Ninian Comper, sited at the centre of Alexandra Gardens in a position which corresponded with the north-south axis of the City Hall. In 1938 the Temple of Peace and Health was completed at the northern end of King Edward VII Avenue, a Classically styled building paid for by Lord Davies of Llandinam as a gift to the Welsh people so as to promote humanitarian causes. Existing buildings erected before 1914 were also subject to extension schemes, the most notable being the University Registry Office in 1921 and 1931, the Technical College (1927), the University College (1930), the Glamorgan County Hall (1932) and the National Museum of Wales (1932), which were all designed in a manner so to harmonise with the original parts of the existing buildings. The development of Cathays Park was not complete though until after the end of the Second World War when the University College and Technical College were extended again and the modern styled Police Headquarters was erected to a design by City Architect, John Dryburgh, on a site to the immediate north of the Law Courts.

Conclusion

Despite the opportunity that it offered the development of civic centre at Cardiff showed how the practice of civic design in early twentieth century Britain was in many respects of a standard below that of contemporary design practice in other countries, particularly America. If ever a City Beautiful inspired scheme was to be undertaken in Britain in the period up to 1914 then Cathays Park was to be it. However, as highlighted, an American type scheme was not produced despite the grand scale of the buildings undertaken. The development of civic core at Cathays Park and the erection of seven buildings within it before the onset of War in 1914 did reveal that civic designing was an aspect of the architectural design and planning practice that took place there with many buildings, principally the largest ones constructed there, being related to each other through the axial lines in the internal arrangements corresponding with other local buildings, the heavy application of Portland stone, building lines matching those of neighbouring buildings, the choice of predominantly

Classically inspired architectural styles in the district and the use of common design features such as domes and corner pavilions in order to connect a building with its neighbour.

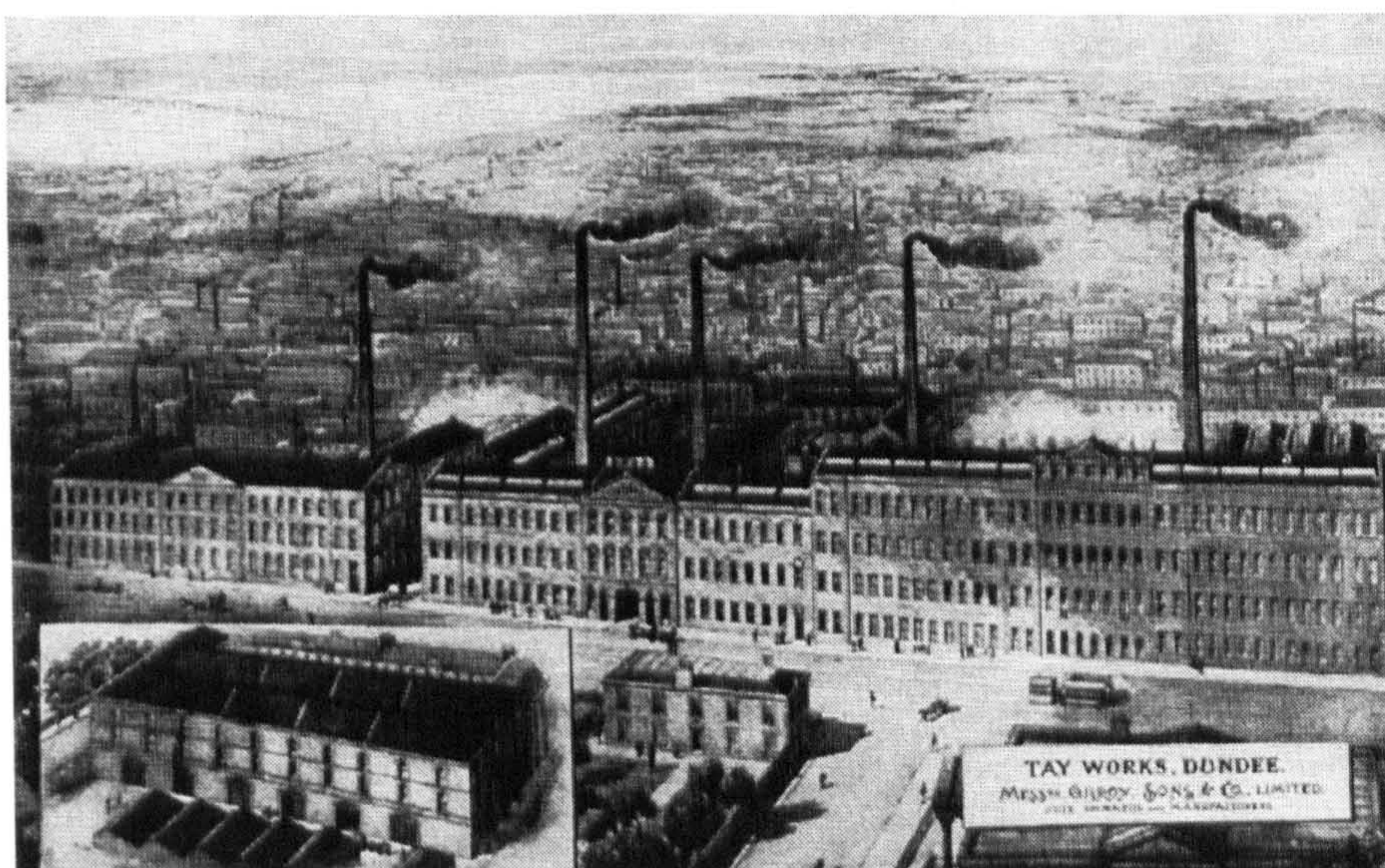
The choice of the Cathays Park site offered great possibilities for large scale urban designing and it must be said that neither the Corporation nor the architects that built structures there fully appreciated this and the planning opportunities it offered. For example, the choice of the site to the east of the area for the University College, the third large sized building to be erected in the district, greatly disrupted the formal rhythm established by the City Hall and Law Courts. However, the construction of the National Museum of Wales went a little way to redress this matter. But, in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period when the foundations for modern town planning were being laid no other development of this type or scale was undertaken in Britain so as to establish a civic centre of this kind in a large provincial city. For this reason alone Cardiff attains a degree of civic design significance and despite the criticisms one can level at Cathays Park scheme this should not detract from the fact that the overall composition is unique and its importance was reinforced further by the actuality that the scheme was largely developed when the seeds of town planning in Britain were first being sown. The importance of the civic composition must rank with the Queen Victoria Memorial scheme and the Kingsway-Aldwych scheme in central London in the period leading up to 1914, even though these schemes were of a far different nature. The importance of Cardiff was further reflected in the role that its buildings played in the shaping of municipal design at that time, helping create a movement which favoured the Baroque style of architecture which was to become dominant in Edwardian civic design practice in Britain.

Dundee

Introduction

“Considering the age, the historic importance and the present size and wealth of Dundee, it is disappointingly wanting in architectural interest”, remarked *The Builder* in 1898 (1898: 139). Such a situation had arisen by the end of the nineteenth century as a consequence of three factors. Firstly, Dundee was located between the Law and the Tay estuaries and prior to the onset of industrialisation at the end of the eighteenth century the settlement was renowned for its prettiness (Walker, 1955: 3). After the arrival of modern industry this reputation was somewhat lost. Another reason was that Dundee had developed during the nineteenth century a townscape which differed from the much lauded Classical design styles practised within Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow (*Ibid.*: 3). An addition factor was the development of the jute industry within Dundee during the Victorian period which resulted in a large number of mills being erected (see figure 6.3.1). Collectively these elements had the effect, according to *The Builder* (1898: 139), of producing a Victorian city “taken up with huge jute factories and model dwellings”, although the overall state of the centre of the town was not assisted by the fact that the laying out of new streets the mid-Victorian period had been carried out without a great deal of judgement on the part of the town’s authorities.

Figure 6.3.1. The Tay Works, Lochie Road, Dundee, in the 1890s.



At the start of the nineteenth century Dundee's population was a little over 26,000 and this only grew slowly in the following two decades reaching a total of about 30,500 (source: Census, 1821). The 1820s was a decade of great transition in Dundee (Whatley in Whatley, 1992: 7), an outcome of the rapid growth of textile manufacturing in the town and the growth of local shipbuilding and engineering industries which collectively helped produce a significant increase in the town's demographic size as well as change the economic and physical nature of the settlement. So important was jute manufacture to Dundee during the Victorian period that the settlement acquired the label 'Juteopolis' (*Ibid.*: 7).

With the growth of manufacturing in the early to mid-nineteenth century came the expansion of Dundee's port. With this local economic boom came building and population booms that left their imprint on the built environment apart from the growth in the number of local docks. However during the 1830s other events affected Dundee's urban development. This included legislation passed from 1831-3 which removed the closed political oligarchy that had dominated Dundee's local government up to that time. These Acts also extended the town's spatial boundaries and as a result of this development, coupled with the immigration of people from Perthshire and the Highlands, Dundee population size began to increase at a faster rate than before (Lenman, Lythe and Gauldie, 1969: 7). While immigration helped to sustain Dundee's commercial activities, which were only exceeded by Glasgow in the mid-nineteenth century, (*Ibid.*: 7) it significantly affected the town's social composition with the town developing with a proportionately smaller Middle Class population than other urban places. By as late as 1861, for example, the Middle Classes comprised less than 12% of the total population of the town.

By 1851 the town's population has risen to almost 79,000 (source: Census). However by the start of the twentieth century Dundee's population had risen to over 150,000 (source: Census, 1901), a size of similar standing to Aberdeen and Cardiff. Such was the rapid demographic and economic rise of Dundee during the late-nineteenth century that in 1889 city status was conferred. Five years later another civic peak was reached when the city was given the rank of 'county of a city', an honour only enjoyed by two other urban settlements in Scotland, Glasgow and Edinburgh, at that time (Whatley in Whatley, 1992: 7).

To sustain the growing cultural and utilitarian life of Dundee, new civic provisions were necessary elements in the development of the settlement. By the early 1860s an Infirmary and Royal Infirmary were erected, both designed by Peddie and Kinnear, and after 1872,

the date of the Education (Scotland) Act, a proliferation of new Schools were erected at a number of locations about the town. However in the decades leading up to the 1860s public building schemes in Dundee were almost none existent, with only two schemes, the Albert Institute (1864) and Townhouse (1871) being of any note, an unusual occurrence given the general growth in public building in Britain and given the relatively large size of the settlement at that time. Such inactivity, apart from in field of Church building, which flourished in Victorian Dundee, was a result of economic problems within the town's government.

By 1871 conditions in the centre of Dundee were so poor that the Corporation passed an Improvement Act which permitted over 20 central slum removal schemes in order to improve the area (see figure 4.17.2), yet this was not the first public attempt to shape Dundee's urban form for in the mid-1820s the town's council had passed an Act to open new streets including Union Street (McWilliam, 1975: 132). However, a lack of planning and architectural activity took place between the 1830s and 1860s, a consequence of the council's financial problems and between 1842 and 1864 the local council was effectively insolvent (Images of the past, 1992: 27). Thus the most notable buildings of this period in Dundee were private in nature although a number of public buildings of note were erected. These included the Infirmary, 1852-5 by Coe and Goodwin, the Royal Exchange, from the mid 1850s by Bryce, and the French Gothic styled Morgan Hospital, erected during the 1860s, which by the end of the nineteenth century was still the principal public building in the north west of Dundee (The Builder, 1898: 146).

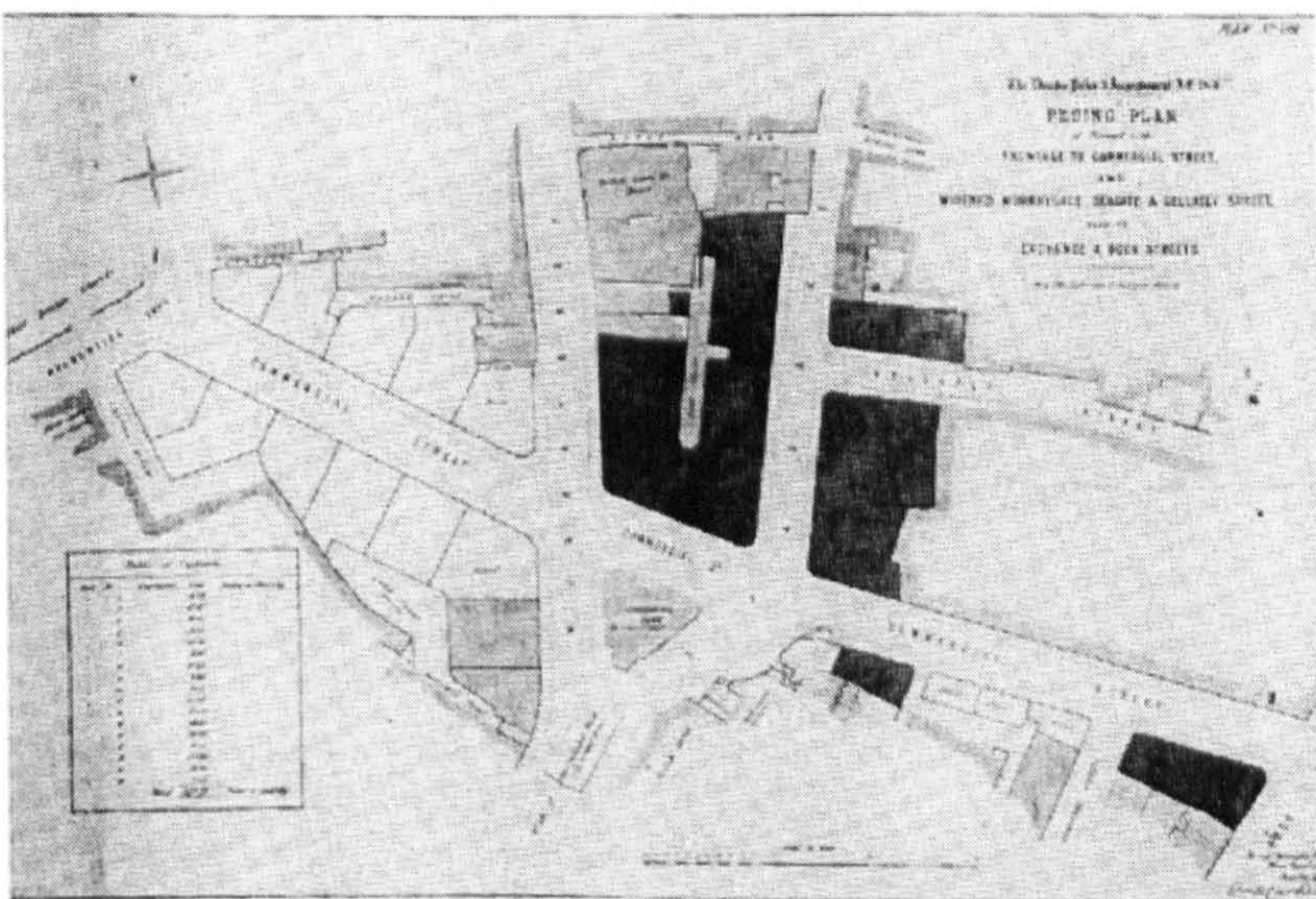
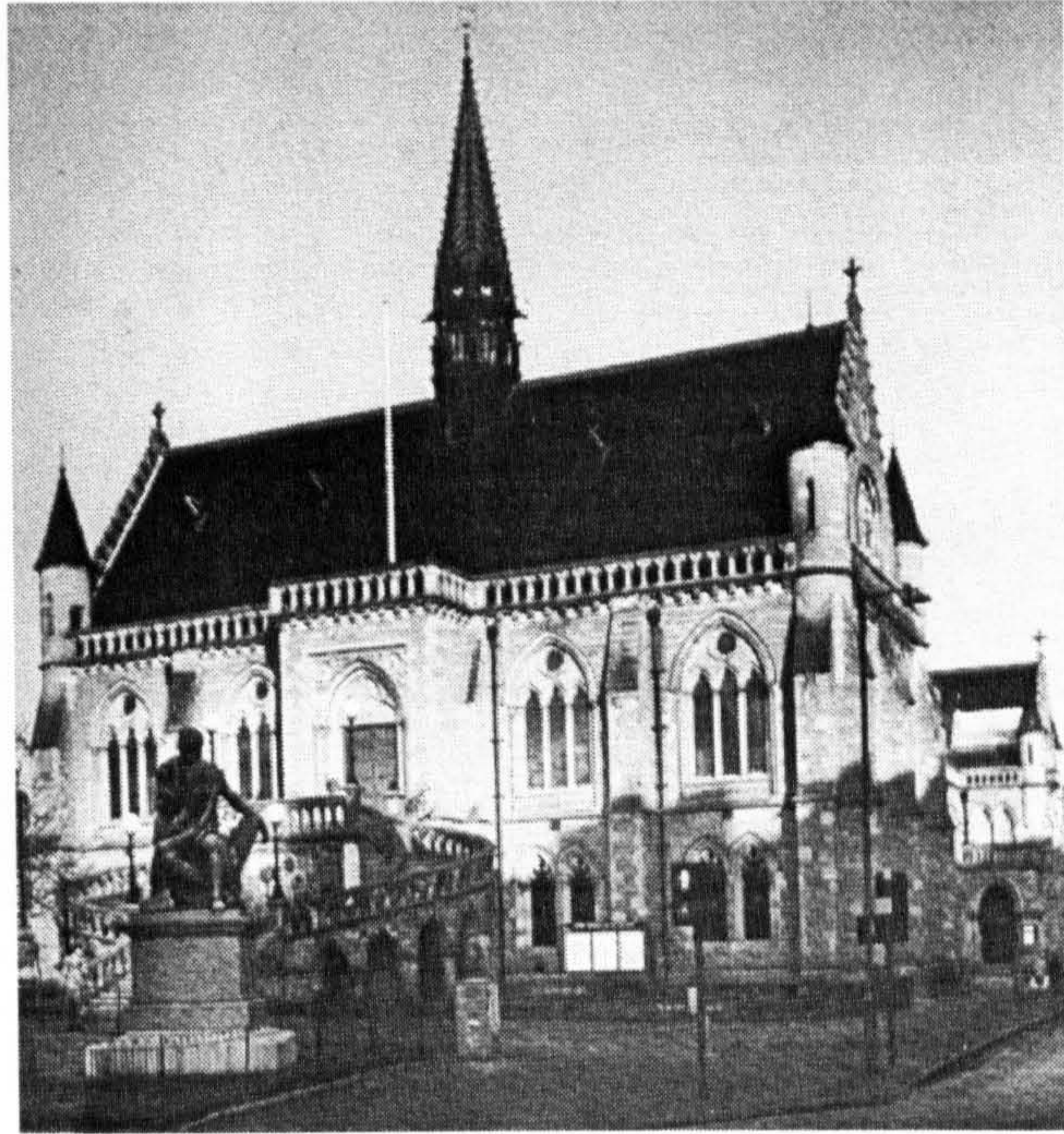


Figure 6.3.2. A section of the Dundee Improvement Scheme, 1871.

In 1868 with the council's financial problems resolved and the appointment of William Mackinson as Burgh Engineer and Surveyor the civic design of Dundee altered considerably. Mackinson tackled the issue of large scale urban planning in a ruthless manner and from 1871-91 supervised the removal and rebuilding of the many pre-Georgian districts of Dundee and the Commercial Street and Whitehall Street Improvement schemes, controlling the design of new buildings in the area so to ensure stylistic uniformity (Walker, 1955: 21-2). But, many edifices of historical and architectural interest in central Dundee were lost as a consequence of Mackinson's work. Another element of civic design distinction concerning Dundee from other large urban centres was its lack of open space in the settlement as only three parks, Baxter Park, Balgay Hill Park and Barrack Park, had been laid out by the end of the nineteenth century (The Builder, 1898: 146) and the only open spaces located in or about the central core of Dundee were two Medieval cemeteries, the Howff and Chapelside, which were later laid out as garden spaces to no particular plan.

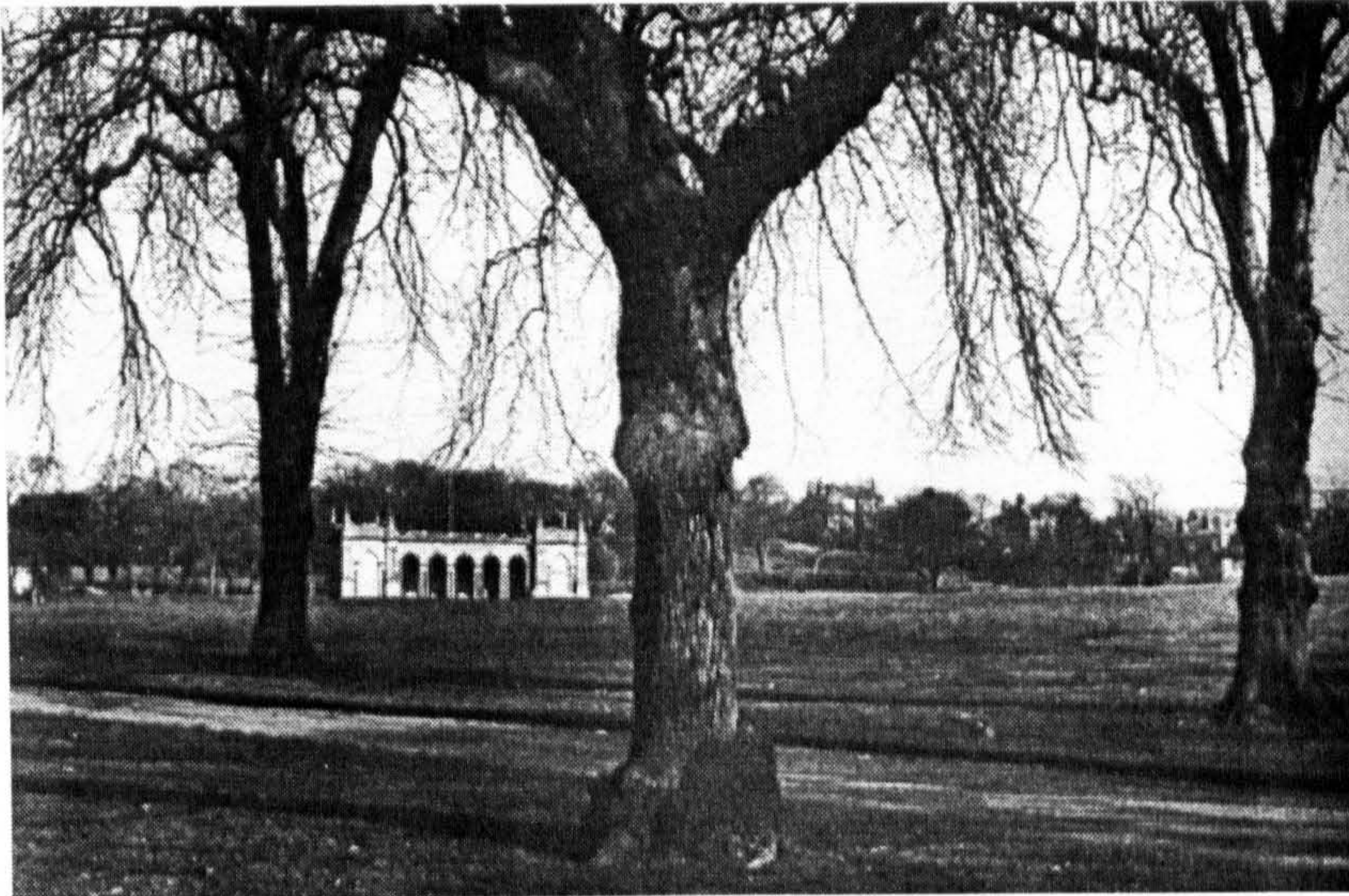
The clearing of land around the central core of Dundee from the 1860s onwards did not result in a proliferation of new public buildings that might have been expected and instead established in a boom in tenement building, typically four storeys in height, to house those displaced by the slum clearances. However it was the apartment buildings along with a large number of Churches that still remain as Dundee's chief late-Victorian architectural legacy, thanks in part to the lack of public architectural buildings constructed. From the 1870s none of Dundee's public structures were equal to the grandiose ones that graced the town in earlier decades, arguably the finest of which was George Gilbert Scott's Albert Institute (see figure 6.3.3), a Gothic styled structure consisting of a large hall with office spaces. The 1870s also represented a watershed in the architectural development of Dundee with the emergence of mixed design styles and the erection of numerous commercial buildings to varying scales and architectural styles. In addition, the history of Dundee's public designing from about 1870 was dominated by a small group of individuals who monopolised local architectural practice. These individuals were David M'Kenzie, Charles Edward and James Maclaren, (Walker, 1955: 21) as well as William Mackinson and James Thomson who were employed by the Corporation.

Figure 6.3.3. The Albert Institute, Dundee, by George Gilbert Scott.



Similarly to most other large sized provincial towns and cities in the period considered by this work Dundee erected a large scale Town Hall building, the Townhouse, although public activity tended to concentrate on constructing small scale public buildings, a consequence of the Corporation's unwillingness to spend large funds on buildings perhaps as a response to the financial legacy of the mid-Victorian period despite it employing a City Architect, James Thomson, from 1904. Thomson was to significantly affect the urban form and townscape of Dundee in another way thanks to his grandiose proposal for the dock lands, described as being "perhaps the best initiative of the period" (*Ibid.*: 27), a scheme discussed later in this section. Notwithstanding financial assistance from benefactors such as American steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, Dundee still fell short of the public design and planning activities of other provincial cities. Even Dundee's sole Victorian park, Baxter Park, completed in 1863, covering a space of over 15 hectares (see figure 6.3.4), located to the east of the town centre was the result of a £50,000 donation from Sir David Baxter. However, somewhat ironically, arguably the finest landscape architect of the age, Sir Joseph Paxton, was invited to advise the Corporation on the layout of the new park. The action of employing an individual of as high acclaim as Paxton did thus provide evidence that design matters were considered within the local authority and were understood to be significant elements in the emerging civic identity of the town. A fine Italianate layout (Walker, 1977: 17) was the outcome of Paxton's advice at Baxter Park while Paxton's son-in-law, G.H. Stokes, designed the pavilion and steps positioned at the centre of the open area.

Figure 6.3.4. View of Baxter Park and its pavilion.

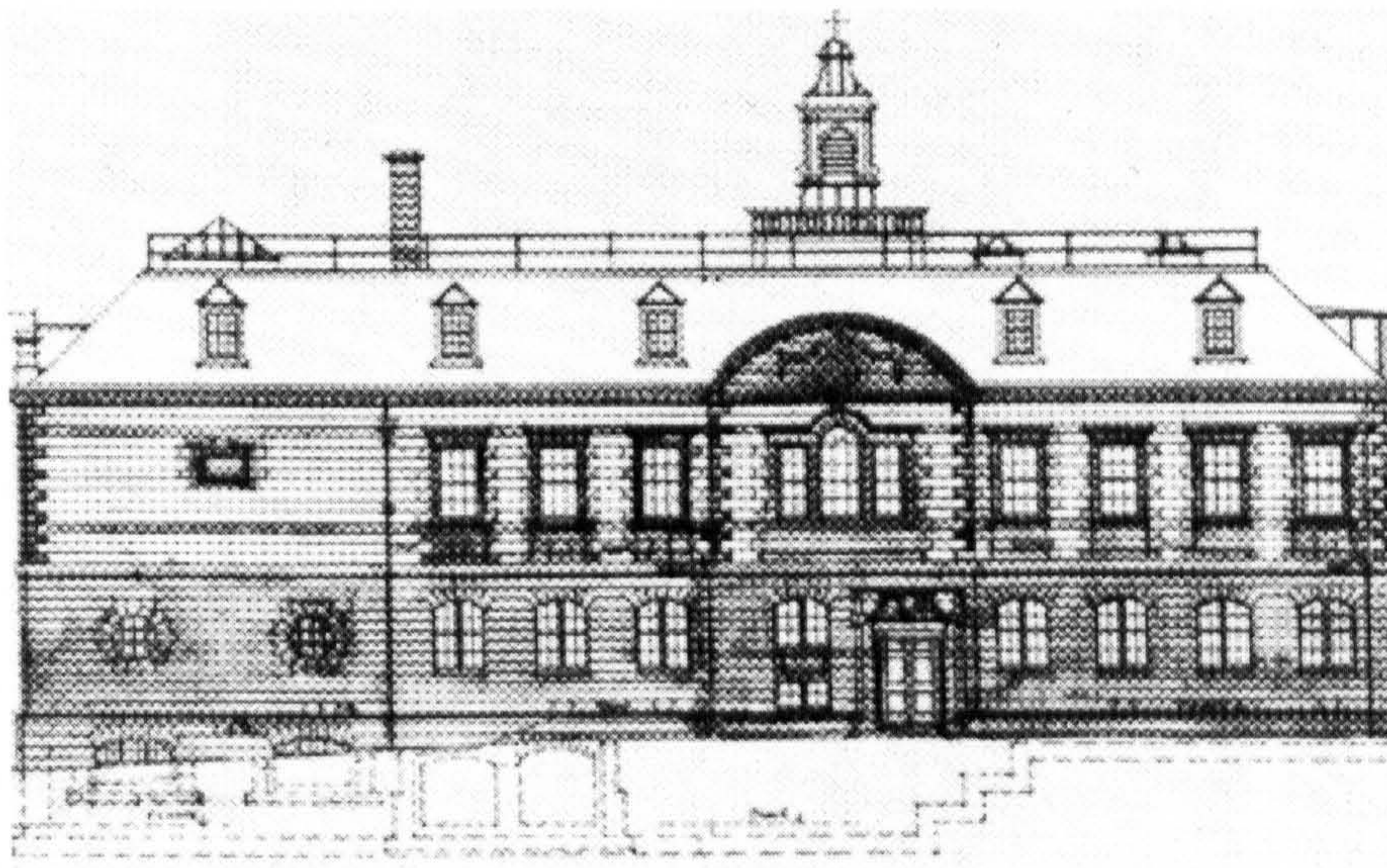


The University College

The extension of the University College in the early twentieth century represented one of the largest public building schemes undertaken in late-Victorian and Edwardian Dundee. As was the case in many other settlements at that time, particularly in the smaller provincial British town and cities examined by this study, extension schemes were commonly employed as a means to solve a fundamental problem faced by public authorities, that is the need to erect new buildings on the one hand and the lack of finance and/or will to spend large sums of money on new public buildings on the other. Such a policy, based on extending existing buildings, naturally affected the civic design of any given place which tended to have less effect upon the townscape than when new buildings were erected. The 1907 extension to the University College consisted of a new building paid for by a £12,500 donation from American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. The new red brick building, designed by the competition winner Rowand Anderson of Edinburgh, consisted of a four story structure within which was found a number of rooms related to the practice and education of science. The main feature of the new building's internal arrangement was the lecture theatre (The Builder, 1907: 391), although the main feature of the front elevation was the principal entrance positioned towards the centre of the front elevation of the building, marked above by a rounded portico and a vertical element, a small turret, at the rooftop. Arched window openings were located in regular bays along the ground floor level of the front elevation, the shape of which differed to window openings at some of the other levels. A basement floor

level of the building formed part of the building scheme but it was only visible from the street level towards the southern end of the building due to the sloping topography of the site from north to south. Windows at the basement level were designed with arched heads.

Figure 6.3.5. A perspective of the University College's front elevation showing basement level (source: McKean and Walker, 1984).

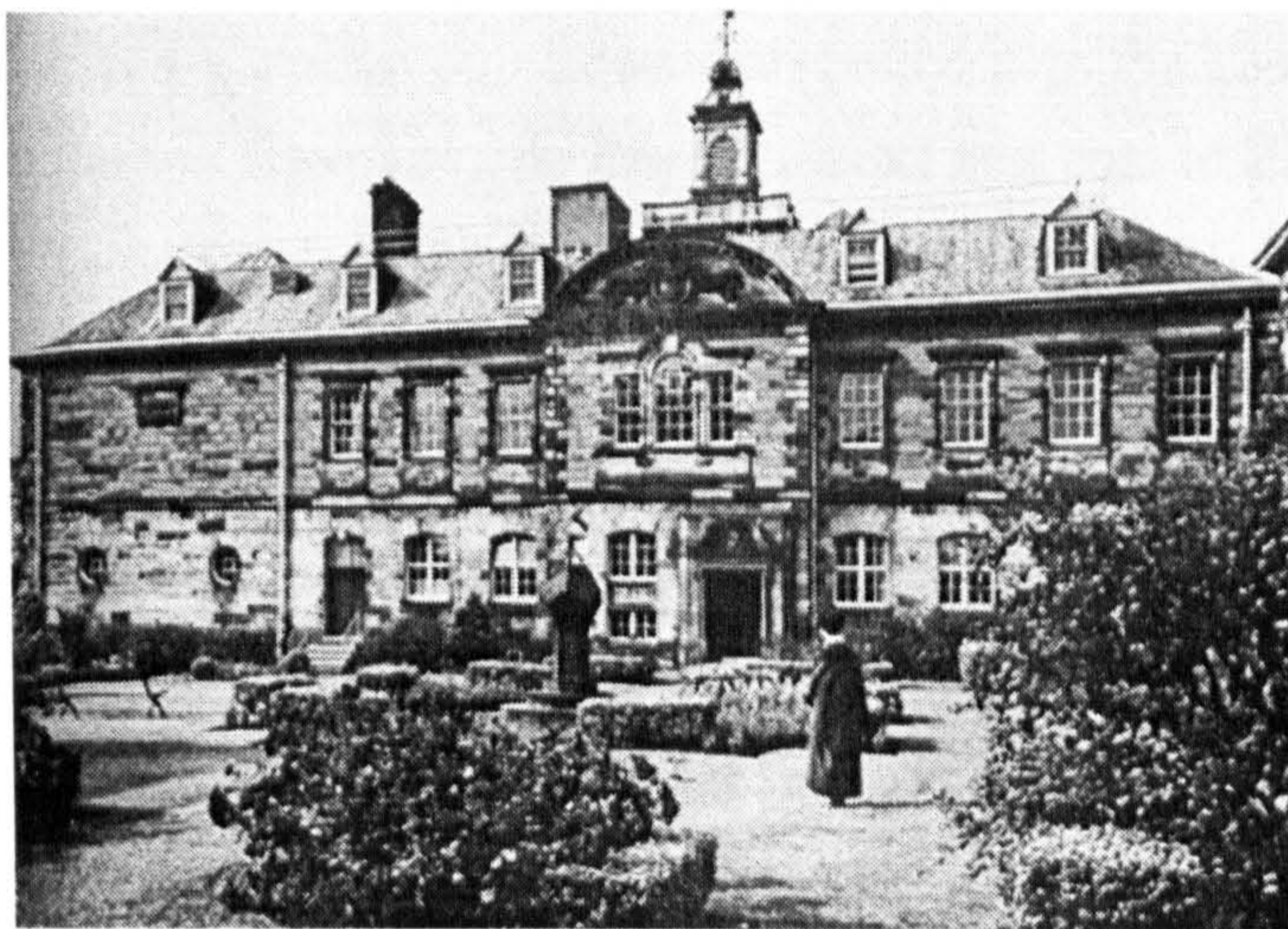


The development of the University College in the Park Place and Small's Wynd area of Dundee, near to numerous rail lines that followed the line of the Firth of the Tay to the south, meant that opportunities of relating the building to its setting by planning lines were restricted. But the gradual accumulation of buildings as the institution grew in size in the following years after the original building was completed and the lack of an general plan for its development meant that the campus grew in a somewhat uncoordinated manner, developing with little organisation that would have benefited the College's overall layout. However, while in front of the previously described south facing University College building, at a considerable distance away were rail lines, dock areas, warehouses and mills, immediately to its front was an open area that was laid out at the time of construction, with a carriageway of geometric form which led towards the centre of the main elevation of the College and its principal entrance. The centre of this open space was later filled by a large stone feature positioned in accord with the building's main entrance and the entrance vestibule space located behind the double doorway. But, importantly, no other prominent spaces in the building's plan were positioned along the axis established to the rear of the main entrance.

Figure 6.3.6. University College setting in 1903 (source: Ordnance Survey).



Figure 6.3.7. University College as seen from the open space situated to its front. Note the position of the architectural element within the open space, positioned in accord with the main entrance of the building.



The large scale setting around the University College allowed the new building to fit in rather well with its setting as did the use of stone material for the building although its detailed design may be of a different nature to those edifices located near to it. By locating the College building away from the front of its site an opportunity was provided for the introduction of civic design features in front of the building, not only the small flight of steps positioned in front of the main entrance but also the carriageway, and while the front

elevation was composed in a symmetrical manner, an axis was formed behind it by the placing of an entrance hallway, this is scarcely apparent to anyone passing the building. Furthermore this axial line was not continued inside the internal arrangement, as noted earlier. However the placing of a symmetrical carriageway in front of the main entrance allowed this axis to be brought forward, in a southwards direction, away from the building which in civic design terms is notable.

The Reading Room and Post Office

Public architecture and public building in Dundee during the period considered can be noted as generally being of small scale in nature both in terms of the amount of civic building that occurred, the size of buildings erected and the amount of public money afforded on civic planning and design matters. Even by as late as the first decade of the twentieth century the Corporation was only spending on average about £100,000 per annum on all environmental and building schemes in Dundee, a sum which included matters relating to public health improvement, even though a City Architect was employed. A typical public building erected in Dundee during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period was the Central Reading Room (see figure 6.3.8) by James Thomson, the City Architect. At a cost of £11,200, paid for by a donation by Andrew Carnegie, this raised three storey structure belied its relatively low cost due to the strength of its design.

Erected from locally quarried stone (The Builder, 1909: 472) and designed in a symmetrical manner with double columns on each side of the recessed main entrance, positioned at the centre of the front elevation facing towards Ward Street, this one storey building made a big impact upon the central townscape for it brought the Edwardian Classical style of design to Dundee for the first time. McKean and Walker (1984: 50) described the building as being essentially a Baroque structure “of the type that the best London architects were using”, such was the quality of designed used for the scheme. One of the most notable aspects of the building was the arched portico above the main entrance which established a vertical axis at the centre of the building, an alignment also marked by a large rounded arched window and pediment immediately above the double doorway. A tower at the roof level, decorated with double columns, terminated this central alignment while rectangular windows were placed in regular bays along the partly covered basement and ground floor levels

reinforcing the symmetrical effect of the front elevation. Window openings at the attic level were of a semi-circular form and the corners of the building were decorated by banded rustication which emphasised them within the design composition.

The planning arrangement of the building received no attention in the contemporary architectural press although it is known that the axis of the main entrance was continued inside in the internal arrangement by a vestibule which provided access to the reading areas and library lending section which were arranged to each side of the space towards the rear of the plan. Thus the symmetrical form of the main elevations was continued into the plan.

Figure 6.3.8. The Central Reading Room.



Erected on an unencumbered site the Reading Room, which faced east towards the open space known as The Howff, was located in one of the most promising site's in central Dundee for civic design, being located close to the General Post Office building, erected in 1898. The new Post Office, at the junction of Ward Road and Constitution Road received much praise in *The Builder* (1898: 143), for its "different" design based upon its "multiplication of detail, its columns and pilasters, strings and cornices, square windows and circular headed windows, dormers, domes, turrets and vases, carving and sculpture, and many other architectural contents of the architectural larder poured into the pot and flavoured with just enough Italian Renaissance sauce to satisfy the public palate." (*Ibid.*: 143)

Designed by W.W. Robertson, an employee of HM Board of Works for Scotland, the Post Office represented one of the most grand and large buildings erected in late-Victorian

Dundee, and certainly it is one of the most confident in terms of its symmetrical design. Situated on a site on Euclid Street the Post Office was surrounded by a Girls School and Bank at its rear and by an YMCA and Chapel to its western side, buildings of a scale above the norm in central Dundee which helped the new large sized public building fit in with its surroundings. To the other side of the Post Office were to a number of small scale buildings, possibly shops.

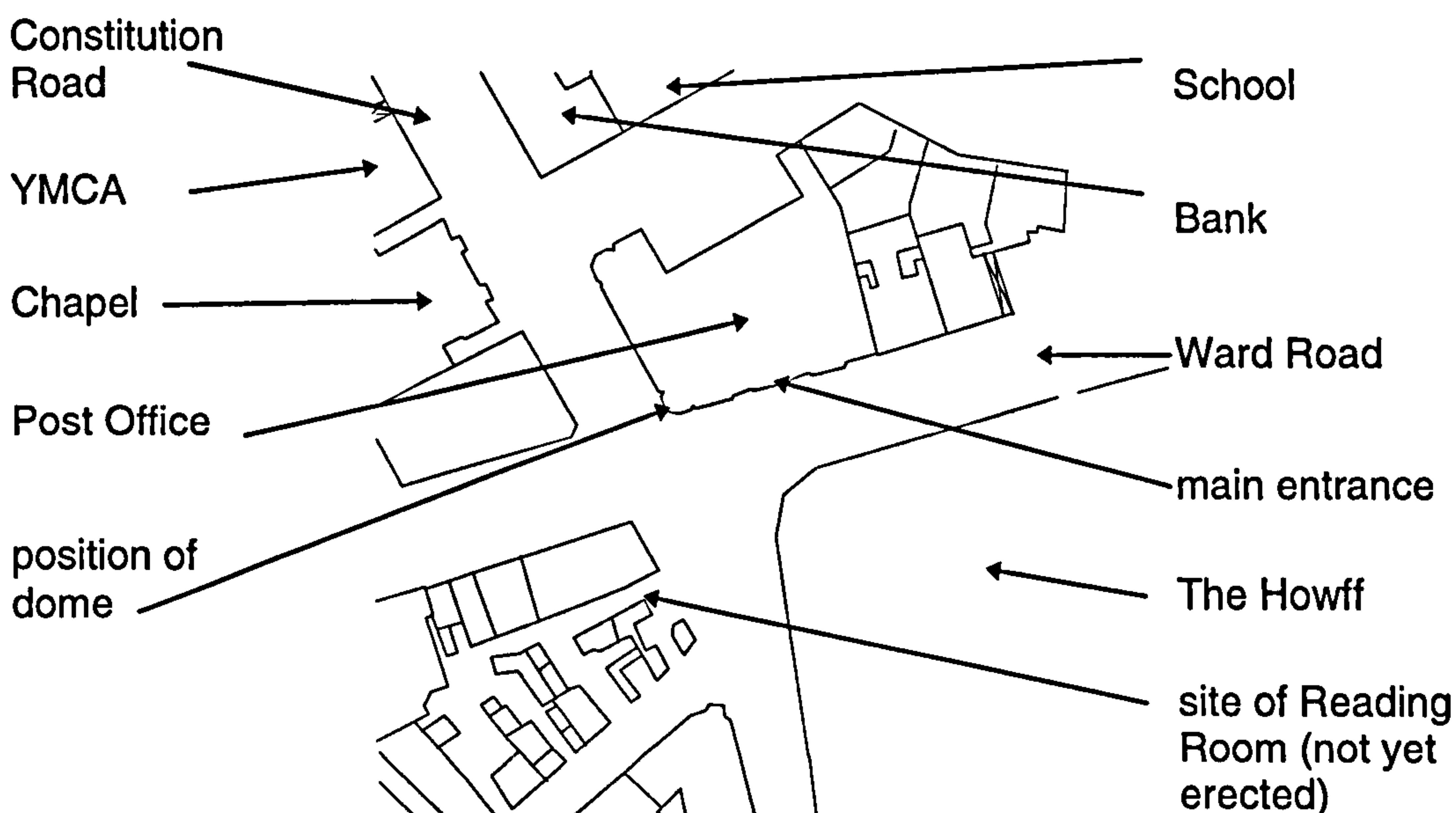
The front elevation of the Post Office (see figure 6.3.9) was marked at its centre by the main entrance above which, at the rooftop, was placed a small pediment and cupola. A balustrade was positioned along the rooftop, decorated by stone urns which were placed above vertical alignments established along the main elevation, marked by features such as double columns. The central and end sections of the building were emphasised by the building line being slightly brought forward from the rest of the structure. The window openings, given rounded arch heads on the ground and second floor level, were positioned in regular bays from the central axis of the main doorway, that is between the columns positioned along the main elevations of the building, and their placing reinforced the symmetrical effect of the composition. The south west, front corner of the principal facade was covered by a dome of Florentine style (McKean and Walker, 1984: 49) and this corner, as well as the north western corner of the building, along a side elevation, were handled differently from the other corners of the building and were rounded in form. Such a treatment of only rounding one or two corners of a building in civic design was uncommon, as was the placing of a vertical element at one corner of the front elevation, but when the road pattern around the building is examined the placing of the dome was such so as to present a dramatic view of the Post Office when approaching the building from the south of its site.



Figure 6.3.9. The front elevation of the Post Office.

The site of the Post Office was located close a site at the junction of two roadways, Ward Road and Constitution Road, which cross each other at an almost 90 degree angle. The form of the surrounding environment meant that the road approaching from the south towards the junction where the Post Office was placed was presented with a near direct vista to the south western end of the building's front elevation. Of note too, if somewhat unusual was the fact that the building was given a building line which was forward of those to the west of its site, thus allowing the building to literally stand out in front of its neighbours and so have a greater impact when viewed from along the street, with no space being placed in front of the building apart from the pavement.

Figure 6.3.10. The Post Office and its situation in 1902 (source: Ordnance Survey).



The Technical Colleges

A significant public building constructed in central Dundee during the period considered by this study was the Technical Institute, at a cost of £45,000 (The Builder, 1906: 699), designed by J.H Langlands, a School Board architect, who was given assistance by Robert Gibson and W.G. Lamond. The Institute, later renamed the College of Technology, has been said to be “a large, symmetrical building with centre pediment and projecting wings enlivened with gigantic baroque details.” (McKean and Walker, 1984: 46) Notable design

features of the building included rustication which was used on the end pavilions so as to possibly emphasise the corners of the composition and to provide decoration.

The internal arrangement of this three storey edifice consisted of two quadrangular blocks within which rooms, according to different function, were placed. The rear of the quad, facing northwards, was devoted solely to the textile department while the eastern section was given to the boilers and engines that heated and powered the College, for example. At the front of the building was placed the administrative offices, lecture rooms, examinations hall and library (The Builder, 1906: 699, 1907: 231). As highlighted earlier, the resultant building was not only large in scale but also symmetrical in plan, marked at the centre by a pediment and the recessed main entrance with its arched double doorway. Windows along the main elevations were positioned in regular bays, a common feature of civic design not only in Dundee but also in many other large provincial cities during the period considered. The site of the Technical Institute on Bell Street, a central location in Dundee, was situated close to other notable public buildings in Dundee, such as the Albert Institute, but there was little evidence to show that the Institute was designed in accord with the already built environment situated in proximity to it. However many other public buildings that were of a scale larger than the norm such as the Post Office and the Central Reading Room were located fairly closely to the College so despite its large size the new building did not appear too indifferent in the centre of the settlement.

In 1915 a Training College designed by T. Martin Cappon was erected in Dundee. The design of the Training College was in an Edwardian Baroque style of design. The building displayed many prevalent smaller scale design civic design details such as the use of rustication at the ends of the main elevation of the building, the use of end pavilions, about 40 feet in length, and the raising of the building above the street level so to probably distinguish it from its neighbours. A stone wall was laid out at the side of the end pavilions parallel to the line of the front elevation. Other notable design features included the lower ground floor window openings being designed with semi-circular arches while the fenestration on the other three floors were of a rectangular shape apart from those situated at the ends of the main elevation at the second floor level which were given rounded heads. A vertical feature, a tower, formed a significant element of the overall composition and marked the central axis of the building, the vertical element being positioned above the Entrance Hall to the rear of the building's main entrance. The length of the front elevation

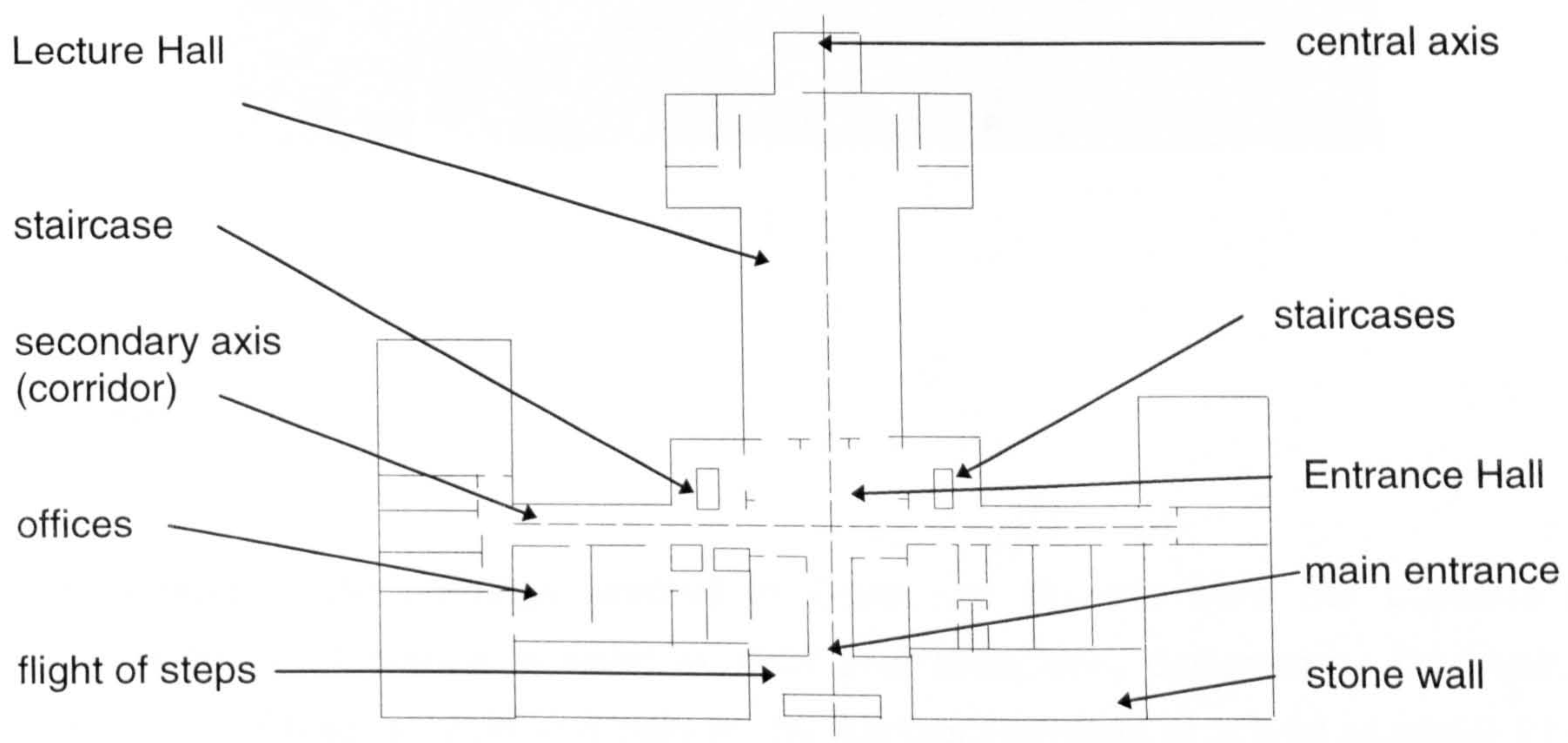
was about 220 feet in length and was marked at the centre, in front of the main entrance, by a quarter turn flight of steps, a very rare feature in civic design at that time.



Figure 6.3.11. A perspective of the Training College (source: *The Builder*, 1915).

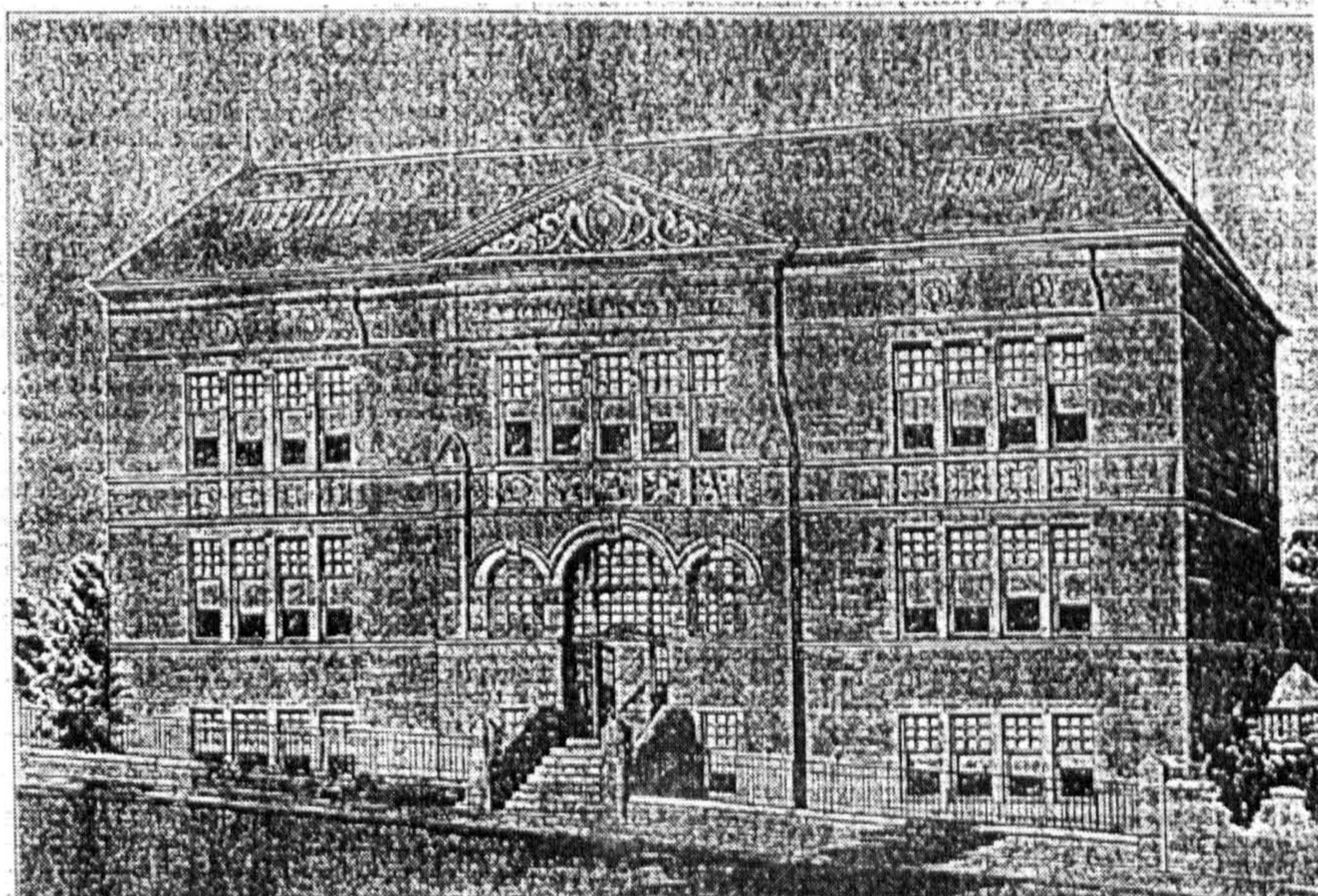
One major central axis and a number of secondary ones dominated the symmetrically formed interior arrangement of the Training College. The central axis, the primary alignment in the plan, was marked by a number of features both behind and in front of the building's main entrance which included a flight of steps, a tower, an entrance vestibule and other notable spaces within the building. Directly behind the entrance vestibule was Entrance Hall which leads into a corridor situated parallel to the line of the main elevation, in so doing forming a secondary axis in the internal arrangement which cuts through the main one at a 90 degree angle. The largest space in the plan, the Lecture Hall, which had its central axis laid down in accordance with the position of the main entrance, was located at the rear of the Entrance Hall, while staircases were placed on each side of the Entrance Hall further reinforced the symmetrical internal arrangement at the front of the building.

Figure 6.3.12. Training College ground floor plan.



The Technical Institute previously discussed was erected as a replacement for the existing Institutes erected during the late-Victorian period, including the Institute designed by Murray Robertson, a small public building which nevertheless was important to the civic design of Dundee thanks to the numerous architectural elements that its design contained. These features included the centrally placed pediment and main double door entrance, an opening that was marked by a flight of steps and stone pillars at the pavement, also were used to mark the stone wall and decorative iron railings situated in front of the building, the arched double doorway with arched window openings at each side of it. The Builder (1898: 145) noted that the Institute was designed as a “plain rectangular, business like structure” although Walker (1977) recognised that its design was similar to the contemporary work of American architect H.H. Richardson, a leading designer in the City Beautiful movement at the end of the nineteenth century.

Figure 6.3.13. A perspective of Dundee’s first Technical Institute (source: The Builder, 1898).



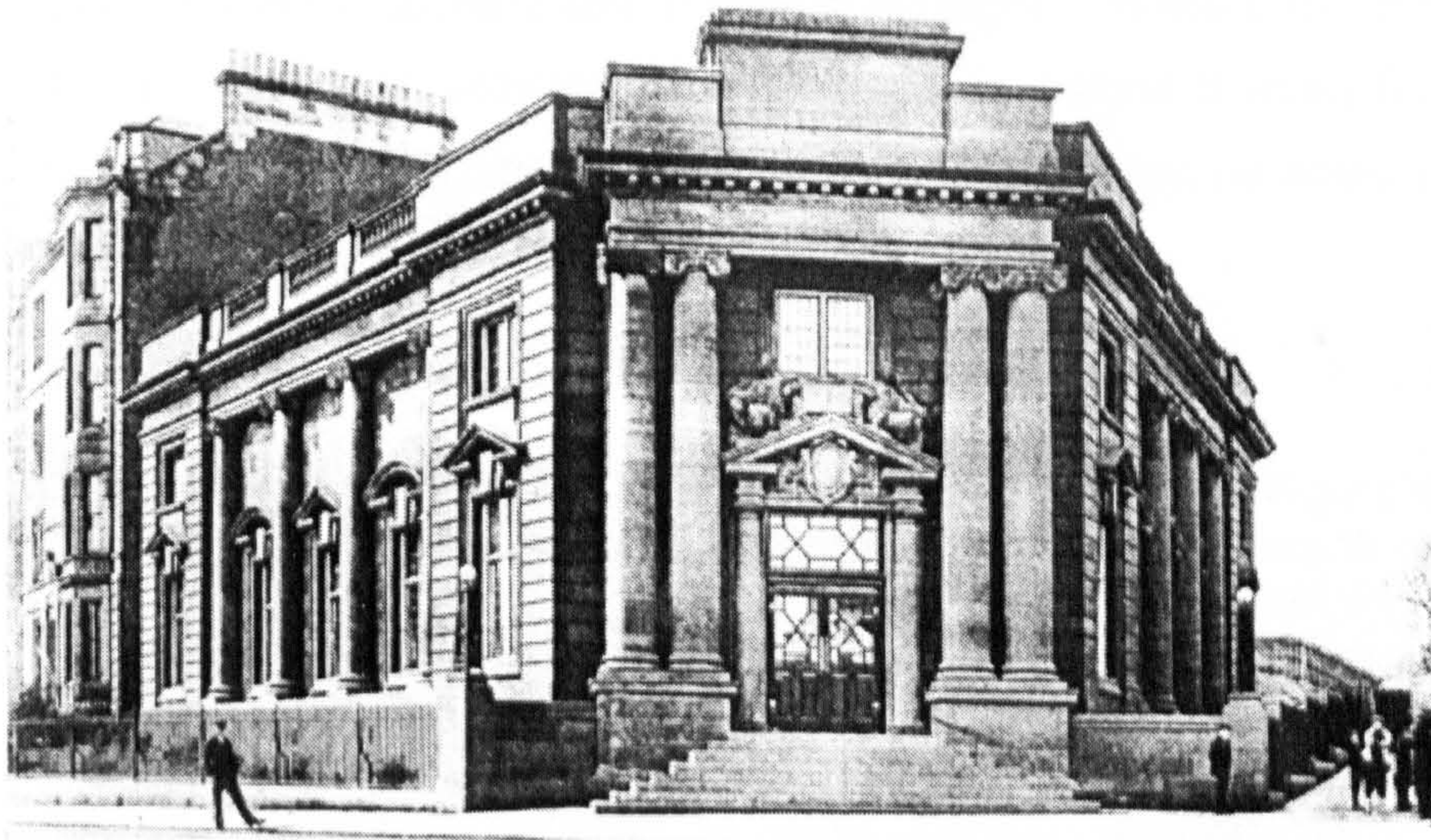
Libraries

Other notable public buildings erected in Edwardian Dundee were the Coldside and Blackness branch Libraries, erected in 1904 and 1908, both designed by City architect Thomson in a Classical style and paid for by Andrew Carnegie at a cost of about £7,000

each (The Builder, 1915: 585), modest sums in comparison to other amounts spent on other public buildings elsewhere at that time. Walker (1977: 27) noted that the two buildings were composed with “strong and straightforward classical elevations, ingenious plans with especially good staircases”.

The Blackness Library was erected on a triangular shaped site close to the junction of Blackness Avenue with Perth Road, the main entrance positioned towards the thinnest part of the site at the centre of the small front elevation. Thomson marked the entrance with two large double columns, one placed at each side of the double doorway. The main entrance was reached upon climbing a flight of steps for the building was raised above the street level in order to overcome the problem of the sloping site and to possibly stress the importance of the building from its neighbours which were erected at ground level. Positioned above the double doorway was a pediment with sculptured decoration by Alfred Hodge. A low stone wall was laid out in front of the Library close to the end of the previously noted flight of steps, marked by lamp posts positioned in accord with the central axis of the front elevation.

Figure 6.3.14. The Blackness Library.



Along the two side elevations of the Library were placed four columns within recessed central sections while the building line was brought forward slightly at the ends of these facades so to give the impression of being pavilions. Rectangular shaped windows were placed in regular bays, positioned between columns, along the elevations with window openings also being surmounted by small sized pediments. A balustrade was located at the

rooftop so as to cover the roof level when viewed from the street level while the ends of the side elevations were decorated with banded rustication. The building, constructed of red stone was described as being “a severe two-storey Renaissance building”, (McKean & Walker, 1984: 78) the plan of which was kept uncomplicated with an entrance hall located to the rear of the main entrance giving access to a reading and book lending space on each laid out towards each of its sides.

The Blackness Library’s design and plan revealed little influence of the surroundings upon the design and plan of the building. Located in the south-west of Dundee (see figure 6.3.15) the Library was surrounded by a mixture of building types, such as houses to the west, a Church to the north and a Chapel to the south which the Library directly faced towards, as well as industrial buildings to the east and south. Despite being erected on a site adjacent to a major road junction the alignments of the approaching roadways were not utilised by the architect as the roads went past and not up to the building. In many respects the form of the junction, a ‘V’ shape to which the library was erected at the side of, did not present any vistas directly towards the building. Thus while in civic design terms the road offered potential for approaching the front of the building due to the position of the new building at the side of the prominent road junction in actuality this was not possible. Significantly too there was no evidence in the architectural media to highlight that the form of this building bore any additional association with the built environment around it apart from its scale being in keeping with the building situated in proximity to it. However, as noted previously in this study, association by scale alone represents weak civic design.

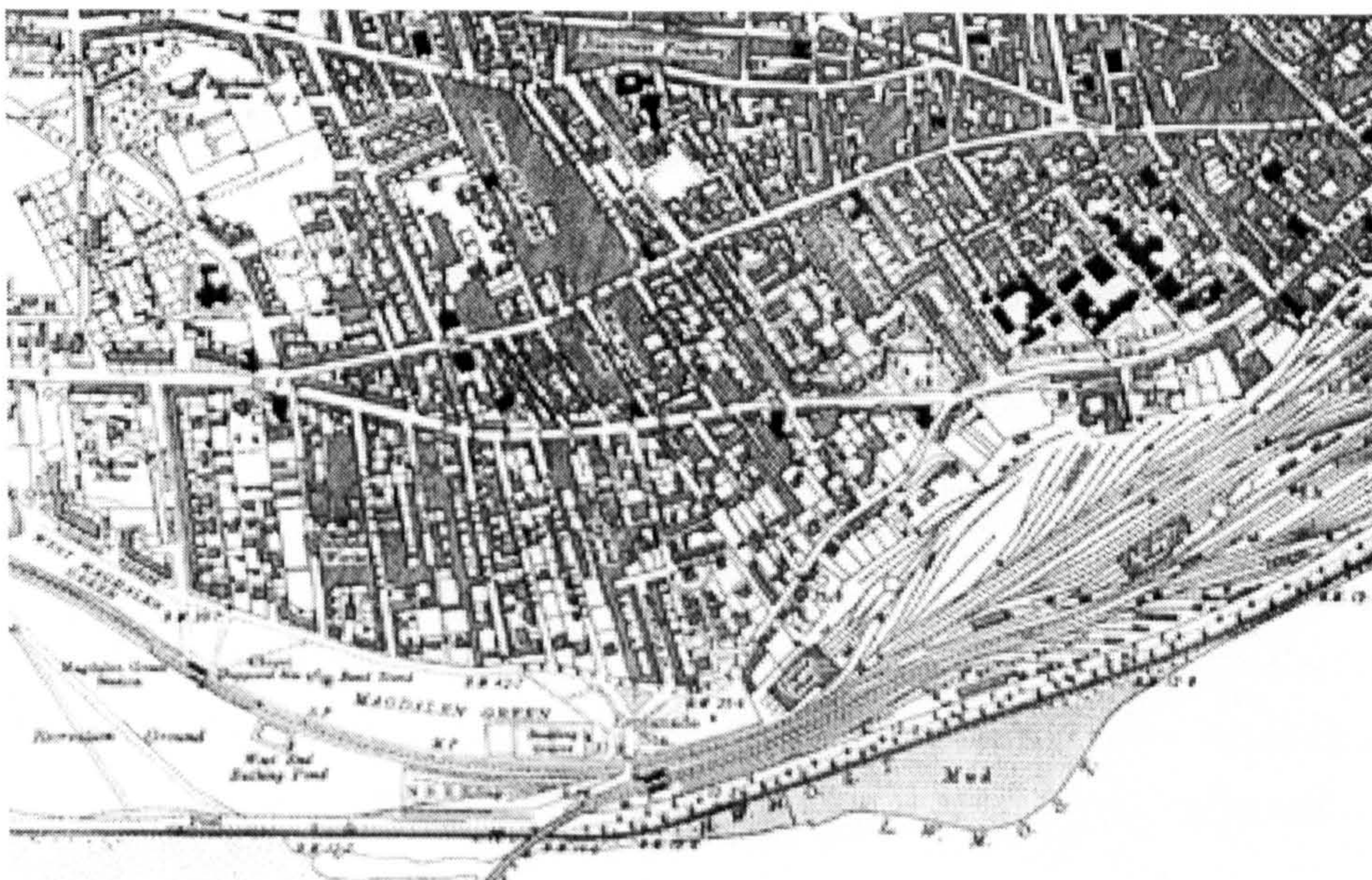


Figure 6.3.15. The south western section of Dundee (source: Ordnance Survey, 1923). The site of the Blackness Library is to the west of the map immediately to the north of the ‘C’ shaped road junction.

The Coldside Library, a building of symmetrical form, occupied an awkwardly shaped site positioned between Strathmartine Road and Loons Road to the north-west of Dundee which was to significantly affect the form of the building, although the shape of the site was utilised by Thomson to produce a highly original shape for a public building, a shallow semi-circle. Walker (1955: 27) described this Library and the Blackness Library, both design by James Thomson, as being “strong and straightforward classical elevations, ingenious plans with especially good staircases”. It has also been said that the Coldside Library was Thomson’s best designed structure: “a great concave-fronted Y-plan library with massive baroque gables”. (McKean and Walker, 1984: 94) For a block plan of the Coldside and Blackness libraries please refer to figure 6.3.17.

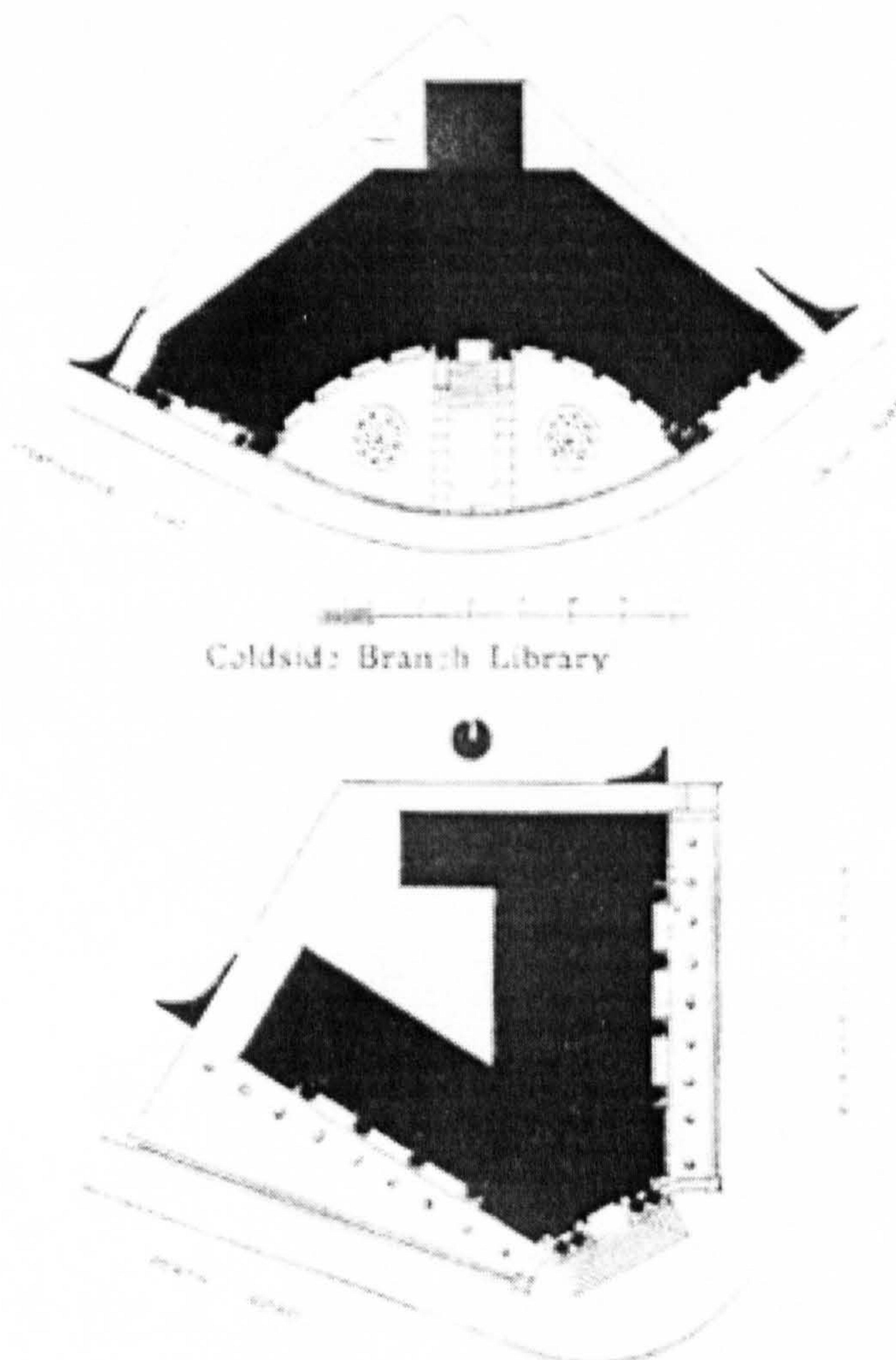
Figure 6.3.16. The Coldside Library.



The main entrance into the Coldside Library was positioned at the centre of the curved west facing front elevation and was marked above by a sculptured pediment and a small turret at the roof level. A flight of steps was placed in front of the entrance doorway and a lamp post also marked the central point of the principal facade, erected beyond the iron railing which was positioned at the front of the building’s site. Two additional lamp posts were situated towards the ends of the main elevation also in positions that corresponded with the central axis of the building. The blind upper storey, covered by red brick added a visual contrast to the rest of the stone composition with all window openings positioned in regular bays along the main elevations. The ends of the Coldside Library were marked at their centres by a large rectangular window at ground floor level. To each side of these window openings were

placed large, single columns, above which were placed pediments. Banded rustication was also used at the each end sections so to provide further emphasis within the composition.

Figure 6.3.17. Block plan of the Coldside Library (top) and Blackness Library.



As was the case with the Blackness Library, the Coldside Branch Library was also erected on a site situated close to a prominent road junction. However unlike the Blackness Library it was located within an area of Dundee that was relatively undeveloped, apart from a small number of large sized industrial building, and by as late as 1923, the date of the third Ordnance Survey series of Dundee, it was still shown that the building occupied a site which directly faced towards open land. Thus the building had little to relate to which naturally affected the strength of its civic design, apart from the use of small scale architectural details such as those previously mentioned, for it has been noted by this study that the strongest civic design schemes bore an association to their surroundings. Despite being located about one mile from the centre of Dundee, the building was surrounded by industrial

structures, as noted earlier, which included a saw mill and a number of works building while to the east of its site, along Loon's Road, were a number of terraced houses. Thus the impact of this public building was minimal as it offered little in the way of civic design to associate with. Of significance too, the position of the Library and the angle of the approaching roadways which formed a shallow 'X' at the nearby road junction, meant that they offered little possibility of continuing one of their alignments into the internal arrangement of the building for the angle at which the roads met was too shallow to continue towards the site of the building. Thus the road alignments tended to run past the building, which as highlighted previously, was set back within its site.

