REBUILDING SCOTLAND

THE POSTWAR VISION 1945-1975

EDITED BY MILES GLENDINNING

J P McCafferty.

The early postwar decades witnessed a national reconstruction drive of unprecedented vigour – a revolution in architecture and building, whose uncompromising Modern monuments still dominate our towns and cities. This book, drawing on a recent pioneering series of national symposia and exhibitions staged by DOCOMOMO (Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement) and other key organisations, presents an introductory reassessment of thirty years of vigorous, but until recently misunderstood transformations of Scotland's built environment.

Some of the papers evoke this era's sheer energy, the vast quantity and scale of its building, and the passion which fuelled programmes such as housing 'crusades'. Some recall its constructional and technical daring. Others, by contrast, emphasise that architecture, as an art, flourished undiminished during those years of Modernity in design. This was a period of complexity and conflict, in its often tempestuous debates and ideas, and yet also one of simplicity – of consensual confidence in progress and rationality in building. This volume is lavishly illustrated, including many original photographs.

Miles Glendinning is an architectural historian with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.

The cover photograph is of the St James Centre, Edinburgh (Ian Burke & Martin, begun 1964) seen under construction in 1972. (RCAHMS).
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GLASGOW'S HOUSING CRUSADE
Councillor David Gibson, the Corporation's Housing Committee Convener, inspects the Scotstoun House multi-storey development along with the Lord Provost, Dame Jean Roberts, during construction in 1963. [Outram]

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PROLOGUE

The early postwar period of Scottish history – the years between approximately 1945 and 1975 – witnessed a national reconstruction drive of unprecedented vigour. So colossal and audacious were its utopian visions that we, today, have difficulty in even grasping, let alone inhabiting them. The reaction to this disparity of values during the past twenty years, for the most part, has been violent condemnation. (Figs. 1.1, 1.2) Yet this is sure to change, as is demonstrated by the precedent of nineteenth-century architecture, and its equally tempestuous passage through the cycle of opinion. That was a century of the most violent transformation, a period which brought Scotland the most shocking social and visual dislocations in its wake. And these inspired, at the time, comprehensive denunciations from all sides, from ordinary people and intelligentsia alike. Yet, once fresh changes had dimmed memories, the condemnations gradually fell silent, and were replaced by more measured appraisals, and then by nostalgic praise: in the 1960s and 70s the word 'tenement' changed, within a few years, from a symbol of the harsh modernity of industrial capitalism to an emblem of 'traditional' urban community.

This volume has been motivated by the belief that we are now, in the 1990s, just reaching a position where we can begin building up a historical perspective on the postwar era of reconstruction. On the one hand, this is arguably historically a closed subject: no longer

1.1 Hutchesontown/Gorbals Area 'C' (Basil Spence, built 1960-6): 1958 perspective of proposed blocks.

1.2 'Blowdown' of Hutchesontown 'C' on 12 September 1993.

do 'crusading' councillors call for the maximum output of new tower blocks, or 'utopian' Modern architects demand the definition of scientific standards of mass provision – although the hyper-urbanist concepts of some contemporary international architecture point to the possible revival of Modernist concerns such as 'density' and 'urbanity'. And some major Modern buildings are now in decay, even being demolished. But at the same time, many of those key people of the time are still around, to recall their ideals and values to us. Today's blanket anti-Modern rhetoric, which brands an entire generation as base and corrupt, is not only in itself implausibly simplistic but also, in the process, silences the potentially invaluable testimony of participants from those years – people whose experience could be of help not only to the academic historian and researcher, but also to those concerned with remedying the real practical problems which arise out of any revolutionary period of building. Only when the raucous background noise of invective finally ceases will this historical 'silence' also end, and today's real concerns about postwar buildings begin to be properly recorded and addressed.

This, then, is the aim of this volume: to begin the task of clearing away the blanket condemnations, and of dissolving the Utopia-Dystopia polarisations. It contains two main sections. The first (Part 1) presents a brief historical introduction to this period, drawn from some primary sources, but chiefly from published material: for a fuller account, readers should consult Chapters 8 and 9 of *A History of Scottish Architecture* (Edinburgh, 1996, by M. Glendinning, A MacKechnie, R MacInnes). The second section (Parts 2, 3, 4) is the more important, as it contains a selection of direct testimonies from the years 1945 to 1975, in the form of a series of lectures and papers by key figures from that time. For arguably, in a controversial subject such as this, the most accessible way of beginning a reassessment is to listen to the voices and concerns of those who were actually involved.

As is well known, these years, in Scottish architecture, were dominated by Modernism. But the book also encompasses other prominent architectural movements of the time – including those tendencies, carried over from the '30s, which were most usually referred to at the time as 'Traditional' or 'Traditionalist'. And it also encompasses *all* kinds of buildings during that period, the everyday alongside the architecturally elevated.

While its architectural and building-type scope is wide, its approach to the sociology of architecture and building provision is more selective. In this area we begin by the sweeping claim, that all historical investigations of buildings ask two main types of questions. The first is the subject of this book: the provision of the buildings in the first place. Here the fundamental questions are: why, by whom, how? In other words: What was the purpose of the building? Who was the patron? And how did the designer and constructor address these demands? In practice, as we will see in the following pages, answers to these questions tend to merge into more complex formulations encompassing groups of ideas: examples of such formulations are 'functionalism', 'housing crusade', or 'package-deal building'.

