Figure 3.11 The detached tower: Piazza San Marco, Venice
Figure 3.12 Queens Chambers, Long Row, Nottingham

3.11

adjacent street façades. In this instance the effect of the tower is achieved mainly by the projecting turret, a splendid opportunity for lavish decoration and dramatic silhouette. The second type projects in plan and elevation from the building mass of the street block. In this form the tower is more demonstrative and assertive of its context and should be reserved for those important landmarks that denote the nodes which structure the city. The decorative treatment of the projecting turret should be clearly vertical with appropriate towered finish above roof line (Figure 3.10).

(ii) The Detached Tower

This is probably the most unusual type of corner treatment. In this case the tower stands in complete

3.12

isolation from the corner. It follows the model of the tower in St Mark's, Venice, standing at the corner of Sansovino's library and acting as the visual fulcrum turning the corner between piazzetta and piazza. As an urban feature where land is at a premium the utility of a detached tower of this type is strictly limited (Figure 3.11).

HYBRID STREET CORNER TYPES

Many of the basic corner types are capable, with subtle changes of emphasis, of development into hybrid types. The treatment of the roof line and of the ground floor gives the greatest scope for invention and creation of the hybrid corner. In the case of the street corner, in particular, they may be layered and superimposed to create complex hybrid types. For example, the building designed by Watson Fothergill at the junction of Queen Street and Long Row on the northern side of Nottingham's Market

Square is a simple angular corner type, where the roofscape expresses the relative importance of the two streets, but it also has the addition of a delightful stub projected tower element taking the form of a highly decorative oriel window (Figure 3.12). The treatment of the obtuse corner of the bus station in Tavira, Portugal deconstructs the corner element to such an extent that only a small proportion of the façades meet at roof level: the corner of the building being marked by a decorative column extending through two floors: both main floors are deeply incised. In many other ways the building is far from radical and complements the traditional waterfront of the town (Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.13 Bus Station, Tavira, Portugal

THE PIAZZA CORNER TYPOLOGY

The internal angle where two planes meet and tend to enclose space is most commonly found in the public square, place or piazza. According to Sitte (1901), the most important quality of the public place is its sense of enclosure. The public place or square is an outdoor room and together with the room it shares the quality of enclosure. The key to enclosure in the square is the treatment of its corners. Generally speaking the more open the corners of the square, the less the sense of enclosure, the more built up or complete they are, the greater the feeling of being enclosed. The internal corner of the public square is a townscape element which has not always been given great embellishment and, since its spatial qualities have been dealt with elsewhere (Moughtin, 1992), it will not be given great prominence in this text.

THE NON-CORNER

As the name implies the type of piazza corners grouped under this heading occur when the wall planes of the square do not actually meet: there is no actual physical corner. The sense of enclosure, the feeling of being within a place, is then determined and sustained, if at all, by some other method.

(i) The Open Piazza Corner

A prime example of this type of corner treatment is Michelangelo's development of the Capitol in Rome. One side of the piazza is a scenic platform presenting a panoramic view of Rome to the observer. The other two corners of the square, that is, between the Palazzo del Senator and the Palazzo dei Conservatori, and between the Palazzo del Senator and the Capitoline Museum are physically open but visually closed. The piazza holds together as an urban space because of the strength and unity of Michelangelo's powerful architecture and, secondly, because of the insistent decorative floor patterning which concentrates eye and mind upon the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (Figure 3.14).

Camillo Sitte developed his own ideal piazza arrangement for a square with open corners. He suggested a plan form where the streets lead out of the corners of the square like the blades of a turbine, so that from any point in the square there is no more than one view out. He was basing his suggestion on medieval examples where he said 'in former days, if possible, only one street opened at each point, while