

# Cumbernauld Town Centre

**LISTING ASSESSMENT REPORT, AUGUST 2022**

On behalf of Hamcap (Cumbernauld) LLP



i | Table of Contents

1 | INTRODUCTION ..... 1

2 | LISTING LEGISLATION, POLICY & GUIDANCE..... 3

3 | HISTORY AND BACKGROUND..... 5

4 | IMPLEMENTATION OF DESIGN..... 9

    Phase 1..... 10

    Phase 2..... 15

    Phase 3..... 18

    Phase 4..... 20

    Phase 5 ..... 23

    Events and Visits..... 24

    Repairs, improvements and alterations ..... 25

5 | SIGNIFICANCE AND ASSESSMENT AGAINST LISTING CRITERIA..... 34

APPENDIX 1 | REFERENCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 39



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Section 1

**Introduction.**

# 1 | Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2022, Historic Environment Scotland (HES) announced that they were to undertake an assessment of Cumbernauld Town Centre to establish if it met the criteria for listing. This document has been produced by Icen Projects on behalf of Hamcap (Cumbernauld) LLP to assess the significance of The Centre Cumbernauld also known as Cumbernauld Town Centre and The Central Area to establish if the Site meets the criteria to be listed.
- 1.2 The Client owns a significant part of the Town Centre and had reached an agreement with North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) to sell the Town Centre to NLC to enable demolition of the existing Town Centre and redevelopment of the Site for a new Town Centre called 'The Hub'.
- 1.3 The Client has commissioned this report to assist HES in their assessment of the Site by presenting as much relevant information as possible for consideration about the building. Extensive research was undertaken primarily at the NLC Archives in Motherwell, as well as online sources, historic mapping and site visits.
- 1.4 This Report will be submitted to HES along with a Certificate of Intention Not to List (COINTL) application.
- 1.5 HES wrote to the Client in March 2022 informing them of their intention to carry out a listing assessment.
- 1.6 A Site visit was undertaken on 28 April 2022, the Client and representatives from Icen and NLC met HES on Site.
- 1.7 HES carried out a public consultation exercise which ended 12 June 2022 during which time over 2000 responses were received.
- 1.8 HES wrote to the Client on 29 June 2022 advising that due to the large number of consultation responses, it is unlikely that HES will reach a decision on whether or not to list until Autumn 2022. HES also invited the Client to submit their views on the significance of the building as well as any additional information relating to the proposed redevelopment of the Site.
- 1.9 The Report is divided into three main Sections (in addition to the Introduction and Listing Policy, Legislation and Guidance section) The first section will look at the historic background that prompted the construction of the Cumbernauld Town Centre and influences that informed the design.
- 1.10 The second section will look at the implementation of the construction based around the 5 main phases and how it developed to its current form.
- 1.11 The final section will assess the Site against the listing criteria for deciding the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings as set out in the HES Designation Policy and Selection Guidance 2019 based on the research carried out by Icen.
- 1.12 This Report has been produced by Icen Projects, specifically authored by Frances Swanston MA (Hons) MURP MSc MRTIP IHBC, Associate and Aidan Ball Albessard HND VQ MA(Hons), Senior Consultant, with review by Laurie Handcock MA (Cantab)MSc IHBC MCIFA, Director Built Heritage and Townscape Team.

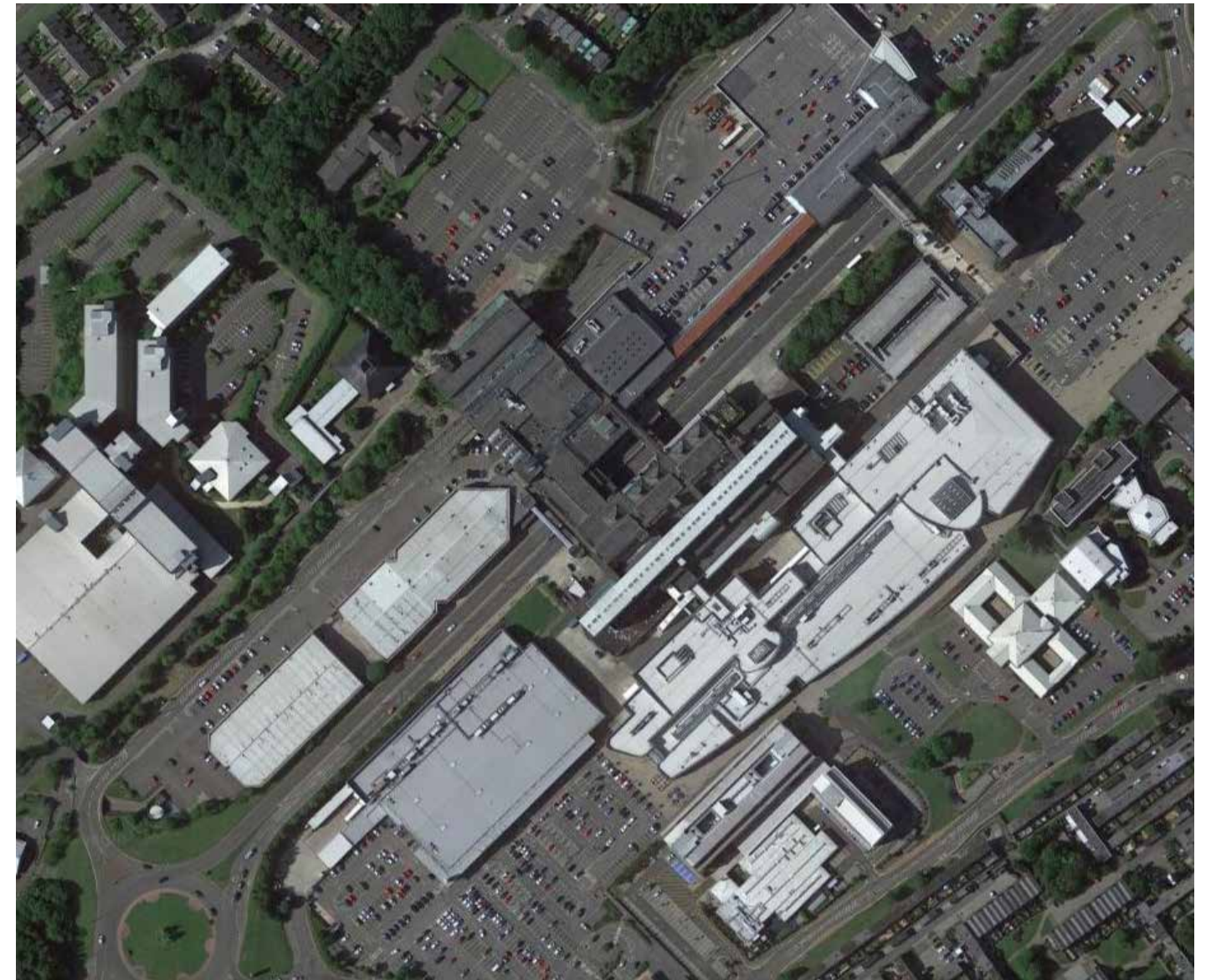


Figure 1.1 Site Map with showing Cumbernauld Town Centre

Section 2

# **Listing Legislation, Policy & Guidance.**



2 Listing Legislation, Policy & Guidance

Legislation		National Policy			
2.1	Primary legislation regarding the Historic Environment in relation to the listing process is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as modified by the Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act (2011). Historic Environment Scotland (HES) are the lead public body set up to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment.	Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, Historic Environment Scotland (2019)		The older a building is, and the fewer of its type that survive, the more likely it is to be of special interest. HES do not normally consider buildings which are less than 30 years old for listing as there is not enough historical perspective to allow a full assessment of the interest.	Certificate Of Intention Not To List (COINTL)
2.2	Part 1 of the Act, Listing buildings of special architectural or historic interest states:  <i>(1) For the purposes of this Act and with a view to the guidance of planning authorities in the performance of their functions under this Act in relation to buildings of special architectural or historic interest, Historic Environment Scotland shall compile lists of such buildings or approve, with or without modifications, such list compiled by other persons or bodies of persons, and may amend any list so compiled or approved.</i>  <i>(2) In considering whether to include a building in a list compiled or approved under this section, Historic Environment Scotland may take into account not only the building itself but also—</i>  <i>(a) any respect in which its exterior contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part, and</i>  <i>(b) the desirability of preserving, on the ground of its architectural or historic interest, any feature of the building consisting of a man-made object or structure fixed to the building or forming part of the land and comprised within the curtilage of the building.</i>	2.4 This document sets out the policy and selection guidance used by HES when they designate historic sites and places at the national level. The document covers the designation of scheduled monuments, listed buildings, Gardens and Designed Landscapes and Historic Battlefields.		Social historical interest  Social historical interest is about the way a building contributes to our understanding of how people lived in the past, and how our social and economic history is shown in a building and its setting.	2.12 Anyone can seek a COINTL from HES. An assessment in undertaken against the listing criteria and if a building is found not to meet the listing criteria, a COINTL can be issued.
		National Guidance		Association with people or events of national importance:  This refers to the connections that a building has with people or events which have had a significant impact on Scotland's cultural heritage.	2.13 Part 5 A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 Act states that:  (1) HES may, on the application of any person, issue a certificate stating that it does not intend to include a building in the list compiled or approved under section 1.  (2) Where HES issues a certificate under subsection(1) in respect of a building-  (a) It may not for a period of 5 years from the date of issues exercise in relation to the building any of the powers conferred on it by section 1.
		Scotland's Listed Buildings (HES) 2019		Listing Categories	Appeal against listing of buildings
		2.5 This document explaining what listing means to owners and how HES assess buildings for listing.		2.10 There are three Categories of listed buildings in Scotland:  Category A  Buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are outstanding examples of a particular period, style or building type.  Category B  Buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are major examples of a particular period, style or building type.  Category C  Buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are representative examples of a particular period, style or building type.	2.14 Part 5B of the Act gives powers to the owner of the building the tenant and the occupier to appeal to the Scottish Ministers a decision to list a building or to appeal to amend an entry in the list relating to a building.
		2.6 Listing is the process that identifies, designates and provides statutory protection for buildings of special architectural or historic interest.			2.15 Should HES decide to list all or part of the Cumbernauld Town Centre, the Client would have the right to appeal this decision.
		2.7 Each building is assessed on its own merits and a number of factors are taken into account to decide whether a building has special architectural or historic interest.			
		2.8 Architectural interest of a building is assessed under two headings:  Design  This relates to the building's design and also takes into account how authentic and complete it is, as later changes may add or detract from the interest. We assess factors such as artistic skill, the designer, interior, plan form, materials, technological excellence or innovation and regional traditions.			
		Setting  This relates to the context of a building and takes into account the current and historical setting. The building's contribution to its setting and how other features, both built and natural, relate to it are also taken into account.			
2.3	(3) Before compiling or approving, with or without modifications, any list under this section or amending any such list Historic Environment Scotland shall consult such persons or bodies of persons as appear to it appropriate as having special knowledge of, or interest in, buildings of architectural or historic interest.	2.9 Historic Interest is assessed under the following three headings:  Age and rarity		The Listing Process	
				2.11 Anyone can propose a building for listing. Once HES receive a proposal for listing, HES carry out an assessment of the building to inform a decision whether or not the building meets the criteria listed above and if so, which category of listed building is most appropriate. If HES conclude a building does not meeting the listing criteria, there is no right of appeal against this outcome.	

Section 3

# **History and Background**

### 3 History and Background

#### History of the Cumbernauld Concept

- 3.1 This section will outline the background of Cumbernauld New Town from its designation to the preparations for construction of Phase 1. In the following paragraphs, it is intended to highlight the influences that shaped the initial design for the Town Centre.
- 3.2 Following the War, the New Towns Act was passed in 1946 to expand and improve the decaying urban realm in the UK. It followed on from the Abercrombie Plan for London in 1944 which proposed 8 new satellite towns. Overall, there were three generations of new towns in England up until 1970. In Scotland there were 5 new towns: East Kilbride (designated 1947), Glenrothes (designated 1948), Cumbernauld (designated 1955), Livingston (designated 1962) and Irvine (designated 1966). These 5 new towns were part of the new Clyde Valley Regional Plan which was also produced by Patrick Abercrombie and Robert Mathews.
- 3.3 Like the other Scottish New Towns, Cumbernauld was envisioned to accommodate population overflow from Glasgow, in particular the Gorbals. The Cumbernauld Development Corporation (CDC) was set up as a quango by the Secretary of State for Scotland, financed by the Government in 1955 to develop, promote and manage Cumbernauld. The CDC reported annually to the Secretary of State. Their annual reports provide a great insight into the development progress, the issues the CDC faced.
- 3.4 The overall design of the new town was put together by a team led by Hugh Wilson who set up their offices in the old village of Cumbernauld. From early on the team decided on three particular points that was to give the original design its primary significance and attention from across the world:
  - The plan was going to be a deliberate departure from Garden City Philosophy and was to follow a high-density or clustered plan;
  - This new town was going to be a town for the motor age with completely segregated traffic from pedestrian walkways;
  - The town centre was to be designed as a megastructure on the ridge of a hill.

#### High Density

- 3.5 The Garden City philosophy is what most of the post-war New Towns followed both in the UK and abroad. Invented by Ebenezer Howard in the late 1910s, the Garden City was an urban solution in response to socialist discussions revolving around the concept of urban decay. The idea of the Garden City was to have a spread-out and zoned pattern of neighbourhood units each separated by greenery from each other with a town centre in the middle (Figure 3.1). This format naturally became very popular as a solution to post-war urban decay and overpopulation.
- 3.6 For Cumbernauld, the decision to follow this high-density plan rather than the spread-out Garden City plan was partly dictated by the restrictions of where the site could be. Outside of the built-up areas, much of the Clyde Valley was either designated Green Belt, valuable agricultural land or mineral-rich land for mining. There was only one small remaining suitable site and that was to become Cumbernauld New Town.
- 3.7 At the time there was a debate within the design team about where to place the town centre- within the valley or on top of the ridge. Hugh Wilson wished the Town Centre to stand as a rising monument atop the ridge and act as a visual centre to the town centre but concerns were stressed about the difficult implications of wind-tunnels and driving rain that the ridge-top position would offer. In the end the ridge site was chosen as it emphasised the town centre as a megastructure and its departure from the Garden City philosophy to the high density arrangement.
- 3.8 The idea behind the high-density arrangement came out of contemporary discussions in town planning and architecture from conferences like CIAM and writings from Team 10 and Le Corbusier. Interestingly, however, there was also a traditional argument to the high density plan. Historically the urban tradition in Scotland had been to tightly pack clusters of buildings in order to shelter better from the weather and prevailing winds. This led to urban areas building upwards rather than outwards from relatively early on starting in medieval towns like Edinburgh and Stirling and resulting in traditional Scottish tenement blocks.
- 3.9 This also resonated with the project because much of the arrangement in the Gorbals was rows of tenements which offered a close community and in ways, a positive way of life for the people who lived

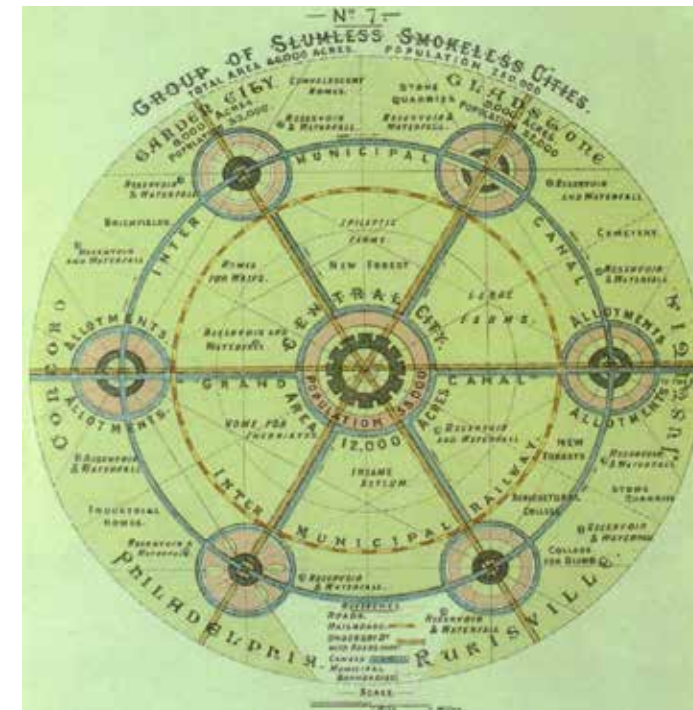


Figure 3.1 Ebenezer Howard's Garden City [Source: Researchgate]

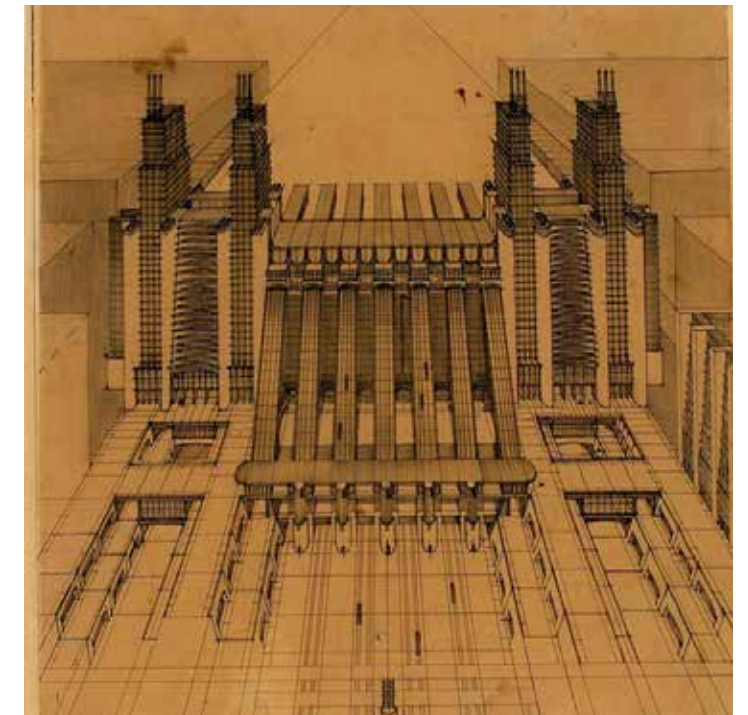


Figure 3.2 Antonio Sant'Elia La Citta Nuova [Source: artsy.net]



Figure 3.3 Ludwig Hilberseimer's Vertical City [Source: ResearchGate]



### 3 | History and Background

there. The decision was made to keep this spirit of Scottish clustered urbanity with the overall plan of the town and ideas of the tenement were also reflected in the housing of the new town.

