

Figure 5.1 Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, Poissy, 1931. From student model, University of Nottingham.

It was Lubetkin who remarked that one of the most difficult tasks facing the architect was giving a building 'a hat and a pair of boots'. In the event he followed the Corbusian example of allowing the building to 'hover' over the site on free-standing columns, thereby offering a transitional void between the building and the site; at roof level, a carefully organised repetitive façade was terminated by an eruption of plastic formal incident which effectively finished off the building with a silhouette akin to abstract sculpture (**Figure 5.5**). These devices

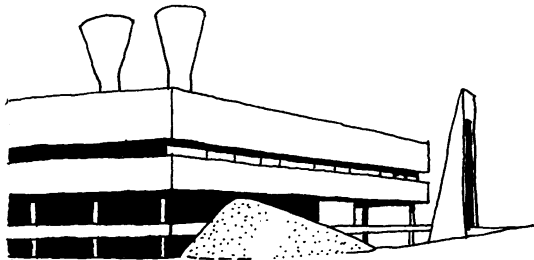


Figure 5.2 Ryder and Yates, Gas Council Research Station, Killingworth, Northumberland, 1969.

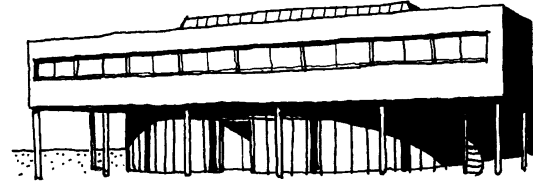


Figure 5.3 Derek Walker, Chief Architect, Milton Keynes Development Corporation, Parish Church, Milton Keynes, 1974.

were initially established by Le Corbusier embodied within his 'five points' manifesto and were best exploited on multi-storey buildings, but even when faced with designing his own single-storey dwelling at Whipsnade, Bedfordshire, 1936, Lubetkin reinterpreted the Corbusian model by cantilevering the floor slab from its primary support so that the whole structure appeared to be visually



Figure 5.4 Quinlan Terry, Library, Downing College, Cambridge, 1992.

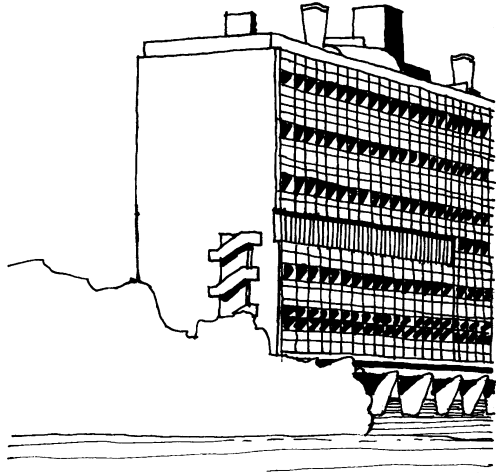


Figure 5.5 Le Corbusier, *Unité d'Habitation*, Marseilles, 1952.

divorced from the site. At roof level, a curved wall within the plan was reiterated as a plastic screen addressing the surrounding landscape (**Figure 5.6**).

The classical language of architecture had offered a whole range of devices for establish-

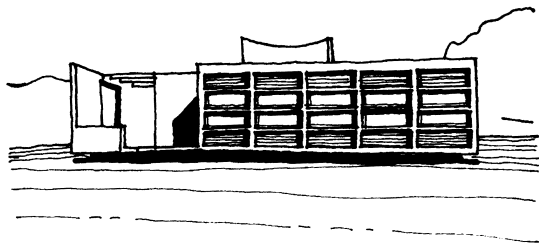


Figure 5.6 Berthold Lubetkin, *House at Whipsnade*, 1936. From Berthold Lubetkin, Allen, J., RIBA, p. 186.

ing a satisfactory transition between the building and the ground, and, indeed, for terminating the façade at roof level; such were the roles of the rusticated base and entablature respectively and architects have since reinterpreted these devices in various ways (**Figure 5.7**). Whilst various alternatives to the classical base or podium have been evolved as plinths firmly to wed the building to its site, it is the role of the roof in determining how a building looks which has most taxed architects' visual imaginations.



Figure 5.7 T. C. Howitt, *Portland Building*, Nottingham University, 1957.