Revealing the Institutional Order of Birmingham as a Framework for Civic Life – An Interpretation of Paradise Circus and Associated Institutions between 1779-1980

Volume 1 of 2

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Abstract

Revealing the Institutional Order of Birmingham as a Framework for Civic Life – An Interpretation of Paradise Circus and Associated Institutions between 1779-1980

This thesis is concerned with the interpretation of the architectural and urban topography of Birmingham through the study of literary and intellectual institutions. The study is temporally bounded by the foundation of Birmingham Library (1779) and the building of Central Library (1974) as part of Paradise Circus (1980). Presented in three parts and beginning with John Madin's now demolished modernist complex, the thesis explores the historically constituted and continually negotiated topography of Birmingham towards an understanding of implicit and explicit institutional order as the stratified horizon for praxis (Carl, 2012: 67). Questions of continuity, progress and freedom resonate throughout the work with implications for contemporary architectural and urban theory and practice, in doing so offering a framework for civic life.

The hermeneutic position of this research offers a counter to the technological orientation and topographical amnesia of the modernist city. In contrast to conventional historical research which defers to the intention and authority of the author of the work (of art, architecture, literature) in question (Parcell, 1993: 250), and methods of scientific analysis where a work is treated as a silent, neutral object, hermeneutics calls for more subtle and comprehensive modes of historical and humanistic understanding (Palmer, 1969: 8). This is particularly valuable in the study of architecture and urban topography where history and design are both engaged in the act of interpretation. Vesely's (2004: 52) reciprocal unity between topology, orientation, and physiognomy as a sequence of relationships and dependencies offers a way of thinking about architecture beyond abstract notions of space, style or its technological and instrumental nature. Together, these orientate the research in *finding the right question to ask* (Gadamer, 1975: 312), informing the tools employed in its making.

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The research has been ordered by the study of historical documents and the architectural and urban topography of the city itself. Part 1 presents the historiographical context of twentieth century works and discussions around continuity and progress through the study of Cedric Price's unbuilt project for BMI/HQ and John Madin's now-demolished Paradise Circus. Beginning with the foundation of Birmingham Library (1779), Part 2 explores the topography of modernity from which those projects emerged, discussing the basis for an architectural and social culture that did not always conform to accepted convention or practice. Together, these parts lead the interpretive work of Part 3. Original drawings, photographs and the 'map of institutional continuity' accompany the presentation of extensive archival works throughout the thesis, some uncatalogued and seen here for the first time.

Drawing extensively on the fields of politics, philosophy, technology, and religion, and intensively on practices of architecture, art, landscape, and planning, the thesis contributes new insights into the architectural and urban topography of Birmingham, revealing the implicit and explicit institutional order of the city.

As the thesis presents, the implicit yet intensive order of the first library embodied dialogue (*logos*) at a time of much national and international dispute, with the naming of the site of Paradise establishing an ontological orientation to the fast-growing city. The long-term project for the Town Hall and subsequent Birmingham and Midland Institute and later conjoined Free Reference Library represented a more explicit yet contingent and open form of city-building, signifying ideas of democratic representation and civic participation. The parallel study of Price and Madin's works articulates differing attitudes to continuity and progress, where the latter made ground for civic life, acknowledging the traditions as well as the expanding territory of the city embodied in the ring road.

The thesis poses important questions about the ways in which institutions accommodate change whilst providing continuity with the given, historical conditions of *urbis* and a concern for freedom as the 'natural conditions common-to-all' *(physis)* (Carl, 2012: 67). Such questions have been given greater urgency in the context of declining state support and intervention, changes to the ownership and governance of public space and buildings, and global movements for social, spatial, and environmental justice. The thesis also offers opportunities for the creative interpretation of the archive in an approach which seeks not to reconstruct conditions, but to situate meaning within tradition.

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Contents

This thesis is presented in two volumes;

Volume 1 – Text and Illustrations

Volume 2 – *Drawing Series*, *Mapping of Institutional Continuity,* Source Maps and Prospects

The word count of 80,359 includes titles and subtitles, body text, captions and footnotes.

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Acronyms and Initialisms

Where an important institution is cited, its full name will be used. The following acronyms and initialisms are used within the text with reference to the following institutions and collections;

BMT – Birmingham and Museums Trust

BCC – Birmingham City Council, Wolfson Collection, Library of Birmingham

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

BFCAA – Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association Archive

BMI – Birmingham and Midland Institute

CCA – Canadian Centre for Architecture

RIBA – Royal Institute of British Architects

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PART 1 – Continuity and Progress

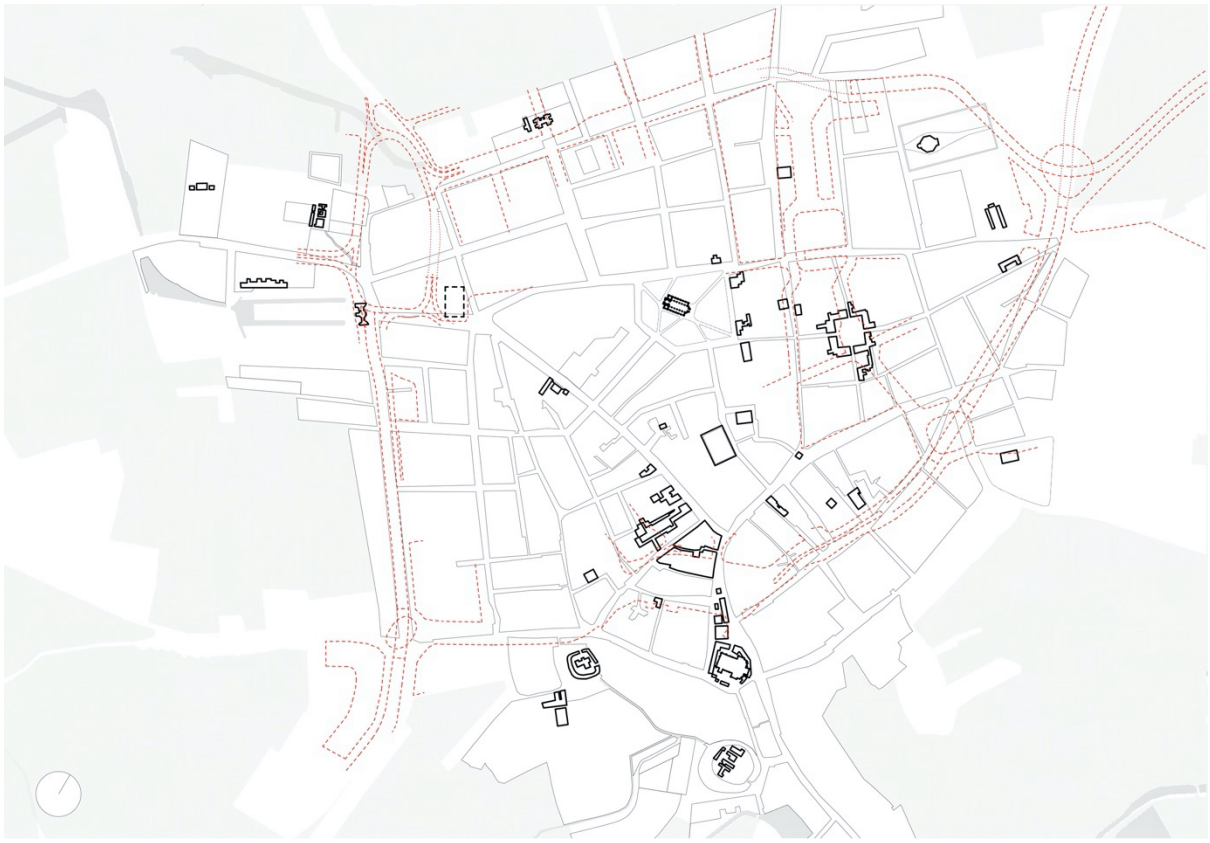

Figure 1: Drawing 005E – drawing of the extents of Birmingham in 1779 overlaid with the post-war plan for the Inner Ring Road in red as described by Cherry (1994: 201). The future position of the Town Hall is indicated by a dashed line, around which the drawing series was oriented. Source: author

Chapter 1 – Introduction to Thesis and Part 1

1.1 Establishing the Research Territory

1.1.1 An Outline of the Thesis

> I have never been very certain as to the value of tangible links with the past. They are often more sentimental than valuable...As to Birmingham's buildings, there is little of real worth in our architecture. Its replacement should be an improvement, provided we keep a few monuments as museum pieces (Manzoni in 1957, cited in Foster, 2005: 197)[1]
>
> The condition of perpetual novelty within a void-like tabula rasa […] undermines cultural continuity and denies the location of collective action (Caruso, 2008: 35)
>
> The 'kind of loop' referred to in 1917, enclosing an area almost exactly equivalent to the built-up extent of Birmingham in 1780, became an indispensable measure for post-war reconstruction (Cherry, 1994: 201)
>
> The form of the city changes more quickly […] than the human heart (Baudelaire, 1857: 118)

The challenges of considering questions of continuity in the post-Enlightenment, post-industrial city of Birmingham are brought to the fore in the above quotations. That they are taken from disparate sources and times points to the hermeneutic nature of this thesis. All too often questions of style, economy or subjective preference outweigh more pressing issues of a building's capacity for change, its embodied carbon, or fundamentally, its civic presence, meaning that the city finds itself in a constant search for novel solutions. This is not a new phenomenon. The scale and complexity of works completed in Birmingham in maximising infrastructural efficiency of movement left lasting implications for the order of change today. Manzoni's attitude of 'keep[ing] a few monuments as museum pieces' illustrates the reductive tendencies of modernism and the objectification of the city and its architecture as an image, yet the best of the modernist architecture that accompanied the Manzoni's Inner Ring Road responded to the newly formed conditions of the city as well as a much deeper tradition. This was seen most intensely at Paradise Circus, where the promenade along New Street culminated in the temple-like form of Central Library. The contradiction between the architecture of the city as a living tradition and progressive novelty will be critically considered throughout the thesis.

Cherry's (1994) observation on the close alignment of the town's boundary and that of the Inner Ring Road describes changes to topography 'through time', but it also prompts

[1] In an email exchange between the author and Foster on 8.08.2022, Foster advised that this quote came from the Public Works Department cuttings in the archives of Birmingham City Council, since destroyed. Therefore, only a secondary citation is available.

questions of how we might view the city 'in time'[2]. The making of the drawing in figure 1 as part of the wider *Drawing Series* therefore forms the basis for the critical study of institutional order. The unique nature of this research will also offer insights into how Birmingham prospered in the late and post-Enlightenment owing its existence to industrial might over and above religious or royal patronage. Reflections on the concrete conditions of the city and the making of drawings reveal that order and underpin the original nature of the thesis. What could be considered the best modernist architecture in Birmingham is being lost to redevelopment risks repeating the heavy-handed approach of the twentieth century, underlining the contribution and urgency of this research. This is not only from the perspective of conservation and reduction of carbon emissions, but it is concerned with the erosion of the civic values that those works embodied, all too often disregarded in favour of economic gain. The overarching aim of this thesis is therefore the recovery of what it means to be civic in Birmingham, and the ways in which institutions manifest and moderate varying ideas of continuity, progress, and freedom.

The institution at the centre of the research is the complex known until recently as Paradise Circus, a large multi-functional series of buildings which formed part of an extended Civic Centre between 1974 and 2016. The complex, designed by Birmingham born and educated architect John Madin, included the largest municipal library in Europe at the time of its opening, together with a range of other civic functions. It also formed a junction on the technical infrastructure of the Inner Ring Road conceived in 1917 and built between 1957 and 1971, incorporating a car park and never-used bus station. The incomplete nature of the complex was used in the rationale for its demolition and replacement with commercial buildings. In this thesis, I argue that rather than being a deficiency in its intent and design, the open and contingent form was a counter to the progressive tendencies of the modernist project on the city and reflected a tradition of architectural praxis and civic participation. Moreover, the study of the library and its associated institutions, including that of the site itself, reveals the temporal depth to intellectual and architectural traditions.

Commensurate with the hermeneutic approach of this thesis, the research questions were reached through reading and interpreting the concrete conditions of Paradise Circus and wider context, together with the in-depth investigation into multiple archives. They consider the implicit and explicit institutional order of the city, asking how the civic ground of the city might be understood and recovered in a place that has apparently placed so little value on tradition. The making of territorial and temporal drawings as means to explore the intensive, as well as extensive, institutional order of the city has given structure to the thesis, beginning

[2] The discussion on the difference between considering a work *through time* and *in time* is discussed in section 1.2.

with Paradise Circus, but also reaching back to the founding of the first subscription library in 1779 to provide the context related to the civic basis of the research.

This thesis, therefore, brings together disparate readings on the city to reveal an all-to-often overlooked depth of tradition in a city with a history of novel urban and architectural attitudes. Through extensive archival research, the thesis reveals previously unseen or uncatalogued material, calling on local and international collections in making associations across registers often for the first time. Beyond offering new representations of the city at key moments in time, the 'map of institutional continuity' (figure 2, see larger version in Volume 2) and accompanying *Drawing Series* (figure 3 and throughout the thesis) frame the temporal distance necessary in the interpretive work of the research, revealing the latent traditions of place as institution. Considering the limited concern for or ignorance of those traditions in recent redevelopment projects - including that at Paradise Circus - the thesis contributes a deeper understanding of continuity in architecture and urban topography where those traditions of the city are alive. This is important to not only provide a sense of belonging to citizens of Birmingham but to ask greater questions about who the city serves and for what purpose. The institution forms the basis for that interpretation.

As the bearer of incorruptible knowledge and power, the degree to which institutions correspond with the changing order of the city reveals its contingency. In the context of the climate crisis and closely connected social injustices, the thesis also raises important questions about the positivist dream of the finished city, and the ways in which a contingent, open architecture might offer an alternative approach. It also proposes an interpretive middle ground between the historicising conservatism and what Caruso (2008: 32) describes as the tyrannical novelty of contemporary architecture and urban practice in the city cited at the beginning of this section.

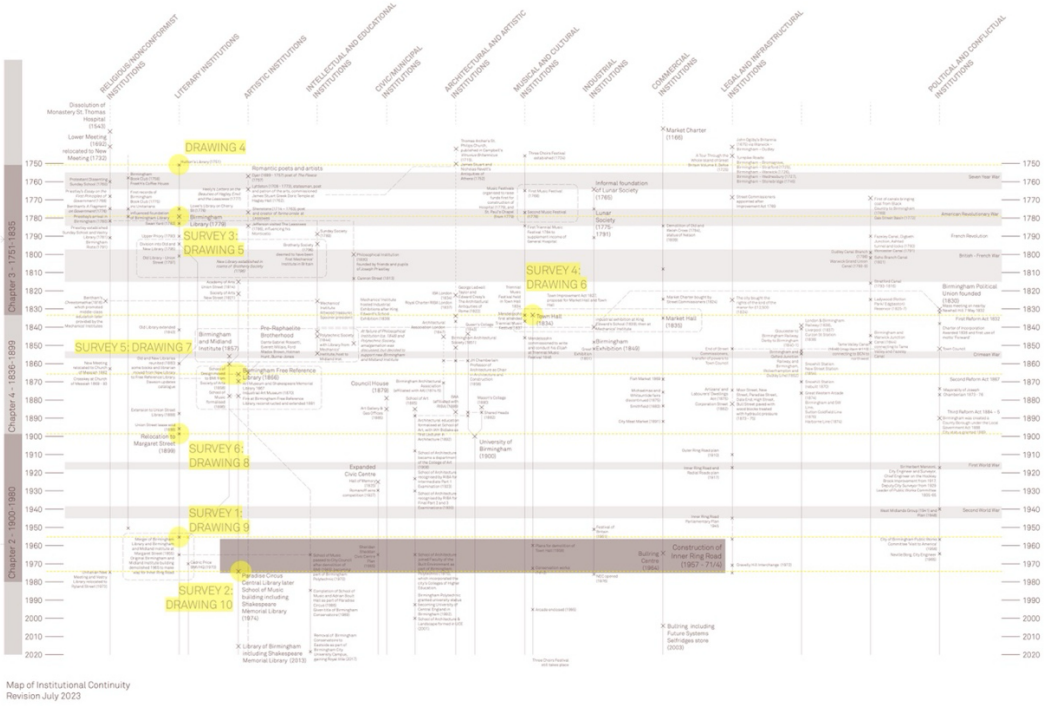

Figure 2: *Mapping of Institutional Continuity* highlighting relationship to drawings (in yellow), institutional forms across the top, and chapter (left hand vertical axis). Available in Volume 2 plate C.1. Source: author

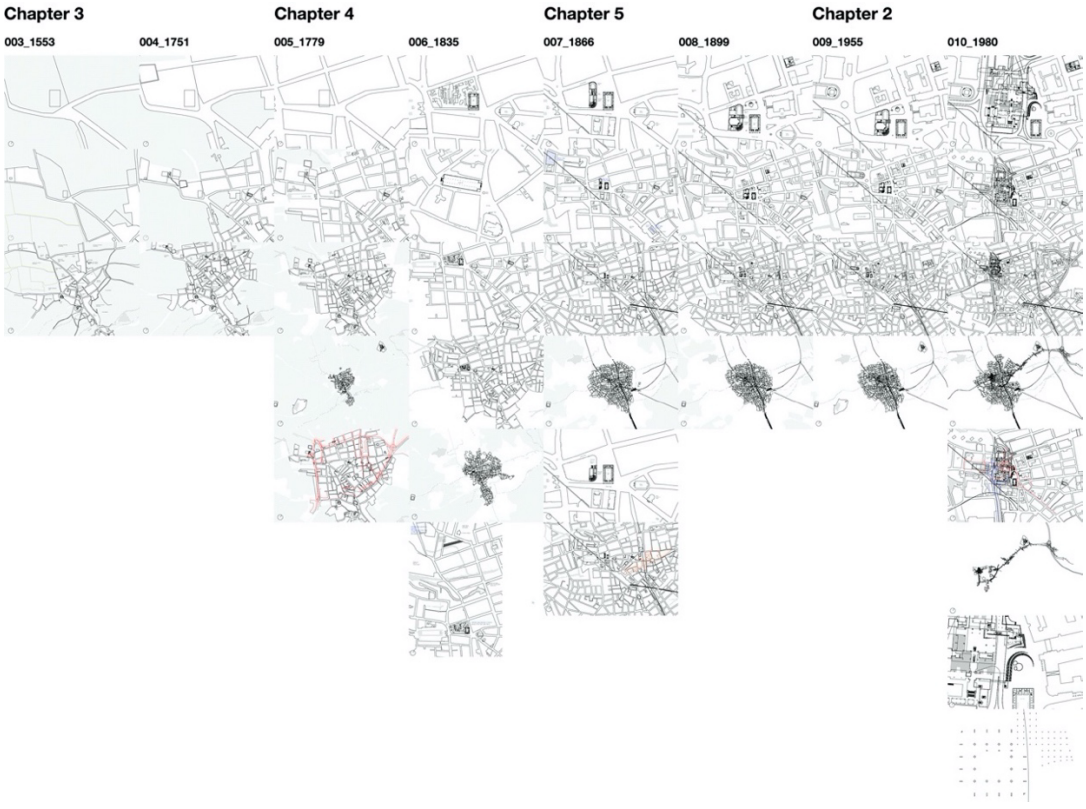

Figure 3: Excerpt of the *Drawing Series*, an original set of new drawings at key moments of the study of institutional order of Birmingham. These formed the basis of the structure, around the inception, construction, demolition and/or decline of institutions. Available in Volume 2 plates D.1 to D.10. Source: author

1.1.2 The Aims and Objectives of the Research

The aims of the research are four-fold. First, the thesis aims to reveal the depth of cultural references and continuities embodied in the topography and architecture of the city at a variety of registers and temporal moments. Manzoni's disregard for 'tangible links with the past' cited at the opening of this chapter has long been the basis for uncompromised development in the city, first made manifest in the enlarged project for the Inner Ring Road as discussed in chapter 2. His suggestion that it would be sentimental to retain or preserve historical works of architecture other than 'a few monuments as museum pieces' overlooks the very particular praxis of the city, consigning all past, present and future building to indiscriminate and often ill-informed destruction. The objective therefore is to deepen dialogue around the order of the city, its continuities and freedom and to provide a framework for thinking beyond subjective issues of aesthetics and style on universal questions of what it means to be civic in the post-industrial city.

Second, counter to a contemporary concern for what Temple (2014: 160, 161) describes as 'the immediacy of things', the hermeneutical perspective aims to recover a collective participation concerned less with novelty in favour of continuity. Birmingham is often associated with novel architectural and urban works – the transition from an industrial to commercial centre led to the large scale reimagination of the topography of the city, with the ring road and Paradise Circus representative of an apparent break with tradition, though this forms one of the major questions addressed in this thesis. As the post war project on the city comes under ever-greater scrutiny as building fabric deteriorates and original uses are lost particularly along the line of the inner ring road, major civic projects have been replaced; the Bull Ring with Future Systems' Selfridges and Benoy's shopping mall (2003), and Central Library with Mecanoo's Library of Birmingham (2013). Both are representative of what Caruso (2008: 35) refers to as 'a condition of perpetual novelty within a void-like tabula rasa [which] undermines cultural continuity and denies the location of collective action'. They are not concerned with continuity or civic depth but with technique, surface and image. This presents important questions about how such buildings and landscapes accommodate change and their representative role in the city. Nonetheless, these places too animate the city, drawing into focus its continuities.

Third, the thesis contributes new insights into the physical development and temporal depth of the city, bringing to light new readings. Whilst there are many texts published on the origin and history of the city (refer to Appendix A), few attempt to locate events in a wider intellectual, philosophical, or architectural discourse, or to explore the temporal continuity of the city. This is exemplified by Cherry's insightful yet unexplored observation that 'the 'kind

of loop' referred to in 1917, enclosing an area almost exactly equivalent to the built-up extent of Birmingham in 1780, became an indispensable measure for post-war reconstruction." (Cherry, 1994: 201). The thesis therefore seeks to bring to light new insights through horizonal interpretation of underexplored or previously unknown architectural works and their communication with wider intellectual and creative disciplines, placing them 'in time' to obtain a 'disciplinary and worldly involvement' (Parcell, 1993: 250). This is discussed further in section 1.2.

Fourth, the thesis locates the development of Birmingham as a post-Enlightenment city in a broader field of enquiry. Baudelaire's quote at the opening of this chapter suggests that the citizens' capacity for change could not keep up with the rapid changes affected upon Paris during the nineteenth century. Similar patterns of development have been seen in Birmingham albeit on a smaller scale. The making of new streets and roads had the purpose of improving the image of the city as well as efficiency of movement, together with the clearance of so-called slums along their line that were often home to thousands of inhabitants deemed unruly by city leaders. The coalescence of public buildings including the library and road infrastructure at Paradise Circus reveals a particular civic orientation, revealing an institutional order specific to the city. The aim therefore is not a singular theory of the institution, impossible given historical process (Voegelin, 193). Instead, the thesis is concerned with the topic of institutional order and the orientation of human activities through institutions. The study of the library and wider intellectual, political, artistic, and scientific institutions over the extended temporal depth of this thesis provides the ground for reflection on questions of continuity, progress, and freedom.

1.1.3 Institution and Institutional Order as the Topic of the Thesis

At the centre of the thesis lies the topic of institutional order and the orientation of human activities through institutions. The study of the library and wider intellectual, political, artistic, and scientific institutions over the extended temporal depth of this thesis provides the ground for reflection on questions of continuity, progress, and freedom. The inter and intra-dependence of institutions across temporal and territorial boundaries is gathered in what this thesis defines as the *Mapping of Institutional Continuity* (figure 2 and included in Volume 2) that accompanied the creation of the *Drawing Series* (summarised in figure 3 and gathered in Volume 2). The approach to making these artefacts and their contribution to knowledge is discussed in section 1.1.5. It also shows the relative stability and longevity of some and the comparatively contingent and short-lived nature of others. Within this, architecture and urban topography provide the horizons for institutional praxis (Carl, 2012: 67).

The aim is not to arrive at a singular theory of the institution, an impossibility given the relative instability of society in 'the swamp of historical process' (Voegelin, 2000a: 193), but to consider the correspondence between iterations of institutions and their manifestation in built form. Neither is it the intention to restrict the various forms of institutional praxis to stylistic movements or indeed to offer an architectural critique of historical or contemporary works, though questions of architectural form and style inevitably inform the dialogue. Instead, architecture and urban topography provide the conditions for reflection on continuity, progress and freedom.

Given the large scale, infrastructure-led regeneration of the city in the second half of the twentieth century, the relative stability and continuity of institutions was disrupted, most evident in the *tabula rasa* approach to Paradise Circus discussed in chapter 2. Indeed, with the cultural revolutions of the 1960s, the very notion of the institution as the arbiter of order (related to government, knowledge, culture) was called into question. The temporal depth of this study not only allows these events to be seen in the context of earlier periods of disruption, witnessed in the Birmingham Riots of 1791 and protests leading to the Reform Act of 1832, but to consider degrees of continuity and contingency in the architectural representation of those moments. As Baudelaire contemplated in the quote cited above, the pace and scale of change in the political field of urban development often shrouds a deeper sense of the natural world and human participation therein. Consequently, the overarching aim is the recovery of what it means to be civic in the post-Enlightenment city through the study of institutions and institutional order.

1.1.4 Defining Institution and Institutional Order

The cultural institution of the library and the technical armature of the city's Inner Ring Road forms the opening enquiry of this research. The two projects became entwinned in the post-war reconstruction of the city, most intensely at Paradise Circus. The tension between the cultural intent of the library and the technical objectives of the Inner Ring Road underpins the complexity of the situation and establishes an ontological depth. According to Carl;

> Architecture, as mediation between particular and universal, carries the institutional horizons for praxis; and in fact, this is plain in the settings for civic institutions of the polis. Too often reified as 'types', the standard terms for the parts of cities - streets, alleys, blocks, parks, etc. - still carry an institutional decorum particular to each city. Architecture is the basso continuo against which we improvise our judgements, choices, statements. (Carl, 2015: 17)

This raises several ideas related to institutions. It positions architecture as the manifestation of an institutional order of praxis, and the ways in which buildings and their topography carry meaning particular to the conditions of a place. The terms institution and institutional order

are discussed here as the basis for the wider topical dialogue beginning with the library and Paradise Circus.

1.1.4.1 Institution

The term institution has meaning in everyday use, particularly with reference to bodies of power and knowledge. Institutions are usually seen as organisations that in some way represent orders of belief (religious, scientific), control (politics, law, policing, finance), culture (literature, art, broadcasting). They provide degrees of stability in society, in maintaining freedom and enriching ways of life, in gathering, advancing, and disseminating knowledge for the wider good, and in the moderation of systems related to fiscal policy, regulatory standards and the conduct of civil life. Depending on their integrity, rules and governance, institutions tend to outlive the individuals or groups of their founding, intentionally maintaining their role as arbiters of civic life over an extended period. When institutions lack the necessary integrity, do not have rules that are open to change according to circumstance, or have governors whose interests are not aligned, they are susceptible to failure, with a loss of stability and continuity, often with implications for those groups whose interests they serve, as well as for wider society.

Institution can also refer to a particular place or building usually associated with the organisational basis of the term. The founding of institutions was particularly prevalent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, associated with the growth in population, international trade and the contestations over national boundaries. As discussed by Arendt (1958b: 124), institutions associated with imperial expansion grew exponentially, leaving a problematic legacy of exploitation and calls for reparation still relevant today. Institutions also became synonymous with the ordering of society; the provision of medical treatment, housing of the poor, and with incarceration. These were often but not always armatures of central or local government. In places that lacked the necessary structures of government, philanthropic individuals or groups provided assistance for those most in need, or established institutions for the advancement of knowledge or culture, usually funded through industrial activity. Such was the case of Birmingham's Hospital (1779), the funds for which were raised by the founding of a music festival for the raising of funds through subscription, which in turn led to the construction of the Town Hall, the first of its kind in Britain. In this sense, the city's canal network might also be seen as an institution, funded through subscription and particular to the topographical orientation of the situation. It was also an infrastructure of civic pride, essentially connecting Birmingham to the global network of trade and culture. As Carl (2012, p. 81) notes, under certain circumstances infrastructure too can

become the vehicle for civic commitment, raising questions about the register and order at which institutions might be considered.

Institution also marks the beginning of something whether enshrining acts, relationships, or commitments in law such as in marriage, the laying of a foundation or crowning of a monarch. Parliamentary statutes such as the *Literary and Scientific Institutions Act* (1854) led to local acts that established institutions such as the Birmingham and Midland Institute, 'established for the Diffusion and Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art'.

Customs and traditions represent a less tangible yet equally relevant order of a situation, sometimes made manifest in-built form. The aforementioned music festival itself can be seen as an institution, representing the temporal dimension of the term. Though reflective of the concrete conditions of their being, they are not limited to a place or time, passed on through word of mouth, performed in drama, song, or dance, recorded in the written or printed word, documented, or interpreted in works of art. The term institution has manifold meanings concerned with the territorial and temporal dimensions of the city.

1.1.4.2 Institutional Order

As noted previously, the topos institution is satisfactory for the study of the appropriateness of established institutions in a relatively stable society, yet does not consider temporal or ontological depth of a situation. Institutional order reveals the stratified horizons of the situation, summarised by Carl (2000: 331; 2015: 16) and developed in this thesis at two levels;

Explicit
official institutions, usually supported by law (e.g., parliaments, postal service, marriage) or by other public consensus (such as scholarly research);

informal, self-organising institutions (e.g., the group of men who always gather in the corner of the piazza, clubs, societies, Facebook friends, collaboration in emergencies); and

Implicit
the more primordial phenomena of language, custom, and locale, which underlie the other two.

An enquiry into institutional order therefore requires a deeper engagement with 'the field of the foundation, maturation, and decline, of the reform and revolution, and of the collapse of institutions' (Voegelin, 2000a: 194). The thesis explores the way in which the library in its various embodiments moves between these explicit and implicit levels, related to the natural conditions as explored below.

Order in the sense discussed here is concerned with tradition, including but not limited to the concrete conditions of institutions described so far. Drawing on the Greek philosophical tradition translated through Heidegger and Gadamer, Vesely (2004: 70, 74) proposes a reciprocal 'communicative' or 'ontological movement' between embodiment and articulation, animating and transforming human circumstances as a whole. At the base of this, embodiment is concerned with the natural conditions common-to-all (*physis*), Heidegger's 'earth'. At the other extreme, articulation, Heidegger's 'world', points to the possibilities of meaning, embodying the reciprocity between the natural conditions, and what Carl (2015: 18) describes as 'the horizonal/institutional structure of the analogical field that makes the topic the basis of communication between, for example, architecture, ornament, music, painting, and so on'. Within this field, the ontological bases of order were power, reason and revelation most coherent in the *polis* (Voegelin, 2000a: 217), with implications for contemporary notions of freedom.

In discussing the origins of institutional order, Voegelin (2000a: 196) elaborates on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* citing three areas that remain relevant to the topic today: the first concerned with education; the second with stasis; and the third the cycle of political forms. On education, he states that 'if the person knows […] what the good life [the purpose of human life] is, then certain consequences result for the establishment of society beyond the educational institutions' (Voegelin, 2000a: 196). This places the educational institution in the realm of ordered conduct towards the attainment of the best *polis*. This relates to the second area of stasis, meaning 'to fix or 'become rigid'. Voegelin (2000a: 197) elaborates

that ‘when someone becomes hardened in a position and offers resistance to the smooth interplay of society, then order enters into disorder’, drawing distinctions between institutions of order (government, law) and disorder (revolt, war). The tension between established institutions and phenomena of change and progress is concerned as much with equality as it is resistance depending on one’s position with respect the institution. The balance is dependent on the constitution within which the institution acts, related to the third area, the cycle of political forms, Aristotle’s *politikon anakyklosis*, and ‘saturation’ in the structure of the economy that forces change. This is concerned in historical memory with phases of monarchy, aristocracy, democracy and institutions of tyranny (Voegelin, 2000a: 199, 200). Voegelin’s reading of Aristotle reveal complex notions of institutional order, or lack thereof, framing the hermeneutic tradition of the present condition.

Contrary to the technological orientation of modern civilisation, the natural conditions common-to-all (*physis*) remain relevant to civic life. Ancient principles of natural law were translated through Cicero’s *De Re Publica* (51-54 BCE) and incorporated within Aquinas’ Christian interpretations in his *Summa Theologica* (1485) (Schneewind, 1998: 17-19). The scientific gains of modernity claimed ground in the realms of reason and revelation in favour of experience where mathematical reason and speech made freedom possible (Schneewind, 1998: 156), with implications for the order of the world and philosophical thought. The transformation of the duties of natural law and corresponding natural rights as privilege into the social principle of liberty, contributed to what Carl (2015: 11) describes as ‘the passage from the benign state of nature [*natura naturata*] to the malign state of society [*natura naturans*]’ with new rules and conventions, embodied in institutions. This transition led to the emergence of the public domain, distinctions between private as ‘the human condition’ and public as ‘a human creation’, and the new roles assumed by ‘man as actor’ (Sennett, 1977: 98, 99). Newfound discoveries in science informed proto-socialist ideas, particularly in France where systematic attempts were made at ordering and improving the city, and with it the conduct of its inhabitants. Prominent in this were new civic, legal, and political institutions which recalled ancient Rome, manifest in new public buildings and monuments. Ideas of liberty and freedom were a forceful presence across Europe after the fall of the *ancien regime* at the hands of the French and American Revolutionaries, and much feared by the established political and religious order in Britain.

Architecture and topography, therefore, offer the depth of institutional praxis necessary for philosophical reflection, and as explored in section 1.2.1 freedom and liberty form a critical part of the thesis. Kahn’s exhibition *City/2* (1971a; 1971b; 1971c) and discourse *The Room, the Street and Human Agreement* (1971d) contemplate the ways in which architecture and

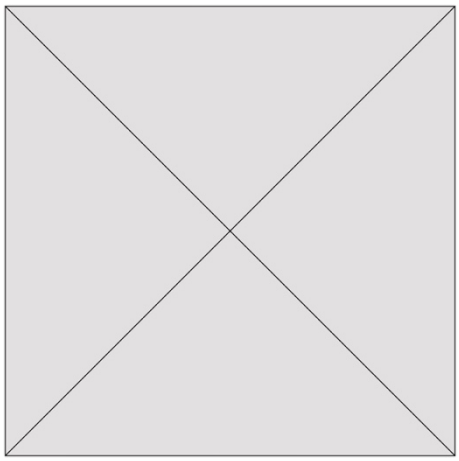

Figure 4: Louis Kahn's sketch ‘The City from a Simple Settlement’, Drawing for City/2 exhibition, 1971. Source: Philadelphia Museum of Art, accession number 1972-32-2, accessed 27.02.2022, www.philamuseum.org..

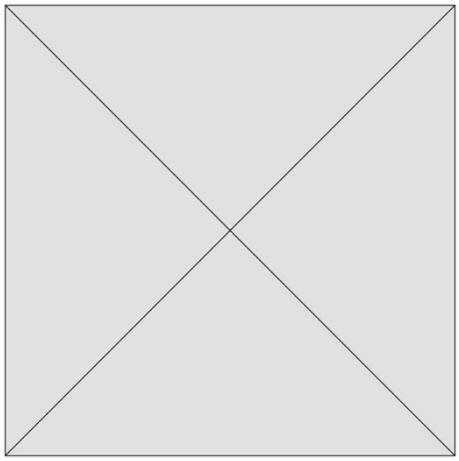

Figure 5: Louis Kahn's sketch ‘The Street is a Room by Agreement, Drawing for City/2 exhibition, 1971. Source: Philadelphia Museum of Art, accession number 1972-32-3, accessed 27.02.2022, www.philamuseum.org..

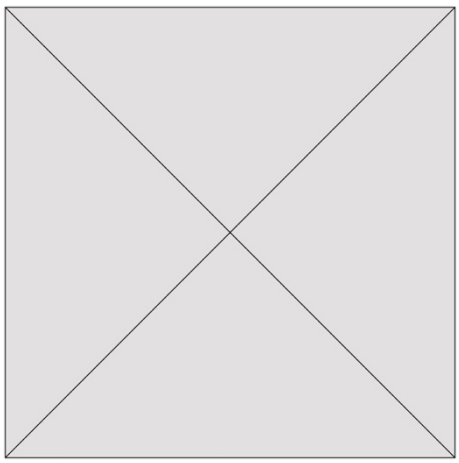

Figure 6: Louis Kahn's sketch ‘Architecture Comes from the Making of a Room’, Drawing for City/2 exhibition, 1971. Source: Philadelphia Museum of Art, accession number 1972-32-4, accessed 27.02.2022, www.philamuseum.org..

urban topography provide the horizons for institutional praxis, lamenting their demise in late-modernity. Moving between the registers of the room and the city, Kahn viewed all as a means of expression, first of beauty and harmony (1971d: 259). For him, 'natural agreement – the sense of commonality' was the basis for the city of 'assembled institutions' (1971b) (figure 4). Kahn (1971b) recognised that the civic nature of a place required a sensitivity to how institutions are 'renewed and [the] desire for new agreement', with the measure of their success depending on their ability to reflect changing societal and environmental circumstances. Between the city and room, the street and civic places lining it ('The Meeting House') (figure 5) are also reached by agreement, with the sky as a ceiling, suggesting a universal commonality (1971c). The situation of the room embodies human participation (figure 6), with the 'society of rooms' coalescing in the plan of the building.

Kahn's topical discussion on the institution is fruitful in its positive orientation towards the city at a variety of territorial and temporal registers, but it also offers insight into what happens when human agreement cannot be reached. At several moments in the span of this thesis Birmingham witnessed dissent and disagreement, leading to new modes of institutional organisation and activity by necessity. This was most pronounced in the foundation and growth of the Birmingham Library in the late eighteenth century by largely nonconformist intellectuals and industrialists at a time that the government of the town was nascent. The reasons and implications for such a concentration of religious nonconformity are discussed in chapters 3 and 4, as are the ways in which institutions including the library mediated the contested ground of the city. Conversely, the overbearing will of the Corporation in the twentieth century meant that any form of continuity in institutional order was disregarded in favour of a larger pattern of development including Paradise Circus and the Inner Ring Road, resulting in the loss of embodied institutional praxis.

1.2 Hermeneutics and the Architecture of the City - Research Methods & Tools

As an area of phenomenological philosophy, hermeneutics is concerned with the study of understanding and of interpretation. The task of interpretation requires the consideration of a work of humankind (or God), where the meaning of a work is derived from deciphering the human imprint on it. In contrast to 'methods' of scientific analysis where a work is treated as a silent, natural object, hermeneutics calls for more subtle and comprehensive modes of historical and humanistic understanding (Palmer, 1969: 8). Interpretation can be seen as the most basic act of human thinking, a constant process of positioning oneself in the world in how we navigate the day to day as well our plans for the future. In that sense the hermeneutical act of understanding is both an epistemological and an ontological phenomenon, concerned as it is with our very being-in-the-world (Palmer, 1969: 10).

The distinction between historical research and hermeneutic enquiry lies in the position with regards the work. Parcell (1993: 250) notes that in conventional historical research, the artefact is situated 'in its cultural world' by working back in time and deferring to the intentions and authority of its author, 'holding an autonomous truth, separate from the individuals who help to reveal it'. In hermeneutics, the artefact holds the potential for the individual involved in interpretation to obtain a 'disciplinary and worldly involvement' as well as 'a degree of self-understanding, both individual and cultural'. This is particularly valuable in the study of architecture where history and design are engaged in the act of interpretation, as a counter to progress. These are summarised as the 'world behind' and 'in front of the work', and both are relevant and present in this thesis. However, given the scope of knowledge that exists in consideration of the 'world behind' works of architecture and topography in Birmingham through time, this thesis makes a unique contribution in consideration of the 'world in front' of the work 'in time'. This temporal dimension is discussed in the following section.

The study of institutions, institutional order, and the stratification of horizons reveals the *praxis* of the city, manifest in its urban topography and architecture. The continuity of civic ground is revealed through the interpretation of these institutions. The primary tools for this research are the city itself, the archive, the *Mapping of Institutional Continuity* and the *Drawing Series*. The following section explores the phenomenological basis of the work.

1.2.1 Continuity and Progress

The concern for continuity in relation to the urban topography and architecture of Birmingham is not an obvious nor easy starting point for research. As Lynch (2017: 40) notes, where buildings are detached from their topographical setting in modernist cities such as Birmingham and Stuttgart, orientation can be difficult. Vesely (2004: 54) contends that this disorientation is due to a discontinuity of references brought about by war or human endeavour, leading to a loss in 'the meaning of the remembered space and its coherence'. The recovery of references leads us to an understanding of deep spatial structures between the natural conditions and the 'possibilities of representation' upon which architecture is dependent. Vesely's (2004: 52) reciprocal unity between topology, orientation, and physiognomy as a sequence of relationships and dependencies offers a way of thinking about architecture beyond abstract notions of space, style or its technological and instrumental nature. Topology refers to the deep spatial structures of the city, orientation to the continuity of references present in a condition, and physiognomy as the explicit manifestation of spatiality, each in unity with the other; 'the visible aspects of space, its physiognomy, depend on orientation; the orientation in turn depends on the topological

character of the surrounding world' (Vesely, 2004: 52). This brings us closer to understanding the phenomenon of continuity, revealing the civic nature of a place.

The coherence of 'remembered space' according to Vesely (2004: 54) evokes a temporal depth. The search for continuity in a city that has apparently pursued progress is an underlying tension in this work, and has ongoing implications for the civic nature of the city. The radical reworking of the city can be seen in the ambitious plans for the civic centre which expanded to the regional scale of the ring road and national highways, creating novel conditions for the city's architects. This forms the basis of chapter 2. Whilst this object-based view of architecture was not unique to Birmingham, the territory affected by such change and the rate at which it was achieved embodied the modernist project on the city. There was little resistance to wholesale demolition at the time until the conservation policies of the late 1960s began to influence professional and public opinion. Heritage policy (2021) today defines works of architecture (as well as monuments, places and landscapes) as assets with varying degrees of significance, continuing the categorisation and objectification of the city that began with the first Town and Country Planning Acts. Progress and conservation can therefore be seen in the same spectrum, flattening the possibilities of creative interpretation.

The apparently progressive nature of Birmingham is related not only to its twentieth century reinvention, but has earlier origins related to the concentration of radical nonconformity as discussed in chapters 3 and 4. The changing nature of the values underpinning progress lies at the centre of this tension with continuity, represented by the city's motto of 'Forward', determined at the point at which the charter of incorporation was awarded (1838) and which suggests a degree of continuity and consideration of the 'world in front of the work'. The modern idea of progress has two main divides;

> One is the idea of progress through the accumulation of knowledge and advancement of science and technology. The other associates progress with the perfection of man and the civic order. (Wright, 1993: 221)

The relationship between the institutional order and civic conditions of the city is therefore dependent on the underpinning values of that progress. Wright notes that;

> the progress which was thought to follow from the advancement of science (accumulation of knowledge), tends to become identified with economic growth as such. […] Progress thus measured is no longer a value concept. It is a 'factualised', value neutral notion, an instance of what philosophers call the reification of value. (Wright, 1993: 222)

The ways in which those participating in the development understood the traditions of the place in relation to continuity forms a fundamental aspect of this thesis, countering the view that Birmingham is synonymous with such a value neutral notion of progress.

As an advocate of this approach and as a counter to chronological order, Leatherbarrow (2021) explores the possibilities of representation in architecture through the consideration of the chronologies that exist in a work, that of the world, the body and the project. The time of the world relates to the ways in which buildings testify to collective human interests, orientation and desires, echoing future possibilities (Leatherbarrow, 2021: 13). The patina of weathered surface or the ways in which a space accommodates a festival point to the ways in which continuity contributes to the civic whole. The time of the body indicates a relationship between the ground of the building and that of the wider territory. The ways in which one experiences a building through the 'incremental and retrospective senses of its spaces' and 'characteristic rhythms' gives orientation to life as a shared experience (Leatherbarrow, 2021: 14). In the time of the project, the progressive nature of design development often conceals the unforeseen possibilities of the work and the 'ignoring or renouncing [of] the world's intelligence' (Leatherbarrow, 2021: 16). Leatherbarrow (2021: 10) distinguishes the thesis of his work as 'working in time' rather than 'through time' diachronically, offering the possibility of 'ontological movement' between the earthly conditions and worldly possibilities.

This human and worldly concern is echoed in the term 'ground' within which continuity is made evident. Carl (2012: 67) defines 'ground' as 'a metaphor for the conditions by which freedom is meaningful', adding that 'common ground' is 'an ethical concept that invokes the one thing a city ought to grant – a depth that accommodates with dignity the diversity of its peoples and their histories'. The continuity of differences afforded by topographical ground can be described as 'civic', defined by Lynch (2017: 9) as 'something which orientates architecture towards the shared conditions of urbanity'. Counter to a contemporary concern for what Temple (2014, pp. 160, 161) describes as 'the immediacy of things' related to progress and personal fulfilment, the hermeneutical perspective aims to recover a collective participation, or at least to recognise the 'limitations and possibilities of a participatory dimension of contemporary [and historical] architecture'.

1.2.2 Praxis and the Stratification of Horizons

The concern for the institutional order, manifest in the buildings and topography of the city, gives insight into the *praxis* of the situation. Carl (2012: 74, 67) defines *praxis* as 'a particular form of the 'situation' of phenomenology' with two dimensions – action and reflection. Gadamer (1981: 88, 90) places the origin of *praxis* in the 'remote […] tradition of Aristotelian

philosophy', adding that 'practice [*praxis*], as the character of being alive, stands between activity and situatedness'. Within this practical philosophy, making (*poiēsis*) as 'a knowledgeable mastery of operational procedures' (Gadamer, 1981: 92) arises from practice itself as the basis for dwelling rather than 'an ornament and bonus added to dwelling' (Heidegger, 1975: 213).

In post-Enlightenment, modernist cities such as Birmingham, the theme of the 'city as image' (Carl, 2000: 328) tends to overwhelm the *praxis* and *poiēsis* of a situation, where visual aspects of the city are amplified, with generalised categories of space, grid or network used as terms to describe the technological framework of the city, within which the subject or agent operates as part of greater system. Counter to such conceptual generalisations, Carl (2000: 328) states that 'a town mostly happens in what people do – in the domain of *praxis*', suggesting that a 'stratification of symbolic embodiment' is necessary to avoid a conflict between the 'methodological requirements of epistemological clarity and the comparative 'messiness' of the practical order'. The 'typicality of *praxis*' is suggestive of an 'exchange between the given conditions and the historical possibilities' (Carl, 2000: 332), offering a communicative depth to the concrete conditions of the city. Within this, the continuity of differences reveals the stratification of institutional conditions, otherwise known as 'horizons' of Gadamer's 'tradition' (Carl, 2015: 25). The recovery of this continuity through the topography of the city and its *praxis* therefore forms the basis of the research.

1.2.3 Gadamer on the Priority of the Question

Phenomenological hermeneutic enquiry takes the conditions of the city itself as an element in the act of understanding in 'finding the right question to ask' (Gadamer, 1975: 312). Grounded in Heidegger's earlier work on the reconception of understanding, Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (1975) challenges the notion of method as a way to truth – for method is incapable of revealing new truth; it only renders explicit the kind of truth already implicit in the method (Palmer, 1969: 165). His intention was to bring the phenomenon of understanding itself to light, with similarities to the dialectic of Plato but without the doctrine of ideas or conception of truth and language.

Like Heidegger, Gadamer called for a dialectical interaction with tradition, in place of modern technological thinking rooted in subjectism (*Subjektitat*). Instead of taking human subjective consciousness, and the certainties of reason based on it, as the ultimate point of reference for human knowledge (Palmer, 1969: 164), Gadamer proposed an 'historically effected consciousness' (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) as a way of positioning oneself in the world as a fundamental part of hermeneutic interpretation. The formation and fusion of horizons underpins what it is to be experienced and is concerned with tradition. Here

tradition is not fixed or stationary, it is alive and participatory – Palmer (1969: 177) uses the analogy that historical consciousness, and therefore tradition, is ‘a stream in which we move and participate in every act of understanding’, rather than ‘a pile of facts which can be made an object of consciousness’. Immersing oneself in tradition as the mediation between past and present, is the only way to find the right question - citing the historian RG Collingwood as one of the few modern thinkers to have formulated a position on historical interpretation, Gadamer stated that;

> We can understand a text only when we have understood the question to which it is an answer. (Gadamer, 1975: 378)

Such a mediation has guided and structured the thesis. The dialogue between periphery and centre, stability and change, freedom and restraint endeavours to bring the phenomenon of understanding to light without the dogma of method.

1.2.4 The City, the Archive and the Drawing as Research Tools

Relating the hermeneutic act of drawing to Gadamer's (1975: 378) logic of question and answer is fruitful, for through such a process the primacy of dialogue and the structure of question and answer is the basis for attaining the hermeneutic horizon. At the centre of this is the placing of the 'historical text' - in this case the city and its architecture, the archive, the drawing - as the object of interpretation, and the posing of a question to the interpreter in gaining an historical horizon, 'the means by which we anchor ourselves in the world' (Leatherbarrow, 2000: 173). The unique and open-ended opportunities provided by archival research and the corresponding making of drawings reveals particular ways of looking at the city in relation to civic identity and institutional order. Therefore, the experience of understanding and representing the strata of institutional horizons of the city is a creative act in bringing to the fore an interpretation of civic order as tradition and memory, embedded in the topology, orientation and physiognomy of the city.

The thesis therefore reflects upon the concrete involvements of the city, beginning with the development of Paradise Circus including Central Library during the second half of the twentieth century, initially presenting the works as they were understood within the culture of modernity that the city manifested. Following this, four key moments in the development of Birmingham are investigated within the history of ideas asking whether the traditions that Birmingham thought it was representing did indeed belong to a radical history and tradition, or to a different source.

Interpretation follows the study of historical sources including the city itself, archives and the making of new drawings that illuminate the findings and provide the critical structure of the work. Having established the city as site of reflection, the archives and the approach to drawing are explored here.

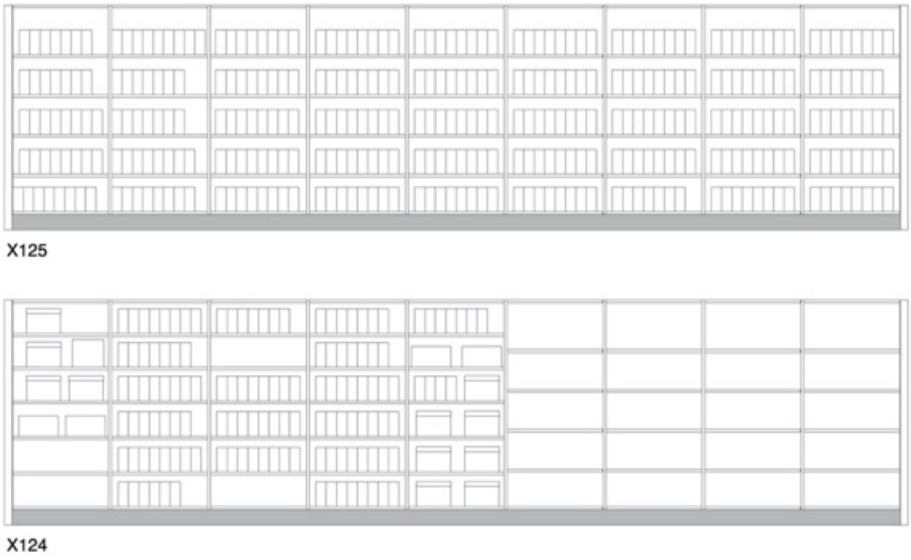

Figure 7: Drawing of the John Madin office archives, Central Library, 2009. Source: author

Figure 8: One of 487 uncatalogued archive boxes from the archives of John Madin's architectural practice, accessed in 2009 as part of Stuart Whipps' book and show at IKON *Why Contribute to the Spread of Ugliness?*. Source: Stuart Whipps (2012)

1.2.4.1 The Archive

The primary sources for the research have been archives, collections and records, providing unique and often previously unseen insights into historical moments. Working with archives is 'institutive' in the making of connections and of new orders and understandings as a way of 'placing oneself in a tradition' (Palmer, 185). Archives are often, though not always, associated with institutions and representative of the ways in which they 'produce, gather and conserve them' (Ricoeur, 2006: 66). Though the archive is no longer conceived as a monument (to the institute, the State, etc.) as was the case in the nineteenth century, Ricoeur suggests that far from being benign, the document offers a 'radical form of criticism' of the 'conditions of historical production and its concealed or unconscious intentions' (Ricoeur, 2006: 68). As the site for philosophical participation, archives 'call out for human interpretation' (Foster, 2006: 144), of pursuing traces which may or may not lead to further openings or revelations.

The long-term engagement with Paradise Circus and representative archival collection came first through collaboration with the artist Stuart Whipps. Several visits were made to the office archive (figure 7) of Birmingham-born and educated architect John Madin (1924-2012), at the time uncatalogued, in a poor state of repair, and stored beneath his Central Library in a space intended for a bus interchange that was never used. This initial work both contributed towards Whipps' show at the IKON Gallery (2012) (figure 8), and provided unique access into the contents, revealing new insights into the origins of Madin's design for Paradise Circus and Central Library including his own development sketches, and travel itineraries in America where he met Paul Rudolph at his recently completed Art and Architecture Building in New Haven[3]. The visits also raised numerous questions about the design of the library building, its failure to gain listed building consent, and the contested debate about its future[4].

These discoveries inspired further investigation into other collections in the city, including the City of Birmingham holdings located in the Mecanoo-designed library that replaced Madin's after its demolition in 2016. Further fruitful visits followed to collections at Birmingham City Council's Highways Department, Birmingham Museums Trust Museum Collection Centre, Birmingham and Midland Institute, and Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association[5]. In parallel, numerous digital repositories were consulted including the Media Archive for Central England (MACE), the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and the

[3] These are discussed in chapter 2.
[4] Clawley's *Library Story* (2015) offers an in-depth insight into the ultimately unsuccessful campaign to save Central Library.
[5] The author is a trustee of BFCAA and was part of JISC funded project to have the group's archive digitised. The collection is due to move into the Arts, Design and Media archive at Birmingham City University in 2022.

Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), broadening the horizon of the research[6]. Together, these provided the temporal depth necessary in thinking about the order of the city and the ideas that underpinned works of architecture[7]. The very nature of archival research reveals unforeseen material and broadens the horizon of the research and provides opportunities to reflect on and interpret contemporary conditions of the city.

1.2.4.2 The *Drawing Series* and *Mapping of Institutional Continuity* in Structuring Research

Drawing on observations of the city and archival studies, the making present of lost, overlooked, or displaced historical information through drawing formed the basis for the research, bringing together situational and historical continuities. This idea of the space of experience, of a body of knowledge as a personal accumulation as well that collectively embodied in past projects, in treatises and books, and in existing buildings and cities provides an important principle in the design of research that is both interpretative (hermeneutic) as well as practical in the act of making (poetic) (Vesely, 2004: 7). The revealing of such horizons has structured the research around key moments represented through the *Drawing Series*. In discussing the horizon not only as a line at the edge of the visual field but the field itself, Leatherbarrow (2000: 172) refers to the 'world' as the expanse of circumstances in which he finds himself, where those circumstances relate to terrain as well as cultural practice. Within this 'field of existence' lie 'relationships of distance' and 'of cultural and historical depth, accumulated and renewed in all the encounters of social, political, and historical life', measured in the 'patterns and present force of a tradition' (Leatherbarrow, 2000: 173). The drawings are therefore representative of the physical conditions of site whilst embodying wider cultural practices evident in the archives and historical publications.

The making of the *Drawing Series* (figure 3) followed the gathering of archival maps of Birmingham, presented with the new work in Volume 2. The information was ordered in drawing layers and classes in Vectorworks (Appendix C). Works and events were documented in the *Mapping of Institutional Continuity* (figure 2) which established a chronological scheme for the research and identified relationships between institutions.

[6] Further details of collections consulted are provided in Appendix A.
[7] This was initially focussed on buildings of the post-war period, but the thesis has opened up horizons from many other periods in the city's history. The author is the founder of the Birmingham branch of the Modernist Society, and has written for the Modernist journal on New Street Signal Box Dring, M. (2019a) Power Box. *The Modernist Magazine,* May 30, April 2019. and Spaghetti Junction Dring, M. (2019b) Spaghetti Junction. *The Modernist Magazine,* December 33.. The author also published Modernist Map Birmingham Dring, M. (2018) *Modernist Map Birmingham.* Birmingham: Modernist Society.

Given the inaccuracies and inconsistencies of historical maps, it was necessary to transpose the various readings of primary sources onto an accurate representation of the spatial ground using digital ordnance survey data, with some informed assumptions made about alignments of roads, building lines and footprints. Once this was established, sites were given priority as representative of the continuity of the situation, assigned a unique reference number and attributed to the necessary drawing class and sheet. The ordering of information in this way allows for the combination of different classes of information to make new readings of the city, as seen in figure 1. Where archival building plans were available, as with the Town Hall, Birmingham and Midland Institute and Central Library for example, these were drawn to scale and incorporated into the city-wide drawings to demonstrate the relationship between interior and exterior as a continuous ground as in the Nolli map of Rome (1748). As the first explicit institutional work in the Birmingham, the Town Hall orientates the drawings, and establishes the ground of Paradise Circus 'in time' which was fruitful in the interpretation stage of the thesis.

Interpretation forms the methodological basis of phenomenological description (Heidegger, 1953: 26). The thesis establishes the hermeneutic situation, which, as Gadamer states, is 'the situation in which we find ourselves with regards to the tradition that we are trying to understand' (Gadamer, 1975: 312). Through the making of drawings, this thesis reveals the tradition of the city through the study of institutions.

The intent of making drawings was to locate the institutions within the concrete conditions of the city, and to provide a critical insight into the civic ground of the city and therefore the structure of the thesis. These drawings form the basis for a series of surveys which structure the core chapters. As identified in the timeline, drawings were made at representative moments in the foundation, expansion and movement of the various institutions including the libraries, the Town Hall, and civic buildings. The order in which drawings are presented, and therefore the parts and chapters, reveals the critical enquiry of the research, beginning with the twentieth century projects on the city. The drawings are presented below in relation to the surveys, parts and chapter of the thesis;

Parts and Chapters	Surveys and Drawings as they are presented in the Thesis. Drawings number according to chronological sequence.
Part 1 – Chapter 2	**SURVEY 1** - Drawing 9 – the city in 1955 at the merger of the BMI and Birmingham Library.
	SURVEY 2 - Drawing 10 – the city in 1980 with the partial completion of both Central Library as part of Paradise Circus and the civic complex of buildings, and the completion of the Inner Ring Road.
Part 2 – Chapter 3	Drawing 1 – the topography of Birmingham and surroundings.
	Drawing 2 – the pre-modern settlement of Birmingham at the time of the first market charter of 1166.
	Drawing 3 – the city in 1553 at the dissolution of the monasteries according to Leland's journal and conjectural drawings of nineteenth century.
	SURVEY 3 - Drawing 5 – the city in 1779 at the foundation of Birmingham Library.
	SURVEY 4 - Drawing 6 – the city in 1835 at the construction of the Town Hall.
Part 2 – Chapter 4	**SURVEY 5** - Drawing 7 – the city in 1866 by which time the Birmingham and Midland Institute (1857) and Free Reference Library (1866) had been built.
	SURVEY 6 - Drawing 8 – the city in 1899 at the construction of a new building for Birmingham Library on Margaret Street.

1.2.4.3 The Structure of the Thesis in Detail

Having established the research tools and approach to the overall structure of the thesis, an approach was developed for the core chapters. The structure of each core chapter begins with two surveys as accounts of events and conditions of the city as dictated by the drawing. This is followed by an historiographical study of the intellectual history of the period, revealing what was known and believed about the past, and, according to Becker (1938: 22) 'the underlying presuppositions which have made their knowledge seem to them relevant and their beliefs seem to them true'. A discussion concludes the main findings of each chapter, contributing the interpretive work of Chapter 5 and the conclusion. A précis of the parts and chapters is provided here to establish the principal works and events in play at each.

The thesis is structured in three parts;

Part 1 – Continuity and Progress

Part 1 presents the conditions of the modernist city first observed in the Birmingham Archives and Collections and in the conditions of the city itself.

Chapter 1 introduces the scope and aims of the thesis, the research methods and methodology, emphasising the role that drawing and archives have played in the making of the research together with the relevance and contribution to knowledge.

The first core Chapter 2 explores the city between 1900 – 1980 up to the partial completion of Paradise Circus with Central Library at its centre.

Survey 1 establishes the conditions of the city between the turn of the twentieth century and subsequent plans for reconstruction of the civic buildings up to 1955 when Birmingham Library and the Birmingham and Midland Institute were unified as a single institution.

Survey 2 considers the commencement and completion of both Central Library as part of Paradise Circus and the civic complex of buildings, within the context of the Inner Ring Road and wider infrastructural works.

The historiography is concerned with the ways in which the Civic Centre was reimagined at various points and ways, with particular reference to the projects of the Inner Ring Road in the expanded territory of the city.

The discussion frames the interrelated projects for BMI/HQ and Paradise Circus and explores the ways in which each responded to the civic ground of the city at that time.

This chapter frames the opening research questions as an outcome of the survey, historiography, and the discussion, developing and directing the enquiry of the second part.

Part 2 – Revealing the Topography of Modernity

Part 2 uses the language and findings of chapter 1 to navigate a deeper tradition of the city related to the topics and research questions. It presents a broader historical context locating the works in local, national, and international realms.

The introductory section of chapter 3 provides an important grounding for the more focussed study of institutions that follow, establishing the historical and topographical conditions of early modern Birmingham, the reasons why the city became renowned for radical political and religious belief, and the implications of that on the order of the city.

The main intent of chapter 3, the second core chapter, covers the period 1779-1835 beginning with the establishment of the first lending library, considering how, as the town's constitution began to be formalised, the flowering of radical political belief led to a rich but contested literary culture.

Survey 3 considers the flowering of radical politics, intellectual culture, and industry, concluding with the foundation of Birmingham Library in 1779.

Survey 4 considers its subsequent bifurcation into Old and New Libraries, and the construction of the Town Hall in 1835 at the head of New Street as the first building of its type in Britain, which established the civic ground of Birmingham.

The historiography explores the ways in which the literary and intellectual life of Birmingham emerged in a town with little local government control but with a rich tradition of radical nonconformity.

The discussion considers the ways in which the town's institutional order moved between implicit and explicit registers, particularly in the proliferation of educational institutions that followed the Birmingham Library that were forebearers to the Birmingham and Midland Institute. The ways in which building of the Town Hall and the canal established an institutional order away from the traditional centre of the market marks the culmination of this chapter. Part of chapter 4 concerned with the founding of Birmingham Library is due to be published in late 2022 as a chapter in the forthcoming book *Unsettled*, edited by Viderman, Knierbein, Kränzle, Frank, Wall, and Roskamm at TU Vienna for Routledge.

Chapter 4, the third core chapter, explores how Birmingham Library and the Town Hall informed wider institutional changes in the city between 1836-1899.

Survey 5 explores the basis for the foundation of the Birmingham and Midland Institute of 1857 built facing the Town Hall.

Survey 6 considers the subsequent and conjoined Free Reference Library of 1866 as well as wider municipal reforms and projects of reconstruction up to the relocation of Birmingham Library to a new building on Margaret Street nearby the civic buildings.

The historiography explores the ways in which civic values were embodied in new building types and the emergence of an architectural culture particular to the city.

Part 3 - **Interpretation**

The third part develops the observations, research questions and language of part 1 in the context of a deeper enquiry into the traditions of the city presented in part 2, towards an interpretation of institutional order.

Chapter 5 considers the implicit institutional order of Birmingham with reflections on the rituals and routines that established the civic ground of the city, the meaning of *Paradise* in the context of the site as well as philosophical ideas on the term and explores the ways in which Birmingham Library mediated between the implicit and explicit order of the city at a moment of great, and at times, radical change.

Chapter 6 reflects upon the work of the preceding chapters, offering a conclusion which considers the implications for the city and its architecture in relation to institutional order, and issues of continuity, contingency, conservation, progress and praxis. It also considers the implications for the study and practice of architecture in relation to the ways in which the archive and drawing contribute to a hermeneutic view of the city and ‘the world in front of the work’.

1.3 The Relevance of the Thesis and Research Questions

1.3.1 The Critical Position and Significance of the Research

The critical position of the research engages with the continuity of the city and is concerned with its civic nature and varying degrees of freedom, explored through institutions and institutional order. Hermeneutic writing on continuity in architecture is often concerned with the study of historically important cities, widely published or renowned architects, and movements or canons with a richness and depth worthy of ever-greater research. For

example, *The Living Tradition of Architecture* (2017) gathers a range of critical voices in elaborating upon the hermeneutic philosophy of Dalibor Vesely et al, dealing variously with topics of Aristotelian prudence, modern aesthetics, and the implications of tradition on contemporary architecture and the city. Scholarly work on Birmingham has not typically been concerned with the depth of cultural references and continuities embodied in its built environment, obscured as they are by the often 'novel' reworking of the city during the twentieth century. As a large but 'provincial' city, Birmingham must be viewed somewhat differently to London and other cities of a similar scale and status, where well developed social classes and institutions historically offered a respectability and stability to ideas of knowledge (Toulmin, 1990: 119). As a city that expanded rapidly in the late and post-Enlightenment, its order was influenced by different forces including commerce and radical religion. That is not to say the institutional order or architectural manifestation of institutions is inferior to established, more well-researched centres of intellect, but that the underlying assumptions and motivations for how, when, where and why certain institutions were established and flourished cannot necessarily be called upon. This makes the situation even more critical since the usual references might not always provide the necessary insight or even exist. Because of the relative lack of enquiry, it offers a rich topic of scholarly enquiry, contributing new insights into the institutional order of Birmingham. It also offers a framework for thinking about places of a similar nature within their broad cultural horizons, with implications for architectural practice and design pedagogy. Ultimately, the hermeneutical perspective gained aims to recover a collective participation, or at least to recognise the 'limitations and possibilities of a participatory dimension of contemporary [and historical] architecture' (Temple, 2014: 161). Architecture therefore provides the basis for reflection on the ontological depth of the city, engaging the domains of history and design.

The significance of the research exists within the realms of scholarly pursuit with implications for architectural education and design pedagogy, and architectural practice more widely. It also raises fundamental questions about the past, present, and future ethics of the city. The gaining of an understanding and recovery of the civic ground is arguably the greatest challenge to the city and society today. Gadamer (1981: 86) states its importance in unequivocal terms;

> Just as we, in our overstimulated process of progress of our technological civilization, are blind to stable, unchanging elements of our social life together, so it could be with the reawakening consciousness of solidarity of a humanity that slowly begins to know itself as humanity, for this means knowing that it belongs together for better or for worse and that it has to solve the problem of its life on this planet. And for this reason I believe in the rediscovery of solidarities that could enter into the future society of humanity.

The implications for architecture and its urban topography are great, made ever more pressing by critical questions over the role of institutions[8], exacerbated by the still evolving media landscape which does as much to divide as it does reveal and celebrate our commonality[9]. Indeed, the digital realm that Gadamer could not have imagined has come to assume ever-greater presence in our daily life, exaggerated during the global coronavirus pandemic of 2019 onwards. The long term human drive for emancipation, first through political suffrage and later through civil and individual liberties and freedom of expression, has dissolved into what Lasch (1979: 71) pre-emptively described as 'the banality of pseudo-self-awareness' encouraged by ever-more embedded and increasingly hidden technology. As to how institutions might orientate civic life when there is ever more distrust in those who seek to maintain and mediate order poses further ethical questions about the role of architecture as the embodiment of institutional order. As discussed in section 1.1.3, the institution and institutional order are not necessarily the same.

To this are added attitudes to preservation and conservation in the context of philosophical questions of progress. Such matters have gained greater urgency in the age of the Anthropocene, described as 'the geologic age in which *Homo sapiens* have become the key structuring species that could determine, alone, the fate of Earth's life forms' (Hillel and de Oliveira, 2014). The Architects' Journal *RetroFirst* campaign (2019) argues that 'the greenest building is the one which already exists', with an explicit call for buildings to be considered not only in their first use but for future uses as yet unknown. This has implications for an architecture of contingency, as well as a concern for a civic architecture not bound by programme or time. This thesis does not offer sentimental views about the loss of Madin's work at Paradise Circus, rather it poses important questions about how complex ideas of contingency and openness might inform architectural discourse and influence decisions taken about the institutional order of the city, concerned with the 'world in front of the work' rather than 'behind' it.

1.3.2 The Research Questions

Based on the discussions of chapter 1, the following questions establish the areas of research in the context of which the survey, historiography and discussions will be developed in chapter 2. These questions are presented in greater depth at the close of

[8] A recent campaign by the Future Architecture Front and others helped 'architect worker' Muyiwa Oki win the election to become the next RIBA president, with pledges to decentralise and regionalise the institution, adding that 'change is the only constant' Waite, R. (2022) 'Architect worker' Muyiwa Oki wins RIBA presidential election. *Architects' Journal*.

[9] A positive example of the ways in which the powers of social media can be harnessed in understanding the use of social space is illustrated in a recent blog post by Gehl, which mapped the relationship between human experience and the built environment using a variety of data points. Nonetheless, this forms a continuation of the techno-system that has come to characterise the contemporary city. Cook, R. and Thorsen, S. (2021) Social Media and Social Space: Studying Public Life in the Time of Covid. *Gehl Blog.* 16.08.2022. Available at: https://gehlpeople.com/blog/social-media-and-social-space-studying-public-life-in-the-time-of-covid/.

chapter 2, forming the boundaries of the study in part 2 and basis for reflection and interpretation of the institutional order of the city in part 3.

RQ1 In what ways was the implicit institutional order of Birmingham evident during the twentieth century, and what was its origin?

RQ2 In a city outwardly concerned with progress and efficiency at the expense of continuity during the twentieth century, how might an interpretation of the architectural *praxis* of institutions reveal the traditions of the city towards a framework for civic life?

RQ3 How does the interpretation of architectural and urban design drawings reveal and contribute to new understandings of the city?[10]

[10] For the developed research questions, refer to section 2.5.

Chapter 2 – The Library and Technical Infrastructure 1900–1980

> The state and technique – increasingly interrelated – are becoming the most important forces in the modern world; they buttress and reinforce each other in their aim to produce an apparently indestructible, total civilization. (Ellul, 1964: 318)

As discussed in chapter 1, the modernist city came to represent an image of progress, making 'culture as a whole available to design, a project for accomplishment' (Carl, 2000: 328). In such conditions, made necessary by war damage or by political will, the relationship between buildings and the topography of the city is obscured or destroyed by major projects of reconstruction, potentially displacing collective human interests, orientation, and desires. Ellul's (1964) quote above reinforces the totalising intentions of such projects, where *praxis* gained over generations is synthesised into a concern for the visual domain of the city. In Birmingham, those entrusted with the regeneration of the city during the twentieth century embraced change through the making and remaking of ground as their interpretation of freedom accorded to the individual.

In the preceding era, Birmingham had been compared to European and American cities on account of its progressive liberal government and debt financed municipal improvement projects. The turn of the twentieth century saw the beginning of ever more ambitious projects, interrupted by two World Wars and by an increasingly centralised government. One of the earliest projects was the *Beaux-Arts* inspired plans for the expanding civic centre, conceived alongside early planning for road infrastructure based on the Viennese Ringstraße. The foundation of the University on a new site at Edgbaston with the later demolition of its predecessor Mason College made way for new civic buildings and squares around Paradise Street. As a later part of this work, the Birmingham and Midland Institute merged with Birmingham Library and relocated to Margaret Street. The creation of a regionally oriented West Midlands Group in 1941 and Plan in 1948 directed the post-war recovery of Birmingham, through the reconstruction of central 'blitz and blight' sites including the replanning of five 'slum' housing districts through the 'new towns' project of 1955 onward. The comprehensive reconstruction of the city was directed not by an urban plan but by the infrastructure of the Inner Ring Road based on American models which emphasised private mobility and individual liberty. This included the reconstruction of the library at the newly named Paradise Circus based on modernist principles.

The construction of the ring road and civic centre reoriented the city to the motor vehicle with novel forms of infrastructure and architecture. Despite the perception that Birmingham embraced modernist architecture and urban form at a scale greater than most other British

cities, the drawings (provided throughout the thesis and gathered in volume 2) show that the continuities are greater than the differences, as illustrated in figure 1 on page 28. As noted in the chapter 1, the project for the Inner Ring Road participated in a much longer tradition of the city than simply ‘enclosing an area’ (Cherry, 1994), tracing an earlier order though in a manner that disregarded the particular conditions of those sites.

This chapter elaborates on the projects that underpinned such a holistic reimagination of the city, particularly around Paradise Street/Circus and the expanded realm of the Civic Centre, where much of the civic life of the city became concentrated. This gives insight into the questions for which these historical actions were the answer, provided in the concluding section of this chapter.

2.1 SURVEY 1: Reorienting the City – The Civic Centre and the Inner Ring Road (1900–1955)

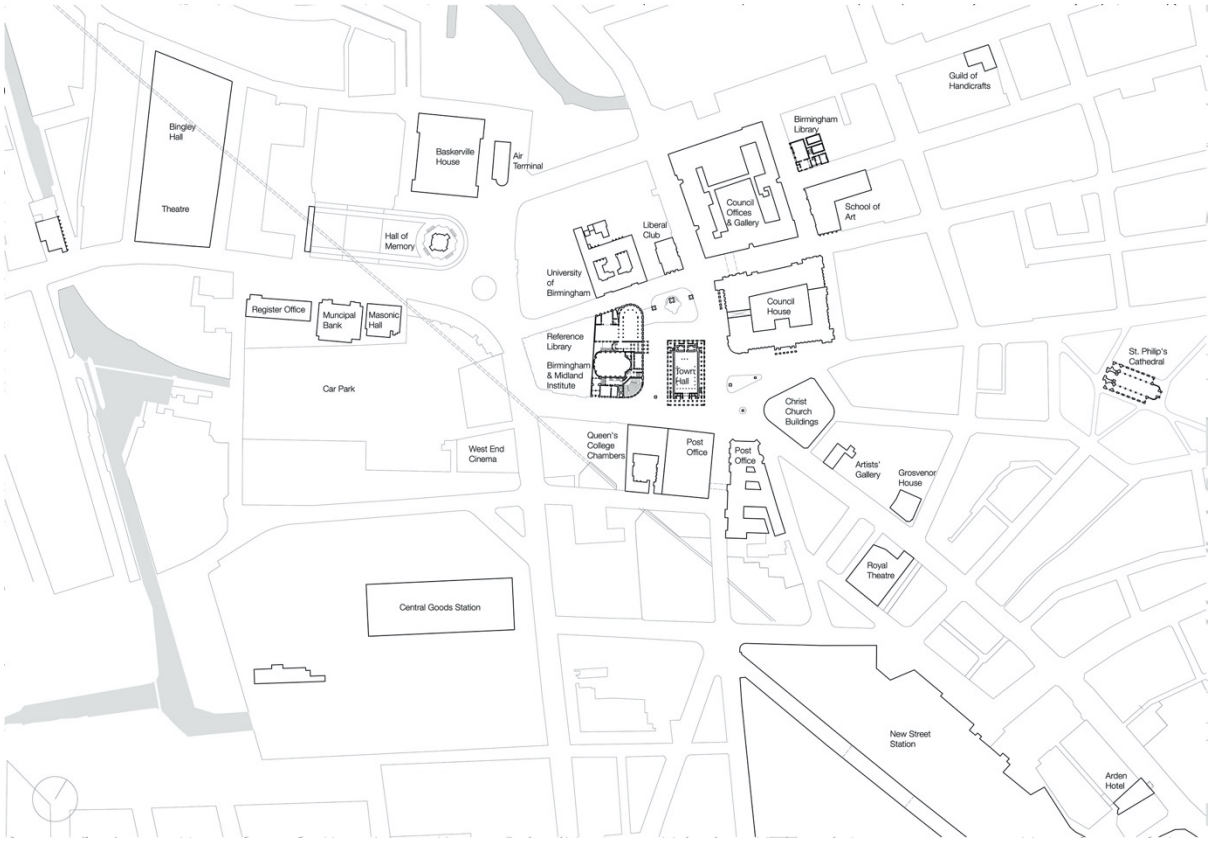

Figure 9: Drawing 009B – 1955 – 1:2,500 at A3, at removal of Birmingham and Midland Institute to Margaret Street and the first works to the expanded Civic Centre. Source: author

At the opening of the twentieth century, the city was shaped by private, municipal and central government action. The civic experience was transformed through new ideas of how and where people lived and worked, their modes of transport and access to leisure time. The map of 1955 represents the conditions of the city after numerous ambitious plans were made for an enlarged Civic Centre and advancement of the Inner Ring Road, interrupted by two World Wars and subsequent limitations on development. In 1955, the decision was taken to merge Birmingham Library and the Birmingham and Midland Institute, bringing together two of the earliest and most prominent cultural institutions of the city on grounds of necessity rather than any ideological position. This, together with the partial delivery of the Civic Centre, demonstrates how the order of the city began to be influenced by ideas from Europe and later, America, addressing a much wider territory and broader population.

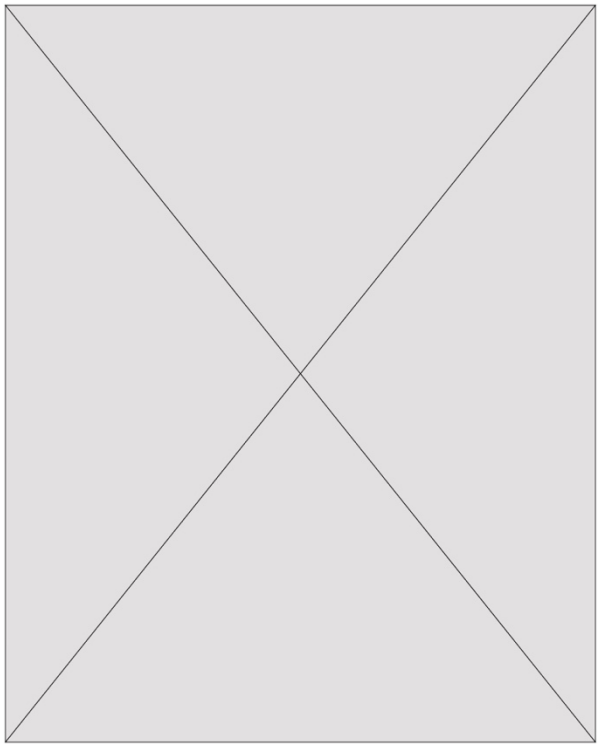

Figure 10: Ordnance Survey map of 1900 edited to highlight proximity of back-to-back and tunnel back housing to the centre of the city. Source: Digimap, accessed 11.02.2022

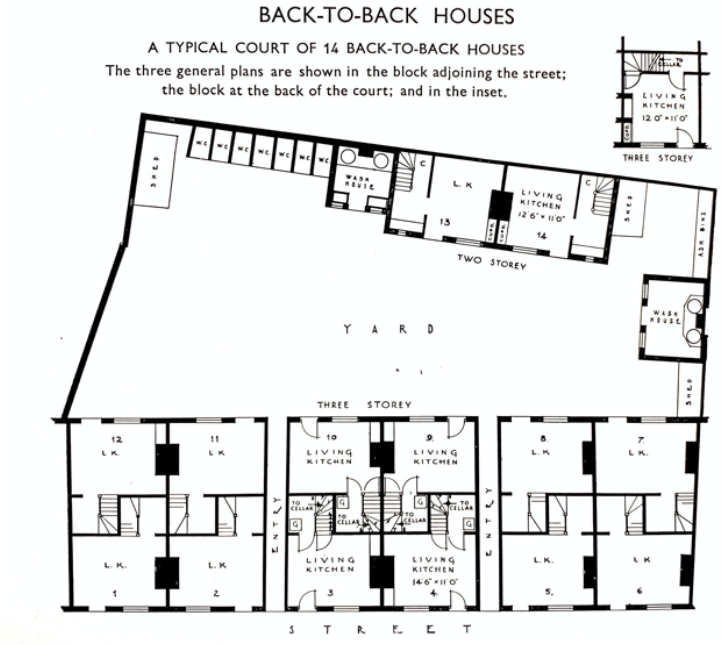

Figure 11: Back-back houses as illustrated in BVT publication 'When We Build Again', 1941. Source: (Bournville Village Trust Research, 1941)

Much of this work was concerned with the improvement in living conditions, continuing the municipal programme initiated by Chamberlain's Corporation. The back-to-back housing of the 'unskilled labourer' and the tunnel-back housing of the 'artisan' dominated the inner and

middle parts of the city, set amongst industry still dependent on coal for power and heat (figures 10 and 11). A City Council Enquiry of 1913 found that 50,000 houses were unfit for inhabitation, often overcrowded and lacking ventilation and sanitation (Bournville Village Trust Research, 1941). Traffic became increasingly problematic both in the centre as industry outgrew confined premises, and in transporting the city's workforce from the periphery as surrounding villages grew to accommodate the expanding population. With the distribution of living and working over an expanding cityscape guided by the Council's policy of outward migration, came opportunities for a reimagined and enlarged civic centre.

Migration from the centre followed the model of Bournville (1879), established as the 'factory in the garden' after the Cadbury works moved from Bridge Street nearby Bingley Hall to a rural site to the south of the city. In place of the dense and insanitary housing of the centre, Bournville offered new standards in living and was not exclusive to employees of the works, becoming a model for Garden City planning and municipal estates. Together with newly constructed factories, the settlement provided new types and arrangements of housing in a verdant landscape, exemplified in the 'universal house plan' of the earliest Garden City projects (figure 13). By 1900, the village provided 800 homes, prompting George Cadbury to create the Bournville Village Trust to oversee and manage the village, to improve substandard housing and preserve surrounding agricultural land, embodying the founder's Quaker values in its operation. Likewise, the Common Good Trust was established in 1917 by Cadbury's son for the purchase and protection of 'beauty spots, essential pieces of land, buildings of architectural grace and historical importance' which otherwise would have been lost to development (Bournville Village Trust Research, 1941). As Trusts concerned with the provision of appropriate housing away from the blight of industry and with the protection of the city's historical fabric, they prefigured wider projects on the city and ideas of improvement and progress. This was seen not only in peripheral developments of municipal and private housing but also in the removal of industry from the centre, opening up once congested and polluted streets and sites for new civic uses, including those around Paradise Street and Easy Row.

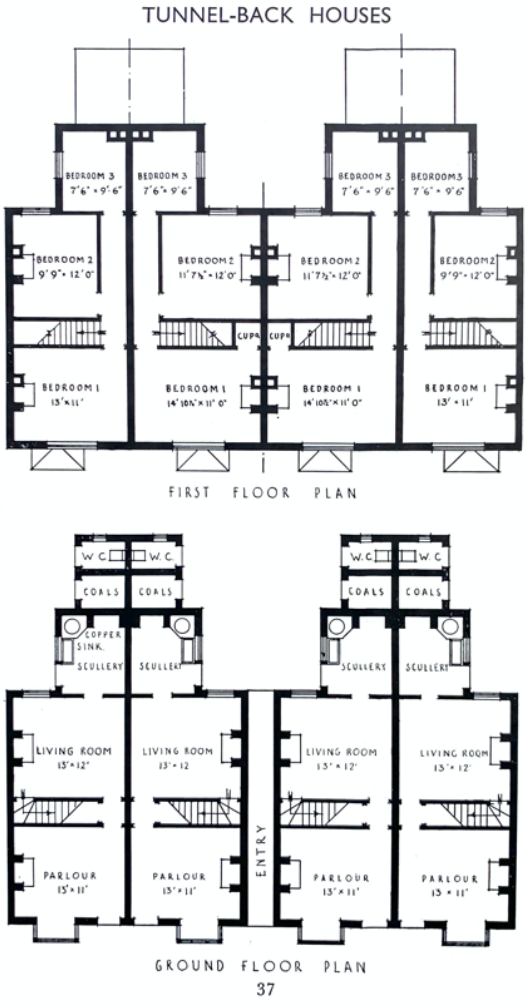

Figure 12: Tunnel back houses as illustrated in BVT publication *When We Build Again*, 1941. Source: (1941: 37)

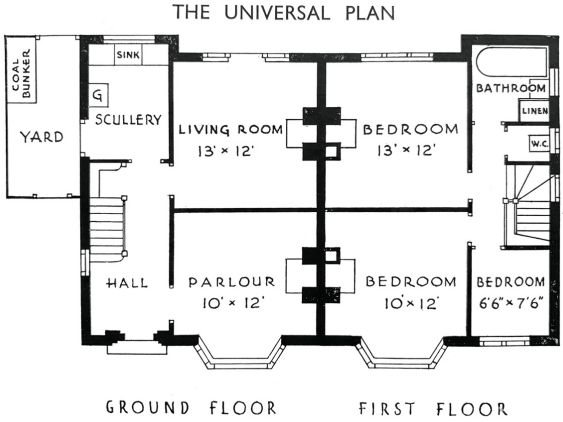

Figure 13: The 'Universal Plan' house type as illustrated in BVT publication *When We Build Again*, 1941. Source: (1941: 39)

Just as Bournville provided a new model of life in bucolic surroundings, so too did the University (figure 14). Founded in 1900, the University built upon earlier municipal and private educational institutions, and like Bournville created a new territory beyond the edge of the city. As Slater (2002: 78) notes, rather than join the federation of Victoria Universities as had been seen in the north, the University sought independence. Funds were raised through donations from philanthropic industrialists including Canadian railway magnate Lord Strathcona and American steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, largely through Chamberlain's personal influence (Slater, 2002: 78). The gift of land at Edgbaston for the newly built science departments was made by Lord Calthorpe, with Aston Webb and Ingress Bell appointed by Chamberlain to plan the first buildings of the new campus. Webb and Bell's scheme made use of the site's topography with a semi-circular range of buildings placed on a promontory overlooking then open countryside, with a free-standing clocktower at the centre modelled on the Torre di Mangia, on the Palazzo Publico in Siena. The reference to the Torre de Mangia as an emblem of democratic rule recalled the Humanist tradition of the north Italian city, as well as the secular foundation of the institution. These first buildings, including the Great Hall and power station, were complete by 1909, the previous Mason College buildings facing the Free Library on Edmund Street continuing to provide accommodation to the Arts Faculty until 1965 despite plans for their removal in the 1944 plans for the Civic Centre.

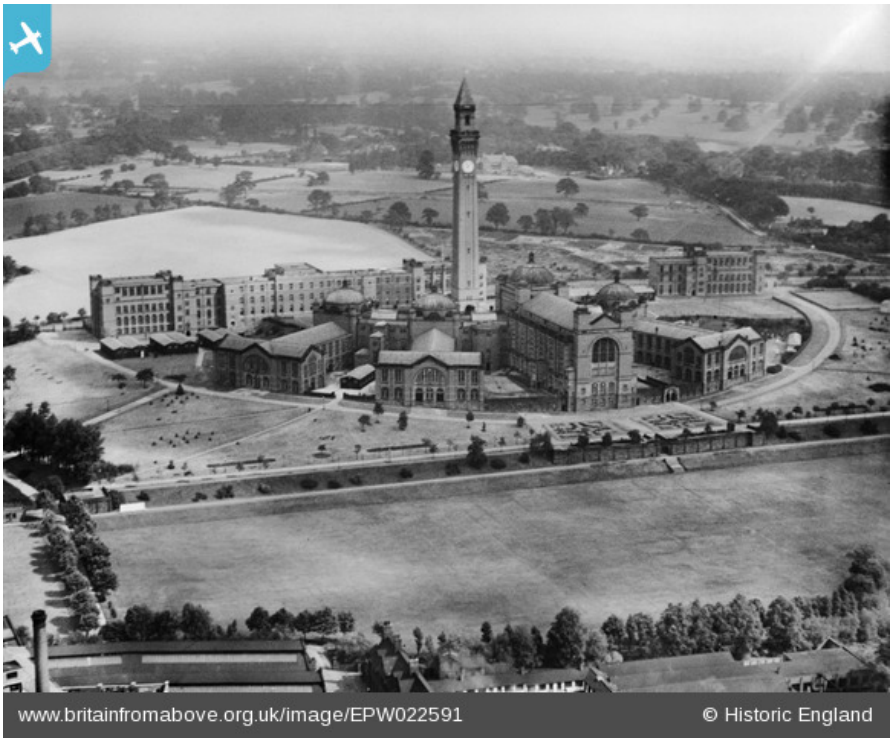

Figure 14: The first buildings of the University of Birmingham by Aston Webb and Ingress Bell, Edgbaston, photographed 7th August 1928. Source: Britain from Above, EPW022591 accessed 5.10.2021.

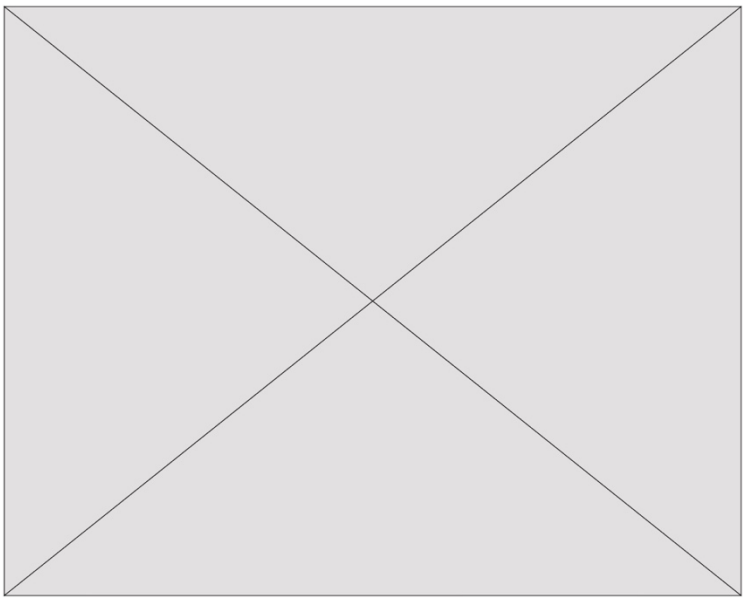

Figure 15: Drawing of Birmingham Municipal Buildings Extension by Ashely and Winton Newman Architects, 1912. Source: (1912: 267)

2.1.1 The Expanding Civic Centre

With the gradual migration of inner-city inhabitants to the middle and outer ring of the city, the centre opened up for new civic activities. After the late nineteenth century addition of the Council House, Municipal Gas Offices and Art Gallery to the earlier civic buildings around New Street, Paradise Street and Edmund Street, the project for the embellishment of the Civic Centre gathered momentum in the opening decades of the twentieth century, paralleled by and in part shaped by the plan for the inner ring road from 1917 (discussed in section 2.3.2). This was initially concerned with the extension to existing buildings to accommodate new municipal functions. The Council House extension (figure 15, H. V. Ashley and Winton Newman, 1912 and 1917) provided offices for the education department, a further extended gas department, and the health and tramways departments, all with new galleries and the Natural History Museum over. A massive stone bridge with oversized voussoirs connected the two galleries at the first floor, creating an interior complex that covered two city blocks.

Coinciding with the loss of the Public Offices on Moor Street for the construction of the station there (1911) and the demands of the expanding city, additional municipal office space was planned during the years of the First World War, prompting a massive programme of land acquisition by the Corporation (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 449). With this began the project for an enlarged civic centre, connected to new ideas of movement embodied in the first plans for an inner ring road and widening of arterial roads, documented in the *Public Works Committee report on Arterial Roads* (City of Birmingham Public Works

Committee, 1917). This, together with William Haywood's plan of 1918 for the Civic Centre, set the agenda for the expansion of the civic centre, intended as 'Birmingham's 'Whitehall'' (Chamberlain in Haywood, 1918: 14). The influences and scheme for each are discussed in greater detail in section 2.3.

As seen in the drawing of 1955 around which this first section is structured (figure 9), only S. N. Cooke and W. N. Twist's Hall of Memory and garden (1925, figure 16) had been built, partially fulfilling Haywood's plan[11] though at a diminutive scale since the site had only been partially cleared of industry. As a landscape of commemoration to the first World War, the temple-like Hall and garden gave a new order and orientation to the site, wrought from the industrial ground of the city.

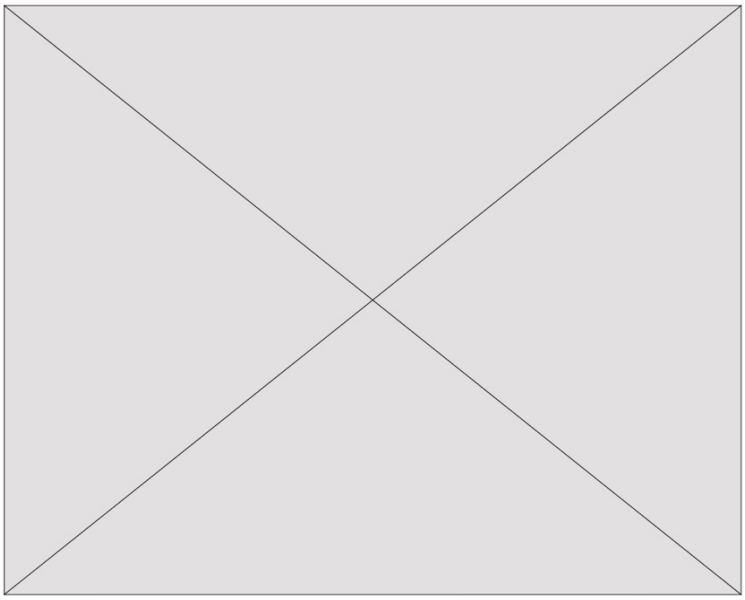

Figure 16: Plan (in green) for S. N. Cooke and W. N. Twist's Hall of Memory (1924) laid over Baskerville Canal Basin. Source: BCC BBP 34142, accessed 27.2.2014.

[11] This is discussed in section 2.3.

Figure 17: Aerial view of the Hall of Memory and garden, around 1925 soon after its opening, with the Masonic Hall facing onto Broad Street. Source: Britain from Above, EPW038602, accessed 5.10.2021

A stoa stood as counterpoint to the Hall and as a visual termination to the garden, screening the backdrop of brick buildings and Bingley Hall beyond. The long sides of the garden were open, on one side to cleared ground, the other to Broad Street which had been identified as a major arterial route in Stilgoe's plan of 1917. Overlooking the garden from the other side of Broad Street was the newly built Masonic Temple. The widened ground between the Hall and the buildings of Easy Row was left open for traffic movement, as seen in the aerial view (figure 17). Following numerous schemes for the Civic Centre (as discussed in section 2.3), approval was finally given in 1934 for a plan drawn up by S. N. Cooke with civic centre competitor James Swan (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974). Only the neo-classical Municipal Bank (1931) and the front range of the Municipal Offices (1940, later named Baskerville House) were constructed, both by T. Cecil Howitt of Nottingham in Portland stone to match the Hall of Memory.

2.1.2 The Birmingham and Midland Institute and Birmingham Library

As momentum fluctuated in the planning and construction of the expanded civic centre and Inner Ring Road, the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Library continued to play a role in the educational and cultural life of the city. A library extension had been proposed in Haywood's plan of 1917, and by the time of the 1948 plan, both buildings were to be rebuilt as part of the reconfigured civic centre, leaving their original site adjacent to the Town Hall open to become Paradise Square. This external pressure for change came not only through the Corporation but also national initiatives for reform. As Waterhouse (1954: 162) noted, The Education Act of 1902 promoted opportunities for education at all levels, with the previous Municipal School Boards replaced with newly formed national Boards of Education. Increased access to Secondary and University level education meant that the technical education offered by the Birmingham and Midland Institute was becoming less tenable. The global political climate also meant that the markets for British manufacture and industry were becoming increasingly challenging, Joseph Chamberlain's[12] tariff reform policy seen as a major contributor. Counter to Free Trade policy, Chamberlain's revised Imperial policy sought to strengthen the Empire through reciprocal tariffs, and 'to impose tariffs on foreign, non-Imperial imports' (Reekes, 2018: 153). In contrast to the tightening of conditions around manufacture, there was greater freedom in society, particularly in individual wealth and

[12] Unitarian industrialist and Liberal politician Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914) was member of Parliament for Birmingham from 1876 (Reekes, 178), believing that 'local government is increasing in importance while Imperial is diminishing' (Briggs, 231). Together with Dawson and Dale, his *civic gospel* characterised the association of municipal action and the well-being of the citizens of Birmingham. He was no relation to the architect John Henry Chamberlain (1831-1883), one of the leading practitioners in the city who enacted many of Joseph Chamberlain's civic projects, including the School of Art (1885) and Corporation Street (1882). The two are given their full name in the thesis for clarity.

access to leisure time away from work. Whilst educational classes suffered, the artistic life of the Institute, in particular the School of Music, flourished.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Institute had enjoyed a strong relationship with the Corporation, R. F. Martineau acting as Vice-President to the Institute whilst a Borough Governor, and his brother Thomas holding offices of Honorary Secretary of the Institute and as City Mayor between 1885-88. This overtly political allegiance changed when Whitworth Wallis took over as Honorary Secretary in 1903, having been Keeper of the City Museum and Art Gallery where he had built up a collection of Pre-Raphaelite works. Prior to this, he had been in charge of the Prince of Wales Indian Collection at Bethnal Green before its relocation to South Kensington (Waterhouse, 1954: 165). His father George had been headmaster of the School of Art at the Institute's foundation and one of the first governors of the Corporation, and Wallis's appointment reinforced the cultural aspects of the Institute.

Traditions founded in the nineteenth century continued at the Institute, the Monday Evening Lectures providing a broad spectrum of topics which was increasingly rare in an age of specialisation. So too, the popular 'Annual Conversazione'[13] offered scientific and literary exhibitions, dances, and opera that meant that by 1922 the Institute had its highest membership ever (Waterhouse, 1954: 175). This period of optimism was short-lived. The economic decline that followed the First World War and the onset of the Second World War restricted membership. The Institute failed too in countering the popularity of cinema and the influence of the radio in providing entertainment and education. In an attempt to modernise and recruit new members at the Institute's centenary, a newly appointed Concert Room and Cinema were installed, and the Reading Room and Ladies' Room were redecorated and refurnished. The general decline in membership continued after 1945, with only the affiliated School of Music and Birmingham Natural History and Philosophical Society remaining important institutions for the city and wider West Midlands (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 285). Despite such challenges, the Birmingham and Midland Institute remained present in the industrial and cultural life the city.