#### Town for the Motor Age

- 3.10 The central idea of Cumbernauld was to have a sophisticated street hierarchy with completely segregated vehicles from pedestrians achieved by under-passage, over-passage, mid-block walkways and a complete system of vehicular facilities from expressways to minor cul-de-sacs. All roads and paths lead to the Town Centre. Those arriving by car or by bus arrived at the lower level and all pedestrians arrived via bridges at the middle level of the structure. This was a relatively new idea as there was a rising awareness of the increase of car ownership and the segregation of traffic became an important challenge in urban planning. A similar example and possible precursor to Cumbernauld was the new garden city of Radburn, New Jersey founded 1929.

#### Megastructure

- 3.11 The Town Centre was a megastructure. The term was coined in the 60s by Fumihiko Maki to describe the apparent trend towards huge multi-storey multi-functional structures. This trend was predominantly confined to paper for example in many of the designs of Le Corbusier or in the designs of the Japanese Metabolists. More direct comparisons in this strand are Ludwig Hilberseimer's Vertical City (Figure 3.3) and Antonio Sant'Elia's La Citta Nuova (Figure 3.2) as both were designs with megastructures and incorporated a system of segregated traffic from pedestrians.
- 3.12 None of these examples, however, were ever built. Cumbernauld is a rare example of a megastructure that came off the page and into the real world. It was a test case in 1960 and the hope was it would be successful in execution.
- 3.13 British architects Alison and Peter Smithson came up with the 'streets in the sky' concept at a similar time to Cumbernauld's concept development. It was soon discovered when it was built out, this great idea did not play out quite as well as they had hoped in reality.



Figure 3.4 Promotional model photo montage showing a model of the Town Centre in the background and a car in the foreground highlighting the relationship, C 1956 NLC Archive

#### Preparation for Phase 1 (1955 - 1960)

- 3.14 With these ideas of a high-density new town for the motor age with the megastructure as a town centre the CDC and the designers went to work with preparations.
- 3.15 We know that Cumbernauld town centre was developed in 5 main phases, and that these phases are still evident today, but that the visions for the phases changed over time, and quite early on in the process after Phases 1 and 2 were built. The CDC detail issues with securing funding and interested parties to locate to the town centre, which influence their decisions on expansion. The CDC were also working to a budget as well as having to balance economic pressures with delivery of an original idea for a town centre
- 3.16 The following section details the development of the different phases.
- 3.17 In 1958 it was reported in the 2nd Annual Report of the CDC that "this year covered the continued investigation, study and analysis request for preparation of preliminary planning proposals". By the time of the 3rd Annual Report a year later in 1959 design plans were taking shape and that "after careful consideration, a site has been selected for the central

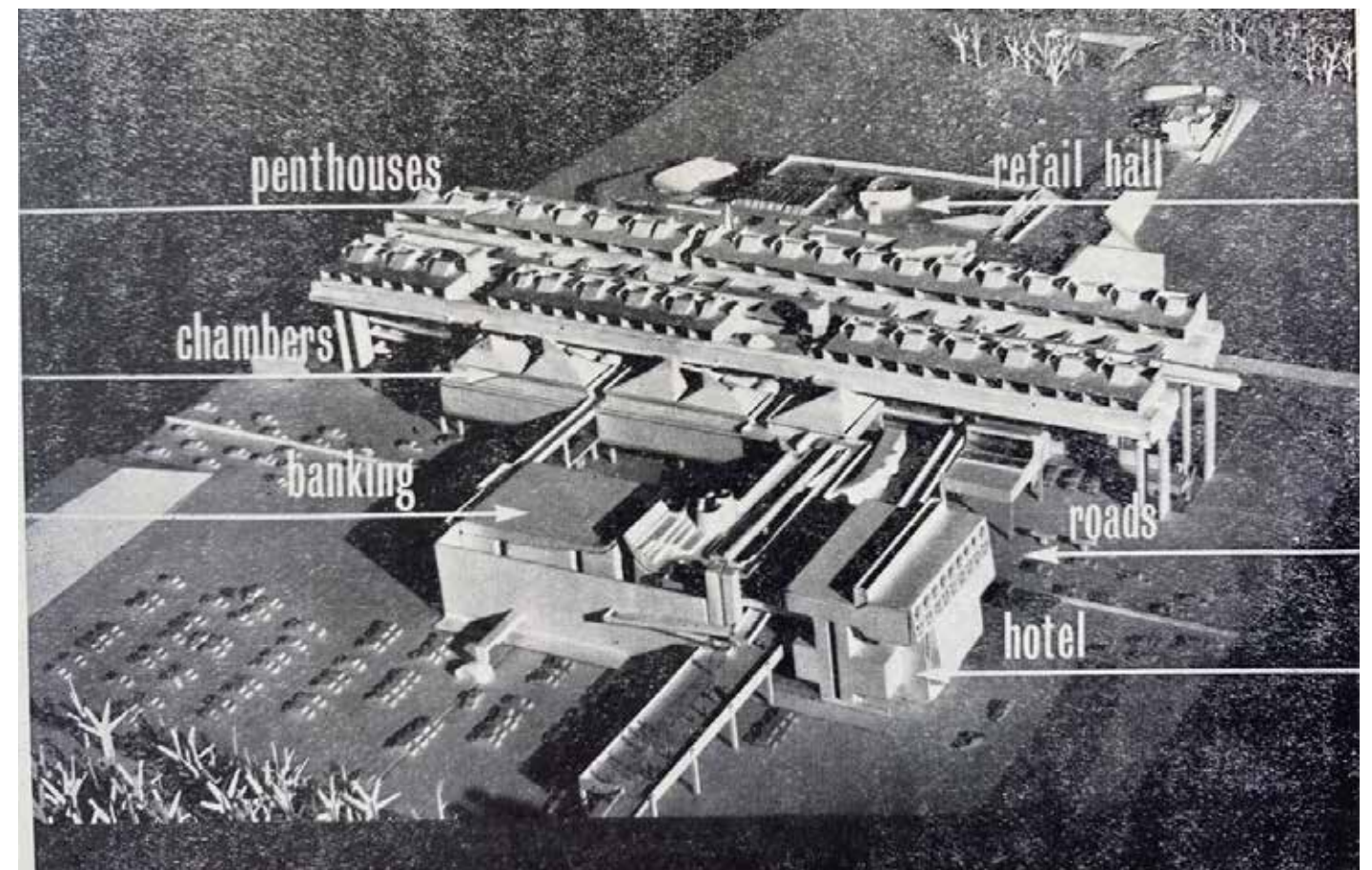


Figure 3.5 Photo of early Town Centre model in the Preliminary Planning Proposals First Addendum Report, 1956 NLC Archives



area south of and just below the ridge of the hill. In this position the centre can take a linear form and can be planned on various levels...the central area of the town will provide sites for shops, offices and public, cultural and recreational buildings and also from housing in high blocks" ... The centre can take a linear form and can be planned on various levels with pedestrian access from the surrounding housing areas" (p23).

- 3.18 The CDC were tasked with the delivery of the town centre, which would be delivered over a number of phases. The first phase would be the heart or core of the new town centre. The early CDC reports (pre 1967) detail the discussions and decisions over location of the centre and the design principles it was to follow. By 1960 the 4th Annual Report confirms that a definite site for the centre has been allocated along the ridge of the hill between the major road junctions on the radial link of roads at Seafar and Muirhead. The area is approximately 3500ft long and 620ft wide comprising nearly 50 acres.

- 3.19 Studies for the centre undertaken at the time showed that in this position it would be possible to arrange a main access road and a considerable amount of parking at a lower level under the main pedestrian area, which would be linked to the main pedestrian foot paths. The CDC acknowledge *"the detailed design and development of this centre is bound to take a considerable amount of time"*. These considerations led to the CDC remarking that *"owing to the problems associated with the design of the central area it has been necessary to proceed with plans of the general area between Seafar and Wilderness Brae to the north"*.

- 3.20 By 1961 the CDC report that the Corporation are in the course of preparing a submission for the Second Revision of their preliminary planning proposals. The CDC report state that informal consultations are taking place with the Scottish Development Department, as well as discussions with potential developers. In 1962 the CDC report that considerable progress has been made in the planning of the central area development. *"It is the Corporation's view, that it is extremely important that the first stage of the central development should be available to the Town by, at latest, 1965, so that the services and facilities (in particular retail trading) essential to the population as it will be then, may not be lacking."*

- 3.21 The CDC 'hoped' that the tenders for the major

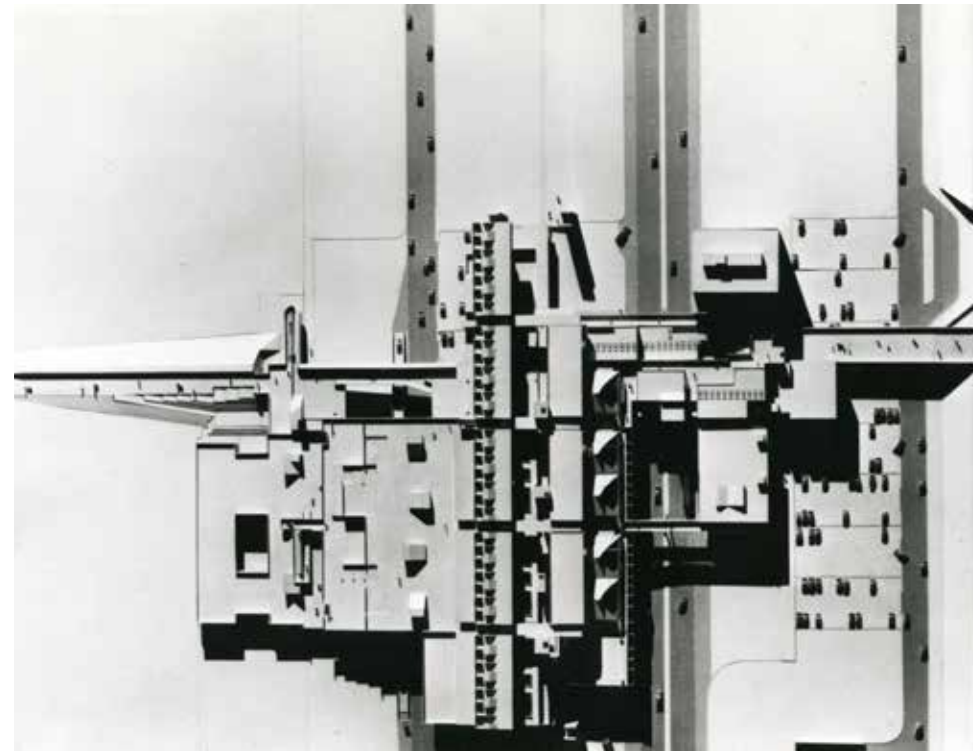


Figure 3.6 Photo of 3D model of Phase 1 Town Centre as built 1967 NLC Archives

earthworks required on the site would be commencing in the summer of 1962.

- 3.22 The CDC further reports that *"a preliminary scheme has now been prepared for the central area... the main element has been designed as a single comprehensive structure providing accommodation for shops, offices, entertainment and public"*.

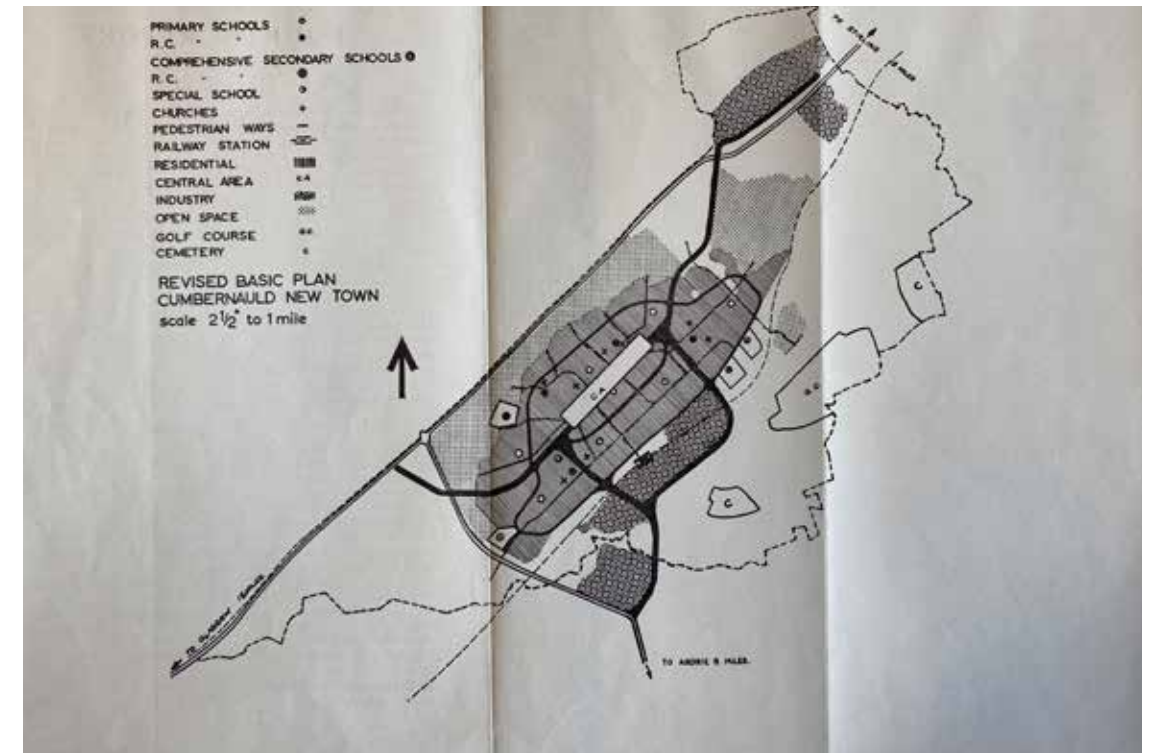


Figure 3.7 Revised basic plan of Cumbernauld New Town published in CDC Annual Report 1960, NLC Archives



Figure 3.8 Photo of concept model for Phase 1 Town Centre, C1960, NLC Archives

Section 4

# **Implementation of the Design**



## 4 | Implementation of Design

### The Phasing

- 4.1 Cumbernauld Town Centre as it appears today, has developed in five main phases from 1960 onwards. Each Phase will be described in detail in this Section. Phases 1 and 2 are typically referred to as the original Town Centre and were designed and constructed on megastructure principles. From Phase 3 onwards, this concept was abandoned. Original phases were demolished to make way for later Phases and alterations were carried out to all Phases.
- 4.2 The maps on this page (Figures 4.1 to 4.5) show the 5 Phases of Cumbernauld Town Centre in relation to one another. They also highlight the areas that have been demolished to make way for future phases and in Figure 4.5 (current layout) what sections remain from original Phases 1 and 2. Phase 3 was almost completely demolished with the creation of the Antonine Centre (Phase 5).)