The second type of question looks into what happened after the buildings were completed: their use, experience – all the things which nowadays seem most immediate in the case of buildings over 20 years old. This vast area, which requires a different range of historical expertise from the investigation of provision – expertise concerned especially with questions of habitation, building repair and management – is not addressed directly or systematically in the present volume. It is, however, frequently touched on in passing, not least because there are significant areas of overlap, notably the question of how the providers thought

their buildings would be used. However, we must remind ourselves that our own present-day orthodoxy of 'user participation' in design and provision – however much rooted in the Modern concern for definition of 'user needs' – is, in its full-blown form, only a recent phenomenon, falling largely outwith the chronological scope of this book. The intention here is not to reiterate yet again the values of our own time, but to begin the rediscovery and reassessment of the values of the great postwar rebuilding drive, and to draw attention to key built realisations of those ideals.

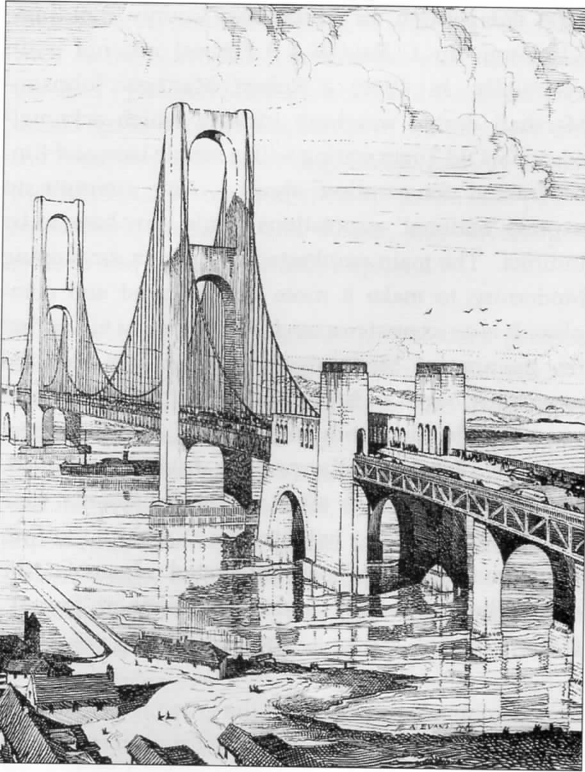
These early postwar buildings, like their nineteenth-century predecessors, are monuments to a revolution in all aspects of building. Some evoke the era's sheer energy, the vast quantity and often huge scale of building; and some are exemplars of its constructional and technical daring. Others, by contrast, testify to the fact that architecture, as an art, flourished undiminished during these years. This was a period of complexity, in its often tempestuous debates and ideas, and yet also of simplicity – of consensual confidence in progress and rationality, however variously defined.

The contents of this volume are derived largely from activities organised, or co-organised, by the newly founded Scottish National Group of DOCOMOMO – an international working party which, as its acronym indicates, is dedicated to the 'Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement'. Professor Hubert-Jan Henket's contribution (included in Part Two of this book) explains in more detail about the organisation's purpose and multi-national structure. In mapping out an initial strategy, DOCOMOMO decided to begin by organising a conference, to put the reassessment of postwar architecture firmly on the public agenda. This conference, 'Visions Revisited', sponsored by Historic Scotland and by the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS), took place in October 1992 at the University of Glasgow, and brought together testimonies from key contemporary actors from the 60s, with contributions from younger historians and an audience of professionals and interested lay people.

'Visions Revisited' was followed up with two events during 1993, arranged in collaboration with other national organisations. A seminar series, organised along with the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland, elaborated the idea of first-hand testimonies, by setting several key Modern designers in conversation with present-day critics and historians. In other words, a two-pronged approach: direct recollection of the past; and engagement of the past with present-day values. The RIAS Festival Exhibition, for which DOCOMOMO acted as curators and authors, took public debate a stage further, by identifying sixty key monuments of historical and architectural importance, and – to encourage debate and research – putting them on public display through the medium of original drawings, photographs and models. These events will, it is hoped, lead on to successively more focused initiatives in the future, including the preparation of a formal register of monuments of significance (derived from the original 'sixty' list) for the use of ICOMOS and Historic Scotland; and, of course, the publication of the present book.

In the interests of comprehensibility, this book has merged the 1992 and 1993 lectures into a single series, arranged thematically under two basic section headings. The first group of lecture papers, '*Patronage and Building*' (Part Two of the book), views buildings above all in their political and social context: in other words, in the framework of an archaeology of building provision. The other group of papers (Part Three), '*Architects' Architecture*', focuses on one particular way of visualising buildings – as works of architecture – and on the description of this process chiefly through the words of designers themselves; and it rounds off the series of papers by reproducing the wide-ranging discussion which ended the 'Visions Revisited' conference. In order to retain the immediacy of the original lectures, we have not, in this book, converted the papers into academic footnoted texts. Part Four presents, with slight modifications, the list of sixty key buildings prepared for the RIAS 1993 exhibition.

All in all, this volume should be seen not as any kind of definitive history of Modern architecture in Scotland, but rather, as the first step in the opening up of the subject – a presentation of contemporary testimonies and preliminary present-day accounts, intended to lay down markers for future detailed research.



1.44 Early proposal for the Forth Road Bridge, in a heavy Art Deco style: illustration on front cover of *Fife Looks Ahead* report, 1946.

