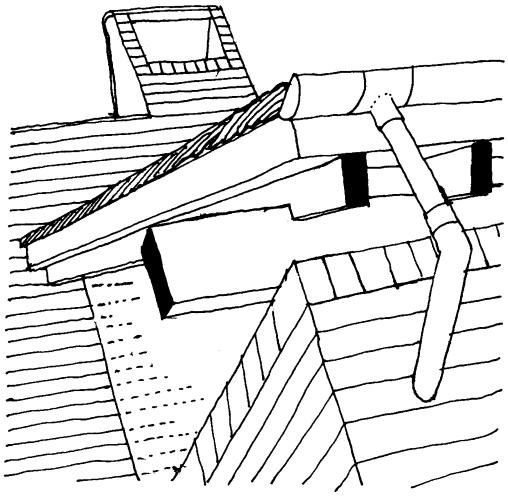

Figure 4.29 *Aldington, Craig, Collinge. Housing, Bledlow, Bucks, 1977.*

powerful pragmatic tradition within the pluralist ambit of recent British architecture.

Just as most buildings juxtapose a range of formal framed, planar or plastic elements, so do they embody contrasting tectonic types. This may well be a response to a programme demanding a range of accommodation, the cellular elements of which could be served by a traditional structure of load-bearing masonry, but where other parts of the building demanding uncluttered spaces will require the technology of large spans.

Architects have seized upon the potential for form-making that such juxtapositions offer (**Figure 4.30**), but they also raise a question of structural hierarchies, where one structural

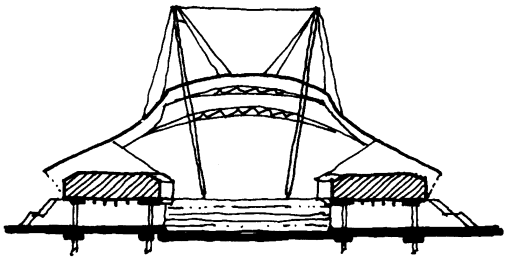

Figure 4.30 *Michael Hopkins, Inland Revenue Amenity Building, Nottingham, 1995. Section. From* Architectural Review *5/95, p. 40.*

form remains dominant over sub-systems which provide a secondary or even tertiary order.

Expression

Having arrived at an appropriate structure, or set of structural systems, be they framed, planar or plastic which will allow the 'diagram' to develop and mature, the designer is faced with the whole question of structural expression and how this interacts with the 'skin' of the building. Should the external membrane oversail and obscure a structural frame, should it infill and therefore express the frame, or should the frame be revealed as a free-standing element proud of the external cladding or 'skin' (**Figures 4.31–4.33**)?

Moreover, if load-bearing masonry structure is adopted, should the building in its external expression articulate a clear distinction between what is load-bearing and what is

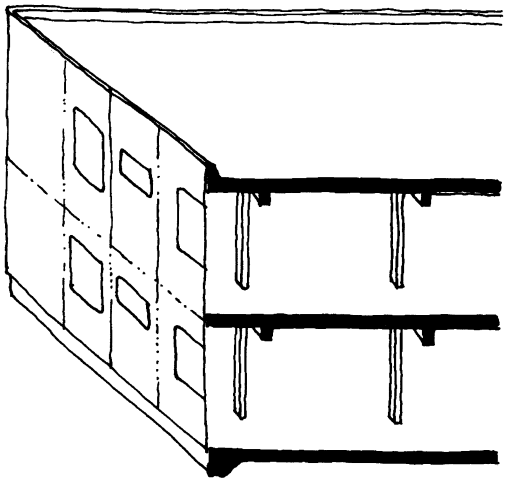

Figure 4.31 *Cladding 'oversailing' structure.*

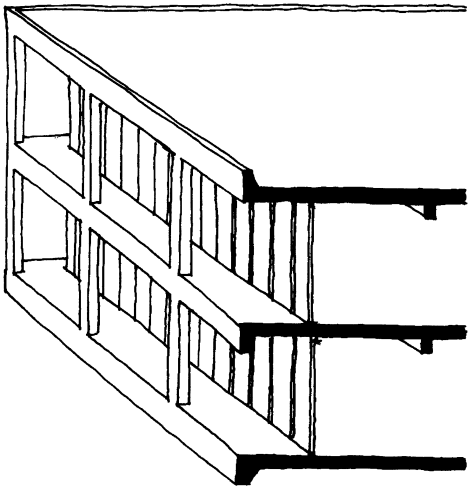

Figure 4.33 *Cladding recessed behind structure.*

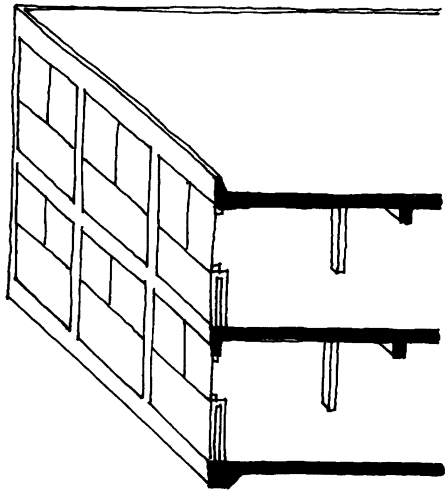

Figure 4.32 *Cladding 'flush' with structure.*

merely non-load-bearing infill. Therefore within this complex design process, attitudes towards choice of structure and its expression established at an early stage, inevitably have a profound effect upon a formal outcome.

HOW IS IT MADE?

Tectonic display

Having established what the 'carcass' or bare bones of the structure will be, the designer will give further thought to how these 'blocks', 'sticks' or 'membranes' will be assembled and joined together. As we shall see in the next chapter, this process in itself allows the