Figure 4.2 Phases 1 and 2 (1968-1972)

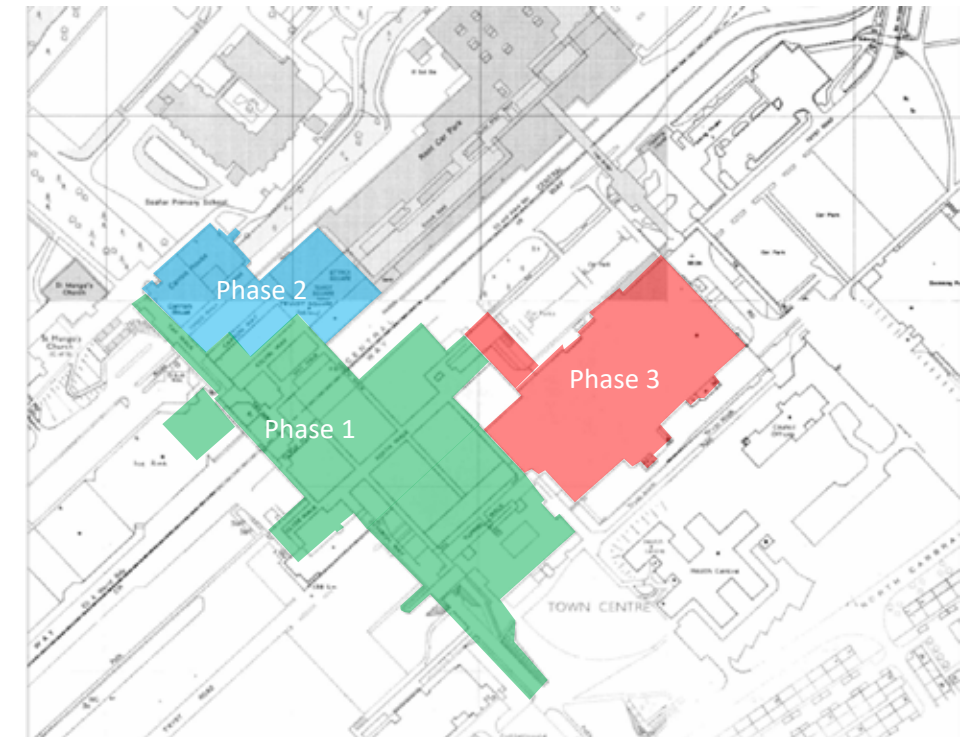


Figure 4.3 Phases 1, 2 and 3 (



Figure 4.1 Phase 1 ( 1960-1967)



Figure 4.4 Phases 1, 2, 3 and 4(1971-1975)

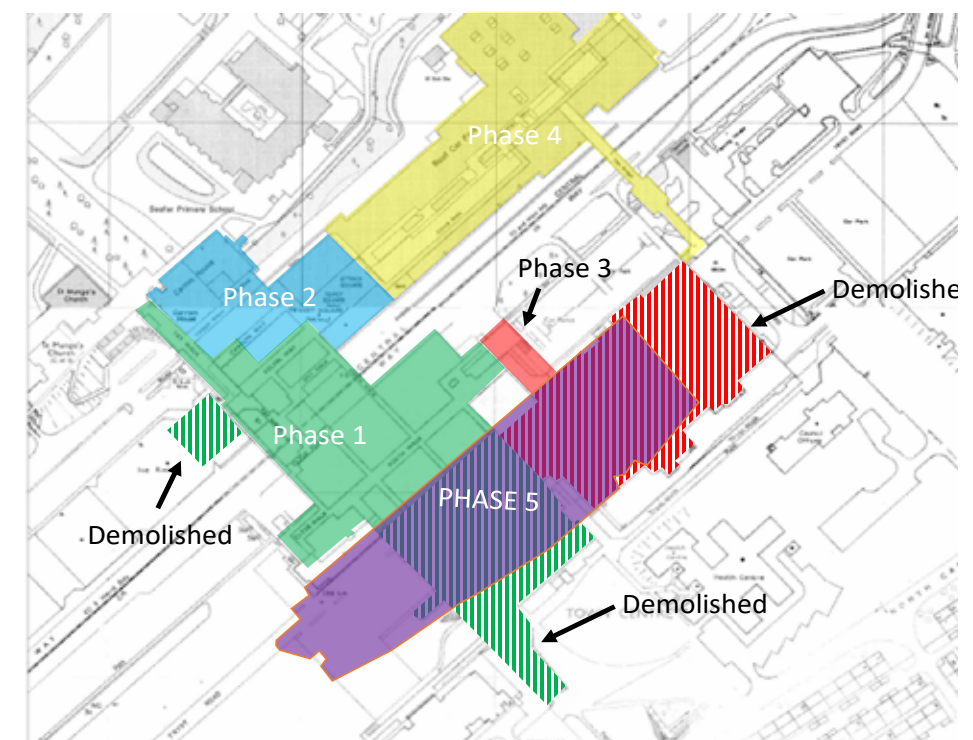


Figure 4.5 All Phases, including areas of demolition and rebuild



## 4 Implementation of Design

### Phase 1 (1960 - 1967)

- 4.3 Development of Phase 1 of the town centre was started in 1960. There were a number of key players responsible for delivering the design and construction of Phase 1. The 1964 CDC Annual Report states that *"The commission to L H Wilson was extended to include the Central Area"* (CDC 1964). Wilson had been first appointed in 1956. However, Geoffrey Copcutt is often credited with Phase 1. Described as, a flamboyant and often controversial designer. *"He conceived the Centre as a linear, stepped multifunction structure, with vehicle routes (including a fast divided highway) slicing through its centre, and pedestrian access ways crossing at right angles"*
- 4.4 However Hugh Wilson left the team in October 1962, although remaining as consultant, and Geoffrey Copcutt departed in 1963. The scheme proceeded according to Copcutt's plan and chosen aesthetic but was implemented by his successors Philip Aitken and Neil Dadge. Although the Cumbernauld staff contributed working diagrams, the contractors, who had been hired on a 'design and build' basis, handled the detailing.
- 4.5 In 1963 permission was granted to proceed with taking tenders forward for the first stage of development of the town centre, in terms of the main structural concrete work and floor decking. The main part of this was the construction of the south side of the main access road, which was going to contain the car park above, two floors of shopping space and offices, the main post office, a floor with areas for the town library and other public uses. Above this would be provision for some housing (Avon House).
- 4.6 To the south would be a low block containing office space and additional car parks. On the other side of the main access road will be a small section of the northern area of the centre containing banks, specialist shops and a hotel.
- 4.7 During 1963, the bulk of the excavation and major earth works contact were completed. Tenders were taken in 1963 for the design and erection of the main structural concrete work and floor decking, which commenced in October 1963 and by March 1964 it was one-third complete with the intention for completion by December 1964.
- 4.8 The contact was given to Duncan Logan (Contractors) Lts who retained Oscar Faber & Partners Consulting Engineers as their design consultants.
- 4.9 It was reported in the year-end report in March 1965 that it had not been possible to achieve the programmed completion date for December 1964 for the main structural concrete work and main decking. This was *"due in part to the very complex nature of the structure itself and the adjustments and additions in space allocations made during the progress of the work as commercial interests who are to take premises firmed up their requirements"* (CDC 1965).
- 4.10 Work on the hotel began in June 1965 - a six storey development, was undertaken by Grampian Properties Ltd. The hotel comprised 25-bedrooms, lounge, bar, small dance hall, three cocktail bars, two dining rooms and a function suite. *"Its completion should coincide with the opening of the First Phase of the Central Area in summer of 1966"* (CDC 1965).
- 4.11 The extent of the original Phase 1 can be seen in Figure 4.6, the 1967 OS map. By this time, St Mungo's Church can also be seen (but this was built shortly after Phase 1 was complete). This plan shows the original approach ramps from the south (later demolished) as well as the Eagle Hotel on the north-east corner (later demolished).
- 4.12 Figures 4.7 on the following page detail the floorplan layouts of the Phase 1 structure as well as two images taken during the construction of Phase 1. At this time, the town centre was a compact structure.



Figure 4.6 Phase 1 Cumbernauld Town Centre

## 4 Implementation of Design

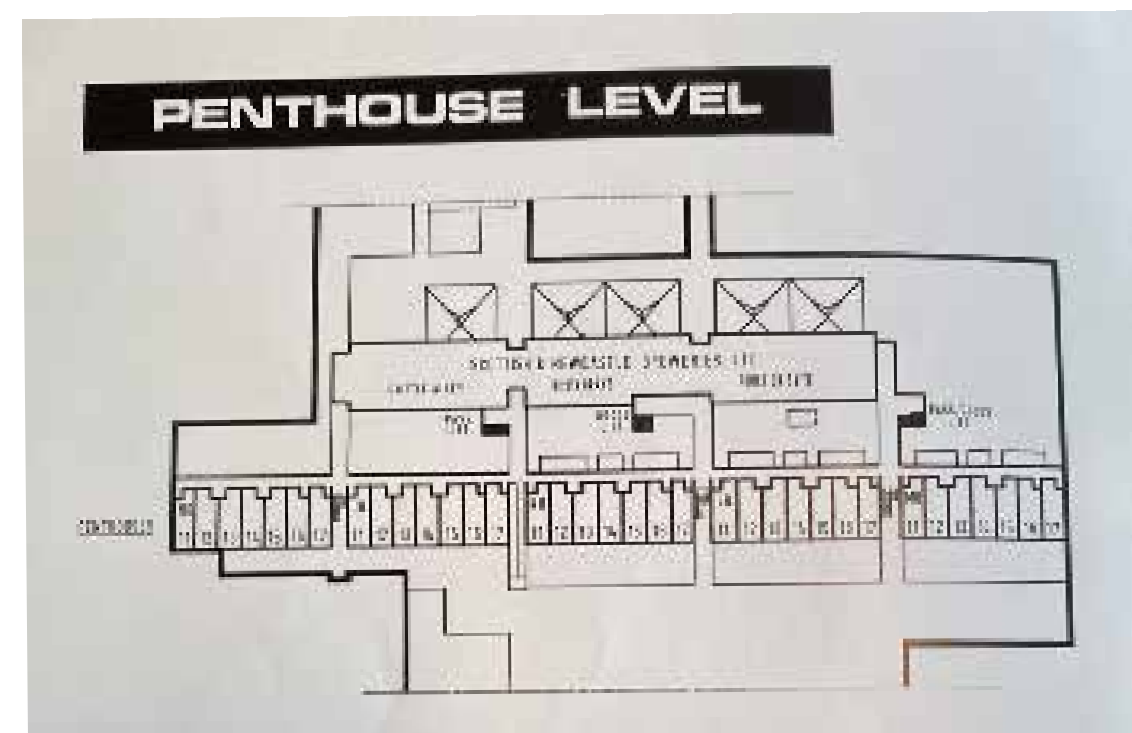
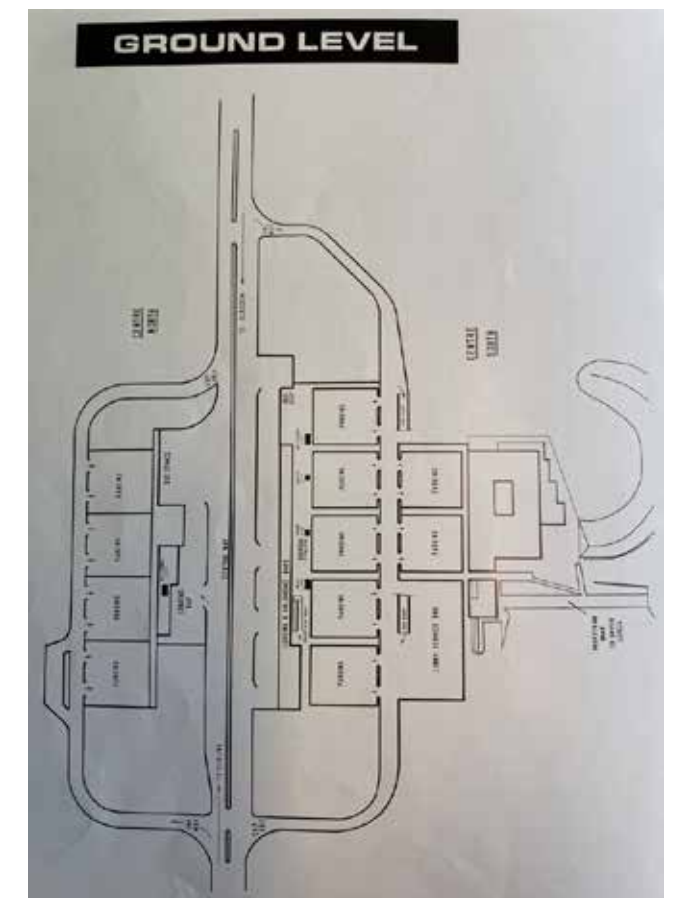
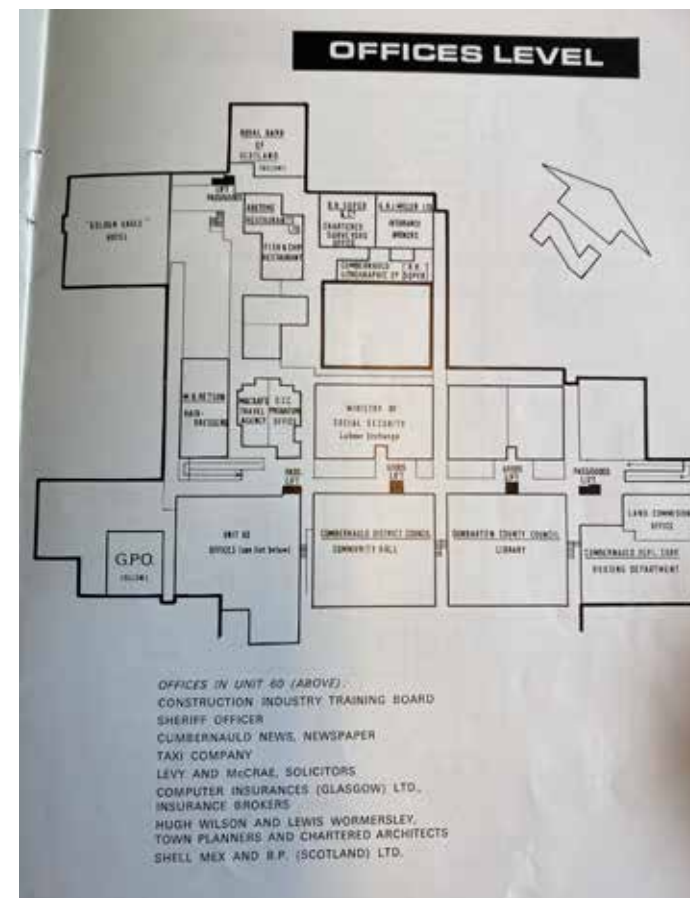
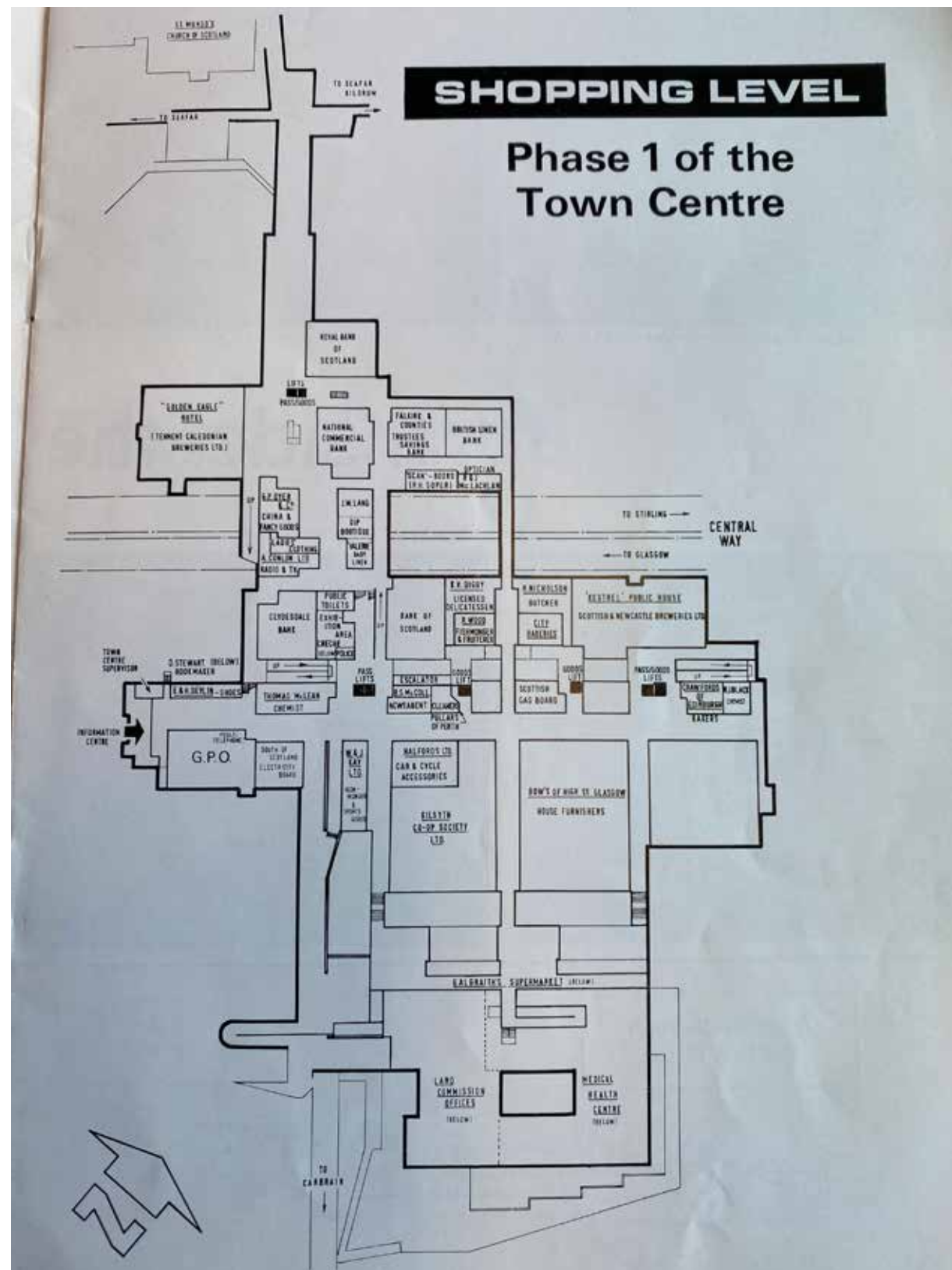


Figure 4.7 Plans showing the layout of Phase 1 over the four levels. These plans are taken from a promotional leaflet produced by the CDC in 1967 to mark the official opening of Phase 1 by Princess Margaret. (NLC Archive)