Figure 6.3.18. The north west area of Dundee (source: Ordnance Survey, 1923). The Coldside Library was erected to the north of the area shown, to the south east of the hospital at the 'x' shaped road junction.

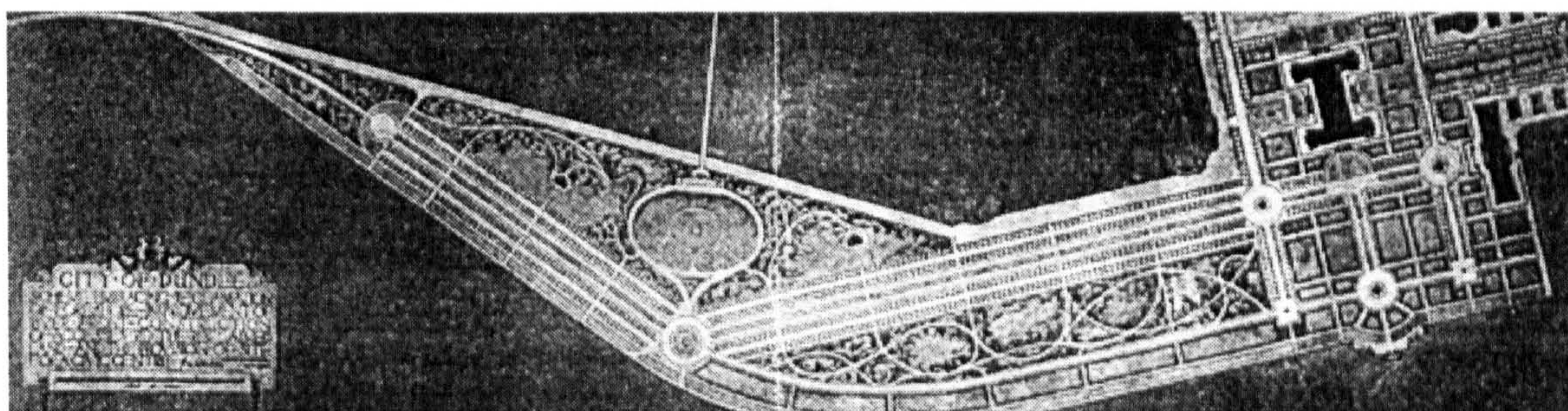


The City Beautiful comes to Scotland

In 1913 James Thomson, Dundee's City Architect, proposed plans for the redevelopment of central Dundee, a scheme very much in contrast to the civic design that was being practised

in the settlement at that time. On a site to the west of the city centre, on land reclaimed from the dock lands, Thomson planned to erect a rail station, a host of municipal buildings, formally laid out garden spaces, avenues lined with trees and formal approaches to the proposed buildings. The Town Planning Review (1913: 177) described Thomson's project as being both "interesting" and "important", providing Dundee with "the most magnificent river front in Great Britain." (*Ibid.*: 177) Such was the scale and ostentation of the suggested project that it can also be argued that the scheme verged upon civic design megalomania and no scheme in Britain during the period considered either proposed or built could be compared with its grandiose nature. In 1914 the Corporation accepted Thomson's scheme.

Figure 6.3.19. The plan of Thomson's Improvement Plan for Dundee.

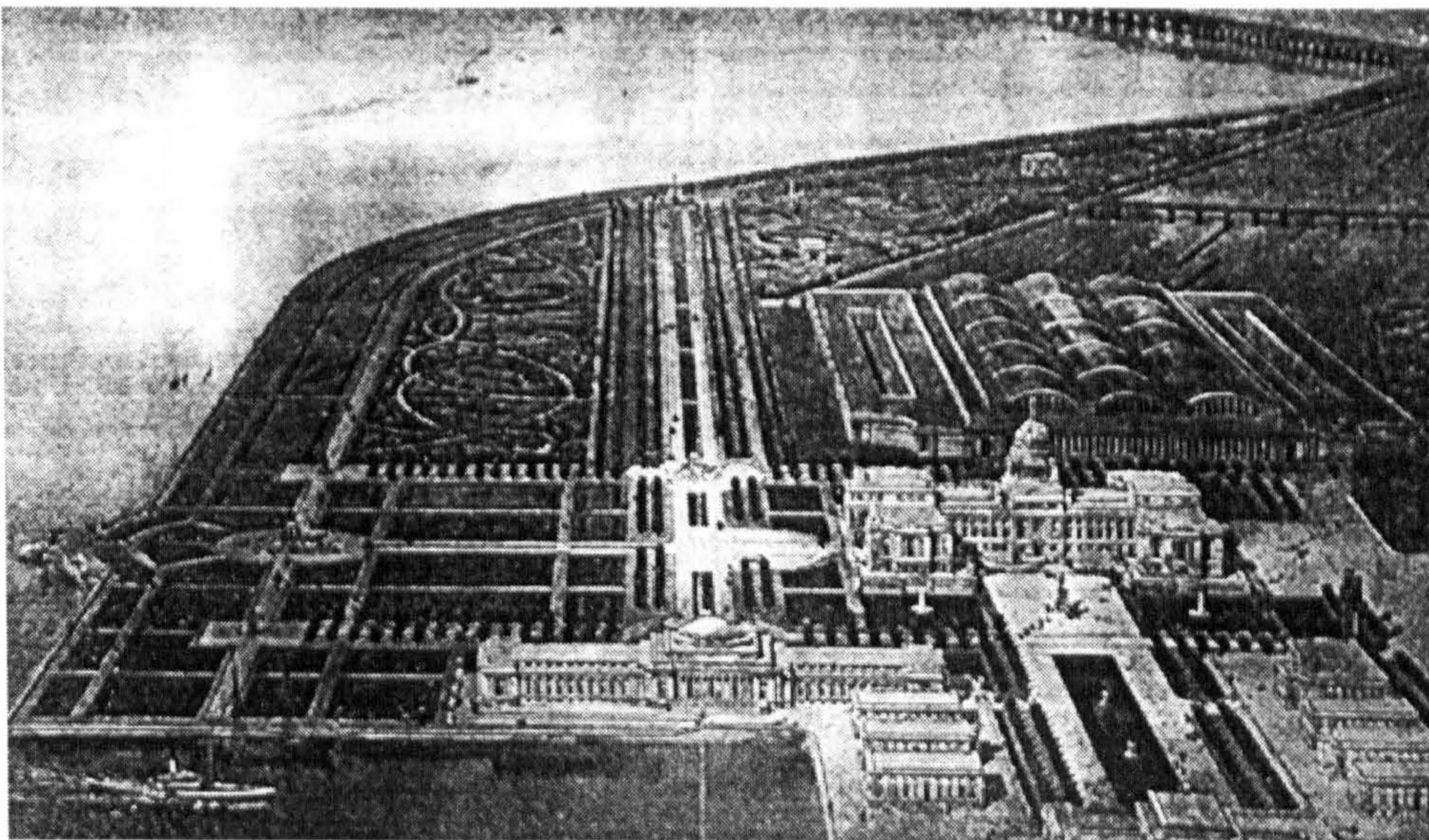


A fundamental element to the success of the Dundee planning scheme was the reclamation of land. Like the Peir Head development at Liverpool, Thomson sought to open up part of the dock area, around King William IV dock, which by the early twentieth century was inadequate to the needs of modern industry. Thus for a relatively small economic cost Dundee aimed to establish "a splendid site for its new municipal building and public market, and a fine open space on the river front." (*Ibid.*: 177) The Builder (1915: 31) noted that Thomson's scheme "although appearing somewhat ambitious at first sight, is both practicable and economic in its adaptation of means to ends." The journal added that; "It is also so arranged that it can be carried out in sections, none of them of great size or cost, which can be put in hand at intervals of a long period of time, avoiding a heavy charge of rates." (*Ibid.*: 31) Unfortunately the central improvement scheme, like so many improvement schemes of the Victorian and Edwardian era was abandoned in 1914 and given the history of the Corporation in Dundee with its prudent attitude to public building this retreat is not too surprising. Nevertheless a brief description of James Thomson's plan is necessary and had the scheme been laid down in the manner intended by Thomson Dundee would have been given a monumental civic design scheme on a par with those undertaken in the largest cities of contemporary America. Instead, when the idea of the scheme was reborn in 1918 it was

greatly revised but the implementation of the amended scheme along with other projects, albeit of a more minor scale, led to Dundee quickly assuming a reputation in the immediate post war era as being a progressive settlement with a local government of a broad minded nature. The perception of the council had thus radically altered in a matter of years for this label was hardly applicable before 1914.

The total spatial area of Thomson's 1913 scheme was approximately 85 acres, a substantial tract of central urban land. The overall scheme consisted of eight distinct elements which included the removal of many insanitary properties close to the area of redevelopment (The Builder, 1915: 585), and the building of a new bridge across the Tay. The reclaimed land from the Tay Estuary was to be laid out formally in a manner which Thomson described as a pleasure ground and wide esplanade (*Ibid.*: 585). The primary architectural structures in the plan, the rail station and municipal buildings, were to be designed in a classical fashion by Thomson.

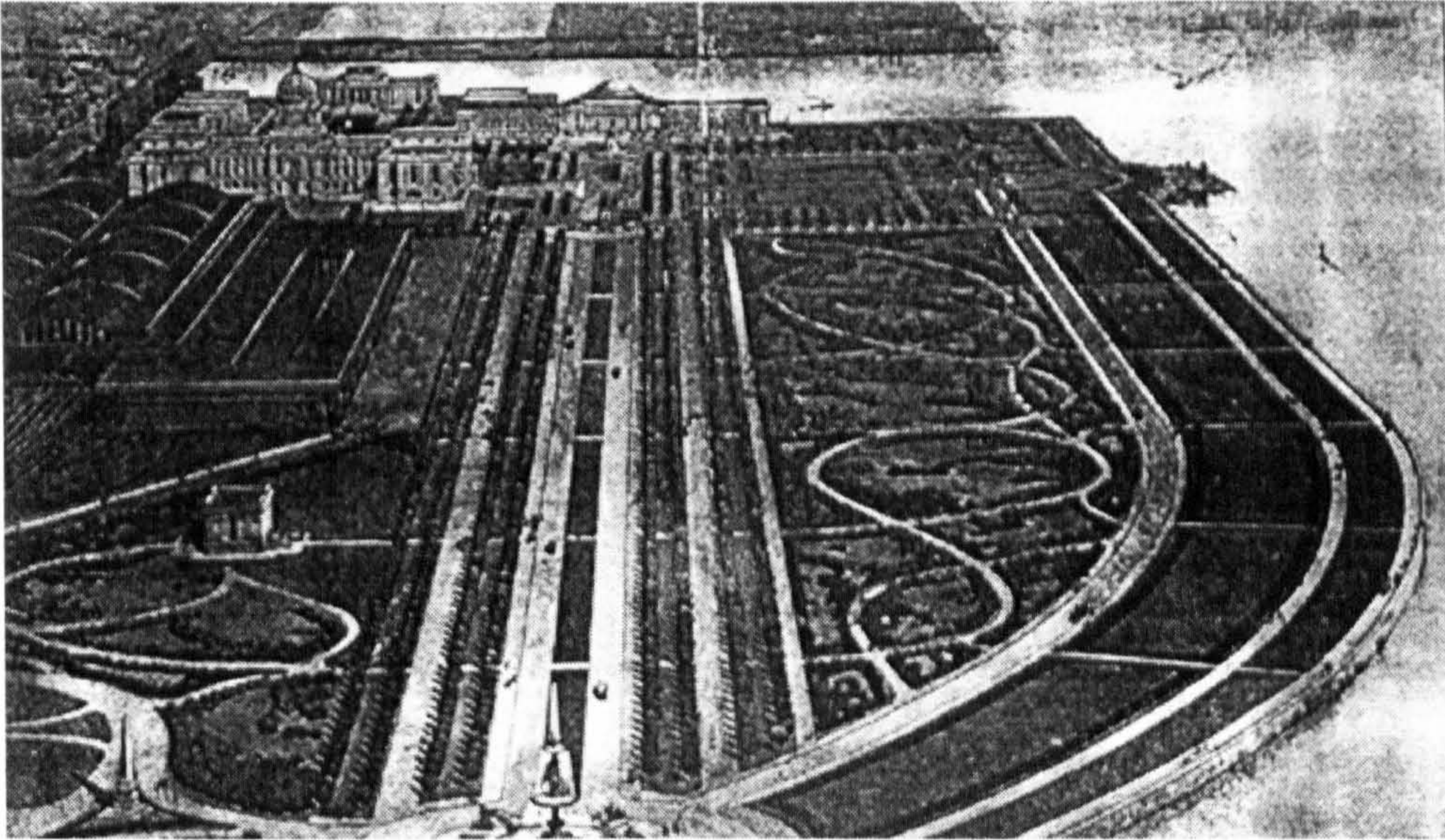
Figure 6.3.20. A perspective of the proposed Dundee Improvement Plan (1913).



Thomson's plan for Dundee was guided by the employment of symmetrical planning lines on a large scale and the use of vistas to create grand visual effects. Surrounded by water on three sides of the reclaimed site, the civic buildings were placed together by Thomson at the eastern end of the land close to Earl Grey Dock so as to form a group. Although Thomson gave no detailed perspective sketches of his buildings, or detailed plans of the buildings either, he did produce a number of landscape pictures showing the anticipated completed

form of the civic district. The most prominent of the buildings was a Municipal Office designed in a highly symmetrical form with a plan of a rectangular shape marked at its centre by a huge dome in the style of St Paul's Cathedral, London. Statues were to be placed in front of the building in prominent locations like in at the centre of the end sections and centre of the building.

Figure 6.3.21. A perspective from Thomson's plan for Dundee.



The Classically composed Municipal Office was decorated by a large number of paired columns. To the west of the central point of this structure Thomson placed the centre of the rail station's main elevation and to the east he placed a statue. Located nearby were additional municipal buildings which were also composed and arranged in a formal manner. To the south of the main civic building the central line of axis through the building was continued towards the waterfront and was terminated by another statue. Around this particular statue Thomson designed a garden area with a formal plan with alignments also terminated by statues. A large rotunda was erected in this section of the reclaimed land. The large axis from the centre of the principal civic building was continued across the reclaimed area for many hundreds of yards and was terminated by a huge fountain placed near to the banks of the Tay estuary. A footpath from the fountain lead west towards the new bridge which spanned the Tay Estuary.

Inter-War Dundee

As highlighted earlier with the onset of War Thomson's scheme was suspended and when it was undertaken again, in 1918, the monumentality of the original plan was lessened to a considerable extent. However after 1918 Dundee Thomson was involved the erection of one of the settlement's most prominent public buildings, Caird Hall, although the history of this building effectively begins before 1914 due to local concern that the Town House, designed in 1731 by William Adam, did not have enough dignity for a settlement of Dundee's size and importance. In addition, the site of the Town House had become inconspicuous during the nineteenth century due to the buildings erected around it. Before 1914 a local industrial magnate, James Caird, donated money to pay for a new City Hall and Concert Hall building, to be erected only if the Townhouse was cleared so as to enhance the setting of his munificence (McKean and Walker, 1984: 14). The resultant Caird Hall (1914-22) by Thomson was thus erected with an open space, known locally as City Square, in front of it. The grand impression of this building was further enhanced by it being set on a stone plinth which raised the building above the ground and by huge stone pillars which dominated the front elevation. However, significantly, public building in Dundee during the years 1918 to 1939 were undertaken at a slower rate than in the years preceding 1914. Apart from Caird Hall little of note was erected in central Dundee before 1939, the most striking building being Bonar House, erected in 1928 after George Bonar had given money to the Corporation so to erect a School of Economic in Dundee, and the Harris Academy, erected in 1926. This large two storey building, situated in western Dundee near to the Western Cemetery, was designed by Donald Ross consisting of a major symmetrically formed composition with a cupola at the rooftop, a drawbridge in front of the principal entrance with wings which swept back from each side of the central section. The building line was also projected forward at the end of each wing so to establish pavilions.

Conclusion

It has been shown that the practice of civic design in the period covered by this project was extremely limited in Dundee and had it not been for James Thomson's activities, often financed by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, in the Edwardian period as well as the proposed plan of central Dundee then there would have been even less civic architectural

and planning activity in Dundee, which is unsatisfactory given the demographic size and economic extent of the settlement by 1914. It has also been shown that had it not been for the donations of philanthropist Andrew Carnegie then the small number of structures erected in Dundee between about 1880 and 1914 would have been even less in total. However this situation must be placed in context, for Dundee was not too dissimilar from other large provincial towns and cities in Britain during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period which also tended to erect few public buildings and those that were undertaken often paid little attention to civic design matters. Where civic design was recognised to take place it can be stated that in Dundee it was not as strong as in other provincial towns and cities and the lack of environmental interest by the Corporation between about 1880 and 1914 was reflected, for example, by a lack of spending on both improvement schemes and the erection of public buildings. This obviously affected the city's architectural development but it may be assumed that the Corporation's poor financial footing prior to the period covered by this work was still having an effect by the final decades of the nineteenth century which resulted in few public building schemes being undertaken. Public building must also be noted to not be a pressing matter for the Corporation in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period.

The proposal plan for Dundee by James Thomson was an undeniably strong, arguably despotic, piece of urban planning which revealed the influence of the American City Beautiful Movement in Scottish urban planning circles in the Edwardian period. The scheme, for example, was of a scale and pretension not seen in Britain at that time in either schemes that were erected or proposed, and highlighted the possibilities of urban planning during the period examined. Had the scheme been undertaken then Dundee would have developed with a scheme on a par with the large American cities of Chicago, Washington or San Francisco. Sadly, as highlighted previously, the scheme was not implemented in its original form and this was not only a loss to the civic design of the settlement but arguably to civic design in Britain.

Aberdeen

Introduction

In 1801 the population of the county of Aberdeen was 121,065, the fourth largest in Scotland after the counties of Lanark, Edinburgh and Perth (source: Census). By the middle of the nineteenth century, in 1851, Aberdeen County's population had risen to 212,000 and by the start of the twentieth century to 304,420 (source: Census, 1901). This made the county in 1901 the third largest in terms of population total in Scotland. However Aberdeen's population, that is the town of Aberdeen, was just over 12,000 in 1801 (source: Census), but throughout the nineteenth century the settlement grew in size so that by the start of the twentieth century (1901) the population of the municipality was over 144,000, making the settlement of approximately the same demographic size as Dundee and Cardiff.

Situated on the east coast of northern Scotland where the Rivers Don and Dee meet together, Aberdeen enjoyed a prospect that was unrivalled by many other British towns and cities, looking out towards the North Sea. The role of water had long played a fundamental part in the life of the town and by the early nineteenth century Aberdeen had a thriving industrial base based on water related commerce, primarily ship building, fishing and brewing. Other important industries in the town from this time included textiles, quarrying and meat trading, which formed part of the specialist business upon which the town's economy relied (McWilliam, 1975: 129).

Aberdeen's built environment was subject to a great deal of urban planning activity from as early as the Georgian period with a New Town proposed by about 1800 and due to the employment of improvement schemes by the Town Council. During the Georgian period two important central thoroughfares were opened, King Street and Union Street, a roadway three-quarters of a mile long of a broad width and direct nature that cut directly through the Medieval core of the settlement, terminated at one end by the tower of Christ's College (erected in 1850). These new roadways helped to establish in the settlement a mixture of land uses within which new streets with private and public buildings were interspersed with narrow courts (Adams, 1978: 81) filled with workers houses, and so the social stratification

that was so pronounced in other Scottish cities, such as Edinburgh and Glasgow, was less apparent in Aberdeen. Smith (1995: 1) noted that Union Street is to Aberdeen what the Royal Mile is to Edinburgh, and it was during this time that the elegant Bon Accord district was laid out with its geometric road layout and squares (see figure 6.4.1). The bold planning of Aberdeen, while pleasing to the eye, was costly and coupled with a mismanagement of public funds brought the Town Council to bankruptcy by 1817 (Adams, 1978: 80). This factor, while occurring many years prior to the period covered by this work, was to affect the willingness of Aberdeen's public authorities to undertake major architectural and planning schemes in the later decades.



Figure 6.4.1. A view along Union Street at the end of the nineteenth century with the tower of the Townhouse in the background.

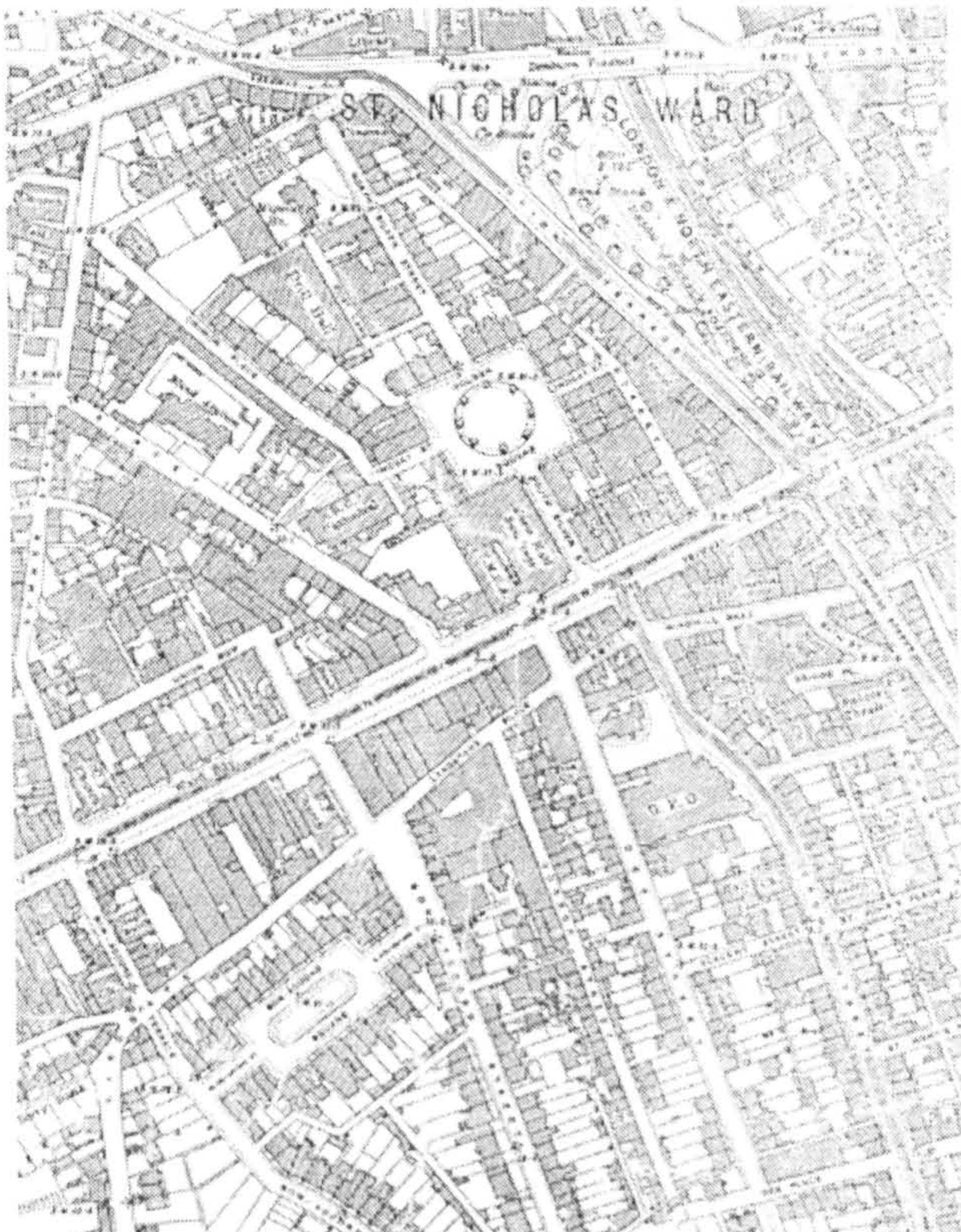
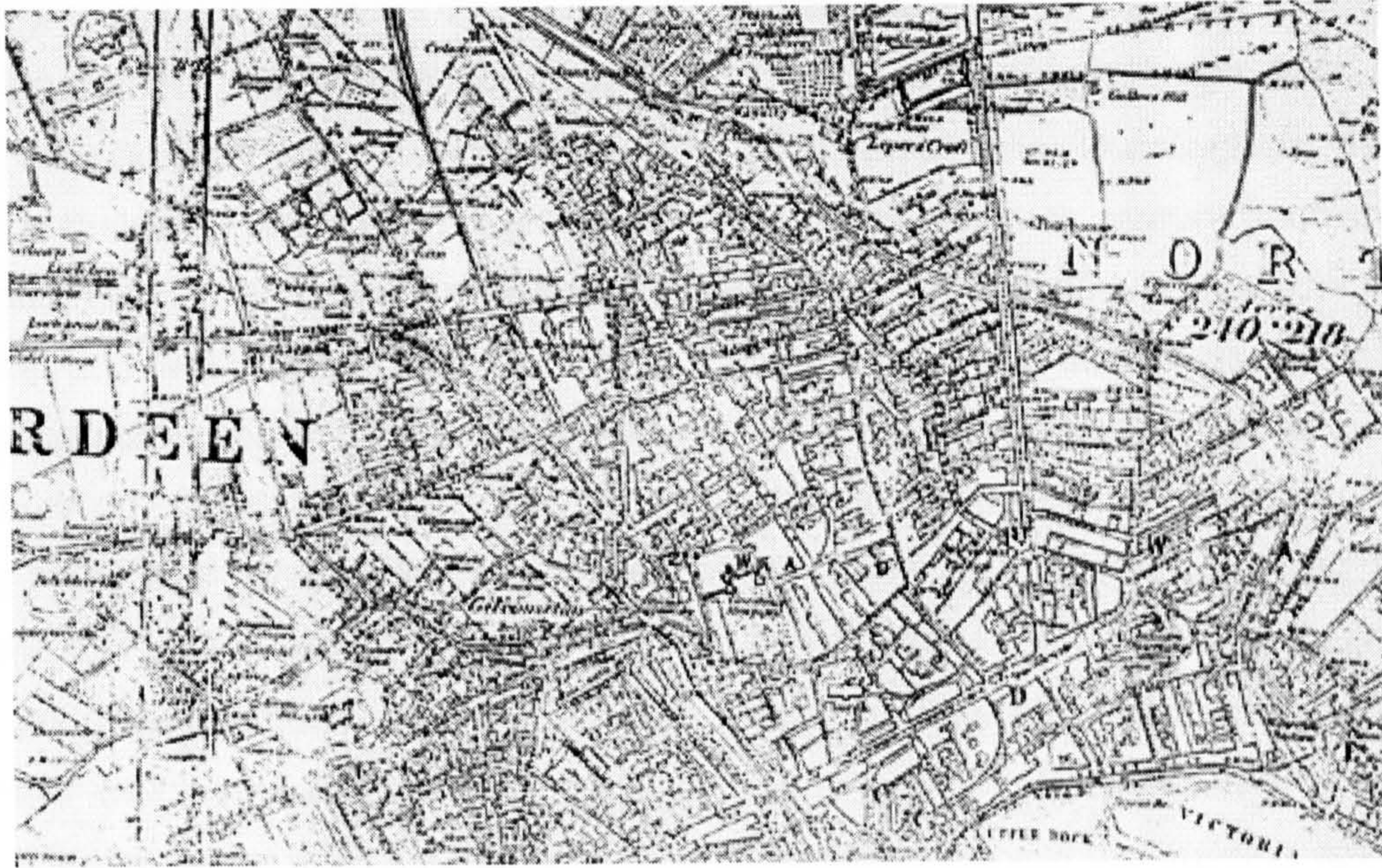


Figure 6.4.2. The Bon Accord district of Aberdeen with Union Street visible through its centre, lined east-west (source: Ordnance Survey, 1902).

The use of granite in the architectural development of Aberdeen during the nineteenth century gave the settlement an unrivalled appearance. McWilliam (*Ibid.*: 130) noted that the use and appearance of the material “obliges buildings to be serious, and this is why early nineteenth-century Aberdeen has more in common with the other neo-classic capitals of northern Europe, Helsinki most of all, than with the easy charm of most of its contemporaries in Britain - even with the splendours of Edinburgh.” Aberdeen partly as a consequence of the widespread use of granite in the nineteenth century established its own architectural identity and use of distinct design features (Dunbar, 1966: 152), which the composition of granite promoted. Significantly too, the building activity during the Victorian period in the ‘granite city’ was dominated by a small number of local architects who were to greatly affect the civic design of the place.

Of importance to the architectural development of Aberdeen were two architects, John Smith and Archibald Simpson. John Smith in his role as Town Architect was responsible for designing some of the town’s most prominent buildings in the late-Georgian and early-Victorian period, which included the Music Hall (1820) with its imposing 90 feet high Ionic front elevation, “arguably the finest building in Union Street” (Smith, 1995: 4), North Church (1830), the Infirmary (1833-40), Town’s Schools (1841) and New Market (1840-2). However in the years preceding the period covered by this work a distinct lack of public architectural practice was undertaken in Aberdeen despite the growing size of the town in economic and demographic terms and the increasing needs of the local population although, as noted earlier, improvement schemes were undertaken particularly from the late 1860s due to fears over disease and threats to the town’s law and order. As a consequence the these factors and a willingness of the Liberal politicians who dominated the Town Council at that time, a political group who were prepared to instigate urban improvement, the town’s sewerage system was reorganised between 1866-70, in 1866 an aqueduct was constructed supplying fresh water to the town, gas was municipalised in 1871 and Victorian Bridge built (in 1881). However by as late as the 1880s only four architectural schemes of any note had been undertaken in the decades prior. These schemes were the Grammar School (1857), a Music Hall (1858), the Municipal Building (from 1867) and Victoria Park, laid out by J. Robertson in 1871, within which a massive granite fountain was placed. A cemetery was also laid out in 1880 by the Corporation but by the start of the period examined by this work no strong architectural trends existed in the civic design of Aberdeen apart from the dominance of granite as a building material.

Figure 6.4.3. Aberdeen's town plan in 1869 (source: Ordnance Survey).

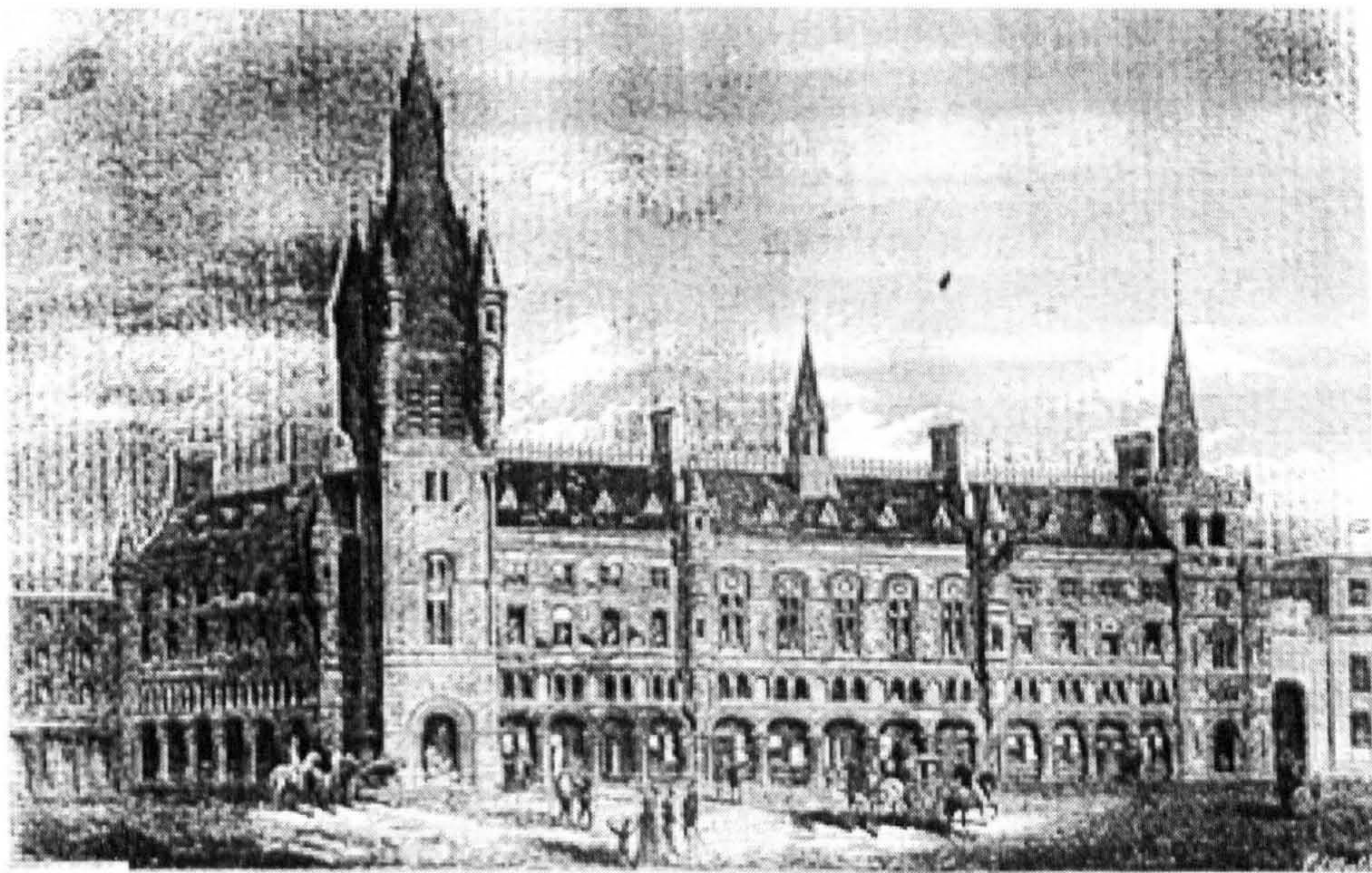


The Townhouse

The civic design activities of the late-Victorian period began in Aberdeen from as early as 1865, many years before the period covered by this study, when the Corporation invited three local architects to design a new and large scale public building to be known as the Townhouse, later renamed the Municipal Building, a Town Hall albeit but in name which also contained Law Courts. The choice of the site for the new building was an interesting one, being positioned at the junction of Union Street, the principal thoroughfare of the town, with Broad Street, a street of much lesser importance, to the rear of the Police Station and other buildings noted in *The Builder* (1868: 410) as being “of an inferior description.” Thus the selection of site was hardly the most salubrious in central Aberdeen at that time and the scheme was also criticised in the contemporary architectural press for not incorporating the removal of buildings along Broad Street so to enhance the new public building’s effect when viewed from the north of its site towards it. However in 1905 as part of an extension scheme, by A. Marshall Mackenzie, at a cost of £35,000, the buildings located directly to the north were replaced by a new wing of the Townhouse whose building line loosely corresponded with the front of Marischal College which was situated to the north (*The Builder*, 1905: 636) along Broad Street some distance away.

The cost of this large scale four storey building, erected from locally quarried granite, was put at approximately £50,000 (*Ibid.*: 410) and Peddie and Kinnear's design were awarded the design premium. Construction began in 1867 and was completed in the following year with the new building being designed in a Scottish Baronial style (Cunningham, 1981; 25), which *The Builder* (1868: 410) recognised as belonging to sixteenth century Scottish design. The impact of this public building upon the local townscape was derived not solely from its large size, 200 feet in length and 115 feet in width, but in that its effect was enhanced by a 190 feet high clock tower and circular turrets placed above the conical rooftop at the corners of the building. Other prominent design features included archways on the walls of the building above the window openings which were located in regular bays along the main elevations and also of an entrance at the centre of the south facing elevation, marked by an arched doorway and turret at the rooftop. An entrance was also positioned beneath the clock tower which was also marked above by a large arch while steps were positioned in front of it. Lamp posts were erected at regular distances in front of the building which added to the general effect of the civic design composition, and two lamp posts were placed on each side of the main entrance, located beneath the tower.

Figure 6.4.4. The Townhouse (source: *The Builder*, 1868).



A brief description of the Townhouse's plan is necessary. As noted briefly earlier, the building was to not only be used by the Corporation but also by Court Officials and the internal arrangement reflected this in a practical manner by being planned in two distinct

sections. The first section, along Broad Street at the western side of the building, was to be used by the Corporation and Police Commissioners. The other section of the plan, close to Union Street, that is the main facade of the building, was to be used by the Court House and in this part of the plan was arranged court rooms which were entered from a corridor, 24 feet high, 16 feet wide, 60 feet long, laid out behind the main entrance and vestibule positioned beneath the tower at the south western point of the plan. The axis of the corridor, running in an east-west direction, was terminated at the eastern side of the building's plan, that is the part of the building farthest away from the main entrance, by a broad staircase which gave access to further court rooms positioned towards the rear of the building on the first floor level. The centre of the building in the upper storeys of the building was filled by the largest room in the building, a hall measuring 76 feet in length and 46 feet which was so high that it was continued into an upper floor level of the building.

Erected on an irregularly shaped site, which the Townhouse more or less fully occupied (see figure 6.4.5), the building represented a significant piece of civic design not only because of the large scale of the building but due to the features employed on the elevations of the building, for example. Other significant aspects of the building's design included the side entrance that was placed in the centre of the elevation facing west to Broad Street and lamp posts that were placed at regular distances about the front and side elevations of the building in accordance with the regular location of the window openings, as previously noted. The placing of lamp posts in front of the entrances not only allowed any axes established to the rear of them within building to be continued away into the surrounding environment but in addition marked the alignment which would be scarcely apparent to someone passing the building.

At the south western corner of the building's plan, at the junction of Union Street with Broad Street was placed the clock tower which doubled as an end pavilion in the symmetrically composed south facing front elevation. The front of the Municipal building fronted an open space that was formerly used as a market place (see figure 6.4.6), but the space was not filled with architectural features throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as statuary, which would have greatly enhanced the civic design of the building had they been placed in positions corresponding with the design and internal arrangement of the Town House. However the open space in front of the building greatly added to the impact of the building in the centre of the settlement, partly because fine views towards the building were established through it.

Figure 6.4.5. The Townhouse and setting (source: Ordnance Survey, 1902).

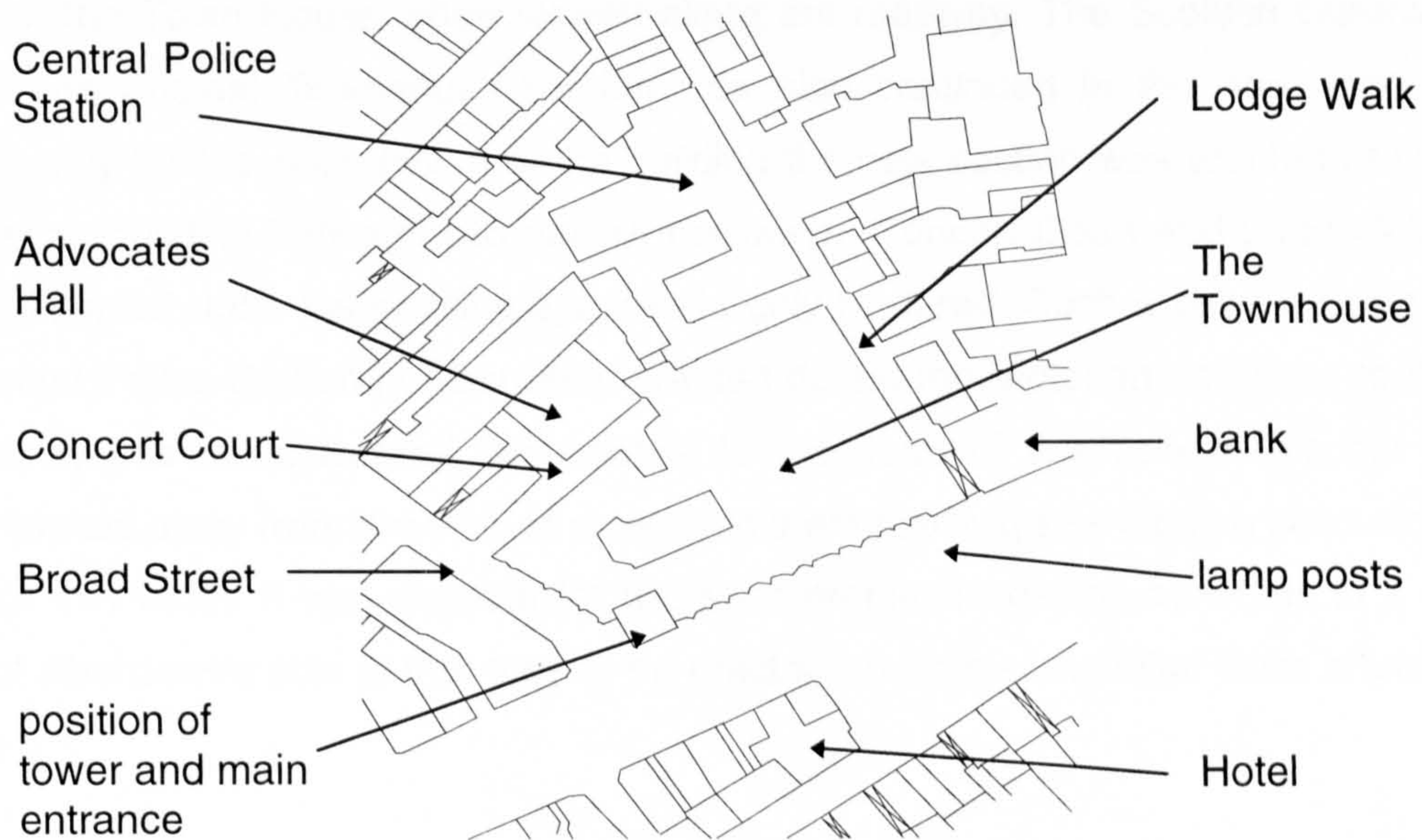


Figure 6.4.6. Castle Street in 1920 showing the market in front of the Townhouse.



It has already been noted that in the early twentieth century a new wing was added to the Town house by A.M. MacKenzie, with assistance from J. Rust, winners of the design competition, and as highlighted previously this scheme was a major event in the civic design of Aberdeen during the period covered by this work partly because the scheme was not only

large in scale but involved the removal of buildings along Broad Street so as to heighten the impact of the Town House when viewed along the roadway. The Scottish Baronial design style of the original Townhouse section was also continued in the new wing although unfortunately for the civic design of the building the new section was erected at the rear of the existing building between two narrow roadways, Concert Court and Lodge Walk. Thus its visual impact upon the passing eye was largely hindered. Such a case was also true for the Central Police Station in Aberdeen, erected during the Victorian age prior to the period covered by this work, located immediately to the north of the Townhouse but was also largely tucked away from the view of more prominent roadways as it being sited along a side street of thin width. It was unusual for two such prominent design schemes in a provincial place of Aberdeen's size at that time to be erected on sites along what were effectively side streets.

The architectural development of Aberdeen was not particularly vigorous at the end of the nineteenth century. As was the case with its provincial counterpart Dundee, a settlement of similar demographic size, which also suffered from a lack of public buildings of any considerable size and civic design strength during the Victorian and Edwardian period, and Aberdeen only undertook the erection of a small number of public buildings during the period about 1880 through to 1914. As a consequence of this lack of public building in Aberdeen the civic design of its small public buildings take on extra importance.

The Post Office

One of the largest and most considerable of all public buildings erected in Edwardian Aberdeen was the central Post Office. Facing Dee and Crown Streets the new Post Office was opened in Aberdeen in 1907. Designed by W.W. Robertson, formerly HM Principal Architect for Scotland at HM Office of Works in Edinburgh, furthermore the architect of the central Post Office in Dundee, this three storey edifice was constructed from Kemnay granite. The total cost of the building was put at over £50,000 (The Builder, 1907: 455).

It should be noted that the new Post Office in Aberdeen was a building of a scale well above the norm at that time of its construction, measuring 220 feet in length by 140 feet in breadth

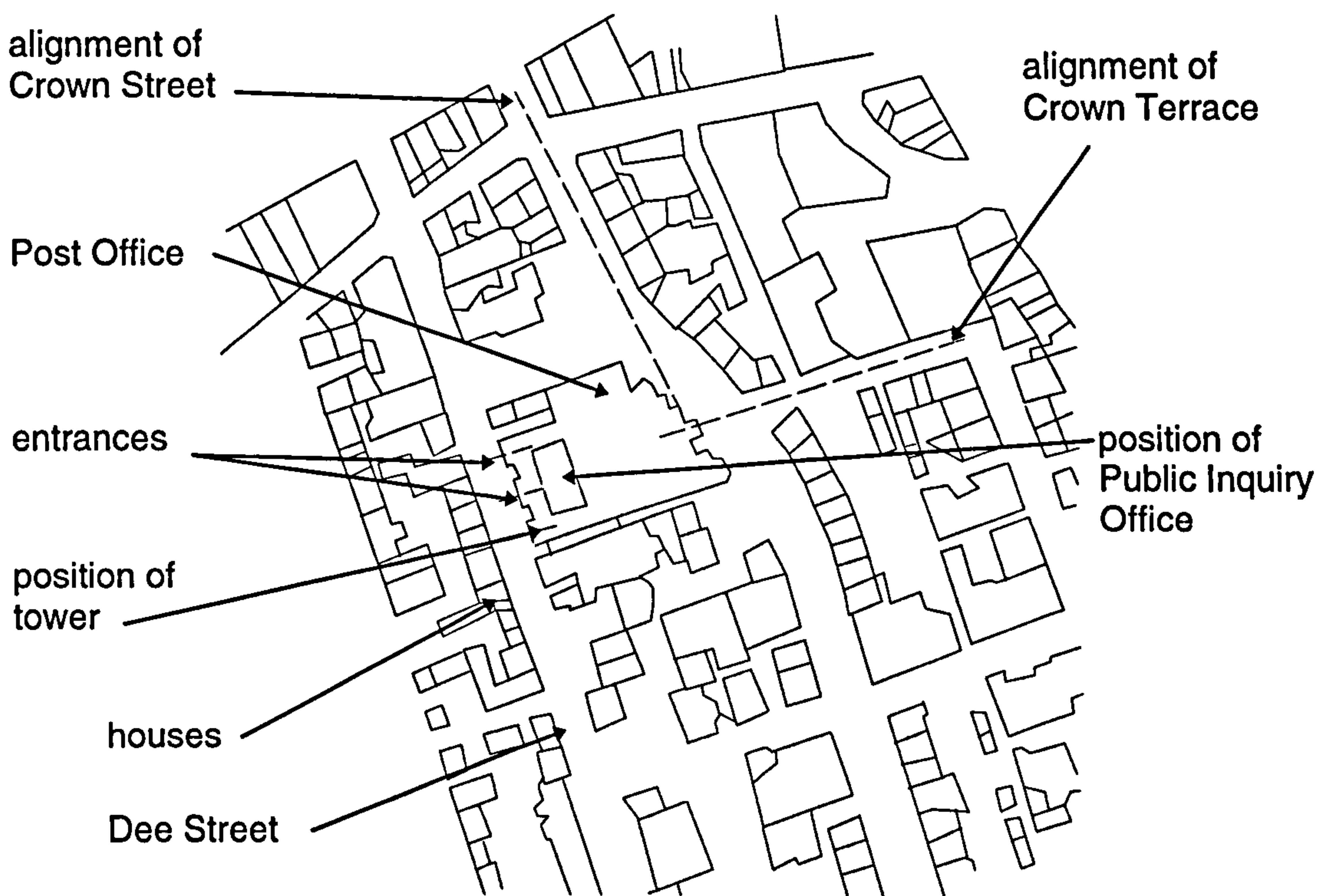
with a height of almost 60 feet (The Builder, 1907: 454), yet it was erected on a site away from the commercial core of the city, situated within the largely Georgian district of the town among the large terraced houses of Dee Street near to Bon Accord Square and Golden Square. The road pattern in this area of the town was more geometric in form than in other parts of the settlement with few curvatures roadways which offered the prospect of establishing direct vistas towards the new building. However, one of these curvatures was located midway along Crown Street to the rear of the Post Office building. In order to deal with this situation Robertson gave the Post Office's rear elevation a staggered building line although this was a result in part of the site being of an awkward form. By designing the rear elevation in accordance with the curvature of the road, and the irregular shaped boundary of the site, a vista towards the Post Office was created when looking southwards along Crown Street and as the building line of the building's rear elevation was brought forward at interim intervals the view along the roadway was terminated by the rear line of the building. Significantly too, the centre of the rear elevation was met directly with the alignment of a roadway known as Crown Terrace, a side road, which gave a direct vista to the back of the building and at the point where the alignment of this roadway met with the building it was marked on the Post Office by the building line being brought forward. However no evidence was noted to suggest that the rear elevation of the Post Office was marked by any architectural feature of note at the point where it met with the alignments of either Crown Street or Crown Terrace apart from the extended building line (see figure 6.4.7).

The Post Office was designed with three entrances along its principal elevation. The main entrance of the Post Office was positioned in the centre of the 220 feet long front elevation which faced west towards Dee Street to the rear of which was situated the Public Inquiry Office (The Builder, 1907: 454), the only space with public access in the building. This space measured some 2,000 square feet in area (The Builder, 1907: 454). The importance of this room was emphasised by its high ceiling to floor height, 20 feet. The other entrances were placed towards the ends of the main elevation in positions in accord with the facade's central alignment, one giving access to the Public Enquiry Office and the other to the first floor and the Surveyor's and Postmaster's room. The southern most entrance it should be added was vertically marked by a tower.

The ends of the symmetrically composed front elevation were marked by end pavilions, a common feature in the design of public buildings at that time. The main entrance was also marked at its front by a porch which gave direct access into the Public Inquiry Office through

a vestibule positioned directly to the rear of the main entrance which also provided access to the nearby Telegram Delivery Office. Although this formed an axis of note at the centre of the large front elevation this is hardly apparent to a person passing the building as the axis was not marked away from the building by features such as a flight of steps or lamp posts. The southern section of the building's plan contained the largest space in the internal arrangement, the Sorting Office, which was located directly behind the Public Office and measured 114 feet in length by 100 feet in width, positioned at ninety degrees to the angle of the space at its front. However there was little evidence of alignments in the plan of the Post Office apart from the one established behind the principal entrance, in part it can be assumed due to the practical nature of the building which required a functional and open internal arrangement.

Figure 6.4.7. The Post Office and its surroundings (source: Ordnance Survey, 1926).



The planning of the Post Office apart from the advantageous road layout around the back of the building which afforded views directly to the centre of the back facade provided little evidence of relating to its surroundings of mainly houses. The scale of the Post Office, 58 feet in height, for example, was way above the that of the surrounding buildings erected in the Georgian period and this made any attempt of association difficult due to the small scale

of the setting. While the large scale of the Post Office must be seen to be appropriate to its function in terms of allowing the building to fit with its surrounding it was problematic. The formally designed front elevation also was composed with little relation to the surrounding environment. The front of the building, for example, faced a row of terraced houses which it did not correspond with while the only sense of association that was evident between the building and the houses at its front was due to all the buildings being erected from granite.

Marischal College

“Milan Cathedral came to Aberdeen at the turn of the century when Alexander Marshall Mackenzie adopted the same soaring, surging verticals to punctuate the Broad Street facade of Marischal College”, remarked Sinclair (1984: 64). The original College building, designed by Archibald Simpson in the late-1830s was by the end of the nineteenth century becoming inadequate for the needs of the institution so in 1891 it was decided by the College’s Sites and Plans Committee to extend the existing building. However this was not to happen until the early years of the twentieth century (The Builder, 1906: 400). The extension scheme was perhaps the single most important architectural scheme in Aberdeen during the period studied, not only because of its enormous scale but because the new scheme involved the clearance of a number of buildings located near to the site in Broad Street and the moving of an existing Church building, Greyfriars Church, for which a sum of £46,000 was given by central government (Sinclair, 1984: 64, The Builder, 1906: 400) in order to pay for the expenses involved in clearing the land and rebuilding the Church. As part of the development scheme the Church was moved to a site nearby and the resultant College building has been said to be one of the finest education buildings of its period (West, 1967: 175). Certainly it was the largest architectural project undertaken in Aberdeen during the period about 1880 to 1914.

The total cost of the College extension scheme, designed by A. Marshall Mackenzie, was put at £200,000 (The Builder, 1906: 400), an enormous sum of money which not even the largest of provincial settlements at that time could afford to spend on a Town Hall, a sum raised largely from private benefaction by individuals such as Lord Strathcona, Charles Mitchell and Son and Andrew Carnegie, the latter being an individual who donated sums of money for public buildings in other settlements examined by this work. The design of the

new granite building was sympathetic to the vernacular revival that was occurring at the time in Scotland and the new Marischal College's form also paid consideration to the Gothic idiom thanks to its large buttresses, the spires positioned at consistent distances on the rooftop and the elongated window openings, for example. However the placing of the fenestration along the main elevations corresponded with the symmetrical form of the overall composition and was found in regular bays with general shape of the window openings being rectangular although at the basement level the windows were designed with arched heads. *The Builder* (*Ibid.*: 400) noted that the design style chosen belonged to "the Perpendicular Gothic of the period of Henry VII."

Figure 6.4.8. Marischal College with Greyfriars Church to the right (source: Sinclair, 1984).

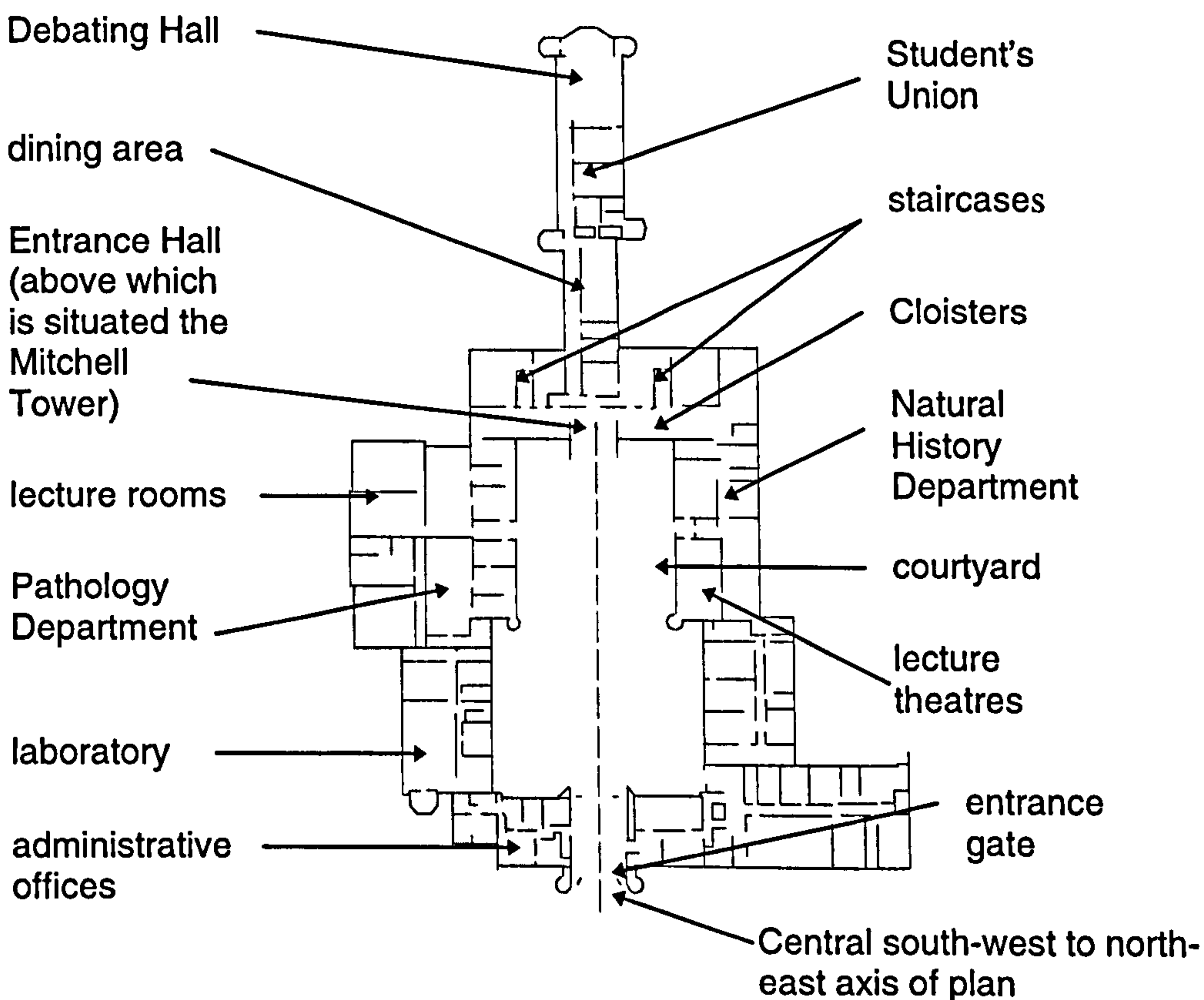


The dimensions of the completed College building, four storeys including basement level, were huge, being about 400 feet in length with a width of almost one hundred feet at certain parts of the plan. However the large sense of scale was further enhanced within the composition by the Mitchell Tower, a vertical element that reached a height of 260 feet, which was situated towards the centre of the plan in the rear section of the composition. This vertical element was surmounted by a spire (*The Builder*, 1906: 400) which made for an imposing landmark in central Aberdeen while minor vertical axes were established in all the main elevations due to the buttresses placed at regular intervals along the building. Such design features helped establish the imposing appearance of the building which came to dominate the centre of Aberdeen, even overpowering the large scale Townhouse which was located to the south along Broad Street. The importance of the building to both

Aberdeen and the Scottish nation was shown by the King and Queen officially opening the building in September 1906.

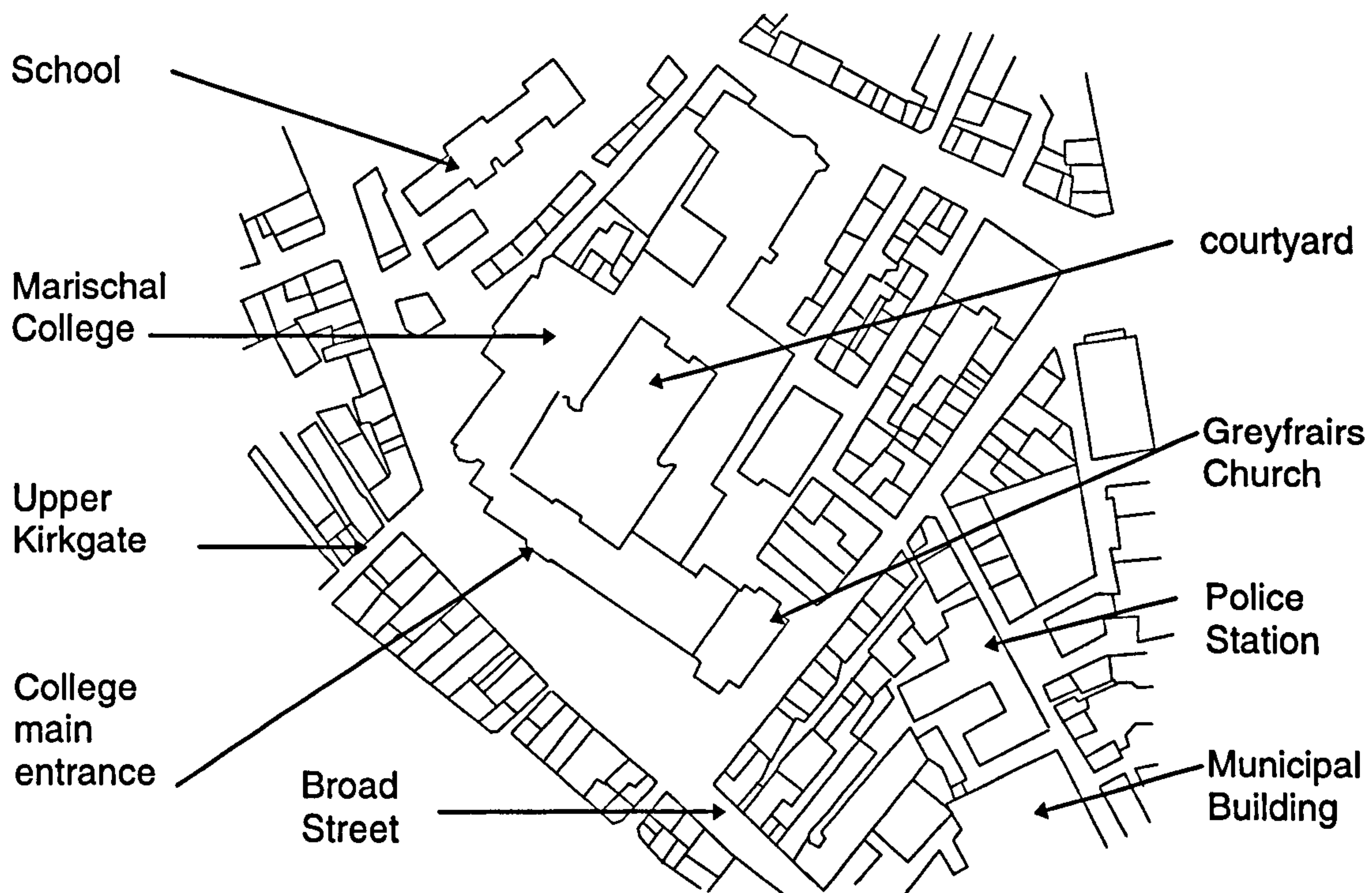
The general form of the plan of Marischal College was a long, rectangular building with a courtyard at its centre, the shape of which related to the central south-west to north-east axis established from the main entrance of the building. The main entrance of the College was recessed beneath the gate house which led directly into the courtyard space, called the Quadrangle, around which the building was arranged. The plan of the overall building offered much potential for planning on symmetrical lines but was split into a number of distinct sections that comprised individual academic departments of the College, each with their own distinct layout suited to the nature of the subject area being taught, and so as a consequence bore little relation existed between the planning of each part of the new building.

Figure 6.4.9. Marischal College's ground floor plan.



The central axial line that was established at the recessed main entrance at the front of the building was continued eastwards across the courtyard towards the rear section of the College and was marked by the Mitchell Tower above the entrance at the rear of the building. Behind this doorway was placed an Entrance Hall, which gave access into the Cloisters and spaces used by the Midwifery Department as well to the Lady Students Rooms and staircases positioned in accord with the central (south-west to north-east) axis of this section of the plan. The central alignment established was further evident in the form of the rear part of the building which was designed with a long, thin form that included Tea Rooms, the Student Union and the Debating Hall. This particular space contained a stage at its northern end, positioned in the centre of the Debating Hall, thus terminated the alignment from the main entrance and gatehouse at the front of the College. It was in this section of the building, above the Debating Hall on the first floor level, that the Mitchell Hall, a 116 feet long and 42 feet wide, was situated (The Builder, 1906: 400).

Figure 6.4.10. Marischal College and its surrounding in 1926 (source: Ordnance Survey).



The chosen site for the College's extension was situated between Broad Street to the south, North Street to the north and to the west and east by two minor roadways, Littlejohn Street and Queen Street. The area surrounding the site contained primarily, small terraced houses mixed with public houses and small scale industrial workplaces and shops. The large floor heights of the College and general large size of the building did not relate in any particular

manner to the small scale of its setting. However situated close to the site of the College was other larger buildings of a public nature such as schools and churches as well as the Townhouse positioned at the southern end of Broad Street at the junction with Union Street.

The width of Broad Street was increased as part of the College extension scheme and a long, thin space other than that of the roadway was established in front of the building (see figure 4.18.11), created by removing Greyfriars Church to a new site and clearing a number of buildings, as noted earlier. The overall effect of setting the new building back from the roadway helped to enhance its impact on the passing eye but the local road pattern in proximity to the College site had little influence upon the plan of the building with the main roadway, Broad Street, heading not directly towards the College but past the site. However one minor roadway, Upper Kirkgate (see figure 6.4.12), located between Broad Street and St Nicholas Street, did have an affect upon the planning form of Marischal College as its alignment met directly with the western corner of the front elevation. In terms of civic design this is of note. At the point where both building plan and axis of the road met, the building line was projected forward with a circular bay which thus terminated the vista eastwards along Upper Kirkgate. This too is of civic design worth.

Figure 6.4.11. The open area established in front of the College's front elevation. The vertical element to the rear right of the photograph is Townhouse's tower.

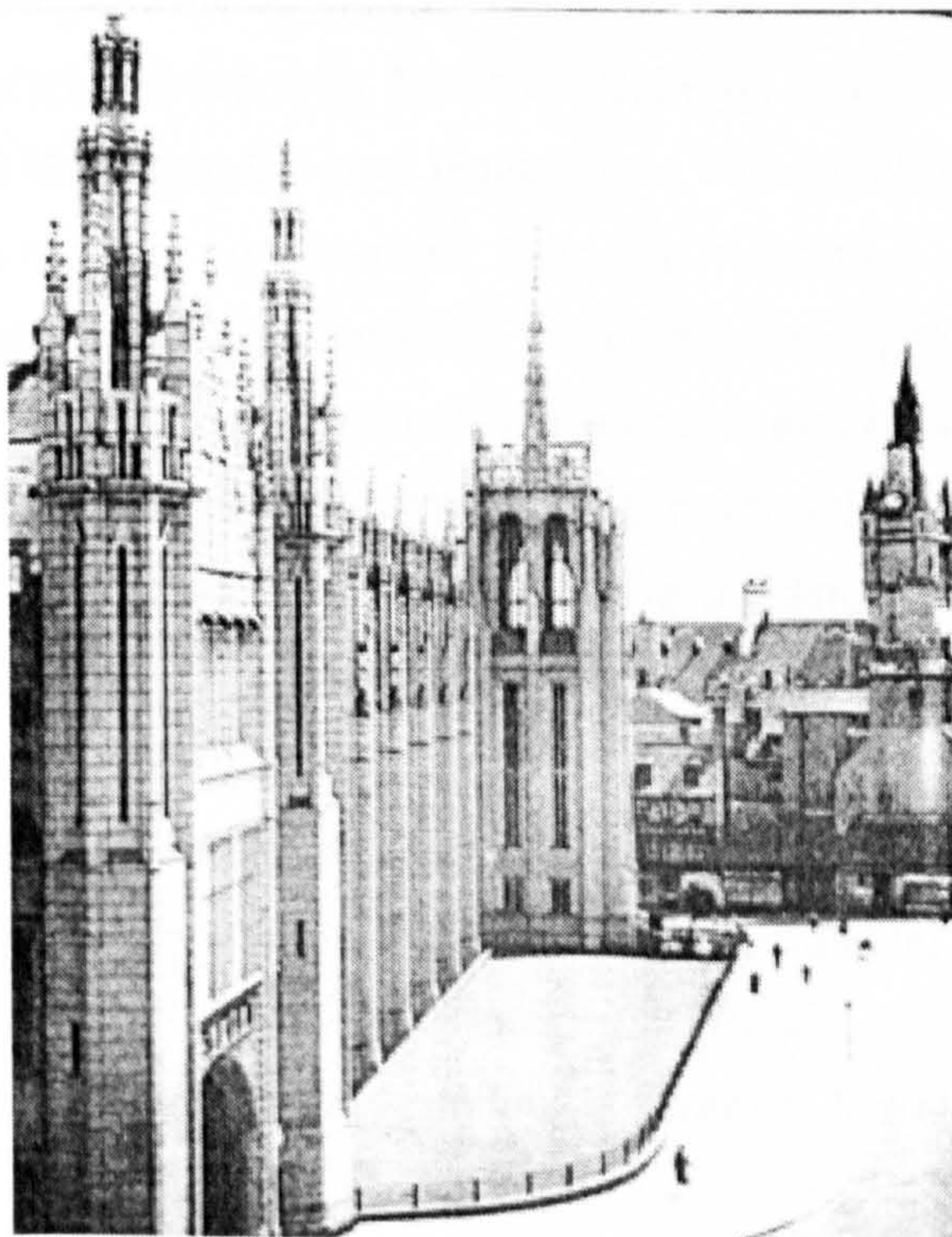
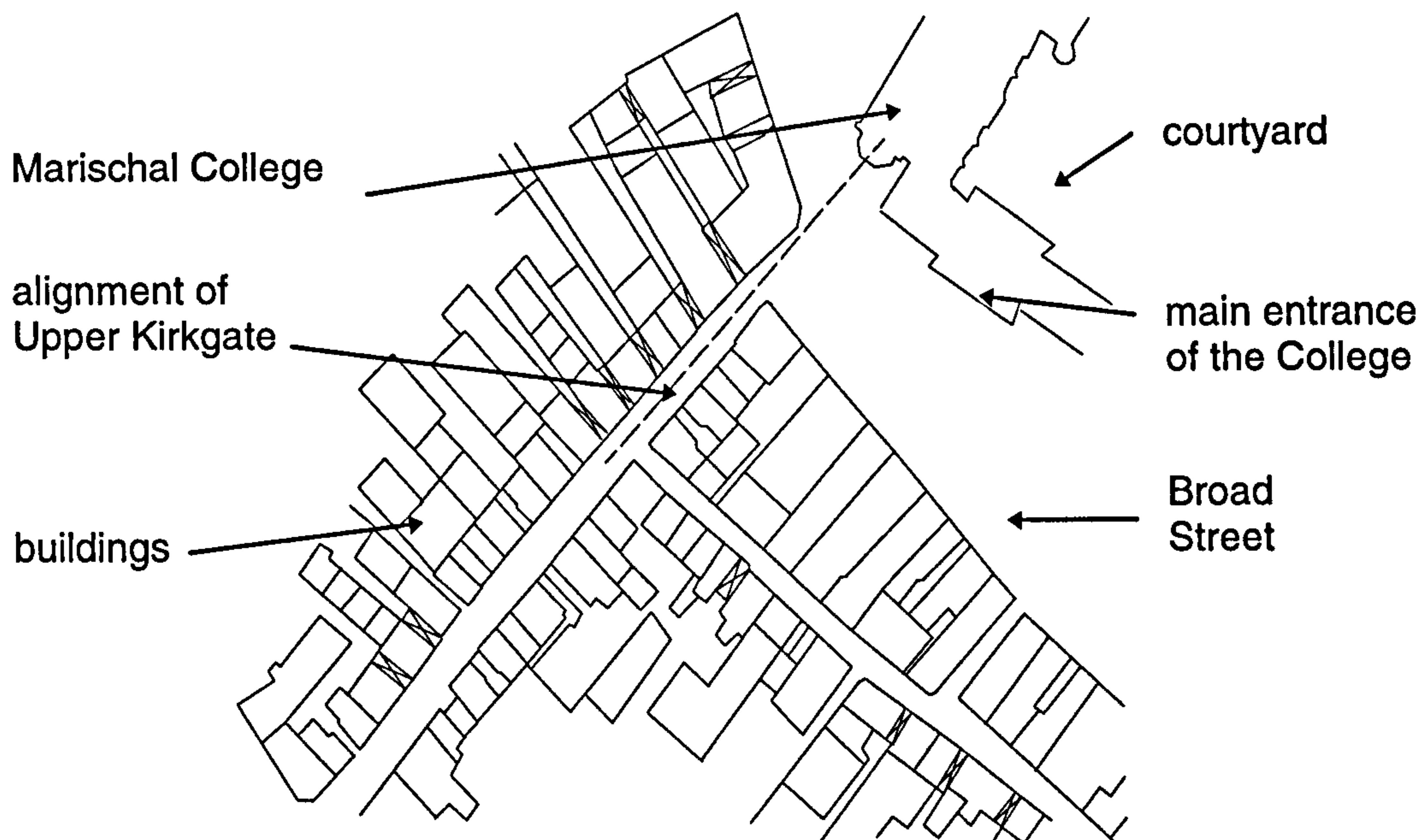


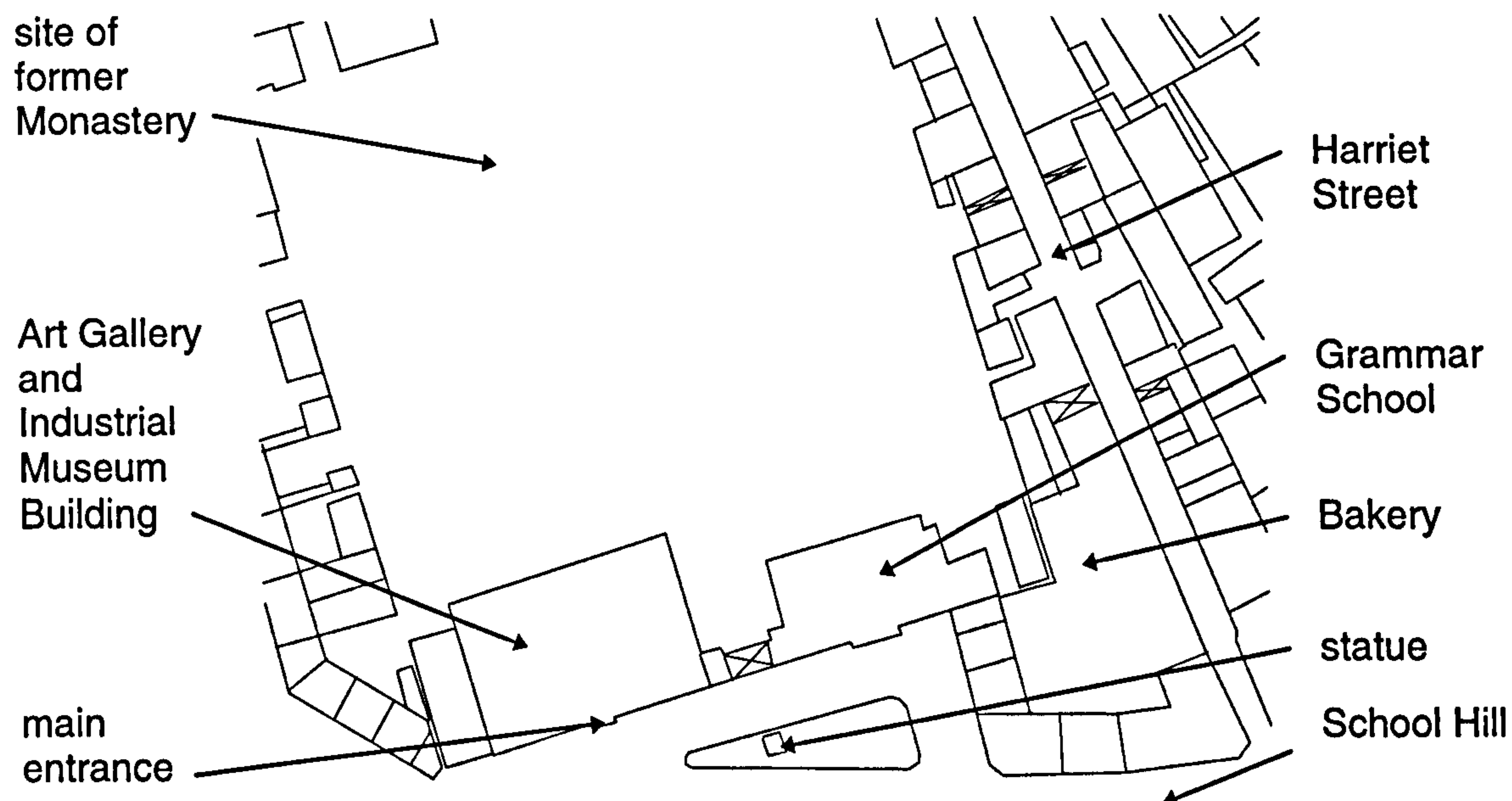
Figure 6.4.12. A map showing Upper Kirkgate and Marischal College to the east (source: Ordnance Survey, 1926).



