5.13

Figure 5.13 Public garden, Tavira, Portugal
Figure 5.14 Paving, Piazza del Campo, Siena

5.14

Paving designed to provide a sense of repose is usually associated with areas in the city where people stop and rest: it is the equivalent of pauses in music. It is used in places where people socialize, drink coffee, admire the view of a fountain, a sculpture or a distant prospect. The town square, or the nodes where people meet, are often treated as areas of neutral, non-directional paving. Such paving has the effect of halting people. Equally effective are patterned floors which can give a place a focus of interest. The centre of interest may be the pattern itself or some feature such as, for example, the bandstand in the public garden in Tavira in the Algarve, Portugal, to which the gaze of the onlooker is directed by the insistent pattern of the pavement (Figure 5.13). The interplay of floor patterns which alternate between movement and rest can be designed as the city's choreography, bringing qualities of rhythm, scale and harmony to the urban scene.

Some functions of the hard pavement in towns and cities are concerned with aesthetic requirements in contrast to those discussed previously which are either purely or partly practical in nature. These aesthetic functions include: enhancing the character of an area; retaining some connection with the past, that is, maintaining a memory trace; breaking the scale into more human and visually manageable proportions; signalling a change of design element or simply resorting to ornament and decoration almost for its own sake.

Successful paving reinforces the character of a place. It is part of the greater unity of buildings, soft landscape features, urban furniture, sculptural features, fountains and pools. The character of a paved area is determined partly by the materials used, be they brick, stone slabs, cobbles, concrete or macadam (Beazly, 1967). The edging detail is also

important in determining the character of a paved landscape. The character can vary from the hedge-lined rural path to the highly formal macadam surface with precision-formed kerb. Materials, however, of themselves, have no singular unalterable character. This character of a landscape depends more upon the use of the materials, how they are arranged and how they interrelate with other materials and landscape features. A carefully designed floorscape can give to an area a unity which may otherwise be absent from a disparate group of buildings. The dish like pavement of the Piazza del Campo in Siena holds together the great volume of the square repeating and reinforcing the colour of the surrounding walls. The floor pattern is determined by the drainage channels which fan out from the Palazzo Communale towards the curving wall of the less imposing façades (Figure 5.14). Many traditional parts of other cities also have an overall unity of which the pavement is but part. For example, the brick pavements of Dutch streets echo the material of surrounding façades in one unified and highly decorative townscape (Figures 5.15).

In streets which are being pedestrianized the question is raised of the advisability of retaining pavements. The functionalist view would suggest that the removal of vehicular traffic from streets eliminates the need for a raised kerb and pavement as a vehicular and pedestrian separator. From a narrowly functionalist point of view, this argument is tenable. However, such a design strategy ignores the aesthetic requirement of enhancing the linear quality of the street which is an important consideration. More importantly, if this functionalist principle is followed, an opportunity to retain some link with the past is lost: the memory trace of past necessities is destroyed for ever. Towns and cities are full of such anachronistic and intriguing features which, some would suggest, lend enchantment and interest in an otherwise bland urban world.

Decorative patterning in pavements can perform the important aesthetic function of breaking down the size of large hard surfaces into more manageable human proportions. However, care must be taken when using patterning in pavements to manipulate scale. If not handled carefully, such types of patterning can look forced and artificial. The dished pavement of the Piazza Obliqua designed by Bernini as part of the setting for St Peter's, Rome, depends for its main effect, not on decorative paving, but on the dominance and grandeur of the colonnaded arms of the Piazza, the obelisk at its centre and two flanking fountains. The sweeping dish is emphasized only by eight radial spokes centred on the obelisk, otherwise the vast area has only the pattern of slabs to give it scale (Figure 5.16). In general, paving slabs of stone have a natural scale related to human dimensions. They therefore require no additional patterning for the purpose of determining scale. A pattern within a slabbed pavement may be necessary for other reasons but rarely for those of scale. Macadam or large *in situ* concrete surfaces, often need to be divided by some sort of patterning. Macadam car parks of great and faceless extent present a problem of scale. The division of large areas of car parking into small units based upon the

Figure 5.15 Paved square, Delft