## 4 Implementation of Design

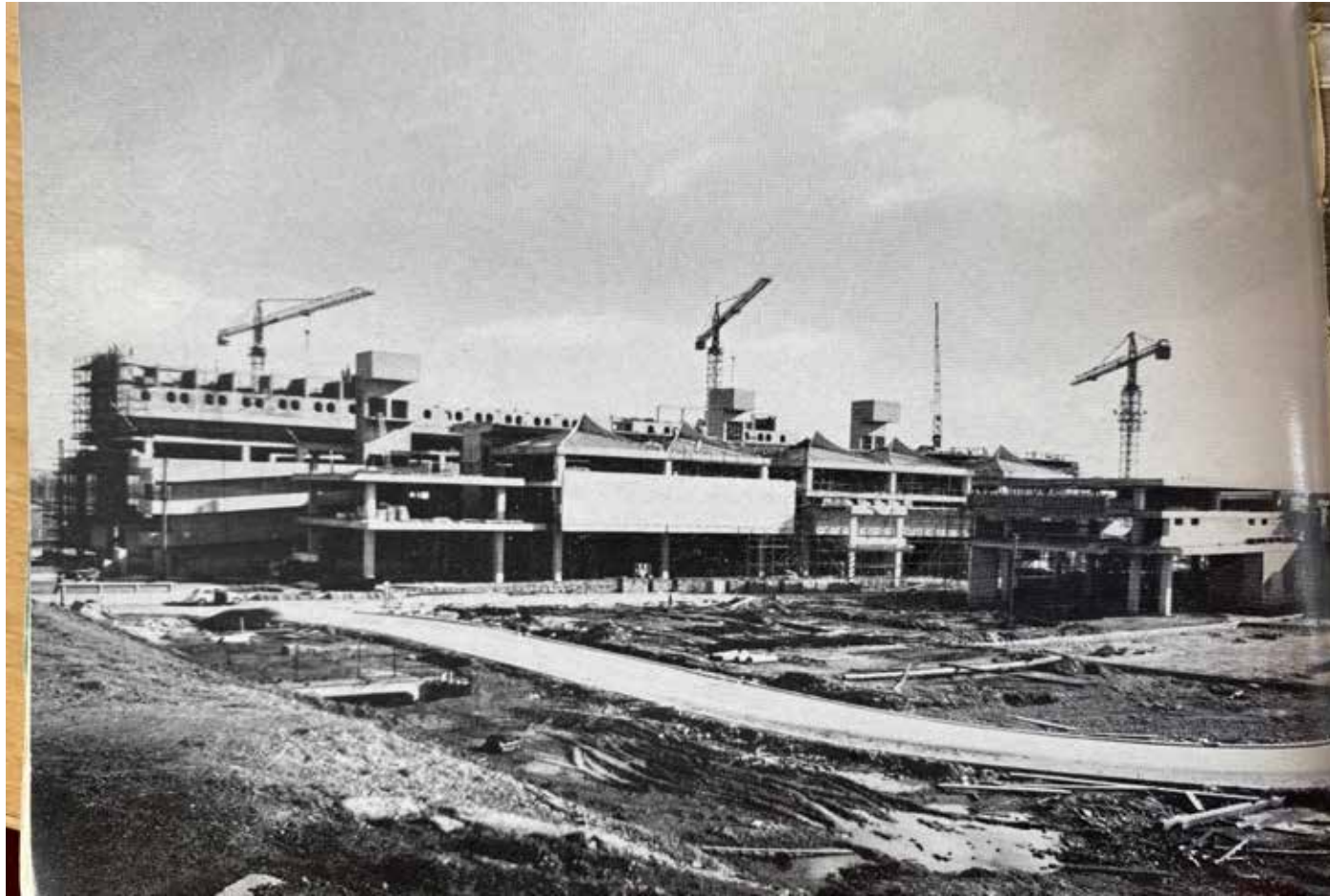


Figure 4.8 Photo of Phase 1 under construction C1965 taken from the northern side of the Town Centre with the beginnings of Avon House taking shape as well as the pyramidal roof of the Social Club. NLC Archive

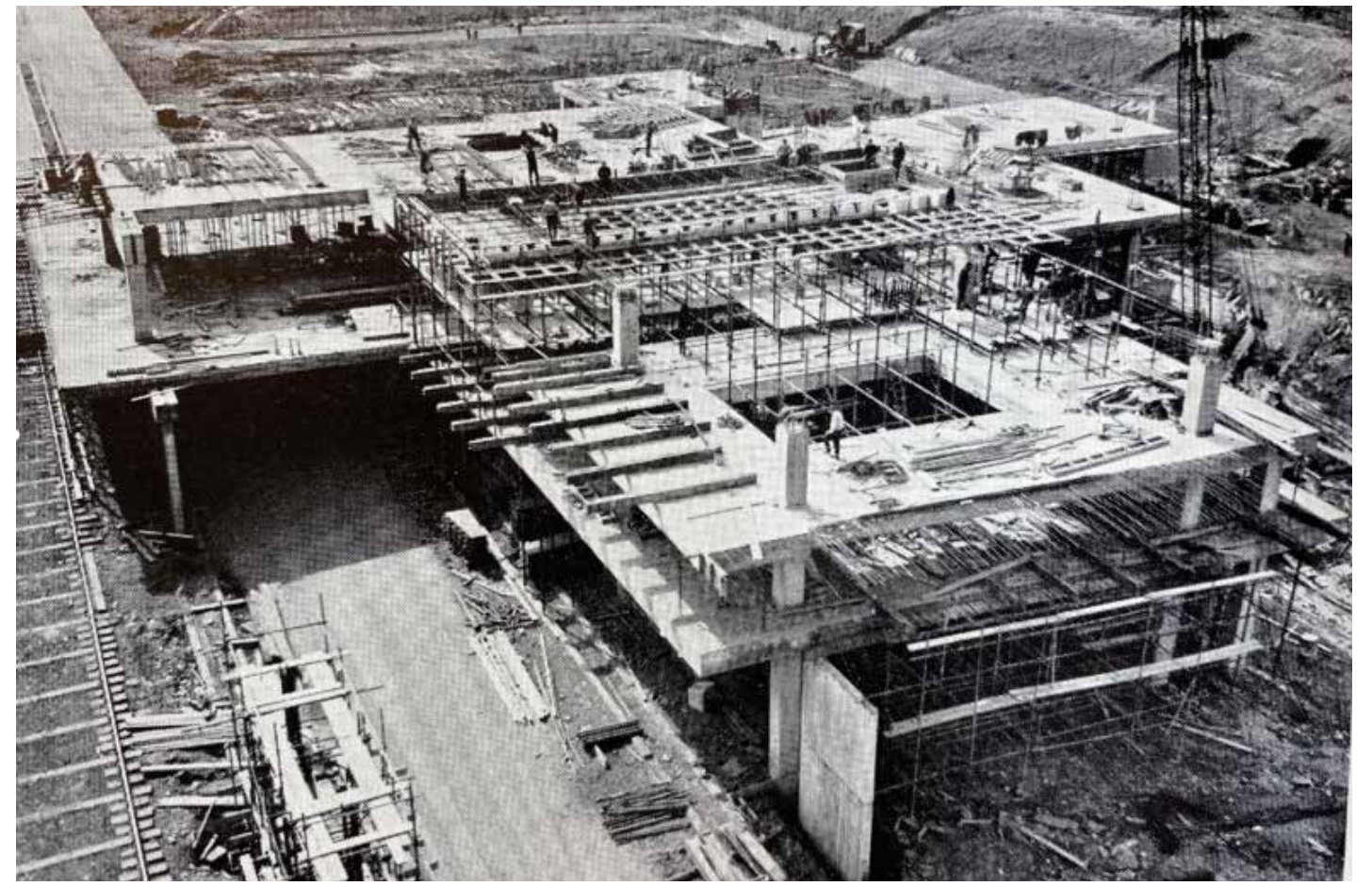


Figure 4.9 Photo of the construction of the car park and lower level Phase 1 Town Centre building, C 1962. NLC Archive



## 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.10 Completed Phase 1, 1967 showing the Eagle Hotel and Avon House. Note the original roofline and window arrangement on Avon House. NLC Archive.



Figure 4.11 West side of the Phase 1 Town Centre construction. NLC Archive



4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.12 Completed Phase 1 southern side .



Figure 4.13 Aerial photo of the completed Phase 1 taken from the south of the Site looking north. The future housing area is marked on the image.

- 4.13 The image above is particularly important in demonstrating the significant amount of change this area of the Town Centre underwent. The ramps which functioned as the original entrance are no longer there, as well as the buildings in the foreground. All of which were later demolished for Phase 5 and the Antonine Centre.
- 4.14 The original design intention of Avon House can be seen in this image with the original roof line and window details, which were altered in 1984. The 'GAL' text is from Galbraiths supermarket (the largest in Scotland at the time).
- 4.15 The carved sculpture on the pedestal was created to mark the opening of Phase 1 and to commemorate Princess Margaret's visit in 1968.
- 4.16 The stone carving at the top of the structure came

- from a gate pier of the house of an individual who work at the CDC. It has been moved various times and has now lost its pedestal and sits between the Antonine Centre and the Technical College on a low section of wall.
- 4.17 This aerial photo shows the newly completed Phase 1 with St Mungo's Church to the north. From this image as well as appreciating the extent of Phase 1, it also emphasises the extent of demolition of the south side as mentioned in the previous image. Figure 4.12 opposite is taken from the ramp at the southern most tip of the Town Centre in this image.



## 4 Implementation of Design

### Implementation of Phase 2 (1968-1972)

- 4.18 The Phase 2 development comprised the extension of the Town Centre northwards from the Central Way towards St Mungo's Church with the creation of Carron House, Tweed Walk, Carron Way, Kelvin Way, Spey Walk, Tay Walk. It also referred to housing developments and other development outwith the Town Centre building that took place during this time. Phase 2 was constructed between 1968 and 1972.
- 4.19 The first mention of the Second Phase by the CDC in their Annual Reports is in the 9th Annual Report to year end March 1965. *"Preliminary consideration is being given to Phase II which is the portion of the Central Area required to meet the needs of the Town by 1969...this development is planned to comprise civic buildings, retail and commercial offices, entertainment facilities, housing and car parking spaces for 2000 cars".*
- 4.20 By the time of the 1966 Annual Report, outline proposals for Phase 2 had been informally submitted to the Secretary of State. The CDC state *"These outline proposals do not envisage any departure from the principles adopted for Phase 1 of a multi deck structure and the provision of adequate car parking and loading space at basement level within the structure. Sports and recreational facilities, including possibly a swimming pool will be associated with Phase Two."*
- 4.21 The 1967 CDC Annual Report states *"Phase 2 of the Town centre will be developed in three parts. The first part totalling just over 32,000 square feet, is now under construction. Of this a large supermarket will account for 20,000 square feet with the remainder divided between standard sized shop units and an arcade containing a number of fully finished shop units. A further 176 car parking spaces will be created...It is hoped that Phase 2A will be open for trading in 1970"* (CDC 1967).
- 4.22 The 1969 CDC Annual Report refers to a Phase 2A and 2B. They reported that the structural contract for Phase 2A, which is the first section of Phase 2, is almost complete and tenders have been received for the infilling and finishing works which the Corporation are to have undertaken by separate trades contractors.
- 4.23 The CDC comment that for Phase 2B *"Considerable research and experience gained from the design*

and operation of Phase 1 have been applied in the planning of Phase 2B, and that the formal submission of the application would be made by late 1969.

- 4.24 The second phase of the Town Centre totalling 44,500 and 23,300 sq feet of commercial and office space was almost complete by the end of 1970. The CDC remark that terms have been agreed with a major retailing unit for the large store unit in this development.
- 4.25 By 1971, the CDC report that *"the Corporation have decided on a program to improve standards of amenity and comfort throughout the development"*. Which is the first mention in CDC records of work being required to the Phase 1 structure and layout.
- 4.26 It is reported by the CDC that commercial interest continued firm in the third phase of the Town centre and design studies proceeded on the implication of the proposed Town Extension on future shopping developments, which was the Woolco building to the south-east of the Town Centre in the following phase of development.
- 4.27 By 1972 the large supermarket and other shops in Phase 2 of the Town Centre were trading and the majority of the remaining shops were either let or reserved (CDC Annual Report 1972). Phase two was complete.
- 4.28 The images opposite and on the following page show the completion of Carron House (Figure 4.15) and the Phase 2 extension to the north of the Site and the Eagle Hotel (Figure 4.16).
- 4.29 The new shopping 'streets' of Tweed Walk, Carron Way, Kelvin Way, Spey Walk and Tay Walk were open to the elements when originally constructed. These were later covered over because of issues with water ingress and consequent drainage problems and safety issues with slip hazards for shoppers. In the 1970s the concept of the 'shopping mall' gained popularity with large, enclosed and covered shopping centres. Cumbernauld was already outdated and attempts were made to become more 'mall' like by covering over areas and increasing the number of retail units by creating an additional level of shops.
- 4.30 Phase 2 saw a continuation of the multi-level concept as well as providing more retail and office space for Cumbernauld.

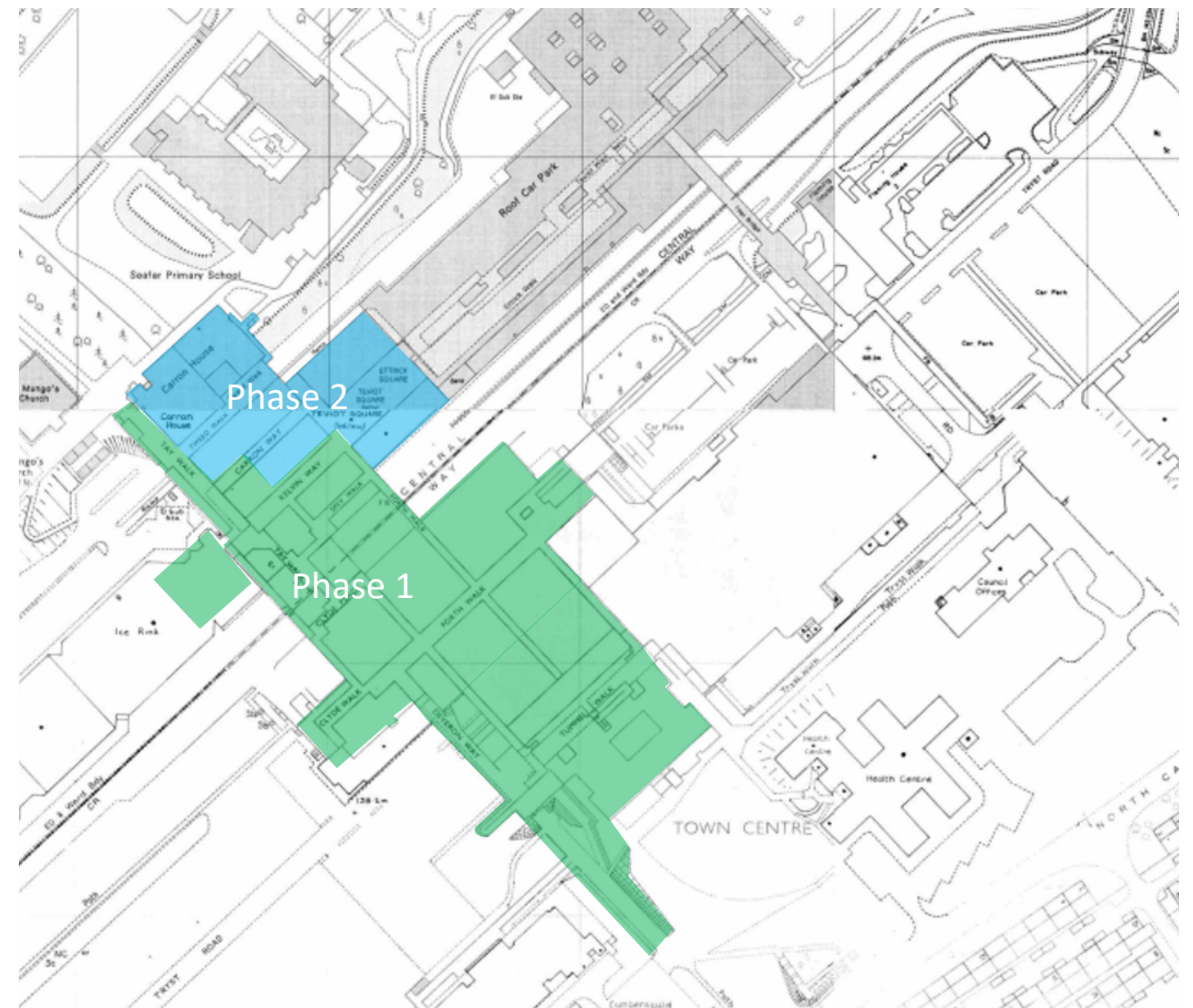


Figure 4.14 Phases 1 and 2



## 4 Implementation of Design

CUMBERNAULD TOWN CENTRE)

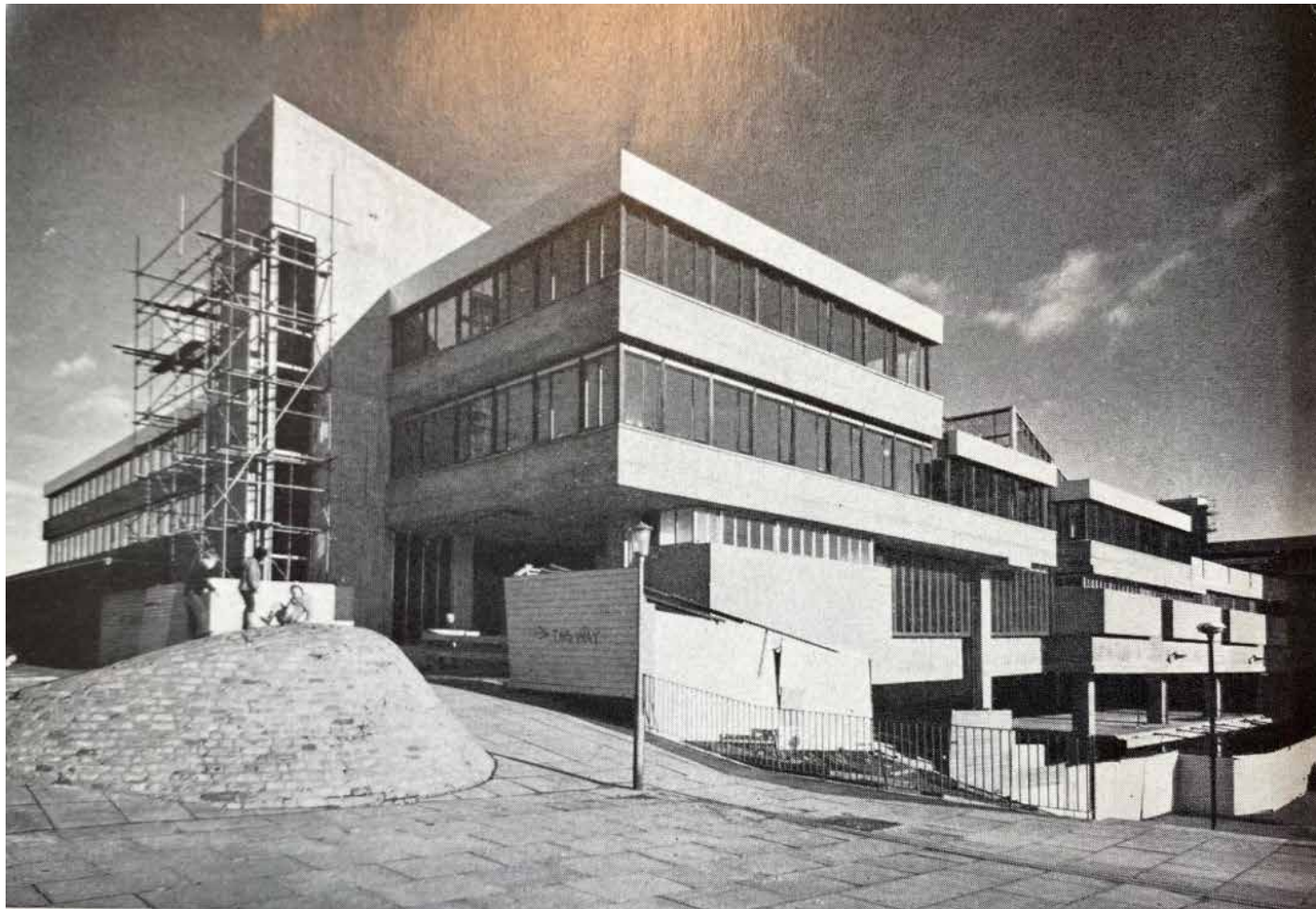


Figure 4.15 Near completion of Carron House at the northern end of Phase 1 opposite St Mungo's Church, NLC Archives