The Art Gallery and Industrial Museum

In 1884 a new public building, the Art Gallery and Industrial Museum Building, was erected on a site along a roadway known as School Hill which was situated to the west of Upper Kirkgate, the roadway that aligned with Marischal College. Designed by local architect A. Marshall Mackenzie and Matthews the new Gallery and Museum building was erected within a somewhat formally arranged environment, being a neighbour of the Grammar School building which was constructed much earlier in the nineteenth century. Both these buildings though shared an open space laid out in front of their main elevations, in the centre of which was found Robert Gordon's Statue which was placed in accord with a axis of a footpath laid out in the centre of the open space to the rear of the buildings which once belonged to a monastery (see figure 6.4.13). This open space, a garden area, was filled with a number of other footpaths arranged in a formal manner, lined by trees and ornamental features such as stone vases at ordered intervals which reinforced the formal impression of the space. The civic design possibilities for the Gallery and Museum building were further assisted by its site being situated close to the road junction of School Hill with Belmont Street, a roadway approaching the public building from Union Street to the south.

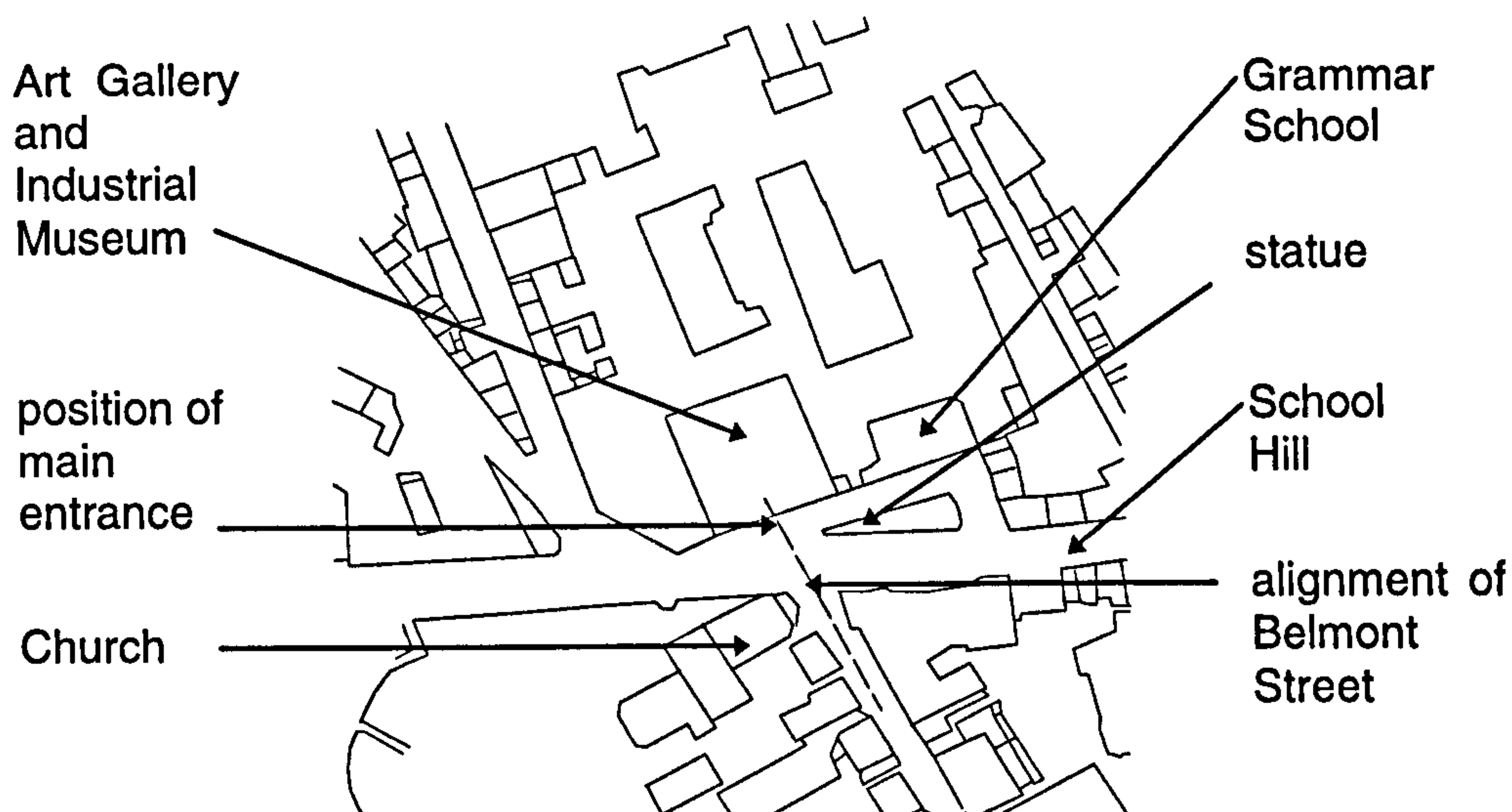
Figure 6.4.13. The Art Gallery and Industrial Museum and its setting in 1902 (source: Ordnance Survey).



The design of the two storey Gallery and Museum, constructed from granite, was of a Italian Renaissance style (The Builder, 1884: 874) with a symmetrical form and the principal entrance was placed at the centre of the front elevation which faced south to School Hill. The length of this main elevation was 130 feet while the breadth of the building was 90 feet. The front entrance was made into a prominent civic design feature, so as to possibly emphasise its importance within the composition, by the placing of a portico above the arched main doorway, supported by two columns placed on each side opening, to the rear of which was put a vestibule space. However apart from this small composition, and the positioning of window openings at regular bays along the main elevations, this building contained few civic design features of note and would have been of less civic design note were it not be for the fact that the site of the building was directly approached by a roadway, Belmont Street, which has an alignment that met with the position of the Art Gallery and Museum's main entrance (see figure 6.4.14). However as a consequence of little attention being given to the building and its plan in the architectural press during the course of construction and upon its completion it is not known whether this structure was planned with a central north-south axis coming back from the main entrance, which as noted earlier, aligned with Belmont Street. However the fact that the main entrance is placed in a position that corresponded with an oncoming roadway is of civic design worth regardless of whether this alignment was continued in the internal arrangement of the building. Significantly too, even though the detailed design of the Art Gallery building was different from other buildings

in its setting, because the building was constructed from granite and was designed with only two floor levels, in so being of a similar scale to those buildings such as the Grammar School located in proximity to it, the Gallery and Museum building fitted in well into the surrounding environment.

Figure 6.4.14. The Art Gallery and Industrial Museum setting in 1926 (source: Ordnance Survey).



The Central Library

Local designers Brown and Watt won the first premium of the Central Library competition in 1889. Completed in the early 1890s the building was an important addition to the civic design of late-Victorian Aberdeen if only for the reason that the settlement at that time contained a small number of large scale public buildings. Designed with a symmetrical form this building contained many significant civic design features used elsewhere in Britain, such as arched windows positioned at the centre of the first floor level, the central section being designed with an extended building line so to presumably emphasise it within the overall composition, the two entrances placed towards the ends of the front facade which fortified its symmetrical impression, the main one being designed with a broad width double door and portico above it. A turret was placed at the centre of the building on the rooftop and the building was raised above the street level which was evident in many other civic design schemes examined. In front of the two entrances placed along the main elevation were positioned flights of steps, the ends of which were marked by lamp posts placed on stone plinths while a low stone wall with iron railings was also positioned in front of the building

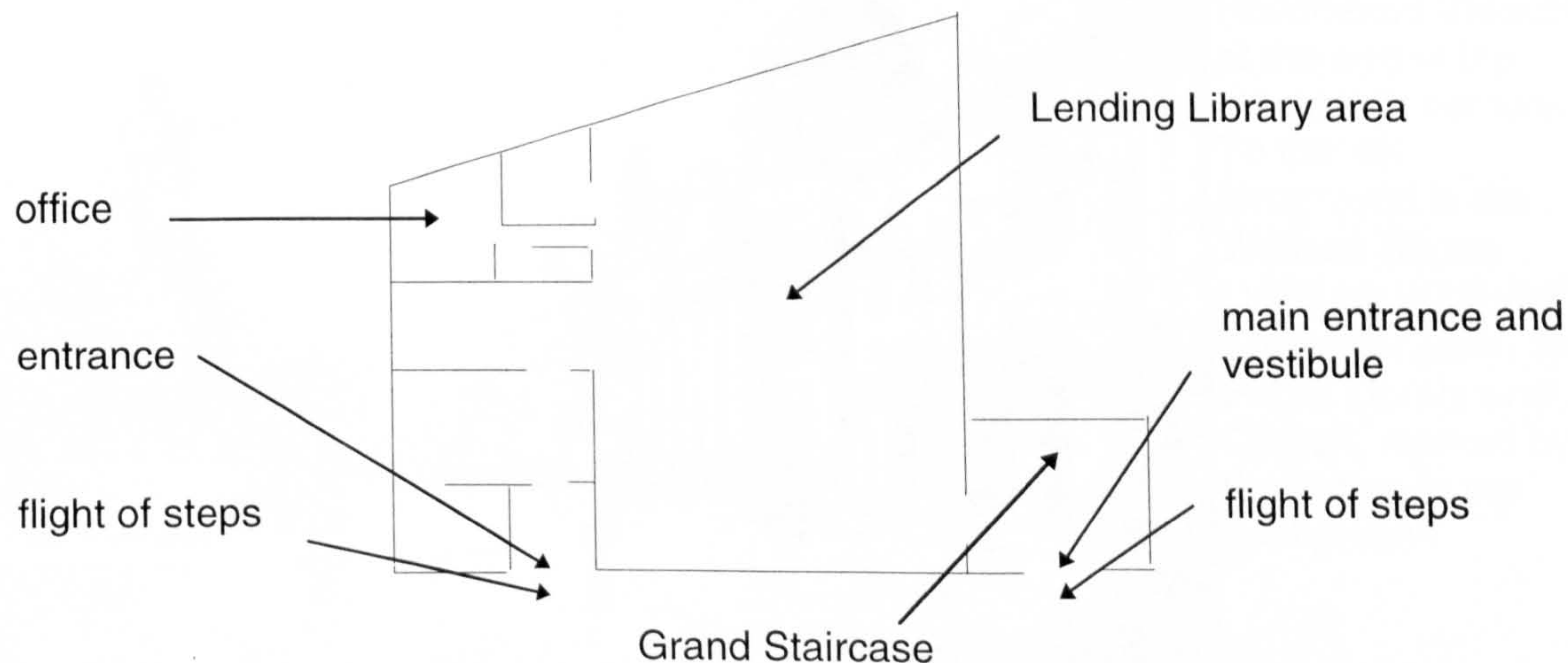
which added to the general impression of the building. The placing of these features in front of the doorways had the effect of continuing any established alignments away from the building.



Figure 6.4.15. A perspective of the Central Library (source: *The Builder*, 1898).

The plan of the new library was simple in form, dominated by the large Lending Library space at the centre of the internal arrangement, and contained no major axial lines of civic design worth. The most notable one was established by the placing of the Grand Staircase behind the entrance vestibule and entrance located at the eastern side of the front elevation. However this barely constituted a major alignment in the plan and no other features marked the north-south axis apart from the steps in front of the entrance doorway. Office spaces within the plan were placed against the wall of the western elevation.

Figure 6.4.16. The ground floor plan of the Central Library, Aberdeen.



At the time that the Library was being built to the west of its site was situated an open piece of land surrounded by trees which contained a fountain erected within a circular base, although the position of this feature did not relate to the form of the neighbouring building (see figure 6.4.17). When the library was subsequently extended in 1903 this open area was redeveloped as part of the enlargement scheme and the fountain was removed. The extension, which more than doubled the length of the front elevation of the building, had the effect of making the Library of such a scale that the completed building could be seen along Union Terrace, a roadway that directly approached the library from the south.

Figure 6.4.17. The Library's setting before development (source: Ordnance Survey, 1902).

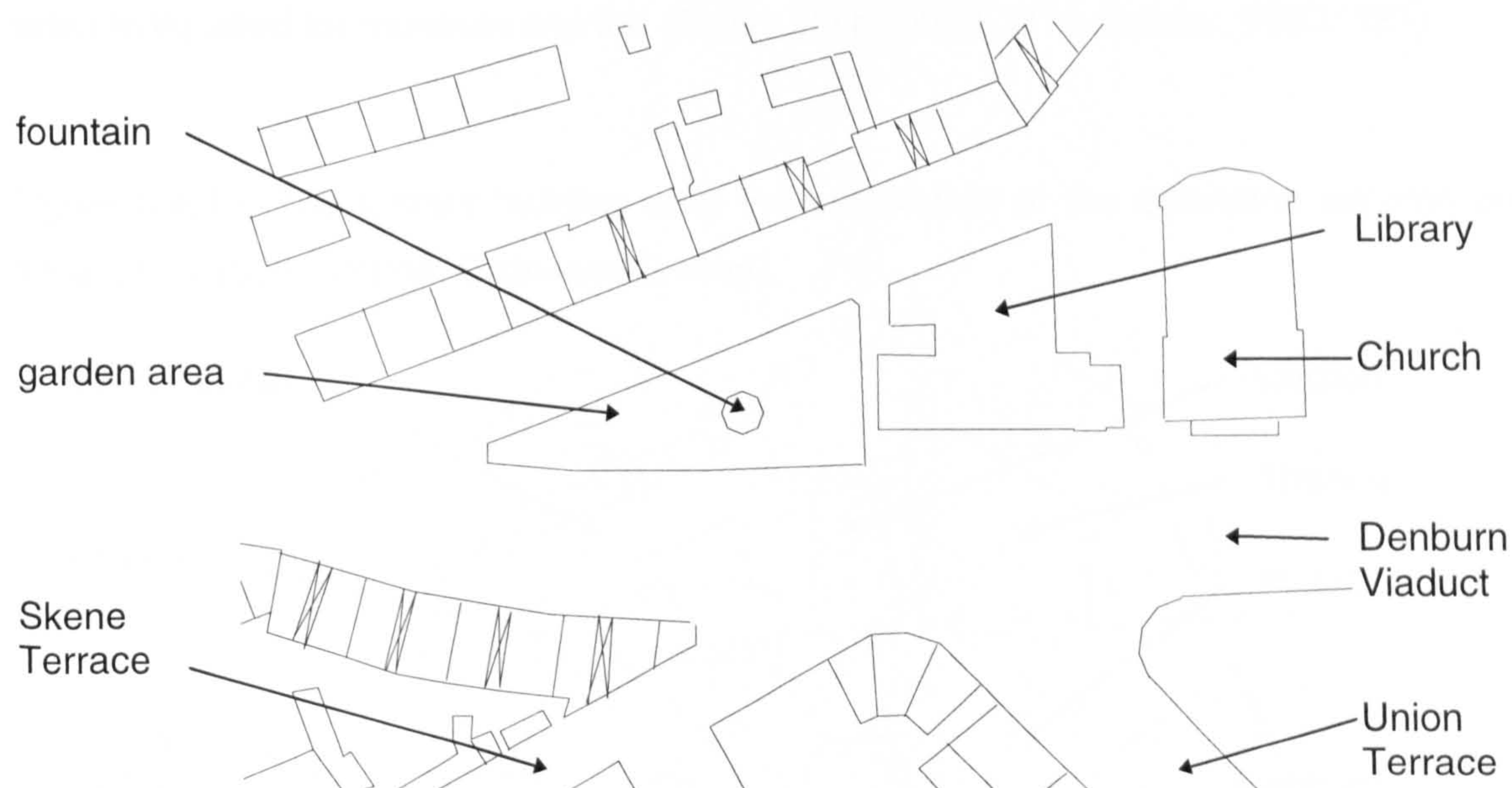
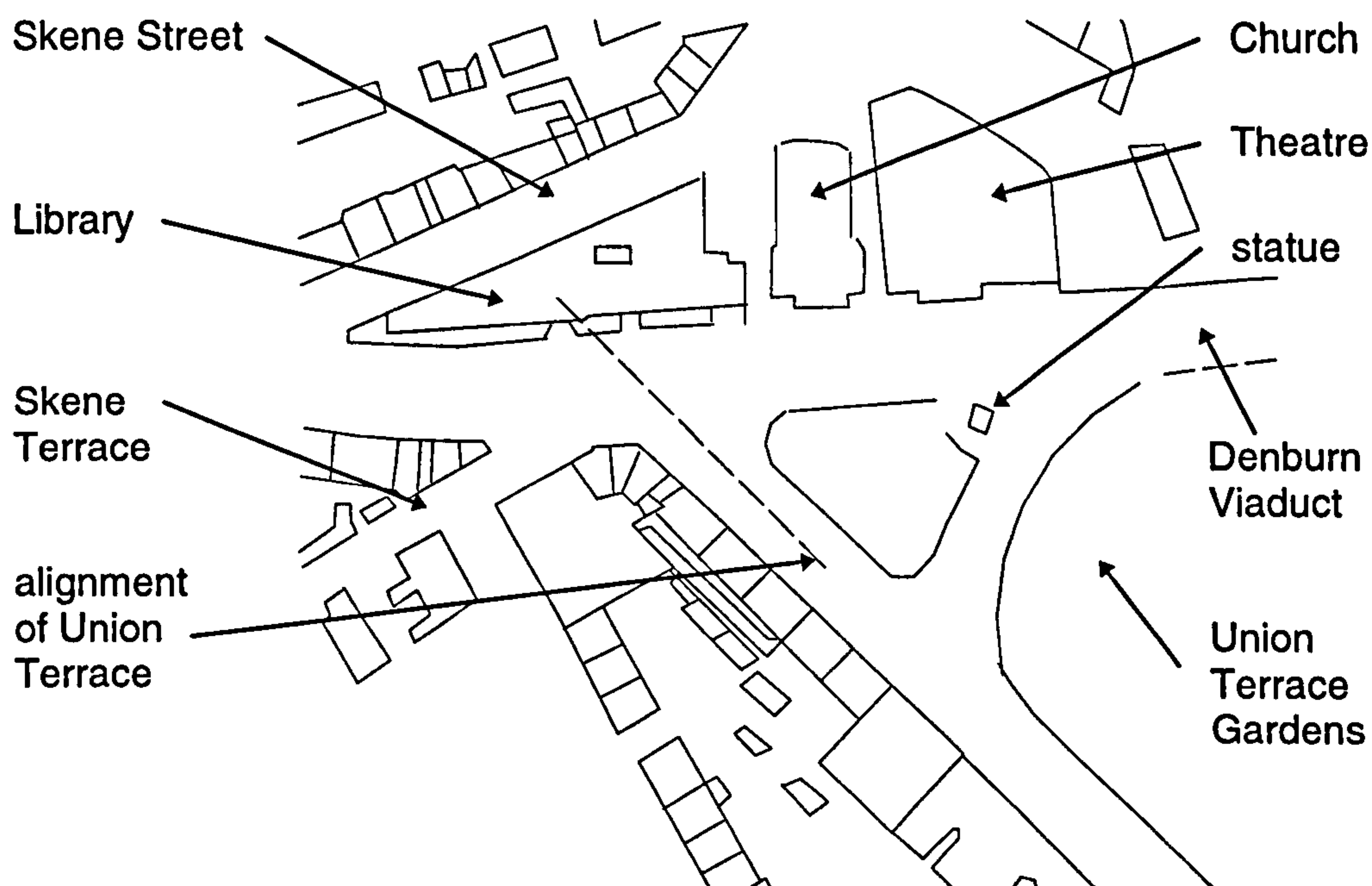


Figure 6.4.18. View looking west along Rosemount Viaduct at the end of the nineteenth century. To the left foreground is the Wallace Statue (1888 by W. Grant Stevenson) with the Public Library and Church, marked by the dome, in the background.

It has been noted above that after the Library extension was completed the alignment of Union Terrace met directly with the main elevation of the building. However a significant civic design opportunity was not utilised during the undertaking of the extension scheme as the elevation and plan of the enlarged building were not marked at the point where the axis of the oncoming road met with the wall of the enlarged building. No mention was made as well in the contemporary architectural media that the alignment of the roadway was continued by the form of the internal arrangement of the new section of the Library building, had it done so would have strengthened the civic design of the Library. However the new extension, designed by A. Marshall Mackenzie, an architect responsible for many structures in late-Victorian and Edwardian Aberdeen, provided reading spaces and spaces to be used for a Museum with the Central Hallway, at the centre of the plan, had rooms located to its sides to be used for museum and the display of sculpture. (The Builder, 1903: 121)

Figure 6.4.19. The Library building after the completion of the extension scheme and its situation in 1926 (source: Ordnance Survey).



Inter-War Aberdeen

The years following the end of World War One in 1918 a number of new challenges emerged for the City Council of Aberdeen to deal with, partly due to a lack of economic growth in the settlement. In architectural terms, the social and economic discontent

experienced between 1918 and 1939, saw the rejection of the historical styles popular prior to 1914 and an increasing soberness in the use of granite. While monumentality in the city's architecture remained, a more simple use of design emerged, as highlighted by A. Marshall Mackenzie's War Memorial and Cowdrey Hall building which was opened in 1925.

While few building buildings of any note were erected at the city centre, the City Council and its City Architect, Alexander Gardner, pursued a policy of erecting new buildings at the urban periphery, such as school buildings, after the City Education Authority was established in 1919. Other notable buildings at the urban periphery included the Children's Hospital (1926-8), the Royal Infirmary (1927-36), Kaimhill Crematorium (1937) and Bon Accord Baths (1940). However after 1918 the City Council undertook large scale public housing projects and not so much civic buildings for the first time, erecting 6,500 homes between 1919 and 1939. With a deteriorating and old housing stock, a shortage of new houses and overcrowding still major problems in Aberdeen by 1918 the council had little choice to adopt such a policy but in so doing this was at the expense of the city's civic design which very much played a secondary role to the housing schemes and it also increased the local authority's debt to a figure five times higher than what it was at the start of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

Aberdeen's local authority, like many other smaller provincial Corporations studied during the period about 1880 to 1914, was not fortunate enough to a large local tax base and hence budget that it could expended on lavish public buildings at regular intervals. As was the case with other smaller sized places studied, such as those in the Lancashire region of England, when new buildings were needed and existing ones were known to be inadequate for contemporary needs they often were extended so to lessen the costs of public building unless private benefactors offered large sums of money to contribute towards construction costs. This was true of the Aberdeen Art Gallery (1884), for example, which was extended instead of being replaced by a new larger building elsewhere in the settlement and the Townhouse which was extended on two occasions before 1914. Aberdeen, however, was fortunate to have its civic design influenced by philanthropists who frequently gave money to the local authority in order to erect new public buildings. These buildings, significantly,

showed similarities with civic design practice elsewhere in Britain at that time, such as the common use of symmetrical forms, the marking of entrances by feature such as steps and on some occasions the utilising of the alignments of approaching roadways.

It has been shown in this section that architecture was used as a significant means to embellish Aberdeen in the period covered by this project although it should be reiterated that despite its relatively large demographic size and importance within the urban hierarchy, the Corporation did not erect a large number of public buildings and many of these buildings were not of any great scale even though they were larger than surrounding buildings in many instances. The obvious exception to this rule was Marischal College, a building of such large size that it would have been huge in many other urban places examined by this work. At a cost of £200,000 the College also cost more to build than the grandiose Town Halls erected in many larger provincial places at about the same time, such as in Sheffield, for example, and thus can be seen to represent the zenith of architectural design and planning in late-Victorian and Edwardian Aberdeen. It was unfortunate in terms of civic design that the College was sited in an area of the settlement that was not the most advantageous for civic designing and the plan of the College, as highlighted earlier, related little to the built environment around it apart from corresponding with the oncoming alignment of a side street.

In summary, the civic design of Aberdeen during the period studied must be viewed as providing examples of what was achieved and not what was possible. Had the opportunities for civic design been fully appreciated in Aberdeen by the Corporation and the architects in the settlement then it would have been a place with a stronger design standard than what had emerged by 1914 although the choice of sites for some buildings made the practice of civic design a difficult task to undertake apart from by the application of small scale design features, such as a centrally placed main entrance.

Sunderland

Introduction

In 1801 the two settlements of Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland, situated north and south of the River Wear, had a combined population total of almost 24,500 (source: Census). By the mid-nineteenth century (1851) this figure had risen to over 64,500, even though the rate of urban growth from 1801 had been slower than the national average. However after this date Sunderland's rate of growth increased markedly rising to almost 82,000 in 1861, 98,300 in 1871 and 116,500 by 1881 (source: Census). At the start of the twentieth century (1901) Sunderland had just witnessed the most rapid demographic growth in its history, and as a consequence become a major provincial settlement with a population of almost 147,000 inhabitants (source: Census).

Figure 6.5.1. Routhwaite's town plan of Sunderland in the 1891.



During the course of the nineteenth century Sunderland achieved a world wide reputation as a ship building town (Corfe, 1973: 74). By as early as the mid-Victorian period Sunderland

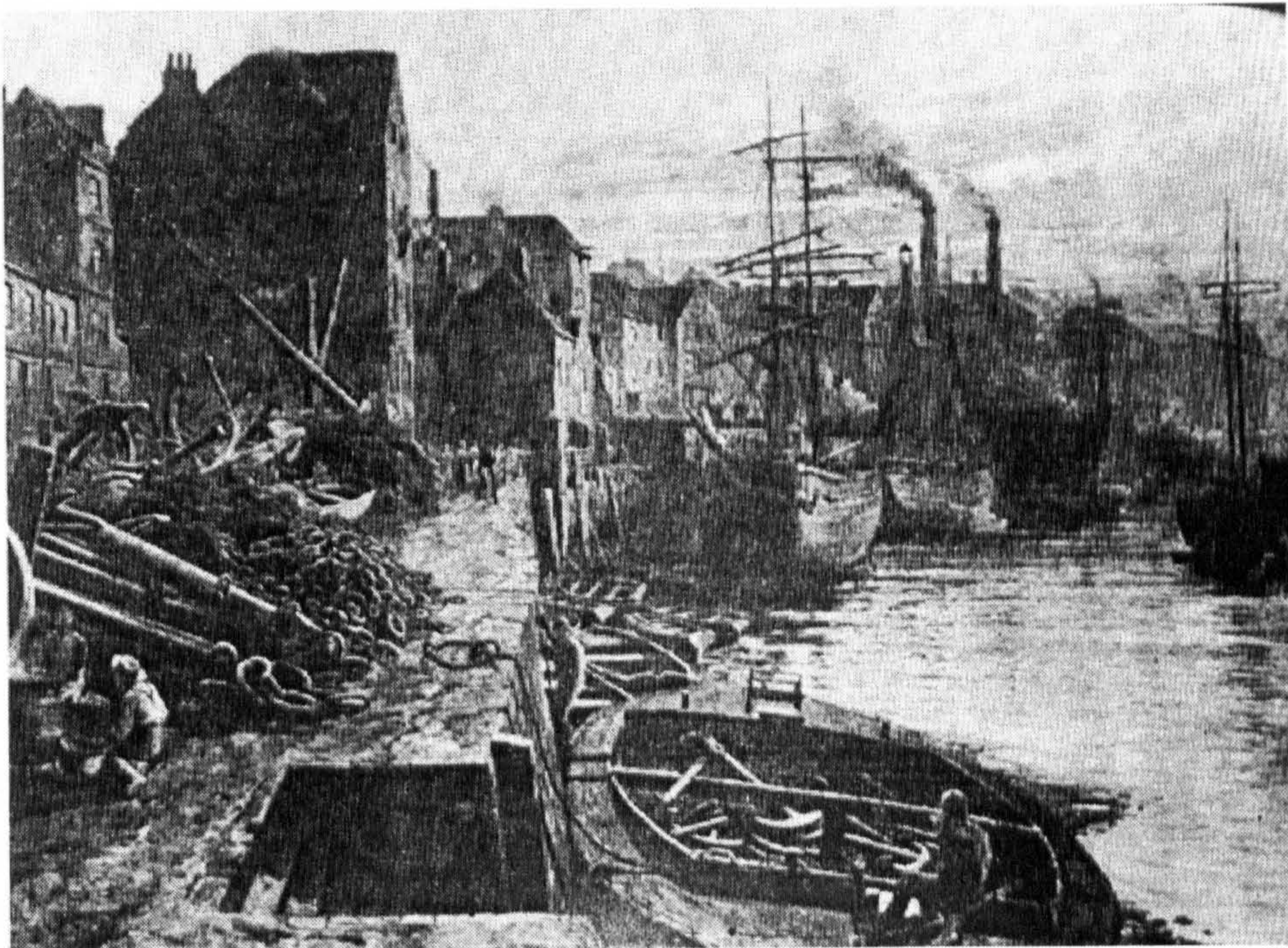
claimed to be the largest ship building town in the world and in 1834 Lloyd's Register of Shipping regarded the town as the most important centre in the country. This industry made a major impact on the urban form of the town from the late eighteenth century onwards, discussed subsequently. By the mid nineteenth century Sunderland's importance as a port was also increasing (*Ibid.*: 79), its growth influenced by the shipment of coal from the coal fields in the Durham and Northumberland region which came about as a result of improvements to its port facilities and the emergence of a rail network in the north east of England. In 1882 the industrial nature of the town inspired the Daily Telegraph to comment that within Sunderland "every acre of land is the basis of some commercial undertaking. Smoke filled the sky and grime covered the buildings." It was during the nineteenth century that the extensive expansion of the dock lands occurred, with new bridges being erected and new docks being opened or extended on a regular basis at a rate of about one new dock being opened per decade of the century. With this industrial growth along the nearby North Sea coastline and River Wear came new urban growth and an expanding urban sprawl.

As Sunderland grew in demographic size and spatial extent during the Victorian period it emerged with districts of particular architectural styles and forms. For instance, the central area of Sunderland was laid out with a rather geometric road layout consisting of thoroughfares lined north to south that were intersected at regular distances at near ninety degree angles by other roadways (see figure 6.5.1). Therefore it was difficult for architects to acquire sites that were directly approached by roadways of any note in the centre of the town so to establish grand vistas to the buildings, the roadways tending instead to go past selected sites, and as a consequence few vistas towards any buildings were established.

Located close to the River Wear in the High Street area of the north of Sunderland were situated the dock workers houses, packed close together, while to the west of the centre of the town and the Fawcett Street area were located the salubrious Victorian suburbs of the Fawcett estate and the planned developments by John Dobson, a designer who significantly affected the development of central Newcastle in the mid-Victorian period, where the local well-to-do were inclined to reside. The High Street during the Victorian era, a prominent roadway, was frequently turned into an open air market area, the centre of the roadway being lined with market stalls selling goods such as corn, meat, fruit and livestock. It was in this district of the settlement that the numerous theatres and public houses were erected in

the late-nineteenth century, later being constructed on sites further southwards towards the centre of the settlement.

Figure 6.5.2. Painting of the docks area, Sunderland, by T.M. Henry in 1885.



The uninterrupted spatial expansion of Sunderland swallowed previously outlying settlements such as Bishopwearmouth and Monkwearmouth. By the end of the nineteenth century thanks to the pressure of urbanisation and demographic growth the once opulent houses to the west and south of the town centre were being filtered, that is subdivided, into tenements for working families employed in nearby warehouses, factories or workshops (*Ibid.*: 57). However the Corporation, established in 1835 after the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act, did affect the developing urban form of the town from as early as the mid-1850s when it erected a workhouse in 1854, an asylum (1858) and laid out a new cemetery (1857). Arguably the most significant of public schemes undertaken in mid-Victorian Sunderland was the laying out of the People's Park in 1857, an open space that was later renamed and extended in size. It was about this time that Sunderland for the first time began to acquire a pretension that reflected itself architecturally which had civic design implications for the town. In 1867 new Gas Company Offices was erected, designed by G.G. Hoskins, and in 1872 the Victoria Hall was constructed to a cost of £10,000, a palace of entertainment used for civic fetes and political meetings which in 1903 was sold to the Corporation, who promptly added an extension to the existing structure. The civic rise of

Sunderland was in many ways completed by the end of the nineteenth century when the status of the settlement was elevated to county borough after the passing of the Local Government Act in 1888.

Mowbray Park

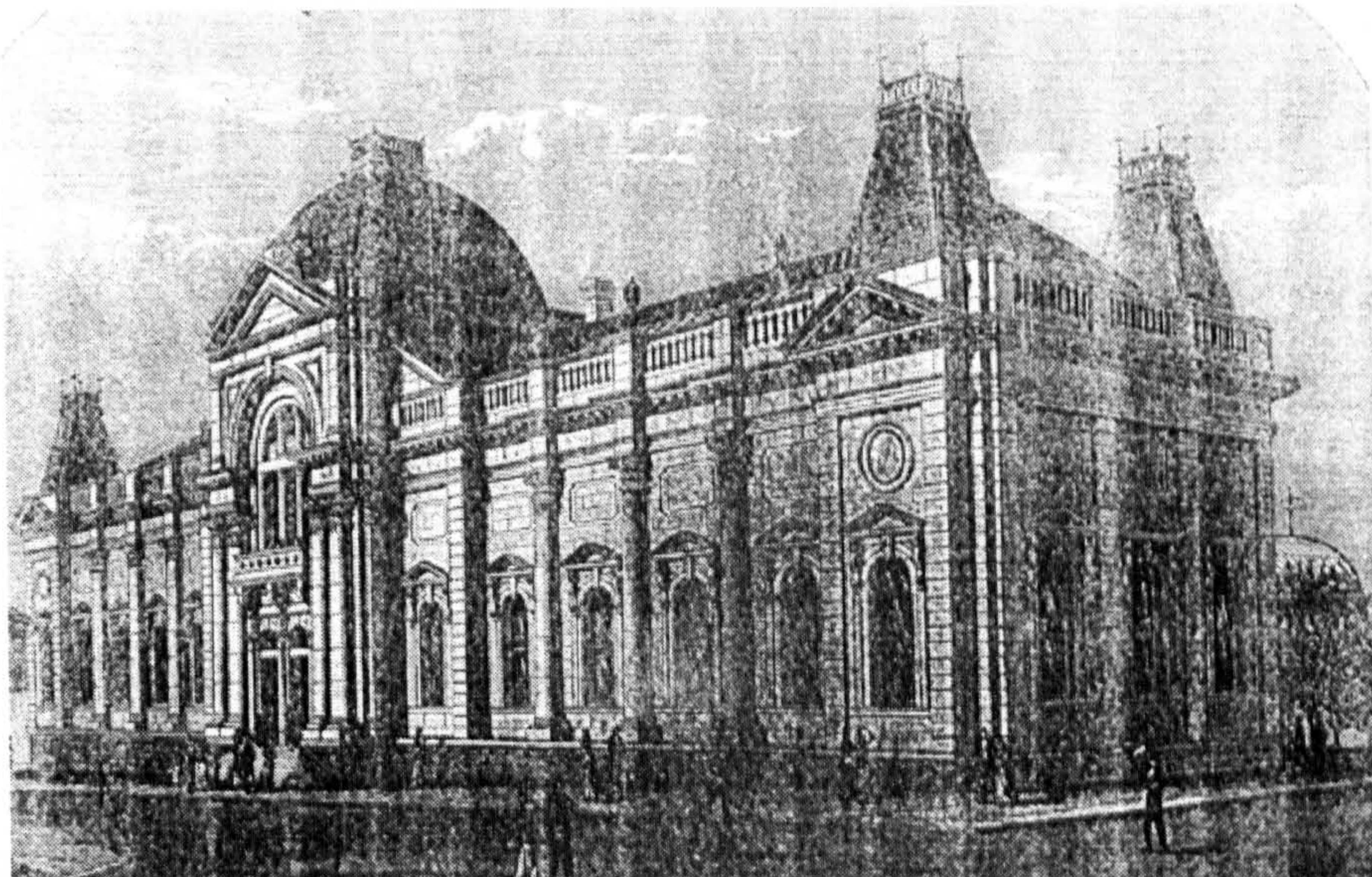
Pevsner (1953: 228) recognised that “Sunderland is not fortunate in its public buildings”, despite the fact that from the mid-Victorian period the Corporation made its first significant impact upon the built environment of Sunderland, as highlighted previously. This process was first brought into being when it purchased 5.6 hectares of land located south of the centre of the town in the mid-1850s. The boundary of the area was formed by rail lines running in a east-west direction and the Corporation developed the land into a park, People’s Park, later renamed Mowbray Park, which would give the local population some much needed open space. Sunderland, like many other provincial towns, developed in the nineteenth century with few open areas until public parks were laid out by the local governments. The area was laid out to an informal plan by Lawson and Smith, the plan being affected by rocky outcrops in the area, a consequence of quarrying, and the undulating topography that made a formal, symmetrical layout impossible to carry through. The maritime and naval traditions of Sunderland were celebrated in the grounds of the space through the placing of a statue in its southern section promptly after the park was opened to the public. In the following decades other statues were added (Conway, 1991: 156), including one of a local naval hero, Jack Crawford, a former Member of Parliament for Sunderland, as well as of John Chandlish and General Sir Henry Havelock, the son of a local shipbuilder who achieved national fame for nullifying an Indian mutiny. Two Russian guns captured at the Battle of Sebastopol were later positioned close to Havelock’s statue. Another statuary erected in the park acted as a memorial to the Victoria Hall disaster of 1883, when 183 local children died as a result of a stampede down the building’s staircase in a rush to obtain free toys. But, the statuary within Mowbray Park were placed at locations scattered about the space and their positions did not relate to each other and so cannot be considered to form a composition.

In 1866 Mowbray Park was extended, increasing the total area of the park to more than 11.5 hectares. A bridge over the railway connected the new and original sections of Mowbray

Park together and the plan of the new park area was by J. Lindsay. Similarly to the southern section of the park, an informal layout was once again employed. A large pond, already existing in the area, was incorporated into the scheme.

In 1877-9 the park (see figure 6.5.4) underwent further development when a new combined Museum and Library building was erected at its north-western corner, in the newest section of the Park. This building was designed by competition winners J. and T. Tillman and was described by Pevsner (1953: 453) as being “hardly one of the ornaments of the Victorian era.” Designed as a tall two storey structure in an Italian Classical style and with a symmetrical planning form, the main north-facing elevation which faced north towards Holmside Borough Road, was dominated by an attached colonnade and French mansard roofing (*Ibid.*: 453).

Figure 6.5.3. A perspective of the new Museum and Library (source: *The Builder*, 1879).



The siting of the building at a considerable distance from the boundaries of its large site and open site of the park ensured that opportunities for the introduction for civic design elements could be provided and elements such as the flights of steps were placed in front of the centrally placed main entrance, which faced northwards. A large space other than that of a local roadway was also established in front of the main elevation which was raised above ground level so as to emphasis its importance and to differentiate the building from its surroundings which consisted mainly of residential buildings. A stone wall marked the front boundary of the building's site and an entrance gate was positioned directly in front of the

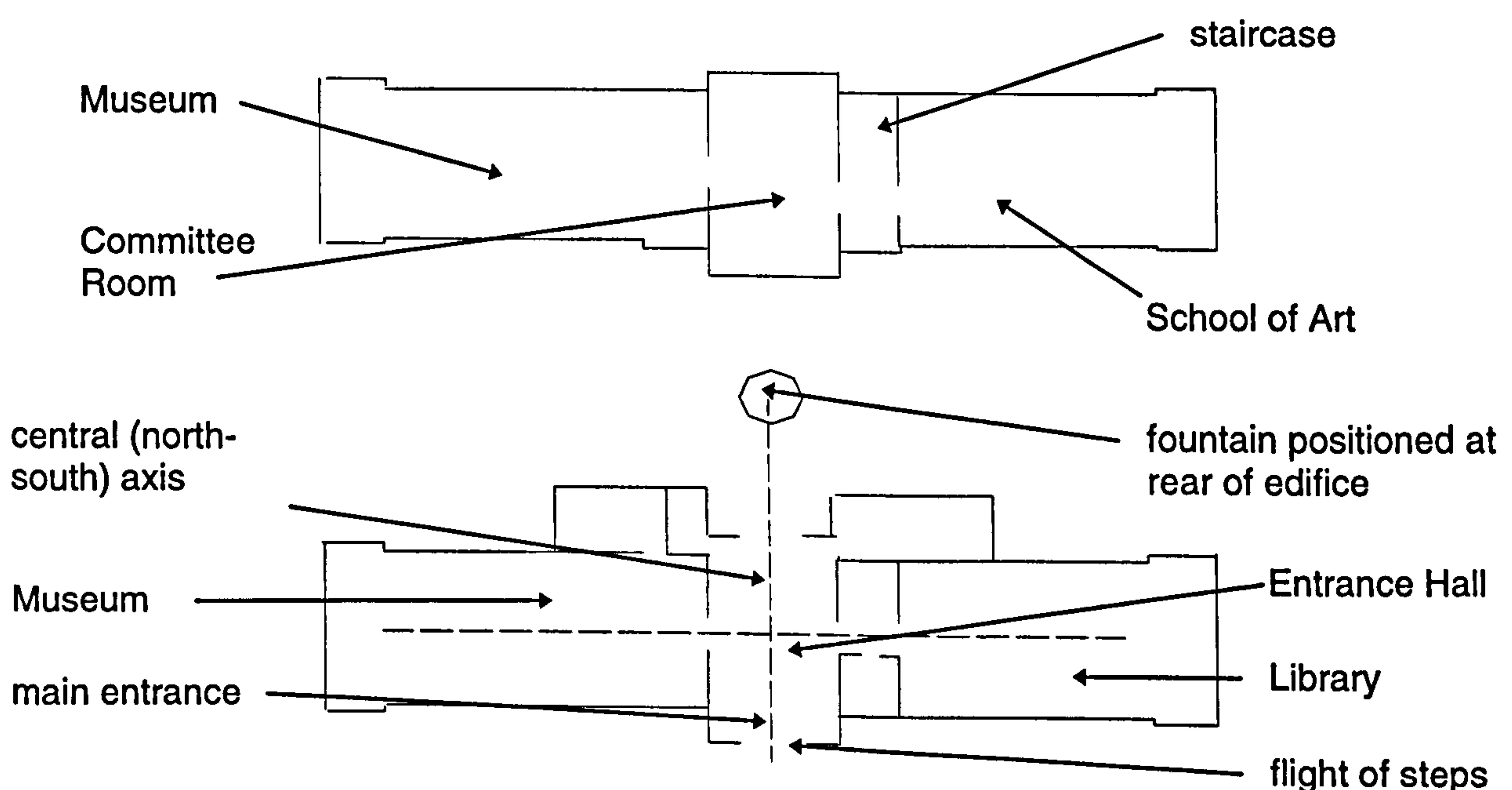
central section of the Library and Museum and the principal entrance. Thus the central axis of the plan was marked at a considerable distance away from the building and this was important in civic design terms. The central section of the building was further emphasised by the placing of a large arched window at the centre of the front elevation and a dome above the Entrance Hall, a space located to the rear of the main entrance, while the ends of the building were emphasised by the building line being projected forward which established end pavilions. These were decorated with porticos. A steeply pitched roof was also used at the corners of the building, providing a contrast to the low pitched roof of the rest of the building which was partly covered from the eye at the street level by the use of a balustrade (see figure 6.5.3). Other important civic design elements included the regular positioning of the arched window along the main elevations between which were placed vertical elements such as columns and pilasters.

Figure 6.5.4. Mowbray Park in 1919 (source: Ordnance Survey).



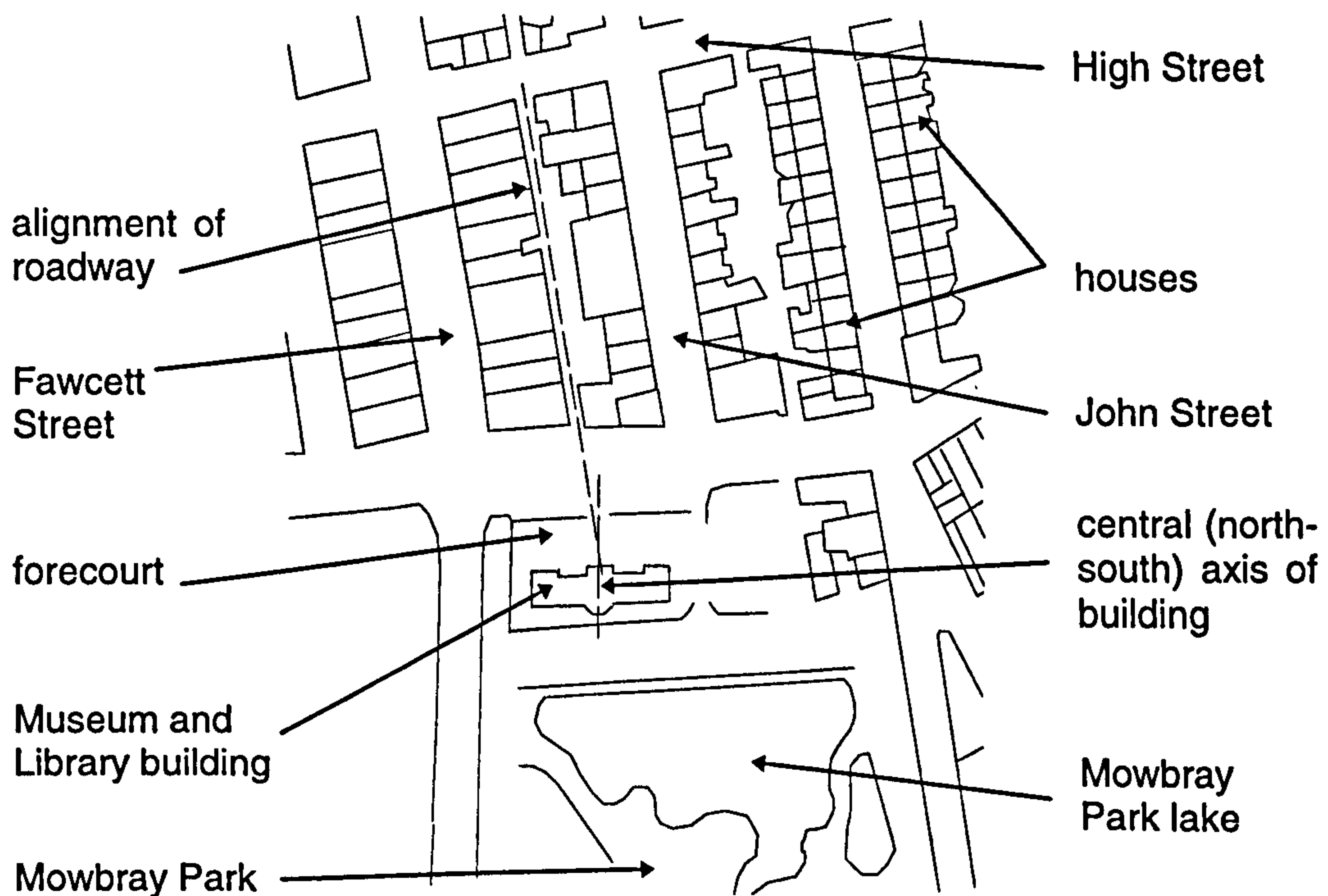
The plan of the building was simple in nature and symmetrical in form being almost 180 feet long and about 60 feet in width, containing of only five spaces in the ground floor plan. The centre of the front elevation was marked by the building line being brought forward away from the rest of the elevation, a civic design characteristic also used to emphasise the corners of the building. The main entrance was also stressed by double pilasters being placed on each side of it and a broad flight of steps in front of it. The central axis established from the main entrance was continued through the building's plan by the Entrance Hall and was also marked too by features such as a rear entrance at the centre of the back elevation, the flight of steps in front of it and a fountain placed at a distance in front of the rear entrance. Located on each side of the Entrance Hall were large open spaces, one to be used as a Museum gallery and the other as a Library space. Each of these rooms measured 75 feet in length and 35 feet in width, although within the Library section of the plan was positioned a staircase that gave access to the School of Art, another Museum gallery and Committee Room which were located on the first floor level. At each side of the rear of the Entrance Hall were placed other spaces of equal size, being about 15 feet in width and 30 feet in length. These were the Curator's Room and Reading Room. Access into the Museum and Library areas at the ground floor level was by doorways positioned on each side of the centre of the Entrance Hall which established a major (east-west) axis, at ninety degrees to the central north-south one, in the internal arrangement.

Figure 6.5.5. The Museum and Library building's first floor plan (top) and ground floor plan.



In terms of its planning the Museum and Library did not stand as an isolated structure within the built environment of Sunderland. It has already been noted that to the north of the building's site lay the open space and a number of streets containing residential premises. Importantly, the alignment of one street related to the position of the central section of the building, in so doing establishing a vista to it from the High Street which was located many hundreds of yards away. However the roadway that met directly with the Museum and Library structure, albeit at a slight acute angle, was not a main one but a small, side street running parallel to Fawcett Street, Frederick Street and John Street to the south of the High Street. Nevertheless in civic design terms the planning of the building and its correspondence with the existing street pattern is of some meaning. Road alignments have been shown to have been used in many other civic design schemes in other large provincial centres during the period examined and as a consequence of the building being relating to its setting it may be considered within the framework to be an effective civic design piece. Furthermore the design of the building also revealed the use of other common civic design, with the central north-south axis established to the rear of the main entrance, allowing the alignment of the oncoming roadway to continue inside the plan of the building.

Figure 6.5.6. The surroundings of the Museum and Library (source: Ordnance Survey, 1894).



The Town Hall

In 1873 the Corporation embarked on establishing a Town Hall, one of the most prominent of all Victorian public building types. Up to this time The Exchange, opened in 1814, had been used by the Corporation as the principal municipal office (Corfe, 1973: 59). Construction of the Town Hall, designed by competition winner Brightwen Binyon, began in 1879 along Fawcett Street, a broad roadway laid out in a north-south direction through the centre of Sunderland, which was one of the principal roadways in the centre of the town.

At a cost of £50,000 the building was in relative terms not too expensive but nevertheless it made a dramatic impact upon the visual environment of the town thanks to its 140 feet high clock tower which dominated the town's skyline and thus made the building a local landmark. The overall effect of this building though was far greater than this feature alone for it "added distinction to what was even then in the course of change from being Sunderland's foremost residential area into its main shopping street." (*Ibid.*: 99) The development of Fawcett Street into Sunderland's most important shopping street, and arguably most important civic street, occurred due to the erection of prominent public buildings, such as the Town Hall, alongside the roadway in the Victorian period. The Town Hall site, located close to the southern end of the roadway, was situated at the corner of Fawcett Street with the junction with Athenæum Street. These thoroughfares crossed each other at an angle of almost ninety degrees.

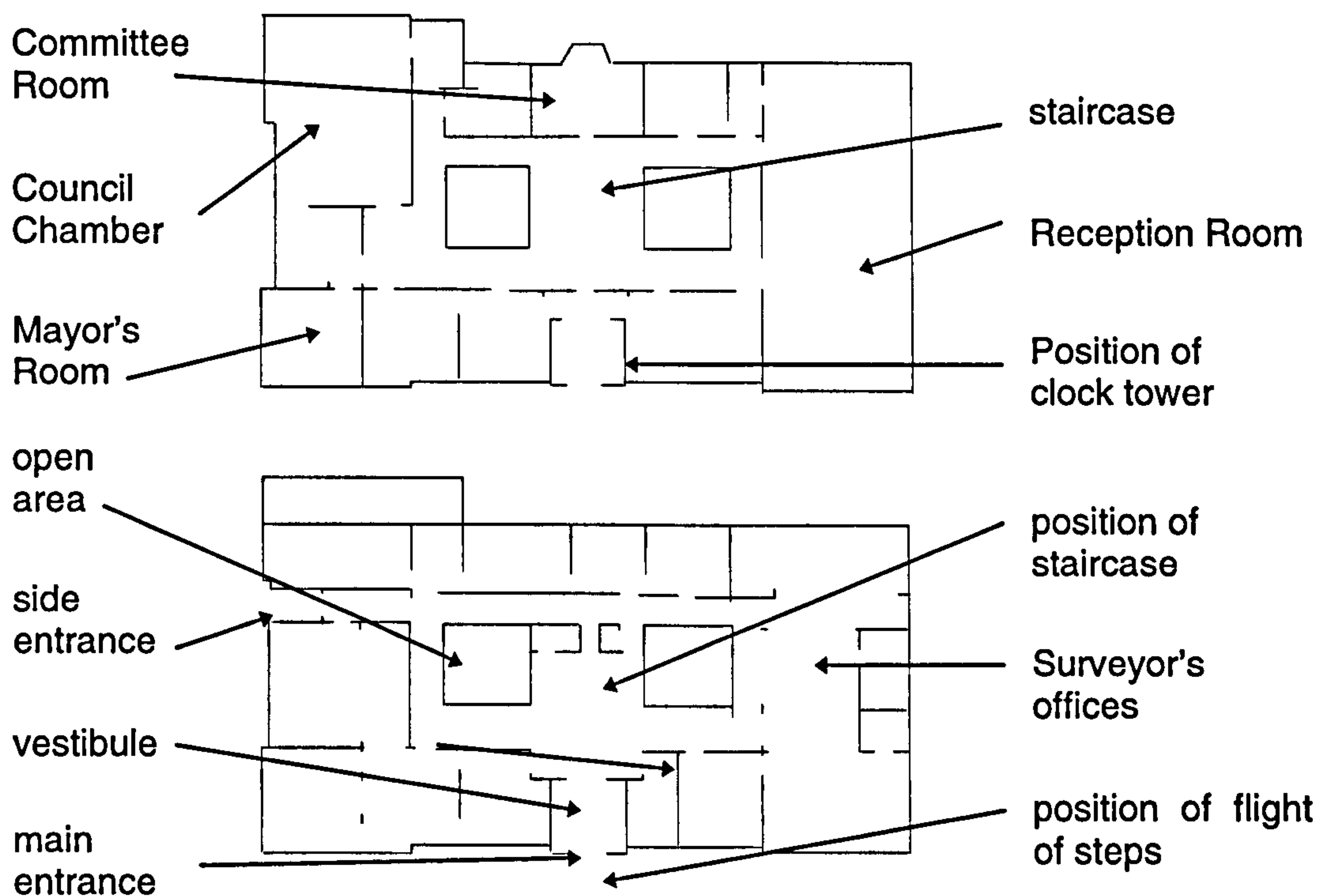
The design of the new Town Hall used many elements prevalent in civic design at that time. Not only was the new building of a scale larger than other structures in the local environment but the ground floor of the building was marked with rusticated stone work, the building was raised above the street level while the first floor level, the level within which the most prominent of the building's rooms were located, was designed with a floor to ceiling height that was greater than other floor levels. In addition, the importance of this floor level above the others was emphasised by the round arched windows placed at regular bays along it and the use of columns at the central and ends sections of the front elevation. The ends of the composition were also emphasised by the pitch of the roof being steepened, a civic design characteristic also used within the Museum and Library scheme in the town.

Figure 6.5.7. A perspective of the Town Hall (source: *The Builder*, 1886).



The symmetrical front elevation of the Town Hall was marked at the ends not only by pavilions topped with steeply pitched roofs but by columns positioned between the window openings on the first floor level, the principal floor. Window openings at the front elevation were placed in regular bays positioned from the central of the building, which was marked by the main entrance and an arched portico at the roof top. The centre of the roof level was also marked by a vertical element, a clock tower, positioned directly above the vestibule to the rear of the principal entrance. In front of this doorway was situated a small flight of steps and two lamp posts, each placed in positions in accord with the central (west-east) alignment of the building's plan (see figure 6.5.8), which had the effect of bringing the axis away from the building into the surrounding environment. But, it should be recognised, that this central axis was also marked within the building's internal arrangement by the placing not only of a vestibule, the walls of which were used as masonry to support the clock tower, but by the main staircase, positioned between two courtyards that provided light into the building. The grand staircase provided access to the most prominent spaces in the plan, such as the Council Chamber, Reception Room and Town Clerk's Department, which were all located at the first floor level. Unfortunately for impact of the building its site, at the junction of two roadways, meant that the building was often viewed at an angle and not from directly in front. However sited opposite the public building were a number of three storey buildings, structures of a larger scale than their surroundings, which fitted in somewhat well with the large bulk of the Town Hall.

Figure 6.5.8. The ground floor (bottom) and first floor plan of the Town Hall, Sunderland.



Despite being one of the largest buildings in Victorian Sunderland in terms of overall size and with a clock tower of a substantial height, the Town Hall made no attempt to relate itself to the surrounding environment and this naturally weakened the civic design quality of the scheme although the site and surroundings, mainly shops, did not particularly encourage any such activity even though those buildings sited opposite to the Town Hall were also large in scale. As noted earlier, the public building was positioned at a junction of two major roadways which cut across each other at a ninety degree angle, so no grand vista could be established directly towards the building. Instead the on looking eye mainly saw the building at an angle. Pevsner (1953: 228) highlighted that most of the large sized public buildings in Sunderland also suffered by not having open space other than roadways about, that is in front, of their sites. However, the Town Hall scheme does provide evidence to show that the architect did add elements to the front of the centre of the building where the main entrance was found. Thus to anyone passing the building it becomes apparent that there is a central axis in the building's design and plan. However, the provision of two lamp posts and a small flight of steps in front of a building's main entrance must be viewed to not be the strongest example of civic design undertaken from about 1880 to 1914, which could have been greatly strengthened had, for example, an open space with statuary within it been laid out in front of the Town Hall at the time of construction.

The Technical College

The development of the national system of education was reflected in Sunderland by a proliferation of Board Schools erected in different areas of the settlement after the passing of the Education Act in 1870, and in the construction other educational institutes in the town in the following years. The Technical College, erected in 1901 to the south west of the central district of the town, and paid for by both the Corporation and a number of local employers, was established so to help improve local standards of education. The new College, cost £18,000, was designed in a Baroque manner (The Builder, 1901: 198) with a symmetrical 'L' shaped form which allowed the building to fit into its irregularly shaped site which was made cramped by existing buildings such as the Drill Hall to the north and a small roadway to the south. To the west of the College's site was another roadway, Green Terrace, which was lined with residential buildings facing towards the new public building.

Figure 6.5.9. The surroundings of the Technical College before the erection of the building (source: Ordnance Survey, 1894).



Constructed from red brick and terracotta the most prominent design feature of the College was its tower, surmounted by a dome, located at a southern corner of the front elevation.

The building was also set back within the front of its site and from the pavement and roadway at its front so as to possibly provide an opportunity for the inclusion of a number of civic design elements at the entrance of the College, yet there is no evidence to suggest that features such as flights of steps, lamp posts and statuary, elements which were noted elsewhere in front of the main entrances of other prominent buildings, were situated in front of the College. The contemporary architectural press gave little attention to the design or plan of the new building despite its local importance which may have been a reflection of the perceived low quality of the composition in terms of its planning and design. It was unusual for the architectural press not to describe the composition of such a large scale public building, over 150 feet in length and breadth, and for a building of its type and this situation may have arisen due to its poor design. Few civic design elements apart from those previously noted were employed within the College scheme although as highlighted earlier, the environment around the building was not advantageous for civic design practice. No prominent axes were evident in the internal arrangement of the building although the influence of the site upon the building's form must be seen as a factor in this situation. Thus large rooms such as the 70 feet long and 30 feet wide Examination and Lecture Hall were placed away from the main entrance, situated towards the rear of the internal arrangement away from any axial lines established at the front of the building although, again, there is no evidence to suggest that any such alignments were created.

Figure 6.5.10. Plan of the Technical College's setting (source: Ordnance Survey, 1919).



The Central Post Office

By the early twentieth century architectural and civic circumstances in Sunderland were changing. “Public confidence found its expression in the new public buildings, dignified and spacious, that ornamented the town centre in the Edwardian decade.” (Corfe, 1973: 101) This self-assurance was asserted in the extension of the Town Hall in 1904, for example, the extension scheme comprising of redeveloping the site next to the Town Hall, using a simple ground plan based on a centrally located top lit hall space around which were placed offices (The Builder, 1905: 365). Other public building schemes included the erection of a new Central Post Office (1903), the River Wear Commissioners Office (1907) and Magistrates Court (1907), by W. and T.R. Milburn with assistance from Wills and Anderson. Also erected was a combined Police, Sessions Court and Fire Station in 1908. Corfe (1973: 101) noted that these new public buildings were often designed in a style in keeping with that established in Sunderland by the Town Hall some decades earlier.

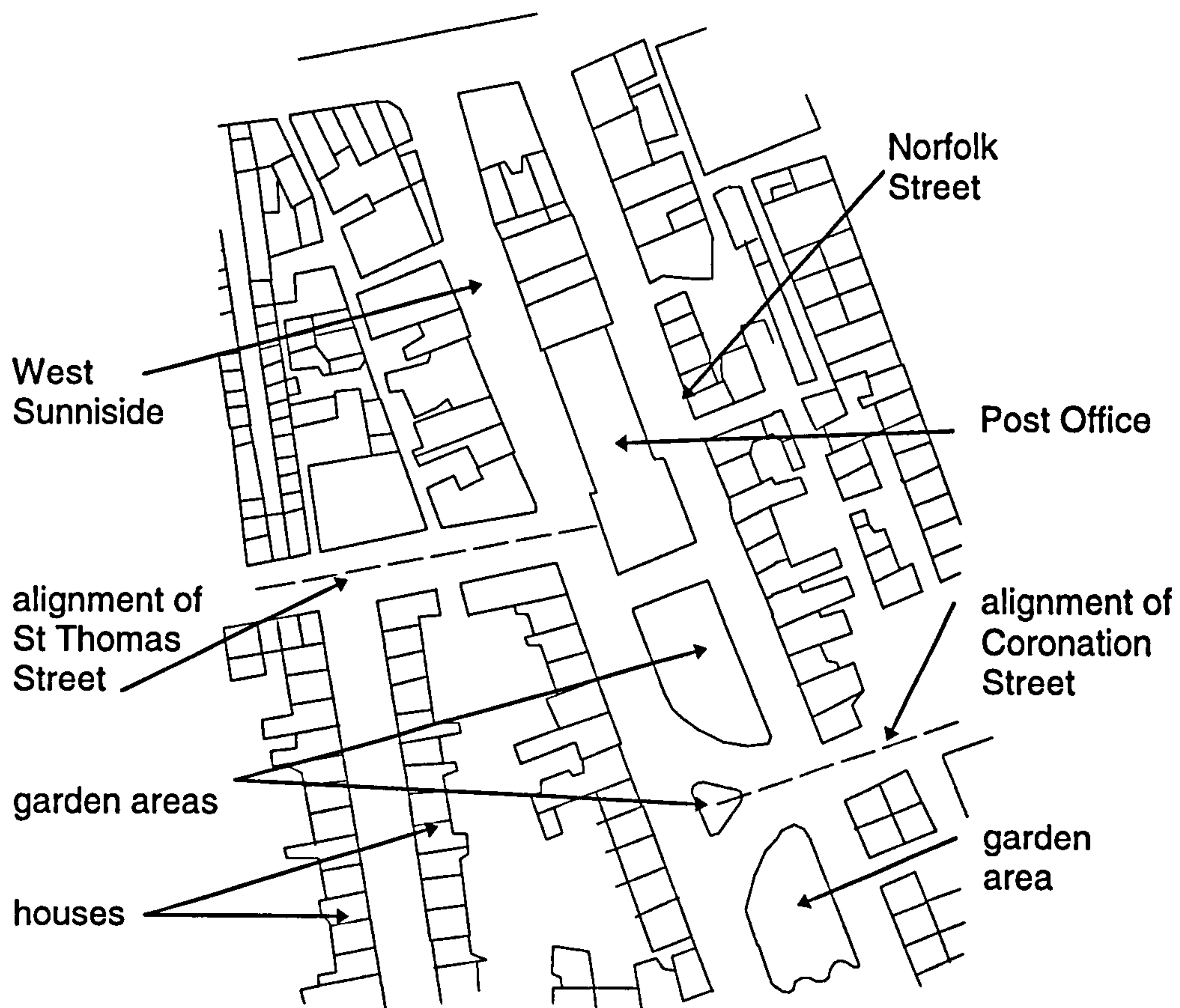
The new Central Post Office in Sunderland was designed by Henry Tanner, an architect who designed numerous large scale Post Office buildings in some of the largest provincial towns and cities at the end of the nineteenth century. The building, however, served a double purpose, acting not only a Post Office but also as an Inland Revenue Office. Located alongside a roadway known as West Sunnyside to the east of the town’s central core the building was erected on a large plot measuring 270 feet in length but only about 65 feet in width. The site had formerly been undeveloped and comprised an open area.



Figure 6.5.11. The site of the Post Office before development (source: Ordnance Survey, 1894)

The new four storey Post Office, erected from Cocklaw and Chollerford stone for the lower floor levels and Denwick stone for the upper levels, occupied the northern most section of the site which was sandwiched between two roadways, Norfolk Street to the east being and West Sunnyside to the west, while the southern section of the site was laid out as a number of small garden spaces (The Builder, 1903: 187), each positioned between the alignments from oncoming roadways, such as Athenæum Street (see figure 6.5.12). As part of the development of the area a new road junction where Coronation Street and West Sunnyside met was created with the joining of the roadways s being marked by an open space filled with trees. This feature terminated the vista along Coronation Street.

Figure 6.5.12. The Post Office setting in 1919 (source: Ordnance Survey).



The design of the Post Office building was Baroque and the building's front faced south towards the garden areas previously noted while the front section of the building, with its extended building lines, was met directly at the western side, at an angle of almost 90 degrees, by the alignment of St Thomas Street. The building thus terminated the alignment and view along the approaching roadway although no features were positioned on the building's elevation to mark the point where the road alignment met with the wall of the

public building which would have strengthened the civic design of the scheme. In terms of plan, little information was given about the building's plan in the contemporary architectural press, but it is known that the internal arrangement was dominated by the large sized Public Lobby, 60 feet in length and 25 feet breadth, which was positioned towards the front of the building. Rooms such as the Sorting Office, the largest space in the plan, 90 feet in length and over 50 feet in width, were located towards the rear of the building but there is no evidence to suggest that these spaces were arranged in accordance with the central north-south axis, established at the rear of the main entrance positioned at the centre of the front elevation, or related to the two side entrances located on the West Sunnyside and Norfolk Street elevations. Therefore, similarly to other public buildings erected in Sunderland at that time, little attention was placed upon associating the building with its surroundings. In addition, there is little evidence to highlight that the building's composition, apart from its use of stone, fitted in with the surrounding buildings, most of which were houses, and in terms of the number of storeys of the public building and their height it is unlikely that the building has a degree of scale, while appropriate to its function, that brought a sense of relation with the buildings situated about it. Thus the design and plan of the large Post Office must be seen as an isolated building within a predominantly small scale residential setting.

The River Wear Commissioners Board Offices

The River Wear Commissioners Board Offices in Sunderland was erected on the site of the former central Post Office at the corner of St Thomas Street and John Street in 1907 (see figure 6.5.11). Designed by John Hall, a local architect, the building was faced with Hepworth Burn stone and faced north towards another stone building, St Thomas's Church, which was situated directly across St Thomas Street from it. The front elevation of the River Wear Commissioners Offices displayed many civic design elements that were common at that time, such as the raised ground floor level, the window openings placed in regular bays, the larger floor to ceiling heights on the ground and first floor levels, so to possibility highlight their importance, the centrally placed and recessed main entrance in front of which placed a flight of steps. An arched canopy was placed above the door and with the two arched porticos positioned at the centre of the first and second floor levels formed a minor vertical axis at the centre of the building. Rustication was used on the ground floor level and the ends of the main elevation were also brought forward, which formed pavilions. Arched

porticos were also used on the ends of the front and sides elevations to add further emphasis to the corners of the building.

Figure 6.5.13. The front elevation of the River Wear Commissioners Office.



The plan of the Commissioners Board Office like other Victorian and Edwardian public buildings in Sunderland did not relate to a great extent with its surroundings apart from in terms of scale or building materials used. The position of the main entrance, for example, which was positioned at the centre of the front elevation, presumably to reinforce the sense of symmetry in the design of the front elevation, to the rear of which was a positioned a vestibule, a central hall space and a staircase which formed a north-south axis. However these features were not associated with any of the features of the Church located opposite to it, such as its entrance which was positioned further westwards towards the junction with John Street. The largest space in the plan of the four storey office building, located at the eastern section of the building at the ground floor level was the Accountants Clerks Office, a space that measures some forty feet in length by twenty feet in width. The Board Room, another important space in the building, was positioned directly above the Accountants Clerks Office (The Builder, 1907: 588-9) on the first floor level.

Figure 6.5.14. The River Wear Commissioners Office first floor and ground floor plan.

