climate? Is it important to maintain existing views from the site or will the building construct its own inward-looking prospect? How is access to the site to be effected and how can the placing of buildings on the site reduce roads and site works to a minimum whilst at the same time allowing for easy circulation of people and vehicles? How do site access points respond to an existing infrastructure of vehicular and pedestrian routes? Where are existing services to the site located?

Such a survey need not be exhaustive to prompt a designer's key site responses. These in turn will be reappraised and modified along with other decisions as the design progresses. During these initial explorations it is advisable to draw the site and outline building proposals to scale so that relative sizes of the site and major building elements may be absorbed early on in the design process. In this way it is possible even at this stage to test the validity of basic design decisions and whether there exists a fundamental harmony between the site and the proposed buildings which it is to accommodate.

This whole question of an architect's response to a specific site is best illustrated by example (**Figure 3.1**). Here is a generous south facing sloping site with mature planting within a lush western suburb of Sheffield. Dramatic distant views of the city are afforded to the south and a major road forms the site's northern boundary together with vehicular and pedestrian links to local facilities. The local authority insists that all mature trees on site are retained. The initial steep gradient from the road makes vehicular penetration of the site impracticable and, in the event, undesirable, given its mature planting. The client's needs appear to be even more demanding; he wishes to retire to this house with his wife and requires to live, eat and sleep at road level, that is, on an elevated plane to the north boundary. Moreover, he wishes to store his three historic motor cars at the same level and adjacent to the road to minimise hard surfacing on site. As much as possible of the mature planting on site must be retained (it is the former garden of an adjacent nineteenth-century villa). The initial diagrammatic solution (**Figures 3.2, 3.3**) demonstrates not only how responses to the site and, for example, client's needs are interdependent, but also the need to consider simultaneously various

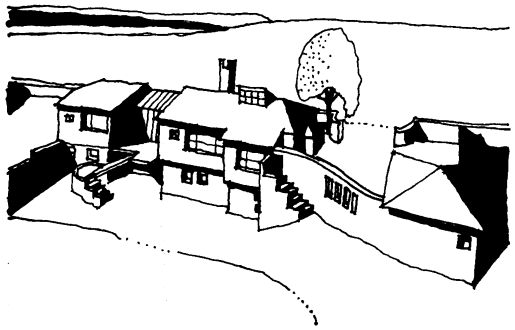

Figure 3.1 *Fawcett, A. Peter, House for Anaesthetist, Sheffield 1987.*

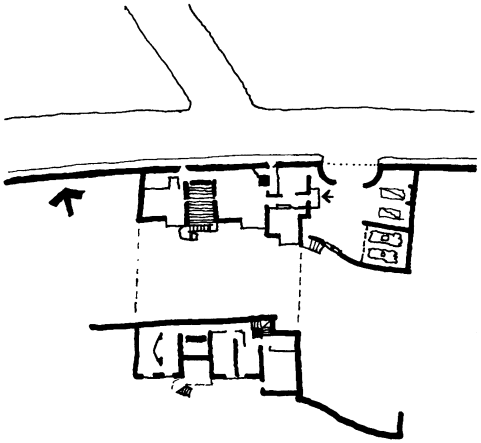

Figure 3.2 *Fawcett, A. Peter, House for Anaesthetist, Sheffield 1987, Ground floor and basement plans.*

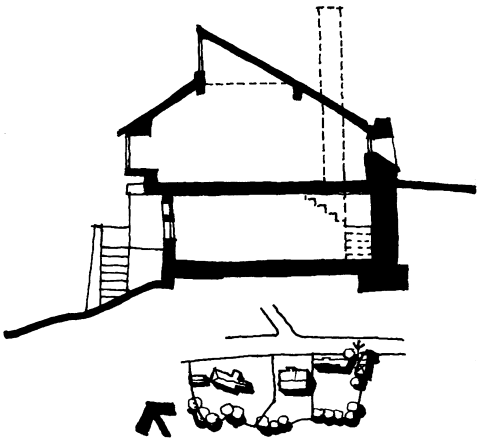

Figure 3.3 *Fawcett, A. Peter, House for Anaesthetist, Sheffield 1987, Section/site plan.*

components of the programme. Furthermore, it demonstrates how apparently severe programmatic constraints may provide a real springboard for creativity and form-making; hence the linear, single-aspect plan; the elevated living floor for access and views with service areas below; the retention of the boundary retaining wall to the north to serve also as the building's boundary thereby minimising its 'footprint' on site to preserve all mature planting; the minimal 'mews' vehicular access.

Intervention

This demonstrates how aspects of a specific programme can interact with a site to determine an optimum formal outcome. But exemplars have also conditioned architects' responses to the site during this century; these have taken on extreme positions from the archetypal Corbusian model where precise geometrical building form is set up in dramatic contrast to the landscape (**Figure 3.4**), and where 'pilotis' allow the building to hover in apparent detachment from the site, to an alternative modernist orthodoxy where a building's 'organic' form is perceived as an outcrop of the site itself (**Figure 3.5**). These positions have variously been interpreted as the self-conscious designed object contributing to the landscape (**Figure 3.6**), or, as in the case of Cullinan's visitors' centres for sensitive archaeological sites, for any intervention to