Figure 4.16 Phase 1 and 2 completion from the west looking east towards Eagle Hotel and Carron House NLC Archives



## 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.17 St Mungo's Church with Phase 1 northern section bridge over St Mungo's Road towards Carron House still under construction, NLC Archives

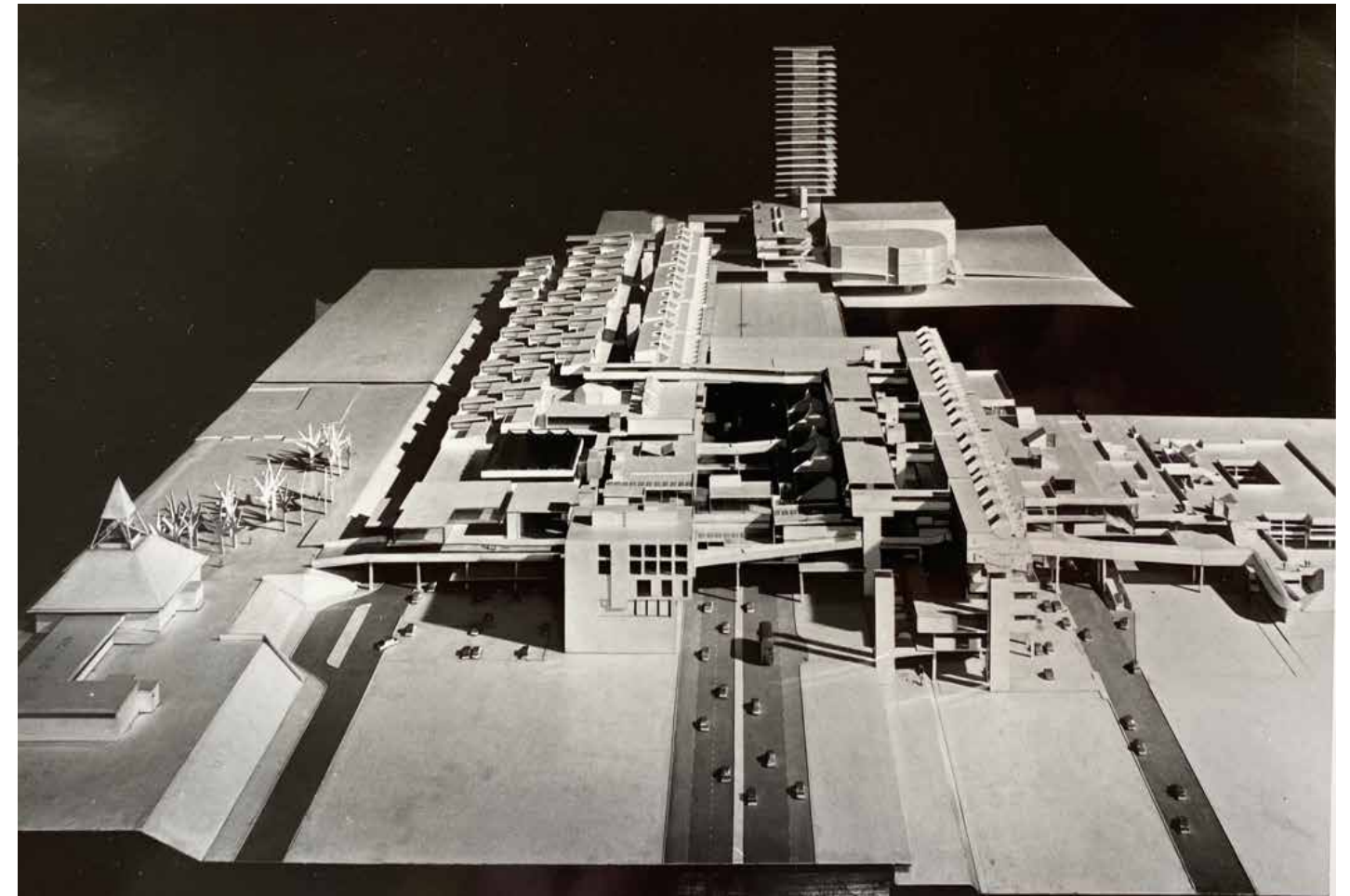


Figure 4.18 Photo of 3D model made of Phase 1 Town Centre, NLC Archives

4.31 St Mungo's Church was built in 1964, designed by Alan Reiach. The church is a prominent landmark in the Town Centre, and was Category B listed in 2000 at the same time as the Technical College building. Alan Reiach designed two churches in Cumbernauld, both of which can accommodate 800, Kildrum Church being the earlier of the two.

4.32 Reiach (1910-1992), who was apprenticed to Sir Robert Lorimer (1864-1929), was primarily involved in the design of public buildings, including churches, schools, universities and hospitals. Noteworthy features of St Mungo's Parish Church include the bold pyramidal roof, with apex of which forms a roof light lighting the nave of the church, and above this is a pyramidal belfry. The impressive Baltic redwood-

lined interior gains natural light from the large central rooflight and clerestory windows (HES, listing description LB46977, 2000).

4.33 In the image above, St Mungo's is already complete and the bridge structure to support the Phase 2 development of the Town Centre is under construction.

4.34 A number of models were made of the Town Centre, both of concept ideas and the Town Centre Phases 1 and 2, as built. The model above shows Phase 1 as built with plans for Phase 2 and an extension to where Phase 4 ended up being. Carron House is not shown on this particular model, but St Mungo's Church can be clearly seen as well as the Eagle Hotel.



## 4 Implementation of Design

### Implementation of Phase 3 (1971-1975)

- 4.35 The 1973 CDC Annual Report states *"Phase 2 of the town centre is now well into its stride and all its shops have been let... The construction of the Woolco department store is well under way, and it is hoped that the store will be trading by Christmas 1973"*. The CDC reports refer to the Woolco store as Phase 2 initially, then into Phase 3.
- 4.36 The CDC report in 1974 *"the large Woolco Department Store, the first in Scotland, will be opened on 4 June 1974. Construction had been delayed in the early stages as a result of the builders strike in 1972. All remaining units in the Town Centre have been let, and a substantial list of further retail interest has been recorded... Preparatory design work is in progress on a fourth phase of shopping development in the central area. It is hoped to begin construction within the next 18 months"*.
- 4.37 The CDC report that during 1974, work was almost complete on improvements to the first phase of the Town Centre, particularly in enclosing shopping malls and upgrading finishes. During this time, many of the open walkways were covered over, as well as the Phase 2 streets.
- 4.38 Phase 3 comprises the area of land to the immediate south and east of the Phase 1 development comprising the Woolco store. By 1975 Phase 2 is complete and the Woolco development is referred to by the CDC as Phase3 *"The year has seen the completion in the Town Centre of many important projects so that the southern side, boarding the North Cabrain Road, promises to develop within a year or two into the model urban environment which has been so long awaited. The combination of the successful giant Woolco Store and the excellent new recreational and administrative facilities, with the prospect of completion of the technical college and the new health centre, is transforming the economy, amenity and convenience of the Town Centre"*
- 4.39 The opening in June of Scotland's first Woolco Department Store, as the Third Phase of the Town Centre, was, the CDC report in 1974 *"the highlight of the year"*.
- 4.40 During this time the CDC remark on a number of occasions about financial issues with rising costs of building works. This starts to impact over the 1970s on the scope and building of the Town Centre extensions and the take up in retail units.
- 4.41 During this time the Cumbernauld College was built to the south-west of the Centre by architects Gillespie, Kidd and Coia, started in 1971. Cumbernauld College is a similar complex superstructure to the Cumbernauld Town Centre but, on a smaller scale. The College was listed Category B in 2000 at the same time as St Mungo's Church. The college has not been altered since it was built and still retains its original design and layout.
- 4.42 The design of the Woolco building was a departure from the original megastructure concept constructed as a multi-level building. The requirement for floorspace, and that of the retailer meant that the Phase 3 structure was a large rectangular box shape. The CDC report that retailers found their units difficult to service in the Phase 1 section in particular. Changes in shopping trends also meant that larger, open plan retail spaces were sought after rather than smaller, more bespoke retail units.
- 4.43 These influences are clearly seen in the form of the Phase 3 building on the images on the following page. The Phase 3 development marks the point at which the original design concept for Phases 1 and 2 was not continued.

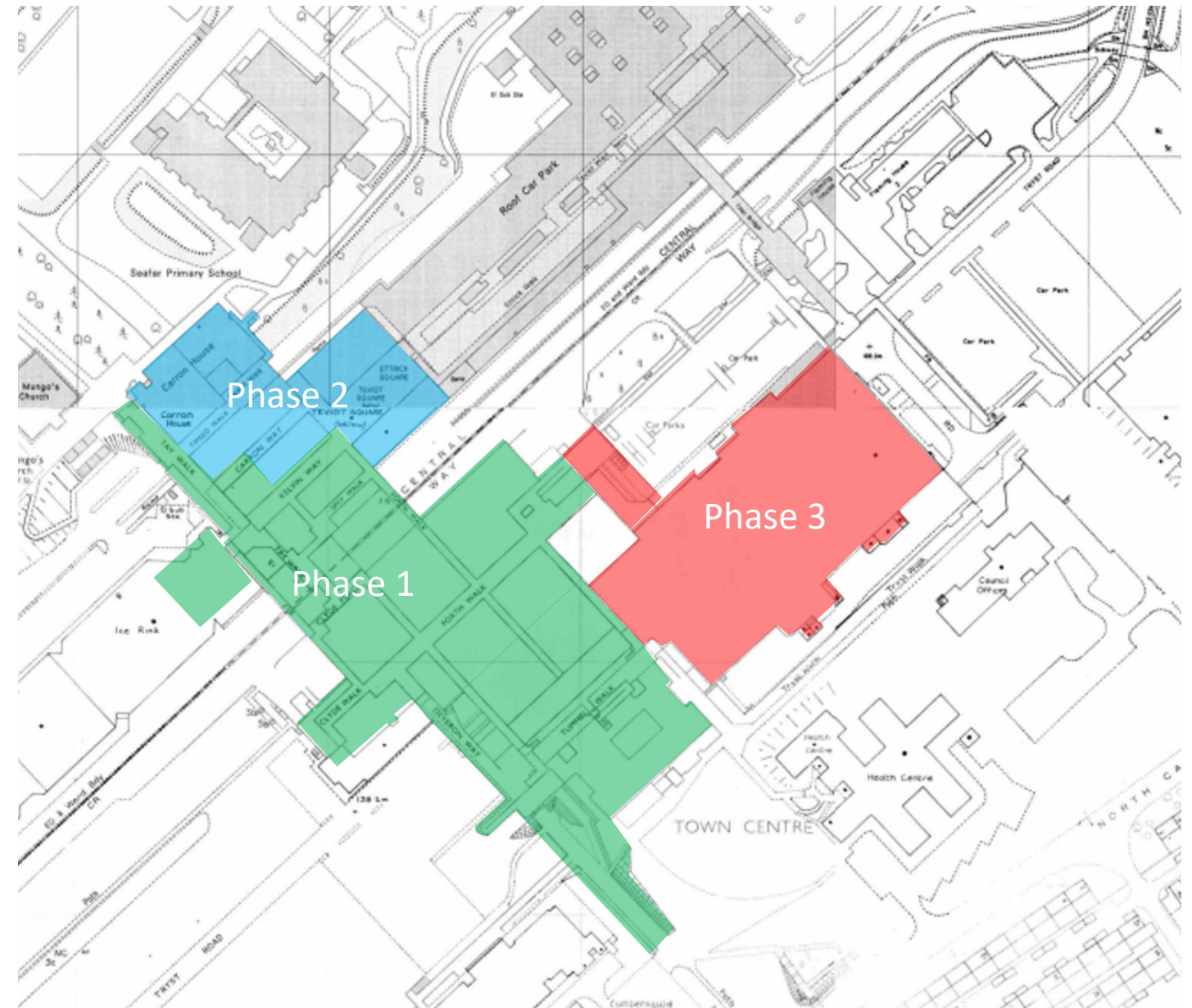


Figure 4.19 Phases 1, 2 and 3



4 Implementation of Design

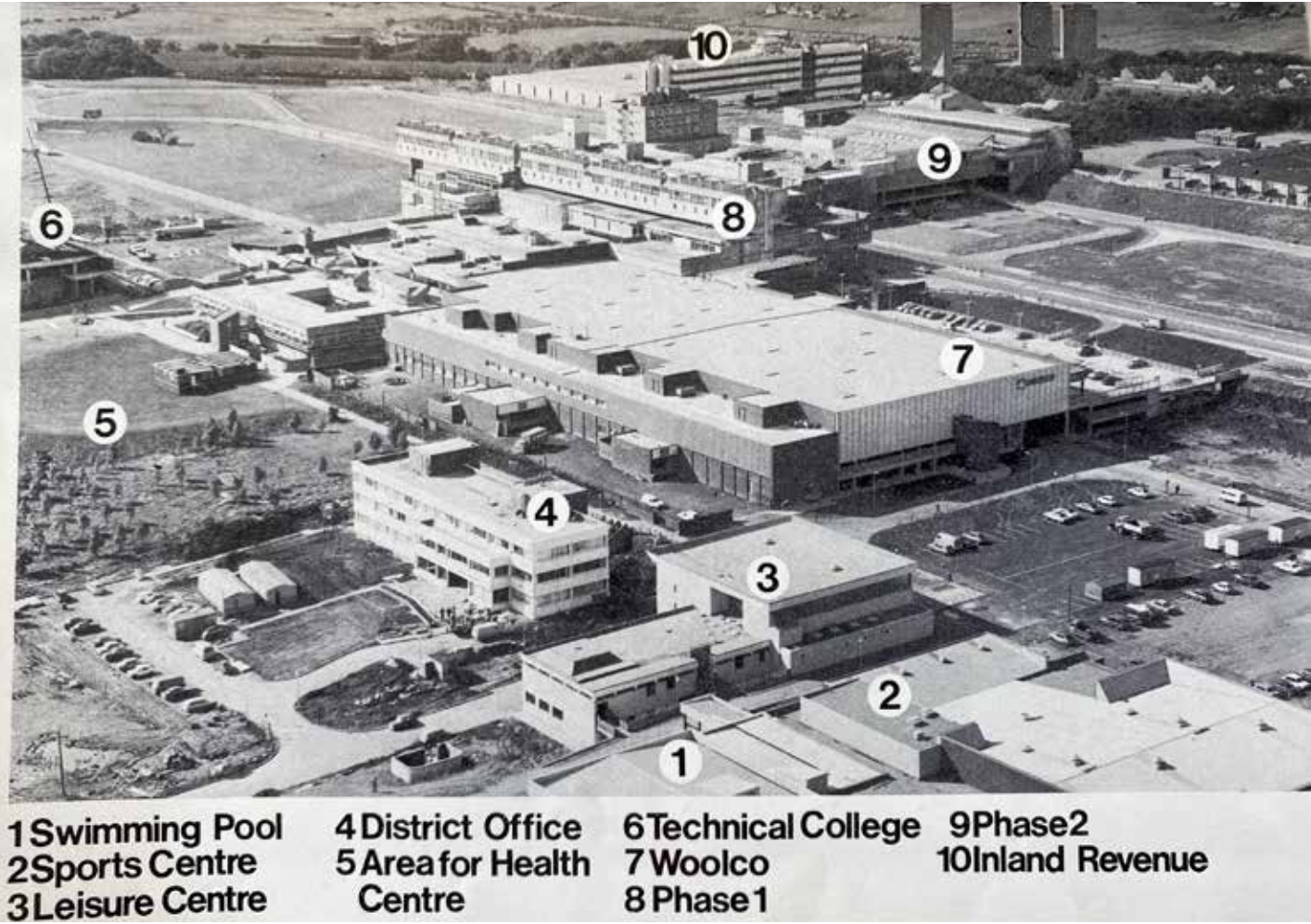


Figure 4.20 Marked up aerial photograph with Phases of the Town Centre highlighted in the 1975 CDC Annual Report. NLC Archives