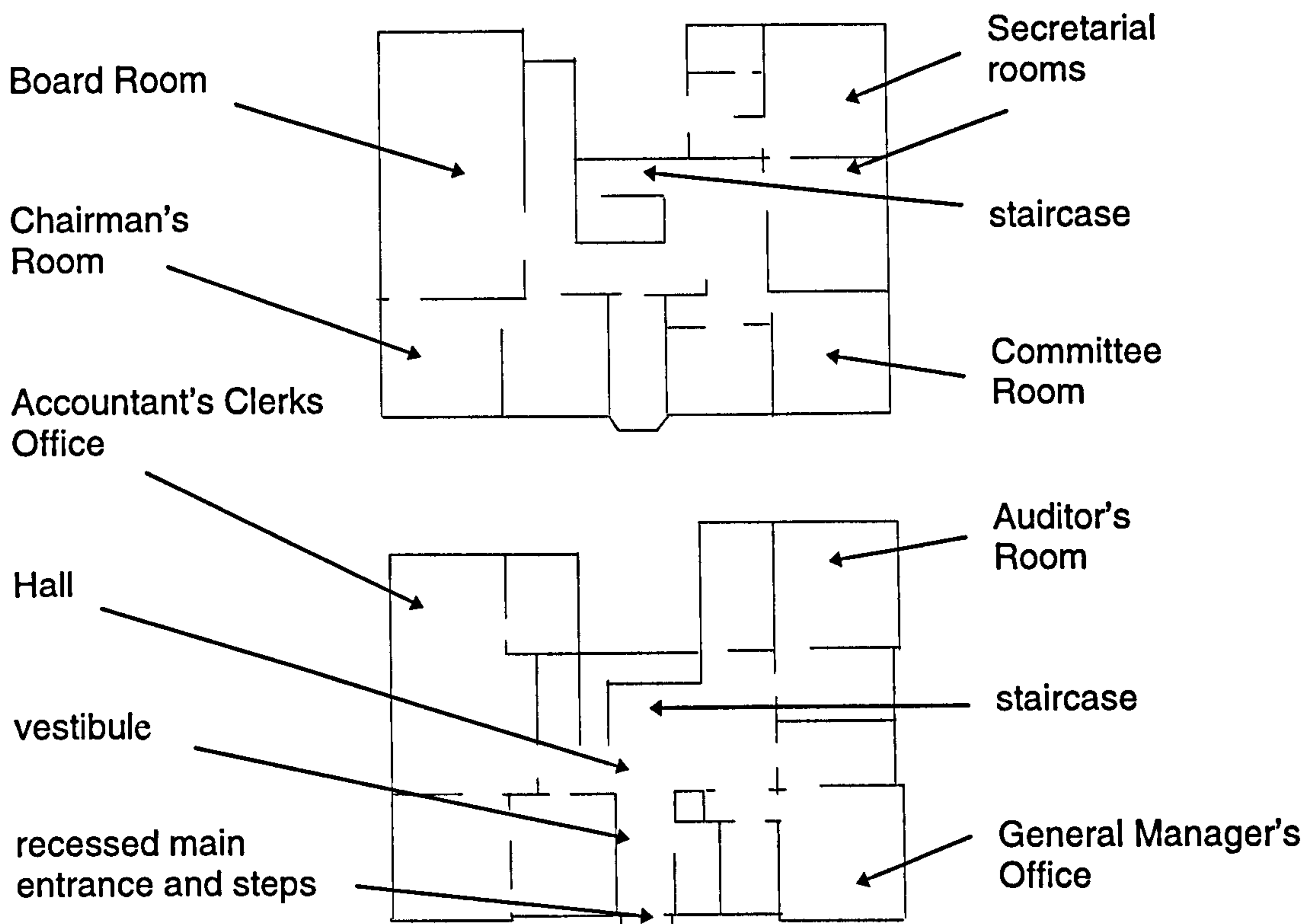
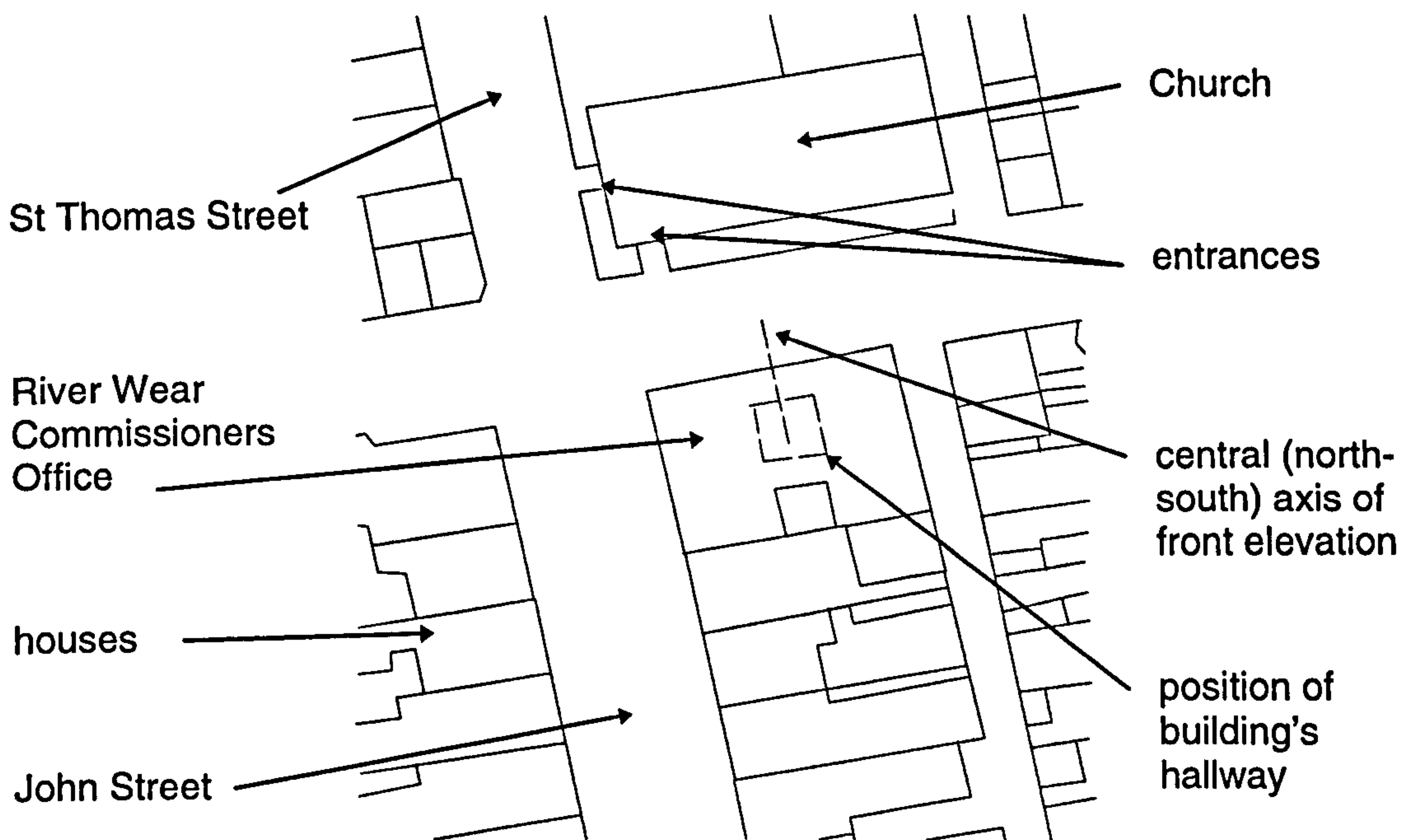


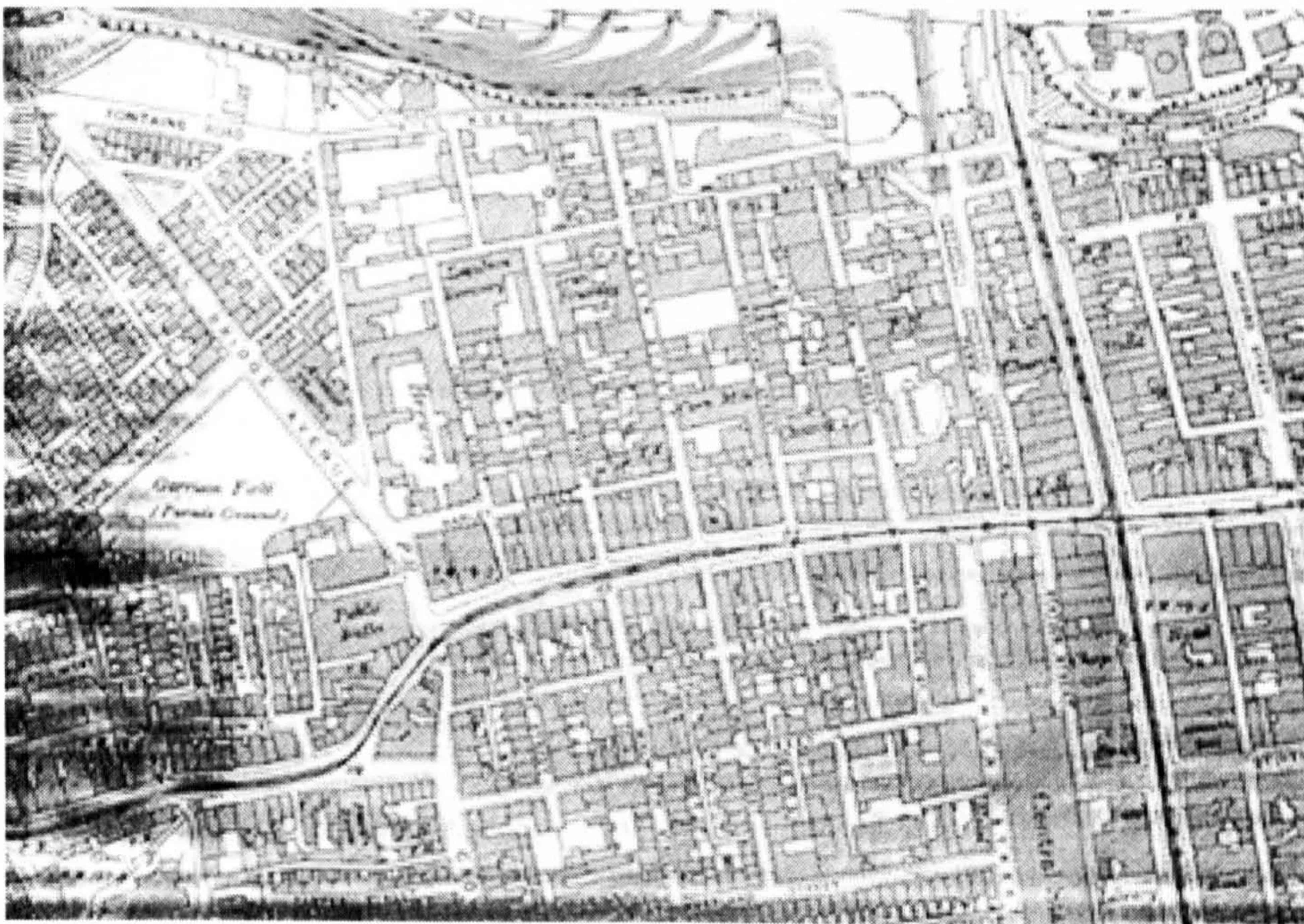
Figure 6.5.15. The plan of the River Wear Commissioners Office's setting (source: Ordnance Survey, 1919).



The Police and Fire Station

A district of central Sunderland where a small number of public buildings were erected in proximity to each other during the period considered by this study was at the western end of one of the widest roads in the centre of the town, High Street. The first public building to be built in this district of Sunderland was a Public Bath and Wash House in the mid-Victorian period but at the turn of the twentieth century it was followed by the erection of the Central Police Station and the Central Fire Station, both erected on sites which were redeveloped by the clearing of existing buildings such as small back-to-back terraced houses. The public baths and the Police Station were both positioned on sites that adjoined each other along a roadway known as Gill Bridge Avenue to which they faced, a roadway that led north-west towards the rail sidings and the mooring posts at the River Wear. However, like other public buildings in Sunderland, these structures received almost no attention in the architectural press at that time of their erection despite their local importance and large scale. In 1907 the Police Station was completed, an building designed by W and T.R. Milburn, which was composed with three entrances along the main elevation of which only one was for public access (The Builder, 1907: 175).

Figure 6.5.16. The High Street district in 1894 (source: Ordnance Survey). The High Street runs east-west through the area of Sunderland shown.



The plan of the Public Baths was of a rectangular form, located at the end of the High Street where it curved southwards towards the road junction with Crowtree Road. The building's position at the junction made it act as a terminating marker along High Street but no architectural element was used to mark the oncoming alignment upon the outside of the building. In civic design terms this was disappointing even though the alignment of the roadway was continued loosely inside the building by the position of the swimming pool, which was laid out parallel to the line of the approaching roadway.

Despite being positioned closely together the Public Baths and the Police and the Fire Station were arranged in a somewhat disorganised way although their size and scale were similar. The environment around these buildings was also laid out in an accordingly haphazard manner with the most dominant building types being terraced houses and public houses, nine of which were evident in the immediate area with the largest being located opposite the new Police Station. The plan of the Police Station conformed to a symmetrical shape, with an 'E' shaped form. The front elevation of the Police Station faced directly towards Gill Bridge Avenue and the plan of this particular section of the building was pushed against the front of the site which resulted in it being formed with an irregular shape, as if it were cut by the line of the passing road.

The form of the environment around the two structures (see figure 6.5.17), was not conducive or dignified enough in many respects to encourage civic designing of the type practised in the period studied apart from the introduction of small scale design features at the front of the building, although it was with the alignment of the approaching roadways that the best possibilities for relating the structures to their surroundings existed. For example, a small slip road, Harley Street, ran directly up towards the Police Station which thus offered a vista to the building but there is little in the planning and design form of the building to suggest that the alignment of the roadway was utilised within the composition. Another small road, coming southwards between Fontaine Road and Gill Bridge Street, ran towards the Police Station and its alignment met with the building at an acute angle, but again there is little in the composition of the front elevation of this building to suggest that the alignment was marked on the structure. In civic design terms therefore the Police Station represents a weak piece of civic design, designed with few architectural elements of note, which is even more ineffective when the form of the local environment is considered.

Figure 6.5.17. The western end of the High Street, Sunderland in 1919 (source: Ordnance Survey).



Inter-War Sunderland

Municipal enterprise in Sunderland after 1918 did much to change the appearance and nature of the town (Corfe, 1973: 107) although the erection of new public buildings did not take place at the same rate as seen before the onset of War in 1914. Instead the Corporation took up a policy of improving traffic circulation around the central core and this was to be achieved through the widening of existing roadways and the laying down of tarmac over existing gravel thoroughfares. In 1925 a new ring-road scheme was completed and in 1929 a new Bridge across the River Wear was opened. Public parks became a more significant aspect of the Sunderland urban form between 1918 and 1939 with the opening of Backhouse Park in 1923, as a result of a bequest to the Corporation, and Thompson Park in 1933. With regards to the construction of public buildings only two schemes of note took place even though the population during the Inter-war period rose dramatically from about 159,000 in 1921 to 275,000 by 1951 (source: Census). The first building scheme to take

place was the conversion and extension of the Workhouse into a hospital in 1929 and the other scheme was the erection of a new Technical College building, the Priestman Building, in 1939 in order to cope with growing student numbers in the town. A Classical Beaux Arts style was chosen for the new building by architect Oliver Hall Mark which Pevsner (1953: 453) noted as bearing down heavily upon the Georgian terrace houses to which it faced.

Conclusion

It has been shown in this section that little civic designing of any great significance took place in late-Victorian and Edwardian Sunderland and that what did occur generally took place either in the early and late years of the period considered, although civic design as a practice in Sunderland was severely restricted by the cramped conditions within which the late-Victorian public structures of the town were placed and by the overall lack of public architectural activity during the period considered. However this should not take any attention away from the fact that the civic designing which did take place was often of not too great a standard. Of significance too to the practice of civic design in the town was the limited funds of the Corporation who possibly could not afford the costs of undertaking large sized slum removal scheme in central areas and then subsequently redeveloping the cleared sites with expensive and large scale public buildings, like what occurred in the some of the other provincial settlements examined by this work. As a consequence of the financial restriction upon the Corporation the sites selected for public building were not always conducive for civic designing of the type that was practised in Britain during the period examined by this project. Yet in some situations where civic design was a realistic possibility, the designers did not fully appreciate the opportunity given. For example, Henry Tanner could have related his Post Office, the largest public building erected in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period in Sunderland, to the surrounding environment, particularly by utilising local roadways, in a far greater way than he actually did and the new Central Police Station was also planned in such a fashion whereby the alignments of oncoming roadways were not utilised. Significantly too in Sunderland the buildings that were erected were frequently erected on sites scattered around the central core so no attempt was noted to be made so as to establish a civic district in the growing settlement.

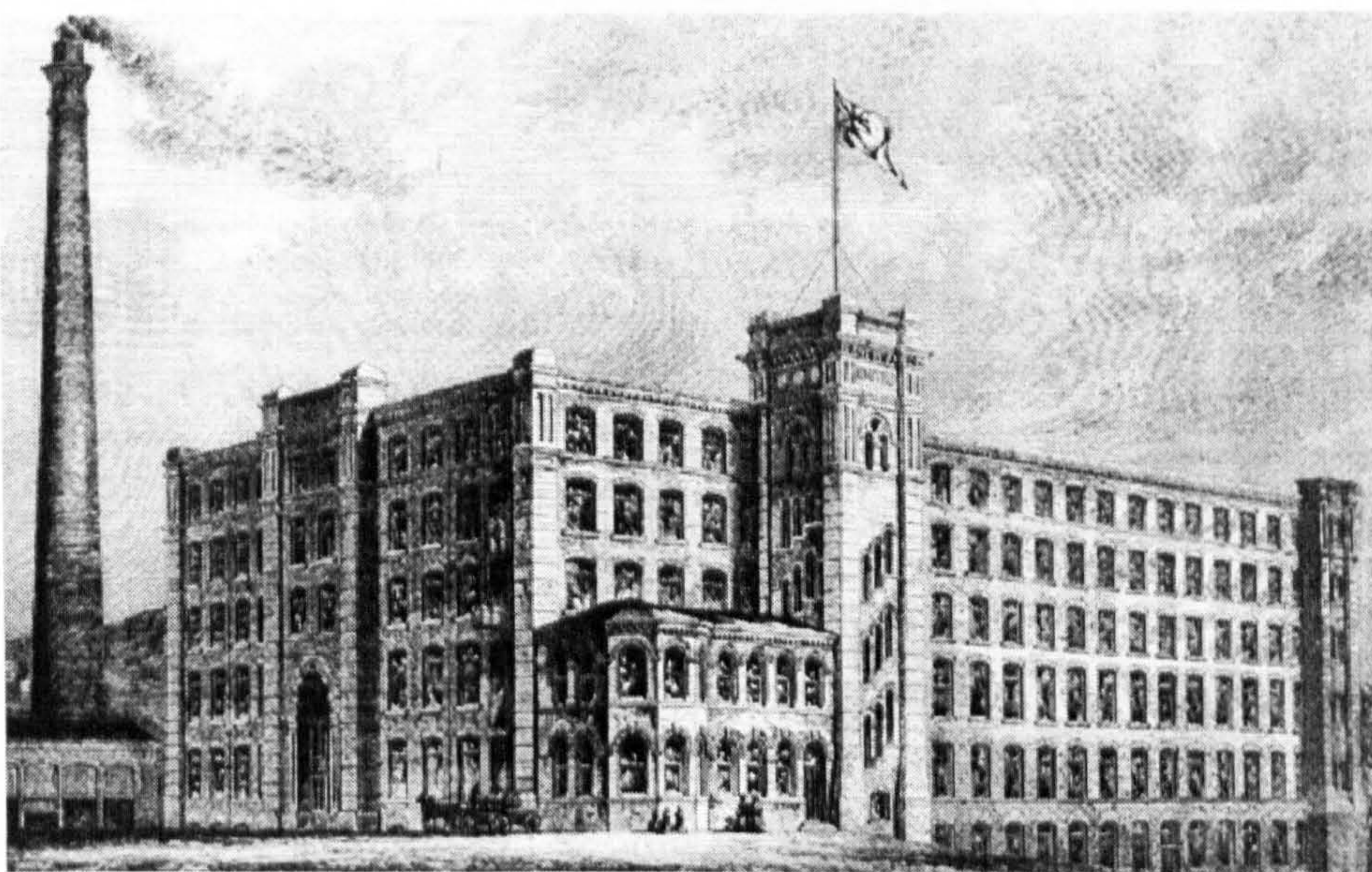
The Museum and Library building was arguably the strongest example of civic design in Sunderland during the period examined by this project with its central axis marked both in front and behind the building. The marking of the central axis behind a building was very rare in terms of civic design in the national context. The building not only had its central north-south axis marked immediately in front of the edifice by features such as a flight of steps to the front of the principal entrance but also vertically by a dome and inside the building by the symmetrically formed internal arrangement. In addition, the central axis of the building was marked at a considerable distance away by the alignment of an approaching side street. The corresponding of a building's most prominent design features with an oncoming roadway was often only seen within the strongest civic design schemes identified in provincial Britain between about 1880 and 1914.

Oldham

Introduction

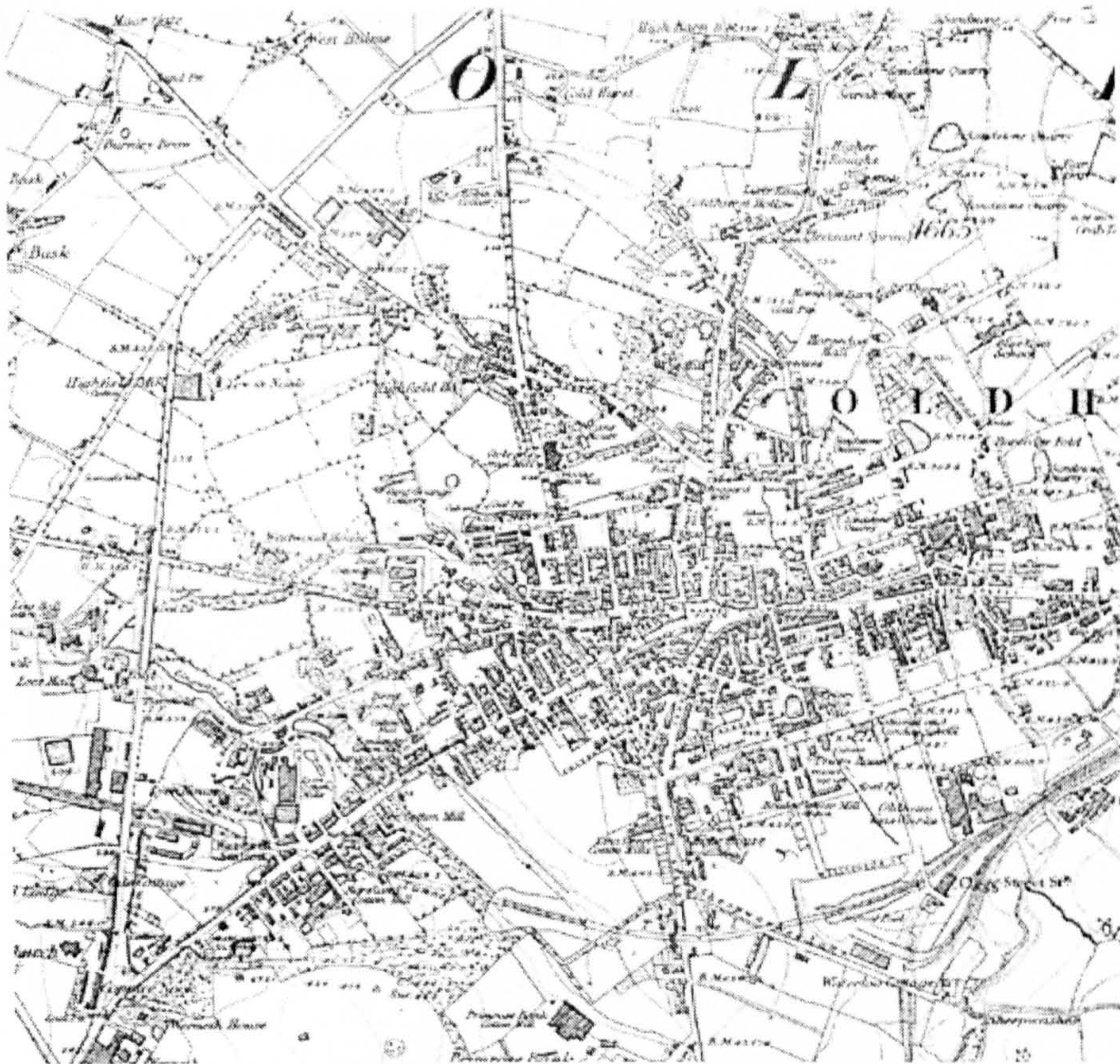
Oldham, like its Lancastrian civic and economic rivals Bolton and Blackburn, emerged from provincial obscurity to national importance during the course of the nineteenth century by turning itself into one of the greatest cotton spinning settlements in Britain (Kenyon in Pevsner, 1969: 356). From as early as the end of the 1770s the impact of the cotton industry was already being felt in Oldham, a time when the first mill was erected in the town. By the mid-1790s the town had already acquired twelve mills within which many of the local populous, about 11,000 at that time, were employed. These mills, and subsequent mill buildings erected prior to about 1850, tended to be erected close to the central core of Oldham, therefore affecting to a considerable degree the townscape of the settlement, partly due to the huge scale of some buildings. Even in the twentieth century their effect was being felt. "Nobody can deny that they are impressive. Their bulks dwarf everything, and their chimneys make the church spires appear negligible." (Pevsner, 1969: 356)

Figure 6.6.1. The United Mill. An example of large scale mid-Victorian industrial architecture in Oldham (source: Jones, 1985).



Like other urban settlements in Britain during the nineteenth century Oldham's growth was rapid. In 1801 the town's population was a little over 12,000 (source: Census). By 1831 the population for the town had risen to 32,000 and by 1861 had a population total in excess of 72,000 (source: Census), which brought about a marked change in the appearance and spatial extent of the town from what it was some years earlier. Between 1871 and 1881, the peak decades of building activity in the town, Oldham's population rose from over 82,500 to nearly 111,000 (source: Census), and at the start of the twentieth century Oldham's population was in excess of 137,000 (source: Census, 1901), which made the towns one of the twenty largest provincial urban settlements at that time in England and Wales.

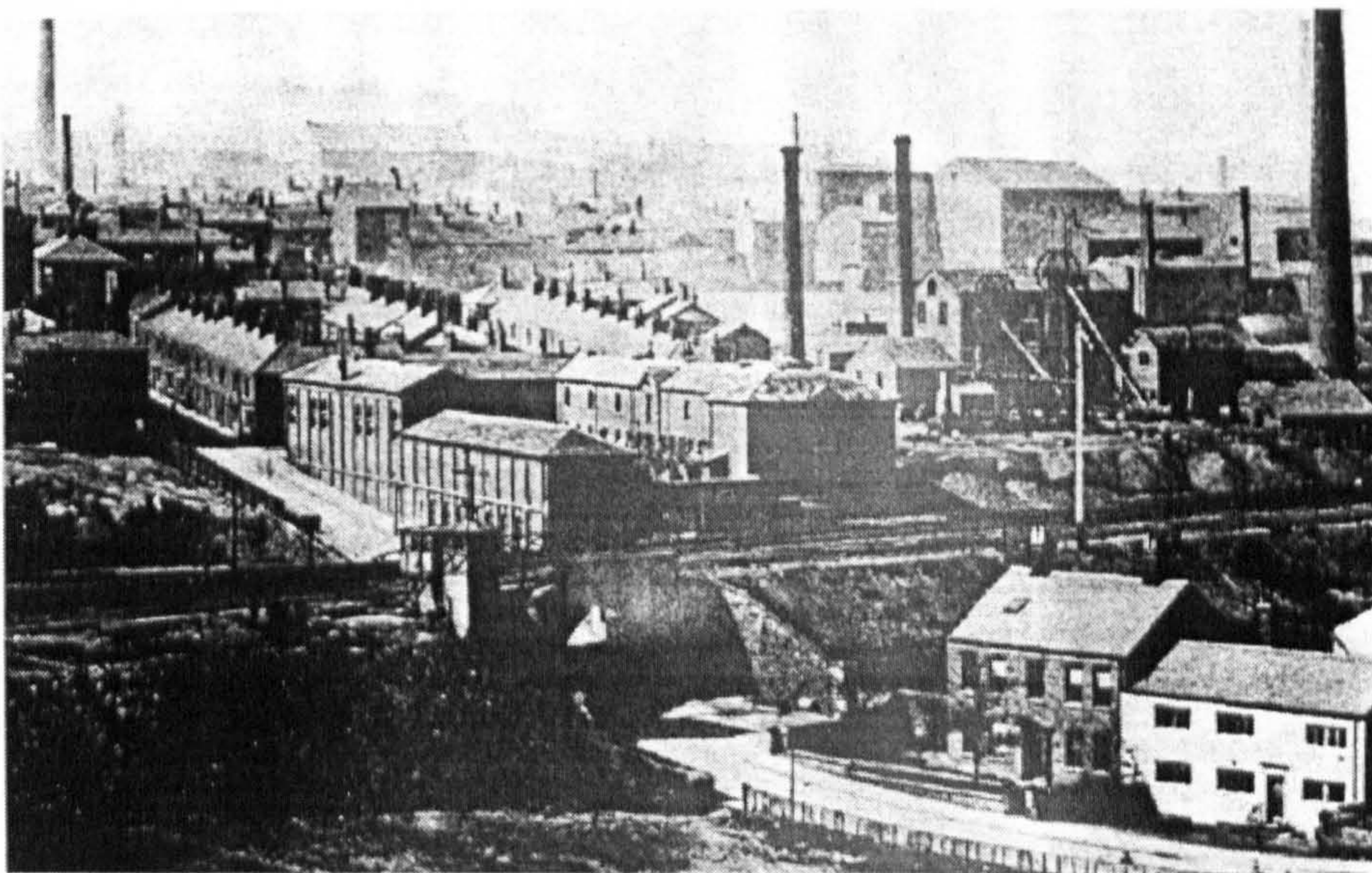
Figures 6.6.2. Oldham's town plan in 1863 (source: Ordnance Survey).



Such was the effect of the rise of cotton manufacture in Oldham that it affected the development of the urban form, as highlighted earlier. Not only did it create an environment within which places of work and houses, primarily terraced units, were located in proximity to each other but it, in addition, helped to produce a cramped setting with few open spaces. Only in 1865 did the Corporation try to redress the problem of a lack of open areas within the town when it laid out Alexandra Park, a space covering a total area of 26 hectares.

In an environment such as Oldham's, which was dominated by large industrial buildings from the early-Victorian period onwards, the local mills essentially became not only the largest but possibly the equivalent of civic buildings of the settlement. This situation was compounded by a number of factors in the case of Oldham, such as the town prior to industrialisation being a hamlet and so contained no public buildings of note prior to its rapid growth and that a lack of public building occurred in the town during the Victorian period. The first public building in the settlement of any note was the Town Hall in 1841 and few other buildings of any architectural note were erected afterwards. Only four public design competitions were held in Oldham before 1900 despite its large size at that time and two of these competitions were for Workhouse buildings, in 1848 and 1884 (Harper, 1983: 131). Also due to their often huge scale the impact of the industrial structures upon the eye should not be overlooked. Often these buildings, many of which were erected from local stones or from locally produced bricks, most notably Accrington bricks, made a significant effect on the on looking eye due to their employment of features such clock towers and chimneys which not only formed local landmarks but also enhanced their often huge scale.

Figure 6.6.3. A view of Oldham in 1870.



In this course of this study it has been noted that in some other large provincial centres, such as Bradford, for example, that public architectural design was dominated by a small number of individuals or by a successful partnership. In the case of Bradford Lockwood and Mawson dominated local practice from the mid to late-Victorian period. Of importance to the design of Victorian Oldham were the Stott family, an architectural partnership comprising of

Abraham Stott and his three sons, Jesse, Abraham and Philip, who dominated local mill design up to the mid 1880s, a time when public building in Oldham was almost none existent. Of local significance too was Thomas Mitchell, an architect of ecclesiastical and industrial buildings who provided many of the most acclaimed pieces of industrial design in the Oldham area of Lancashire, such as the United Mill at nearby Chadderton in 1874 (see figure 6.6.1). Mitchell, in addition, designed one of the most important public buildings in Oldham, the Free Library and Museum, won in competition in 1881. But, it is important to note that Oldham was not only one of the smallest number settlement examined but that during the Victorian and Edwardian period only a small number of public buildings were erected. In addition, the settlement also had some of the weakest civic design examples that were erected during the period considered. Collectively, these factors affected the architectural and planning form of the town as it developed between about 1880 and 1914 and the lack of architectural practice in the town also meant that it received scant attention in the architectural press even though in 1888 under the passing of the Local Government Act Oldham was elevated to county borough status along with the largest provincial cities of the time such as Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds and Sheffield.

Arguably the most prominent and significant of Oldham's Victorian public buildings was the Town Hall by Joseph Butterworth in 1841. Designed a Classical, Grecian style the seven bay ashlar covered front elevation of the two storey structure, facing north onto High Street, was decorated by at its centre by an enlarged four column portico of Ionic columns which were surmounted by a pediment. The size of the portico was so large that it dominated the composition of the front facade (Cunningham, 1981: 126). Cunningham (*Ibid.*: 44) noted that the design quality of the Town Hall was high although the building was not especially elegant in comparison to other public buildings in Britain. However Cunningham (1981) also highlighted how the good design quality of the Town Hall can be used to emphasise how early-Victorian Town Halls were generally regarded more as works of art than functional buildings even though the interior of the building contained little in the way of decorative features, perhaps a reflection of the low cost of the scheme. The total cost of the building was only £4,000, with the only exception being the small sized Council Chamber that contained a "comfortable dignity that was so important a feature of these buildings." (*Ibid.*: 208)

The dimensions of the Town Hall were relatively modest for a building of its type, measuring only 102 feet in length and 68 feet in width, and such a modest scale may be understood to

reflect the young state of Oldham as a place of any significance and the young age of its public authority, although an influence upon the size of the Town Hall, somewhat unusually, was that no local government existed in the town at that time of the building being erected for the Corporation was only formed in 1848 after a charter was passed. Another factor of significance was the fact that the settlement at that time was quite small in terms of population size, about 41,500 in 1841 (source: Census) and so only had only a small number of ratepayers. This was a notable influence upon the construction of many public buildings in the Victorian period for the size of the settlement affected the amount of tax available to a local government which, theoretically at least, could spent on the erection public buildings and environmental improvements. As Oldham only has a relatively small tax base this made the local authority relatively poor in comparison with other urban places in Britain. This situation was perhaps reflected too in the Town Hall extension scheme of 1879-80, when the Town Hall was becoming too small in size for the expanding local authority, for it could not afford to erect an entirely new building. Further public activity did take place in the following decades after the completion of the Town Hall although numerically few buildings were constructed and significantly too there was a tendency in Oldham to erect only small scale public buildings, such as the brick and terracotta County Court (1894) by Henry Tanner. Pevsner (1969: 357) described this edifice as being: "Not at all of the ashlar solidity and taciturn dignity of mid-C19 county courts."

Figure 6.6.4. The Town Hall area of Oldham in 1891 (source: Ordnance Survey).



Union Street

During the course of the nineteenth century Union Street developed into Oldham's main street, a broad roadway which ran in an east-west direction through the centre of the town along which a number of public buildings were erected throughout the Victorian period, although Oldham's largest and most important Victorian building, the Town Hall, was situated to the north on a site at the High Street. It was along Union Street that Oldham developed anything that could be noted as a civic centre with a small number of public buildings being situated in proximity to each other close, particularly at the junction of Union Street with Greaves Street and Queen Street (see figure 6.6.7).

Figure 6.6.5. Central Oldham in 1880 (source: Ordnance Survey). To the centre of the map is Union Street which at that time was surrounded by a number of undeveloped sites, some of which were used for public building schemes at later dates.



As noted previously in 1879 it was decided by the Corporation that the Town Hall should be extended in size in order to cope with the increasing size of the local government and needs of a growing local population, about 110,000 at the time (source: Census, 1881). The commission for the extension of the building was given to a Bolton based architect, George Woodhouse, and a local architect, Edward Potts, a designer who had been involved in William Hill's Bolton Town Hall scheme (1866-73). Potts had also been commissioned to design many large scale structures for the growing local cotton industry in the Oldham

region (Jones, 1985: 158). The total cost of the Oldham Town Hall extension was about £24,000 (Cunningham, 1981: 281).

When asked by the Corporation to produce new designs that would adjoin the existing Town Hall building, Woodhouse and Potts conceived a scheme of a more comprehensive nature than a mere structural extension, proposing a plan whereby the new and old sections of the Town Hall would literally merge together (Cunningham, 1981: 88), partly through stylistic association, in so doing forming a large scale building. However this idea failed to win the support of the Corporation, possibly on the grounds of cost, who refused to proceed with the scheme. As a consequence of this setback the original proposed scheme ended at that moment and Woodhouse and Potts were subsequently only allowed to transform the side elevations of the Town Hall, along Greaves Street and Firth Street, adding minor design details, such as pilasters and columns so as to make the facades look more impressive (Pevsner, 1969: 357). On this matter Cunningham (1981: 88) noted: "Potts and Woodhouse had achieved the equivalent of only the central section of one side of Leeds or Bolton town hall, though their plans were for a whole building of that type that would have been around 240 feet square and larger than either of its predecessors." But, significantly for the civic design of Oldham, the new scheme only altered the secondary elevations of the building which were only visible along the narrow side streets alongside the building's plot. However in 1909 the Town Hall was extended again, this time by Taylor and Simister to a cost of £26,000, in order to cope with the further growth of the Corporation.

It has been noted already that Union Street developed into the main street of Oldham during the Victorian period. Pevsner (1969: 357) said of Union Street that it "is wide and has sufficient buildings of some prominence to be remembered." It was along Union Street that Oldham developed anything as to what would be labelled a civic district, and one of the most notable of its public buildings was situated close to the Greaves Street junction with Union Street. This public building, the Free Library, Art Gallery and Museum, it was rare in late-Victorian public architecture to have a building fulfilling three public functions of this kind but may have been a consequence of the corporation not being able to afford separate building types, was erected after a competition in 1881, won by Thomas Mitchell. The Free Library and Art Gallery building was designed in a Gothic style and despite its importance to the developing town it received little attention in the architectural press. The Builder in 1883, for example, published pictures not of the winning competition design but the design and plan

submitted by A.H. Tiltman and H. Shaw instead (see figure 4.20.6) which was awarded third premium.

Figure 6.6.6. A competition entry for the combined Library, Art Gallery and Museum building, Oldham (source: *The Builder*, 1883).

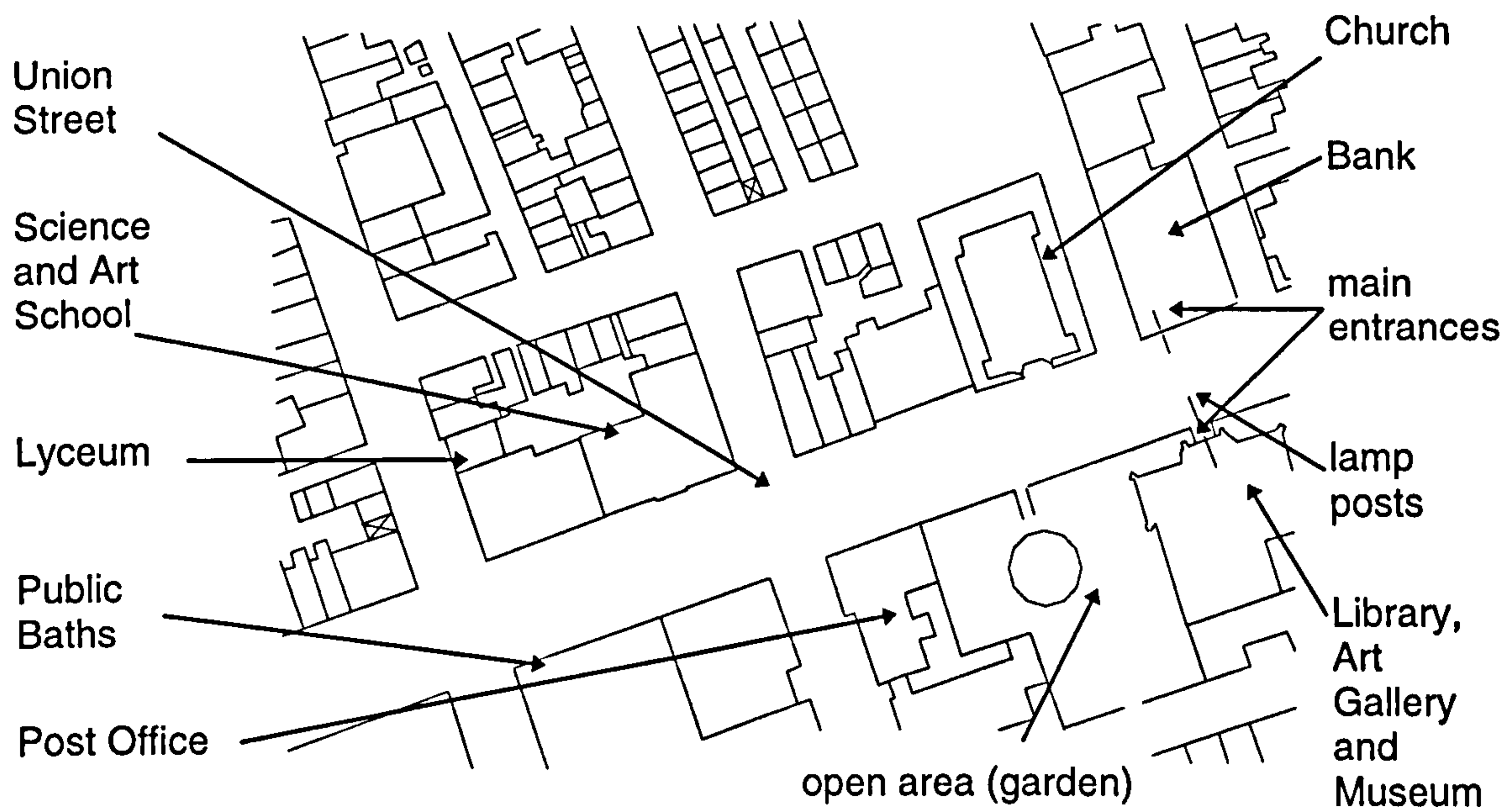


The Ordnance Survey (OS) dating from 1880 shows the unencumbered site upon to the east of central Oldham the Free Library, Art Gallery and Museum structure (see figure 4.20.7) was to be subsequently erected. Public buildings already existing in the immediate area close to the Library, Art Gallery and Museum site included the small scale Post Office building at the corner of Greaves Street and Union Street (1877), the Lyceum (1855-6) and the Science and Art School (1855-6), as well as the Public Baths (1854 and 1880).

The selected plan of the Free Library, Art Gallery and Museum building by Mitchell was of a square form with the ends of the front elevation emphasised by end pavilions. The raised Library and Gallery building was positioned away from the front of its site, being set it back from Union Street and the pavement in front of it so to create an open area, albeit of a small size, other than that of the roadway which the principal elevation faced towards. The raising of the building above the street level helped to distinguish it from its surrounding and to emphasise the importance of the public building. In addition, by situating the structure back from the roadway and pavement positioned to the front of it the architect was able to establish an opportunity for the introduction of further civic design features such as a

projecting building line at the centre of the main elevation and other features of civic design significance. Lamp posts were also placed in front of the principal entrance.

Figure 6.6.7. Plan of Union Street and the public buildings located along it (source: Ordnance Survey, 1891).



The centre of the main elevation, facing northwards to Union Street, was marked by the main entrance reached by a small flight of steps positioned at its front and was also marked by a building line that projected beyond that of the building line of the elevation so to emphasise it within the design composition. The axis established by the placing of the main entrance was continued away from the building not only by the steps situated in front of the doorway but also by two lamp posts, as highlighted earlier, placed in accord with the central axis of the front elevation. In addition, this alignment related to the position of the main entrance of the Bank located on the opposite side of Union Street, but this sense of association was not further fortified in the planning of the buildings. Only a vestibule and entrance hallway marked the central axis established at the front of the Library, Art Gallery and Museum building in the internal arrangement.

Located close to the west of the Library, Art Gallery and Museum was the central Post Office building. This building was erected in 1877 on a site close to the junction of Greaves Street and Union Street. The main elevation of the new building facing west towards Greaves Street. Situated between the two public buildings was an open area of land, bound

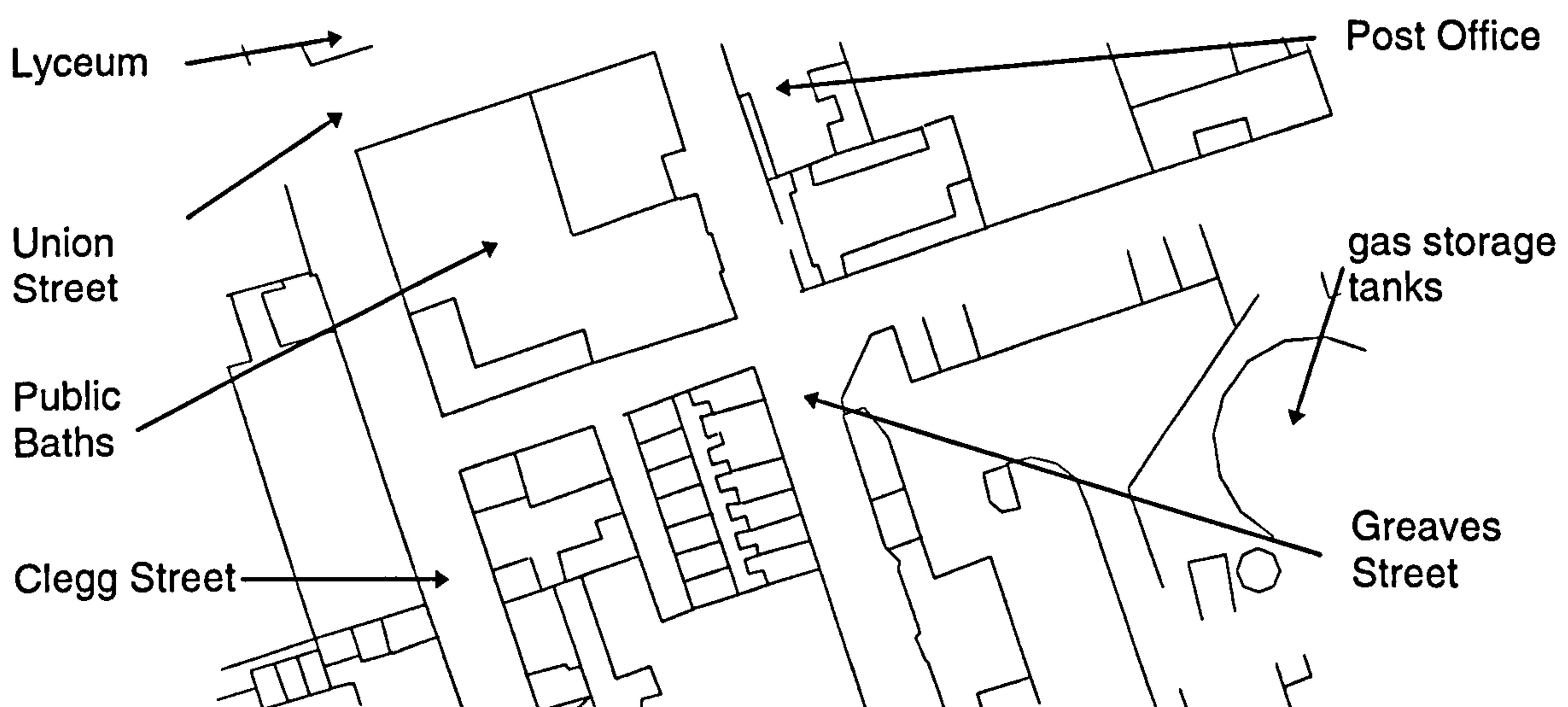
to the north and south by a stone wall interrupted at the mid-way point by an entrance into the area. During the 1880s this open space was laid out in a formal manner with trees, other foliage and footpaths. The design of this space comprised of two sections, the smallest section being situated to the south of the site and approached by an entrance in Ashworth Street, a roadway lined with the Corporation's gas storage tanks. This part of the garden area was laid out in a rectangular form with the Ashworth Street entrance positioned centrally. The second section was located towards the northern end of the open space and was dominated by a circular feature filled with trees around which a footpath was placed. This footpath was adjoined by another track which was laid out in a north-south direction within the southern section of the open area. At the point where the two footpaths intersected each other a flight of steps was situated immediately to the east leading to the site of the Library, Art Gallery and Museum site. The main entrance of the open space was marked by a flight of steps leading from Union Street which led directly towards the centre of the previously noted circular feature. Unfortunately in terms of civic design and the relation of the space to the surrounding environment, none of the alignments established in the park adjoined with form and features of the surrounding buildings and so the garden area formed an isolated environment in the centre of Oldham. However it did help to produce a soft landscape in the district where many of Oldham's public buildings were located, although the isolation of this space from the buildings around it was much to the detriment of the overall civic design effect of the district.

To the west of the Post Office along Union Street was located the Science and Art School and the Lyceum, by N.G. Pennington, a building designed in 1855-6 with "a dignified long front, Italianate, with arched upper windows." (Pevsner, 1969: 358) The centre points of both the Post Office and Lyceum were marked on their front elevations by the main entrances, the Lyceum's with steps leading up to it and lamp posts placed in front of the main doorway. Additional lamp posts were placed in front of the ends of the building while the entire front of the building was marked by a low height stone wall within which the previously mentioned lamp posts were fixed. Stone walls of this kind, positioned in front of buildings, were a rare relatively feature of civic design in the period examined.

Across Union Street opposite the Lyceum was situated the Public Baths, originally built in 1854 but extended in 1880. As a result of its extension the Baths occupied a site of substantial size between Clegg Street and Greaves Street although the shape of the plan of the building was highly irregular, shaped in part by the existing buildings positioned

immediately alongside it. For example, when the building was extended its enlarged site enclosed existing buildings located in proximity to it. With its recessed entrance placed towards the centre of the main elevation facing west towards Clegg Street, in front of which were situated a small flight of steps, the most startling design aspect of the Public Baths was the French styled pavilion roof (*Ibid.*: 358). The northern elevation of the building, facing Union Street, did not possess any design features of any particular note which related it to the buildings across the roadway although the ends of the building line of the northern facade of the Baths did correspond with the ends of the building line of the wall positioned in front of the Lyceum. However this displays thin civic design practice at best while the only element that essentially related the swimming baths to its surrounding was its scale. However, this again represents weak civic design practice when compared to other examples of civic design undertaken at about the same time.

Figure 6.6.8. Union Street with the Public Baths (source: Ordnance Survey, 1907).



Inter-War Oldham

Despite the creation of the Beautiful Oldham Society in the early twentieth century after a campaign promoted by the Oldham Chronicle under the heading 'Beautiful Oldham! Why Not?' to encourage the cultivation of plant life, the preservation of open spaces, the abatement of smoke and the erection of attractive buildings (Town Planning Review, 1910: 172), little public building took place in Oldham in the following years. At the end of World

War One in 1918 little further public activity was undertaken in central Oldham despite the fact that the town's population was still growing, being about 144,000 people in 1921 (source: Census), and so were the needs of the local community. A garden suburb of the type advocated by the likes of Raymond Unwin and Garden City followers was undertaken but with regards to public architecture little new activity took place between 1918 and 1939. It was only after 1945 that the Corporation became heavily involved in architectural and planning schemes when a College of Further Education was built (1950-4 by Sir Percy Thomas and E. Prestwich) as well as a new Health Department and a new shopping centre, architects were R. Seifert and Partners in collaboration with Borough Architect T. Cartlidge.

Conclusion

As noted previously from the early nineteenth century onwards public architecture was only undertaken in Oldham at intermittent periods and those buildings that were erected were often of a weak civic design nature. In a settlement such as Oldham, which was comparatively small when contrasted to other places examined in this study, the undertaking of grandiose architectural designing and planning can to be viewed to be a matter not of high regard in the day-to-day life of the Corporation who instead devoted energy to concerns seen as more pressing than the appearance of the town, such as the regulation of new houses and streets as well as the improvement of public health. It has also been shown that during the period covered by this work those public buildings that were erected in Oldham showed comparatively little evidence of civic design practice and that which was practised was thin at best. However, where evidence of civic design was being undertaken more civic design elements could have been employed to make any identified scheme even stronger in nature. For example, while the centre of the front elevation of the combined Library, Art Gallery and Museum building corresponded with the main entrance of the Bank positioned opposite to it, and that the front entrance of the Library was marked by a flight of steps and lamps posts situated at its front, this alignment was not brought into the internal arrangement of the building apart from by the placing of a vestibule to the rear of the main doorway.

As few public buildings were erected during the period considered in Oldham this obviously affected the practice of civic design practice. In addition, the choice of sites were not always

advantageous to the large scale symmetrical layouts that were noted in other places. Significantly too, it must be remembered that Oldham was one of the smallest urban centres studied, having a population of only 137,000 by 1901, and with the Corporation only having a relatively small taxation base public funds for architectural and planning activities was lesser than for those larger urban centres regardless of the architectural pretensions that the local government wanted to achieve. This factor also helps to explain the rare occurrence of a combined library, art gallery and museum and the use of extension schemes rather than the erection of new buildings. However, in other smaller sized places examined, such as Blackburn, the strength of civic design was considerably greater than what it was in Oldham.

The practice of civic design in Oldham did display many characteristics that were noted in the civic design of other urban centres during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, including the employment of symmetrical designs and plans for buildings, the placing of a main entrance at the centre of the main elevation and the raising of notable buildings above the street level. The main entrance, as has been shown, was often positioned at the centre of the principal elevation and was sometimes marked in front of the building by a flight of steps. In the case of the Library, Art Gallery and Museum by lamp posts too. However no further architectural or design features were evident in front of any of the buildings studied, features such as statuary that were placed in prominent positions in front of public buildings constructed elsewhere in Britain. It was also recognised in Oldham that any axial lines established by the main entrance and steps in front of buildings were not continued into the internal arrangements.

The public buildings placed on sites alongside or in proximity to Union Street, a principal roadway in the centre of the town, displayed little evidence of being related to each other through means such as a common design style or by planning traits, significant elements of civic design practice elsewhere in provincial Britain. Therefore it can be recognised that at best the civic design of Oldham was weak. In many respects, Oldham like other towns of an industrial nature in the Lancashire area, which grew rapidly during the nineteenth century, were dominated in design terms not so much by public buildings but by industrial ones and this study does not provide any evidence to disprove such a situation, at least during the period about 1880 to 1914.

Blackburn

Introduction

Blackburn, like many other urban settlements in Lancashire, was greatly affected by the rise of industrialisation, the growth of cotton manufacture and heavy manufacturing industries from the end of the eighteenth century. But Blackburn though was not a modern settlement in the sense that it was formed as a result of modern industrial developments, for it did in fact have a history that stretched well beyond the onset of the Industrial Revolution to the Saxon era. During the Medieval period Blackburn acquired a reputation as a centre for weaving and by the end of the eighteenth century the town had already acquired standing for being a settlement known for its opulence and respectability. By this time the population was approximately 12,000 (source: Census, 1801).

Located in northern Lancashire Blackburn became a major component in the Lancashire industrial system, based largely on cotton production, from the early nineteenth century onwards. Of significance to its development was the completion of the Leeds to Liverpool canal through the town in 1816 and arrival of the railway in 1846. These two agents helped to stimulate further industrial growth and new buildings such as the Exchange, 1846 by Dickson and Brackspear, and the railway station, also 1846. Other later notable buildings included the Infirmary (1857), the 20 hectare Corporation Park, laid out in 1857, and a workhouse (1859).

By 1851 the settlement had grown remarkably in size from what it was at the start of the nineteenth century and had a population of over 52,000 (source: Census). By 1881 Blackburn's population had risen to over 104,000, thus doubling the 1851 population size, and by the start of the twentieth century, despite the rate of demographic growth slowing down, the town's population was over 127,500 (source: Census), growth that in turn brought about an increase in the spatial extent of the town (see figure 6.7.1 and 6.7.2). The population size of the town in 1901 made Blackburn the twentieth largest provincial settlement in England and Wales, of which almost one third of the population, about 41,000 people, were employed as cotton operatives in the local mills. As a result of the large cotton

industrial base within the town Blackburn had, by circa 1900, acquired a well deserved label for being the cotton weaving capital of the world. This reputation was consolidated at the start of the twentieth century when in 1901 the Imperial Mill was opened, a factory which was said to be the world's largest spinning mill, containing over 95,000 spindles. (Jones, 1985: 184)

Figure 6.7.1. Blackburn's town plan in 1845 (top) and 1891 (source: Ordnance Survey).



Similarly to other urban centres where the impact of industrialisation was great, industrial architecture had a significant affect upon Blackburn's urban form with mill buildings and their chimneys having an arguably greater imprint on the Victorian environment than the town's Churches and public buildings, a consequence of the public buildings being of a scale much smaller than many industrial structures erected in the Victorian period even though the public buildings were on occasions large in size. For example, it was not uncommon for some mills to be over 200 feet in length and to have a height well above 50 feet excluding vertical features such as chimneys and clock towers. But this occurrence should not detract from the architectural importance of the public structures erected within Blackburn during the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century although the Corporation may have done more to introduce civic design into the settlement during this period.

The history of Victorian public architecture in Blackburn begins in the mid-1850s when the Town Hall was erected, one of only a handful of major public architectural pieces to be built in Blackburn during the nineteenth century. However, with the completion of the Town Hall architecture became a more significant issue in the civic life of the town than it had been before and despite the Town Hall being erected prior to the chronological era covered by this work its importance to the environment of Blackburn should not be overlooked. Thus a brief description of the form of this building is necessary due to its civic design significance in central Blackburn.

The creation of a modern local government in Blackburn emanates from the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835, although the creation of a Corporation was not reflected architecturally until 1852 when a Town Hall was commissioned. Designed by Paterson, a locally based architect, the Town Hall was described by Pevsner (1969: 63) as being "big, Italianate, and indifferent." Completed in 1856, the total cost of the structure was relatively low in comparison with other Town Halls erected in other provincial settlements at the same time, the cost was about £35,000, although this factor does not lessen the affect of the building upon the environment of the town. The building was constructed from brick with Yorkshire stone dressing, the use of brick helping the public building fit in with the surrounding buildings even though its detailed designs were different.

The dimensions of the Blackburn Town Hall in comparison with other Victorian Town Halls was relatively small, measuring only 120 feet in length by 62 feet in width, yet this was of a scale above the norm in central Blackburn at the time of its construction and had the two 80

feet high towers that were planned as part of the original composition been erected then its scale would have been greater still. But, sadly, these vertical features were not erected in order to keep the costs of the scheme as low as was possible (*Ibid.*: 87). The building was erected on a site unencumbered by other buildings in the Market Place next to the Market House, an structure of approximately the same size as the three storey Town Hall. The Town Hall's most prominent architectural elements, of importance to its civic design, were, as highlighted previously, its similar scale with the neighbouring Market House, its low pitched roof, shallow so not to be seen from the street level, the increased height of the first floor level, higher than that of other floor levels so as to presumably highlight its importance to the overall composition, and the round arched window openings placed in regular bays along the main elevations. The corners of the principal facades were accentuated by the use of stone dressing and the roof was covered at regular intervals by decorative stone ventilation shafts (see figures 6.7.2, 6.7.3 and 6.7.4), which were also used on the Town Halls of Leeds and Bolton, which also helped to mask the roof from the on looking eye.

Figure 6.7.2. Blackburn Town Hall.



In 1900 a competition was held to extend the Town Hall due to the pressure being placed on the existing building as a result of the growth of the Corporation in the preceding years. Assessed by A.N. Bromley, from Nottingham, the competition was limited to only six invited designers and was won by Henry Hare, an architect who was rapidly amassing a reputation in the field of public architecture at the turn of the century because of his many competition successes. Construction for the extension scheme began in 1902 and the cost was in

excess of £40,000. As part of this scheme it was decided that the existing Law Courts, located within the Town Hall, should be removed and put within a new Police Station and Law Courts building. The decision therefore to extend the Town Hall had a major affect upon the civic design of the central environment of Blackburn, for not only was a new public structure to be erected but the extension scheme was undertaken so to help enhance the architectural effect of the Town Hall so that it could be seen to a greater advantage (The Builder, 1900: 144).

Figure 6.7.3. A view of central Blackburn in 1894 with the Town Hall (left) and market.



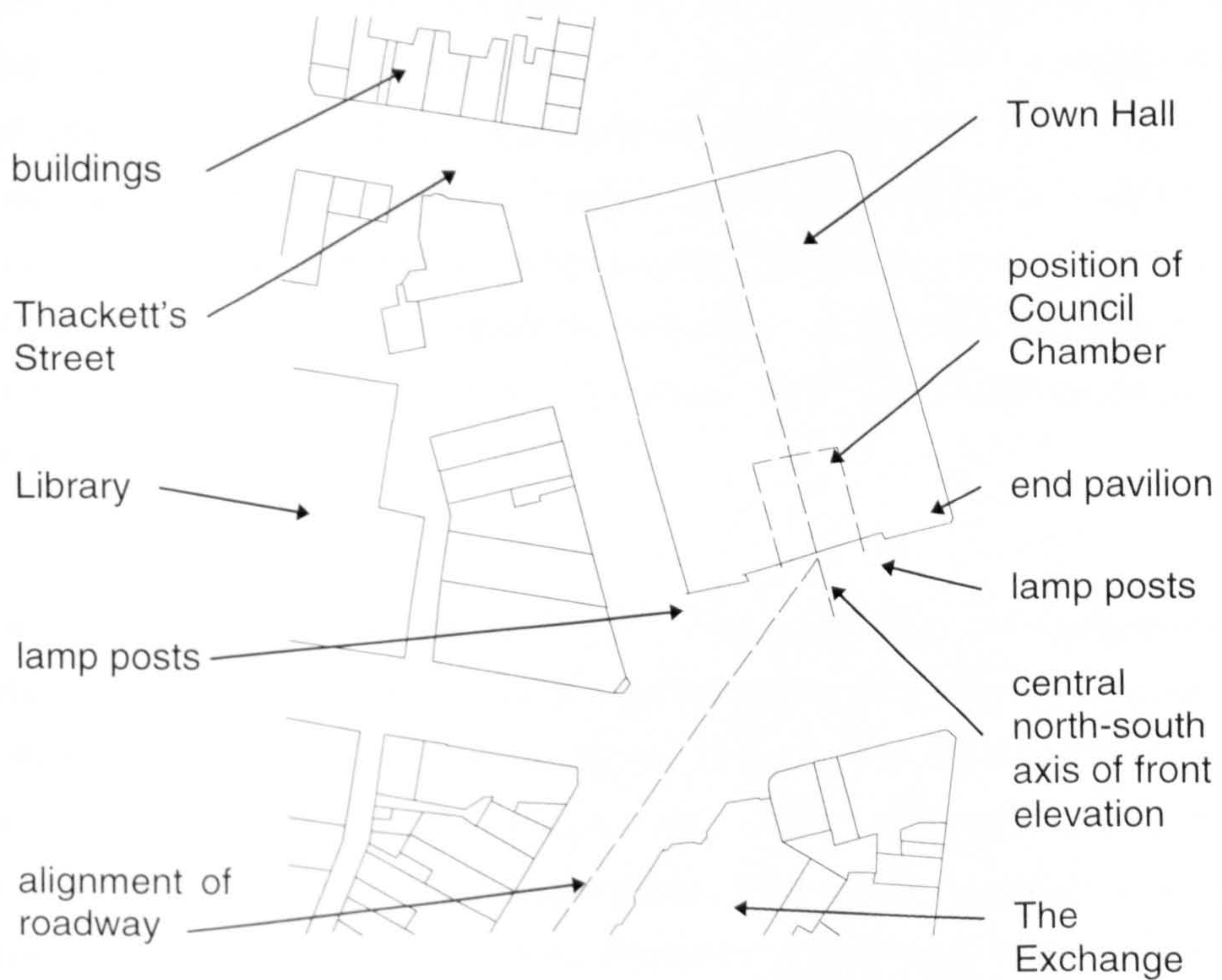
An open courtyard in the centre of the plan, around which a corridor was situated so to allow circulation around the building, dominated the internal arrangement of Blackburn's Town Hall. The main internal space, the Council Chamber, was placed towards the western elevation, facing King William Street, which was marked outside at regular intervals by lamp posts fixed into a low height stone wall. Significantly, the positioning of this room against the western wall of the building allowed the axis of Preston Road to meet with the central north-south axis of the building (see figures 6.7.4 and 6.7.5), and this is of civic design note. Such a practice of placing a prominent room or feature in a position so as to attempt to correspond it with the alignment of an oncoming roadway was a prevalent element of the stronger civic design schemes noted by this study. Other notable civic design elements evident in the Town Hall scheme included the distinct treatment of the corners, as different from the rest of the building, which were emphasised not only by stone dressing being used but in the plan of the building too by their building lines being projected forward, while the central five sections of the main elevation had their building line slightly recessed (The

Builder, 1902: 104). This recessing provided opportunities for civic design elements at the entrance such as the placing of steps in front of the main entrance situated at the centre of the western elevation which as stated above was marked in front by a stone wall and lamp posts.

Figure 6.7.4. A view towards the Town Hall in 1895 (source: De Gex, 1996).



Figure 6.7.5. A plan of the area shown by Figure 4.21.4 (source: Ordnance Survey, 1910).



The Free Library

The next major public building to be constructed within the centre of Blackburn was the two storey Free Library and Museum in the early 1870s. In 1871 a competition was held in order to select a design for the new building, won by the London based partnership of Woodcutt and Collcutt. The construction process began in the following year and was completed in 1874 to a design “in the early style of Decorated Gothic.” (The Builder, 1874: 528). Bradford and Longridge stone were used in the construction process. Sculptured panels decorated the exterior walls of the raised building and these were composed by Seale.

The design of the Library used elements noted elsewhere in civic design practice. The centre of the main elevation, for example, facing west onto Frances Street, later renamed Library Street, was marked by the recessed main entrance with large stone arch placed above. The raising of the building above the ground level and the recessing of the main entrance, as shown by figure 6.7.6, allow for the introduction of design features such as steps directly in front of the building. Two lamp posts were placed in front of the principal entrance which had the effect of bringing the building’s central axis outside of the building while positioned directly to the rear of the main doorway was an entrance vestibule which gave access to a Reference Library on one side of the internal arrangement and to the other side into the Lending Library (see figure 6.7.7). In terms of civic design this is important for the central east-west alignment to continue inside and away from the edifice. The front elevation was also marked at regular distances from the centre by four recessed window openings at the ground floor level, two of which were positioned on each side of the central doorway (*Ibid.*: 528) which also helped to reinforce the symmetrical impression of the principal elevation. Directly above these windows were positioned recessed mullioned windows with carved heads.

In 1893 the Library and Museum was extended. This process of enlarging public buildings was a particularly common in the smaller provincial settlements examined, where it may be assumed that the small financial stature of the Corporations meant that were unable to afford the sometimes high cost of erecting new public buildings. Hence the cheaper extension schemes acted as a viable alternative. The limited number of storeys of the building, two in total excluding the attic level, allowed the building to fit in somewhat well with its setting and this sense of association was enhanced by the scale of the Library and

Museum in terms of its floor to floor heights and overall size, which were in keeping with the surroundings which were mainly houses along Richmond Terrace to the north of its site. But there is little further evidence to suggest that the sense of association between this building and its setting existed as, for example, the building's plan did not relate to any structures in proximity to it. Furthermore little attention was given in the contemporary architectural press to the building which also suggests that its civic design was not too strong. However the placing of the lamp posts in front of the Library's main entrance is of note.

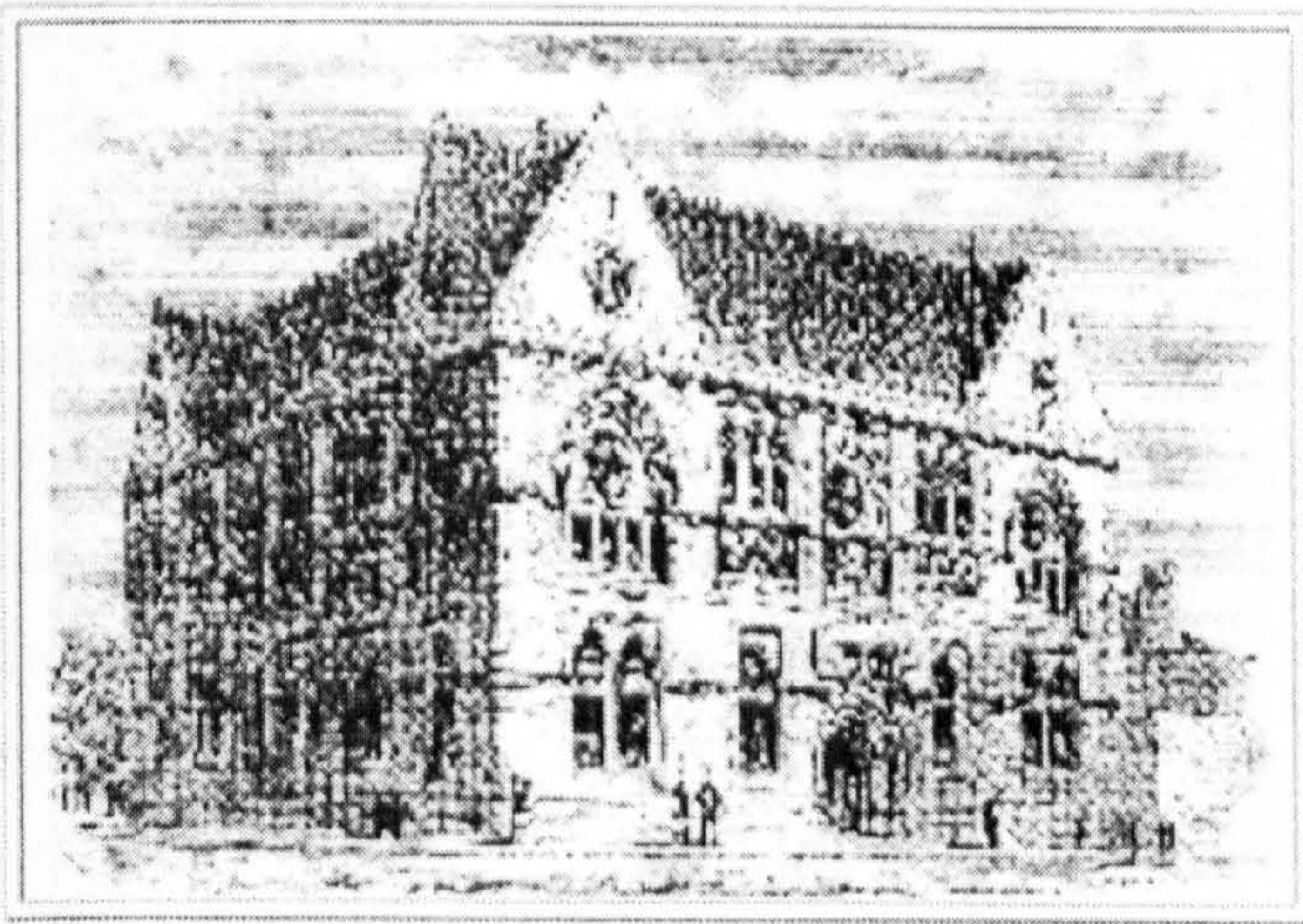


Figure 6.7.6. The Museum and Library's front elevation.

Figure 6.7.7. The plan of the local environment in 1893 (source: Ordnance Survey).

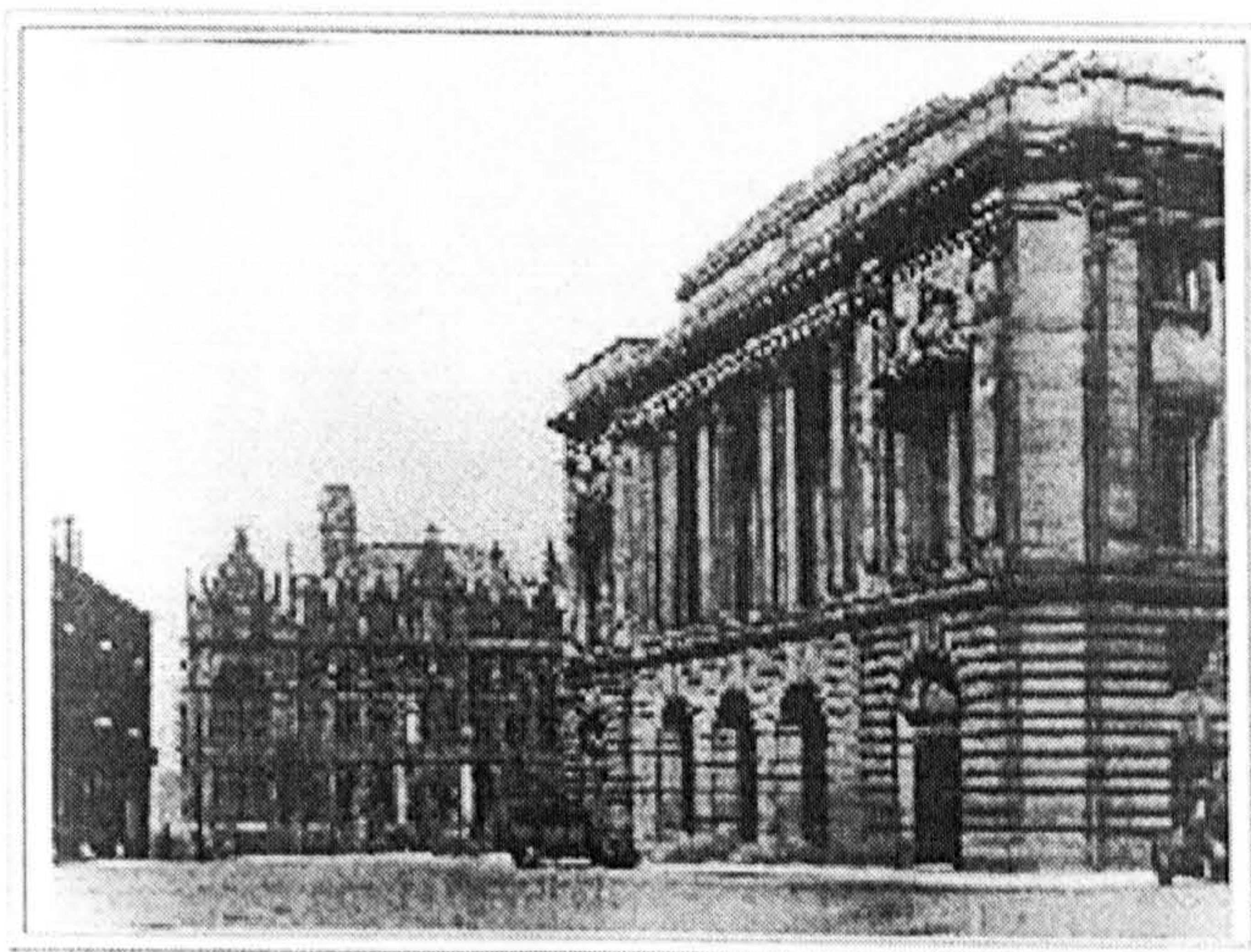


The Blakey Moor District

In 1888 the College of Technology and Design was erected on a site to the west of the town centre, positioned close to the junction of two prominent roadways. The site of the new building was noted in *The Builder* (1888: 354) as being “a rather awkward in shape though ample in size, being roughly a triangle, running down at least to a rounded corner, at the meeting of two streets, Blakey Moor and Nab Lane, and the ground falls rapidly to the westward; this latter point is often, however, no disadvantage in a site; it may even be a convenience.” E.C. Robins acted as assessor for the design competition.

Designed by competition winners Smith, Woodhouse and Willoughby in a French Renaissance style (*Ibid.*: 64), the building was built from red brick and yellow terracotta. The use of brick helped the building fit in with its surroundings which largely consisted of small scale private buildings, houses, at that time although from the early twentieth century the surroundings of this building changed markedly due to activities of the Corporation. This transition will be discussed subsequently. However, similar to some other public structures erected in the town, this building showed a large degree of association with its setting in its design and plan.

Figure 6.7.8. View along Blakey Moor to the Technical College. In the foreground is King George’s Hall which was added after the erection of the College (seen in background).