1.45 The Forth Road Bridge as built: North Tower, raising climbing structure: view of jacking corner, October 1960.

In the field of area redevelopment, some responded to the demands of the motor vehicle for parking and roads by maintaining, or even expanding Functionalist tabula-rasa formulas. As late as 1965, it was argued that the proposal to redevelop Laurieston/Gorbals in Glasgow with 23-storey slab blocks and expressways would create an area of 'high amenity'. (79) An accelerated road-building drive included the Scottish Office's construction of the long-awaited Forth Road Bridge (1958-64, Mott Hay & Anderson/Sir Giles Scott, Son & Partners), whose design was widely admired across the world as the herald of a new era of lightness in spun-cable suspension bridge design. (Figs. 1.46, 1.47) And it took in Scotland's first motorway ring road, the Glasgow Inner Ring Road, begun in 1965 under engineers Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick, and consultant architect W Holford. (80) In James P McCafferty's essay in this book, the planning and implementation of this massive project are outlined. (Fig. 1.47)

At the same time, there were more architecturally elevated responses to the new ideas of the consumer society. Critics in various countries reacted by proposing, for instance, the aestheticisation of the everyday, or (with the French Situationists, founded 1957) the futuristic exploitation of ever-expanding technology to heighten social flexibility, through such devices as 'mobile' architecture of spaceframe with flexible infill - an aestheticisation of communication. (81) In Scotland, the writings of John L Paterson questioned the orthodox Modern city pattern and called for a new kind of classless urban 'vernacular' that would intensify 'urban reality': when working on Matthew's Hutchesontown 'B' project in Glasgow, he was able to implement a pioneering proposal to put street lights on top of the high blocks, with the aim of turning night-time life in the scheme into 'theatre.' (82)

THE ARCHITECTURE OF RATIONALIST ECONOMY

Among the early 1960s attempts to modify mainstream Functionalism and give expression to a more affluent and variegated society, there were some who tried to express technological advances and affluent society through greater rationalism. This had two

1.46 Forth Road Bridge: northward view in March 1961.

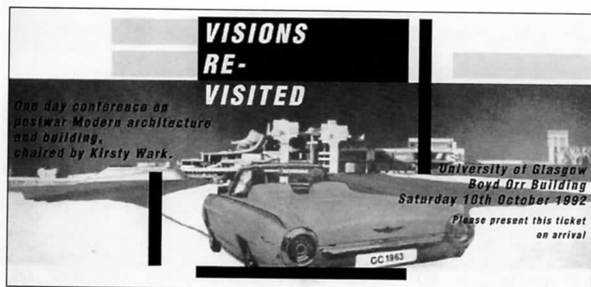
1.47 Glasgow Inner Ring Road: view by Alexander Duncan Bell of Kingston Bridge (Glasgow *Highway Plan*).

PART TWO
PATRONAGE AND BUILDING

INTRODUCTION

This first group of papers, all drawn from the DOCOMOMO Conference, 'Visions Revisited', is dedicated to the general context of building. Its aim is to begin, with the aid of the recollections of key participants from the 1950s and '60s, the reassessment of the 'why', 'who' and 'how' of postwar building as a whole. (Fig. 2.1)

It focuses above all on the 'housing-planning nexus', with two contributors representing the central government viewpoint and one the municipal position. The climax of the Government drive for planned modernisation in the mid 1960s is recalled, especially in the field of housing and planning, by the Scottish Office minister, J Dickson Mabon, who put it into effect, and by one of his key administrators within SDD, Ronnie Cramond. Pat Rogan, on the other hand, recollects the continuing sense of outrage at the persistence of the 'slums', which drove forward the municipal 'crusaders' for housing output. A fourth paper focuses on a different aspect of the 1960s rebuilding – the urban roads programme of Glasgow Corporation, which set out to create a full-scale US-style expressway in the densely constrained setting of a European city. Described by the engineer James P McCafferty, the essay deals both with the 'provision' and the 'design' of this vast and, in the event, uncompleted project. But we begin Part 1 of the book with the three short introductory papers which inaugurated the 'Visions Revisited' conference.



2.1 DOCOMOMO 'Visions Revisited' inaugural conference, 10 October 1992: conference ticket.

VISIONS REVISITED CONFERENCE: INTRODUCTORY ADDRESSES
CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME:
KIRSTY WARK

Welcome to 'Visions Revisited'. This is the inaugural conference of the Scottish National Group of DOCOMOMO – the International Working Party for the Documentation and Conservation of Buildings and Sites of the Modern Movement. And it's a mark of the passion that Modern architecture arouses that this conference is well oversubscribed. You've all come here from your own traditions – planners, architects, historians, interested people from the community. And, also, you've come with your own prejudices. This, then, is a chance to hear a great variety of views expressed.

John Ruskin said: 'When we build, let us think that we build for ever'. The trouble is, many people don't see Modernist buildings like that, and they accrue evidence – and it's often not very difficult to accrue evidence – to support their view. Or, sometimes, the problem is just the shock of seeing something different – like the Louvre pyramid in Paris. One interpretation

Recently, when compiling the notes for this paper, I went up to the City Chambers in Edinburgh, and had a talk with the Depute Convener of Housing of Edinburgh District Council. I learned that the waiting list is now no less than 25,000, about half of that number being homeless. When I left office as Housing Chairman in 1965, the waiting list had been reduced to 6,000, but that number's back up to 25,000! In discussing multi-storey blocks, it appears that the public are still divided. Some love them, some loathe them. At present, there are 72 multi-storey blocks in Edinburgh. Seventeen are due for demolition, leaving 55, with 4,500 flats. But the most interesting thing that came out of our discussion was this. The District Council plan, for the next five years, has a paragraph headed: 'Acquisition of Land and New Building'. It reads: 'The District Council owns sites which have potential to be developed to meet housing need. At present, however, the Housing Department lacks the capital finance to embark on its new building programme. It also has to consider the 'Right to Buy' implications of any new building scheme, as tenants will be able to purchase their homes at full discount after five years, leaving the Council with a large, long-standing loan debt on the houses sold, and with a reduced revenue base to service the debt.'

