

the City of New York did not encourage investment in such a mammoth project. Subsequent plans for the precinct were thus more down to earth. A 1975 proposal was pragmatically related to how developers finance their projects. It divided the whole site into a number of residential clusters or pods that could be developed independently. The pods turned in on themselves to create isolated, controllable middle-class worlds. The pods were to be linked by elevated walkways with traffic moving underneath, but the idea was abandoned as too costly. It was a sort of plug-in urban design although who would finance the walkways was not clear. Nevertheless, one of the pods, Gateway Plaza, was built. It took a number of years to complete being finished in 1982. By then the BPCA had abandoned the pod plan and another master plan was in place.

Until 1979, the land was leased to the BPCA. The parlous financial state of the 1970s led to New York State's Urban Development Corporation stepping in and the title was transferred to the BPCA. Having the land title enabled the authority to make decisions rapidly. One of the first decisions it made was to adopt a conceptual plan radical in its simplicity (see Figure 8.34a). The conceptual design and master plan were the work of Alexander Cooper and Stanton Eckstut. Produced in 1979, the scheme's intellectual foundation was a precursor to the ideas of the New Urbanist movement in urban design.

This new plan was developed under considerable time and political pressure. Richard Kahan, Director of the BPCA at that time, faced considerable constraints. Payment on a \$200 million bond issue had to be made in 90 days and a plan requiring the approval of the New York State legislature had to be made within that time. It also had to be

something that property developers could understand. The parcelization of the overall scheme had to be fairly standard.

The plan proposed that up to 14,000 housing units be built on the site, that commercial facilities be incorporated as an integral part of the scheme, and that 6 million square feet (557,000 square metres) of office space be located opposite the World Trade Center. Thirty per cent of the site would be squares and parks and an esplanade would run along the Hudson. The streets consumed another 16% of the site space. The new plan was based on a number of objectives. Battery Park City should:

- 1 be an integral part of Lower Manhattan so the street pattern of Manhattan ought to continue through the site;
- 2 have circulation at ground level;
- 3 have its aesthetic qualities based on New York's architectural heritage;
- 4 have the commercial complex as its foreground buildings, with the other buildings as background;
- 5 have its uses and development controls flexible enough to respond to changes in the marketplace.

The northern end of the site was to be a park, now named for Governor Rockefeller. Public art would terminate the vistas from the centre of the island on each street in order to provide elements of interest and act as symbols of 'class' – high status.

The master plan specified the sites for buildings and the design controls to be applied to each. The building design guidelines were based on the buildings in well-loved parts of New York such as Gramercy Park and Morningside Heights. The guidelines stipulated the nature of materials, the