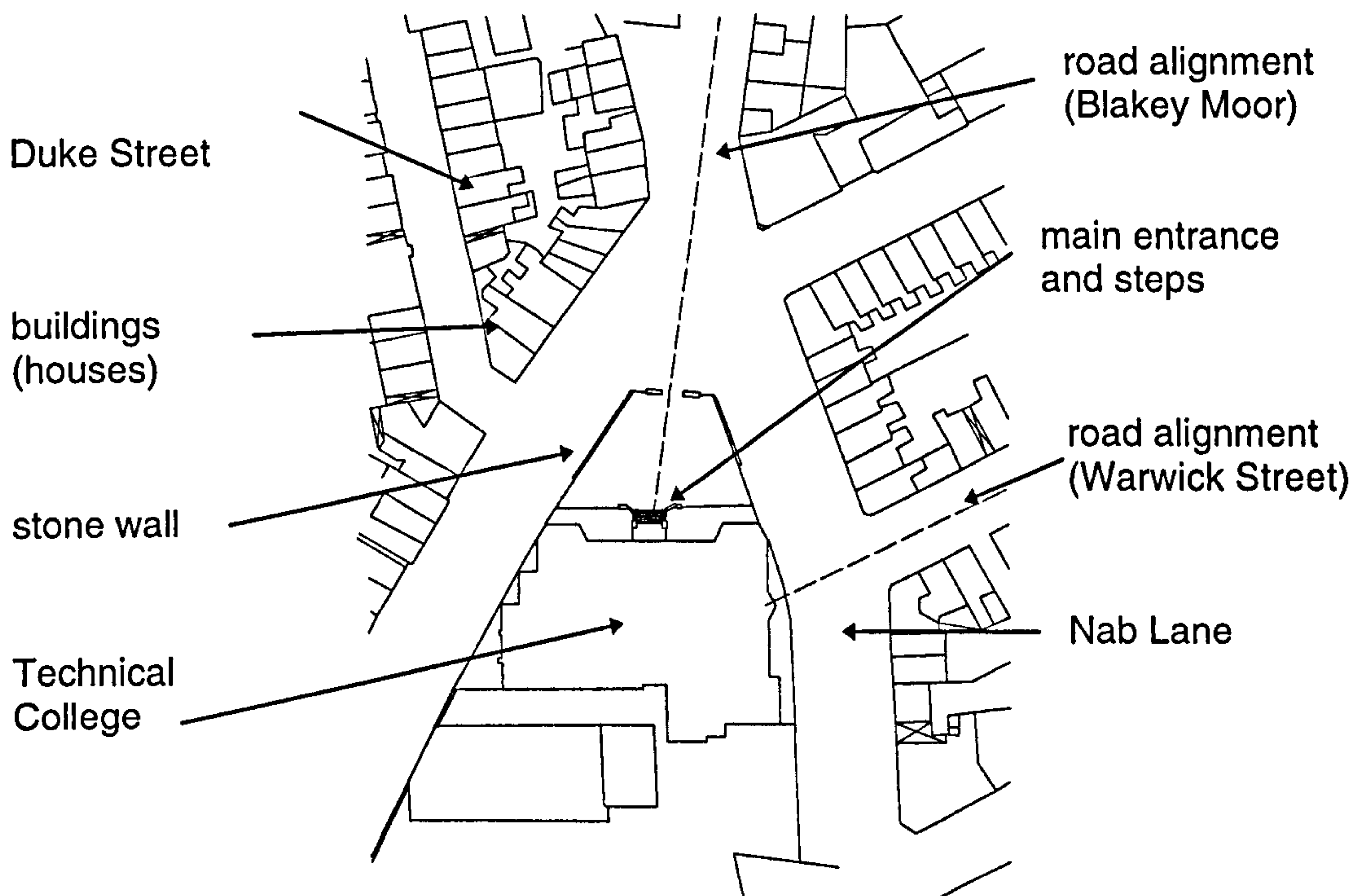
The primary features of the symmetrical College, many of which were common in contemporary civic design, were the nine bays of the front elevation and the end pavilions, at the centre of which is placed the main entrance (see figure 6.7.9) positioned between the circular headed, mullioned window openings along the main facade and as the building lines of the building were set back inside the boundary of the site, particularly in front of the principal east facing facade, the architects were able to introduce civic design features in front of the structure. The raising of the building above the ground also assisted with the civic design process for this helped to emphasise the importance of the building within its setting, with a flight of steps being placed directly in front of the main entrance. This entrance was also marked by a stone wall at the eastern end of the site, at some distance from the building, while the main entrance was marked inside the building's plan by the placing of an entrance hall and the primary staircase directly behind it (*Ibid.*: 354). The rest of the internal arrangement of the College was laid out on practical lines in block form and The Builder remarked that its plan was in general terms "exceedingly well arranged" (*Ibid.*: 355), although little attention was given to the building at the time of its construction and completion in the architectural press.

Figure 6.7.9. The main entrance of the Technical College in 1895 (source: De Gex, 1996).



A direct view towards the centre of the main elevation, the principal doorway and the features in front of it was presented when travelling west along Blakey Moor (see figures 6.7.8 and 6.7.10). This was significant to the civic design of the building. Vertical axes in the composition of the main elevation, established at the ends and centre of the building, were marked at the rooftop by gables which could also be seen along the vista towards the building. A small tower was also placed at the rooftop, thus making the building become a landmark, towards the back of the building's plan which was used as a means to ventilate the building and to allow for smoke emission (*Ibid.*: 354). But its position did not correspond with the placing any of the features used in the composition of the front elevation.

Figure 6.7.10. The setting of the Technical College in 1892 (source: Ordnance Survey).



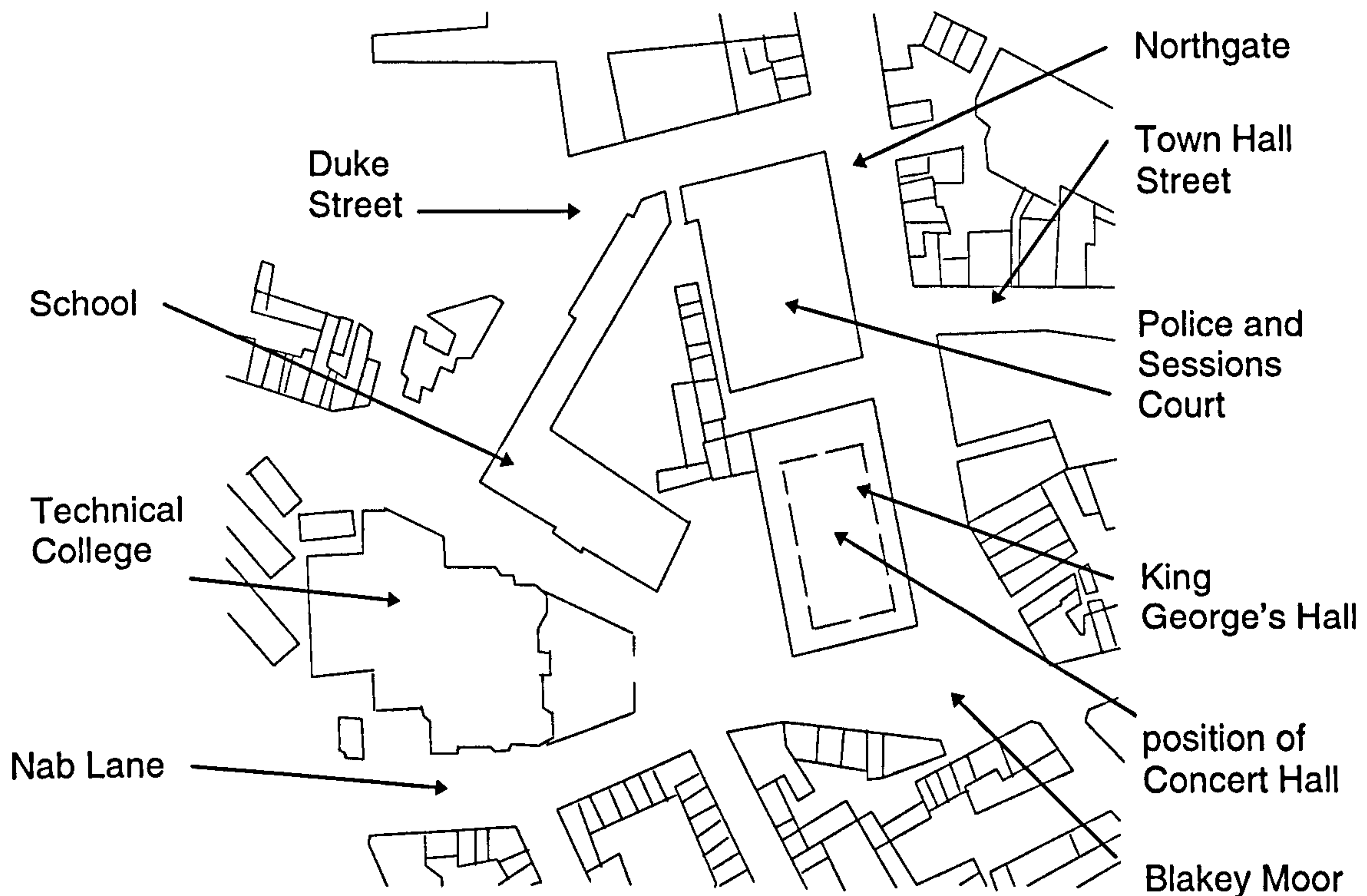
While the setting for this building was not the most advantageous in terms of civic design, and the shape of the site equally unhelpful in planning a symmetrical building, Smith, Woodhouse and Willoughby nevertheless utilised the local street pattern, in so doing they made the building a strong civic design scheme. For example, the oncoming alignment of Warwick Street to the south of the site was also utilised in the design of the building and marked on the southern elevation of the building by the projected building line which terminated the vista along the street. Thus the approaching alignments of roadways to the building was marked upon the external form of the College and this is of note to the civic design of the scheme.

The Technical College, a building of large scale in comparison to its surroundings, stood as a rather isolated design feature in the western area of central Blackburn until the late Edwardian period when the immediate area around the College, principally along Duke Street, comprising previously of small scale houses was removed as part of a major slum clearance scheme. The cleared land was redeveloped in the following years and the area was used by the Corporation to establish a civic district in the town although the development of the civic area was not comparable in scale or civic design extent with a scheme such as Cathays Park, Cardiff. Subsequently a School, the Police and Sessions Court building and King George's Hall, a large concert hall designed Briggs, Wolstenholme and Thornely, were erected near to the Technical College. The development of the area was situated to the immediate north of the Technical College's site and west of a major thoroughfare called Northgate which ran through the centre of Blackburn in an east-west direction.

Figure 6.7.11. The Duke Street area of Blackburn in 1892 (source: Ordnance Survey) before development as the town's civic district.

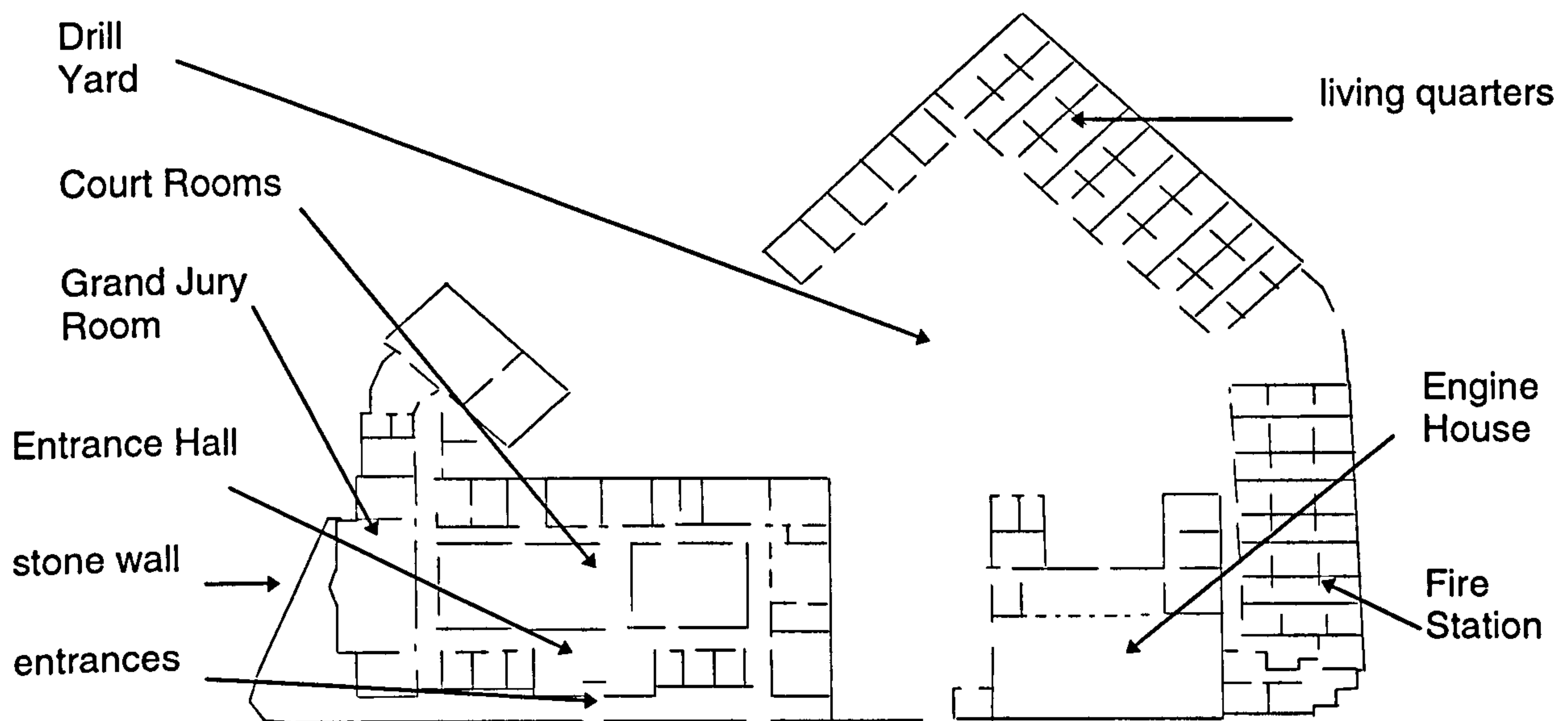


Figure 6.7.12. The Duke Street area after development by the Corporation in 1931 (source: Ordnance Survey).



In the early twentieth century the Corporation made a comprehensive attempt at using civic design to improve the condition of Blackburn through erecting new public buildings at the centre of the town and by establishing a planning competition for the central area of the town in 1913. In 1902, the old Police Station and the Law Courts were removed from the Town Hall, as noted previously, and a new public building was constructed (see figure 6.7.12) on a site in the Duke Street area of central Blackburn after a design competition was established. Won by Manchester based partners Woodhouse and Willoughby, the new building was situated at the corner of New Market Street West and Northgate. The chosen design style for the new building was Classical while the original plan of the scheme was arranged along symmetrical lines and formed a comprehensive civic design piece which comprised of two distinct sections, the first being the Court House and the Police Offices, the second was the Police's working area within which kitchens, stables, an engine house and blacksmiths area were situated. These rooms were to be laid out around the drill yard and linked to the other section of the scheme through axial planning lines.

Figure 6.7.13. The original plan of the new Police Station and Law Courts building.



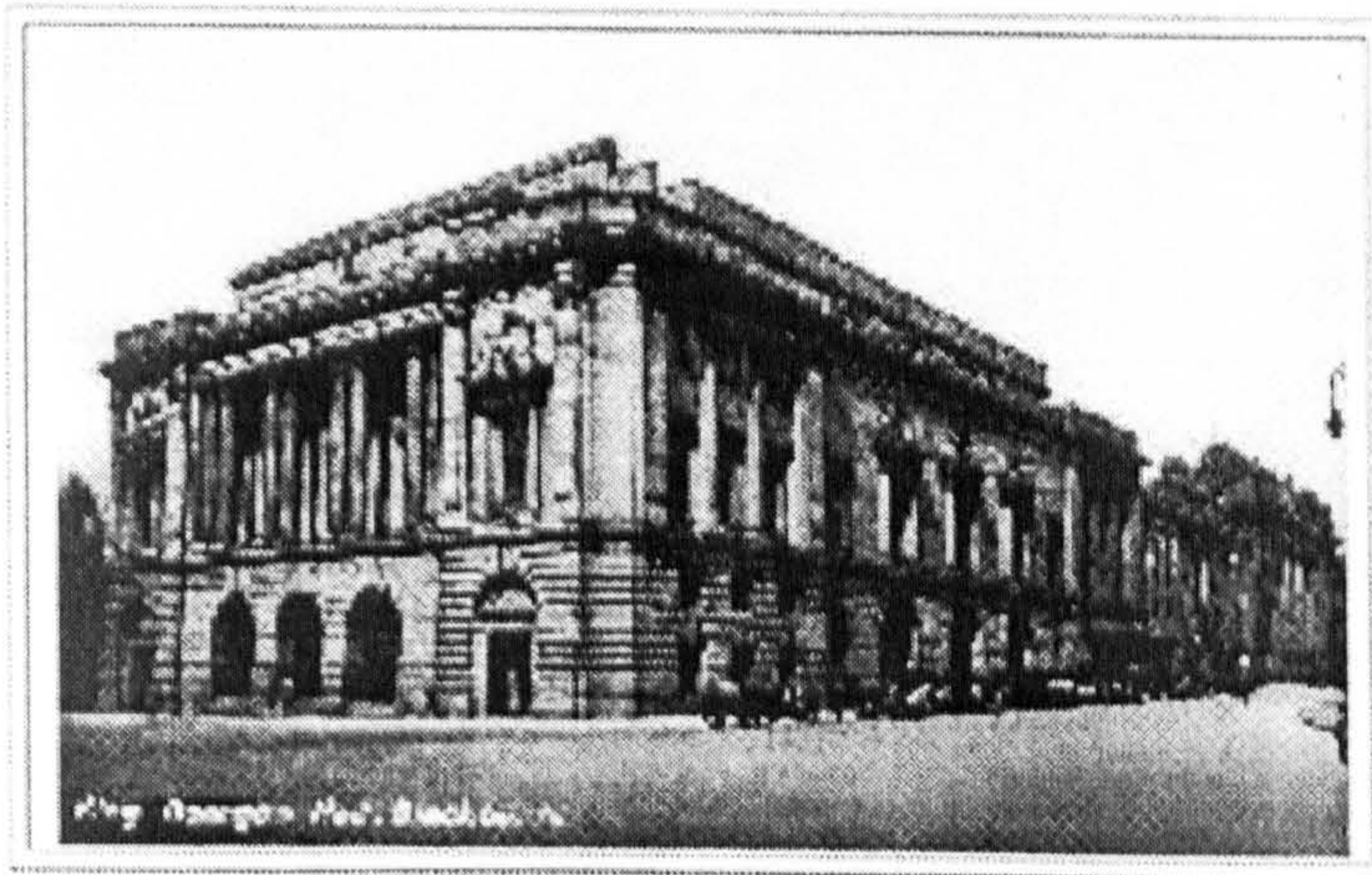
Sadly, like many other buildings examined by this work in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, the original scheme was never undertaken and in the following years from the scheme being proposed many changes took place. Firstly, the Court House section was replaced by a large public hall, King George's Hall, and the area originally laid out with Police Rooms became the Police and Sessions Court building. The space to the rear of the building remained as a drill yard but was substantially reduced in size while the area originally planned to be living quarters for the firemen became a wing of the new school erected along Duke Street.

The development of the area to the immediate north of Blakey Moor and to the west of Northgate in the Edwardian period in many ways can be understood to represent a major attempt by the Corporation to establish a civic district in the settlement, to be achieved by locating new, large scale public buildings in proximity to each other. Furthermore there is evidence to suggest that civic design was practised in this redeveloped district of central Blackburn. For example, all of the public structures located in the vicinity to a roadway known as Northgate were composed with symmetrical forms and and, and significantly, with a sense of association among them through the use of a common design style and elements such as columns and pilasters. This was most obvious in the designs of King George's Hall and the Police and Sessions Court building, two large sized Classical buildings that were placed alongside each other even though the Hall facing southwards

towards Blakey Moor and the Police and Session Court facing east to Northgate and Town Hall Street.

Symmetry dominated the design of two storey King George's Hall. On the ground floor level of the main elevation were positioned five large arches, three of which placed in accord with the central axis of the elevation and north-south alignment of the internal arrangement. Beneath the archways were located the recessed main entrances, in front of which were placed a small flight of steps, a common feature of civic design. The entrances led directly to the entrance hallway which in turn provided access to the Concert Hall, the main space in the internal arrangement. Above the three central arches on the first floor level, positioned in front of the recessed building line, were placed four pairs of double columns, which were located in positions at equal distances from each other was a heavy cornice line near to the rooftop. The employment of this feature helped to take attention away from the roof of the building from the eye at street level while the roof was designed with a low height which also made it difficult to view from the local streets. Rustication decorated the corners of the Hall but at the ground floor level only.

Figure 6.7.14. King George's Hall as seen from the junction of Blakey Moor with Northgate.



The side elevation of the King George's Hall which faced eastwards towards Northgate, the roadway that the front elevation of the Police Station and Sessions Court faced, was designed with large columns positioned at regularly distances along it, a feature that was also included in the design of the neighbouring Police Station and Courts building, with rectangular window openings placed in each of the bays established by the columns. Many

common civic design elements were evident in the King George's Hall and the Police and Sessions Court schemes, which had the effect of helping to associate the two buildings to each other. These features included the main cornice lines of the two buildings being of a similar height, while the likeness of scale between the buildings in terms of their floor heights and general size increased the sense of relation. The huge columns on the east elevation of King George's Hall also enhanced the feeling of relation between the two Classically designed buildings, the front elevation of the Police and Courts building being dominated by large scale columns. Rustication on the ground floor level of the Police and Courts building were also evident and the form the building's window openings, similar in terms of shape and size to the fenestration of King George's Hall, also brought a sense of relation.

Figure 6.7.15. The Police Station and Law Courts building.



The general form of the new Police Station like King George's Hall was governed by symmetrical lines. The main entrance positioned towards the centre of the principal elevation was emphasised, for example, by the large double door opening and also by the large window placed directly above it which helped to establish a vertical axis towards the centre of the building. Despite the Police Station having a street directly approaching it, Town Hall Street, a roadway that joined Northgate with the Market Place, no features were employed on the main elevation of the structure to formally mark the termination of the vista along the roadway as it met with the wall of the building. Thus a civic design opportunity to relate the building to its setting was squandered. Furthermore the alignment of the roadway was not continued into the internal arrangement of the building. However the sense of

association of the Police Station and Law Courts can be said to be fairly strong and the civic design significance of this relation should not be overlooked.

Blackburn Redevelopment Competition, 1913

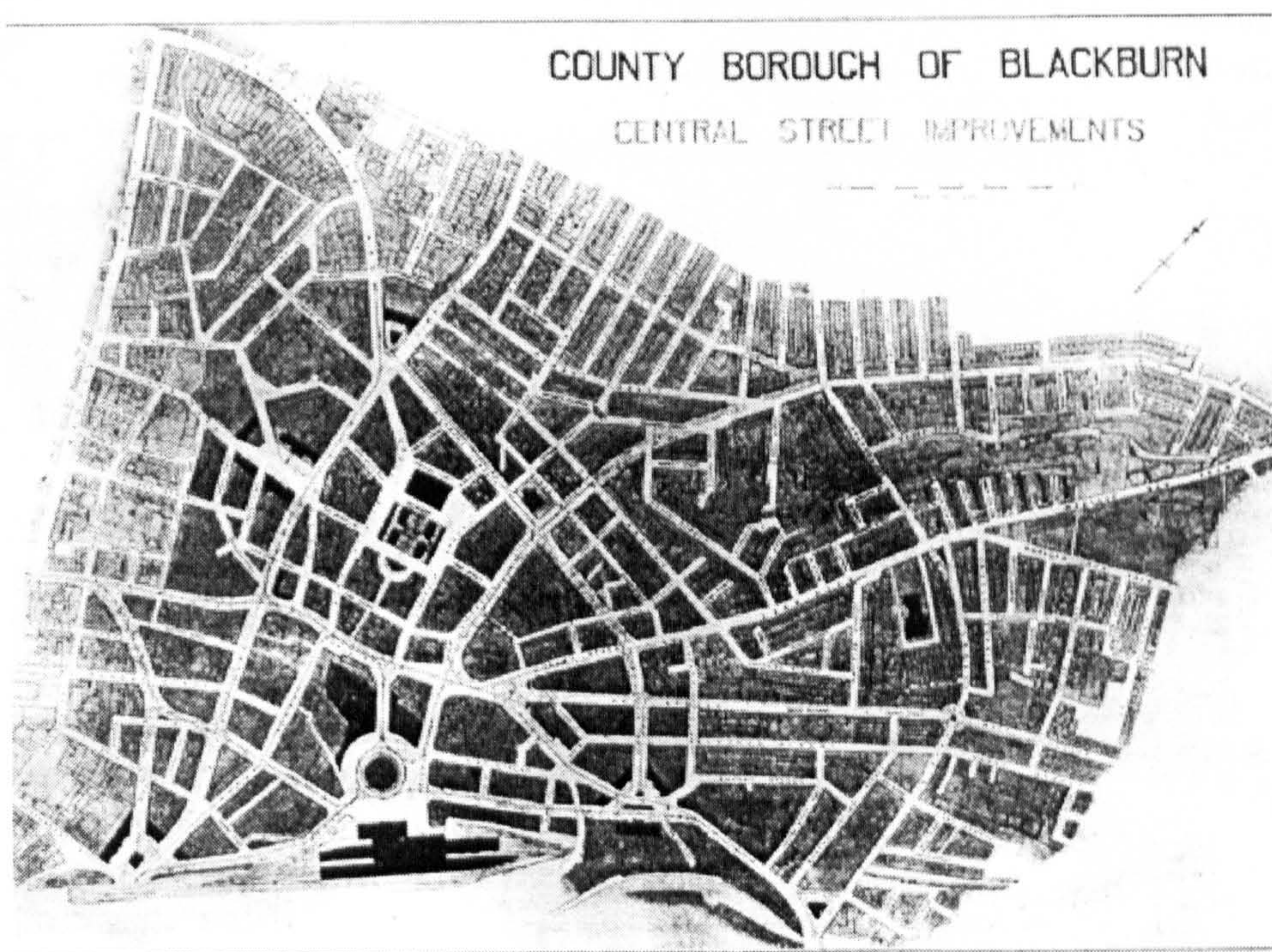
It has been noted previously, albeit briefly, that a major urban design competition was held in Blackburn during the Edwardian period in 1913 so as to redesign the town centre. In many respects this proposal can be regarded as the only comprehensive attempt at large scale modern urban planning in Blackburn during the period covered by this work, a scheme suggested to “improve the streets in the centre of the town” (The Builder, 1913: 477). The importance of the suggested scheme should not be ignored for it captured the impulse given to national civic design practice as a result of the passing of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc., Act in 1909. The Builder on this very matter noted that: “The Blackburn improvement scheme competition is one of the first of a series of projects for remodelling the central areas of our towns that are certain to allow the impetus given to suburban town planning by the Act of 1909.” (*Ibid.*: 11) Unfortunately the proposed scheme was not undertaken, in part due to the onset of World War One in the following year, but the proposal must be viewed as part of Blackburn’s civic design heritage if only for it showing what was possible in design and planning terms in the town before 1914.

Both architects and surveyors were encouraged by the Corporation to submit designs for the centre of the town and Stanley Adshead, a civic design lecturer at Liverpool University, acted as competition assessor. The Town Planning Review (1913: 176-7) noted of the scheme that the “Corporation of Blackburn, who have the good fortune to control the destiny of one of the best planned towns in Lancashire, but which unfortunately through lack of Town Planning in the past has acquired obstructive features in its central area”.

The objectives of the scheme as laid down by the Corporation were principally to grant routes for through traffic in order to relieve traffic congestion and improve circulation, to alter street and building frontages, to improve the conditions of Blackburn market, to provide tram facilities and to abet the general improvement and amenity of Blackburn’s central area. The competition, which attracted over thirty entrants was won by J.M. Linton Bogle of Heswell, a

designer of little standing within his profession at that time, with a scheme which was said to be “exceedingly quiet and unostentatious” to such a degree that “one would be apt to pass over at the first cursory glance, but on closer scrutiny and comparison it appears to treat in detail in a very straightforward way the essential requirements.” (The Builder, 1913: 11) The Town Planning Review (1913), while admiring many details in the scheme, noted that the general character of the winning design had been approached from the standpoint of an engineer rather than an architect. This was to be important in terms of the civic design of the project was to be created with as much emphasis on urban utility as architectural design. Nevertheless the civic design significance of the proposal should not be overruled due to this factor.

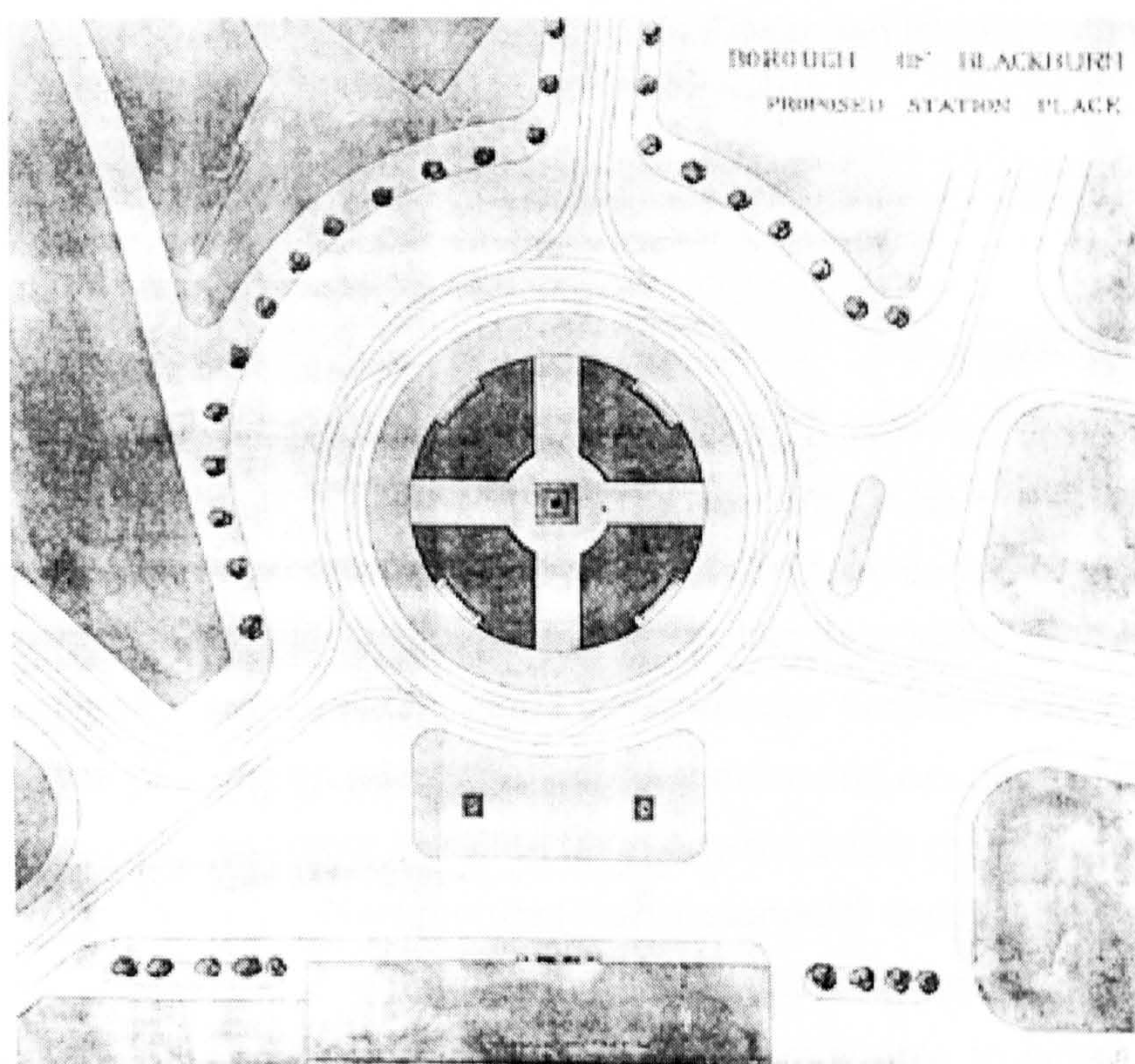
Figure 6.7.16. Linton Bogle’s proposed plan of central Blackburn (source: Town Planning Review, 1913).



The principal features of Linton Bogle’s plan included the redesigning of the Market Place and the creating of an open area in front of the rail station so as to provide a dignified approach to the building, as well as incorporating the widening of many roads around the central core and the redesigning of numerous road junctions. This element of the scheme was employed so that architectural and traffic spaces could be created in central Blackburn, many of which would be marked at the centre by an architectural features such as a statue, which would enhance each individual open area.

One aspect of Blackburn's urban form that offered a great opportunity for urban design was the large open space in front of the railway station and the creation of a formal approach to the rail station won Linton Bogle much admiration in the contemporary architectural and planning press who for the first time during the period covered by this work gave detailed attention to developments occurring Blackburn. The main feature of the approach to the station was a circular space that was divided geometrically into four equal sections. The centre point of the area was to be marked by a monument or statue which also terminated the alignments of three roadways approaching the area. The axial line at the centre of the main elevation of the rail station was continued away from the building and also terminated at the statue. To the rear of the circular space, directly in front of the rail station, were to be placed two further statues, equally spaced from the central axis of the rail station elevation. The circular form not only acted as an major architectural feature in the town but was designed so as to serve another purpose for it would also act as a circus for a number of roads in the area in order to lessen traffic congestion problems within the centre of the town.

Figure 6.7.17. The proposed layout by Linton Bogle to the front of the rail station (source: The Town Planning Review, 1913).



Inter-War Blackburn

Blackburn's civic design practice effectively came almost to a stop in 1914. After reaching a peak in the Edwardian period when a number of new large scale buildings were erected, including King George's Hall and the Police Courts and Sessions House, as well as the proposed plan for the centre of the town in 1913, civic design in Blackburn never really recovered its pre-1914 momentum after World War One began. In the Inter-war period, Blackburn with its population of about 126,000 (source: Census, 1921), had only one new public building erected in the centre of the town, in 1921. The new building was the Fire Station in Byrom Street. Designed by Walter Stirrup this building employed many of the civic design characteristics used in the years immediately before 1914. Designed in a Baroque manner using red brick and stone for the decorative trimmings, the Fire Station became a new landmark in Blackburn due to its large tower positioned at the rear of the building which Pevsner (1969: 64) noted could be seen from afar in the settlement. However with the completion of this building in 1922 came the end of a civic design era in Blackburn for no new buildings were subsequently erected in either central or peripheral locations until many years after 1945 and those that were constructed after this date were designed in a different manner to the buildings erected in the late-Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-war period.

Conclusion

The process of civic design in Blackburn can be recognised as being weaker than that observed in other large sized provincial settlements during the period covered by this work. This was in part due to the limited number of public structures that were erected in Blackburn, only three major public buildings being erected between about 1880 and 1914, and because of the Corporation adopting a policy of extending existing buildings rather than erecting new ones at times where pressure upon present buildings was great. But, in many respects, the civic design of Blackburn was of a standard and practice that was not in keeping with its small size during the period studied, and displayed a high quality in some schemes, such as the Technical College, that was comparable to larger scale schemes undertaken in the largest provincial cities examined during the period considered.

The proposed scheme to redevelop the central area of Blackburn showed the potential of large scale civic design in the town and what was possible to achieve in more idealised circumstances. Furthermore the proposed scheme, and the form of those buildings erected in the Edwardian period, on the whole serve to highlight that for a provincial place of relatively small scale the Corporation in the years immediately prior to 1914 paid much attention to the planning form and architectural composition of the centre of the town. This becomes particularly apparent about the time of King George's Hall and the Police Station and Sessions Court being erected. While it can be concluded that the practice of civic design was stronger in other provincial centres examined by this work, particularly the larger cities such as Liverpool and Birmingham, the practice of the art in Blackburn did by no means provide the weakest examples of civic design out of all places studied, and the use of road alignments in some architectural schemes highlight that the exercising of civic design principles in Blackburn was of more strength than civic design schemes in other places, particularly those of similar size such as Oldham. In addition, many characteristics that were evident in civic design elsewhere in Britain from the end of the nineteenth century, such as in places like Glasgow, Liverpool and Birmingham, could be viewed in many of Blackburn's civic design schemes, such as the use of symmetry in the design of main elevations, the use of rustication, the raising of building above the street level, the marking of main entrances by features such as flights of steps, lamp posts and stone walls, and the low pitching of roofs so to make them difficult to view from street level. Therefore for a town of its size the Corporation from about 1880 to 1914 can be perceived to have made an admirable attempt at employing civic design as a means to not only beautify the centre of the settlement but to also help compose buildings that would serve the needs of the local people.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESULTS OVERVIEW

Introduction

In the preceding three chapters an account has been given of examples of civic design occurring in a number of large sized provincial settlements during the period about 1880 to 1914. The intention of this part of the study is to identify the major civic design characteristics that were in evidence at that time. This is to be presented in the form of three sections. The first section, chapter seven, will present a summary of the design principles evident in civic design during the period selected for study as well as highlighting the extent and characteristics of civic design at that time. Chapters eight and nine examine those elements identified in this chapter in greater detail.

This chapter comprises of two different yet related parts. The first section draws attention to the principles that were perceived to govern civic design as well as some of the characteristics of civic design as noted in its practice during the period selected for study. In this chapter the forms of buildings studied is also emphasised. The second section of chapter seven focuses upon the theory of civic design during the period examined and the influence of civic design within the context of the emergence of modern British town planning, in addition to identifying the people who undertook civic design at that time.

The Form of Provincial British Civic Design, c. 1880-1914

A principal aim of the study was to highlight the principles that seemed to govern civic design during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. In this, the opening part of the first results chapter, the principles that appeared in civic design practice will be emphasised. Furthermore, many characteristics evident civic design during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period will be recognised.

In the previous three chapters twenty two large sized provincial settlements have been examined with regard to their civic design during the period from about 1880 to

1914. As part of this process of examination over one hundred public buildings of varying types were studied in relation to their designs, their internal arrangements and the environment about them, and many significant findings became apparent as a consequence of this analysis.

An important conclusion of this work was the dominance of symmetrical designing and planning lines in civic design in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. Of all the public buildings examined the vast majority had their main and possibly other elevations composed on symmetrical lines regardless of the size of the building and the overall design style employed and, significantly, it was noted too that one elevation was usually given greater importance than the others within the overall composition. The importance of one elevation over other ones was frequently shown by it containing the principal entrance and, in some cases, it would face towards an open space other than that of a local roadway. Sometimes the open space towards which the main elevation of the building would face was marked by architectural elements, such as statuary, sited in positions relating to the prominent axial lines or design features of the building.

This work has revealed that the planning arrangements of the buildings studied took many forms, although the planning forms of civic design schemes, like the composition of the main elevations, was dominated by symmetrical lines. A common element noted in the planning process of buildings erected during the period selected was that a major feature in the internal arrangement might be placed centrally on a line of axis that was usually reflected in the treatment of the main elevations. Elements that have been identified to be positioned along the central alignment of the principal elevation included the main entrance. Other features that were also sometimes placed along a central axis included entrance vestibule spaces, main staircases and prominent, large sized spaces within the arrangement of the building. In addition, within some civic design schemes the central alignment was continued away from the building by the positioning of architectural features such as flights of steps, lamp posts and statuary, in front of the main entrance which could be placed at a considerable distance away from the building.

In civic design schemes it was common for corners to have a similar or identical form to each other. Such a situation often reinforced the symmetrical effect of the main elevations where such an overall treatment was applied. In some instances individual

corners were handled differently, sometimes due to the influence of the local road layout which would encourage this so as to establish a vista towards the building, or due to the placing of a vertical element at one end of the main elevation although there was a tendency in late-Victorian and Edwardian civic design to mark the centre not the ends of the building with a vertical element.

The placing of features or spaces within the internal arrangement was noticed in a large number of civic design schemes to suggest its presence upon the design of the main elevations. This was indicated, for example, by the placing of design elements at each side of the main entrance or by the placing of features, such as a gable or portico, above it from which regular bays would be placed along the main elevations where fenestration and details such as columns, pilasters or buttresses would be placed.

As well as symmetrical approaches to the design and planning of buildings in civic design schemes non-symmetrical forms were also evident during the period considered. While it has been shown that civic design was dominated by symmetrical lines between about 1880 and 1914, non-symmetrical design and planning was however a significant characteristic of civic design. Significantly, the use of asymmetrical design and planning forms in the design of public buildings of a sometimes large scale provided evidence that civic designers considered both formal and informal design forms also as a means to create a grand structure and to establish an impact upon the on looking eye. Such an approach to civic design was often apparent where the shape of the site was not conducive to a symmetrical treatment but the intent of the designer to use asymmetrical forms must not be overlooked. Similarly to the symmetrical approach to civic design, non-symmetrical buildings were generally designed with one or more elevations having greater importance than the others, elevations which would also be marked by a number of detailed features or would face towards an open space of some note. In terms of planning the overall arrangements of non-symmetrical buildings, like symmetrical ones, took on many different forms although asymmetrical structures were usually composed without a central axial line. The corners of non-symmetrical buildings were usually designed and treated in the same way as each other although fenestration could be handled somewhat differently than on symmetrically composed elevations, yet it was common for regular bays to be placed along the main elevations with window openings placed in neat groups along them.

Within non-symmetrical buildings no important features or spaces were generally evident in the plan along a centrally established line which could have suggested its presence upon the design and composition of the elevations. However, main entrances would be marked on the elevation by design features above and at the sides of the doorway but it was unusual for spaces, apart from a vestibule, to be placed directly to its rear in the internal arrangement of a non-symmetrical building. Prominent spaces were often placed elsewhere within the plan.

An intention of this work was to investigate the strength and characteristics of civic design during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. By studying a large number of public buildings erected in large sized provincial settlements a number of significant conclusions regarding the form of civic design became evident. One result was that the smaller sized public buildings examined were noted to receive a similar kind of attention as that given to the largest public buildings considered, albeit with generally fewer civic design features, so as to establish a sense of grandeur. The strength of civic design schemes was generally identified by the amount of design and planning features being employed within a single building scheme. In addition, buildings identified within civic design schemes were often designed to a large scale, a scale larger than that of the surrounding structures, and were composed with particular design elements which distinguished them from other buildings in the urban environment. One means by which this was achieved was by raising the public building above the level of the street. This also helped to establish an impression of great height and bulk. Other means by which public buildings within civic design schemes were distinguished from other structures was the use of different building materials and by the increased floor to ceiling heights of the floor levels. A significant number of buildings examined were raised above the street level, sometimes to a height amounting to about half a floor level, and where a building was raised associated features, such as flights of steps, for example, were usually placed in front of the main entrance.

A major conclusion of this work has been to reveal the vigour of civic design during a period when not only the greater rational control of the built environment was exercised but modern British town planning emerged. This study has revealed that many features were used within civic design practice at the end of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth century, and thus many things were understood to comprise civic design at that time, but also that the strength of civic design varied

considerably in terms of the amount of architectural and planning features that were used within design schemes. While it was discovered that civic design consisted of the application of particular design and planning elements to and around a public building, the amount of features employed varied considerably from scheme to scheme. In some civic design schemes, for instance, a limited number of architectural and planning elements were evident while in other schemes not only were a greater number of design and planning features applied but these, in addition, paid greater attention to the form of the built environment about the building. This could be noted, for example, through the regard given to the local road layout or the position of statutory or buildings in the immediate area. However it was uncommon during the period examined to note a civic design scheme that involved the application of a large number of design and planning features recognised as comprising civic design earlier in this work (see introductory section of the thesis for the definition of civic design).

The occurrence of civic design was discovered to vary from provincial place to place with some of the largest and strongest design schemes, somewhat unsurprisingly, occurring in the largest provincial settlements examined where the Corporations were presumably able to draw upon a bigger budget to finance public building schemes, a consequence in part of the local tax base being somewhat larger and the needs of the local population being possibly greater than in smaller sized places. However, the work has revealed that while many of the most prominent civic design schemes were undertaken in the largest of settlements examined, this did not necessarily mean that the occurrence or character of civic design declined as a matter of course as the size of the settlements examined became smaller. This study has shown, for example, that many of the strongest civic design schemes undertaken in the period from about 1880 to 1914 occurred not just in the largest provincial cities but elsewhere. Cardiff, by way of illustration, developed from the late-1890s with a civic centre that was unique in Britain not only in terms of size but also in terms of design strength and the a number of public buildings were deliberately placed in proximity to each other, which were associated to each other by common design styles and features, planning lines and similarities of scale. Bradford's Cartwright Hall is another example of a scheme of civic design note.

In many of the smaller sized settlements examined, such as Blackburn and Oldham, the amount of public building that took place was generally of a lesser scale than in

places such as Liverpool, Glasgow or Manchester, and as noted previously, often the scale of the scheme erected was often lesser as well. Generally less civic design features were evident too. But the buildings that were erected were nevertheless of local importance not only in terms of their function but also in terms of the appearance within the given place. In larger places, such as Manchester, which grew rapidly during the nineteenth century, more public buildings were naturally erected so to serve the needs of the local population although in some large sized municipalities the frequency of civic design schemes was low in comparison to other places, with settlements such as Bradford, Nottingham and Leicester, for instance, erecting few large scale public buildings of civic design note during the period selected for this study.

The Details of the Buildings Examined

A common feature of buildings identified within civic design schemes during the period selected for study was that the many floor levels of a building were generally treated differently from each other. Lower ground floor levels, for example, where used were usually placed below the level of the street so that only the upper sections were visible to the eye. Sometimes lower ground floor levels were further concealed from view due to the placing of iron railings or low height stone walls at their front. In addition, where a lower ground floor level was applied to a civic design scheme it was usually handled in a distinct manner that involved the stonework being worked differently to the rest of the composition, for example, by rustication being used, and the window openings being of a contrasting form to the other floor levels.

The principal floor level of a building identified within a civic design scheme was noted to be usually positioned on either the ground floor or the first floor level. Many elements were prevalent in the treatment of the principal floor levels from that of other floor levels and these included the larger floor to ceiling height of the main floor level, the handling of the fenestration in a different manner from the other floor levels and the use of added decoration. Other floor levels were generally handled differently than the principal floor level and this was evident, for example, by the smaller floor to ceiling heights of the secondary floors and sometimes, as noted earlier, the distinction was also reflected in the different form of the window openings. Less detailing was also apparent on the minor floor levels and decorative

features such as rustication were rarely seen on such floor levels apart from at the ends of the building where it would be used as part of the overall treatment of the corners of the building.

The handling of the corners of public buildings was a significant aspect of civic design during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, and almost two thirds of buildings studied were noted to have a treatment of one kind or another. A number of different means by which the corners could be handled were identified. These included the rounding of one or both corners of the main elevation, the placing of a pavilion at the corners of the primary facade, the use of rustication towards the corners of the building and the placing a vertical element above one or all corners of the building. However the most common corner treatment in civic design during the period selected for study was to allow the elevations to naturally adjoin.

End pavilions were employed within a considerable number of civic design schemes identified by this study. The employment of pavilions in civic design was often in association with a symmetrically planned front elevation with the use of such features helping to reinforce the regular form of the building. On less frequent occasions vertical elements also marked the corner pavilions. One of the less common corner treatments was for both the front corners or just one corner to be rounded while the most common corner treatment, as highlighted previously, was to allow two elevations to adjoin at the angle dictated by their building lines. To mark the meeting of the walls elements such as columns, pilasters, gables and decorative features were frequently sited close to the corner joint. The overall window pattern along the main elevations did not usually alter close to a corners unless a corner pavilion or pediment was employed, then the size and shape of the window openings would be noted on occasions to be different.

A notable feature of civic design was the particular types of building material employed during the construction process. Materials used within civic design were discovered to come from a range of different sources and consisted of a variety of colours and textures. It was discovered though that materials used for public buildings were generally quarried from local sources and that Portland stone was commonly used too. In the smaller sized settlements examined local stones were noted to be more prevalent in civic design practice although it was also recognised that in Scotland the use of local stones was particularly widespread as well.

A feature of civic design that was identified by this study was that the building materials used within public design schemes were usually different to those materials used in the surrounding environment. This distinction was most apparent where the setting of a prominent building was composed largely of brick structures but it must also be emphasised that the employment of different materials can be recognised to provide a means whereby the importance of a public building was stressed. As shown previously other means, such as raising the building above the level of the street, were also employed to help highlight the importance of public buildings, but the choice of a particular material over others was also of significance especially where a local environment was deemed to be somewhat undignified. Thus a visual dichotomy could be established between a public building and surrounding private ones through the use of a different building material in the civic design scheme to that employed in the setting.

The practice of civic design highlighted the common use of design elements along the main elevations which included gables, vertical elements, rustication, arched or semi-circular window openings, as well as pediments and porticos. The position of features like pediments and porticos was often related to other significant design and planning elements used, as they were usually commonly seen to be placed in proximity to the position of the main entrance. It was common too for vertical elements to be placed in particular positions in the plan, the most common of which was directly behind the principal entrance on the central axial line established within the scheme.

The use of decorative features such as rustication tended to only be at particular places within the civic composition, such as the lower ground floor, the ground floor level and the ends of the main elevations. This selective positioning of the banded stonework was also noted for the placing of sculpture in many schemes which would often only be found at the most noticeable sections of the building, such as along the main floor level or inside a pediment above the main entrance. However, to refer back to the use of rustication in civic design, its application was closely associated with the general design style of the building erected. For example, rustication was not evident on Gothic styled buildings but was commonly used as part of schemes designed to a Baroque style.

Window openings in a large number of schemes examined, regardless of design style used, were noted to be placed in an ordered pattern, positioned at regular distances along the main elevations often from the central axis of the elevation in symmetrically designed buildings and from features such as the main entrance in non-symmetrical compositions. While the shape and form of window openings in civic design was subject to a number of influences, one particular window form was frequently used in civic design during the late-Victorian and Edwardian era. This was the arched or semi-circular opening and was observed on a large number of buildings of varying types ranging from Town Halls, Post Offices, Law Courts and Universities, erected to varying scales at different times of the period considered. Significantly, the use of this window opening was restricted to certain floor levels and parts of buildings in civic design and, for example, would only be seen on the principal floor level or at the ends of a main facade. However, as noted earlier, the size and shape of window openings was sometimes liable to alter near to a corner particularly where a pavilion or a pediment had been employed.

It was noted during the study that window openings were usually spaced at regular distances along the main elevations. This was also noted for other design elements used in civic design. The regular spacing of bays was a notable feature of provincial civic design in Britain regardless of the design style employed and the orderly spacing of elements such as windows, columns, pilasters and buttresses along the main elevations was usually directed by their distances from primary and secondary alignments established in the composition. The size of each bay was frequently recognised to be identical so as to present an impression of rhythm and harmony in the composition of the elevations and this practice of regularity in the design process was evident on buildings of all types erected at various times during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. The repetition of bays therefore highlights the tendency towards regularity in civic design during the period selected.

Vertical elements were employed as part of a large number of schemes examined in this study. While vertical elements performed a largely functional role, such as being a clock tower, it must not be ignored that many vertical elements erected in civic design schemes were designed solely for aesthetic purposes with towers, loggias, domes and turrets heightening the visual impact of many buildings. Vertical elements were principally used on Municipal Offices and Town Halls, arguably the most grandiose and significant of all Victorian and Edwardian public buildings, but were

also a major feature in the composition of other building types. Vertical elements were noted to vary greatly in size, ranging from over 300 feet in height in some cases to only a few feet above the level of the roof in other instances. The design of vertical elements, such as clock towers, revealed a particular design handling, shown by their plainly designed lower sections, for example, with decoration only usually being added to the most elevated and visible sections of the structure where the clock faces were positioned. Of note too, the study discovered that clock towers were generally erected from the same building materials as the building upon which they were erected.

Vertical elements were noted to be positioned in a variety of places within civic design schemes. The importance of vertical elements to civic design was often a consequence of their position on or close to prominent axial lines in the plan which would sometimes correspond with features situated in the building's surroundings. By placing a tower or a dome above a prominent axial line the symmetrical effect of the elevations and plan could be reinforced where such an overall approach to the composition of the building was employed. The most common position of a vertical element in late-Victorian and Edwardian civic design was above the central axis of the front elevation where the main entrance was often positioned. However vertical features were noted to be situated in other positions along the principal facade and these included at the corners of the building, to one side of the front elevation, at the ends and the centre of the primary facade and at the centre of a secondary elevation.

With the construction of a vertical element extra masonry had to be used in order to support the structure and thus the placing of a vertical feature into a civic design scheme could have a significant impact upon the plan. How the extra masonry was handled by the architect and where it was placed within the internal arrangement had an influence upon the civic design process and within the study the handling of vertical elements was subject to particular practices. For example vertical features, as highlighted already, were commonly placed on the central axis of the front elevation, positioned often above an entrance vestibule situated immediately to the rear of the principal doorway. However where a vertical feature was placed above the internal arrangement the masonry used to support it had little on the plan with the stone materials being conveniently fitted into the walls of the room or rooms situated below.

While many design characteristics have been noted in this section limited attention has been given to the planning of buildings identified within civic design schemes so far. Attention will now be given to the internal arrangements of buildings examined, as well as to the approaches of the main entrances and the use of roads within civic design schemes.

It has been recognised previously that the internal arrangements of symmetrical and non-symmetrical public buildings tended to be of a different forms with, for example, asymmetrical plans tending to be being governed less by strict axial lines, although within certain building types particular spaces dominated the internal arrangement. In Town Halls two spaces were of usually of significance to the plan, these being the Council Chamber and the Public Hall. Not only was the importance of these spaces reflected by their large size but they were often placed in prominent positions within the plan. Such spaces were usually placed in a position that was either along or near to the central or another prominent axial line established in the building's plan. Such a space would often be situated towards the centre of the internal arrangement in correspondence with the position of the main entrance at the front of the building, although on other occasions these spaces were noted to be placed at a ninety degree angle to a notable axial line established with the plan. Furthermore the importance of the spaces was shown by their larger floor to ceiling height than for other spaces in the plan, and by the amount of decoration found within them.

In some building types the internal arrangements tended not to be formed along such grand axial lines. In Post Offices, for instance, the internal organisation was usually dominated by one large open space within which the public counter would be placed, and in Library buildings an open space, the Reading Room or Lending Library as it would be known, often dominated the plan, usually positioned to the rear or close to the position of the main entrance and its vestibule. In the smallest sized buildings examined due to space being at a premium it was generally recognised that staircases and not prominent spaces were positioned towards the rear of the main entrance. Where a staircase was placed spaces would then be arranged about it. Staircases were however noted to be sited in many other positions within the internal arrangements of buildings in civic design schemes during the period considered. These other locations included at the end or close to the end of a main corridor, in proximity to a secondary entrance or where the alignment of the main elevations changed dramatically. Staircases were noted to never be placed beneath

a tower although where a dome was used staircases were sometimes located close to the vertical element so to present impressive views inside the structure. It was also common for staircases to be positioned so that they faced directly towards each other, particularly in many of the large scale building examined, near to the central axis plan, so reinforcing the symmetrical treatment of the scheme.

The treatment of a main entrance was recognised to be a major element of late-Victorian and Edwardian civic design. Not only were main entrances generally noted to consist of double doors and be recessed from the line of the principal elevation but they were often placed towards the centre of the front elevation, as noted earlier. Main entrances were also recognised on many occasions to be marked by a variety of design features in proximity to them which included vertical elements, sculpting, columns, pilasters, gables, pediments, a flight of steps directly in front of the doorway, and possibly an open space other than that of a roadway or the alignment of an oncoming roadway. Spaces other than a roadway to the front of a main entrance were sometimes filled with architectural elements such as statuary while lamp posts were frequently observed to be positioned to the front of a prominent entrance. However other features, such as a bandstand and a water trough, were also noted as being placed in proximity to the main entrances.

Secondary entrances were often treated in a similar manner to main entrances although with smaller sized design features placed in proximity to them. A considerable number of buildings studied were designed with their secondary entrances receiving design attention of one kind or another although it must be noted that the treatment of such an entrance varied greatly during the period examined. But the principal treatments of side entrances between about 1880 and 1914 included it being placed in accord with a secondary alignment established in the plan of the building, the use of double doors, the placing of a flight of steps, lamp posts or a stone wall in front of it or near to it, the marking of the entrance by a vertical sculpture above it and the bringing forward of the building line close to the position of the doorway. On other occasions it was noted that a side entrance would be given no design or planning emphasis.

A significant number of buildings identified within civic design schemes were noticed to utilise the local road pattern to assist with the civic design process. Roadways were recognised, for example, to influence the position of vertical elements and the

handling of the corners of a building and where a roadway directly approached an end of an elevation it was sometimes seen that the corner was treated in a different manner to other ones so as to terminate the approaching vista.

The second part of the chapter summarises the theory of civic design as it appeared during the period selected for study as well as highlighting the influence of civic design within the context of the emergence of modern British town planning. The individuals who undertook civic design in the period between about 1880 and 1914 will also receive attention.

Civic Design: The Theory

It has been highlighted earlier that this study was not only interested in the practice of civic design during the period selected for study but also the theory of the art, particularly what civic design was understood to mean in circumstances that were often more idealised than in actual life. One means by which the theory of civic design was noted was by examining not only a number of papers written in the contemporary architectural press on the subject and also by analysing a number of proposed civic design schemes, many of which were suggested by Corporations or professionals associated with philanthropists.

The theory of civic design as shown by suggested civic schemes during the period about 1880 to 1914 was discovered to be similar to the practice of provincial civic design, with many elements observed in the practice of civic design being also recognised in many proposed civic schemes, such as the dominance of designing and planning along symmetrical lines. But significant differences were detected between what was understood to comprise the theory of the art and what was actually practised. These disparities included the scale and spatial areas affected by actual and suggested schemes, with proposed schemes tending to be of a larger scale in terms of both the size of buildings to be undertaken and the extent of the area to be developed. Proposed schemes often included the arranging of a number of large scale buildings in proximity to each other so as to form a group. In civic design practice the grouping of such buildings in the vicinity to each other was somewhat rare. Many proposed schemes were of such a large scale that they compared with the schemes undertaken in the large cities of America at the same

time. Proposed schemes also tended to prefer Classical or Baroque styles of architecture to other design forms while those buildings that were to be erected were usually surrounded by large open spaces filled with statuary placed in positions in accord with the axial lines established in the design and plan of the buildings suggested. In addition, proposed schemes were of a more rigid planning nature than civic design in practice, being of a severe formal character barely seen in actual design schemes. Not even the development at Cathays Park, Cardiff, could compare with the formal lines employment in many schemes proposed during the Edwardian period.

Civic Design and Modern British Town Planning

The period covered by this study also witnessed the emergence of modern British town planning. Of importance to the development of town planning were a broad range of factors that included the passing of the Housing of the Working Classes Act in 1890, a legislative piece that consolidated previous housing codes and encouraged building at the urban periphery. Other factors of significance included the success of model communities such as Port Sunlight (from 1888) and Bournville (from 1895), and architectural developments in the design and laying out of residential houses for working people. Such architectural developments in the early years of the twentieth century centred largely upon the partnership of Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker who, in effect, encouraged the housing reform movement to move into the fields of design and layout. Guided by socialist convictions and inspired by Ebenezer Howard's Garden City idea, Parker and Unwin produced radical new housing layout at New Earswick, Letchworth Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb from 1901, using architectural principles as a means to guide their planning forms. Thus town planning for the partners, that is modern housing and road layouts, was a natural extension of the ideology of architecture with its principles being applied to a large spatial scale in order to arrange houses to a low density. This application of design rules was crucial to Parker and Unwin's urban planning and the fullest expression of architecture was thus noted as being either civic design or town planning (see Hawtree in Sutcliffe, 1981). The Royal Institute of British Architects reinforced this belief in 1910 when it published 'Suggestions to Promoters of Town Planning Schemes' which asserted that the principles of architecture also governed town planning and the arranging of buildings

with open spaces about them. Thus the domains of architecture and town planning shared a close affinity with civic design practice and theory. In addition modern housing schemes were laid out with civic districts often designed as single compositions with their layouts also highlighted characteristics that were in evidence in civic design. Hawtree (in Sutcliffe, 1981) stated that formative British town planning was charged with civic design devices.

New residential estates laid down in accord with modern town planning rules established at by Parker and Unwin, such as Ruislip Manor (by A. and J. Soutar), Liverpool Garden Suburb (by J.N. Dixon), Rhubina Garden Suburb at Cardiff (by T. Alwyn Lloyd and Raymond Unwin), were often composed with a central core about which public buildings were situated. In such an area symmetrical planning forms were frequently employed, with the buildings arranged into neat groups while vistas were produced along roadways approaching the buildings so as to enhance their effect upon the eye. Regard was also paid to the design and plan of all buildings within modern residential schemes with emphasis being placed upon their organisation so that street pictures could be created. Road junctions were also surrounded by buildings so to enclose the open space and establish vistas to houses placed nearby. Notions of proportion and scale, open space about buildings, the use of topography and common design styles were emphasised in practical design terms.

The Civic Designers

An objective of this work was to identify the people who undertook civic design during the period selected for study. In the accounts given in the preceding three chapters it is apparent that the design of large scale public buildings in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period was undertaken by a broad range of professionals. Civic designers ranged from local people, many of who were responsible for only one or two public buildings of note during the course of their careers, to national figures who on rare occasions went local. Many of these nationally significant individuals designed the largest and most notable civic design schemes of the period while other architects as a result of their design abilities, and designing at least one structure perceived to be of national importance as well as of a high design quality, received professional acclaim.

It has been highlighted by this study that almost every large town and city experienced the erection of a number of public buildings and in many settlements these structures were designed by architects of relatively low professional standing. Even in the largest settlements, and their most important schemes, designers of a hitherto low standing often composed the new civic buildings, in so doing possibly attained a higher status within their profession. However for other designers despite being responsible for at least one major civic design scheme their careers did not experience a marked progression and no significant career advancement subsequently occurred.

In a small number of settlements examined it was discovered that the civic design undertaken during the period considered was dominated by a partnership of by a small group of individuals. This situation was perhaps most common in the towns and cities examined in Scotland but was also evident in England. In such an instance not only did the individuals/partners design the most prominent of all public buildings erected, such as a Town Hall, but they were also involved in a large number of civic schemes. This situation was recognised in Bradford, for example, where Lockwood and Mawson designed the most conspicuous of the city's public buildings and a large number of prominent buildings too.

By the end of the nineteenth century many Corporations were for the first time employing a City Architect. In some settlements studied the role of the City Architect was of great importance to the civic design that was undertaken during the period examined and while it was also noted in some settlements the City Architects suggested large scale central redevelopment schemes as a means to bring about local urban improvement and architectural betterment. Furthermore, City Architects were also recognised to play a vital role in many design competitions established, for they were noticed on occasions to act as competition assessors.

Conclusion

Many of the elements of civic design as it occurred in large sized British urban settlements between about 1880 and 1914 have been highlighted within this chapter. While many aspects relating to provincial civic design have been noted the following two chapters provide a more detailed analysis of the characteristics, occurrence,

location and theory of civic design in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. The persons who undertook civic design during the period selected for study will also receive more detailed attention in the following sections of the study. The next section, chapter eight, highlights and discusses the design and planning principles that appeared to govern civic design during the period from about 1880 to 1914, in addition to emphasising the characteristics of civic design schemes occurring in large provincial towns and cities at that time.

CHAPTER EIGHT: RESULTS

Introduction

In the preceding chapter an overview has been given of some of the characteristics of civic design occurring in a number of large sized provincial settlements during the period about 1880 to 1914. The intention of this chapter is to further described the major civic design characteristics that were in evidence at that time.

This chapter highlights and discusses the design and planning principles that appeared to govern civic design during the period selected for study, in addition to emphasising the extent and characteristics of the influence of civic design occurring in large provincial towns and cities at that time. Within this section, that is the part dealing specifically with the principles, extent and characteristics of civic design, the results will be presented in the following manner:

1. The treatment of the main elevations:

- I) Symmetrical.
- II) Not symmetrical.

The treatment of the various floor levels:

- I) Basement or lower ground floor.
- II) Principal floor.
- III) Other floors.

The treatment of corners.

2. The design elements visible on the elevations involved:

- I) The elements themselves.
- II) Their spacing.

III) The handling of roofs.

IV) Vertical elements:

- Types of vertical elements identified in civic design.
- The position of vertical elements visible within civic design schemes.
- The usage of vertical features.
- Masonry used as part of the construction of a vertical element.

3. Internal arrangements.

Approaches to main entrances.

Use of local roads within civic design schemes.

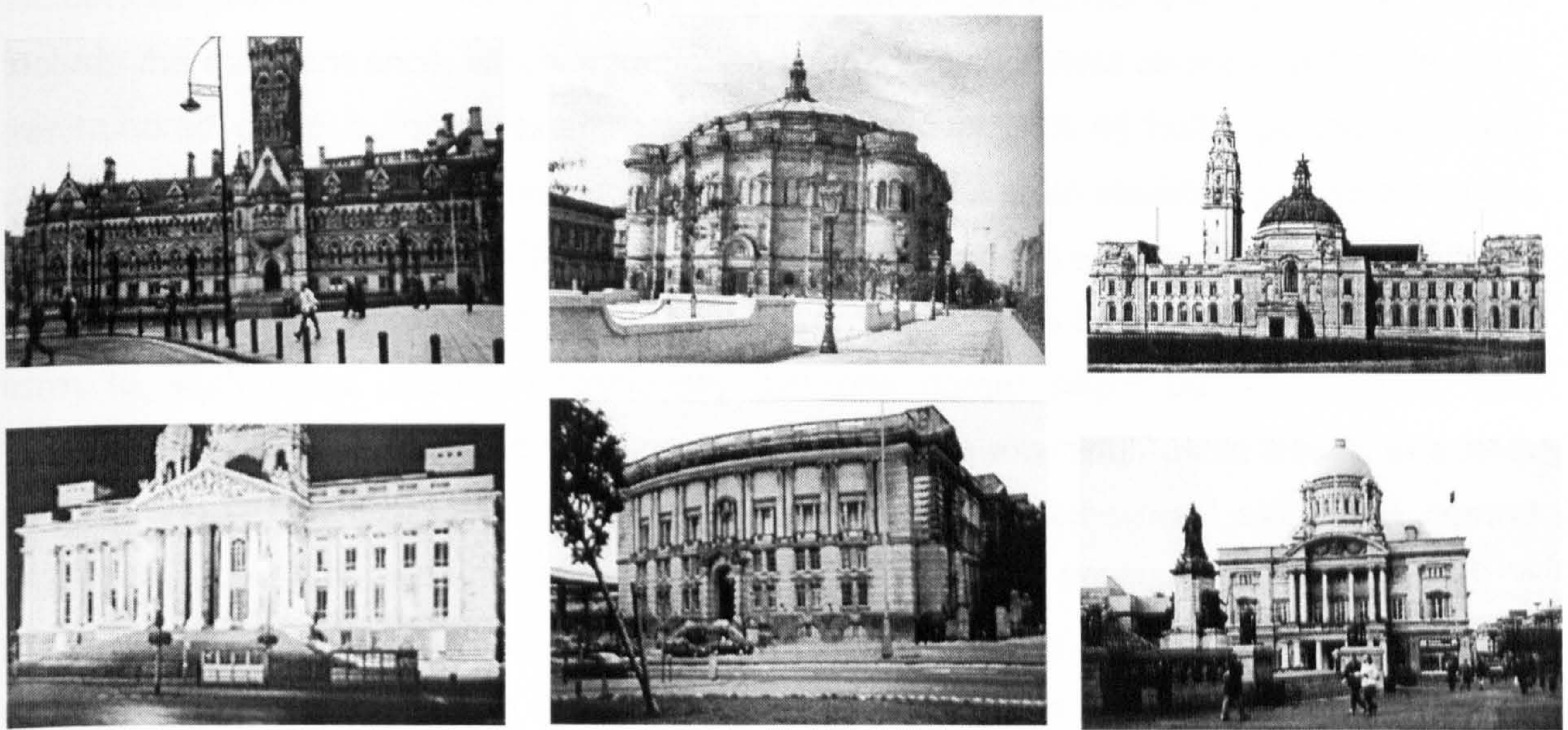
4. Materials/Masonry

The chapter will begin by examining the form of the elevations in civic design schemes undertaken within the period covered by this work before moving onto examine other identifiable traits of civic design during the period selected for study.

The Treatment of the Main Elevations

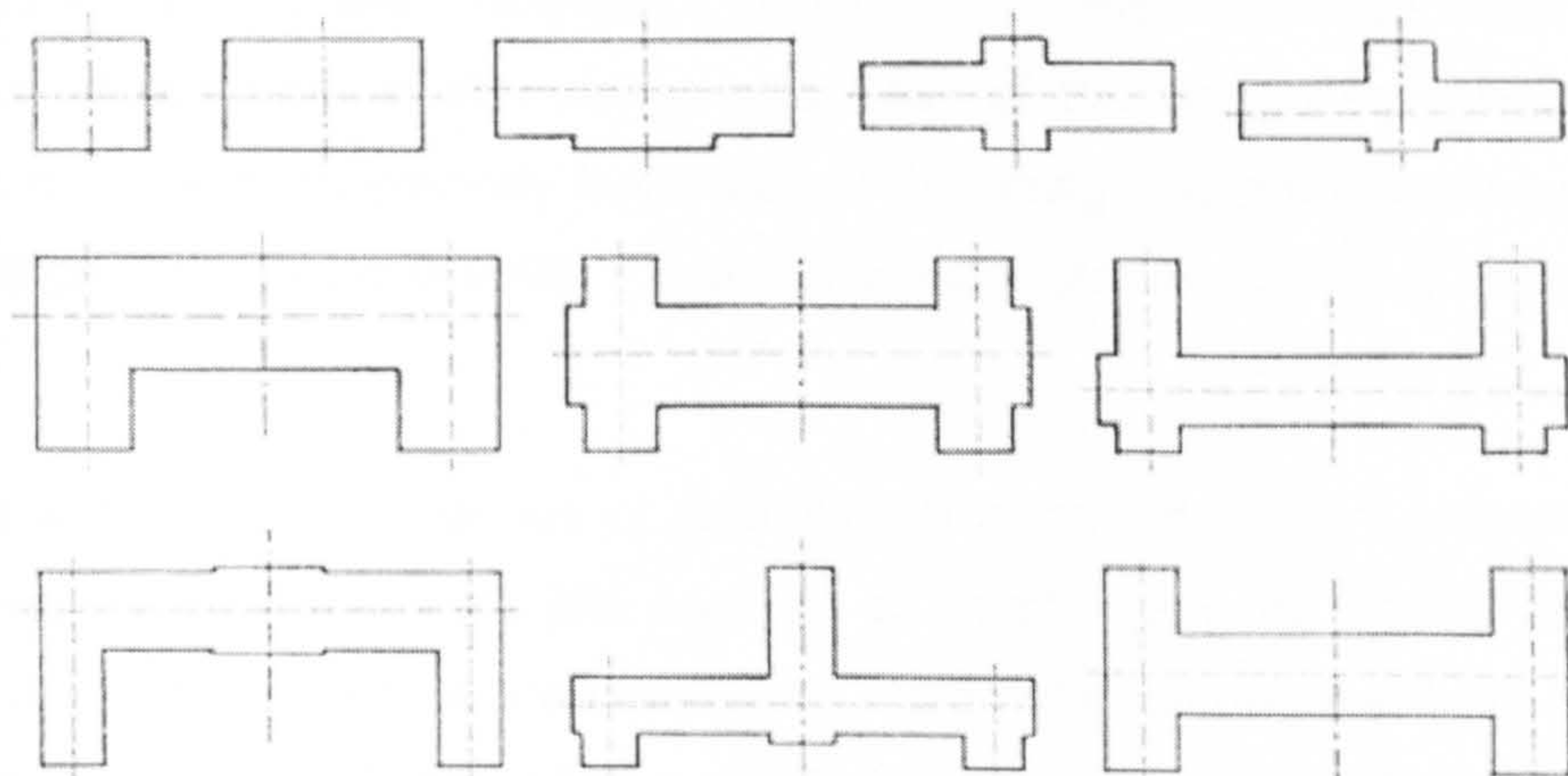
The main elements of approaches to the treatment of the elevations that appeared in buildings in civic design schemes erected in the period under consideration may be listed as follows: symmetrical and non-symmetrical. Many prominent public structures erected during the period considered by this work had their main and perhaps other elevations designed on fairly strict symmetrical lines. This formed a major characteristic of buildings in civic design schemes, such as those shown by figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1. Examples of symmetrically designed elevations (from top left: Bradford Town Hall, McEwan Hall, Edinburgh, Cardiff City Hall, Portsmouth Guildhall, Technical College, Liverpool, and the City Hall, Hull).



For many public buildings examined one side of the composition was usually given greater importance than the others. That side often contained the principal entrance of the building and perhaps faced an open space of some note, a space other than that of a roadway. Although the overall plan arrangements of the building might take many forms, such as those shown by figure 8.2, the symmetrical elevation was generally linked to an essentially symmetrically detailed plan and one, and sometimes more, lines of axis were in evidence.

Figure 8.2. Examples of types of symmetrical plans with central and major axial lines shown.