So, in effect, Edinburgh District Council is barred from embarking on worthwhile projects. Meantime, vast sums are being spent on maintaining existing housing stocks, and rehabilitating private properties – the point that was touched on in Dick Mabon's paper, and where, I may say, the money's being used to very good advantage.

2.25 Pat Rogan revisits Martello Court (20th floor) in 1991.

But, overall, the future certainly looks bleak, as the private sector is also stagnant, mainly as a result of the recession. And therefore the whole future, for the homeless, and for those hoping to acquire a new home – especially the young ones coming up, who are looking for new homes of their own – doesn't look too bright at all. However, we can but hope that things will improve as they go along – that's always been my sentiment!

THE GLASGOW INNER RING ROAD: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

JAMES P McCAFFERTY

As the only engineer contributing to this conference, among so many architects and others, I feel rather like the one-eyed javelin player, brought into the team not so much to win medals as to keep the crowd on its toes! I'm not a traffic engineer or a transportation planner. I cannot therefore claim any personal credit for the overall planning of the Inner Ring Road, but I was very much involved in its design and its construction. (Figs. 2.26, 2.27)

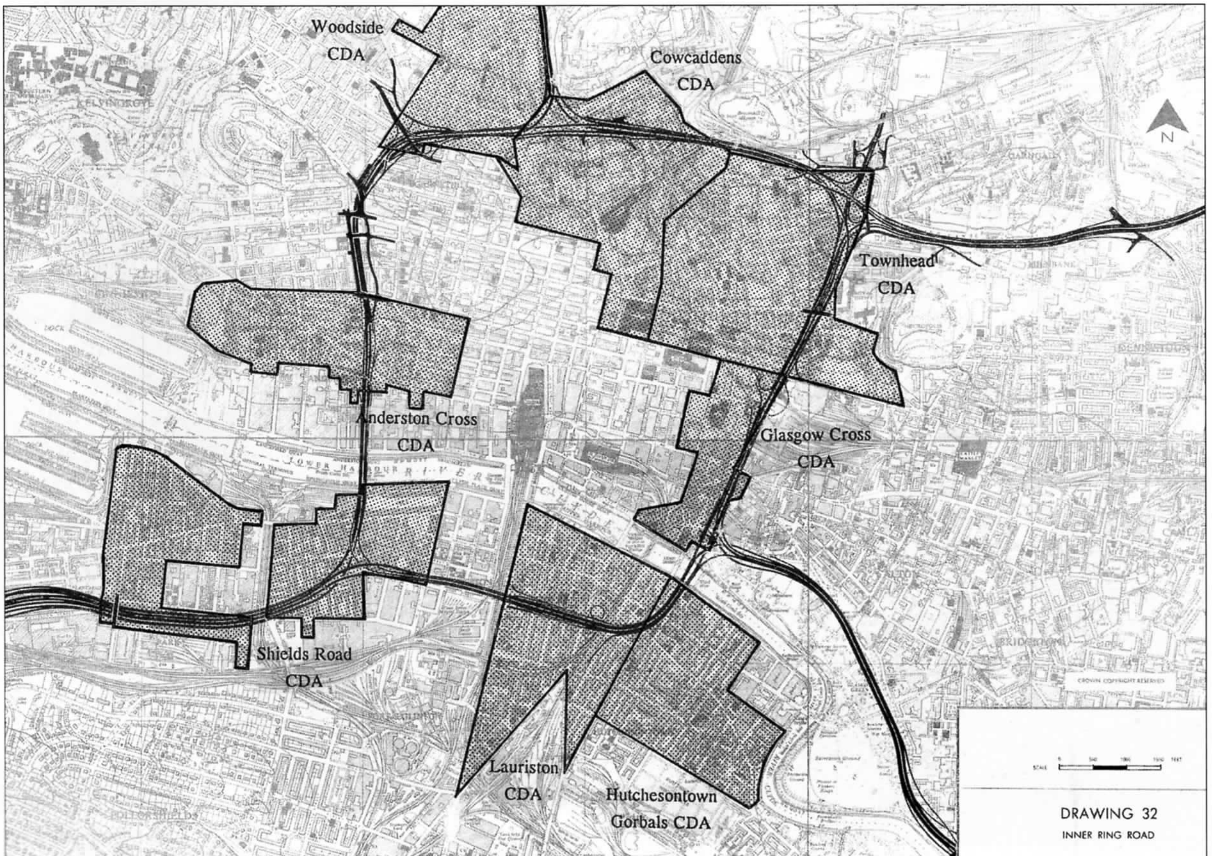
When I left university and – a product of the white heat of technology – joined Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick, we were still in the Swinging Sixties. Mini-skirts, the Pill, New Towns, the Beatles, flat roofs, tower blocks – and urban motorways! It was a time of great change and excitement. Everyone wanted to be 'where it was at'. And, as far as urban motorways in Scotland were concerned, 'where it was at' was 6 Park Circus, Glasgow, the home of Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick. For the next ten years or so, I mixed with a group of energetic and innovative engineers from many parts of the world, and we also worked closely with Holford Associates, architects and planning consultants – and, of course, with our clients, the Corporation of the City of Glasgow. In the beginning, where no standards existed, we invented them. We felt that we were involved in the greatest project in Scotland. And when it was over, we scattered, like the remnants of the Seven Samurai, to far-off parts, to share our experiences with others.

I propose, first, to give you a potted history, to set this project in its historical context, followed by an evaluation – and a view of the future.

The first proposals for the systematic modernisation of the Glasgow road network date back to the end of World War II. In 1945, Robert Bruce, Master of Works and City Engineer, proposed two ring roads around the centre of Glasgow, and several radial motorways. In 1949, Abercrombie's *Clyde Valley Regional Plan* recommended an extension to the Bruce roads network, including several other ring roads and radial arteries, along with rehousing in New Towns, new industries for old, and a coordinated transportation plan. In 1954, the Glasgow Development Plan proposed two ring roads again, and nine dual carriageway arterial roads, along with road improvements to reduce traffic congestion in the city centre.