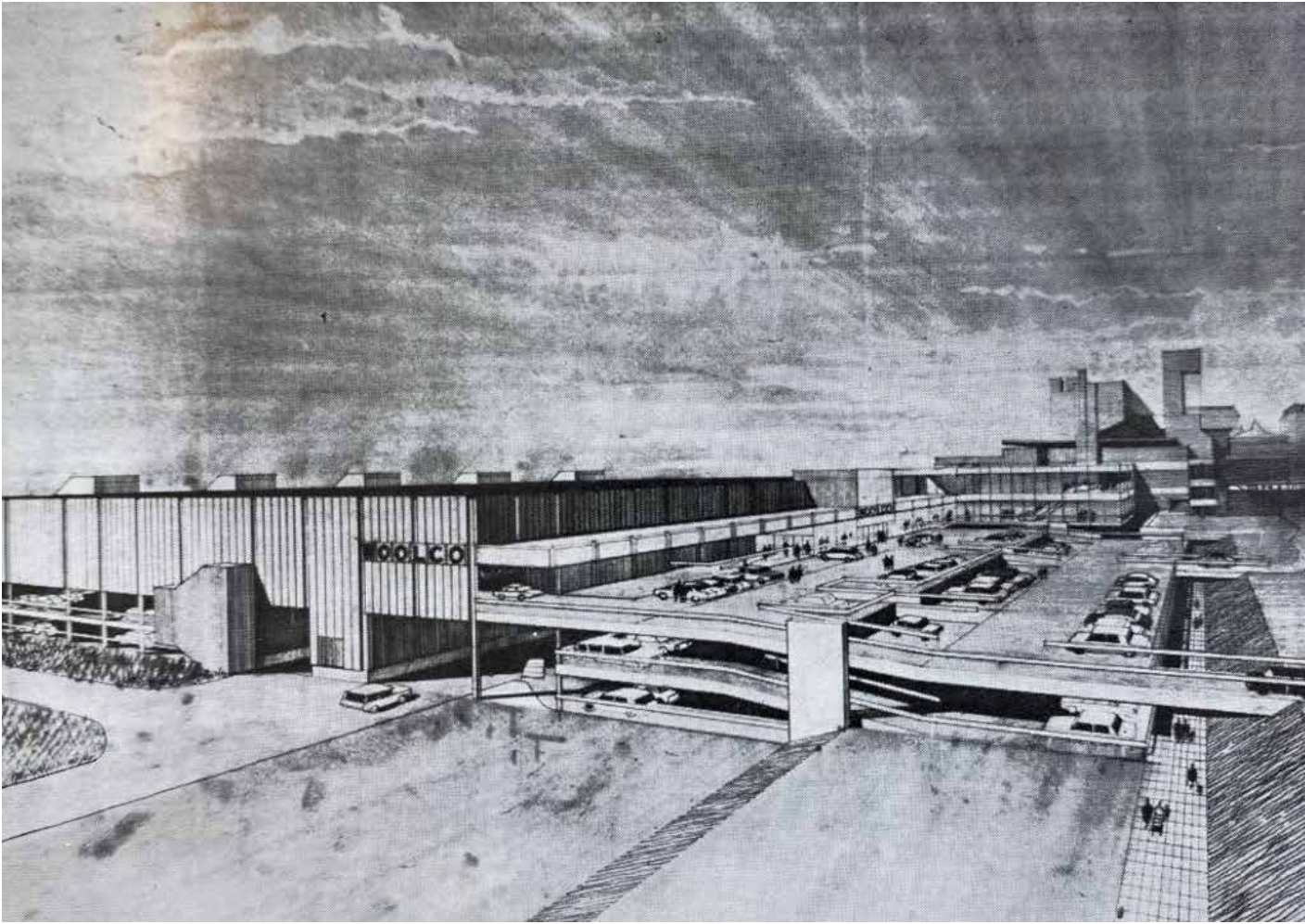


Figure 4.21 Artist impression of the Woolco building and Phase 3 car parking area C1972. NLC Archives



4 Implementation of Design

Implementation of Phase 4 (1975-1981)

- 4.44 First reference to Phase 4 of the Town Centre is mentioned in the CDC Annual Report of 1975. *"Planning has continued on the Fourth Phase of the Town Centre, with modifications made necessary by current financial limitations. The Corporation expect to approve a scheme involving 10,000 square metres of retail space later in 1975."* It becomes clear when reading the CDC reports from the second half of the 1970s that the CDC struggled to push forward with expansion of Phase 4 as had been intended earlier on that decade.
- 4.45 The 20th Annual Report of 1976 also highlighted the financial difficulties the CDC were facing due to *"the formidable problems of high interest rates and rising construction costs, and to the consequent delays in proceeding with such badly needed developments as retail buildings, offices, cinema, hotels etc...It is becoming critical in respect of the projected 4th Phase of the Town Centre without which Cumbernauld in a few years' time, will be very seriously under-provided with shops"*.
- 4.46 By 1976, both the Health Centre and Technical College were almost finished, but the CDC reported that despite their best efforts it had not yet been possible to devise a viable scheme for the 4th Phase, nor for the new office block and cinema.
- 4.47 1977 marked the 21st anniversary of Cumbernauld. The occasion was marked by a visit by the Queen. The CDC Annual Report from that year remarked that *"In common with the rest of Britain, Cumbernauld has faced a year of continuing economic difficulty"*.
- 4.48 There was a continued delay in starting Phase 4 by the CDC. During 1976 retail interest continued at a high level and the Corporation did everything possible to devise a financially viable scheme but, with the economic climate progressively deteriorating, it became clear by December of that year that progress was not possible in the short term.
- 4.49 The CDC sought an external review and retail study to advise on future development. Work had started at this time on the bingo/cinema complex and the new Central Health Centre to the south of Phase 1 was operational.
- 4.50 The report that followed was the Cumbernauld Central Area Review and Town Centre Expansion,

- undertaken by Healy & Barker, April 1977. The report highlighted a number of disadvantages with the Town Centre, in particular the difficulty in transporting goods from shop to car, difficulties in servicing, flexibility and security problems in the large malls at night. *"Perhaps most serious, there are costs, as extremely high construction cost in relation to a severely restricted area of usable commercial space, and maintenance costs in relation to the malls, hoists, lifts and escalators"*.
- 4.51 The report's findings conclude:  
*The centre as developed was largely open to wind and weather. The site of Cumbernauld is very exposed and the Town Centre is one of the highest points within the site. In addition, the shopping deck is at about the same height as a roof of a two-storey building.*  
*The climate of central Scotland is, of course, not conducive to comfortable shopping in such circumstances and it was consequently found necessary to modify the design by filling in the sides and roofing over the malls. Whilst these additions to the original architecture have been handed as well as circumstances allow, they are visually unsatisfactory, and the resulting centre falls far short of the standards of comfort and convenience to be found in other such centres".*  
*Phase 2 of the Town Centre was completed in 1971... It was developed on the same basis as Phase 1 and with the same attractions and disadvantages; it has been created in a simpler manner with cladding and internal décor in an attempt to improve customer comfort and convenience.*
- 4.52 The Healy& Barker report concluded that *"The centre at present is seriously inadequate, both in terms of size and design"*. The report suggested that the centre should be enlarged by a further 200,000sq ft and that the new development should contain two large stores and a variety of shop units. From Healy & Barker's discussions with retailers, they believed this approach would be viable *..."if it were designed in accordance with modern shopping practice, including in particular, safe covered pedestrian routes, car parking at the same level as the shops and convenience servicing arrangements"*.
- 4.53 Development of Phase 4 finally begun in 1979 with the further extension of retail space by 15, 558 sqm.

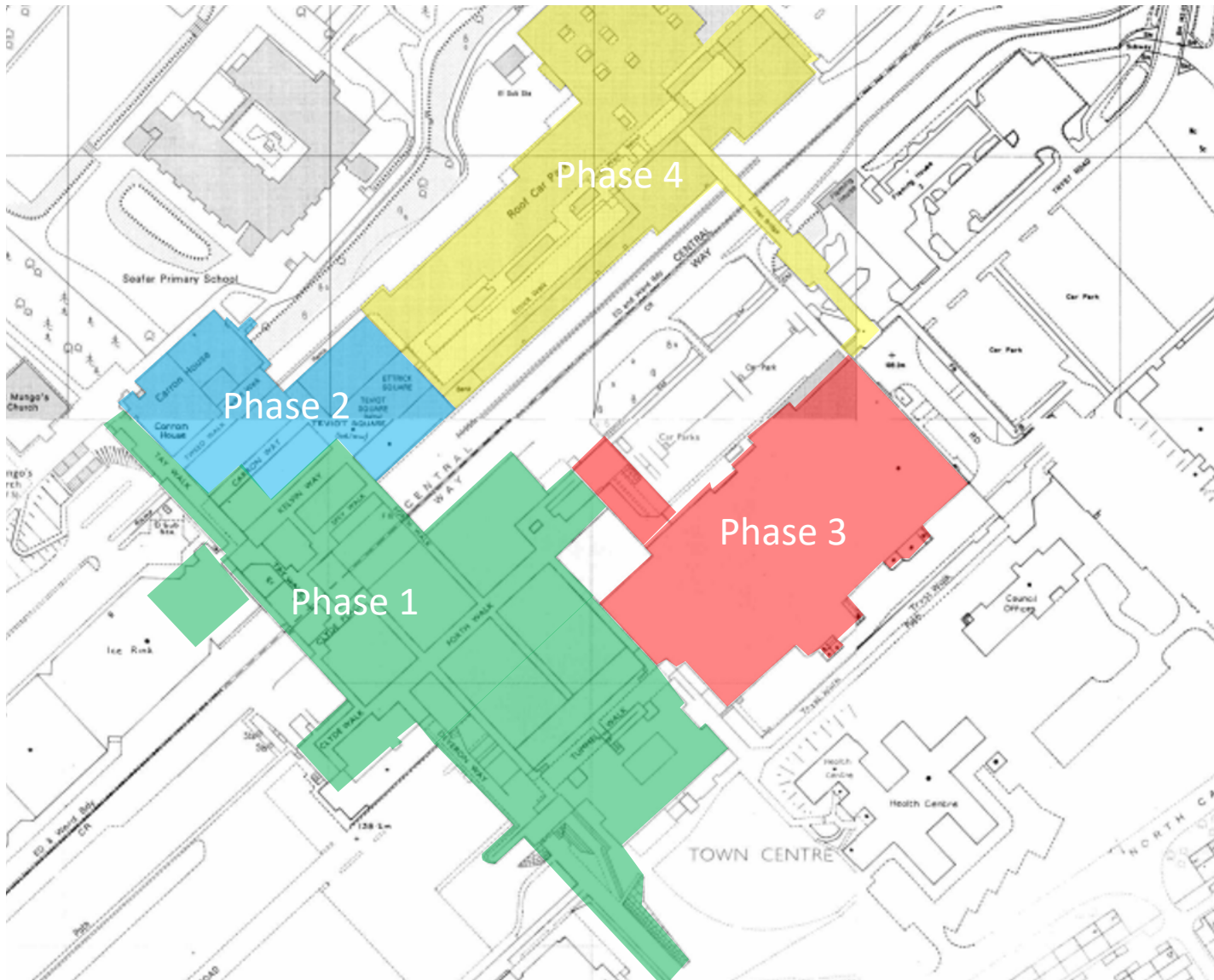


Figure 4.22 Phases 1, 2, 3, and 4

- This comprised a shopping mall style building, principally at ground level, and a large supermarket with 66 retail units and parking for 240 vehicles. The work was undertaken by John Laing Construction. The design of Phase 4 is more recognisable as a 'mall' rather than the Phase 1 and 2 multi-layered structure. The design principles of Phase 1 and 2 were not continued into Phases 3 or 4.
- 4.54 The 25th Annual Report of 1981 marks HRH Prince of Wales' visit and the opening of Phase 4. The Cross Town Link (bridge between Phase 3 and 4) which completes the circuit of shopping facilities in the Cumbernauld Centre was near completion at this time and is still used today.
- 4.55 Built at a cost of £0.6m the bridge was notable for its bold and imaginative design interlinking contrasted spaces and with a central point of interest.



## 4 Implementation of Design

CUMBERNAULD TOWN CENTRE



Figure 4.23 Phase 4 main entrance hall and escalator, 2022



Figure 4.24 External southern elevation of Phase 4 at Central Way, 2022



## 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.25 Aerial photo taken around 1985 of Phases 1-4. In this image the southern access ramps are clearly identifiable as well as the newly completed Phase 4. The blue paint scheme has yet to be implemented and the Woolco building (Phase 3) is still there. Cumbernauld Library NLC



Figure 4.26 By the time of this photo, the bingo hall/skating has been built to the west of the Town Centre Cumbernauld Library NLC.



## 4 Implementation of Design

### Phase 5 (1996-2007)

- 4.56 The planning for the Phase 5 extension to the Town Centre started in the final years of the Cumbernauld Development Corporation. In the 1995 Annual Report of the CDC, the chairman David Mitchel explains that £75 million has been earmarked for the Town Centre to create 300,000 sq ft of new shopping space. A company called Arrowcroft Group plc had produced proposals for the redevelopment of the Town Centre to include 4 major stores, 1,200 new car parking spaces and a new bus station.
- 4.57 In 1996 the CDC dissolved and handed over all responsibilities for the development of the town to Cumbernauld and Kilsyth District Council. From this time onwards we have records of planning applications which indicate the continuation of the project.
- 4.58 Originally, Tesco was supposed to part of the direct extension to the Town Centre, however, the supermarket obtained separate planning permission to build a stand-alone unit further to the south west of the Town Centre which caused delays and redesign of the initial Phase 5 design.
- 4.59 Confusingly Phase 5 was divided into 3 sub-phases: A, B and C. Phases B and C were two building Phases. A planning record of Phase A could not be found but it can be assumed that this consisted of the large demolition works that were to take place resulting in the significant loss of the last remaining parts of the iconic Phase 1 southern approach ramps, and the main entrance to the Town Centre itself, reducing the Phase 1 structure by almost a half in terms of floor area.
- 4.60 Phase 5 demolished most of Phase 3 the Woolco department store as well, and left only a fragment to the north abutting Phase 1 and Central Way.
- 4.61 Phase 5 opened in 2007 as the Antonine Centre named after the near-by Antonine Wall.

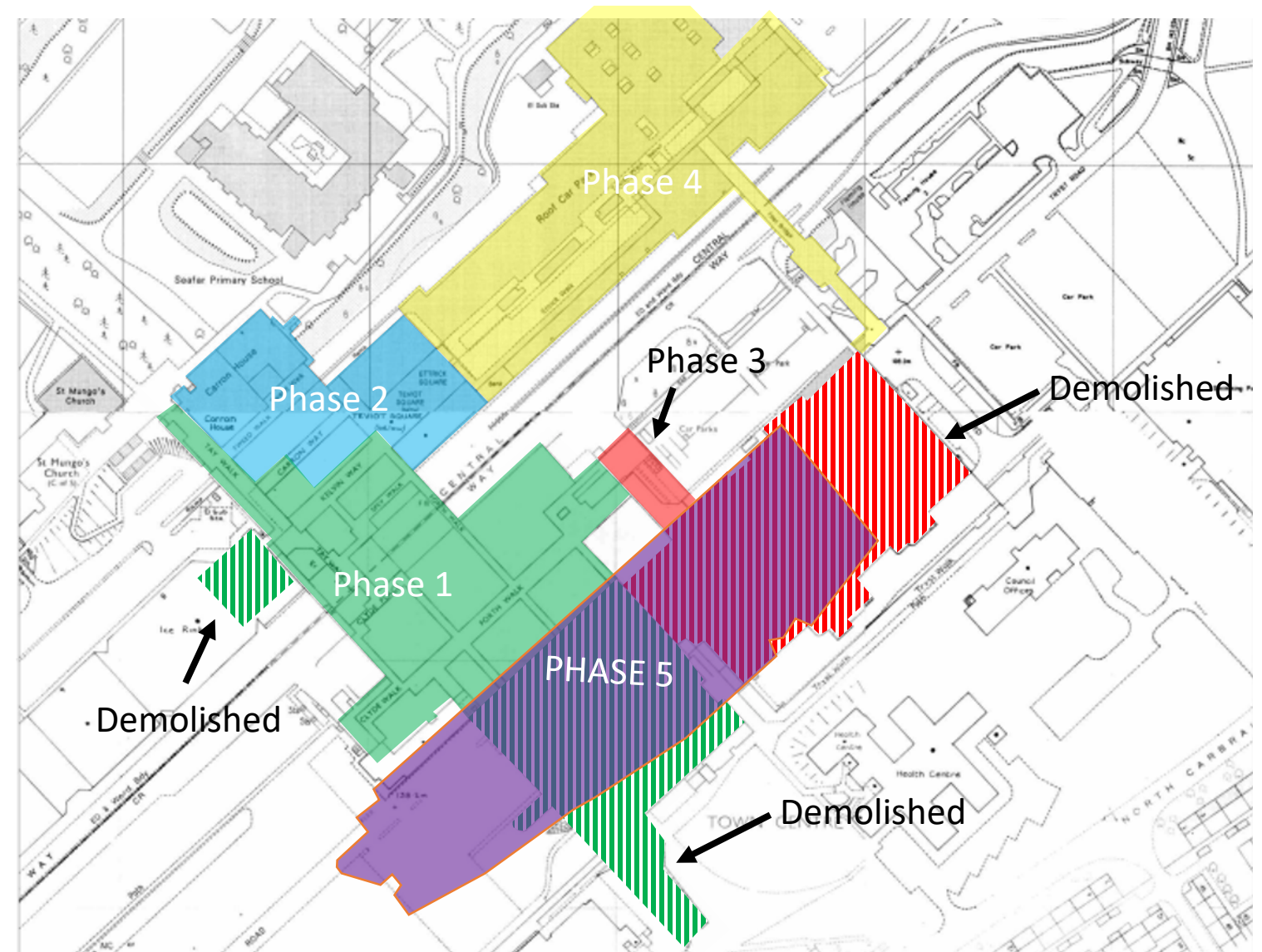


Figure 4.30 All Phases of the Town Centre 1-5, including demolished areas of Phase 1 and 3 to make way for the Antonine Centre (Phase 5)

Figure 4.27 Phase 5 connection to Phase 1, 2022

Figure 4.28 Rooftop of Phase 5, Antonine Centre, to south of Phase 1, 2022

Figure 4.29 Western end of Antonine Centre, 2022



## 4 Implementation of Design

### Events and Visits

- 4.62 Over the course of the Town Centre's lifetime, there have been a number of events that have been recorded. The Town Centre has won awards both positive and negative, which reflect both public and academic interest. The Town Centre has also been visited a number of times by the British Royal family as well as foreign dignities.