A common feature of the plan of public buildings erected during the period selected for study was that a major element of the internal arrangement might be placed centrally on a line of axis and this was often reflected in the treatment of the elevations which might indicate its presence. Elements of plans that have been placed along a central line of axis include the main entrance, which would often be marked by details above it or beside it. Of the hundred or so buildings examined for this work over 90% of buildings studied were designed with a primary entrance located at the centre of a main elevation placed along the main line of axis established within the plan. Of significance too was the practice whereby a building would sometimes be designed with its corner elements having a similar or identical form to each other, though occasionally just one corner might be emphasised. The treatment of entrances and the handling of corners will be examined more closely in a later section of this chapter. Other parts of the plan that could be placed along the central alignment established in the scheme include the entrance vestibule, a staircase or a prominent space within the internal arrangement of the building. Sometimes the central line of axis established in the plan would be marked outside of the building by an architectural feature such as a flight of steps, lamp posts, a statue or fountain, which could be placed at some distance away from the front of the structure. There was also a tendency in a number of public buildings to mark the central axis with a vertical element such as a dome or clock tower.

It has been highlighted previously that the placing of features or spaces within a plan along a centrally established axial line may have suggested its presence upon the composition and design of the main elevations. As noted earlier this could be indicated by the placing of columns or pilasters at each side of the main entrance or the placing of a portico or gable above the main entrance from which regular bays would be placed along the elevations where details such as further columns or pilasters and fenestration would be placed. The common use of symmetrical elevations, regardless of the design style being employed, when linked with the comparatively large size of the design scheme, produced a sense of formality that gave the public building a dramatic impact and impression of importance.

It should be noted that the practice of designing a symmetrical front elevation depended upon the shape of the building's site and not so much upon the choice of design style selected by the architect as balanced elevations were noted among the three most common design styles employed between 1880 and 1914. These styles were Gothic, Classical and Baroque, even though in the choice of an style such as the Gothic a symmetrical front

elevation was of less importance to the general composition of the edifice than for other types such as Classical or Baroque that placed great emphasis upon a symmetrical frontage and regularity of form in the plan. The practice of designing in a symmetrical manner was also dependent upon having a fairly symmetrical plan being used and the role of the site in the design process should not be overlooked. If the site was relatively open and unencumbered from surrounding structures then it would be expected that the possibility of the building having a symmetrical front elevation, and perhaps other symmetrical elevations too, would tend to increase. In addition, if the size of the plot of land to be developed was large in extent then the designer could erect a structure, perhaps of a large size, that was much smaller than the area of the site. This situation had the effect of allowing the new building to fit well within the boundaries of its site, in so doing establishing space around the structure which allowed for the possibility of introducing civic design elements in front and around it. However during the course of the project little evidence has been produced to highlight that the role of sites affected the treatment of the elevations on public buildings. Little evidence has also been produced to emphasise that characteristics such as the degree of openness of a site, or the unencumbered nature of a site, affected the form and plan of public architecture erected on it as symmetrically composed elevations were discovered on buildings of varying types erected on sites that were both open and enclosed. It was recognised too that the shape of the site had little affect on the overall treatment of the elevations as formally designed facades can be seen in most provincial settlements where public structures were placed on both geometric and irregularly shaped plots.

The size of the building can be seen to be an influence upon civic design practice and the treatment of the main elevations as the largest public buildings examined, usually Town Halls, tended to be composed in a formal or symmetrical way. However, relatively small public buildings and civic design schemes such as the County Session Court, Liverpool, the School Board Office, Leeds, and the River Wear Commissioners Office, Sunderland, were designed in a symmetrical manner too so the association between size and form cannot be seen to be too strong. A stronger correlation appears in the treatment of elevations and the employment of particular design styles, especially the Classical or Baroque forms. Out of the total number of buildings designed to a Classical or Baroque idiom, over 80 buildings in total, all were treated in a symmetrical manner by the designers, although buildings designed in a Gothic manner also showed that symmetry was significant in the handling of their elevations and plan, as noted previously. Another influence upon the treatment of the main elevations was the relation between the building and its surrounding, that is the use of a symmetrical treatment was more common where the main elevation faced directly towards

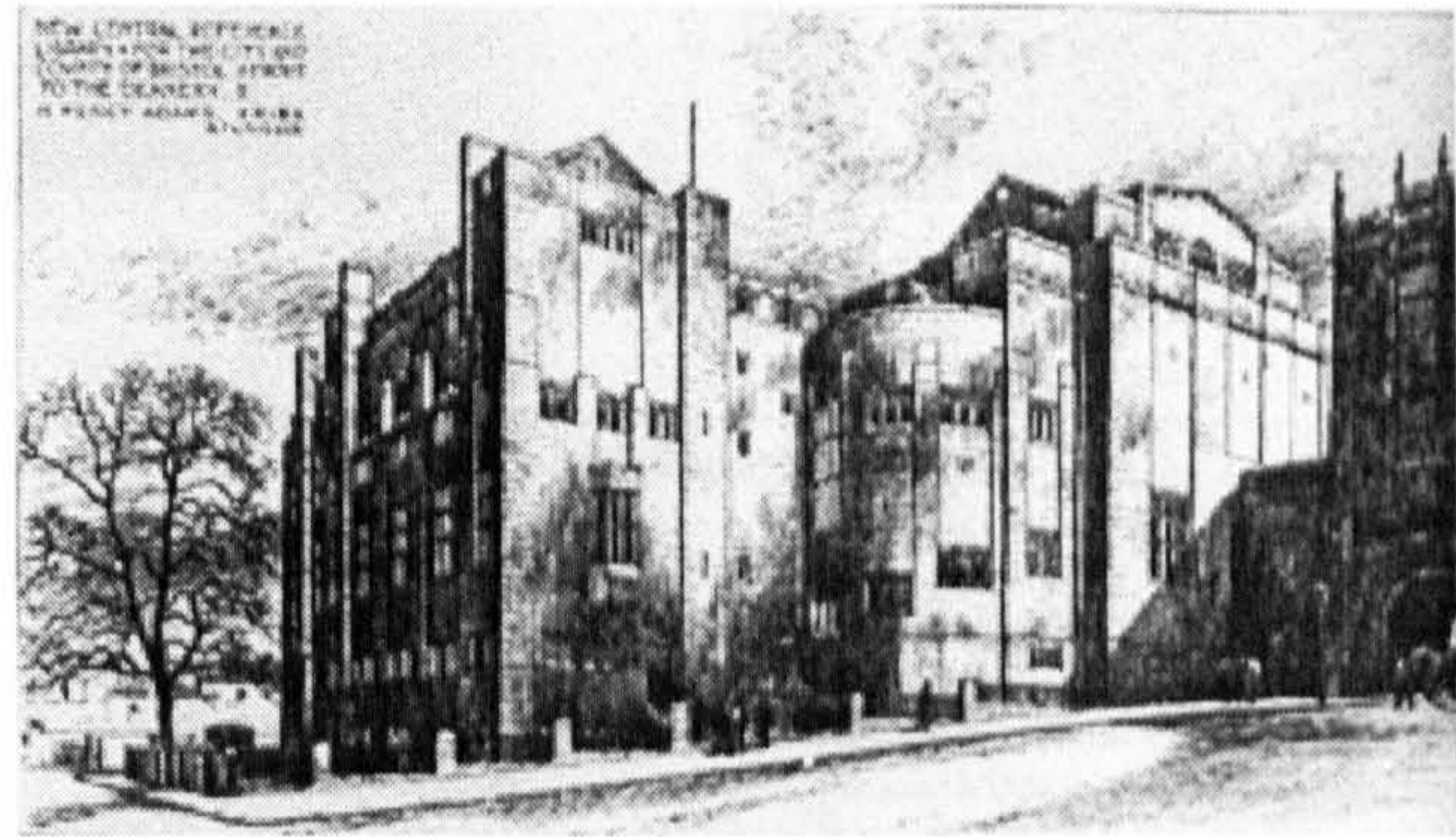
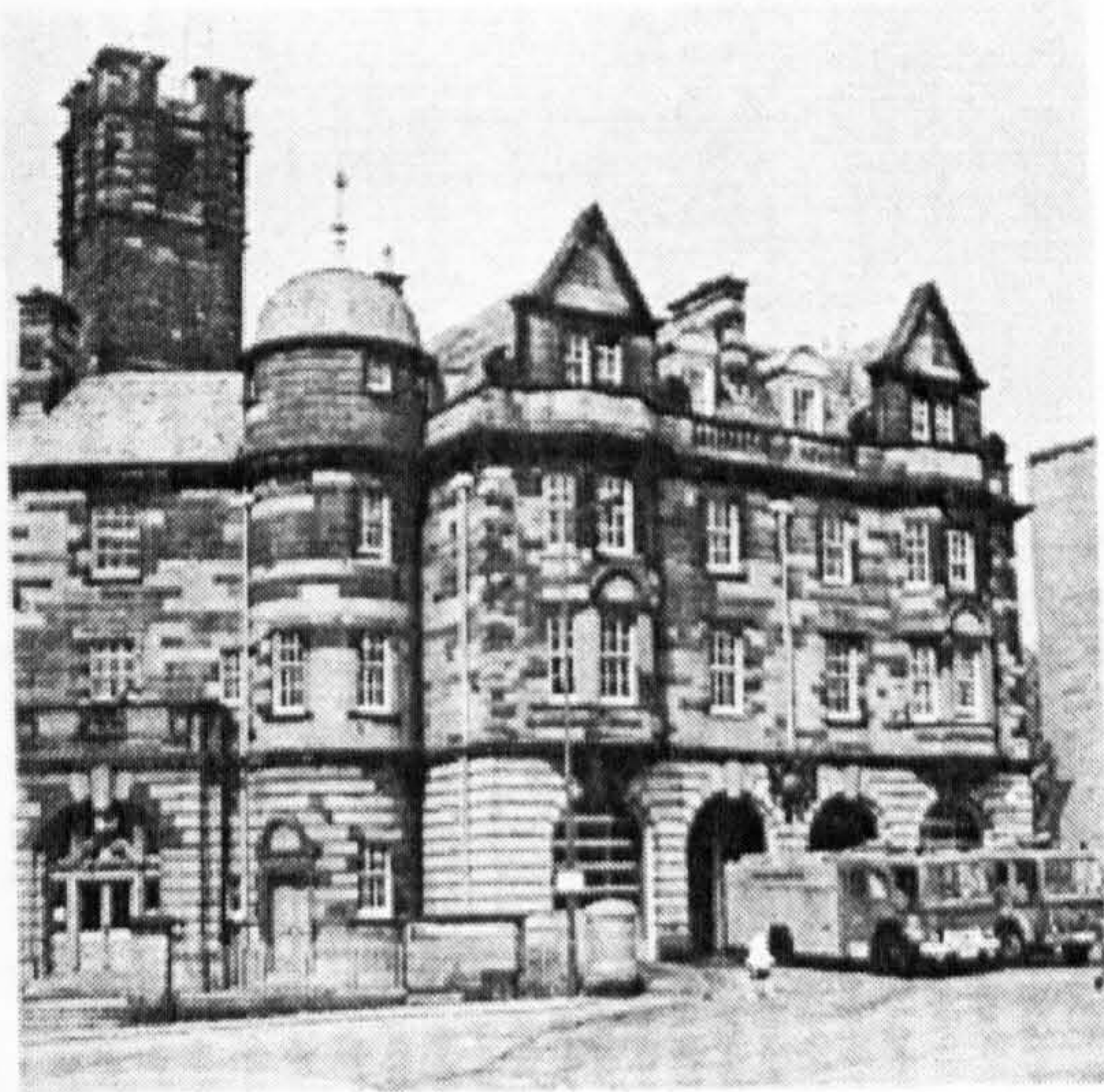
an open space of some note other than that of a roadway. Where a building was noticed to face towards an open area then it was also generally discovered that the designer gave the principal elevation a symmetrical treatment and that features, for example, a broad flight of steps and sometimes lamp posts, would be placed in front of the principal entrance.

As well as symmetrical approaches to planning and the design of elevations being adopted in civic design between 1880 and 1914 so too were non-symmetrical approaches. The non-symmetrical treatment was usually found on buildings which were designed in a style not belonging to the Classical, Gothic or Baroque idioms, such as the Modern style, used for the Central Reference Library at Bristol, or Vernacular styles which were more common in public architecture in Scotland during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, such as the Baronial style. While most prominent public buildings were designed in a symmetrical manner non-symmetrical design and planning nevertheless formed a significant feature of civic design during the period studied by this work. Such an approach to public design and planning was in part an outcome of the selection of an awkwardly shaped sites such as that for the Central Library in Edinburgh which was erected on a site bound on two sides by roadways at different ground levels. Sites of a form like this were therefore not conducive to treatment of a more symmetrical nature even though the main elevations were sometimes composed in a symmetrical way. A non-symmetrical treatment to design could also be adopted because of the preferences or the intent of the designer not to give a formal, monumental image. The designer may have instead sought to create a less formal and more picturesque building, or due to the relation of the function of the building and the influence of the client's brief upon the architect. It may also be expected that a situation whereby non-symmetrical treatments are selected ahead of symmetrical ones could arise as a consequence of the influence of the building type upon the designer, although even in the design of public building types such as Post Offices, architects were recognised to employ dramatic elevational treatments like those used on more prominent building types, such as Municipal Offices and Town Halls, and these usually took a symmetrical form. The Glasgow Post Office, George Square, by Robert Matheson, erected between 1875 and 1878, is a good example of a functional structure being designed in a formal, grandiose manner. Thus the influence of the building type was noticed to have little effect on the treatment of elevations for public buildings erected during the period examined.

Of the hundred or so buildings considered by this project it was noted that only a small number, less than ten in total, were constructed in a non-symmetrical manner. Similarly to

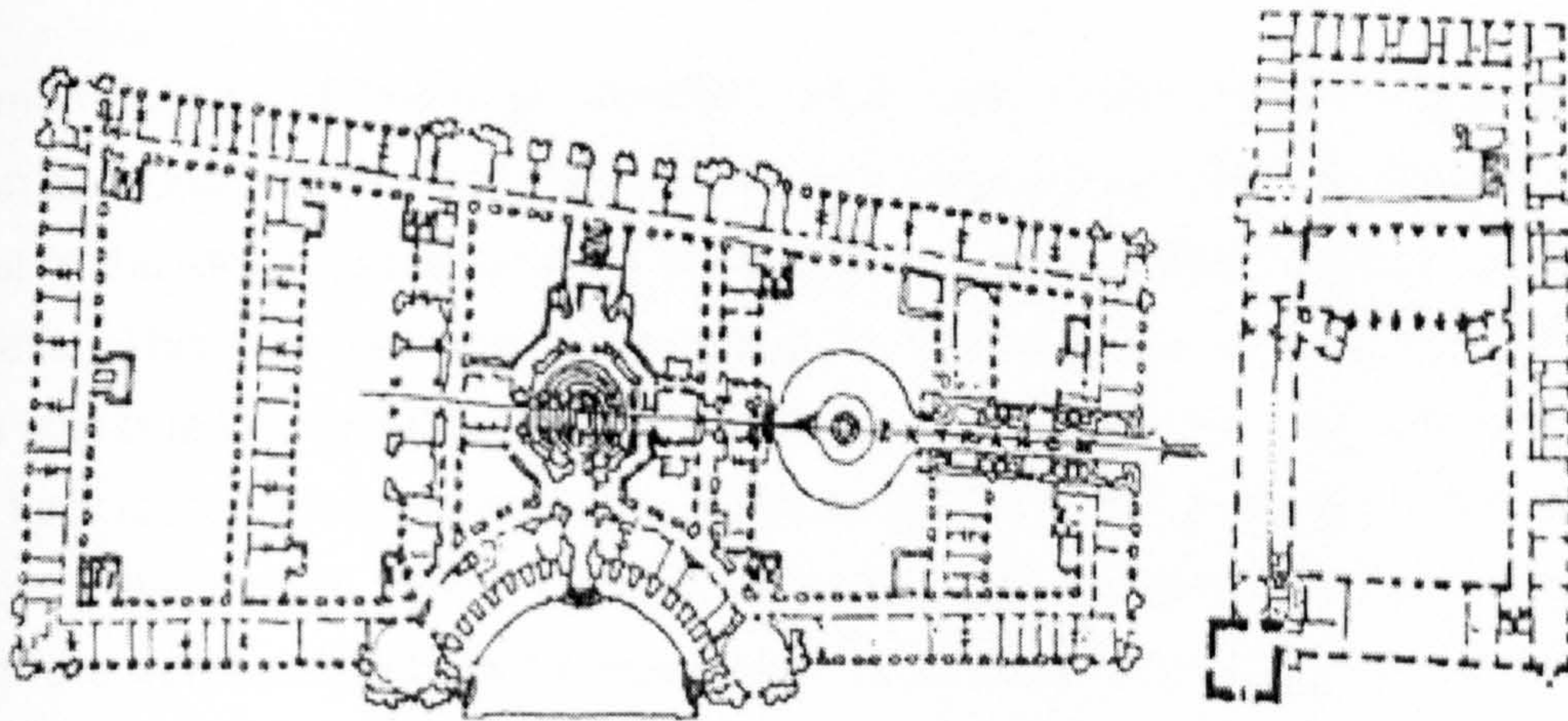
symmetrical buildings non-symmetrical ones were also designed with one or more elevations having greater importance than the others, with the most important elevation being not only marked by a number of detailed design features but would on rare occasions face towards either a roadway or an open space of some local importance. Features identified on elevations in civic design schemes are discussed subsequently in this chapter.

Figure 8.3. Examples of non-symmetrical elevations.



In the design and planning of non-asymmetrical public buildings it was recognised in many instances that these buildings were composed without a central axial line, a common feature of symmetrically designed buildings, and that the overall planning arrangements of the non-symmetrical buildings might take one of many forms (see figure 8.4). With regards to the form of the elevations on non-symmetrical buildings the main entrance like those for symmetrically designed buildings would be marked by details around it, and in front of it in some schemes, although features such as the fenestration were handled somewhat differently on non-symmetrical elevations than on symmetrical ones. However, significantly, such a building, that is a non-symmetrical one, tended to be designed with its corner elements consisting of a similar or identical form to each other, although one corner might be emphasised, for example, by the placing of a vertical feature at it. This element of the treatment of the elevations of public buildings will be examined further later.

Figure 8.4. Examples of non-symmetrical plans.



Within non-symmetrical buildings no prominent features or spaces were often evident in the internal arrangement along a centrally established axial line that may have suggested its presence upon the design and general composition of the elevations. However, main entrances were marked in the design of the elevation, as noted earlier, although to the rear of the doorway no prominent and large sized spaces within the plan were often to be found, instead being positioned elsewhere in the plan. Regular bays would however often be placed along the main elevations with details such as fenestration placed in tidy groupings along it.

Little evidence has been discovered during the course of the study to suggest that the openness of the site had an effect on the use of non-symmetrical treatments of the main elevations for it, like the use of symmetrical handling, was evident on differently formed sites ranging from ones open on all sides or a number of sides, such as the Lauriston Fire Station, Edinburgh, and the Central Reference Library, Bristol, for example, through to ones enclosed by a number of existing buildings. Significantly, non-symmetrical approaches were used on buildings of a comparatively large scale that showed the architects considered an informal style of design was able to establish a significant impact upon the eye and thus allow the building to make a mark upon the composition of the local built environment.

The Depth and Treatment of Various Floors

A common feature of buildings identified within civic design schemes during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period was that the lower ground floor level was often placed below the level of the street so that only the upper part of it was normally visible to the eye at the street level. This was particularly recognised on symmetrically composed public buildings yet was less true for non-symmetrical schemes which tended to be designed without a lower ground floor level unless the undulating topography of the local area invited this. Without the influence of the natural features of the site or perhaps the willingness of the designer to show off the new building to its full advantage, to be achieved, by way of illustration, by the raising the building above the street level, it was generally recognised that non-symmetrically designed buildings were designed without such a floor level.

The practice of incorporating a lower ground floor was frequently used in public buildings of all types although a great many public buildings erected did not have a lower ground floor level. Of the all the buildings examined within this project over 25 buildings, about 20%, were designed with a lower ground floor level. However where a lower ground floor level was incorporated into the civic design scheme it was usually given a certain treatment by the architect. This section of the building, for example, was often marked by stonework of a different nature to that of the rest of the building. This did not necessarily mean that another type of stone was used, but that the stone used to erect this part of the structure was worked differently. A rusticated form, that is the cutting of masonry into stone blocks separated from each other by deep joints, was regularly employed as a means to make the lower ground floor level distinct from other ones.

It has been highlighted previously that a considerable number of civic buildings were designed with a basement level. Significantly the creation of a basement level often took place in design schemes that involved the raising of the building considerably above the street level although it should be reiterated that buildings that were elevated were done so frequently to a height whereby only the top of the lower ground floor level could be seen. However lower ground floors were sometimes willingly concealed from view by the erection of a low height stone wall or an iron railing fixed into a stone base in front of the building which ensured a degree of privacy inside the buildings and added to the impact of the building upon the on looking eye. The placing of a low stone wall in front of a building can be

seen at the Pierhead, Liverpool, on the Mersey Docks Office, for example. The line of these stone walls might also correspond with other features evident in the scheme, for instance a flight of steps marking an entrance where the wall would meet with the step the furthest away from the structure of the building. Often the different treatment of the lower ground floor level was evident in terms of the differing handling of the window openings which would take a contrasting form to those of other floor levels. A common shape of lower ground floor windows was for their forms to have semi-circular heads and buildings that had windows composed in this manner included Cartwright Hall, Bradford, and the Science and Technology College, Liverpool.

Figure 8.5. A perspective of Cartwright Hall, Bradford, to show the differing treatment of the lower ground floor level. Note the different treatment of the stonework and the different shape of the window openings.



The main floor of buildings identified within civic design schemes was usually recognised to be the ground floor or first floor level. But many common elements were prevalent in the treatment of the main floor level and these included:

- The floor to ceiling height of the main floor was usually greater than that of the other floors of the building.

- The main floor of buildings were sometimes raised above ground level and that of the surrounding buildings.
- Fenestration was handled in a different manner with the form of the window openings being different from other floor levels.
- The principal floor level would often be given extra decoration.

It was noted during the course of the examination of provincial settlements that 38 civic design schemes had their ground floor levels emphasised by the raising of the ground floor level about that of the street, often by approximately half the height of a floor of the building. This practice of raising public buildings, as if it were on a podium, had the effect of making the structure appear more important, creating an impression of great height and scale, and also, significantly, allowed the public building to become dissimilar from neighbouring structures which would be erected at the ground level. This distinction was established by the buildings having their ground floor levels at different heights, with the public buildings' ground floor obviously being above that of its neighbours. As the building was effectively raised above the ground it was also common to find associated features in design schemes such as flights of steps, which were sometimes placed in front of the main entrance, helping establish a grand approach before entering the building.

The importance of one floor level over the others in civic design was usually indicated by the increased height of that floor, although no standard floor height existed during the selected period. It has been noted earlier that generally the main floor of public buildings erected as part of civic design schemes was the ground floor but the first floor was sometimes used as the principal floor level, highlighted by the main spaces within the structure being established there. This was recognised particularly for Town Hall buildings where spaces such as the Council Chamber, a Public Hall, Reception Rooms and Mayor's Offices, would be located at the main floor level, and in the Town Halls schemes at Sheffield and Manchester, for example, the prominent spaces within the internal arrangement were positioned at the first floor level.

The height and treatment of the secondary floors of public buildings within civic design schemes was usually different to that of the principal floor. One noticeable difference was the smaller floor to ceiling heights but another distinct disparity in their treatment was the difference in detailing located on the subsidiary floors which would often be designed with

less design elements along them than the main floor level. The use of rustication was noted to not be used on floor levels other than those deemed to be the principal ones apart from at the ends of the elevations where it would be used as part of the handling of the corner. In addition the size of the windows, particularly in terms of height, were smaller on the secondary floors and it was also unusual to view decorative features in proximity to them.

It has been emphasised that fenestration was often handled differently in the composition of the main floor level. Often window openings on the principal floor were noted to not only be larger in size but also different in shape, sometimes being formed with a semi-circular or arched head, while windows on other floor levels could be designed in a rectangular form, for example. Examples where window openings on the main floor level were treated differently from other floor levels included Cardiff City Hall, Cardiff Law Courts, South Wales University College at Cardiff, the Mersey Docks Office (Liverpool), Birmingham's Council House, the Guildhall, Nottingham, the Museum and Library building at Sunderland, the National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, the Central Post Office at Glasgow, the Townhouse, Aberdeen, and the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle.

It has also been noted previously that the principal floor level would be usually composed with added decoration so as to distinguish it from other floor levels in the scheme. Added decorative elements noted in provincial civic design included the columns and pilasters, sometimes placed to the side of window openings, for example, at the Guildhall in Nottingham, as well as the different treatment of the corners on the main floor where decoration could be placed at the end sections. Decoration could be in the form of elements such as sculpture, rustication, double columns or pilasters which could be placed within the design of end pavilions where used.

Treatment of the Corners of Main Elevations

The treatment of the corners of public buildings was significant to the practice of civic design. One means, already mentioned earlier in this chapter, by which a corner of a front elevation could be treated was through the placing of a vertical element, such as a tower,

above it, although a number of treatments were also recognised during the period considered:

- The rounding of just one corner of a building, for example, the south western corner of the Council House, Birmingham.
- The placing of a dome above the corners of the principal elevation or a clock tower at one corner.
- The placing of an end pavilion in buildings composed to a Classical or Baroque style which would project beyond the building line of the building, for example, the City Hall and Law Courts, Cardiff, and a gable for buildings designed in a Gothic manner.
- Not marking the corner point, allowing the two elevations to naturally adjoin or perhaps having an area of solid masonry instead. This was the most common feature of civic design and the handling of corners during the period considered.
- Rusticated masonry placed at the corners of the building.

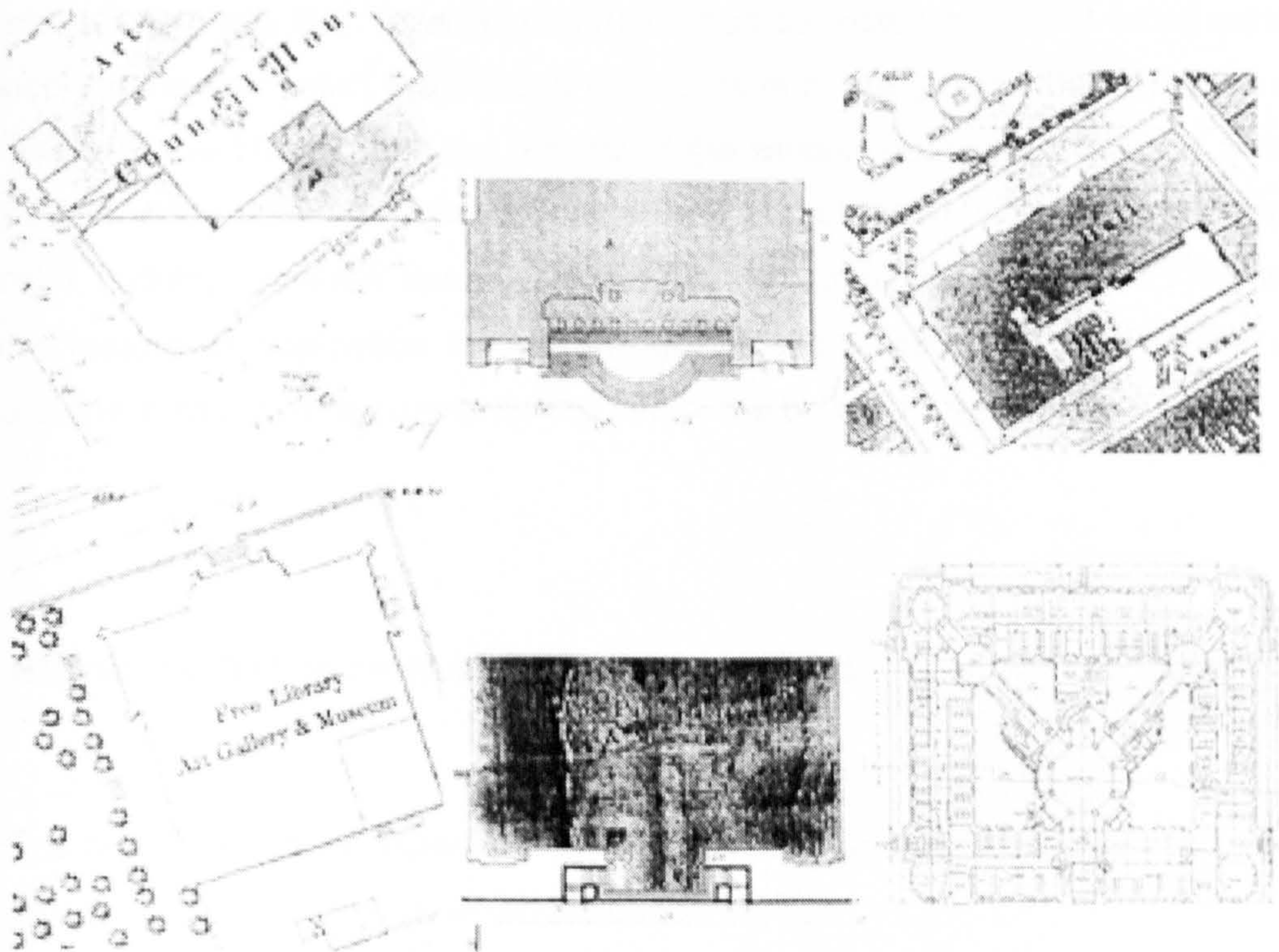
64 buildings studied as part of this project were noted to have a treatment of one kind or another to the ends of their main elevation other than allowing two of the elevations to naturally adjoin. A significant feature in the handling of corners in civic design practice was the employment of domes at the corners of the front section of the public building, so to possibly cover the sharp angle at which two elevations met by putting emphasis on the dome and not on the angle of the exterior walls of the building. Buildings which used domes above the corner points of the elevations included the Guildhall, Portsmouth, the Docks Offices at Liverpool and Hull, and the City Chambers, Glasgow, which also used domes and corner pavilions, an unusual combination in the practice of civic design. The Docks Office at Hull employed towers as a means to terminate oncoming vistas and alignments along approaching roadways and thus highlighted that vertical elements in corner positions could be used as a means to relate a building to its surroundings, an important aspect of civic design as defined by this work. Another incentive for emphasising the corner of a building included the need of the designer to bolster what could be an initially weak composition, and so by stressing the corners of the main elevations through the employment of vertical elements the designer is able to strengthen the overall design.

The placing of a dome above the corners of a building was not particularly popular with civic designers and was less commonly used than the corner pavilion, a frequently used characteristic of large scale public architecture which involved bringing forward the building line from the front of the building at the end of the main elevations. Corner pavilions were used on a total of 39 buildings that included the City Hall and Law Courts, University College and the National Museum of Wales, all erected in the Cathays Park district of Cardiff. Other buildings with end pavilions included the University College, Nottingham, the Municipal Offices, Liverpool, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow, and the Town Halls of Bolton, Bradford and Sheffield. The employment of corner pavilions in civic designing was often used in conjunction with a symmetrically composed front elevation and the practice of placing pavilions at the end of the primary elevations served to reinforce the regularity of the scheme. Features such as towers or domes marked the corner pavilions in a vertical manner. The general form of corner pavilions showed little variation in civic design during the period considered, being either of a rectangular form or fractured into acute angles at the corners of the front and side elevations so as to give a rounded impression when viewed from a distance (see figure 8.6), used, for example, at the Mersey Docks Office, Liverpool. However for the vast majority of civic design schemes which used end pavilions they were noted to be of a rectangular form.

Arguably the least common treatment of corners in late-Victorian and Edwardian civic design was the rounding of them and even less common was the rounding of just one corner of a building, a practice that was used sometimes where the awkward shape of the site meant that elevations would meet at a similarly awkward angle. Thus the rounding of the corner was used as a ploy to avoid a sharp angle of connection. This can be seen at the Council House, Birmingham, which was designed by Yeoville Thomason in 1874, although the rounding of only one corner of this scheme may have also been encouraged by the local road pattern with the curvature of the angle established so as to possibly terminate the approaching vista. Often with the rounding of the corners of a building came the employment of architectural features alongside or close to the line of curvature. Architectural features that were placed alongside a curved corner included rounded pediments above the cornice line, as seen at the Council House, Birmingham, and the Mersey Docks Office, Liverpool. Also evident was the placing of columns or pilasters at regular bays close to the corner of the main elevations, arranged in an orderly manner away from the central axis of the front elevation. Such a treatment was also common where the buildings were symmetrically composed with the general the treatment of the corner being of little difference to the overall form of the main elevation where the distance between bays and

the rhythm of the elevation was maintained. Thus the general orderly treatment of the principal elevation was persevered despite the change in the alignment of the elevations along the corner.

Figure 8.6. The different treatment of corners within provincial civic design schemes. Buildings shown (from top left: Council House, Birmingham, Leeds Town Hall, Leicester Town Hall, Library, Art Gallery and Museum Building at Oldham, William Brown Library, Liverpool and the Mersey Docks Office, Liverpool).



The most common corner treatment apparent in the exercising of civic design was for the architect to do nothing and to allow the two elevations to meet at the angle dictated by their building lines. To mark the meeting of the walls columns, pilasters or decorative features such as rusticated masonry were often placed at the location. On Gothic styled structures small, rounded turrets were frequently placed at the top of the corner joint. Window patterns did not usually change unless a corner pavilion or a pediment was employed in which case the form of the windows, such as their size and shape, was liable to alter.

Decoration in the form of rustication was often employed at the corners of public buildings but only on Classical or Baroque styled compositions and was an important means of

decoration. The common use of rustication was recognised in provincial civic design, being a feature of nearly 30 public buildings, although it was only usually applied to particular parts of buildings such as the lower floor levels and at the corners of the building, as noted earlier. Rustication was also observed to be used in schemes which had their corners marked by features such as pavilions or pediments, like Cartwright Hall, Bradford, and the University College, Cardiff, or on buildings that did not have any specific treatment given to the handling of its corners, such as the Guildhall, Hull. However where a public building was designed in a refined manner often the form of rustication was less prominent than that used on more boldly designed or grandiose buildings. At Birmingham University, designed by Aston Webb and Ingress Bell, for example, rustication consisted merely of small sandstone bands placed at the corners of the building at heights from the ground that corresponded to the floor levels of the building and the heights of the window openings. However within this particular scheme the masonry used for the process of rustication, sandstone, differed from the principal building material used elsewhere in the scheme, red brick. This was an uncommon feature of rustication in civic design between 1880 and 1914 which usually consisted of the same materials used for the rest of the building.

Design Elements Visible on the Elevations Involved

The practice of civic design revealed the common employment of particular design elements on the main elevations concerned, which included:

- Gables.
- Pediments and porticos.
- Columns and pilasters.
- Rustication of the ground floor level and corners of the buildings.
- Window openings designed with arched or semi-circular heads.

One of the most prominent of these elements, noted in the design of Classical styled buildings, was the application of columns and pilasters along the main elevations. These were often placed at regular intervals creating orderly bays along the facades between

which window openings were placed. The position of these bays often reflected the degree of regularity evident in the plan of the building. The effect of the ordered bays frequently reinforced the symmetrical effect of the building's composition, even in non-symmetrically designed buildings.

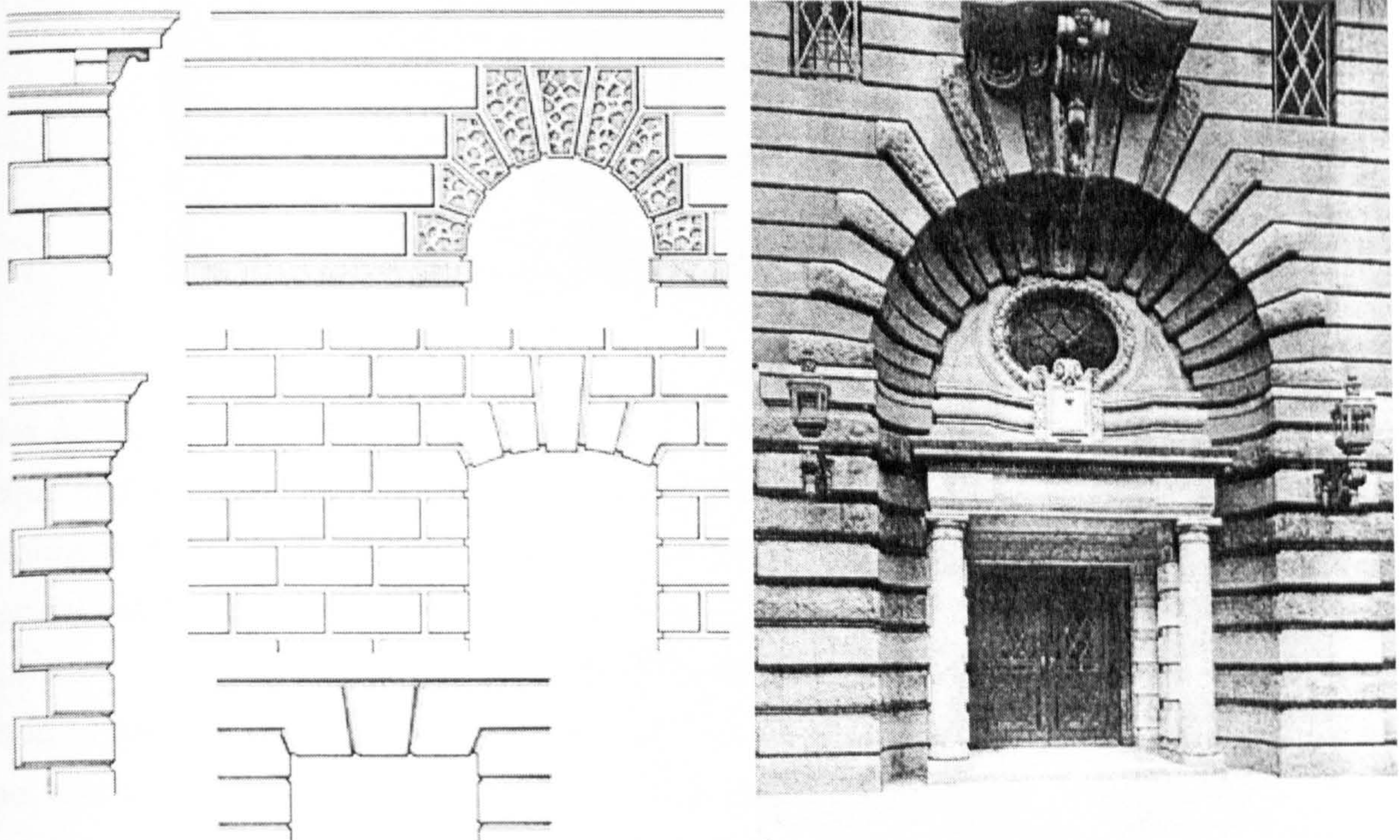
Many design elements were used upon buildings erected during the period studied. For example, Gothic styled buildings were discovered to be designed with gables, frequently placed at the centre or the ends of the most prominent elevation or elevations, while in Classical or Baroque buildings porticos and pediments were frequently used, usually placed in the centre of the main elevation. The use of a pediment, that is a low pitched gable placed directly above a portico, supported by columns and/or pilasters, was a major element in the form of the principal elevations of Classical or Baroque styled buildings erected before and during the period about 1880 to 1914. The location of the pediments and porticos were usually related to other significant elements in the design and planning of public buildings particularly in buildings treated in a symmetrical manner, for they were frequently placed at the centre of the main elevation in front of the principal entrance of the building which, as shown earlier in this chapter, was often placed on the central axial line established within the plan of the building. It was common too in a number of the more large scale building types, such as Town Halls and Municipal Offices, for a vertical feature to be placed directly behind the central alignment of the portico and its pediment thus creating a central vertical axis. Examples of this practice can be seen in Hull, Birmingham, Glasgow, Cardiff, Bolton and Portsmouth. Thus the position of a pediment was very much in association with other architectural elements noted in the composition of civic design schemes.

A common element appearing in the design of buildings identified within civic design schemes was rustication. However it has been noted already that this feature was often used only at particular sections of civic design schemes. This was also true of other decorative elements that would also be applied to limited parts of the main elevations, usually on the most important areas of the building such as the principal floor level. Stone sculpture, for instance, was only placed in certain parts of the composition, for instance on a clock tower or inside a pediment. The space inside the pediment's gable was frequently filled with sculpting and can be seen at the following buildings: the Council House, Birmingham, Cartwright Hall, Bradford, where sculpture was put beneath the upper gable of the porte-cochere, as well as the Town Hall, Bolton, and City Chambers, Glasgow.

The form of rustication, that is the pattern and texture of the masonry used, during the period studied did not follow one particular style even though the banded form with a smooth texture was by far the most popular at that time. The types of rustication employed within provincial civic design schemes between about 1880 and 1914 can be listed as follows:

- Banded, where only the horizontal joints of the stones used are emphasised.
- Diamond pointed, each stone is cut in the form of a low pyramid.
- Cyclopean rustication consisted of large blocks carved in a manner so to give a natural impression as if it had been brought straight from a quarry.
- Smooth blocks are finished neatly to present a flat face. Chamfered edges emphasised the joints of the stone pieces.

Figure 8.7. (Left) Diagrams showing types of rustication used in civic design and how it appeared at corners points and about window openings, and the main entrance of the Council House Extension, Birmingham.



The use and form of rustication used was closely associated to the general design style of the building upon which it was employed as a means of decoration. Buildings erected towards the end of the period studied and designed in a Baroque style, tended to incorporate a lot more rustication than those structures erected earlier in the period considered, and usually a banded form of rustication was employed as well. In the Edwardian period when the Baroque style of architecture was commonly used in public designing, the use of rustication was a feature frequently noted at the corners of buildings, often being employed to decorate the corner pavilions, and was also seen at the central sections of the main elevations of many buildings. An example of the use of rustication in this manner can be seen at the Law Courts, Cardiff, and Guildhall, Hull.

Figure 8.8. The principal elevation of the Guildhall, Hull showing the use of rustication.



The arrangement of windows along the main elevations of almost all of the public buildings examined were recognised to be placed in a regular pattern, positioned often at orderly distances from other window openings and from the central axis of the front elevation in symmetrically designed buildings and at regular distances from features such as the main entrance on non-symmetrical buildings. However the design and pattern of the windows used in civic design schemes was subject to a number of different influences that included the functional requirements of the building's occupants, the size of the budget for the building scheme, the reliance upon heating and lighting within the structure and the architect's reaction towards climatic conditions. Also of influence is the designers preference for one form of window opening over another regardless of other factors noted previously.

Of importance too in some building types was acoustic performance and ventilation needs which can be affected by window patterns, their shape and size. Thus these factors when combined dictate the form and arrangement of the windows in civic design.

As highlighted earlier in this chapter a common element observed in civic design schemes during the selected period was the use of rounded archways at the top of the windows of the main elevations or the use of semi-circular heads. Examples of buildings where this shape of window opening was used are the Municipal Offices (Liverpool), the County Session Building (Liverpool), Mersey Docks Offices (Liverpool), Birmingham University, University College (Cardiff), Law Courts (Cardiff), City Hall (Cardiff), the Central Post Office (Glasgow), the City Chambers (Glasgow), the Docks Office (Hull), Bradford Town Hall, Cartwright Hall (Bradford), Bolton Town Hall, Sheffield Town Hall, Leeds Town Hall, Manchester Town Hall and the Municipal Building at Leeds. Significantly, the use of arches above the heads of windows was noted to not be employed on all floor levels of public buildings and was instead limited to a small number of window openings like those on the ground floor or the first floor level, the primary floors of public buildings, or at the ends of a main elevation often in conjunction with rustication. A less common practice in the treatment of the fenestration was the placing of a small gable or pediment above each window opening which was used on buildings such as the City Chambers, Glasgow, and the Blackness Library in Dundee.

A notable feature of civic design was that the spacing of elements on the elevations was often discovered to be a regular distance from each other. The regular spacing of bays, within which windows were usually placed, was a widely applied feature of civic design regardless of the design style involved but on symmetrically composed buildings the placing of elements along with main elevations often related to the symmetry of the plan.

The spacing of elements along elevations was often directed by their distances from the central and subsidiary alignments established in the composition of the building, particularly evident on symmetrical treatments, and would be placed at regular distances from the axes with the size of each bay being of identical size in order to present a sense of rhythm in the design of the elevations involved. This practice was observed on buildings of all building types erected at various times within the period studied, designed to a variety of styles as well. The repetition of elements along the facades highlighted the tendency towards regularity in civic design and the practice of using an ordered rhythm may have been

employed so as to exhibit harmony and balance in design schemes of a public nature as well as to help show the building off to its best advantage.

The spacing of elements along the main elevations in civic design practice during the period selected for study did not appear to be governed by steadfast mathematical rules but was instead dictated by principles relating to the use of proportion in the design process, with the spacing of elements being governed by a ratio of design sizes that could be applied to and used upon a variety of building types, a diversity of design styles and a variety of building sizes. In the positioning of window spaces in an orderly manner, other elements such as columns and pilasters were used to divide the facade up and between which were placed window openings. But in the placing of windows not only was there an stylistic influence upon the designer but also a practical one on behalf of the users of the building, for it is imperative that spaces within the internal arrangement were adequately lit, irrespective of the number of floors and design style.

The Handling of Roofs

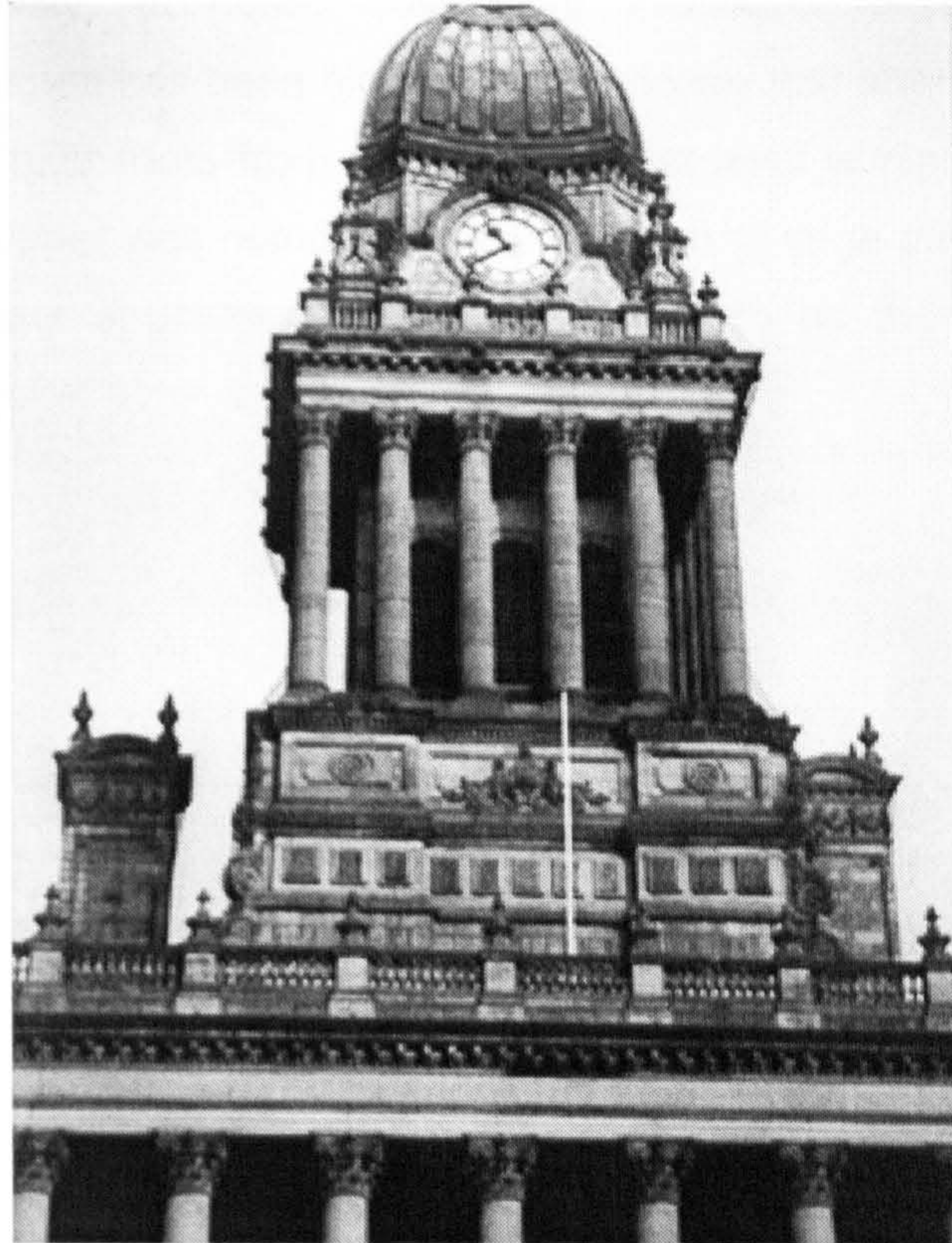
In the practice of civic design rooftops were used on occasions as a means to enhance the expression of the building involved. However generally within civic design practice the opposite was true for roofs did not assist with the display the building and tended instead to be hidden somewhat from the eye. This was achieved on a number of buildings which tried to hide their roofs from the eye at street level by:

- Designing the rooftop with a low height
- Designing the roof to a shallow gradient.
- Placing the roof behind architectural features such as balustrades or a vertical element.
- Gutters and drips, features related to the rooftop, were sometimes hidden away from the on looking eye although parapets did not occur on all buildings studied.

It has been highlighted above that balustrades were a frequently used element in provincial civic design. Balustrades were often placed above the cornice line at the top of the elevation

and served a two-fold purpose, firstly to enhance the decoration of the elevation and to secondly help conceal the roof from the public's eye when viewing it from the street level. Balustrades also acted as a safety element where access was allowed to the roof section of the building.

Figure 8.9. The balustrade and clock tower of Leeds Town Hall which helped to cover the roof of the building from the eye at street level.



It has been highlighted previously that many roofs appeared to be concealed. Balustrades placed above the cornice line at the top of the main structure was just one means whereby a roof could be hidden. Decorative elements on the balustrade such as cast iron rails, used for example at the Municipal Buildings, Liverpool, or figurative urns could be used to assist with this process, seen at Leeds Town Hall and Bolton Town Hall where they were used for an additional design effect being positioned on vertical axial lines established by the columns and pilasters below that decorated the facades of the structure. However the roof was also used in some cases in civic design as a means to emphasise certain sections of the building and this was to be achieved through the pitch of the roof being steepened or turned at ninety degrees to the angle of the main roof area. Buildings which were designed with roofs in this manner included the Post Office, Forster Square, Bradford, the Central Library,

Edinburgh, the College of Art, Edinburgh, the Town Hall and the Museum and Library building in Sunderland, and the University College, Nottingham.

A significant feature of roofing in civic design schemes was that it tended to consist of natural slates, often quarried locally and not, for example, copper material that was instead used only on domes. This preference for natural slate materials over copper or other materials may be derived from the influence of factors such as climatic and weathering considerations, durability, economic costs, the availability of materials and artistic preferences even though it has been highlighted previously that attempts were made during the period studied to hide roofs from the eye at street level within civic design schemes. However the use of copper was noted in the composition of large provincial public buildings particularly where dome structures were employed, such as the City Hall at Hull and Birmingham University.

Vertical Elements

Buildings such as Town Halls and Municipal Offices were arguably the most grandiose and significant of all public building types erected during the Victorian and Edwardian period. As a result of their importance it has been shown by Cunningham (1981) that these building types and others too were often designed not only as functional edifices but as aesthetic ones too. As a consequence of this actuality many devices were used by architects to assist with the display of the buildings including vertical elements such as clock towers, turrets and domes. Vertical features were used on over 40 buildings examined by this study.

The vertical elements that were applied to civic design schemes erected during the period under consideration can be classified as follows:

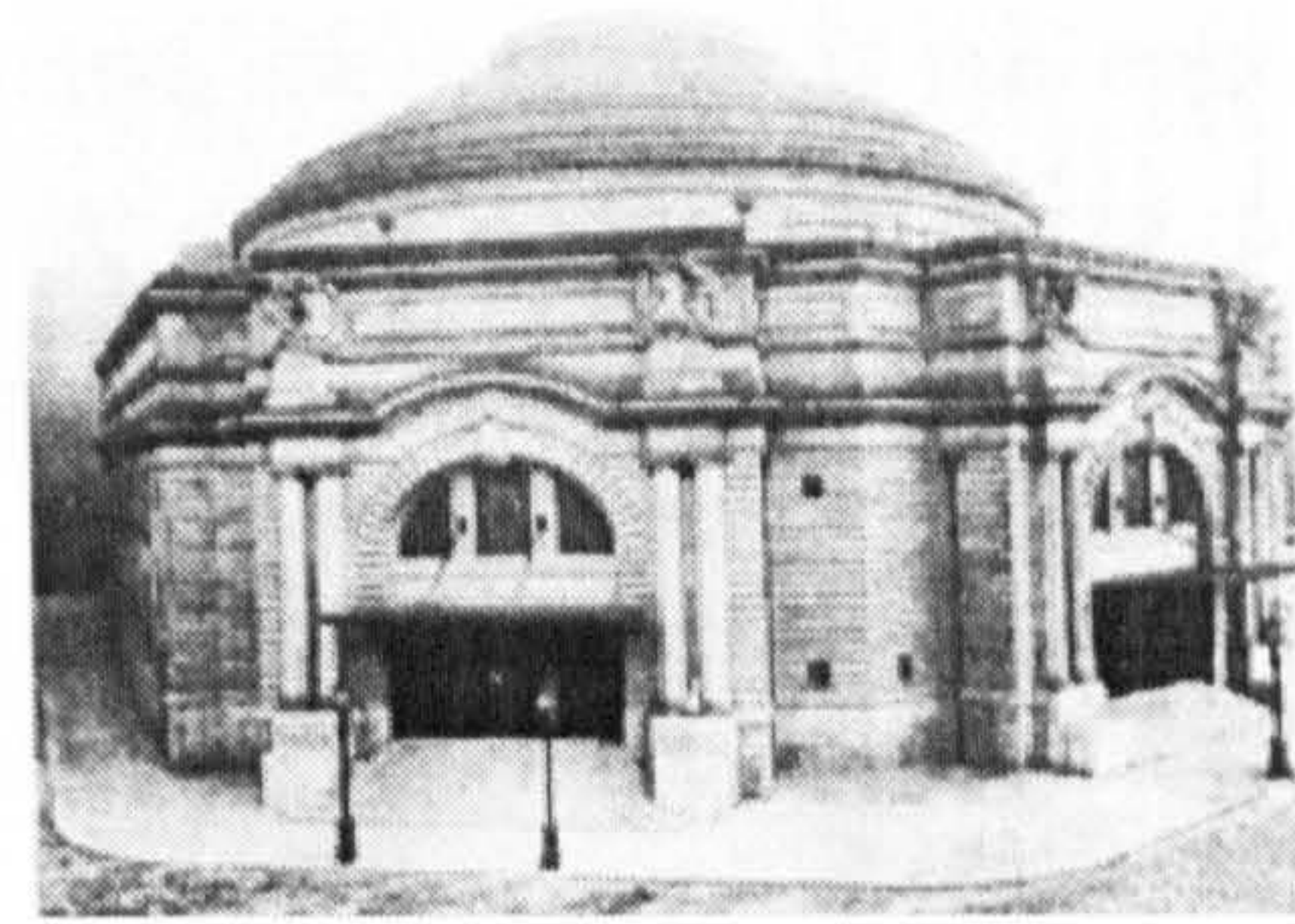
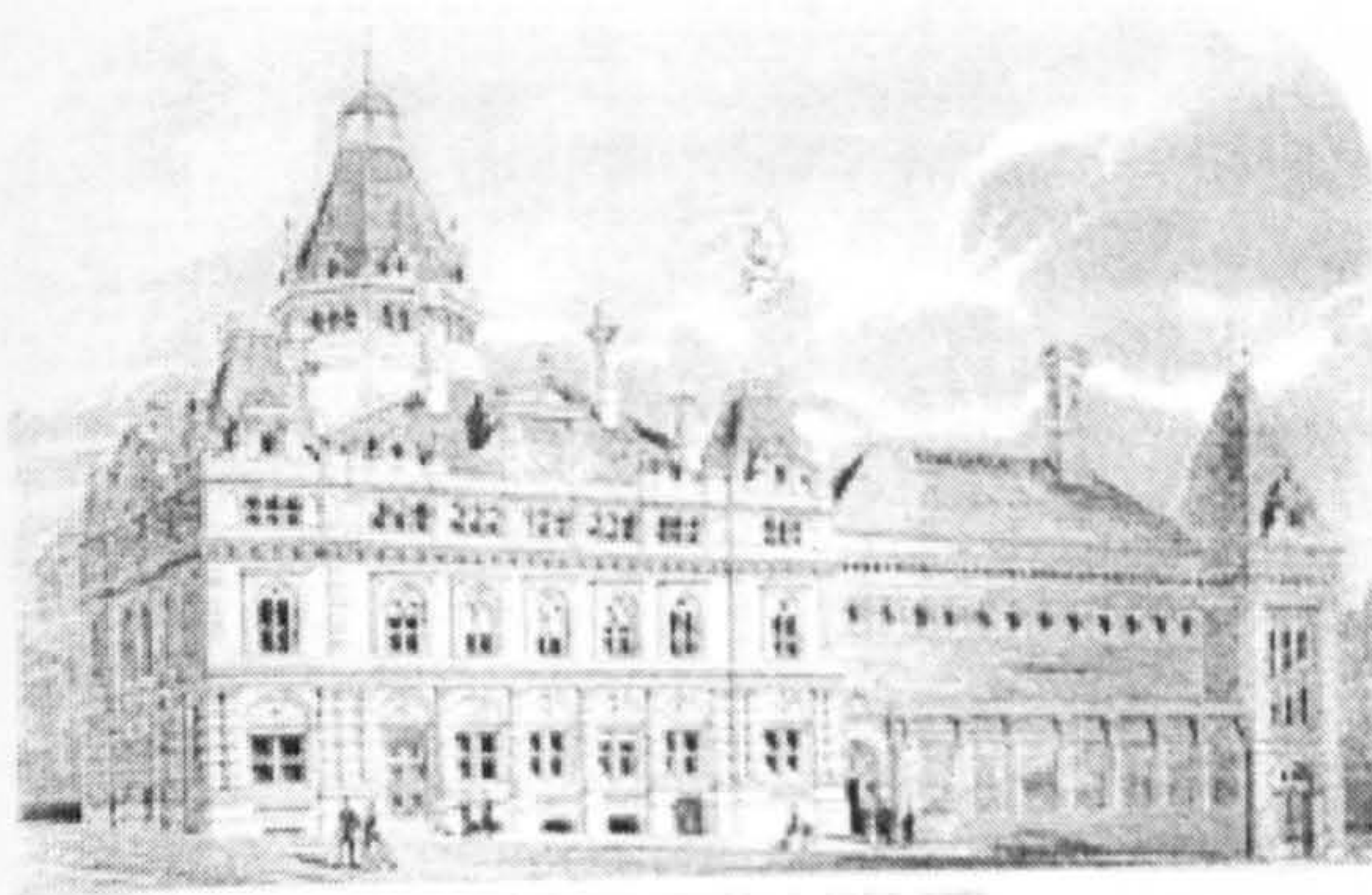
1. Types of vertical features employed.
2. The usage of vertical features.
3. The position of vertical features along the main elevation.
4. Masonry supporting the vertical element and its impact upon the internal arrangement of the building.

Public buildings were often designed in such a manner so as to make an impact upon the local street picture and to become a local landmark. One means by which this could be achieved was through the employment of a large vertical feature like a tower or dome so to heighten its artistic effect. Towers were principally constructed on Town Halls but were on infrequent occasions erected on other building types, most notably University Colleges such as those at Newcastle and Sheffield, Law Courts like the building at Cardiff where the structure was designed with two loggias, and Municipal Offices, for example at Liverpool, while smaller vertical elements such as turrets could be seen on libraries and other building types, such as the Theological College at Bristol and the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle. Thus vertical elements can be understood to be important features in civic design schemes and their numbers would have been greater had it not been for financial restrictions imposed upon designers, for many vertical features were not erected on the grounds of cost despite being part of the original design proposal.

The Town Halls of a sizeable number of large urban centres contained a vertical element and this practice continued throughout the period considered up to 1914, by which time most large provincial settlements had already acquired a Town Hall. Therefore, as a result of this situation, it is difficult to state whether the use of towers would have continued in Town Hall designing in large provincial centres during the early twentieth century. But if the practice of Town Hall designing in somewhat smaller urban locations such as Colchester (1898-1902), Lancaster (1906-9), Stockport (1904-8) and South Shields (1905-10), with populations of about 34,500, 40,000 and 79,000 at the time of construction of their Town Halls, as well as Vestries in London, such as East Ham (1898-1903), Woolwich (1903-6) and Lambeth (1904-8), is used as a guide for design practice then towers would probably still have been employed.

Domes were a less common vertical element used during the selected time period but was nevertheless evident on large scale building's such as the Council House, Birmingham, Usher Hall, Edinburgh, the City Hall and Docks Office, Hull, and Birmingham University (see figure 8.10). The types of domes that were applied to civic design schemes varied greatly in form ranging from those with a steep pitch, such as the Docks Office, Hull, to those with a shallow pitch, for example, McEwan Hall, Edinburgh, which was also designed in an umbrella manner.

Figure 8.10. Types of domes used in civic design schemes in the period selected (from top left: The Mitchell Library, Glasgow, the Docks Office, Hull, the Central Police Station, Newcastle, Usher Hall, Edinburgh, Birmingham University and the City Hall at Cardiff).



This study of late-Victorian and Edwardian civic design has demonstrated that domes were always placed above a drum, the height of which varied considerably from a shallow structure with no pendentive like that of the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, the City Hall and National Museum of Wales, both erected in Cardiff, through to tall, elongated drums of considerable height decorated with window openings, columns and groins like those discovered in Hull on the City Hall and Docks Office buildings. A common feature observed at the top of domes were small stone lanterns positioned at the centre point with sculptured decoration placed near to the summit of the lantern, although the lanterns like the form of the domes upon which they were placed were observed to vary in design and size. At the

Usher Hall, Edinburgh, for example, the lantern of the dome was flattened and designed with a low height, so in keeping with the form of the dome upon which it is erected, while for other buildings such as the Docks Office, Hull, the lantern was thin in width and of a size about as high as the dome itself, excluding the drum. Small sized domes were observed at the top section of some clock towers which were part of Baroque or Classically styled buildings, usually of the domical or elliptical vaulted type of dome. Examples of domes at the summit of clock towers were noted at Bolton and Leeds for the Town Hall schemes, which were of such a form partly due to the square base upon which both domes were erected. Generally domes in civic design were erected upon circular drums.

During the Victorian period there was often a practical need to add a clock tower to public buildings as Cunningham (*Ibid.*: 166) has highlighted, an outcome of the majority of the population not possessing a watch. However this reason alone does not answer the question of why clock towers became such elaborate and enormous architectural structures in their own right.

The design of clock towers (see figure 8.11), which in many cases was in excess of 300 feet in height, usually consisted of two distinct stages although there were exceptions to this rule. The first, the lower stage, was often designed with minimal detailing and small window spaces. The upper stage was very much in contrast to the lower one and here the detailing, consisting of sculpting with elements symbolic of the nature of the settlement or stone decorative elements like urns or minarets, was often found. The design of the upper level of the clock towers had the tendency to consist of a number of sub-stages marked by cornice lines from which the width of the tower would get smaller as the height from the ground increased. However buildings like the City Chambers, Glasgow and the Town Hall's of Sheffield and Bradford had the width of their towers maintained until almost the top of the structure. Columns were often positioned between each cornice line on most towers not designed in a Gothic manner, acting as both an aesthetic and constructional element in the form of the tower. A notable feature of some towers designed to a Baroque or Classical style was that a small dome often surmounted it, as highlighted previously.

An universal feature in the design of towers was that the clock faces were to be located within the upper stage of the structure, that is the highest part of the tower, where the clock face could be easily seen from distance. Another common characteristic of vertical feature design was that it was constructed in the same material as the building upon which it sat.

This can be seen in a large number of public buildings and in only a handful of buildings was a different building material used, like in the Guildhall scheme at Hull, where the tower was erected from materials other than Portland Stone that was used for the main section of the building (see figure 8.11).

Figure 8.11. Examples of clock towers in civic design schemes. From top left: Sheffield Town Hall, Hull Guildhall, Leeds Town Hall, Portsmouth Guildhall, Sunderland Town Hall, Manchester Town Hall and Leicester Town Hall.



It has been noted earlier that vertical elements not only played an artistic role but a functional one too, acting as a clock tower, for example. Cunningham (*Ibid.*: 166) in his study of Victorian Town Halls noted that not only was the motive for display a common motive for erecting a vertical element as part of the composition but also there were other requirements of a functional nature, such as the need to provide extra office spaces or ventilation shafts. For example, the Town Hall structure at Leeds by Cuthbert Brodrick, which is universally acknowledged to be one of the Victorian period's finest Town Halls, employed ventilation shafts in the form of decorative subsidiary towers, placed towards the four corners of the building, to complement the design of the centrally located clock tower and to enhance the architectural effect of the building. It is possible too that these four towers, along with a decorated balustrade (Dixon and Muthesius, 1978: 152), were positioned on top of the outer walls of the building in order to help mask the building's roof from the eye at the street level, a significant aspect of civic design as shown in this chapter's section dedicated to roofing. The tower at Birmingham University also served a practical role in addition to its function as a clock tower, as the 325 feet high structure doubled as a scientific testing area where experiments connected to acoustics could be carried out and the lower section of the tower was also designed with office spaces. This use of a tower for office rooms can also be seen in Glasgow where the lower levels of the tower on the City Chambers was used for such a purpose.

The function of vertical elements such as domes was somewhat different from that of vertical elements such as clock towers. Not only did it too act as a landmark but also it served a structural function. Domes represent a means which allow for the least amount of material surface area possible to cover a given volume of space while concurrently providing a grand impression upon the on looking eye. When viewed from the inside a building domes establish a sense of spaciousness and strength in the internal arrangement while their structural ability to enclose large amounts of space with relatively limited materials helps to permit superior light and acoustic properties.

As stated earlier the importance of vertical elements to civic design schemes during the late-Victorian and Edwardian era was often great due to their placing on prominent axial lines established within the plan of the buildings, which would sometimes correspond with features in the surrounding environment. Upon examining civic design schemes it can be noted that towers or domes were frequently placed centrally along the main elevation, often on the central axial line of the principal elevation, regardless of the design style of the

building. The Gothic styled Town Halls of Manchester and Bradford each contained a centrally situated tower which helped to strengthen the symmetrical arrangement of the structure, providing a strong vertical element in the long front elevations, with Bradford Town Hall's front elevation, for example, being 275 feet in length while Manchester's was 350 feet. The clock towers of both these important civic schemes were positioned directly above the main entrance of each building so as to possibly advertise the location of the principal doorway. However other buildings had their towers situated in different places along the main elevations that often did not correspond with the placing of the main entrance and was instead related to other significant features of the building. Birmingham Council House, for instance, had both a centrally placed dome on the main elevation and a clock tower positioned close to where a side facade adjoined with the rear one.

Positions where vertical elements were placed in civic design schemes undertaken between about 1880 and 1914 included (see figure 8.12):

- At the centre of the front elevation, as noted previously, being positioned above a prominent feature in the composition such as the main entrance.
- To one side of the principal elevation.
- Above the ends and centre of the main elevation.
- At the centre of a secondary facade.
- At the ends of the front elevation.

The most common position for a vertical feature to be observed within a civic design undertaken during the period selected for study was on a position directly in the middle of the elevation above the central alignment of the plan that was usually marked by the main entrance. This was a feature of the most important and acclaimed public building designs of the time although in some instances vertical elements were pushed to one side of the central axial line of the building such as Leicester's Town Hall and the Council House, Birmingham. However by placing a tower or a dome above a prominent axial line the symmetrical effect of the elevations and plan could be reinforced. Examples of this included Hull's City Hall and Guildhall, Cardiff City Hall, a scheme which contained both a dome and tower, Birmingham University, the Mersey Docks Office (Liverpool), Liverpool's Municipal Buildings, Cardiff's National Museum of Wales, Glasgow University and Cartwright Hall

(Bradford). Significantly too in terms of civic design these buildings were all erected at different times within the Victorian and Edwardian period and were also structures designed to a range of design styles. Centrally positioned towers and domes were also observed on important public buildings erected in settlements not examined by this work, such as London with the Imperial Institute (1887-1893), by Thomas Colcutt, and the Victoria and Albert Museum extension (1899-1909) by Aston Webb and Ingress Bell.

Other possibilities for placing a vertical feature include positioning it towards the end of the front elevation, as shown by the figure 8.12. Reasons why this practice was prevalent included the need to emphasise a corner of the building in order to strengthen the composition for it could be weak otherwise, or the feature was placed in such a position so to terminate the vistas from various directions towards it. An example of this can be seen at the Town Hall, Sheffield. One possible reason why Edward Mountford, the architect of Sheffield's Town Hall (1891-7), put the clock tower towards the end of the front elevation was that it allowed the structure to associate with its surrounding, an important principle of civic design, with its position in the building's plan reinforcing the street pattern around the structure. This is shown in the plan of the area around the Town Hall's site in central Sheffield (see figure 8.13).

Mountford's design report for the Town Hall in Sheffield, published in *The Builder* in 1890 (1890: 471), noted that the placing of the tower at a corner of the front elevation was a result of the street pattern around the building which made the tower "conspicuous from all points", and gave views towards the site from along the number of roadways which approached the structure. Furthermore the choice of the corner location for the tower allowed Mountford to conveniently join together the Pinstone Street and Surrey Street elevations, the two most prominent outer walls of the building with each other, and to mask the sharp angle at which they adjoined.

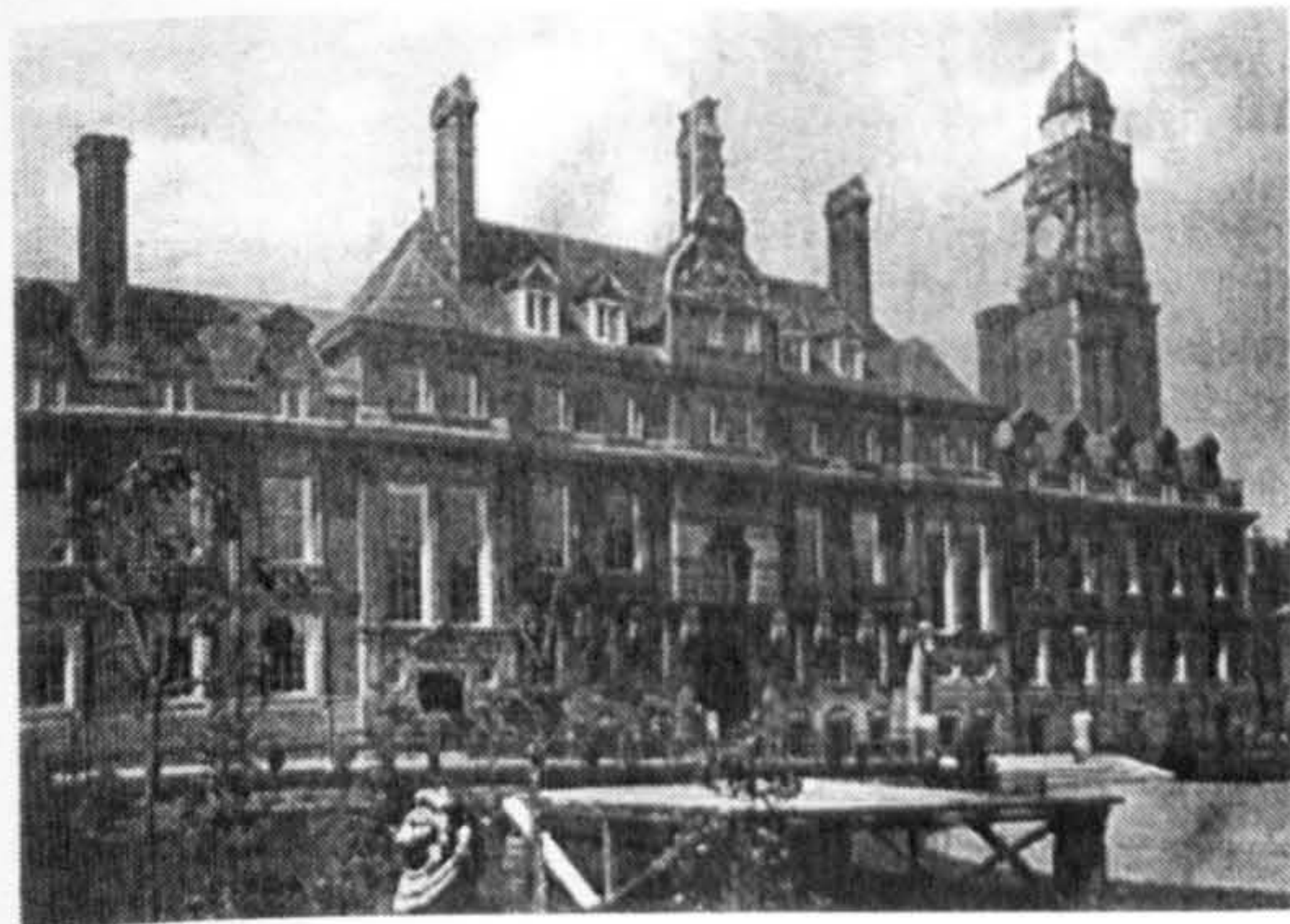
Figure 8.12. Examples of civic design schemes with the different locations of their vertical elements.



