

Figure 9.6 The Radcliffe Camera, Oxford

Figure 9.7 University Buildings, Abercrombie Square, Liverpool



9.6

and that: ‘There are equal numbers of large, medium and small projects’ (Alexander *et al.*, 1987). The figure that Alexander places on the upper limit for projects – based presumably on the North American experience – is 100 000 square feet. This figure represents a four-storey building



9.7

block, without light wells, of just under one acre in extent. The upper limits set by Alexander may be too high for the British context, where street blocks traditionally tend to be smaller than those in the USA. Sustainable development suggests an upper limit for development of three to four

Figure 9.8 University of Liverpool, Bedford Street North

Figure 9.9 Rialto Bridge, Venice



9.8

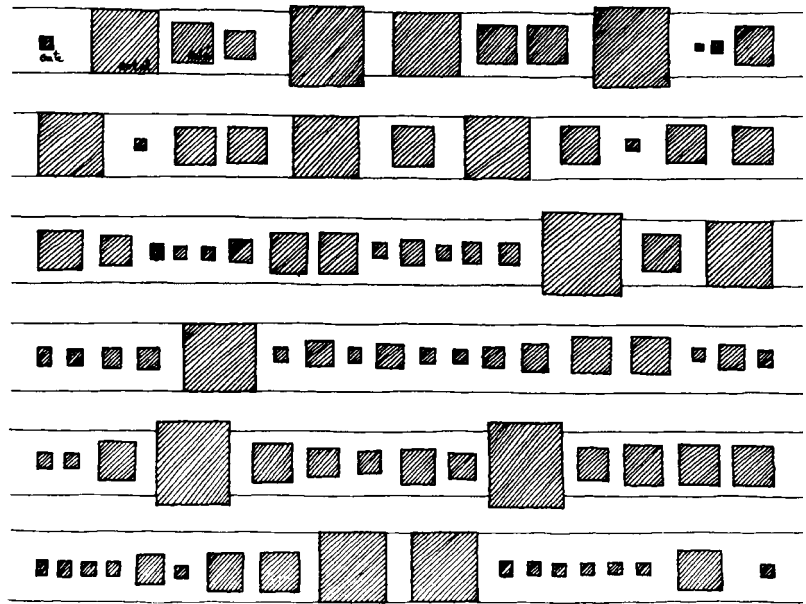


9.9



9.10

storeys, which also points to development units of smaller scale than those envisaged by Alexander. There seems to be a strong case for breaking down into discrete units of single street blocks those large-scale developments which have become increasingly more common in recent years. The street block developed to three and four storeys should be the determinant of project limitation. Using the notion of a correct distribution of project sizes, then for sustainable development – particularly in the British context – a majority of small and medium-sized developments should be the strategy for city planning and design and not the equal numbers of large, medium, and small projects suggested by Alexander.



9.11

Figure 9.10 Rialto Bridge, Venice

Figure 9.11 Sequence and size of development projects (Alexander, 1987)

There is of course, a gain to the public purse in the building of megastructures which obliterate the finer grain of older city networks. With the megastructure, the amount of public street is reduced, and therefore there are savings to be made by the city in its maintenance. In addition, since circulation in the megastructure is along private streets the policing role can be privatized, so saving additional resources. One measure, however, of a civilized society is the degree to which its city streets and squares are public and open to all citizens to use freely and safely. This civilized society requires a city which meets Jacobs' criterion for self-policing, rather than one depending for safety on the night-time closure of whole sections of the city, which are policed in daylight hours by security firms and made safe by the ubiquitous surveillance camera (Jacobs, 1965).