#### St Enoch Clock

- 4.63 St Enoch's train station in central Glasgow was demolished in the 1966 along with the St Enoch Hotel. The clock was saved from demolition and went to auction. The clock was purchased by the Raymond Gillies Foundation, and gifted to Cumbernauld showing the connection between Glasgow and Cumbernauld, as so many people moved from Glasgow to Cumbernauld as the New Town developed.
- 4.64 It is the only piece of the station known to have survived. The clock was presented to Cumbernauld in 1977 as the New Town celebrated its 21st birthday.
- 4.65 It was originally hung at the foot of the stairway which joined the upper shopping level to the town centre Phase 1 to the walkway leading to the Woolco store. The Queen was celebrating her Silver jubilee in 1977 and she unveiled a commemorative plaque documenting the gift of the St Enoch Clock from the people of Glasgow to the people of Cumbernauld.
- 4.66 The clock moved location slightly when the Antonine Centre was built. It is in almost the same location, but faces a different direction. The clock has historic significance, with no designation but it could most likely be incorporated into a new development scheme for the Town Centre if desired.

#### Gregory's' Girl Film 1981

- 4.67 The clock gained greater attention through the film Gregory's Girl in 1981. The setting of the film was Cumbernauld.

#### Royal Visits

- 4.68 Cumbernauld was visited on a number of occasions by members of the royal family. Most notably, Phase 1 was opened by Princess Margaret and her husband Earl Snowdon in 1967. Archive news footage exists showing the visit. The notable visits are:

- Princess Margaret and Earl of Snowdon, 14 May 1961
- Prince Albert of Belgium, 19 March 1964
- Princess Margaret & Lord Snowdon, 18 May 1967
- The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh - St Enoch Clock 1977 - to celebrate Cumbernauld's 21st birthday and the unveiling of the St Enoch Clock
- HRH Prince of Wales, Duke of Rothesay, 1 July 1980
- HRH Princess Anne, opening of the Antonine Centre on 6 June 2007.



Figure 4.31 Photo of St Enoch Station Clock 1965, NLC Archives



Figure 4.32 Current location of St Enoch Clock between Antonine Centre and Phase 2



Figure 4.33 A) CDC Commemorative Pamphlet 1967. B) CDC Annual Report 1968 image of sculpture commissioned to mark opening of Phase 1 Town Centre, and C) CDC pamphlet marking Prince Charles' visit in 1980, NLC Archives



# 4 Implementation of Design

## Refurbishments and Alterations

4.69 The following paragraphs detail the alterations that have taken place to the Town Centre since Phase 1 was opened in 1967. They catalogue a series of issues that (mainly) the Phase 1 and 2 buildings faced, which resulted in loss of original fabric, additions and refurbishments driven by economic factors, building safety and fire regulations and user comfort. The resultant effect is a significantly altered building, which has lost the purity of design first envisaged by the original designers, in an attempt to keep it fit for purpose.

### 1970s

4.70 The Cumbernauld Central Area Review and Town Centre Expansion, undertaken by Healy & Barker, April 1977 details alterations to phases 1 & 2 “to modify the design by filling in the sides and roofing over the malls”. This was due to the microclimate and windtunneling problems. This was one of the main issues with the design of the Town Centre. From early on in the design process, the teams Landscape Architect flagged potential issues of wind and rain due to the Town Centre’s position on the ridge. This continued to cause problems resulting in the necessity to box in most of the open areas of the Town Centre.

4.71 Later in 1979, the 23rd Annual Report there was a further programme of improvements to Phases 1 & 2. These included upgrading and refurbishment of lifts and major improvements to the escalators. There were also further improvements to weather-proofing, lighting and direction signing.

### 1980s

4.72 The 27th Annual Report of 1983 details the refurbishment of Phase 1 including fire precautions such as improved exit routes, fire barriers and smoke extraction. These alterations are particularly visible on Avon walk which was once completely open and had voids looking down to the floors below. Now these are filled-in and barriers divide up the long corridor (Figures 4.34, 4.35 and 4.36).

4.73 The report goes on to describe the upgrading of finishes throughout Phase 1 - a monitoring centre.

4.74 1983 was also the year that the Golden Eagle Hotel was demolished the report states:

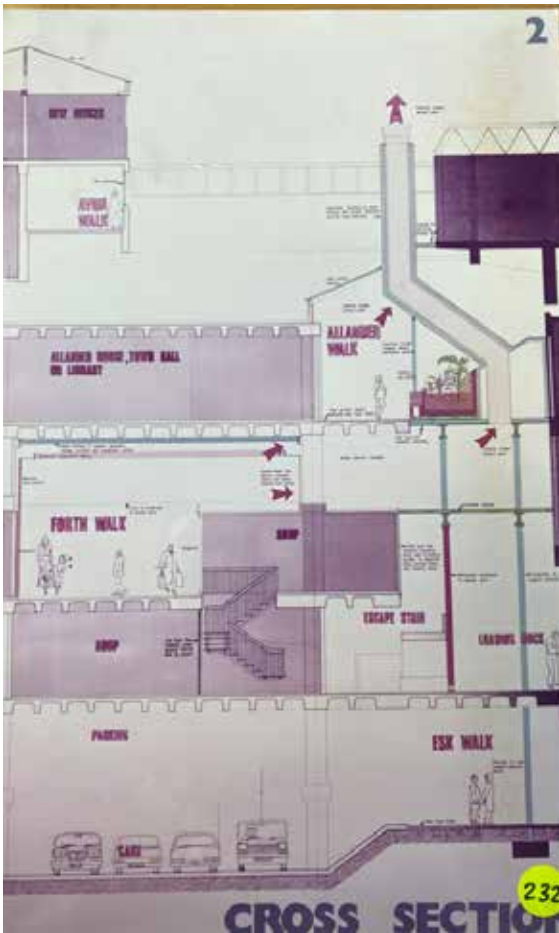


Figure 4.34 Building warrant drawing showing 1983 alterations to meet fire safety requirements

hotel investment, but without success; the causes appear to be high building costs, the state of the hotel industry and uncertainty about the route of the M80 motorway. The Corporation believes that if Cumbernauld is to fulfil to the full its function as a centre of economic growth, the provision of a good hotel is an essential part of its infrastructure.

4.75 In 1981, plans were begun to convert the penthouses in Avon House to offices (figures 4.37 & 4.38). A report was submitted to the CDC outlining the problems with the roof and the windows - how they had started to decay because they were made of timber and not up to fire safety regulations. The conversion replaced the roof with plastic cladding as well as the windows with plastic. Furthermore the interiors of the flats were completely gutted out and redeveloped to accommodate the office spaces.



Figure 4.35 Allander Walk pre-fire alterations but already with roof enclosure

4.76 The following text is an extract from the 1980 planning application detailing the proposed changes to Avon House.

At the Corporation’s request the work on the re-roofing project for the Penthouses was abandoned, and a new brief accepted for the conversion of the houses to offices.

#### Problems - the Roof

After commencement of the design sketches and discussions with the Fire Master it became evident that the existing roof patios were not suitable as a means of escape, due mainly to the fact that the roof was of timber construction..it was decided to ignore the roof as a means of escape, which allowed a very simple roof design to be considered. The new roof will give complete coverage of all the existing problem areas. In effect a metal ‘lid’ will cover the new units.



Figure 4.36 Allander Walk 2022 showing fire safety alterations with the blocking off of lower walkways

#### Building Exterior

The existing windows have been examined on both sides of the building, and it is clear that the timber sashes and frames are worn out. Replacement is the only logical answer, and with a view to reducing future maintenance, it is considered that bronze anodised aluminium frames in-filled with bronze tinted anti-sun glass is acceptable, and very compatible with similar work being carried out on the Town Centre at present.

The large areas of exposed concrete have, over the years, become dirty, and advice is being sought at present regarding methods of cleaning.

4.77 The 28th Annual Report of 1984 reported that every possible effort had been made to secure funds for plans for conversion of the former Templeton supermarket in Phase 2 into a badly needed leisure complex called “leisureplex” which included a snooker hall, a disco and an arcade,



## 4 Implementation of Design

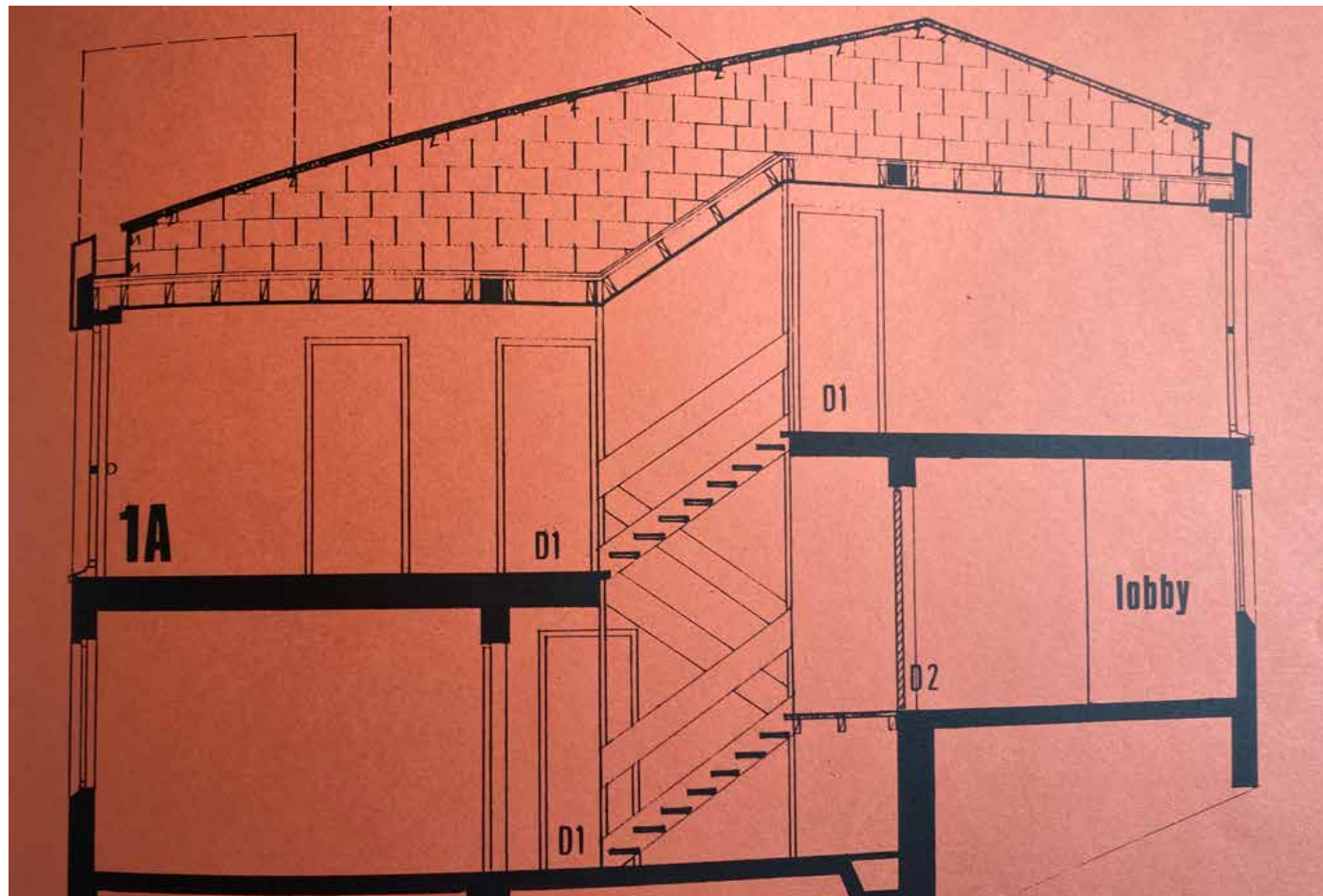


Figure 4.37 Plans As Existing, Penthouses 1980, prepared by McDonald Hamilton Monteforre & Rae, NLC Archives

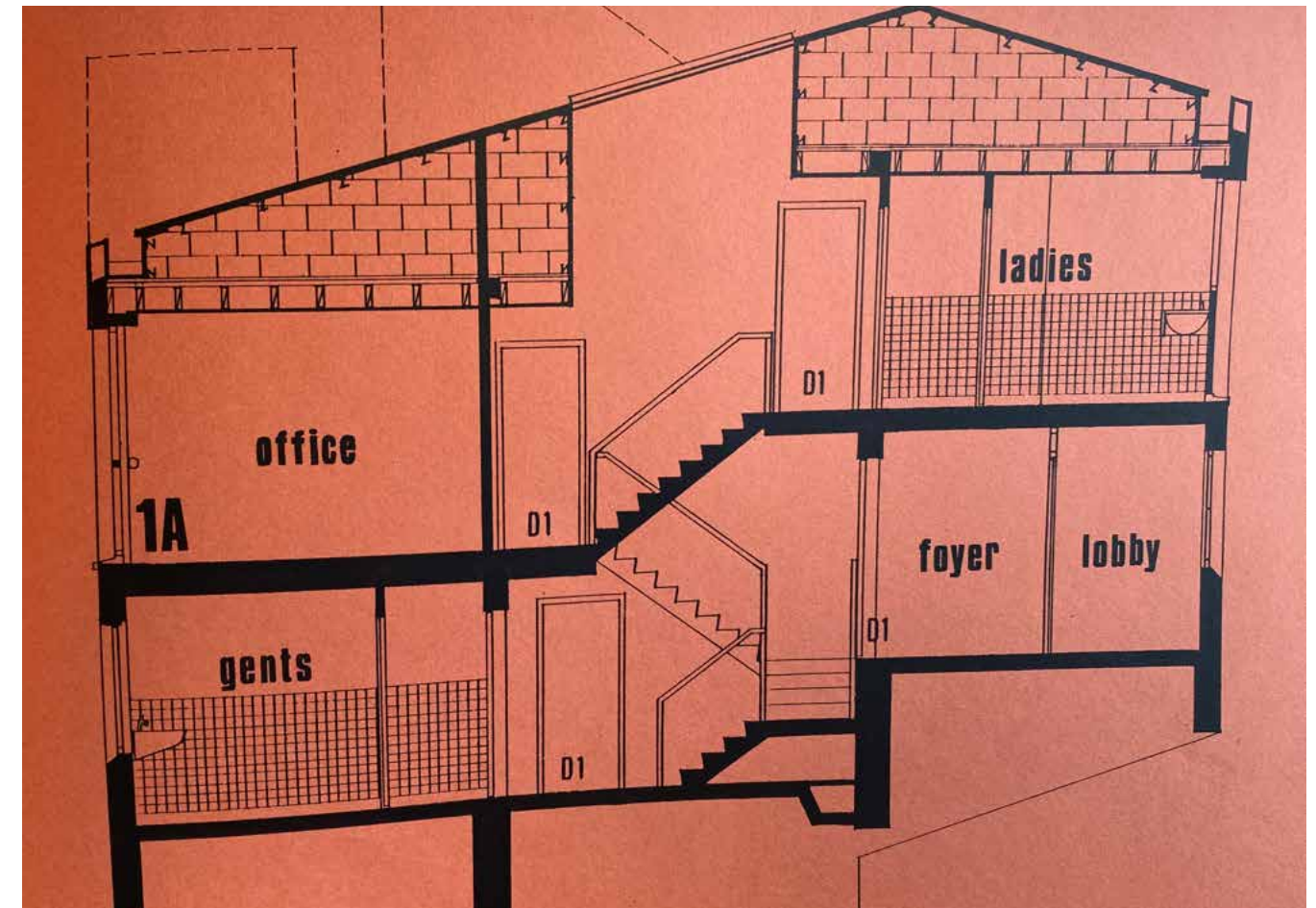


Figure 4.38 Plans As Proposed for offices 1980, NLC Archives

### 1990s

- 4.78 In 1996 there was a planning application entitled "Internal refurbishments Phase 1 Cumbernauld Town Centre". Also in 1997 planning had begun for Phase 5 which included much demolition of Phase 1 and would have included both internal and external alterations to conjoin with Phase 5.

### 2000s

- 4.79 In the year 2001 there was a planning application that referenced external alterations to Phase 4 which created the new glass entrance to that part of the centre.
- 4.80 Also in 2001, there was a planning application for the installation of telecommunications equipment

on to Avon House. There were two other of these applications in 2004 and 2005 which also included equipment installed on Phases 1 & 2 as well. These resulted in the unsightly and cluttered roofscape of Phases 1 & 2, particularly on the north eastern tower which included antenna, transmission dishes, railings and mesh cabinets.

- 4.81 The images on the following page highlight the significant amount of alteration that has taken place, in particular at Phases 1 and 2 with extensive enclosure, cladding and encasing or open decks, walkways and access ramps, which are indicative of design failure for the fabric of the Town Centre and for the user.



4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.39 Roof exterior above Allander Walk showing covered over section of the original Phase 1 building



Figure 4.40 Exterior glass cladding over original Phase 1 pedestrian access ramp



Figure 4.41 Roof above Tay Walk covered over and glass cladded, as well as encased walkway and closed off ramp



Figure 4.45 Tweed Walk covered over by glass roof



Figure 4.42 Enclosed walkway from Phase 1 to 2 over Central Way



Figure 4.43 Interior view of pedestrian access ramp shown externally in 4.29 this would have been open to the elements originally



Figure 4.44 Forth Walk underneath Avon House covered over with glass roof



Figure 4.46 Stairwell leading down to car park level under Phase 1 showing defunct drainage channel



4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.47 Photo of Tay Walk as originally intended, open to the elements C1970

4.82 The image above shows the original intention of open Streets in Phase 2. The Royal Bank of Scotland building is clearly recognisable with Avon House set behind. Early on in the Town Centre's operation, it was realised that the openness led to issues with water ingress into the structure, which caused not maintenance issues and slippery surfaces.



Figure 4.48 Tay Walk Royal Bank of Scotland as it is today 2022

4.83 This image by contrast shows the Royal Bank of Scotland in 2022. Tay Walk was covered over and the building encased. The original concrete shuttering structure has been removed and the lower level in filled, which enabled more office and retail units to be created.