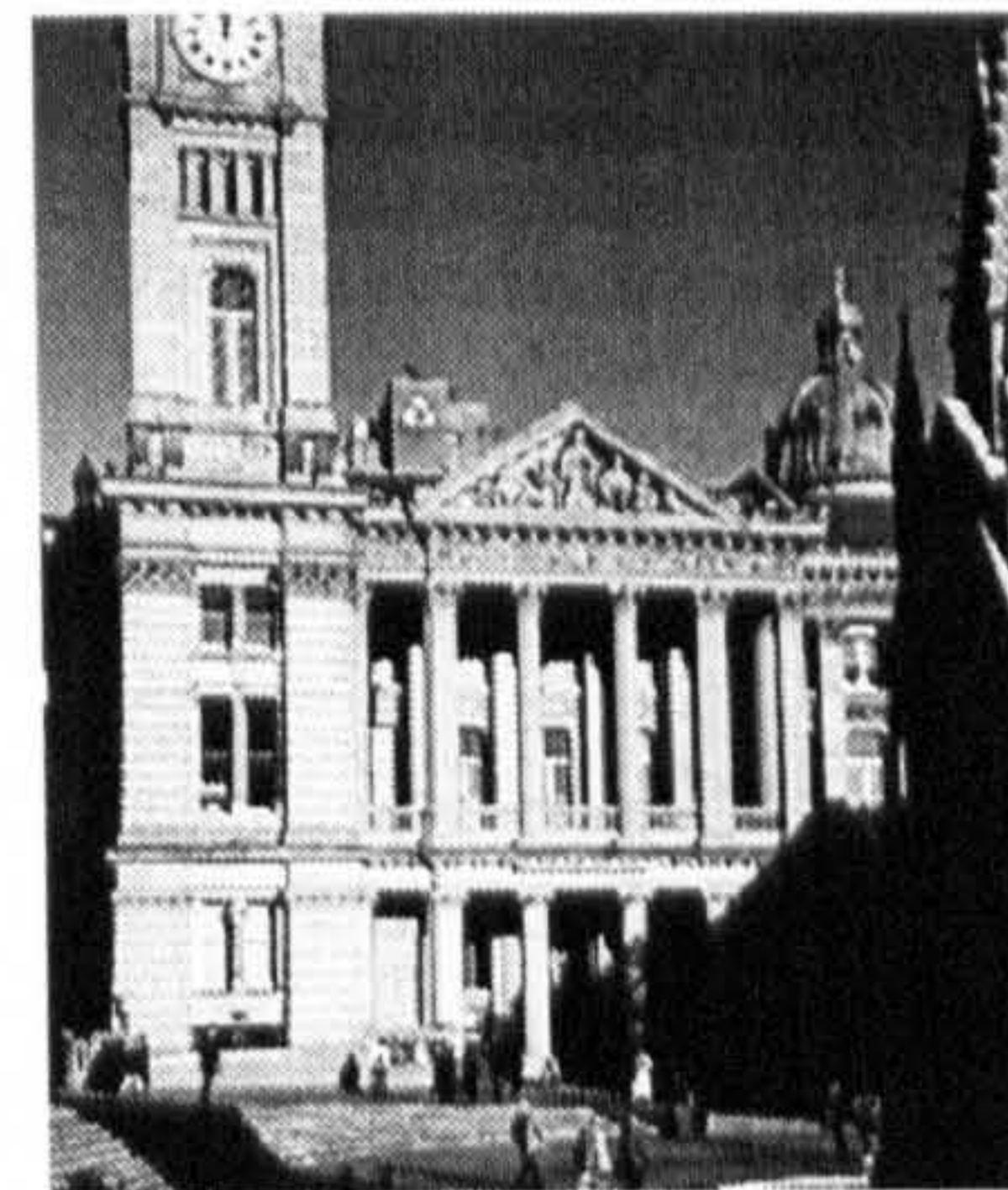
Left (National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh): Vertical elements placed at the corners situated of the front of the building.



Right (Reading Room, Dundee), at the centre of the main elevation.



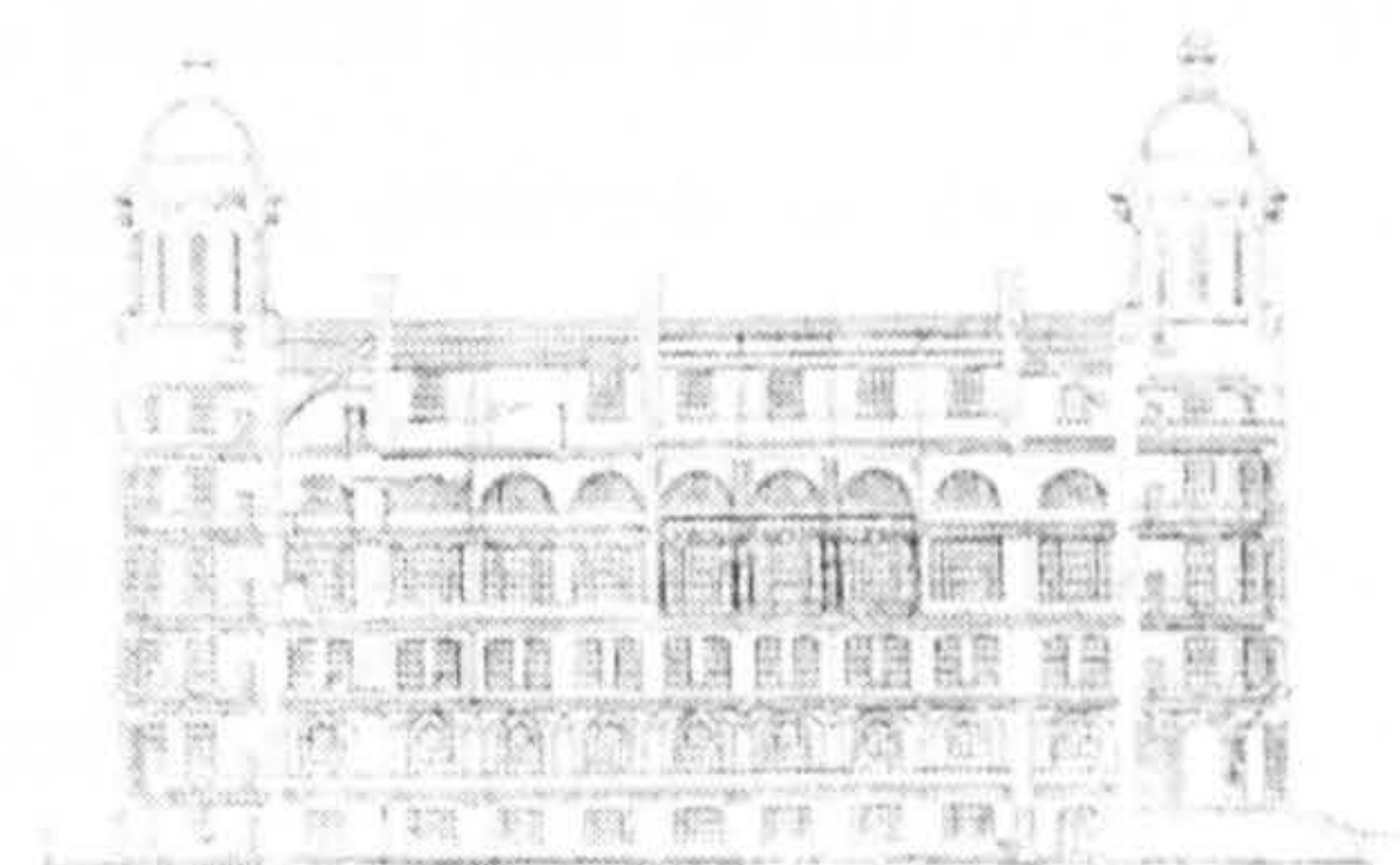
Left (Leicester Town Hall): To one side of the principal elevation.



Right (Birmingham Council House): To one side of a secondary elevation.



Left (Glasgow City Chambers): At the ends and centre of the main facade.

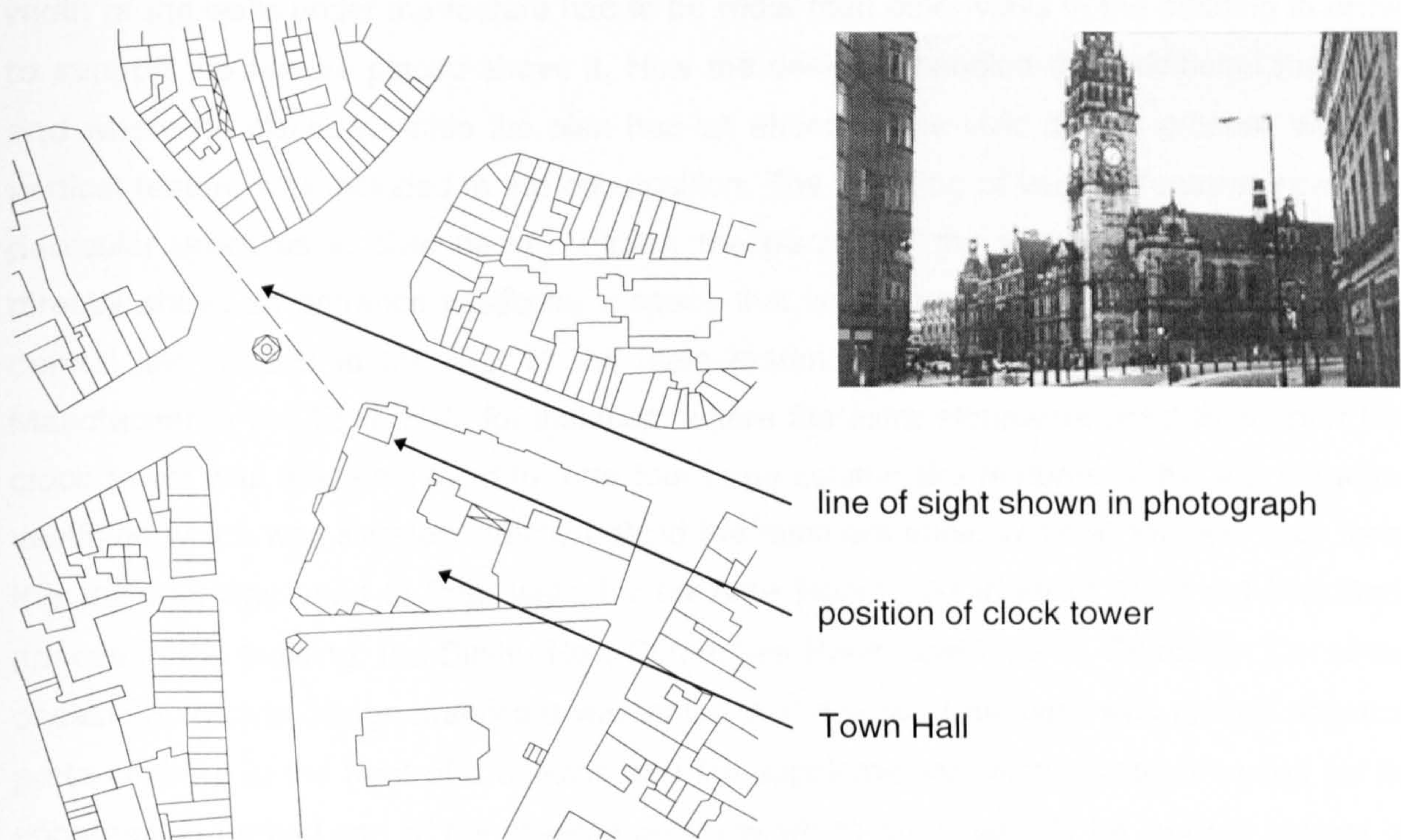


Right (Mersey Docks Office, Liverpool): At the ends of the all building's elevations.



Cardiff City Hall. Positioned on the central axis of the side elevation to the rear of a secondary entrance.

Figure 8.13. Plan of Sheffield Town Hall and surroundings in 1905 (source: Ordnance Survey) and photograph showing with the position of the clock tower as seen from Leopold Street (looking south east along the roadway).

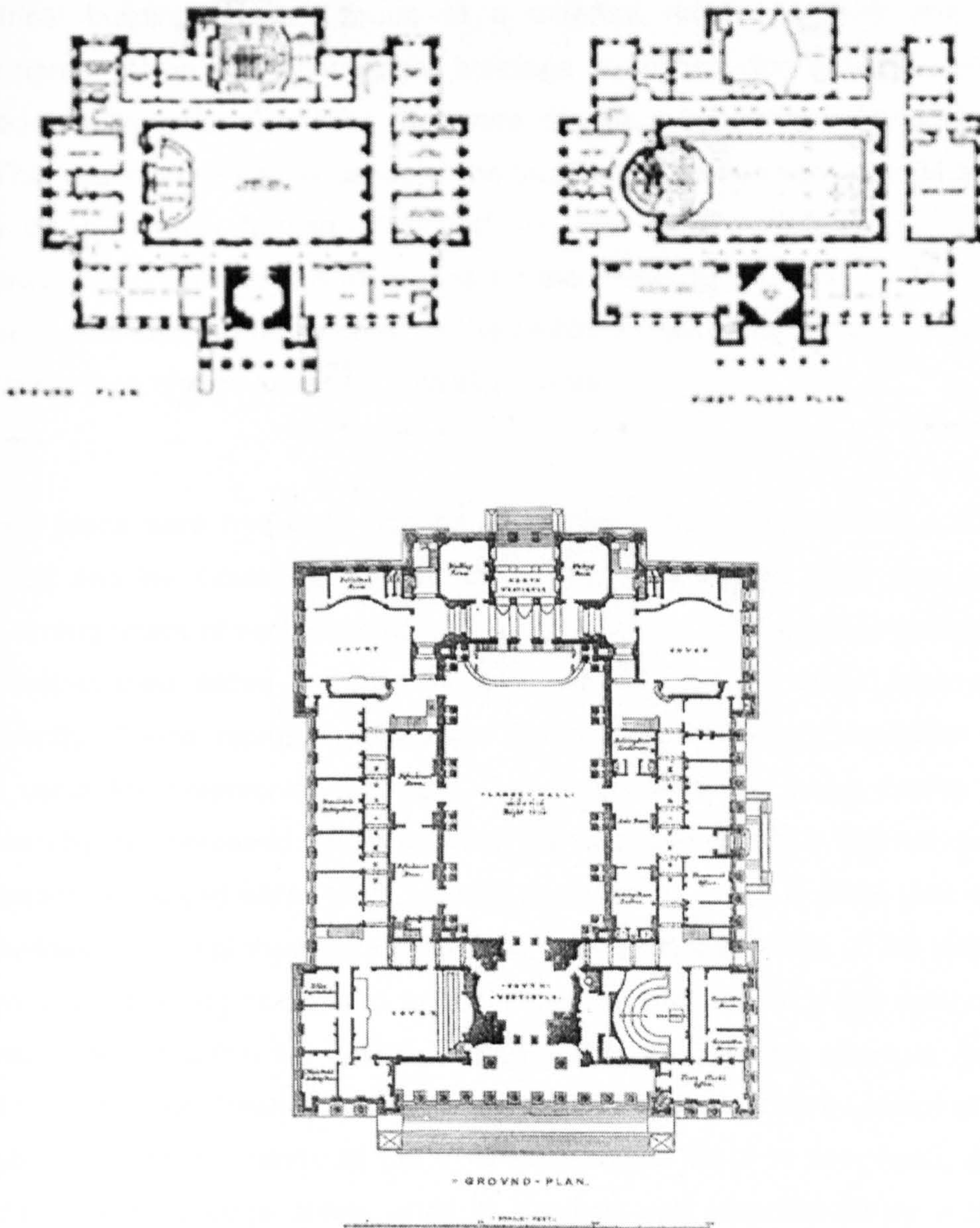


Another possibility for the placing of vertical features was to position one at an end of an elevation and to place another in the middle of the main facade. An example of this was at the Council House in Birmingham and also in the City Hall scheme at Cardiff, where two vertical elements were employed. In this particular civic design scheme a dome was placed above the main entrance in the centre of the front elevation while a clock tower was put at the centre of a side elevation, sited in such a position so to capture the central axis of a neighbouring building, the Law Courts. However the placing of a vertical element at the centre of a side elevation was a rare occurrence in civic design during the period studied as was the placing of vertical features at all the corners of a public building. The most notable examples of buildings with all their corners marked by a vertical element of some description included Birmingham University, the Mersey Docks Office, Liverpool, the Docks Office at Hull and the National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh. In the Mersey Docks Office design not only were domes placed at each corner of the building but the largest vertical feature in the scheme, also a dome, was placed at the centre of the plan. This too was a rare use of positioning vertical elements during the period considered.

The placing of a vertical feature into a building has a profound affect upon the building's plan because of the extra masonry needed to support the structure and this has civic design implications. The extra masonry used for construction purposes, for example, meant that the width of the walls under the feature had to be wider than other walls in the building in order to support the feature placed above it. How the designer handled this additional masonry and where he placed it within the plan had an effect on the civic design process when a vertical feature was included in the composition. The handling of vertical features revealed particular practices in civic design. Firstly, the placing of the vertical feature was often directly above an entrance vestibule, a space that would sometimes be located along the central line of axis to the rear of the main entrance. Such a situation was evident at Manchester in the Town Hall, for instance, where the extra stonework used to support the clock tower was also employed to form four huge column-like features within the entrance vestibule which was situated directly behind the main entrance, while at the first floor level the material was used to form walls for an Ante Room and three of the most important spaces in the building: the Dining Hall, Committee Room and Council Chamber. On some occasions in civic design practice it was noted that a vertical element was placed above a porte-cochère at the front of a building and the supplementary stone materials used for its construction formed part of the covered driveway which would usually be laid out in front of the primary entrance. The use of the porte-cochère was observed in only a handful of civic design schemes during the period considered, which included Cardiff City Hall, Cartwright Hall, Bradford, the City Art Gallery and Museum at Bristol and the Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow.

It can be noted therefore that as extra masonry used was conveniently fitted into the walls of a vestibule space, for example, that it did not really have too great an effect upon the form of the plan and the additional masonry used did not have a significant affect upon the form of the internal arrangement. Even at Sheffield the Town Hall clock tower, which was positioned near to a corner of the front elevation, did not significantly affect the plan of the building and it was used in a practical manner to form the walls of a strong room which was fitted inside the base of the vertical feature. A similar practical use of the extra masonry can be seen at Leeds Town Hall (see figure 8.14) where the auxiliary masonry needed to support the clock tower was employed to form columns which were placed in the vestibule and columns to line the Main Hall.

Figure 8.14. Plans of buildings showing the position of the additional masonry used for supporting the vertical feature used within each scheme (top: Bolton Town Hall ground floor and first floor plan and Leeds Town Hall).



Internal Arrangements

This section of the work considers the significance of the position of prominent room spaces within the internal arrangement of public buildings to the practice of civic design and while a number of building types were examined by this study many common planning

arrangements were noted even though spatial requirements tended to be different for each type of building. Emphasis in this section will be placed not only upon the largest spaces within internal arrangements of public buildings but also on other prominent spaces. It should be established at this point that the internal arrangements of symmetrical and non-symmetrical buildings tended to be of a different nature or form with the internal arrangements of the non-symmetrical buildings examined, for example, tending to be governed less by strict axial lines that were dominant factors in symmetrically arranged plans. This was partly a consequence of the fact that some non-symmetrical buildings were erected on awkwardly formed sites and so their plans reflected the unsuitability of symmetrical arrangements and axial lines for the particular situation. The influence of the designer should also not be ignored, as the architect may prefer a more original or natural arrangement than one governed by rigid alignments.

Town Hall plans were frequently dominated by two spaces, these being a Ceremonial or Public Hall and the Council Chamber. Other prominent rooms were also evident in the internal arrangement of such buildings, noticeable due to their size being larger than other spaces established within the internal arrangement and for other reasons discussed subsequently. These rooms included the Mayor's Apartments, Committee Rooms and spaces used for ceremonial purposes. The importance of these rooms was usually highlighted by the increased height between the floor and ceiling in the rooms, the amount of decoration employed within them, usually designed by persons other than the architects of the building, and that they were positioned at important sections of the plan, such as at the front of the building or close to the centre of the plan. Often these spaces were given additional attention within the building's plan and at Cardiff, for example, the City Hall's Council Chamber was treated as a particular feature within the front section of the building, being positioned at the centre of the front elevation at the first floor level, directly above which was placed a large dome, while its position was emphasised by a porte cochère placed at its front which faced towards an open space of some importance.

The planning of Town Halls erected during the period considered was influenced by the Town Hall schemes at Leeds and Manchester which were erected prior to the period covered by this work. However their importance should not be overlooked for their planning forms reappear in later buildings, particularly those erected on substantial sites of an open nature. Despite both being unencumbered from other structures, the Leeds and Manchester Town Halls adopted different internal arrangements although both buildings each have their

Main Hall placed behind an entrance vestibule situated in accord with the building's central line of axis (in the Leeds scheme) or parallel to the central axial line (at Manchester). Around the largest space in each these two civic schemes was placed a corridor that was so designed so as to provide circulation around the building and access to other spaces within the plan. The central alignment was marked at the exterior of both buildings by architectural features such as a large portico, at Leeds, and a gable, at Manchester. Immediately to the rear of these elements, situated above the main entrance vestibule, was placed a vertical feature, a clock tower in each case. Symmetry was a highly visible element in both building's plans but at Manchester the form of the site influenced the planning process and spaces were arranged so as to practically solve the problem of the oddly shaped site. The type of arrangement developed at Leeds by Cuthbert Brodrick, and adapted by Waterhouse at Manchester, reached its climax at Cardiff City Hall, designed by Lanchester, Rickards and Stewart, where a ring corridor enclosed the largest room in the plan, the 130 feet long Assembly Hall, which was located at the centre of the plan albeit at ninety degrees to the axis established from the centre of the front elevation.

Figure 8.15. Cardiff City Hall ground floor plan with the Assembly Hall at the centre.



The most common position for the largest space in Town Hall buildings, usually the Public Hall, was to be put at the centre of the plan around which was located a corridor and a ring of other rooms. But by the end of the nineteenth century in some Town Hall buildings a major change was occurring in relation to the planning of this principal space within the overall composition. This new difference was that the space was now being rotated across the central axis to a ninety degree angle, as shown by figure 8.15, and was a particularly common feature in some of the largest of the late-Victorian and Edwardian buildings erected. These Town Halls were usually erected on relatively isolated sites as well, which is of civic design note, as the designers were thus less constrained in the design process by the influence of the surrounding environment. Sites which were open offered more design freedom than those which were cramped within the existing urban form.

For other building types the form of the plan differed to that of the Town Hall as an outcome of the different function that the new building was to perform. This naturally brought about a different response and attitude to the civic design scheme by the architect concerned. Within the combined Art Gallery and Museum building type, for example, it was common for the main spaces to be placed not along the central alignment of the building but at either at ninety degrees to the main alignment or secondly for important spaces to be placed within wings established in the plan, often located at the ends of the main elevation whose longitudinal axis ran parallel to the central one. An example of this type of plan can be viewed at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow. Public buildings of similar plans include Cartwright Hall, Bradford, the University College at Nottingham, the William Brown Library, Liverpool, and the Museum and Library building at Sunderland, which had important spaces within its plans located away from the central section of the internal arrangement.

Buildings of a highly practical nature such as Post Offices were usually designed with internal forms reflecting the orderly nature of its function. In a building such as this little evidence was often noted of grandiose axial planning lines being employed and instead large open spaces dominated the plan, one large space often being placed at the front of the building where the public counter was situated followed by another large room at the rear of the plan which was generally used as a Sorting Office. It was common however for a Post Office building's principal entrance, to the rear of which would be situated the Public Lobby, to be positioned at the centre of the main elevation. Open plans like those noted in Post Office buildings were also seen in the internal arrangements of Library buildings which

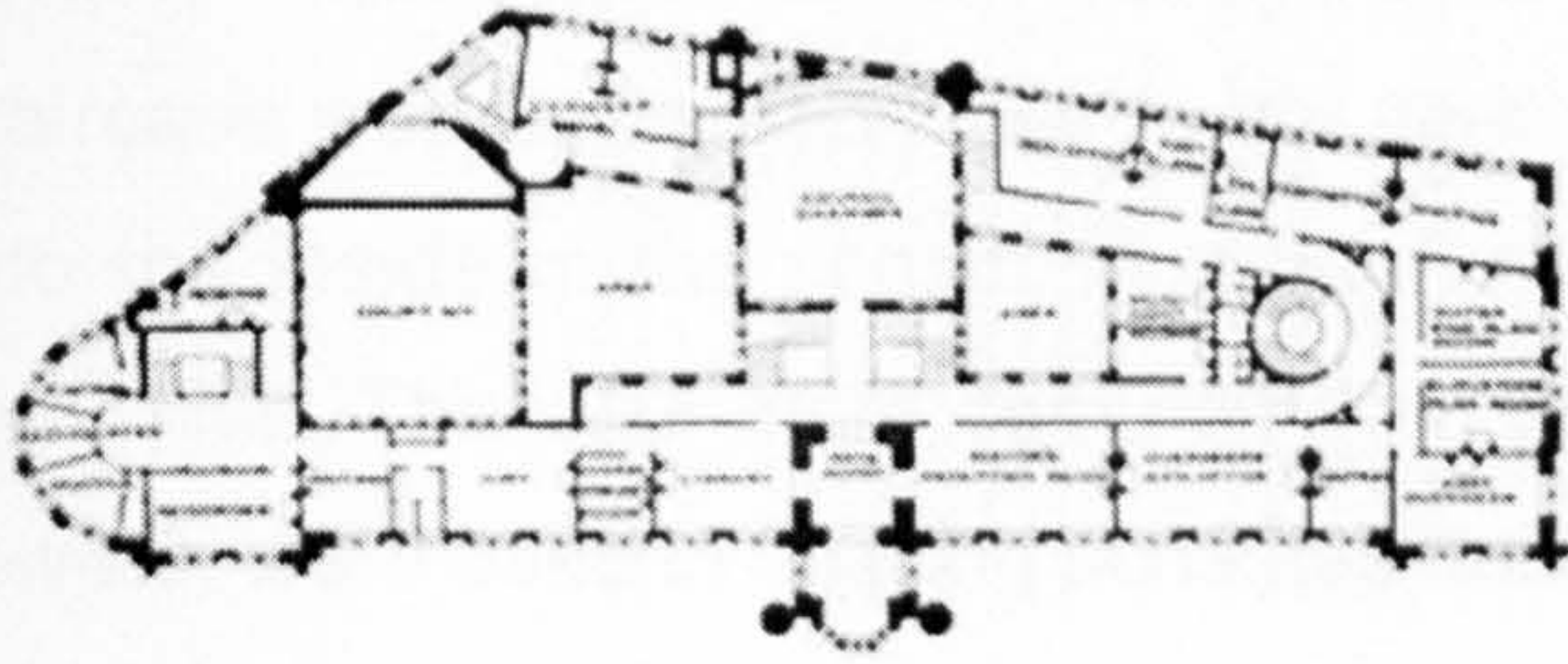
were usually formed with a limited number of spaces such as a Reading Room, a Local Studies Room, a Reference Room and a Book Lending area.

A significant feature of the planning of civic design schemes was the placing of the principal staircase within the internal arrangement of the public building. In the smallest sized public buildings due to space being at an optimum, as a result of the limited size of the plan, it was common for the central axis of the building to be marked not by a central space but instead by a smaller feature like a staircase around which spaces were dispersed. Examples of this were identified at the Education Board Office, Leeds, and the River Wear Commissioners Office at Sunderland. There was tendency in the smaller public edifices to place a staircase on the alignment of the main entrance behind the vestibule space. However in the larger sized structures staircases were also put in positions that corresponded with central or other prominent axial lines established in the plan. This arrangement can be seen in Sunderland's Town Hall, at the City Hall, Cardiff, where the two main staircases were placed opposite each other across the Ante Hall on the primary north-south axis of the plan, and also at Cartwright Hall, Bradford, where staircases were placed on each side of the Central Hall, a space laid out along the central axis of the composition.

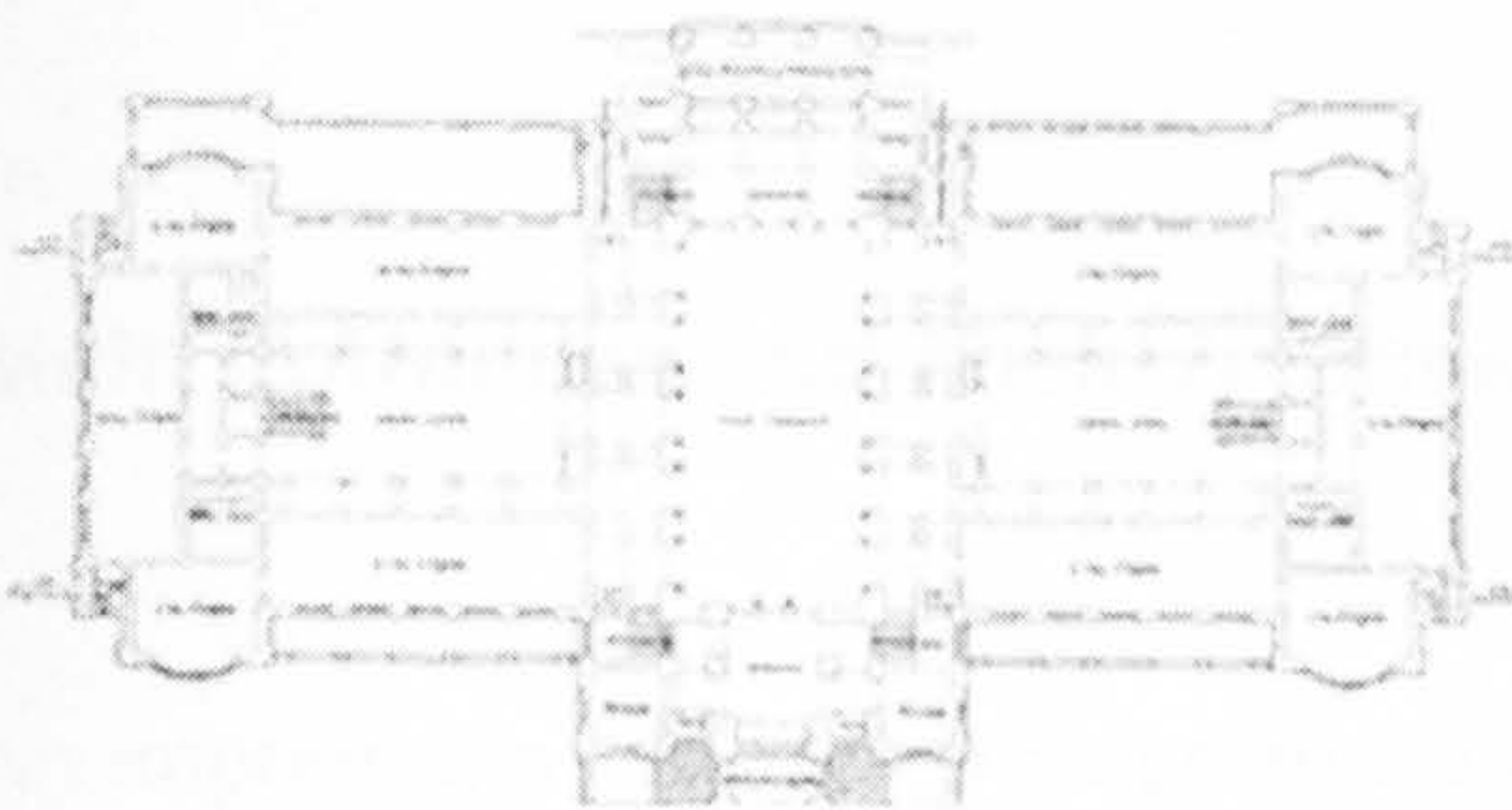
It was common in civic design for two prominent staircases to be positioned so that they directly faced towards each other or for the principal staircase to be placed either close to or on the central line of axis. However other places in the internal form where staircases in civic design schemes were placed included:

- At the end of corridors. This was a common practice in the larger buildings, such as Bolton Town Hall, where they acted as terminating markers.
- In positions close to the end of corridors, for example, and the City Hall, Cardiff.
- Close to or directly behind a secondary entrance.
- In situations within the plan where the alignment of the elevations changed dramatically with the staircases acting as a pivot on which the angle of the building altered. This can be seen at Manchester Town Hall and to a lesser degree in the plan of the Town Hall, Bradford.

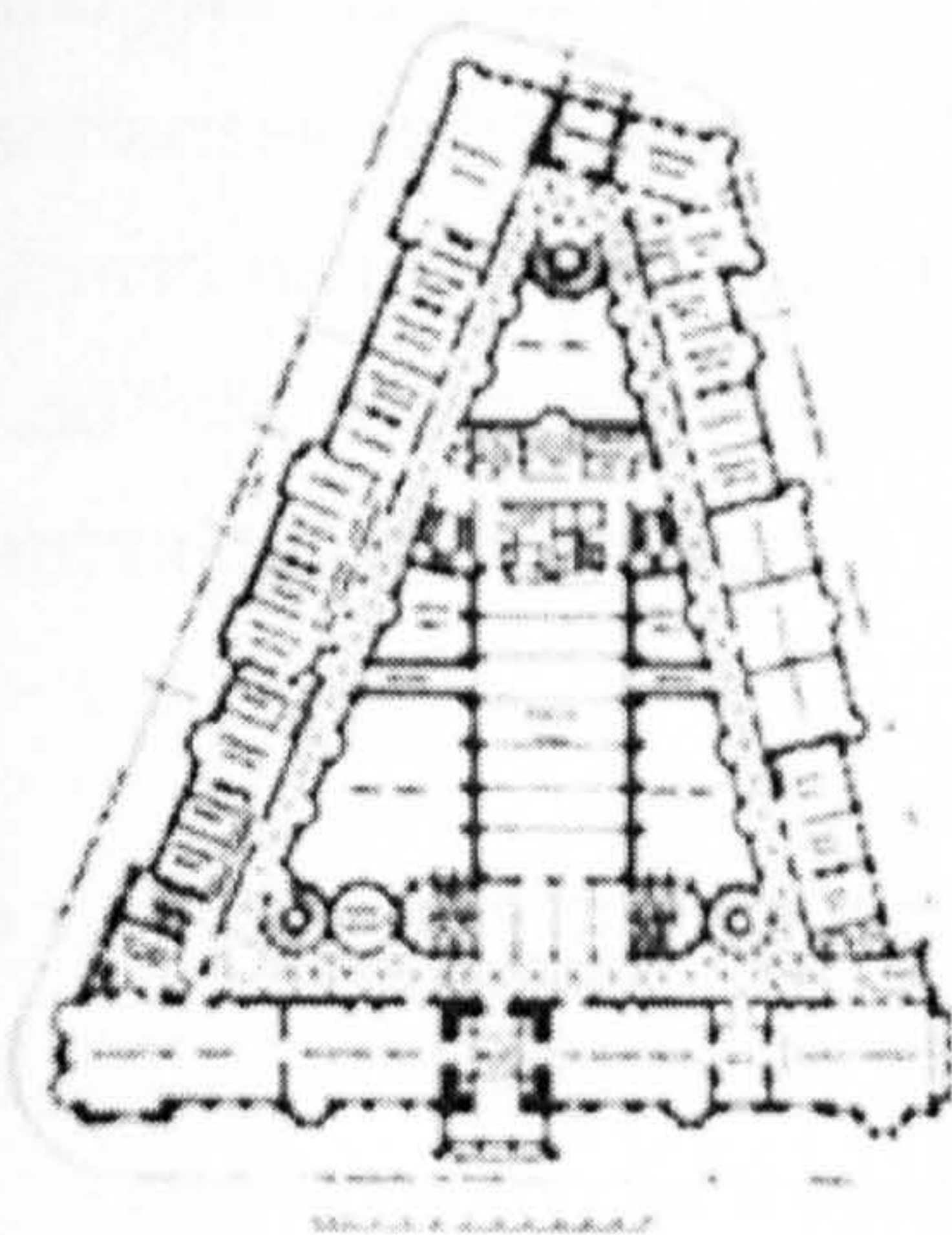
Figure 8.16. Plans of buildings showing positions of prominent staircases.



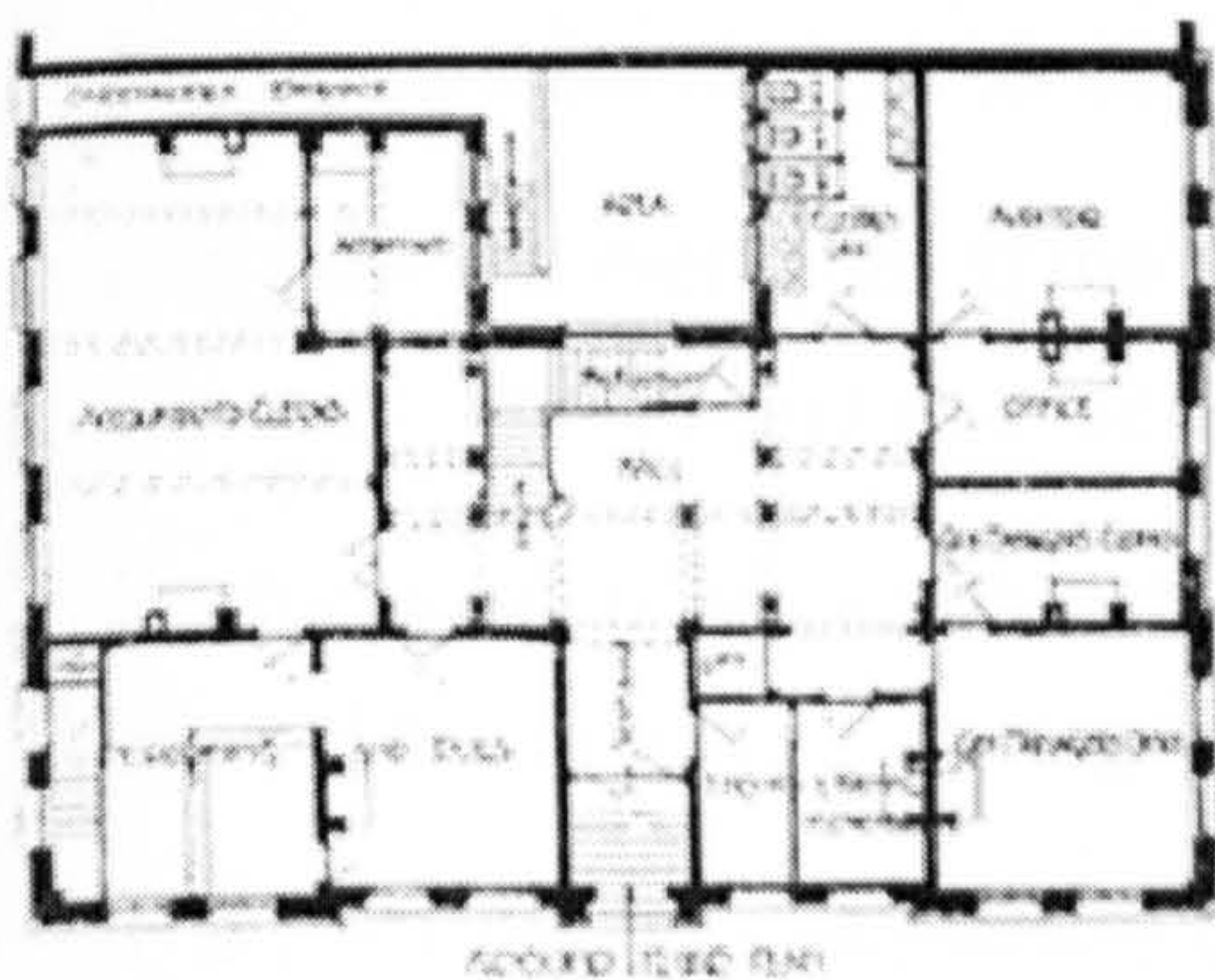
Bradford Town Hall. Staircases placed facing opposite to each other in a position relating to axis at centre of front elevation.



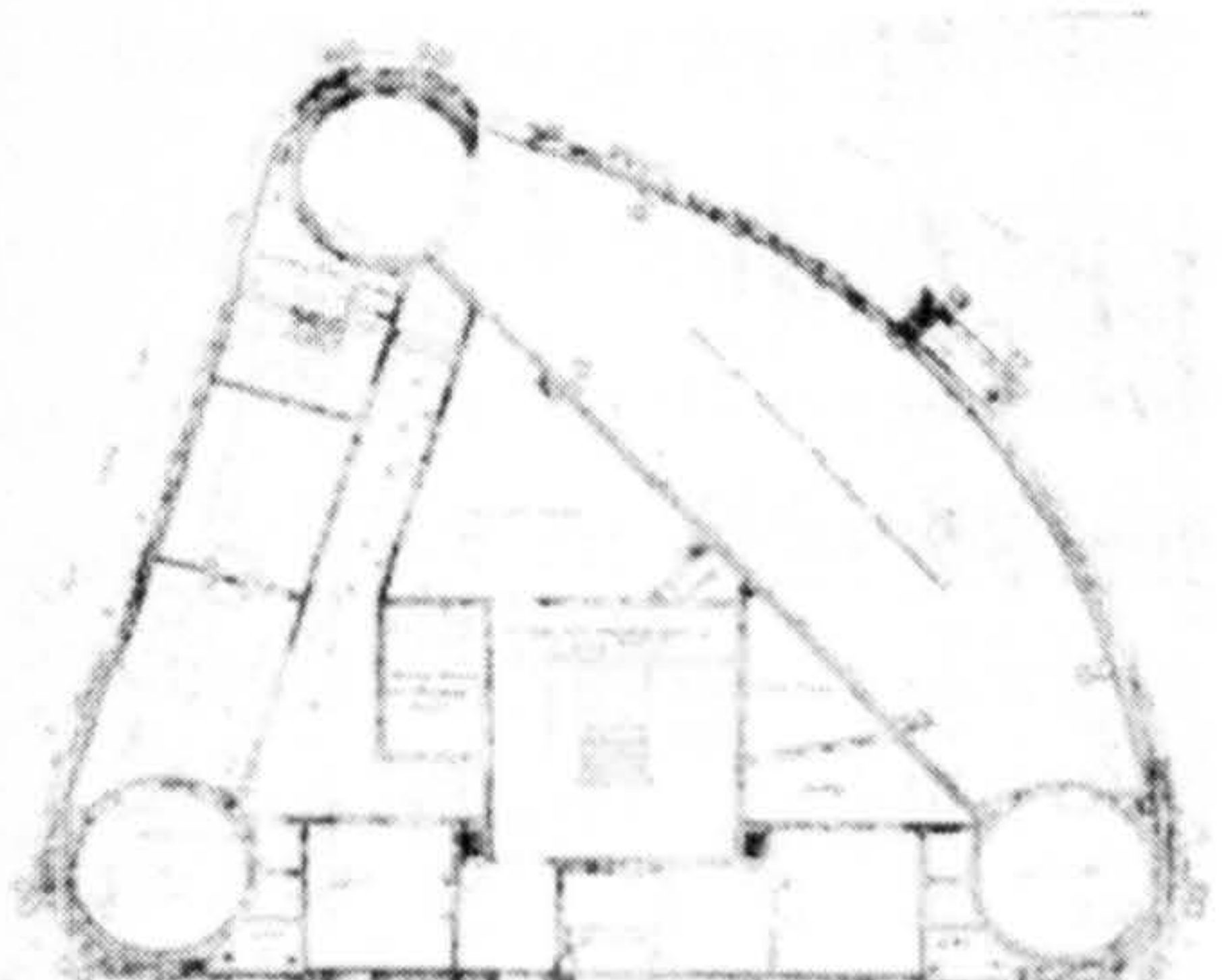
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow. Staircases facing towards each other but positioned at opposite ends of the building.



Manchester Town Hall. Staircases placed inside the corners of the plan to help mask the change in alignment of the main elevations within the internal arrangement of the building.



The River Wear Commissioners Office, Sunderland. Staircase positioned parallel to central axis of the front elevation.



The Docks Office, Hull. Staircase situated directly behind the main entrance which was put at the centre of the front elevation.

Staircases were noticed in civic design practice to never be placed directly beneath a vertical feature such as a clock tower or dome although in some buildings the primary staircase was positioned close to the vertical element in order to present spectacular views into the inside of the construction upon moving up the flight of steps, such as at the City Hall, Hull. This was more common it should be noted where domes, as opposed to clock towers, were used in building schemes during the period considered.

Main Entrances and Their Treatments

An important aspect of civic design was the treatment of the main entrance, often recessed, and the employment of approaches in front of it. It has already been highlighted that entrances were often positioned at the centre of the main elevations and that they were sometimes marked by other civic design characteristics such as vertical elements. In addition, other architectural features were frequently positioned in proximity to the main entrances of the buildings studied and these elements included:

- A flight of steps positioned directly in front of the entrance doorway. Often smaller flights of steps were noted in front of side entrances. In Classically formed public buildings it was common for a portico to sometimes also be used.
- Steps were sometimes placed to the rear of the principal entrance.
- Architectural elements at the side or above the main entrance. These included columns, pilasters, gables and pediments.
- Features such as lamps were sometimes placed on each side of the doorway at the front of the structure, arranged in accord with the central axis of the front elevation.
- The principal doorway would consist of double doors and was often recessed behind the building line of the elevation.
- An area of open space, often filled with statuary, other than that of a roadway established in front of the main elevation and its entrance. This can be seen in a number of civic design schemes, particularly for Town Hall buildings like those at Leeds, Cardiff, Glasgow, Newcastle, Bolton, Manchester, Liverpool, Portsmouth, Leicester, Bradford, Hull and Birmingham.

- Approaching roadways. At both the Leeds and Manchester Town Halls the centre of the front elevation aligned with an oncoming roadway although the change in axis between the thoroughfare and the centre of the building was marked by statuary. But it was unusual to note in civic design that a roadway was incorporated into the treatment of the main entrance simply because existing road patterns around buildings were not always utilised by architects and that road patterns did not make this type of approach possible.

All of the buildings examined for this work provided examples where the designer(s) had employed an approach of some description in proximity to the main entrance. Town Halls in particular had the most pronounced approaches and often combined a large flight of steps with other features such as lamp posts or, in a small number of cases, statuary, which were sited in positions usually related to the central axis established in the design of the main elevation and sometimes the internal arrangement.

Flights of steps located on an alignment with the main entrance of a public building, that is directly in front of the entrance, was a frequently used civic design element during the period examined, and this feature was used on a large number of buildings of differing types. A total of 49 buildings were designed with steps ranging from small to large flights as part of the composition of their main entrance. Steps can be seen to serve a number of functions and not only a prosthetic one, for example, being used to help assist in the display of the high status of a public building. The form of the flight of steps positioned in front of the main elevation of public buildings revealed many features of architectural regard. All stairs erected as part of the composition of a public building, with two exceptions, the Science and Technical College at Liverpool and the Training College, Dundee, were observed to be arranged in a direct manner, a straight stair, involving no tapering or turns at the base or top, and were designed with a high degree of regularity in terms of their layout. The two Colleges highlighted above were each designed with a quarter-turn flights of steps with landing in front of the principal entrance. The number of steps used in civic design schemes varied considerably from one or two at a minimum through to over 20 for the Town Hall at Bolton. For a handful of the largest public buildings the steps observed at the front of the main elevation were designed with a generous width so as to create a sense of monumentality. At Bolton the width of the Town Hall steps was in excess of 100 feet. The feeling of monumentality, based upon an exploitation of symmetry, helped to exhibit albeit in a symbolic way the strength of the public authority while steps were employed to architecturally accentuate the importance of the main entrance through providing a dramatic

approach to it. Large, broad flights of steps can be seen at Portsmouth and Leeds, where they formed a substantial part of the composition of the main elevation of the respective Town Halls.

The provision of open spaces was often essential for new public buildings to show themselves off to full capacity even though few public buildings erected between about 1880 and 1914 were built on open sites which permitted open viewing from the front other than the opportunity afforded by a local roadway. But the creation of new public spaces in front of public buildings reveals that they were used for display purposes, an important component of civic pride in the period examined. The use of space in front of Gothic buildings was less pronounced in civic design practice during the period studied and Cunningham (*Ibid.*: 132) has argued that this was an outcome of the style being suited to being seen along a street as the style did not really require an open space of considerable extent in front of a building in order for it to be seen at its best. However where an open space was provided this made an often significant contribution to the local townscape. The impact of such an open area was often enhanced further through the placing of statuary within it and from the late-1880s to circa 1902-3 many open spaces in the centre of provincial settlements were filled with statues to commemorate the jubilees and reign of Queen Victoria, often erected in positions relating to the design and internal arrangement of the public building located nearby, for example, in front of the main entrance. Such an action of placing statuary in relation to the design and plan of its architectural context represents an effective use of symmetrical design and planning in order to create visual effect, evident at the Town Halls of Leeds, Leicester, Glasgow and the City Hall, Hull, where statuary was situated in open spaces established in front of each building in accord with the central axis of the structures' principal elevation.

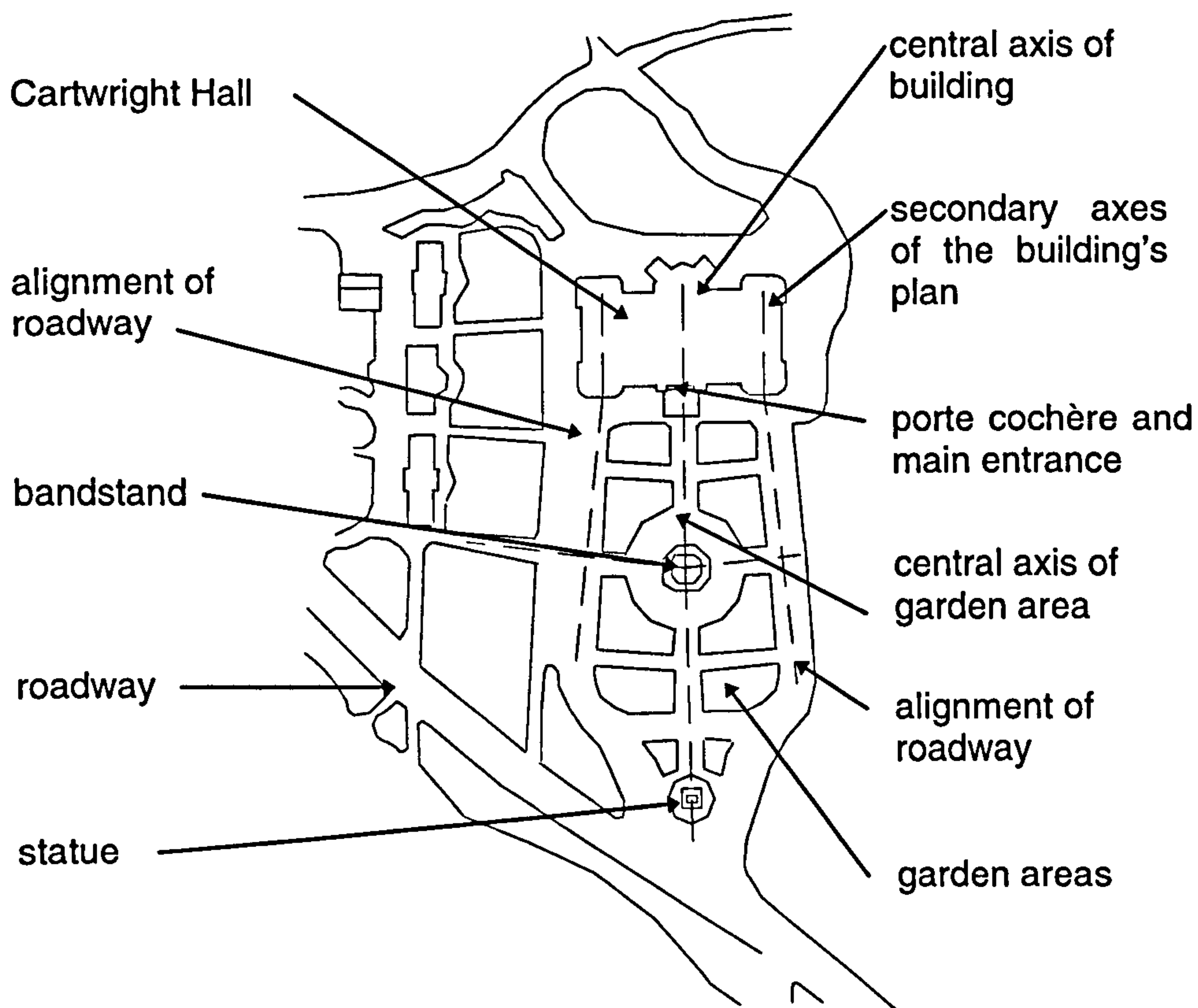
The creation of an open space as part of a public building's composition formed an important element in a number of modern architectural schemes regardless of the design style employed and were always placed in front of the main elevation of a building. However these public spaces were not left open and were, as highlighted earlier, sometimes filled with architectural elements after the edifice had been completed. It was noted to be rare in civic design for the space to be filled with features during the process of constructing the public building. Only after the building was completed were features added to the space, even if it was established as part of the overall scheme, such as the Town Hall scheme at Leicester where both the building and Town Hall Square were established at the same time.

Features placed in proximity to public buildings include lamp posts, obelisks, statues, fountains, a band stand and a water trough. At Leeds, for example, a pair of carved stone lions were erected at each side of the Town Hall's steps but the Portland stone figures were not commissioned until seven years after the construction process at Leeds had ended.

It must be noted that it was far less common for a building other than a Town Hall to incorporate a space of substantial size as part of its composition unless it was set well back within its site as the choice of sites for these buildings were not always advantageous for planning and designing of this type. However where a civic design scheme was undertaken at the urban periphery the possibility of establishing approaches in front of the building was more favourable due to a lack of constraints such as cramped surroundings which was commonly experienced towards the centre of urban settlements and as a result many structures at the urban fringe were designed with carriageways and spaces in front of their main elevations. Arguably the grandest example of this is Cartwright Hall, Bradford, which had a formal garden area and roadways laid out in front of the building all in accord with the central axis of the public building and its symmetrically formed internal arrangement, an alignment which was also marked at some distance away from the building by a statue and a bandstand (see figure 8.17).

A feature employed in association with treatment of the main entrance was the recessing of the principal doorway behind the building line of the front elevation, and as noted previously it was often marked by architectural features at the sides, above and in front of the doorway, although in some instances a flight of steps was positioned to the rear of the main entrance inside the line of front elevation. Other noticeable features at the front of public buildings, apart from those mentioned earlier, especially in the combined Art Gallery and Museum building type were porte-cochères, always placed at the centre of the front elevation in front of the main entrance. Significantly porte cochères were noted to only be used as part of Baroque styled compositions which were erected later in the period studied, that is from the late-1890s onwards when the Baroque style of architecture was enjoying a revival in Britain and was popular in public architectural practice.

Figure 8.17. Cartwright Hall and surrounding area with features shown (source: Ordnance Survey, 1908).



The importance of side entrances should not be underestimated in civic design practice even though a significant number of public buildings, over 20 in total, were erected on sites that were built up on two or more of their sides. The treatment given to side entrances varied greatly although where a symmetrical interior arrangement was employed emphasis was usually placed upon the side entrance(s) of the building as a matter of course. The treatment of side entrances was generally similar to the approach adopted for main entrances in civic design although the features used were generally smaller in scale. The common treatments of the side entrance can be listed as follows:

- Entrance placed in the centre of a secondary elevation or towards an end of the main elevation, situated in a position that related to prominent axes established within the internal arrangement.

- Entrance approached by a flight of steps, albeit often smaller in scale than those situated in front of the principal entrance.
- Side entrances usually consisted of a double doorway.
- The entrance would sometimes be marked by features such as a stone wall, of a low height, lamp posts and other features positioned directly in front or at the side of the entrance. At the Mappin Art Gallery and Museum building, Sheffield, for example, a fountain in a circular base was situated in front of the side entrance.
- Bring forward of the building line close to the position of the secondary entrance.
- The entrance would be marked by design elements such as sculpture, columns or a pediment immediately above or at the side of the doorway on the elevation of the building.
- The entrance would be marked by a vertical element. At the City Hall, Cardiff, the side entrance was marked by a 200 feet high clock tower. However this was a very unusual occurrence during the period selected for study.
- Entrance given no emphasis at all. At the City Hall, Hull, the side entrance opens onto the street and was marked by no features other than that of a double door.

Roads and Civic Design

A significant number of civic buildings examined, almost 25 in total, utilised the local road pattern to assist with the civic design process primarily through the handling of vistas, using the direct alignment of the oncoming roadway to meet with prominent features on the main elevations. Despite local road patterns only being influential upon a relatively small proportion of public buildings erected from 1880 to 1914 its importance to the practice of civic design should not be ignored. At the Guildhall, Portsmouth, for example, roadways that approached the southern elevation of the building were utilised to establish views toward the centre of the elevation with their alignments corresponding with the position of an entrance. At Leeds a similar event occurred in the design of the Town Hall although the axis of an oncoming road, Park Cross Street, did not meet directly with the building. Instead statuary was sited in front of the main elevation at the place where the oncoming road alignment met with the central axis of the edifice. At Sheffield roadways around the Town Hall influenced the position of the clock tower in the building's plan which was subsequently placed at the

corner of the front elevation towards a prominent road junction rather than at the centre of the elevation, and the Docks Office, Hull, was formed with domes placed at the end of the front elevation so as to help terminate the vista along a thoroughfare that came directly towards it. Also in Hull the change in the alignment of one of the settlement's most prominent roadways, Alfred Gelder Street, was used to determine the position of the entrance to the Law Courts section of the Guildhall. At Cartwright Hall, Bradford, the road pattern around the building was laid out as part of the building's scheme and showed the influence of the building's form upon it. Not only was a symmetrical road layout employed but all roads were laid out in accord with the central axis of the building. The side roads in front of the building approached each end of the principal elevation, in so doing adjoining with the longitudinal axes established in the wings of the building.

Building Materials and Civic Design Schemes

A significant characteristic of civic design was the type of building material used in the construction process. Materials used during the period considered came from a variety of sources and were of a wide range of types, texture and colours, although two trends were evident during the period considered. The first was that materials used for public building was often quarried from local sources. The second tendency was towards the employment of Portland stone, a limestone material dating from the Jurassic period that was quarried in southern England, which was first used in British architecture by Inigo Jones for the Banqueting Suite, Whitehall, London, in 1619. The popularity of the stone increased considerably after Sir Christopher Wren used it in the construction of St Paul's Cathedral, London (1675-1710). As a consequence of the national significance of this building Portland stone became a more commonly used building material in later decades. However by the end of the nineteenth century its popularity among architects of public buildings had attained new found heights and was being used to erect a large number of buildings in many large sized provincial settlements.

The popularity of Portland stone has been seen by Shore (1957) to be a consequence not only of its aesthetic properties, but its ability to be used in large blocks or be carved into small, detailed pieces and because of its durability. The toughness of Portland stone noted Shore (*Ibid.*: 66) was an outcome of the material having a high resistance to damp, dirty air

such as that found in industrial settlements, and secondly from the fact that it weathered evenly and not in patches. In the context of the grimy atmospheres of the large industrial cities of Britain where the air quality was poor and building materials were constantly being attacked by corrosive atmospheric particles, it was important that designers selected materials that could cope with the harsh conditions as well as present an appearance pleasing to the eye. Portland stone as a hard wearing stone could deal adequately with the torrid atmospheric conditions of British industrial settlements and this in part was reflected in its widespread use between about 1880 and 1914.

In the smaller sized provincial settlements studied for this work local stones and slates for the roofing tended to be more prevalent in civic design schemes yet local materials were still to be used in some larger provincial places such as Leeds. Local stones were particularly common in the large towns and cities of Scotland, where it was possibly more troublesome and costly to transport vast quantities of stone needed for the construction of large scale structures from non-local sources due to the increased geographical distance from the place of excavation. It can be assumed therefore that this factor was an influence upon the lack of use of Portland stone in Scotland during the period studied, where local materials were favoured more. In Aberdeen, for example, so prevalent was the use of one locally quarried material, Granite, during the course of the nineteenth century that the settlement acquired a reputation for being the 'granite city'. However, significantly for the practice of civic design, the intention of the designer to prefer the use of local materials over non-local stones cannot be disregarded.

The application of particular building materials in civic design projects was affected by a number of factors, one of which was the size of financial budgets available to local governments for public building. Financial matters had a significant effect on the practice of civic design as Corporations tried to rescue a degree of human comfort and dignity from urban environments that were largely dirty, smelly, noisy and disadvantageous to the majority of the urban populous who lived in poor quality housing with few amenities. Thus the attack on dirt and disease tended to often take precedence over artistic matters in the day-to-day running of many Victorian Corporations. Sometimes the only exceptions came with the construction of Town Halls or other buildings deemed to be of local importance where matters such as civic pride and civic rivalry meant that art took on greater significance but even for these buildings budgets were not limitless. Constant financial wrangling during the course of construction was not uncommon during the period considered and this would

frequently affect civic design matters with, for example, elements such as clock towers not being constructed so as to lessen the cost of the scheme.

In the smaller sized provincial settlements where Corporations had lesser financial budgets due to a more modestly sized local tax base from which public expenditure came, matters such as high labour costs and the cost of building materials counted against the adoption of more expensive materials, particularly when compared to cheaper materials such as brick. However a preference for natural stone over processed bricks between about 1880 and 1914 was noted to have existed for even in the smaller provincial settlements brick was not taken up in civic design practice. Brick was only employed, for example, for one Town Hall, at Leicester, where a distinct Queen Anne design style was also used. But for one particular building type, University buildings, bricks were used on frequent occasions, hence the emergence of the term 'red brick university' from around the turn of the twentieth century.

A feature of civic design that was commonly recognised was that the materials used for civic design schemes was usually different to that used on buildings in the surrounding environment, which helped to emphasise the importance of the public building. The employment of a differing building material from that of the rest of the urban environment must be viewed as a conscious means by architects, along with the use of other civic design features such as the raising of the ground floor level, to provide, for example, a deliberate separation between public and private buildings, in so doing emphasising the importance of the public structure.

The use of different building materials for public buildings was most apparent where the surrounding local environment was largely constructed from brick and where the setting consisted of building types of a greatly contrasting nature to the public buildings erected, like slum housing, public houses or industrial buildings. Examples of contrasting building types being placed in proximity to large public buildings was observed in most cities, particularly in central Birmingham and along William Brown Street, Liverpool, which new buildings were erected on sites previously occupied by industrial units although many remained in the surrounding area after the civic design schemes began. Significantly, many of the buildings erected often prior to the construction of public buildings were types viewed in civic and artistic circles as not being particularly dignified, which were often erected from materials that were often cheap in cost and allowed for rapid construction. Therefore an important public structure erected in an area surrounded by such lowly perceived buildings perceived

would not be constructed from the same building material as its neighbours as a matter of course. Any possible structural distinction was often further enhanced by the need to erect prominent public buildings from a material which was deemed to be appropriate and as highlighted earlier there was a need in some instances to make the a public building as distinct as possible from that of its surroundings. Another feature of civic design that was less evident but nonetheless of significance was the infrequent employment of common design styles to associate public buildings together which were located in close proximity to each other. This was recognised at William Brown Street, Liverpool, where sandstone was used for the six Classically styled building erected in the district and at Cathays Park, Cardiff, where a series of public structures followed a not only a common design style but also used Portland stone. Where such a strong culture was established it was unusual for differing building materials to be employed, for example at William Brown Street, Liverpool, sandstone was widely used and at Cathays Park, Cardiff, Portland stone was the only building material employed, and often competition rules stipulated that new buildings must be erected from a particular material and designed to a particular style.

In some settlements examined local design patterns were evident. By the 1890s in Birmingham terracotta was used on a variety of both public and private building types, thanks largely to the impact of the Assize Law Courts by Aston Webb and Ingress Bell upon the local townscape. Terracotta and to a lesser extent red brick were frequently employed in the city at that time and can be seen to represent an effort on the part of the Corporation to help establish a pleasing urban environment (Stratton in Tilson, 1989: 21). The use of these two materials during the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Birmingham has been noted by Pevsner and Wedgwood (1966) to be an important element in the local process of urban development, offering a route towards design which befitted the modern settlement and reflected the commercial prosperity and public endeavours which took place within it. Furthermore it must not be forgot that the widespread use of brick and terracotta took place in Birmingham within a context filled with local concern about the standard of the urban environment so that the city was able to culturally, socially and economically compete with other large provincial cities and with London so that it could be known as the 'second city of the empire'.

Conclusion

Many of the major characteristics of civic design during the period about 1880 to 1914 have been highlighted during the course of this chapter. Particular emphasis has been given to, for example, the treatment of the main elevations, the treatment of the various floor levels of public buildings, the treatment of corners, the design elements visible on the main elevations of civic design schemes, the handling of roofs, vertical elements, internal arrangements, approaches to entrances, roads and materials employed, all notable aspects of civic design practice.

The following chapter draws attention to what civic design was understood to consist of both in theoretical and practical terms during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. This is to be observed through drawing comparisons between proposed schemes in the period considered and the characteristics and extent of civic design in practice at that time. In comparing proposed schemes with those actually undertaken many differences and similarities become evident and these variations and resemblances will be highlighted and discussed. The chapter will also recognise the significance of civic design within the context of the formative years of modern town planning. With the roots of modern town planning in Britain being planted in late-Victorian period, the same period as that covered by this work, the activities of the Garden City movement and designers such as Raymond Unwin are examined as civic design has been recognised as being an influence upon residential planning advances.

Within the forthcoming chapter those individuals who undertook civic design during the period considered will be identified. Not only will the civic designers be highlighted but their standing within the architectural profession will also be raised and examined. The role of City Architects, employees of many of the Corporations active within the larger provincial settlements studied, will also be acknowledged.

CHAPTER NINE: RESULTS

Introduction

The third chapter of this section, the results part of the study, draws attention to what civic design was understood to mean and consist of in theory during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, as well as indicating the significance of civic design upon formative modern town planning in Britain. Furthermore those individuals who undertook civic design during the period selected for study will also be acknowledged and discussed.

The Theory of Civic Design during the Period Considered by this Work

An objective of this study was to understand what civic design consisted of both in terms of its theory and practice during the period about 1880 to 1914, an era which was within the formative years of modern town planning in Britain. Many of the features evident in civic design practice during the period examined have been noted and described earlier in the course of the work and, as shown, civic design was dominated by symmetrical forms with over 90% of buildings studied being composed along formal lines.

In order to examine what the theory of civic design consisted of during the period about 1880 to 1914 a number of contemporary book, articles published in journals and proposed planning schemes were examined. Up to about 1905 it was noted that the theory of architectural planning and civic design received little contemporary attention but from about that time, with the emergence of modern town planning and the Royal Institute of British Architects establishing a Town Planning Committee, chaired by Sir Aston Webb, a renewed interest was evident in the design of the urban form and the principles that governed it. By circa 1910 civic design received great attention in the architectural press, partly as a consequence of the passing of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc. Act in the previous year, but also as a result of the Royal Institute of British Architects' conference on town planning in 1910. As part of this landmark event, the first of its kind in the world, consideration was given to the form and design of city centres.

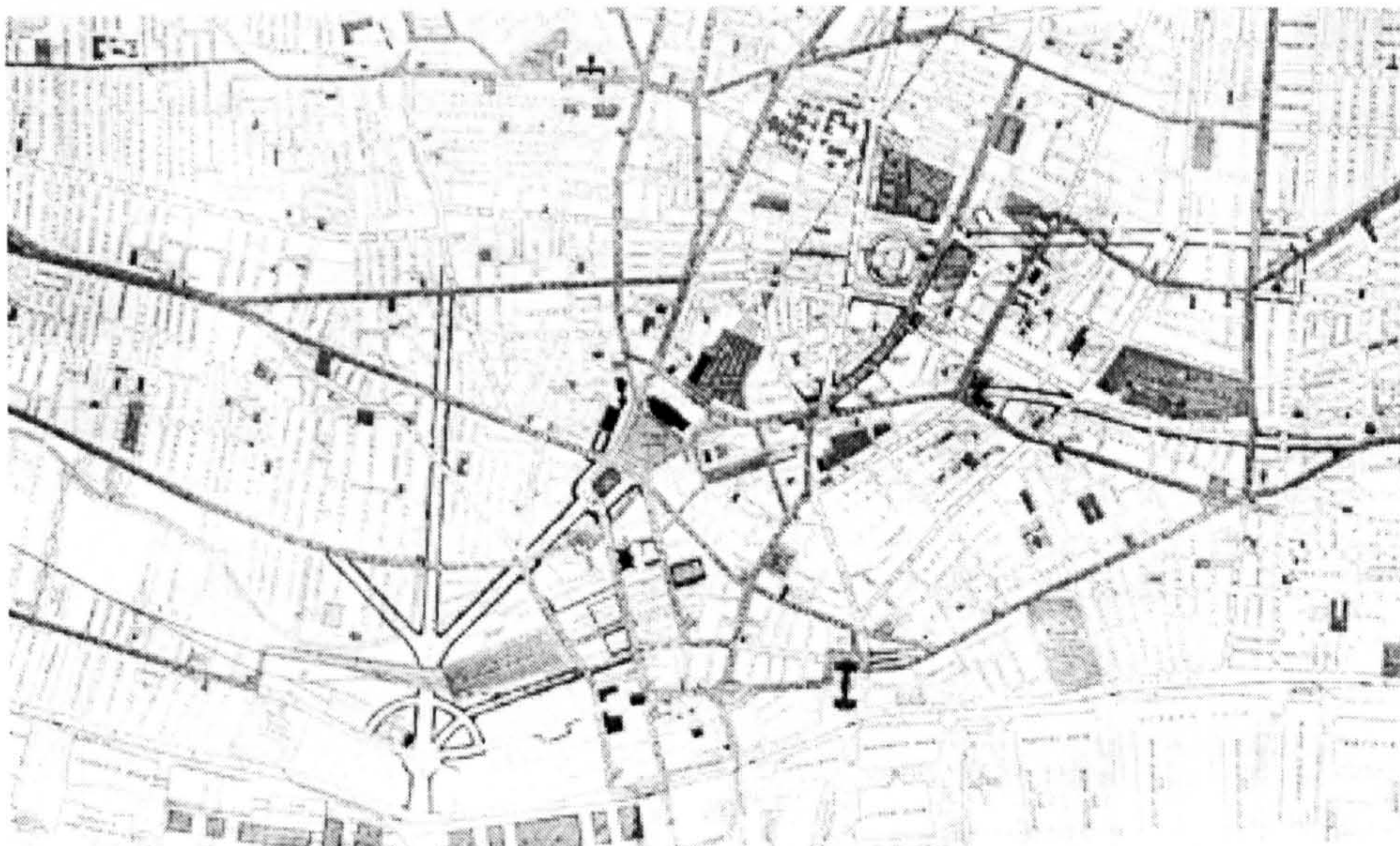
In the practice of civic design and in the many schemes proposed, most of which were suggested after 1910, a discrepancy was evident between what was perceived to be civic design in theoretical terms, as shown by proposed schemes, and what was actually undertaken. The principal differences noted were:

- **Scale.** Proposed schemes were generally of a considerably larger scale than civic design schemes actually undertaken.
- **Civic design strength.** Proposed plans were composed with buildings having more design and planning features than many schemes which actually occurred in the period examined.
- **Civic design in practice** while involving the redevelopment of central areas of land often took place on sites at the urban periphery. Proposed schemes did not pay any interest in developing the urban fringe and instead concentrated upon redeveloping large areas of central land.
- **The number of buildings involved in practice and in suggested schemes varied considerably.** In practice it was rare for civic design to involve the design and planning of more than one building at the same time, however in proposed schemes it was common for a number of buildings to be considered, with these structures usually placed in proximity to each other along axial lines. The grouping of public buildings was recognised by Mawson (1911) to be a fundamental principle in civic design, and in the practice of the art this did not really occur at any one time as civic districts were developed as a result of a process of accumulation.
- **Proposed schemes were composed of a greater degree of formality in the design and planning process.** Many plans, that is the form of buildings and the space about them, were discovered to be of a strict symmetrical form. Proposed schemes involved laying out buildings in surroundings that were not cramped so that the full value of the buildings as architectural landmarks could be appreciated.
- **Proposed schemes placed a greater emphasis on the use of the vista than was generally found in practice** as new roadways were often suggested to run up towards prominent points of new or existing buildings. In proposed schemes it was common for a number of new roadways to be suggested. These thoroughfares were usually broad and straight in form, cutting through the existing urban form, as they ran up towards existing or proposed public buildings. Approaches to buildings was a major element of proposed schemes.

- All buildings in suggested planning schemes were recognised to be of a Classical or Baroque form.

One of the most apparent differences between suggested and practised civic design schemes was scale and the extent of land that was to be developed. While it has been recognised that many design schemes in practice were large scale with, for example, some buildings such as Town Halls in the largest provincial settlements examined being over 300 feet in length, in some suggested schemes the area of land affected could be hundreds of yards in length and buildings being hundreds of feet in length and breadth. Thomas Mawson's plan for Bolton, for instance, was to involve the redevelopment of an area of land measuring in excess of 1,200 yards in length and 500 yards in breadth. Similarly, Thomson's plan for Dundee (1913) was to redevelop a section of central Dundee measuring almost one mile in length which was about the scale of many contemporary schemes undertaken in America, while a plan for Liverpool was to affect the entire central area of the city (see figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1. The proposed Improvement Plan for Liverpool by Stanley Adshead (source: Town Planning Review, 1910).