But all these plans for the time being remained on paper – and, by 1956, the average journey speed in the city of Glasgow was just 8.2 m.p.h. 'Stopped time' accounted for one-third of journey time. Traffic was focused on the city centre. Many of the roads were overloaded. Use of public transport was falling, and private vehicle ownership was increasing dramatically. Traffic volumes were expected to treble in fifty years. Road safety records were worsening. This is a quotation from the 1960 Review of the Development Plan: 'The future social and economic health of Glasgow will depend basically on a successful attack on the interlocked problems of housing, employment and communications. In this respect, the campaign of the 1960-80 period should be centred on the redevelopment of 29 Comprehensive Development Areas (CDAs), and on the traffic proposals for the central area'. By contrast, the existing road system was characterised by the Review as 'a plethora of radial routes with multitudinous interchanges, and a complete absence of specially designed ring roads which would link the main radials and enable through and cross city traffic to steer clear of the city centre and inner residential areas'.

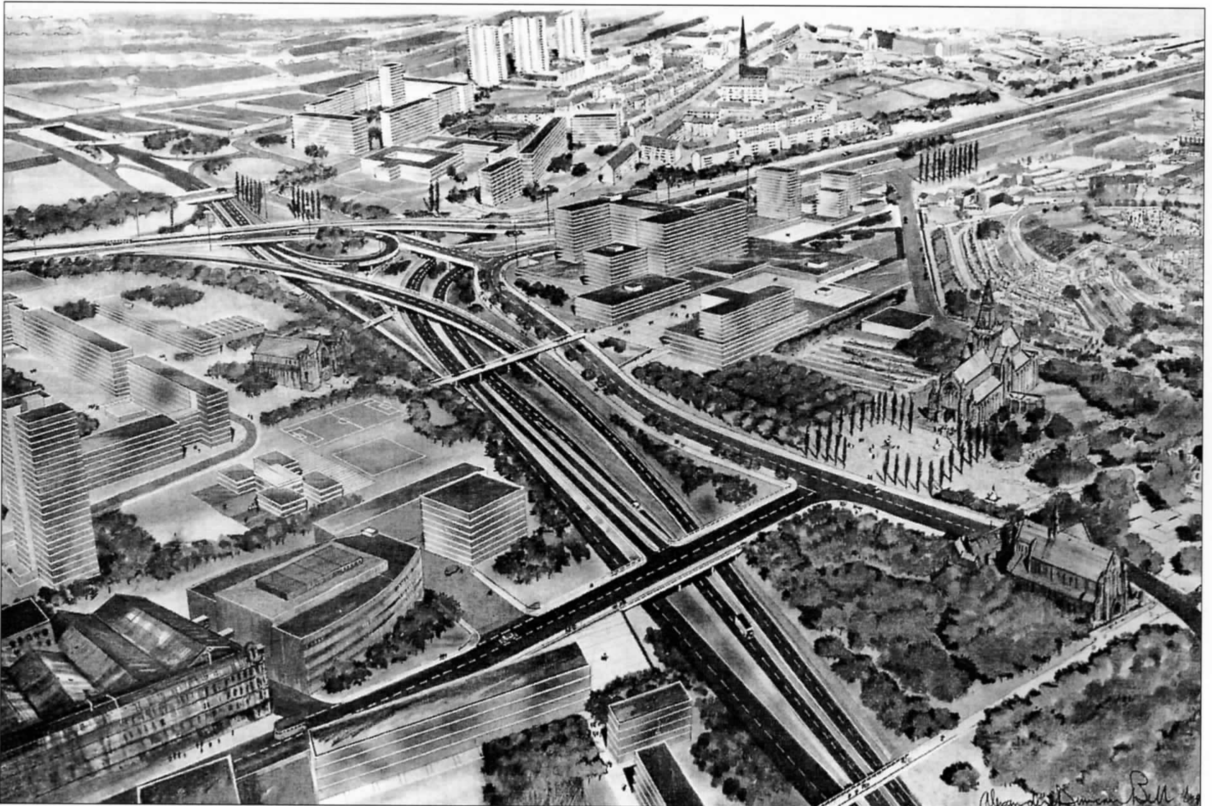
The 29 CDAs recommended in the 1960 Review – part of the Glasgow planners' strategy of linked redevelop-



2.26 Glasgow *Highway Plan* (1965): map of Inner Ring Road, with Comprehensive Development Areas superimposed.

ment and overspill – involved 2,700 acres of the city, 2,500 industrial and commercial concerns, and a population of 300,000, and the traffic proposals included an Inner Ring Road. Although this concept had been discussed previously, now the CDA clearance programme provided a readymade framework into which the road could be slotted. By that time, in 1960, significant elements of public and political opinion in the city were ready for this bold step. The *Glasgow Herald*, on 22nd February, proclaimed, 'The timing and the logic of the proposals are both right. Redevelopment of the central areas provides the opportunity for road building on the boldest lines'. A strong element of civic pride was evident: Glasgow was, after all, the nation's largest city and its commercial-industrial hub. And there were also comparisons with the relative inactivity of England in this field. The *Herald* continued: 'The most extraordinary thing, perhaps, about the inner ring road proposals is that they have sprung from local initative. While Mr. Marples, Minister of Transport, is considering what powers he possesses or can acquire to make a departmental assault on London's traffic problem, Glasgow has produced a blueprint for the first urban motorway in Britain, probably in Europe, and is turning now to consider the prospects for an outer ring route'.