The varying fortunes of the Institute paralleled that of Birmingham Library, which, since its relocation to Margaret Street in 1899 had seen a steady decrease in subscription. This was seen as a result of the removal from the commercial life of the town and remoteness from the railways stations (Parish, 1966: 77). Like the Birmingham and Midland Institute, various

[13] The author's research at the Architectural Association on Bedford Square, London, has shown that a 'Conversazione' was held there as an annual exhibition, musical performance and evening of talks that celebrated the students' work and wider architectural and intellectual society. The translation to Birmingham came through the affiliation of the Birmingham Architectural Association and the AA in delivering curriculum in the Midlands. This forms the part of the author's ongoing research into the ways in which architectural ideas and movements found a place in cultural centres such as London and how they were articulated in places such as Birmingham.

initiatives were put in place to reimagine the library: the publication of *The Birmingham Library Magazine* from 1907; the foundation of a Reading Circle; the appointment of a Kitchen Committee and provision of additional lunch services; the creation of a gramophone record and later long-player record lending library (Parish, 1966: 80). Although the Second World War saw a spike in membership, the imposition of rates on the Library led to an increase in subscription rates and a fall in membership, so much so that by 1954 the situation was critical (Parish, 1966: 80). The following year, the library was forced to merge with the Birmingham and Midland Institute, itself a struggling organisation. The lease of the library buildings as well as its contents, including the stock of over 100,000 books, passed to the Birmingham and Midland Institute, though the two remained in situ. This ended 176 years of proprietary membership and independent activity in the city. The two institutions owed their existence, directly in the case of the library and indirectly in that of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, to Joseph Priestley, their union a necessary act of survival in ever changing conditions.

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2.2 SURVEY 2: The Library and Infrastructure Coalesce (1956–1980)

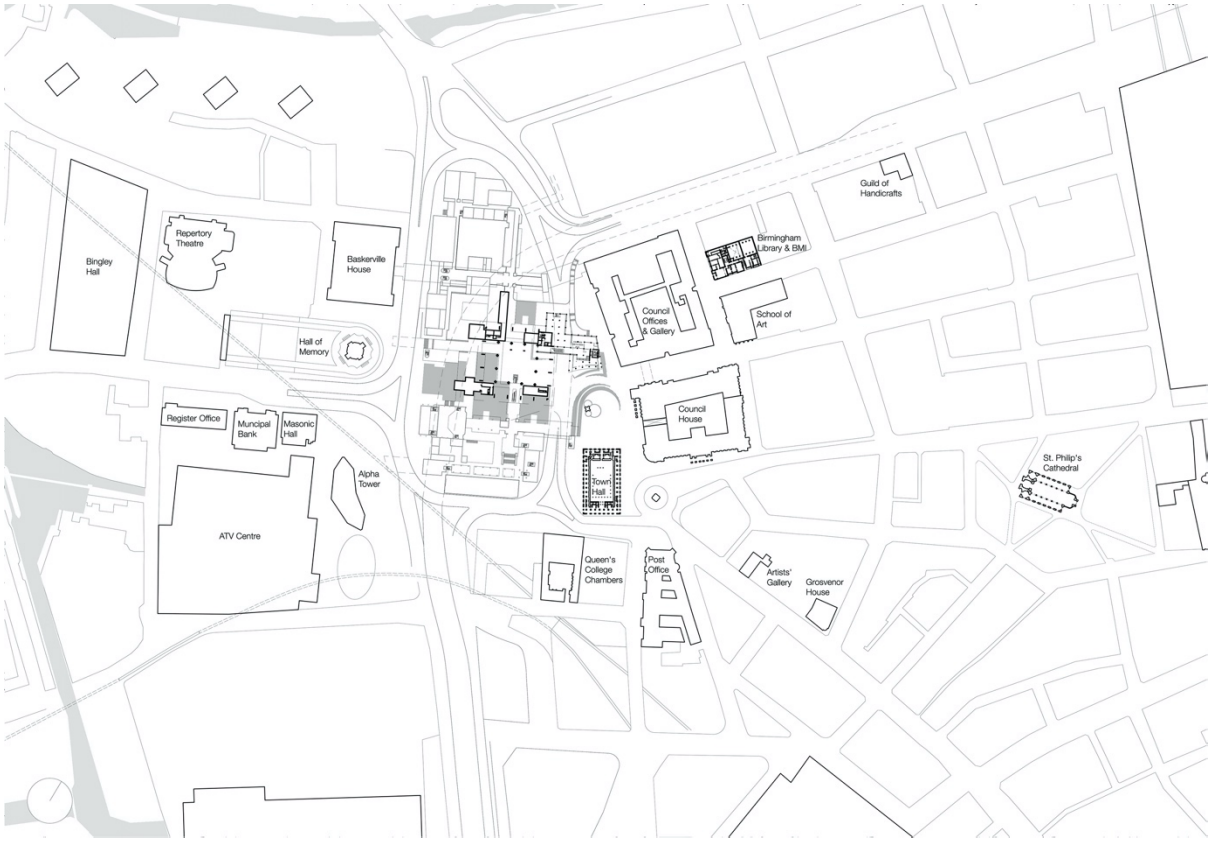


Figure 18: Drawing 010B – 1980 – 1:2,500 at A3, at partial completion of Paradise Circus including Central Library and further works at the Civic Centre upon precinct principles. Source: author

As the argument for the Inner Ring Road came to dominate the Corporation's plans for reconstruction, other projects became subservient including that of the Civic Centre. By 1980, the plans for the Inner Ring Road which had first been proposed in 1917 had largely come to fruition, albeit with deviations in alignment and the implications of grade separation, and the scheme for Paradise Circus had been partially built as part of an enlarged Civic Centre. This had led to the removal of the Birmingham and Midland Institute from its first location alongside the Town Hall and Reference Library, to join its partner institution the Birmingham Library at Margaret Street, but not before several other possible ideas had been explored.

In the years after the Government's initial rejection of the road infrastructure plan, the Corporation continued to apply pressure and to take matters into their own hands.

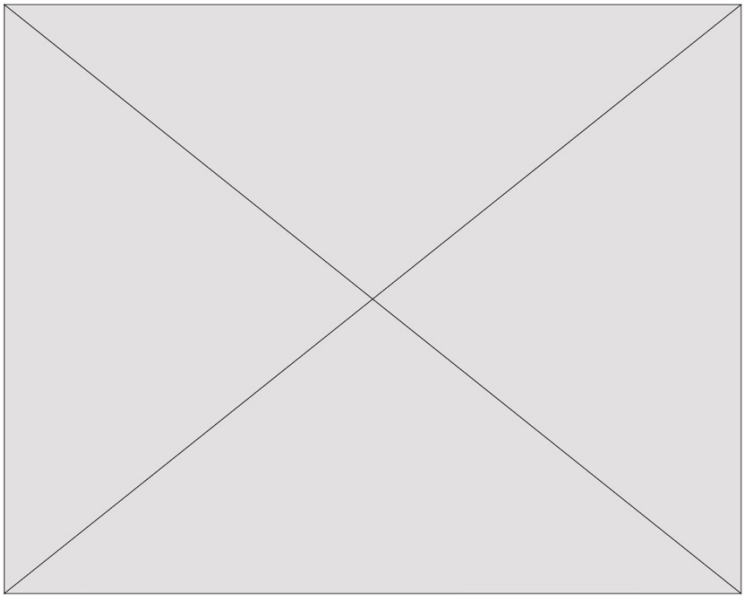


Figure 19: Queen Elizabeth II opening the Great Charles Street Queensway tunnel, part of the Inner Ring Road, on 7th April 1971. Source: Birmingham Post and Mail Archive, accessed 24.10.2021, copyright Mirrorpix https://www.mirrorpix.com/id/00486198

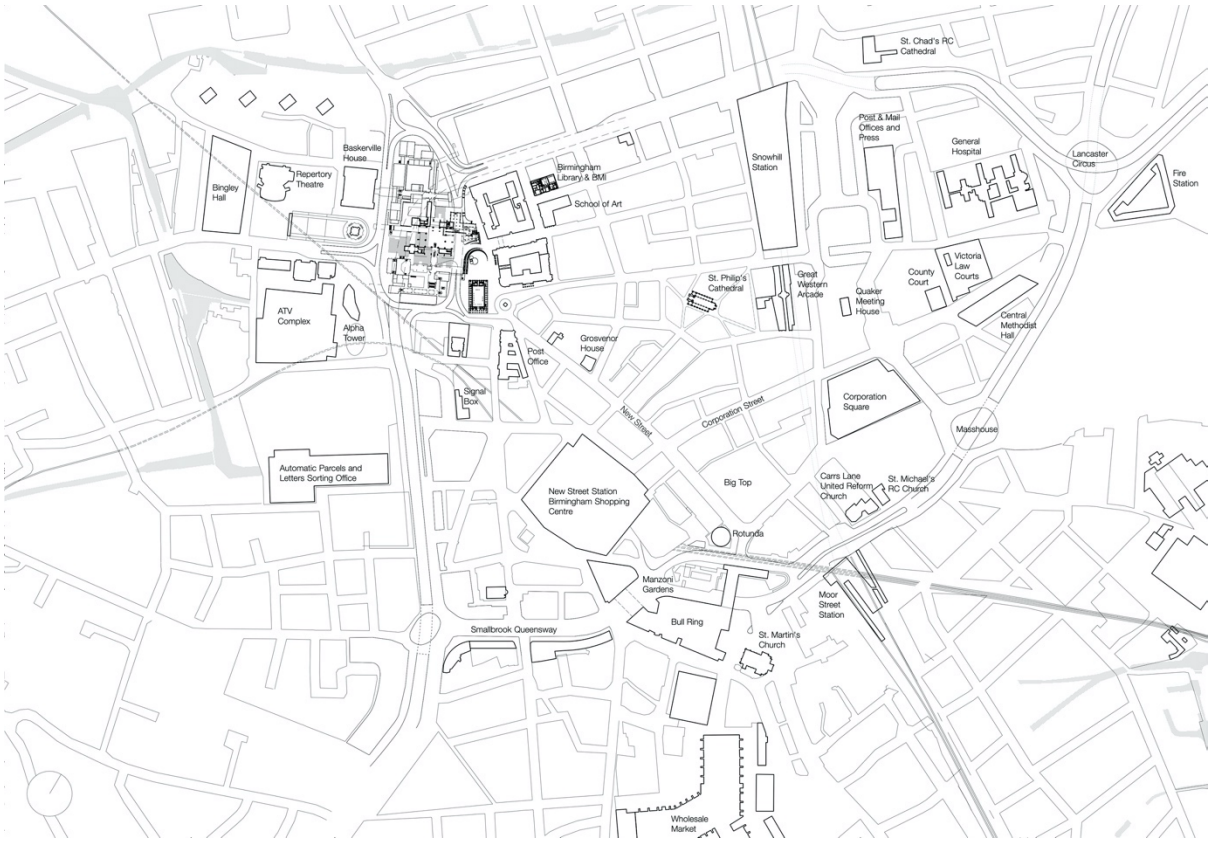


Figure 20: Drawing 010C showing the major developments around the Inner Ring Road including Paradise Circus. Source: author

Plans that had first been made in 1917 finally became a reality from 1957, the newly named Queensway opened in 1971 by Queen Elizabeth II (figure 19). The following year saw the opening of the Gravelly Hill Interchange (built 1968-72), connecting the Inner Ring Road to the national motorway network via the Aston Expressway. The motivations for and implications of this are discussed in section 2.3.

2.2.1 Lining the Inner Ring Road

This long-term project on the city led to a great many changes in the order and orientation of the city, the ring road and subsequent development reconfiguring the historic context (figure 20). The first sections to be built between Lancaster Place and Holloway Head passed through the Bull Ring where the bombed-out shell of the Market Hall (labelled '5' on the slide image in figure 21) was subsumed by elevated roads, and finally demolished to make way for Manzoni Gardens. The ground of the Bull Ring was cleared and reconceived as an indoor shopping centre and multi-storey car park, first by Birmingham architect James Roberts. Disagreements over leases and ground-rents meant that this first scheme was soon superseded by a commercially driven project by Laing with their architects Sydney Greenwood and T. J. Hirst (1964), though Roberts' Rotunda (1965) was built on the site of the Swan Yard, marking the junction of High Street and New Street as a City Council requirement.

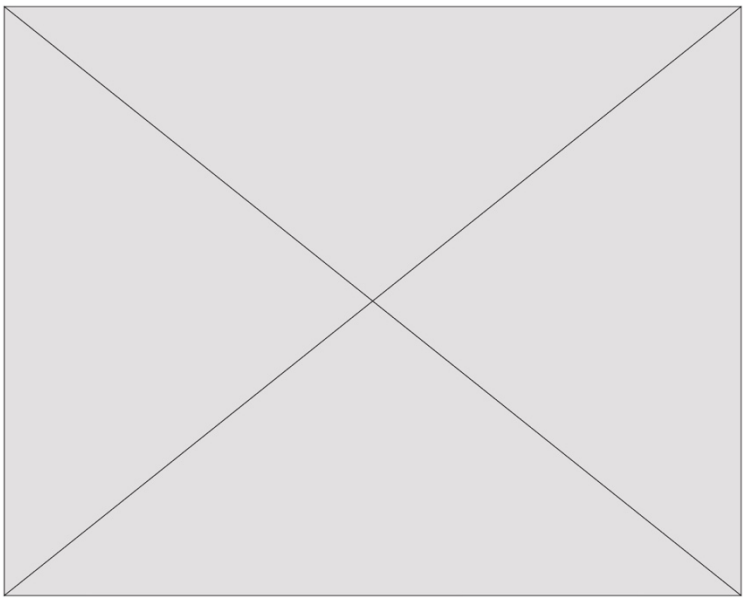


Figure 21: Combined panoramic view of the first section of the Inner Ring Road under construction, 1959. St. Martin's Church is on the left, with the bombed remains of the Market Hall to the centre, with what became Smallbrook Ringway stretching out to the right marked by the sweeping white arrow. Source: BCC Urban Design 2009_155 Basement 6_1 Box 24 of 51

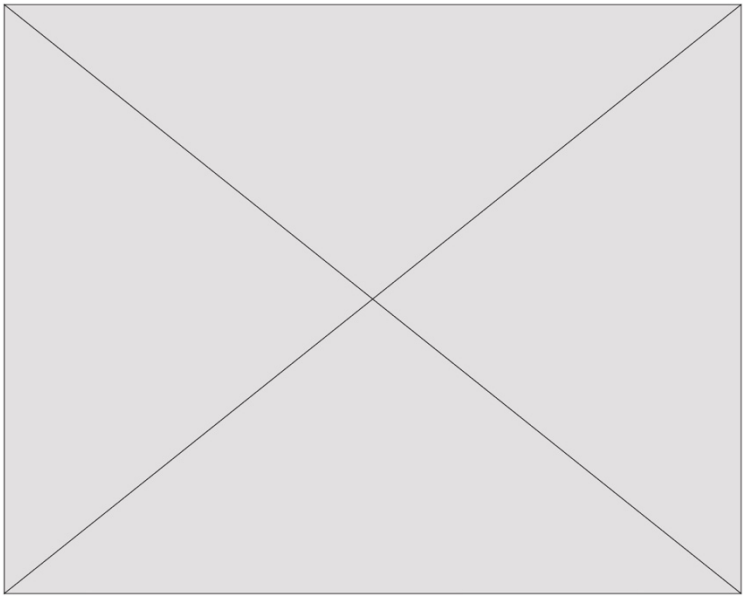


Figure 22: James Roberts' Smallbrook Ringway Centre soon after opening in 1962. Source: (Little, 1971: 118)

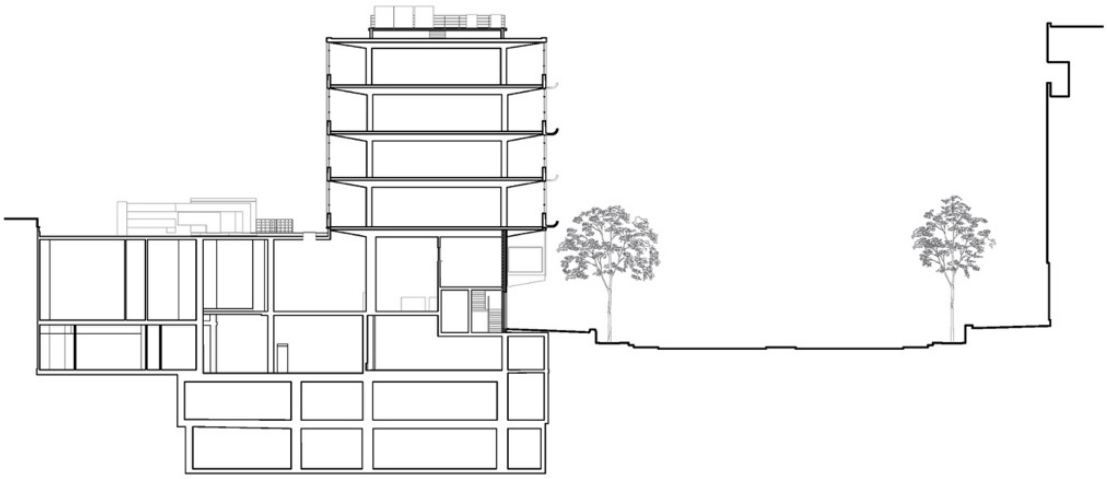


Figure 23: Section of James Roberts' Smallbrook Ringway Centre, 1962. Source: Bhachu I, Salton-Mayers A, Hussain Z

Roberts' other notable contribution to the architecture of the new infrastructure-oriented city centre was the Ringway Centre (1962, figures 22 and 23) on Smallbrook Queensway, the first to be completed along the Inner Ring Road. Built in two sections with a bridge-link on massive *pilotis* over Hurst Street, this sweeping block reinforced the movement of the road through its alignment and pattern of sculptural concrete light sconces across the uniform façade. Building servicing and pedestrian subways were accommodated below street level, with a continuous commercial frontage at the new ground level onto the highway.

The first phase of construction also saw dramatic changes around Moor Street to the north of the Bull Ring. St. Michael's RC Church, once the Unitarian New Meeting House (1802, figure 24) remained as testament to an earlier urban order, though subjugated to the Queensway which rose up in front to allow for a pedestrian subway beneath (figure 25). Carrs Lane United Reform Church was rebuilt by Denys Hinton (1971) as a collection of monolithic brick volumes which addressed both the elevated road and a small square to the north formed after the demolition of Whitwell and Yeoville Thomason's earlier building.

Where the Inner Ring Road met Corporation Street at Old Square, a new shopping precinct was formed. Corporation Square (1963-66, figure 26) was Birmingham-trained architect Frederick Gibberd's only building in the city. Counter to the linear frontage of Roberts' Ringway Centre, Gibberd defined a series of passages and a central open precinct with a Miesian advertising tower, kiosk, and octagon of seating to the interior of the block. In deliberate contrast to the neo-classical Lewis's store opposite, the building was designed as a low-lying monolithic podium in Portland stone, with a recessed ground floor onto Corporation Street and Bull Street. A ballroom and car park were placed beneath the square to occupy the dramatic level change across the site, accessed from the lower Dale End.

Figure 24: New Meeting House (1802), reconstructed after the Riots of 1791. Became St. Michael's RC Church after move of Unitarians to Church of the Messiah. Source: BMAG 1933V321.23 accessed 24.10.2021

Figure 25: St. Michael's RC Church in 2017. Source: author

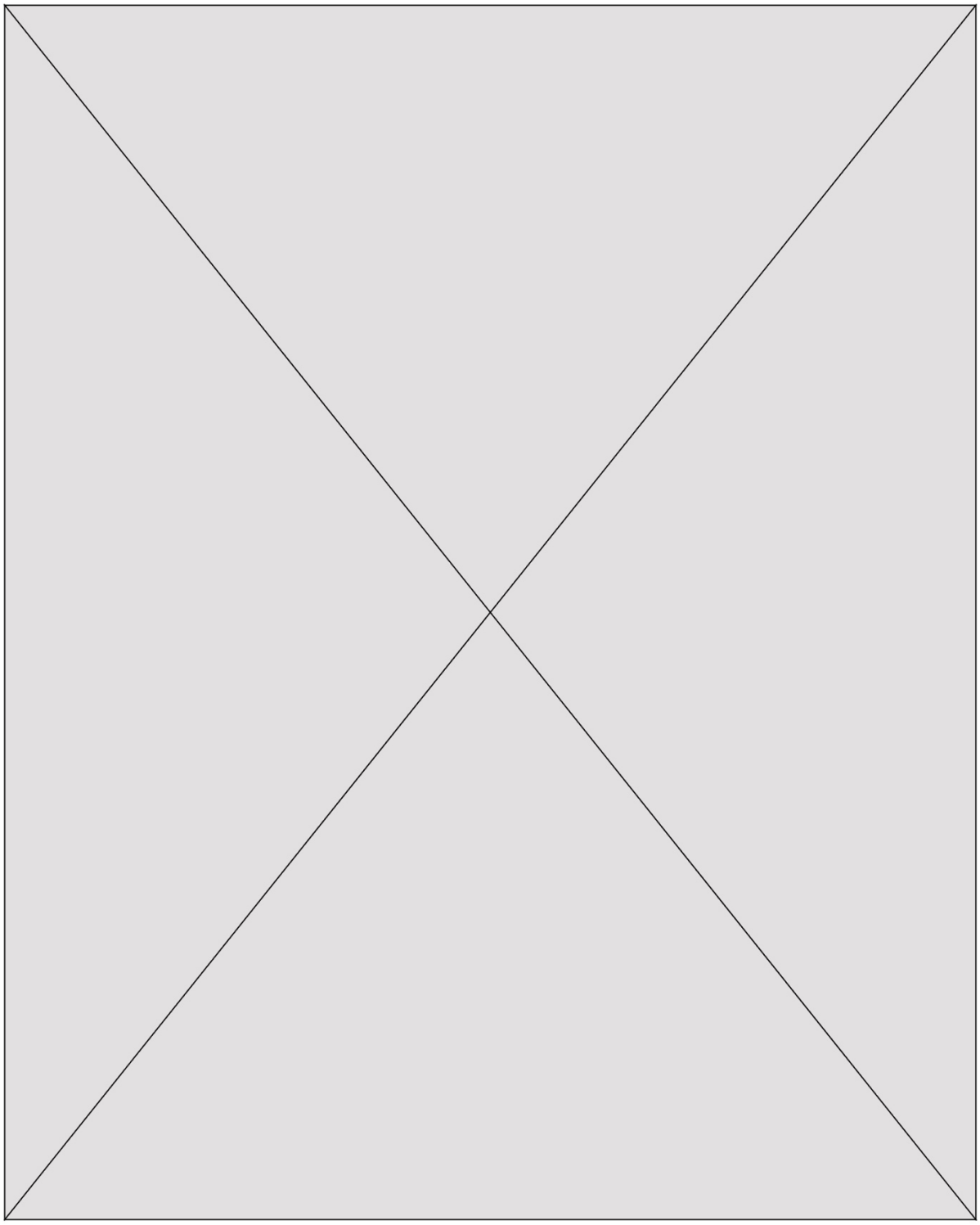


Figure 26: Gibberd's Corporation Square, 1971. Source: (Hickman, 1970: 89)

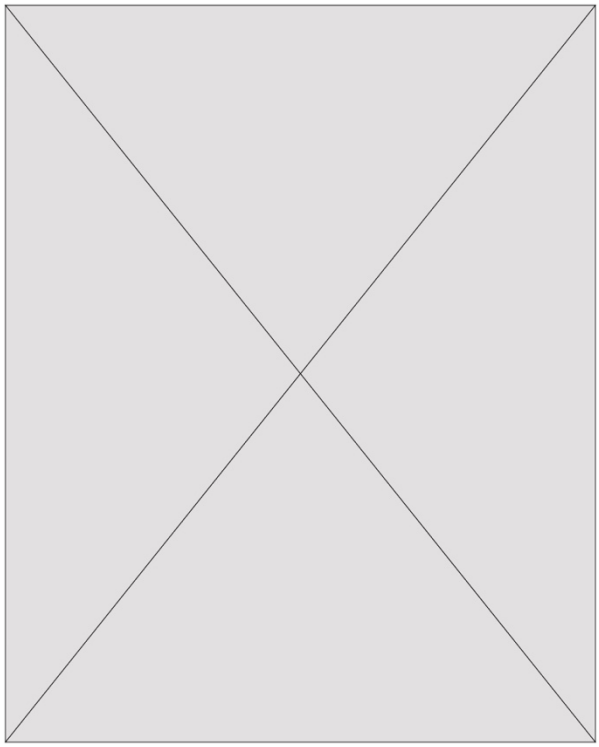


Figure 27: Newspaper Printing Works & Offices, Birmingham Post & Mail (c1970). Source: (Madin, 2011: 49)

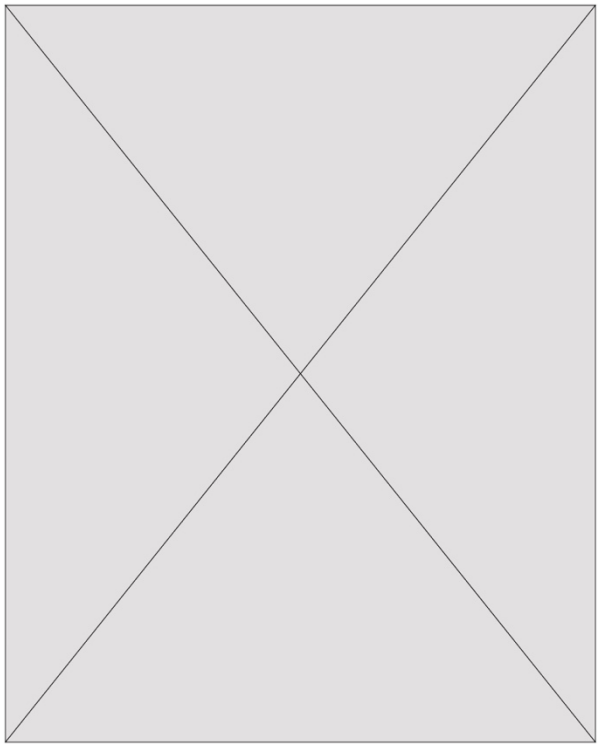


Figure 28: Model of SOM's Lever House, in Architectural Forum 1950, photograph by Ezra Stoller-Pictor.
Source: (1950, 85)

To the north of Corporation Square, the Post & Mail Building (John Madin, 1966, demolished 2005, figure 27) was built in response to the new conditions of the ring road at Colmore

Circus and set new standards for commercial architecture in the city. Modelled on Skidmore, Owning and Merrill's Lever House (1952, figure 28), Madin's building was composed of a raised open patio providing entry into the three-storey podium block, with a curtain-walled office tower over aligned to the axis of Colmore Row (Madin, 1968). Rather than attempt to build the maximum envelope, the Post and Mail building, like Lever House, was designed to reflect an open and dynamic society. To achieve this, the printing presses and bulk paper stores were housed five storeys below ground, freeing up the ground floor for the public facing advertising hall and patio. The modernisation of the provincial newspaper was as much about the provision of new works and offices as it was an advertisement of a progressive organisation and city region.

Whilst the development of the Inner Ring Road provided the impetus and conditions for development, New Street too saw change though not directly associated with the road. Instead, attempts to counter the dominance of road infrastructure led to substantial upgrades to the rail system, including the technical apparatus of the track and the station buildings themselves. The Transport Act (1962) and British Railways Board plan *The Reshaping of British Railways* (1963, otherwise known as *The Beeching Report* after Chair Lord Richard Beeching) led to the abandonment of many routes deemed uneconomical, and investment in others. The subsequent programme of electrification to improve the speed and reliability of services required the construction of the Telephone Exchange and Signal Box at New Street Station (1965, figure 29). This was a new building typology and form of architectural construction, designed by architects John Bicknell and Paul Hamilton, London Midland Regional Architect Roy Moorcroft with John Hoile, and Diana P. Quin. The building incorporated new methods of signalling and telecommunications for the newly electrified line, commanding the technical operation of some eighty miles of track. The adjacent New Street Station buildings of 1854 and 1880 had received substantial bomb damage during the air raid of 21st November 1940 and underwent complete reconstruction between 1967-71. British Rail reconfigured the tracks and built a six-and-a-half-acre concrete slab over to accommodate Birmingham Shopping Centre by Cotton, Ballard, and Blow. This internalised mall drew on American models, incorporating shops, cinemas, a hotel, offices, and a raft of car parking over, with bridge links into the Bull Ring and Station Street. A tunnel was constructed linking the complex to the Automatic Parcels and Letters Sorting

Figure 29: Trackside view of New Street Signal Box, John Bicknell and Paul Hamilton, London Midland Regional Architect Roy Moorcroft with John Hoile and Diana P. Quin, 1965. Source: author.

Figure 30: Grosvenor House, New Street, Cotton, Ballard and Blow, with input by Herbert Manzoni, 1951. Source: author.

Office (R. H. Ouzman, Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, 1970), the largest mechanised letters and parcels sorting office in the country (Hickman, 1970: 93). The interior complex with vertically layered programme and bridge and tunnel connections to other buildings was to become a major preoccupation for architects and engineers in the city. On New Street itself, post war development continued, encouraged by the relaxation of building restrictions in the 1950s (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 464). Of the earliest, Grosvenor House (Cotton, Ballard, and Blow, with input by Herbert Manzoni, 1951, figure 30) set the agenda for architectural standards, rarely fulfilled in subsequent projects. By the same architects, City Centre House (built 1954-57) saw the development of the 'Big Top' site on the corner of New Street and High Street, left in ruins after the air raid of 10th April 1941. This commercial building was commissioned by the Birmingham developer Jack Cotton, whose City Centre Properties was concurrently part-financing Gropius and Belluschi's Pan Am building over Grand Central Station in New York (built 1954-63).

Cotton was also responsible for the demolition of the Theatre Royal on New Street to make way for the Woolworth Building (Cotton, Ballard, and Blow, 1958-61 and 1962-64), ending 185 years of theatrical performance there. Just as Cotton's interests reached into Europe and the US, Gropius' too had connections to Birmingham having been invited to talk in the city as early as 1934. More latterly it was through Cotton and his friend Philip Sergeant Florence, Professor of Commerce at Birmingham University, that Gropius' influence was felt in the city (Foster, 2005: 30). His proposal of 1962 for a commercial development of courtyards and a point block between New Street and Temple Row was to remain unbuilt after the Labour Government's ban on office development was extended from London to Birmingham in 1965 (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 446). Cotton and Gropius' schemes did however demonstrate the city's participation in global practices and theories of architecture and urban planning.

2.2.2 The Complex and Precinct - The Civic Centre and ATV

Separate but adjacent to the expanded civic centre (discussed in section 2.3), plans for the ATV site were advanced by H. George Marsh of Richard Seifert & Partners. Known as the Paradise Centre, the complex incorporated a sculptural office tower which drew reference from Gio Ponti's Pirelli Tower in Milan (1958) as well as Marsh's Centre Point (1966), along with a studio, theatre, cinema, exhibition hall, shops, and car parking. A diminished Alpha Tower and associated studio complex was completed by 1973 (figures 31 and 32) with

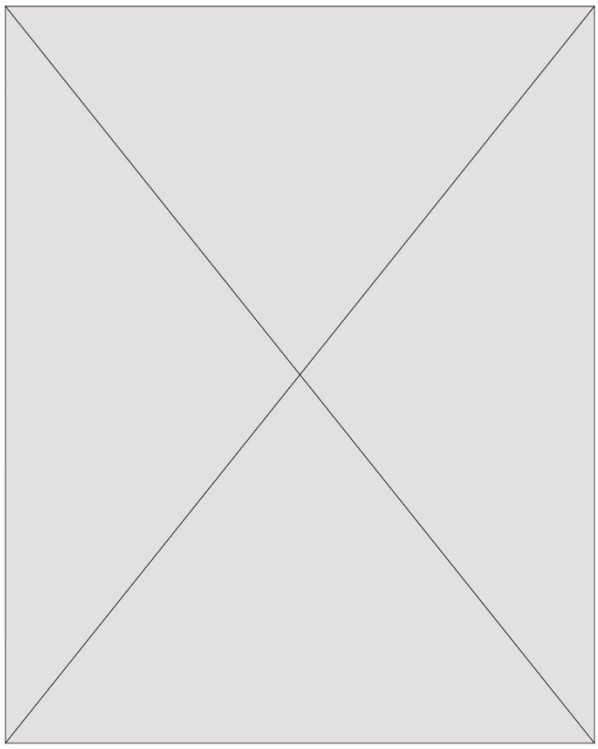


Figure 31: Figure 115: Sketch view of Richard Seifert & Partners initial proposals for Paradise Centre complex, 1969. Source: (1969, 42)

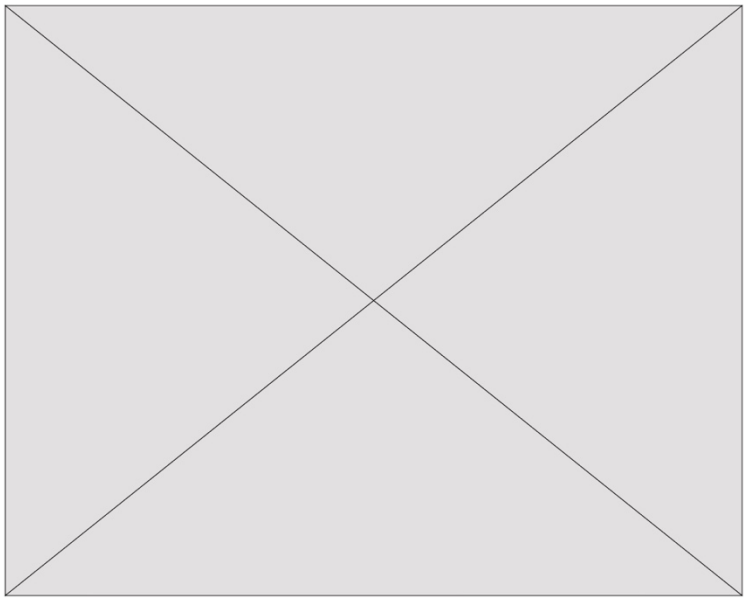


Figure 32: Ground plan of Richard Seifert & Partners initial proposals for Paradise Centre complex, 1969. Source: (Architectural Review, 1969)

subterranean pedestrian connections into Paradise Circus. This set the agenda for tall buildings in the city, though few matched its sculptural qualities. It also changed the dynamics of the whole of the civic centre, countering Madin's three-dimensional conception

of the whole much to his dissatisfaction. Of the planned buildings to the wider Civic Centre, only the Repertory Theatre and the four high-rise residential (in lieu of office) blocks lining the canal were complete by the opening of Paradise Circus, both designed in association with City Architect J. A. Maudsley, successor to J. R. Sheridan-Shedden after his death. Representative of Sheppard Fidler's precinct plan (discussed in section 3.3.3), the theatre, by Graham Winteringham of S. T. Walker & Partners (built 1969-71, figure 33), was a free-standing building that recalled the organic forms, in plan at least, of Utzon's Sydney Opera House. In an interview with the architect (2012), Winteringham recounted his admiration for the Opera House and Ove Arup's engineering of the complex form, which led him to ask the engineer to work with him on the Theatre. Arup went on to collaborate with Madin on the engineering of Paradise Circus. The rehearsal theatre, stage and fly tower, and back-of-house facilities were expressed as monolithic volumes with rounded corners built in textured precast concrete, with the 'democratic auditorium' formed in-situ concrete with visible Colombian pine board markings on the exposed soffit of the foyer (2012). The façade to the Civic Centre garden was to have overlooked a lake (unbuilt), accentuated by precast concrete panels with arched openings giving it a crown-like appearance which recalled the decorative motifs of the Festival of Britain.

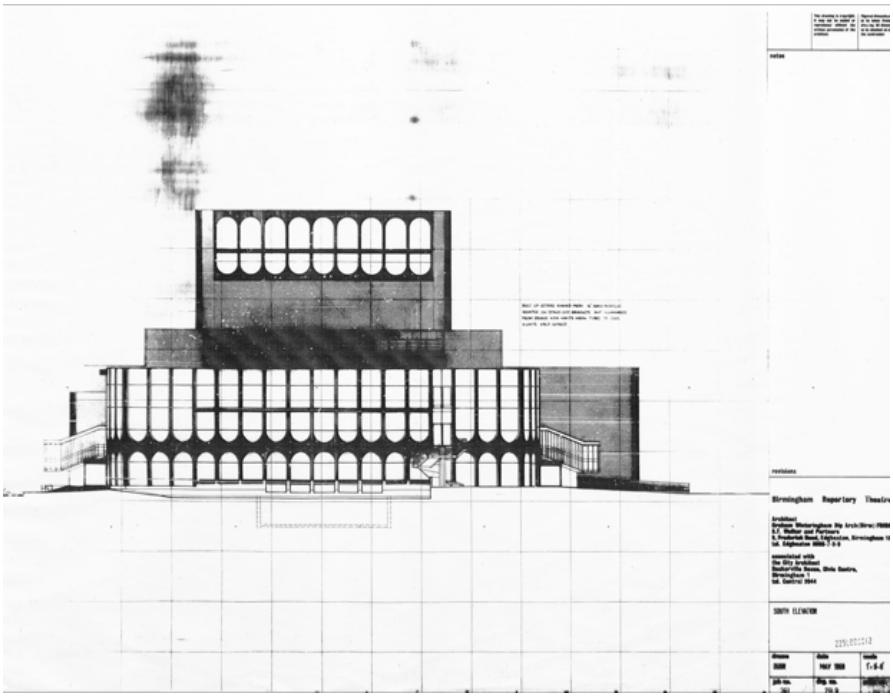


Figure 33: Front facade to Graham Winteringham of S. T. Walker & Partners' Repertory Theatre, 1971. Source: BFCAA

2.3 Historiographical Context

Paradise Circus, the Civic Centre and the Inner Ring Road are emblematic of the modernist approach to planning and architecture. Having established the conditions of the city in the

periods up to and after 1955 and 1980 in the preceding sections, the purpose of this section is to position the work in a more precise historiographical context. The first part 2.3.2 considers the Inner Ring Road, conceived concurrently but separate to the Civic Centre, beginning a near sixty-year project on the city. The second part 2.3.3 considers the ways in which practices in architecture, engineering and planning converged to reimagine the city at the regional scale, leading in section 2.4 to an exploration of the projects for a new Birmingham and Midland Institute and rebuilt Central Library within Paradise Circus, part of the new territory of the Inner Ring Road. These parts are given historiographical context in the following section.

2.3.1 Continuity and Change during the Twentieth Century

Challenges to the continuity of cities in the global north came from many directions at the turn of the twentieth century. Rapid urbanisation through industrial growth placed new pressures on the historical fabric of cities. The migration from country to city led to a disproportionate rise in the urban population, Birmingham one of thirteen cities numbering a million inhabitants by 1900 alongside London, Manchester, Paris, Vienna, Chicago and New York (Sutcliffe, 1981: 2). By the start of the First World War, four-fifths of the population of Britain lived in towns or cities, compared to a third a century prior. The intensification of industry in the centre led to a decline in living conditions where housing became overcrowded and insanitary, shrouded in smoke and pollution, exacerbated in Birmingham by inward migration during the depression of the 1930s (Department of Economics Affairs, 1965). Those able to leave the ‘slums’ for the periphery did so, reinforcing divisions in society where managerial and professional classes inhabited suburban districts served by tram and rail, and increasingly by car. As the century progressed the environmental blight of unabated industrial activity was compounded by traffic noise and pollution, despite the Clean Air Act and railway electrification programmes. According to Ginsburg (Architectural Review, 1969), the diversification of industry and rise of a service economy in the years after the Second World War intensified decentralisation and suburbanisation, giving ‘some idea of what the American spread city could become in England’. With this came the notion of the regional city as an expanded territory. The implications of these ideas on the civic ground of the city are explored here.

Such changes were not only related to industrial growth, but significantly to the consequences of major conflict and a rising awareness of the social implications of centuries of colonial rule in Britain and elsewhere. The widespread destruction of cities, the displacement of large numbers of people by force or discrimination, the persecution of Jewish and other groups all disrupted urban life and the accumulated wealth of Europe. In

Britain, citizenship and right of abode was granted to all members of the Commonwealth, through the British Nationality Act 1948, both in reckoning with the country's colonial past and role in slavery, as well as seeking ways to support post-war reconstruction and the nascent welfare state. Attracted by work opportunities predominantly in manufacturing and with expectations of a high standard of living, 50 – 75,000 West Indian and Pakistani people settled in Birmingham between 1956-64 (Department of Economics Affairs, 1965), many inhabiting central districts and newly built estates and towns. Widespread discrimination in housing and employment led to civil unrest, the Notting Hill Riot of 1958 bringing attention to the plight of marginalised people, paralleled with the Civil Rights Movement in America. The disturbances of the 1980s, including those at Handsworth, show the longstanding and continued deprivation of these communities. Class and racial divisions had been reinforced through the city order, Thatcher's Government suggesting that the absence of a significant black middle class had been a factor in the unrest (Addison, 1985). The polarity of inner-city areas, of Birmingham and the Black Country, and of Birmingham and the linear subregion to the east with Coventry at its centre, served to demonstrate the new conditions of the city.

The complex circumstances of the early twentieth century gave rise to the concept of urban planning and sociology as disciplines in their own right, and a broadening of architects' roles. Until then, cities had enjoyed a degree of autonomy from Government interference, allowing for locally oriented initiatives to flourish often led by philanthropic industrialists concerned with improving the lives, and therefore productivity, of their workforce. With the rising concern for individual liberty and freedom of expression and the widening access to culture and education, the question of how and by whom a city should be governed in relation to urban form came to the fore, given greater impetus by changes in architecture and the challenges posed by wartime destruction. Planning took on an infrastructural dimension, concerned with mobility, utilities, building codes and environmental pollution. In sociology, a concern for human associations marked a shift from the idea of 'environment' as a positivist term to that of 'context' in relation to the culture of a place (van den Heuvel, 2008: 25). The requirement for architects to think at the scale of the city as well, as the building, led to novel approaches to the integration of architecture and infrastructure whilst separating the pedestrian and vehicle. There was far from consensus as to how cities should be built, with references taken from European and North American examples.

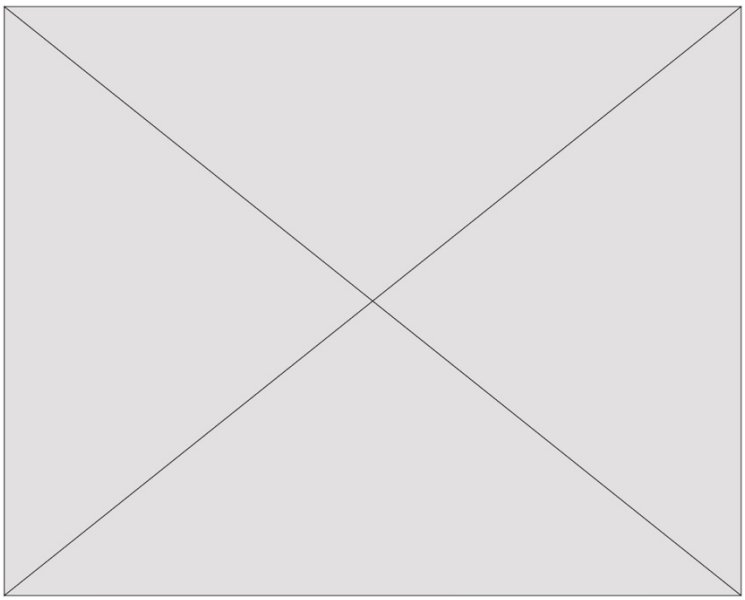


Figure 34: Excerpt of plan for the Inner Ring Road included in the City of Birmingham report on Arterial Roads, 1917. Source: BCC MS2126_EB9_1917_2 (1917).

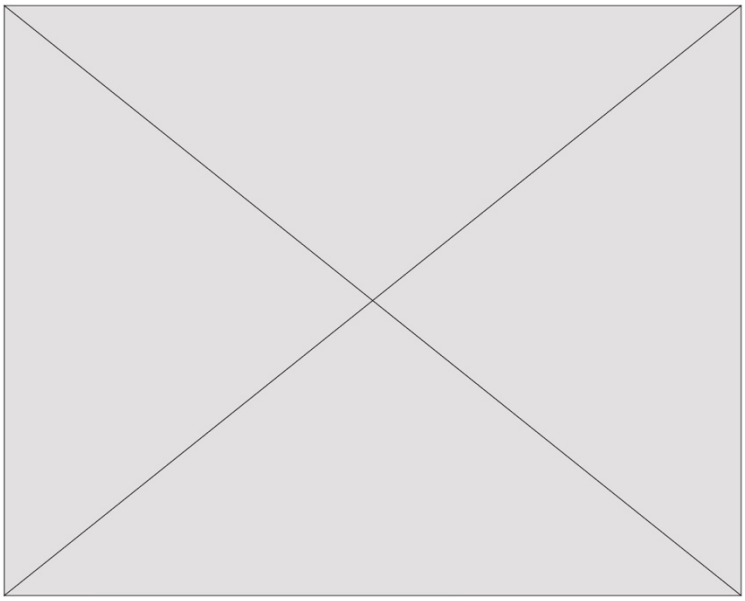


Figure 35: Type of modern shop front onto new ring road, in the City of Birmingham report on Arterial Roads, 1917. Source: BCC MS2126_EB9_1917_2 (1917).

What was common to all was the comprehensive nature of planning and building. Such attitudes to urban change were representative of progress during this period, often overshadowing the tradition of the city as a place of dialogue and exchange.

2.3.2 The Reimagination of the Civic Centre

From the turn of the twentieth century up until 1955, the first plans for the Civic Centre and Inner Ring Road emerged as distinct entities, taking on an altogether different dimension as the two projects became unified. It also marked the point at which the Birmingham Library

and Birmingham and Midland Institute lost their independence, merging to avoid closure. With an influential and comparatively wealthy municipal government, Birmingham often led the way in addressing the challenges of the day related to population growth and the improvement of living and working standards. The divergence of architecture and planning as distinct disciplines presented new approaches to city form that drew on traditions of the previous century. It is through this that the projects of the Civic Centre and Inner Ring Road will be first understood, followed by a study of plans for each.(nd.-b)

Birmingham was the first of the major industrial British cities to determine a town planning scheme. Having witnessed some of the latest developments in European city planning at the RIBA Town Planning Conference in London (1910), City Surveyor Henry Stilgoe produced plans for the 'Outer Ring' of the city between 1913-25 (Bournville Village Trust Research, 1941). A plan for widening of the city's twelve arterial roads and an Inner Ring Road was made by Stilgoe in 1917 (figure 34). Stilgoe's diagrammatic route for the Inner Ring Road gathered the widened arterial routes into an efficient gyratory that built largely upon existing streets, with new routes cutting across the markets leading to a widened Moor Street. The loop was incomplete to the north, the New General Hospital and continuation of Corporation Street and Lancaster Street taking priority. The diagram was supplemented by studies of typical street conditions for various locations, with specifications of how shop fronts might be presented along the route (figure 35). The implementation of such a plan in the centre of the city not only offered improved circulation to deal with the 'traffic problem' of moving workers between home and the factory, but it also added to the impetus for the formalisation and expansion of the civic centre. Land that until then had been associated with the industrial life of the city – the canal wharves and Bingley Exhibition Hall – was designated for new civic purposes.

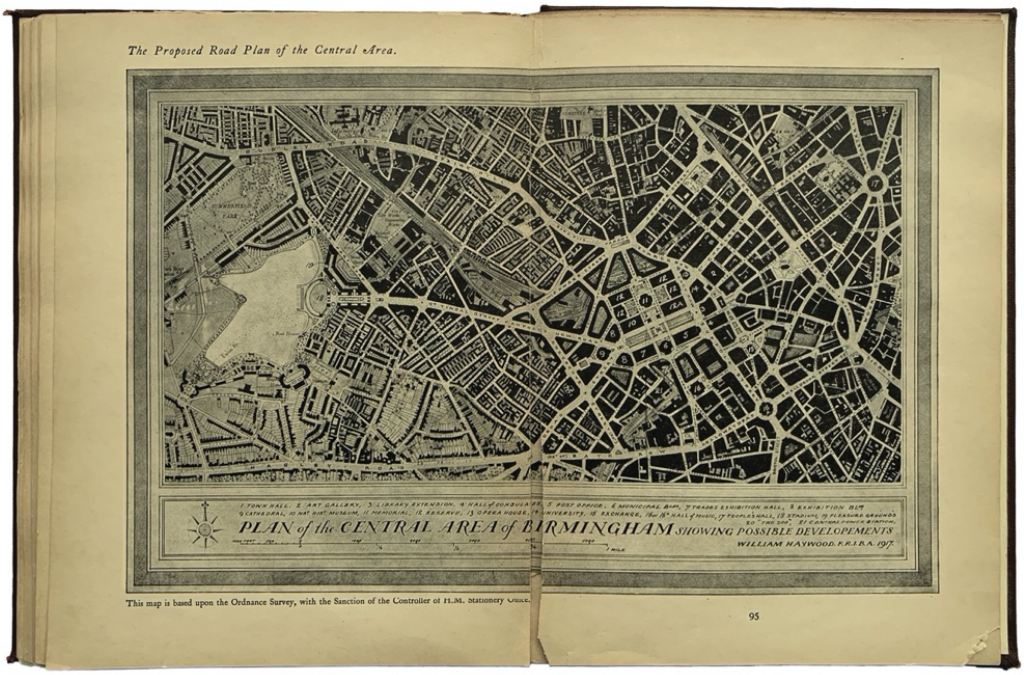


Figure 36: William Haywood's 'Proposed Road Plan of the Central Area', drawing dated 1917. Source: (1918: 94 - 95)

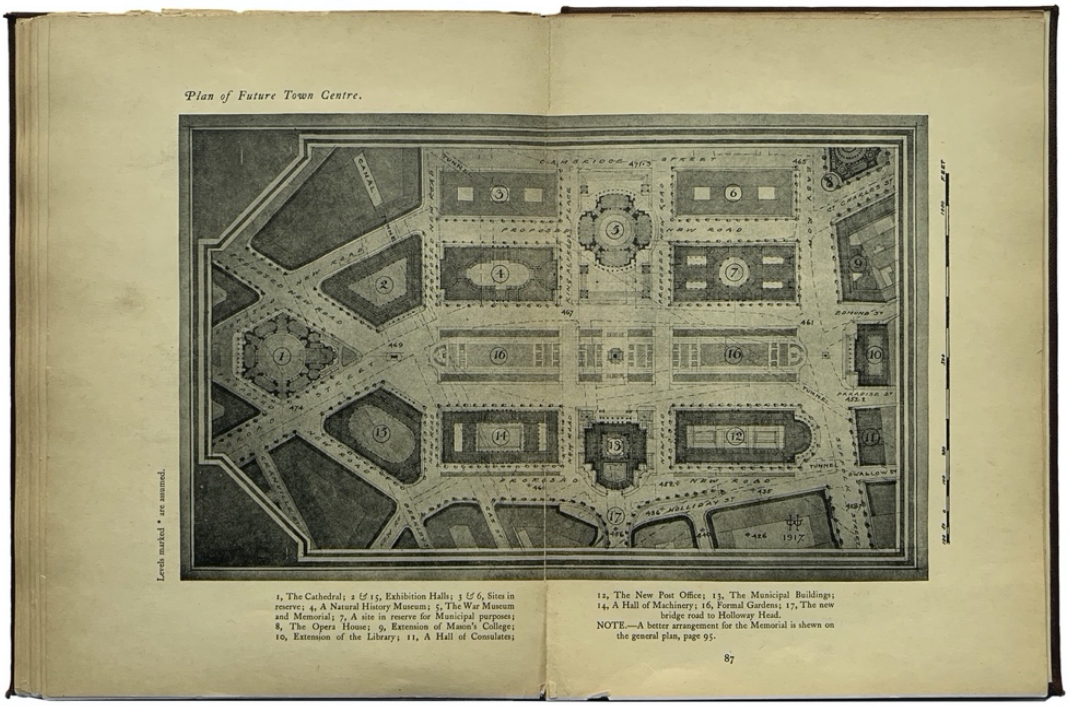


Figure 37: William Haywood's 'Plan of Future Town Centre', 1918. Source: (1918: 86 - 87)

2.3.2.1 William Haywood's Plan

In an essay entitled *Birmingham as it Might Be* (Muirhead, 1911: 584), Birmingham architect W. H. Bidlake[14] advocated for a balance of the formality of a classical layout for public buildings with the informal and picturesque of the Gothic plan for the 'filling in of the city', in his proposals for reframing Victoria Square. Bidlake's ideas were given comprehensive form in William Haywood's book *The Development of Birmingham* (1918) which provided proposals for the central areas of the city (figure 36), including plans for 'A People's Hall', 'Pleasure Grounds & Zoological Garden' and 'Improvements to New Street Station'.

It also illustrated proposals for a 'Future Town Centre' (figure 37), where Haywood's plan embellished Stilgoe's road scheme with monumental sculptures and public buildings at major road intersections and the Civic Centre. At the centre was a large parade ground, enclosed by symmetrically placed buildings that included cultural functions of a Natural History Museum, and places of musical and theatrical performance. As a centrepiece to the Civic Centre, a municipal 'Sky Scraper' (figure 38, following page) was justified on grounds of efficiency as well as being representative of the Corporation as an important utilitarian organisation (Haywood, 1918: 89). In the immediate foreground of the tower, Haywood proposed a thirty-five foot high statue of a metal worker, raised on a pedestal to 'symbolise the spirit of Birmingham' as a place of industry and making (Haywood, 1918: 91).

Key to Buildings in Haywood's 'Future Town Centre' plan of 1917 in Figure 37.
Buildings shown in the wider 'Central Area Plan' (Haywood, 1918: 94 - 95) are the Town Hall (existing), Art Gallery (existing), Hall of Music (proposed), People's Hall (proposed), Stadium (proposed), Pleasure Grounds (proposed), 'The Zoo' (proposed) and Central Power Station (proposed).

1 Cathedral
2 Exhibition Hall
3 Sites in Reserve
4 Natural History Museum
5 The War Museum and Memorial
6 Sites in Reserve
7 A Site in Reserve for Municipal Purposes
8 The Opera House
9 Extension to Mason's College
10 Extension of the Library
11 A Hall of Consulates
12 The New Post Office
13 The Municipal Buildings [The Municipal Tower] (figure 40)
14 A Hall of Machinery [Trades Exhibition Hall]
15 Exhibition Hall
16 Formal Gardens
17 The new bridge road to Holloway Head

[14] In 1892, architectural education was formalised in Birmingham at the Municipal School of Art, with W. H. Bidlake as first Lecturer in Architecture.

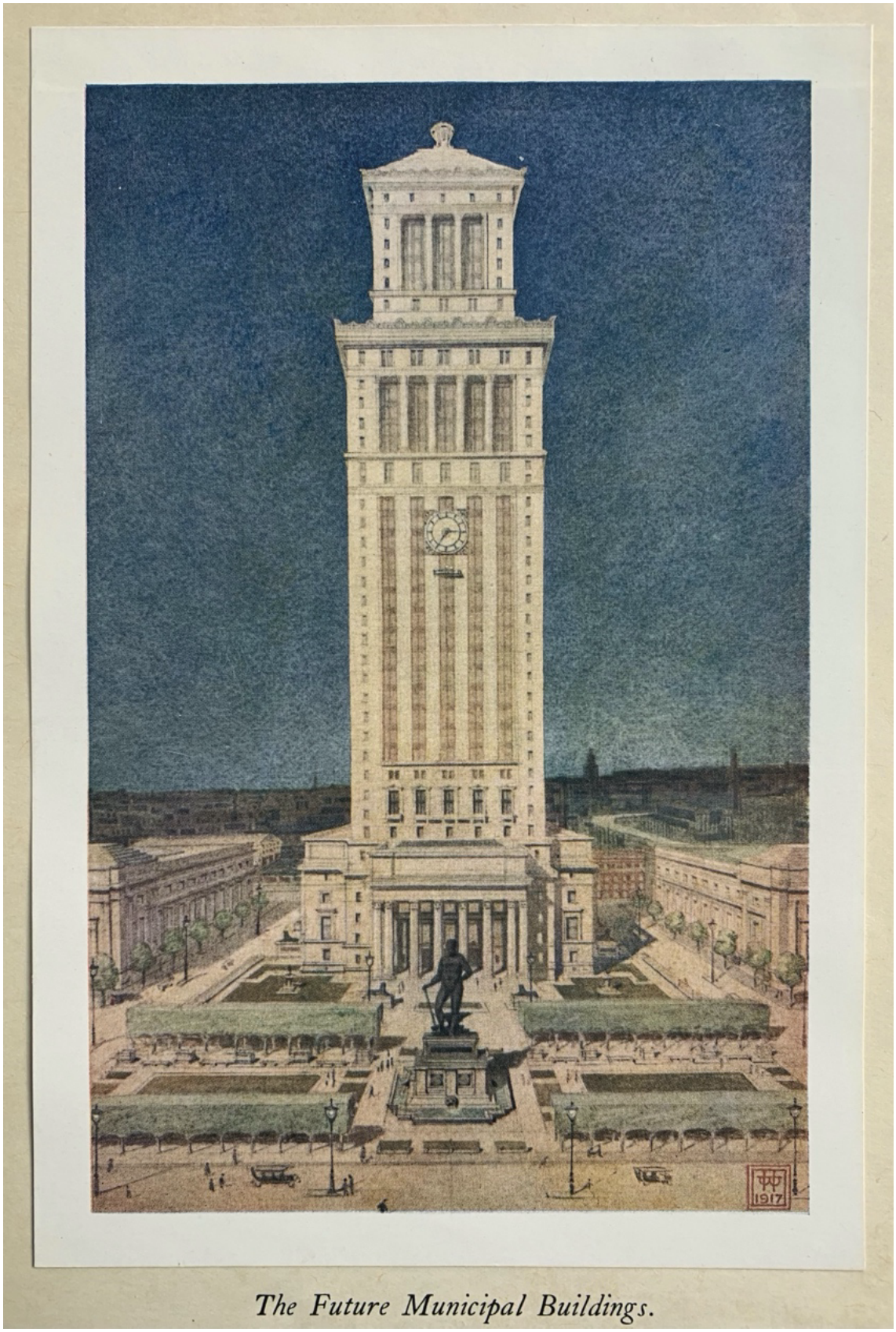


Figure 38: Haywood's proposed Municipal Tower with statue of a metal worker in the foreground, 1917. Source: (Haywood, 1918: 90)

2.3.2.2 The Competition for the Civic Centre

In the face of competition from rail transport, the canal wharves and storage depots to the west of the civic buildings had become redundant, allowing for an expanded civic realm. In the spirit of the German model of commissioning public building, an international competition for the design of a formal civic centre was held in 1926, won by Maximillian Romanoff of Paris. Romanoff's scheme (figure 39) substantially reoriented the site around a widened Broad Street, the avenue terminating in symmetrically planned civic buildings that gave order to a grand north south axis away from the Council House and Town Hall. The Hall of Memory and Masonic Hall were uneasily incorporated into Romanoff's plan, the proposed buildings inflected around them. After Romanoff's plan was rejected by the General Purposes Committee on grounds of being too ambitious for a provincial city, a more modest set of proposal were prepared by City Engineer Herbert H. Humphries (1930 [figure 40]) and a further iteration commissioned from S. N. Cooke with civic centre competitor James Swan (1932 [figure 41]), gaining approval in 1934 (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 449). Sutcliffe and Smith (1974: 450) noted the slow progress made in the inter and post-Second World War period, the plan again revised in 1944 by William Haywood. Strikingly similar to his earlier 'future town centre', Haywood's plan incorporated a central parade ground surrounded by 'Civic Centre Buildings'. In place of his original thirty-six storey 'Municipal Sky Scraper', Haywood proposed a 140 foot column at the centre of a large parade ground, once again surmounted by 'a smith, carrying a wrought iron disc upon which would be shown in relief a mother and child standing against an oak tree to signify the rebirth of art in association with natural beauty' (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 450).

Together with broadcasting, musical performance and subterranean spaces, Haywood's revised plan included a City Hall, a new Library and Birmingham and Midland Institute (instead of extensions to the existing), an Art Gallery, Philharmonic Hall (in place of the earlier Opera), Planetarium, a People's Hall (relocated from a peripheral position in his earlier plan), a Civic Theatre and the British Broadcasting Corporation. The Cathedral and War Museum were removed from the Civic Centre itself, the Cathedral relocated to a site further west along Broad Street. This proposal was approved in 1945 and further resolved by City Engineer and Surveyor Herbert Manzoni, including detailed plans for traffic movement and subterranean carparking beneath the central parade ground. The outcome of Haywood and Manzoni's plan was published by the Corporation in 1948 (figure 42), and Haywood embarked on a four-year project to construct a model of his scheme (figure 43).

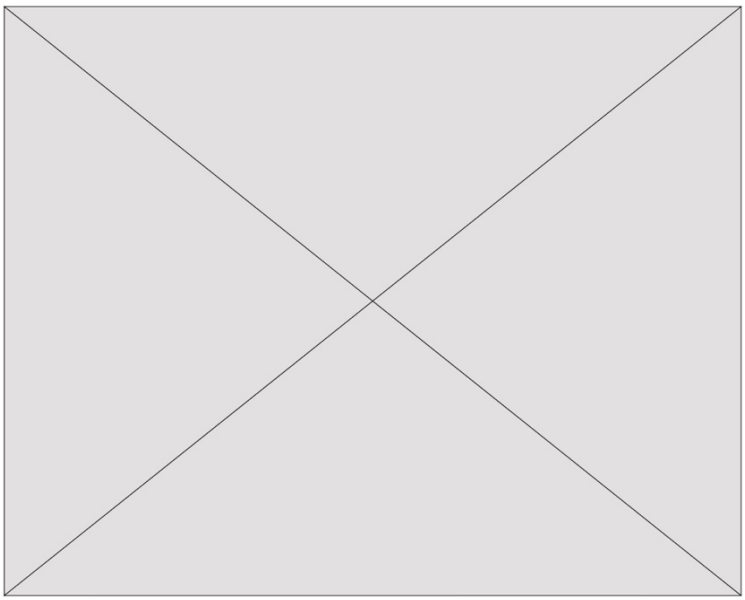


Figure 39: Maximillian Romanoff's winning proposal for the extended civic centre on land previously occupied by canal wharves and factories, 1927. Source: (Birmingham City Council, 2009)

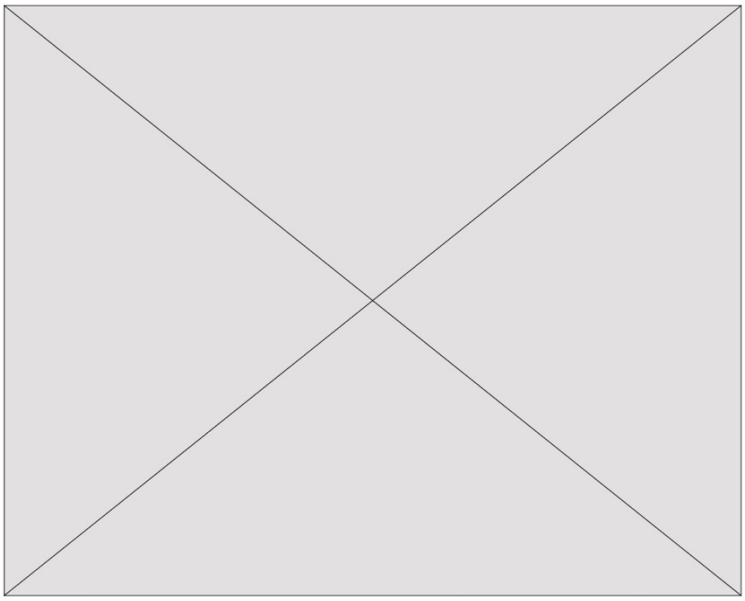


Figure 40: City Engineer and Surveyor Herbert H. Humphries proposal for the Civic Centre, 1930. This informed Cooke and Swan's subsequent proposal of 1932. Source: (Birmingham City Council, 2009)

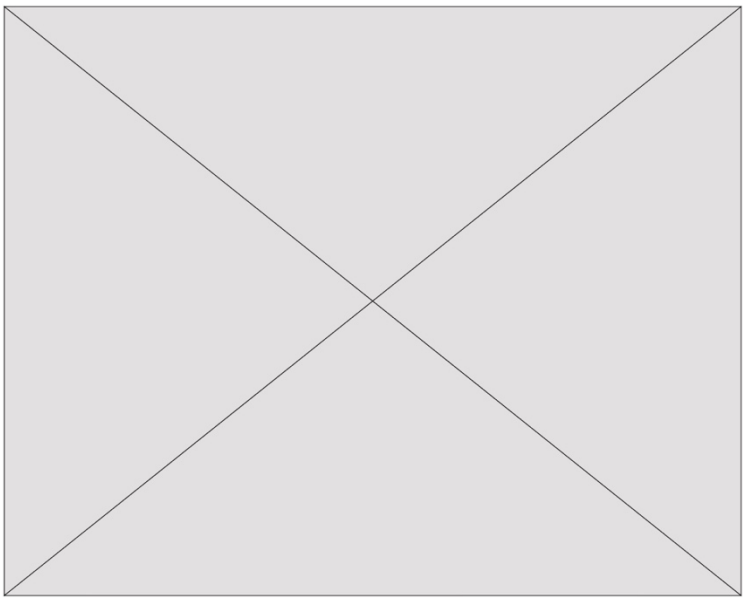


Figure 41: S. N. Cooke and J. A. Swan's Civic Centre scheme of 1932, which gained approval in 1934. The Masonic Hall and Municipal Bank to the centre of the plan had already been built. Source: (Birmingham City Council, 2009)

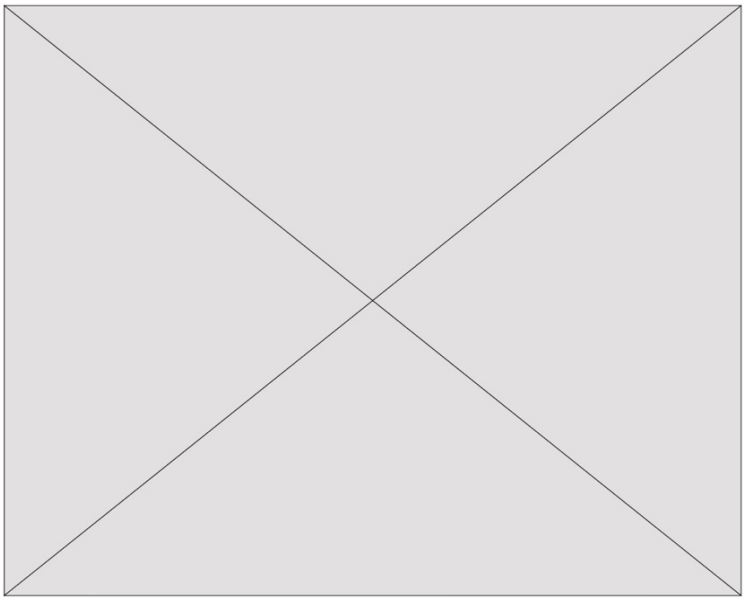


Figure 42: The outcome of William Haywood's scheme of 1944 (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974) and the scheme of 1947 credited to Herbert Manzoni, the 1948 scheme for the civic centre, with open parade ground surrounded by 'Civic Centre Buildings'. Source: (Birmingham City Council, 2009)

Key to Buildings in Haywood and Manzoni's plan of 1948 shown in figure 42. The circular building to the west of central garden is labelled 'Planetarium' in symmetry with the already built Hall of Memory to the east.

A City Hall
B Libraries
C Art Gallery
D Museum
E Philharmonic Hall
F Hall of Marriage
G People's Hall
H Trades Exhibition Hall
J Bush House
K Civic Theatre
L Gas Department Building
M The Midland Institute (rebuilt)
N The B. B. C.
O Civic Centre Buildings
P Reserved Site

Figure 43: Model of Haywood's Civic Centre, with 140 ft column at the centre of the large parade ground.
Source: BMT accession number 1987 F14.

2.3.2.3 The Plan and Campaign for the Inner Ring Road

As the plans for the Civic Centre were revisited on City Beautiful lines, the scheme for the Inner Ring Road gained its own momentum under Manzoni's leadership who saw the project as instrumental in advancing redevelopment of the centre. Originating from the Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act of 1909, the formal business of town planning had been considered under the Public Works Committee since 1919, along with highways and civil engineering. Manzoni led the Committee between 1935-65, having previously been chief engineer on the Hockley Brook Improvement from 1917, deputy City Surveyor from 1929 and serving on a Government panel for the reconstruction of bombed sites and slum redevelopment projects leading to the Town and Country Planning Act or 'Blitz and Blight' Act of 1947 (Macmorran, 1973: 91). The combined planning and the technical disciplines of the Committee would influence the idea and order of the city over an extended period, starting with the first detailed plans for the Inner Ring Road from 1943.

The first report of the Advisory (Traffic) Planning Panel, which included members of the Public Works Committee, the Traffic Advisory Committee, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, the Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association, the Civic Society and 'The Arts' set out the conditions for the 'rapid progress with the completion of an Inner Ring Road' as an essential measure for the effective management of traffic in the post-war era (Macmorran, 1973: 92). A detailed plan was submitted to the City Council by the Panel in 1944, showing the alignment of the proposed roads and intersections, the land and properties needed for such work, and the financial arrangements required for the completion of the project. Upon approval, the Council included the Road in a draft scheme for the planning of the central area to be submitted for a Parliamentary Bill in 1945. Part of the submission was an A1 Book of Plans and Sections (figures 44-47), according to Macmorran (1973: 114) one of the largest municipal projects ever submitted to Parliament.

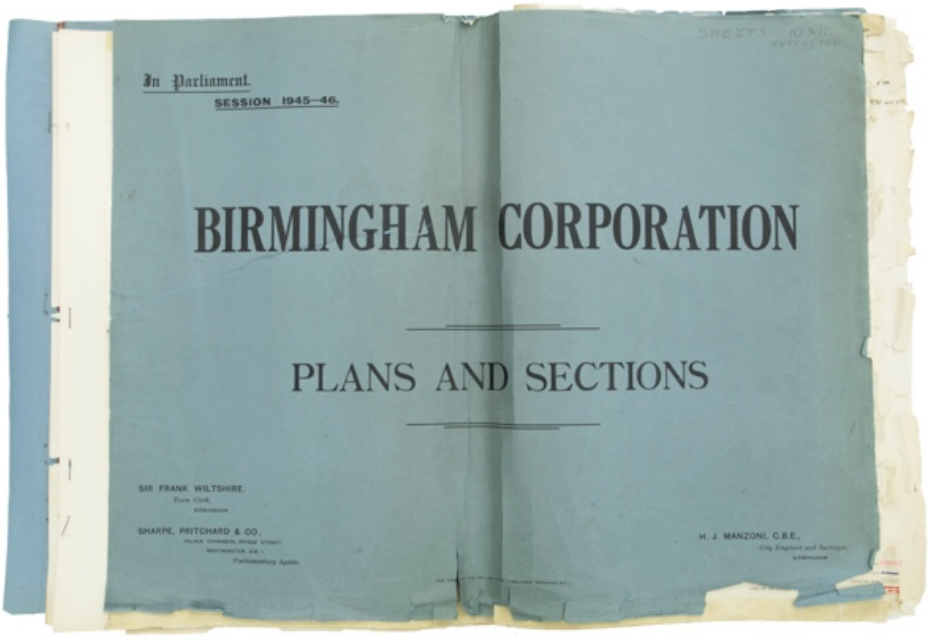


Figure 44: Cover of the Birmingham Corporation 'Plans and Sections' book. Source: BCC

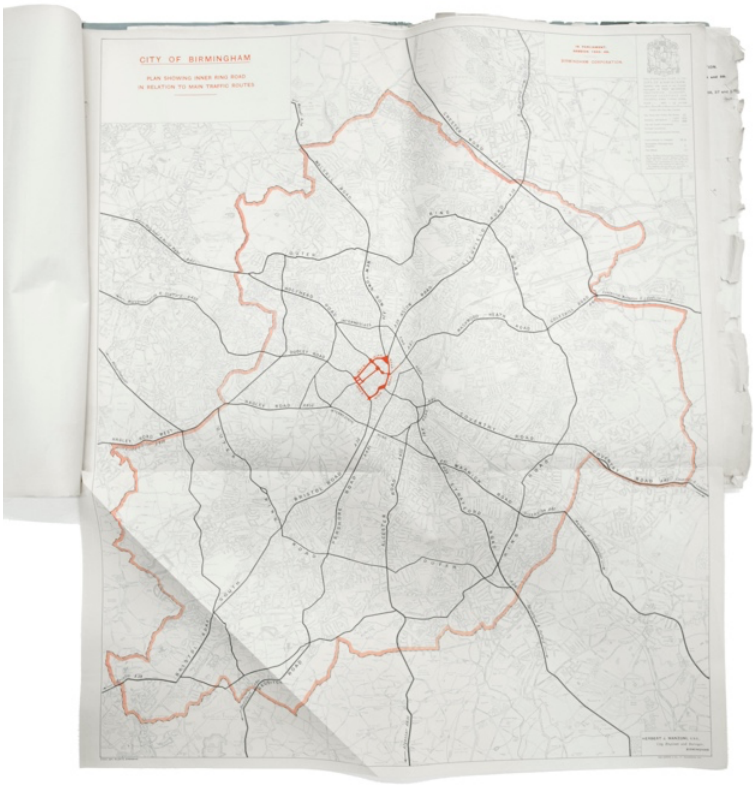


Figure 45: reference map of the Birmingham Corporation 'Plans and Sections' book. Source: BCC

Figure 46: Key Plan to Birmingham Corporation 'Plans and Sections' book. Source: BCC

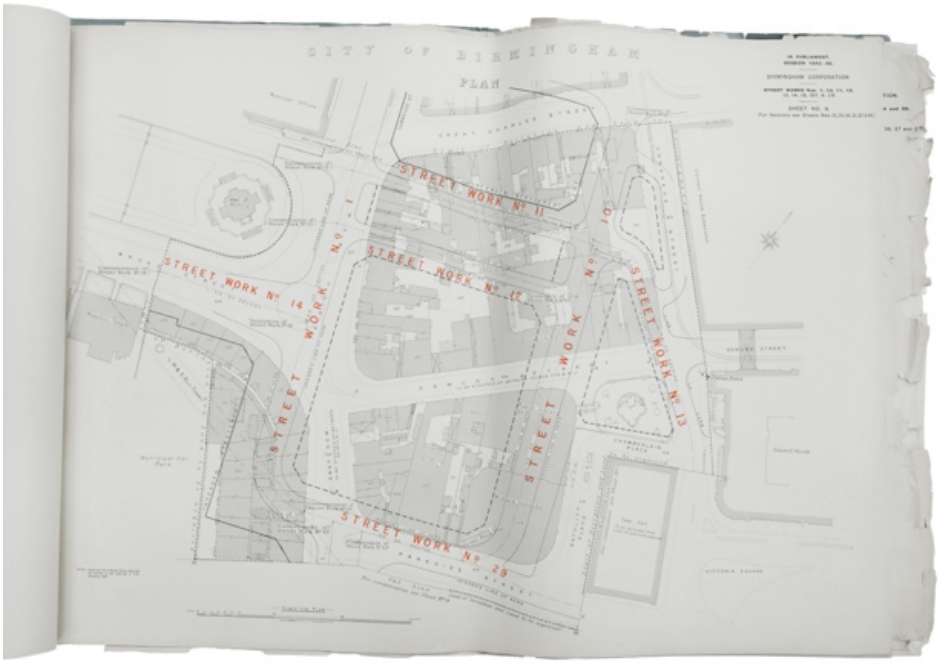


Figure 47: plan of road proposals around Easy Row from the Birmingham Corporation 'Plans and Sections' book. Source: BCC

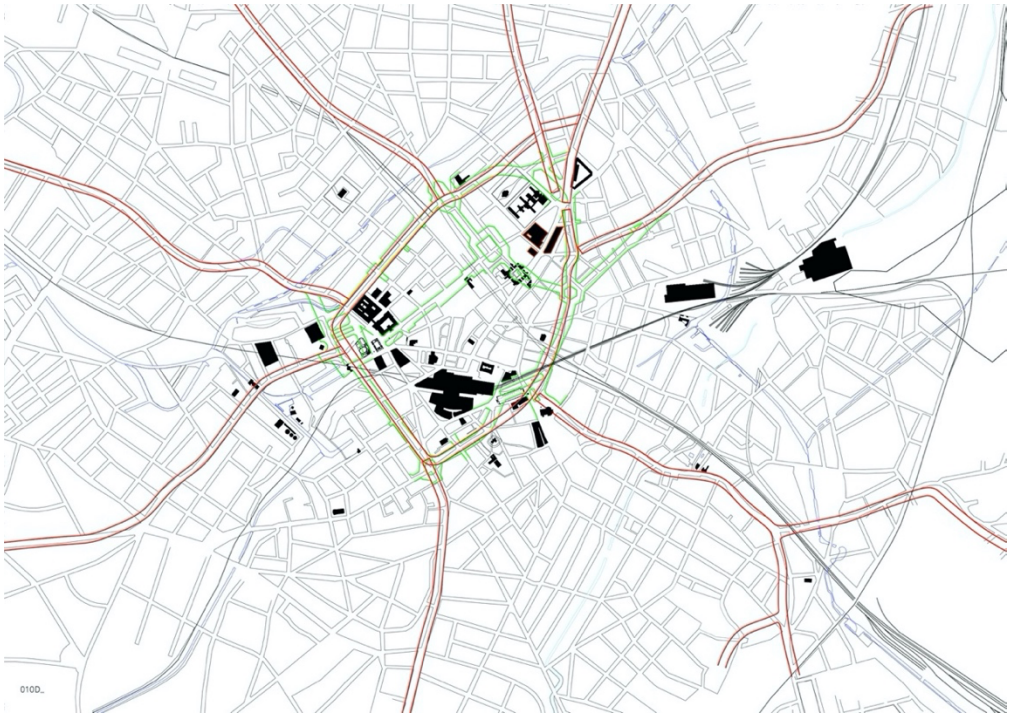


Figure 48: 1955 drawing with overlay of Stilgoe's 1917 plan (in red) and Manzoni's 1945 plan (in green) of the Inner Ring Road. Source: author

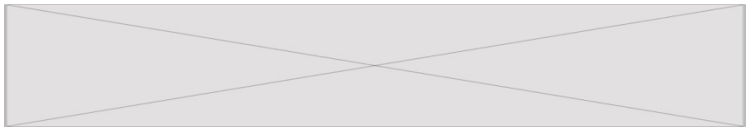


Figure 49: Panoramic view of the car park on 'Old Wharf' behind Easy Row. Source: BCC Easy Row Photos Box 6/17

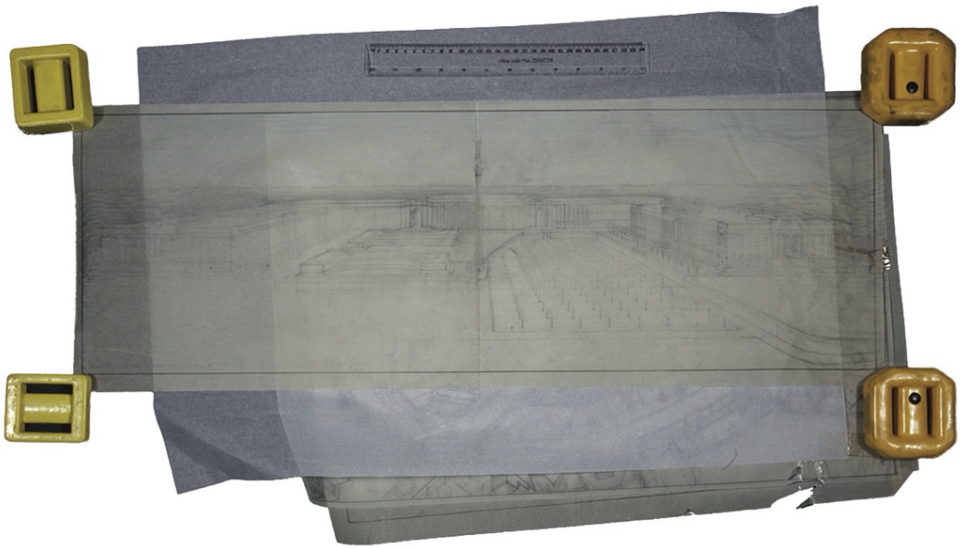


Figure 50: Cut away perspective view of Manzoni and Haywood's Civic Centre of 1948, showing subterranean parking for 3,000 cars beneath the parade ground with 140ft column. Source: BMT 2004.1729, accessed 23.11.2009

Stilgoe's plan of 1917 (in red in figure 48) showed an indicative route with the intention of creating a new border to the centre. Manzoni's plan (in green) gave details of the realignment of city blocks, particularly around the Town Hall and Easy Row where streets were reoriented to the Civic Centre beyond and illustrated sites to be purchased by the Corporation to allow for the construction of the road. The general arrangement differed only in the addition of a chord linking the Civic Centre to the west with a new chord to the east, elevating Colmore Row to a multi-lane highway which would have removed the northern edge of St. Philip's burial ground around the Cathedral, and almost entirely eradicating the Square to Corporation Street. The Bull Ring markets were also substantially reoriented around the extended junction of the road in place of the bombed-out shell of the Market Hall.

Archival documents show that the argument for the Inner Ring Road was hard fought with central government. The urgency of the situation had been stated during the years of the war, predicting that conditions would mean that by 1951 'movement of traffic [would be] impossible unless adequate provision is made for it' (1941: 7). The Corporation had been purchasing property since the first plans for the road, and other sites around Smallbrook Street and the Bull Ring had been bombed during enemy action (1941: 9). The original plan had been advanced so that the alignment of the double carriageway had begun to influence new developments, and a north-south traffic tunnel with east and west branches planned to connect the busy Bristol Road and Aston Road. Part of the argument for the tunnel was for air raid shelter planning as well as the employment of men following demobilisation after the war (1941: 10). Additional plans had advanced for improved car parking in the centre, encouraged by the improvements to the arterial and ring roads. In place of the informal use of the 'Old Wharf' on Easy Row (figure 49), Manzoni proposed a subterranean garage beneath the ceremonial square for 3,000 cars at the Civic Centre as the solution (figure 50),

There had been no progress by 1955, traffic delays reported to average approximately seven-and-a-half hours per week in central areas (1955). The Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation John Boyd-Carpenter had omitted Birmingham's proposal from his 'expanded road programme' on account of its scale and limited finances in the post war period, prioritising trunk roads instead which received a seventy-five percent grant. This would have an influence on the form of infrastructure in the centre of Birmingham.

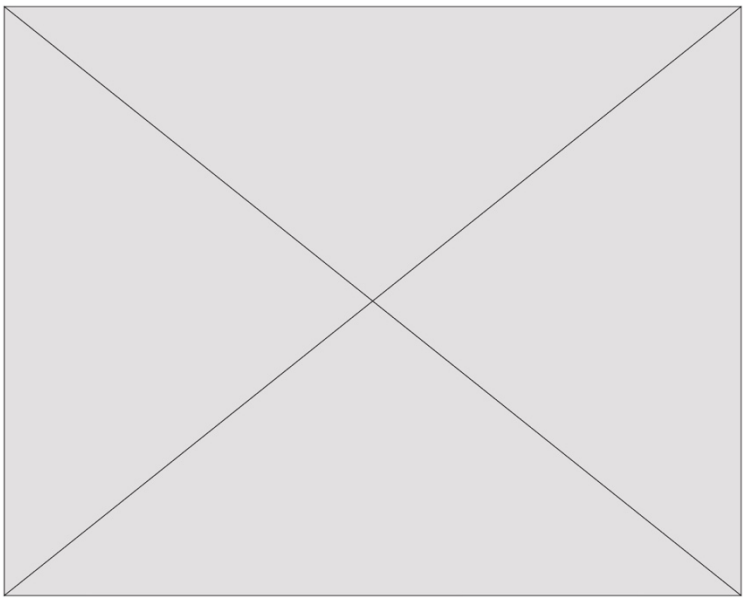


Figure 51: Minister of Transport Harold Watkinson detonating a charge of gelignite to demolish a wall at the inauguration of the works to build the Inner Ring Road. The gathered crowd were showered with rubble such was the power of the explosion. Source: MACE ‘Ringway: The Birmingham Inner Ring Road Stage 1' accessed 24.10.2021.

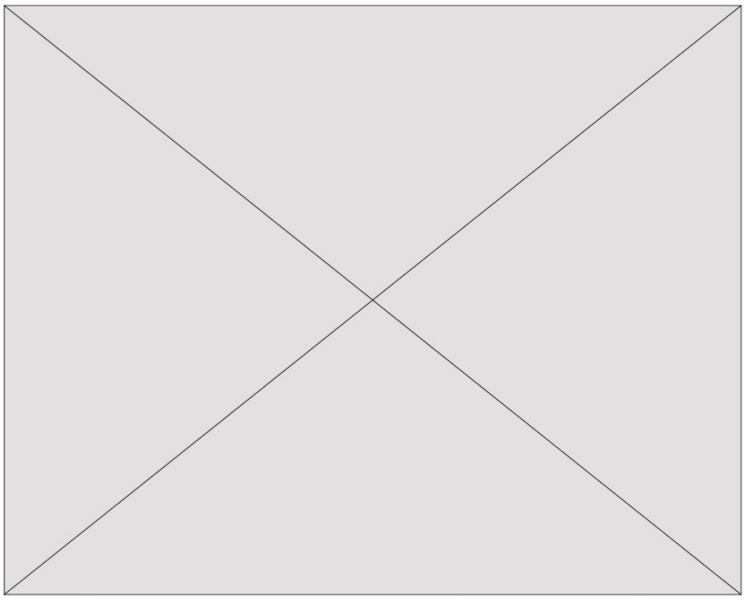


Figure 52: Comparative illustrations of New Street in 1952 and projected into 2002, with the Town Hall unchanged on the horizon. Source: (Cadbury, 1952: 36 - 37)

A deputation of Corporation representatives urged the Minister to review the decision, stating;

> ‘Birmingham is not asking for a ‘luxury’ or ‘amenity’ scheme to be authorised and suggests that Her Majesty’s Government ought to consider this road improvement scheme as a modernisation of part of

> the capital equipment of Midland industry. The Ring Road should, in the City Council's view, be treated for Government investment policy purposes, in the same way as a scheme for a large conveyor installation in one of our big motor works.' (1955)

Despite the deputation's suggestions of a phased delivery over a fifteen-to-twenty-year period, funds had already been allocated elsewhere and the scheme was, for the time being, frustrated. Further campaigning by the Public Works Committee under Alderman Frank Price saw results, particularly after the previous Minister for Transport was replaced. His successor Harold Watkinson (figure 51) adjusted his priorities to problems of urban mobility, advised by Cllr Price, and approved the first phase of the Inner Ring Road in 1956 with a seventy-five percent Government grant for the work (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 408).

2.3.2.4 The Changing Nature of the Street

As seen in the preceding section, the debate on how best to reconstruct the city divided professional opinion, particularly on the role of the street in the context of an increasingly diffuse territory in the first half of the twentieth century. In his introduction to Geoffrey Boumphrey's *Town and Country of Tomorrow* (1940: viii), Manzoni challenged the apathetic approach to reconstruction that would 'leave us indefinitely on paths which experience is showing to be narrow and not over straight', calling for a break with tradition as seen in America. Boumphrey, a member of the M.A.R.S Group, wrote briefly on the situation concerning British roads, comparing them with those in America which were much less congested despite higher car ownership (1940: 186). Not only were roads part of a coordinated effort in solving traffic problems, but a reliable infrastructure was also essential to the war effort, and later to economic recovery through the distribution of industry.

As Honorary Secretary of the West Midlands Group with Manzoni, Paul S. Cadbury (Vice-Chairman Cadbury Brothers Ltd., Trustee of Bournville Village Trust, Member of Birmingham City Council 1941-45) was particularly active in advocating for a bold future vision for the city, illustrated in his publication *Birmingham Fifty Years On* (1952: , figure 52).

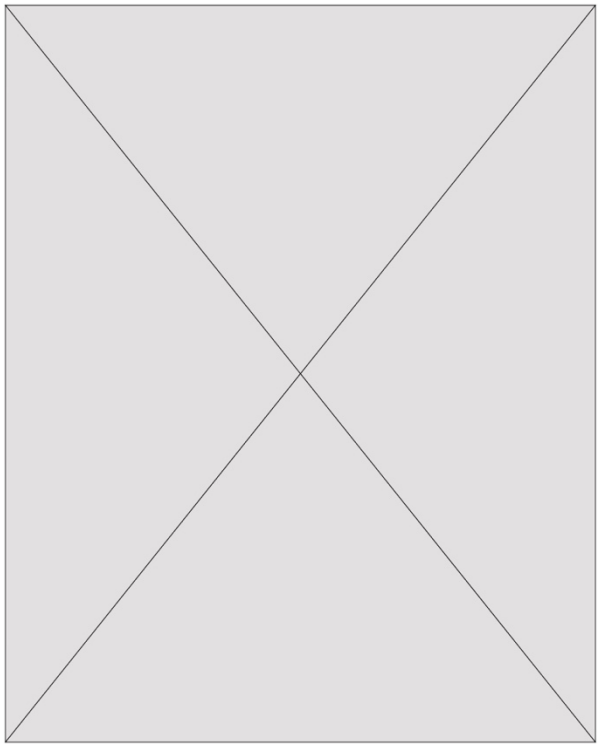


Figure 53: Plan showing ‘proposals for new trunk roads' to link the conurbation with the principal ports and keep through traffic away from the built-up areas. Source: (West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction Planning, 1948)

Published by Bournville Village Trust, the book detailed the problems then – in relation to homes, factories, shops and markets, roads and traffic, railways, airfields, education, and entertainment – with projections to 2002, vividly illustrated through comparative street scenes. Numerous comparisons are made to the American condition, proposals for Snow Hill Station paralleled by a study on Grand Central Station, and the traffic problems of central Birmingham likened to that of Fifth Avenue. Based on Manzoni's Parliamentary plans of 1946, the Inner Ring Road and two bisecting traffic tunnels accompanied these observations, demonstrating the ambitions in engineering and planning for movement. Yet despite Cadbury's vision, the street remained a tangible basis of urban life, as seen in his illustrations. His view along New Street showed new glazed façades and novel modes of transport inspired by the unfolding atomic age, but the horizon was dominated by the unchanged Town Hall.

2.3.2.5 The West Midlands Plan and Regional Setting

In Britain, regional planning came to the fore after the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 required development plans to be made (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 126). In Birmingham, two major studies resulted from this; that of the West Midlands Group concerned with regional interests, and another by Sir Patrick Abercrombie and Herbert Jackson commissioned by the Minister of Town and Country Planning. According to Sutcliffe and Smith (1974: 126), both were committed to the limitation of peripheral growth through the designation of a green belt, the former projecting a decline in population, the latter growth. The West Midlands Group brought together academics, industrialists, councillors, architects, planners and economists to make a survey of the West Midlands, presented in their *Conurbation* (West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction Planning, 1948). The title referred to Patrick Geddes concern for a regional approach to planning, defining an interdependency between 'towns, suburbs and townships' with 'certain strong economic and social links and common characteristics' (West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction Planning, 1948). Lewis Mumford provided the foreword, hoping that through 'the political intelligence, the administrative skills and the civic probity and courage', the conurbation of Birmingham and the Black Country might return to a former state of solvency in industrial and financial terms (West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction Planning, 1948). The report said little of central reconstruction, other than that 'the provision of entertainment and kindred services is abnormally low' (West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction Planning, 1948), but it did establish the regional identity of the city, most evident in the proposal for new trunk roads (figure 53). The Trunk Roads Act 1946, which provided a Ministry of Transport grant of seventy-five percent for their construction, would have a major

bearing on the conception of highways within Birmingham, and the order of the Civic Centre as discussed later in the following section.

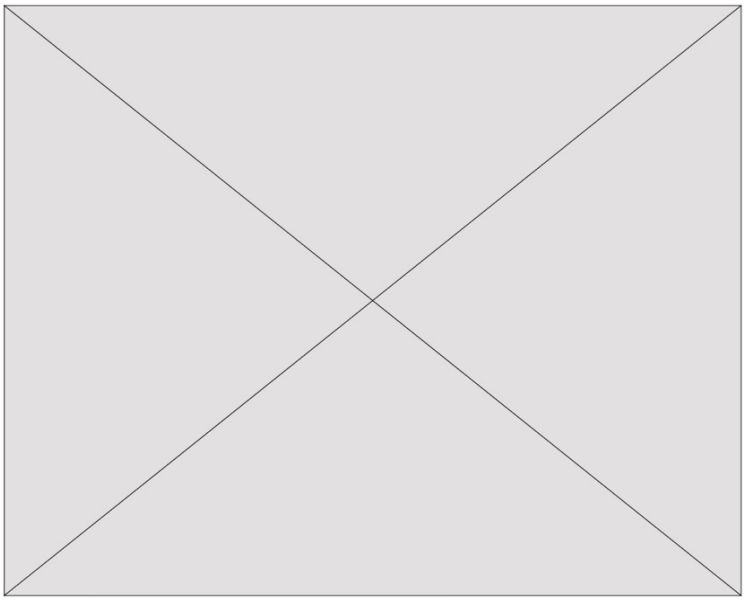


Figure 54: Report of the City of Birmingham Public Works Committee 'Visit to America', 1956, with a view of the Port Authority of New York bus terminal and elevated highway. Source: (Price et al., 1956)

Abercrombie and Jackson's more influential and ultimately adopted *West Midlands Plan* (1948) proposed that the rise in population should be accommodated both within, and beyond the conurbation, in town expansions and new towns. Abercrombie was renowned for his involvement in regional plan-making, his *Greater London Plan* (1945) structured by three concentric rings, a pattern that would be followed in the *West Midlands Plan* (Larkham, 2013: xvi). Birmingham trained Jackson had worked for Sir Aston Webb and later for the architects of much of Bournville Harvey and Wicks, becoming an advisor to many Midland planning authorities and earning a reputation as an architect of some national repute with his partner Reginald Edmunds (78). The *West Midlands Plan* established the grounds for the construction of Telford new town, as well as the definition of the city's green belt and Midland motorway system as advocated by the West Midlands Group, expanding the civic territory of the city to that of the region.

2.3.3 The Highway and the Precinct

This section discusses the transition from the City Beautiful image of the Civic Centre and Inner Ring Road to one dominated by infrastructure and the consequent reconceptualization of urban space as precinct. The city's ongoing participation in international dialogue on planning and architecture reached heroic proportions with the construction of Manzoni's plan for the Inner Ring Road after 1955, the city commanding a regional territory within the newly built national motorway network. It was in this context that the project for the expanded Civic Centre was reimagined first by the City Architect Sheridan-Shedden, later by architect John Madin, both of whom addressed the increasingly infrastructural nature of the centre by conceiving of the precinct as mediator between the historical and the new. The convergence of architecture, engineering and other technical disciplines offered new insights into ways of conducting civic life in the expanded territory of the city. It is through this that the projects of the Civic Centre and Inner Ring Road will be first understood, followed by a study of plans for each.

2.3.3.1 Building the Inner Ring Road

Following Parliamentary approval for the Inner Ring Road, the detailed engineering of the Inner Ring Road fell to Manzoni and the Public Works Department. Like Cadbury, Manzoni looked to America as a model for infrastructure-led redevelopment at a city and regional register. In a trip guided by the Cement and Concrete Association of Great Britain and the Portland Cement Association of America, a delegation of the Public Works Committee studied traffic, parking, highways and rapid-transit facilities in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia, and New York. The Committee published their findings in a report (1956: figure 54), noting space efficiency, grade separation, modernised rapid transit

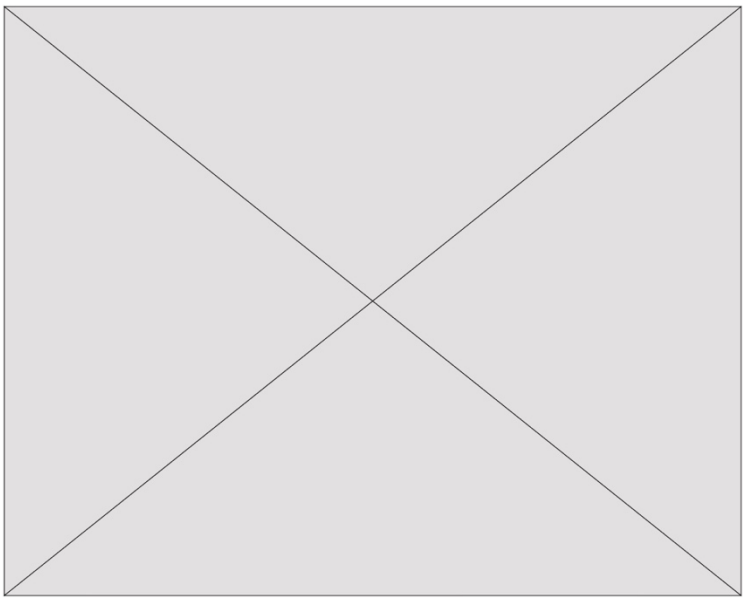


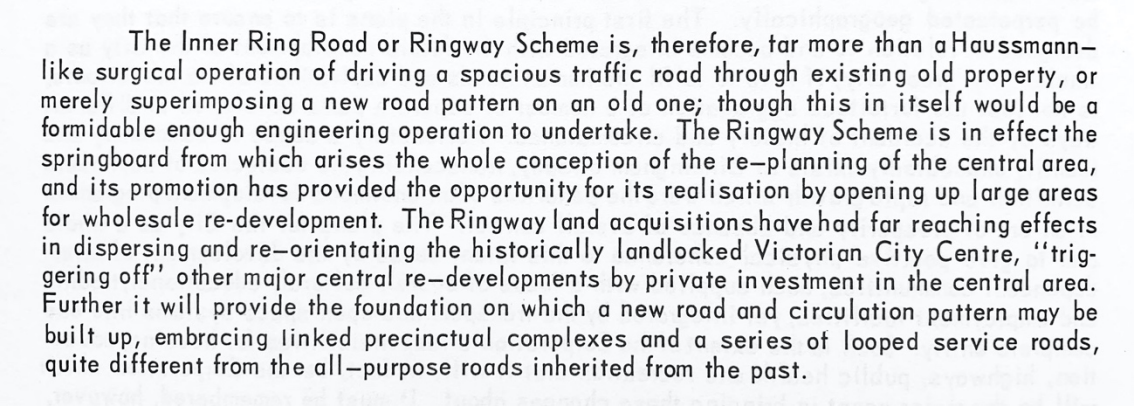
Figure 55: Commemorative bronze medal made for the occasion of the opening of the Inner Ring Road in 1971 by Queen Elizabeth II. Source: BCC, Accession Number: 1971 N714.

and investment in gyratory and arterial routes as critical to averting the worsening crisis. The Committee compared those circumstances to that of Birmingham, asking ‘how many people will insist upon using their own cars and how many can be persuaded to use mass transit facilities?’ (Price et al., 1956: 14). The answer was that the individual liberties and freedom of movement provided by the private car outweighed any commitment to mass transit, so much so that by the publication of the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority’s plan in 1972, the West Midlands conurbation had the highest car usage in Britain. Nearly sixty percent of all journeys to work were by car, with just over five percent by rail (1972: 15). Likened to car-dominated Los Angeles, the city’s association with vehicle manufacture combined with higher-than-average earnings meant that redevelopment embodied that individualism, dominated by road infrastructure.

