

The activities inside are all divided up into small cells. This is exacerbated on downtown sites where land values are high and development is forced upwards to achieve the density of occupation that is affordable. Perhaps the large city centre hotel is the most difficult of all for this reason. Here a double message must be expressed about function and prestige. So many twentieth century buildings have struggled with this visual linguistic conundrum that we are used to the monstrosity that blights many of our urban spaces.

There seem to be a number of ways of handling the conflict. In the hands of the clever architect, both scales can be expressed. See how Louis Kahn cleverly manages to express both the scale of the individual laboratory and the scale of the university institution in his Richards Medical Laboratory at Pennsylvania State University in Philadelphia (Fig. 3.8).

This is not the case in this hotel situated just outside the centre of an English city on a main arterial road (Fig. 3.9). The building offers three quite different scales. At ground level the building seems to try hard to puff itself up into something grander than it really is for the entrance, but it largely fails and looks a little ridiculous in the attempt! Above this comes the largest scale of all, with floor levels disguised by the open concrete screen. In fact this is a continuous ramped car park, and draws attention to what should be a secondary service element of the building. Finally, the actual rooms above simply express their natural domestic scale. The whole effect is confusing and inconsistent, with inappropriate relative emphasis on the various components of the whole.

Another technique is simply to avoid expressing the smaller scale by removing the clues to internal functions. The huge glazed walls of a whole generation of curtain-walled buildings in the twentieth century have adopted this device.

### **Scale of movement**

Our discussion of scale so far has tended to imply that the human viewer is static. Another form of scale is that which relates not so directly to ourselves, but to our pattern of movement. As pedestrians we not only have an approximately constant size but we also maintain a more or less constant speed of movement. The way buildings appear and move across our field of vision is largely dependent on this pace of life. As pedestrians we may walk directly past buildings, perhaps on the pavement of a street. In such circumstances we may not only be able to reach out and touch them, but also to feel their effects in a wide variety of ways. We might sense the change in temperature as they create shade or perhaps shield us from the wind; we may hear the sounds of the city reflected back off the walls; we may even smell the materials of the building or the preparation of food or other processes