But others were not so keen. In the *Glasgow Herald* three days earlier, Councillor Harry J. Crone had complained that the Planning Committee were 'bulldozing the individual members of the Corporation'. A.S. Warren complained of being 'pulled by the nose'. The person doing the 'bulldozing' and 'nose pulling' was Bailie Bill Taylor, Convener of Planning and future leader of the Labour Group in Glasgow Corporation. He explained, in reply, that 'purely negative restrictions on traffic do not meet the basic functions and needs of the city, and severe restrictions could eventually lessen the importance of the central area as a whole . . . Unless our road system matches the potential challenge, then



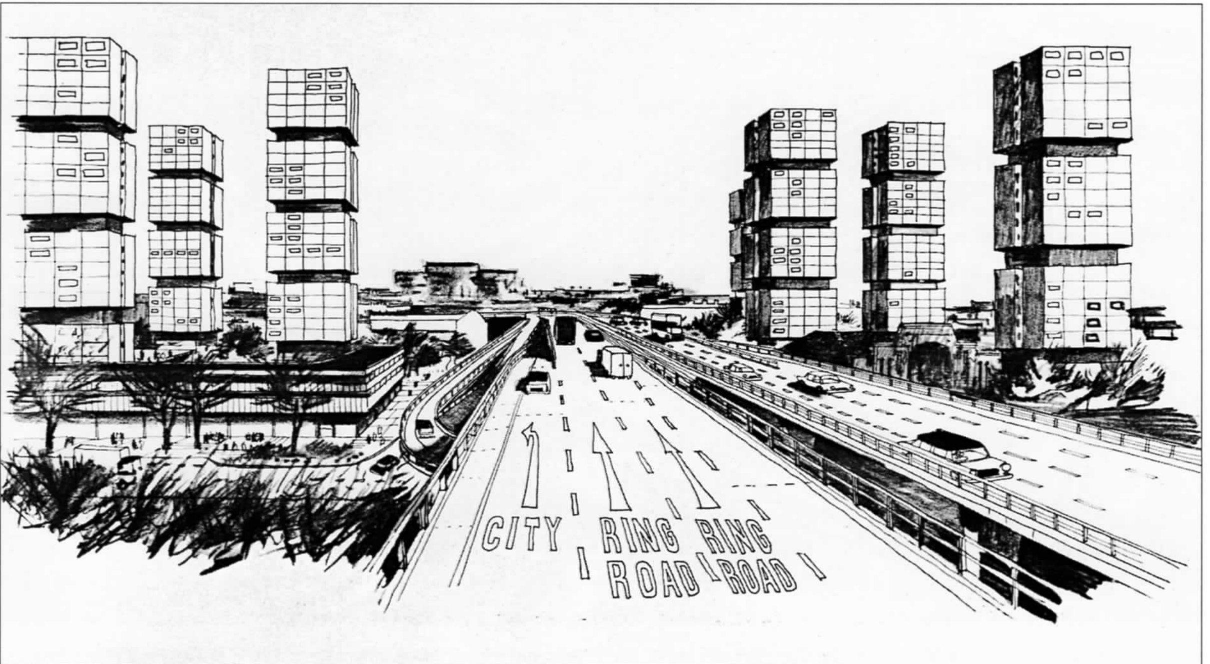
2.27 Perspective (1965), by Alexander Duncan Bell, showing the Townhead interchange as envisaged in the *Highway Plan*. The view, from the southwest, shows the Royal Infirmary completely redeveloped at the centre, and, at the left, the originally intended decked layout of Townhead C.D.A. Area 'B'.

the centre of Glasgow is going to die of slow strangulation'. As S. Hamilton, former Town Clerk, subsequently noted, a decisive role was indeed played by the City's Labour administration, who supported this initiative of the Planning and Housing Committees, and forcefully exploited available Government subsidy.

In 1960, therefore, Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick were commissioned to develop an Inner Ring Road proposal. At this stage, the road proposals included the embryonic idea for a ring road round the centre. The Clyde Tunnel was proposed, and there were motorways heading towards Glasgow, but nobody was quite sure what they were going to do when they got there! In 1961, Lord Provost Jean Roberts led a visit to the USA to study redevelopment of urban areas. They visited Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, New Haven, Pittsburgh, Detroit and Chicago. They returned convinced that comprehensive redevelopment, mass transportation, and urban motorways would halt Glasgow's decline.

Again in 1961, Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick were asked to undertake a more comprehensive study, and we brought in New York consultants Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton to advise on American experience. The initial proposals for the Inner Ring Road were published in 1962. In 1963 the Highway Plan itself was completed, although it was not published until 1965. At that time, car ownership was predicted to be three times higher by 1990, and the proposals included three ring roads, plus radial motorways and expressways. The ultimate network of roads comprised an Inner Ring Road in the middle, with various arterial roads, and outer ring roads. It indicated the present M74 coming off the Inner Ring Road East Flank at Glasgow Green just north of the Clyde; the Kingston Bridge crossing; and the Renfrew and Monkland Motorways. Going straight out to the north-west was to be the Maryhill Motorway, towards Bearsden, Milngavie and the north of the city.

As already mentioned, the Inner Ring was to make extensive use of the Comprehensive Development Areas, already designated by Glasgow Corporation planners, which covered a vast area of the city. These CDAs, of course, were there not just to cope with roads, but to cope with rehousing and regeneration of the city. They came first, in other words: the road opportunistically made use of their clearance. Although I daresay the tenements in the path of the



2.28 1965 *Highway Plan* perspective of South Flank (unbuilt).

road fell into disrepair even more quickly once its alignment was decided! (Fig. 2.28)

Target 1 of the Highway Plan – the motorway across the city, including the West and North Flanks of the Inner Ring Road – was planned to be completed by 1975, along with pedestrianisation of principal shopping streets and an effective parking policy. By 1965, work on the North Flank at Townhead had commenced, with the Scottish Office providing finance of 50-75% for the contracts which followed. And, in the event, Target 1 was actually completed by 1981, in ten contracts. The cost of all that was about £150m (or £590m in today's prices).