Manzoni’s approach was to have a profound effect on the order of the city. His progressive programme of renewal through infrastructure laid waste to the continuities of the city. In a report to the Institute of Civil Engineers, Manzoni (1961: 267) referred to the Inner Ring Road as ‘a city street of novel character – it is not an urban motorway, nor principally a traffic street or a shopping street’, viewing it both as a highway for pedestrian activity as well as for unrestricted movement of traffic.

Grade separation between pedestrians and vehicles became the new standard for projects around the Inner Ring Road, with priority given to the dual carriageway. Landscape was to form an important role in mediating between the two parts of the system, Manzoni’s successor Borg (1962: 4 of section 'Redevelopment and Overspill') noting that the ‘parkway will eventually encircle the city centre’ where ‘new vistas and sight lines, opened up at right angles to the main roads, have been planned to reveal new views of important buildings and to expose the interesting changes in ground level.’ As encouraged by the City Council, approaches to architectural form varied from linear frontage to those arrange around a precinct, though there was far from a consensus about which was most appropriate in the new context of the road.

The necessary acquisition of land for the construction of the Inner Ring Road from 1917 onwards substantially changed the orientation of the city from the streets of the historical centre to that of the prescribed peripheral route. The Council purchased some 1,500 properties across eighty-five acres of land, forty of which would be let to developers with leases of seventy-five to ninety-nine years (Borg, 1962). The project was intended as an extension to the centre through the reconstruction of sites lining the road, as well as an opportunity to re-plan and rebuild substantial parts of the centre, as described by Borg (1965) here;



The Inner Ring Road or Ringway Scheme is, therefore, far more than a Haussmann–like surgical operation of driving a spacious traffic road through existing old property, or merely superimposing a new road pattern on an old one; though this in itself would be a formidable enough engineering operation to undertake. The Ringway Scheme is in effect the springboard from which arises the whole conception of the re–planning of the central area, and its promotion has provided the opportunity for its realisation by opening up large areas for wholesale re-development. The Ringway land acquisitions have had far reaching effects in dispersing and re–orientating the historically landlocked Victorian City Centre, ''triggering off'' other major central re–developments by private investment in the central area. Further it will provide the foundation on which a new road and circulation pattern may be built up, embracing linked precinctual complexes and a series of looped service roads, quite different from the all–purpose roads inherited from the past.

Figure 56: Excerpt from Birmingham Public Works Department publication, section ' Redevelopment and Overspill', describing the nature of the Inner Ring Road scheme. Source: (Borg, 1965: 12 of section 'Redevelopment and Overspill')

Counter to the earlier programme of the ring road as an extended civic ground albeit concerned with a European and imperial image of the city, after 1955 the project was concerned with the economic regeneration of the centre where the city was something to observe rather than to participate in. As the ceremonial medal shows (figure 55), the project was complete by 1971, setting the context for future development.

2.3.3.2 The Civic Centre as Precinct

In the years after Haywood and Manzoni's Civic Centre plan of 1948, the Corporation were slow to acquire all the necessary land (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 450). Haywood's civic column had been abandoned despite Bloye's progress on the sculpture during the war. As seen elsewhere in the city, attitudes to planning and architecture had changed dramatically since the earlier plans for the Civic Centre. Influence came through professional journals as well as government guidance. Both the modernist doctrine according to Le Corbusier's *ville radieuse* and British notion of townscape advocated by the *Architectural Review* as a development of Sitte's concern for the irregular, featured heavily in city centre planning. The Ministry of Transport published *The Design and Layout of Roads in Built Up Areas* (1946), followed soon after by *The Redevelopment of Central Areas* (1947), a model guide as part of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947. The former advocated ring roads around central areas, the latter precincts within which the civic life of the city would be conducted away from traffic. Birmingham had imagined the ring road from 1917 as part of concentric pattern of development, and so had already fixed ideas about their approach to central redevelopment. In place of Coventry's 'correct, seemly, yet dull' plan based on the model of the Swedish precinct, Birmingham's attitude of 'get(ting) the highest rents and let(ting) the traffic flow freely' actively pursued the American model (Ginsburg, 1969b: 7). Whilst the precinct would feature in the new topography of the city, it was by no means the only model under consideration.

As the last of the major city authorities to do so, the Council reluctantly appointed A. G. Sheppard Fidler as its first City Architect, having relied on the City Engineer Manzoni to lead development (Fidler, 1987: 5). In 1955, Sheppard Fidler was asked to prepare an updated plan. In place of the rigid symmetrical planning of the earlier schemes, the plan of 1956 (figures 57 and 58 on following page) was conceived as a campus with free groups of individual buildings of varying scale, set in a landscape of interconnecting squares and precincts. According to Sutcliffe and Smith (1974: 452), Sheppard Fidler was seeking a sense of enclosure, stating that 'we need variety and changing views, interest and drama – architecture in the service of man, not his master'. He found influence not only in the American precinct but also in the Scandinavian approach garnered in Gunnar Asplund's Stockholm Exhibition of 1931, which had influenced Robert Matthew and Leslie Martin's scheme for the Festival of Britain of 1951. The existing Hall of Memory, Municipal Bank, Masonic Hall and Council Offices were incorporated into the plan, with the Central Reference Library and Birmingham and Midland Institute reimagined as a series of interlinking linear blocks around the Town Hall (figures 59 and 60 on following page). A bridge link over the Inner Ring Road, at this point at grade, led to the planned Exhibition Centre on the Old Wharf car park site, a renewal of the deteriorating Bingley Hall. This was given greater impetus when the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce discontinued the British Industries Fair at Castle Bromwich in 1957 after the withdrawal of Government funding, and a new central venue was proposed by the Labour group of the City Council (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: 452). Sheridan-Shedden's subsequent report (1965) provided a revised masterplan with details of the Central Island Site (figure 62), later known as Paradise Circus, including Madin's Central Library[15], and James Roberts' Exhibition Hall[16]. Whilst much of the report is dedicated to these projects, the masterplan gave details of the Repertory Theatre and adjacent offices to the west of Baskerville House and the Hall of Memory, together with plans for increased car parking.

[15] Discussed in section 2.4.
[16] Discussed in section 2.3.3.3.

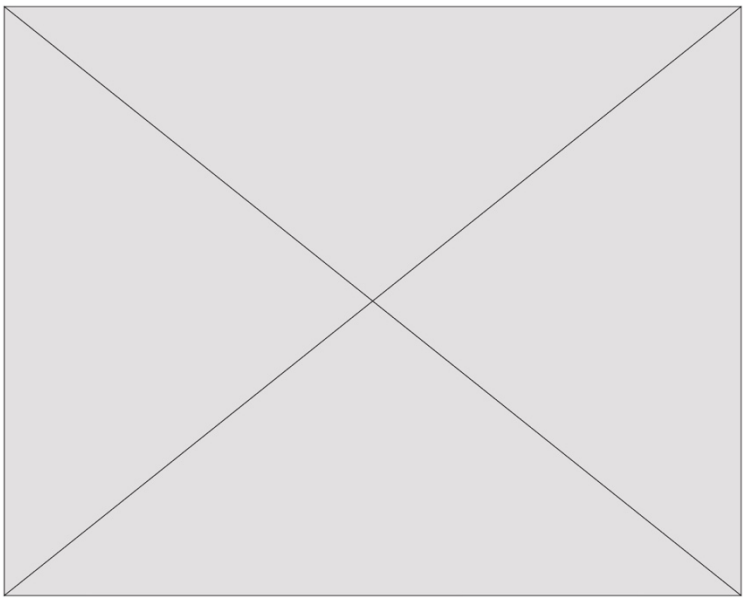


Figure 57: A. G. Sheppard Fidler's precinct scheme for the Civic Centre, 1956. Source: BCC (2009).

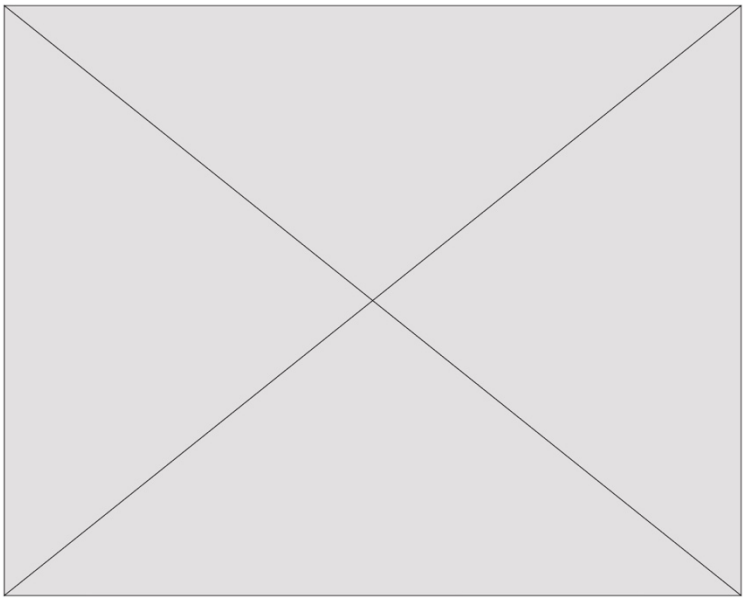


Figure 58: Aerial sketch view of A. G. Sheppard Fidler's civic centre, 1956. Source: BCC (2009)

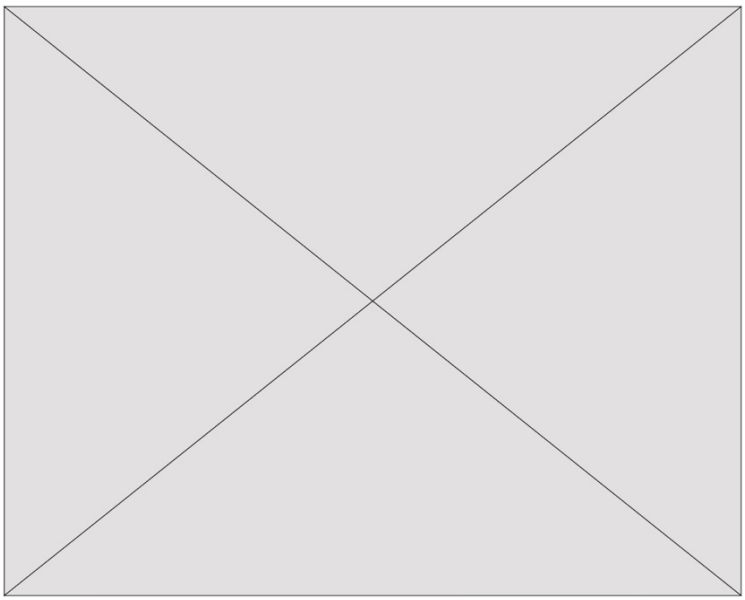


Figure 59: Sketch view towards Library with opening towards Hall of Memory, in A. G. Sheppard Fidler's civic centre, 1956. Source: BCC (2009)

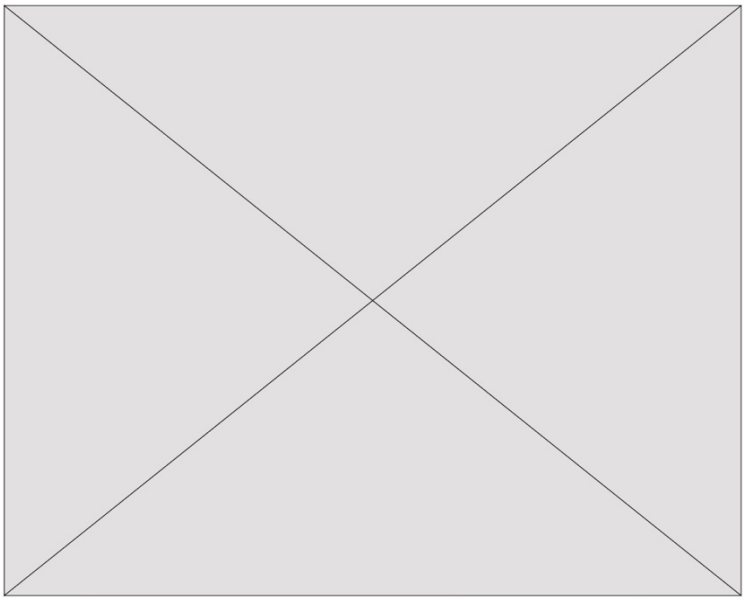


Figure 60: Sketch view of Inner Ring Road passing beneath bridge link between the proposed Library and the Exhibition Centre (right), in A. G. Sheppard Fidler's civic centre, 1956. Source: BCC (2009)

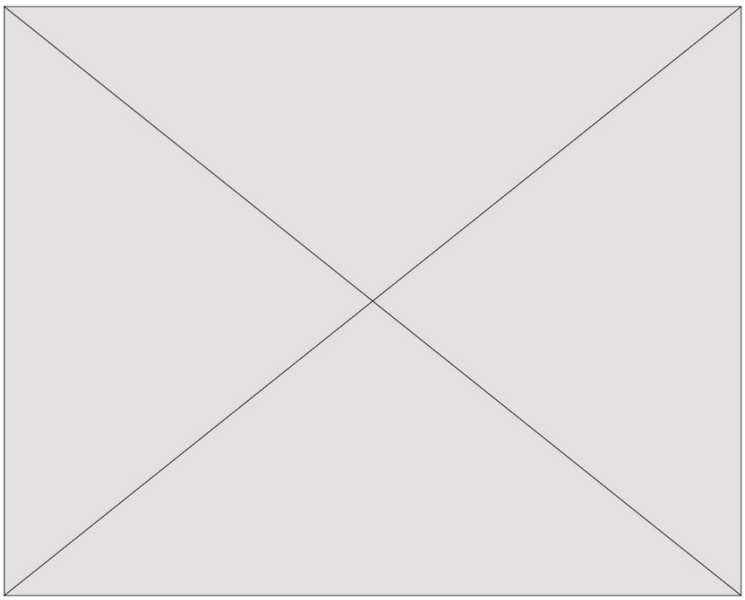


Figure 61: Sketch view of a retail arcade, in A. G. Sheppard Fidler's civic centre, 1956. Source: BCC (2009)

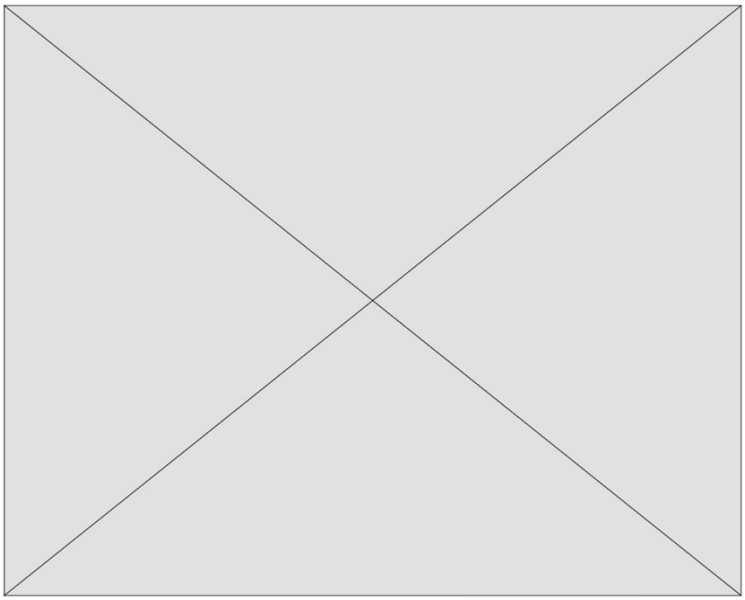


Figure 62: Model of revised masterplan of 1965 by J. R. Sheridan-Shedden with Graham Winteringham's Repertory Theatre within the precinct (left), James Roberts' Exhibition Hall (bottom) and John Madin's scheme for the Central Island Site (right). Source: BCC 2009_155 Basement 6_1 Box 24 of 51, accessed 9.01.2014.

2.3.3.3 The Exhibition Hall and First Project for the New Library

The independent development of the Exhibition Centre within the overall campus was testament to the adaptability of Sheppard Fidler's plan, and royal ascent was obtained in 1959. After Sheppard Fidler's resignation over the scandalous behaviour of the House Building Committee and contractors Bryant, and his lack of agency within the Council, his successor J. R. Sheridan-Shedden advanced plans for the Civic Centre including the

Exhibition Centre and Central Island Site incorporating a new Library. An earlier plan had included a large exhibition hall with a structural folded roof, with a small hall and restaurant projecting into the surrounding plaza (figure 63). Sheridan-Shedden's Civic Centre report (1965) gave details of James Roberts' subsequent scheme (circa 1964, figure 64) which refined the entrance concourse, articulated by a geometrically structured façade overlooking the now expanded and sunken route of the Inner Ring Road. The split-level plan of the complex allowed movement from New Street to Broad Street by way of pedestrian passages and piazzas beneath Paradise Street, lined with shopping, public houses and commercial uses (1965: 10). The Exhibition Hall itself was to be a flexible clear span space with a Promenade for bars, buffet, lounges and special displays (1965: 11)[17]. With no financial commitment to the construction of the Hall, plans remained provisional until in 1968 the Conservative leaders of the Council let the site to Associated Television (ATV), resulting in Siefert's Alpha Tower and associated TV studios. Within two years, the Government had committed to build a new National Exhibition Centre to the east of Birmingham nearby the airport, ending the tradition of exhibitions within in the civic centre but setting a precedent for the large-scale performance hall that followed.

[17] John Madin's proposals for Paradise Circus is explored in further detail in section 2.3.4.

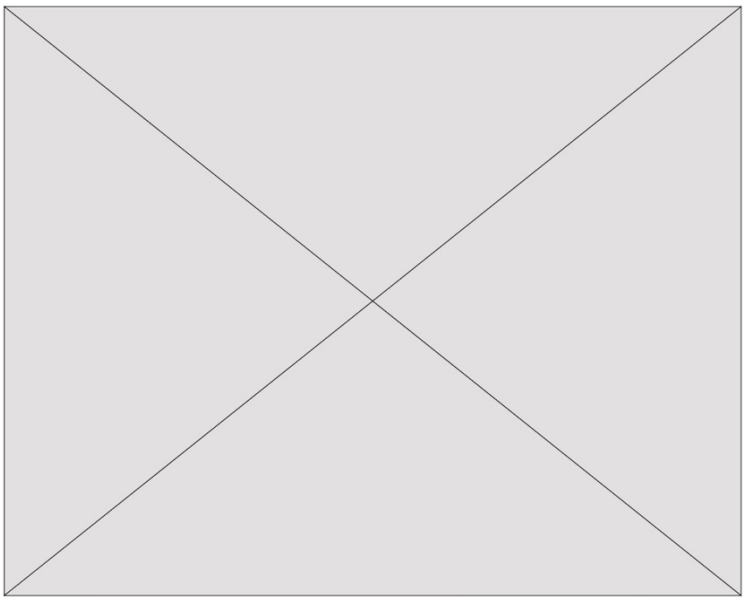


Figure 63: Aerial sketch view of A. G. Sheppard Fidler's scheme for the Exhibition Hall, circa 1959. Source: BCC (2009)

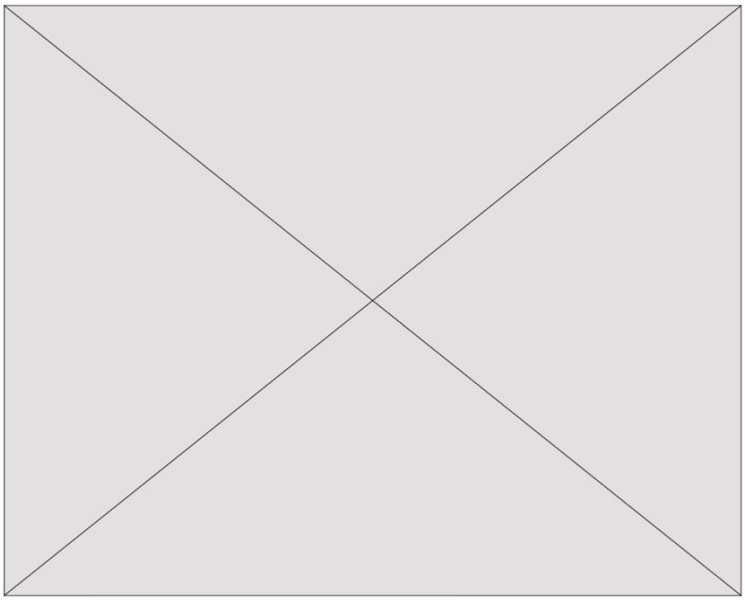


Figure 64: Model view of James Roberts' Exhibition Hall entrance concourse of circa 1964. Source: BCC (2009)

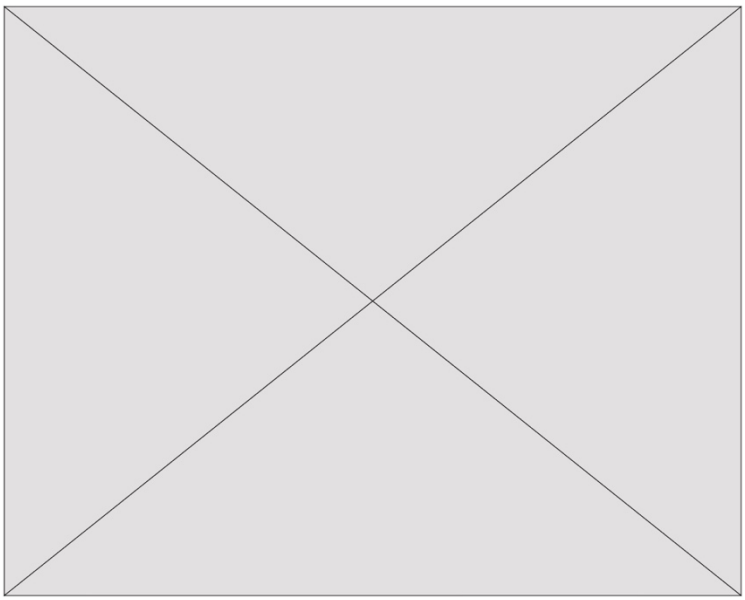


Figure 65: Model of proposed library by City Architect, 1963 including Robert's scheme for the exhibition hall.
Source: BCC Urban Design 2009_155 Basement 6_1 Box 24 of 51, accessed 9.01.2014.

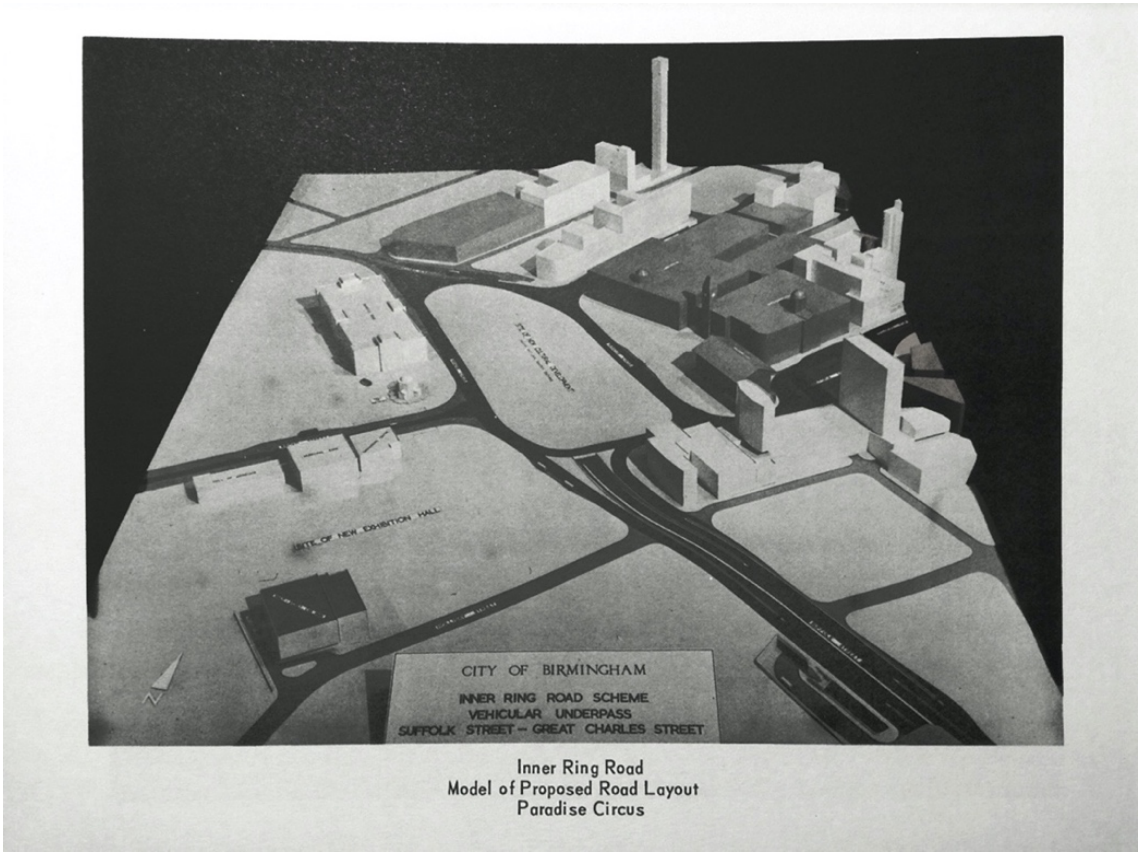


Figure 66: Model of proposed road layout, with 'site of new cultural development' marked on central island site.
Source: (Borg, 1965)

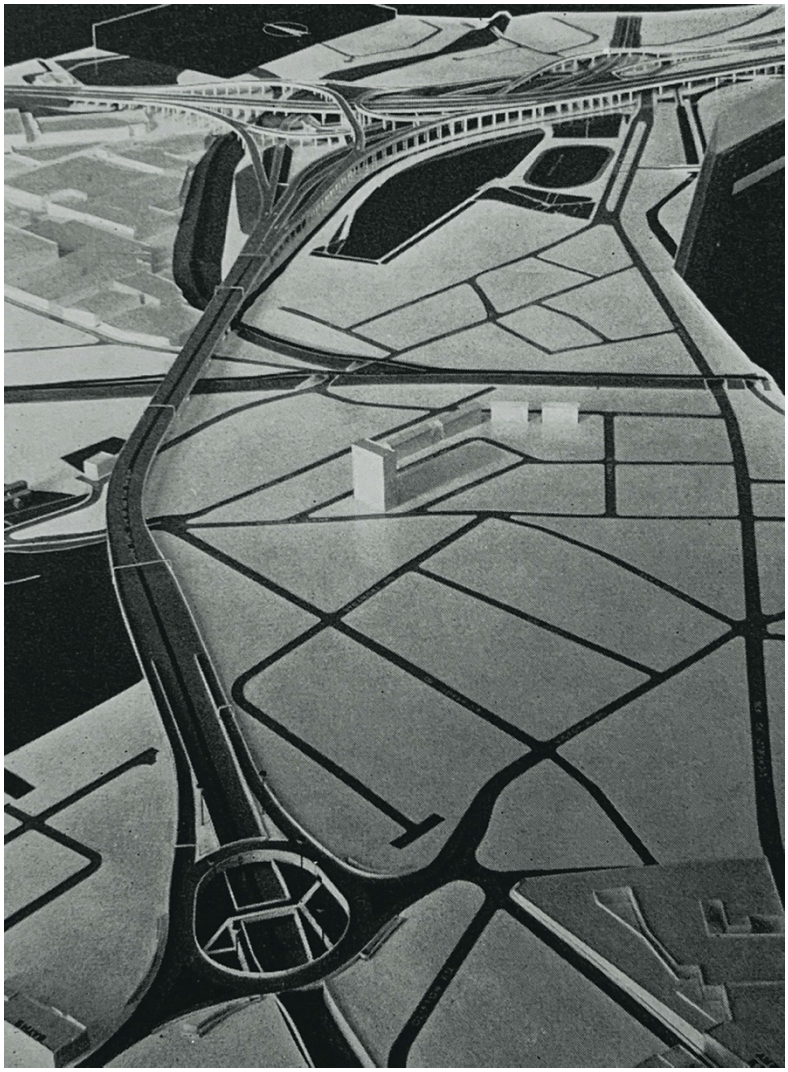


Figure 67: Model of the Aston Expressway and Gravelly Hill Interchange linking the city centre with the national motorway system. Source: (Edwards and Borg, 1968: 80)

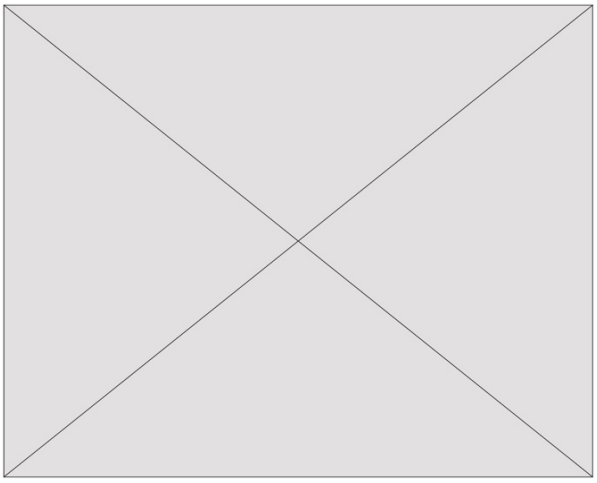


Figure 68: Reyner Banham's Gravelly Hill interchange 'tourist route'. Source: (Banham, 1972)

The desire for an extension to Chamberlain and Martin's library building of 1882 was evident in Haywood's 1917 plan for the central area. By 1948 this was drawn as a new building on the corner of Easy Row and Broad Street overlooking the Hall of Memory. Sheppard Fidler's plan of 1956 returned the library to Paradise Street though reconceived as a piazza enclosed by linear buildings and the Town Hall, concurrent with City Librarian Victor Woods' report on the requirements for a new library (Clawley, 2011: 107). A revised library scheme was proposed in 1963 by the City Architect (figure 65), consolidating the idea of the library on this island site bounded by the tunnel and traffic island of the Inner Ring Road, as well as a bus station layby. Bridge links are shown connecting pedestrian routes from New Street and between the Library and Civic buildings to the north and west as well as Robert's Exhibition Hall scheme.

The progress of the Inner Ring Road meant that by 1965, Easy Row and Paradise Street had been subsumed into the 'Central Island Site' defined by a tunnel and gyratory road system that segregated vehicles and pedestrians, determined for a 'new cultural development' (figure 66). So committed were the Council to the scheme that the Birmingham and Midland Institute was demolished and relocated to 'temporary' accommodation at Margaret Street along with Birmingham Library. The planned replacement was to be part of John Madin's project for Paradise Circus, though disagreements over the brief meant that alternative arrangements were developed for a site on Broad Street by Cedric Price as discussed later in this section.

2.3.3.4 The Expanded Territory of the City

The Council's long held desire to incorporate an exhibition hall into the Civic Centre effectively came to an end with the opening of the NEC to the east of the city, connected to the nation by the growing motorway system as illustrated in the West Midland's Group *Conurbation*. The first stretch of the national motorways, the M6 or Preston Bypass, opened in 1958. The Staffordshire section of the M6 followed in 1962, connecting to the M1 north of Birmingham in 1972 (Moran, 2010: 35, 36 [figure 67]).

In an article entitled 'Big Brum artwork', Reyner Banham likened Gravelly Hill Interchange to the Santa-Monica/San-Diego intersection in Los Angeles. The interchange linked the M6 to the city's Inner Ring Road via the Aston Expressway, the exhilarating experience of travelling through it captured in Banham's 'tourist route' (figure 68), revealing 'the close-packed curving and intersecting perspectives of double files of columns, which seem the more extraordinary from the constantly changing viewpoint of a moving car' (Banham, 1972: 85).

Figure 69: Drawing 010F – 1980 – 1:20,000 at A3, showing the relationship between Paradise Circus, the Inner Ring Road, the Aston Expressway, Gravelly Hill Interchange and the M6, described by Banham as ‘a municipal coup’. Source: author.

Whilst extolling the ‘interior landscape and automotive dynamics’ of the junction, Banham (1972: 84) described it as ‘a great local con job, the first successful civic rip-off at the expense of the motorway programme’ since it only linked the motorway to the city, rather than the expanding national network. To the Council, the interchange was as important as the Civic Centre in representing the progressive nature of the city, as well as the increasing freedoms of the time.

Together with Madin’s Paradise Circus (discussed in the following section 3.4) and Manzoni’s Inner Ring Road completed in 1971, Gravelly Hill Interchange contributed to the reconception of the city at the regional register (figure 69). The expansive and connected urban fabric of the road system provided ‘form-giving potential’ for ‘topographic transformation in the megapolitan landscape’, in what Frampton describes as a ‘megaform’ (1999: 16). The projects for the new Birmingham and Midland Institute and Central Library were conceived within the regionally connected realm of the city and advances in technology, the latter with a deep awareness of the urban topography and institutional order.

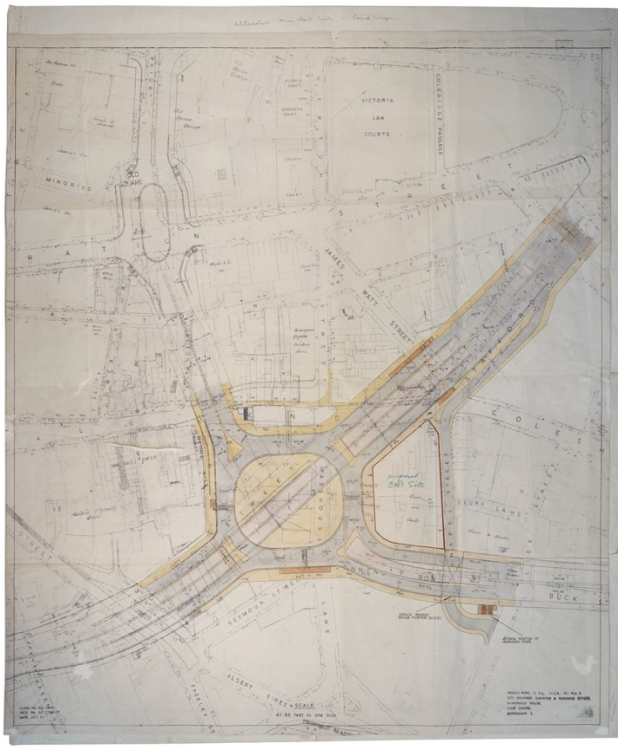


Figure 70: Plan from the City of Birmingham showing the first site for the new BMI building adjacent to Masshouse Circus outlined in red, July 1967. Source: CCA reference images Price DR1995:0243:001:004 Page 6 Masshouse site

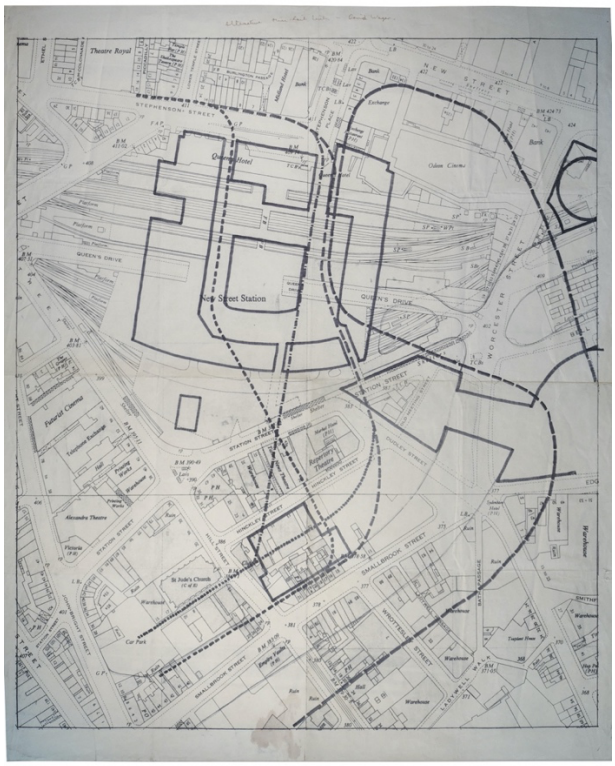


Figure 71: Plan from the office of Cedric Price showing movement paths between New Street Station and one of the proposed sites for the BMI on Smallbrook Queensway as part of the Shantasea development, circa 1969. Source: CCA reference images Price DR1995:0243:001:004 Page 5 Smallbrook site

2.4 The Adaptive Institution – the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and Central Library at Paradise Circus

The institutions of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and the Central Library underwent radical reform during the twentieth century. Having been forced to relocate to the premises of Birmingham Library upon the demolition of its buildings facing the Town Hall to make way for the Inner Ring Road, the Birmingham and Midland Institute reimagined itself as a new form of institution in proposals by Cedric Price (1970). John Madin's project for Paradise Circus (1974) simultaneously addressed the internal logic and the civic purpose of the library, the enlarged territory of the city delineated by the Inner Ring Road and its connections to the national motorway system, and the liberal society of the post-war era. Both projects engaged in international dialogue on architecture, engineering and associated technical disciplines, though with differing degrees of concern for the continuity of the city.

2.4.1 Cedric Price and the Project for BMI/HQ – The Decentralised Institution

After compulsory purchase and demolition in 1965 of the Birmingham and Midland Institute building on Ratcliffe Place, the School of Music passed to the City, with the intention that both would form part of the new civic complex as separate entities. According to Sheridan-Shedden's report of 1965, the Midland Institute had submitted a revised schedule of accommodation in April 1965, doubling its earlier assessment and throwing their inclusion in the development into doubt. By 1967 it was evident that the Birmingham and Midland Institute was no longer part of the Paradise Circus brief, due to disagreements with the City Council overcompensation for the site at Paradise Street and the increased area of the brief. This would ultimately end the project for a new Birmingham and Midland Institute, but not before a significant amount of work had taken place in defining a new mission, embodied in a project by Cedric Price. This is explored here to frame the ways in which technology sought to expand the civic ground of the city.

With their removal from the civic centre and temporary home on Margaret Street, the Birmingham and Midland Institute explored several possible new locations in the City Council's substantial portfolio. In a memorandum to the British Film Institute (1967), the Birmingham and Midland Institute set out their vision for a new building adjacent to Masshouse Circus and Aston University (figure 70). The site was one of many vacant plots available after the construction of the Inner Ring Road. The plan recognised that the Institute's role of 'spread[ing] knowledge of science, literature and the arts through setting up schools and mounting classes' had been superseded by national educational reform (Fleetwood-Walker, 1967). They did recognise, however, that a more educated society with

increasing leisure time would want to engage in cultural activities in an appropriate social setting, reinforced by close proximity to the university campus.

The co-operative possibilities of the reimagined institute addressed new approaches to learning with freedom to access information at any point or time, with minimal institutional intervention. The brief included Birmingham Library to be developed as ‘a cultural and special subject library’ with space for study. As a new addition, a ‘Science Repertory Theatre’ based on the Royal Institution in London, was to showcase demonstrations of science and technology from various fields (Fleetwood-Walker, 1967). The British Association had long been part of the Institute, offering lectures and courses, and the Midlands Association for the Arts served as a local body for the Arts Council. New additions were to include an ‘Information Centre’ for activities on science, drama and the arts, and ‘Film’ provision, building on the possible co-location of the Midland Film Institute. The British Council were also in negotiation about space within the Birmingham and Midland Institute, the two bodies having mutual aims. With the removal of the School of Music to the City, music provision was to include ‘experimental work’ with ‘electronic equipment to generate sound’ in acoustically balanced spaces served by recording facilities (Fleetwood-Walker, 1967).

Later briefs for the Birmingham and Midland Institute included a regional centre of the Open University. First known as ‘The University of the Air’*,* Open University was proposed by the Department of Science and Education in 1966 (1966: 4), as part of the Labour government’s post-war policy to extend culture and education to the working classes. The proposal built on technological discoveries of the time where ‘the best of our teachers can now be made available to vastly wider audiences’ (1966: 3). Those either not attracted or not able to attend traditional institutions both in the UK and other parts of the world were to form a distributed community of learners, accessing television and radio lectures along with residential courses and tuition (1966). The benefit for the government was that investment would be minimised with little physical infrastructure required to run higher and further educational programmes. A central authority was to coordinate the production of programmes, provide administration and control the activities of regional partners who would provide ‘libraries, laboratories and viewing/listening posts’ (1966: 7). The BMI/HQ was to be one such regional centre, and this thinking was evident in the developing scheme for the new institute.

It was clear from the first intent that the institution was to be reconceived as part of an extensive national and international network, removed physically and programmatically from the civic ground of the centre.

A second site was considered on Smallbrook Queensway (figure 71) when Cedric Price was appointed architect to developers Shantasea, producing initial proposals between 1967-68. Price's appointment most likely came through broadcaster and journalist David Frost, a director of Shantasea, for whom he had made feasibility and concept studies for a retail store and restaurant 'The Leisuremart' in Chelsea in 1966 (Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1966). The project, with involvement from Sir Michael Balcon and the British Film Institute, was for a cinema for the Midland Film Institute with housing and a hotel, the auditorium expressed as a floating volume at first floor level, with an accommodation tower overreaching fourteen floors. The Birmingham and Midland Institute were considered as a tenant of the building. Pre-empting a change in government policy on office space in the city, the brief changed predominantly to offices in 1969, at which point Price as well as the Birmingham and Midland Institute disassociated themselves from the project. The Shantasea project failed to gain planning approval, and the Birmingham and Midland Institute appointed Price for their own building.

In the intervening period, the City Council had provisionally awarded the Birmingham and Midland Institute a site on Broad Street, bounded by Oozells Street and Brasshouse Passage, between the Church of the Messiah and Chapel (figure 72 on following page). It is here that Price developed his proposals for BMI/HQ, the case for the new building endorsed through the Cultural Conference of 1969 at which 'virtually every association and society putting on arts, drama and exhibition events in the City centre' advocated for an openly accessible Birmingham and Midland Institute facility as proposed by Price (Price, 1971). The proposed new Central Library and School of Music was deemed inadequate for 'present activities – let alone any future expansion' though without any discussion as to why, furthering their cause for such a building in the face of 'scattered events in unsatisfactory make-shift conditions' (Price, 1971).

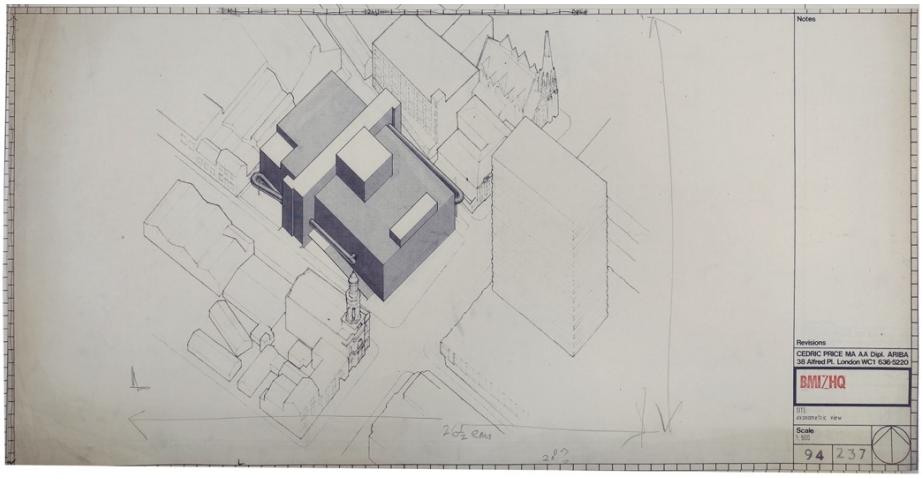


Figure 72: Axonometric view of the proposed BMI/HQ on Broad Street, Birmingham. Source: CCA DR1995:0243:436:458 Page 24

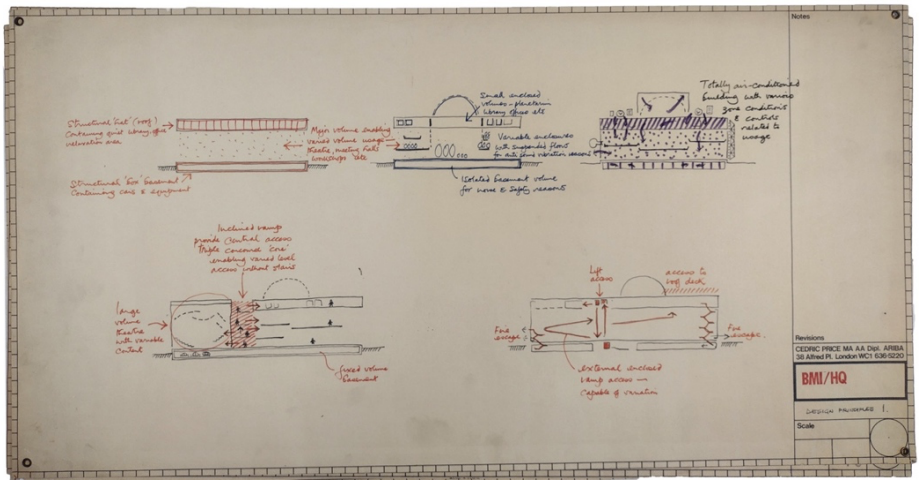


Figure 73: Price's design principles for BMI/HQ related to programmatic and spatial adaptability. Source: CCA DR2004:0291 Page 6

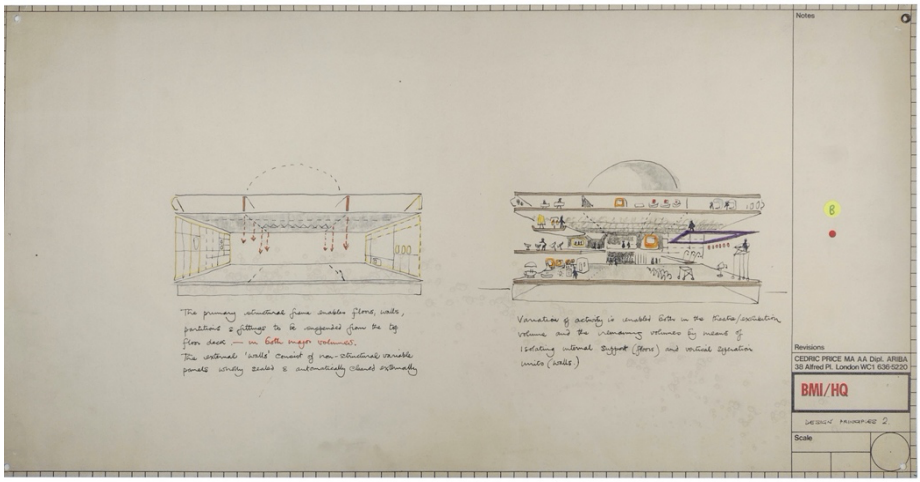


Figure 74: Price's design principles for BMI/HQ related to the technical performance of building elements. Source: CCA DR2004:0291 Page 4

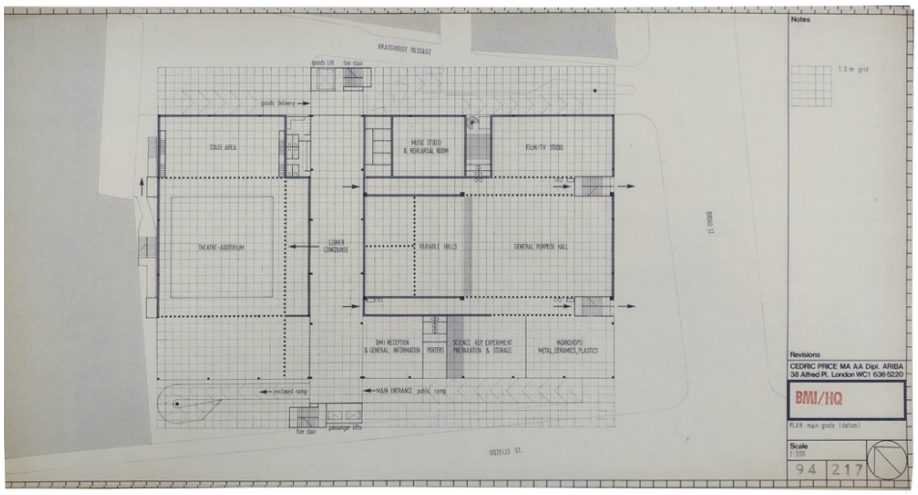


Figure 75: Main grade (datum) plan of BMI/HQ. Source: CCA DR1995:0243:436:458 Page 04 main grade plan

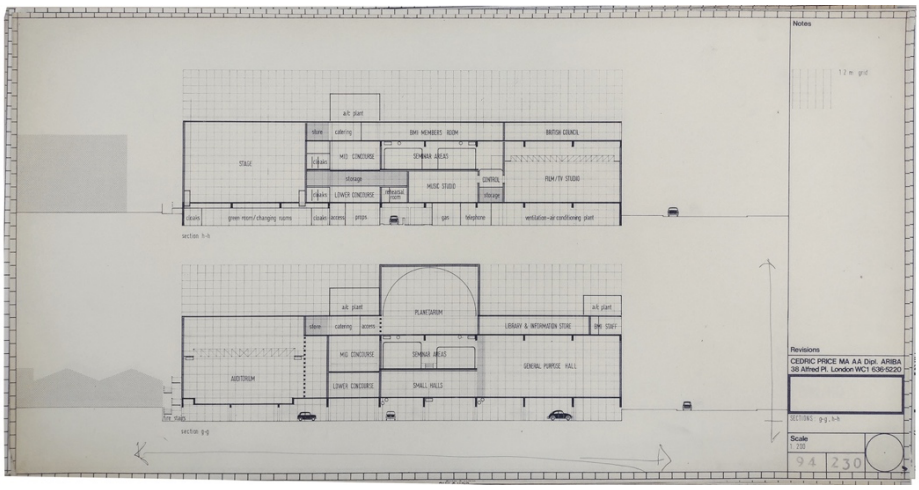


Figure 76: Sections gg hh of BMI/HQ. Source: CCA DR1995:0243:436:458 Page 20 sections gg hh

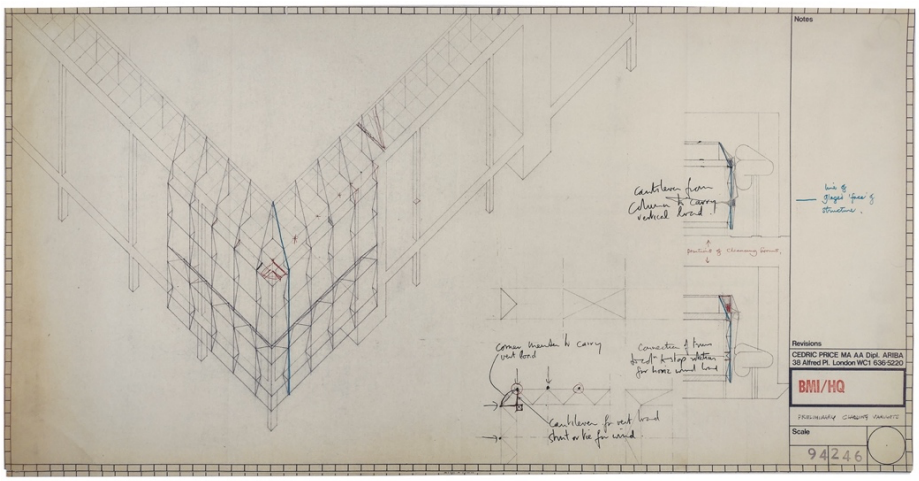


Figure 77: Corner axonometric of glazed screen detail to Price's BMI/HQ. Source: CCA DR2004:0291 Page 5 cladding scheme

2.4.1.2 Building as 'Civic' Technical System

Price's scheme responded in scale to the conditions of Broad Street but adopted an entirely internal logic of entrance and circulation. A 'triple concourse core' accessed from the side of the building together with external enclosed circulation 'tubes' provided ramped access to all levels (figure 73, bottom diagrams). Between a highly serviced inhabited 'basement 'box'' and 'structural 'flat' (roof)', large, air-conditioned volumes were to allow varied use, from theatre, meetings halls and workshops, within which suspended 'tray floors' provided different patterns of inhabitation (figure 73, top diagrams). Those technical elements framed the social activities within, where;

> 'The primary structural frame enables floors, walls partitions and fittings to be suspended from the top floor deck - in both major volumes. The external 'walls' consist of non-structural variable panels wholly sealed and automatically cleaned externally' (figure 74, left diagram).

where;

> 'Variation of activity is enabled in the theatre/exhibition volume and the remaining volumes by means of isolating internal support (floors) and vertical seperation [sic.] units (walls.)' (figure 74, right diagram).

As a monument of modernity, Price's single point perspectives recall Boullee's eighteenth century project for the Royal Library in Paris designed for a new public, as well as Piano and Roger's Pompidou. The Pompidou elaborated upon the radical theories of Archigram and Price (in particular his Fun Palace), and although BMI/HQ was not realised or widely published, the similarities are evident. Both have an exterior structure with wide-span trusses to allow for flexible configuration of the interior, accessed by exterior circulation 'tubes'. According to Rattenbury (2011), Price's Fun Palace was 'effectively designed to resist this process of institutionalisation, of the state taking over', also evident in his project for BMI/HQ. In both projects, the building was a 'kind of amenity, a sort of stage set, which was for people to use', and unlike the Pompidou the technology was conceived to be almost invisible (Davies and Rattenbury, 2011). That technology was not concerned directly with the structural framing or approach to the glazed envelope, though both were innovative for the time. This is discussed in further detail in chapter 5.

The transposition of the technical system into architectural form can be seen in the datum-related plans and sections in figures 75 and 76. The building was planned on a 1.2m grid with main structural supports at 7.2m intervals around the main volumes.

A file note from Price's office described the construction as 'medium span structures: reinforced concrete' and 'large span structures: protected steel', with the structural diagram

suggesting a concrete plinth which accommodated parking and services, with vertical support to ‘table floors’, with ‘tray floors’ held by suspension strap hangers in areas of most flexibility. The façade was to be given maximum visibility through a vertical truss-framed glass envelope (figure 77), similar to that of the Pompidou and developed in Foster’s Willis-Faber and Dumas building of 1975.

2.4.1.3 The Unrealised Project for BMI/HQ

The plans for a new Birmingham and Midland Institute building were delayed and ultimately halted by disagreements with the City Council who deemed the building too large, and who would not agree to the allocation of the site until compensation had been agreed for the Birmingham and Midland Institute building on Paradise Street (1970). The Birmingham and Midland Institute had offered a substantial contribution for the delivery of a ‘public service building[…] designed chiefly for use by others, including the Theatre Centre, other operatic and dramatic companies, music societies, the Birmingham International Council, the Extra-Mural Department, the British Council and the Open University’ (Birmingham and Midland Institute, 1970). They argued that the loss of the space previously occupied by the School of Music was to be taken over by other activities, a position rejected by the Council. The Midland Film Theatre had already indicated their concerns earlier that year and had been in discussion with the Midlands Art Centre in Cannon Hill Park about locating their operations there. The project did not advance beyond outline planning gained in mid 1970, instead the Birmingham and Midland Institute reworked their premises at Margaret Street with a new library and auditoria by Associated Architects. Nonetheless, the project, and Price’s celebrity, would have been known to practitioners in the city, setting an agenda for other cultural projects of the time, not least in John Madin’s work at Paradise Circus that the Birmingham and Midland Institute and others had criticised.

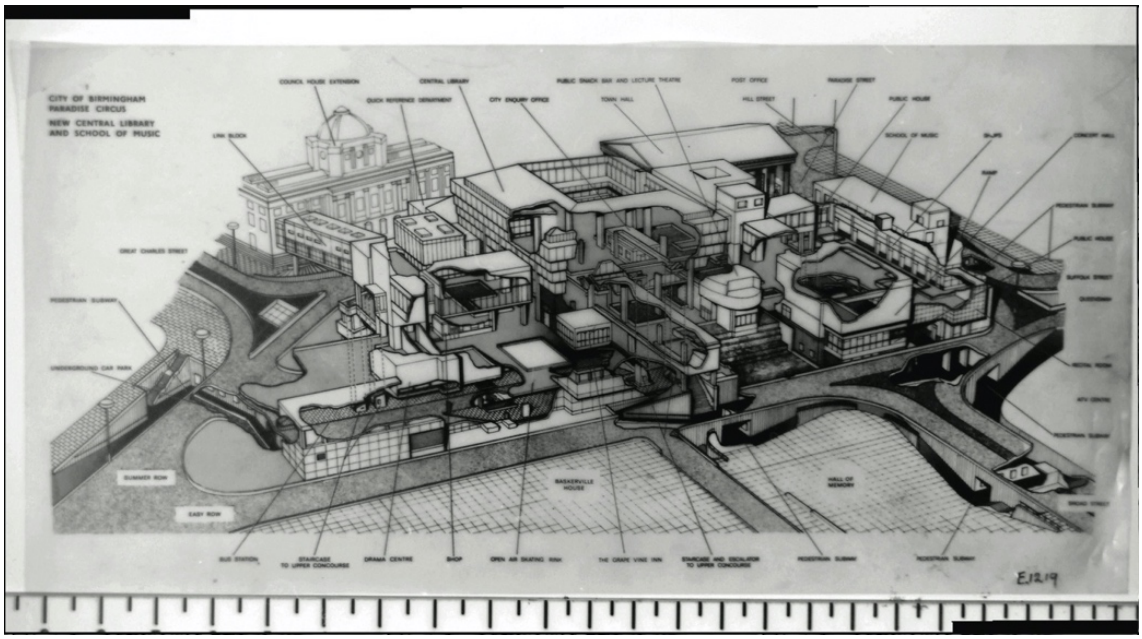


Figure 78: Cutaway section of John Madin's Paradise Circus with Central Library in the centre, bounded by the Inner Ring Road. Source: BCC Highways Department E1219

2.4.2 John Madin and Paradise Circus

John Madin's involvement in Paradise Circus began in 1964 when he and James Roberts were appointed as architects for the New Central Library and Exhibition Hall respectively. Working with the City Architect's Department, the revised master plan for the Civic Centre was published in 1965 (see Section 2.3.3). As a development of earlier iterations by the City Architect, the proposal was for 'a New Central Library, School of Music [separate from the Birmingham and Midland Institute], Birmingham Athletic Institute, a Drama Centre, Midland Institute [demolished 1965] and Youth Organisations. Additional uses included a bus setting down and picking up point, car parking provision, exhibition room, public houses, shops and offices' (Sheridan-Shedden, 1965). Planned as a comprehensive complex incorporating the Inner Ring Road, Paradise Circus was founded on five main principles;

(1) A natural progression from the New Street shops through to the proposed Exhibition Hall in Broad Street by means of a pedestrian way was considered essential.

(2) The grouping of the various building functions into suitable related 'use zones' and the integration of these functions into a three-dimensional whole, designed around a system of 'public' precincts and 'private' courts which will form part of a public pedestrian system and will also create private internal quiet areas, insulated from the noise and fumes from the traffic circulating around the site.

(3) The aim was that pedestrians would be able to walk completely under cover and circulate between a series of interconnected precincts and courts, varying in size, character and function.

(4) It was also appreciated that the high architectural quality of the existing Town Hall, Council House and Clock Tower, known as "Big Brum", should be allowed to dominate the whole area and should be capable of being seen from Broad Street and various approaches and from within the site itself. This was not possible in the original scheme.

(5) It was also felt highly desirable that the site should have as high a commercial return as is thought correct in this type of development and also, by various additional uses which have already been mentioned, bring life and vitality into the area not only during the day, but at night. A certain amount of shopping, offices, public houses, restaurants, car parking, etc. have, therefore, been incorporated in the complete development.

Figure 79: The five basic principles of development of Paradise Circus, from JR Sheridan Shedden's Civic Centre Report of 1965. Source: BCC MS 2492_2004_135

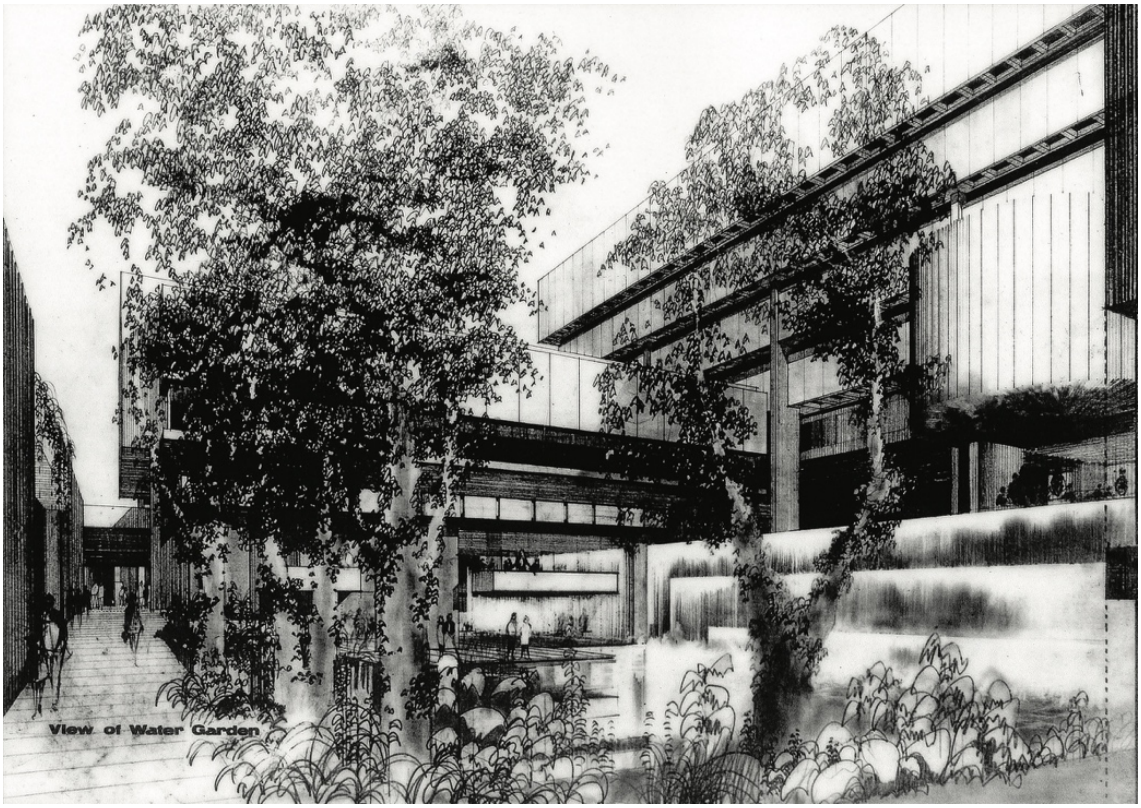


Figure 80: Visual of the lower water garden to Paradise Circus, with the elevated Inner Ring Road to the left and Library to the right. Source: BFCAA accession number D0113.

Although part of Sheridan-Shedden's report, Madin's influence on these principles is clear. He criticised the dominance of engineering and argued for a clear distinction between spaces of vehicular movement and pedestrian oriented civic spaces. Critically, Madin called for those sites lining the Inner Ring Road to be considered holistically through a three-dimensional plan;

> 'The City has made a lot of mistakes along the Inner Ring Road. They could have established shopping precincts and freed the road itself for through traffic. Instead, they have mixed up their uses and have neither provided proper shopping nor proper traffic movement. […] Linear development along traffic roads is wrong'. (1969)

The relationship of buildings to the new context of the road was well understood by Madin who saw the mediating topography as fundamental in shaping the experience of the city from the perspective of the pedestrian and motorist alike. Cullen's *Townscape* (1971) and Appleyard et al's *View from the Road* (1964) were both concerned with such spatial sequences, but as explored here, Madin was as concerned with the experience of the street as he was the dynamic movement around and beneath, in doing so drawing on a much deeper architectural tradition.

From its inception, the project for the library followed that of the Inner Ring Road, the construction of which required the successive demolition of several civic buildings between Easy Row, Paradise Street and Edmund Street to the west of the Town Hall, including the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Reference Library. That such an ambitious programme could only be built over several phases was to influence Madin's attitude to the organisation of the building and architectural expression of its parts.

The report of 1965 further detailed the workings of the site from the perspective of access and circulation, with a section on the 'grouping of the accommodation'. At the centre of the group was the Library, forming one edge of a reconceived Chamberlain square intended to unite the planned School of Music, Concert Hall, Opera Theatre with the Town Hall, and Council House. Within the complex, interconnected courtyards and precincts were to include kiosks, sculpture and water garden with seating (figure 80), with a square which could be frozen during winter months to form an outdoor skating rink, overlooked by the Athletic Institute and two public houses (Sheridan-Shedden, 1965: 5). The Midland Institute was to return to its place on Paradise Street but located on the upper part of the Shopping Mall.

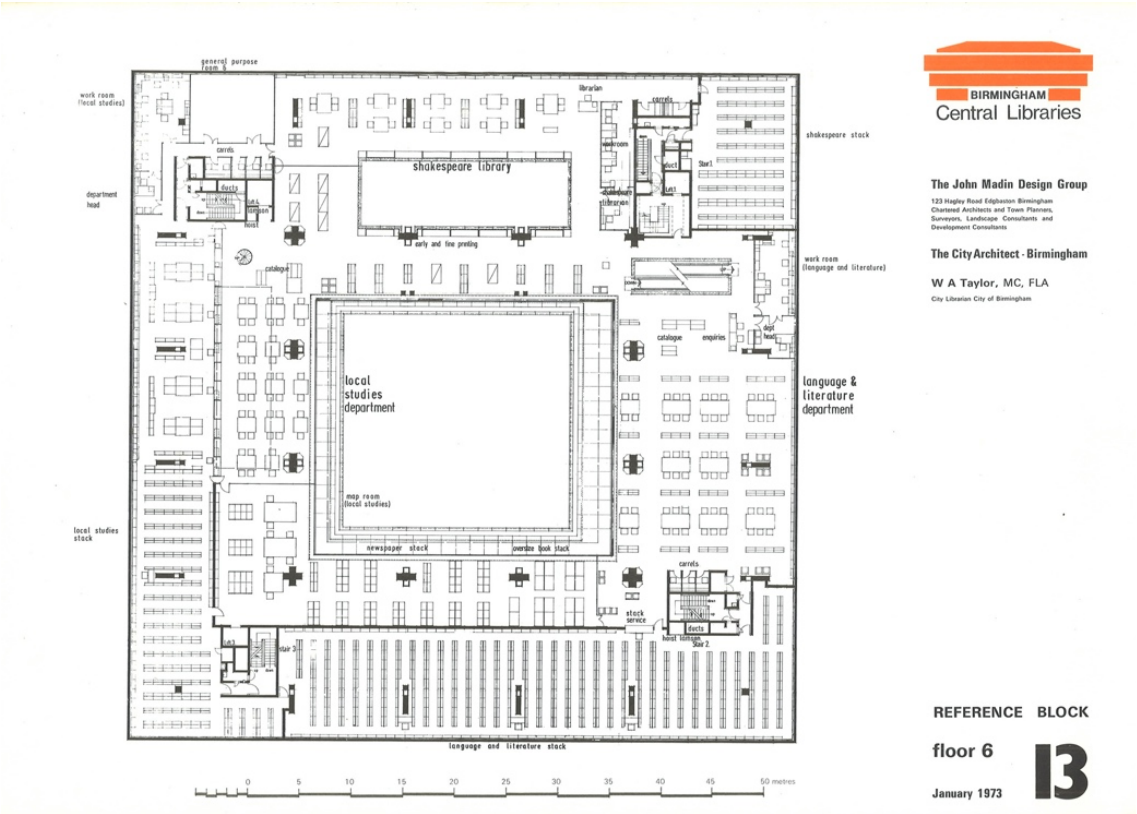


Figure 81: Plan of Floor 6 showing the planned location of the Shakespeare Library. Source: BFCAA

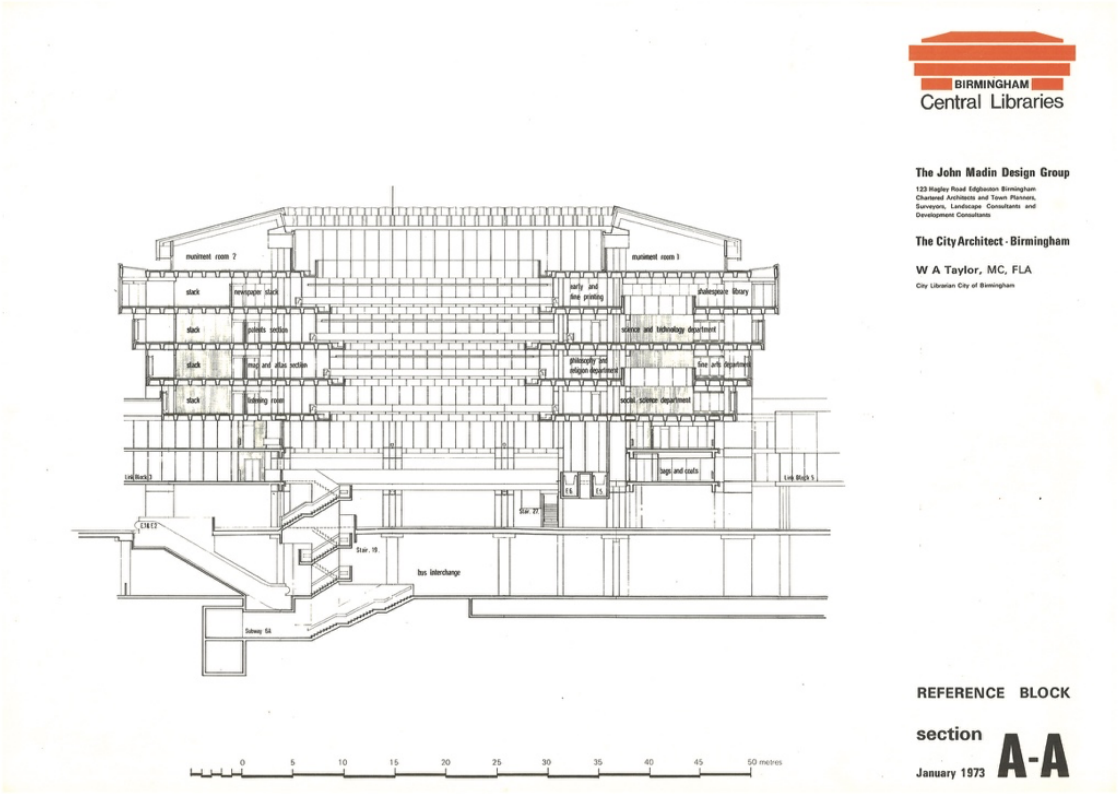


Figure 82:Section A-A to Central Library. Source: BFCAA

As the largest municipal library in Europe at the time of its completion, Central Library accommodated reference, lending and children's libraries, and specialised archival and administrative spaces to serve the city and its 35 branch libraries, as well as a wider cultural remit through the provision of a lecture theatre for audio-visual performance and the spoken word, meeting rooms and exhibition spaces (figures 81 and 82). City Librarian W.A. Taylor established the principles for the building from the practical perspective of the library. The first was a need for flexibility to accommodate the changing emphasis of the library, both spatially through the design of shelving and furniture and technologically in anticipation of new forms of media and learning techniques. The second was for an open plan building, available for 'the ordinary man and woman, perhaps not too familiar with libraries, to use.' (1975: 9). In lieu of the formal Reading Room and newsroom, a Readers' Lounge was to be a welcoming space, with visual connections to other parts of the building. The children's library was a late but, in the view of the City Librarian, necessary addition to the brief, since inner city school libraries were seen as inadequate (1975: 8). Clawley (2011: 108) noted that nearly forty years after its opening, Central Library still drew most of its visitors from the inner city ward of Ladywood, one of the most deprived in Britain, foregrounding the social need for the library.

As an important connection to the nineteenth century library, the Shakespeare Library was to be relocated in its entirety, complete with J. H. Chamberlain's interior, though it was 1986 before it was finally reinstalled in the School of Music building rather than the main library building as first intended. Madin's influence in conceiving of Paradise Circus came from his background as well as focussed research by him and his colleagues in practice. As director of one of Britain's largest commercial architecture practices in the post war period, Madin was well travelled. Having served in the Royal Engineers in India, Iraq and Egypt between 1943-47, he returned to Birmingham School of Architecture to complete his studies (Madin, 2011: 11), travelling soon after to Scandinavia upon recommendation of the Head of School Douglas Jones. Scandinavia, in particular Sweden, was a popular destination for architects in the post war period after Asplund's celebrated Stockholm Exhibition of 1931, and the socially oriented housebuilding programme that had continued throughout the years of the conflict. In line with this, the School of Architecture moved away from a classical training in architecture to modernism around 1948 (1969), evident in Madin's earliest works in particular the Engineering Employers Federation building (figure 83). Though Madin did not directly cite Asplund, his work, and that of others, would have been known to him and his peers, informing Madin's monumental approach to the Library at Paradise Circus.

Figure 83: John Madin's Engineering Employers Federation building, Edgbaston, 1957. Source: BFCAA/Brophy, accessed 16.07.2009.

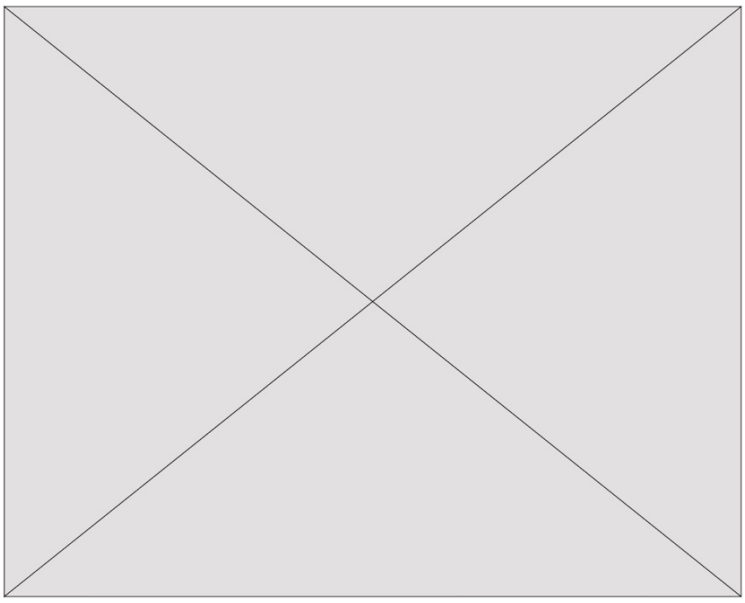


Figure 84: John Madin's working list of American Libraries in advance of his visit in 1964. Source: BCC MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014.

Madin's subsequent visit to America in 1964 was evidently influential in his approach at Paradise Circus. Directed through his own research and enquiries at the Professional Library Journal in New York (figure 84), his itinerary included visits to recently completed libraries and public buildings from which he could gain insight. Madin's trip to Detroit, America's motor city was of particular note, where he witnessed the recently completed

extension to the Public Library hosted by its Director C.M. Mohrhardt. Although it would differ from Madin's proposal in overall massing and structural expression, similarities can be seen in the use of coffered concrete floor slabs (figure 85), and the fin columns and marbled clad entrance of the main entrance (figure 86). Madin's initial intent to clad the buildings at Paradise Circus in Portland stone or travertine (Clawley, 2011: 110) was changed to precast and in-situ concrete apparently on cost-saving grounds, but the influence of his American travels was evident in the resultant scheme both in the material expression as well as the social aspects of the building. His research trip to New Haven included the recently completed Art and Architecture Building where he was hosted by its Director Paul Rudolph. In a letter thanking him for his hospitality, Madin commending Rudolph for having 'achieved something which so many buildings lack today – character and humanity – the best building of its kind I have ever seen.' (Madin, 1964: figure 87). Though no greater account is provided of their meeting, the split-level section, monumental structure, and exposed concrete surfaces of the Art and Architecture Building evidently influenced Madin's scheme for Paradise Circus[18].

[18] These influences are explored further in chapter 5.

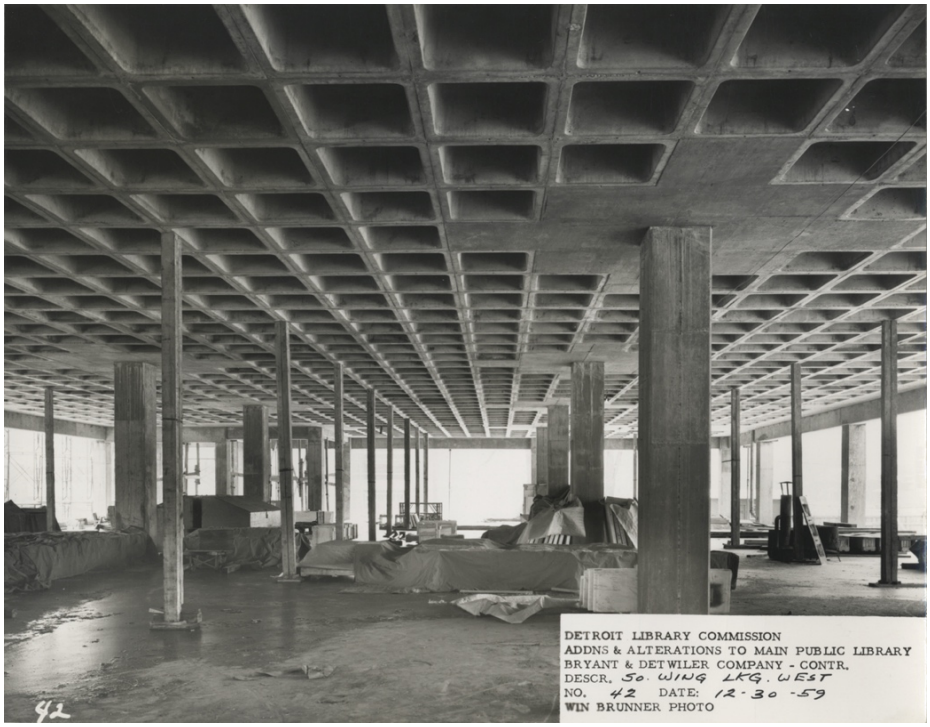


Figure 85: Interior photograph of south wing to Detroit Public Library under construction, December 1959. Source: Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library Archive Resource ID bh006617, accessed 11.01.2022

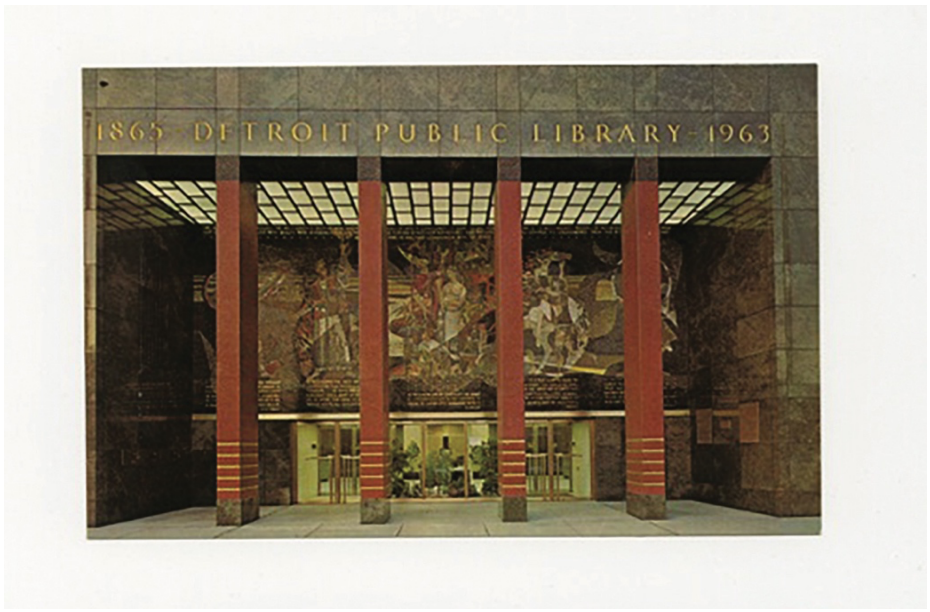


Figure 86: Postcard of the Cass Avenue entrance of the Detroit Public Library, showing mosaic mural designed by Millard Sheets, from John Madin visit 1964. Source: BCC MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014. Also available from Burton Historical Collection at Detroit Public Library, resource ID: bh009442.

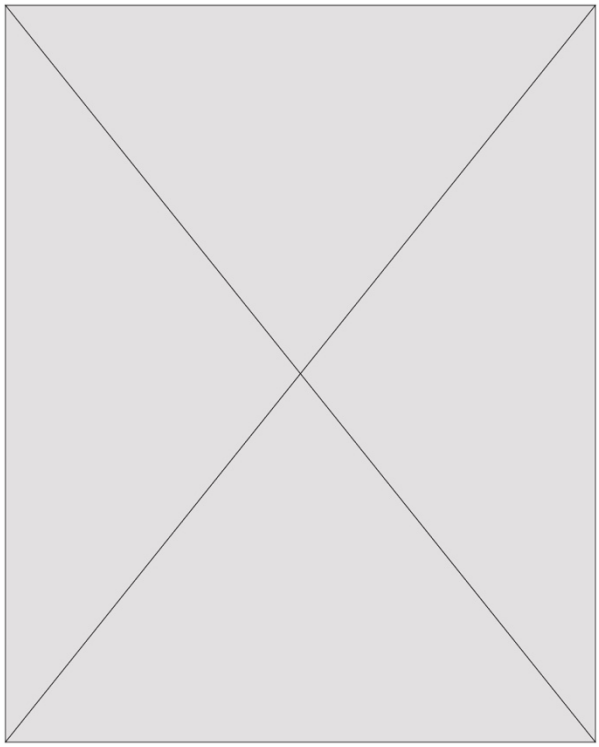


Figure 87: Letter from John Madin to Paul Rudolph, Director of Department of Architecture, Yale University, 23rd December 1964. Source: BCC MS 2492 (2004/135) accessed 9.01.2014

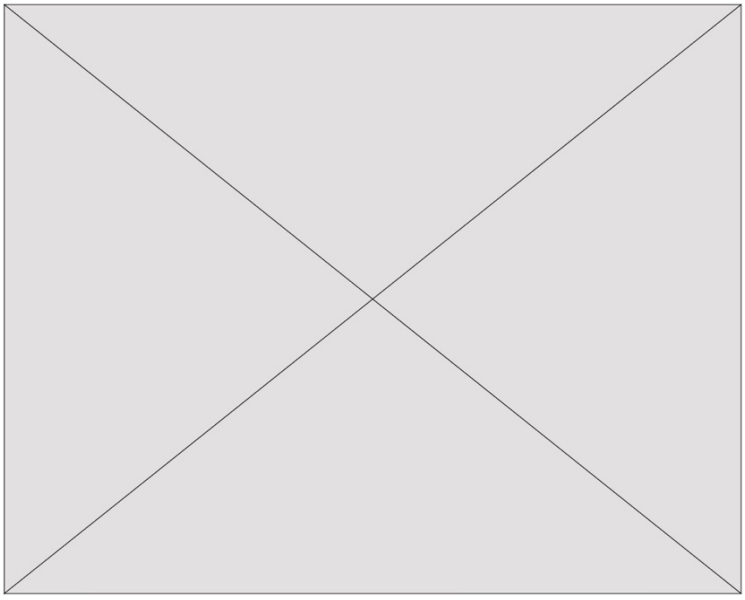


Figure 88: Small guidebook showing the Ezra Stoller's photograph of SOM Gordon Bunshaft's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in New Haven, from John Madin's visit of 1964. Source: BCC MS 2492 (2004/135) accessed 9.01.2014

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Madin also visited the 'Yale Rare Books Library' (figure 88). As Director of Architecture at Yale, Rudolph had instigated the competition for the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (1963) after an endowment by alumni Frederick and Edwin Beinecke. Designed by Gordon Bunshaft of SOM, the Library occupies a square bounded by Wall Street and High Street and faces Woodbridge and Woolsley Halls. Although Bunshaft was not an academic like Rudolph and wrote little on his work, his correspondence with sculptors Henry Moore and Jean Dubuffet, recorded in the Avery Library, suggests an affinity with formal composition and a concern for material craft. Madin's notebook included a postcard and small guidebook to the Beinecke most likely gathered during his visit (figure 88). The pattern of ascent and descent from the ground level into different parts of the building, and monumental temple-like nature of the building in the formal topography of the square bears comparison to Madin's project for Paradise Circus.

John Ericcson, Madin's project architect for Central Library, stated that together with Le Corbusier's monastery at La Tourette, the practice looked to Deny's Lasdun's Royal College of Physicians, London and Leslie Martin's library complex at St. Cross, Oxford as influences in the evolution of the brief for Paradise Circus and library (Clawley, 2011: 109). The final iteration of the library exhibited several common traits to La Tourette, not least in its material expression[19].

[19] These British, European and American influences on Madin's work at Paradise Circus are explored in chapter 5.

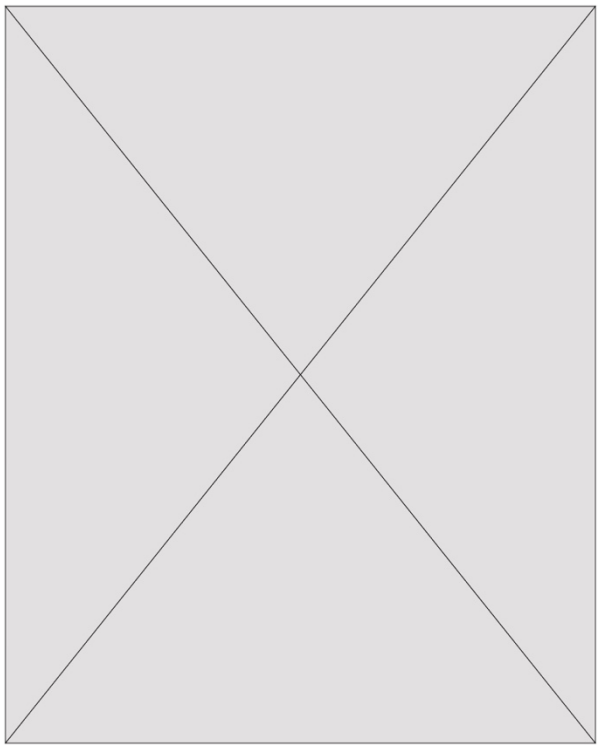

Figure 89: Diagram by John Madin of relationship between buildings and open space, existing condition shown in figure 13, and proposed in figure 12, in the Paradise Circus project file circa 1965. Source: BCC MS 2492_2004_135 accessed 9.01.2014.

2.4.2.1 Paradise Circus as Monumental Open Loggia

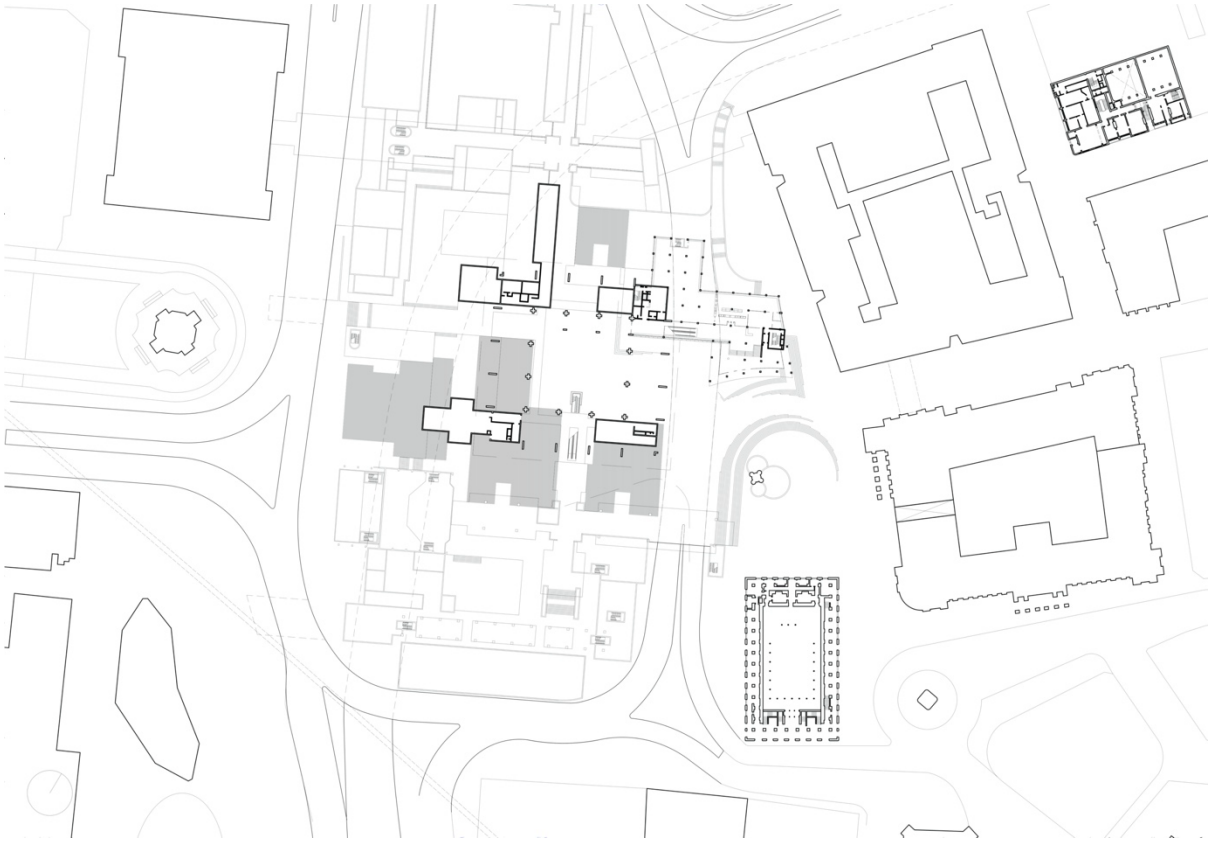

Figure 90: Drawing 010B – 1980 – 1:2,500 at A3, plan of Paradise Circus as complete megaform, with Central Library shown in bold to the centre (drawing 010A_1980_1:1500 at A3). Source: author

Madin's Paradise Circus was conceived at multiple registers including new ideas of the library as an open civic institution and the necessarily temporal nature of the institution. Diagrams from Sheridan-Shedden's report together with rough sketches from Madin's office archive files give some insight into how the principles for the development of Paradise Circus were interpreted. The most profound and informative of Madin's intentions is that shown in figure 89, which describes a move from the bounded nature of the nineteenth century civic buildings around Chamberlain Square, to the fluidity of movement across the city, anchored by the Town Hall and Baskerville House, both representative of prior civic ideas. In place of the paternalistic institutions of the municipal government, Madin proposed an open landscape as an emblem of individual liberty and freedom of expression. The library building itself would provide the continuity with the civic buildings, manifest as a temple-like anchor to the collective form of the complex.

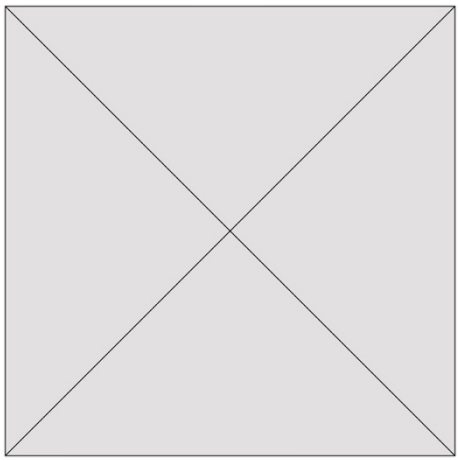

Figure 91: John Madin's sketches from a copy of J. R. Sheridan-Shedden's 'Civic Centre Development' Report in the Paradise Circus project file, 1965. Source: MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014.

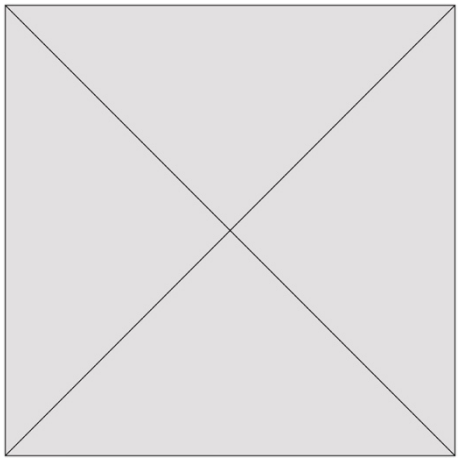

Figure 92: John Madin's sketches from a copy of J. R. Sheridan-Shedden's 'Civic Centre Development' Report in the Paradise Circus project file, 1965. Source: MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014.

Madin’s concern was not only of movement out but of views into the site. According to the design team report (1973a), ‘the continuity of spaces which flow under the Reference Library and upwards through the void in its centre’ was a guiding principle in ensuring the composition was legible to pedestrians and related to the wider city, in particular New Street to the east and the growing civic centre to the west. The view from the road was equally as important, the sweeping curve of the highway travelling north presented with a view of the composition before descending below ground. The composition of the complex was designed to accommodate a variety of forms and volumes. Figure 91 demonstrates the concern for the section of the Central Library building, the centre open to the sky. Within this, floor decks shift according to level and need. Figure 92 locates the Library in the wider Paradise Circus and Civic Centre, the site bordered by volumes rising on battered plinths revealing views of the surrounding city. That succession of movement from the lower part of the city along New Street, towards the Town Hall and arriving at the monumental open loggia of the library (as in figure 93) provided a civic, humanising experience of the city, simultaneously engaging in the wider register of regional mobility and international communication.

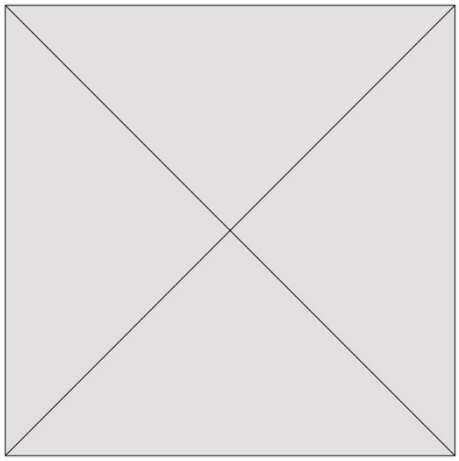

Figure 93: John Madin's sketches from a copy of J. R. Sheridan-Shedden's 'Civic Centre Development' Report in the Paradise Circus project file, 1965. Source: MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014.