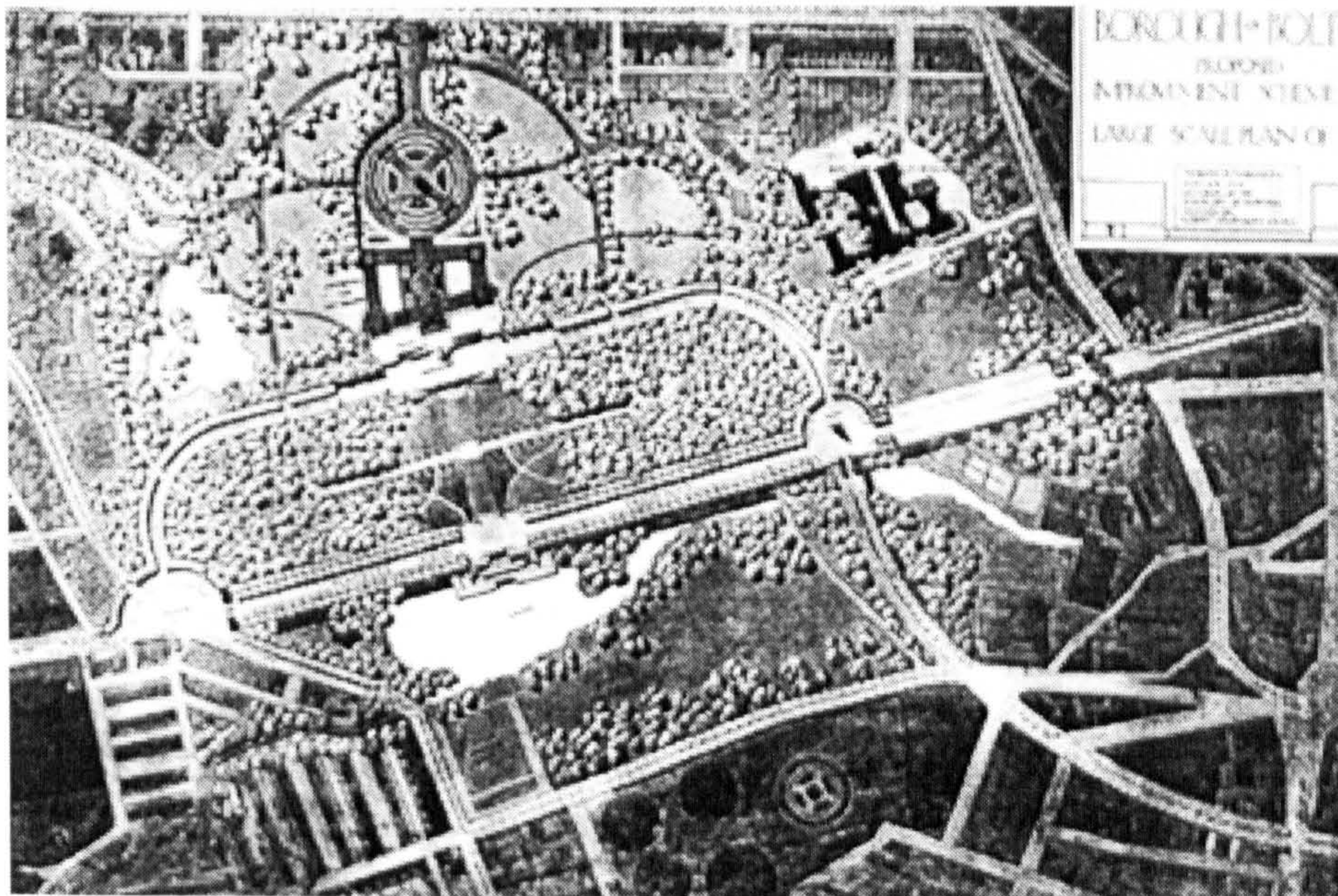


The redevelopment of Dundee was also involved land reclamation, which was only used once in civic design practice at the Pierhead, Liverpool. A major aspect that affected the scale of civic design schemes in Britain was compensation costs and in order to undertake the proposed schemes during the Edwardian period Corporations would have been faced with huge financial costs, even before construction costs for the new buildings could be calculated. Land reclamation, where possible, provided a

cheap alternative to this. However even in such situations costs were still high and beyond the reach of many of the smaller sized Corporations.

Proposed civic design schemes tended to take little interest in developing the urban periphery unless an existing building of some note was already erected there and then it was often be incorporated into the overall plan. Instead suggested City Improvement Schemes, as they were known in the Edwardian period, tended to give regard only to those areas of a settlement where the most public buildings were situated, that is towards the centre of the place. Often such schemes were concerned with trying to associate public buildings together by planning means, and a way in which this was to be achieved was by the laying down of broad boulevards such as those shown in figure 9.2, which presented views towards the buildings involved.

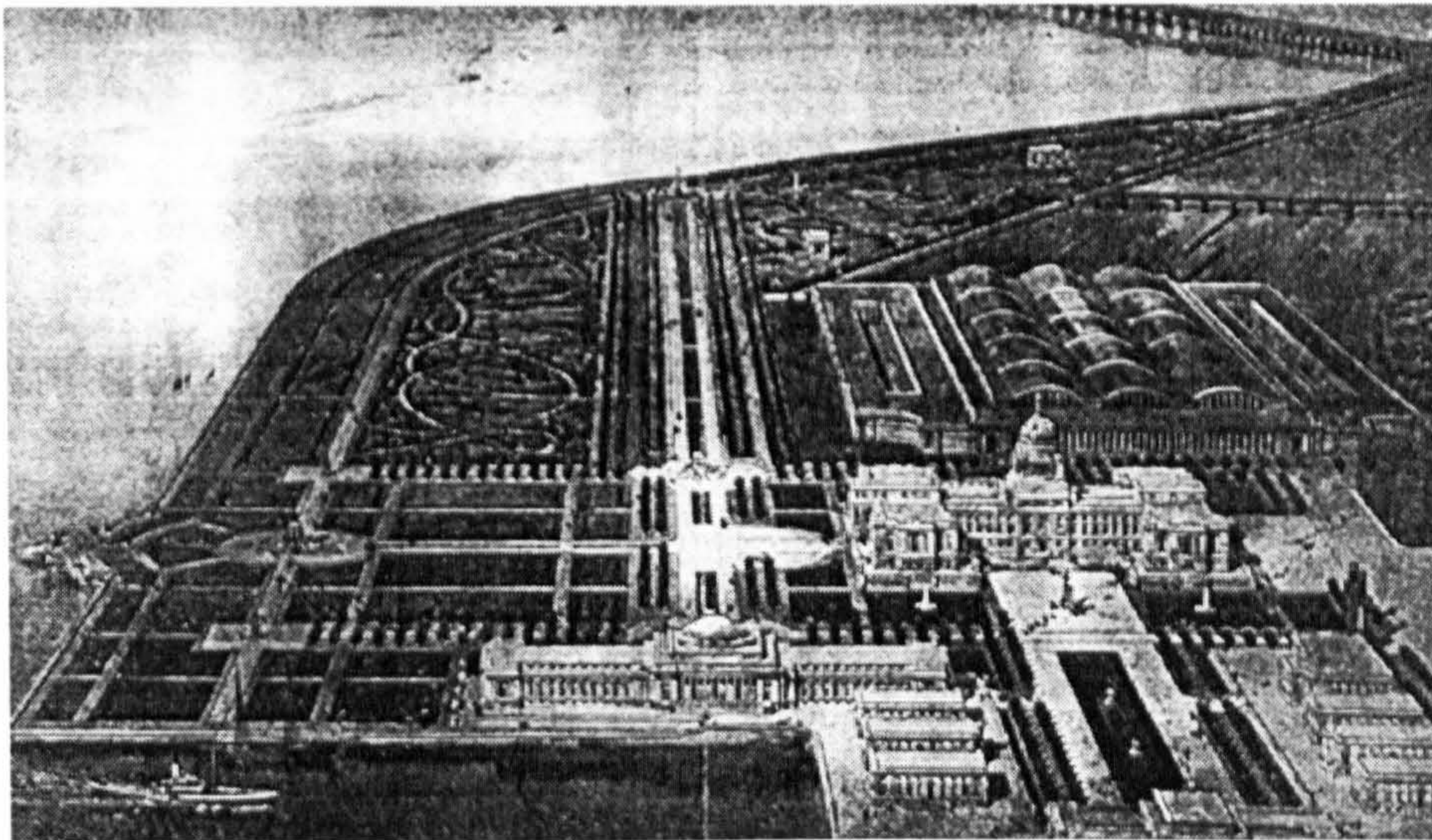
Figure 9.2. Queen's Park, Bolton, with boulevards heading east to the town centre from in front of the Museum and Art Gallery (source: Mawson, 1911).



Civic design in practice generally involved the erection of a single public building with particular design and planning features. Where urban areas were developed along civic design lines this was often a gradual process of accumulation where new buildings were added at later dates, such as at Cathays Park, Cardiff, following the completion of the Law Courts and City Hall. In proposed schemes this was not generally the case and a number of new and often large scale buildings would be suggested for erection at the same time. For example, Thomson's plan for Dundee

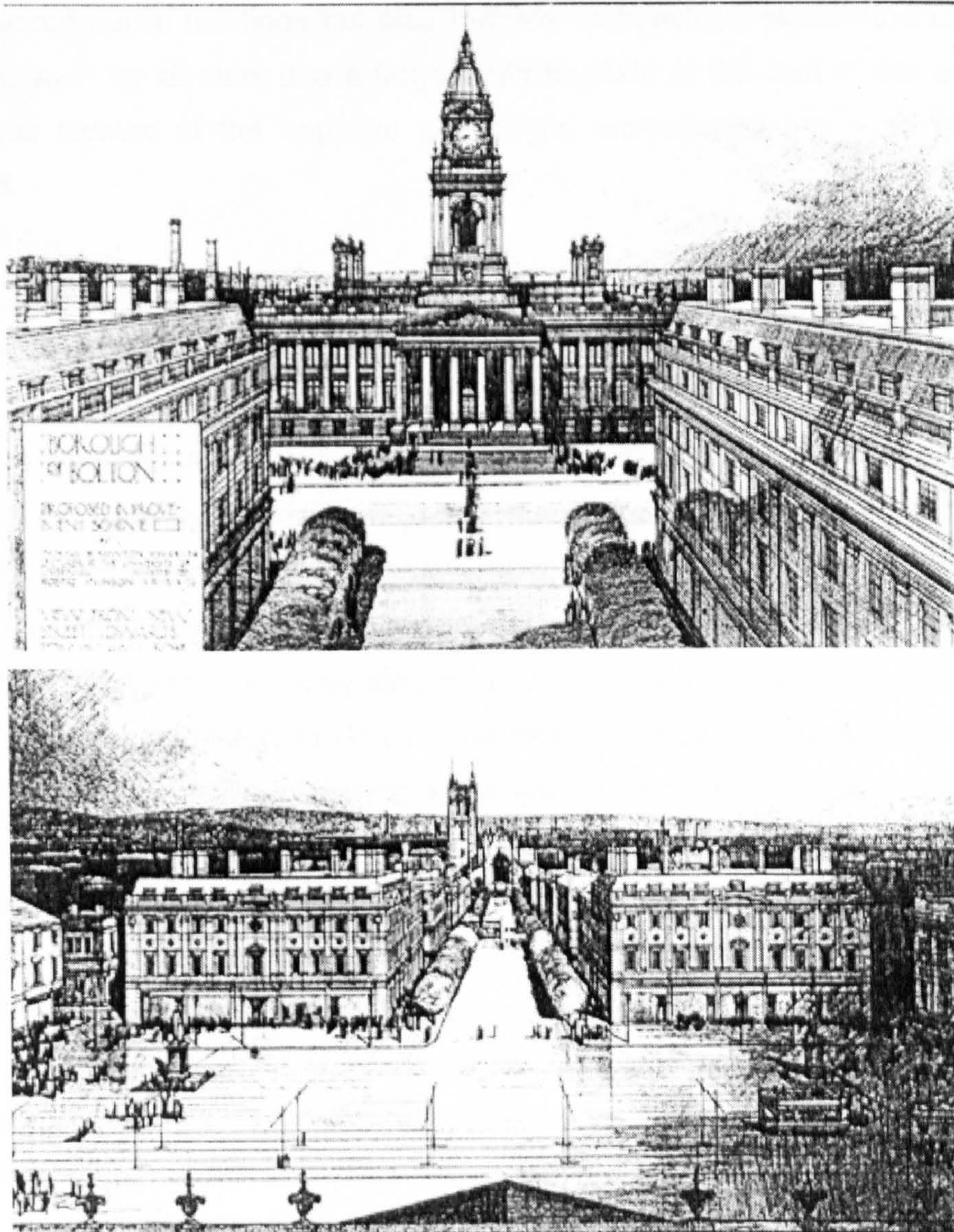
(see figure 9.3) involved the construction of a handful of public buildings, while Gibson, Skipworth and Gordon's plan for central Bradford (1915) was to involve the erection of a number of buildings, each measuring over 200 feet in length, which were to be laid down in the north of the centre of the settlement between Town Hall Square and Forster Square where existing local buildings of note, like the Town Hall and Central Post Office, were erected.

Figure 9.3. A perspective of Thomson's plan for Dundee (source: Town Planning Review, 1913) with the proposed public buildings in the foreground.



It has been noted that suggested civic design schemes were of a highly formal nature. This situation was in part a consequence of the fact that they paid little or no attention to the existing road pattern, which in reality often made sites awkwardly formed with thus the prospect of undertaking symmetrical planning difficult. In proposed schemes the urban form was often approached as if it were a clean canvas and so no, or little, attention was noted in some instances to be paid to the existing urban form. In such a situation proposed buildings were frequently arranged in a symmetrical manner, with grandiose vistas established towards the new buildings along new roadways in the surrounding area. Buildings in such schemes were also noted to be placed along axial lines so that, for example, the central axes of each building could relate to neighbouring ones. In other schemes, such as Mawson's plan for Bolton, existing public buildings were aligned to each other through the clearing of parts of the existing urban form and the laying down of boulevards (see figure 9.4). This was a rare feature of civic design undertaken in practice during the period selected for study.

Figure 9.4. Perspectives from Mawson's plan for Bolton (1911) showing the use of vistas to and from the centre of the Town Hall's front elevation. The bottom view is from the base of the building's clock tower looking towards St Peter's Church.



Vistas established in proposed schemes tended to be grand, long and often approached prominent sections of public building. Mawson in his Bolton scheme, by way of illustration, planned a new roadway, Church Avenue, which not only linked St Peter's Church with the Town Hall (see figure 9.4) through a direct line of sight, but the roadway as it approached the Town Hall from the east of the town centre directly aligned with the central axis of the front elevation. As shown in the study of Bolton in chapter six, see pages 419-435, many architectural elements marked the centre of the Town Hall's principal elevation, such as the main entrance, a large flight of steps, the clock tower and a portico as well as the central axis being continued inside the internal arrangement of the building thanks to the position of the entrance vestibule

and the building's large sized public hall area, the Albert Hall as it was known, to the rear of the primary doorway. In Thomson's Dundee scheme vistas of monumental scale (figure 9.3) were established so as to provide dramatic views not only towards the proposed public buildings but also towards architectural elements found within the area, such as statuary and a large sized fountain at the end of the esplanade which was located at the opposite end of the redeveloped site from the public buildings.

Civic Design and the Emergence of Modern Town Planning

This work was undertaken with the intention of indicating the significance of civic design as a design and planning subject in its own right and as an influence upon the development of modern British town planning, the formative years of which begin during the period covered by this study. As highlighted earlier in this undertaking, civic design has been a relatively ignored academic subject, particularly with regards to the town planning history of Britain. Therefore this work was undertaken so as to help rectify this situation. For example, the last piece of literature dedicated to civic design, or civic art as it has been known, was Thomas Mawson's 1911 book 'Civic Art'. However it must be noted that as a landscape architect by training and profession Mawson studied civic design with a different perspective to that adopted by this work. In addition, Mawson examined schemes that were undertaken not only in Britain but also in Europe and America, as well as proposed a number of his own improvement schemes. The time scale of Mawson's work was also much longer than that used by this study and much emphasis was placed on eighteenth century architectural activity in 'Civic Art'.

The subject of civic design has received additional attention as a consequence of this study through a number of papers being written, published and presented at international conferences. These included work related to changes urban form of large cities in Britain between about 1880 and 1914, presented at the 6th International Seminar on the Urban Form, a paper looking at how the Victorians managed the urban environment in the light of many problems that were experienced at that time, presented at the Millennium Conference in Sri Lanka, and a paper published in the 6th Australian Urban History and Planning Conference

Proceedings on the influence of empire in civic design in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period.

Town planning in Britain has been widely acknowledged by authors such as Cherry and Sutcliffe, for example, as having its roots being laid down in the late-Victorian period even though town planning, as a tool for arranging the urban form, did not appear in earnest until the early years of the twentieth century when an overall strategy to solving inherent urban problems such as housing, health and the perceived poor design of environment, appeared. Civic design in both Britain and elsewhere has, significantly, been noted by such authors as playing a vital role in affecting the form of town planning in its formative years, a time when there was wide concern in British society for the condition of settlements of an industrial nature and for their appearance. With this worry came a renewed interest in the urban form and its design, not only in Britain but also in Europe and America, particularly among architects and other professionals interested in the arrangement and expression of the urban environment.

As modern town planning in Britain was borne initially out of the activities of hitherto unknown provincial architects Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker, it emerged with a spirit inspired by existing architectural principles. With an emphasis on large scale design matters, as well as the design and planning of cottage houses, town planning paid more than lip service to civic design at the start of the twentieth century. Significantly too town planning involved the arranging of modern residential buildings to a low density and layouts based on the concepts of, for example, proportion, scale and the enclosing of space, notions evident in civic design practice, so thus the heritage of civic design was made apparent to town planners, who were in effect practising architects. This in turn reinforced architectural principles in town planning practise and intensified the attention given to design and planning details: "The plain field of town planning was to be charged with the devices of civic design." (Hawtree in Sutcliffe, 1981: 73) Consequently the most comprehensive expression of architectural principles in practice by the start of the twentieth century was either town planning or civic design (*Ibid.*: 73). Of significance too, while matters relating to street widths, open spaces and uniformity of land use had been developed by municipal engineers from the 1840s, and had brought about new urban standards in the following decades, they had done so without a establishing physical model upon which to base subsequent practice. Civic design, in contrast to this, had established

many noticeable urban layouts across British urban places before town planning emerged and so they, as well as the arts traditions, were to possibly act as models for formative town planning in the early years of the twentieth century.

Formative town planning practice in Britain largely centred upon the activities of Parker and Unwin who designed three pioneering schemes, New Earswick, Letchworth Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb, between 1901 and 1907, which had the effect of coupling architectural practice with town planning. Inspired by the ideas of William Morris, their socialist convictions and Ebenezer Howard's Garden City idea, the most radical urban reform idea of the late-nineteenth century, design concepts for Parker and Unwin were also social ones. With a willingness to improve the living conditions of working people the partners worked move from house design into larger spatial contexts by the late-nineteenth century so as to offer slum dwellers an alternative environment in which to live. With the late-Victorian model settlements of Port Sunlight (1888) and Bournville (1895) showing that it was physically and financially possible to erect good standard, low density houses within a well designed environment, the Garden City at Letchworth, Herefordshire, was the first opportunity to establish a pre-planned settlement on a virgin site, a place designed in accordance with modern planning principles. Using informal road layouts reminiscent of medieval urban forms with formal Baroque styled spaces and avenues at its centre, Letchworth was of huge influence not only for allowing housing reform to encompass matters such as layout and design but due to it implicitly promoting civic design rules. However as a panacea to urban problems Letchworth was held back by its slow growth and by the expense of establishing new towns. An alternative was sought and from 1905 Unwin again played a central role.

The development of the 240 acre Hampstead Garden Suburb in north London to the evolution of town planning in Britain cannot be underestimated, not only due to the passing of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Act in 1906, the first piece of modern planning legislation in Britain. Inspired by the work of Austrian Camillo Sitte, Unwin composed a plan of great architectural and planning character that not only promoted the low density housing ideal and British suburbanisation but showed that the gradual improvement of existing settlements through planned extensions was a policy worth pursuing by public authorities even though the garden suburb scheme was a diluted version of Howard's Garden City. With this scheme rapidly acquiring an identity independent of the original Garden City idea, Unwin's design and

planning forms were swiftly applied elsewhere in Britain to equally large and smaller scales through a proliferation of Garden Suburbs and Garden Villages. The design approach of Unwin, enshrined in many of the early Garden Suburb and Village schemes, thus came to constitute one of the most significant achievements of planning in its formative years (Gaskell in Sutcliffe, 1981: 54), an achievement which acquired legal favour after the passing of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc. Act in 1909. Such a planning situation, composed along architectural lines in practice, meant that civic design came to be of significance:

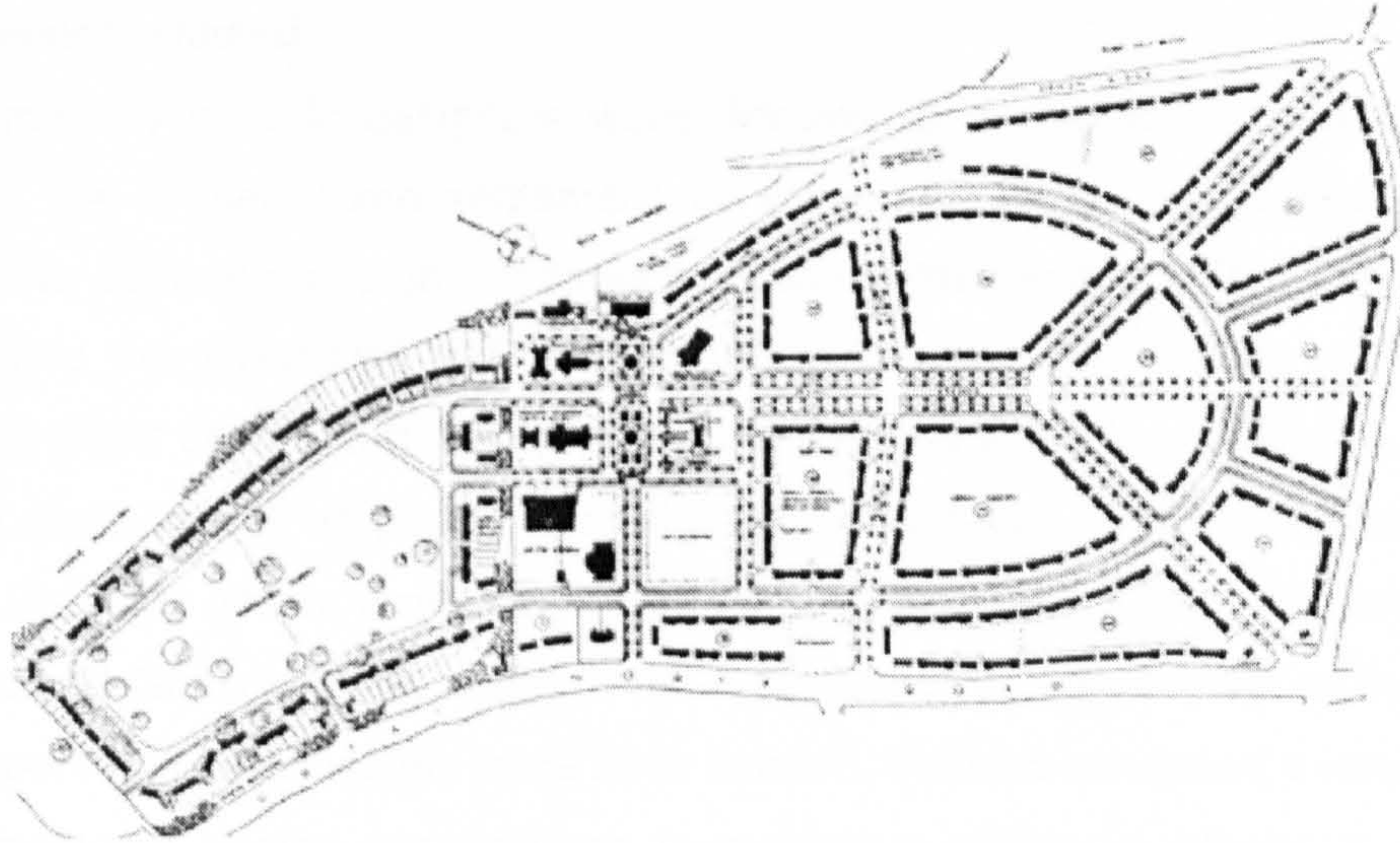
The impact of the garden suburb on the early planning movement...meant that while civic design was slow in reaching its full development, considerable advances were made in that aspect of it concerned with the planning of residential areas. (*Ibid.*: 54)

Civic design was thus not only of great influence to formative town planning but its importance to the character of modern planning ensured that site planning details formed a major aspect in arranging modern residential layouts. The artistic and architectural pretensions of the Garden Suburbs thus can in part be attributed to the influence of civic design notions in the composition of modern housing schemes initially developed by Raymond Unwin.

Many of the early town planning schemes showed a further association to civic design through the laying out of a civic district within the overall residential scheme. Letchworth Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb have been described in some detail earlier in this work with reference to their central areas, but other planning schemes were also designed with such districts. These places included Knebworth Garden Village by Thomas Adams, Alkington Garden Suburb, Manchester, also by Adams, Woodlands Estate near Doncaster (see figure 9.5), by Percy Houfton, Ruislip Manor and Warrington Garden Suburb, both by A. and J. Soutar, the redevelopment of Port Sunlight by Thomas Mawson, Liverpool Garden Suburb by J.N. Dixon and Rhubina Garden Suburb, Cardiff by T. Alwyn Lloyd and Raymond Unwin, which were all laid out with formally planned central areas. Schemes such as these also highlight that a fundamental feature of urban design at the start of the twentieth century was the belief that public buildings were not seen to their best in isolation but as a group, a principle of civic design noted by Mawson (1911). Significantly too, similarly to provincial civic design at about the same time, town planning was largely undertaken by individuals of hitherto low standing within

their profession. However as town planners were nearly all architects by vocation it ensured at the very least that an important element of modern town planning would be design based.

Figure 9.5. The plan of the Woodlands Estate (source: Town Planning Review, 1910).



The Civic Designers

It is appropriate to consider the individuals who were designing public structures and applying civic design principles to the urban form of British provincial settlements during the period selected for examination. The results of this work with regard to civic designers can be summarised as:

- Civic design was undertaken by a broad range of professionals ranging from those at the very top of the architectural profession, who on occasions went local, to those of far lesser vocational standing.
- Provincial civic design was mainly undertaken by individuals who were of relatively low professional standing.
- Many of London's most famous public designers, such as John Brydon, John Belcher and Edward Mountford, during the Late-Victorian and Edwardian period had little affect upon provincial civic design. An exception to this rule was Sir Aston Webb who had a noted influence upon both civic design in the provinces and in the Metropolis.

- Several of the largest civic design schemes identified by this work were composed by designers of hitherto low professional standing such as the City Chambers, Glasgow, by William Young and the Council House, Birmingham, by Yeoville Thomason.
- Some civic designers were noted to not experience a marked growth in their careers after designing a prominent civic building in the largest provincial settlements studied.
- The majority of civic designers were discovered to practice in only one urban place, that is their home settlement, or within one region although others were noted to compose design schemes in many settlements. William Hill, example, designed the Town Hall at Bolton and the Guildhall, Portsmouth, while George Gilbert Scott designed buildings in places such as Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leeds as well as places like Brighton, Cambridge, London, Newark, Oxford and Preston, which were not included in this study. Alfred Waterhouse, an acclaimed Gothicist, was noted to have designed a large number of buildings in Liverpool and Manchester, aside from London, but also assessed a large number of significant design competitions in numerous provincial places investigated. Thus his civic design influence could be noted elsewhere.
- Civic design practice in some settlements was dominated by one individual or by a partnership, such as Lockwood and Mawson in Bradford. However, it was generally the case that a number of individuals were practising civic design in large sized provincial settlements during the period thought about.

During the course of this work it has become apparent that the designing of public buildings identified as part of civic design schemes was undertaken by a broad range of professional designers. Civic designers ranged from local architects, many of whom were responsible for only one or two major public buildings in their careers, often found in their home settlement, to acclaimed national figures such as Alfred Waterhouse, Aston Webb, Edward Mountford and Henry Lanchester, individuals who designed some of the most significant and large scale buildings of the age in many of the largest provincial settlements examined. These buildings included Manchester Town Hall (by Waterhouse), Birmingham University (by Webb), Sheffield Municipal Buildings (Mountford, 1890-7) and Cardiff City Hall (Lanchester, from 1897) although it was generally discovered during the course of the study that it was rare for such prominent designers to enter and win such nationally important design competitions as those noted above. Generally designers of much lesser professional status

designed the smallest and some of the largest design schemes considered by this study.

Designing a large scale civic design scheme provided a significant means to establish a design career and possibly a place within the upper echelons of the architectural and planning professions. Many of the individuals who received professional acclaim during the period did so as a consequence of their design abilities and through designing at least one structure deemed to be of national importance and of a high design quality. This was particularly true for professionals such as Alfred Waterhouse, William Young, Edward Mountford and Henry Lanchester, who after respectively designing Manchester Town Hall, Glasgow's City Chambers, Sheffield's Town Hall and Cardiff's City Hall assumed a more significant rank within their profession. Yet some designers, such as Yeoville Thomason, the architect of the Council House, Birmingham, did not experience a marked progression in their careers following the completion of their most prominent composition and instead maintained virtual national anonymity. However the importance of persons such as Thomason, provincially based designers who often designed only one structure of significance during the course of their career, to the practice of civic design in the period studied should not be underestimated. The importance of these provincial designers whose career would often only be based in just one urban place can be seen to result from the large number of buildings that these individuals collectively designed in the period covered by this work. In addition, it was these professionals who often designed some of the period's most important public edifices.

The role of often otherwise largely undistinguished designers based in provincial settlements to the practice of civic design is wholly significant at the end of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth century. Almost every large town and city experienced the erection of a number of public buildings and in some cases architects whose practises were confined very much within the one large urban settlement, the place where a new building was being erected, designed the majority of public structures erected during the period considered by this work. Even in large cities like Liverpool, Birmingham and Glasgow, it was frequently designers of comparatively low national professional standing who designed the largest civic design schemes. In Glasgow, for example, the Municipal Chambers were designed by William Young in 1881, a designer who was of relatively little importance hitherto

yet managed to win the most important design competition in one of Britain's largest settlements. This was no mean feat and the win was even more surprising when it is realised that Young had not won a design competition prior to his Glasgow success. In Birmingham too, Yeoville Thomason's competition entry to design the Council House was not only the highlight of his professional career by a significant margin, Thomason's only competition win prior to this success was in the Smethick Public Hall contest in 1865, but for a building of such national importance, a building which was to acquire great local symbolism through the rise of Joseph Chamberlain and his Liberal Corporation, it would almost be expected that a designer of more national prominence would be wanted or selected by the Corporation simply as this would possibly be a shrewder move than selecting a relatively unknown professional. For a little known provincial designer to be awarded with the competition's first premium was a bold move on the part of the Corporation. The selection of schemes by such unknown designers throughout the late-Victorian period and Edwardian period reveals that design quality was considered to be more important than individual reputations. However it also highlights that had competitions not been so commonly used as the means to procure a suitable designs then it is likely that civic design would have been affected far more by the renowned designers who would have been awarded commissions on the grounds of their acquired standing. Therefore they could have arguably played a greater role in civic design than what they actually did.

It has been recognised during the course of this study that many of London's most acclaimed designers of public buildings during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period had little or no effect upon provincial civic design between about 1880 and 1914. Many architects were noted to have designed no public buildings in the large sized provincial settlements examined despite their many competition successes in the Metropolis. Brydon, for example, it seems had little interest in provincial affairs and between 1885 and his death in 1901 only entered five design competitions in places outside of London, instead concentrating his efforts upon designing public buildings in London such as the Chelsea Town Hall (1885-7), the Chelsea Library (1889), the Chelsea Polytechnic (1891-5) and the Government Offices (1898-1912) in Whitehall. Other notable designers also took a limited interest in provincial matters. Thomas Colcutt's only building in the provinces was the Town Hall at Wakefield (1877) and John Belcher enjoyed little competition success in the provinces, his only major win outside of London coming in the Colchester Town Hall event, yet was renowned for his designing in the capital.

Many of the most successful designers in London by the late-Victorian period, such as Norman Shaw and Ernest George, as well as those architects noted earlier, were recognised in the following decades to have had only a limited effect upon provincial civic design. Waterhouse, for example, was however seen to have had a major affect upon the design of settlements such as Liverpool and London before the late-Victorian period, and from the 1870s his skills were still being felt in the provinces, although Waterhouse had by this time moved into the area of competition assessing. From the late-1870s Waterhouse adjudicated some of the England's most important provincial schemes, such as Nottingham University College (1876), Sheffield Town Hall (1889), Cardiff City Hall (1897) and Cartwright Hall, Bradford (1899). Between 1869 and 1900 Waterhouse judged 37 provincial design competitions.

One London based architect was noted by this work to have both a major affect upon the public design of both London and the provinces during the period considered. This designer was Aston Webb, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects from 1902-3, who with his professional partner Ingress Bell, designed some of the most important late-Victorian and Edwardian schemes in Britain, such as the Assize Law Courts in Birmingham (1886-95), the Victoria and Albert Museum, Kensington (1899-1909), Birmingham University (from 1900), the Queen Victoria Memorial Scheme, London (1901-12). Significantly too, few designers whose careers began in the provinces had had much success in the civic design of London during the period considered, with probably William Young (1843-1900) being the most successful due to his competition win for the Glasgow City Chambers (1881) and for the designing of the War Office in Whitehall (from 1898).

Of increasing importance to the practice of civic design during the Late-Victorian period was the role of the City Architect, a position of employment established within many of the larger municipal Corporations, like Hull and Bradford, to deal with undertakings such as urban improvement and the designing of a range of public buildings, edifices needed by the seemingly constant physical as well as bureaucratic growth of local authorities as well as a consequence of the growing needs of urban populations. The creation of City Architect positions in many of the larger provincial settlements in Britain by the turn of the twentieth century was important if only for it allowing, for the first time, public authorities to employ on a permanent basis a fully trained and experienced architect to deal with matters that affected the civic design of a given place, such as the design of sometimes large

scale buildings or the design and planning of new public spaces. In Dundee, for example, the civic design activity that was undertaken from the early-1900s was conducted largely by the City Architect, James Thomson, who not only designed a number of important design schemes but by the late-Edwardian period had also proposed a major redevelopment scheme for the centre of the settlement. But for a settlement's most prominent public buildings like Town Halls and Municipal Offices, a design competition would still be held in order to select a design scheme even if a Corporation had its own City Architect. On such occasions the Corporation's employee might act as competition assessor or a supervisor during the process of construction.

In the majority of large sized provincial places examined it was discovered that civic design was undertaken by a number of individuals. In places such as Newcastle, for example, those schemes perceived as being of note to the settlement's civic design were each designed by a different designer. However, in other provincial settlements the situation was somewhat different. In places such as Bradford, for instance, local civic design from the mid-Victorian period through to the late-Victorian period was dominated by one partnership, consisting of Henry Lockwood and William Mawson, who designed schemes such as St George's Hall (1851-2), the Wool Exchange (1864-7), Kirkgate Markets (1869-72) and the Town Hall (1869-72), as well as numerous local mill buildings and the model town of Saltaire (1851-76), which was situated in the hinterland of Bradford. Even after the partnership had come to an end following Lockwood's death in 1878 its influence was still visible in later decades within Bradford due to the Town Hall extension scheme which was undertaken at the start of the twentieth century in such a manner so as to attempt to harmonise with the existing section of the building.

It has been noted by this work that many civic designers were professional designers of little ranking within their profession and that such individuals, on many occasions, won prominent design schemes, many of which were to have national importance. Such a situation was also evident by the Edwardian period when a number of large scale central redevelopment competitions were won by hitherto unknown individuals and partnerships. These schemes were established by some Corporations as a response to inherent urban problems and to present a new appearance to their urban cores. Among the notable competition winners were Gibson, Skipworth and Gordon at Bradford and Linton Bogle at Blackburn, who designed major

redevelopment schemes which received much attention in the contemporary architectural press, such as *The Builder* and *Town Planning Review*. Yet these individuals were somewhat unknown before their design successes. In the case of Gibson et al and Linton Bogle, provincial designers who achieved only one competition win of any significance during the course of their careers, their importance to civic design should not be denied even though, following these competition successes, they did not experience a growth of any note in their professional standing. In many respects these individuals appeared from provincial obscurity and subsequently went back to it despite their competition successes which attracted national coverage in the architectural press.

Conclusion

The development of the urban form and the practice of civic design within a number of large British provincial towns and cities at the end of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth century have been described in detail within the previous chapters of this study. Major civic design characteristics that were in evidence at that time relating not only to the composition of the main elevations, the internal arrangements and the environments about public buildings identified in civic design schemes have been recognised and analysed. As shown by the study many features were understood to have comprised civic design during the period about 1880 to 1914, although the extent of the art and the number of elements used within individual design schemes was noted to vary considerably. With regards to the theory of civic design between about 1880 and 1914 it has been discussed and the major differences between it and civic design in practice have been noted. The individuals who undertook civic design have also been identified and have received attention, particularly with regards to their status within the architectural profession.

In the following section, chapter ten, the principal results of the research are reiterated and commented upon, while suggestions will also be made with regards to the research methods that were employed. Reference will also be given to the strengths and limitations of the research methods used within the course of this work. Areas of further civic design research are also considered within the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The research project upon which this work was based has provided a detailed examination of the civic design of a large number of large provincial settlements in Britain during the period about 1880 to 1914 and has concurrently provided a detailed investigation into the influences upon the civic design of each of the settlements selected for study. In the previous sections of this study detailed descriptions have been presented regarding the characteristics of civic design occurring in large sized provincial centres and in this, the final chapter, the principal results of the research are reiterated and remarked upon. Comments are also made with regards to the research methods that were employed during the research process and their strengths and limitations. Areas of further civic design research are also considered.

The Study and the Results

It will be recalled that this study was undertaken with the intention of obtaining information about the practice of civic design in provincial settlements in Britain during the period around 1880 to 1914 when significant social, economic, political and environmental change was occurring. However in order to identify the characteristics that formed civic design as it would appear at that time a criteria relating to the architectural and planning forms of public buildings was established and a number of large sized urban settlements were selected for study.

In order to seek to clarify the exact features that comprised civic design during the period selected for consideration five aims of differing natures were established. For the purpose of satisfying these objectives over one hundred public buildings erected during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period within twenty two provincial centres, these being Aberdeen, Birmingham, Blackburn, Bolton, Bradford, Bristol, Cardiff, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow,

Hull, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oldham, Portsmouth, Salford, Sheffield and Sunderland, were examined in terms of the composition of their main elevations and internal arrangements. The design and form of the environment around these buildings and the relation of the public buildings to their setting was also considered as a significant part of the overall civic design process.

By the start of the period covered by this work the majority of British towns and cities had experienced, and were still experiencing to differing degrees, urban development both in terms of their expanding demographic sizes and the erection of public buildings to serve the needs of the local people. All settlements studied in this work were, by about 1880, still growing in population size and spatial extent that in turn placed increasing pressure upon their local governments to provide services for the urban populous as well as providing a healthy and pleasing environment. It was noted too that in some large provincial settlement civic design traditions were already well established before 1880, such as in Edinburgh with its New Town, Liverpool with St George's Hall and Leeds with its Town Hall. However in other places, often the smallest sized settlements that were examined, such as Blackburn and Oldham, for example, which were small urban places prior to the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation at the start of the nineteenth century, no civic design tradition was evident prior to the period considered by this work even though a number of important public buildings, such as Town Halls, had been erected by 1880.

This project, as highlighted earlier, provided an opportunity for discussing the influences on the built environment within the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, an era within which a greater and more rational control of the urban environment was exercised by local governments in Britain. Among the factors that was recognised to have influenced the development of the urban form and civic design practice at that time was the development of legislation relating to the control and laying out of the urban form, such as local Improvement Acts and national legislative pieces like the Public Health Act (1875) and the Artisans and Labourers Dwellings Improvement Act (1875). These two legislative pieces had major implications for the civic design of British towns and cities from the mid-1870s as they permitted the clearance of tracts of land within or close to the central core. This was of significance to civic design for this study has recognised that most schemes occurred on central sites that were redeveloped, that is cleared, before a public building was erected upon it. Therefore any legislative developments which permitted the clearance of urban land were of value to civic design practice as it unfolded during the period given attention.

Foreign developments, such as the American City Beautiful movement, which advocated Classical designing and formal planning lines to sometimes large spatial areas, were also observed to be influential upon civic design practice in some provincial places during the period covered, such as Cardiff with the development at Cathays Park and Liverpool, a place closely allied with America due to trade and shipping links. Other factors of importance to the practice of civic design between about 1880 and 1914 included the emergence of imperial influences, reflected through, for example, statuary being erected in many British towns and cities, statues such as those of Queen Victoria, which were often erected at dates coinciding with royal jubilees or immediately after her death in 1901. Such architectural elements, commemorating royalty or other prominent public figures like Members of Parliament, were usually erected in public parks or in prominent public spaces, often placed in proximity to important and large scale public buildings. Many Town Halls examined for study were noted to have statuary placed in spaces laid out in proximity to the structure, sometimes with the statuary placed in prominent positions in front of the building.

A factor observed as being of significance to the practice of provincial civic design during the period examined was Acts of Parliament relating to the expansion of the local government system, such as the Local Government Act, passed in 1888, which resulted in many of the larger provincial towns and cities being given county borough status, as well as the attitude of Corporations towards the appearance of towns and cities. The approach of local governments towards the urban environment was partly revealed by the number of public buildings that were erected between about 1880 and 1914, in part to serve the needs of the local population, and by the amount of and the civic design characteristics employed within these public building schemes, with for instance, those Corporations interested in urban matters often erecting not only large scale buildings but structures whose design comprised of numerous architectural and planning characteristics that were noted as constituting civic design. An important conclusion established by this work was that the role of local governments varied significantly from place to place during the period chosen with regards to the control of the development of the urban form, the erection of public buildings and the characteristics of civic design employed, with some Corporations preferring to extend existing public buildings rather than erect new ones. This was particularly common in the smaller settlements examined where the local taxation base, and so ultimately the money available to spend on environmental or architectural matters, was not as big as in the larger provincial places investigated.

The role of Corporations upon the practice of civic design in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period has already been recognised but it must also be emphasised that within many of the provincial settlements examined the process of public building was constrained not only by limited public funds but in some instances by a lack of ambition to undertake design projects. Such a situation of financial constraint therefore encouraged Corporations to promote extension schemes rather than attempt to create more comprehensive civic schemes. Had Corporations been able to raise greater funds and/or had a more favourable attitude towards public building then arguably the design and form of many towns and cities in Britain may have been vastly different to how they actually unfolded between about 1880 and 1914. Of importance too were philanthropists such as Andrew Carnegie, individuals who donated large sums of money for architectural purposes. In many places, such as Dundee and Aberdeen, and even Birmingham with its new University which was paid for largely by private contributions, such was the influence of persons like Carnegie, who frequently gave large sums of money to pay for the erection of public buildings, that many places studied would have had a significantly different appearance and the practice of civic design might have been less apparent had this money not been given.

During the course of the study the development of the central areas of settlements was evident in many of the urban centres examined and this was revealed by changes to both the changing form and visual appearance of the central cores. Within the development of central cores of provincial settlements particular civic design characteristics became prevalent, although, significantly, it was discovered that it was uncommon for a large number of design and planning elements identified as constituting civic design to be practised within a particular scheme. The principal characteristics of late-Victorian and Edwardian civic design in practice have been highlighted and explained within chapters seven, eight and nine but the principal results will be reiterated subsequently.

The Principles, Characteristics and Strength of Civic Design, c. 1880 and 1914

A principal intention of this study was to note the design principles that governed civic design as it appeared in practice and its characteristics that were evident during the period circa 1880 to 1914. Features identified in civic design schemes included:

- The dominance of symmetrical forms in both the planning and treatment of main elevations. 92% of all buildings examined were subject to a symmetrical treatment with regards to their main elevations and general plan.
- Despite many buildings being erected upon cramped sites or ones with irregular boundaries civic designers generally adopted the same approach to the design and planning process as was evident on buildings erected on unencumbered sites where the form of the building was governed by a theoretical rationale worked out or taken on by the designer beforehand.
- 74% of all public buildings identified as being civic design schemes were designed in a Classical or Baroque manner with the remaining 26% of building being composed in a Gothic, Modern or Vernacular style, the latter form having the greatest influence in Scottish civic design.
- The most important floor level on buildings identified within civic design schemes was often the ground floor although in some instances the first floor level was seen to be the most significant, particularly on Town Hall buildings. The significance of one floor level above the others was usually shown by it being given a different treatment to other floor levels and this often took, for example, the form of a greater floor to ceiling height, larger window openings, window openings of a different shape and additional decorative elements such as columns or pilasters being placed on the primary floor level.
- Windows on the main elevations were usually positioned in regular bays and the most common form of window opening were those that were headed with rounded arches or semi-circular heads. The form and size of windows was recognised on occasions to differ towards the ends of the principal elevation, particularly where end pavilions were employed.
- A number of different treatments of corner angles was noted in provincial civic design practice. These included the use of end pavilions, the rounding of corners or just one corner on rare occasions, the use of rusticated masonry and the placing of vertical elements above the angle. However the most common treatment in civic design was to not mark the corner point and to let two elevations meet at the angle dictated by their building lines.
- Public buildings were often designed in a manner to distinguish them from surrounding structures. One means by which this was to be achieved was by raising the public building above the street level. 34% of Public buildings studied were placed on sites that were raised above the street level. Other means to distinguish public buildings from

those in their surroundings included the increased scale of the structure, in overall terms and floor to ceiling heights, the use of differing building materials and increased use of detailing along the main elevations.

- 20% of buildings studied were designed with a lower ground floor or basement level, often positioned beneath the raised building, and where such a floor level was added it was sometimes concealed from view by means such as a stone wall or iron railing fixed into a stone base.
- Ground floor levels would often be treated differently from other elevations, visible by the use of rustication at the ends or at the central section and a larger floor to ceiling height than other floor levels, for example.
- Main entrances were usually placed at the centre of the front elevation which would often be marked by features such as lamp posts or steps directly at the front and prominent spaces within the internal arrangement to the rear. About 45% of all public buildings examined were designed with steps as part of the composition of their principal entrance although the size of the flight of steps varied from two or three steps at a minimum to 22 at Bolton's Town Hall. Often a vestibule was situated immediately behind the main entrance with the walls of this space forming part the extra construction used to support vertical elements, such as a clock tower or dome, which were often positioned directly above.
- The principal entrance of a public building identified within a civic design scheme would also sometimes be marked at some distance in front of the building by a prominent architectural feature such a statue within a open space of some note or by the alignment of an approaching roadway or carriageway. This had the effect of bringing the established planning alignments away from the building into the surrounding environment. 19% of public buildings examined utilised local road patterns in the civic design process.
- The principal entrance would usually be recessed and consisted of a double doorway.
- Staircases were placed in a variety of different locations within the internal arrangements of public buildings, even those of the same type. Positions for staircases included facing towards each other in positions relating to the axis at the centre of the main elevation, at opposite ends of the building, in positions masking the change in the alignment of the main elevations and to the rear of the principal entrance.
- Vertical elements were a common feature of civic design being used within 38% of all schemes examined. The extra masonry used to support the vertical structure tended to

have little or no impact upon the internal arrangement of the building. The most common position for a vertical element was above the central axis of the main elevation, to the rear of the main entrance, with the additional masonry used to support the vertical construction frequently be used as material for the walls of a space such as an entrance vestibule. However vertical elements were also put in other positions, for example, to one side of the front elevation, at the corners of the front elevation or at the centre of a side elevation. Vertical elements were understood to not only used as a decorative element but in some cases, such at Glasgow City Chambers, Birmingham University and Portsmouth Municipal College, performed other roles through containing spaces to be used as part of the building's function. At Birmingham University the clock tower contained office spaces and a large area for the testing of acoustics.

- Common design elements positioned at either the centre or ends of main elevations included gables, pediments, porticos, columns and pilasters.
- Roofs were sometimes designed in such a manner so as to be low in pitch in order to be out of sight from the street level and would often be hidden behind features such as balustrades or a vertical element. However on other occasions roofs were used as a means to emphasise certain sections of a building, such as the ends, and this was to be achieved through it being given, for example, a steeper pitch than the rest of the rooftop or by it being turned at a ninety degree angle to the rest of the construction.
- Civic design schemes were usually undertaken on sites in central areas of provincial settlements on pieces of land that were redeveloped, often as a result of the passing of local legislation such as Improvement Acts. However the passing of such legislative pieces was dependent upon the attitude of the Corporation and its willingness to use existing environmental legislation or to pass new Acts.

An intention of this work was to investigate the vigour of civic design occurring in large provincial settlements during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. With regards to the extent of the art the following results were recognised:

- The amount of civic design occurring during the period selected for study varied considerably from place to place but generally the larger the size of the settlement the larger the number of civic design schemes were identified. However there were many exceptions to this rule with places such as Bradford and Nottingham having a significantly smaller amount of civic design schemes than their population sizes

represented. Some smaller places, most noticeably Cardiff, had a greater amount and number of characteristics than was to be expected in a settlement of its size. This was in part a consequence of the settlement's rise in status to Welsh Capital which brought about a wave of public building in the following years.

- On the basis of the civic design criteria established it became apparent that many design and planning traits, such as those highlighted previously, were understood to be involved in civic design. However, it was very rare for a large number of these characteristics to be exercised concurrently within a civic design scheme, for few of these characteristics were practised together.
- Schemes that were identified as civic design ranged from buildings of a scale not significantly larger than the surrounding environment, sometimes with few features recognised as constituting civic design, to public buildings of a huge scale, that is in excess of 300 or so feet, which were at the same time composed of a multitude of design and planning characteristics.
- Smaller sized public buildings erected during the period selected were handled with regards to their design and planning in a similar manner to larger sized public buildings.
- The extent of civic design, that is the amount of design and planning characteristics used within a single design scheme, varied greatly from scheme to scheme, and from place to place, during the period selected for study.
- Large public buildings situated in an open setting such as those erected at Cathays Park, Cardiff, were rare examples of comprehensive civic design.
- Civic districts emerged during the period considered as a result of an accretion of individual buildings rather than a single master plan or the erection of more than one building in a single instance in proximity to each other. Civic districts in some large sized provincial places developed over a period of many decades.
- Civic design schemes that took place on previously undeveloped sites, such as those situated at the urban fringe, were often discovered to use more civic design characteristics, especially features such as entrance carriageways which were often laid down often in accord with the axial lines or features situated on the main elevations of the building involved, than many buildings erected at the centre of a provincial settlements. This was in part a consequence of the lack of constraints at the urban fringe due to sites not being cramped between existing buildings.

It has been highlighted previously that this work was undertaken with a number of pre-established aims. One objective related to investigating the extent or strength of civic design occurring in large provincial urban centres during the selected period. Many of the design and planning characteristics that appeared to govern civic design have been noted earlier in this section and therefore there is little need to repeat them. The results of the study also highlight that many different characteristics were practised in civic design schemes during the selected period for study. It is also important to note that no one single provincial place practised civic design of a form or with features that was not evident elsewhere and even at Cardiff, with its Cathays Park development which was of a scale unsurpassed during the period considered, the general nature and principles upon which the area was laid out were visible elsewhere, albeit on a somewhat smaller with less bold civic design lines. Of importance too, it was discovered that the strength of civic design varied considerably between schemes. On the one hand civic design included large sized buildings such as Manchester Town Hall, Cardiff City Hall, Birmingham Council House, Glasgow City Chambers, Bolton Town Hall and Portsmouth Guildhall, buildings between 200-300 feet in length, fronted by an open space other than that of a roadway, within which statuary was placed, while the design of the building used many features noted as constituting civic design. But buildings of much small sizes and with less design and planning features also comprised civic design. Smaller buildings examined included the Wear Commissioners Office at Sunderland and the libraries in Dundee, for example. In addition, while it was discovered that civic design schemes comprised of the combining of various architectural and planning features the amount of different features employed varied greatly, ranging from schemes such as Cartwright Hall at Bradford which was designed with numerous design and planning elements. These included symmetrically formed main elevations, the use of rustication and end pavilions, the placing of arched window openings in regular bays, the raising of the building above the street level, the marking of the front entrance by features such as a flight of steps and a porte cochère in front of it and to the rear by rooms laid out in accordance with the central axis of the main elevation, as well as the aligning of the centre of the front elevation with features in the surrounding environment so as to continue the central axis away from the building. However civic design also included buildings such as the public library at Blackburn, a structure composed with far fewer design and planning features.

A significant finding of the study was that provincial civic design schemes often did not involve the development or redevelopment of substantial tracts of urban land, like what was occurring in contemporary American civic design practice, apart from the large Town Hall

schemes in the largest settlements examined, for example, at Manchester and Glasgow. Instead British civic design during the period selected for study tended to involve only individual public buildings and few schemes took place within which two or more buildings were erected at the same time. Therefore large public buildings situated in an open setting like those erected in Cathays Park, Cardiff, were rare examples of designing and planning but even the civic centre at Cardiff developed as a result of an accretion of individual buildings rather than a single master plan. In many respects the civic districts that did emerge in the those places examined were a consequence of the gradual accumulation of buildings, erected in proximity to each other at intermittent dates.

Additional Findings

An aim of the study was to understand what civic design was understood to mean and consist of in both theory and practice. Provincial civic design from about 1880 to 1914, as recognised earlier, was understood in practice to be largely formal in nature with its form being governed by an orthodoxy of symmetry, order and often a Classical or Baroque design styles so as to create a sense of monumentality and balance in the design scheme. Symmetrical design and planning was a primary feature of civic design and was evident in the vast majority of buildings studied, being applied to a variety of building types designed to diverse design styles. Only 8% of all buildings studied were designed in a non-symmetrical manner.

It has been noted previously that this study was also undertaken so as to understand what the theory of civic design consisted and one means of identifying this was to examine schemes proposed before 1914. Information on the theory of large scale architectural planning and urban design was frequently noted in contemporary journals and papers given to local architectural societies or lectures given by the Royal Institute of British Architects, often in reference to particular places, districts within certain settlements or building types. However the theory of civic design was given little regard in the contemporary architectural press until about 1905 when journals such as the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects began printing papers by noted designers and academics such as H.V. Lanchester, Patrick Abercrombie, C.H. Reilly, Beresford Pite and John Simpson, which examined the design and plan of British cities. However from about 1910, when the Town

Planning Review was first published, and Thomas Mawson's book 'Civic Art' was printed, which examines the history of civic design and landscape architecture in America and Europe, urban planning theory received far more professional notice. Of influence too to the increase in regard paid to proposed civic design schemes such as those suggested in Blackburn, Bolton, Bradford, Dundee and Liverpool, as well as other settlements not examined by this work like Bath, which all received detailed scrutiny in the architectural press. From about 1910, arguably as a result of the passing of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc. Act (1909), the British architectural media began to place greater emphasis on civic design matters. The Builder, for example, established a 'Monthly Review of Civic Design' in 1911 within which important large scale design and planning schemes were analysed. Material relating to the theory of civic and urban design also appeared in prominent contemporary books, like Raymond Unwin's 'Town Planning in Practice' (1909), which dealt with matters relating to the design and form of British settlements albeit with an emphasis on housing layouts. Of significance too to the awakening of civic design practices in the contemporary media was the Royal Institute of British Architect's Town Planning Conference in 1910. This event, the first of its kind, was attended by civic planning experts from Europe and America and examined matters relating to the planning and design of central areas of large cities. With the event came a new found sense of importance of the architectural design of central areas of British urban settlements.

The findings of this study relating to the theory and practice of civic design between 1880 and 1914 highlighted that a discrepancy was evident in what was seen to compose the theory of civic design and what was actually practised. For example, it was recognised that proposed schemes were often of a scale and character that was not carried out in practice. Major differences noted between suggested schemes and actual projects included:

- Differences in scale and spatial extent, as highlighted previously. Proposed schemes were often of larger scale in terms of buildings to be erected and area affected than those schemes actually undertaken. Proposed schemes sometimes included the removal of large areas of the central built environment in order to make way for the proposed redevelopment scheme whereas in practice Corporations could not afford to clear vast areas of central urban land due to the high costs of compensation.
- Proposed schemes paid little interest to the development of the urban periphery unless a prominent local building was already erected there and would thus be incorporated into the overall town plan.

- Proposed schemes often included the erection of a number of large scale public buildings that would be grouped in proximity to each other, arranged along axial planning lines or proposed public buildings would be erected at various places throughout the urban form but would be linked together by alignments and vistas along broad, long boulevards, a civic design feature rarely seen in practice in Britain during the time period examined apart from in London.
- The extent of civic design was stronger in theory than in practice, that is the number of planning and design features recognised within a suggested civic design schemes was often significantly higher than was evident in schemes undertaken within provincial settlements.
- Buildings proposed as part of suggested civic design scheme would be Classical or Baroque in style.
- Proposed schemes were of a nature that placed great emphasis on the use of vista which would come directly towards prominent sections of public buildings sited in prominent positions within the town plan, such as the centre or ends. Buildings would also be surrounded by large open spaces filled with architectural elements such as statuary that were placed in locations relating to the plan of the building, such as in front of the main entrance, which could also be marked by other elements such as a large vertical feature, the main entrance and a broad flight of steps.
- Proposed schemes were generally of a severe formal nature with a rigid geometric plan barely seen in actual civic design schemes. Buildings were often placed in situations together where their axial lines relating to other buildings. Many proposed schemes examined, such as Thomson's plan for Dundee, were akin in form and scale to the largest American contemporary schemes under the City Beautiful movement. Plans such as this in provincial Britain often involved the reclamation of land from dock, estuarine or river areas upon which the design scheme would take place. The reclamation of land close was viewed as a cheap alternative to slum removal and compensation costs that it presented.

A further aim of the work was concerned with highlighting the significance of civic design within the context of the emergence of modern town planning before 1914 when an increased awareness of the form and design of urban settlements was emerging due to the development of modern town planning.

The importance of civic design as an individual subject area has been shown at the most apparent level through the undertaking of this project which is a relatively ignored area within both architectural and town planning history. Therefore any work on the subject of civic design will help to highlight its importance, and a comprehensive study on civic design in the context of the emergence of modern town planning has not been undertaken in Britain since Thomas Mawson wrote 'Civic Art' in 1911, although Mawson wrote from a different perspective to this study and provided a more theoretical overview of the art and its characteristics, looking at practices in a broader time scale and geographical area too. Another means by which civic design has been highlighted is by the author presenting papers based on this research project at conventions like The Sixth International Seminar on the Urban Form (Florence, Italy), the Cities and Sustainability Conference (Dambulla, Sri Lanka), and the School of Architectural Studies' 1st Environmental Design Symposium (Sheffield, England), and through having sections of the work published.

Civic design has been acknowledged by many authors, such as Gordon Cherry in 'The Evolution of British Town Planning' (1974), to be a significant influence upon the emergence and development of formative modern town planning in Britain. However attention, such as in Cherry's book highlighted above, was often quite small scale in nature and has not taken the form of a substantial section of a body of work. Civic design has not, for example, been directly used as an area for modern or recent research unless isolated examples of settlements or schemes have been examined and this is usually within a far more specific context than the one adopted by this project. It is hoped therefore that this research will not only fortify existing knowledge regarding British urban planning and public architectural design but will also help to emphasise the significance of architectural practice and public developments that were taking place at the urban core to the emergence of town planning at the start of the twentieth century. Therefore, a modern research project such as this will reiterate the importance of public design to the evolution of urban planning, not only because it was deemed to be influential at that time, for as Hawtree in Sutcliffe (1981) noted, town planning by 1909 had a strong visual emphasis and was charged with civic design principles. These included the grouping of buildings in neat arrangements, establishing design unity by a similarity of the scale of new buildings and the common use of building materials, and the use of proportion in the design process so as to ensure a completeness and harmony in the form of the new environments. Early town planning in practice, as well as issues of urban order and disorder, were mainly perceived in terms of design which encouraged the use of design values and principles in the arranging of modern housing estates. The ultimate outcome of the passing of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc.

Act in 1909 was that town planning became synonymous with garden schemes as laid down originally by Unwin, a planner who placed great stress on the visual and architectural quality of the urban environment.

The study recognised the people who undertook civic design during the period considered. It has been shown in the previous chapter that civic design was undertaken by a broad range of designers that included those at the very top and those towards the lower echelons of the professional ladder. Civic designers were recognised to range from locally based architects, those individuals who may have only been responsible for only one or two major public buildings, to distinguished national figures. However many designers of relatively little importance hitherto managed to win the most important design competitions of the time and so were responsible for designing some of the most large scale as well as significant of public buildings erected in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. Even in the largest cities studied, such as Liverpool and Glasgow, it was frequently designers of comparatively low national professional standing who designed the largest and most prominent civic design schemes, such as Glasgow's City Chambers which was designed by William Young, up to then unknown, and Birmingham's Council House by Yeoville Thomason. As a consequence of the competition success Young's career rapidly climbed while Thomason's career did not experience a marked progression after the completion of his most prominent composition and instead maintained virtual national anonymity by subsequently designing only a small number of small scale public buildings and judging a few competitions in the West Midlands region. The same was also true to a lesser degree of the partnership of Lanchester, Rickards and Stewart, who after winning the Cardiff City Hall and Law Courts competition, a competition of national importance, only had one further success, the Town Hall in Godalming. However following Stewart's premature death in 1902 Lanchester and Rickards became one of the most successful of all design partnerships in the Edwardian period, winning many design competitions and widespread acclaim.

A valuable conclusion of this study was that provincial civic design during the period studied was largely undertaken by professionals who were not of high professional standing, individuals who often only designed one building of significance during the course of their career, and by individuals who were noted to only design within only one provincial settlement. The importance of these designers must not be underestimated and can be understood to be an outcome of the large number of public buildings which these individuals collectively designed. In addition, as it was these types of persons who composed many

prominent civic design schemes, as highlighted previously, so in effect it was these individuals who put into practice the principles and characteristics of civic design that have been identified and described within this project. The role of often largely undistinguished designers to the practice of provincial civic design was considerable during the period investigated for nearly every settlement examined for this study not only experienced the erection of a number of buildings by such individuals but in some cases these architects designed the majority of civic design schemes that occurred between about 1880 to 1914.

Research Weaknesses and Limitations

In order to gather information relating to civic design a detailed research process was devised, a description of which can be found in the methodological section of the study, chapter two. The description provided of the research methods used highlighted how the research analysis tended to concentrate upon the physical form of central areas of selected urban centres, looking at both the built environment and open spaces located in the vicinity of prominent public buildings. Emphasis was also put upon identifying the design and interior arrangements of public architectural forms, the disposition of prominent public buildings within large provincial centres and the environment about such structures.

While it is understood that the research methods employed generally worked well it became apparent on occasions as the research process unfolded that they contained faults. However, it must be emphasised that the research methods that were used were appropriate for the purpose of this study and its framework. This adequacy has been highlighted by the aims of the project being fulfilled through the identification, noting and detailed description of the principal characteristics of civic design as they would appear and to a lesser extent in proposed schemes within the time scale selected.

Some comments regarding the research methods employed are pertinent, particularly with regards to the limitations and weaknesses of the research process. Firstly, it can be remarked that the overall research process was somewhat dependent at certain times upon the availability of source material, such as historical maps and plans for the urban places chosen for study, information which was to be provided for at a variety of scales (1:10,000, 1:2,500, 1:1056 and 1:500). This was necessary in order to view and understand detailed

facts about the general urban development and design of a place at a given time and the placing of public buildings within it, as well as providing evidence of the development of the urban form. While primary source material in the form of maps and building plans were also printed within contemporary journals, like *The Builder* and the *Architectural Review*, on infrequent occasions it was discovered that such journals were difficult to obtain because of the reluctance of libraries to give public access to such source material due to their age and/or condition, a situation heightened at many libraries where many old maps had not been stored or handled properly. This was a practical problem that was constantly faced in the research process. Thus where such source material was not available the research process had to be, and significantly was for the large part, flexible enough to incorporate other means to extract information about a particular building, district or place. This included site visits, drawings and photographs, for example.

In order to study civic design practice it was intended at the early stages of the research process to investigate urban forms at a number of spatial scales ranging from the town plan to district scale. Although this approach to the subject area made it easy to identify certain aspects of civic design it carried with it the possibility that some significant elements might be neglected. Hence emphasis was subsequently placed upon the street scale and the design and form of the buildings involved themselves so as to identify small scale details which may have been important to the character of civic design. This took on greater significance in the research process once it was discovered in the study that civic design comprised largely of an amalgam of largely small scale features in the design and planning process. In studying the form of public buildings attention was also given to details around and approaches to them, features in proximity to the main entrance and the placing of statuary, that were sometimes sited in proximity to prominent buildings. These particularities can only be seen on cartographic sources of a small scale and so reinforced the need to look at provincial centres in a detailed way.

Within the course of this study various building types have been examined. While it has been possible to obtain information regarding the composition of most building types examined, such as Town Halls, Municipal Offices, Libraries and Museum buildings, for some building types, for example, Post Office buildings, the situation was somewhat different. During the period considered by this work HM Board of Works was responsible for designing Post Office buildings and unfortunately plans for such buildings tended to be withheld from the public and as a consequence many were not printed in the contemporary

architectural press. Only the plans of the central Post Offices erected in some of the largest provincial places between about 1880 and 1914 were printed although a description of the form and plan of a given Post Office building would be supplied where diagrams were not provided. But even today problems are experienced when trying to obtain plans of such buildings because of security issues that arise. However where descriptions of Post Office's were discovered to be inadequate with regards to the building's civic design site visits were undertaken in order to overcome this difficulty.

It has been noted earlier that methodological changes occurred during the course of the research process. Changes to the methodologies employed were not always as a response to apparent weaknesses in the research process but due to, for example, problems in obtaining source material, principally maps. Where such a situation was encountered emphasis often shifted onto obtaining other significant primary sources such as contemporary photographs of streets, buildings and open spaces. Such source material was often discovered in literature written in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Historical photographs and plans were also taken from local history books written after the end of the period selected. Such books included McKean's 'Dundee: An Illustrated Introduction' (1984) and Corfe's 'Sunderland: A Short History' (1973).

Within any research project there are limitations with regards to the research methods that were used and this work was no exception. Firstly, due to limitations of time and for reasons explained in the earlier chapters it was considered appropriate to only examine those provincial settlements that had a population total in excess of 125,000 persons by the early twentieth century (1901). Therefore many large sized places that were subject to notable civic design schemes, such as the Town Hall at Rochdale (1871-84) by Crossland, and the Harris Library and Museum (1882-93) in Preston by James Hibbert, were not examined. An additional limitation of the study was that while it concentrated upon a large number of substantially sized urban settlements, to give a more rounded or comprehensive picture of civic design would obviously require investigating a larger number of provincial settlements. Another shortcoming that became apparent was that the amount of information available for some of the settlements studied was not great and this was particularly true for the smaller sized provincial settlements where there was a distinct lack of detailed material regarding their built form, urban development and architectural history. Even in contemporary journals, such as *The Builder*, information for some of the settlements examined was at best limited and some of the smaller public buildings erected received barely any attention, in so doing

making it difficult to detailed information about the building as well as making it problematic in the search for plans and detailed perspectives of many schemes. It was also discovered on rare occasions in the architectural media that for some design competitions more emphasis was placed on designs not awarded the first premium, for example, the third placed scheme for the Library, Museum and Art Gallery competition in Oldham received greater attention than the winning design in *The Builder*, and that descriptions of many buildings were very brief despite their local design importance. This was especially true for the smaller sized public buildings erected in the smaller sized provincial settlements. The project was also affected where public buildings have been removed due to modern urban developments. In such a situation the reliance upon obtaining primary source material increased as site visits were obviously not possible.

Future Civic Design Research

It is appropriate at this point to suggest areas of future civic design research.

It has been noted previously that this project was undertaken so as to develop an appreciation and understanding of the practice and form of civic design in large sized provincial settlements between circa 1880 and 1914. A project such as this has been necessary in part due to a lack of studies on civic design, especially within the field of Planning History that instead tends to concentrate upon residential layouts at the urban fringe during the time scale highlighted earlier. Therefore any further work on British civic design and studies of British town or city centres in the period when town planning came forth would be of worth to Planning Historians simply because there is a lack of detailed work in the field at the present time. One such area that can be suggested for future research, and has been examined during the course of this study, is the persons who undertook civic design. While many individuals have been identified as civic designers, and their standing within the architectural profession commented upon, future research could investigate these individuals in greater depth. This work has discovered many new findings relating to the persons performing civic design during the period considered and this could form a foundation for future work in an area which has not been studied adequately to date.

In spite of its obvious limitations this work has attempted to highlight the importance of civic design and the need for further research to be carried out on the subject by providing a possible route along which further studies can be carried out. Due to limitations of time and for other reasons previously noted, it was considered appropriate to ignore provincial settlements that were not of a substantial demographic size. Smaller sized places were therefore disregarded within the framework of this study despite in some cases their historical and contemporary significance. It is with these smaller settlements, of which 55 settlements had a population over 50,000 people by 1881, the date of the Census nearest to the start date selected for this work, that an opportunity for further research can be seen and a comparison between the larger places examined by this project and those of a future project could be useful to those persons with an interest in the urban form. In towns such as Rochdale, Preston and Halifax, settlements of a large size, although not large enough to be included in this work, grandiose, large scale public buildings were erected during the period studied and their affect upon the urban form of each respective town would provide further account of civic design during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period. In addition, any future research could examine London, a unique settlement in the British context during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, which was subject to central Government building along Whitehall, the development of the museum area at Kensington and the formation of the London County Council (LCC) in the late-1880s which for the first time allowed political power to be held by one authority as opposed to numerous local vestries. The London County Council, significantly for civic design, had architectural and planning pretensions and established its own Architect's Department which was responsible for both modern residential schemes such as Boundary Street and central planning schemes such as Kingsway-Aldwych project and the County Hall scheme in the early 1900s. London, too, in the period covered by this work, was subject to the Queen Victoria Memorial scheme by Sir Aston Webb within which The Mall was laid out, Admiralty Arch erected and Buckingham Palace refaced.

Further research could also expand the chronological scale of this project, examining civic design in the years immediately following World War One when British society underwent major transition, a period within which some architectural traditions continued and others altered in a radical way. For example, Inter-war public architecture still used design styles that were popular before 1914, particularly neo-Georgian inspired Classical design, and between 1918 and 1939 many grand civic projects were undertaken in Britain. These include the civic centre, Birmingham, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, Leeds Civic Hall, Sheffield City Hall and the continuing development of Cathays Park, Cardiff.

The towns and cities selected for study were located only in the provinces of England, Scotland and Wales. Ireland and its urban centres were ignored within the framework of this project even though it was still under British rule before 1914 and major Irish settlements such as Dublin, Cork and Belfast, were large enough size to be included in this work, having experienced significant demographic growth during the nineteenth century. These settlements also witnessed developments in terms of their public architecture and civic design with Belfast and its City Hall by Brumwell Thomas, erected from 1897, being not only a watershed in the Baroque revival but a structure that had a marked influence upon the central urban form of the settlement, for example. Therefore any future research could examine the civic design of large Irish settlements. Research could also be undertaken on fields that affected the nature of civic design during the period chosen including architectural competitions, for example, or the undertaking of architectural biographies of persons who were practising civic design between 1880 and 1914. While many individuals have been studied beforehand this work has shown that most civic designers were of low professional ranking and so have not been covered to the same extent as eminent designers like Alfred Waterhouse and Henry Lanchester. In addition, there is little work written at the present time on the role and work of City Architects, individuals who significantly affected the civic design of a number of settlements from around the start of the twentieth century. Work on areas such as these will help to expand current knowledge of civic design practice in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period.

It was stated at the start of this project what civic design in the context of the framework of this work was to be and also what public building types this work would examine. As a consequence of this statement many public building types were ignored, such as hospitals, workhouses, prisons and market halls, as well as privately constructed building types of a sometimes large scale and grandiose design such as hotels, offices, theatres and railway stations, the latter being a building type that was often planned with a space other than a roadway in front of its principal elevation. But as most railways stations were erected prior to the period covered by this work thus the chronological scale of any future research involving such a building type will have to extend back into earlier years of the nineteenth century. However this will be significance to the study of civic design as not only will it broaden the range of building types studied but also the range of circumstances and contexts particular to the earlier Victorian period which affected public design matters.

Conclusion

To summarise, this study has recognised and described many design and planning features that were evident in civic design practice between about 1880 and 1914, as well as commenting upon the extent of the art and identifying the professionals who undertook it. In addition this work has highlighted the influence of the principles of civic design at the end of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth century to the emergence of modern town planning in Britain as well as investigating what civic design was understood to mean in theoretical terms. Many factors have also been noted to have affected the form and undertaking of civic design, not least the growth of the local government system and the willingness of local authorities to erect new public buildings so as to not only serve the local population but to also improve the visual condition of the environment. In the large settlements matters such as civic rivalry and the eagerness to be known as the second city of the empire were also recognised to have encouraged large scale architectural and planning schemes which affected the civic design of provincial places.

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