The principles of planning of the Inner Ring Road were similar to those produced in the Buchanan Report, which it pre-dated. Primary roads would be built for main traffic flows; most traffic would be directed away from city streets; large travel and environmental benefits would result. Traffic diverted to well-designed new roads would cause less environmental harm than the same traffic on narrow city streets. The city centre environment would be improved by limiting traffic, and that traffic would be limited by control of parking spaces. Short-term parking was to be encouraged, car commuting discouraged.

The techniques which were used in the 1961 traffic survey were as follows: destination surveys established travel patterns in 1961, and traffic patterns were then predicted for 1990, allowing for traffic growth, and changes of population and employment, New Towns and so on. Future road proposals were then tested for the predicted traffic flows. The results of this 1961 survey, fed into a model of the city streets, demonstrated large flows on either side of Central Station, and crossing the River Clyde: that was why there were already those two bridges there. And there were big flows on Paisley Road West, Great Western Road, and on Parliamentary Road, leading out to Springburn and Kirkintilloch. The 1990 traffic fed on to the same system indicated that there would be massive congestion, were nothing to be done to the road system. Particularly busy would be Paisley Road West and the roads along the south side of the line of the present Kingston Bridge. All in all, predicted traffic flows were found to be four times higher in 1990 than in 1961. The same 1990 traffic levels, fed on to the Highway Plan's proposed new network, showed a large volume of traffic flowing out across the Kingston Bridge and going up round the West Flank of the Inner Ring Road and out along the North. There was also a massive flow – indeed a bigger flow – predicted for the East and South Flanks. And there were connections to the M74 at the south-east.

The traffic survey models, we believed, provided a rational basis for the design of new roads. Primary routes were located so as to cause least environmental harm, which, it was recognised, could arise from noise, visual intrusion and severance. I mentioned the CDAs a moment ago. But outside those areas, too, the motorways were located along disused canals, adjacent to railways, or adjacent to industrial areas – in other words, trying to snake along lines of existing severance. Construction of the North and West Flanks was staged: the worst areas of congestion, mostly in the early CDAs, were relieved first. It was intended that a sensible, coherent system was to exist at all times. Inevitably, however, this dramatic period from 1965 onwards, when the line of the road became a huge expanse laid bare awaiting construction, was a time of great trauma for the city. Most people travelled by public transport in those days, but there was still a lot of chaos, traffic-jams of buses, and general inconvenience to people who were simply trying to go about their daily business while an urban motorway system was being constructed across their city. (Figs. 2.29, 2.30)

Considerable efforts were made to ensure that the system would be safe, user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing. For instance, the design set out, from the beginning, to provide open-span pedestrian underpasses rather than closed boxes, because it was felt these were much more open and user-friendly, allowing free movement of traffic and people at ground level. A lot of attention was given to the detailing of footways and landscaping. Also carefully considered were the interchange designs, with bridges sweeping down to carry traffic. These are quite interesting structures in their own right – single columns, torsionally stiff prestressed concrete boxes.

Townhead Interchange was the first to be constructed. Its prestressed concrete box girder bridges were quite avant-garde in their day. The red sandstone retaining walls, on the other hand, came in a way from the past: they were built of rubble re-used from demolished tenements.

Models of major structures such as Townhead Interchange were made, to assist in public exhibitions – which were not the same thing, of course, as today's idea of public 'participation'. The Inner Ring Road design work was split between two firms of consulting engineers, Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick (who dealt, basically, with the North Flank) and W.A. Fairhurst and Partners (the West Flank). Another environmental concern was that not just important industry, but also buildings of historical or architectural interest – including their settings – were to be preserved. At Charing Cross, for instance, the motorway was depressed in a cutting, both to reduce noise and to minimise severance of the community and overshadowing of the Mitchell Library; and there was an effort, through the famous 'Bridge to Nowhere' – which was intended to carry shops across the street – to preserve the 'canyon effect' of the city centre. It would, of course, have been much cheaper and simpler just to continue the line of the raised viaducts on either side, but that would have been unacceptable in such a sensitive location.

So what were the results of all this planning and effort? An evaluation carried out by my firm in 1980 produced the following results. For the motorist, there were of course direct and obvious benefits. Traffic speed had increased from an average of 18 mph in 1961 to 50 mph, largely because of the M8; time savings, largely because of the M8, were about 20%; fuel savings, approximately 9%; and a reduction of street congestion produced similar savings of time and fuel. But other people benefited, too. There was a large reduction in the number of accidents and fatalities on the roads into the city: fatalities were cut from 16.5 per million vehicle-miles to 0.8 in 1977. There were also environmental benefits – a reduction

2.30 Oblique view of the same area in 1974, after completion of the road.

(opposite) 2.29 Vertical aerial view of West and North Flanks under construction, 1969. At the bottom of the picture, the Kingston Bridge is half-built. Above it, on both sides of the Ring Road, stretches the Anderston Cross C.D.A. At the top of the picture is clearance for the Woodside C.D.A.

in noise, fumes, visual intrusion and vibration in the city; and a reduction in the number of heavy vehicles travelling through the city, and elimination of traffic from the main shopping streets – pedestrianisation, even, in places such as Buchanan Street. There were also improved operating conditions for buses. And what of the appearance of the completed road itself? Looking at it today, it is, in my opinion, a green, pleasant, yet at the same time dramatic motorway. Lots of trees, landscaping, footbridges, spiral ramps – the planting has come on well.