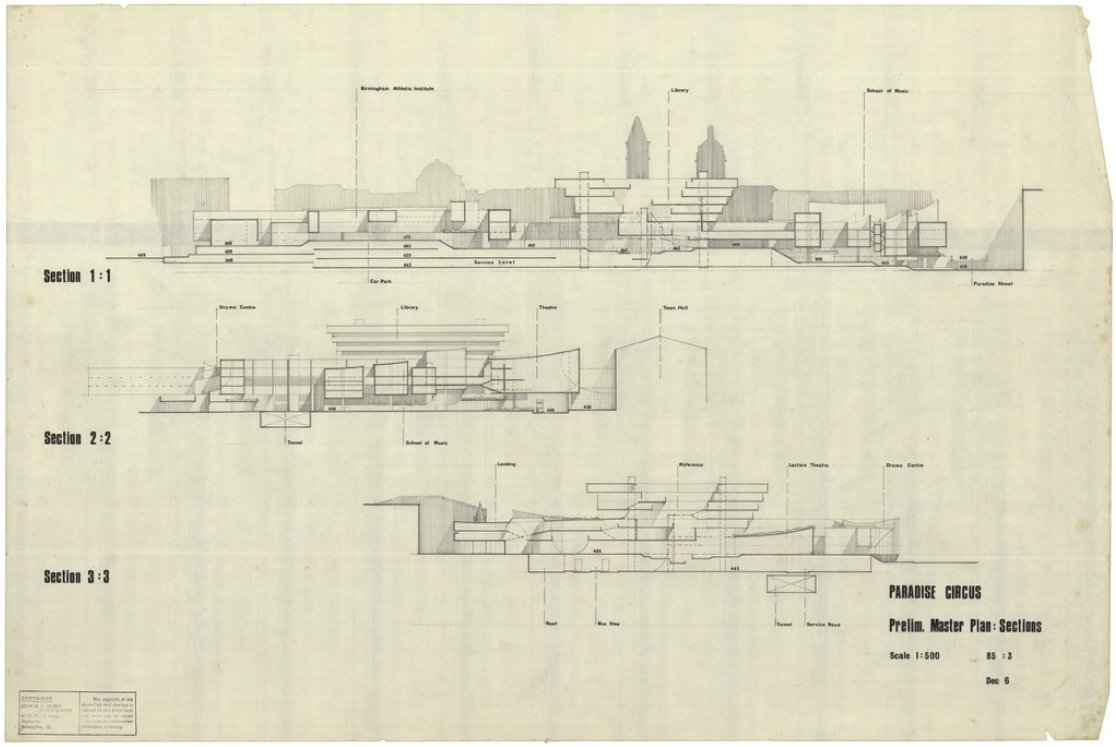

Figure 94: Sections of preliminary master plan for Paradise Circus, John Madin, December 1964. Source: BFCAA

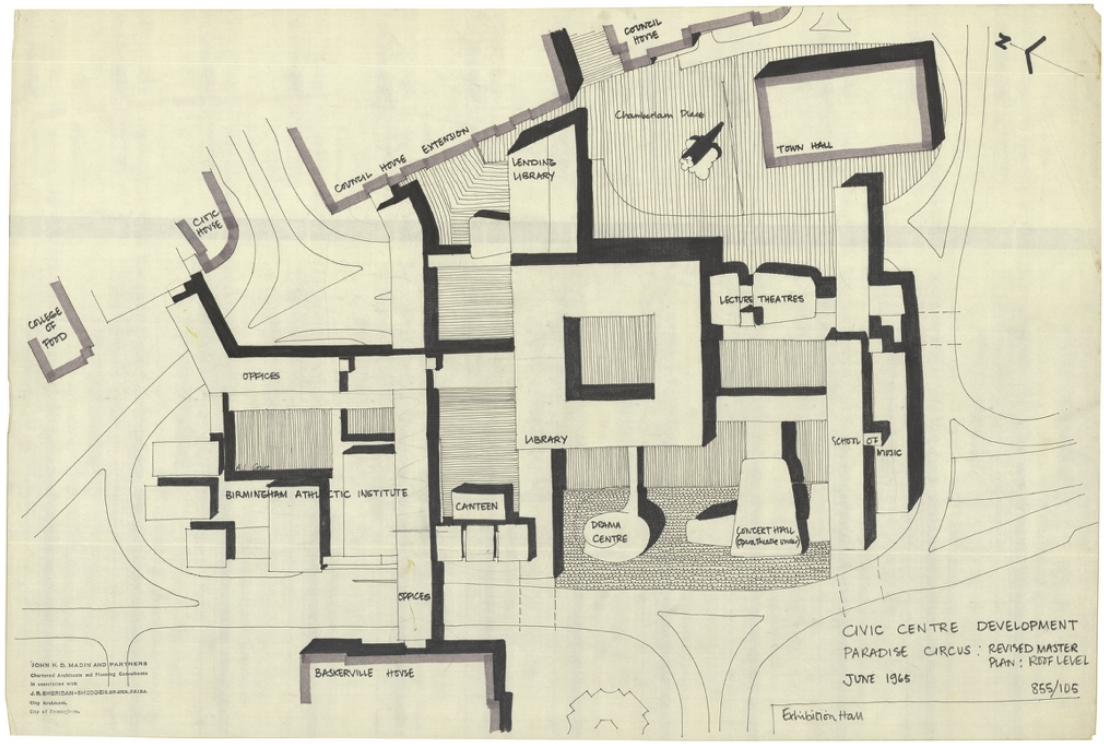

Figure 95: Roof level plan of revised master plan for Paradise Circus, June 1965. Source: BFCAA

More detailed arrangement plans show the intended distribution of the programme around the loggia of the library. Bridge links arranged in an almost pin-wheel array from the centre are shown leading to the sculptural forms of the entrance block, Midland Institute, Drama Centre, School of Music, and Athletic Institute in the plan of 1964. A subterranean service level was excavated to provide for the bus interchange and car park fed by the Inner Ring Road, with pedestrian underpasses lined with shops linking to the exhibition hall and extended Civic Centre. The horizontal emphasis and massing of the library buildings was intended to avoid overwhelming neighbouring buildings, particularly to Chamberlain Place which was reconceived as a sweeping amphitheatre around the Chamberlain memorial fountain. The preliminary sections (figure 94) demonstrate the intended sculptural plasticity of the composition, the modelling of the ground plane rising to the tiered platforms of the library revealing the sky at the culmination of the promenade from New Street and the Civic Centre. The compositional grouping of buildings around the library and the square oculus within is seen most clearly in the roof plan of the revised masterplan of 1965 (figure 95). The megaformal nature of the complex was evident in the framework of raised walkways and corridors gathering the various institutional activities together and connecting out into the surrounding topography. In accordance with the City Council's realisation that Paradise Circus would have to be built in phases, the megaform suggested flexibility through its open-ended form, bounded by the geometry of the gyratory road, below and above which pedestrian subways and bridges led to the historical and extended civic centre. This is discussed further in chapter 5.

Unity was to be provided by a consistent structural system and material finishes. Ove Arup (1895-1988), who had been engineer to Winteringham's Repertory Theatre (Winteringham, 2012), was appointed to the design team for Paradise Circus, and their journal (1974c) gave a detailed appraisal of the completed project. After budgetary constraints eliminated Portland stone and travertine for the external cladding, the buildings were ultimately constructed in four types of in situ concrete;

(1) Plain concrete from plywood forms used in service areas, below ground and on hidden surfaces,
(2) Grit-blasted concrete to approximately 3mm depth on most vertical surfaces throughout the libraries and link blocks,
(3) Grit-blasted ribbed concrete on service core walls,

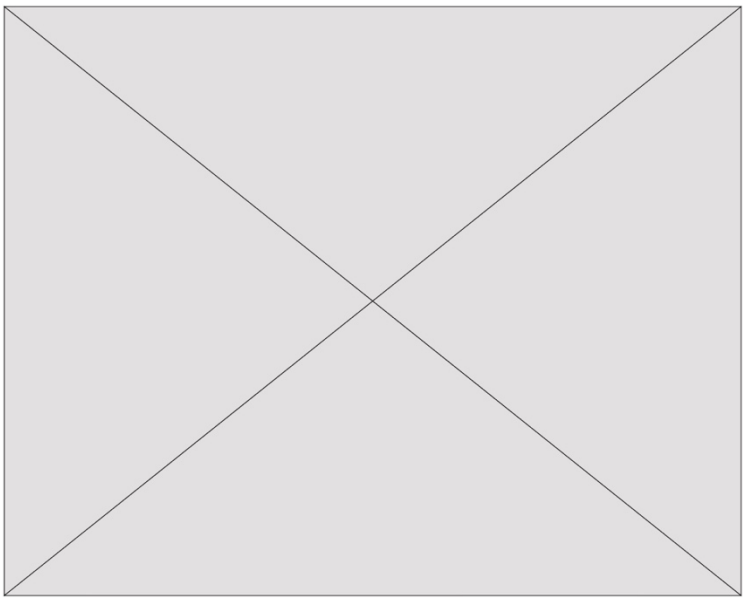

Figure 96: Arup details for details of columns to reference library, 1968. Source: BCC BPP 1190/90, accessed 9.01.2014

Figure 97: The in situ concrete fin columns of the library under construction circa 1970. Source: BFCAA

(4) Smooth fair faced concrete from glass reinforced coffer moulds on reference library floors (1974c: 9).

The structural elements to the library itself were expressed in a series of cruciform and fin columns (figure 96), allowing maximum room for pedestrian passage beneath and through

the complex. The structure also provided the necessary span to the library over the highways below which dictated the position of the main building on the site (figure 97).

As the main expression of the building, the precast cladding was of Hopton Wood limestone and Derbyshire Spar aggregate with white cement was specified to address the context as closely as possible. This was used consistently throughout the building, giving it a robustness and monumentality (figures 98 and 99). More or less the same combination had been used at the Repertory as an interpretation of the Portland stone of the civic centre. The City Council's delegation to America, sponsored by the Cement and Concrete Association, Arup's earlier work, and Madin's experiences in New Haven and Detroit would have also been influential in the final decision on material on grounds of cost, efficiency as well as an emblem of progress. The highly engineered nature of the site, dictated by the three-dimensional alignment of the Inner Ring Road, could have overwhelmed the redevelopment of Paradise Circus. Instead, Madin's scheme accommodated the many technical constraints of the road and library brief, prioritising human experience in a collective civic realm. The subterranean landscape of bus interchange, services and parking connected to the pedestrian realm above, a continuation of the passage from New Street onto the newly extended ground of the civic centre to the west, where Winteringham's Repertory Theatre established the precinct model that Sheppard Fidler had envisioned in his plan of 1956.

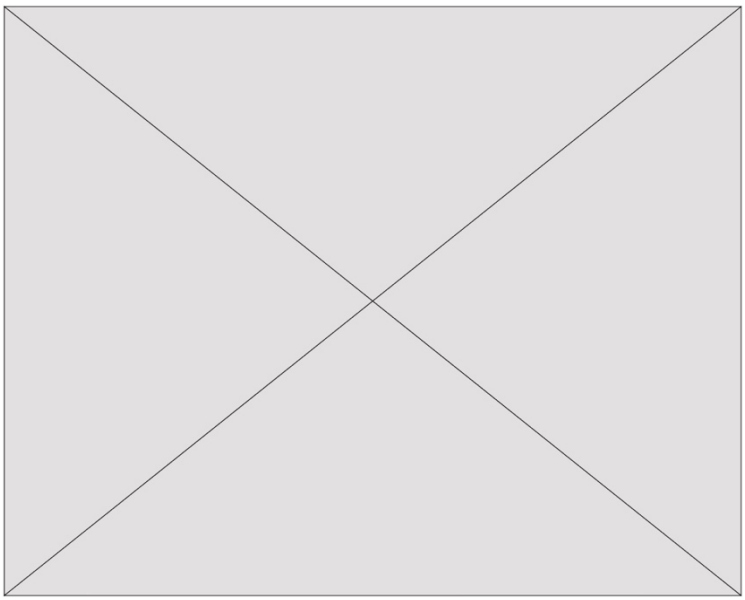

Figure 98: View to west from within the courtyard of Central Library, 1974, with the Victorian Reference Library behind prior to demolition. Source: Sam Lambert, RIBA RIBA28167

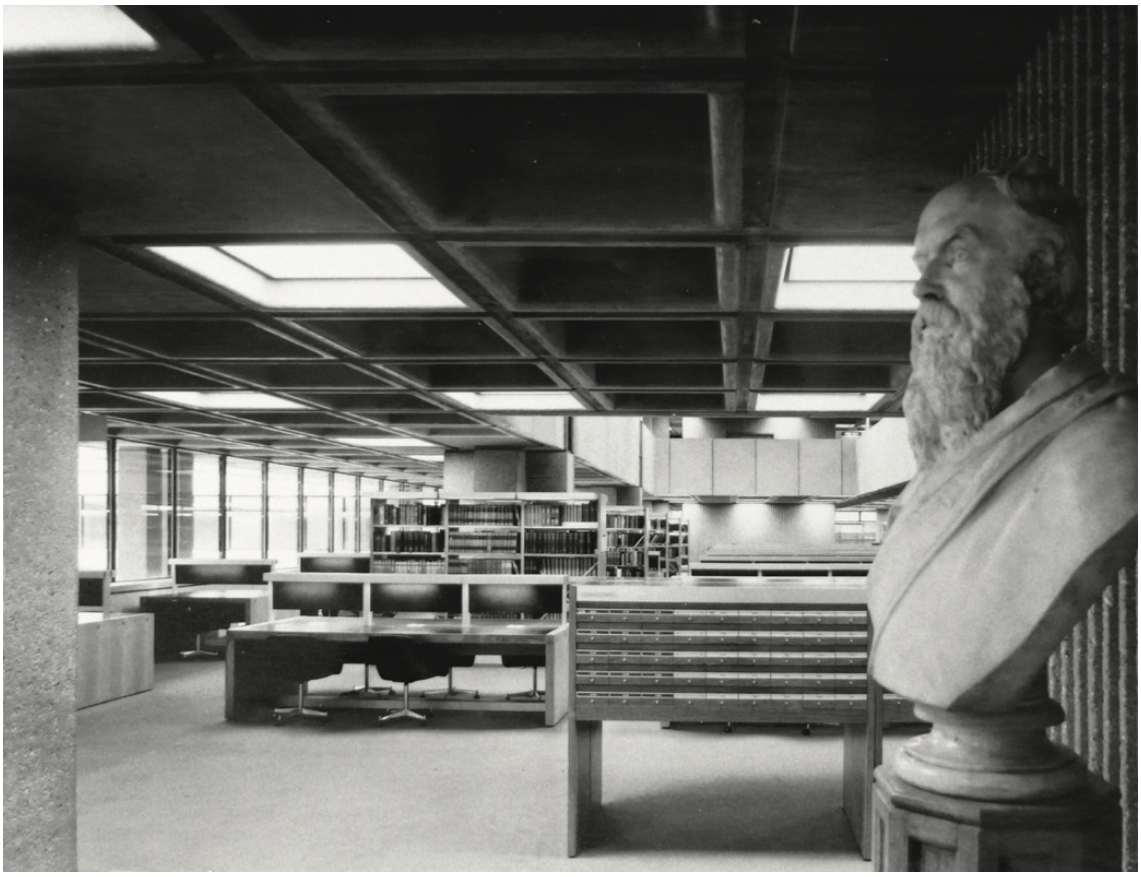

Figure 99: Interior of study room in Central Library, with bush hammered concrete to the service core to the right behind the figure of Samuel Timmins, founder of the Shakespeare Library. Source: BFCAA

2.4.2.2 An Unintentionally Incomplete Complex

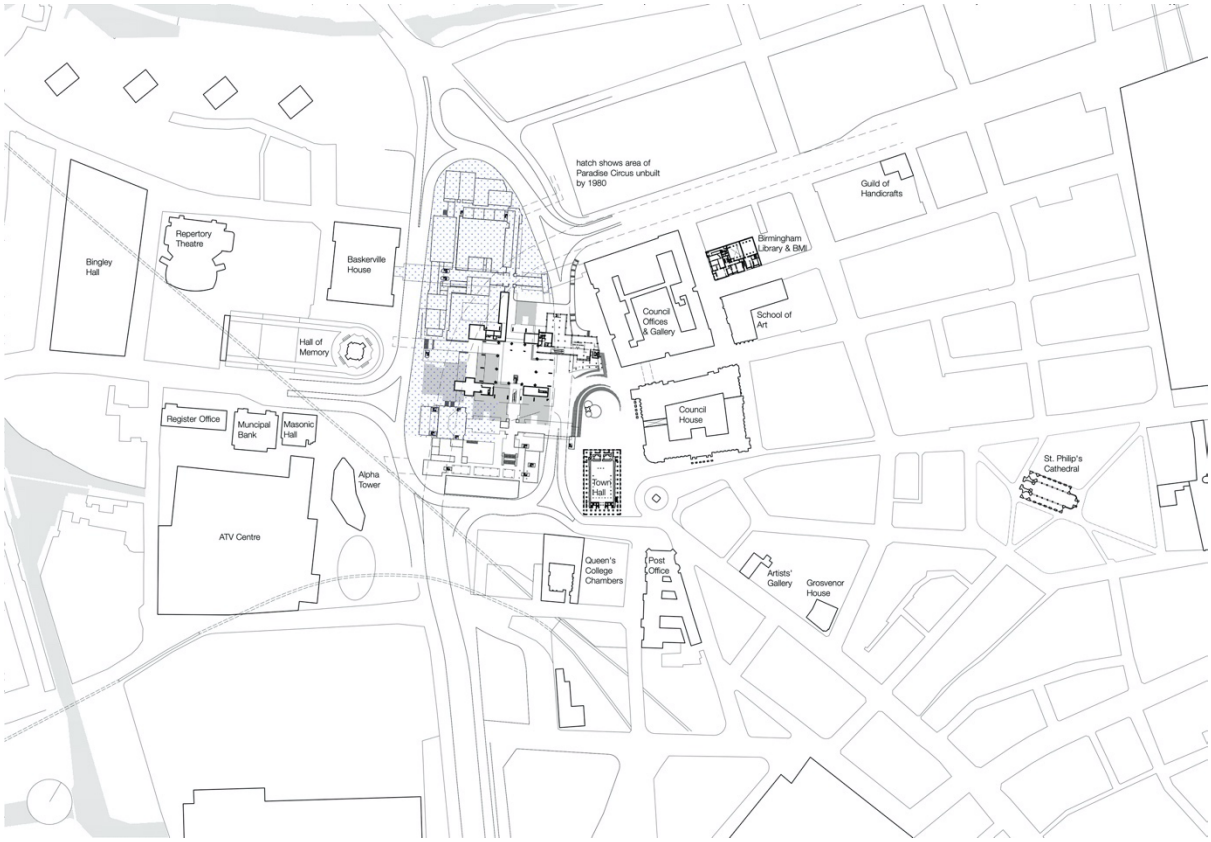

Figure 100: The extent of Paradise Circus constructed by 1980, according to a survey by the City of Birmingham. The hatched area was built in subsequent phases though not in accordance with Madin's principles. Source: author

Of the planned programme for Paradise Circus, only the Library, School of Music and interchange were built, though the latter was never operational. The incomplete Paradise Circus opened on 12th January 1974 in a ceremony presided over by Harold Wilson, then leader of the Labour opposition (figure 101). Despite this, the building received widespread acclaim, and was published internationally. The Architects' Journal (1974a) led with the comment that 'Even if the form of the new central library owes a great deal to American models, and even if a major A road runs underneath it, and even if a splendid old Victorian library is being demolished to allow it to go up, the new central library at Birmingham represents a visual relief in the sterile wasteland of super-roads and filing cabinet office blocks'. The article recognised the commitment to the widening role of the public library service that had been achieved in the United States and Scandinavia, the first of its kind in the UK. The press release (Archimedia, 1973) for the formal opening included citations from the director of the state library of Munich, amongst others, who proclaimed it as 'the ideal model for my own plans, to be realised in the next three years in Munich'.

Figure 101: Brochure for the opening of John H. D. Madin & Partners New Central Libraries at Paradise Circus, presided over by The Rt. Hon. Harold Wilson on 12th January 1974. Source: BFCAA

By 1975, the global energy and financial crisis had caused work at Paradise Circus to cease indefinitely. With an economy dominated by motor manufacturing, the West Midlands suffered greatly. Figure 100 illustrates the limited extent of completed works, with swathes of banked land to the west of Central Library. The bus station remained incomplete and a point of contention as to whether it had been required in the first place after the West Midlands County Council took over transport planning in 1974. With no passenger footfall, the retail space within Paradise Circus remained vacant. A claim by the contractors Sir Robert McAlpine over delays due to an enquiry into the demolition of the previous reference library meant that there was little financial support for the completion of the surrounding landscaped water gardens and pools. The drama centre and athletics institute were also cut from the brief, with car parking provided in place of the bus station. Despite plans for a sports and

leisure complex, only a bridge over the ring road to the west and the creation of the amphitheatre steps to Chamberlain Square to the east had been completed by the end of the decade.

By the turn of the 1980s, ambitions for a civic programme had largely given way to hotel and commercial developments, with the Council providing the previously planned concert studio theatre overlooking the ring road. Madin withdrew from the John Madin Design Group in 1975, the practice completing the School of Music and Adrian Boult Hall in 1983. The postscript to this is discussed in greater depth in section 6.1 in the context of the civic intentions for the project and the procurement and delivery processes which prevented its realisation.

2.5 Research Questions

The projects for an expanded civic centre and road infrastructure reoriented the city, enlarging the territory from that of the city to the region. The institutions of the city bore witness to these projects of modernity and to the changing nature of civic ground, either adapting to that change or becoming redundant in the process. The ever-shifting horizon, seemingly concerned only with efficiency, movement, exchange, and novelty, disrupted the continuity of the city. This thesis explores and interprets the ways in which civic ground - its cultural and intellectual institutions – is representative of the ontological movement between the practical and symbolic.

At the conclusion of this part, the brief questions suggested in chapter 1 can now be further expanded. The following questions are concerned with revealing, interpreting and recovering the praxis of the city through the stratification of institutional order;

> RQ1. How and why did such a concentration of intellectual and civic life form around the site known during the twentieth century as Paradise Street, Paradise Circus, Paradise Forum and now Paradise? To what extent has the name *Paradise* influenced the ways in which the city has been considered at various episodes and registers, and how is this related to the implicit institutional order of the city?
>
> RQ2. In a city outwardly concerned with progress and efficiency at the expense of continuity during the twentieth century, how might an interpretation of the architectural *praxis* of institutions reveal the traditions of the city towards a framework for civic life?
>
> RQ3. To what extent does the interpretation of architectural and urban design drawings reveal and contribute to new understandings of the city, and how might such practices be extended at different registers and in different places within its broad cultural horizons?

PART 2 – Revealing the Topography of Modernity

Part One established the civic orientation of Paradise Circus in the context of large-scale redevelopment of the city centre to improve housing as well as infrastructures of mobility and sanitation, in doing so framing the boundaries of the study. This was both an exercise in technical efficiency as well as an expression of civic ambition in the face of increasing government intervention. The comprehensive nature of change expressed the city's wealth, power and independence, the parallel projects of the Library, the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and Inner Ring Road revealing varying orientations towards techno-rationality and continuity.

Part Two reflects upon the research questions and the topic of an emergent *institutional order*, through the themes established in Part 1. The topography in question remains consistent, offering a common ground and continuity to the research. In doing so, it offers deeper insights into the stratification of institutional horizons through an exploration of the *praxis* of the city. Chapter 3 begins with an exploration of the association between the town's market charter and early radical culture of nonconformity which led to the opening of the town's first lending library in 1751. The first survey 1752-1779 establishes the circumstances involved in the flowering of that radical and intellectual culture up to the founding of the Birmingham Library, foregrounding the townspeople's role in educational and political reform of the early nineteenth century. The second survey 1780-1835 considers how those institutions anticipated the increasingly formal bodies of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library, concluding with the towns' first major civic architectural work, the Town Hall.

Chapter 4 builds upon the civic and intellectual basis of the institutions studied in chapter 3. The first survey 1836-1866 considers the implications for incorporation of the town which until then had given inhabitants a high degree of freedom in life and work, and the social reforms which followed including the building of Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library. The second survey 1867-1899 is concerned with the continued formalisation and reordering of the city, its growth and rise to prominence through Chamberlain's 'civic gospel'.

These chapters, together with the outcomes of Part 1, contribute to the hermeneutic interpretation of this thesis in Chapter 5.

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Chapter 3 - The Formation of an Explicit Institutional Order 1779-1835

3.1 The Conditions for an Emergent Literary Culture

The manner in which Birmingham gained prominence as a centre of literary thought and industry is associated with the *praxis* of the city, relevant today. Two interrelated aspects of this unlikely rise are explored here as a precursor to the core work of the chapter, concerned with the foundation of Birmingham Library (1779) and later the Town Hall (1835). First, the granting of a market charter (1166) by Henry II over a borough charter had implications for how trade and industry was conducted, as well as how the town was governed. Second, and in direct relation to the charter, is the emergence of radical political belief and places of nonconformist worship, and the wider dissemination of those beliefs through printing and publishing. Here, each aspect is associated with Sennett's notion of boundary and border, where;

> The boundary establishes closure through inactivity, by things petering out, not happening; to say that the edge-as-border is a more open condition means it is more full of events in time (Sennett, 2018a: 590).

This notion embodies the changing position of Birmingham. At the granting of the charter, the town was a small settlement on the boundary of the two great cathedrals at Lichfield and Worcester, lacking natural resources or any major patronage apart from those intent on exploiting the land and its people. That inactivity and lack of corporate status gave rise to an atmosphere of religious tolerance, promoting active dialogue at the border as a centre of nonconformity and radical belief which still resonates in the city.

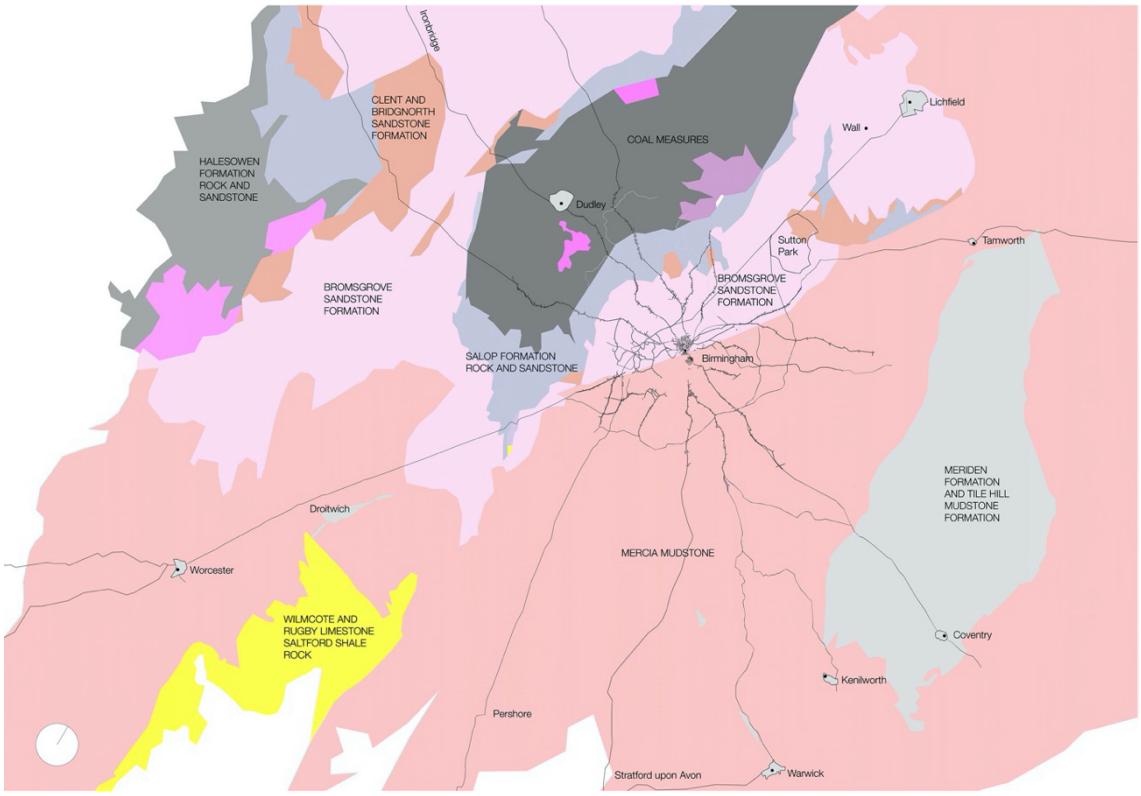

Figure 102: Drawing 001D – Landscape and Geology with town extents in 1779 – 1:20,000, geological map of Birmingham and surroundings. Source: author

Figure 103: Drawing 002 - Pre-modern Birmingham. Source: author

3.1.1 The City as Boundary - the Market Charter, Trade and Manufacture

The map in figure 102 gives several insights into the geological and geographical basis for Birmingham, its routines and rituals and the boundary condition in its earliest form. Although archaeological finds of Palaeolithic and Bronze Age origin give evidence of much earlier settlements, the Roman occupation of Britain informed subsequent patterns of inhabitation. Of note is the alignment of Ryknield Street, a Roman road which joined the Fosse Way at Bourton-on-Water in the Cotswolds, and Watling Street at Wall in Staffordshire before continuing further north. In the Midlands these roads formed a connection between two of the earliest centres of Christian worship in Britain, at Lichfield to the north, and Worcester to the south, both surviving Romano-British communities. Worcester was the seat of a bishopric from the seventh century, and the first Cathedral at Lichfield was consecrated in eighth century. The ecclesiastical boundary that divided the vast diocese of each religious house ran along Bourn Brook (now the site of Bournville), largely reflecting the kingdoms of the Anglian Mercians to the north which included the villages of Aston and Birmingham, and the Saxon *Hwicce* to the south including Yardley and Kings Norton (Slater, 2002: 6). The Augustinian Priory of St. Thomas (circa twelfth century-1536) was settled at Birmingham, roughly equidistant from these religious houses and overseen by Lichfield Cathedral. With its own *conyngre* or rabbit warren, this would have provided a convenient place to stop with a plentiful food supply. Though the priory was dissolved under Henry VIII, these boundaries existed into the twentieth century.

The foundation of the priory coincided with the granting of the market charter with profound implications for the trajectory of the town and its people. From the twelfth century, the local lordship belonged the de Birmingham family who chose not to found a borough to avoid the expense of a charter, instead granting burgage tenure open to all who came to live and work in the town (Slater, 2002: 8). These deep burgage plots (shown in figure 103) had narrow frontages onto Digbeth and the green (later Bull Ring) around St. Martin's Church. Between 1154 and 1166 the Barony of Dudley under Gervase Pagnell permitted de Birmingham to hold a weekly market confirmed in a charter approved by Henry II, allowing the collection of tolls. Gill (1952: 10) speculated that trading had taken place for some time prior to the Norman Conquest to service the agricultural economy of the surrounding land and afterwards the manorial house. The intentional absence of a borough charter and the early provision of a market charter influenced the growth, outlook, and constitution of the population of the town, as discussed later in this chapter.

Although little drawn evidence exists of the order of the town at his point, the topology of the town is revealed through the close association of the land to work and trade, and the

Figure 104: Drawing 003 – the town in 1553 at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. The position of the Town Hall of 1835 is shown in a dotted line to the top left of the image as a tool for navigating the drawings. Source: author.

routines and rituals of the inhabitants and their neighbours in nearby towns and hamlets. As Gill (1952: 18) notes, each supplied materials and goods to the others – salt from naturally occurring sources in Worcestershire, iron manufacture from south Staffordshire where the land had begun to be mined for raw materials, livestock and corn from others. From this grew the early manufacturing base of Birmingham, the burgage plots occupied by those producing goods related to agriculture - ironmongers and lorimers, butchers, leather, and wool dealers. By 1600, the principal goods manufactured in the town were of iron and steel to serve livestock farming, in place of woollen manufacturing. Leland's *Itinerary in England and Wales*, commissioned by Henry VIII as a record of the libraries of monasteries and colleges for the monuments of ancient writers, noted that;

> 'There be many Smithes in the Towne that use to make Knives and all mannour of cuttinge Tooles, and many Loriners that make Bittes, and a great many Naylors. Soe that a great part of the Towne is maintained by Smithes whoe have theire Iron and Sea-Cole out of Stafford-shire.' (1535 - 1543: 114)

This marked the beginning of manufacturing in metal in the town that would lead to the production of swords and later to firearms, machinery, and jewellery. It also placed Birmingham at the boundary of such activity, given greater prominence by its crossing over the river Rea. Given the abundance of rivers and small tributaries across the terrain, crossing points were limited for farmers and merchants. Routes that traversed the land from east to west had to pass the alluvial meadows of the Rea valley, prone to seasonal flooding. The earliest timber and later stone bridges were constructed at Duddeston and at Deritend, maintained by the Gild of the Holy Cross, established in 1392 not as a trade guild but through an endowment originally intended for the foundation of a chantry at St. Martin's Church. The Gild was both religious and charitable, and endowments came from religious bodies as well as the land owning and manufacturing townspeople. This allowed for the building of the Gild Hall on New Street to the north of St. Martin's Church, embodying the early *praxis* of the town on religious, commercial, and proto-civic grounds.

Between the founding of the earliest market and the dissolution of the monasteries, the boundary of Birmingham expanded into surrounding pasture and agriculture land. The congestion in built form and market activity around the junction of High Street and New Street gave way to partially rural streets to the north. The changes in property and land ownership after the dissolution changed that order, with land available for speculation. As shown in drawing 003 (figure 104), the lands of the Priory were acquired by a number of families, Dugdale (1656: 661) noting William Colmore the elder and the younger as beneficiaries, as well as William Phillips who would later give his name to St. Philip's Church

(now Cathedral). Of the Colmore land holding, Paradise Close formed a promontory overlooking the valley of the river Rea to the south along New Street, and heath land to the north. This well-drained land would have been a valuable asset to the Colmore family. As the historian Hutton later noted, this elevated site was to become significant in the growth of the town; 'Birmingham, like the empire to which she belongs, has been, for many centuries, travelling *up hill;* and, like that, rising in consequence' (Hutton, 1783, 39). Whilst little is known of the particular conditions of this place, the name 'close' indicates that this was a bounded site positioned at the ascent of a hill (New Street) first tended by the Augustinian monks. The religious connotations of naming the site 'Paradise' are explored further in chapter 5. To the west of Paradise Close on the road to Halesowen (now Broad Street) lay several small land holdings. Byngas Hall was one of the very few substantial buildings in the 'foreign' surrounding the town, rebuilt and renamed Bingley Hall as the home of Charles Lloyd (d. 1698), minister of the Quaker Society of Friends (Harman and Showell, 1885: 80) and later of the Lloyds banking family. Neighbouring Easy Row was home to renowned printer John Baskerville from 1747, with pastureland, 'shady walks', fishponds, and grotto[20]. Land lining the western edge of Chappell Street (now Bull Street) opposite the Free Chapel of St. Mary's was divided into 'folds', further extending the area of the town to the north. After the Gild of the Holy Cross was dissolved, much of the estate fell into private ownership, though remained part of the endowment of the King Edward's School which took up premises in the Gild Hall, rebuilt once on New Street and twice in the twentieth century at the edges of the city.

This orientation away from the routines and rituals of the market and church towards newfound prosperity through the acquisition of land had profound implications for the institutional order of Birmingham. However, it could be argued that the town remained a provincial boundary amongst other more important centres. That it remained unincorporated led to the proliferation of intellectual activity as an active border, as discussed in the following section.

[20] Baskerville was a friend of the poet and William Shenstone (1714-63), a celebrated garden theorist, who built his *ferme ornée* The Leasowes at Halesowen to the west of Birmingham, an 'Arcadia' featuring 'an alcove, six elegies, a seat, two epitaphs […], three ballads, four songs, and a serpentine river' Humphreys, A. R. (1937) *William Shenstone - An Eighteenth-Century Portrait.* London: Cambridge University Press.. Baskerville was also visited by eminent professionals of the day. The architect James Adam (1732–1794, son of William and brother of Robert) visited in 1758 with the Church of Scotland minister Dr. Alexander Carlyle, who noted 'his house was a quarter of a mile from town, and, in its way, handsome and elegant' (Pardoe, 12).

3.1.2 The City as Border - Meeting Houses, Radical Politics, and Literary Culture

Figure 105: Drawing 004 - 1751. The first detailed maps of the town were made around this time, and included St. Philip's Church, and signs of the early literary society. The position of the Town Hall of 1835 is shown in a dotted line to the top left of the image as a tool for navigating the drawings. Source: author

In the following period, activity and interest in Birmingham grew on account of the economic possibilities and religious toleration open to its inhabitants, leading to a nascent public culture. That the town did not have a borough charter and instead prioritised the market charter gave rise to a degree of freedom seen rarely elsewhere, creating the conditions for religious dissent and radical politics.

Britain, like many other nations of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, was in turmoil over how and by whom it should be governed. In the aftermath of the Restoration, religious dissent and radical politics had gained ground through itinerant ministry and prolific publishing. The troubled relationship between the Crown and representative Parliament, the dogmatic religious divisions in Britain and Europe, and the march of scientific progress all contributed to revisions of the form, order, and culture of British cities. The perceived threat to national stability by religious dissent was limited by several acts with increasing severity.

The Corporation Act (1661) intended to restrict membership of a municipal or chartered corporation to communicant members of the Church of England. The Act of Uniformity (1662) re-established the Church of England, and required conformity of all those in holy

Figure 106: Distribution of religious houses of Birmingham in 1751. Source: author

orders, every minister, teacher, lecturer, or university fellow to prescribed doctrine and the Book of Common Prayer. Refusal to do so risked the loss of their livelihoods. It also demanded that religious worship be conducted in licensed churches and chapels under men better disposed to the government (Dudley, 1912: 70). The Five Mile Act (1665) prevented preachers and teachers from coming within five miles of an incorporated town or borough. The later Test Act (1673) excluded all non-Anglicans from any civil or military office under the crown. As an unincorporated town, Birmingham was excluded from these restrictions meaning that dissenters could find a place in the nascent hierarchy of the town.

These acts created divisions, between those of the Church of England and of dissenting belief, and between incorporated and unincorporated towns and cities, substantially altering the course of civil and religious life in Birmingham. Whilst the lack of incorporated borough status was increasingly seen as a hindrance to democratic representation, it meant that the rapidly growing town was an appealing place for displaced dissenters to settle. Many of those dissenters who lost their livelihoods turned to crafts and trades, including the production of much in demand metal wares in Birmingham. The Toleration Act (1689) under the reign of the Protestant William and Mary reinforced the dissenter's place in the town, allowing them to establish meeting houses and, controversially, schools, since the comparatively high levels of literacy in the dissenting population was viewed with suspicion by those in power. The incoming population brought with them new beliefs, ideas and skills that would change the orientation of the town from subsistence with the land, to growth, expansion, and invention, changing the orientation of the town through its places of worship (figures 105 and 106).

Birmingham, therefore, became a centre of nonconformity (figure 106), with the earliest meeting houses on Phillip Street in the centre (1689) and Lower Meeting in Deritend (1692). At this lowest point stood the Chapel of John the Baptist Deritend (founded 1380, rebuilt 1735), including in its congregation John Rogers, Birmingham's most notable early Protestant nonconformist and martyred under Mary I as recorded in John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563). After further education at the University of Cambridge, Rogers found employment as chaplain to the Merchant Adventurers' Society in Antwerp where he first began working with the English Protestant Lutherans William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale. Distributed by English merchants, their translation of the New Testament (1525) reached a wide readership across Europe, remaining influential today. Their translation not only undermined Catholic belief in being presented in English and without mention of priests and the church, it also incorporated the anonymised works of Luther whose writings were banned (Lindberg, 1996: 314).

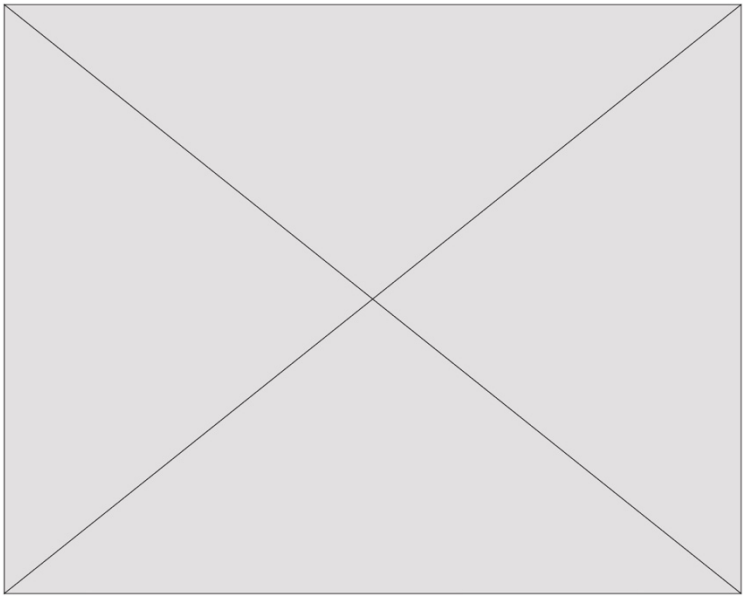

Figure 107: John Freeth depicted with merchants and manufacturers, illustrated by Eckstein. Source: (Gill, 1952: 160)

Figure 108: now known as 'The Old Grammar School', Thomas Hall established a library here at St. Nicolas's Church between 1629-62. Source: author

As dissenting practices grew, further Meeting Houses were built amongst the markets and metal workshops of Deritend, 'High Town' (now High Street) and Moor Street. The growing congregation of the Lower Meeting relocated to New Meeting on Moor Street in what had been the Presbyterian Meeting House, with Carrs Lane United Reform Church nearby (1748). The Independent Meeting off Cannon Street, the Quaker Friends' Meeting House on Bull Street, and the Methodist Meeting on Steelhouse Lane were removed from the workshops in the lower part of town, built amongst newly made spaces in the town – Cannon St was cut in 1733 by the Guest family who owned a cherry orchard there, and The Square was built by Westley in 1713 on ground previously occupied by the Priory. Despite the modest scale and simplicity of the buildings, dissent began to challenge the established order of the Anglican Church, particularly since worship often took place in many smaller meeting houses distributed across the town in close proximity of workshops and houses.

Religious dissent and intellectual debate also began to feature beyond the confines of the meeting house. Freeth's Coffee House (figure 107) fronted onto a narrow passage called Bell Street leading from Spiceal Street. Despite its unassuming and informal character, the Coffee House became the centre of intellectual life through the founding of the Birmingham Book Club around 1750, where books were purchased and circulated amongst members. The members were primarily Unitarian in their beliefs, Langford (1868: 57) suggesting that the Book Club was a cover for discussion of controversial political and religious topics of the day. As part of national discourse on freedom, Freeth's invitations to the Club's annual dinner fostered sympathy with those involved in the battle for American independence despite the impact it was having on trade in Britain. The ethical basis of civic life was deemed of greater importance than its economic prosperity and religious conformity, forcing a divide in society.

Despite their humble places of worship and dialogue, the culture of nonconformity was pervasive. The printed word contributed to a growing awareness of public culture, promoted by Protestants in the aftermath of the Restoration. Over 22,000 pamphlets were published during the time of the English Civil War of the seventeenth century, way in excess of the French Revolutionaries a century later, effecting the 'structural transformation of the 'public sphere' as a place for public debate (Achinstein, 1994: 3, and Habermas in Achinstein: 9). According to Hughes (1998), the Presbyterians employed both print and preaching in influencing Government, simultaneously using action and text to educate their congregations in the search for knowledge. The polemical works of Orthodox Puritan Thomas Hall, Pastor of St. Nicolas's Church Kings Norton (then in Worcestershire, now part of the city of Birmingham, figure 108) exemplified this. Hall wrote for a broad, often poor readership,

Figure 109: excerpt from 1732 East Prospect of Birmingham, with an oversized St. Philip's Church on the higher ground (numbered 10), overlooking the town with diminutive nonconformist chapels below (numbered 14 and 15). Drawn by William Westley. Source: BMT

establishing borrowing libraries between 1629-1662 to allow access and promote dialogue, made possible by cheaper printing techniques and increasing literacy amongst the population. As Keeble (1987: 130) noted, the closing decades of the seventeenth century saw increased uptake of readership by dissenting orders, expedited by the development of subscription publishing almost entirely by nonconformist stationers to raise capital and secure a market. Subscription was to have widespread influence on the economy and industry of the country not least in the construction of the first canals in Birmingham from 1769, as well as the spread of literacy and the encouragement of dialogue.

In contrast, the Anglican Church asserted their authority through evermore substantial religious buildings. In Birmingham, St. Philip's Church (1709-25) was built at the highest point, dominating the topography and Meeting Houses in the lower part of the town as exaggerated in the prospect shown in figure 109. Built in an English interpretation of Baroque by Thomas Archer (1668-1743), the Church incorporated the geometrical rigour of the Italian masters, but without the ostentatious decoration[21]. St. Philip's gave order to the speculative development of the Colmore's estate to the northwest after a 1746 Act for the development of the land. Until then, the only building to occupy this land was William Colmore's house New Hall positioned on the axis of Newport, later Newhall Street (circa 1620). Between the maps of 1731 and 1751, the heathland beyond New Hall Lane, later Colmore Row, changed from fields and pools with an avenue leading to New Hall, to a partially manifest grid of streets perpendicular to Colmore Row marked as 'land for building'. The grid took reference from the new squares of London and was an efficient and refined extension of the town. Colmore Row became a destination overlooking St. Philip's, intersected by Church Street, later terminating at St. Paul's chapel as the estate was built.

Though not the first book collection in Birmingham, it was in this context that William Hutton established the town's first lending library on Bull Street (1751). This event, from which point the thesis develops, helped established the active border condition of the town. No longer was it between other more important or successful places, rather it attracted intellectual debate and original thought in the disciplines of engineering, art, philosophy, and religion. This was not solely dependent on nonconformist voices but encouraged dialogue amongst different factions of society, seen most prominently in the foundation of Birmingham Library as explored in the following chapter.

[21] The Scottish architect Colen Campbell included Archer's St. Philip's Church in his influential *Vitruvius Britannicus* Campbell, C. (1715) *Vitruvius Britannicus.* 2007 edn. London: Author. Available [Accessed., alongside the works of Vanbrugh (under whom Archer had studied), Wren, Jones and Hawksmoor as a record of the 'best of the Moderns'. In framing the work of the English architects, Campbell paid respect to the 'Restorers of Architecture' in Italy, but described their work as 'affected and licentious' and 'wildly Extravagant' Campbell, C. (1715) *Vitruvius Britannicus.* 2007 edn. London: Author. Available [Accessed..

3.2 SURVEY 3: The Flowering of Radical Politics, Intellectual Culture, and Industry – The Foundation of Birmingham Library as Institution (1752–1779)

Figure 110: Drawing 005C – 1779 – 1:5,000 at A3. The position of the Town Hall of 1835 is shown in a dotted line to the top left of the image as a tool for navigating the drawings. Source: author

Between the foundation of Hutton's lending library and the Birmingham Library, the streets and buildings that made up the historical centre of Birmingham between the crossing of the river Rea and St. Martin's Church remained largely unchanged despite a near doubling of the population[22]. It did, however, witness the increasing propriety of the buildings lining New Street which led to less developed ground to the north. The differentiation between the lower part of the town and the raised ground of the heathland became ever more evident, as the institutions associated with the intellectual life of the town grew and matured.

Deretend (Deritend in modern spelling) and Digbeth were lined by workshops, yards and gardens which backed onto the as yet undeveloped meadowland beyond. By the time of Hanson's map of 1778, the most southerly part of town had been laid out for further development on a grid of streets named Bradford Street, Cheapside, and Mosley Street, bringing a degree of civic order to the area. These partially built streets were the first to

[22] Hanson's map of 1778 reported 42,550 inhabitants.

encroach into the floodplain, the value of speculative building outweighing the risks posed by flooding. The commercial life of the town remained concentrated on the ground surrounding St. Martin's Church, where the Michaelmas and Whitsuntide fairs were held as a mark of continuity with the town's origins. The incremental addition of modest buildings to serve the Bull Ring markets meant that by 1779 much of the land between Spiceal Street, Corn Cheaping and High Street at the Shambles was occupied. On market days the stalls of butchers, fishmongers, market gardeners, earthenware dealers and dairy producers prevented passage through this part of the town such was the density of trade (Gill, 1952: 170). The implicit institutional order can be seen in the cyclical events related to the market and wider agricultural topography, from the daily routines of trading to the seasonal celebrations associated with the harvest, yet the disruption caused by this encroachment led to 'improvement' works enabled by a series of Acts in 1769 and 1773 (Gill, 1952: 170).

Documentation of the first meeting of the newly appointed Street Commissioners was held at the Castle Hotel on Moor Street, giving a picture of the area;

> The market 'for the sale of neat cattle within the said town,' which had 'usually been held in the principal street and greatest thoroughfare, called the High Street, to the great danger and inconvenience of all persons living and resorting there,' is to be removed to 'that part of the street called Dale End […]. The buildings scheduled for purchase [and hence demolition] are named as follows: (1) 'At the entrance into New Street; four tenements fronting the High Street; two of them in the occupation of W. Hutton […] with tenements *backwards,*' […] (2) 'The Upper Round-about House in the occupation of Samuel Willets or his Under Tenants […]; (3) The house fronting the Corn Market in the occupation of Francis Moles; [one of those surrounding St. Martin's Church,] (Dent, 1880: 161)

Despite the new powers awarded by the acts, progress on the improvement work was impeded by the limited agency of the Street Commissioners and the restrictions placed on Britain's economy by the war in America[23]. Despite Birmingham's increasing distance from the capital by its own growing wealth and intellect, it was still subject to political control from outside.

Whilst the institutions of New Street gained in propriety, much of the civic life of the town remained close to the intensity of the markets.

[23] This is discussed further in section 3.4.

Figure 111: Facade of the Free Grammar School to New Street, showing new ornamentation and boundary. Source (Dent, 1880: 73)

Figure 112: Three Birmingham Post Offices, the earliest at the top which faced the Free Grammar School. Source: BMT 1996V148.114

New Street remained partially rural though as figure 110 shows, institutional activity began to populate the frontage giving it a decorum not seen elsewhere in Birmingham. The Free Grammar School (figure 111) remained a significant presence, its clock tower presiding over low-rise houses and workshops. The balustrade received a row of vases, and the frontage and entry court were enclosed by stone pillars and iron fencing in 1756, separating the school from its immediate context and associating it with new architectural tastes seen most prominently at St. Phillip's Church which also received similar ornamentation. In stark contrast in scale and ornament, the first post office stood almost opposite the school as a remnant of the rural life of the town (top illustration in Figure 112). The gated passageway between the rustic ale house on the right and the Georgian townhouse housing the post office to the left led to Packwood's bowling green, one of several greens that became a focus of the life of Birmingham. St. Phillip's Church is prominent in the background though this particular view would not have been possible given the orientation of New Street. highlighting the pride taken in the building in this still semi-rural street. The post office was relocated to the opposite side of New Street in 1767 at the top of Peck Lane (middle illustration in Figure 112), where the postal service was expanded to six days a week in an attempt to kerb illegal collections (Langford, 1868: 121). The movement of the Post Office along New Street to the north illustrates the need for ever greater communication with the wider world, each iteration gaining in prominence.

Beyond Lower Temple Street, the frontage to New Street was only built up on the southern side, facing orchards and town gardens to the north which provided the inhabitants of the town with food and a livelihood (Harding and Taigel, 1996: 237). That they were yet to be enclosed or substantially built upon suggests that demand for land on New Street remained low. This makes the construction of the Theatre (Thomas Saul, 1773) all the more unusual. Theatres were limited to seasonal performances and formed part of an emerging field of leisure pursuits, usually on the fringes of town as was the case with Birmingham's version of Vauxhall Gardens to the east. As a development of an earlier theatre from 1743, the theatre was built 'on an extensive plan, and richly ornamented with painting and scenery' (Dent, 1880: 144), reflecting the newfound demand for the arts and culture of an increasingly wealthy merchant class.

Figure 113: Canal Office, Paradise Row, Birmingham. Source: BMT 1996V148.175

At the top of New Street, a newly widened and named Paradise Row led onto the canal wharf and buildings of 1769 (figure 113), constructed on land belonging to Thomas Gooch[24]. As one end of the Birmingham Navigation Canal the wharf was entered from Suffolk Street/ Easy Row, the latter named after Baskerville's residence Easy Hill, then occupied by the pin and button manufacturer John Ryland who had a workshop on New Street. The Canal Office was of a new type associated with the canal within which business transactions took place, the angled sides of the octagonal building overseeing the movement of goods in and out of the wharf via the gated entrances either side. Built with funds raised by subscription[25], the canal beyond brought coal from the collieries around Wolverhampton to be distributed across the town, resulting in a substantial reduction in the cost of fuel for industry and for heating domestic properties. The wharf, canal and nearby iron foundries marked a change in order of the town, relating it the extensive register of the area. As an engineered landscape, the wharf was scaled to the needs of the passage of goods and materials into and out of Birmingham, intensifying activity around the routines of the carriers and distributers. This was extended by the addition of Gas Street Basin in 1772. Much of this site was bounded by gardens and field enclosures. To the west, Bingley House was the last building on the road to Five Ways, home to the banker Charles Lloyd (the elder) who established Taylor and Lloyds Bank with John Taylor in 1765 on Colmore Row, the first of many founded to serve the growing industry of the town. The institutional order of this elevated ground was governed by the private as well as collective interests of industrialists, influencing later patterns of civic development most prominently in the Town Hall (shown in outline on the drawing in figure 110).

On the heathland to the east, St. Philip's Church continued to dominate the town, ordering the speculative development of the Colmore's New Hall estate to the northwest. Colmore Row grew in prominence with its prospect overlooking St. Philip's, intersected by an avenue leading to the Colmore's house positioned in the middle of partly built, partly projected New Hall Street, indicating that this was a town in rapid transition where once rural villas were being surrounded by development.

[24] In 1766, Sir Thomas Gooch inherited the estate of Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London, who had purchased the land from the Marrow family in 1730 (Gill, p.124). Marrow took originally ownership of the estate after Lord L'Isle was forced to give up his property. Thomas's brother William was Governor of Virginia from 1727 where his estate produced and regulated tobacco. He also called for the suppression of 'fanatical and enthusiastic knowledge' being preached by nonconformist ministers in Virginia Anonymous (nd.-a) *Sir William Gooch (1681–1751).* Available at: https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/gooch-sir-william-1681-1751/ [Accessed 12.08.2022]. The Gooch Estate still own substantial tracts of land in the centre of Birmingham around Digbeth.

[25] Appendix B provides a list of those who subscribed to the building of the canal. Many investors also had interests in other institutions including the Birmingham Library and Lunar Society, and as Fellows of the Royal Society in London.

Church Street was extended northwards in 1778 forming New Hall Market square and a newly set out but as yet unbuilt grid of streets around St. Paul's Chapel. The chapel was begun in 1779 after an endowment by Charles Colmore on whose land it was built, and through a share of the proceeds from the town's second music festival that year. Robinson (1973: 78) noted that the design for St. Paul's by Roger Eykyn was most likely derived from James Gibbs' 'Book of Architecture', one of many pattern books that were published for architects and clients. St. Paul's received a critical response from Samuel Wyatt[26] who was working in Birmingham and elsewhere in Britain at the time, illustrating the debate over architectural style amongst the intellectual elite.

The ground around St. Philip's Church and the Square was home to an increasingly affluent and aspirational population, though workshops and yards remained part of the urban order. On Temple Row stood Dadley's Hotel (1772), also known as the Tontine Hotel on account of funds being raised by subscription for its construction. In the absence of any public buildings, the hotel played host to numerous large public meetings, significantly for the town's first Hospital, as well as the controversial dinner to celebrate the second anniversary of the fall of the Bastille in 1791[27]. Nearby, the Square had become an address of some standing. According to Dent (1880: 152), those who lived on the Square, including Samuel Johnson's life-long friend Edmund Hector, had 'risen to a position of ease and prosperity'. As a diminutive version of the squares of the Bedford Estate in London, the Square was lined by two storey houses as a unified composition overlooking a formal garden to the centre. This private development was a moment of decorum in amongst the competing commercial enterprise of the town. Between St. Phillip's, The Square and Colmore Row to the north, institutions that represented the intellectual culture of Birmingham were founded. Following Hutton's earlier model, Joseph Crompton's private circulating library on Colmore Row (1763) was a much larger collection reaching 3000 volumes, open to 'all Lovers of Literature, and mental entertainment' (Crompton in Langford, 1868: 131). Others followed, including John Lowe's library on nearby Cherry Street (1776).

[26] The Wyatt family were renowned architects and builders of the time. James Wyatt studied antiquity and the Renaissance on a Grand Tour of Italy, and William and Samuel Wyatt became known as builders to James' plans, earning a reputation as architects in their own right (Robinson, 26). Samuel Wyatt's work included various transformations and additions at Shugborough Hall, Staffordshire for Thomas Anson II, and at Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, for example. On St. Paul's Church, he remarked;
'that the circular window and door on the side are not in a piece with the long windows. That the gallery is too wide and will obstruct the voice. That the Middle Isle is too narrow and too low. That the Entabliture [sic.] above the capitals is ugly. That the groin arches are very pretty. That the Gallerys [sic.] rise a monstrous hight on the pillars. That the windows are too large, […] That there can be nothing uglier than the chancel window in the execution. That in general terms he should be sorry they should build it so. […]' Robinson, J. M. (1973) *Samuel Wyatt, Architect*. D.Phil. Thesis. Oxford..
[27] The implications of this dinner are discussed in section 3.3.3.3 in relation to the Birmingham Riot.

As the most publicly oriented and enduring collections, Birmingham Library (1779) was founded 'to promote a spirit of liberality and friendship among all classes of men without distinction' (Parish, 1966). This was one of the earliest subscription libraries to be established outside of London, preceded only by Leeds Library of 1768. Starting life as a modest collection accessible by subscription and held in a bookcase[28] at the house of merchant and button maker John Lee jr at Snow Hill (shown conjecturally in the survey at figure 110), the Library provided a focus for the early civic life of the town. From the outset, the nineteen mainly radical dissenting founders[29] wished to broaden the concern of the library 'with a liberal anxiety to extend its usefulness' (Edwards in Parish, 1966: 11). This proved to be a challenge to the constitution of the library and was representative of wider held political and religious differences in the conforming and nonconforming life of Britain[30]. Birmingham Library therefore represents the movement between the implicit praxis of the locale, and the explicit manifestation of the institution through the society of religious, scientific, and civic-minded individuals.

Institutions associated with the 'relief' of Birmingham's inhabitants occupied ground to the east. Not only were they under pressure to relocate to make way for more proprietous uses, but the requirement to increase their support came from the town and beyond. In his argument for the construction of the General Hospital to those who believed the Infirmary to be sufficient, Dr. John Ash noted that;

> It having been objected, to the Usefulness of the above-mentioned design, that the present Infirmary established at the Workhouse, will answer all the Purposes of it, it may be necessary here to observe that more than half the Manufacturers in the Town of Birmingham are not Parishioners of it, and cannot be entitled to any Relief from the present Infirmary: Many of them are Foreigners, but the greatest Part belong to the Parishes of the neighbouring Country. (Ash in Dent, 1880: 125)

The Infirmary was relocated beyond Steel House Lane from its position next to the Workhouse on Lichfield Street and enlarged to cope with growing numbers. The plans for the Hospital first commenced in 1765 under the direction of Ash, but despite fund raising through the music festival of 1786 (a forerunner to the Triennial festivals) funds soon ran out with many sponsors directing their investments towards the canal companies.

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[28] According to Parish, this bookcase, constructed in 1782, was presented to the Library in the 1960s and was exhibited in the Margaret Street premises of what became the Birmingham and Midland Institute. Upon asking after its whereabouts as part of this research, the Birmingham and Midland Institute advised that it 'had been lost many years ago' (having been used as a stationery cupboard), and that 'it was of not great importance' (emailed dated 15.02.2017).

[29] Early members included: industrialists Matthew Boulton, James Watt and John Taylor; physicians Dr. William Small and Dr. John Ash; bankers Sampson and Charles Lloyd; dissenting ministers Rev. John Edwards (Priestley's successor at New Meeting) and Rev. Radcliffe Scholefield (Old Meeting) Association. Refer to Appendix B to associations and membership of these and other leading individuals of the time.

[30] This is discussed in detail in section 4.3.3.2.

Figure 114: Trade Card for Matthew Boulton's 'Soho Manufactory, Birmingham. Source: BMT 1996F137

In 1776 a meeting was held at Dadley's Hotel for 'the Nobility and Gentry, as well as the Inhabitants of the Town' to raise funds to 'speedily render this charitable Design useful to the public' (Dent, 1880: 130). Following a second music festival in 1778, the Hospital was finally constructed on the northern boundary of the town in 1779, providing beds for 100 patients. Like subscription for books and canals, this would expand into a campaign for the first Town Hall to be constructed in Britain and made manifest a nascent civic order.

Many of those subscribers were part of the fraternity of industrialists who made their name and fortunes in the town. Moving north on the road to Wolverhampton stood Matthew Boulton's Soho Works (figure 114). The road had long been a trade routes between London and the north and had been turnpiked in 1752 (Gill, 1952: 87), opening up the surrounding land for further speculation. The enclosure of what until then had been open common land marked the largest single expansion of the town, Boulton arguing that he had simply removed 'a few miserable huts filled with beggarly people' for the creation of employment for 'a thousand men, women and children (…) for nearly thirty years past' (Boulton in Uglow, 2002: 159).

Born in Birmingham and educated at an academy for dissenters, Boulton had become a partner in his father's buckle-making business, and later established himself as a manufacturer of 'toys' at Snow Hill for which Birmingham became renowned. In 1762, he purchased the lease to a mill next to a pool formed by the diversion of Hockley Brook by a previous inhabitant, reconstructing the mill and relocating his business there. His business operations soon outgrew the mill, and the new 'manufactory' and workers housing was built, financed largely through debt and family gain. Great Hockley Pool and Brook initially provided power to the 'manufactory' as well as a backdrop to Boulton's works and home which hosted Lunar Society meetings. The demand for water during summer months and the threat posed by the construction of the Birmingham Canal across the heath drove Boulton to develop a steam-engine to pump water into his millpond, drawing on the mechanical expertise of James Watt. The canal was both a cause of concern to Boulton's manufacturing but as a subscriber to the canal he saw the greater importance of improving communication with both London and the northern coal and manufacturing districts (Smiles, 1865: 179). At this point, neither Boulton or Watt realised the profound impact both the steam-engine and canal were to have on manufacturing and trade, and the city itself as the provision of power moved from water to steam engines driven by coal.

The 'manufactory', designed first by Thomas Lightholder from 1761 then by William and Samuel Wyatt from around 1763, housed a multitude of Boulton's business operations, as his trade card illustrates. The three-storey front range of the factory was of 19 bays with

three end bays either side carrying pediments. Three central bays formed a ‘gatehouse’ topped by an octagonal roof with clock cupola, beneath which visitors found show rooms for inspection and purchase of goods (Robinson, 1973: 21). At the time of its completion in 1766 it was the largest factory in Europe. Boulton’s house was added soon after, around the time that Samuel Wyatt was completing works at Kedleston Hall with Robert Adam. Soho became known as the 'epitome of the arts', the road to Wolverhampton travelled by nobility and gentry gaining the title the 'road to taste' (Hutton, 1783: 271). Science at this point became associated more with technology than knowledge, embodied by the Lunar society. Nevertheless, the link between arts, science and commerce remained evident in the construction of Boulton’s works, and in the homes of those associated with the society.

Just as Boulton had the means to move beyond the boundaries of the town to enclosed heathland, so too did other wealthy industrialists, extending the civic ground of Birmingham. The rural villa in landscaped grounds was a sign of success away from the increasingly congested centre where industry and living occupied the same ground. Many had homes in the town as well as the country. Hutton had a townhouse at High Street and a villa at Bennett’s Hill, Saltley. On the road towards Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon to the south-east, several industrialists built comfortable villas: the banker and manufacturer of metal buttons, japanned ware, and snuff boxes John Taylor at Bordesley Hall, Mount Pleasant; Sampson Lloyd at The Farm; George Humphrys at Spark Brook; William Russell at Showell Green in Worcestershire; and Lady Carhampton at Moseley Hall as a tenant of John Taylor.[31]

The years leading up to the formation of the Birmingham Library at the conclusion of this survey witnessed a town coming to terms with the rapid growth in manufacturing activity accompanied by greater inward migration of those seeking work and ‘relief’ in the hospitals and workhouse. It was also a town with a flourishing civic life. As the economic basis shifted away from those activities related to agriculture – the markets, the fairs, metalworking by hand – towards ever larger manufacturing operations and modes of transport in the canal, the civic ground of the town was reorientated towards new institutions away from the historical centre. With this came new modes of architectural representation. The façade as a sign of decorum became part of the street, with architects of some repute commissioned in their design, beginning an architectural dialogue as seen in Wyatt’s criticism of Eykyn’s work at St. Paul’s Church.

[31] Despite the removed position of these villas, many of them were attacked during the Birmingham Riots of 1791 on account of their association with dissent, and specifically with Birmingham Library. This is discussed in section 4.3.3.

Despite the visual prominence of certain institutions, the everyday spaces of the town remained a vital part of the implicit institutional order. The radical dissenters chose unassuming places to meet in amongst the markets nearby their meeting houses. The select group of the Lunar Society met at Boulton's home, articulating a complex spectrum of public life from the domestic interior, where Birmingham Library first found form, to the institution of the street and the much wider register of a landscape reoriented towards the canal. That much of this was raised through subscription speaks of the citizens' will and agency in achieving its aims without intervention or support from outside. As explored in the subsequent survey, the formalisation of the library through its laws, catalogue and ultimately permanent home established an explicit institutional order and embodied long-held views on the contested topic of freedom and liberty that eluded so many nonconformists. That Birmingham was open to such dialogue articulates the ethical dimension of the place and its ontological depth with regards to freedom.

Figure 115: 'A View of High Street Birmingham' by Thomas Hollins, 1812. Source: BMT 1988V1518

3.3 SURVEY 4: Reform, and the Emergence of Civic Order – the Construction of Birmingham Library and the Town Hall (1780–1835)

Figure 116: Drawing 006B – 1835 – 1:2,500 at A3. Survey 4 upon the construction of the Town Hall and Market Hall which became explicit expressions of the institutional order of Birmingham. Source: author

As the founding of Birmingham Library marked the conclusion of the previous survey, this period saw the continued manifestation of an explicit institutional order, culminating in the building of the Town Hall (figure 116). This represented not only the embodiment of a local civic ground, but as the first of its kind in Britain it was a national statement of emancipation coinciding with the Reform Act of 1834. Those explicit institutions reinforced an earlier order of difference between the lower and upper parts of Birmingham, though each continued to evolve.

By 1835, many of the plans set out in the first Improvement Act of 1769 had been fulfilled, clearing away the accumulated buildings associated with the market around St. Martin's Church. The improvements carried out by the Street Commissioners intended to make the market a safer and more respectable place for trade, but also provide a more suitable setting for St. Martin's Church by opening the churchyard on all sides (figure 115).

Figure 117: Public Office, Moor Street, Birmingham. Source: BMT 1996V148.117

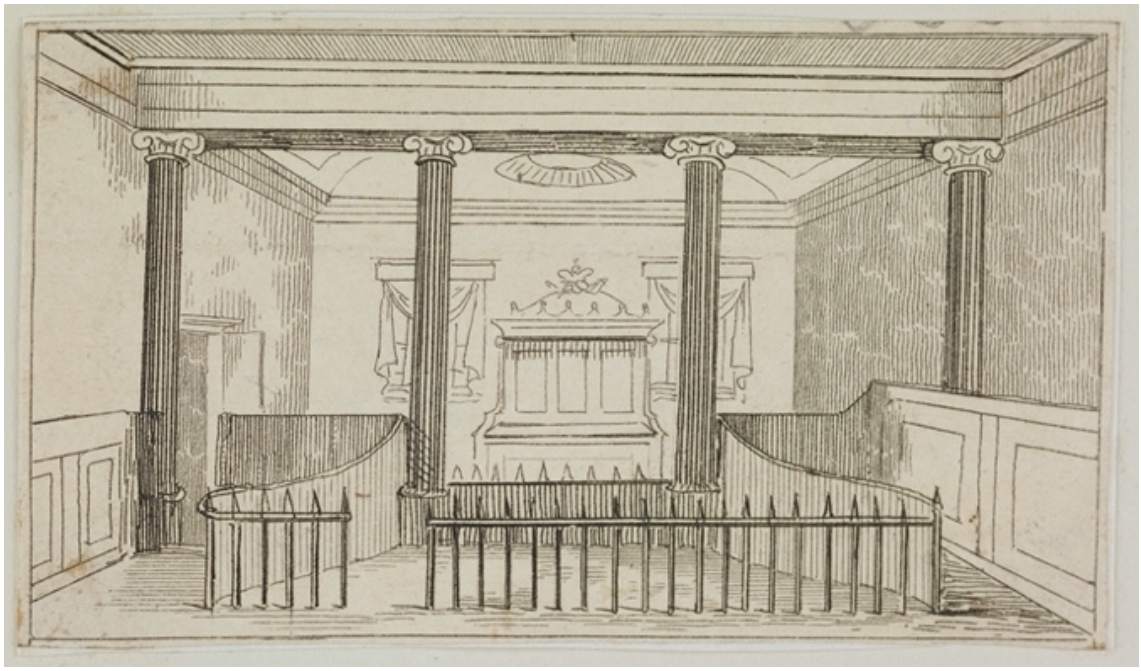

Figure 118: Galleried magistrates court interior of Public Office, Moor Street, Birmingham. Source: BMT 1996V148.118

The Old Cross, which had been the place of Street Commissioner's business, was deemed unsuitable and was demolished in 1784 along with the Welsh Cross, and limits were placed on where and when market traders could set up, cutting through the implicit institutional order of the market for the first time. These structures were replaced in 1809 with the town's first public statue to commemorate Horatio Nelson who had been killed at the Battle of Trafalgar at the height of the Napoleonic wars. Nelson's visit to Birmingham in 1802 had been received with a large public audience, and the statue was erected in his honour after his death, and in recognition of the role the weapons manufacturers of Birmingham had played in his victories. William Westmascott's statue of Nelson stood amongst the open ground of the markets, with William Hollins' 'Egyptian Conduit' water pump in front of the newly revealed and refaced St. Martin's Church. Hollins explained that the architecture of the pump responded to the 'new style of ornamental furniture and decoration, namely, the Egyptian' in veneration of Nelson's victory at the Nile, as 'the best [style of architecture] adapted for a public building' (Langford, 1868: 202). Such influences were seen in Regency architecture as part of the ever-expanding taxonomy of architectural styles through the expansion of the British empire, though no further attempt was made to remodel the area according to such tastes. Hollins also designed the Public Offices on Moor Street (1807, figures 117 and 118) nearby the Meeting Houses, replacing the demolished Old Cross and various hotels as the meeting place of the Street Commissioners. Like the canals, it was paid for through subscription to a Tontine rather than by rates, as a mark of propriety rather than any form of civic representation. The Offices provided accommodation for the Magistrates and Street Commissioners and a large room for public town meetings, though Beardsworth's Repository for Horses and Carriages was used for larger gatherings. This included the second meeting of the Birmingham Political Union in May 1830 where 80,000 townspeople gathered to listen to Thomas Attwood and other leading figures campaign for parliamentary reform. Further along Moor Street, The New Meeting was reconstructed in 1802, the previous house having been destroyed in the Birmingham Riots of 1791[32]. Carrs Lane United Reform Church (1820) was rebuilt by Thomas Stedman Whitwell[33], architect of the Pantechnetheca on New Street.

[32] The sequence of events leading up to the riots, the reform movement and the subsequent implications are discussed in greater depth in section 3.4

[33] Whitwell (1784-1840) was best known for his design of the secular communal utopia at New Harmony, Indiana, USA.

Figure 119: The Market Hall, view from Worcester Street. Source: BMT 1996V148.110

Figure 120: Drawing 006E - Plan of Market Hall in context of open-air markets and surrounding streets. Based on a drawing held by BFCAA. Source: author

The formalised open-air market was complete by 1811, with market stalls relocated to Dale End to the north, and significantly to New Smithfield to the south. The site of the latter had been the ancestral home to the earliest lords of the manor but had fallen into disrepair. Purchased by the Street Commissioners, the moat was filled in, the house demolished and the New Smithfield marketplace was opened in 1817 for the sale of cattle, sheep, and pigs. Around the same time, the Paving Committee began their work to flag the footpaths of all principal streets, half paid for by the Commissioners with the remaining funds raised through subscription (Langford, 1868: 318).

New Street was the first to receive this improvement, 'after levelling as nearly as practicable the whole of the street from one end to the other, to flag both foot paths and to light the street by lamps, raised upon iron columns, at the edge of the causeway.' (Langford, 1868: 441), followed soon after by High Street.

Plans for an indoor market were first raised in 1822 and given greater impetus after the Street Commissioners purchased the manorial rights to the market in 1824. It was not until 1827 that the Town Improvement Bill was passed with the intention to build a Market Hall, to enlarge Smithfield Market and to enact a series of street improvements across the town. Significantly, the Bill also included proposals for 'the erection of a Town Hall[34], suitable for the transactions of public business, an object to which the attention of the Commissioners was called, in the first instance, by the Musical Committee of the General Hospital' (Report of the Street Commissioners cited in Langford, 1868: 445). This Bill made manifest the institutional order of the town that influenced subsequent development, and which is still evident today.

The Market Hall (Charles Edge, 1835, figures 119 and 120) replaced several buildings between Bell Street and Philip Street, with entrances facing onto the Bull Ring and to Worcester Street. Inspired by the Grecian Classical Revival in the early decades of the nineteenth century, the building sat on a rusticated stone basement from which rose double-storey openings, the two entrances flanked by Doric columns of giant order. The stone mass of the building stood in stark contrast with the adjacent two and three storey brick buildings, and the informality of trade which continued in the surrounding streets. Inside, two lines of cast iron columns with decorated capitals formed a broad central aisle with space either side for market stalls to be erected, or for the room to be used for different purposes.

[34] The Town Hall is discussed in greater depth in sections 4.3, 4.4 and chapter 5.

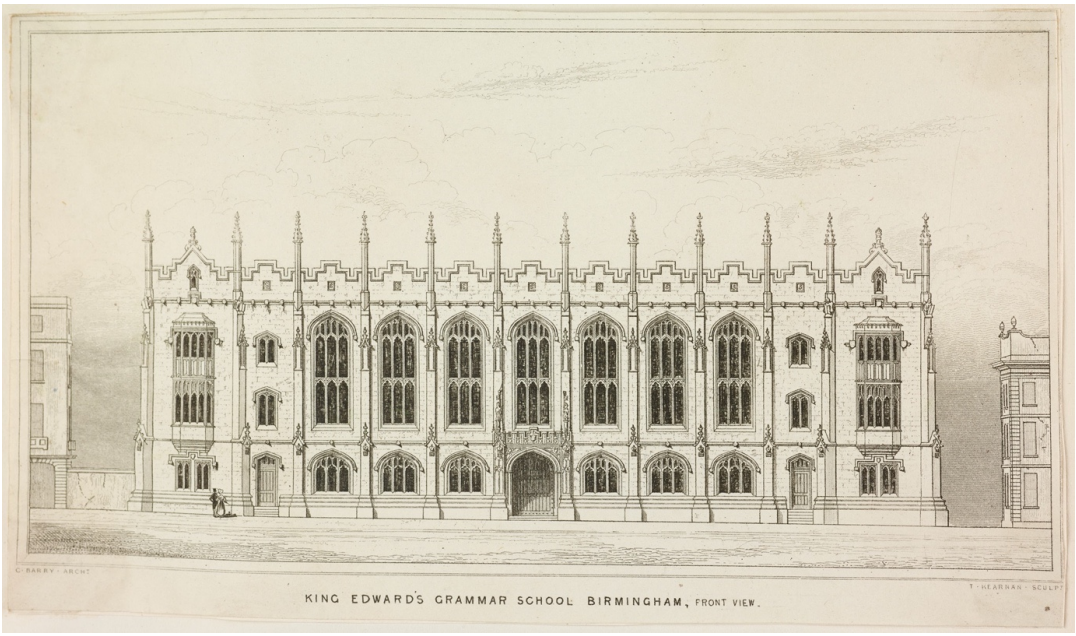

Figure 121: Charles Barry's King Edward's Grammar School, Birmingham, Front View, to New Street. 1833.
Source: BMT 1996V148.131

Between the Market Hall to the south and the Town Hall to the north, the newly paved, cleaned and lit[35] New Street became an ever more respectable address for the civic life of the town. The buildings that lined New Street were gradually updated or replaced by new uses. As a successor and beneficiary of the earlier Gild, the King Edward VI Free Grammar School (figure 121) was a wealthy land-owning institution with holdings around the town. Their commitment to New Street led to the launch of a competition for a new building. Charles Barry's winning proposal was for a castellated Gothic building with Tudor details, associating the building with the era of the school's foundation.

It was here that Barry first worked with A. W. N. Pugin and the stone carver J. Thomas, with whom he worked on the Houses of Parliament (1835). Although the scale of the school was minor compared to the Houses of Parliament, certain stylistic motifs featured in both buildings; the symmetrical façade with projecting oriel windows to each tower, pointed arch windows with stone tracery, finials that projected high beyond the parapet. However, it lacked the structural and programmatic dynamics, or 'picturesque utility', that Pugin brought to the Westminster project. The debate over architectural style, in particular Pugin's belief that the Perpendicular would assert Christian and English as well as moral values, would come to dominate the profession in the early part of the nineteenth century (Bergdoll, 2000: 160).

Next to the Free Grammar School stood Thomas Attwood & Richard Spooner's Bank, one of many private banks that had grown in line with business and transportation. Attwood was a local promoter of the early railway projects and treasurer to the Mechanics' Institute – one of several forebearers to the Birmingham and Midland Institute – but most renowned as founder of the Birmingham Political Union which called for parliamentary reform, leading to the mass meetings on Newhall Hill. In 1798, the Hen and Chickens Hotel moved from High Street to its position between the Grammar School and Attwood and Spooner's Bank, to a building designed by James Wyatt, becoming a prominent feature of the town as a point of arrival and accommodation for visiting dignitaries. It is most likely here that Karl Friedrich Schinkel[36] stayed on his visit of 1826, his journal entry recording his arrival during 'the Saturday evening or night market, and driving in there felt like entering an amphitheatre full of people' (Schinkel, 1826: 126).

[35] Gas lighting was invented by William Murdock of Handsworth, first used at Boulton's Soho works (Gill, C. (1952) *History of Birmingham.* 3 vols. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press for Birmingham City Council., 191). The Birmingham Gas, Light and Coke Company was founded in 1819, the Birmingham and Staffordshire Gas Light Company in 1825 (Briggs, A. (1963) *Victorian Cities.* 1968 edn. Middlesex, England: Penguin., 218)

[36] Schinkel's writing on his experiences is discussed further in section 4.3.

Figure 122: Charles Jones' Pantechnetheca, New St, Birmingham, designed by Thomas Steadman Whitwell. Source: BMT 1970V616

Figure 123: Samuel Wyatt's façade to Theatre Royal, New Street 1781. Source: BMT 1965V221.32

That Schinkel included Birmingham in his itinerary is testament to the increasing prominence of industrial activity, even if the civic setting did not meet with his expectations or approval.

Charles Jones' Pantechnetheca (figure 122) opened in 1824 to great acclaim and intrigue, described as 'one of 'the sights' of the town' as a destination for visitors (Harman and Showell, 1885: section titled 'Pantechnetheca'). The shop replaced the 'Old Crown' public house on the corner of New Street and Union Passage in 1824. The façade was as novel a composition to the town as the wares sold within. A Greek Revival façade loosely recalling the Athenian agora, the seven bay stoa was supported at ground level on Doric columns with an architrave over listing Jones' name alongside goods in 'gold, silver plate, gems, bronzes, jewels', a taller first floor of further show rooms fronted in Ionic columns with statues over, the attic adorned with the shop's name in Greek type.

As a 'General Repository of Art', the shop sold weapons, badges and medals, jewellery, cutlery, papier mâché, and plated wares, often manufactured by smaller businesses. Jones was also an agent for trade with 'East and West India', part of a global economy. Its architect Thomas Steadman Whitwell (1784-1840) was best known for his design of the secular communal utopia at New Harmony, Indiana, USA. This was done in close collaboration with the mill owner and social reformer Robert Owen, but their plans remained unrealized. That he was working in Birmingham is some mark of the town's increasing aspirations for civic representation through its architecture.

Further along New Street to the north, the earlier Theatre by Saul was reworked by Samuel Wyatt in 1781 to provide a more refined façade to New Street along with the addition of a coffee house (figure 123). Wyatt's ongoing work for Boulton at his Soho manufactory and his reworking of St. Paul's Chapel led to his commission for the Theatre (and numerous other works), where Boulton was a shareholder. The patronage by wealthy industrialists who made themselves in Birmingham was evident here as elsewhere. There was an aspiration for a theatre that would be representative of the culture of the town, and the funds for the construction were raised from the Triennial Music Festival organised by Joseph Moore, which also provided for the construction of the hospital (1779) and later the Town Hall (1834) (Gill, 1952: 131). Wyatt's stone façade was well received, described by a local journalist as 'a superb portico…from the design of one of the first artists in the kingdom' (Robinson, 1973: 115). The Theatre was destroyed in an arson attack in 1792, the reconstruction works complete by 1795. The 'Royal' title proved elusive until 1807. Theatres that were licensed with parliamentary approval were granted this title, allowing for a monopoly on performances for four months of the year (Gill, 1952: 137).

Figure 124: Portico to Thomas Rickman's Society of Arts building, New Street, with St. Phillip's Church in the background. Source: BMT 1996V148.163

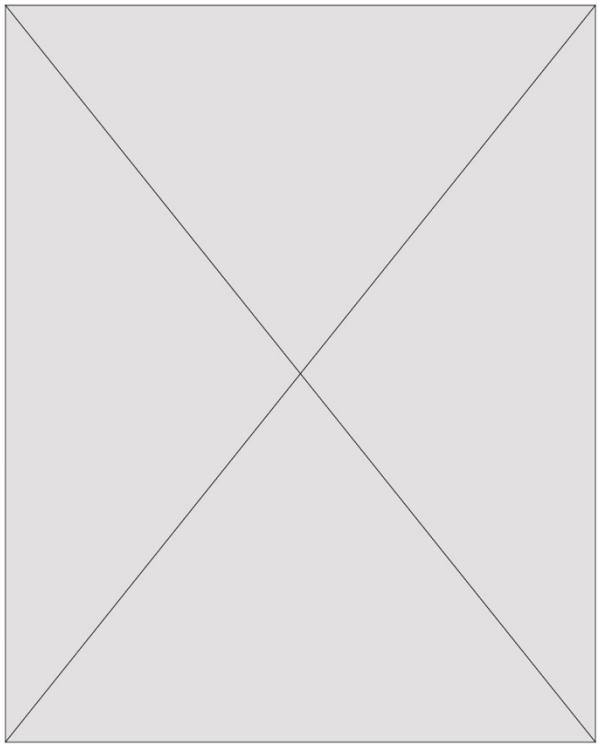

Figure 125: Philosophical Institution, Cannon Street. Source: Waterhouse, 63

A Bill for Royal title was supported in parliament by the conservative politician and political philosopher Edmund Burke[37], famously referring to Birmingham as 'the great toyshop of Europe' in his speech (Gill, 1952: 137).

The passage of communications through the town grew dramatically during this period. As Dent (1880: 345) noted, in 1770 there were no more than six mail coaches running from Birmingham, reaching at least eighty-four of which forty were daily by 1820. The Post Office was removed to a new site further up New Street, reconstructed again on the same site after the cutting of Bennett's Hill, described by Dent as an old-fashioned suburban mansion called Portugal House designed by Beau Green.

Bennett's Hill was also the location of the News Room (1825), by Rickman and Hutchinson, providing readers with newspaper from London and abroad, along with details of shipping, commerce, and law. The Academy of Arts, first established on Union Street in 1814 with Sir John Soane as Honorary Member for Architecture, relocated to Thomas Rickman's building of 1821 on New Street where it became the Society of Arts (figure 124). Rickman's *Attempt to Discriminate the Style of Architecture in England* (1819) provided terminology for the Gothic Revival. It is therefore likely that his Classical design for the Society of Arts predates this work. A portico supported by giant Corinthian columns stood over the pavement facing the entry court of the Theatre Royal opposite. To the rear of the building, a brick drum housed a large top lit room The Panorama for exhibitions surrounded with smaller rooms for sculpture, equipment and meetings (Gill, 1952: 141) most likely influenced by Soane. Close by, the Philosophical Institution (figure 125), founded in 1800, acquired buildings on Cannon Street in 1813. The objective of the Institution was to 'promote Literature, Science, and the Arts, by Lectures and Discussions, a Library, a Museum, a Laboratory and Apparatus, and the publication of Transactions' (Waterhouse, 1954: 5). Offering a parallel education for those artisans employed in the town, the Mechanics' Institute opened at Mount Zion Chapel, Newhall Hill (1826). With the bankers Spooner as President and Attwood as Treasurer, the Mechanics' Institute became a training ground for supporters of the Birmingham Political Union founded in 1830, leading to the mass meeting on nearby Newhall Hill on 7 May 1832.

[37] Joseph Priestley, discussed later in this chapter, wrote his *Letters to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, Occasioned by his Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1791) in response to Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Burke, who had initially stood with the American colonists, had changed his position on revolutionary politics, his *Reflections* seen as 'an example of his romantic reaction against rationalism of the Enlightenment' (Schofield, R. (2004) The Enlightened Joseph Priestley A Study of His Life and Word from 1773 to 1804. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University.: 278)

Figure 126: View of Christ Church, with Ann Street to the left and New Street to the right, 1829. The portico of the Society of Arts can be seen on the left side of New Street. The etching also shows the dramatic level change across the site. Source: BMT

Figure 127: Birmingham from the Dome of St Philip's Church in 1821, drawn by Samuel Lines Snr. The view shows the encroachment of building on open fields, the ground to the west largely bordered by formal buildings but with overlooking the churchyard. Source: BMT 1893P72

Christ Church (1813, figure 126) dominated the top of New Street at the junction with Ann Street (Colmore Row) and forming an irregularly shaped ‘square’ that led onto Paradise Street. Christ Church was proposed in 1803 to provide for the ‘lower classes’ of the area to the south of New Street who were denied access to the oversubscribed Church of England places of worship. Annexed to the Cathedral Church of Lichfield and built on land offered by William Inge, King George III paid £1,000 towards its construction in 1805, though the building was only consecrated in 1813 after a struggle to raise the necessary funds for its construction. Dent (1880: 306) described Christ Church as ‘a heavy, plain, stone structure, with a projecting roof and a tetrastyle Doric portico at the western end’, its ‘unsightly’ form marred further by the later Gothic ‘ugly spire’ added in 1815 in place of the planned dome and cupola. This amalgamation of styles due to prolonged period of construction led to an uncomfortable compromise that was not unique to Christ Church. Fluctuating economic conditions and a developing culture of building meant that projects were often over ambitious, or poorly conceived.

Samuel Lines Senior’s view over Christ Church and the rear of Society of Arts (figure 127) shows the still semi-rural character of parts of New Street and hinterland. By 1828, this had been bisected by Waterloo Street and Bennett’s Hill as a continuation of Temple Row to the east and of New Hall Street to the north (figure 128). Waterloo Street was constructed by Commissioner Theodore Price who owned the land to the east of Christ Church. Waterloo Steps, which linked Waterloo Street with New Street and provided a route to Paradise Street, was described as a ‘walking street’ or passage and likened to Cranborne Alley in London built by the Earl of Salisbury, twelve feet wide with shops on either side (Gill, 1952: 195). Catherine Hutton, daughter of William, described Bennett’s Hill as ‘an upstart of a street’, on account of it bearing the same name as her family home to the north, but also as an indication of the increasing propriety in this part of Birmingham (Dent, 1880: 309). The street as a society of rooms manifested the institutional order of a rapidly changing topography.

Figure 128: the corner of Waterloo Street and Bennet's Hill, towards St. Philip's Square. Source: BMT 1996V148.178

Figure 129: Paradise Street Towards Christ Church with Town Hall on the left. Source: BMT 1889V8

New Street reached a plateau at Christ Church that led onto Paradise Street (figure 129) where Birmingham Medical School stood (1826), and the canal wharves beyond. As noted earlier, plans for a Town Hall were formed at the same time as the Market Hall to the south as a consequence of the Town Improvement Act of 1827. It was here that these plans came to fruition in 1835, though the decision on the most appropriate site for the Town Hall nor the completion of the building was not reached easily[38]. The competition, the selection of the architect, the troubled construction and opening of the Town Hall contribute to a greater understanding of the way in which people in Birmingham viewed themselves and how they wished to be viewed by others. By 1834, the Town Hall was partially completed and in use, providing the termination to New Street that the Commissioners had originally intended.

Together, the market hall, the school, Society of Arts, Theatre Royal, the Philosophical Institution and Mechanics' Institute provided a cultural ground for the growing population, a spatial and intellectual orientation towards the newly developed edges of the town along New Street as an expression of an explicit institutional order.

[38] This is be explored further in section 4.3.

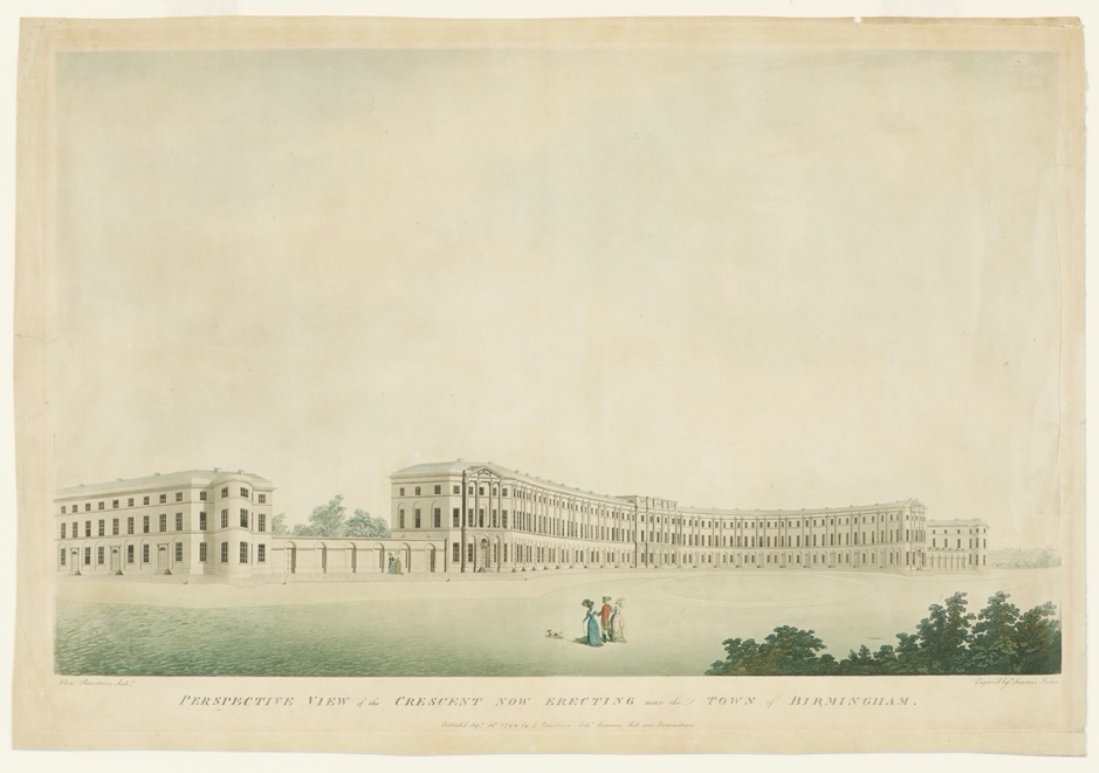

Figure 130: The Crescent, John Rawsthorne, 1792. ‘Perspective View of The Crescent Now Erecting Near The Town of Birmingham’. Source: BMT 1956V373.

3.3.1 The Formalisation of the Boundary

With the coming of the canal into the western edges of the town, the site of Baskerville's, later Ryland's, house at Easy Hill was transformed into Baskerville Wharfs and the Union Rolling Mills. These served the expanded canal network after the construction of Fazeley Canal, Digbeth Junction, Ashted tunnel and locks leading to the north bisecting the Colmore estate (1790), and the Worcester Canal (1791) served by an extended Worcester and Birmingham Canal Companies Wharf and offices to the south. Despite the encroachment of industry and canal carrying on the western edge of the town, Lloyd's Bingley Hall was a reminder of the rural villas on the town's outer limits. This was joined by ambitious plans for The Crescent, following the model of urbane housing developments seen elsewhere in Britain.

Planned by John Rawsthorne (1761-1832) in 1792 (figure 130), The Crescent recalled Wood the elder's Royal Crescent (1767-74) in Bath though on a smaller scale, the thirty-four houses unified in a single sweeping composition which was to command views over 'a pleasing and lively summer-view […], laid out in small gardens' (Drake, 1825: 45). As a student of James Wyatt, the Palladian influences are evident in Rawsthorne's work, as are those of Nash's arrangement of terraced housing around Regent's Park, London during the late eighteenth century. The Crescent was never completed due to economic depression after the Napoleonic wars and the encroachment of industry brought about by the construction of the canals and Crescent Wharves. However, it formed part of widespread changes in the order of the town and to new ideas about civic life, discussed later in this chapter.

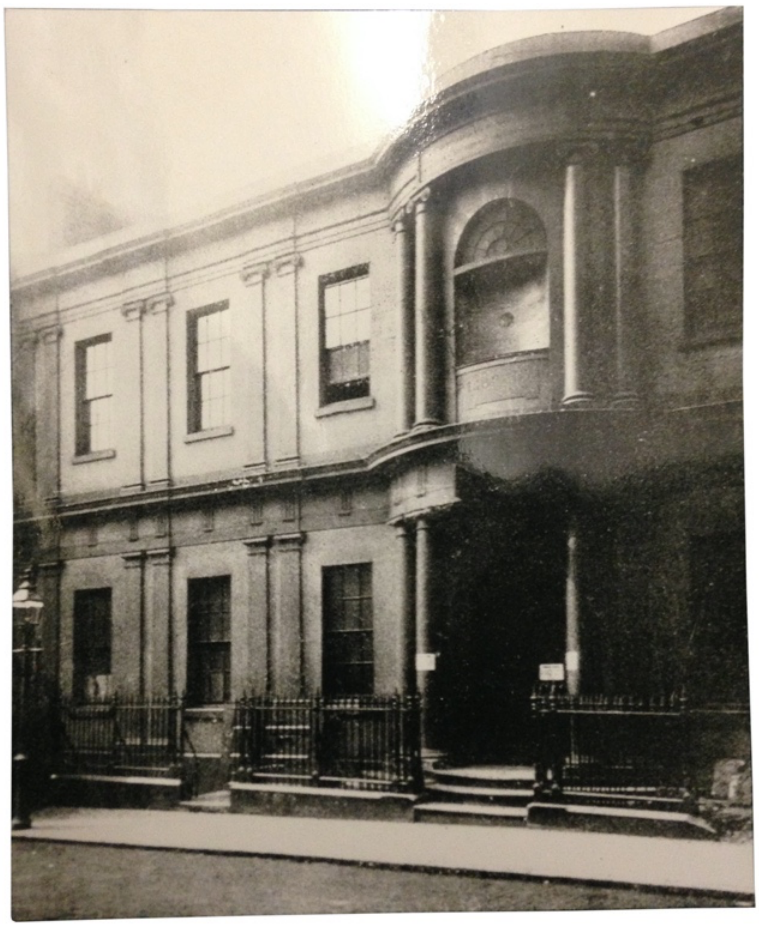

Figure 131: Facade of Birmingham Library to Union Street. Source: BMI

Figure 132: Reading room interior to Birmingham Library, Union Street. Source: BMI

3.3.2 The First Building of Birmingham Library

From its foundation in 1779, Birmingham Library remained without a permanent home until the turn of the century, though this was no sign of the institution's stability. In the intervening period, it occupied a room in Swan Yard (1782) at the junction of High Street and New Street, then relocated to a warehouse owned by the banker Samuel Lloyd on Upper Priory (1790) adjacent to The Square. The first purpose built library was on Union Street, previously a narrow 'zig-zag passage for pedestrians, called Corbett's Alley' (Drake, 1825: 51). Like other buildings on the street, the Library (figures 131 and 132) was fronted in stone, having a 'curved portico, supported by two pair of coupled columns of the Doric order, surmounted by an Ionic story of the same form' (Drake, 1825: 53). Over the entrance was engraved the Library's motto

> 'ad mercaturam bonarum artium profectus et tibi et omnibus ditesces' –
>
> 'At the market of the good arts, both you and all will progress to riches',

promoting the role of the intellectual institution in an ever more industrial town. The overwhelmingly radical proprietors of the Library and other institutions believed that progress would not be wrought through production alone, but through the intellectual and ethical advancement of the *polis*.

The period of this survey up to 1835 then saw Birmingham gain greater prominence in British and European circles. Not only were architects such as Schinkel drawn to see for themselves how the town was being shaped by industrial forces, the patronage and practices of Soane, Barry, Wyatt, and Rickman all contributed to a rich culture of architectural representation. Buildings and streets illustrated the effects of that debate, in particular Christ Church were its extended construction period saw different influences in its classical body and later gothic tower. That contingency was seen too in the Town Hall though with a commitment to the classical order, where the site and funds only allowed for the construction of two faces which marked the ascent to New Street[39]. Notably, the Market Hall was completed in a single phase, testament to the still lively trade which took place there despite the discontinuation of earlier traditions.

[39] This orientation is discussed in section 6.2.1.

Figure 133: The East Prospect of Birmingham in the County of Warwick. Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, 1753. Source: BMT 1934P398

Figure 134: 'The Itinerant', a view of Birmingham, engraved by James Storer after a picture by J.M.W. Turner, 1795. Source: BMT 1965V221.137

Streets also took on an institutional dimension, with New Street and Waterloo Street gaining in prominence, and where the interiors of newly built institutions like the Society of Arts and Theatre were joined to the street through formal approaches to the façade and threshold. Likewise, the passing of domestic places into industry made explicit the influence of an earlier order based on those who made their livelihoods in Birmingham. It also gave rise to a new domestic realm, influenced by the latest fashion for buildings that framed the landscape as seen in the never-completed Crescent.

That lively civic life was seen too in the proliferation of institutional activity concerned with in the emancipation of knowledge, and ultimately of man. The Mechanics' Institute was hosted in one of the many nonconformist chapels and was a forceful presence in the drive for political reform through its treasurer Attwood, and a predecessor to the Birmingham and Midland Institute[40].

3.4 Historiographical Context

The preceding survey and drawings in figures 110 and 116, reveal the order of the town and the ways in which the concerns of the time were reflected in its architecture and urban form. The following historiography considers the knowledge and beliefs of those making work in, and about, Birmingham, and how they contributed to the cultural pattern of their own time, giving further insight into the tradition of the city at a critical moment. This is considered in relation to those documenting the city through drawn prospects, those involved in printing, publishing and in poetry, and those responsible for the new institutions of the city.

3.4.1 Prospects of Birmingham

The earliest view of Birmingham associated with this period is Samuel and Nathaniel Buck's *East Prospect of Birmingham in the County of Warwick* of 1753 (figure 133), not long after William Hutton founded the town's first lending library. As a drawing type, the prospect provided a three-dimensional view to accompany increasingly sophisticated town plans. As Elliot (1987: 59) notes, the Bucks were prolific in publishing their prospects, depicting 76 towns and dockyards between 1721 and 1753. Their prospect of Birmingham is taken from a rural vantage point overlooking the town as many similar views were, illustrating the topographic position of the town as rising from the lower ground around the river Rea and the ascension to the higher ground to the north. The foreground is framed by a line of trees and shrubs, beyond which lie the Lord's mesne or hunting ground upon which deer roamed. In the centre middle ground, Cooper's windmill and buildings mark the alignment of the river, the only sign of development in the otherwise open fields of the floodplain.

