



Roman grid structure through the period of urban decline in the Dark Ages to be reborn in Medieval times and given its delightful half-timbered two-storey shopping arcade built largely upon its Roman street lines. Chester is a particularly good example of a city which owes its existence and current economic well-being to a living tradition of conserving the best from the past and building intelligently upon this fine legacy (Figures 3.6 to 3.8). Gosling attempted to structure development in the Isle of Dogs, London, using the lay line or axis connecting The Queen's House by Inigo Jones in Greenwich to St Ann's Church by Hawksmoor in Limehouse. The axis so formed was intended to be a structuring line, giving definition to this section of the Dockland's regeneration. Unfortunately, this proposal was never implemented and the opportunity to stamp the area with a discipline generated by a sensitive appreciation of this magnificent location and its history was lost (Figures 3.9 to 3.12).<sup>5</sup>

Development in Nottingham during the 1960s and 1970s illustrates a misdirection of urban structure which resulted in part from an application of principles of architectural and planning design associated with 'modernism'. The almost total disregard for Nottingham's urban form which had developed over a long history has resulted in areas of the city in need of attention and repair, or as Alexander says, 'in need of healing' (Figures 3.13 to 3.16).<sup>6</sup> The fate of Nottingham mirrors developments of the time in other British and European cities. The main geographical and historic structuring elements of Nottingham remain evident today. Two main factors determined the siting of Nottingham. The River Trent on which the city is sited was navigable and easily fordable. Bunter sandstone coinciding broadly

**Figure 3.12** St Ann's Church, Limehouse.

with Sherwood Forest terminates abruptly in a river-cut cliff, about two miles long and overlooking the Trent flood plain. The earliest settlement stood on the highest point of this cliff, a sandstone spur with good defence on three sides. The city has the physical remains of two ancient settlements which were sited on the defensive sandstone spur. The former Saxon settlement, or Anglian Burh, centred on the area now known as the Lace Market is to the east of the city centre and the former Norman Borough to the west of the centre was planted on Castle Rock, the most impregnable site in the area (Figures 3.17 and 3.18).<sup>7</sup> The two settlements were unified administratively probably from the twelfth century, symbolized by the development of Market Square, known locally as 'Slab Square'. Around the large triangular square has grown the nucleus of the town centre. The Norman and Saxon centres were, and to some extent are still, connected to each other and to Market Square by a series of narrow Medieval streets such as Castle Gate, Hounds Gate and Bridle Smith Gate (Figures 3.19 to 3.21). Nottingham, unlike many other British cities, is physically separated from its main river. The much smaller River Leen was diverted in the thirteenth century to run beneath the Castle Rock but never became a major trade carrier. It was not until the opening of the canal in the 1790s and the building of a series of warehouses along its length that there was pressure for the centre to move southwards. The early rail network ran round the outside of the built-up area of the town (Figure 3.22).<sup>8</sup> The easiest route into Nottingham at the time of railway expansion was on the south side of the town across the Meadows; the entry point being south of Carrington Street on the edge of the built-up area. Nottingham's Victoria Station to the north of the city was opened in 1901. It served The Great Central and The Great Northern routes. The Great Central Line through the heart of Nottingham connecting The Victoria Station and The Midland Station, which was rebuilt on a grander scale in 1903/1904, was finally and short-sightedly closed by Beeching in 1967. Despite the



**Figure 3.13** Maid Marion Way, Nottingham.



**Figure 3.14** Entrance to The Victoria Shopping Centre, Nottingham.