But along with, or in the wake of all this, there inevitably also came a 'downfall'. The Greater Glasgow Transportation Study (GGTS) was set up in the mid 1960s to produce a coordinated transportation plan for all modes of traffic. In 1968, they confirmed that the Highway Plan was the highway network they intended to adopt. Several years later, however – in 1973 – the Land Compensation Act gave rights to compensation if property values were to fall due to road construction. That year, the GLC in London immediately abandoned its motorway plans. By 1974, the Greater Glasgow Transportation Study was reporting a 30% drop in predicted 1990 traffic. In the deteriorating economic conditions and changing political climate, the motorway proposals appeared over-ambitious and expensive. Now there was more emphasis on jobs and dealing with urban deprivation. Increasingly, transportation policy encouraged the use of public transport.

The optimism of the 1960s was gone, and attitudes towards urban motorways changed. 'Motorway' became a pejorative word, and the roads themselves were now actually blamed for the clearance of the CDAs! Environmentalists and conservationists led the protests. Confidence among politicians and officials waned. In 1975 Strathclyde Regional Council inherited Glasgow's roads, and by 1981 Stage 1 had been completed. But there were to be no more big urban road schemes.

What, then, of the future? Traffic volumes continue to rise inexorably. There are currently 155,000 vehicles per day crossing the Kingston Bridge, against 120,000 predicted for 1990. Because the Ring Road has not been completed, Charing Cross Section cannot cope with the traffic: under the original plan, half the through traffic on that section would have gone the other way, via the South and East Flanks. So at rush-hour Charing Cross is slow-moving, often blocked. Something needs to be done.

Yet, paradoxically, car ownership in Glasgow is very low, by modern Western European standards. There's a long way to go before we get anywhere near the sort of car ownership levels of Düsseldorf or München! But car-use will inevitably rise fast unless some political move is made to restrict it. We only need to look at what's happened since the most recent predictions, in 1983: a steep rise, above both the 'low' and 'high' predictions of '83! In other words, our predictions have been completely wrong, and, for the past decade, car ownership has been increasing far faster than expected. What is to be done?

Strathclyde Regional Council have proposals to tackle this situation, which they've summed up in a document called 'Travelling in Strathclyde'. This plan proposes a light rail transit system through the city. It will be on roads, with wires overhead: useful, but perhaps not as aesthetically pleasing as some other modes of transport. But what about new roads? The Strathclyde plan shows spreading red lines snaking right round what once might have been called the East Flank and the South Flank, and across the river by the Kingston Bridge. All looking suspiciously like some sort of completion of the Inner Ring Road – but not quite the sort of Ring Road that was planned, originally! (Fig. 2.31)

(opposite) 2.31 Glasgow Inner Ring Road, West Flank: 1988 view of Kingston Bridge.

Institute of Chartered Accountants in London, I got external concrete out of my system; but I've always felt the need to express the constructional material. My underlying philosophy's stayed the same: a preoccupation with an openly declared articulation of the surface of a building – separating out elements of the building, and bringing them to the outside to make their presence felt. In answer to your second question: I believe Modern architecture's been a great movement, but it's been corrupted badly. The Modern Movement made one terrible mistake, in particular: it dismissed everything which happened before 1917. It became totalitarian, like Communism in Russia. And it crumbled at roughly the same time as Communism. But, unlike Communism, this was just a crumbling of things that obscured its essence: the real Modern Movement is still there. The Weissenhof houses were pure music, wonderful things. The rot began with the Festival of Britain, which trivialised Modern architecture, with gewgaws applied to buildings. However, I think that the Modern Movement, in the broad sense, is now heading for a renaissance. It's not for me personally – but I'm rather excited about it!

VISIONS REVISITED CONFERENCE: CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Kirsty Wark: To conclude this conference, we've gathered together a discussion panel, drawn from some of our speakers today. (Fig. 3.74) I'd like to begin by re-focusing on what was perhaps the most persistent theme running through these lectures: the drive to build Modern mass housing, and the architectural and building processes which contributed to it. Because that subject seems somehow to encapsulate all the most acute pressures of the time: social, political, aesthetic. And it highlights, in a way that no other building type can, the double chronological tension associated with Modernism: on the one hand, its own ambiguous, generally hostile relationship with the legacy of the 19th century; on the other hand, our own uneasy present-day relationship with the relics of Modernism – monuments of a lost era of utopian dreams.

Let's jump straight into these issues, by picking up the debate that Charles Robertson started. If we take just that one project, Hutchesontown 'C', and ask: how do we, today, go about evaluating its historical and architectural significance? And what do we actually do about the building and its problems, in practical terms? There must be, represented at this conference, a variety of views, ranging from architects, engineers, to planners perhaps; I don't think we have anyone who has ever lived in Hutchesontown 'C', but I may be wrong, and it would be interesting to have their views as well. What do we do with Hutchesontown 'C'? If it needs shoring up and other extraordinary measures to save it – then should it be saved at all? (Fig. 3.75)

Charles Robertson: I think it's structurally sound, and I don't think there's any question of it falling down. In

3.74 'Visions Revisited' conference: discussion panel of speakers. Visible in picture (from left): Charles Robertson, James P McCafferty, David Page, Kirsty Wark.

3.75 Hutchesontown 'C': 1966 view beneath the eastern block.

3.74 'Visions Revisited' conference: discussion panel of speakers. Visible in picture (from left): Charles Robertson, James P McCafferty, David Page, Kirsty Wark.