[40] This is discussed in section 5.3.2.

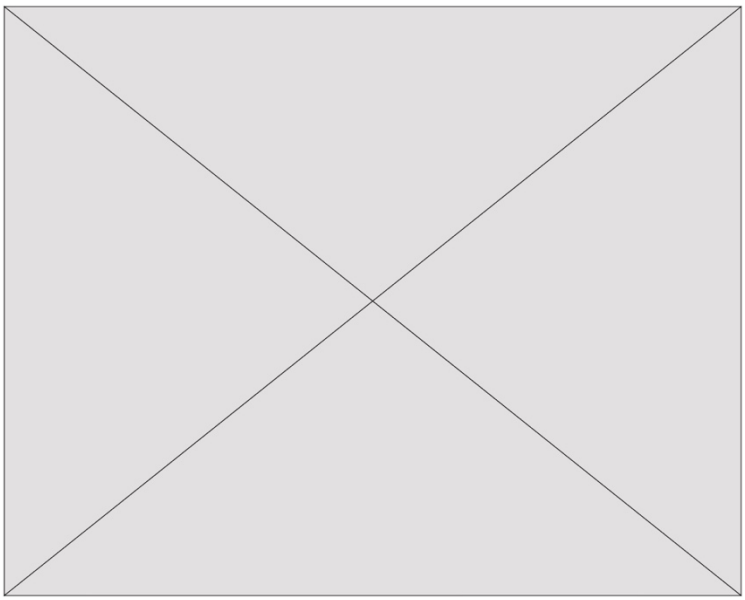

Figure 135: Dudley, Worcestershire, 1835, after J.M.W. Turner. Source: Tate T05097

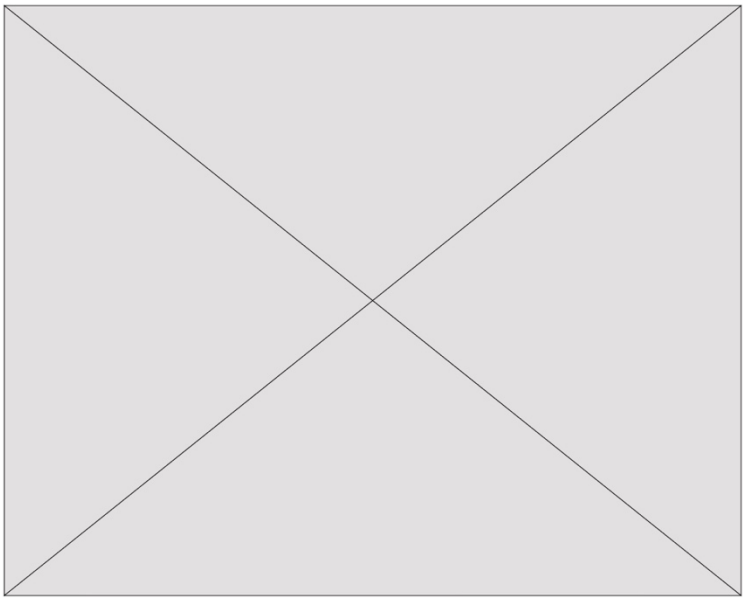

Figure 136: Adam and Eve leave Paradise, John Martin in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, 1827. Source: Royal Academy (online) BLL01002502133

To the left, tightly packed buildings line the route into Birmingham from the south, with the crossing of the Rea at the lowest point. From here, Digbeth rises towards the visibly dominant spire of St. Martin's Church, around which the scale of the buildings enlarge in relation the merchant activity around the markets. New Street is given visual prominence by the shading of those buildings fronting the street, the clock tower to the Grammar School projecting above the horizon. To the right of New Street, the town is densely built with few buildings of distinction other than what is likely to be the Presbyterian Meeting House in amongst the artisan's dwellings and workshops. To the far right, St. Bartholomew's Chapel

sits in a formal square surrounded by regular rows of houses as well as brass foundries from which smoke is billowing. This was part of the speculative development of land owned by Jennens built for the increasing population of the town and noted on Bradford's plan of 1751 as 'land for building'. Further speculation of the Colmore estate took place around St. Philip's Church which dominates the centre background of the view. Within the surrounding landscape sit rural villas in rolling fields, subdivided by hedgerows after the earlier enclosure acts.

Similarly, the later view of 1795 entitled 'The Itinerant' (figure 134) made after a drawing of J.M.W Turner during his travels in the Midlands shows a bucolic view framed by rolling countryside, with an increasingly built-up middle ground including a terrace of houses that leads off to the right. This formal prospect continued in the tradition of earlier views, but Turner's later view of Dudley marked a stark contrast between the increasingly urbane setting of Birmingham and the industrial activity around the collieries (figure 135). In the foreground is the shimmering surface of the canal leading to Birmingham lined with canal boats and the dark masses of industrial buildings and machinery. Nearby, kiln chimneys emit plumes of smoke whilst foundries light up the sky providing an almost celestial yet artificial illumination to this engineered landscape. Overlooking the scene on the hill is the silhouetted ruin of Dudley castle, the manorial lord's seat for centuries prior. The fall from grace of this once-powerful seat of Lord Dudley must have been of some pleasure for the newly made industrialists of Birmingham. It was this same landscape that inspired John Martin's mezzotints (figure 136) for the reissue of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1827), Martin telling his son that 'he could not imagine anything more terrible, even in the regions of everlasting punishment' than the Black Country (Rykwert, 2000: 40). As industrial activity intensified to the east, Birmingham positioned itself as a place of intellect and refined taste, aspiring to the literary influence of Lichfield, home to Samuel Johnson.

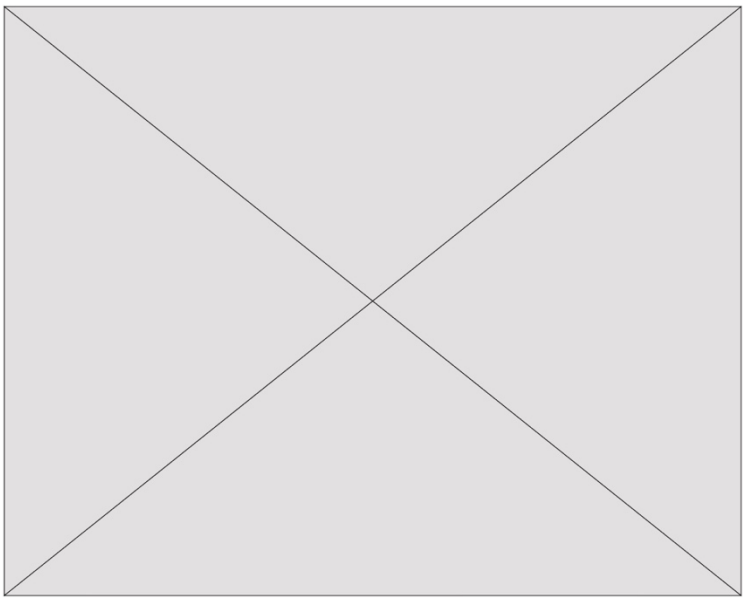

Figure 137: Joseph Wright of Derby's 'Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump' (1768). Source: The National Gallery NG725.

Other artists depicted the life and work of the town, or those associated with it. As discussed later in this section, the Lunar Society was a predominantly scientifically oriented group, though the nature of their work was met by suspicion by less well versed in the new discoveries of the day. This mysticism and distrust of the unknown, and of the radical scientists of the time, is captured in Joseph Wright of Derby's *Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* (1768, figure 137).

Wright was a regular visitor to Matthew Boulton's home and works at Soho (Schofield, 1963: 130). The gathered audience are there to witness an experiment, with the scientist confronting the viewer from behind the apparatus as if asking a moral question about scientific progress. The scene is lit from a single candle positioned behind a fluid-filled vessel containing a diseased human skull, the illumination provoking an ethereal mysticism, reinforced by the presence of the moon revealed through the window. A white cockatoo sits apparently motionless in a glass vacuum chamber, with the scientist's hand positioned on the air valve. Only the young girl and the two inquisitive young men can watch as the scientist holds the life of the bird in balance. Others are either turned away or are unable to bear the apparent cruelty of the experiment or the fear of the unknown, the adolescent girl comforted and instructed by an older man. The picture is an allegory for the scientific pursuits of the time, of the distrust felt by many particularly in the church where God's authority was apparently challenged by humankind. The morality of modern science and progress is under question, the reaction of different generations ranging from fear to fanaticism with indifference in-between. This division was pronounced in Birmingham where the intensity of intellectual and moral debate was guided through groups such as the Lunar Society, and later those involved in the Birmingham Library.

3.4.2 The Literary Life of Birmingham

As a town increasingly renowned for its invention, prosperity, and intellectual culture during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, its passing from the rustic to the industrial and the rapid expansion of its boundaries and prospects was widely documented. The self-proclaimed 'first historian of Birmingham' William Hutton, the geographer Charles Pye, and James Drake, author of a guidebook to Birmingham each described the city at particular moments, as discussed here. Of particular note, however, is the poet John Dyer who featured alongside William Shenstone and Lord (George) Lyttleton in what is considered Samuel Johnson's last significant work, volume ten of *Prefaces Biographical and Critical to the works of the English Poets* and *Works of the English Poets* (1781). These Romantic

artists drew on a much deeper institutional order associated with the landscape and Britain's dominance in world politics[41].

In his account of the modern situation, Hutton charted the growing population of the town, which had grown from 15,032 in 1700 to 48,252 in 1778, drawing comparison with Manchester (22,440) and Nottingham (17,711) as a measure of Birmingham against other rapidly industrialising towns and cities (1783: 61). The interior and boundaries were constructed and extended to satisfy the demand, Hutton himself joining the property-owning ranks. Hutton believed that trade had instilled 'civility and humanity' in the population who were 'full of industry', their 'appearance marked with the modes of civil life' (1783: 73). The association of industry with 'moral duty' and 'liberal sentiment' was witnessed by Hutton in dissenting practices of the town's Meeting Houses, as well as the buildings of Birmingham which 'rose in a style of elegance' (1783: 73). The wealth generated in the town contributed to the provision of the Hospital and Charity schools through subscription, as well as to the Workhouse, public offices, canals, Royal Hotel, the paving of streets, and to Birmingham Library. In the absence of a representative local government and corporation, the industrialists[42], many of whom were dissenters including Hutton, and landed gentry provided the means for improvement.

For Hutton, the enslavement of anyone, whether at home or abroad, contravened dissenting belief that all men were equal. One of his major concerns, therefore, was the limited government of Birmingham, and the liberty of its people that it provided. Hutton stated that 'every man is free the moment he enters', elaborating that;

> We often behold a pompous corporation, which sounds well in history, over something like a dirty village--This is a head without a body. The very reverse is our case--We are a body without a head. For though Birmingham has undergone an amazing alteration in extension, riches and population, yet the government is nearly the same as the Saxons left it. (Hutton, 1783: 164)

Indeed, in writing on the failed petition of 1716 to King George I for incorporation designed to 'destroy the villainous attempts of the Jacobites', Hutton suggested that such a bid was for pride rather than the protection of interests in the town – in this, Hutton recognised that

[41] The influence of the Romantic artists is discussed in chapter 5.

[42] The opening up of international trade, and of the exploitative practices of the East India Company in particular, contributed to the wealth of Birmingham. Of particular note, though not cited by Hutton, are the earlier landed Whig MP Sir Richard Gough who became a director of the East India Company Slater, T. (2002) *Edgbaston - A History.* West Sussex: Phillimore & Co. Ltd.. Similarly, the widowed plantation and slave owner Lady Carhampton (UCL, 2022) occupied Moseley Hall which belonged to the industrialist John Taylor, as discussed in section 4.3.3.3. Although there is little detail of their exploits and how it came to benefit Birmingham, Hutton deplored those who sold their people to the slave trade, more so those who bought them for acting 'so daringly opposite to the Christian precept' (Hutton, W. (1783) *An History of Birmingham.*. It would be some fifty years before the agitation for the abolition of the slave trade under Joseph Sturge (Dent, 1880, p.476)

Birmingham had been built on utility rather than ceremony, and as such he believed that the shackle of the corporation was unnecessary and overbearing.

3.4.3 Dissent, Radicalism and Publishing as Contributors to an Institutional Order associated with Freedom

That such a concentration of trade and industry occurred in Birmingham has as much to do with natural resources and advances in communication and technology, of which there were many, as it does longer held ideas and prejudices that arose before, during and after the Reformation. The earlier arrival of nonconformity and those with radical political views was pronounced due to the unincorporated status of Birmingham and the opportunities open to those who had been forced to give up their livelihoods. According to Dickinson (1977: 198), the ideological origins of radicalism during the eighteenth century were to be found both in the further intellectual inquiry into the rights of man after John Locke and later Joseph Priestley, and the external pressures created by new divisive issues in France and America.

Unitarian preacher, intellectual and scientist Joseph Priestley settled in Birmingham in 1780, taking up ministry at New Meeting, one of the leading congregations in the country actively engaging in politics and reform (Rivers and Wykes, 2008: 42). By the time of his arrival in Birmingham, he was both revered in scientific and philosophical matters and reviled by the English establishment. Priestley found Birmingham liberating and welcoming not least through his prior correspondence with many of the Lunar Society members and their continued subscription to his works. Like many other nonconformist chapels, New Meeting was a modest structure with none of the icons of the Catholic or Anglican Church, a two-storey volume presiding over an open space as a public expression of congregation. It was here that Priestley first took up preaching duties, founding classes for children, youths and women, and a religious library. His ministry there saw the setting up of a vestry committee, chosen through a system of balloting which permitted women to vote even if only by proxy (Bushrod, 1973: 2). This was Priestley enacting his ‘doctrine of necessity’, where participation in associative morals acts would bring him and his congregation closer to the omnipresent God. This idea that everyone had a role to play in collective life would have a major influence on the ‘civic gospel’ of Dawson, Dale and Chamberlain[43].

The revolutionary sentiments held by Priestley and other likeminded dissenters led a renewed call for parliamentary reform, with the eventual aim to extend the franchise to all adult males (Dickinson, 1977: 195), as well as local and national agitation by dissenters for the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts. This radical belief was given a voice in the

[43] This is discussed in section 5.3.1.

burgeoning industrial ground of Birmingham where representation was limited to two county level members of parliament. The radicals' use of the Press and skilful dissemination of propaganda demonstrated the power of the printed word in the defence of freedom. Though not directly associated with the radical movement, John Baskerville's publication of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (first published 1667, Baskerville edition 1759) revived the memories of the Reformation and Glorious Revolution of 1688.

Significantly, his works found a wide readership in Britain and abroad. In Britain, he printed translations of Virgil's 'Bucolica', *Georgica* et 'Aenis' and was printer to the University of Cambridge (Pardoe, 1975: 101, 106). In Europe, particularly France where his print and politics found recognition, Baskerville was in regular correspondence with Voltaire, his work was purchased by the State, and he had been offered apartments in the Louvre by the King to carry out his printing there – he refused, 'because he would not deprive his own country of the credit of the art' (Kippis in Pardoe, 1975: 96). In America, fellow printer Benjamin Franklin was a subscriber to Baskerville's editions of Virgil's works and visited Birmingham in 1753 to meet Baskerville at his villa on Easy Hill. Although Baskerville remained liberal in his political views, his promotion of radical ideas through his printed work gained wide support, later dividing the town in the drive for political reform.

3.4.3.1 Proto-Government

Baskerville's liberal position and landed status saw his appointment as one of fifty Street Commissioners as a result of the Improvement Act of 1769 (Dent, 1880: 161). Many towns, Birmingham included, enacted their own local Improvement Acts, emulating London's reconstruction after 1666 where more durable materials had been used in place of the earlier timber structures that had been so vulnerable to the spread of fire.

The 'Act for Laying Open and Widening certain Ways and Passages within the Town of Birmingham; and for Cleansing and Lighting the Streets, Lanes, Ways, and Passages there; and for Removing and preventing Nuisances and Obstructions therein' required the appointment (not election) of the Street Commissioners to oversee the work (Dent, 1880: 160). Particular attention was paid to the formalisation of the markets and New Street where buildings that had encroached on the street were removed. As the first formal body responsible for governing aspects of the town, the Street Commissioners included leaders in industry, science, and religion[44]. Amongst them were subscribers to the newly formed canal companies, members of the Lunar Society and of the New Meeting congregation.

[44] See Appendix B for table of memberships of Street Commissioners, Lunar Society, Canal Companies, and later the committee of Birmingham Library.

As Schofield (1963: 8) notes, turnpike roads and waterways provided the means of industrial transportation until the arrival of the railways the following century. The construction of the canal network began in the second half of the eighteenth century, where the Grand Trunk canal linked the Trent and Mersey with the industrial towns and cities of the midlands. Much like the publishing houses and libraries of the time, this was funded through subscription enabled by the growth of banking business by provincial industrialists who depended on new sources of capital and modes of transportation (Schofield, 1963: 8). Of the earliest advocates for the new canals were Josiah Wedgwood and Erasmus Darwin, both Lunar Society members. Wedgwood, a scientist, potter and businessman whose industrial settlement Etruria in Staffordshire recalled the Latin 'Holy Land' as described by Renaissance humanists (Temple, 2011: 24), first established a committee for the Grand Trunk canal in 1764, petitioning in London until it was passed in 1766. Darwin, a Cambridge graduate who had settled in Lichfield as a physician, scientist, and poet, became an advocate for Wedgwood's canal project. Through his influence, other industrialists joined the canal building movement, Matthew Boulton lending his support to Wedgwood's project and the Birmingham Canal. Despite significant opposition to the canals from wagon-masters, inn-keepers, proprietors of turnpike trusts and those promoting other canal projects (Schofield, 1963: 41), the first canal was completed linking Birmingham with the coal fields to the north in 1768, lowering the price of coal and increasing the profitability of manufacturing. The Birmingham Canal Navigation (1777) further enlarged the influence of industry in the town. Not only did the canals extend the geographical terrain and orientation of Birmingham to the north, but they also embodied a locally led political will to change the progress of the town through technical means.

It was through the canal projects that Wedgwood and Darwin became acquainted and later members of the Lunar Society, many of whom owned shares in the canal companies. Founded as an informal circle around 1765, the Lunar Society numbered only fourteen over its lifetime but had many influential associates. Founding member Matthew Boulton (1728) was born and raised in Birmingham, helping develop his father's business in enamelled metal before taking it over in 1750. As Schofield (1963: 18) notes, his strength was in the advancement and application of others' ideas, making him a pioneer of mass production and of new sources of power for industrial production. It was with his business partner the Scottish engineer James Watt, also a Lunar Society member, that he produced the first rotary engines for mining pumps that harnessed steam for production (Rykwert, 2000: 31). They later made proposals for a seven-storey iron-framed 'manufactory' which, whilst not built, went on to inform those that followed.

Figure 138: Cropped page from Bisset's Magnificent Guide, 1808, showing Thomason's Manufactory on Church Street near to St. Philip's Church.

Despite their success in patenting and selling their work (over three hundred of their iron engines were in operation by 1800), Rykwert (2000: 32) suggests that the impact of their inventions remained marginal in Britain, since the 'changes in the methods of production had been ideological and managerial, not technical and scientific'. The Lunar Society brought together often speculative scientific work that encompassed the midlands and north of England, Scotland, and America, gaining Birmingham a reputation as a place for intellectual debate as much as for the application of ideas.

The renown of Boulton and Watt, and other leading industrialist in Birmingham, was such that Karl Friedrich Schinkel visited the town in 1826 as part of a Europe-wide mission for the Prussian State to view the technical advances being made in construction and manufacturing. His *English Journey* (1826) documented the towns of the industrial north, Birmingham and the Black Country included, where factories and goods were being made at a vast scale. His journal contained sketches and notes of his visits to towns and specific buildings, highlighting his fascination with the applications of new technologies that would influence his own work. Schinkel recounted his meetings with manufacturers in France, England, Scotland, and Wales. Of note was his meeting with Aron Manby, originally of Horseley Works near Birmingham, who took 500 workers to Charenton, France, to construct a factory for the production of steam-engines. Schinkel (1826: 49) recounted in detail the skill and precision with which this operation was conducted, commenting that 'the workers are almost naked, and have enormous strength', recalling the scenes of depravity of the Black Country. Manby's factory was seen as 'the most important source of cast and rolled iron products in Paris and surrounding areas', a testament to the engineering might and opportunity seized upon by Manby and others (Schinkel, 1826: 49). Schinkel's visit to Birmingham was, however, less awe-inspiring, the town built of 'quite unremarkable brick houses for 120,000 inhabitants creat(ing) a very melancholy impression' (Schinkel, 1826: 126). Despite enthusing about the 'great and famous' Warwick vase[45] in the conservatory at nearby Warwick Castle, he gave a less than favourable account of the manufacturer Thomason's life-size replica cast in iron with a bronze finish after visiting his factory adjacent to St. Philip's Church (figure 138); 'a wretched piece of manufacture on a huge scale' where 'all of the sculptured parts look as if they are stuck on', adding that 'even worse is a bronze statue of the King of England 6ft high: any baker could do it better in dough' (Schinkel, 1826: 126). Despite criticising the crude manufacturing processes, Schinkel must have found value in what he saw at Thomason's works.

[45] The Warwick Vase is a fourth century BCE marble vase found in Hadrian's Villa near Tivoli in 1771. It is now in the Glasgow Museum (Schinkel, 1826, p.124).

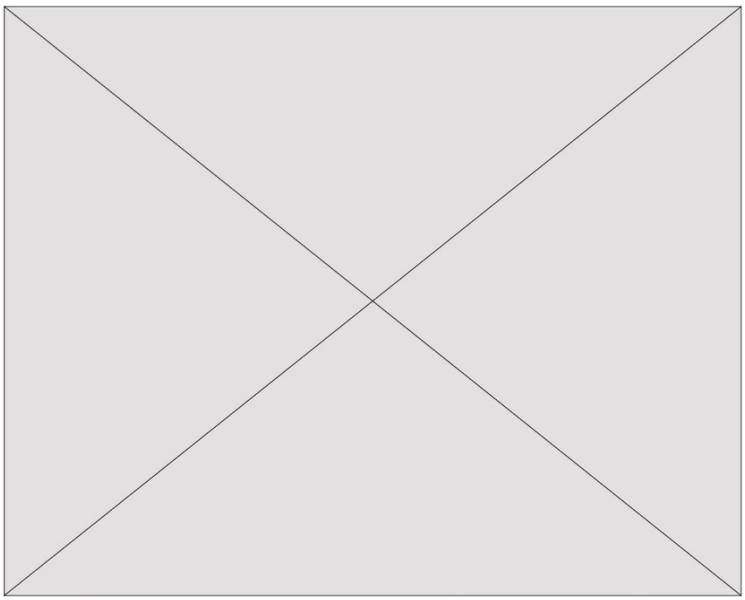

Figure 139: A replica of the Warwick Vase, made according to Thomason's process, located at the top of the staircase of Schinkel's Altes Museum, Berlin. Source: NCSU Libraries Collections

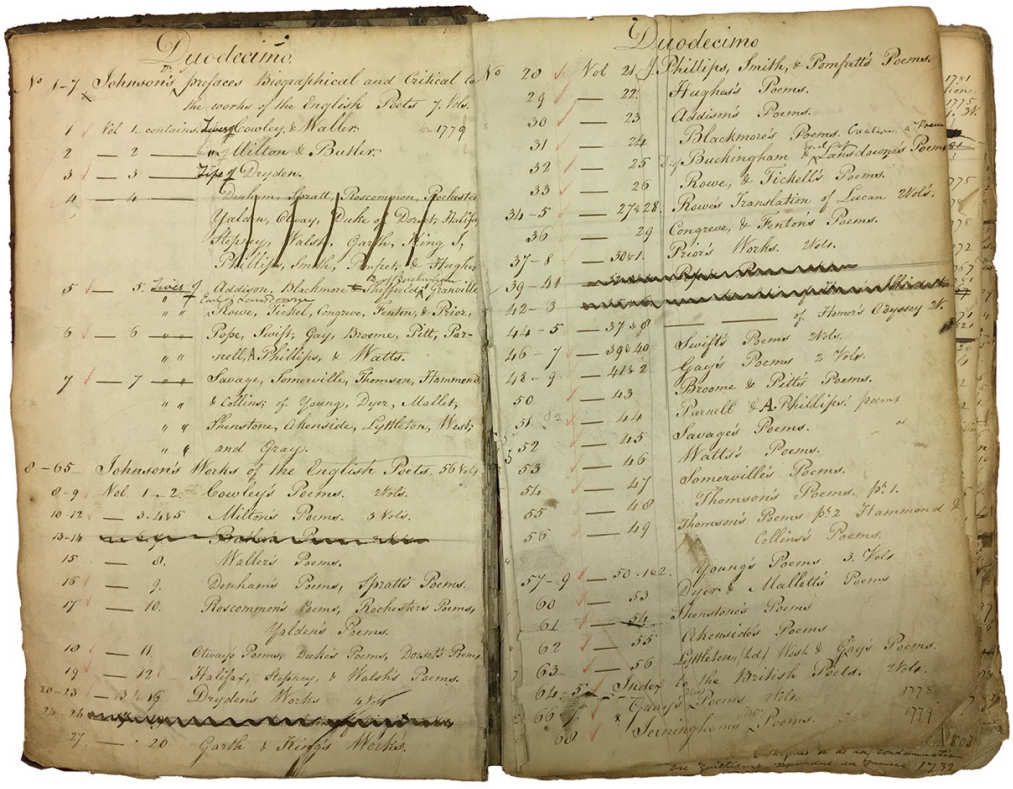

Figure 140: Opening pages of the Birmingham Library 'Catalogue Duodecimo' 1779. Source: (Birmingham Library, 1779)

A specimen vase was sent to Berlin in 1826, with an enlarged version cast for the top landing of the stairway at the Museum am Lustgarten (now the Altes Museum) (figure 139) most likely after Schinkel's death (Schinkel, 1826: 126). Furthermore, Thomason's process was given as an example in Schinkel and Beuth's Vorbilder für Fabricanten und Handwerker (published and updated between 1821 and 1830).

Birmingham's moves to associate itself with ancient civilisations through the remaking of significant artefacts that were not available in the town served to deepen the institutional order of the place, even if the results were not well received in wider circles. That the technique rather than the outcome was of value reflects the approach to manufacture and a changing attitude to commerce which prioritised the market over and above artistic integrity. The differentiation was seen later in construction too, where stonemasonry gave way to the use of cast terracotta, a material with its own tradition but that received criticism for lacking authenticity and craftsmanship.

3.4.3.2 The Foundation, Building and Bifurcation of Birmingham Library

The creation of institutions including the library represented the search for a common ethics of the city. Although earlier lending libraries and book clubs had existed, the foundation of Birmingham Library in 1779 was the first formally constituted collection in the town (figure 140). The collection was initially without a permanent location, positioned first in the home of the merchant and button maker John Lee jr. at Snowhill and relocated to Swan Yard adjacent to Hutton's house and the market in 1782. It moved again to Upper Priory in 1790, by then sufficiently large to warrant the first purpose-built library, but the advertisement for suitable land coincided with increasing tensions both in the selection of the book stock, as well as local and national agitation by dissenters for the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts. As the institution sought stability and permanence, its constitution and collection remained controversial.

From the outset, the nineteen mainly dissenting founders wished to broaden the concern of the library 'with a liberal anxiety to extend its usefulness' (Edwards in Parish, 1966: 11), inviting the clergy of the town to join them which was initially refused on suspicion of their radical beliefs. The library committee was formed through ballot, with each subscriber submitting up to twenty nominees. Early members included: industrialists Matthew Boulton, James Watt and John Taylor; physicians Dr. William Small and Dr. John Ash; bankers Sampson and Charles Lloyd; dissenting ministers Rev. John Edwards (Priestley's successor at New Meeting) and Rev. Radcliffe Scholefield (Old Meeting) (Parish, 1966: 89). This liberal intent led to the appointment of proprietors that would disrupt the course of the institution, in

particular Dr. Joseph Priestley, by then minister of New Meeting, and Reverend Charles Curtis, Rector of Anglican St. Martin's Church.[46]

Soon after his arrival in Birmingham, Priestley had become a subscriber to the library alongside fellow Lunar Society members, making him eligible for appointment to the committee. He believed that the library was essential in 'bring(ing) the reading and thinking parts of the town better acquainted with each other' (Priestley in Parish, 1966: 12). His first act was to reorganise the collection on the same structure he had implemented at Leeds Library, providing 'that stability and method without which no institution can prosper' (Schofield, 2004: 243), revising its laws, policies and cataloguing (the latter remaining in use today). Although the collection still filled no more than a bookcase by 1782, Priestley saw the physical growth of the town as synonymous with the expansion of knowledge and dialogue amongst its inhabitants, embodied in the library and the society of members which included merchants, artisans, manufacturers, bankers, printers, and scientists. Of particular interest was the 'welfare' and 'growing interests' of the collection, notably in the controversies surrounding liberty and morality, not least through his own work. Priestley initially believed that controversial works should only be considered for inclusion when the library could afford to buy works on both sides of an argument. Alongside Dyer's poetic works discussed earlier, the collection included Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1762), Voltaire's *Letters on the English Nation* (published in English in 1778), and later, Franklin's *Life and Essays* (1793), books that were representative of the informed global view that the laws of the library, if not the whole committee, sought. The categorisation and division of knowledge embodied in the catalogue, and the openness to free enquiry via the ethical agreement of the collection were both emblems of modernity, promoting dialogue and settling the library as a new institution.

Priestley's measured attitude to free enquiry came under pressure as the collection grew and the membership became more diverse. By the mid-1780s, the collection numbered some 1,600 volumes and a separate scientific section had been formed to satisfy demand. Representing the religious opposition, Curtis was the first clergyman to be elected to the committee in 1784, later gaining the presidency. The appointment of Curtis was representative of the dissenting members' belief, that pertinent and decent dialogue was a shared moral duty. Priestley's position and that belief was called into question when in 1786 a group of Anglican churchmen from nearby Deritend mischievously voted to buy Priestley's *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (1782) against the author's wishes with intent to unsettle the accord (Money, 1977: 127). Dialogue turned to disagreement, followed by

[46] See Appendix B for a full schedule of membership and other associations.

Anglican protests and emblematic resignations orchestrated by Curtis and his party who put forward a motion to exclude all controversial works for good.

Although the clergy later returned to the committee, the atmosphere of intellectual debate on matters of politics and religion in Britain was far from settled, none less so than in Birmingham. The American Declaration of Independence of 1776 and French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* of 1789 which followed respective revolutions had stressed civil liberties and free will, leaving the British establishment fearful of seditious acts at home and the radicals that promoted them. Similarly, the distrust between factions of the library committee persisted, with dissenting membership being gradually eroded, so much so that by 1790 Priestley had ended his active participation and by 1795 a New Library had been established to provide for dissenting subscribers (Parish, 1966: 60). In the intervening period, the Birmingham Riot of 1791 forcefully illustrated the contested order of the town, embodied in the destruction of buildings associated with dissent. The Riot can also be seen as a cautionary predecessor to largely peaceful but deficient reform in Britain the following century.

3.4.3.3 Birmingham Riot and the Suspension of Dialogue[47]

The culmination of tensions in Birmingham was marked by a dinner to celebrate the second anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. Held in a hotel adjoining St. Philip's square on 14th July 1791 to 'commemorate the auspicious day which witnessed the Emancipation of Twenty-six millions of People from the yoke of despotism' (Langford, 1868: 477), diners included 'prominent local figures of every persuasion' (Money, 1977: 219) including members of the Lunar Society. Priestley had been advised not to attend, after an anonymous leaflet was distributed falsely suggesting the revolutionary intentions of the diners. The controversy around the library's book stock, Priestley's and others agitation against the Test and Corporation Acts, as well as the Lunar Society's anti-slavery petitioning to Parliament, and the widespread misrepresentation of dissenting beliefs meant that the gathering quickly became the subject of public unrest.

[47] A version of this section is due to be published in late 2022 as a chapter in the forthcoming book *Unsettled*, edited by Viderman, Knierbein, Kränzle, Frank, Wall, and Roskamm for Routledge.

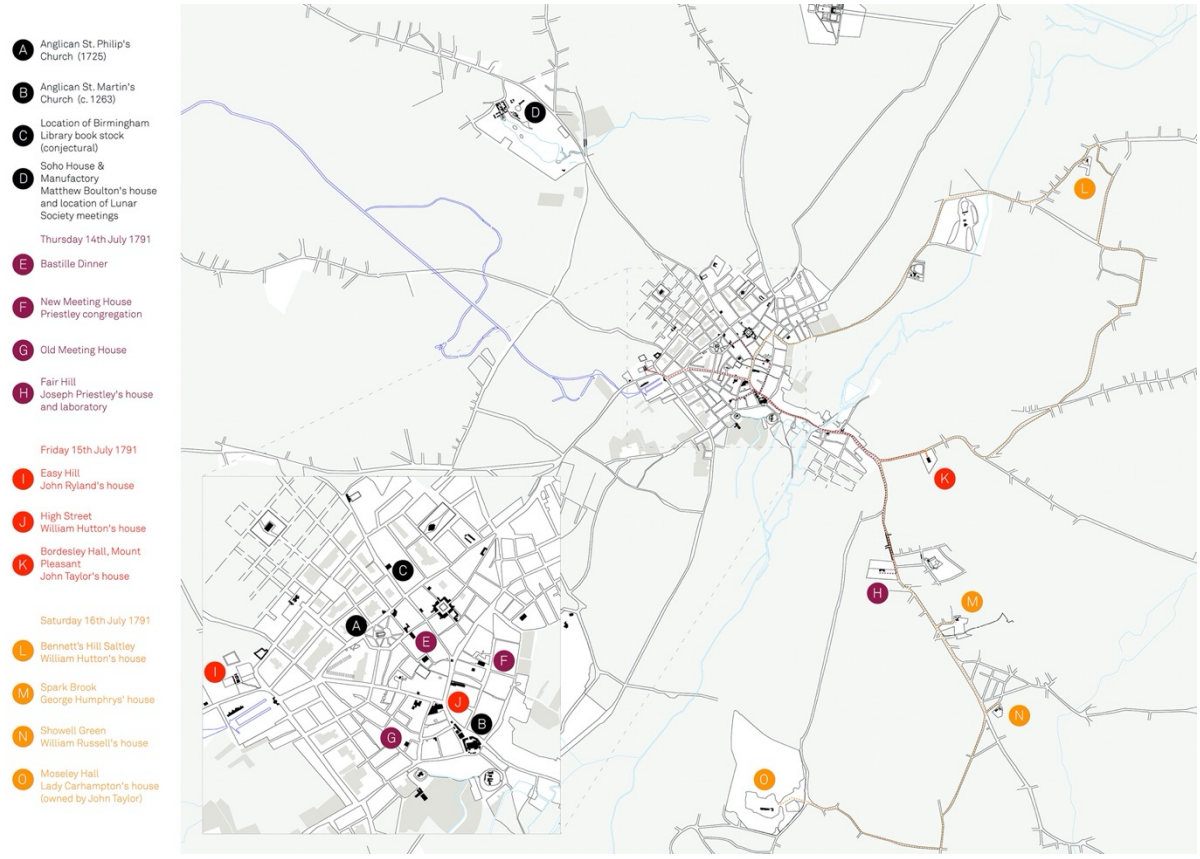

Figure 141: Drawing of the sequence and sites of events during the Birmingham Riots, 1791. Source: author

Figure 142: Page from Johnson's book illustrated book of scenes after the riots of 1791.Priestley's house and workshop were destroyed, along with much of its contents. Source: (Johnson, 1792)

The horrors of the French Revolution remained current in the minds of those patriotic to King, Church and country, a second leaflet stating that ‘we are not so destitute of common sense as not to prefer the order, liberty, happiness, and wealth, which is diffused through every portion of the British Empire, to the anarchy, the licentiousness, the poverty, and the misery, which now overwhelm the degraded kingdom of France’ (Langford, 1868: 479). ‘Common sense’ would also be used by the British radicals following Thomas Paine’s book of the same name (1776), which argued the case for political reform based on an inalienable commitment to natural rights, rather than the traditional liberties of the British which prioritised propertied franchise over civil liberties (Dickinson, 1977: 240). The age of reason and the belief in progress as seen in institutions such as the library came to represent a potential unsettling of traditional values.

Over the three days that followed, a crowd made up of local apprentices and labourers, transient looters, and a disciplined nucleus of rioters strategically attacked properties associated with dissent under orders from the high church gentry and magistrates (figure 141, with numeric references below) (Schofield, 2004: 286). Priestley’s publisher Joseph Johnson of London documented selected outcomes the riots in a book written in English and French (Johnson, 1792), accompanied by etchings of the ruined properties by William Ellis (figure 145). First to succumb was the nearby New Meeting house (F) where Priestley was minister, ‘assaulted with great fury’ destroying a valuable collection of books in the process though the shell of the building remained. Old Meeting (G) was razed to the ground, followed soon after by Priestley’s home and laboratory at Fair Hill (H) set some distance to the south along the turnpike road towards London. Johnson noted that had Priestley been at home he surely would have ‘been a victim to their rage’, instead the rioters had to be content with destroying ‘an apparatus of philosophical instruments, and a collection of scientific preparations for ascertaining the powers and the extending the knowledge of nature [his pneumatic studies], of such number and value, as perhaps no individual except Dr. Priestley could have been deprived, in any age or country’ (Johnson, 1792: 3). This was an irreplaceable loss of national significance, and an attack on the institutional basis of radical thought.

The following day saw the destruction of houses belonging to John Ryland, William Hutton and John Taylor on a route that traversed the built-up extent of Birmingham. Ryland owned a wiredrawing and pin-making workshop on nearby New Street, his house Easy Hill (I) once the home and workshop of Baskerville. The estate was well situated on the edge of heathland to the northern boundary of the town adjacent to the newly constructed Birmingham Canal Navigation that brought materials in and transported good out. The

Figure 143: Library as Building, commemorative coin, 1797. Source: BMT 1939N168

intoxicated rioters fell fowl to their own acts of vandalism having consumed Ryland's plentiful wine cellar, leaving seven dead at the scene and others hospitalised. Hutton's townhouse (J) at the junction of High Street and New Street was ransacked, as was his house at Bennett's Hill (L) to the north the following day, a spectacle for their urban and rural neighbours. The industrialist and banker Taylor's 'superb mansion' Bordesley Hall (K) to the east similarly suffered at the hands of the mob despite some resistance from local constables, leaving nothing but the walls standing by the following morning (Johnson, 1792: 1). The third day saw the ransacking of houses further from the town. In addition to Hutton's rural house, the properties of George Humphrys, William Russell and Lady Carhampton were attacked. 'The most elegant and completely finished [house] in the vicinity of Birmingham', Humphrys' Spark-Brook (M) stood in its own 'pleasure grounds' alongside the turnpike road to London (Johnson, 1792: 5). Russell, a merchant, and chairman of the local committee for the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, lived further to the south. Lady Carhampton, a widowed plantation and slave owner *(UCL Department of History, 2020)* occupied Moseley Hall. As a royalist, she was spared but the house succumbed to the same acts of destruction, belonging as it did to John Taylor.

In total, fourteen properties were destroyed, all of them related to dissenting practice and many to Birmingham Library. The industrialists worshipped at Meeting Houses in the centre of the town alongside their workforce, and built substantial rural villas set in landscaped gardens on and beyond the boundaries of the town. The nascent library, though controversial, was deemed too important to be sacrificed in the riot by those who directed it. Although the participatory capacity of the library lie dormant after the riot, as an implicit representation of institutional order it provided continuity in a period of intense intellectual and physical conflict. The advent of its explicit manifestation in built form would cause the two factions of the library committee to split.

3.4.3.4 The Library as Building and Forebearer of other Institutions

No Parliamentary enquiry into the riots ever took place, opposed, and defeated by a government keen to avoid scrutiny of such suspect actions. Referring to the riots as a 'violent breach of the bonds of society' (1791: 50), Priestley left Birmingham for good, first for Hackney, London then for a new life in Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

Despite his departure and the resignation of dissenting committee members, the library remained part of the civic order of the town. The earlier plan for permanent premises were revisited with the first Library building opening on Union Street in 1797 where it remained for over 100 years (figure 143). However, the committee was far from stable, and Birmingham New Library was established by liberal dissenters dissatisfied with the evident bias in the

membership in the omission of those texts dealing with ‘disputed questions’. The New Library later opened in 1796 in the rooms of the Brotherly Society (Kelly, 1952: 22), a precursor to the Mechanics’ Institute, on Temple Row West overlooking St. Philip’s churchyard, the proximity of the two institutions implying a renewed dialogue between those of differing religious persuasions.

Urban life remained unsettled at a national level too. The trade and colony war between the British and French spanning the turn of the century and the later war with America had plunged the ‘lower-orders’ into destitution. In Birmingham, only the manufacture and trade of guns and swords thrived in otherwise depressed conditions. After the end of conflict in 1815, the hardships persisted, affecting a climate of patriotism as well as radicalism in Britain. A more tolerant society meant that though various religious groups might differ in their political rights, all could worship freely (Dickinson in McCalman, 1999: 37). Greater numbers were engaged in politics, through petitioning campaigns for parliamentary reform, led in Birmingham by the banker Thomas Attwood and the Birmingham Political Union where democratic representation remained absent.

Through the division of the Library into Old and New, the founding institutional purpose of moderating opinion through dialogue was lost, superseded in part by a more widespread movement for civil liberties that had their origins in institutions such as the library where the republican ideal of a virtuous and active citizenry was seen most clearly. Priestley’s ministry, scientific enquiry and activities at Birmingham Library embodied the revival of the Lockean tradition of natural rights, informing the democratic arguments of Thomas Paine in *Rights of Man* (1791) which called for a renewal of the contractual agreement between government and governed, and Jeremy Bentham’s philosophical radicalism that would follow. This would inspire wider reform in the Act of 1832, as well visible signs of civic representation in Birmingham. This is discussed further in chapter 5.

3.4.3.5 Musical Culture and the Town Hall

As discussed earlier, the proposals for a Town Hall and Market Hall were a consequence of the Town Improvement Act of 1827, which saw the formalisation of these civic structures. The beginnings of the Town Hall as a place for performance and meetings lie in the Music Festivals[48], first suggested by James Kempson, Clerk at St. Bartholomew's Chapel, as a way of raising funds for the General Hospital. Kempson was an active member of the Musical and Amicable Society founded 1762, later establishing the Oratorio Choral Society in 1766 to cultivate singing on a larger scale and the procurement of high quality instruments, the year the foundation stone of the Hospital was laid (Sutcliffe Smith, 1945: 13). Capel Bond, a highly respected organist from Coventry, prepared the plan for the first Festival in 1768, the oratorios held at the Theatre on King Street and St. Philip's Church where Handel's *Messiah* was performed. Whilst the Festival was successful in raising funds for the Hospital, the Festival did not take place again until 1778 at the New Street Theatre which had risen in prominence. The following event of 1784 marked the beginning of the Birmingham Triennial Festival, rising in popularity and profitability, interrupted in 1793 by the burning down of New Street Theatre, poor trade, and the impact of the Birmingham Riot two years prior. Music and performance were encouraged by the Dilettanti Society[49], the industrialist Joseph Moore establishing his Private Concerts at the request of his friend Matthew Boulton. Moore led the growth of the Festival during the early years of the nineteenth century, arguing for the Town Hall as St. Philip's Church became inadequate for the scale of performance and audience (Sutcliffe Smith, 1945: 28).

The first proposed site for the Town Hall was on Bennett's Hill, close by the News Room and other cultural institutions. A further site at the top of New Street between Hill Street and Pinfold Street facing Christ Church was considered 'a desirable situation on account of its elevation, the open spaces around it, the excellence of the approaches to it on all sides, and the handsome termination it would have formed to New Street' (Town Hall Committee in Dent, 1880: 421). This was abandoned by 1830 on account of the high land costs though a meeting of the Commissioners later that year reported that an appropriate site occupied by houses and workshops had been unanimously agreed upon and purchased at Paradise Street.

[48] Sutcliffe Smith (1945, p.111) discusses the Birmingham Festivals in relation to other notable Festivals including the Three Choirs Festival, established 1724 to assist the Widows and Sons of the Clergy in the Dioceses of Worcester, Hereford and Gloucester, and the Foundling Hospital Festivals from 1749 conducted by Handel. The Three Choirs Festival is still held in alternating venues across the three cities.

[49] According to Bergdoll (2000, p.17) the English Society of Dilettanti was founded in 1733-34 to promote foreign travel and 'Greek taste and Roman spirit' among gentlemen and artists alike.

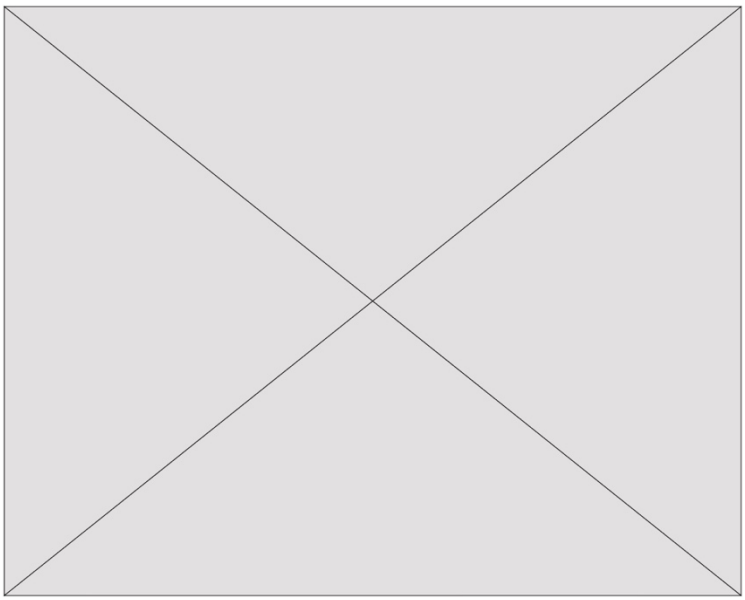

Figure 144: Charles Barry's unsuccessful competition entry for Birmingham Town Hall. Source: BCC MS617/2/2/1

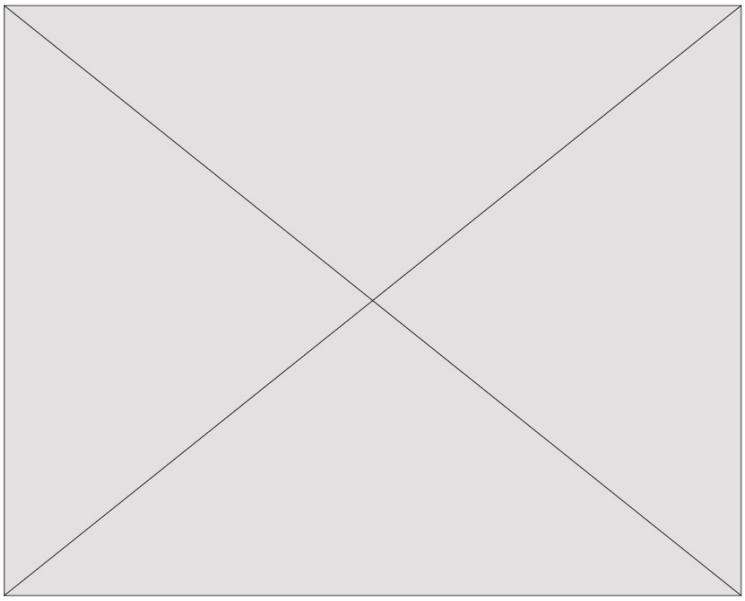

Figure 145: Hansom and Welch's Town Hall competition proposal, painting by Henry Harris with imagined backdrop, 1831. Source: Assay Office, reference unavailable.

Additional land to Congreve Street and Edmund Street was also purchased to control and protect the immediate context of the planned Town Hall, and a competition was launched to find an architect.

The advertisement for the Town Hall competition was placed in *The Times* in December 1830 by the Street Commissioners. According to Joseph Hansom's account, the competition attracted seventy-six entries, displayed in the large room of the Public Office on Moor Street (Hansom, 1834: 5). Amongst them were many proposals 'bearing the impress of Soane, and Nash', but only three were shortlisted; Charles Barry, Thomas Rickman[50] and Henry Hutchinson, and Hansom and Welch (Hansom, 1834: 6). Barry's design received some public attention outside of the competition (figure 144), being exhibited at the Royal Academy and described in the local Gazette thus; 'Rarely have we seen a design possessing so much originality, with apparently no pretention to novelty; or so true to the spirit of classical architecture, without at all reminding us of any individual model' (Dent, 1880: 470). After some development of the initial submissions, Hansom and Welch's scheme received a unanimous vote from the Commissioners (figure 145). The architects consulted Sir John Soane on further refinements, Hansom (1834: 6) noting that Soane commended them for their design but recommended 'that another example of the Corinthian order should be adopted, namely, that of the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli [used by Soane at the Bank of England], in preference to the one of my [Hansom's] choice, the Temple of Jupiter Stator, at Rome'. Both featured in George Ledwell Taylor and Edward Cresy's *The Architectural Antiquities of Rome* (1822)[51], an influential publication in the debate over architectural style (figures 146-148). Proposals were revised, the reduced cost of the columns made up for by 'additions to the interior'. Soane's recommended columns were later rejected by Foster, Surveyor to the Corporation of Liverpool, who had been consulted on the proposals and who made other changes including a reduction in the roof weight and thickening of walls. The return to more expensive columns and retention of an improved interior led to the financial ruin of Hansom who was effectively appointed as contractor and architect on a fixed cost.

[50] An antiquarian Quaker from Sussex via Liverpool, the architect Thomas Rickman first worked in Birmingham on the construction of St. George's Church, one of the 'Commissioners Churches' as a result of the 1818 Church Building Act. He established an office and family in Birmingham.
[51] Taylor and Cresy's *Architectural Antiquities of Rome* followed in the tradition of James Stuart and Nicholas Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* (1752). Stuart was the architect of the Doric Temple at Hagley in Worcestershire for Lord Lyttleton.

Figure 146: Plate LXXXIV: view from the south east of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, Rome. Source: Taylor and Cresy's *Antiquities of Rome* (1822)

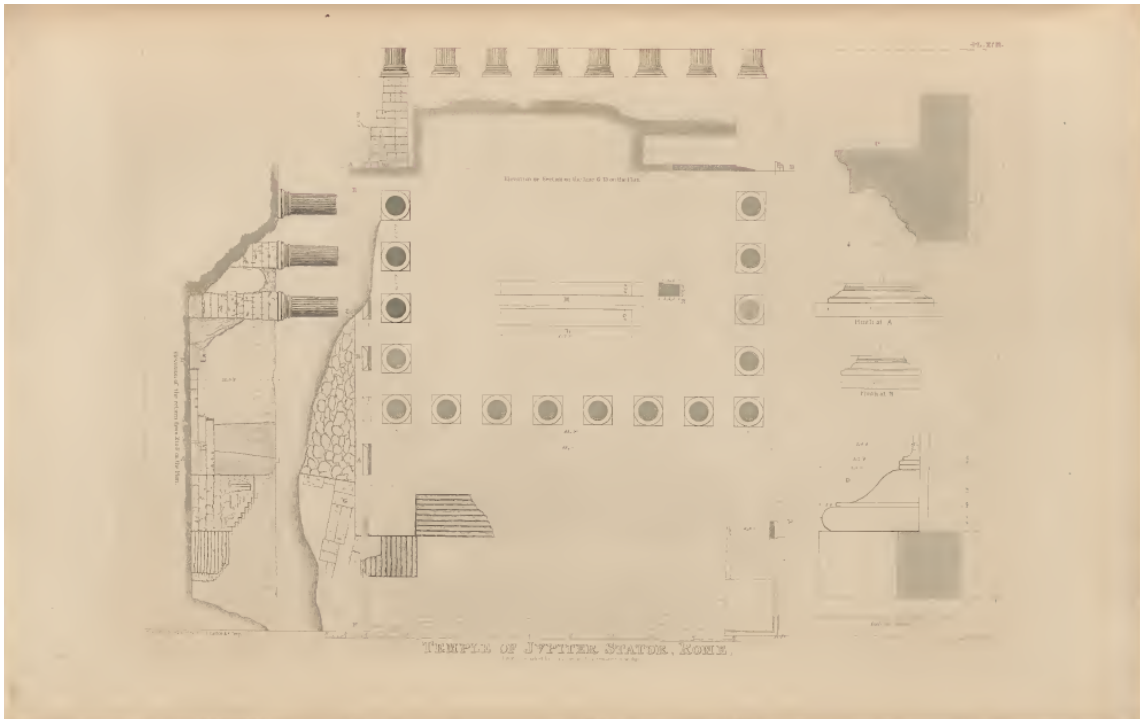

Figure 147: Plate XCII: plan and elevations, showing the parts discovered by the recent excavations, of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, Rome. Source: Taylor and Cresy's *Antiquities of Rome* (1822)

Figure 148: Plate XCIII: elevation of the Pronaos of the Temple, Restored, of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, Rome. Source: Taylor and Cresy's *Antiquities of Rome* (1822)

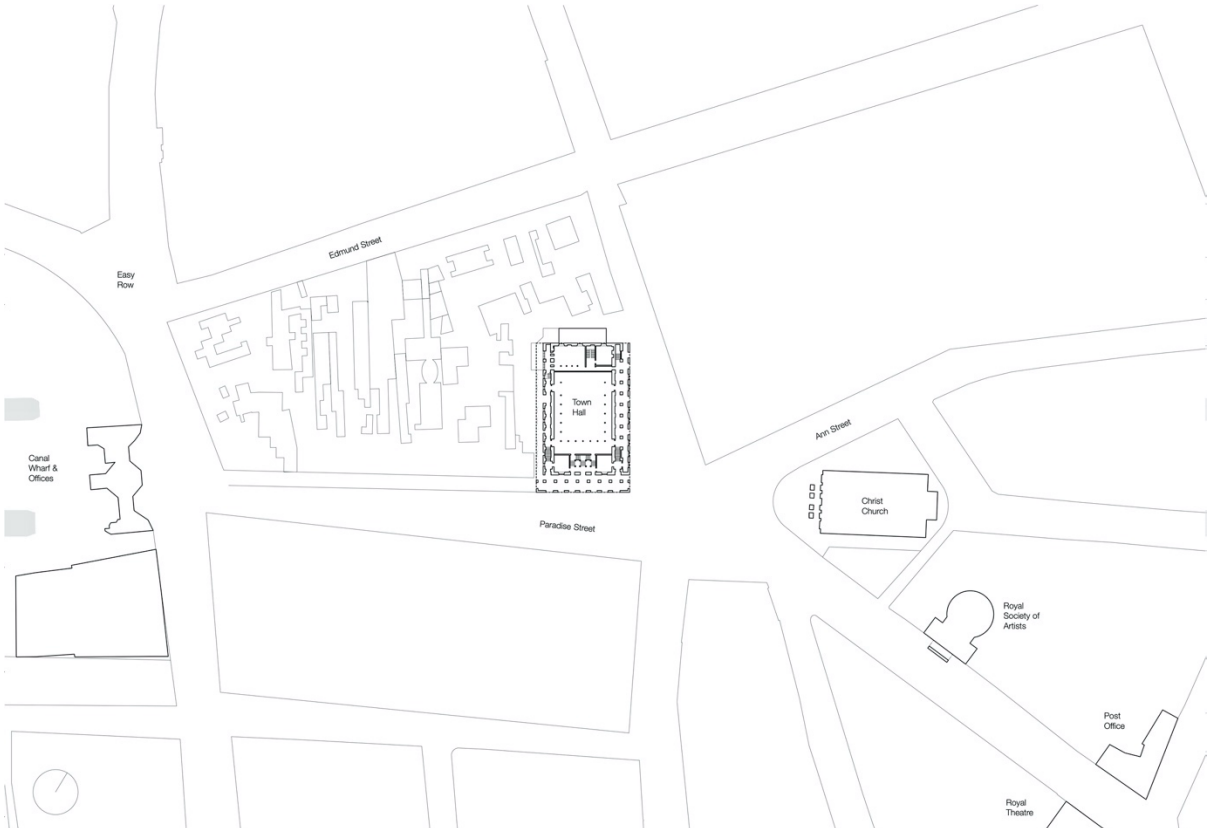

Figure 149: Drawing 006A – 1835 – 1:1,500 at A3, ground plan of Hansom and Welch's Town Hall, with organ extension and incomplete west and north wall, 1835. The ground behind the Town Hall remained as closely-built houses and workshops. Source: author

Hansom was responsible for the procurement of all materials. The clay for the 200,000 bricks was raised from the deep foundations and fired on site, the furnace not only drying the walls but also providing heat during the winter months. The stone came from Anglesey, transported eighty miles by sea and one-hundred miles by canal via the Duke of Bridgwater's canal. A steam engine on site was used to cut the stone, saving time on the construction. Roof joists and ceiling panels were made on the ground and hoisted into place by new methods designed for the job[52]. The invention was not limited to the fabric of the building. During the construction, Hansom became a vocal advocate for Trades or Industrial Unions on account of the persecution he experienced as the costs of the building grew, as well as the below-standard wages of the labourers which had led to strikes. This followed a national movement for representation through Labour Exchanges led by Robert Owen, and locally advocated for by Attwood (Oliver, 1958: 363). For Hansom, 'free agency' in industry was a 'mischievous and a miserable doctrine', and called for greater regulation (1834: 12). He was troubled by the introduction of mechanical power too, equating its use to 'a saving of 20 per cent. as compared with manual labour, but which would have the instant effect of dispensing with the labour of thirty thousand artificers, and the giving to their families the maintenance of a workhouse in lieu of that which they now derive from honest labour' (Hansom, 1834: 13).

Bankrupted by the mismanagement of cost, Hansom was eventually removed from the construction of the Town Hall to be replaced by Foster of Liverpool. Hansom's *A Statement of Facts relative to the Birmingham Town Hall with an Appeal to the Rate-Payers and Inhabitants of Birmingham* (1834) was as much as statement of fact on the much maligned process as a moral claim over his work. Hansom's publication coincided with the partial completion and opening of the Town Hall, providing the termination to New Street that the Commissioners had originally intended. In west and north faces of the Town Hall remained incomplete until sufficient funds could be raised for the adjacent land and materials required (figure 149).

The Town Hall can be viewed as the first major representation of an explicit institutional order to Birmingham, revealing both continuity with ancient seats of democracy as well as new modes of culture in the town. It also embodied the rights of man in its construction, in the face of ill-judged and managed procurement and increasing mechanisation[53].

[52] The hoist failed during the lifting of one of the joists, killing two of the labourers. A memorial stands in the grounds of St. Philip's Church (now Cathedral), in the form of one of the stone columns bases.
[53] This is discussed further in chapter 5.

3.5 Discussion

Several topics reveal the civic order of Birmingham during a time of intense change, evident in the order of the city presented in chapter 2.

The contingent nature of the civic and commercial life of the town continued to manifest itself in the order of institutions, most evident in the buildings that lined New Street. The increasing orientation of the civic life of Birmingham away from the historically important markets towards new institutions is representative of the changing aspirations and expectations of the *polis,* yet that implicit order remained evident. The Market Hall, Town Hall and the Old and New Libraries as well as a multitude of other institutions provided a civic order that reinforced earlier patterns of life as well as introducing new ideas and models, most notably in the formalisation of the arts and the engineered landscape of the canals and wharves. Despite the orientation to higher ground, the commercial life of Birmingham remained important, the Market Hall constructed at a larger scale than that of the Town Hall. However, the differentiation of the cultural and commercial life became more pronounced. The Market Hall was a practical solution to the problem of a crowded street space around St. Martin's Church, employing new techniques in cast iron construction. The stone facades onto the Bull Ring and Worcester Street were of an order and scale appropriate to the purpose, but there was little attempt to create a representative realm around the Market as seen at the Town Hall, apart from the refacing of the church and clearing away of structures to make way for the diminutive monument to Nelson and the 'Egyptian Conduit' water pump.

As a connecting passage between the lower and higher ends of the town, the incremental development of New Street from a partially rural track lined by gardens and orchards to an address of some respectability showed the town in transition. The paving and lighting of the street, the serial enlargement and relocation of the Post Office towards the top of the street, the development of new modes of entertainment at the Theatre and granting of Royal title, and the introduction of an explicit commercial and financial institutional order all contributed to an emergent civic ground. The rebuilding of the Grammar School by Barry and Pugin in a Gothic style was representative of the architectural debate of the time and preceded their later work on the Houses of Parliament which saw Barry's classical plan articulated by Pugin's Gothic gestures and details. Barry's temple-like Town Hall competition entry demonstrated his, and others, doubt as to the modern relevance of the Gothic. Conversely, Rickman's neoclassical Society of Arts, most likely inspired by Soane as Honorary Member for Architecture, coincided with his *Attempt to Discriminate the Style of Architecture in England* (1819) which provided the terminology for the Gothic revival. Christ Church

amalgamated various architectural styles on account of its prolonged construction, an assembly of Doric portico and Gothic spire.

From its beginnings in various domestic and commercial settings at locations across the town as an explicit institutional order, Birmingham Library was representative of the interest in liberty and morality led predominantly by dissenters. Priestley's constitution regulated the committee and the collection, promoting dialogue amongst its members on pressing political, religious, philosophical, and scientific matters of the day. After initially refusing the invitation, members of the Anglican clergy eventually joined the committee, the subsequent disagreement over the book stock illustrative of more widespread unrest between those in support of the Crown and Church, and those engaged in radical dissent who sympathised with revolutionary forces in France and America. This culminated in the Birmingham Riots and Priestley's subsequent departure from the town and from Britain, as well as the separation of the library into 'Old' and 'New'. Through this division, the founding institutional purpose of moderating opinion through dialogue was lost, superseded in part by a more widespread movement for civil liberties that had their origins in institutions such as the library where the republican ideal of a virtuous and active citizenry was seen most clearly. Other prominent institutions followed, most significantly the Philosophical Institution (1800) established by friends and pupils of Priestley to 'promote Literature, Science, and the Arts, by Lectures and Discussions, a Library, a Museum, a Laboratory and Apparatus, and the publication of Transactions' (Waterhouse, 1954: 5). This would inform subsequent institutional activity in the town, notably in the association of commercial, municipal and civic interests.

The transformation of the private realm into a public concern was evident in the library but remained exclusive on account of its subscription. Of an altogether different order, the Town Hall was a result of a collective desire for an appropriate venue for musical performance and public debate, its construction coinciding with the successful, but limited, political reform. Hansom and Welch's neoclassical Town Hall was representative of a new public architecture which drew on the imperial grandeur of Rome that had been excavated, recorded, and published for the first time by British and European archaeological explorers. The debate over architectural style was brought to the fore through such buildings, as well as a proliferation of essays, pamphlets and journals that were debated in among a limited, but expanding, reading public (Bergdoll, 2000: 10). The selection of an appropriate order located the building socially and historically, the decorum of the situation giving dramatic emphasis to the idea of the ascent to the good. This differentiation from, as well connection to, surroundings is most clearly seen in the Town Hall, and set the sensibility for subsequent

development around Paradise Street. This territory not only reflected the growing aspirations of the *polis*, but also accommodated new modes of communication and production. The canal was conceived at a different register, connecting Birmingham to a much larger landscape of extraction. Far from being an anonymous representation of collective life, the canal became a vehicle for civic pride, and contributed to the manifestation of an explicit institutional order of the town.

Chapter 4 – Institutional Order Manifest as Institute 1836-1899

> One of the effects of civilization (not to say one of the ingredients in it)… is, that the spectacle, and even the very idea of pain, is kept more and more out of the sight of those classes who enjoy in their fullness the benefits of civilization. (Mill, 1836: 130)

The widespread social reform in Britain that had begun in the eighteenth century and that came to partial fruition in the following century informed the order of Birmingham through an explicit institutional order. It was during this time that Birmingham, like other industrial towns of a similar scale and prominence, was first incorporated, later gaining the long-desired city status. The ways in which the institutions of Birmingham came to embody that civic life is explored here in two sections. First, the planning and construction of the first rail lines from 1838, initially connecting Birmingham with London and Liverpool, and, as a consequence, with global trade. The centre of the town was 'straightened out' by the relocation of less desirable institutions – 'slum' housing, the workhouse, and the gaol – to the northern boundaries, making space for new civic institutions. Of those, the Birmingham and Midland Institute as a combination of earlier institutions, came to occupy a prominent site adjacent to the Town Hall, opening in 1857. This was joined by the first Free Reference Library at Paradise Street in 1866. Second, the creation of new streets lined with civic and commercial buildings replaced artisan's housing that was perceived by civic leaders as a dangerous breeding ground for revolution. Sanitation and utilities were taken over by the newly powerful corporation, the profits of the gas board providing funds for the construction of the new art gallery in 1885 – the motto over the gallery entrance reads 'By the gains of industry we promote art'. This was accompanied by the extension of the formal civic centre by the construction of the Council House in 1879, as well as the consolidation of the first Birmingham Library in nearby Margaret Street in 1899.

As the drawings reveal, the concentration of civic life in the middle and upper reaches of the town built upon earlier events and institutions. According to R.K. Douglas, editor of the *Birmingham Journal*, those institutions 'generated and fostered a conviction amongst the people that government was a matter in which every man ought to take an interest' (cited in Briggs, 1963: 207). By the 1870s and early 1880s the manifestation of Joseph Chamberlain's liberal 'civil gospel' had earned Birmingham the accolade of 'the best-governed city in the world' according to the American journalist J. Ralph (1890: 99). The association of the 'new corporation' with the old idea of the church promoted equality for all citizens, with the library and improvements to various infrastructures as the means of emancipation.

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4.1 SURVEY 5: Incorporation, Social Reform and New Mobility – The Public Library and the Birmingham & Midland Institute at Paradise Street (1836–1866)

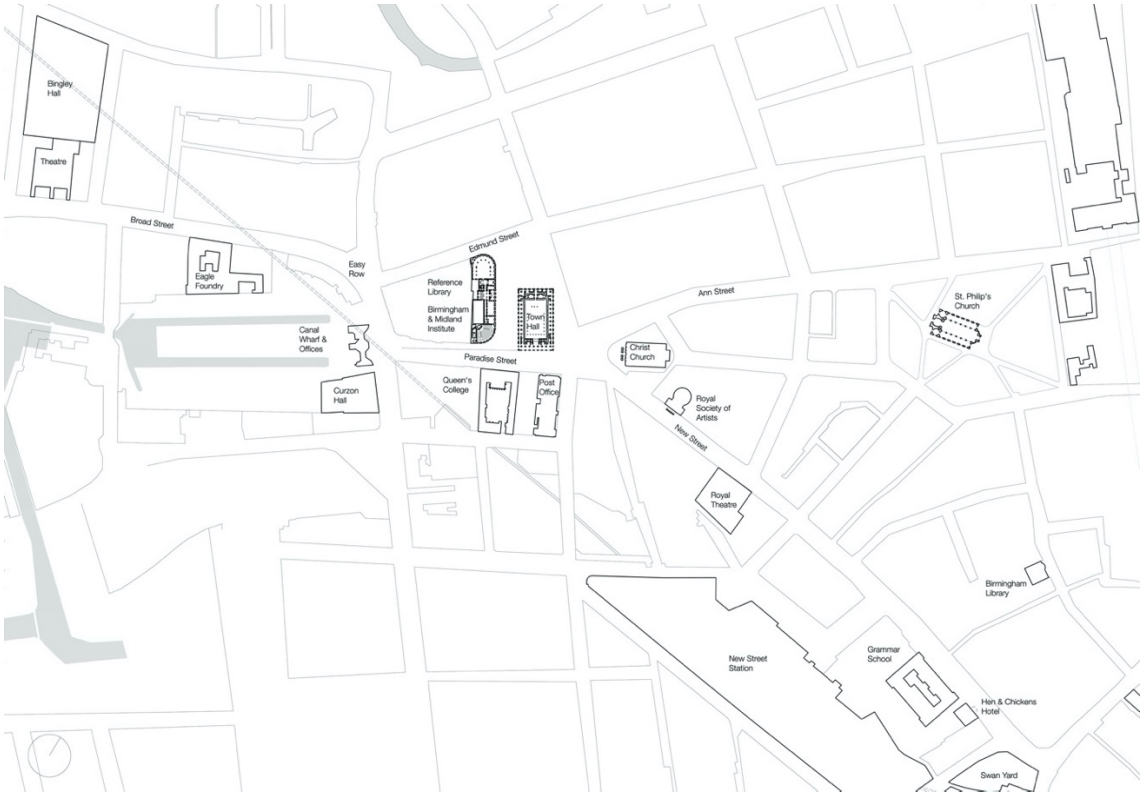


Figure 150: Drawing 007B - 1866 – 1:2,500 at A3 at the opening of the Reference Library. Source: author

With the construction of the Market Hall and the Public Office nearby St. Martin's Church, the lower part of Birmingham grew in decorum in line with a desire for incorporation, a petition for which was launched in 1837. In contrast, the rookeries of Moor Street remained crowded with poor housing in squalid conditions. As Bushrod (1973: 6) notes, such was the poverty there that the New Meeting inaugurated its own Ministry to the Poor. Despite such charity, the conditions at Moor Street were no longer tenable for an increasingly affluent congregation that included some of the most successful industrialists including the recently arrived Joseph Chamberlain who was actively involved with the Vestry Committee there (Briggs, 1963: 191). Contrary to popular opinion amongst the congregation, four members bought the rights to build a new meeting house over the Birmingham Canal on Broad Street. The newly named Church of the Messiah (1862, figure 151) recalled Priestley's Unitarian values based on Biblical evidence rather than that of Martineau who 'laid greater stress on the authority of the individual conscience' (Bushrod, 1973: 7). Yet despite this return to their foundational values, the church was built in the Gothic style to associate with Anglican religious and civic life.

Figure 151: The Unitarian Church of the Messiah, built over the Birmingham Canal on Broad Street, 1862.
Source: (Bushrod, 1973: 9)

The contradiction between the moral duty of the church to serve the people of the town whatever their circumstance, and the propriety of constructing a new building in the Gothic style, as seen in the later stages of Christ Church, away from its congregation in the lower part of the town was as much a reflection on the increasing acceptance of nonconformity as it was the rise in influence of those practicing its beliefs. The implications of this change of moral position were to have a profound effect on the civic life of Birmingham[54].

As nonconformity took a position amongst the flourishing civic life of the town, the fortune of other institutions depended on the will of its members. Some thrived, others faltered, either ceasing to exist or incorporating with others for survival. Just as the New Birmingham Library found a home in the Brotherly Society, nascent institutions often inhabited others' buildings. In 1837, the year of the petition for incorporation, a new commercial department was established at the reconstructed King Edward's Free Grammar School on New Street to counter the traditionally classical curriculum and in recognition of the growth in the applied arts in industry (Hopkins, 1989: 142). A similar provision was made for those of the middle and working classes by the Mechanics' Institute in response to the limitations of teaching provided by the school. To mark the visit of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1839 (founded 1831), the local committee of the Association mounted an industrial exhibition at King Edward's Free Grammar School, reported to be the first of its kind in Britain. As Dent noted, the objectives of the exhibitions were:

> 1st. To present, in one view, the various stages through which the principal articles manufactured in this district have to pass, commencing with the raw material.
>
> 2nd. To make known the value of any recent improvements in the arts and manufactures.
>
> 3rd. To collect together any curious specimen occurring in practice, whether in mechanics or chemistry, which may lead to the suggestion of further improvements in the application of science to practical purposes. (Dent, 1880: 481)

This methodical and thorough display of the productive capacity of Birmingham's scientists and manufacturers was widely visited, receiving many plaudits. In subsequent years, the Mechanics' Institute mounted a series of similarly successful events, coinciding with renewed agitation in support of the Chartists, led by Attwood and members of the Institute. The political action resulted in large public gatherings culminating in the Bull Ring Riots of 1839.

[54] This is discussed in greater depth in section 5.3.

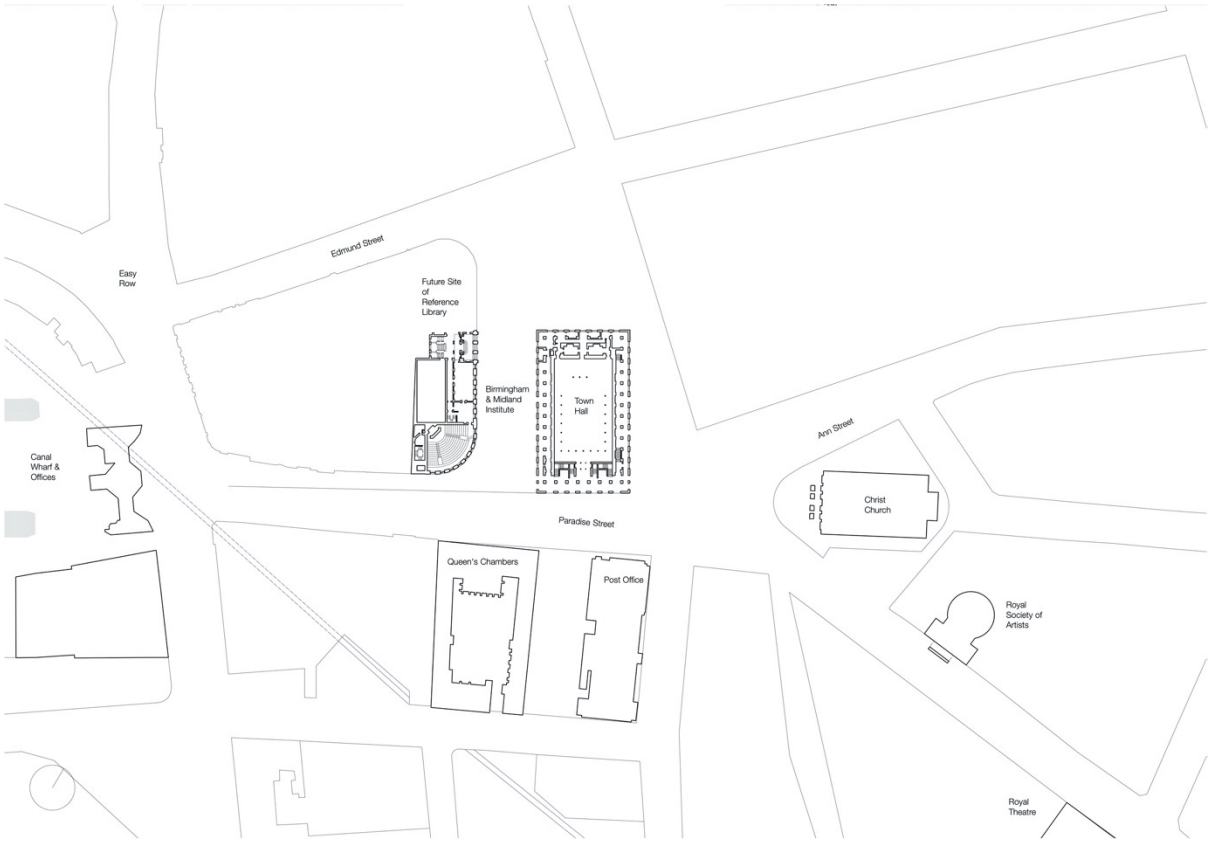


Figure 152: Drawing 007E – 1857 – 1:1,500 at A3, plan of first Birmingham and Midland Institute facing the Town Hall. Source: author

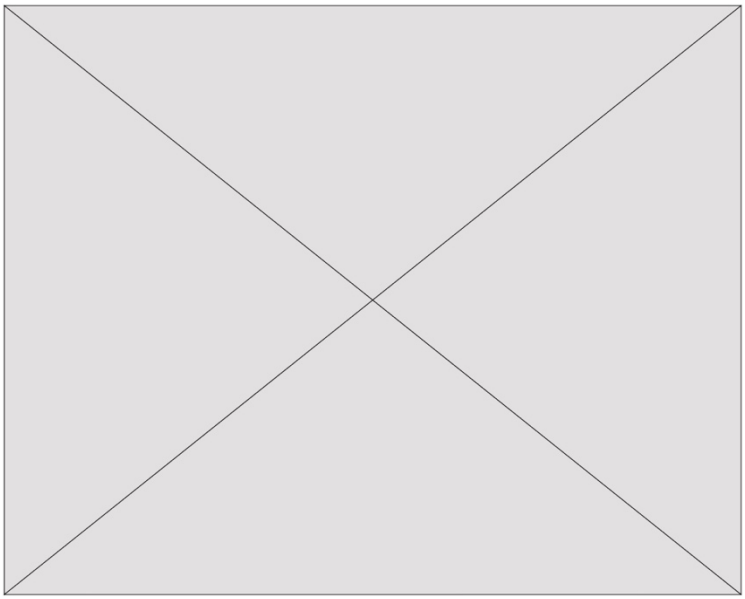


Figure 153: Plan by Charles Edge of the works to the surrounding context of the Town Hall, including the 'proposed new street' and new building lines to Ann Street revealing the Town Hall. Source: BCC MS1460_2

It ultimately led to the demise of the Institute in 1842, its members energy consumed by the Chartist movement and poorly managed exhibitions causing significant financial losses (Waterhouse, 1954: 9).

The idea of the industrial exhibition and the representative institution remained influential, however. The Industrial Exhibition (1849) planned by WC Aitken for the second visit of the British Association took place at Bingley Hall to the top of New Street, a direct result of these earlier exhibitions. It was visited by the Prince Regent and through his influence inspired the World's Fair of 1851, with Birmingham's manufacturers contributing to the construction of Paxton's Crystal Palace and the interior exhibition. The Fair inspired subsequent international exhibitions and engaged Birmingham's artisans in wider questions of style and technique.

In place of the Mechanics' Institute rose the Polytechnic Society (1844) which opened on Steelhouse Lane. The Society obtained the library of the earlier body, providing a reading room, scientific apparatus and a museum for the exhibition of natural history and for 'specimens of the machinery and manufactures of our own and other countries' (Waterhouse, 1954: 9). It also housed a Lecture Theatre, used by the Midland Institute. Early supporters included Charles Dickens, a champion of education for the working-classes, who presided over a 'conversazione' at the Town Hall to raise funds for the Society (Waterhouse, 1954: 10). This Society too would fail, forced to leave the Steelhouse Lane premises in 1848, coinciding with the dissolution of the earlier Philosophical Institution. The two organisations discussed amalgamation, but it was decided that a new foundation would better serve the town. The resultant Birmingham and Midland Institute occupied the buildings of the Philosophical Society on Cannon Street, until new premises were built on Paradise Street (E. M. Barry, 1857, figure 152), facing the Town Hall on land granted by the newly formed Town Council. The School of Design was removed from the Society of Arts (which gained its Royal title in 1864) to the Birmingham and Midland Institute in 1858[55].

The increasing propriety of the buildings and streets between the markets to the south and New Street and Paradise Street to the north meant that the incomplete Town Hall finally received the necessary funds to fulfil its purpose and to provide a suitable setting for new civic structures and occasions. The Triennial Music Festival had been held in the Town Hall since 1834, welcoming Felix Mendelssohn in 1837 for a performance of his oratorio *St. Paul*, his *Elijah* commissioned for the festival of 1846.

[55] This, as well as the implications of the Industrial Exhibition, is discussed in greater depth in section 5.3.

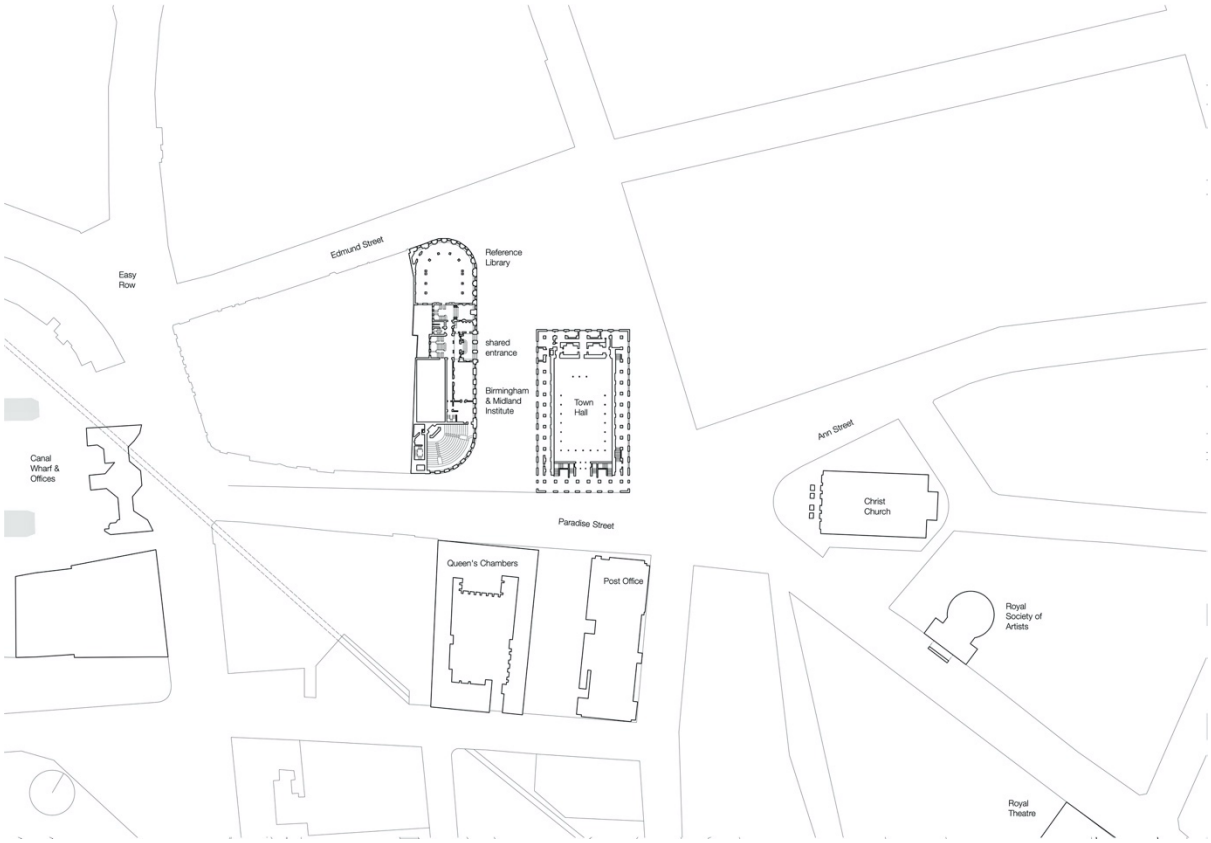


Figure 154: Drawing 007A – 1866 – 1:1,500 at A3, Paradise Street with Free Reference Library, Birmingham and Midland Institute and extended Town Hall. Source: author

Charles Edge's work to the north extension and façade to the west were complete by 1848 and the surrounding buildings cleared to allow for the Birmingham and Midland Institute from 1855. After the award of the Charter of Incorporation in 1838, the Street Commissioners worked in parallel with the newly constituted Town Council until 1852 when the Council was reconstituted and took full responsibility. Despite what Briggs (1963: 208) described as 'the worst period of Birmingham local government', a tripled budget allowed for the purchase of land on Edmund Street and Congreve Street (1853) as well as on Ann Street (1857) for public buildings and newly aligned streets, as depicted in Edge's drawing in figure 153.

The shortcomings of the town council, in particular the Public Works Committee, led to a period of economy, relieved only by the increasing and hence taxable value of property. It was in this climate and wider, mainly Liberal movement for public libraries that the Council belatedly decided to levy rates for the construction of a central reference library, enacting the Public Library Act 1850. In place of subscription, the Council levied a penny rate from 1860 to establish a library with reading and news rooms, a museum and art gallery, and four lending libraries with their own news rooms (Briggs, 1963: 214). The location and idea of the library was directly related to the Birmingham and Midland Institute. As Waterhouse (1954: 63) notes, the Institute had within its founding Act the 'power to transfer land or provide buildings for any library or museum formed by the town'. The Library (J. H. Chamberlain and Martin, 1866) was built on land between the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Edmund Street with a shared entrance from Ratcliff Place, named after John Ratcliff, the Mayor of Birmingham 1856-58 (Dent, 1880: 625) (figure 154). Opened to great acclaim, the nonconformist minister and George Dawson addressed the gathering, enthusing that 'a great town exists to discharge towards the people of that town the duties that a great nation exists towards to discharge towards the people of that nation', likening the public library movement to the church, providing for all people irrespective of their background or circumstance (Briggs, 1963: 196). This was the 'civic gospel' in action, the collective duty of the polis grounded in common purpose, though through the incorporation of the town and the establishment of an elected Council, that duty was less moral than it was legal. Hunt (2004: 519) suggests 'municipal gospel' as a more apposite term, marking the shift from the mid-Victorian voluntarist model to one enshrined in government[56].

[56] George Dawson, Robert William Dale and Henry Crosskey were the leading voices of the 'civic' or 'municipal gospel' movement, adopted and developed by Joseph Chamberlain during his tenure as Major. This is discussed in section 5.3.1.

Figure 155: Birmingham Station, Curzon Street, 1839. Source: BMT 1996V145.12

Figure 156: Curzon Street Station, Birmingham, 1838. Source: BMT 2002V6

As the Reference Library became a formal part of the growing civic centre, the earlier Old and New Birmingham Libraries evolved in line with the changing circumstances of their membership and wider movements. The Old Library on Union Street was extended in 1843 to provide ‘a reading room, a general room, a room for periodicals and works of rapid circulation, and a reference library’ (Parish, 1966: 68). A change in reading habits and tastes and increased competition from other libraries – significantly the Free Library - and book clubs had resulted in falling membership, so much so that by 1860 the Old and New Libraries took the decision to reunite. Some 300 books from the New Library went to the Free Library, as did the librarian. Nonconformist involvement persisted during these years, Dawson involved in revising the catalogue. Membership recovered too, in part due a doubling of the number of shares and to a new class of ‘subscriber’ member, so that by the opening of the Free Library the committee was in a position to begin a reserve fund for future building (Parish, 1966: 73).

4.1.1 New Infrastructures to the Periphery and Centre

The rise in productivity and propriety was aided by new forms of movement, transportation, and communication. This initially saw development on the edges of the town, but as technology improved had a greater impact on the centre. The construction of the canals from 1777 on had accelerated the growth of industrial activity and altered the landscape and orientation of the town. The canal corridors cut across previously rural land made possible by novel feats of engineering, connecting the workshops and factories of Birmingham with sites of extraction, production, and trade. This landscape of wharves, warehouses, workshops, and factories lie in close proximity to the civic life of the town, in particular beyond the civic buildings of Paradise Street. Canal construction continued into the nineteenth century with the Birmingham and Warwick Junction Canal (1844) and Tame Valley Canal (1846), but the slow passage of the boats, the lack of connectivity between often competing systems and the seasonal impact of drought and cold weather meant that they were not entirely efficient nor reliable (Hopkins, 1989: 30).

Figure 157: Birmingham New Street, new Grand Central Railway Station. Source: BMT 2002V4

Steam power changed the register of transport and manufacturing in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Grand Junction Railway (1837) was the first long distance railway in the world to use steam locomotives, running for eighty-two miles from Birmingham, via Wolverhampton, Stafford, Crewe and Warrington, where it joined the Warrington and Newton Railway which in turned connected Liverpool and Manchester (Line and Langham, 2014: 6). The opening of the Birmingham to London line the following year with a new terminus at Curzon Street reduced the travel time to five hours and completed an efficient link between the north and south. Curzon Street Station[57] (1838, figure 155) by Philip Charles Hardwick was one of a pair of buildings by the architect, the other at Euston Grove. Both buildings were of the Greek Revival style, and representative of a new building type. At Curzon Street, the principal building is square in plan including the portico, the ground floor composed of six rooms of varying proportion, with a grand three storey stone staircase to the entrance lit by an octagonal lantern. The portico is framed by four Greek Ionic columns of a giant order which rise from a podium, with a full entablature, stepped architrave and blank frieze over. Detached from the principle building to the rear stood the cast iron train shed by the engineer John Joseph Bramah and a turntable by the company's engineer Robert Stephenson (figure 156). A hotel wing was added later by Robert Benson Dockray, replacing the entrance gate to the train yard beyond (Historic England, 2015).

Not only did the railway bring a new order and building type, but it also extended the town's boundary to the east, reorienting and reorganising a much wider territory though many of the tracks followed the valleys of the rivers Tame and Cole. Where this was not possible, the arc of the rail line cut across existing streets and field boundaries, as well as the avenue of trees extending east from Aston Hall. The Hall had been occupied from 1819 by James Watt jr and after his death was turned into a museum of curiosities between 1858-64 (Foster, 2005: 274). The life of the terminal building was short-lived, after an act of parliament was passed in 1846 for a 'Grand Central Station' in the centre of Birmingham (figure 157). As Curzon Street Station closed to passengers and became a goods depot for the London and Northwestern Railway, New Street Station opened (1854), substantially altering the topography of the centre.

New Street Station was of a different arrangement to Curzon Street, since it was located amongst existing streets. This was enabled by new engineering techniques that allowed for the tunnelling of tracks through the sandstone ridge upon which the town stood. Positioned

[57] The aristocratic Curzon family bought parts of William Jennings (of the Jennens family) estate when he died intestate in 1798. This site, previously known as Nova Scotia Gardens, was owned by Lord Howe. (Harman, T. and Showell, W. (1885) *Showell's Dictionary of Birmingham.* Birmingham: Cornish Brothers., 50). Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire was commissioned by Sir Nathaniel Curzon in 1759 as their family home, designed by Robert Adam.

behind Barry's Grammar School and the Theatre Royal, the station occupied the ground of five blocks with the demolition of the Old Meeting House (1689, 1795) and National School. John Livock's Italianate station buildings and Queens Hotel provided an entrance from Stephenson Street off New Street. To the south, Great Queen Street was cut, leading onto the west entrance of the Market Hall and onto Hill Street and Paradise Street beyond. The station shed was enclosed by the largest single-span iron trussed roof in Britain, designed by E.A. Cowper of Fox, Henderson and Co. who had built Paxton's Crystal Palace (Foster, 2005: 110).

Other lines and stations followed, further extending the range of the town, and opening up new places for development in the peripheral landscape. Of significance in the centre, Snowhill Station (1854) linked Birmingham with Wolverhampton and Dudley to the north via Soho, and with Oxford to the south.

With the increasingly dignified setting of the town, those activities deemed unsuitable by the newly formed Town Council and Borough were moved out of sight to allow for more fitting uses and buildings. The Workhouse, which had stood on Lichfield Street next to the infirmary since the Workhouses Act of 1722, had fallen into disrepair, hemmed in by 'dingy brick and mortar on every side, which rendered it close and unwholesome' (Dent, 1880: 501). Through funds raised by rates rather than by subscription as had been the norm, the Workhouse (Bateman, 1852) was removed to a site owned by the parish on Birmingham Heath, adjacent to the newly constructed Borough Gaol and 'Lunatic Asylum' (D.R. Hill, 1850). The latter were built after the formation of the Borough, in place of those previously provided in the county town of Warwick. Further 'straightening out' of the town's streets and institutions followed, along with a concern wider improvement, as discussed in the following sections 4.2 and 4.3.

The legacy of the works discussed here on the spatial orientation of the city was to further establish New Street as an address of some importance through the major project of New Street Station which expanded the territory of the centre to the national register. Institutions founded on need were relocated to the periphery to make way for more proprietous and economically advantageous uses, marking the beginning of a change in attitude to the civic order of the city. Institutions such as the hospital embodied an implicit order associated with an earlier tradition reaching back to the priory, which together with the workhouse was deemed unsuitable for the centre. The combined act for the provision of the Market and Town Halls demonstrated the still-contingent association of commercial and civic interests, informing the subsequent projects for the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library as a union of an implicit and explicit institutional order.

4.2 SURVEY 6: Reordering and Extending the City (1867–1899)

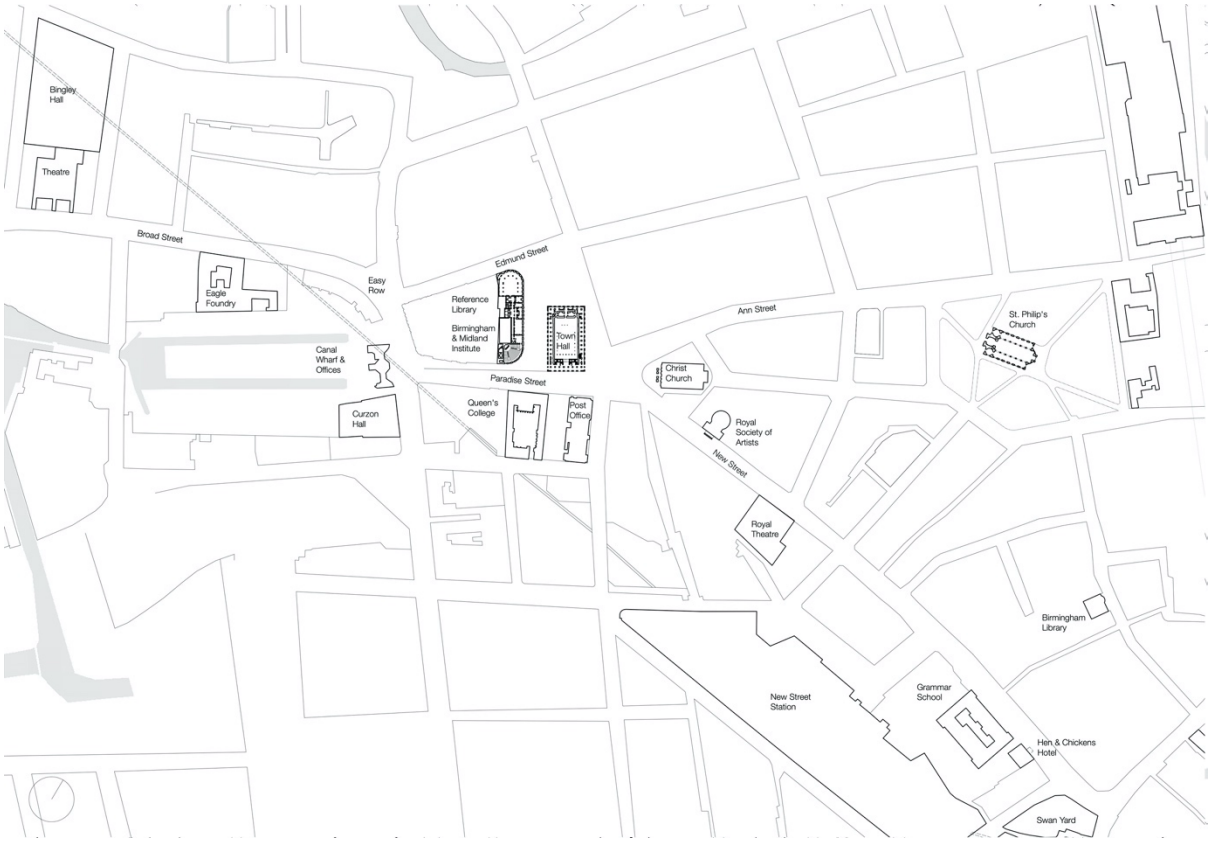


Figure 158 : Drawing 008B - 1899 – 1:2,500 at A3, at relocation of Birmingham Library to Margaret Street and foundation of University of Birmingham. Source: author

With the construction of the Market Hall and purchase of the market rights by the corporation, the Bull Ring continued to form a vital part of the daily life of Birmingham though operating at a different register. Trade intensified under the corporation, with the construction of specialised halls around the historical marketplace. As Briggs (1952: 325) noted, further expansion took place with the opening of the Fish Market on the corner of Bell Street (1869, extended twice 1878 and 1882). Smithfield Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market followed (1883, extended 1892), with the City Meat Market and Abattoirs built on Bradford Street (1891), nearby the abattoirs and tanneries of Digbeth. With the increased activity around the markets, disruption was to be minimised at any cost. After 1875, the Michaelmas and Whitsuntide fairs were no longer held, ending a tradition that had been a feature of the agricultural life of Birmingham since the earliest market (Dent, 1880: 526).

Figure 159: Interior of Great Western Arcade. Source: Dent, 551

This reflected the changing orientation of the town as a consequence of incorporation on grounds of utility as well as propriety, where previously informal places and activities were reordered and refined, seen too in the wood block paving of the streets around the market and Moor Street, along New Street and up to Paradise Street to provide a robust surface for traffic and to prevent pedestrians from having to cross rutted and poorly drained surfaces (Dent, 1880: 525).

With the removal of the New Meeting to Broad Street, Carrs Lane United Reform Church (1876) remained a bastion of nonconformity in the lower part of the town. Whitwell's Greek Revival meeting house was refronted by Yeoville Thomason in a Renaissance style pre-empting his work at the Council House (Foster, 2005: 90). It was here that Dr. R.W. Dale preached his 'civic gospel', urging his congregation to participate fully in the life of the town in whatever capacity they were able. According to Dale (cited in Briggs, 1963: 199) 'they ought to be reformers of local abuses…to see to it that the towns and parishes in which they live are well drained, well lighted, and well paved; that there are good schools for every class of the population; that there are harmless public amusements; that all parochial and municipal affairs are conducted honourably and equitably'. Together with the leading members of the Unitarian Church of the Messiah including Chamberlain, Dale's message reinforced Baptist minister George Dawson's ministry at the Church of the Saviour whose gospel was as much religious as it was practical.

4.2.1 Infrastructures of Propriety and the Growth of the Suburbs

The expansion in trade and population in Birmingham was facilitated by ever increasing connectivity, leading to substantial changes both to the centre and periphery as additional rail lines were cut and surrounding villages were subsumed by expanding boundaries. This was particularly evident after the construction of the Sutton Coldfield (1876) and Harborne (1874) Lines. As the North-Western and Midland lines had brought about change to New Street, the Great Western line had transformed the area around Snow Hill, the station rebuilt and fronted with the Great Western Hotel (J.A. Chatwin, 1875). Opposite, the Great Western Arcade (W. H. Ward, 1874, figure 159) was built over the rail line in two levels, connecting Monmouth Street with Temple Street. The shopfronts lining the arcade were fronted in ebony and gold, the interior street punctuated by a central dome (Dent, 1880: 573). Other private arcades were constructed around the same time, reflecting the tastes of the European city, most notably Paris, a century prior.

Figure 160: 2 Thomas Street, No. 9 Court, 1875, condemned and demolished in the construction of Corporation Street. Source: BMT LS2/100

Figure 161: 1 Thomas Street, No. 6 Court, 1875, condemned and demolished in the construction of Corporation Street. . Source: BMT LS 2/101

These privately delivered projects associated with the railways contributed to various ‘improvement’ measures, including the removal of ‘slum’ housing and streets where a lack of sanitation and fresh water resulted in high mortality rates. This was certainly the case in the construction of New Street Station, but where the impetus for change did not come from external forces, the corporation saw it as their civic duty to provide for their citizens whatever their circumstances.

As Briggs (1963: 214, 201) notes, ‘it was not books [in relation to the Free Library], however, but sewage which gave the makers of the civic gospel their greatest opportunity’, citing Dale who believed that newly powerful municipalities had it in their remit to ‘redress in many ways the inequalities of human conditions’. Under the influential and popular Mayor Joseph Chamberlain, who entered office in 1869, and the equally powerful Public Works Committee, schemes for obtaining and improving various utilities companies commenced, some revisiting earlier initiatives that had been hindered by a period of economy and inaction after the dissolution of the Street Commissioners and start of the Town Council. Objections to the discharge of sewage into the River Tame at Saltley had been raised as early as 1854, only reaching resolution in 1870 when the Sewage Enquiry Committee was established to deal with the broader problem of sanitation (Briggs, 1963: 216). An agreement ‘to rid Birmingham of 14,000 open middens and ashpits that drained directly into sewers’ was reached soon after, complete by 1875 and resulting in a newly formed Birmingham, Tame and New District Drainage Board (Briggs, 1963: 217). Following the example of other municipalities, Birmingham’s leaders saw publicly owned utilities both as a way of improving living conditions and raising the necessary capital for further projects. The Public Health Act 1875 allowed local authorities to buy out gas companies, which duly happened with the acquisition of the Birmingham Gas, Light and Coke Company and Birmingham and Staffordshire Gas Light Company (Briggs, 1963: 218). Reform of the water provision followed with the transfer of the Birmingham Water Works (founded 1826) to the Town Council, leading to further ‘slum’ housing clearance (figures 160 and 161) and the condemning of 3,000 wells serving 60,000 people in the first eight years by the newly founded Health Committee (Briggs, 1963: 225).

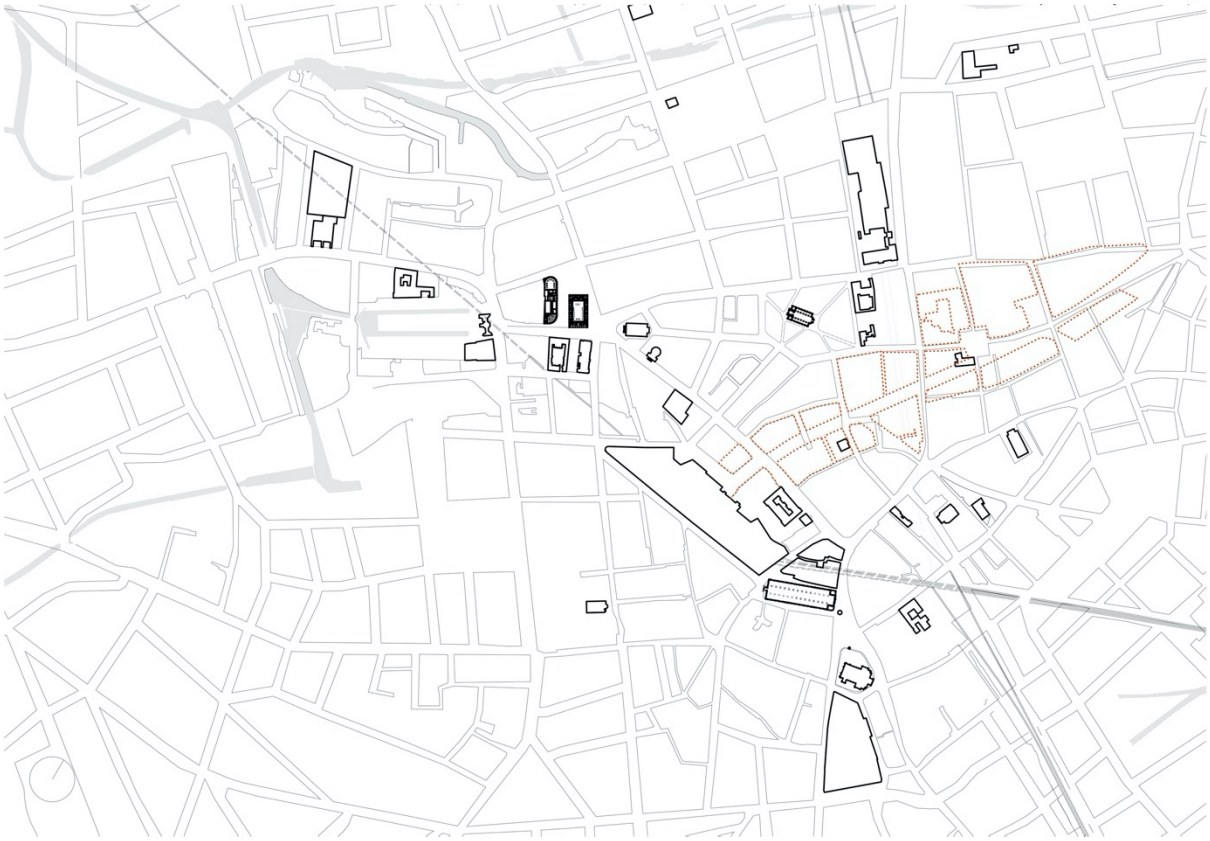


Figure 162: Drawing 007A - 1866 Drawing with line of Corporation Street (in red, constructed 1878 – 82).
Source: author

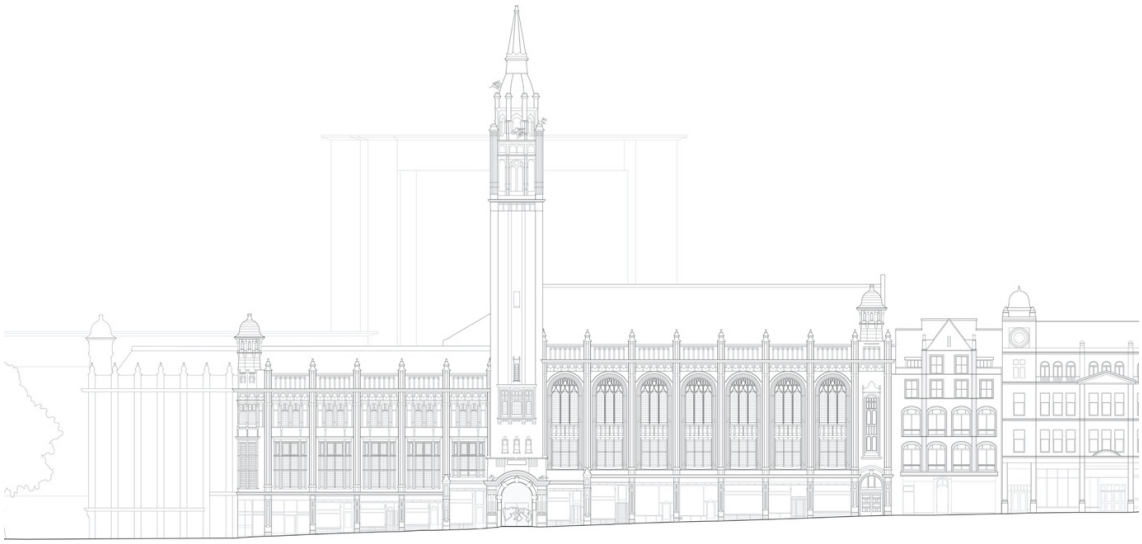


Figure 163: Principal facade to Methodist Central Hall. Source: J Timmins

The result was a sharp rise in borough debt from £500,000 to £2,500,000, encouraged by lowered interest rates due to the financial and economic crisis and fall of foreign investment of the time (Briggs, 1963: 219). By the end of the century, the Corporation's borrowing reached £10 million, compared to that of a 'small continental principality' such was the scale of debt-financed development (Briggs, 1963: 237). Chamberlain's Liberal Council saw such spending as a necessary part of their enacting of the 'civic gospel', enabled in part by central government loans. A substantial part of that debt was accrued through the construction of Corporation Street (1878-82, figure 162) after the Improvement Scheme was granted under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act 1875. This is discussed in greater detail in section 5.3.

The newly aligned Corporation Street was constructed in sections, making new ground for a series of substantial new buildings. The County Court (Williams, 1882) and Victoria Law Courts (Webb and Bell, 1891) formed a centre of justice for the borough, and together with the relocated and much enlarged Methodist Central Hall (Ewen and Alfred Harper, commenced 1899 completed 1903, figure 163) established a new architectural ambition for the industrial city. The principal facades to the Law Court and Central Hall were faced in terracotta with lesser side and rear facades in red brick. The debate on architectural style and the role of new material possibilities are discussed in further detail in section 4.3.

4.2.2 The Representation of a New Material Culture in the Civic Buildings

As Corporation Street changed the topography and orientation in the north of the city, the civic centre grew first in the range of functions and activities, then in architectural form. The Library continued to add to its collection, notably in 1867 when it established the Shakespeare Memorial Library on the occasion of the author's tercentenary through gifts from George Dawson and Samuel Timmins (Dent, 1880: 517).

The Birmingham Midland Institute and later Free Reference Library became the centre of artistic and intellectual debate, successors to prior institutions and drawing together others including the Schools of Design and of Music. The contingent nature of their construction is discussed in detail in section 5.3. The Library housed the city's first municipal Art Gallery and Museum of 1867, with a collection on loan from various benefactors including the Birmingham and Midland Institute who presented a bust of the artist David Cox (Dent, 1880: 518). An Industrial Art Museum was added in 1870 inspired by a collection of artefacts temporarily on loan from the South Kensington (later Victoria and Albert) Museum.

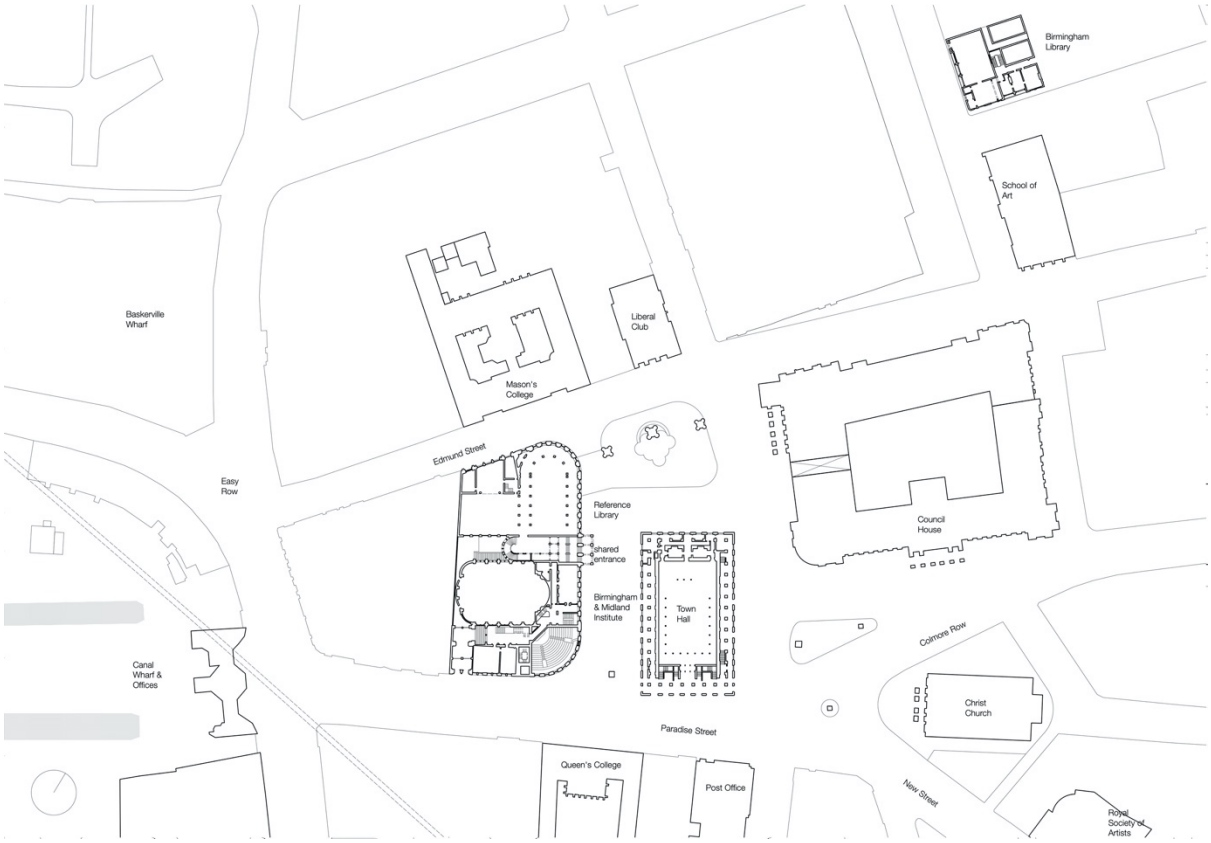


Figure 164: Drawing 008C 1881 Plan of extended Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library in the context of the Town Hall, Paradise Street and Ratcliff Place, and the columnar façade of the Council House. Source: author

The permanent collection included ‘Indian workmanship, carving, metal-work, jewellery, and textile fabrics, examples of ancient and modern Venetian glass, purchased from Messrs. Salviati, and of English glass, manufactured by Messrs. Barnes, artisan and glass workers, of Birmingham’ (Dent, 1880: 518). This collection was influential in the decoration of the new civic buildings, contributing to the material culture of the city.

The process of providing an appropriately positioned Council building had begun in 1853 with the purchase of land but remained undeveloped due to internal disagreements between councillors. A report by Estate and Buildings Committee on the new municipal buildings in 1869 set out the scope of the project, to include corporate buildings, assize courts, and judges’ lodgings (Dent, 522). Detailed proposals followed in 1871 after a competition overseen by Alfred Waterhouse, the scheme ‘Perseverantia’ by Yeoville Thomason winning against twenty-seven others including W. H. Ward of Birmingham and L. de Ville of London (1871: 541).

After some modifications to the design to accord with the classical language of the Town Hall, the first stone was laid by Chamberlain in 1874 and the columnar façade of the Council House to Ann Street was complete by 1879 (figure 164). In a detailed account of the building, The Builder (1878: 214) reported that;

> ‘The pediments are filled with groups of sculptured figures representing Manufactures, Commerce, Literature, Arts and Sciences, and to the central one Britannia rewarding the Birmingham Manufactures; and a figure-subject in mosaic is being prepared by Messrs. Salviati & Co. for the tympanum of the semi-circular arch over the central entrance.’

The provision of dedicated buildings for the administration of the Council was matched by public and private investment in places for education and culture.

The cultural offering of the growing civic centre was further advanced by philanthropic gestures by the city’s wealthy manufacturers and the rising income of the municipal utility companies. In 1880, Richard and George Tangye donated money for the purchase of art works for the city’s collection, on the condition that it be exhibited in purpose built galleries (Ralph, 1890: 106). The gift and pledge coincided with the need for dedicated offices for the gas committee, and the two briefs were combined. Built in stone to match the Council House, the resultant Art Gallery opened above the gas offices in 1885, the motto over the entrance reading ‘By the gains of industry we promote art’ (Briggs, 1963: 218), recalling the earlier motto of Birmingham Library. In 1881 the Tangye’s offered an additional donation for the foundation of a municipal School of Art (1885). This too was designed by Chamberlain

and Martin and fully explored the possibilities of terracotta in the rich design of the principal façade to Margaret Street.

Several similarly important institutions were either founded or relocated nearby in this period. The often-relocated Post Office reached its final location on Paradise Street opposite the Town Hall and Birmingham and Midland Institute in 1891. Sir Josiah Mason College was founded by the pen manufacturer in 1875, with buildings facing the Library on Edmund St complete by 1880 (Cossins) (Ralph, 1890: 102), with the Chamberlain memorial (J.H. Chamberlain, 1880) – a Gothic composition in Portland stone – completing the civic square.

As the municipal Library and Birmingham and Midland Institute expanded, so too did Birmingham Library, its building on Union Passage extended in 1888. The library lease was sold in 1897 to allow for the construction of a new building close by the School of Art on Margaret Street, opening there in 1899 (Cossins Peacock). This foundational institution joined the assembly of civic buildings to the north.

4.3 Historiographical Context

In discussing Birmingham of the mid to late nineteenth century, the 'civic gospel' is widely renowned as the guiding moral basis upon which the government of the rapidly growing city was based. A democratically elected and stable local government had been the aim from the earliest petition for a charter of incorporation in 1837, leading to the foundation of the Town Council in 1852. The ultimate accolade was to gain city status, achieved in 1889. These charters and acts suggest precise transitions from one state of government to another, the move from 'a body without a head', to the 'pompous corporation, […] a head without a body' according to Hutton's earlier damning analogy (Hutton, 1783: 164). In reality, the mode of government and that of the representative institutions existed in a state of flux, subject to incremental change, risk of failure, and duplicated interests. It is within that wide body of institutions that the moral dimension of civic life came to the fore, guiding the subsequent political life of the city. How and where this found physical representation in architecture and urban form reveals the civic ground of the city at a moment of intense change.

4.3.1 Civic Gospel – City as Church

Birmingham's 'civic gospel' encompassed the political, economic, industrial, and cultural life of the city, reaching its fullest expression under the Liberal Council of Joseph Chamberlain. Chamberlain's short mayoralty (1873-76) saw the culmination of sweeping changes in the governance and fabric of the city, many seeded long before but unfulfilled through years of inactivity, first under the Street Commissioners then by the Town Council. The association of 'civic' with 'gospel' was first promoted not by the Liberals but by influential Nonconformist

ministers, who likened their ministry to that of government. George Dawson, Robert William Dale and Henry Crosskey were the leading voices of this movement, which they stated in secular terms, opposed as they were to religious dogma particularly in matters of government. Dawson, Baptist minister at Mount Zion Chapel from 1844 until he established his own Church of the Saviour in 1847, believed in the vitality of the industrial city, as a new Florence where art and commerce could thrive together. His protégé Dale of Carrs Lane Congregational Church also recalled the Italian republic, citing Crosskey when suggesting that 'Birmingham too might become the home of a noble literature and art' (1963: 206). Furthermore, his recollection of ward meetings during municipal reforms served to illustrate the breadth of the vision;

> The speakers, instead of discussing small questions of administration and economy, dealt with glowing enthusiasm on what a great and prosperous town like Birmingham might do for its people. They spoke of sweeping away streets in which it was not possible to live a healthy and decent life; of making the town cleaner, sweeter and brighter; of providing gardens and parks and a museum; they insisted that great monopolies like gas and water supply should be supplied without stint at the lowest possible prices; that the profits of the gas supply should relieve the pressure of the rates. (Briggs, 1963: 206)

For Dale it was the Corporation's duty to improve the lives of everyone through new municipal institutions, including renewed streets as well as new financial regulations which would distribute wealth appropriately. Minister and educational reformer Crosskey, who took up ministry at the influential Church of the Messiah in 1869, likened the democratic orientation of Birmingham to that of Athens. He too wrote of Florence when travelling there later, noting 'Florence certainly distances all that we had imagined — the 'bounteous prodigality of nature' seems more than equalled by the lavishness with which men of genius have scattered their treasures in every highway and byway, so that go where we will there is some building or painting or statue to give delight' (Armstrong, 1895: 411). The civic gospel was not only about equality amongst citizens or a drive for efficiency, but it was also as much about an accord between the natural conditions and civic life of the city. The recalling of ancient and Renaissance settings by the city's philosophers implies a deep appreciation of the temporal nature of these institutional horizons, and the building of the Civic Centre recognised 'the capacity of architecture to harbour memory in a context of conflict and change' (Carl, 2015: 23)

Just as he had likened 'the public library movement to the church' (Briggs, 1963: 200), providing for all people irrespective of their background or circumstance, Dawson saw the 'new corporation' as a similarly open and committed organisation. Dale too saw a correlation

between the two, viewing life in the church as preparation for municipal government, commenting;

> The men that took part in the great and successful movement for reforming our administration and ennobling it had learnt the principles on which they acted and caught the spirit by which they were inspired very largely in the Nonconformist churches of Birmingham. (Dale in Briggs, 1963: 204)

For Dale, the selflessness of civic duty 'in municipal and political life' as well as 'philanthropic and educational institutions' was tantamount to a religious calling through action, not dogma (Dale, 1884: 115).

This was certainly true for Chamberlain, an active member of the Vestry committee at the Unitarian Church of the Messiah. He and others also taught in the Sunday school and helped to establish a Day School, drawing on Priestley's earlier mission to educate his congregation, and informing the subsequent foundation of Board Schools. Chamberlain's own education saw him benefit from the mutual cooperation of nonconformist belief. Raised in Highbury, North London, in a large family whose trade was in cordwaining, he attended Carter Lane Chapel near St. Paul's where he taught at the Sunday School. Educated at the University College School founded by James Mill and Henry Brougham, Chamberlain would have been exposed to radical beliefs and party politics of the time, most notably those of Bentham whose ideas on education had inspired the school and whose Utilitarianism drew on Priestley's Unitarian principles. Chamberlain learnt book keeping and commercial management in the family business, moving to Birmingham to take up work with his uncle John Sutton Nettlefold whose screw-making business had recently obtained the patent for the mechanisation of their production processes having been exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 (Hunt, 2004: 319). Like many of his contemporaries, Chamberlain was as astute in his business activities as he was committed to the church and the greater good of its people.

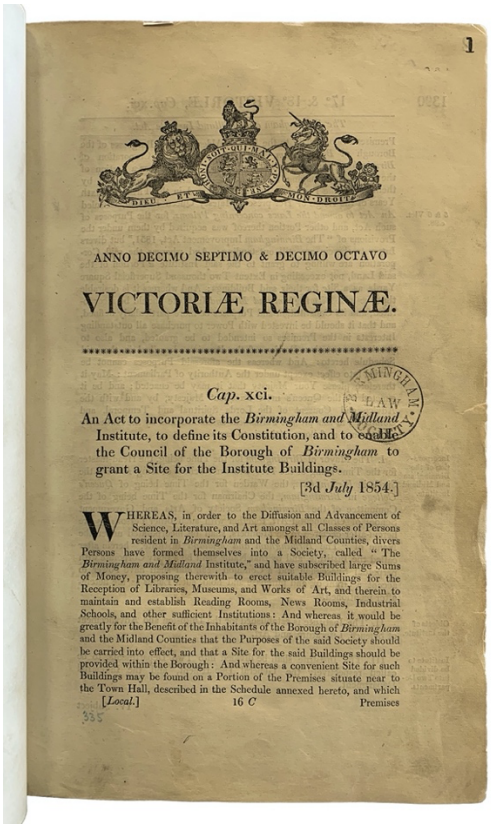
Comparing municipal institutions in America and England, Chamberlain (1891: 270) spoke of the fundamental role that those institutions - or 'machinery' - ought to play in the life of their citizens, recalling Dale's moral duty and Bentham's utility. He was proud to proclaim 'the dignity, the efficiency, and the economy' of the city's municipal services, costing a quarter of that provided in Boston (Chamberlain, 1891: 281). The selfless acts of the paid Councillors and vocational Alderman, who were apparently beyond reproach, provided the 'best political education for a free people', their service offering 'a career of usefulness' to the city of their birth (Chamberlain, 1891: 267). The freedom of access to cultural, educational and sanitary institutions was cited as the basis for the civic city, with the free libraries and museums of art

as well as facilities of technical instruction singled out for the self-improvement of all citizens (Chamberlain, 1891: 269). This was of particular interest in America, as the industrial cities of the twentieth century grew at a pace similar to Birmingham.

For commentators such as the American journalist Julian Ralph (1890: 99), Birmingham was a ‘model’ for the ‘science of municipal management’, earning it the accolade of being ‘the best governed city in the world’ though without citation for such as proclamation. Ralph (1890: 100) noted the Birmingham and Midland Institute as the ‘very great fount of education in the city’, providing for the artisans and shopmen of the city. That civic orientation was seen too in the inclusion of citizens on the Free Libraries and Art Gallery committees and embodied in the city’s motto ‘Forward’. On this, Ralph added;

> no mere system or routine observance could be devised to produce this or any other model government without there being a deep-seated spirit of what is called civicism, a broad and enlightened communal spirit, a far-sighted genius of brotherhood. (Ralph, 1890: 100)

Despite an undercurrent of the spiritual or church-like nature of the institution in Chamberlain and Ralph’s prose, great attention is paid to the relatively stable, technical enterprise of municipal government as a way of capturing the complexities of the city. If however, the institution is considered part of what Voegelin (Voegelin, 2000a: 194) calls ‘the infinitely differentiated field of social and historical processes’ in its foundation, maturation, decline, reform and collapse’, then greater attention ought to be paid to the ways in which the city’s institutions embodied a deeper, ethical dimension, reflected in the architecture and urban places of their making.



1

ANNO DECIMO SEPTIMO & DECIMO OCTAVO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

Cap. xci.

An Act to incorporate the *Birmingham and Midland* Institute, to define its Constitution, and to enable the Council of the Borough of *Birmingham* to grant a Site for the Institute Buildings.

[3d *July* 1854.]

WHEREAS, in order to the Diffusion and Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art amongst all Classes of Persons resident in *Birmingham* and the Midland Counties, divers Persons have formed themselves into a Society, called "The *Birmingham and Midland* Institute," and have subscribed large Sums of Money, proposing therewith to erect suitable Buildings for the Reception of Libraries, Museums, and Works of Art, and therein to maintain and establish Reading Rooms, News Rooms, Industrial Schools, and other sufficient Institutions: And whereas it would be greatly for the Benefit of the Inhabitants of the Borough of *Birmingham* and the Midland Counties that the Purposes of the said Society should be carried into effect, and that a Site for the said Buildings should be provided within the Borough: And whereas a convenient Site for such Buildings may be found on a Portion of the Premises situate near to the Town Hall, described in the Schedule annexed hereto, and which

[*Local.*] 16 *C* Premises

Figure 165: Front page to the Act for the Birmingham and Midland Institute, 1854. Source: BCC LF05.31 Local & Private Acts Vol. 11_17894_BMI Act

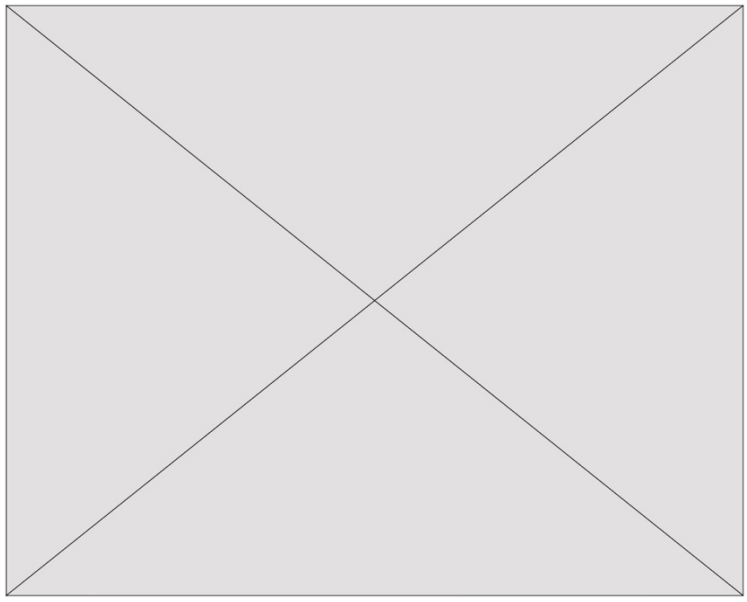


Figure 166: View of E.M. Barry's proposal for the Birmingham and Midland Institute as published by The Builder in 1855. Source: The Builder 1855-11-24: Volume 13 Issue 668

4.3.2 The Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library as 'Type'

The reform movements of the early nineteenth century instigated a new public awareness, where, as Bergdoll (2000: 5) noted, 'the invention of the building type and its public went

hand in hand'. The Free Public Library came to prominence in Britain after the Public Libraries Act of 1850, allowing towns with a population of over 10,000 to ballot their citizens on the provision of a Free Library through an increase in rates. Manchester Free Library (1852) was the first to open under the provision of the Act (Greenwood, 1887: 21). It was during this period, described by Briggs (1963: 185) as Birmingham's 'wasted years of the middle century', that the Town Council rejected Free Libraries and Museums Act on grounds of economy and in principled opposition to government intervention. Far from being inactive, the town saw numerous developments both through acts of government as well as those initiated by prolific local voluntarists. Whilst these did not lead directly to the construction of the Library, they set the agenda for a broader intellectual and cultural programme and the gradual definition of a new building type, nuanced to the conditions of the city.

After the rejection of the Act for a Free Library, a proposal for a 'New Scientific Institution' was made. After the failure of the Philosophical Institution and Polytechnic Institution (where the Midland Institute had inhabited the lecture theatre), it was agreed that a new institution be established 'adapted to the importance and requirements of this town' (Waterhouse, 1954: 11). This 'Literary and Scientific Institution' was first mentioned in public by Charles Dickens during his address at Dee's Royal Hotel to a gathered literary audience (the site of the Bastille dinner which led to the Birmingham Riots). Dickens was keen to note that provision should be made for all 'classes and creeds', and in 1853 offered to read his *Christmas Carol* at the Town Hall to promote the cause (Waterhouse, 1954: 13). This began Dickens' career in public readings for which he became renowned. As a union of science and arts and the embodiment of an intellectual culture that had so far eluded Birmingham, the Institute provided rooms for: lectures and classes; a laboratory; museums of geology and natural history, manufacturing and products, and machinery, tools; mining records; a scientific reference library and general lending library; news rooms; a meeting room; and, A Hall of Fine Arts (Waterhouse, 1954: 4). The committee recognised that not all the necessary funds might be forthcoming, and noted that should that be the case 'a smaller Institution' be founded, 'to be extended, as further sums shall be received' (Waterhouse, 1954: 13). The institution was contingent on the means and conditions of the town as an explicit manifestation of its institutional order.

The Birmingham and Midland Institute was incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1854 (figure 165), and the Town Council granted land to the west of the Town Hall over which the new

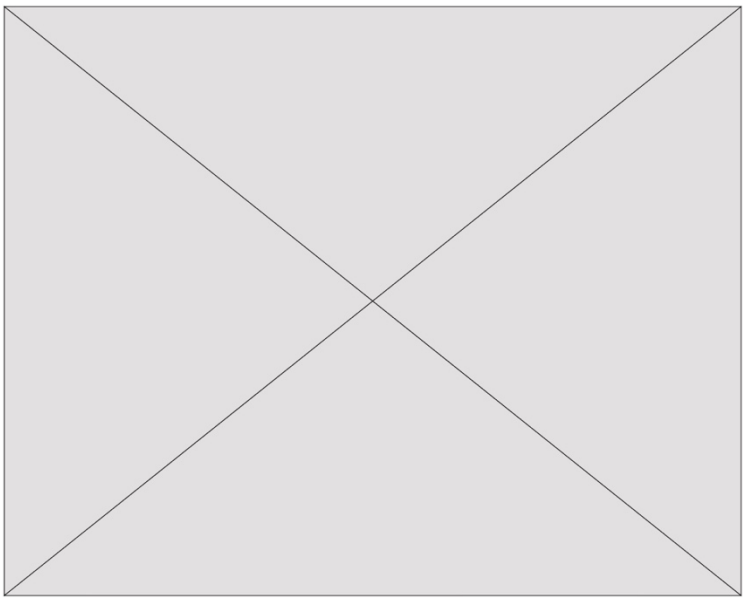


Figure 167: E.M. Barry basement and ground floor plan of Birmingham and Midland Institute, 1855, showing the extent to be built and that for future extension. Source: LOB

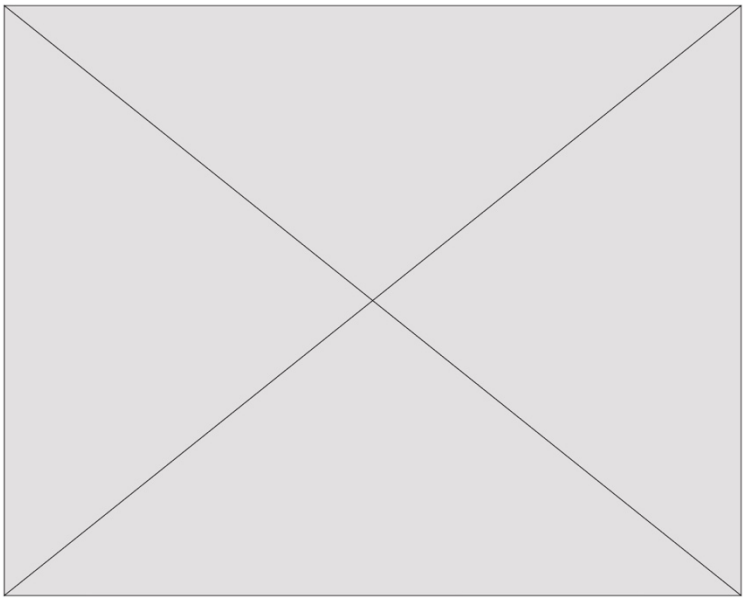


Figure 168: E.M. Barry long section of Birmingham and Midland Institute, 1855, before Library. Source: LOB

building would look, given on the proviso that £10,000 would be raised by subscription. In 1855, Edward M. Barry, the son of Sir Charles Barry, was appointed architect for the new building through competition. Barry's proposal drew on the Italianate Renaissance buildings of his father and his peers, most notable in the clubs of Pall Mall. Sydney Smirke's Carlton Club (1854-56) and C.O. Parnell and A. Smith's Army and Navy Club (1848-51) both reference the palazzos of sixteenth century Venice and the work of Sansovino, with richly adorned cornice and spandrels (Mordaunt Crook, 1987: 200).

The central three bays of Barry's proposal for the Institute could be read as a palazzo (figure 166), though the articulation of the façade was less florid than the London Clubs and closer to the restrained classicism of Alexander Thomson. This central section accommodated the entrance loggia and staircase, with 'curator and committee room' and 'meeting room' at ground floor and 'news room' and 'library' at first floor fronting onto the street. On third floor was the planned School of Art' and on the fourth the 'Industrial Department'. Behind this front range were the double height, top-lit 'small' and 'large' museums lined with galleries and display cases. The lower curved ends of the building articulated the interior function, that of a double height 'lecture theatre' to Paradise Street, and 'mining record room' with 'coffee room' over to Edmund Street seen in the plan and section in figures 167 and 168. This explicitly embodied the act of learning in the fabric of the building, the radius of the lecture theatre reflecting an inward focus, and the array of galleries and museums the active dialogue in Birmingham at that moment. The contingent nature of the scheme reflected negotiation too, reflecting an implicit institution order of a city finding its orientation during a period of civic foundation and burgeoning economic prosperity.

As marked on the plan, Barry's proposals were intentionally designed to be built in stages according to the available funds, with the section towards Paradise Street complete by 1857. The façade prompted intellectual debate, the newly arrived architect John Henry Chamberlain contesting any suggestion that it might be faced in stucco on grounds that 'it is a sham', adding that 'Birmingham is defective in beauty; its streets are wide, but its buildings mean […]. The proposed front is, to our mind, rather too like a row of shops already – build it in cement and the resemblance will be complete' (Chamberlain in Waterhouse, 1954: 58).

With the move of the School of Design from the Society of Arts to the Institute in 1858 and completion of the Industrial Department in 1859, Barry's first stage work was complete. The contingent approach to the building had been anticipated, and the finances of the Institute meant that parts of the building remained intentionally incomplete. Eager to see the building complete, the Town Council reached unanimous agreement on the adoption of the Free Libraries and Museums Act, ten years after it had been issued. Land belonging to the Institute was transferred to the Corporation and Barry was appointed to rework his plans with the revised library programme in place of the small museum and library, mining record room and coffee room, with the Institute and Free Library a single conjoined entity (Waterhouse, 1954: 63). As a result of Barry's failure to alter the scheme to meet the Corporation's budget, he was removed from his duties and replaced by William Martin and John Henry Chamberlain. Barry's planned façade was maintained in the revised scheme to provide a unified appearance to the combined programme and the interior reconfigured to

accommodate book stacks and the large reading room, as illustrated by Edward Richard Taylor (figure 169). The semi-circular plan of the room placed readers at the centre of the collection, the sweeping galleried walls lined to their full height with books, lit from above. The reading room was covered by a large, vaulted roof, the central banks of reading desks and walls lined with books recalling Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève (built 1838-50).

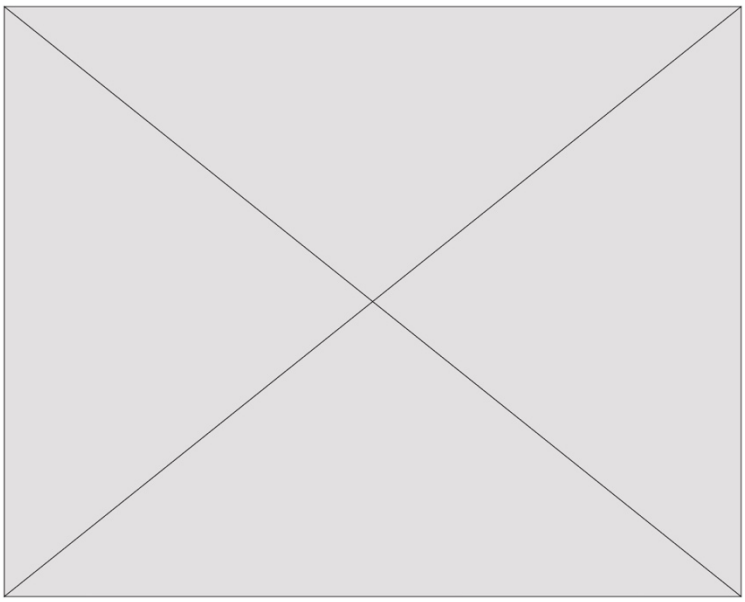


Figure 169: Reading Room Interior of Free Reference Library before the fire of 1879, painting by Edward Richard Taylor. Source: LOB Ref 1885P2464

Work to extend both the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Library commenced in 1878 to satisfy growing membership and needs of both. J. H. Chamberlain and Martin's extension to their and E.M. Barry's earlier buildings provided a 1,000 seat theatre, and an Industrial School within the domain of the Institute, and a new entrance portico, stone staircase and increased book storage to the Library (Waterhouse, 1954: 66). Funds for the purchase of land was raised through subscription with contributions by some of the leading industrialists and politicians in the city; Nettlefold and Chamberlain, the Chance brothers, Louisa Anne Ryland and Sir Josiah Mason (Waterhouse, 1954: 67). Work proceeded well until a temporary screen in the Library caught fire during works to a gas pipe. Much of the Library's collection of rare books, manuscripts, and prints were lost, though the Shakespeare Memorial Library survived largely intact, as did the art collection which had been temporarily relocated to Aston Hall during the building work (Dent, 520). The Birmingham and Midland Institute was largely unaffected by the incident. The rebuilt and extended Library and Institute opened in 1881, notably now as two independent entities after the entrances were separated and internal thresholds were closed. Though J. H. Chamberlain and Martin's approach to both the Library and to the extension was sympathetic to E. M. Barry's first Institute building, their work was increasingly influenced by Ruskinian Gothic, and the applied arts as discussed in section 4.3.3.

That the Birmingham and Midland Institute and the Free Reference Library were built over three distinct periods is representative of the contested nature of the city as it established its civic ground. The Town Hall established the civic order at the culmination of New Street, around which Barry and later J. H. Chamberlain and Martin oriented their iterations of the two institutes, illustrated in figures 170-173 on the following pages (included earlier in the document). Whilst earlier work had respected Barry's intended Italianate design, J. H. Chamberlain and Martin's work to the interior, and to the newly extended facades to Edmund Street and Paradise Street illustrated the changing state of architectural style in the later part of the nineteenth century. The rebuilt and extended Library and Institute became two independent entities after the entrances were separated and internal thresholds were closed. This internal subdivision and the division of education and knowledge removed the opportunities for dialogue and transformation, changing the until then dynamic nature of the institution with future implications for both. This sequence related to the available funds for the construction, much of which was raised through subscription, but also through the changing expectations of a newly framed idea of society. The contingent nature of the making of the civic centre is discussed in chapter 5.

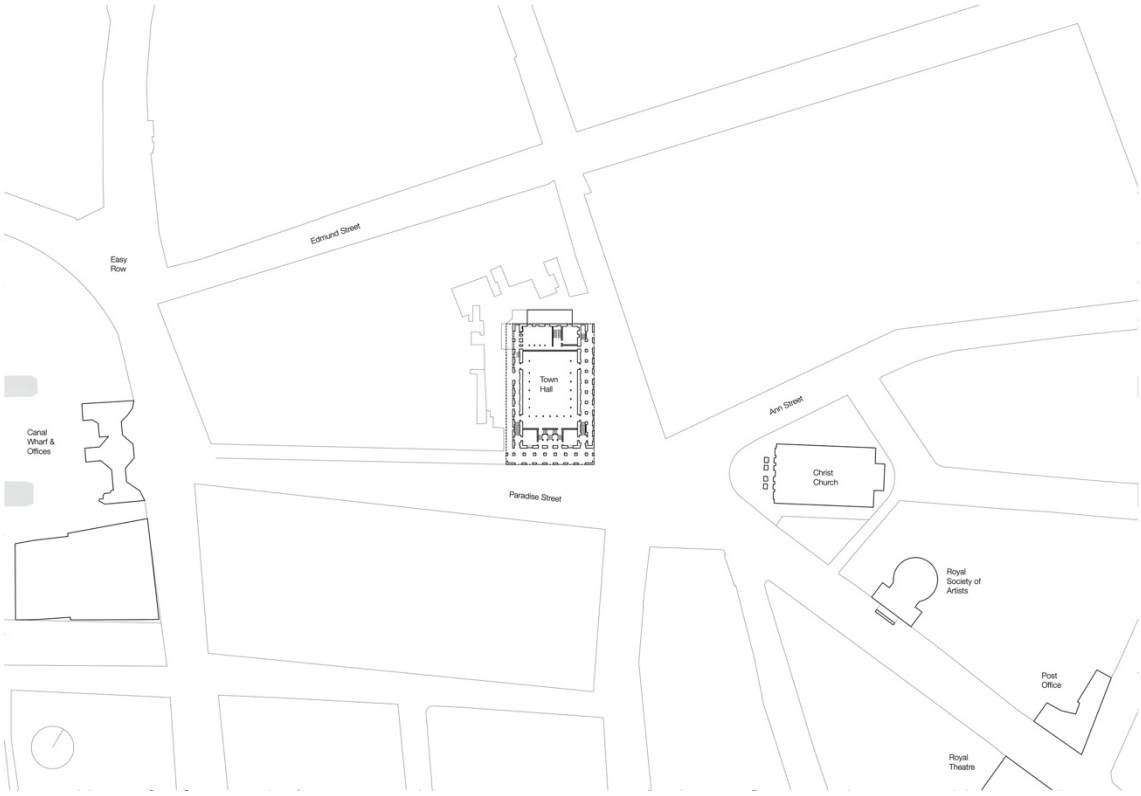


Figure 170: Building Civic Ground – Drawing 1: Hansom and Welch's incomplete Town Hall at its opening in 1834. Source: author

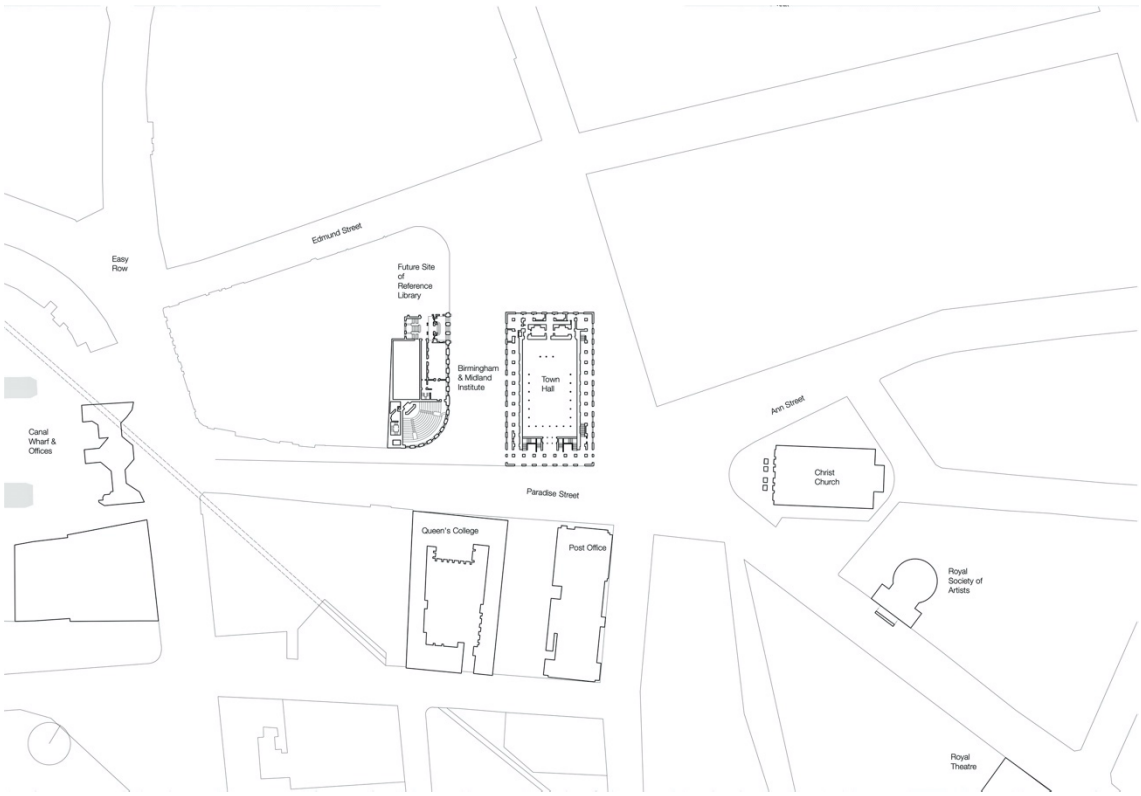


Figure 171: Building Civic Ground – Drawing 2: Completed Town Hall by Edge, with E.M. Barry's Birmingham & Midland Institute of 1857. Source: author

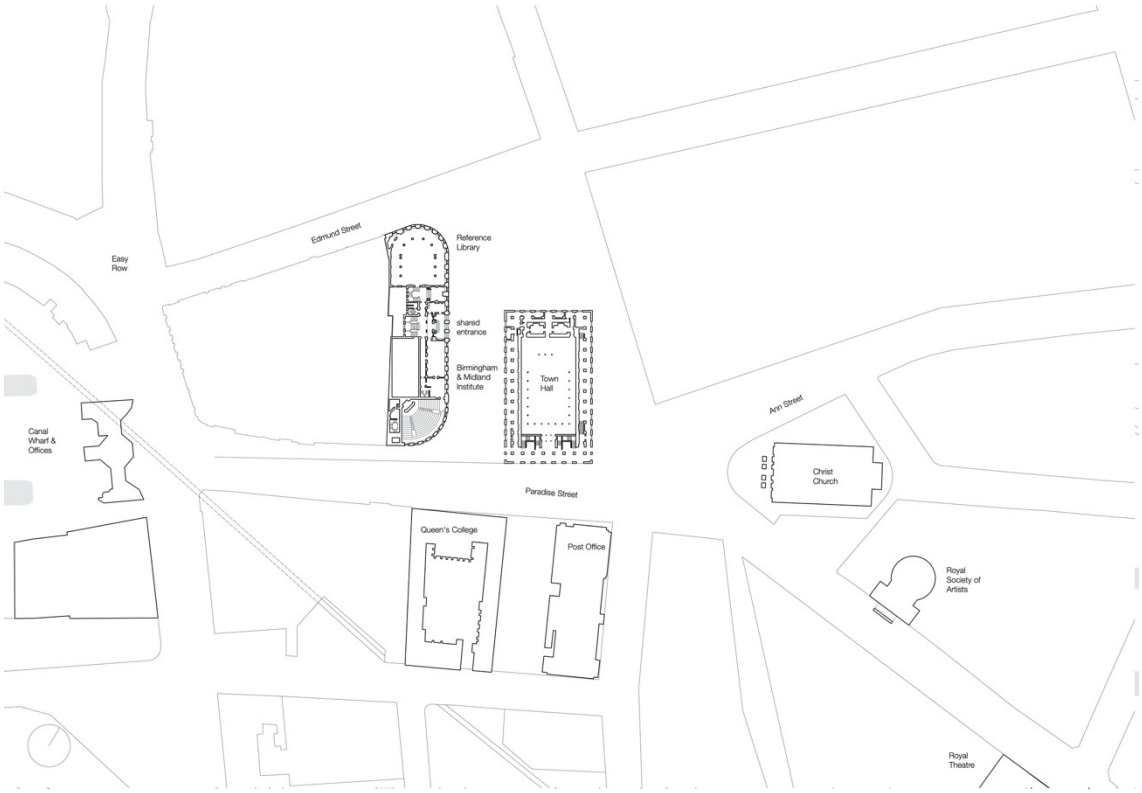


Figure 172: Building Civic Ground – Drawing 3: E.M. Barry's Birmingham & Midland Institute of 1857, with Chamberlain & Martin's Free Reference Library, 1866. Source: author

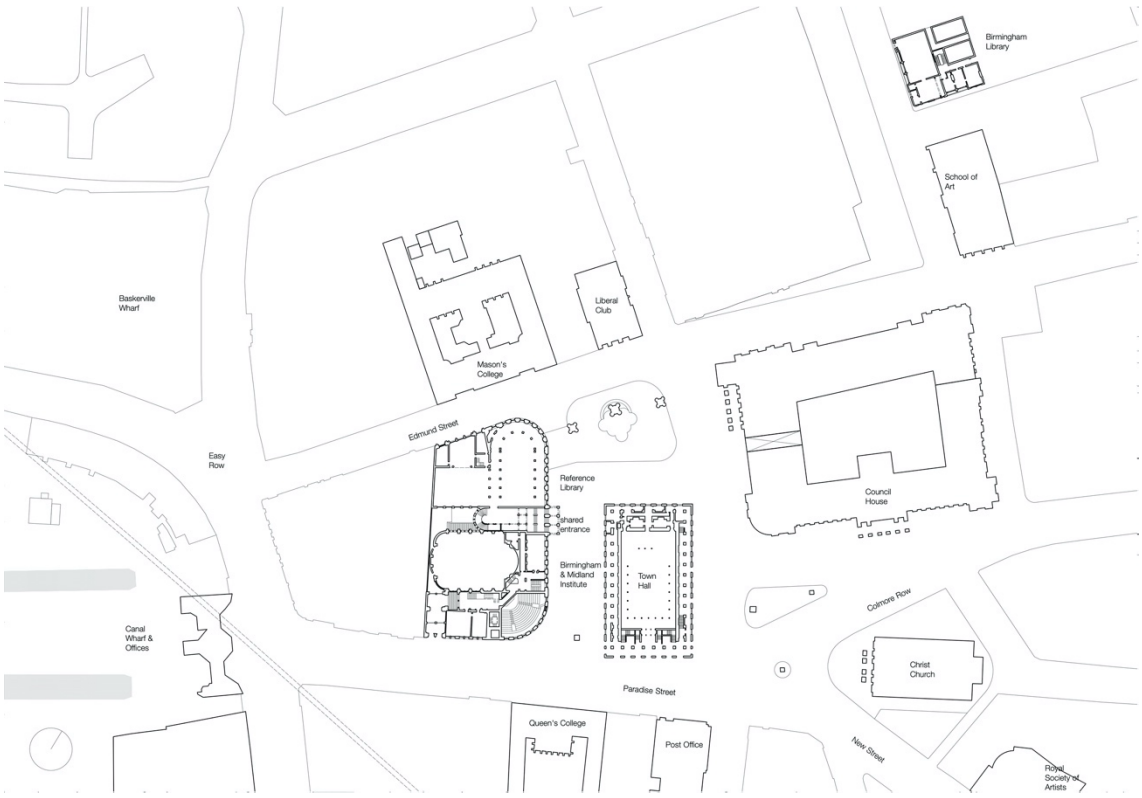


Figure 173: Building Civic Ground – Drawing 4: E.M. Barry's Birmingham & Midland Institute of 1857, with Chamberlain & Martin's Free Reference Library, both enlarged 1881. Source: author

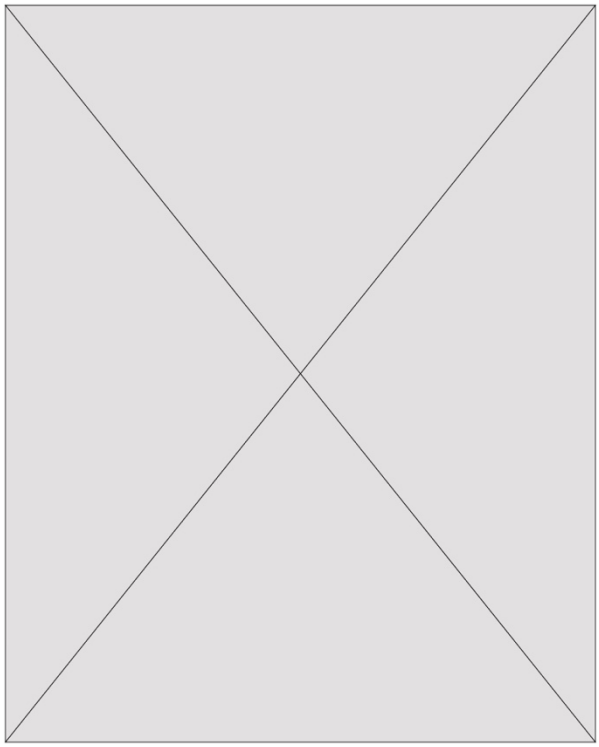


Figure 174: Excerpt of Chamberlain & Martin drawing for the proposed elevation to Edmund Street for the rebuilt and extended Free Reference Library and Birmingham and Midland Institute, 1879. Source: BCC MS1338

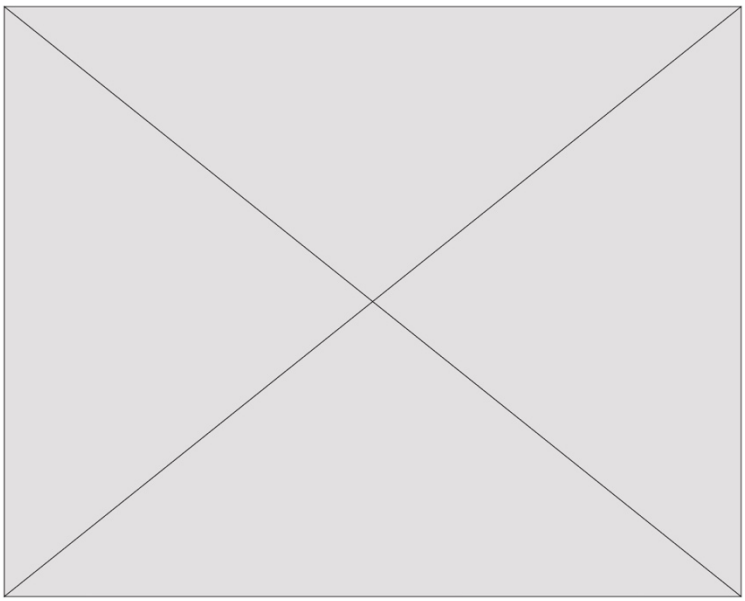


Figure 175: Excerpt of long section showing the Ruskinian Gothic interiors to Martin and Chamberlain's extensions of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and Free Reference Library, opened 1881. Source: LOB

4.3.3 Institutions as a Manifestation of Architectural Culture

The debate over style was as pronounced in the architecture of Birmingham as it was in other major cities in Britain. Hansom and Welch's Town Hall set the agenda for the earliest buildings of the civic centre, E.M. Barry's Birmingham and Midland Institute an exercise in

restrained classical proportion with giant order to parallel that of the Town Hall. As discussed earlier, the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library were built as single entity over a twenty-five-year period, beginning with Barry's Institute. Chamberlain and Martin's later addition of the Free Reference Library, and extension was largely sympathetic to Barry's work, continuing the rhythm if not the precise detail of the façade as it turned the corner into Edmund Street. The façade of the extensions to Paradise and Edmund Street contrasted with that of the earlier principal façade to Ratcliff Place, representative of the changing ideas on architectural style (figure 174). Despite their comparatively small scale, these façades modelled in terracotta with mosaic panels to the window spandrels by Salviati recalled Fowke's Lombardic Renaissance façade to the Lecture Theatre at what became the Victoria and Albert Museum (discussed in chapter 5). On the interior, the new theatre was enclosed by a coffered and ornamented cast iron structure by Horsley Ironworks as marked on the archival drawings (figure 175), and the walls finished in Minton tiles (Waterhouse, 1954: 69).

Chamberlain and Martin's other major works pursued Ruskin's Gothic Revival. Chamberlain's nearby School of Art (1885) demonstrates both arts and crafts influence in composition and in detail, and a growing confidence in the architectural culture of the city. At the centre of the principle façade to Margaret Street is a large blank rose window with a lattice grid and interwoven foliage (figure 176), part of a Ruskinian composition of contrasting materials (Stratton in Tilson et al, 1989: 24). In his address to students of the School of Art at the award of prizes in 1894, Morris (1894: 3) spoke of the necessary utility of art to people in their everyday lives, and the rich municipal life that he observed in Birmingham. For Morris, and others of the Arts and Crafts movement, the hope for a 'new and genuine architecture' came not from 'experiments in conscious style' but from close observation of the predominantly English scene and through the 'care of our old buildings, which are good' (Morris, 1894: 13, 14). In this, he cited the work of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB, otherwise known as 'anti-scrape'), founded in 1877 by Morris and Philip Webb to protect Tewkesbury Abbey from the restoration by George Gilbert Scott.

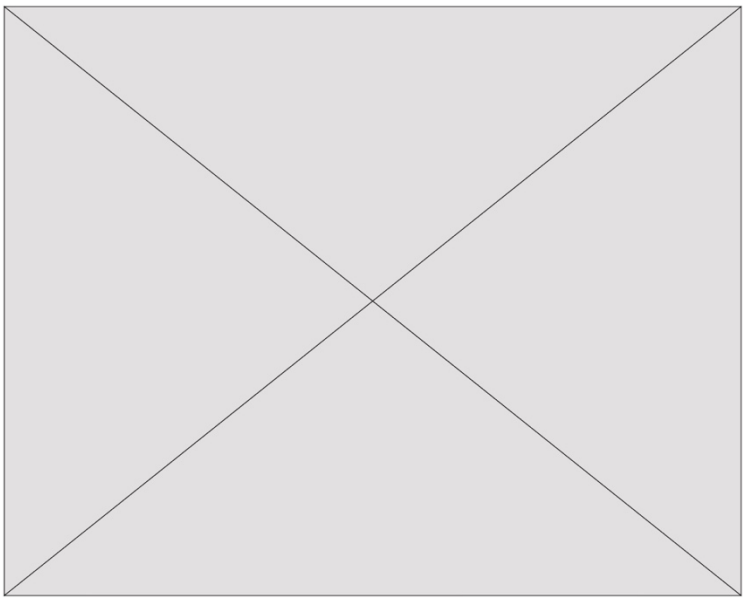


Figure 176: Samuel Barfield’s stone rose window on the façade of J.H. Chamberlain’s School of Art, 1885. Source: RIBA Collections RIBA44385

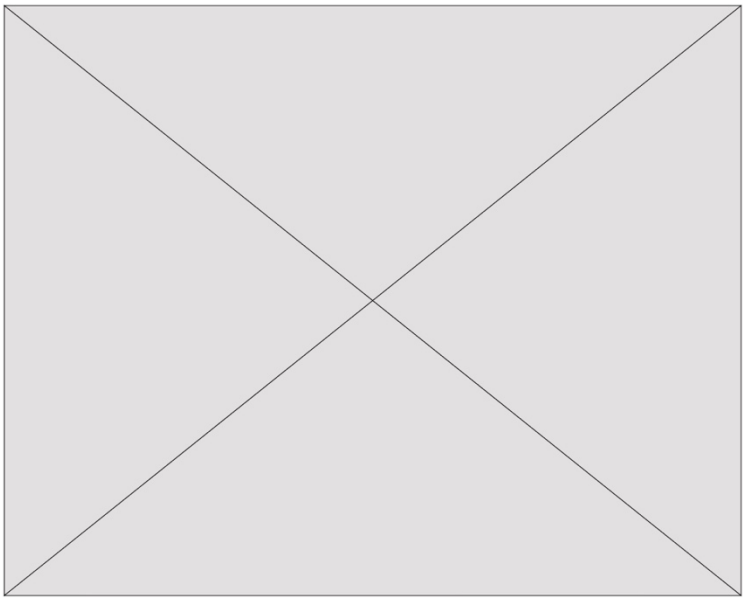


Figure 177: Martin and Chamberlain's plan of Corporation Street for the Birmingham Improvement Scheme 1875. Source: Briggs

Despite their rhetoric, Morris and Webb struggled to maintain their genuine position in an increasingly mechanised and competitive profession, Bergdoll (2000: 224) noting that Morris was never able to produce his work cheaply enough to reach anyone other than the most wealthy of clients. According to Shankland (1962: 182), Morris’s increasingly socialist values did not mean that he rejected machinery and the division of labour, indeed he designed for machine production, commenting ‘it is not this or that tangible steel and brass machine which we want to get rid of, but the great intangible machine of commercial tyranny, which

oppresses the lives of all of us'. Through their prominent roles in the city, particularly Chamberlain's appointment as Professor and Chair of Architecture and Construction at Queens College (1858), Chamberlain and Martin influenced debate and practice. Just as Morris later expanded the definition of architecture to 'embrace everything from teacups to town planning' (Bergdoll, 2000: 224), they were equally adept at the ornamentation of an eaves cornice as they were urban scale plan-making. The practice's work in the cutting of Corporation Street (1878-82, figure 177) saw the ambitions of the Corporation elevated to the scale of the street, opening up the city for new civic and commercial buildings. The street formed part of the Improvement Scheme established under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act 1875, the aim of which was to;

> 'to facilitate the removal, rearrangement, and reconstruction of houses, courts and alleys in the poorer and more densely populated parts of London, and of the larger urban sanitary districts in England and Ireland. The Act is to be put in force where the buildings are closely crowded together, or, from want of light or ventilation, or other cause, are a source of fever and disease, and where, by reason of the premises being owned by separate persons, it would be difficult to secure the cooperation necessary for their general improvement.' (Glen, 1875: 1)

The housing problem was particularly pronounced around the previous site of the workhouse. Chairman of the Improvement Committee and Quaker William White commented that the 'rubbish and dilapidation' of these places 'reminded him of Strasbourg, which I saw soon after the bombardment [of 1870]', recalling the sites of squalor and sedition of the French Revolution (Briggs, 1963: 227). Not only were leaders concerned to improve the lives of citizens, but they were also fearful of the consequences of unregulated urban destitution and what that might lead to. In total, ninety-three acres were cleared around the line of the new street between New Street and Lichfield Street via Old Square, almost half acquired by the Corporation. Chamberlain and Martin attempted to preserve and reveal the earlier conditions of the city, the almost imperceptible curve of the street woven between the Birmingham Library and Stork Hotel on Old Square as well as numerous passages and chapels.

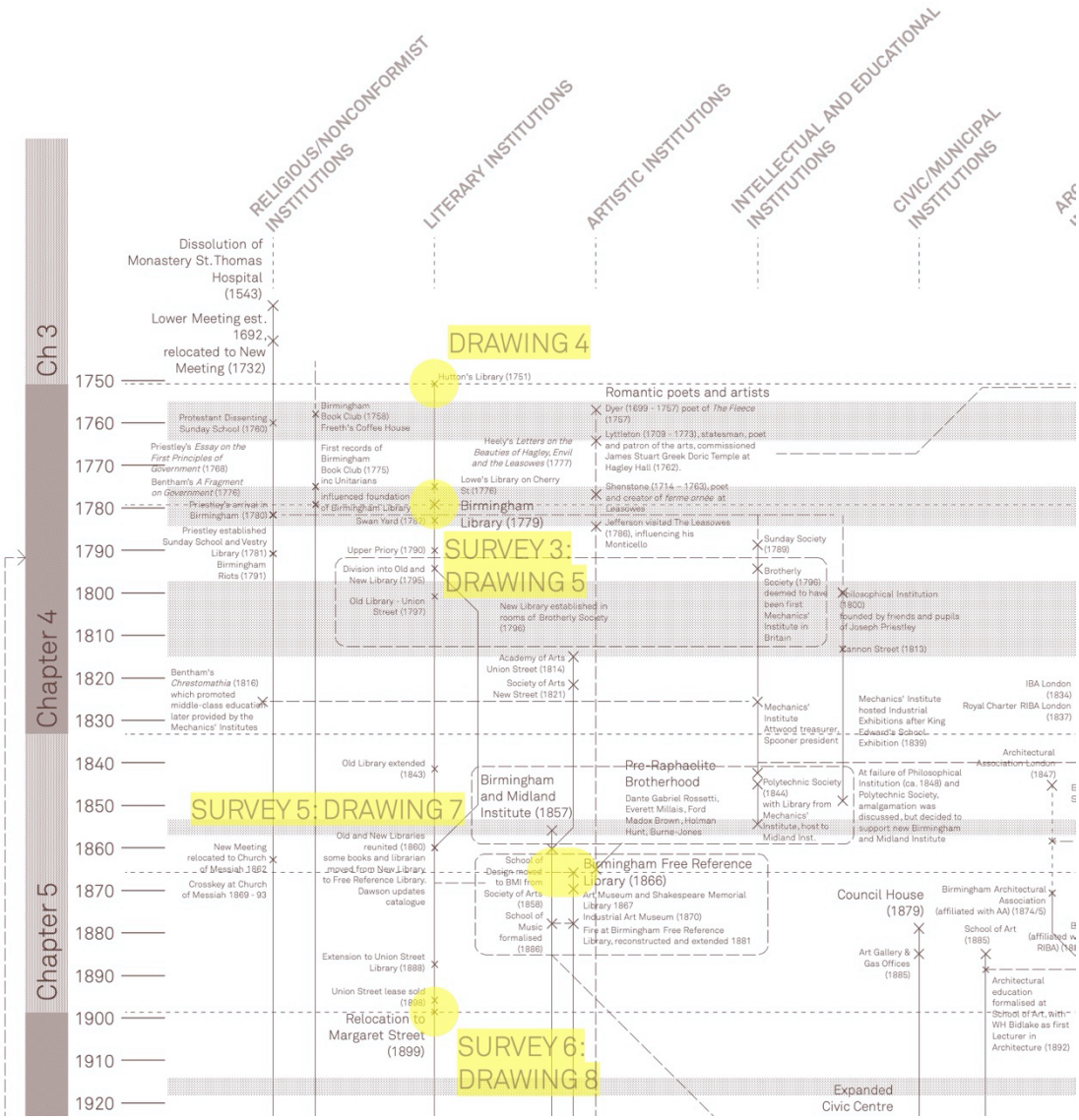


Figure 178: Excerpt of Map of Institutional Continuity, illustrating the constellation of prior institutions that preceded the formation of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and later Free Reference Library. Source: author

The Act made provision for ‘at least as many persons of the working class as may be displaced in the area’ to be accommodated in suitable dwellings there, ‘unless there are any special reasons to the contrary’ (Glen, 1875: 6). The Committee clearly had greater ambitions for the scheme, instead referring to ‘a great street, as broad as a Parisian boulevard’ to provide a dignified destination to the centre (Chamberlain and White cited in Briggs, 1963: 228). The working-class inhabitants were not accommodated, the greater good of the civic street apparently enough of a ‘special reason’ for their exclusion. Such clinical reordering of the city, seen too in Hausmann’s plan for Paris (1853-70) and Förster’s Ringstraße in Vienna (1856-73), marked the beginning of much wider ambitions for revising the ground of the city in the following century as seen in chapter 2.

4.4 Discussion

The surveys and historiography reveal the changing order and aspirations of a newly incorporated city seeking to establish itself as an internationally important place of intellect and an economic force to be reckoned with. This transitionary moment was one of contradiction for the city, of the desire for a respectability and prominence as well as a commitment to its people. Chamberlain’s civic, or more accurately municipal, gospel attempted to achieve just that, as a union of religious doctrine and industrial knowledge that would have been very familiar to the congregation of the Unitarian Church. Indeed, the Church’s relocation from the lower part of the town, around the markets and less desirable and flood plains, to the upper reaches to the west of the Town Hall along Broad Street, embodied that propriety and the gathering of civic ground. That it was built in the Gothic to associate the church with the still powerful Anglicans speaks of a narrower division between the two, and a more tolerant and equal society in Birmingham and beyond. The fact that it was constructed over a canal was further testament that where space was sparse in the industrial centre, technology would provide the answer.

That propriety informed new spaces of modernity across the centre and with it the expectation of a ‘certain kind of behaviour’ (Arendt, 1958a: 41). This was most evident in the amelioration to buildings lining New Street, the construction of New Street station beyond, and in the creation of internalised promenades for shopping as a leisure pursuit as seen in the Great Western Arcade, built above the company’s rail line. The arrival of rail brought new opportunities and ideas, expanding the horizons of the city. This followed patterns of urban change seen most famously in the arcades of Paris and Milan. The cutting of Corporation Street was also influenced by the Hausmann plan for the French capital on a proportional scale, both schemes bringing a decorum and order whilst removing the threat posed by the inhabitants of the unplanned and unregulated slums. The straightening out of what Kant

described as the ‘crooked timber of humanity’ and the eradication of the undesirable aspects of the city drove Baudelaire to write *The Flowers of Evil* cited at the opening of this thesis, lamenting that;

> The form of the city changes more quickly […] than the human heart. (Baudelaire, 1857: 118)

and mourning the loss of the praxis of the city in favour of an imposed order. According to Rousseau (in Berlin, 2013), such institutions of civilisation – the street, the arcade, even the station – were not to be trusted for their distortion of the natural order ‘springing from human vices of greed, egoism and spiritual blindness’.

The severing of tradition was seen elsewhere too, with the cessation of the Michaelmas and Whitsuntide fairs that had marked the passing of the seasons at the market to the south since its founding. With new financial institutions offering unlimited scope for industrial expansion through debt, agriculture no longer formed the economic basis of the city, and with it passed an aspect of the city’s institutional order. The loss of tradition and the gaining of a new orientation towards technology, industry and manufacture led to new institutions of education, exhibition, and art. The proliferation of bodies that preceded the Birmingham and Midland Institute as seen in figure 178 illustrates the ways in which the improvement of society and provision of opportunity was part of the praxis of the city, emerging from religious and intellectual initiatives. Much of this activity can be traced back to the Birmingham Library and associated institutions and individuals such as Priestley and Bentham whose unitarian and utilitarian beliefs Joseph Chamberlain, Dale and Dawson renewed for an industrial, secular society. A proliferation of associated but newly independent institutions followed, funded by industrial philanthropists keen to make a name for themselves in the expanding Midland metropolis. The Tangye’s funding for the extension to the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Library as well as the art gallery, new collections, and the school of art established civic order at a register not witnessed before and provided the opportunity for architects to imagine how those institutions might embody an appropriate tradition, opening new attitudes to the culture embodied in materials and craft.

The leaders’ apparent commitment to civic life and an economic independence that challenged traditional centres of trade led to self-made comparisons with republican Italy, in particular Florence. Dale’s dialogue on the ‘bounteous prodigality of nature’ and the desire for a noble tradition in literature and art informed a wider search for the ways in which that association might be made manifest (Armstrong, 1895: 411). The relationship between the newly formed, wealthy, and powerful Corporation and the South Kensington Museum was

fruitful in establishing the tradition it sought. As discussed further in chapter 5, the acquisition by the Museum of several works in terracotta by the Florentine della Robbia works as well as mosaic glass by Salviati on behalf of the Corporation informed the architectural approach of the city's architects, most prominently in the work of J. H. Chamberlain and Martin. These architects understood the depth of tradition present in materials, and were engaged in wider discourse with Morris et al. They also understood the contingent nature of the institution in a rapidly changing environment. That the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and to a degree the Free Reference Library, were contingent on earlier bodies was represented in their incremental and considered construction over several stages.

The civic leaders understood that tradition rather less well. Joseph Chamberlain's (1891: 270) description of the city's institutions as 'machinery' marked a change in understanding from that of an ethical basis to an organisational one. The case in point is the internal subdivision of and separation of entrances to the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library in the extensions of 1881. The logic was based on the control of larger organisations but can also be seen as the ever-greater division of knowledge first seen here in Bentham's *Chrestomathia*, and the loss of embodied praxis. This began the slow ossification of an institutional order not limited to the institute itself but witnessed at a variety or registers and the erosion of civic ground in the following century. The implications for these institutions, and institutions more broadly, were profound, for as Voegelin (2000a: 197) notes 'institutions start to decline when for one reason or another the process of rigidification sets in'. The embodiment of civic praxis lies at the centre of an explicit institutional order, a tradition to which Madin was responding in his plans for Paradise Circus.

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PART 3 - Interpretation

Chapter 5 – The Civic Institution: An Architecture of Contingency and Participation

As a counter to the modernist project of progress and the loss of historical depth, the theme of stratification of institutional horizons is fruitful in an interpretation of the conditions of the city, beginning with the project for Paradise Circus and associated institutions. If Voegelin's (2000a: 193) assertion that a theory of institutions is impossible given the relative instability of society in 'the swamp of historical process', then that stratification, and the ways in which architecture and urban topography form the basis for interpretation of the *praxis* of the situation, offers a depth of horizon in revealing the civic nature of the city. In his essay 'Renovatio *and the Howling Void',* Carl (1994: 19) identifies the difficulties of renewing our commitment to the city where the 'reciprocity between the given, historical conditions of *urbis* and the potential to be understood in the highest terms of goodness or beauty or lawfulness, etc.' has lapsed, overtaken by private interests as a (mis)interpretation of individual liberty under twentieth century modernism. This is superficially true in the situation of Birmingham, synonymous as it has been with technological 'solutions' to urban issues, but the intention behind this chapter is to consider *renovatio,* 'a renewal with the nature of a refoundation' (Carl, 1994: 21), as an approach to interpreting the concrete conditions of the city in addressing the research question 2 set out in chapter 2. Revealing past horizons allows an understanding of a civic tradition associated with the library in its various iterations and broader topography, with the potential of situating future architectural works.

In that progressive moment where the 'frontier of the present' supersedes any other form of temporal being, intensive historical continuity is lost to 'extensive history' (historicism), 'ensuring that death can only be understood as extinction' (Carl, 1994: 21). Whilst Carl (1994) acknowledges the limitations of *renovatio* in relation to the modernist project, its possibilities lie within the realm of temporal renewal (Carl, 1994: 21). Temple (2017) argues that it is the 'openness' of modernity according to Umberto Eco's claims of 'open work' rather than its teleological 'closure' and completeness which offers the most fertile ground for creative imagination and interpretation. Consideration of the contingent, open, and incomplete nature of the institution forms the basis for interpretation, manifest in the architecture and urban topography of the library and buildings of Paradise Circus.

The three interrelated research questions are addressed here, the first part dealing with the implicit institutional order, the second the explicit institutional order, and the third with the

understanding of institution within 'historical process' and the interpretive possibilities and impact of the research. Within this, particular attention is paid to the ways in which civic ground was made manifest through the institutions of the city at several registers. The legacy of the radical, participatory basis for civic ground, at first intangible yet intensive, is considered in relation to the often but not always extensive projects on the city during the twentieth century under the guise of progress. The implications of the emergence of an architectural and material culture are explored through Britain's first Town Hall and subsequent institutions including the various iterations of library associated both with the intellectual, cultural, and commercial life of the city, along with the ways in which they were built over an often-extended time period. This gives rise to further consideration of the contingent nature of many of those institutions and the continuity of the city. Finally, the archive and the making of drawings is considered within the conditions of interpretive possibilities, offering a counter to the topographical amnesia of the city witnessed in the apparently wholesale reimagination of the city centre during the twentieth century.

5.1 The Implicit Institutional Order of Birmingham related to Language, Custom and Locale

> RQ1 How and why did such a concentration of intellectual and civic life form around the site known during the twentieth century as Paradise Street, Paradise Circus, Paradise Forum and now Paradise? To what extent has the name *Paradise* influenced the ways in which the city has been considered at various episodes and registers, and how is this related to the implicit institutional order of the city?

Birmingham exists at the border of many conditions and jurisdictions, a result of its topographical position and proximity to others. Neither a centre of great religious or royal patronage, nor at a concentration of natural features or resources, Birmingham was a frontier settlement based on proximity, eliciting ideas of a new beginning on virgin ground, a unity of the territorial and temporal. Saxton's map of 1576 shows how the distorted boundaries of Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire converged at Birmingham. This border condition, defined by Sennett (2018b) as 'an edge where different groups interact', persists today, and has given order to the city over an extended period.

Perhaps because of this proximity, the origin, growth and order of the city was involved as much in movement as it was national and international politics and religion and wider philosophical concerns. This is exemplified in the naming of 'Paradise', the site and topic of this study. Where, why and when this entered into the taxonomy of the city, and how this gave rise to a concentration of civic activity, gives insight into the implicit institutional horizon, and the ways in which these ideas have been interpreted over time.

5.1.1 Rituals and Routines

As explored in chapter 3, the topography of Birmingham is associated with the rituals and routines of the setting. The passage between the diocese of Worcester to the south and the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry to the east and north crossed heath land following Roman routes, avoiding the lower lying valley floodplains of the Rea. Positioned close by the ecclesiastical boundary along Bourn Brook that divided these vast dioceses, this elevated land was inhabited by the Augustinian Priory Hospital of St. Thomas overseen by the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, with orchards and gardens surrounding the religious buildings. The trade routes between London, Warwick, Shropshire, and Wales intersected the religious routes with the bridge over the Rea at Deritend one of few reliable crossing points.

Aside from routes to Shropshire and Lichfield, the route to the west leading to Dudley Castle gained prominence after Lord Dudley took possession of Birmingham in 1545. Despite Dudley's short-lived manorial rule, the order of the settlement was sustained, gaining new momentum after the dissolution of the monastery and the sale of land into private hands. New Street ascended gradually from the marketplace on High Street, reaching a plateau at an enclosed field owned by William Colmore. Although the site was named 'Paradise Close' on Hill's conjectural map of 1553 (drawn in the nineteenth century), there is little evidence in historical documentation. Neither Westley's map of 1731 or Bradford's map of 1751, nor Leland (1535-43), Dugdale (1656) or Defoe's (1725) account of the town make mention of Paradise Close or otherwise, suggesting that it lacked sufficient prominence or inhabitation to be noted. Its name origin therefore coincided with explicit manifestation of an intellectual institutional order, seen most clearly in the Birmingham Library.

5.1.2 Dialogue on Paradise, Change and the Pastoral

> The belief that humanity would be victorious over unknown forces and that we would live in an earthly paradise has been at the centre of ethical thought from the Greek *polis* […] to progressive thought in the nineteenth century (Berlin, 2013: 7).

The idea of paradise as a new beginning is older than the city itself. It describes a time before time, a state of perfection without the corrupting influences of humankind. Paradise is seen to derive 'from three mutually influential archetypes: the Persian *Pairidaeza*, the classical *Arcadia*, and the biblical *Garden of Eden*' (Aben and de Wit, 1999: 32). As the word origin for paradise, *Pairidaeza* translates as 'surrounded by walls', described in the Qur'an as a place where 'flow rivers of water undefiled, and rivers of milk forever fresh; rivers of wine delectable to those that drink it, and rivers of clarified honey' (Aben and de Wit, 1999: 33, 34) and where the quadrants of the worldly cosmogram reflected the four elements

subsequently integrated into Christian symbolism. This verdant garden is reflected in Theocritus' writing on sylvan landscapes in the third century BCE, a tradition continued in Virgil's pastoral poems set in *Arcadia*, 'an isolated hilly region of the Peloponnese, the southern peninsula of Greece, and the favourite haunt of Pan, god of pastures, flocks and woods.' (1999: 34). The symbolism of the shepherd and flock has obvious Christian resonance, where uncorrupted nature was seen as an emblem of good, outside of which stood a wilderness. On the Christian conception of the *Garden of Eden*, van Zuylen (in 1999: 31) notes;

> In the beginning, God created a garden called Eden. Before the Fall, Eden was a fertile, fragrant oasis of delight, magically calm except for the sweets sounds of water and laughter. Since the dawn of civilization, humankind has ceaselessly endeavoured to recreate this mythical paradise.

The double meaning of Eden relates to a well-irrigated place as well as the Hebrew origin in the word for pleasure and enlightenment (Aben and de Wit, 1999: 35). The persistence of this vision of an enclosed garden with abundant resources that stands above and apart from the corruption of humankind was seen in artistic works, and in the city itself as Britain came to terms with the implications of its imperial expansion.

The advent of the use of *paradise* in relation to what Voegelin (2000b: 420) describes as the 'realization of perfect human existence' was concurrent with the rise in political 'ideals' at the end of the Middle Ages, with the transformation of 'society into a terrestrial paradise by means of organisation and violence'. These two terms give insight into the particular conditions of Birmingham. The organisational aspects of institutions, both implicit and explicit, began to order the city whose inhabitants were attuned to dialogue on ethical questions of freedom and rights, particularly those whose freedoms had been limited based on belief or political inclination, often both.

The growth in industry, culture, and the expansion of Birmingham into the land around it during the late seventeenth and eighteenth century brought the boundary of city and periphery into dialogue. The improvements in the productivity and therefore profitability of farming through enclosures of open fields transformed the landscape beyond the town and reoriented livelihoods from agriculture and woollen trades towards livestock and a burgeoning metal working trade within the town. As McCalman (1999: 155) notes, waged farm labourers who had traditionally relied on the rights of sheepwalk, estover (wood-gathering), piscary (fishing), turbary (peat-cutting), and gleaning (picking up stray stalks of wheat after the harvest had been gathered), were forced to find refuge in towns in search of

employment. This, together with the arrival of displaced nonconformists after the Restoration brought that dialogue on freedom and between the centre and periphery into sharp relief. As a town with a market charter but no borough charter it was not subject to the restrictions of the Test and Corporation Acts that limited their nonconformists' rights to gather, worship or hold civil or military office, promoting commerce, liberty and gaining in prominence. The powerful image of Birmingham both as pastoral and a place of opportunity for displaced rural and religious people led to the naming of sites after biblical places; nearby Boulton's Soho lie Nineveh, and at the ascent of New Street, Paradise.

Wycliffe's (1375-1425) vernacular bible in English to which Birmingham born and educated Rogers contributed, as well as Luther and Erasmus's translations in Europe, gave direct insight into scripture and inspired much literary insight, placing destiny in the hands of the people rather than that of priests or the church. Thomas Hall, Protestant pastor at St. Nicolas's Church, described Birmingham as 'a little Canaan flowing with milk and honey' (Hall in Duffy, 1998: 259) citing Exodus 3:8, associating it with an abundance resources and prosperity gained through labour. Similarly, paradise embodied heaven on earth, a promised land.

The first explicit use of paradise as a place name in Birmingham came at the onset of technological advances in manufacturing and transportation, when the territory of the town grew exponentially, corresponding with the first forms of local government and acts to control development. Hanson's map of 1778 shows Paradise Row joining the top of New Street to the newly formed canal wharf and offices to the west. Opening in 1769, the canal brought coal from the mines to the west, expanding the horizons of Birmingham beyond the immediate boundary. Through the canal, Birmingham was confronted with the depravity of the extractive and productive landscape of mines and foundries, depicted in the rendering of Dudley after Turner in which the tension between the landed seat of power at Dudley Castle and the glowing furnaces lining the canal is palpable. The dialogue on the fall from grace and placement into the wilderness acted as a premonition of what might happen in Birmingham without intervention.

As is evident in Turner's work, this nostalgia for a rural life and a time before 'the Fall' was captured in many Romantic works of art. Samuel Derrick, the Irish author and friend of Samuel Johnson wrote in 1760 of John Baskerville's house nearby the future site of Paradise Row as standing 'on an eminence that commands a fine prospect' (Pardoe, 1975: 13), suggesting that as the boundaries of the town grew such peripheral sites gained in importance, particularly those with 'picturesque' views over the emerging scene. This

romanticised vision of the town was captured in Dyer's poem *The Fleece* (1757) which bore witness to the transformation of Britain's towns as international trade prospered.

As Goodridge and Pellicer (2007: 3) note, *The Fleece* was written as a didactic verse that follows the conventions of Virgil's four-book agricultural prose the *Georgics* (c.36-29 BCE) which anticipated an era of peace under new ruler Augustus Caesar. Virgil saw the hard toil of agriculture as a necessary effort in rebuilding civilisation, calling upon mythological figures associated with the rustic and pastoral but with industriousness at its heart. Like Virgil, Dyer believed that prosperity would only be achieved through the organisation of productive labour. *The Fleece* gives an insight into the major concerns of modernity in Britain through the narrative of the wool trade. Dyer recounts how animal husbandry, land enclosure, and ambitious canal building projects that connected inland sites of production to globally oriented ports all contributed to the 'reddening fields' and 'th'increasing walls of busy Manchester, Sheffield, and Birmingham' (Dyer, 1757: line 339). Once agricultural communities found themselves at the centre of new industries, in Birmingham concerned with metalwork in brass and steel following the earlier inventions in nearby Coalbrookdale where Abraham Darby first smelted iron ore using coke in 1709.

The global expansion of British trade is represented too, Dyer placing metal goods produced in Birmingham on foreign shores, alongside 'flavour 'd thea and glossy painted vase; Things elegant, ill - titled luxuries' (Dyer, 1757: line 379). Earlier civilisations are used as an allegory for the industry and struggle that the poet saw around himself, as well as nascent forms of government; 'such was the scene of hurrying Carthage, when the Trojan chief first view'd her growing turrets' (Dyer, 1757: line 335). *The Fleece* therefore placed Birmingham at the forefront of industrial development, associating it with an ancient tradition of great agrarian and trading civilisations.

Dyer's association with William Shenstone and Lord (George) Lyttleton, and with the wider architectural and intellectual culture of the Romantic arts would implicitly inform the subsequent vision of the town, most prominently at Paradise Row. Shenstone (1714-63), a celebrated garden theorist, built his *ferme ornée* The Leasowes at Halesowen to the west of Birmingham, an 'Arcadia' featuring 'an alcove, six elegies, a seat, two epitaphs (one upon myself), three ballads, four songs, and a serpentine river' (Humphreys, 1937: 23). The Leasowes was leased to Shenstone by Lyttleton (1709-73), an aristocrat and briefly Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the estate was intervisible with Lyttleton's family estate at Hagley Hall in Worcestershire (Gallagher, 1996: 203). Sanderson Miller was appointed to design Lyttleton's house and follies in the picturesque parkland including a sham ruined castle, a grotto, a Tuscan temple, and a monument to Shenstone (1999). It was here that

James ‘Athenian’ Stuart built his Greek Doric Temple (circa 1762) after his and Revett’s survey (published 1762), believed for some time to have been the first of its kind in Britain[58]. The ‘Virgilian rusticity’ with which Shenstone, Lyttleton and others practiced contributed to an intellectual and creative culture associated with the land and an idealised image of nature, existing in the bounds of ‘an unconscious decorum’ (Humphreys, 1937: 6).

This union of the natural and artificial gained renown in influential circles - Thomas Jefferson’s[59] visit to the Leasowes in 1786 inspired his estate at Monticello[60], representative of an American attitude to landscape perceived as ‘a vast English Garden awaiting ‘edification’ in the form of Enlightenment monuments testifying to the virtues of that style of democracy’ (Carl, 1994: 25). This transcendent idea of the garden, the original paradise, and the ways in which architecture mediated between civilisation and nature with attendant notions of beauty and decorum would pervade the ways in which Birmingham was conceived during the late and post-Enlightenment in Britain. As Dixon Hunt (2006: 273) notes,

> the original picturesque worked a huge revolution in human response to their surroundings, the effects of which are still with us (along with its fossilized gestures that seem to attract all the opprobrium). It emancipated large numbers of men and women to explore, understand and articulate their environment – since they now wrote, drew or imagined, even becoming the ‘designers’ of their own milieu. It inaugurated new dialectics: between aesthetic regard and topographical science, between those who designed and those who experienced and responded to landscape.

Even before the explicit manifestations of a civic institutional order to the city, the site of Paradise was oriented towards a ‘best’ state, recalling Plato’s *polis* as *logos*, the city existing in dialogue itself. The relationship of this topography to the architecture of the city is explored in section 5.2 in relation to the explicit institutional order where that organisational aspect of paradise was made manifest.

[58] Cousins (2004, 52) notes an earlier Greek Doric portico of 1756 by Stuart at The Grove, near Watford, Hertfordshire, for Thomas Villiers, 1st Lord Hyde.
Cousins, M. (2004) Athenian Stuart's Doric Porticoes. *The Georgian Group,* XIV, pp. 48-54.
[59] Jefferson was taught by William Small, Professor of Natural Philosophy at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, in the Colony of Virginia, where he introduced the lecture system, science courses and philosophical discourse in ethics and rhetoric. Jefferson’s classical education in the arts under Small was to have a profound effect on his later formulation of architecture as an ‘elegant and useful art’ that spoke to the dual focus of formal ‘intrinsic beauty’ and utilitarian ‘relative beauty.’ Hafertepe, K. (2000) An Inquiry into Thomas Jefferson's Ideas of Beauty. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians,* 59(2), pp. 216 - 231.. Small was introduced to Boulton by Benjamin Franklin upon his arrival in England from America on a procurement mission for scientific equipment from which he never returned.
[60] Monticello included a 5,000-acre plantation upon which 400 slaves worked during Jefferson’s lifetime.

5.1.3 The Birmingham Library as Dialogue between an Implicit and Explicit Institutional Order of Civic Participation

The first explicit manifestation of institutional order was seen most evidently in the foundation of Birmingham Library, although not directly associated with the site of Paradise Row as it was known at the time. As is evident in the *Map of Institutional Continuity* explored in part 2, the founding of the library was preceded by a rich intellectual culture through Hutton's library, the book club held in Freeth's coffee house, and the nonconformist chapel's own vestry libraries for the education of their congregation. Just as the library that followed was first hosted in a domestic interior, the activities of these institutions were held in modest places, placing the praxis of the town amongst traders, bankers, scientists, educators, and preachers, many such as Priestley assuming a multi-faceted role. Drawing on a tradition of intellectual enquiry associated with nonconformity, the Birmingham Library therefore established a broad dialogue, including those Anglicans whose intolerant stance on religious and political freedom would ultimately lead to the bifurcation of the library into Old and New.

The explicit institutional order of the Library and related societies provided an ontological orientation specific to the culture of the town, manifest in their locations, conditions, rules, participants, collections, and committees. The Birmingham Library, in particular Priestley's instigation of library laws and his school and vestry at New Meeting, inspired a movement of societies and institutions concerned with the civil liberties of all. The Sunday Society (1789), later the Brotherly Society (1796), for the training of Sunday-school teachers was informed by these earlier bodies, hosting the nonconformists' New Library (1796) after the split with the Old, and where a parallel Artizans' Library began (Kelly, 1952: 21). The Philosophical Society (1800) was established explicitly in honour of Priestley after his forced emigration to America, forming the basis for the subsequent Birmingham and Midland Institute. None would have existed without adaptation, amalgamation, or failure of the prior, and its success was contingent upon agreement to participate in the next iteration.

These institutions were the product of the rational thought of the Enlightenment and the Brotherly Society was deemed to have been first Mechanics' Institute in Britain. This is relevant for four reasons. First, it formalised the earlier Unitarian practices in Birmingham of providing education to all, as the means to achieving progressive change in religious, social, and political realms. Second, as a training ground for supporters of the Birmingham Political Union, the institute nurtured political reform in the early nineteenth century in its premises shared with Mount Zion Chapel where the bankers Spooner as President and Attwood as Treasurer planned the mass meeting on nearby Newhall Hill on 7 May 1832. Third, it informed wide-spread advances in the education of adult artisans and of the institutional

body itself. This was as much an organisational gain as it was a moral claim for the civil rights of all. Lastly, later exhibitions mounted by the Mechanics' Institute at King Edward's Free Grammar School (1839) would go on to inspire not only more substantial exhibitions in Birmingham (1849), but significantly the Great Exhibition (1851) which placed the city once again on the international stage through manufacturers contributions to the construction of Paxton's building as well as the display of their artefacts and installations within. It also raised fundamental questions about the relationship between the government and the governed, and ideas of freedom.

Priestley's *Essay on the First Principles of Government* (1768) and *Disquisitions* (1777), and Bentham's *A Fragment on Government* (1776) offered a view on the rights of man in civil society. In his *Essay*, Priestley called for sovereign authority to remain with the people, that governments were limited in their power and freedom of action, and that civil society had the right to bring down, reform or amend a government (Dickinson, 1977: 198). In *Disquisitions,* Priestley argued against Newton's scientific premise that matter is inert. As one of the 'radicals' of the eighteenth century, Priestley built upon Locke's argument that 'God had endowed men and women with certain natural rights to life, liberty, and property, and men and women had entered into civil society and created political institutions in order to preserve those rights' (Rivers and Wykes, 2008: 116). The translation of natural rights (as an 'ideal' pre-political state of nature) into civil liberties required a civilian's positive engagement in political life, made manifest in political institutions.

Priestley's writing influenced Bentham's phrase 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'[61], continuing a radical tradition from the Protestant Glorious Revolution of 1688 into the eighteenth century, and framing subsequent ideas on the city (Rivers and Wykes, 2008: 35). Bentham wrote extensively on the idea of self-governance and social change, believing that 'publicly verifiable facts' were required in gaining consensus in a community, and that the laws and institutions for achieving that needed to be made explicit (Schneewind, 1998: 422, 423). Priestley and Bentham's influence on the foundation of schools formed part of an educational movement led by radicals, parallel to the Church maintained parish schools. As Kelly (1952: 17) notes, such institutions led to the idea of the education of the adult worker, with Bentham's *Chrestomathia* (1816: , figure 182) setting out the model and curriculum later pursued by the Mechanics' Institutes. *Chrestomathia*, an invented term combining two Greek words meaning 'conducive to learning', offered an explanation of 'the design of an institution' (Bentham, 1816: iv). As a progressive statement for the education 'ordinary minds' of 'the

[61] Schneewind (1998, p.420) argues that although Bentham reported having found the phrase in the work of Priestley, its origin is likely earlier in the English translation of Beccaria's *On Crimes and Punishment* (1767).

CHRESTOMATHIC (a) INSTRUCTION TABLES. TABLE I.

Showing the several branches of INTELLECTUAL INSTRUCTION, included in the aggregate course, proposed to be carried on in the *Chrestomathic school:* together with the several STAGES, into which the course is proposed to be divided: accompanied with a brief view of the ADVANTAGES derivable from such Instruction: together with an intimation of the REASONS, by which the ORDER OF PRIORITY, herein observed, was suggested; and a List of BRANCHES OF INSTRUCTION OMITTED, with an indication of the *Grounds* of the omission.

N. B.—*The hard words, viz. those derived from the Greek or Latin, are throughout explained. Through necessity alone are they here employed. Under almost every one of these names will be found included objects already familiar in every family; even to children who have but just learnt to read.*

ADVANTAGES derivable from Learning, or Intellectual Instruction: viz.

I. *From Learning as such;—in whatsoever particular* SHAPE *obtained.*

1. Securing to the possessor a proportionable share of *general respect.*
2. Security against *ennui*, viz. the condition of him who, for want of something in prospect that would afford him pleasure, *knows not what to do with himself* a malady, to which, on *retirement*, men of business are particularly exposed. (1.)
3. Security against *inordinate sensuality*, and its mischievous consequences. (2.)
4. Security against *idleness*, and consequent *mischievousness* (3.)
5. Security for admission into, and agreeable intercourse with, *good company*: *i. e.* company in, or from which, present and harmless pleasure, or future profit or security, or both, may be obtained

II. *From Learning, in this or that particular* SHAPE, *and more especially from the proposed course of* INTELLECTUAL INSTRUCTION.

1. Multitude and extent of the branches of *useful skill* and *knowledge* the possession of which is promised by this system, and at an early age (4.)
2. Increased chance of lighting upon pursuits and employments most suitable to the powers and inclinations of the youthful mind, in every individual case. (5.)
3. General strength of mind derivable from that multitude and extent of the branches of knowledge included in this course of instruction. (6.)
4. Communication of mental strength considered in its application to the business chosen by each pupil, whatever that business may be. (7.)
5. Giving to the youthful mind habits of order applicable to the most familiar, as well as to the highest purposes: good order, the great source of internal tranquillity, and instrument of good management. *See Stage* V. (8.)
6. Possession of sources of comfort in various shapes, and security against discomfort in various shapes. *See, in particular, Stages* III and IV.
7. Security of life, as well as health: that blessing, without which no such thing as comfort can have place *See Stage* IV.
8. Security afforded against groundless terrors, mischievous impostures, and self-delusions. *See Stages* II. III. and IV. (9.)
9. Securing an unexampled choice of well-informed companions through life. (10.)
10. Affording to parents a more than ordinary relief from the labour, anxiety, and expense of time necessary to personal inspection. (11.)
11. Unexampled cheapness of the instruction, in proportion to its value. (12.)
12. Least generally useful branches last examined; and thence, in case of necessity, omissible with least loss. (13.)
13. Need and practice of corporeal punishment superseded: thence masters preserved from the guilt and reproach of cruelty and injustice (14.)
14. Affording, to the first race of scholars, a mark of particular distinction and recommendation. (15.)
15. Enlargement given to each scholar's field of occupation (16.)

OBJECTIONS answered.

1. Supposed impracticability. Granting your endeavour to be good, the accomplishment of it will not be possible (17.)
2. Disregard shown to classical learning, and other polite accomplishments. (18.)
3. Superficiality and confusedness of the conceptions thus obtainable. (19.)
4. Uppishness a probable result of the distinctions thus obtained. (20.)

RELATIONS of the proposed, to the existing great schools, universities, and other Didactic institutions. (21.)

OBSTACLES and ENCOURAGEMENTS. (22.)

ADVERSE PREJUDICES obviated.

1. Novelty of the plan (23.)
2. Abstruseness of the subjects. (24.)

GENERAL CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS. (25.)

GROUNDS OF PRIORITY;

Or circumstances, on which, as between one subject of intellectual instruction and another, the ORDER OF PRIORITY in which they are most advantageously taught, depends.

1. On the part of the mind, the relative degree of PREPAREDNESS, with relation to the subject and mode of instruction in question.
2. The *natural pleasantness* (26.) of the subject.
3. The *artificial* pleasantness (27.) given to the subject, or mode of instruction.

OBSERVATIONS as to relative PREPAREDNESS.

I. *Circumstances on which such* PREPAREDNESS *depends.*

1. Corporeal ideas find the mind earlier prepared for their reception than incorporeal ones. (28.)
2. Concrete, than abstract ones. (29.)
3. Ideas find the mind the earlier prepared for their reception, 1. the less *extensive*, 2. more *plain*, 4. *various*, and 5. *complex* or *complicated* (30.) they are; and the less they include of what belongs to the relation between *cause* and *effect.* (31.)

II. *Circumstances, on which such* PREPAREDNESS *does not depend.*

1. The *name*, more or less familiar or abstruse, of the *art* or *science* (32.) under which the particular subject or object in question has been ranked.
2. The *antiquity* (33.) of the *art* or *science*, *i. e.* the length of time since the study of it happened to come into use.
3. The *number* of the persons who, in the respective capacities of *learners* and *teachers* (34.) happen to be, at the time in question, occupied in the art or science.

N. B.—*Before entrance*, the degree of PREPAREDNESS will, in the instance of each scholar, be ascertained by *examination. After* entrance, it may, in relation to an indefinite number of branches of instruction, and to an indefinite amount in each, happen to it to receive increase from sources *external* to the school. But of any such increase (the whole being *casual*) no account can, to any such purpose as that of modifying the course of the *school* instruction, be taken. The *obscure* of all such increase is, therefore, the only supposition upon which any arrangement can be built.

INTRODUCTORY, Preparatory, or Elementary STAGE. (35.)

ELEMENTARY ARTS.
1. Reading (taught by writing)
2. Writing.
3. Common Arithmetic.

And see Stage I.

STAGE I.

NATURAL HISTORY.
1. Mineralogy. (36.) } exhibited in the most familiar points of view.
2. Botany. (37.)
3. Zoology. (38.)
4. Geography (39.) (the familiar part.)
5. Geometry (40.) (the definitions explained by diagrams or models.)
6. Historical Chronology. (41.)
7. Biographical Chronology. (42.)
8. Appropriate Drawing. (43.)

STAGE II.

I. MECHANICS *at large.*

1. Mechanics in the limited sense of the word. (44.)
2. Hydrostatics. (45.)
3. Hydraulics. (46.)
4. Mechanical Pneumatics. (47.)
5. Acoustics. (48.)
6. Optics. (49.)

II. CHEMISTRY (50.) *at large;* including Chemical Pneumatics.

7. Mineral Chemistry. (51.)
8. Vegetable Chemistry. (52.)
9. Animal Chemistry (53.)
10. Meteorology. (54.)

III. Subjects belonging to Chemistry and Mechanics jointly.

11. Magnetism. (55.)
12. Electricity. (56.)
13. Galvanism. (57.)
14. Balnatics. (58.)
15. Geography continued. (59.)
16. Geometry continued. (60.)
17. Historical Chronology continued. (61.)
18. Biographical Chronology continued.
19. Appropriate Drawing continued. (62.)
20. Grammatical Exercises, applied to English, Latin, Greek, French, and German, in conjunction. (63.)

STAGE III. (64.)

1. Mining. (65.)
2. Geognosy or Geology. (66.)
3. Land-Surveying and Measuring. (67.)
4. Architecture. (68.)
5. Husbandry (including Theory of Vegetation and Gardening.) (69.)
6. Physical Economics, *i. e.* Mechanics and Chemistry, applied to domestic management and the other common purposes of life. (70.)
7. Geography continued.
8. Geometry continued.
9. History continued.
10. Biography continued.
11. Appropriate Drawing continued.
12. Grammatical Exercises, applied as above, continued.

STAGE IV.

HUMANITY, or HUMANITY (71.) (including Hints, including the arts and sciences hereto belonging viz.
1. Physiology. (72.)
2. Anatomy. (73.)
3. Pathology. (74.)
4. Nosology. (75.)
5. Dietetics. (76.)
6. Materia Medica. (77.)
7. Prophylactics. (78.)
8. Therapeutics (79.) at large
9. Surgery, *i. e.* Mechanical Therapeutics. (80.)
10. Zoëgyiantocs, *i. e.* Physiology, &c. applied to the inferior animals. (81.)
11. Phthisonomes, the art of destruction, applied to noxious animals. (82.)
12. Geography continued.
13. Geometry continued.
14. History continued.
15. Biography continued.
16. Appropriate Drawing continued.
17. Grammatical Exercises continued.

STAGE V.

MATHEMATICS.
1. Geometry (84.) (with demonstrations.)
2. Arithmetic (85.) (the higher branches.)
3. Algebra (86.)
4. Uranological Geography. (87.)
5. Uranological Chronology. (88.)
6. History continued.
7. Biography continued.
8. Appropriate Drawing continued.
9. Grammatical Exercises continued.
10. Technology, or Arts and Manufactures in general. (89.)
11. Book-keeping at large; *i. e.* the art of Registration or Recordation. (90.)
12. Commercial Book-keeping. (91.)
13. Note-taking (92.) applied to *Recapitulatory Lectures*, on such of the above branches as admit and require it.

BRANCHES OF INSTRUCTION *omitted;* viz. on one or more of the ensuing GROUNDS; to wit,

I. School-Room insufficient. (93.)
II. Admission pregnant with exclusion. (94.)
III. Time of life too early. (95.)
IV. Utility not sufficiently general; viz. as being limited to particular ranks or professions. (96.)

☞ In the instance of each branch, indication is given of the *ground* or *grounds* of omission, by the numerals prefixed as above.

I. GYMNASTIC EXERCISES. (97.)

1. Dancing. I.
2. Riding (the Great Horse.) I. III.
3. Fencing. I. III. IV.
4. Military Exercise. (98.) I.

II. FINE ARTS.

5. Music. I. II.
6. Painting. I IV.
7. Sculpture. I. IV.
8. Engraving. I. IV.

III. APPLICATIONS of MECHANICS and CHEMISTRY.

9. Gunnery I. II. IV.
10. Fortification. I IV.
11. Navigation I. IV.
12. Art of War. I. III. IV. (99.)

IV. BELLES LETTRES.

13. Literary Composition at large. (III.)
14. Poetical Composition. III.
15. Rhetorical Composition. III.
16. Cretseism. III.

V. MORAL ARTS and SCIENCES.

17. Divinity. II. III.
18. Private Ethics or Morals (controverted points.) II. III. (100.)
19. Law (National.) III.
20. International Law. III. IV.
21. Art and Science of Legislation in general. III. IV
22. Political Economy. III. IV.

VI. ALL-DIRECTING ART and SCIENCE.

23. Logic (by some called *Metaphysics.*) III.

N. B.—In regard to several of the branches in this list, the proposition by which the omission is prescribed, as likewise the *Ground* on which it is prescribed, may, in some way or other, be found susceptible of modification. But whatever may, in this or that instance, be thought of the *filling up*, the scheme of the outline may, it is hoped, be found to have its use.

☞ It is supposed that few, if any, existing branches of Art or Science can be found, which are not included in one or other of the Denominations inserted in this Table. In so far as this is the case, it may, in some measure, serve the purpose of an *Encyclopædical sketch.*

Figure 179: Table 1 from Bentham's *Chrestomathia* (1816)

middling and higher ranks in life' (Bentham, 1816: frontispiece, 21), it would have been of particular interest to many business owners and workers in Birmingham. The curriculum, set out in a series of tables designed to be read as a map, covered a series of 'stages', from the elementary (reading, writing, arithmetic), through 'natural history' (mineralogy, botany, zoology as well as geography and geometry), 'natural philosophy' (mechanics, chemistry) and architecture, to 'hygiastics' (physiology, anatomy, surgery), mathematics, 'the moral arts and sciences' (divinity, private ethics or moral, law, political economy), and 'all-directing art and science' (logic) (Bentham, 1816: table 1).

Despite the failure of the Mechanics' Institute in 1842 after focussing on renewed agitation of the Chartist movement rather than the previously successful programme of industrial exhibitions, its library persisted in the following Polytechnic Society (1844), which hosted the nascent Midland Institute. When this society and that of the Philosophical Institution failed, they collectively supported the foundation of the new Birmingham and Midland Institute. As instigator of the earliest industrial exhibition in Birmingham, the Mechanics' Institute also inspired much grander exhibitions and informed the later extension of the civic ground of the city. This is explored in relation to the explicit institutional order of the city.

The reorientation from an implicit to explicit institutional order instigated the notion of the 'model' institution that could be reproduced. In place of a civic order based on moral knowledge (*phronesis*), Priestley's ordering of the catalogue and laws of Birmingham Library and Bentham's model curriculum and institution proposed a theoretical (*episteme*) and technological (*technē)* basis for participation. Although *phronesis* and *technē* can be said to have 'experience' in common, Gadamer (1975: 325) notes a profound difference, where the moral decision of the former is arrived at through deliberation with oneself on and in a particular situation, and the latter is learnt, reproduceable, and determined by the use for which it is intended. As explored in the following section, the institutional order of the city manifest in the library and buildings was far from didactic in its participatory basis.

Figure 180: The Market Hall at the Bull Ring in 1835. Source: author

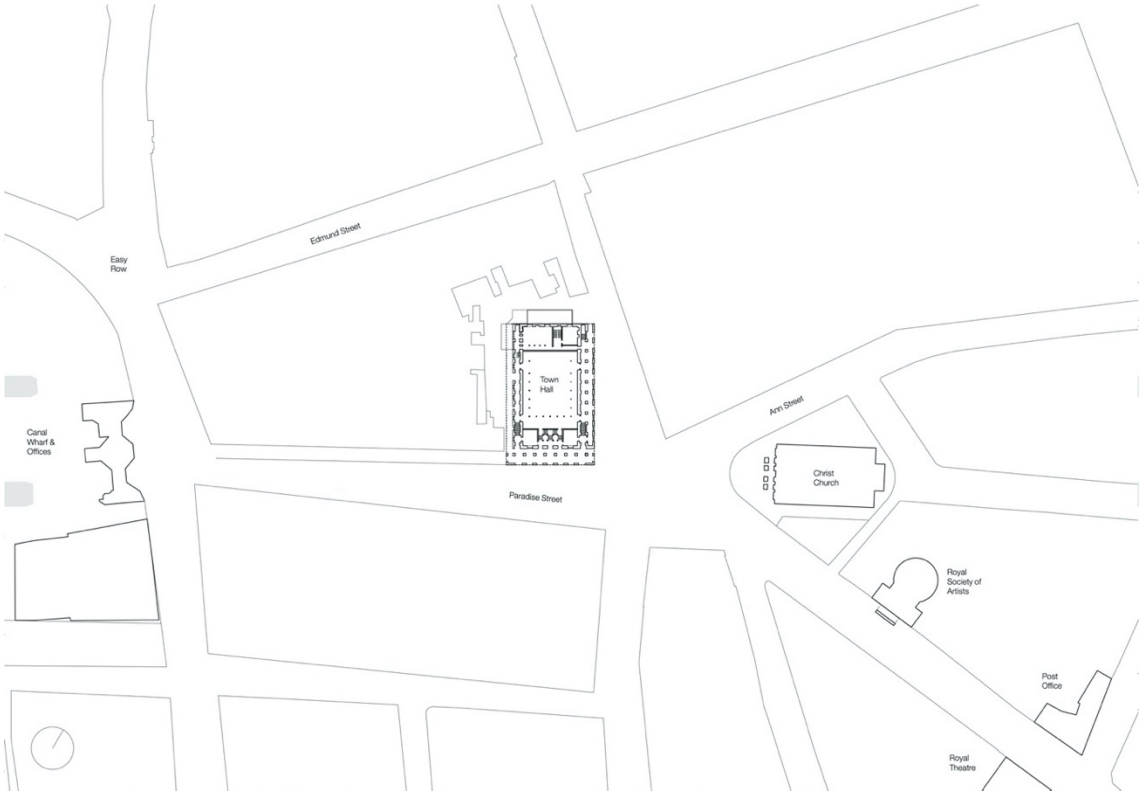

Figure 181: The incomplete Town Hall on Paradise Street in 1835. Source: author

5.2 The Explicit Institutional Order of Birmingham related to Formal and Informal Bodies - Institution as Praxis - An Idea of the Incomplete, Contingent and Open City

RQ2 In a city outwardly concerned with progress and efficiency at the expense of continuity during the twentieth century, how might an interpretation of the architectural *praxis* of institutions reveal the traditions of the city towards a framework for civic life?

5.2.1 Progress and Radical Praxis in relation to Explicit Institutional Order

The intense radicalism of eighteenth-century Birmingham placed the rights of man at the centre of civic debate. The committees of Birmingham Library, the Lunar Society members, subscribers to the canal network, those numerous religious and educational institutions collectively shaped the emergent order of the city, contributing to subsequent cultural and commercial buildings most notably at the Town Hall and Market Hall, and later the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

As shown illustrated in the *Map of Institutional Continuity*, the combined projects of the Town Hall and Market Hall were a product of the 1827 Town Improvement Act but had much earlier antecedents. In the case of the market, the granting of the charter had long established the town as a local centre of trade around which the implicit institutional order began. Occupying the ground of a city block and presenting a formal façade to the Bull Ring, the Market Hall (figure 180) reinforced this activity at a scale matched only by nearby Beardsworth's Repository for Horses and Carriages Positioned at the termination of New Street which rose towards heathland to the north, the Town Hall (figure 181) was, by comparison, more closely scaled to the town's churches, its performance room informed by Westminster Hall and the Palazzo della Ragione in Padua. As discussed in chapter 3, provision for the construction of the Town Hall, together with the hospital and St. Paul's Chapel (both from 1779), had been made by funds raised from the longstanding Triennial Music Festival. The Town Hall therefore not only made manifest that musical culture, but it also built on the earlier romantic arts seen most prominently in Stuart's Greek Doric Temple at Hagley and Shenstone's picturesque landscape at Leasowes.

Two pictures by Harris (figures 183 and 184) articulate the civic nature of the Town Hall and surrounding civic ground, located in the drawing in figure 182.

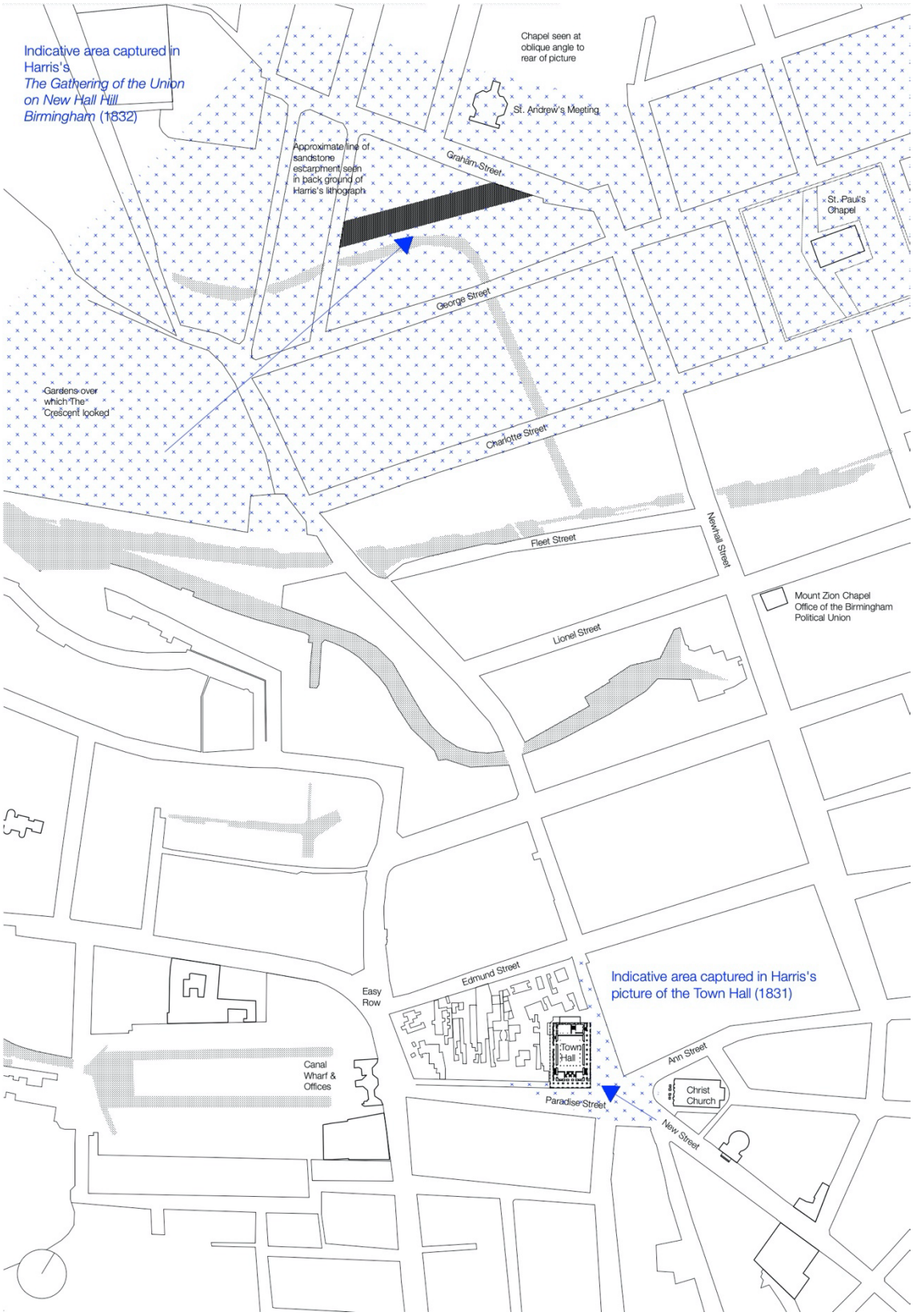

Figure 182: Drawing locating Harris's *Gathering* and *Town Hall* images. Source: author

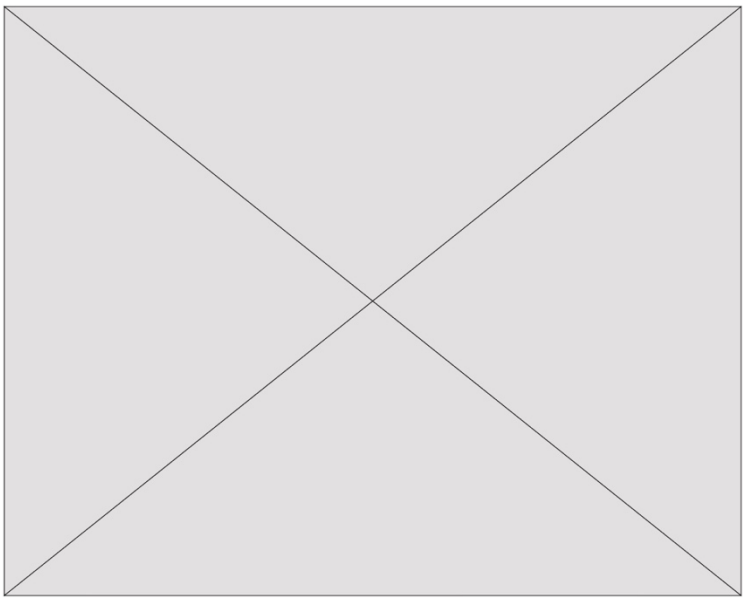

Figure 183: Henry Harris *The Gathering of the Union on New Hall Hill Birmingham* (1832), which captured the mass meeting of the Birmingham Political Union and associated groups. Source: TUC Archive at London Metropolitan University

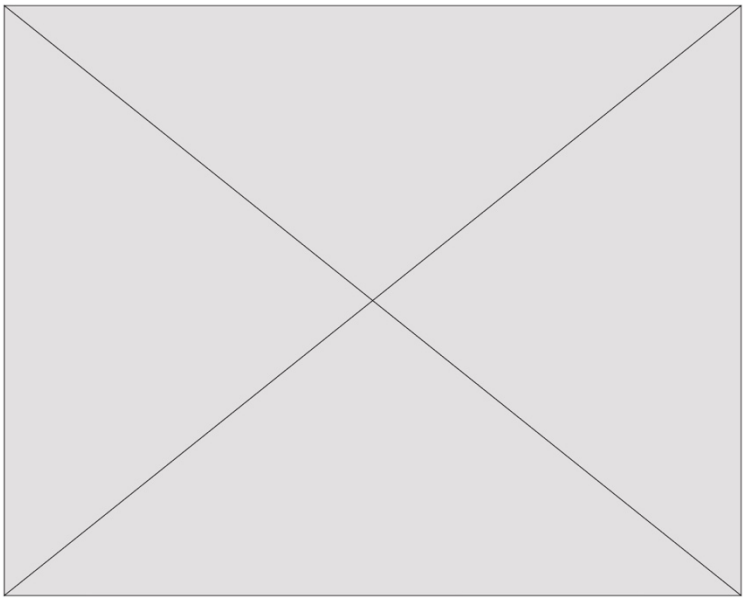

Figure 184: Hansom and Welch's Town Hall competition proposal, painting by Henry Harris with imagined backdrop, 1831. Source: Assay Office

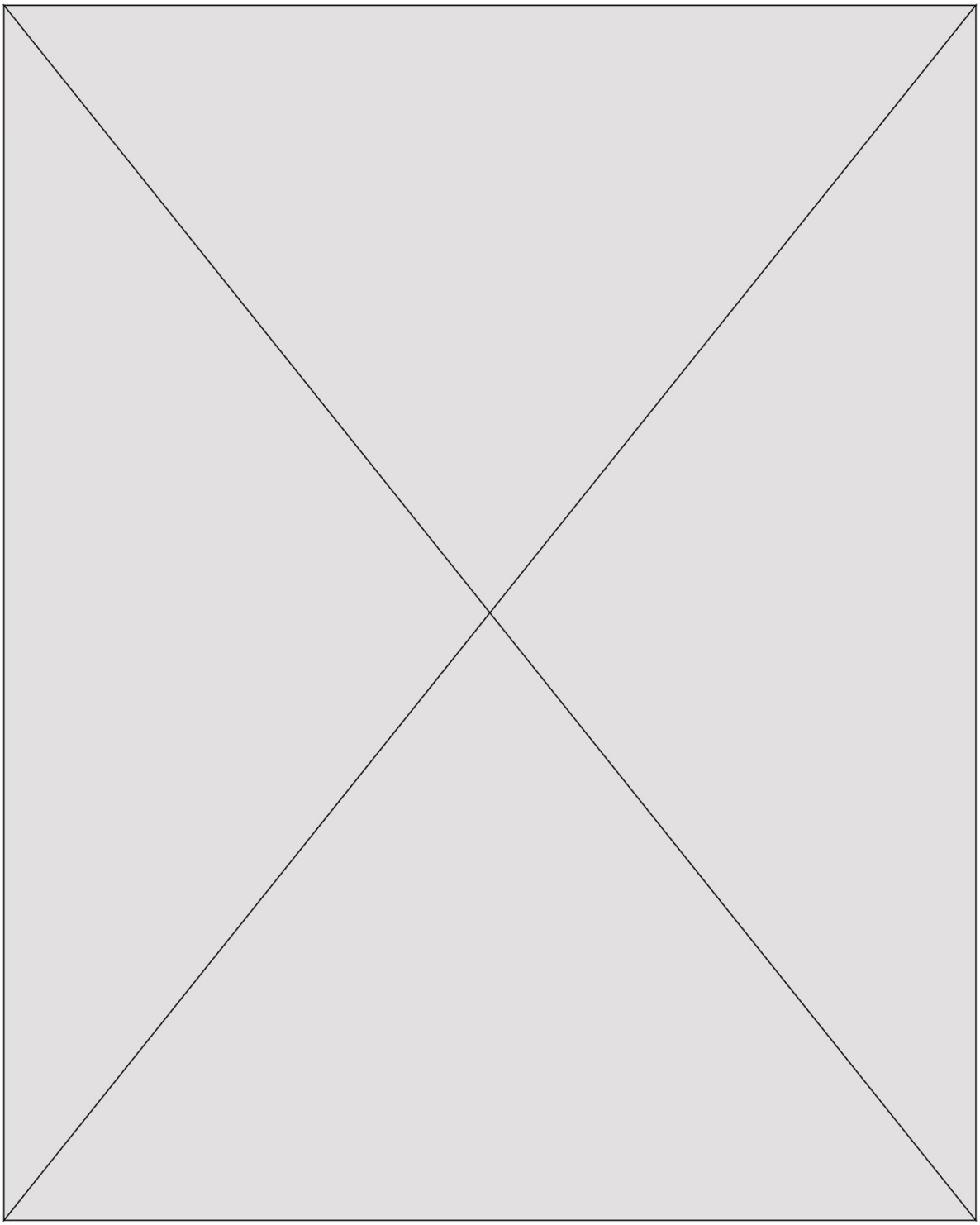

Figure 185: Survey of the ground surrounding the Town Hall upon partial completion. Source: (Peers, 2012: 130)

Made around the same time, both images speak of the changing nature of the city as a place of civic representation. Situated in the expanding territory of the city, Harris' *Gathering* (figure 183) exaggerated the scale of the protest in an ascending topography for artistic effect, the sandstone escarpment and temple-like St. Andrew's Meeting signifying the democratic basis through its recollection of the Athenian Acropolis. Harris' three-quarter view of the as yet unbuilt Town Hall (figure 184) is necessarily more constructed than that of the gathering. Either side of the Town Hall Harris imagined the decorous setting of grand civic buildings along Paradise Street recalling the monumental scale of Soane's Bank of England, and elegant townhouses line streets to the right. The foreground of passenger carriages (rather than those associated with the passage of goods) and throngs of gather crowds before the Town Hall not so much defined a formal square but a meeting of several routes. This, together with well attired pedestrians promenading along the pavement to the right illustrate the decorum of the setting, the colonnade of the Town Hall open to all and the upper storey accommodating promenading guests around the cella of the building.

The contingent nature of the Town Hall and its setting differed greatly from Harris' depictions, reflecting the negotiated reality of the situation. The resistance of the existing ground, illustrated in figure 185 as 'house', 'shopping' (as in workshop), 'yard', and 'brew house', show the intensity and variety of life, meaning that the Town Hall was only complete to the extent shown in Harris' three-quarter view. In writing about the relationship of the Town Hall to its surroundings, the actor and lecturer Charles Reece Pemberton wrote;

> I like it for standing near to those humble brick dwelling-houses. Knowing and feeling, as I do, the purpose and spirit which urged its erection, it looks to me like their magnificent, not insolently condescending, friend – not their haughty lord. Had its site been more elevated ground, and its whole more isolated, I think it would not have possessed that look of the kindly grand, that countenance of the benevolently beautiful, which, to my sense at least, it now possesses. (in Dent, 1880: 473)

The notion of the 'benevolently beautiful' was a concern of architectural aesthetic theory as well as moral and artistic aspects of progress.

The mimetic nature of the Town Hall in signifying ascent to the good and democratic representation through the creation of the largest performance hall in Britain elevated Birmingham to a place of intellect and decorum. It also established a material culture particular to the situation. Built in Anglesey stone brought via sea and the inland canal system, using newly developed techniques in construction as well as innovations in

protecting workers' rights, the Town Hall established the civic basis of the situation embodying technological feats of transportation and construction.

The Town Hall, therefore, addressed the city at multiple registers, offering continuity to the inhabitants of Birmingham whilst embodying an advancement in its collective intellectual and civic culture. It came to represent the democratic will of the people whose protests had led to their (partial) emancipation, where national reform provided (limited) voting rights and parliamentary representation for the city. It placed Birmingham on the international stage through renowned musical and oratory performances including the premiere of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' commissioned for the Festival of 1846. Its architecture was representative of Romantic ideas about the democratic origins of the city and national debate on questions of style, bearing reference to Shenstone's *ferme ornée* at Halesowen, and Stuart's temple in nearby Hagley itself a result of his and Revett's survey of Athenian antiquity. According to Bergdoll (2000: 17), Stuart and Revett's work, together with Leroy's *Ruins of the Most Beautiful Monuments of Greece* (1758), provoked a debate on the notion of architectural models and 'the roles of imitation and invention in architectural design, the relation of modern culture to tradition, the nature of architectural progress, and the very matter of taste'. For Stuart, this visual discourse was concerned with authority and accuracy of reproduction as seen at Hagley rather than any form of historical analysis or creative interpretation. Taylor and Cresy's *Antiquities of Rome* (1822) pursued the same logic though by then debate had developed so that their survey of the Roman Temple of Jupiter Stator provided a template rather than precise model for Hansom and Welch's Town Hall. This notion of the model and of an appropriate architectural style would persist throughout the nineteenth century, as seen in the following exploration of the interrelated histories of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Library.

5.2.2 From Theoretical Model to Architectural Type and Material Culture

The idea of the reproduceable model and questions of style are associated with modern notions of progress, the emancipation of knowledge and later, of man. As Bergdoll (2000: 5) notes, the making of the building type corresponded with that of its public, and with new ideas on how institutions ought to serve that public. Emerging from earlier failed and amalgamated bodies, as well as theoretical structures of knowledge and an act of law, the Birmingham and Midland Institute offers a reflection on such issues at two moments in its history. The first is the E. M. Barry's building on Paradise Street (1857) with associated Free Reference Library (1866/1881), the second Cedric Price's unrealised project for BMI/HQ on Broad Street (1971), each representative of a new building type and the emergence of a material culture specific to the conditions of the city. This reveals local and national debates

on architectural style, the hierarchy and autonomy of institutions of the city in particular in relation to London and central government, and the topographical conditions of Birmingham.

5.2.2.1 Type and Material Culture of the Applied Arts in the Conjoined Projects of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library during the Nineteenth Century

The manifestation of the first Birmingham and Midland Institute on Paradise Street reveals the civic nature of Birmingham at several registers. Not only did it reflect earlier patterns of artistic, scientific, and industrial manufacturing and exhibition, but it also gave rise to an architectural culture where applied arts and new building types coalesced. As noted earlier, the prior exhibitions of the progenitor Mechanics' Institute at King Edward's Free Grammar School (1839) inspired not only more substantial exhibitions in Birmingham (1849), but significantly the Great Exhibition in London (1851). Together, these exhibitions placed Birmingham on the national and international stage. The temporary timber construction of Bingley Hall for the Exposition of 1849 marked a commitment to the advancement of the industrial arts in the city, visited by Prince Albert who paused at R. W. Winfield's display of metalworks to discuss the techniques on show (Eccleston in Tilson et al, 1989: 115). The Prince added authority to Henry Cole's and the Art Manufacturers proposal for the Great Exhibition to 'promote public taste', with many of the city's manufacturers contributing to the construction of Paxton's building[62] as well as the display of their artefacts and installations within[63].

[62] This was seen most strikingly in the design, manufacture, and construction of Crystal Palace itself. In the production and application of glass, the exhibition journal singled out English wares as unrivalled, noting the contributions of Birmingham companies Chance Brothers and Osler Presenter (1851) *The Industry of All Nations 1851 - The Art Journal Illustrated Catalogue* George Virtue, London, Available at: https://archive.org/embed/artjournalillust00bradrich [Accessed 21.08.2021].. Founded in 1814 next to the Birmingham – Wolverhampton Canal, Chance Brothers were responsible for the sheet glass used in the construction of Crystal Palace, having provided the material for Paxton's earlier glasshouses at Chatsworth Chance, T. (2018) *The Crystal Palace's Glass - A Technical and Social History*. Available at: http://tomchance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Glazing_the_Crystal_Palace.pdf [Accessed 22.08.2021].. Not only were they experienced in producing the necessary specification through French techniques brought by their employee George Bontemps from his factory at Choisy-le-Roi, they had the capacity to make the glass in the short time available, the full manufacture and construction lasting only 39 weeks Chance, T. (2018) *The Crystal Palace's Glass - A Technical and Social History*. Available at: http://tomchance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Glazing_the_Crystal_Palace.pdf [Accessed 22.08.2021].. The building's cast-iron columns and beams were made nearby at a foundry in Smethwick, with the facility to be disassembled, moved, and reconstructed afterwards by the contractors Fox and Henderson. The structure received a colour scheme devised by Owen Jones, who's application of a chromatic system to the 564 metre long building evoked the atmospheric haze of the paintings of J.M.W. Turner Bergdoll, B. (2000) *European Architecture 1750-1890.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.. The idea of transparency and of the optical effects used to heighten the visitors' experience was seen too in Birmingham manufacturer Osler's Glass Fountain positioned at the building's crossing, its 'lightness, [and] beauty' demonstrating the 'ingenuity' of the manufacturers in the creation of a spectacular centrepiece Presenter (1851) *The Industry of All Nations 1851 - The Art Journal Illustrated Catalogue* George Virtue, London, Available at: https://archive.org/embed/artjournalillust00bradrich [Accessed 21.08.2021].. Pimlott Pimlott, M. (2016) *The Public Interior as Idea and Project.* Heijningen, the Netherlands: Jap Sam Books. suggests that the extreme measure of indeterminacy in the building's design conveyed the ambition of universality, transforming the city's perceived space.

[63] As representative of the Birmingham manufacturers, Winfield exhibited in the 'Birmingham Court' of the Great Exhibition, contributing to the 'surprising force in the general quality and in the variety' of the artefacts on show, and compared in quality to the ornamental metal work of Liège and Paris Presenter (1851) *The Industry of All Nations 1851 - The Art Journal Illustrated Catalogue* George Virtue, London, Available at: https://archive.org/embed/artjournalillust00bradrich [Accessed 21.08.2021].. Hardman's crafts were showcased in the 'Medieval Court', where all artefacts were designed by Pugin in his recognisable Gothic style.

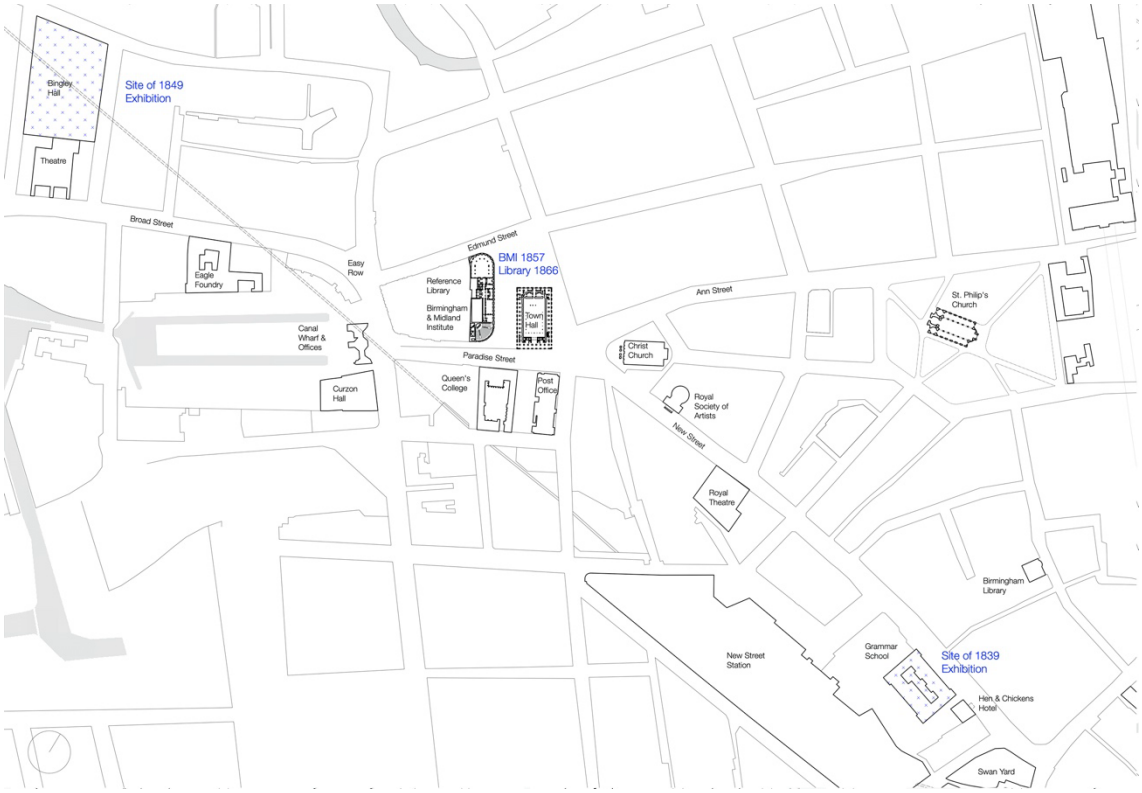

Figure 186: Sites of industrial exhibitions of 1839 and 1849 shown in the later context of the BMI and Free Reference Library. Source: author

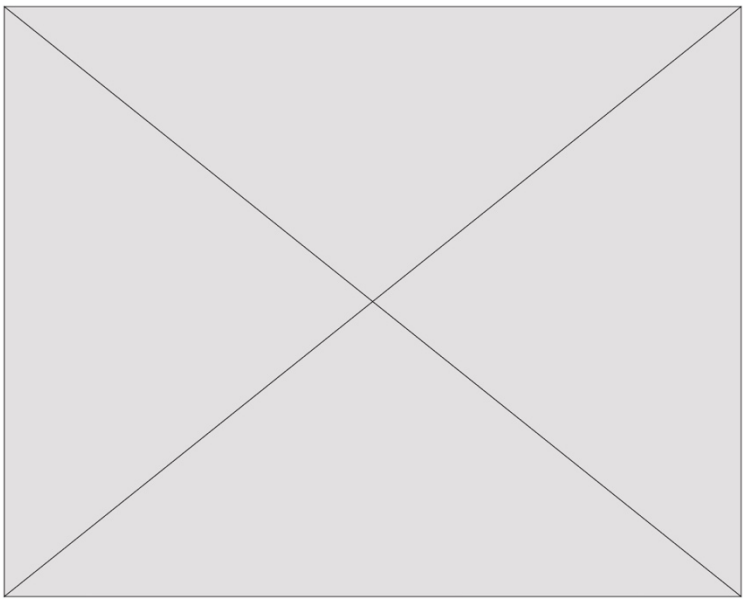

Figure 187: Fowke's Italianate design for South Kensington Museum, elevation of Lecture Theatre block, 1865. Source: Victoria and Albert Museum Collections ref E.1025-1927

Paxton's Crystal Palace was praised for the way in which 'a single section of the building [was] completely explanatory of the whole' (1851: xvii), taking as its inspiration the architect's prior glasshouses at Chatsworth, as well as the Hippolyte Meyndier's Jardin

d'Hiver (1847) on the Champs Elysée which contained 'ball-room, café, reading room and paintings along the high glass walls' (Giedion in Pimlott, 2016: 35). Furthermore, these exhibitions revealed a shift in civic ground from New Street to the top of Broad Street where canal wharves and foundries gradually gave way to more refined yet still industrially oriented activities, evident in figure 186. Together, the Town Hall and later permanent Bingley Hall marked the extents of the future Civic Centre and the association of science (or more accurately industry) and the arts.

Paxton's Crystal Palace as well as the roof to New Street Station and the structure of the Market Hall and later additions to the Birmingham and Midland Institute gave expression to new techniques and ideas of manufacture and society, influencing the wider design reform movement who were critical of the lack of 'any fixed principles in ornamental design' evident in the British and European work on show (Bergdoll, 2000: 219). This had widespread implications not only for Cole's subsequent venture, the South Kensington Museum (1857, from 1899 the Victoria and Albert Museum), but for architectural culture more generally including in Birmingham. South Kensington Museum became a permanent home for the display and dissemination of the arts with a collection purchased from the Exhibition, for the education of designers, manufacturers, and consumers. This included exhibits of 'bad taste' particularly where the artefact was a direct imitation of nature or where ornament did not accentuate form or structure, including produce from Birmingham. Despite his affiliation with the city, Pugin was highly critical of the work produced by Birmingham manufacturers, which, together with Sheffield, he described as 'inexhaustible mines of bad taste' (Pugin, 1841: 24). Separating design from craft, Pugin abhorred the lack of concern for scale, form, purpose and unity of style in design, the 'abominations' a 'modern and debased' form of Gothic (Pugin, 1841: 25). Physick (1982: 9) notes that officials were keen that the building should demonstrate experimentation and a revival of mosaic in glass and ceramic, tile, terracotta and murals, evident in Captain Francis Fowke's first buildings. Fowke's use of terracotta in his Italianate Sheepshanks Gallery and Lecture Theatre building (figure 187) was of particular note. Promoted by Cole after seeing the material in a recently discovered ancient tomb in Rome, terracotta was used on account of lower cost compared to that of Portland stone, and the opportunities it afforded Godfrey Sykes in his ornamental design (Physick, 1982: 37, 11). The sculptural possibilities meant that it could be adapted for a variety of architectural applications and styles.

Figure 188: Madonna and Child, Giovanni della Robbia, terracotta originally installed in the then newly built church of Santa Lucia at Castellina near Florence, 1500. Source: Barber Institute No.42.2

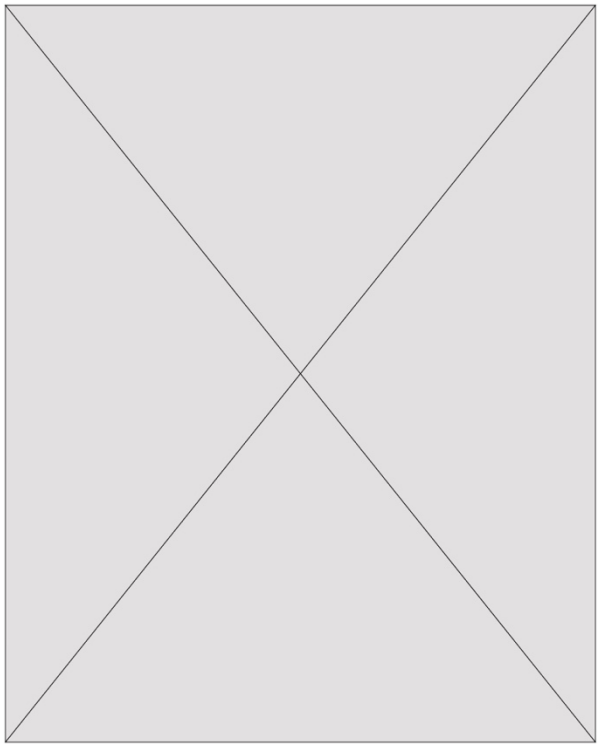

Figure 189: Excerpt of J. H. Chamberlain & Martin drawing for the proposed elevation to Edmund Street for the rebuilt and extended Free Reference Library and Birmingham and Midland Institute, 1879. Source: BCC MS1338

After Fowke's death, Cole wrote;

> England has lost a man who felt the spirit of his age, and was daring enough to venture beyond the beaten path of conventionalism. Captain Fowke, to my mind, was solving the problem of the decorative use of iron, and be appreciating the spirit of both the gothic and Renaissance architects, was on the threshold of introducing a novel style of architecture. (Cole in Physick, 1982: 108)

Though Birmingham's artists and artisans were well represented in the South Kensington Museum collection, they were less prominent in the making of the Museum building itself. In terms of manufacturing, the large, enamelled iron plates to the celling of the Centre Refreshment Room were fired by Willing of Birmingham. Of particular note, however, was the Green Dining Room, designed by Morris, Marshall and Faulkner, which showcased the cultural richness of the city. Artist Edward Burne-Jones was commissioned to make a series of painted panels of the months which lined the room, and, together with Philip Webb, produced the stained-glass windows (Physick, 1982: 133). Together with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Everett Millais, Ford Madox Brown and Holman Hunt, Burne-Jones formed part of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a group of young artists intent on challenging the 'worn-out tradition which dominated the whole of the artistic schools of Europe' by a doctrine of naturalism (Morris, 1892: 141). As Morris (1892: 143) notes, this was not a scientific pursuit nor an attempt to render nature 'real', but as a search for 'perfect ornamentation' through the 'conscientious representation of incident'. Additionally, the work 'ought to be part of a beautiful whole, in a room or a hall', exemplified in Burne-Jones work at the Green Dining Room. The Brotherhood found a great champion in John Ruskin, who, together with Morris and Webb, stood in opposition to the industrial-capitalist social framework through the maintenance of craft standards (Rykwert, 2000: 114).

Such institutions embodied cultural movements and disseminated ideas in very tangible ways. As Stratton (1989: 24) notes, John Robinson, the Training Master and Curator for South Kensington Museum, bought a collection of Italian busts and Florentine della Robbia works in terra cotta on behalf of the Birmingham Corporation, to reinforce the culture of art and manufacture in the city (figure 188). The reproduction of historical forms and motifs in terracotta seen in South Kensington Museum and in the Corporation's collection was representative of an architectural culture grappling with ethical questions associated with new technologies, the arts, and the emergence of new social orders as well as a desire to engage in a much deeper tradition. As discussed in chapter 4, this association led to a flourishing architectural culture and a commitment to the applied arts and crafts, particularly in the use of terracotta and in refined glass work that explored new modes of production. This was most evident in J. H. Chamberlain and Martin's extension to the Birmingham and

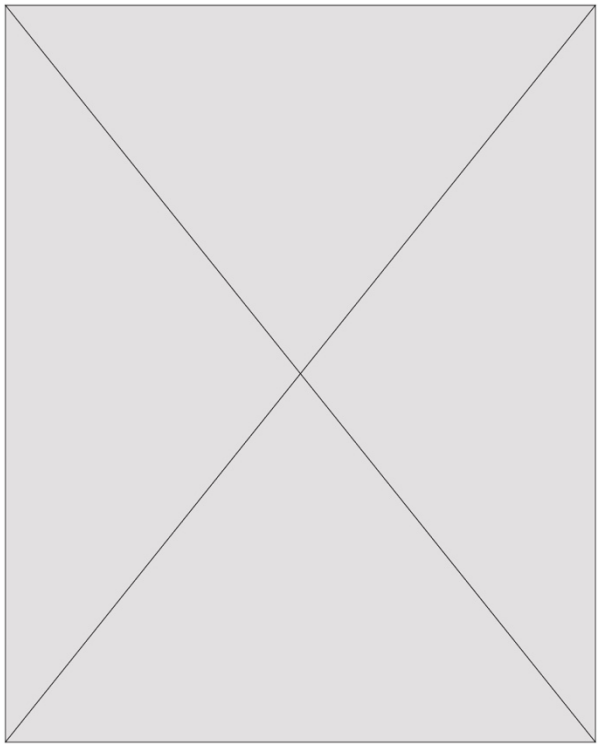

Figure 190: Spandrel panel to Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève (1838-50), featuring the library catalogue of authors. Source: (Middleton and Watkin, 1980: 227)

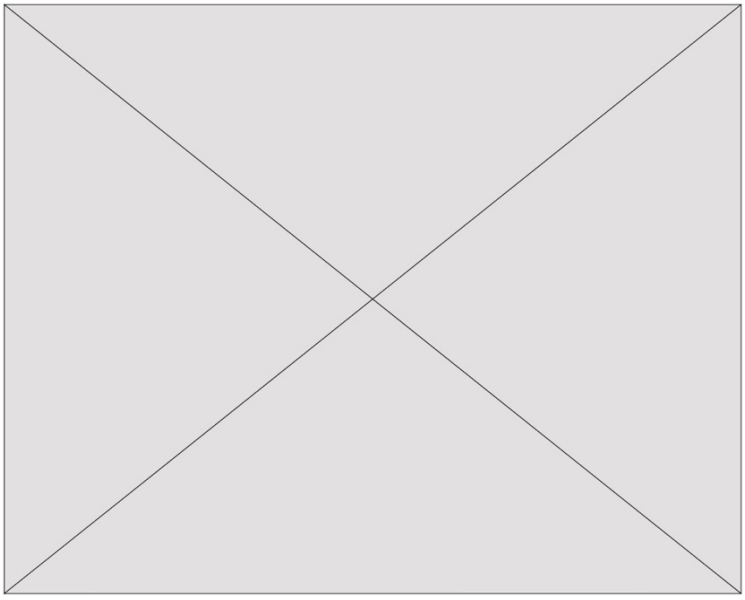

Figure 191: Plan of Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève (1838-50), with College Ste.Barbe and Keeper's House either side. Source: (Middleton and Watkin, 1980: 226)

Midland Institute and Free Reference Library (1881, figure 192) which bore a resemblance to Fowkes' work at South Kensington (figure 189), as well as their School of Art (1885). Aston Webb and Edward Ingress Bell's first major commission for the Birmingham Law Courts (1891) took the use of terracotta to extremes with highly moulded surfaces to the

façade and interior vestibules. The topographic conditions of the region also contributed to that architectural and material culture. The thick red *keuper marl* clay provided the ideal raw materials for the production of terracotta, contributing to the tradition of the city.

Beyond a material culture concerned with the applied arts and questions of style, such institutions, including the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library, were associated with new building types related to the emancipation of knowledge. Type as an architectural term came to the fore during the Enlightenment, where, as Clancy (2015: 13) notes, architects first confronted the systemisation of knowledge. Jean Nicholas Louis Durand's taxonomy of building types expressed an architecture free from history and experience, reinforced by the abstract plan-based classification of type (Clancy, 2015: 14). Quatremère de Quincy's definition offered nuance between type and model, where the former was removed from reductive formalisation and open to variation and nuance related to the material and social organisation (Lavin, 1992). Inherent in Quatremère's definition of type in his *Encyclopédie methodique* (1788) was the act of creation of man, a radical departure from the prior tradition where type was 'created exclusively by divine intervention' (Lavin, 1992). His theory of type was not chronological nor historicist, instead it was grounded in its social function, architecture itself becoming a social institution (Lavin, 1992). Quatremère's theory was most clearly practiced in France, after the Second French Revolution (1848), the end of July Monarchy and start of second short-lived Republic.

Exemplary of Quatremère's ethnographically grounded attitude to architecture and the idea of a socially oriented type, Henri Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève (1838-50, figures 190 and 191) was designed as 'a temple of positivist knowledge, and a temple of progress' (Bergdoll, 2000: 181). As a long rectangular floor plan with ground floor entrance and staircase to the upper-level grand reading room, the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève was utilitarian both in its organisation as well as its construction, employing cast-iron columns, lifts and sophisticated lighting and heating systems. As a type, the reading room recalled both the 'civic' temple at Paestum as well as the medieval refectory of the former Abbaye de St. Martin-Des-Champs (Middleton and Watkin, 1980: 229).

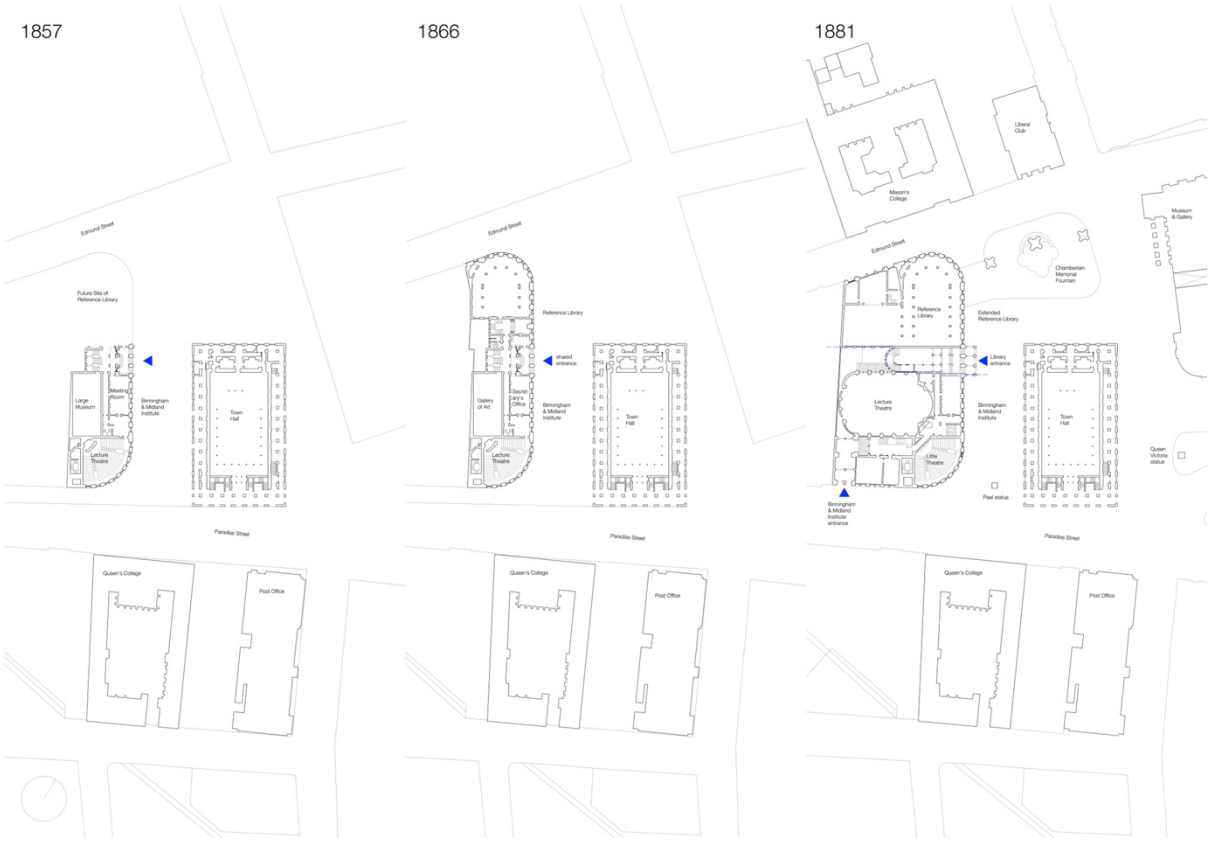

Figure 192: Construction sequence of the conjoined BMI and Free Reference Library adjacent to the Town Hall. Source: author

With the library catalogue inscribed in external walls, Labrouste's mnemonic references in the design of the main façade were many, Middleton and Watkin (1980: 230) citing Wren's library at Cambridge, and Sansovino's Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, amongst others. Far from being a novel building, the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève drew on a rich tradition of type, interpreting them for the industrial age.

Unlike the singular entity of Labrouste's library, the conjoined programme of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library was particular to the concrete conditions of Birmingham, each contingent on the other and to wider patterns of civic life though with different origins. The three iterations shown in figure 192 illustrate the interdependence of each despite their differing associations with the state and local government. In the first instance, the variation and nuance of the library type came as a result of a refusal of the institution as well as the Town Council to bow to central government intervention in the creation of a public library, as well as a period of economy. The act of 1854 which led to the construction of the Birmingham and Midland Institute by subscription, and the later library with which it shared an entrance in the second instance demonstrated an open dialogue between the two institutions and the wider city, the façade maintaining propriety of the setting. The formalisation of the two bodies into distinct entities with separate entrances and a dividing internal wall was representative of a wider specialisation and subdivision of knowledge, as well as the formalisation of municipal services, curtailing prior dialogue. It also pre-empted the early demolition of the Birmingham and Midland Institute before the library at the beginning of the construction of the Inner Ring Road and its eventually permanent removal from the civic ground of the centre.

5.2.2.2 Type and Immaterial Culture of BMI/HQ during the Twentieth Century

If the institutional types and material culture of the preceding century were reflective of the emancipation of knowledge and the embodiment of what Arendt (1958a: 199) described as a new collective space of appearance, those of the twentieth century were concerned with the progressive tendencies of society and the emancipation of man. It was also a time of post-colonial reckoning as the British Nationality Act 1948 entitled members of the Commonwealth to settle in Britain[64]. As established in chapter 2, Birmingham's municipal programme for the renewal of the library and expansion of the civic centre overlooked the prominent role that the Birmingham and Midland Institute had played in the foundation of civic representation, leaving it in a precarious position as it remains today.

[64] Such societal changes were studied in detail by Stuart Hall, Director of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham. Hall later became Professor of Sociology at the Open University.

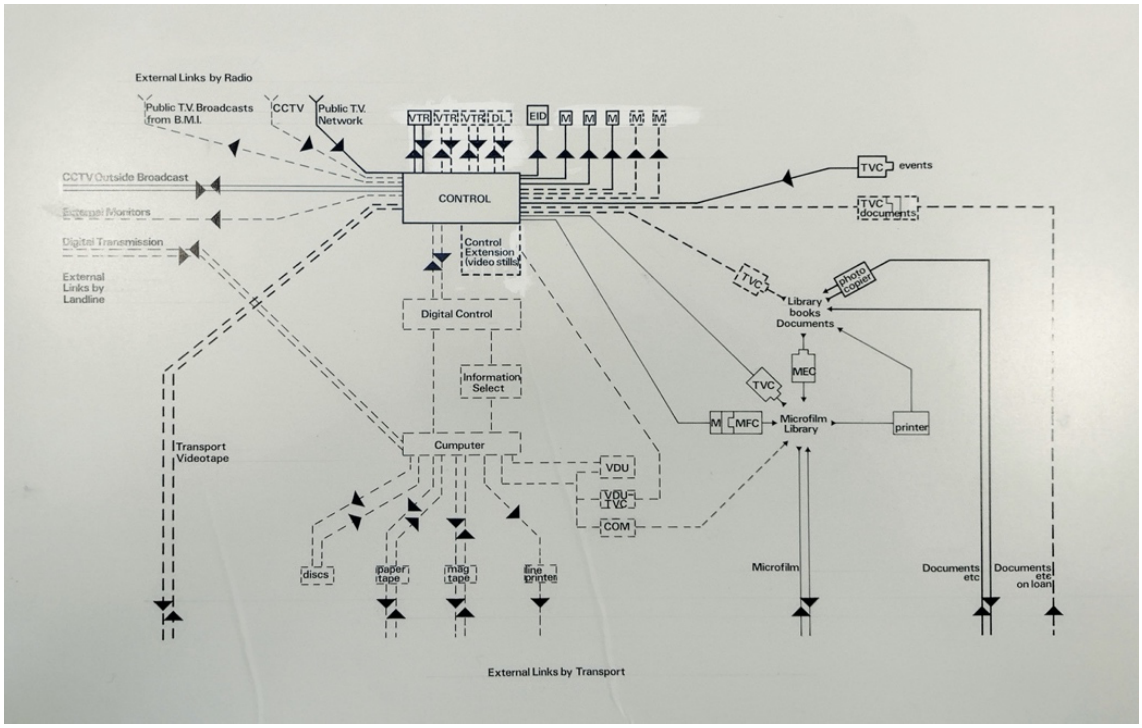

Figure 193: Source: CCA reference images_Price_DR1995:0243:498:500_Page_7_cybernetic model

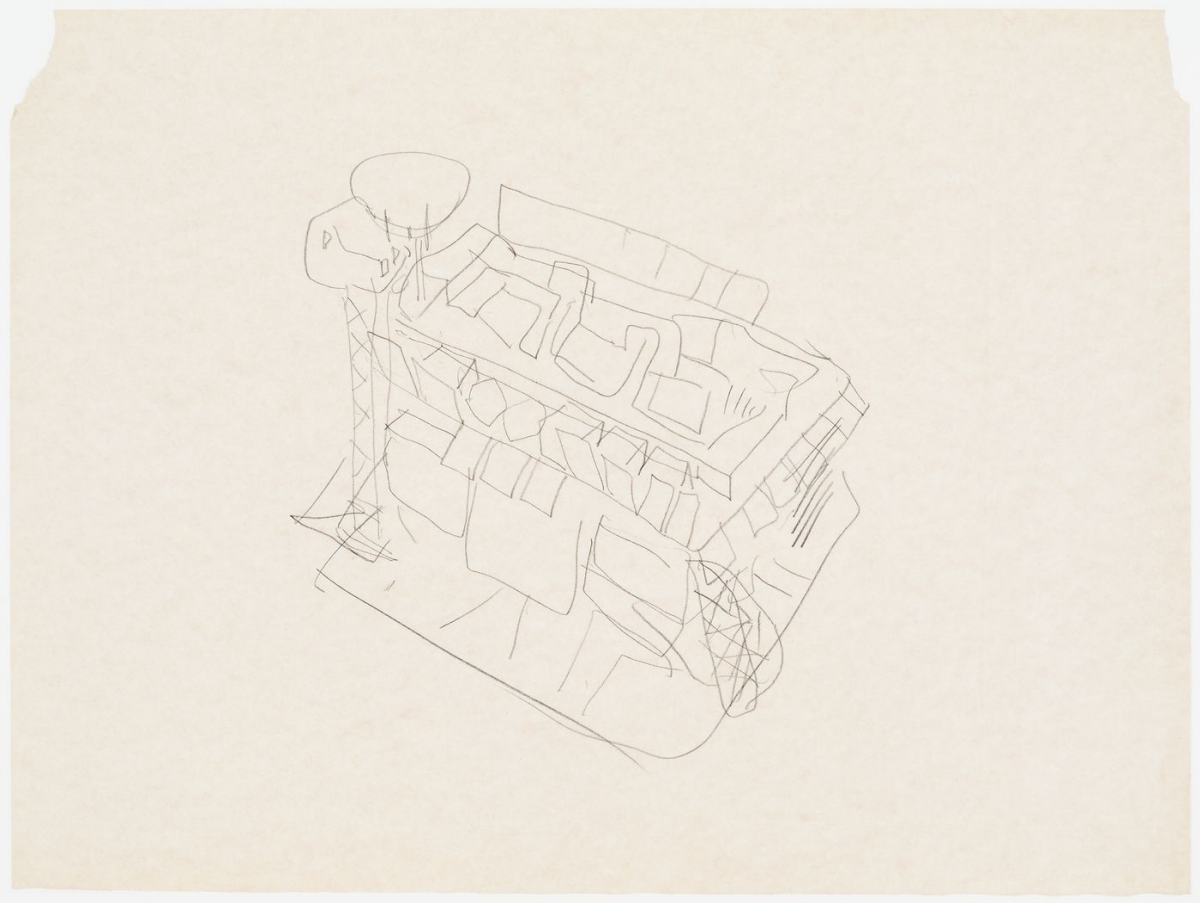

Figure 194: Cedric Price's sketch axonometric view of the proposed BMI/HQ. Source: CCA reference images_Price_DR1995:0243:048

Its union with the first Birmingham Library at Margaret Street was fitting given the close origins of each, yet its removal from everyday civic life of the immediate centre was representative of a political change of emphasis and the questioning of institutional order, manifest in architectural projects of the post war period. Price's project for BMI/HQ testifies to that change and corresponds with the hope of democratisation of knowledge through technology.

Price's proposals for BMI/HQ reflected and developed the ambitions of the institute in its enforced removal from the centre, drawing on ideas evident in his Fun Palace for Joan Littlewood (London, 1959-61) and Potteries Thinkbelt (Staffordshire, 1964-66). The somewhat ironic addition of 'HQ' recognised the historical role of the institute but speculated upon an architecture free from conventions of representation (Hays, 1998: 36). In its organisation, comparison can be drawn between Bentham's framework for technical knowledge in his *Chrestomathia* (figure 195) and Price's cybernetic model (figure 193 and 197), though without any particular claim to content or specialisation. Instead, the proposal responded to the influence of technology and computing on architecture, focussed on utility and freedom of expression. Just as the argument for the Inner Ring Road had been made as if it was a necessary investment in 'a large conveyor installation in one of our big motor works' (1955), Price's BMI/HQ was a emblematic of a new positivism in architecture, its constituent parts drawn as if an engine block with manifolds protruding from the sides (figure 194).

The architecture of Price's BMI/HQ receded from view to frame social interaction through new techniques in material and structural engineering as well as harnessing the emergent forces of digital communication. In place of the mimetic[65] basis of the prior Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library, this was a testament to the modern movement and counter to the processes of institutionalisation. In his essay on typology and method, Colquhoun (1969: 72) suggested a link between the romantic movement and a return to nature 'but changed from a desire to imitate the surface of natural forms or to operate at a craft level, to a belief in the ability of science to reveal the essence of nature's mode of operation.' Such cybernetic systems as seen at BMI/HQ aimed to replicate the web of relations of the city with the institutions at the heart of operations. In place of the civic orientation of the prior buildings on Paradise Street, Price's architecture was an armature for communication.

[65] As Colquhoun (1969, p.71) Colquhoun, A. (1969) Typology and Design Method. *Perspecta,* 12, pp. 71-74.notes, the use of mimetic here refers to an architecture of imitation of a tradition, rather than the Aristotelian imitation of nature.

CHRESTOMATHIC [D] INSTRUCTION TABLES. TABLE I.

Showing the several branches of INTELLECTUAL INSTRUCTION, included in the aggregate course, proposed to be carried on in the *Chrestomathic school*: together with the several STAGES, into which the course is proposed to be divided: accompanied with a brief view of the ADVANTAGES derivable from such Instruction: together with an intimation of the REASONS, by which the ORDER OF PRIORITY, herein observed, was suggested; and a List of BRANCHES OF INSTRUCTION OMITTED, with an indication of the Grounds of the omission.

N. B.—*Per hard words, viz. those derived from the Greek or Latin, are throughout explained. Through necessity alone are they here employed. Under almost every one of those names will be found included objects already familiar to every family; even to children who have but just learnt to read.*

Figure 195: Table 1 from Bentham's *Chrestomathia* (1816)

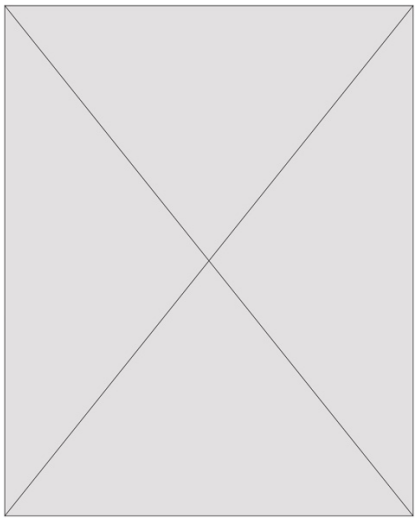

Figure 196: Section by E. M. Barry of the first BMI 1855. Source: BCC BMI_1855_1338/7

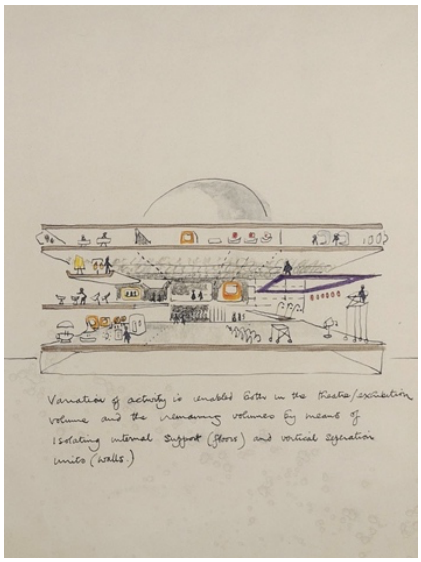

Figure 197: Diagrammatic section by Cedric price for BMIHQ circa 1970. Source: CCA Price_DR2004_0291_Page_4_design principles 2

Indeed, in discussing Price's similarly technical but urban project for the Potteries Think-Belt, Baird (1998: 41) identified its scientistic character as being 'analogous to that of a nineteenth-century natural scientist towards an experiment he is conducting', further reinforcing the connection between Priestley and Bentham's institutional models and the 'life-conditioner' architecture of Price. The topology of the city, *topos* as *logos*, was replaced with a paradoxically closed system, in the process losing the common ground of difference that had characterised previous iterations of the institution.

5.2.3 The Incomplete, Contingent, Creative and Open City – Paradise Circus

> In many ways, a settlement or city is best understood as a vehicle for the resolution of conflict. A city is a contingent, vulnerable thing with respect to its deeper context, and happens fundamentally within the concrete mediative processes of *praxis*. (Carl, 2000: 334)

The technically oriented projects of the Inner Ring Road and BMI/HQ called to attention the extensive conditions of mid-twentieth century Birmingham, a city that increasingly saw itself at the centre of national and international life. The attempts to straighten out the inconsistencies and inefficiencies of the historical city form and connect to a much wider territory through major infrastructure building changed the urban order from that of the street to that of the highway. Rather than Stilgoe's intended sequence of boulevards based on the decorum of the Viennese Ringstrasse, the resultant scheme reconfigured the city through a series of cuttings and raised highways, above and below which pedestrians were channelled. Price's BMI/HQ further systemised the participatory nature of the institution, extending the reach through new digital means. It is within this situation that Madin's Paradise Circus sought to revive civic ground.

In a city historically characterised by contingency, enshrined in the city motto 'Forward', the civic and industrial prowess of the late nineteenth and twentieth century effected great change. Joseph Chamberlain's municipal enterprise, the model communities of Bournville, the 'City Beautiful' image of the various Civic Centre iterations, and the workings of the automotive industries all contributed to a straightening out of form and order. As discussed earlier, the influences of American urbanism were profound, ushering in a new taxonomy and vision of progress. The automobile offered flexibility at the local as well as regional scale, leading to new disciplines of highway engineering and consequently urban form. The Inner Ring Road and the *tabula rasa* offered by the clearance of all buildings at Paradise Street provided the concrete conditions for Madin's new complex.

The novel urban condition of the highway in the American city was studied in *The View from the Road* (figure 198), in which the picturesque tradition of the English landscape and

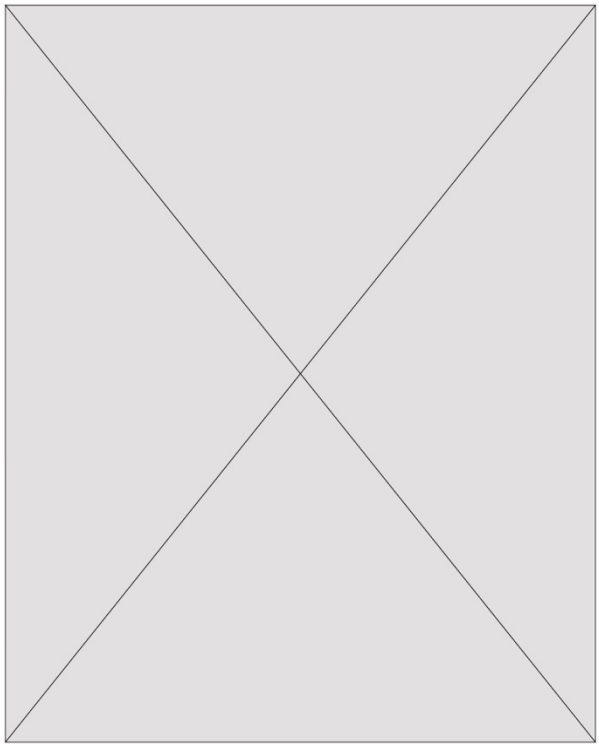

Figure 198: Page from Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch and John R. Myer's *The View from the Road*, describing the taxonomy of infrastructure. Source: (Appleyard et al., 1964: 9)

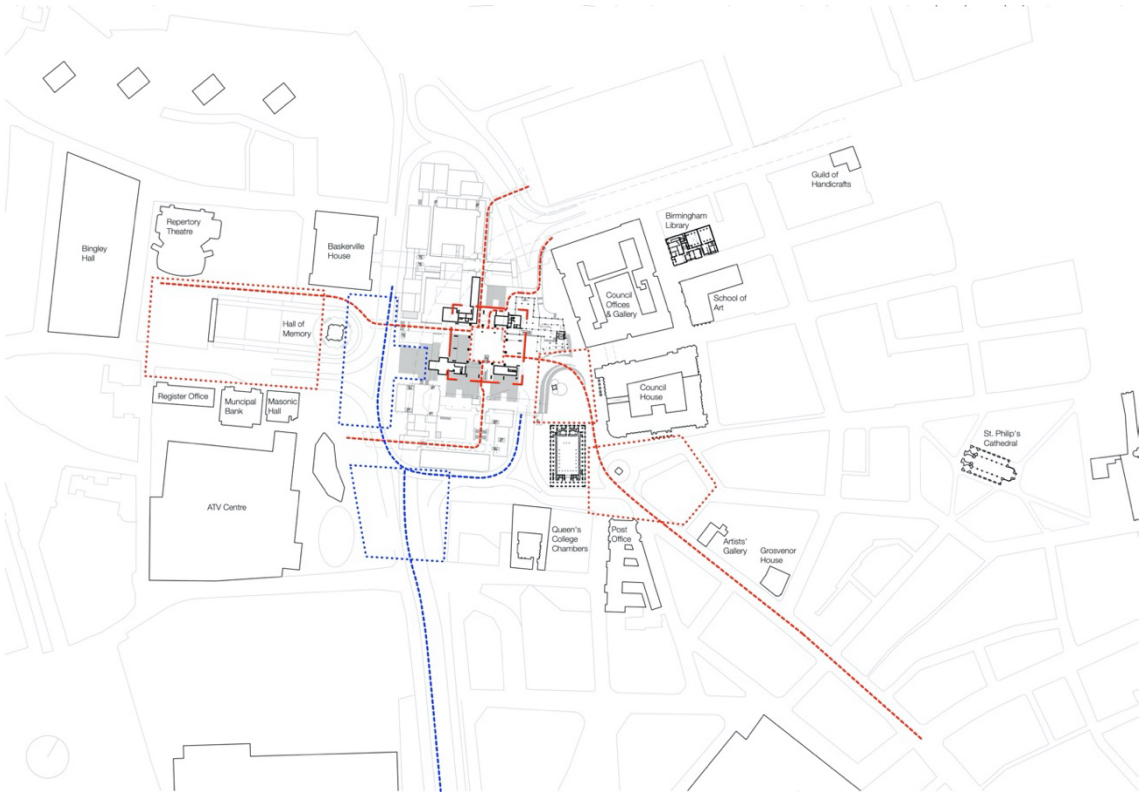

Figure 199: Ground plan of Paradise Circus and Central Library in its projected complete form, with overlays that map the pedestrian (red) and vehicular (blue) experience of moving towards and through the site. Source: author

Gordon Cullen's townscape principles were loosely interpreted for a 'new world of vision inherent in our speed of movement' through examples of the American city (Appleyard et al., 1964: 63). With the city reconceived from the perspective of space-motion and view, the highway was free to move apparently effortlessly through districts, with 'sculpture, painting, or signs' used to depict residential area being traversed (Appleyard et al., 1964: 54). Within this, the hierarchy of the street became subservient to that of the highway, creating the precinct as an entirely pedestrian realm. According to Appleyard et al;

> Buildings have become isolated objects in space. It is the objects, or clusters of them, which became the remarkable perceptual elements. The space of the streets has swollen and spilled over into the spaces between buildings. In the process, the street space has lost its form, and become a neutral background for the form of the structures. (Appleyard et al., 1964: 48)

The city was reconceived as an open terrain to be experienced as a sequence of plastic moments.

As the overlay in figure 199 shows, the visual field of the road (in blue) provided dynamic views of the site. Approaching Paradise Circus from the south, the Inner Ring Road descended beneath the linear block of the School of Music building which lined the southern edge of the site. To the west, the road passed between the Hall of Memory and Central Library providing glimpses to passing drivers. The ascent from the lower part of the city along New Street, towards the Town Hall and arriving at the monumental loggia-like building of the library (in red) was theatrical in its intent, humanising the experience of the city whilst engaging in the wider register of regional mobility and international communications. Beneath the raised mass of the library set on deep columns with a square oculus over the central court, the public were encouraged to dwell and to access the collection for their own self-improvement. Madin's sketch (figure 200) communicates this powerful gesture.

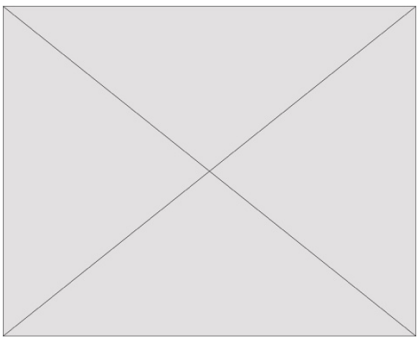

Figure 200: John Madin's sketch of the raised mass of Central Library from a copy of J. R. Sheridan-Shedden's 'Civic Centre Development' Report in the Paradise Circus project file, 1965. Source: MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014.

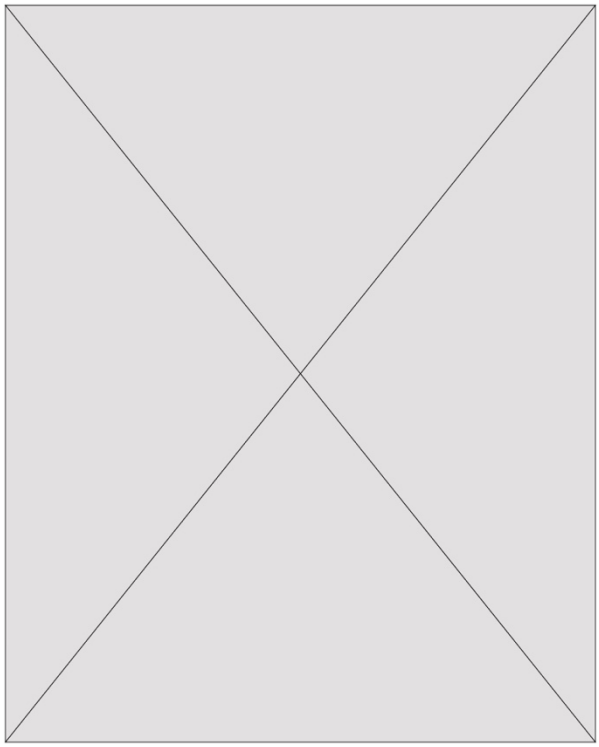

Figure 201: The stepped profile of Le Corbusier's La Tourette, as depicted in Colin Rowe's essay of 1961.
Source: The Architectural Review (Rowe, 1961: 400)

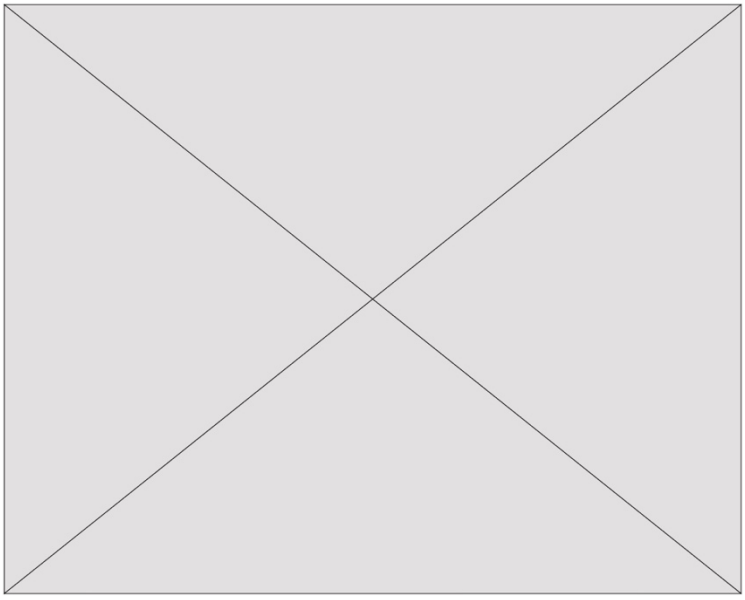

Figure 202: Lower ground floor plan of Le Corbusier's La Tourette, as depicted in Colin Rowe's essay of 1961.
Source: The Architectural Review (Rowe, 1961: 409)

Madin's scheme for Paradise Circus embraced not only these new conditions but implicitly recalled the inherent traditions of the setting in the temple-like library building. The architecture of the complex mediated between the infrastructural ground of the ring road, and an orientation towards nature that looked beyond superficial visual ideas of Cullen et

al's picturesque. Madin's explicit reference to Le Corbusier's La Tourette (1953, figures 201 and 202), Denys Lasdun's[66] Royal College of Physicians, and Leslie Martin's[67] library complex at St. Cross, Oxford, together with his encounter with the architecture of Rudolph, Kahn and SOM at New Haven provide grounds for his material and spatial response. Paradise Circus not only built in the implicit institutional order of Birmingham, grounded in the contingent civic and commercial basis of its foundation and growth, but also represented the explicit manifestation of the institution not as a fixed, closed body but as an open structure that corresponded with the needs of its constituency.

Madin's Central Library referenced La Tourette in its material expression, arrangement, and topographic relationship. According to Rowe (1961: 401), La Tourette embodied certain patterns of organisation in line with Le Corbusier's preoccupation with the Athenian Acropolis as discussed in *Vers Une Architecture*; 'a compounding of frontal and three-quarters views, an impacting of axial directions, a tension between longitudinal and transverse movements, above all an intersection of an architectonic by a topographical experience'. Just as Hansom and Welch had oriented the Town Hall to present a three-quarters view at the ascent of New Street, Madin's library extended this order presenting the temple-like library in the same orientation at the culmination of the *promenade architecturale* from New Street. The programme of La Tourette was organised around a quadrilateral with garden, the *hortus contemplationis* as a place of reflection depicting the cosmological order with the sky as its ceiling. The open structure of Central Library similarly provided a place for reflection though on secular terms, with shallow pools and sunken gardens providing opportunities for respite in the city. The side chapel of La Tourette was one of several sculptural outliers to the main building, articulating the relationship with the landscape. In Lasdun's building, this sculptural volume was enlarged in the 'organic' form of the brick-clad lecture theatre, seen also in Madin's library in the entrance and children's library. This lower block reached out from the main building to form a pavilion to Chamberlain Square, while the main body of the collection was expressed as an introverted volume protecting the books within and providing a focus to the study spaces.

[66] Lasdun's work for Lubetkin at the Hallfield Estate in Paddington was known to Le Corbusier, who featured it in his slides at the CIAM 7 Conference in Bergamo in 1949, which became known as the 'Grid Congress'. Lasdun's notes from the event were scribed on a copy of Le Corbusier's diagrams for the organisation of green spaces as part of his signed Le Corbusier himself.
[67] Martin similarly participated in international dialogue, both through his practice and as editor of the journal *Circle* including contributions by Le Corbusier and the work of CIAM.

Figure 203: view towards the north facade of the Town Hall, with the colonnade to the library shown in the foreground with the Chamberlain Memorial beyond and visuals for the then planned ‘Paradise’ development, photographed 2014. Source: author

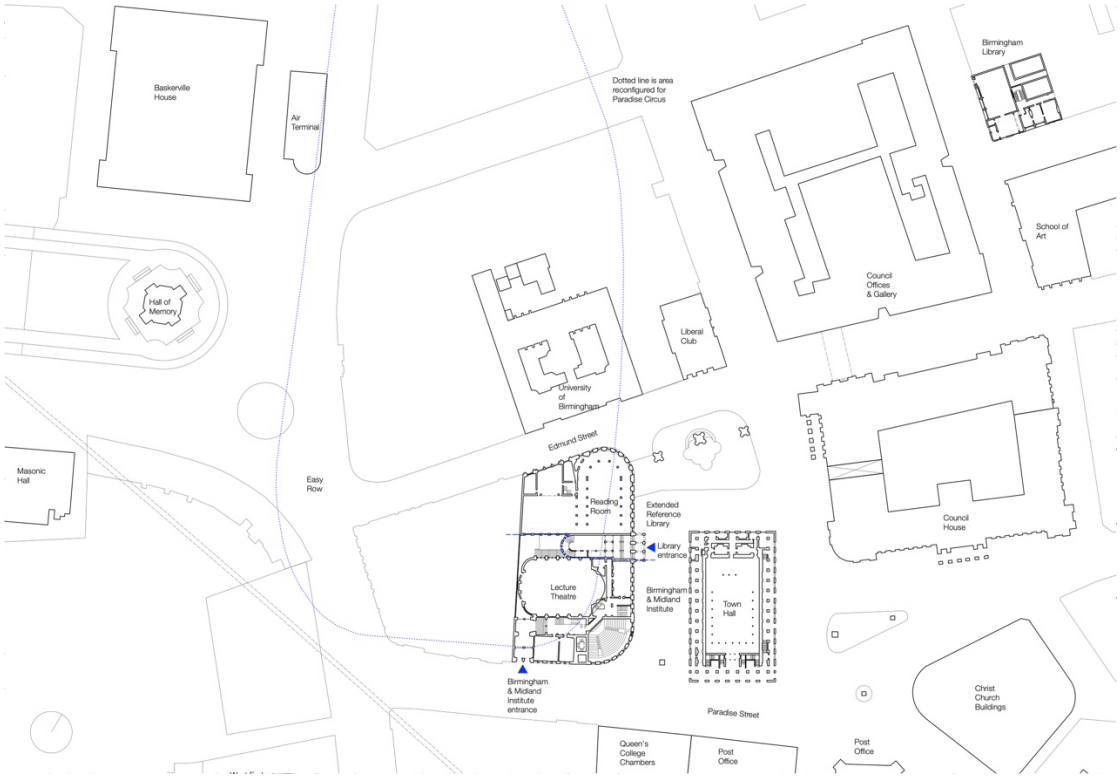

Figure 204: Drawing 009: 1955 of the civic buildings at Paradise Street, with outline of projected area for Paradise Circus. Source: author

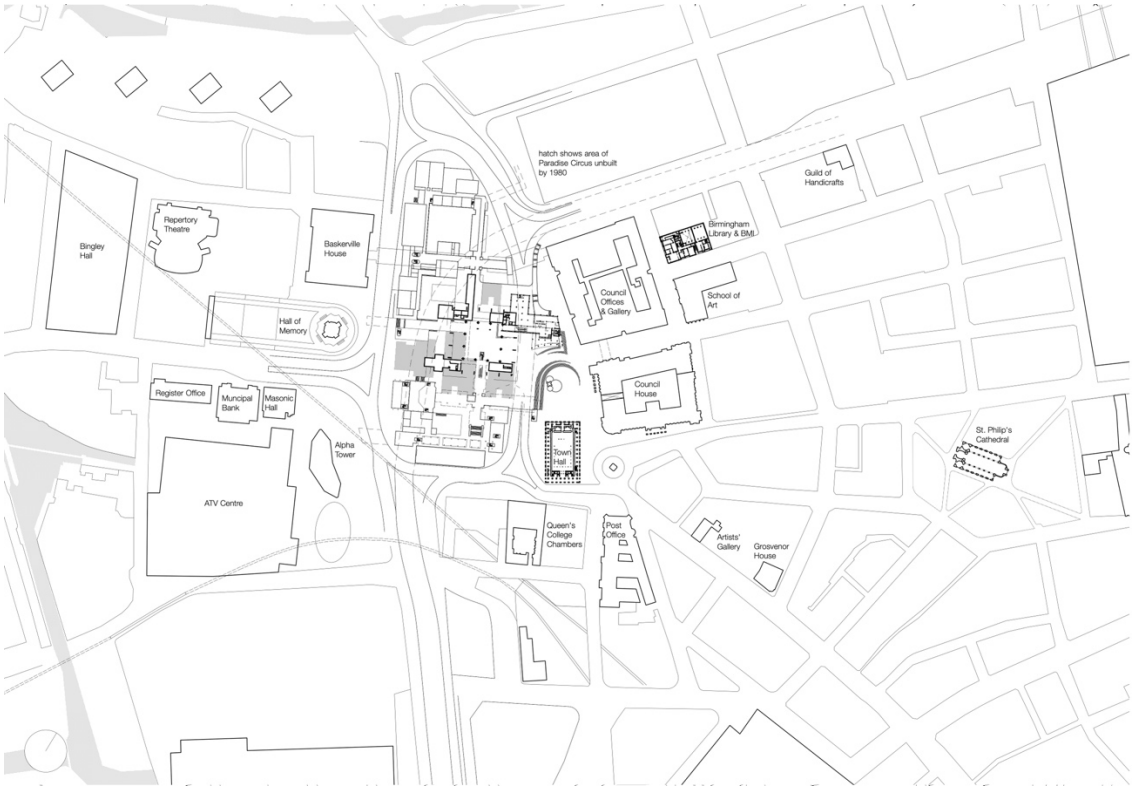

Figure 205: Projected plan for Paradise Circus with Central Library at its core. Source: author

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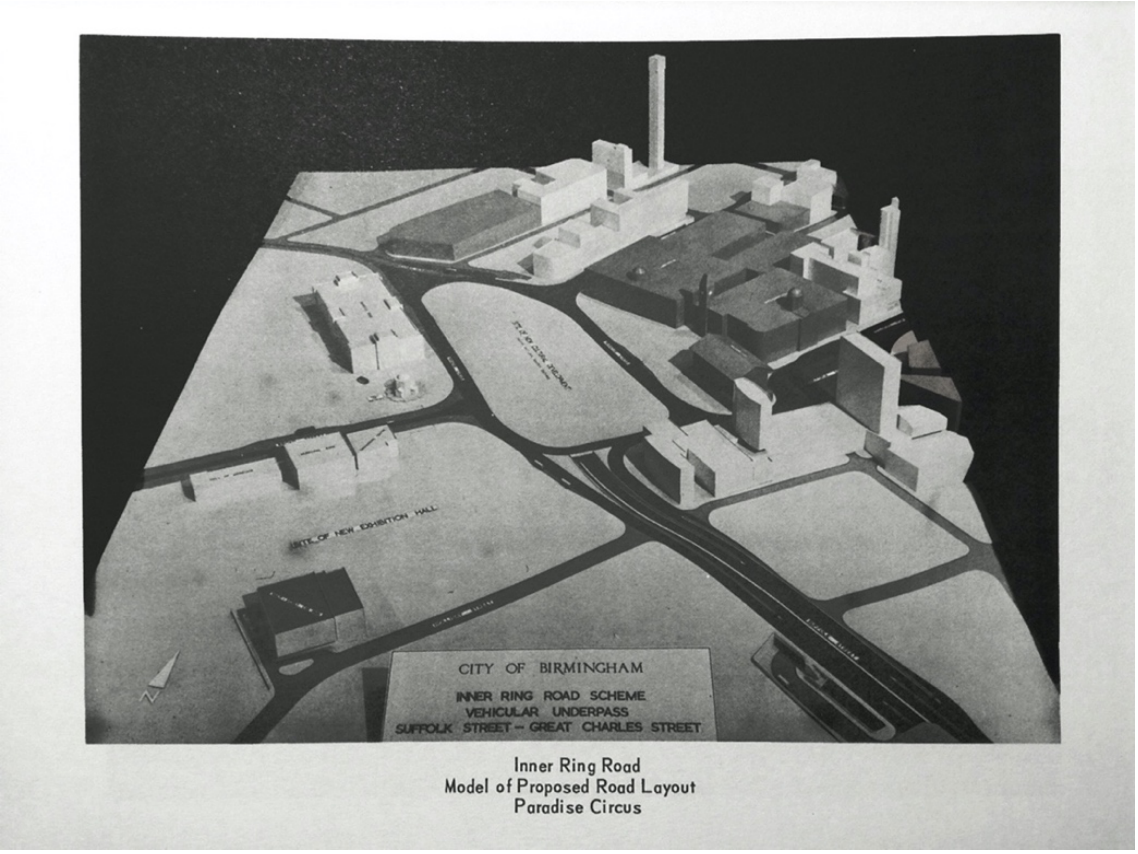

Figure 206: Model of proposed road layout, with ‘site of new cultural development’ marked on central island site. Source: (Borg, 1965)

Figure 207: Abstracted structural grid of Central Library. Source: author

As at La Tourette, Central Library employed a vertical articulation of structural and façade elements with a high centre of gravity which reinforced the relationship between the distant horizon of the landscape and the attenuated volume of the building, leading the eye upwards. In Birmingham, that horizon was inferred since the city had grown up around the site, recalling its paradisiacal origins. The library therefore transformed the field of experience at multiple registers.

Paradise Circus, with the library at its centre, provided the ground for dialogue between the implicit and explicit institutions of the city (figure 204). Although its European and American references were manifest, the arrangement attempted to address the continuities of the city. The totalising context of the Inner Ring Road reordered the city, with the road as a dividing boundary between centre and periphery rather than a uniting border. Madin's conception of a collective form of distinct parts with the library at its centre responded to that dynamic context but also mediated on the incomplete nature of the city.

As a formal response to the various challenging needs of the brief and context, the library made new ground to accommodate the effectively subterranean functions of the (never used) bus interchange and gyratory of the ring road. According to Frampton's (1999: 20) definition, Paradise Circus might be described as a 'megaform' with the following characteristics:

1. A large form extending horizontally rather than vertically;
2. A complex form which, unlike the megastructure, is not necessarily articulated into a series of structural and mechanical subsets as we find for example in the Centre Pompidou [as well as Price's scheme for BMI/HQ];
3. A form capable of inflecting the existing urban landscape as found because of its strong topographical character;
4. A form that is not freestanding but rather insinuates itself as a continuation of the surrounding topography;
5. A form that is oriented towards a densification of the urban fabric.

The complex was certainly extensive in its horizontal reach, traversing several layers of the city. This was particularly prominent at the point that the ring road was stacked over two levels with the library over, resulting in the exaggerated ascent to the court and reflection back on the Town Hall, as seen in figure 205. The library was the most pronounced part of Paradise Circus, its temple-like form echoing that of the Town Hall, continuing the progression from New Street, and acting as a visual marker to the west.

Figure 208: One of the castellated structures designed to allow for the future expansion of Paradise Circus, photographed in 2014. Source: author

The complex was intended as an intensely civic place, gathering the library together with the Birmingham and Midland Institute, the School of Music which by then had passed to the City, along with other civic functions.

The notion of the city as a work in a constant state of change was also anticipated in the architectural form. The decision to demolish the Victorian buildings of Paradise Street and Ratcliff Place was not taken by Madin but rather imposed by the technical requirements of Manzoni's ring road which was too crude to deal with the intensive conditions of the place (figure 206). The challenge for Madin was to assert a new order without limiting future possibilities. The rhythmic articulation of the structure provided an open framework for civic participation (figure 207), the surrounding castellated structures (figure 208) intended for future expansion, supporting bridges and entrances to later additions. This notion of temporal change, articulated by Carl (1994: 20) through recovery of the latent term *renovatio*, counters the teleological act of extensive urban renewal in favour of the intensive continuity of the city. Just as the Town Hall, Birmingham and Midland Institute and Free Reference Library underwent necessarily incremental changes in form and function, Madin's proposal recognised both that Paradise Circus was unlikely to be built in a single phase, and significantly that the buildings and institutions therein should embody the capacity for change. Temple (2017: 240) associates the open-endedness of the unfinished buildings of the Renaissance with that of the multiplicity and plurality of modernity, challenging the temporal autonomy of the architectural project. In his intentionally incomplete scheme for Paradise Circus, Madin interpreted the historical urban and cultural continuity of the place and recognised the range of possible futures through an open architecture. Ultimately, his civic commitment was not equalled or understood by those in charge of political and economic affairs of the city, at first leading to a dismissal of the architectural and urban basis for Paradise Circus in a series of botched attempts to complete the complex including the loss of the Birmingham and Midland Institute from the combined programme, followed later by a complete rejection of the principles in attempts to gain commercial support for the redevelopment of the site. The misappropriation of the ground in which Paradise Circus and the library was located placed the whole site into stasis, literally and metaphorically displacing the tradition of the situation founded on dialogue, contingency and continuity.

The progressive tendencies of British planning, particularly after the Second World War and the financial opportunities and imperatives for 'reconstruction', saw widespread reordering of historic urban centres often through infrastructure planning. Mumford (1964: 8) warned of the 'disastrous American experience with mono-transportation by automobile, which has already gutted out the interiors of our great cities', directly criticising British planners and politicians

for not learning from their mistakes. Mumford's conclusion challenged the progressive nature of such novel planning, stating that;

> For most Americans, progress means accepting what is new because it is new, and discarding what is old because it is old. This may be good for rapid turnover in business, but it is bad for continuity and stability in life. Progress, in an organic sense, should be cumulative. (Mumford, 1964: 177)

As a counter to unabated progress, Paradise Circus made ground for civic life, acknowledging the traditions as well as the expanding territory of the city embodied in the ring road. As Vesely notes;

> even the most abstract technological structures are in the end visible, serve a particular purpose, and have a latent meaning. We appreciate and are aware of the beauty of incomprehensible or enigmatic structures in aesthetic experience. (Vesely, 2004: 249)

Madin's creativity in addressing both the civic and technical aspects of the site contributed to the life of the city, embracing the conditions and in doing so placing Birmingham at the vanguard of architectural and urban practice. As a contrast to the ultimate efficiency of the ring road (now undergoing a process of being dismantled as the idea of the city as a place of efficient movement has been discredited on environmental grounds), the site offered the potential for the reconciliation of differences between society, the environment and technology and resistant to the autonomy of modernist architecture. As Vesely (2004: 7) stated, 'we will find no answer in a naïve belief that the difficulty [of reconciling the inventions and achievements of modern technology, which have already established their autonomy, with the conditions of human life, our inherited culture, and the natural world] can be resolved by subordinating all knowledge and different ways of making to instrumental rationality and technology'. Madin's intentionally incomplete work provided the contingency for other possible outcomes and the opportunity for reflection on the past, present, and future of Birmingham.

5.3 The Archive as Site of Reflection

> RQ3 To what extent does the close study of archives and the making of drawings reveal and contribute to new understandings of the city, and how might such practices be extended at different registers and in different places without resorting to the process as method?

The study of the city and archives, and the making of drawings at a variety of temporal and territorial registers has framed the hermeneutic approach of this thesis and help establish the boundaries to the study. Together, these aspects offer new insights on the city, contributing depth to the understanding of what it means to be civic in the post-Enlightenment city. Initially unencumbered by wealth in natural resources, religious patronage, or political might, the study of places like Birmingham cannot rely solely on the concrete conditions of the city to bear witness to its past since such civic buildings were either not constructed, or they have been lost to the forces of progress. The archive, therefore, bears witness to a lost past or imagined future.

The formation and fusion of horizons in reaching an understanding of institutional order, mediates between the fragment, as a particular condition of place, and the field as a typicality. Carl (2006: 23) contends that fragmentary readings are 'manifestations of difference' but that once a dimension of commonality is reached they can be seen as a 'contested region' or field. Such fragments provide the conditions for understanding, facilitating the move from an extensive view of the city to an intensive and particular reading of the situation and its tradition.

The opening inquiry into the civic nature of Birmingham came through observation on the passing and dislocation of the last great civic enterprise at Paradise Circus, and its replacement with commercial ventures for the first time in the city's history. At the same moment, the initially lauded and subsequently much criticised ring road remains largely intact, sections having been flattened and renamed (for example, Moor Street is now a 'boulevard') in an attempt to suggest yet another imported model of the city. At Paradise Circus, the fragment and field were conceived as a unified entity, though as witnessed the temporal dimension of infrastructure that is 'susceptible to sudden escalations in scale' (Carl, 1994: 20), often outlasts that of the architectural due to the work required in its making, remediation or replacement. The resultant landscape is one of unforeseen particularity where earlier practices are ossified, or systematically destroyed, as part of a wider field.

As discussed in this thesis, the rate and scale of transformation of the centre of Birmingham was greater than most other British cities of similar size, looking first to European and later

American models of urban form and architecture. Since the city itself can no longer be called upon as sole manifestation of continuity, the gaining of an 'historically effected consciousness' (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) and priority of the question necessarily requires greater inquiry onto those conditions including references beyond the tangible. This has been the true value of the archive, in making and remaking the ground of the city and a sense of what made Birmingham civic. The recovery of a collective dimension, beyond the observed conditions of the twentieth century dependent on technical infrastructure, has been the main concern of this research.

The temporal register of the project offered a point of entry for the consideration of civic ground, providing insights into the worldly and bodily registers according to Leatherbarrow's triptych (2021: 12). Not only does the project 'call to attention its horizon', articulating concrete conditions of 'difficulty' present in the site, it provides insights into the topical nature of the situation, dependent on the given circumstances as well as its 'inherent priorities and traditions' (Carl, 1994: 25). This relates equally to the built project in the city as to the projective project of the unbuilt to which the archive bears witness. The manifest projects of various institutions gave orientation to the city on questions of industry, trade, government, property, culture and living. Some of those explicit institutions remain part of the city, Madin's Central Library offering the opening reflection on civic ground of an unconventional nature. In the duration of this research, the building and wider Paradise Circus was demolished (at least, from ground level upwards). What began as an interaction with the concrete conditions of site, documented through various photographic studies contained within this study, necessarily moved to other forms of reflection through archival documentation and interpretation through drawing. These changing conditions reinforced the historical significance of the moment, the temporal distance between the present and the past acquiring a new relevance and urgency.

The interplay between the city and the archive seeks not to reconstruct conditions, but to situate meaning within tradition. The importance of temporal distance in the hermeneutic experience is summed up by Gadamer thus;

> Time is no longer primarily a gulf to be bridged because it separates; it is actually the supportive ground of the course of events in which the present it rooted. Hence temporal distance is not something that must be overcome. This was, rather, the naïve assumption of historicism, namely that we must transpose ourselves into the spirit of the age, think with its ideas and its thoughts, not with our own, and thus advance towards historical objectivity. In fact the important thing is to recognise temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding. (Gadamer, 1975: 308)

The representation of that temporal distance and the movement between key moments of the study (around which the core subchapters are arranged), was through drawings of the intensive conditions of site. Whilst these drawings contribute a new understanding of the order of the city first gained through observations and in the depths of archival holdings, they are not intended as closed compositions but as an open dialogue that gathers the territorial and temporal dimensions. Each drawing represents an incomplete condition, revealing prejudices in the process of reaching understanding. For example, the question of freedom in Birmingham might be viewed as being limited during the twentieth century through central government intervention and restriction as much as it was during periods of radical regicide during the unrest of the late eighteenth century. The first Birmingham Library provided a common ground of difference, now latent in its current disposition within the Birmingham and Midland Institute, seen also in the iteration of the public library at Paradise Circus which promoted the freedom to gain access to education and knowledge through an open architecture. Similarly, between the intensive register of the street and extensive register of the highway lies continuity in the understanding of landscape, of the city as edification of the garden seen most prominently at Paradise Circus.

The creative act of drawing brought together a variety of fragments, from contemporary digital information, recreations of site surveys, tracings of archival records including maps and architectural plans and sections. The allocation of a unique reference to each building (and landscape, sculpture, street) and iteration thereof allows for a dynamic reordering of the temporal depth in the digital domain, with new opportunities for interpretation. This was particularly fruitful in comparing contemporary representations of the city with the then concrete conditions, most evident in the competition and construction of the Town Hall and the inhabitation of the city during protests leading up to the Reform Act. The counterpart *Mapping of Institutional Continuity* (figure 209) prompted further interpretation of temporal distance, foregrounding new associations between creative, intellectual, political, and religious locations, events, groups, and individuals. For instance, the consideration of Paradise Circus as a temple-like building that gathers in the surrounding landscape resonates with the much earlier Romantic tradition of the city as well as through interpretation of the American tradition, itself referencing that of the English.

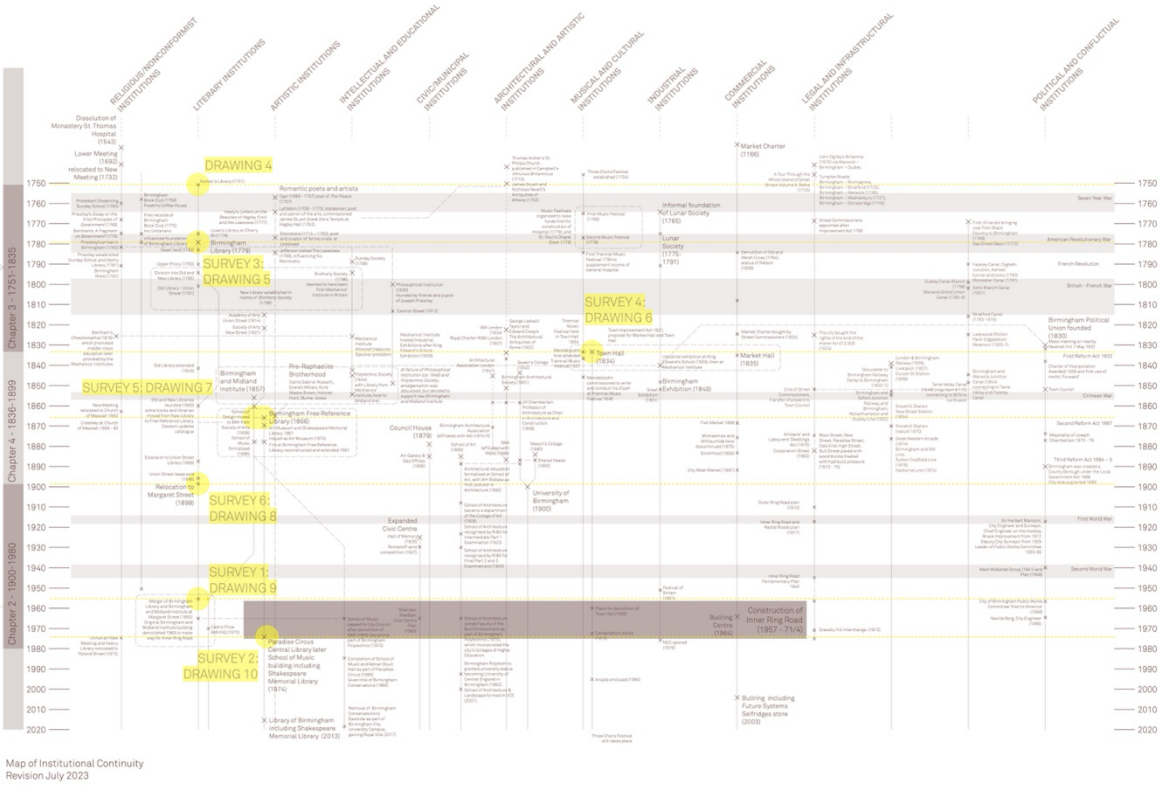

Figure 209: *Mapping of Institutional Continuity*. Source: author

Figure 210: Conglomerate drawing of all institutions considered in the thesis without the underlying structure of streets and roads. This is not to suggest that streets do not form part of that institutional order but that the architectural manifestation provides ground for ethical reflection. Source: author

This is not to overstate the claim that Birmingham was at the epicentre of such movements or ideas but to demonstrate that through time the city and its inhabitants have been part of a rich dialogue on what it means to be civic in the post-Enlightenment and post-industrial city, and how architecture and urban topography manifest that tradition as witnessed in the conglomerate drawing of institutions in figure 210.

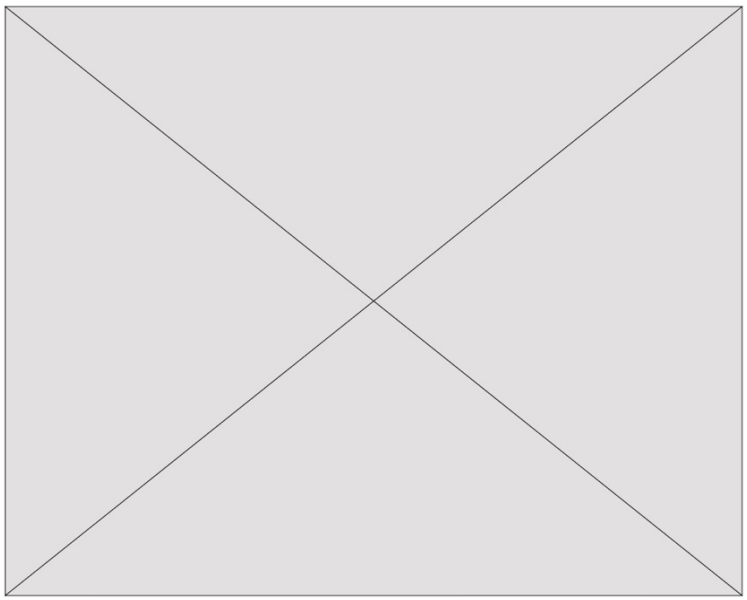

Figure 211: The proposed scheme for the office block and hotel scheme to Paradise Circus by Leonard J Multon & Partners as published in Building July 1983.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

6.1 Postscript to Paradise Circus

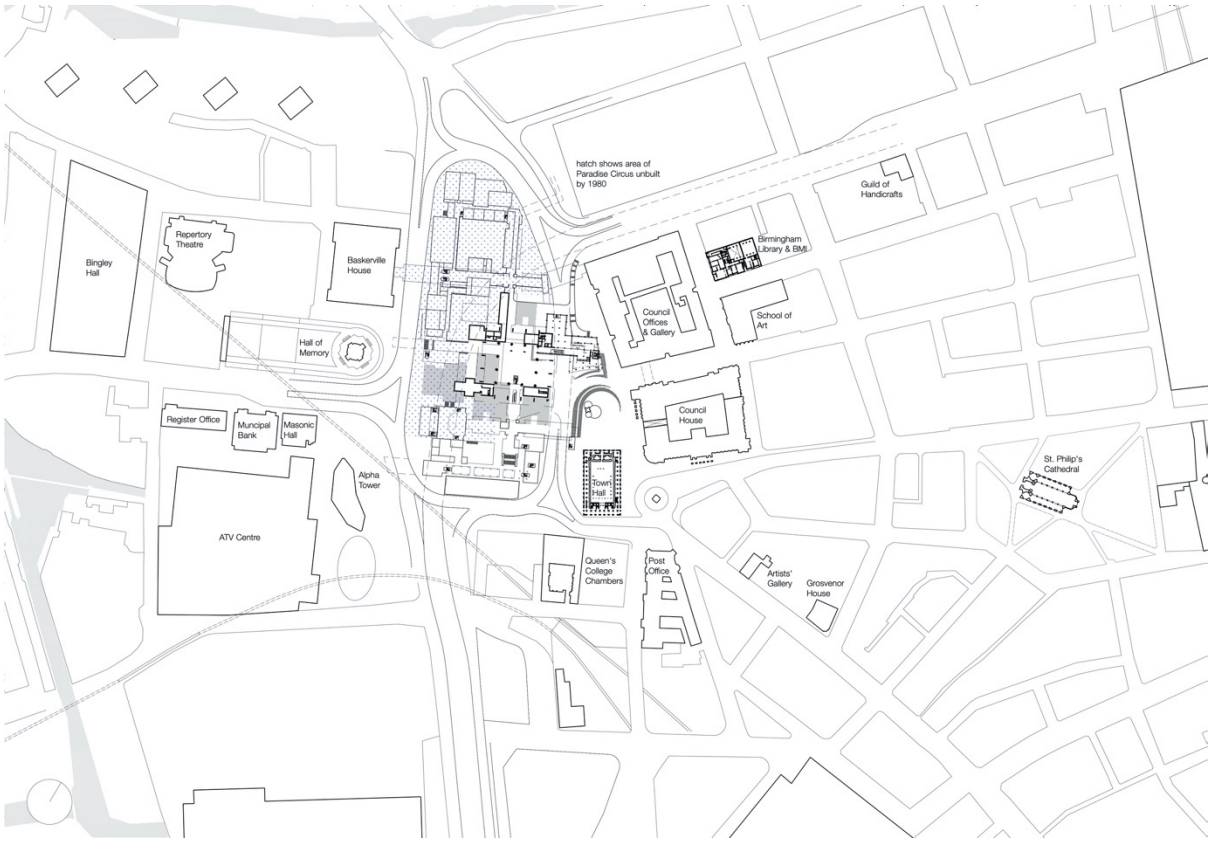

Figure 212: The extent of Paradise Circus constructed by 1980, according to a survey by the City of Birmingham. The hatched area was built in subsequent phases though not in accordance with Madin's principles. Source: author

John Madin's practice completed their work for the main programmatic elements of Paradise Circus with the opening of School of Music and Adrian Boult Hall, though much remained incomplete (figure 212), and the open order of the complex was compromised by a series of buildings by other architects. Leonard J Multon's proposal (figure 211) for two linear blocks broke with Madin's pattern of walkways and precincts, creating a spatial and programmatic division between the two parts of the civic centre.

Figure 213: Water garden to the north of Central Library, taken in 2014. Source: author

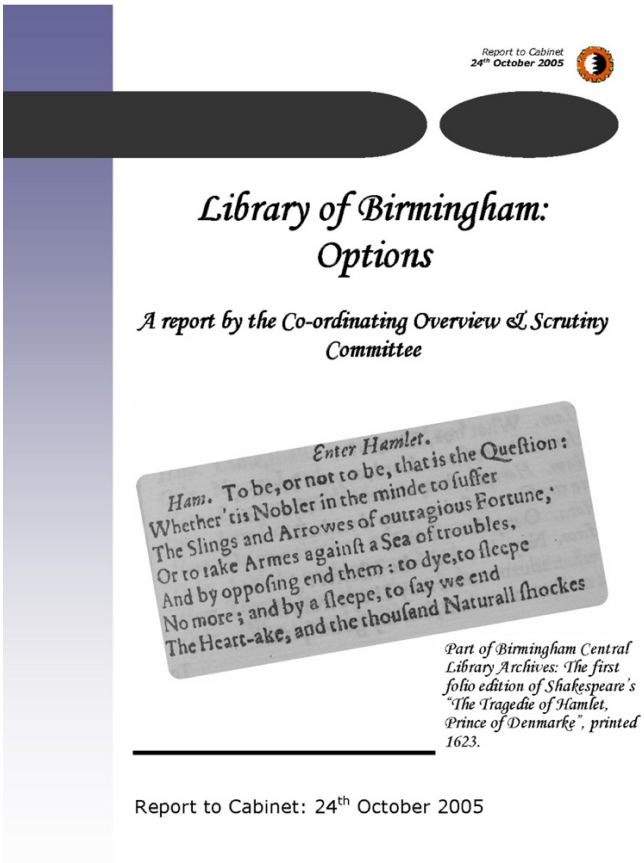

Figure 214: Cover to Birmingham City Council options study for the Library of Birmingham, 24th October 2005.

As Clawley (2015: 19) notes, the economies taken in material specification and subsequent maintenance of Central Library led to the failure of some of the pre-cast concrete cladding panels. As noted in chapter 2 and depicted in figure 213, the courts and reflection pools remained partially complete, and in 1987 the central court was enclosed by a glazed roof and inhabited by fast-food and retail concessions, with the loss of the civic ground at the centre. As seen in other places across the city, civic ground was replaced by commercial interests. Years of uncertainty and underinvestment followed.

According to a report outlining the options for library services in the city (2005: , figure 214), the project to improve library provision began in 1999 after the condition of Central Library was deemed to have deteriorated beyond economic repair, a fact that was strongly contested by supporters of Madin's building. In 2002, the Council commissioned Richard Rogers for a new library building at the centre of the Eastside regeneration area, as part of a bid for European Capital of Culture in 2008. That bid was ultimately unsuccessful but set in motion the project for a new library. Various options followed including refurbishment of the existing library, and a two-site proposal, splitting lending services in a new building on Centenary Square from an archive and history centre in Eastside. Ultimately, the single site option was progressed, with Mecanoo appointed as architect following an international competition in 2008. This did not include Paradise Circus.

Attempts to have Central Library listed failed in 2003 and again in 2009 despite English Heritage support. A campaign by Friends of Central Library to save the building lasted beyond its closure and the opening of Mecanoo's Library of Birmingham (2013) between the Repertory Theatre and Baskerville House. Meanwhile, Glenn Howells Architects lodged their planning application on behalf of the developer Argent in 2012, receiving approval for the £450m project as a joint venture between the City Council and the British Telecom Pension Scheme.

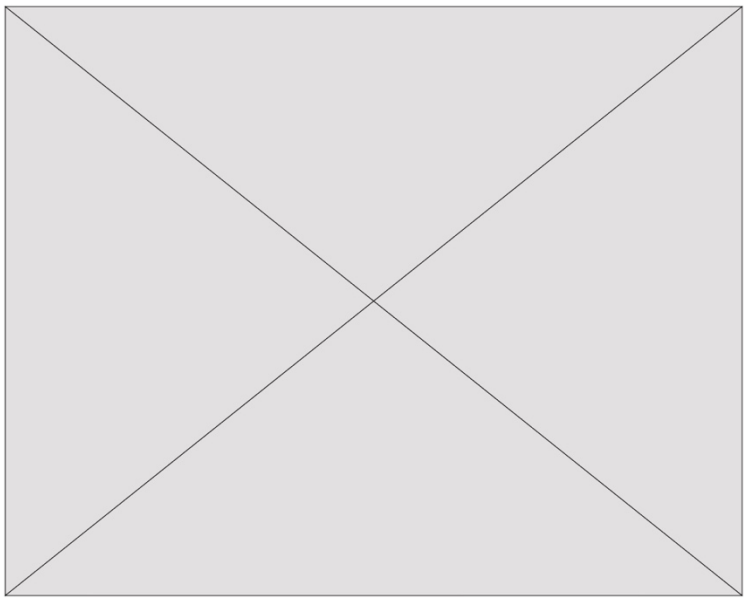

Figure 215: Drawing by Assemble of the meanwhile use of John Madin’s Central Library as part of the Birmingham Charrette, 2013. Source: (Edgerley et al., 2013b)

A design charrette coordinated by the Architects' Journal in 2013 invited six architectural practices[68] to reflect upon the approved illustrative masterplan. There are aspects of the briefing that reveal the superficial, technologically informed basis of the masterplan exercise. The opening statement by Glenn Howells Architects outlined broad objectives for the masterplan for Paradise Circus which would 'restore views of important buildings, improving pedestrian connectivity, simplifying traffic and reinstating parts of the historic urban fabric with streets and public squares' (Bansal, 2013). No reference was made about the dispersal or abandonment of civic purpose or programme, largely since those decisions had been made by the City Council in the years prior. However, the final line of the briefing statement firmly reneges on the civic commitment of Paradise Circus in favour of economic and neoliberal policies; 'these changes should support planned growth beyond Paradise Circus, and ultimately Birmingham's competitiveness at both a national and international level' (Bansal, 2013). Similarly, a statement by the leader of the Council Sir Albert Bore (2013) posed the challenge to the invited architects of 'how you fuse the modern with the old and make this scheme uniquely Birmingham, but at the same time of international standing.' That the two were presented as mutually exclusive points to the lack of understanding of the institutional order of the present buildings. The Architects' Journal brief made reference to the city's history of inventive engineering, drawing a loose analogy with automotive 'designs that used what was already there, what was available, but reorganised them in new ways to make something new, something fresh' (Olcayto, 2013).

The architects' responses were varied in their approach to the existing buildings and proposed masterplan, some preferring meanwhile uses for Central Library as seen in figure 215 (Edgerley et al., 2013a), others drawing on the classical order of the Town Hall to structure a series of new colonnades through the site (Smith et al., 2013), or new squares and courts (Priest et al., 2013). However, the explicit and implicit institutional order of the city was largely absent from dialogue. Additionally, there was little public debate about the ways in which the profession and clients ought to address climate change, or ideas around heritage through retention and adaptation of existing buildings. Rather, the charrette reveals more about the lack of civic commitment by the City Council, the limited agency of architects within this, and superficial understanding of the role of architectural history in questions of design and the recovery of latent traditions (Parcell, 1993: 249).

The demolition of Paradise Circus first announced in 2014 eventually began in 2016 just prior to the expiry of the Certificate of Immunity for listing, ending the explicitly civic nature of

[68] The practices were Assemble, FFLO, Smith & Taylor, BPN Architects, Matheson Whiteley, and Sandy Rendel Architects. Only BPN were from Birmingham.

the site that had begun the century prior, but that had long been evident in the implicit institutional order of the city. The subsequent development has seen the creation of commercial office space, with Eric Parry's One Chamberlain Square indirectly citing earlier European Beaux-Arts traditions that influenced Birmingham's first scheme for the Inner Ring Road as well as the informal and picturesque nature of the Gothic plan for the 'filling in of the city' as advocated by Birmingham Arts & Crafts architect W. H. Bidlake (Muirhead, 1911: 584). The institutional order of Paradise Circus that engaged in the conditions of the road disclosed society to the real and pressing needs at that moment related to freedom of movement and emancipation of knowledge, bringing into play the civic and technological through carefully articulated, if not always complete, architectural works. Rather than building upon the continuities and *praxis* of the city as a fusion of horizons, the latest iteration denies a world enframed by technology and its implicit civic ground, referring instead to generic, historicist ideas of the global city.

6.2 The Original Contribution to Knowledge

The original contribution of the research is three-fold. First, the thesis builds upon the wealth of published material on the city, contributing new insights into the architectural and topographical order at a variety of registers. As valuable as these existing resources are, most deal with the 'extensive' conditions of the city, focussed on issues of planning, politics, religion, industry, or society. Conceptual generalisations tend to objectify the city, obfuscating the opportunities presented by a deeper engagement in the 'intensive' architectural order and urban topography of a place. This thesis calls on a diverse range of material from the fields of politics, philosophy, religion, and geography, and the disciplines of architecture, landscape, engineering, and art, framing the vertical 'ontological movement' across orders and horizonal depth through the analogical field of institutional structures. This provides the possibility for ethical reflection on varying aspects of freedom and civic participation, manifest in works of architecture.

Second, the archival research has been extensive, underpinning the critical, interpretive aspects of the work. Much of this archival material has been brought together in a coherent manner for the first time, some of it unstudied or previously unseen as in the case of the John Madin archive. Reading the histories of the city's institutions via archives and the city together in time brings to light new understandings of the order of the city and the role such institutions played in the mediation of civic life. This not only has implications for the ways in which the history of the city is discussed, presented, and shared but also in the ways it is conceived in the future beyond the contradictory nature of commercial and civic interests. The architectural and topographical manifestation of institutional praxis explored throughout

the thesis raises important questions about the temporal and contingent nature of the city, the ways in which institutions mediate order and change, the role of technology in civic life, and the ethical interpretation of conditions common-to-all.

Third, the approach to the construction of the critical position and argument has involved the creation of new drawings at a variety of registers from the building to the highway (figure 3 and Volume 2), contributing to the gaining of a temporal horizon, described by Leatherbarrow thus;

> Every built work, and by that I mean every room, building, garden, and urban setting, has a stratified temporal horizon, from which it obtains definition and in which it renews itself. (Leatherbarrow, 2021: 10)

These works have structured and illustrated the research, placing the work in the concrete conditions of the city, not as fixed entities but as representations of the contingent nature city. These bring together built, lost and imagined works of architecture as a recollection of the city otherwise unavailable. Beyond the representational nature of the drawings at key moments, they reveal the dialogue inherent in various iterations of the institutions in question, beginning with Paradise Circus but extending to preceding and subsequent institutions, identifying their role in moderating civic life whilst embodying the emancipatory dynamics of the civilisations they served. The drawings are vital in expressing the 'world in front of the work' (Parcell, 1993), proposing an alternative to the modernist principle of progress and its counter, heritage, as discussed further in the following section.

6.3 The Role of Hermeneutics in the Study

As a counter to topographical amnesia witnessed in many major yet provincial cities over recent years, hermeneutics calls for more subtle and comprehensive modes of historical and humanistic understanding (Palmer, 1969: 8). The subtlety of the research is in the wide-ranging nature of the work under consideration, including but not limited to works of architecture. For example, Priestley's library catalogue is given the same attention as Manzoni's schemes for technology-driven urban change during the twentieth century. Both are concerned with order with varying concern for the individual or collective and notions of emancipation. The historical reach of the thesis is comprehensive but not historicist, rather associations are sought, placing the works within a set of relationships (Snodgrass and Coyne, 2006: 8). Each are considered on their own terms as well as related to wider discourses on the intellectual and civic life of the city. This ontological dimension, concerned as it is with our very being-in-the-world, offers an often-overlooked humanistic orientation to research on Birmingham and its architecture.

As identified in section 1.2.1, Vesely's (2004: 52) reciprocal unity between topology, orientation, and physiognomy as a sequence of relationships and dependencies offers a way of thinking about architecture beyond abstract notions of space, style or its technological and instrumental nature. This has informed the hermeneutic interpretation of the work, in the reading of archival sources as well as the city itself, enframed in original drawings throughout the thesis. This renewal of the phronesis at play in the work seeks to reveal their interdependence. For example, the association of the topography of Birmingham with that of America can be found throughout the thesis. Jefferson's notion of the edification of the English garden inspired by Lyttleton, Shenstone et al, might be compared to Manzoni's fascination with the automobile and freedom witnessed in his visit to America and (unknowingly to Manzoni) documented in Appleyard, Lynch, and Myer's *The View from the Road.* Similarly, the material culture of the first great civic buildings of the nineteenth century established the republican interests present in the city, the associations with Florence articulated through architectural expression of the Public Library and artistic adornment of civic buildings.

The thesis addresses the contentious issues of progress and conservation placed at either end of the temporal spectrum. Too great a concern for either risks flattening the possibilities of creative interpretation. Temporal distance in hermeneutic experience forms an underpinning principle of the research, 'as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding' (Gadamer, 1975: 308). Given the extent of redevelopment that took place during the twentieth century, the physical and intellectual work required to reveal and reclaim civic ground is great. All too often this leads either to historicist reworkings or further *tabula rasa* in the belief that there is no retrievable middle ground. Throughout the thesis, progress is recast in Wright's (1993: 221) second definition related to civic order, reclaiming ground from positivist notions of perfectibility through technology. This gives greater depth to the city motto 'Forward', often used as a rationale for development at any cost, shorn of its intended ethical dimension. The thesis is therefore concerned with continuity in works of architecture and the ways in which they 'testify to collective human interests, orientation and desires, echoing future possibilities' (Leatherbarrow, 2021: 13). This is represented most clearly in the study of Paradise Circus through its associations with the Romantic traditions of building in the landscape, the ways in which is countered the fixed institutional nature of civic buildings that it replaced, and the material expression, arrangement and topographic relationship of Le Corbusier's La Tourette as well as other mega forms to which it referred. The open nature of Paradise Circus offers insight into the progressive teleological closure of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and the uneven trajectory of its existence.

The gaining of an 'historically effected consciousness' (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) as a way of positioning oneself in the world has been a fundamental part of hermeneutic interpretation. Palmer's (1969: 177) analogy that historical consciousness, and therefore tradition, is 'a stream in which we move and participate in every act of understanding', rather than 'a pile of facts which can be made an object of consciousness', can be seen in the variety of media employed in the interpretive work of the thesis. The 'mapping of institutional continuity' seeks to establish that 'stream'. The use of the archives as a tool of interpretation rather than fixed body of knowledge allows for nuances to be revealed in the evolutionary process of implicit/explicit institutional order, with potentially radical implications for architectural practice and questions of continuity and conservation. The importance of seeing the architectural culture of the city within a much wider horizon counters the tendency to consider the work in isolation - Manzoni's 'museum pieces' - bringing to the fore the contingent nature of the institution and the interrelation between implicit and explicit order. The archive as site of interpretation therefore offers insight into 'the world in front of the work', engaging the normally independent territories of design and history and the recovery of latent traditions (Parcell, 1993: 249). The archive here is not limited to a single collection or asset, rather a network of interdependent sources with scope for ever-widening historical horizons[69]. In this way, the thesis contributes original insights through new associations between archives, as well as presenting previously unseen works and collections, extending dialogue in the hermeneutical circle of question and answer without the dogma of method. The thesis also makes an original contribution to knowledge through the 'drawing series' which enframe diverse readings related to the *praxis* and *poesis* of the city at various moments.

6.4 The Institution and an Architectural Praxis of Contingency

In the earliest institutions of Birmingham, the commercial and civic life of Birmingham were contingent upon one another, an urban expression of the mutual interdependence of science and the arts. In the relatively limited government of the time, commerce, often deemed detrimental to the order of cities today, was a powerful force for enacting civic ground. The order of Birmingham therefore embodied a collective will and belief in progress on civic terms. The sheer range of inventive initiatives wrought from a ground with few natural resources speaks of the tenacity of its inhabitants as well as its topographical setting. The

[69] Working with archives opens up new possibilities of collaboration both within the institution and beyond. A recent visit to the archives of the Architectural Association built upon the revelations of the thesis, in particular the ways in which architectural education and culture were shared between London and Birmingham, and the implications for the latter as it grew and matured. This also has implications for questions on the legacy of empire, for both cities participated in global trade and were involved in resource exploitation and slavery to varying degrees. For Birmingham in particular this is a fundamental issue given the inward migration during the second half of the twentieth century. This has yet to receive sufficient attention in relation to its architecture and topography, though the work of Stuart Hall and the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham sets a great precedent.

explicit financial institutions that were so well developed in Birmingham provided the basis for collective fund raising through subscription, helping to define and manifest its civic ground. Subscription allowed for the cutting of the canals which extended the territory of the town beyond its historically defined boundaries, the founding of the Public Office, as well as the paving of streets which intensified civic life within. It raised funds for the music festival which in turn supported the General Hospital and led to the manifestation of the Town Hall, attending to the physical and intellectual health of citizens. Subscription to Birmingham Library, and the diverse constitution of its committee and book stock represented the dialogue necessary for the fruitful existence of the institution, seen also in the raising of the Birmingham and Midland Institute on terms appropriate to the concrete conditions of the town. Beyond the artistic and technical proficiency of making buildings, harnessing the power of water in the landscape, and establishment of the financial mechanisms to raise the necessary funds, these civic acts represented the desire to move forward collectively. It was also representative of an implicit institutional order that first saw the town flourish under unlikely circumstances away from established centres of influence. That distance was, and remains to be, one of the defining characteristics of Birmingham, provoking ideas of the place as a pioneering frontier, as a republic, and as a model of modernity.

The contingent nature of both the first building of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Paradise Circus is representative of the implicit and explicit institutional order of the situation, an urban corollary of the two cultures of science (industry) and the arts. Each was contingent on the conditions of the city and the agency of the institution itself, manifest in their programme and significantly in their architecture, albeit in radically different ways. The incremental building of the Birmingham and Midland Institute acknowledged the limited funds and refusal to accept government intervention, yet it was built to an overall plan that was largely observed in the subsequent construction of the Free Reference Library. The intentionally incomplete and open framework of Paradise Circus anticipated the requirements of institutions to adapt to changing circumstances and expectations, though unlike Price's scheme for BMI/HQ was not reliant on the technical overlay of the computer-controlled network. The complex proposed both civic and commercial activities that had been so fundamental in the early development of the town. Moreover, Madin's work responded both to the novel conditions of the road, drawing parallels not only with contemporary work in Europe and in America where planning for the private vehicle had been implemented on a much greater scale, but critically with a deeper tradition that understood the ways in which topography influenced civic life over an extended period. The edification of the landscape seen in the estates of Shenstone and Hagley and replicated by Jefferson at Monticello were the forebearers of Madin's temple-like building that drew the

topography of the city together. That the library was unintentionally incomplete due to global financial turmoil and wilful misunderstandings about the required programme led to the degradation of the physical and metaphorical collective ground of Paradise Circus.

The Free Reference Library and the conditions of its time marked a change in orientation and a lapse in the implicit institutional order. Birmingham's wealth, first generated from raw materials and labour and later through innovations in industrial processes and financial institutions, challenged the national hierarchy, opening the city for radical practices. The dogmatic assertion of Joseph Chamberlain's civic gospel, and the escalation of the city's prosperity to the extent that it had the same debt as a small principality and likened itself to an Italian republic, meant that the civic order that had for so long been contingent on the praxis and prospects of the town no longer held authority over other interests, usually commercial, and increasingly from beyond the boundaries of the city. Since its foundation, Birmingham's distance from places of power, initially in its equidistance from Lichfield and Worcester Cathedrals, later is political differences with London, had been a source of great pride and opportunity, manifest in the radical praxis of Birmingham Library and Birmingham and Midland Institute. The bifurcation of civic and commercial life began with the replacement of funds raised by subscription with funds raised by rates/taxes as was the case with the Free Reference Library. Support for institutions was no longer based on a collective ethical or personal moral commitment to the collective good but was a legal duty of all those who paid rates to the Corporation. Initially rejected on principle of government interference in the affairs of Birmingham, the library was procured as a result of organisational directive instead of the will of the people. The library became an emblem of the civic gospel, and the formalisation of institutions under the increasing influence of local government saw further elaboration on the artistic basis of architectural works. The interpretation of Ruskinian Gothic in the buildings of J. H. Chamberlain and Martin was evidence of an increased confidence and agency of the Corporation, and the emergence of an architectural culture particular but not limited to the situation. However, it also saw the hardening of open discourse into institutional norms embodying 'the passage from the benign state of nature [*natura naturata*] to the malign state of society [*natura naturans*]' (Carl, 2015: 11) where the natural conditions common to all entered into 'the process of rigidification' (Voegelin, 2000a: 197).

The loss of intensive historical continuity and the severing of the commercial and civic life of the city opened it up for further expansion, and new ideas based on efficiency of movement and effectiveness of a city image. The artistic aspect of that division remained present into the twentieth century, albeit in a formalised version of the *Beaux Arts* via the model of the Viennese Ringstraße and American *City Beautiful* movement. Its apparent loss according to

the demands for post-war reconstruction, ‘slum’ clearance and renewal, as well as ever greater dependence on central government for financial support and permission to carry out works, meant that commercial aspects often overwhelmed the civic nature of projects, prioritising individual choice over that of a collective order. That the literal and metaphoric ground of Paradise Circus was either unknown, misunderstood, or ignored in the debate which preceded its demolition highlights a deficiency in understanding the orientation of the city towards its topography, the interdependence of the science and arts, and the ontological movement between the implicit and explicit institutional order of Birmingham. Had that been better appreciated, the interventions for renewal of that ground that recognised the contingent continuity of the site might have seen a reanimation of building and landscape for the common good, meeting Gadamer’s (1981: 86) call for ‘the rediscovery of solidarities that could enter into the future society of humanity’.

The implications of temporal dislocation and the implementation of a new order on the city are evident today where incremental change becomes either more difficult to achieve or impossible without major investment and carbon emissions. That is not to say that the tradition of the city is lost but that its recovery requires greater interpretive and physical work. That tends to be the case in the defence of modernist architecture in Birmingham and elsewhere, where dialogue defers to the dogmatic differences of opinion on questions of aesthetics and style, rather than a deeper engagement with the city as shared here. The unfulfilled civic intentions of Paradise Circus at the hands of the real-politic of commercial procurement desired by the council, as well as global shifts in the economy, was in the end the undoing of what might otherwise have been a successful civic enterprise in the broader tradition of Birmingham's progress.

The work also has implications for the nature of institutions more broadly, and questions of conservation both of what is called architectural heritage (a problematic term) and the environment. The need for institutions to contemplate the challenges facing society and to re-evaluate their position in the city, becomes ever more pressing in light of the climate crisis and the inequalities present in the city. Indeed, the very future of the Birmingham and Midland Institute and Birmingham Library lies in the balance as each seeks to renew their civic purpose. The invasive nature of digital technology, in particular online commerce, and the ways in which it structures everyday life also has implications for the institutional order of the city, placing greater emphasis on the ways in which architecture and the topography of the city ought to offer common ground for civic participation. Perhaps the open, contingent architecture of Paradise Circus presented here can still offer insights on how this might be achieved.

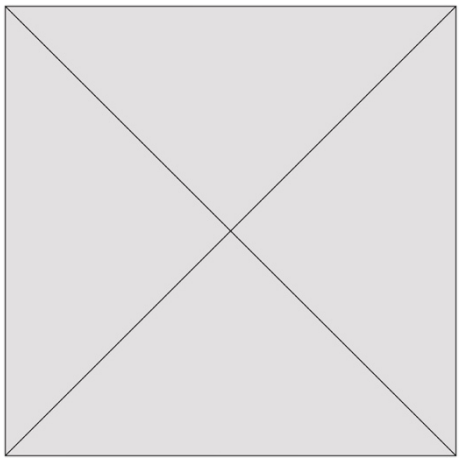

Figure 216: John Madin's sketches from a copy of J. R. Sheridan-Shedden's 'Civic Centre Development' Report in the Paradise Circus project file, 1965. Source: MS 2492_2004_135, accessed 9.01.2014.

Appendices

Appendix A: Research Sources

A1 Primary Archival Sources

A1.1 City of Birmingham Archives

Archives belonging to the City of Birmingham and related bodies provided much of the initial impetus for the research. Birmingham Archives and Collections at the Library of Birmingham includes over 6,000 collections numbering some 60,000 items from the twelfth century onwards (2022a). Of particular note, architectural drawings and documents relating to the first plans for the Town Hall including Charles Edge's plan of 1830 for the intended site on New Street (BCC MS1460/2), E.M. Barry's partially completed scheme of 1855 for Birmingham and Midland Institute on Paradise Street (BCC MS1338/7), and J. H. Chamberlain and Martin's subsequent addition of the Free Reference Library of 1866 (BCC MS1338/7).

Similarly, the slide collection of the Birmingham City Council Urban Design Group (BCC Urban Design 2009/155 Basement 6/1 Box 24 of 51, various) offered insights into the mid-twentieth century revisions to the city through photographs of 'slum' conditions, processes of demolition and reconstruction including many visualisations of the planned civic centre of the 1950s. Substantial records exist of City Corporation business proceedings which offer in depth insights into some of the earliest dialogue of the organisation including that of the powerful Public Works Committee and their Visit to America (Price et al., 1956).

Of the first collections encountered in the research, the uncatalogued archives of John Madin's architectural practice (MS 2492/2004/135) gave insight into the modernist principles and influences of the architect's work at Paradise Circus. Accessing this material first hand in the basement of Madin's now demolished Central Library inspired much of the further exploration and a deeper engagement with the horizons of the thesis.

The working collection of Birmingham City Council's Highways Department also proved fruitful in early research. Notably, the Birmingham Corporation Plans and Sections (Manzoni and Wiltshire, 1945 - 46) for the Inner Ring Road parliamentary submission were made available for inspection, demonstrating the extent to which the city was replanned according to the line of the ring road. Whilst excerpts of this are available in the public domain, the complete set forms a clearer picture on the 'comprehensive' nature of redevelopment, little of which was associated with bomb damage during the second world war. The Department also holds a large microfiche collection that have not been published or made available to

the public, illustrating the various stages of construction of the Inner Ring Road and Paradise Circus through technical drawings.

Of particular relevance to the earliest work in making sense of the various archives through the making of drawings were the surveys, maps and prospects held at the Library of Birmingham, many of which were transposed into the digital layers of the drawing. These were supplemented by secondary sources including Jones' Maps of Birmingham, (1975) and digital map resources dating back to the mid-nineteenth century provided by Historic Digimap (2022c). Volume 2: Illustrations gives a schedule of all such resources used in the preparation of the research and drawings. The transposition and interpretation of that material towards the creation of new drawings is discussed in section 2.3.

A1.2 ..... Birmingham Museums Trust Collections

Birmingham Museums Trust has a large collection of artefacts, documents and works of art across nine sites. The Museum Collection Centre (2022d) houses 80% of the Trust's collection when not on public view. Visits gave insight into City Corporation archives including Sir Herbert Manzoni's Civic Centre Redevelopment Scheme of 1947 (BMT accession number 2000F264.1) together with William Haywood's vast civic centre model of 1948 (BMT accession number 1987 F14). The Trust's Digital Image Resource (2022b) hosts 5,965 collections and has provided substantial resources particularly in eighteenth and nineteenth century records of the city including artefacts connected to the city's dissenting places of worship (for example, BMT accession number 1996V148.65 Old Meeting House Birmingham), institutions that lined New Street (for example, BMT accession number 1996V148.135 King Edwards Grammar School Birmingham), and places of industrial activity (for example, BMT accession number 2003.0031.88 Mr Boulton's Manufactory at Soho near Birmingham).

A1.3 ..... Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI) Collection

The collection of BMI consists largely of uncatalogued material associated with the institute's history. Of particular relevance to the thesis were images of the first library building on Union Street and plans for the later building on Paradise Street. The BMI and Birmingham Library merged in 1955, the former moving to the library's premises on Margaret Street in 1965 after the demolition of the original buildings. The library is both a collection and archive and still uses the cataloguing system that Joseph Priestley introduced upon his arrival in 1780. The Duodecimo Catalogue (Birmingham Library, 1779) records the first book stock of Birmingham Library that was so contested in the early years of the institution. There is a collection of important works by Priestley including his Essay on the First Principles of Government (1768), and An Appeal to the Public, on the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham

(1791), as well as many works by major voices of the Enlightenment including Samuel Johnson, Alexis de Tocqueville, Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

A1.4 ..... Birmingham and Five Counties Architectural Association (BFCAA) collection

The BFCAA collection is also held at BMI[70]. BFCAA has a longstanding connection with the city and its architectural and urban culture. Founded as the Birmingham Architectural Society (BAS) in 1851 for the

> 'advancement of Architecture; for encouraging inquiry upon the subject of the said Art and the various Arts and Sciences connected therewith; for the formation of a Library and Museum; for supporting a uniformity and respectability of practice; and for promoting the general interests of the profession' (nd.-b),

the society gave rise to the Birmingham Architectural Association (BAA) in 1874, an amalgamation of BAS and a junior educational society also known as BAA, the latter leading to the formation of the day school of architecture at the School of Art in 1908. It became known as BFCAA in 1933 in recognition of the importance of expanding towns in Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire and it was at this point that the society began the drawing collection to complement an enlarged book collection focussed on the region. It became a trust in 1979 to protect the collection amidst regional reorganisation of the RIBA. The drawing collection now numbers over 900 artefacts, and the library of 738 books focusses on regional issues related to architecture and the city. Together with other archives mentioned above, these formed the basis for the first studies into the early and mid-twentieth century city, in particular holdings relating to Graham Winteringham of ST Walker, architect for the Repertory Theatre, and John Madin, architect of Paradise Circus.

A1.5 ..... National and International Archives

National and international archives have been consulted in the course of the research. The journal and image collection of Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) is a rich resource for articles, drawings, and photography, providing illustrations such as Denys Lasdun's plans and notes for the Royal College of Physicians and his meeting with Le Corbusier respectively. As references cited by the architects of Paradise Circus, these are invaluable sources to locate such works of architecture in a much broader horizon of praxis. Likewise the Media Archive for Central England (MACE) has been a valuable source of historical material in film broadcasts, including When We Build Again (1943) produced by Bournville Village Trust and Strand Film Company to accompany the book of the same name. These

[70] BFCAA collection due to be relocated to BCU ADM Archive in 2022. The digitised collection is available online at http://www.bfcaa.uk/

show the concern for social values in Britain at a time of conflict, that drew on past models of development whilst looking towards a brighter future. Other national and international online collections of note that have been consulted include the V&A, Britain from Above collection of aerial stills by Aerofilms, and Building journal available through The Internet Archive, where books published prior to 1927 are available for online consultation. This includes The Industry of All Nations (1851), the Art Journal Illustrated Catalogue of the Great Exhibition that included so many products from Birmingham manufacturers. Similarly, the Architectural Review provides an in-depth collection of articles available online, particularly fruitful in gaining deeper insight into mid-twentieth century concerns such as Colin Rowe's essay on La Tourette (1961).

Of note amongst international archives, the US-based Library of Congress and Hagley Digital Archives provided context for the transatlantic exchange of practices during the second half of the twentieth century. Of particular note, these collections provided access to the work of Paul Rudolph that was so influential in the planning and material nature of Paradise Circus, as well as that of Robert Moses' highways schemes for Manhattan including the Lower Manhattan Expressway (1959). The Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) began with the acquisition of works related to works made in the country, but has since grown to encompass a global field of study (Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2022). Modernist architects are particularly well represented with works by Erik Gunnar Asplund, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier included in the catalogue (Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2022). During the 1990s contemporary additions were made to the collection including rarely published or discussed works by Cedric Price, discussed in chapter 2 in relation to his unbuilt proposals for the BMI.

A2 Secondary Sources

Together with primary sources, numerous secondary sources have been consulted in the research. Though not without the inherent prejudice of the author or period within which they were written, such traditional histories of the city offer further valuable insight, discussed here.

A2.1 Historical Literature

Numerous sources of historical literature have been referenced in the research. Such contemporaneous texts were particularly fruitful in the historiographical accounts of each chapter. They have been categorised in the following sections, many with related concerns across categories, and whilst this is not a comprehensive account of all resources consulted, it gives insight into the depth of research undertaken.

A2.1.1 .....Economic, including planning theory and practice, and manufacturing

Directories of trade, such as Bisset's magnificent guide, or grand copperplate directory, for the town of Birmingham Directory (Bisset, 1800), available via The Internet Archive, give an insight into the place and practices of the time, with descriptions and illustrations of events and individuals. 'Public buildings' are listed beginning with Anglican and Catholic churches, the 'Eighteen Dissenting Meeting Houses', and concluding with the 'Two Public Libraries', giving some sense of the order of the town. Equally Showell's 'Dictionary of Birmingham' (1885), available via Project Gutenberg, was written as a diverse history and guide including details of manufacturing, town improvements, and cultural institutions.

The following century saw a great deal of publishing as the city established its credentials as a major industrial centre with a culture commensurate with its global position. Haywood's 'The Development of Birmingham' (1918) was the first comprehensive architectural and urban plan for the city which speculated on a new civic order overlaid onto the existing. A preeminent local architect of the time, Haywood's book provided 'A plan for the Central area of Birmingham' and details of 'A Future Municipal Building' for the renewed civic centre, described by Neville Chamberlain in his introduction as Birmingham's 'Whitehall' (Haywood, 1918: 14). This was supplemented with ambitious schemes for an improved New Street Station and new Pleasure Grounds and Zoological Gardens set around Rotten Park (now Edgbaston) Reservoir, and a 'People's Hall' providing 'a complete bathing establishment', cinema theatre, and Rotunda 'for orchestral music' (Haywood, 1918: 27, 29). If Haywood set the agenda for the twentieth century reimagining of the city, Cadbury's industrial settlement at Bournville gained international renown through the Garden City movement most celebrated in Howard's 'Garden Cities of Tomorrow' (1902). As noted earlier, Bournville Village Trust (BVT) were prolific in their own publications most notably in When We Build Again (1941) and Paul Cadbury's 'Birmingham - Fifty years On' (1952). Written during the years of the First World War, the first was 'a study based on research into conditions of living and working in Birmingham' setting out an approach to reconstruction with an aim 'to secure a perfect world' (Research, 1941: vii). This was not simply a case of outward expansion but of improvement of housing conditions along with the protection of the countryside mandated by national control of land use. Whereas BVT's book was driven by data and diagrams based on Otto Neurath's ISOTYPE methods, Cadbury's text was richly illustrated with somewhat fantastical visions of the future city fifty years hence, though with a determination that such predictions would be achievable by 2002 so long as a major war was avoided. The book contains many comparative photographs and illustrations demonstrating previous, present and future conditions as a mark of progress, a technique first seen in Pugin's critical treatise 'Contrasts' (1836). As a member of Birmingham City Council 1941-45, Vice-

Chairman of Cadbury Brothers, and on the board of the West Midlands Group, Cadbury's influence was great, and he advocated for the reorientation of the civic centre around the end of Broad Street, as well as the implementation of the Inner Ring Road.

Along with Sir Herbert Manzoni[71], Professor P. Sargant Florence[72], Sir Hugh Chance[73] and Professor L. Dudley Stamp[74] amongst others, Cadbury's involvement with the West Midlands Group resulted in 'Conurbation – A Survey of Birmingham and the Black Country' (West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction Planning, 1948), a publication which marked the culmination of the groups research in propositions for the region. As set out in a foreword by Lewis Mumford, the study aimed to prioritise human life over the industrial and financial interests that had hitherto driven the growth of the city, briefly illustrated through schemes for rehabilitation of derelict land by Geoffrey Jellicoe, and a model for smallholdings in the rural environment beyond. Similar professionally oriented publications, such as Manzoni's Inner Ring Road (1961) and the Department of Economics Affairs 'West Midlands – A Regional Study', (1965), reinforced the technical aspect of city planning through data and infrastructure and provide insight into the attitude towards the city. Manzoni in particular was interested in novel solutions to traffic problems, proposing the Inner Ring Road as 'not an urban motorway, nor principally a traffic or shopping street' but a 'combination of a highway for pedestrian activities […] and for unrestricted movement of traffic […] allowing for interchange between both functions' (Manzoni, 1961: 267).

Designed to engage a broad population, various Council-sponsored publications by the Birmingham Mail illustrated the mid-twentieth century ambitions for the city. Fronted with an abstract form of a dove recalling Coventry's phoenix, 'The New Birmingham', authored by Alderman Frank Price (circa 1955), provided plans of the 'five new towns' that bordered the city centre. Adopting the rhetoric of the national New Towns Act of 1946 and subsequent programme, the City Council proposed a series of development schemes that would 'bring village greens into the city' and to 'make a clean sweep to a city of the future' (Price, circa 1955: 5). The civic centre is notable for its absence, perhaps since the plans had not yet reached a resolution after Haywood's iteration was dropped in favour of a precinct model. Similarly, 'The New City Centre of Birmingham' (1963) argued the case of the expansion of the centre by the construction of the Inner Ring Road, somewhat ironic in that it was later blamed for restricting the growth of the city. The guide proudly proclaimed the newly

[71] City Engineer and Surveyor, Hon. Surveyor to the Midland Joint Town Planning Advisory Council
[72] Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, University of Birmingham, Consultant to the U.S. National Resources Planning Board, 1940-43
[73] Director of Chance Brothers Ltd., Member of Worcestershire County Council, Member of Oldbury Education Committee, Member of 'Percy' Committee on Technological Education, Chairman of Smethwick Education Committee 1943-45
[74] Chief Advisor on Rural Land Utilisation, Ministry of Agriculture, Director of the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain, Professor of Geography, University of London, Vice-Chairman of the Scott Committee.

completed Ringway Shopping Centre as ‘one of the longest shopping frontages in the country’, a fact that divided professional opinion on the approach to reconstruction along the Inner Ring Road.

The Council also produced numerous documents for public, professional and internal distribution. Most prolific was the Public Works Department, founded as a committee in 1851 to replace the Street Commissioners after the Birmingham Improvement Act. According to City Engineer Neville Borg’s ‘Birmingham Public Works Department’ (1965), by the twentieth century the duties of the department had grown to oversee highways and parking, town planning, architectural and engineering services, redevelopment and industrial research. Macmorran’s ‘Municipal Public Works and Planning in Birmingham’ (1973) provides a detailed account of the administration and achievements of the committee and department, with the Inner Ring Road proclaimed for having ‘contributed so much to the life and well-being of the city’ (Macmorran, 1973: 1). Edwards’ ‘Birmingham Public Works Planning’ (circa 1970) is one of several promotional pamphlets produced both to disseminate the activities of the department and gain advertising revenue from those involved in the works. The City of Birmingham Information Department issued ‘Birmingham’ (circa 1965), to attract visitors to witness the scale and bravado of change unrivalled in any other English city.

A2.1.2 ..... Political and Religious

Surveys and records of events form an important source of research, often representing particular power structures of government or religious bodies. Early surveys of the country for political purposes include Leland’s ‘Itinerary in England and Wales’ (1535 - 1543), available via the Internet Archive. According to Lee (2010: 3), Leland had cultivated the patronage of Wolsey and Cromwell and in 1533 was commissioned by Henry VIII to survey the libraries of monasteries after the end of the Pope’s authority in England. He was therefore attuned to the various conditions of the towns and villages, making manuscripts of his observations and conversations. His itinerary documented ‘the condition of castles, old and new, and of the market towns and cities, with their principle buildings and churches, and great men’s houses’, as well as the kind and proportions of ‘champion ground, i.e. common arable land, enclosed land, meadows, often of waste, and wood; also the chief forests and parks’. (Leland, 1535 - 1543: xxxiv). It remains an important document since many surveyed towns lack an archival depth of this period, including Birmingham due to its relatively marginal status as illustrated in cartographer Christopher Saxton’s map of 1576. Dugdale’s ‘The antiquities of Warwickshire’ (1656) is also an important antiquarian text since it provided much detail on the county that had undergone so much change since the dissolution of the monasteries. Dugdale wished to recover the lost history of the monasteries and charted the

rise and fall of the de Birmingham family at the hands of the Duke of Northumberland[75] and King Edward VI. He gave details of the Priory Hospital of St. Thomas and subsequent land owners, as well as Sir Thomas Holte's Aston Hall. Defoe's A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain Volume II (1725: 228) noted that the order of towns and cities across the country was changing. He observed that towns with newly gained industrial power in places including Birmingham were 'much larger, richer, and more populous, than Rochester, Peterborough, Carlisle, Bath, and even than York itself, and yet these retain but the Name of Towns, nay even of Villages, in some of which the chiefest Magistrate is but a Constable, as in Manchester, for Example.'. Such towns lacked the institutions and connections with nobility of older cities like nearby Worcester and Lichfield, instead offering opportunity.

Such opportunity led to international interest in Birmingham. Schinkel's visit to the town during his technical mission to France, England Scotland and Wales on behalf of the Prussian State was recorded in The English Journey (1826). During a short visit to Birmingham, he witnessed houses, workshops and factories in close proximity, and the efficient Horseley Works in Wednesbury Oaks near Dudley, an important landmark in industrial production of cast iron. Similarly, in his article The Best-Governed City in the World (1890), American journalist and author Julian Ralph documented the progressive nature of city government under Joseph Chamberlain's, and the ways in which the city's institutions embodied the civic values of its inhabitants.

A2.1.3 ..... Cultural including Literature, Education and Architecture

From Protestant publishing during the time of the English Civil War, and William Hutton's first circulating library of 1751, the printed word has affected a cultural sphere in Birmingham, inspiring the first literary institutions. An early entry into the catalogue of Birmingham Library, Dyer's 'The Fleece - A Poem in Four Books' (1757) bore witness to the transformation of Britain's towns as international trade prospered, often at the expense of those enslaved to it. Birmingham was described as a town rising from agricultural ground, associated with global trade where metal products made there found a market in far off places unimaginable to those who crafted them. Priestley's involvement with Birmingham Library as well as the education movement led to ideas of adult learning, formulated in Bentham's Chrestomathia (1816) which inspired further institutions including Birmingham and Midland Institute.

The architectural manifestation for these new institutions was initially modest, housed in domestic interiors or simple buildings. With the increasing propriety of architectural style during the nineteenth century, texts such as Ledwell Taylor and Cresy's 'The Architectural

[75] John Dudley, Earl of Dudley, later Lord L'Isle

Antiquities of Rome' (1822) inspired evermore ambitious schemes for the earliest civic, though not necessarily public, buildings. Hansom and Welch's Town Hall is testament to that influence, Hansom detailing their own process of delivering the building which ultimately left him bankrupted in his A Statement of Facts Relative to the Birmingham Town-Hall (1834).

International perspectives on architecture and urban planning were gained from multiple sources. Transactions of both the RIBA 'International Congress of Architects' (1908) and the 'Town Planning Conference' (1910) featured international participants including Aston Webb, Burnham from the U.S., Stübben and Wagner from Germany, together framing a dialogue on topics concerned with government and municipal architectural works, copyright and ownership of works, and steel and reinforced concrete construction. Stübben's 'Der Städtebau' (1890) was to be influential in garden city planning in the published works of Horsfall's 'The Improvement of the Dwellings and Surroundings of the People: The Example of Germany' (1904) and Nettlefold's 'Practical Housing' (1908). In the post war period of prosperity, Europe looked increasingly to America for influence. Kahn's essay 'Toward a Plan for Midtown Philadelphia' (1953) systematised streets and conceived of an appropriate architecture to meet the challenges of the modern city. Appleyard, Lynch and Mayer's 'View from the Road' (1964) offered an understanding of the city which drew in Cullen's sequential vision applied to the realm of the urban highway and landscape. Jacobs' 'Death and Life of American Cities' (1961) offered a counter to the positivity of the latter, and later wrote about Birmingham's particular conditions of inefficiency in 'The Economy of Cities' (1970). These texts resonate with the conditions of Birmingham in the second half of the twentieth century.

As architect to Paradise Circus in the challenging context of the Inner Ring Road, John Madin travelled extensively in the U.S. and was heavily influenced by what he saw there. A substantial resource relating to Paradise Circus informed the research, largely from the archives of BFCAA. The 'John Madin Design Group Practice Profile' (1968), the 'Design team Report for Birmingham Central Libraries' (1973a), Press Release 'New Library Receives the Plaudits of Experts' (1973b), Brochure for 'Opening of the New Central Libraries', (1974b), an Arup Journal on 'Paradise Circus', (1974c), and Library Association publication on the same (1975) together give a detailed insight into the experiences and influences of those involved in the project. The Architectural Review 'Preview Birmingham & West Midlands'', (1969a) gives valuable context to Madin's work, with an essay by Leslie Ginsburg, founding Head of the Birmingham School of Planning.

A2.2 Historical Accounts

A2.2.1 .....Economic, including planning theory and practice, and manufacturing

The economic success of Birmingham during the nineteenth and twentieth century prompted many accounts from different perspectives. Briggs' 'Victorian Cities' (1963) includes a chapter 'Birmingham: the Making of a Civic Gospel' which explores the association of reform, municipal government and powerful industrialists centred around Joseph Chamberlain's Liberal caucus and unitarian congregation of the Church of the Messiah. The radical cause of Birmingham is compared with the 'solid, uniform, pacific' nature of Manchester, neither of which were favoured by aristocracy (Briggs, 1963: 185). Hopkins' 'Birmingham – The First Manufacturing Town in the World 1760 – 1840' (1989) provides a focussed account of industrial development through human labour rather than mechanisation, claiming that Birmingham was representative of British circumstances more so than other industrial towns and cities. The predominance of metal working first from agricultural tools to weaponry, 'toys', jewellery and brass demonstrates the changing nature of the material culture reflected too in the town's intellectual culture. Tilson's collected conference essays in 'Made in Birmingham – Design and Industry 1889 – 1989' (1989) continues that investigation into the material culture of the city at various registers, including chapters on the architecture of Bournville, craft guilds and the use of architectural terracotta, highlighting international connections of the city's designers and manufacturers.

There is a wealth of literature on the rich planning tradition of Birmingham. Sutcliffe's 'Towards the Planned City – Germany, Britain, the United States and France 1780 – 1914' (1981) gives a comparative account of those countries' political and economic conditions, and the ways in which ideas were translated by others including planners and architects in Birmingham. For example, Sutcliffe discusses the ways in which defensive boundary fortifications of German cities were adapted to become borders to an expanding urban field, in Vienna becoming the Ringstrasse, an urban form adopted by Birmingham City Surveyor Henry Stilgoe in his earliest plans for the city's ring road. With greater focus on the city itself, Cherry's 'Birmingham – A Study in Geography, History and Planning' (1994) gives a systematic account of its evolution, function and structure including reflections on social and planning concerns. More recently, Larkham has published widely on inter and post-war planning policies and projects, notably in 'Townscape and Scenography' (2014) on the perception of the urban landscape. His essay 'Visions for a new Birmingham' was included in the Routledge edition of 'When We Build Again' (2013).

A2.2.2 ..... Political and Religious

Following the nineteenth century tradition of big book histories which included 'Old and New Birmingham' (Dent, 1880) and 'A Century of Birmingham Life' (Langford, 1868), the three volume History of Birmingham marks an important contribution to accounts. Commissioned by the City Council in 1938, the first two volumes, Gill's 'Volume 1 – Manor and Borough to 1865' (1952) and Briggs' 'Volume 2 - Borough and City 1865 – 1938' (1952), trace the trajectory of the town from industrial village of the medieval period, to the fruition of Joseph Chamberlain's civic ideals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Sutcliffe and Smith's 'Volume 3 – 1939 – 1970' (1974) continued the series though differed from the earlier volumes in that it dealt with a more recent history in living memory of its readership, and paid 'particular attention to the work and leisure activities of ordinary people' (Sutcliffe and Smith, 1974: front flap) in response to the rise in sociology as a discipline. Dedicated to the memory of Sir Herbert Manzoni, volume three included a chapter on urban design and architecture, as well as 'the impact of coloured immigration' (sic.) after the right of abode was granted to all members of the Commonwealth, through the British Nationality Act 1948. Although the section uses language now widely discredited, it makes an important point of the contribution that inward migration made to the culture and economy of the city. Very few books explored in the making of this research express the role of colonial or imperial influences in the successes of trade and manufacture in Birmingham, and where possible such omissions are restored in the research.

Ward's 'City-State and Nation; Birmingham's Political History 1830 – 1940' (2005) echoes earlier observations on the reputation of Birmingham as the 'best-governed city in the world', expanding the narrative to include often overlooked characters in the Joseph Chamberlain dynasty's hold over the city, including the town's first elected MP Thomas Attwood and philanthropist Joseph Sturge. Reekes' 'The Birmingham Political Machine – Winning Elections for Joseph Chamberlain' (2018) gives a detailed account of Joseph Chamberlain's rise in local politics and later monopoly at the regional and national scale. The continuity in often radical religious belief from the earliest congregation of the seventeenth century, via Priestley's ministry, to Joseph Chamberlain's influence alongside other industrious families is covered in Bushrod's 'The Birmingham Unitarians' (1692 - 1973) (1973).

A2.2.3 ..... Cultural including Literature, Education and Architecture

Hutton's 'An History of Birmingham' (1783) is deemed to be the first 'official' history of Birmingham. As founder of the first lending library, Hutton is an important character in the town's literary culture. His history recognised the transition of the town from that of slow, unplanned growth to the increasing influence and success of industry during the eighteenth

century, first seen in the construction of St. Philip's Church, the town's first recognisably formal architectural composition. Hutton saw the need for 'reform, without the will' and asked 'if utility and beauty can be joined together in the street, why are they ever put asunder? It is easy for Birmingham to be as rapid in her improvement, as in her growth' (Hutton, 1783: 66). Some viewed him as radical despite not being of the dissenting religious congregation, causing him great loss in the riots against radical belief of 1791. Other major historical works are cited in the previous section.

Muirhead's 'Birmingham Institutions' (1911) is a collection of lectures at the University of Birmingham on government, health, education, and art, with a closing essay by Birmingham architect Bidlake entitled Birmingham As It Might Be which considers town planning in relation to slums, with a particular concern for the future plan for the Civic Centre with reference to Greek agora, Roman forum, and medieval European towns. Records of particular institutions include Sutcliffe Smith's 'The Story of Music in Birmingham' (1945) concerned with the long association of music festivals and societies with philanthropic ends including the construction of the General Hospital, and the long term project for the Town Hall and its organ. Elliot gives further account in 'The Music Makers – Brief History of the Birmingham Triennial Musical Festivals 1784 – 1912' (2000). The town hall has been studied in depth by Peers in 'Birmingham Town Hall: An Architectural History' (2012). In 'Experience and Identity' (1977), Money discusses the growth of cultural aspirations most evident in the musical culture, as well as literary organisations concerned with printing and publishing a wide range of opinions most notably by those of dissenting belief. Waterhouse's 'The Birmingham and Midland Institute - 1854–1954' (1954) and Parish's 'History of The Birmingham Library' (1966) give important accounts of the two institutions which ultimately merged in 1955, and which have shared a premises since 1965.

This period of major reconstruction work is documented in numerous books including Nairn's 'Britain's Changing Towns/ Nairn's Towns' (1967), which offers the author's typically frank appraisal of the situation. He was equally in awe of the Victorian urbanity as he was the drama of the new taking shape at the time. Of Chamberlain Square he noted that 'there is one spot under the portico of the library [incorrectly attributed to E.M. Barry] where all the buildings crowd together like a bit of orchestration by Bruckner or Mahler, and the whole of the nineteenth century can be apprehended like a revelation' (Nairn, 1967: 2). He saw Birmingham's planned ring road as 'instruments for good or ill, and what they can do in architectural and social terms, is, I am sure, quite unappreciated by those who draw them so blithely on a map purely as a means for relieving traffic congestion' concluding that

‘Birmingham’s will, I think, be all right, but it has taken some fearful risks. Splitting the civic centre was one of them, and slicing right through the Bull Ring was another (Nairn, 1967: 3).

As a partner in John Madin’s practice and advocate for the rich architectural culture of the city, Douglas Hickman[76] published widely. His ‘Birmingham’ (1970) was a gazetteer of 180 projects either built or in the process of being realised, beginning with the earliest Church of St. Nicholas in King’s Norton of the thirteenth to fifteenth century, via the major works of the Church of St. Philip by Thomas Archer[77] of 1715, culminating in Madin’s own Paradise Circus, Winteringham’s Repertory Theatre and a housing development at Kingstanding by the Birmingham School of Architecture Live Projects Department, both of 1971.

Little’s ‘Birmingham Buildings’ (1971) also provides an architectural overview of developments from medieval beginnings to post-war projects rich will illustrations and photographs, accompanied by an essay. Skipp’s ‘A History of Greater Birmingham - down to 1830’ (1980) and Upton’s ‘A History of Birmingham’ (1993) provide a more general overview of the city’s history, with Slater’s ‘Edgbaston – A History’ (2002) highlighting the unique circumstances of the district associated with its absentee land-owners the Gough-Calthorpe family, and its rich collection of Regency terraces, Classical villas and Gothic-Revival mansions. More recent guides to the city’s architecture include Foster’s ‘Birmingham Pevsner Guide’ (2005), and two books by Clawley focussed on the works and legacy of John Madin, in ‘John Madin’ (2011) and ‘Library Story’ (2015), the latter charting the long-fought battle for the retention of Madin’s most significant work.

[76] See also Hickman, D. (1979) *Warwickshire.* Edited by John Piper. London: Faber & Faber Ltd.
[77] Whiffen, M. (1950) *Thomas Archer.* London: Art and Technics. is a useful source of information on the architect including his work in Birmingham and the southeast of England. See also Campbell, C. (1715) *Vitruvius Britannicus.* 2007 edn. London: Author. Available [Accessed. Which includes Archer’s St. Phillip’s.

Appendix B: Table of Memberships

Table does not attempt to map all members/associations of each body but to explore intersections between organisations.

F.R.S.– Fellow of the Royal Society. Notes from (Schofield, 1963: 236)

References to column headings below;

1: (Langford, 1868: 190) (Dent, 1880: 161)

2: (Parish, 1966: 3)

3: (Parish, 1966: 88, 98)

4: (Schofield, 2004: 150)

5: (Schofield, 1963: 42) (Dent, 1880: 149)

6: (The Riots at Birmingham, 1792)

Name **(ordered by second name)**	**Profession**	**Street Commissioner** [1]	**Lunar Society Member** [2, 4, 5]	**Birmingham Library Member** [3]	**Owned Shares in Canal Companies** [5]	**House/belongings affected by 1791 riots**[6]	**Associations**
John Ash	Physician Founder of General Hospital	/		/ from 1781	/ 5 shares		Shared property with Small
Sir Joseph Banks F.R.S.	Botanist President of the Royal Society		/ associated				
John Baskerville	Printer Japanner	/					
Matthew Boulton F.R.S. (1785)	Industrialist	/	/ pre-1780 member	/ after 1783	/ 3 shares		Thomas Jefferson Benjamin Franklin Adam Afzelius, Swedish Botanist Dr. Francis Swediaur, German physicist, chemist, botanist
Rev Edward Burn	Curate and Lecturer St. Mary's Chapel			/ after 1783 President 1791			
Rev Charles Curtis	Anglican Priest			/ from 1783 President from 1789			

Name **(ordered by second name)**	**Profession**	**Street Commissioner** [1]	**Lunar Society Member** [2, 4, 5]	**Birmingham Library Member** [3]	**Owned Shares in Canal Companies** [5]	**House/belongings affected by 1791 riots**[6]	**Associations**
Erasmus Darwin F.R.S. (from 1761, 1st of Lunar Society)	Physician Poet Naturalist		/ pre-1780 member		/		Benjamin Franklin Rousseau
Thomas Day	Author Philanthropist Social and political reformer		/		/		Benjamin Franklin Friend of Kier
Richard Lovell Edgeworth Honorary Gold Medal of Royal Society 1781	Mechanical Engineer Author Philosopher		/				Friend of Kier
John Freeth					/ 1 share		
Samuel Galton jun. F.R.S. (1785)	Quaker manufacturer of firearms Chemist Student of natural history	/	/	/ from 1783	/ proprietor		
Samuel Garbett	Wealthy manufacturer, partner of John Roebuck in Prestonpans sulphuric acid and Carron Iron works.[3]	/			/		Friend of Matthew Boulton. Financial advisor to Lord Shelburne, Whig statesman [3]
Sir William Herschel F.R.S.	Astronomer		/ associated				
William Hollins	Stonemason			/ Mention in tontine deed			
George Humphrys						/ Spark-Brook	
William Hutton	Book seller Author historian					/ Washwood Heath - Saltley	
Robert Augustus Johnson			/				
James Kier F.R.S. (1785)			/ pre-1780 member	/ after 1783	/		
Sampson Lloyd sen.		/					

Name (ordered by second name)	Profession	Street Commissioner [1]	Lunar Society Member [2, 4, 5]	Birmingham Library Member [3]	Owned Shares in Canal Companies [5]	House/belongings affected by 1791 riots[6]	Associations
Sampson Lloyd jun.	Banker	/		/ after 1783 committee 1791			
Charles Lloyd	Quaker banker			/ after 1783			
Samuel Lloyd	Banker			/ Mention in tontine deed			
Joseph Priestley F.R.S. (1766)	Unitarian Minister Scientist Philosopher Educationist		/	/ from 1781 Reformed library upon arrival		/ House and Laboratory, Fair Hill / New Meeting	Benjamin Franklin
Rev Thomas Price	Master of Free Grammar School						
William Russell		/		/ the only dissenter present at selection meeting of Priestley's work prior to riots (Money, 1977: 127)		/ Showell Green	
John Ryland	Button maker	/				/ Baskerville House, Easy Hill	
Rev Radcliffe Scholefield	Minister of Old Meeting			/ from 1783 committee 1791			
Dr. William Small	Physician	/	/	/	/ 5 shares		Thomas Jefferson Benjamin Franklin Corresponded with Priestley 1774 [3]
Daniel Charles Solander F.R.S.	Swedish Naturalist and physician Librarian at British Museum		/ associated				
Jonathan Stokes (only Lunar Society member not to be F.R.S.)	Botanist		/	/ after 1783			
John Taylor	Industrialist, manufacturer of metal buttons,	/		/ from 1781		/ Bordesley / Moseley Hall, residence of	

Name **(ordered by second name)**	**Profession**	**Street Commissioner** [1]	**Lunar Society Member** [2, 4, 5]	**Birmingham Library Member** [3]	**Owned Shares in Canal Companies** [5]	**House/belongings affected by 1791 riots**[6]	**Associations**
	japanned ware, snuff boxes					Lady Carhampton	
James Watt F.R.S. (1785)	Industrialist		/ pre-1780 member	/ after 1783	/		Matthew Boulton
Josiah Wedgwood F.R.S. 1783	Ceramics manufacturer		/ pre-1780 member		/		Benjamin Franklin
Thomas Westley		/			/ 5 shares		
John Whitehurst			/				
William Withering F.R.S. (1785)	Botanist		/ pre-1780 member	/ from 1783			Benjamin Franklin Linnaeus

Appendix C: Digital Layers and Unique Reference Numbers associated with *Drawing Series*

The *Drawing Series* was prepared in Vectorworks v2020. The information relating to the particular sites was contained in over 200 unique classes and sub-classes related to the various iterations of each, listed below;

phd-geology-02 Bromsgrove sandstone
phd-geology-03 Halesowen and Etruria formation siliciclastic arg
phd-geology-04 coal measures group
phd-geology-05 Meriden formation and tile hill mudstone formation
phd-geology-06 Barnt Green volcanic formation
phd-geology-07 unnamed igneous mafite
phd-geology-08 Clent formation and Haffield breccia formation
phd-geology-09 Clent formation sandstone
phd-geology-10 Lickey quartzite formation
phd-geology-11 Mercia mudstone group
phd-geology-12 Salop formation rock and sandstone
phd-geology-13 Coalbrookdale formation
phd-geology-14 Hopwas breccia formation sandstone
phd-geology-15 Bridgnorth sandstone formation
phd-geology-16 St Maughan’s rock and sandstone
phd-sites-000_Metchley Camp
phd-sites-001-2 High Cross/Old Cross
phd-sites-002_St Nicolas's Church Kings Norton
phd-sites-003_Old Crown
phd-sites-004-1 Priory Hospital
phd-sites-004-2 Square
phd-sites-004-3 Corporation Square
phd-sites-005-1 St. Martin's Church 1263 (conjectural)
phd-sites-005-2 St. Martin's Church
phd-sites-005-2 St. Martin's Church encased in brick 1690
phd-sites-005-3 St. Martin's Church SE vestry 1760
phd-sites-005-4 St. Martin's Church spire Hardwick 1853
phd-sites-006-1_Edgbaston manor
phd-sites-007-1 Manor Place
phd-sites-007-3 Smithfield
phd-sites-007-4 Smithfield
phd-sites-007-5 Smithfield extended by 1950
phd-sites-007-6 Wholesale Market
phd-sites-008_St. John's Chapel
phd-sites-009-1 Gild Hall
phd-sites-009-2 King Edward's Grammar School

phd-sites-009-3 King Edward's Grammar School reconstructed C Bar
phd-sites-010-2 Meredith's Bowling Green
phd-sites-010-4 Town Hall 1
phd-sites-010-1 Town Hall 1 - outline/ Paradise Close
phd-sites-010-5 Town Hall 2 completed
phd-sites-011-1 Byngas Hall
phd-sites-011-2 Bingley House (Lloyd)
phd-sites-011-3 Bingley Hall
phd-sites-011-4 Bingley Exhibition Hall
phd-sites-011-5 Bingley Exhibition Hall extended
phd-sites-012_Welch Cross
phd-sites-013-1 Swan Yard
phd-sites-013-2 Swan Yard without toll in 1832
phd-sites-013-3 Swan Yard without toll
phd-sites-013-4 Rotunda (1965)
phd-sites-014_Shambles
phd-sites-015-1 Corn Market
phd-sites-015-3 Bull Ring Centre (1964)
phd-sites-016_Rectory/ Parsonage/
phd-sites-017-1 Cold Bath Lady Well
phd-sites-017-2 Lady Well Baths
phd-sites-019-1 Free Chapel
phd-sites-019-2 Quaker Meeting
phd-sites-019-3 Quaker Meeting reconstructed
phd-sites-020_Aston Hall
phd-sites-022-2 Old Meeting
phd-sites-023-2 New Meeting reconstructed
phd-sites-023-3 Unitarian Church of the Messiah and Sunday School
phd-sites-024-1 Carrs Lane United Reform Church
phd-sites-024-2 Carrs Lane enlarged
phd-sites-024-3 Carrs Lane D Hinton
phd-sites-025-1 Baskerville's House
phd-sites-025-5 Civic Centre - Baskerville Hs/ Hall of Mem/Bank
phd-sites-025-6 Civic Centre 1980 - Baskerville Hs/ Hall of Mem/
phd-sites-026-1 New Hall
phd-sites-026-2 New Hall
phd-sites-027-1 St. Philip's Church
phd-sites-027-2 St. Philip's Church extended 1
phd-sites-028-1 Blue Coat Charity School
phd-sites-028-2 Blue Coat Charity School extended
phd-sites-029-1 Infirmary
phd-sites-029-2 Infirmary enlarged
phd-sites-030-1 Workhouse

phd-sites-030-4 Victoria Law Courts
phd-sites-031-2 Post Office Peck Lane
phd-sites-031-3 Post Office Bennetts Hill
phd-sites-031-4 Post Office Paradise St
phd-sites-031-5 Post Office Victoria Sq
phd-sites-031-6 Post Office Victoria Sq single site
phd-sites-032-1 Packwood Bowling
phd-sites-032-2 Old Library
phd-sites-032-3 Old Library extended
phd-sites-032-4 Birmingham Library relocated Margaret St (1899)
phd-sites-032-5 Birmingham Library BMI ext Margaret St (1970)
phd-sites-033_Salutation PH
phd-sites-034_Towe Bowling Green
phd-sites-035-1 St. Bartholomew's Chapel
phd-sites-036_Methodist Meeting (Steel House Lane)
phd-sites-037-1 Independent Meeting
phd-sites-037-2 Independent Meeting enlarged
phd-sites-038-1 Hutton's Library 1751 (conjectural)
phd-sites-038-2 Crompton's Library 1763 (conjectural)
phd-sites-040-1 Birmingham Library (1779 Lee Jr Snowhill)
phd-sites-040-3 Birmingham Library (1790 Lloyd's Upper Priory)
phd-sites-042-1 Soho Manufactory
phd-sites-043-1 Iron Foundries, Wharf and Canal Offices
phd-sites-043-1-Eagle Foundry, Wharf and Canal Offices
phd-sites-043-2-Eagle Foundry, Old Wharf and Canal Offices
phd-sites-043-3-ATV Centre (1969) Alpha Tower (1973)
phd-sites-045_St. Paul's Chapel
phd-sites-046_St. Mary's Chapel
phd-sites-047-1 Hospital
phd-sites-047-3 General Hospital Steelhouse
phd-sites-048-1 Dadley's Hotel/ Tontine Hotel
phd-sites-049_Freeth's Coffee House and Book Club
phd-sites-050_Meeting (Crooked Lane)
phd-sites-051_Castle Hotel
phd-sites-052_Bordesley Hall, Mount Pleasant/ John Taylor
phd-sites-053_Fair Hill/ Joseph Priestley
phd-sites-054_The Farm/ Sampson Lloyd
phd-sites-055_Spark Brook/ George Humphrys
phd-sites-056_Showell Green/ William Russell (Worcs)
phd-sites-057_Bennett's Hill Saltley/ William Hutton
phd-sites-059-2 Moseley Hall Hospital
phd-sites-060_Vauxhall Gardens (Duddeston Hall, until 1850)
phd-sites-063_Gas Street Basin

phd-sites-064-1 Birmingham Canal Navigation first layout
phd-sites-064-2 Birmingham Canal Navigation revised layout for f
phd-sites-065-2 Methodist Central Hall (1887)
phd-sites-066_Fazeley Canal, Digbeth Junction, Ashted
phd-sites-067_Worcester Canal
phd-sites-069_Warwick Canal
phd-sites-072_Ladywood (Rotton Park/ Edgbaston) Reservoir
phd-sites-074-1 Crescent Wharfs
phd-sites-074-2 Crescent Wharfs 1980s
phd-sites-075_New Library
phd-sites-077-1 Royal Society of Artists Gallery Rickman
phd-sites-077-2 Royal Society of Artists Gallery
phd-sites-077-3 Artist's Gallery
phd-sites-078-2_Birmingham and Midland Institute 1
phd-sites-078-3_Birmingham and Midland Institute 2 ext
phd-sites-079_Mechanics Institution (Mount Zion Chapel Newhall)
phd-sites-080-1 Theatre (1743)
phd-sites-080-1 Theatre (1773)
phd-sites-080-2 Theatre Royal Wyatt
phd-sites-080-3 Theatre Royal 1880
phd-sites-080-4 Theatre Royal extended-2
phd-sites-084_Market Hall (1828)
phd-sites-085_Nelson Statue and water pump
phd-sites-086-1 Public Office
phd-sites-086-2 Public Office extended
phd-sites-087-1_Hen & Chickens Hotel first
phd-sites-087-2_Hen & Chickens Hotel 1880 reduced
phd-sites-087-3_Arden Hotel in 1950s
phd-sites-088_Stork Hotel
phd-sites-089_Bloomfield Wharf/ Newhall Coal Company Wharf
phd-sites-090-2_Central Goods Station
phd-sites-090-3_Automatic Parcels and Letters Sorting Office (19
phd-sites-091_Worcester and Birmingham Canal Companies Wharf
phd-sites-093_Beardworth's Repository
phd-sites-094_Gun Barrel Proof House
phd-sites-095_Cavalry Barracks
phd-sites-096-1_Christ Church (1805-15)
phd-sites-096-2_Christ Church Buildings (1899)
phd-sites-096-3_site of Christ Church Buildings (dem 1970)
phd-sites-097-2 St. Chad's Roman Catholic Cathedral
phd-sites-098_Meeting
phd-sites-099_Meeting
phd-sites-100_Trinity Chapel

phd-sites-103_Scotch Church
phd-sites-105_St. Andrew's Chapel
phd-sites-106_St. Peter's Church
phd-sites-111_School of Industry
phd-sites-112_Birmingham and Warwick Junction Canal
phd-sites-113_Tame Valley Canal
phd-sites-114-2 Curzon St Station extended
phd-sites-115_London & Birmingham Railway
phd-sites-116-1 New Street Station
phd-sites-116-2 New Street Station extended
phd-sites-116-3 New Street Station reconstructed
phd-sites-117_Birmingham/Oxford and Birmingham/Wolverhampton Ra
phd-sites-120_St. Jude's Church
phd-sites-121-1 Central Reference Library (1863)
phd-sites-121-2 Central Reference Library extended
phd-sites-121-3 Central Library Paradise Circus
phd-sites-121-3 Central Library Paradise Circus-2
phd-sites-125-1 Snowhill Station and hotel
phd-sites-125-2 Snowhill Station reconstructed
phd-sites-125-3 Snowhill Station and carpark
phd-sites-126-2_Prince of Wales Theatre
phd-sites-128-1_Great Western Arcade
phd-sites-128-2_Great Western Arcade adjusted colmore row
phd-sites-129-1 Council House (1879)
phd-sites-129-2 Council Hs Gallery (1885)
phd-sites-129-4 Gas Hall and Gallery (1922)
phd-sites-130_Mason College (founded 1875, Edmund St 1880)
phd-sites-131-1_Queens College
phd-sites-131-2_Queens College Chambers 1904
phd-sites-132_Corporation Street (1878 82)
phd-sites-133_County Court (1882)
phd-sites-134-1_1880 civic centre statuary (Priestley, Peel, Wr
phd-sites-134-2_1980 civic centre statuary
phd-sites-135-1_Muncipal School of Art founded (1883)
phd-sites-135-2_Muncipal School of Art founded extended
phd-sites-140_Guild of Handicrafts 1897_8
phd-sites-142_Birmingham and SW Line, Sutton Coldfield Line (18
phd-sites-143_Fish Market (1869)
phd-sites-144_Meat Market (1891)
phd-sites-146_Moor St Station
phd-sites-147-2 Repertory Theatre (1972)
phd-sites-150_Central Fire Station (1935)
phd-sites-151-4 Inner Ring Road

phd-sites-151-4 Inner Ring Road overlay
phd-sites-152 Grosvenor House 1951_3
phd-sites-155_Aston Expressway/ Gravelley Hill Interchange
phd-sites-156_Smallbrook Queensway (1960)
phd-sites-157_New Street Signal Box (1965)
phd-sites-158_Post & Mail Building (1966)
phd-sites-A-1 River Rea original
phd-sites-A-2 River Rea C18 realignment
phd-sites-A-4 River Rea central culverted
phd-sites-B-1 River Tame
phd-sites-B-2 River Tame culverted
phd-sites-D-1 Priory Brook
phd-sites-E-1 Hockley Brook
phd-sites-E-2 Hockley Brook culverted

Appendix D: A Commentary on Reading and Interpreting the 'Map of Institutional Continuity'

Note: This text is also available in Volume 2 along with an A3 version of the 'map of institutional continuity'.

The 'map of institutional continuity' incorporates several layers of research that have informed both the structure and interpretation of the thesis. Whilst the information can be read 'through time' as a chronological ordering of institutions and events, its main contribution is to place those constituent parts 'in time' with potential to reveal latent readings. Together with the drawing series, those readings informed the order to the core chapters of the thesis. The form and layers of the map are explained here.

A. Time (in rows). This establishes the temporal framework of the research, beginning in 1751 with the foundation of Hutton's library and ending in the partial completion of John Madin's Central Library at Paradise Circus in 1980. There are additional institutions and events shown above and below to provide further relevant context referred to in the thesis. The time frame of each chapter is given on the left. Chapter 2 (1900-1980) is the first core chapter, revealing the topics at play that are developed through chapters 3 (1779-1835) and 4 (1863-1899). The beginning and end of each chapter relate to critical events in the history of literary and civic life of Birmingham, captured in the 'survey drawings' highlighted in yellow on the map. They are discussed in further detail below.
B. Institutions (in columns). These eleven institutions were defined in the process of undertaking the research, ordering the interpretive dimension of the hermeneutic method. The columns are intended to be read together rather than in isolation, leading to the continuity cited in the title. The columns of institutional order are summarised here with a brief commentary highlighting the main events in each;
    1. Religious/Nonconformist Institutions – whilst there were several institutions associated with the Anglican church in place by 1751, this column maps institutions and events associated with nonconformist belief in Birmingham. After the Restoration, the town became a centre for nonconformity associated with radical political dissent, scientific and cultural progress, and burgeoning trade and industry. Much of this can be traced back to the intentional absence of a borough charter and the early provision of a market charter (1166), freeing the town from the restrictions of the Test and Corporation Acts that limited nonconformists' rights to gather, worship or hold civil or military office, promoting commerce, liberty and gaining in prominence. The relevance of these institutions

is in the ways in which ideas of freedom pervaded intellectual thought and the praxis of the city over the period studied in this thesis.

2. Literary Institutions – this column maps various iterations of Birmingham Library, prior and subsequent institutions including book clubs, private libraries, and public institutions notably the Birmingham and Midland Institute (1857, with which Birmingham Library combined in 1955) and the Free Reference Library (1866). These public institutions were strongly associated with the artistic and intellectual life of the town, hosting many groups, activities and collections that would inform subsequent institutions. The relevance of these institutions is how dialogue was rooted in the praxis of the city, made explicit in early civic buildings but lost in subsequent developments. The central argument is that Madin's Central Library acknowledged that latent order, whilst other projects were more concerned with novel ideas of progress through technological innovation.
3. Artistic Institutions – these include the Romantic poets and artists associated with the land-owning aristocracy as the town grew in repute and wealth in the early years of industrial development. Of particular note is Dyer, who's poem *The Fleece* (1757) associated Birmingham's burgeoning industries with the ancient tradition of great agrarian and trading civilisations (referred to in chapter 3). The later Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood stood in opposition to the industrial-capitalist social framework (Rykwert, 2000: 114), following Ruskin's return to nature who would also influence the city's Arts & Crafts architects of the nineteenth century. The column also notes those foundational institutions of the Academy of Arts that would inform the Schools of Design and of Music within the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and Art Museum within the Free Reference Library. Many patrons of the arts were also influential in shaping the architectural institutional order of the city. The relevance of these institutions is in the way in which those places and movements informed the emergent order of the city, and how those ideas found form in the institutional buildings of the nineteenth and twentieth century.
4. Intellectual and Educational Institutions – a proliferation of intellectual, scientific and educational institutions sprang from both religious and literary sources, including the Brotherly Society (1796) as the first Mechanics' Institute in Britain. The failure of the Philosophical Institution ultimately led to the formation of the Birmingham and Midland Institute. The formalisation of institutes through increasing municipal and government influence around that time saw the end of the contingent nature of institutional order. The School of Music later found independence though formed part of the civic buildings of Paradise Circus, until it

became part of Birmingham Polytechnic (1970) and later as the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (2017). The relevance of these institutions is how their contingent nature gave way to an increasing hardening of position which changed the order of the city and the “smooth interplay of society” (Voegelin, 2000a: 197).

5. Civic/Municipal Institutions – although earlier civic works of architecture can be found in the Town Hall (1834, included in the musical and cultural institutions column), the awarding of the charter of incorporation (1838) instigated the incremental formalisation of civic buildings at Paradise Street. That the Birmingham and Midland Institute (1857) forms part of both literary and artistic columns rather than as a formal civic act indicates the role of individual and collective philanthropy in the earliest proto-civic acts. The Council House (1879) established a civic order that would influence subsequent extensions (1925 with the Hall of Memory) and the civic complex of Paradise Circus (1974), as well as the plan for the inner ring road (proposed 1917, completed 1974). The relevance of these institutions is that they collectively set the context within which Paradise Circus was conceived, its open form in contrast with the closed nature of prior institutions and the systematic redefinition of the city through the technology of infrastructure.
6. Architectural and Artistic Institutions – of the earliest works in the centre, most renowned was Archer's baroque Anglican church of St Philips (1709-25), featuring in Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715). The Greek Revival found form in Stuart’s Doric Temple at Hagley Hall (1762) as an early work of the Romantic movement, informing the Town Hall which gave order and stature to a growing city. The formalisation of an architectural culture began with classes at Queen’s College (1843) on Paradise Street, with JH Chamberlain as the first Chair of Architecture and Construction (1858). His School of Art (1885) would later host classes with Arts and Crafts architect Bidlake appointed as the first lecturer in architecture (1892). The Birmingham Architectural Society (1851) and subsequent Association (1874) brought affiliation with the Architectural Association who provided the curriculum. The School of Architecture (1908) educated the city’s best known architects including John Madin, architect of Paradise Circus (1974). Whilst aspects of the city’s architectural tradition are well documented, there has been little scholarly enquiry into the ways in which architects and their buildings participated in wider intellectual dialogue.
7. Musical and Cultural Institutions – the first music festivals were staged to raise funds for a General Hospital, and subsequently for the building of the Town Hall

and procurement of its organ. Enabled by the Town Improvement Act of 1827, the Town Hall (1834) and Market Hall (1835) reinforced an earlier order - the lower part of the town for trade and the upper for culture, joined by New Street which was lined by the city's Society of Arts, Theatre Royal and Post Office. Though the Market Hall was replaced by progressively larger versions of the Bull Ring and New Street has been overwhelmed by retail, the Town Hall and Three Choirs Festival provide continuity with that earlier order. The removal of the School of Music to Eastside to allow for the commercial redevelopment of Paradise Circus was a loss to the civic life of Birmingham. The relevance of these institutions is the ways in which various aspects of civic life were contingent upon one another – the festival, hospital and Town Hall each formed through the participation of the city's patrons, many of whom were scientists, industrialists or merchants rather than religious or aristocratic figures.

8. Industrial Institutions – though there were many more industrial activities within Birmingham than illustrated, of particular relevance to the study were the foundation of the Lunar Society and their intellectual and scientific dialogue, and the ways in which the city found a global audience through exhibitions. The first industrial exhibition held at King Edward's School on New Street (1839) led to a larger show ten years later at a site nearby the Town Hall, which in turn inspired the Great Exhibition of 1851. This formalised the exhibition as part of the civic programme that would follow. It also placed the city's manufacturers on the international stage, both in their contributions to the making of Paxton's Crystal Palace and the exhibits within (refer to chapter 3). The long tradition of metal working, first from trades associated with agrarian tool making, then munitions including swords and later firearms, informed the automotive industries for which the city became renowned during the twentieth century. This would also influence the city's orientation to the private automobile, embodied in urban planning of the ring road. The move from moral knowledge (*phronesis*) to technology (*technē)* as a basis for civic participation can be traced throughout the thesis, reaching its culmination in the engineered landscape of the twentieth century.
9. Commercial Institutions – as noted in the context of religious institutions, the intentional absence of a borough charter and the early provision of a market charter (1166) had implications for the constituency and praxis of Birmingham as it grew during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The purchasing of the market charter by the Street Commissioners (1824) and the Town Improvement Act (1827) took commercial activities from the streets around St. Martin's Church

into which Schinkel had arrived during his tour of 1826 and placed them in specialised buildings, first in the Market Hall (1835). The advent of the ring road and model of the shopping mall (1964) reorganised these activities into ever larger interiors. These institutions provided a necessary counterpoint to the outwardly civic expression of Birmingham at the upper reach of New Street, establishing a temporal order related to changing patterns of landscape, livelihood and building.

10. Legal and Infrastructural Institutions – these three columns relate to modes of transportation that have at various moments influenced the orientation of the city; the road, the canal and the railway. As a town positioned at the junction of important religious and commercial passages, but without any major watercourse or natural resources of its own, the citizens of Birmingham made their own ground of opportunity through the improvement of existing routes, and the sponsorship of new modes and landscapes of transport. Blaeu's map (1646) depicts Birmingham as a small settlement on the western boundary of Warwickshire, differing from Ogilby's representation as a minor stage in his Britannia series of route maps (1675). The canal and later rail expanded the field of influence to the national and international register, as depicted in Dyer's *The Fleece.* This move from a boundary to border condition as "an edge where different groups interact" (Sennett, 2018b) is representative of Birmingham's frontier nature, and still evident today. Great Western Arcade (1874) built over the rail line, the cutting of Corporation Street (1882) and the earliest idea the inner ring road based on Vienna's Ringstraße (1917) aimed to bring decorum to informal urban settlement. That the latter became an exercise in engineering under City Engineer Manzoni belies those ambitions, establishing the challenge in the making of civic ground at Paradise Circus (1974). As noted earlier, these infrastructural works were representative of a move from moral knowledge (*phronesis*) to technology (*technē)* as a basis for civic participation.
11. Political and Conflictual Institutions – the final column relates to local, national and international events of war (marked in filled rows across chart), political change and forms of government with implications for the order of and activity within Birmingham. The American and French Revolutionary Wars inspired lively debate on the rights of man amongst radical, often nonconformist constituents including Joseph Priestley, subscriber to and cataloguer of Birmingham Library. Priestley's *Essay on the First Principles of Government* (1768) called for sovereign authority to remain with the people, that governments were limited in their power and freedom of action, and that civil society had the right to bring

down, reform or amend a government (Dickinson, 1977: 198). Despite the openness to free enquiry promoted by the library committee, the fear of seditious acts by radicals led to a climate of suspicion and ultimately persecution in the riot of 1791 resulting in the destruction of buildings and livelihoods associated with dissent. That spirit of enquiry persisted in the petitioning campaigns and mass meetings of the subsequent century that precipitated the Reform Acts from 1832. Though of an earlier origin associated with musical culture and health provision, the Town Hall embodied the emergent civic order, the city gaining its charter of incorporation in 1838 together with the 'Forward' crest. The 'civic gospel' of Joseph Chamberlain's short tenure as mayor saw the formalisation of institutions under the increasing influence of local government, through elaborate artistic and architectural expressions that sought to embody republican ideals of a virtuous and active citizenry. Manzoni and his successor Borg changed the order of the city through evermore ambitious reworkings of the city's infrastructure. Together, these institutions represent dialogues on government and conflict related to the topics of 'freedom-from' or 'freedom-for' as articulated in Berlin's essay 'Two Concepts of Liberty' (1969).

C. Surveys 1-6 with accompanying drawings. These are highlighted in yellow (circle and horizontal dashed line) and structure the thesis and main chapter sections. The drawings locate the institutions within the concrete conditions of the city, and provide a critical insight into the civic ground of the city and therefore the structure of the thesis. They are representative of "the horizonal/institutional structure of the analogical field" as a "communication between, for example, architecture, ornament, music, painting, and so on" (Carl, 2015: 18). These drawings form the basis for a series of surveys which structure the core chapters. As identified in the timeline, drawings were made at representative moments in the foundation, expansion and movement of the various institutions including the libraries, the Town Hall, and civic buildings. The order in which drawings are presented, and therefore the parts and chapters, reveals the critical enquiry of the research, beginning with the twentieth century projects on the city. The drawing nomenclature is chronological (here drawing 4-6, prior drawings 1-3 relate to a context-giving section), the survey nomenclature is related to the order of the thesis.
The thesis begins with studies of the twentieth century conditions through 'Survey 1, Drawing 9 – the city in 1955 at the merger of the BMI and Birmingham Library' and 'Survey 2, Drawing 10 – the city in 1980 at the partial completion of Paradise Circus and the Inner Ring Road'. Chapters 3 and 4 each offer two surveys and accompanying drawings.

D. Dark horizontal band to bottom of map – this represents the comprehensive reworking of the city through the project of the Inner Ring Road (1957-1974), including major revisions along its path at the Bull Ring market (1964) and at Paradise Circus (1974). That the latter did not fulfil the objectives of a civic complex precipitated the changing circumstances of the Birmingham and Midland Institute which was forced to relocate to shared facilities of Birmingham Library (1955) where they remain today.

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