## 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.49 The roofscape of Phase 2 as it is today



Figure 4.50 The roofscape of Phase 2 c. 1970. Note how much has since been boxed-in



## 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.51 Tweed Walk c.1970s



Figure 4.52 A similar view of Tweed Walk as it exists today. Note the difference in tiling, the covered walkway and blocked-up shopfronts



## 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.53 Spey Walk 1970s



Figure 4.54 Spey walk as it exists today. This perhaps illustrates the most significant changes that occurred in this part of the Town Centre.



# 4 Implementation of Design



Figure 4.55 Marked up photo of non-original fabric (west elevation) Phase 1



Figure 4.56 Marked up photo of non-original fabric on Phase 1 (east elevation) as well as Phase 3 & 4.

- 4.84 The pink sections highlighted in the above two images show non-original fabric on the Phase 1 Town Centre building. In addition to the loss of original fabric on Avon House, which also included a change in the design and appearance of the roof, as well as the enclosing of the walkway over Central Way. In addition, the Phase 1 building was originally left as unpainted concrete, which at the time, emphasised the Brutalist style of architecture. Most recently what remains of the original structure was painted blue.
- 4.85 The yellow is phase 4 and the red is what remains of Phase 3 and the connecting sections to the former Woolco building. The pink once again shows non-original Phase 1 fabric, in particular, the glass enclosed original pedestrian access ramp.



Section 5

# **Assessment of Significance & Listing Criteria.**



## 5 | Assessment of Significance & Listing Criteria

### Introduction

- 5.1 Proposals for listing are assessed by HES under the following criteria: Architectural Interest and Historic Interest.
- 5.2 The Architectural Interest of a building is assessed under two headings of Design and Setting.
- 5.3 Historic Interest is assessed under the following three headings: Age and Rarity, Social Historical Interest and Association with people or events of national importance:

### Architectural Interest: Design

#### Artistic skill and/or architectural details or features and how they have been used in the building's design

- 5.4 The Central Area was "An expression of thinking about megastructures" (Gold, p.109). There is no doubt that the original design concept for Cumbernauld Town Centre was forward thinking and bold, representing post-war urban planning in relation to the New Town movement; the future, which aimed to achieve the Megastructure ideal. But what was originally intended from concept to implementation was only achieved initially in Phases 1 and 2. In the years that followed, extensive alteration, demolition, adaptation and extension have meant that the Phase 1 development in particular, is almost unrecognisable in places, apart from Avon House, which in itself has been altered, but acts as a visual focal point and identifiable feature.
- 5.5 Architects and planners of the post-war period were thinking creatively about solutions to the post-war problems and as such, this can make buildings of this period interesting. However, innovation in conception did not always mean innovation and success in implementation or future use. The design concept of Cumbernauld has turned out to be flawed. This was found to be the case as early as 1977, and potentially earlier, as the 'use' of the Town Centre developed and changed over time.
- 5.6 The New Town legacy is almost universally problematic. The towns are dealing with issues arising from innovative or 'up-to-date' responses at a point in time, to the driving issue in urban design terms in the 1950s and 60s of how to divide pedestrian and vehicle. Although only partly built to the original design, according to Gold (2006, p10), Cumbernauld Town Centre gave rise to what still has claims to be "the most comprehensive vertical separation of pedestrians and vehicles seen in a town centre anywhere in Britain during the post-war period".
- 5.7 The two initial phases are the only ones that proceeded in line with the megastructure ideal, which was irrevocably lost by the construction of Phase 3 - the development of the Woolco building as well as the Phase 5 Antonine Centre, which resulted in detrimental impact upon setting and demolition of the significant southern approach to the Phase 1 Town Centre.
- 5.8 An important part of the Town Centre concept and design, was that it was always intended to expand. The Site had been chosen to allow significant expansion for the town. The idea was that as the town grew in population, the Town Centre could adapt and extend. However, this proved to be problematic with the relatively inflexible arrangement of the original design, coupled with the changes in town centre retail requirements and the use of the car.
- 5.9 Another significant part of the design was stepping up from south to north. This, however, has been completely lost when the southern approach buildings and ramps were demolished to make way for the Antonine Centre in the early 2000s. The visual effect of the penthouses crowning the structure that once existed has also been lost, even though the penthouses (Avon House) are still clearly identifiable.
- 5.10 It was realised early on (in the 1970s by the CDC) that the location chosen on top of a hill was a problematic location for a town centre. The site was narrow and elongated, which placed limitations on the chosen design in terms of the layout of roads and buildings. Any pedestrians visiting the city centre on its hilltop would have to cope with the stiff gradients on the way there regardless of the direction from which they approached.
- 5.11 There were also microclimatological problems namely frequent rain and prevailing wind, which led to a number of significant adaptations to the Phase 1 and 2 buildings. This is critical in understanding why the building looks like it does today and why the neat edges of the Brutalist style building have been eroded. The Phase 1 structure was in many places, encased as shown in images on page 27 of this report in particular.

#### Interest of the designer in relation to the building's design

- 5.12 Regarding the interest of the designer reflected in the building's design, it must first be noted that there were multiple designers of Cumbernauld. There is an assumption that it was Copcutt's design that drove Phase 1 forward but it appears that a team of people worked on the concepts for the Town Centre before Copcutt's appointment in 1958. The Town Centre development team was led by the Chief Architect and Planner Hugh Wilson (appointed in October 1956). There was not one 'mastermind' for the scheme rather a bringing together of various people from different disciplines. The CDC Annual Reports give little mention Copcutt. However Hugh Wilson left the team in October 1962, although remaining as consultant, and Geoffrey Copcutt departed in 1963. The scheme proceeded according to Copcutt's plan and chosen aesthetic but was implemented by his successors Philip Aitken and Neil Dadge. Although the Cumbernauld staff contributed working diagrams, the contractors, who had been hired on a 'design and build' basis, handled the detailing (Gold, P122). Therefore, the Phase 1 Town Centre cannot be attributed to one architect or designer.
- 5.13 This team were obviously very driven by modernity in architecture and urban design and these influences are clearly seen in the design of Cumbernauld.

#### Interior design and fixed interior decorative schemes

- 5.14 The interiors over the decades have undergone several refurbishments that have blurred the original schemes. Looking at photographs contemporary to the opening of the Site, there was no clear decorative scheme. There are some additions from the 80s and 90s that survive but much of the interior of Phase 1 and Phase 2 belong to the later refurbishment.
- 5.15 Patrick Nuttgens, architect and academic, gave a guarded response that tempered qualified approval with a carefully worded catalogue of reservations. "For all the positive talk, such as the centre being 'one of the most impressive sights in town planning today', it is the criticisms that catch the eye, for example: it is sometimes coarse and verging on the megalomaniac; here and there it ignores simple needs in favour of some private aesthetic. And yet with ironic justice it is the occasional pieces of pure architecture that in the end are the most irritating aesthetically,

## CUMBERNAULD TOWN CENTRE



Figure 5.1 Phase 1 Car parking area concrete coffer roof construction



Figure 5.2 1967 Phase 1



Figure 5.3 Internal decoration painted brick



## 5 Assessment of Significance & Listing Criteria

*communicating a lively sense of the unnecessary. ... The next phase ... must inevitably correct what appears at a superficial glance to be major faults* [Patrick Nuttgens, Criticism: Cumbernauld Town Centre. Architectural Review 142, 850 (1967) 444 quoted in Gold p122].

### Plan form of the building

- 5.16 The original concept of the plan was to have entry via public transport at the lower levels on Central Way along with services to the building. On the mid level was to be the shopping centre and at the upper levels were the penthouses, social club and library. Since the beginning and over the years, the lower level was heavily criticised as being a dark, dirty and unfriendly entrance to the Town Centre. Eventually the upper levels became largely unused and fell into disrepair and became a derelict area shut off from the rest of the centre.
- 5.17 The original plan form of Phase 1 was significantly altered with the demolition of the southern approach ramps that were a key part of the plan, connecting residential areas to the south with a route that was entirely car free. This entire section was demolished to make way for the Antonine Centre. With this demolition, a significant element of the original design intend, and experience of Cumbernauld Town Centre was lost.
- 5.18 Figure 5.1 is from a promotional leaflet from 1967 marking the opening of Phase 1. It shows that the CDC were not able to retain the original form and function seen in Phase 1 as the future expansion was guided more by economic considerations and attracting investment.

### Materials

- 5.19 There are a variety of materials used throughout the site. Original materials are typical for the Brutalist style. Concrete, for example, was the main material used for the original design not just for the foundations and core but for much of the exterior massing. Details of the shuttering can still be seen on much of the original concrete. Red brick was also used for a lot of the main structures and has been painted with anti-graffiti paint in recent years. Glass was also used not only for the openings but for the roof of a large section of Phase 1 including glass pyramidal pavilions above the social club adjacent to Avon House. These were criticised quite early on as being significantly reduced in size

from the original design. Timber was used for the details such as doors and windows – most notably the round timber window frames of Avon house which were later replaced with plastic. The later phases abandoned the emphasis on concrete and later additions replaced and covered-up sections with contrasting and unsympathetic materials.

- 5.20 The later phases and alterations of the Town Centre strayed away from these basic materials and therefore strayed away from the core Brutalist principle of honesty in raw materials. Plastic cladding became the cheapest and most common go-to material for later alterations and was added on to the structure in several places. The largest visual impact is the alteration to the roof of Avon House as well as the brown plastic sheeting covering up the ramps and walkways of phase 1. In the construction of later phases, inconsistent materials were used such as blond brick for the base of the new walkway over the central way.

### Technological excellence or innovation demonstrated in the building type or its design

- 5.21 The most significant technical innovation of Cumbernauld was to have traffic and pedestrians completely separated using ramps, walkways, overpasses and underpasses. This was a very popular theme in contemporary urban planning but ultimately the idea failed in Cumbernauld due to the lack of proper consideration to the weather as well as to safety.
- 5.22 Many of the gradients of the ramps were too steep and became hazardous particularly in winter. Also the ramps rose to a considerable height and the barriers were quite low and unsafe. They were also open to the elements which lead to the boxing-in of many of the ramps and overpasses with unsympathetic materials. Some of the ramps were permanently closed off and as already stated above, the ramps consisting of the southern approach were demolished in the construction of Phase 5. The loss of the ramps also removed a major aspect of this technical innovation. While a clever solution to traffic issues, the innovations at Cumbernauld failed to deliver and stand the test of time.

### Local or regional traditions that might be demonstrated in the building type, material or form

- 5.23 The idea of the clustered megastructure derived in part from the Scottish tradition of clustered urban arrangements. This theme applies to the New Town of Cumbernauld as a whole. Overall, however, Cumbernauld was an international building taking ideas of the ideal city from the early 20th century and combining it with post-war necessities of housing, facilities and cost. The result was a building that was not suitable for the Scottish climate and while the design sought to encompass Scottish living traditions, it ended up being hated by many of the locals.

### Architectural Interest: Setting

#### Current and historical setting.

- 5.24 Cumbernauld was a new town so it was always intended for its setting to be developed. Whilst the original Town Centre was never meant to be experienced in isolation on top of the hill and it was always intended for future phases of development to be sited around it. Furthermore, the Town Centre was supposed to be a centre point of interchanging junctions and its surrounding were intended to gravitate towards the megastructure. Alterations over the years have skewed this setting most notably with the demolition of the southern approach and the construction of the Antonine Centre.

#### The building's relationship with its immediate and wider surroundings, including views to and from it

- 5.25 The challenge in assessing setting is that there was an intention that the setting would always change. The New Town and Town Centre were purpose built on a hill with open ground allocated for expansion. Therefore there was an assumption that the setting of the Town Centre would always change.
- 5.26 Key views include views from the Town Centre out to the countryside are largely retained. from the upper levels facing south such as Avon House and the library. Views from the Town Centre out to the surrounding new town have significantly altered as the town expanded
- 5.27 Views of the Town Centre from the surrounding New Town were significant because of the Centre's position on the ridge and it being intentionally marked as a focal point in terms of function and visual

## CUMBERNAULD TOWN CENTRE

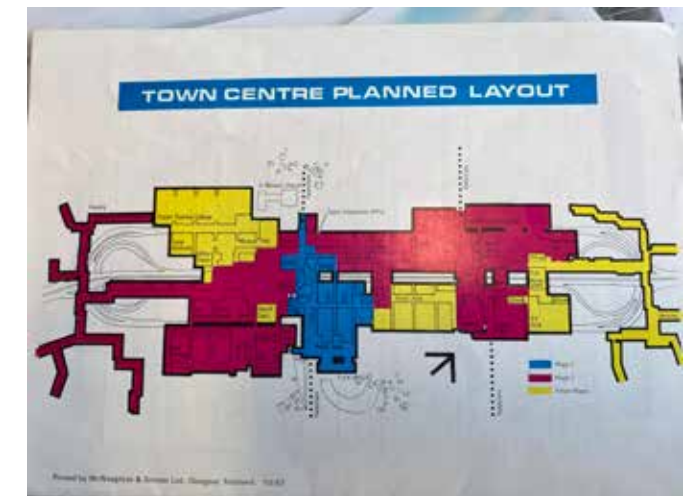


Figure 5.4 Plan of the intended layout from 1967 CDC booklet



Figure 5.5 Interior of Avon House looking out with the countryside on the horizon



Figure 5.6 Southern approach to the Town Centre. Once the main entrance now obstructed by the Antonine Centre





## 5 Assessment of Significance & Listing Criteria

1 from the beginning mainly due to weather, lack of attention to detail and low quality materials.

5.51 Alterations to Phase 1 and 2 include:

- 1977 boxing-in of open areas
- 1979 refurbishment of lifts and escalators and further weather proofing
- 1981 conversion of penthouses
- 1983 fire safety refurbishment to Phase 1 including extractors to Avon walk
- 1984 conversion of Templeton Supermarket
- 1996 internal refurbishments to Phase 1
- 2001, 2004 & 2005 - telecommunication installations
- Extensive demolition of south side of the original Phase 1 southern access.

5.52 The setting of Phases 1 and 2 has altered significantly. Later additions to the Centre, and decisions to demolish and extend have all had a detrimental impact upon the setting of the Town Centre.

5.53 Everything that gave the Town Centre its significance has been negatively impacted. The megastructure design lost its flow of plan in demolitions of Phase 1 and contrasting extensions have been insensitively tacked on. The style of New Brutalism lost its honesty in materials with unsympathetic additions, demolition and repairs, which have been detailed in this Report.

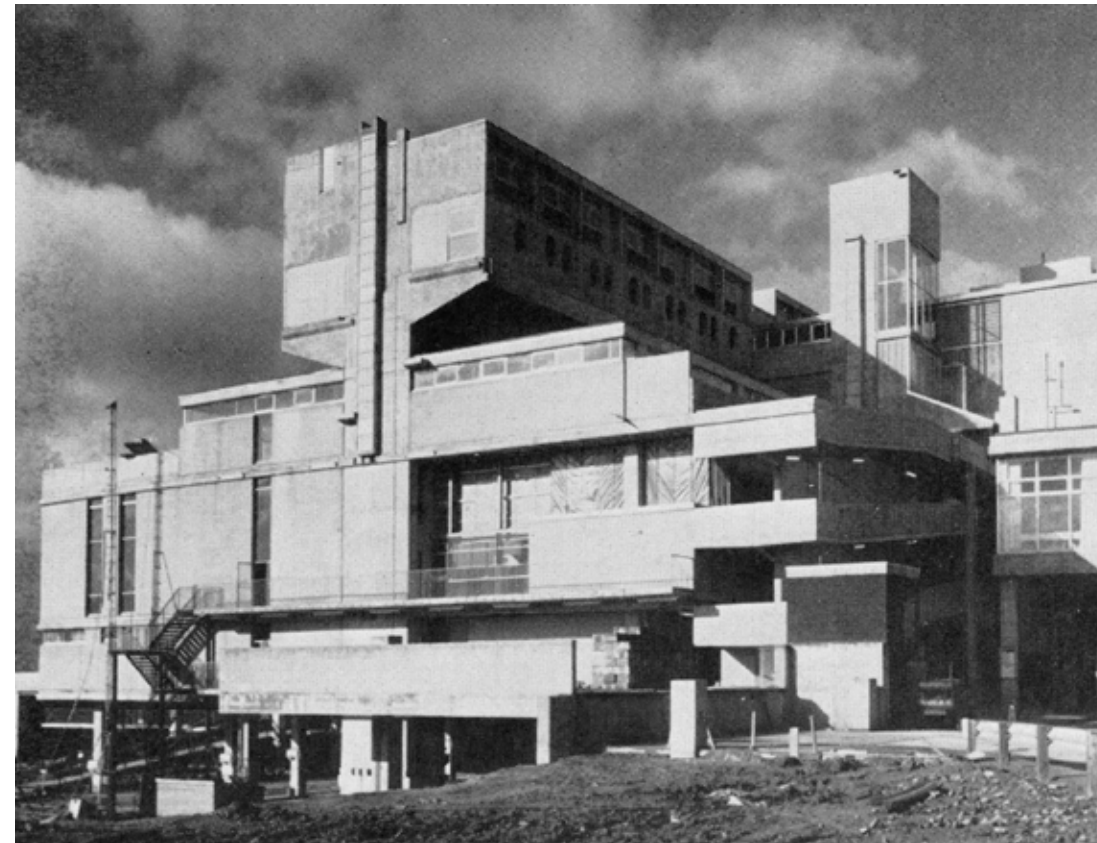


Figure 5.7 West elevation of newly completed Phase 1 showing the neatness of the Brutalist design



Figure 5.8 South side of Avon House and original intended entrance approach to the Town Centre, Phase 1



# Appendix 1

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# Appendix 1 | References

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Internal Refurbishment Phase 1 Cumbernauld Town Centre

Ref. No: 97/00256/FUL | Received: Fri 29 Aug 1997 - Town Centre Redevelopment Including Retail, Leisure and Car/Bus/Taxi Facilities with Associated Hard and Soft Landscaping

Ref. No: 01/00172/FUL | Received: Mon 19 Feb 2001 – External Alterations to the Town Centre Phase 4

Ref. No: 01/01612/FUL | Received: Mon 10 Dec 2001 - Installation of Telecommunications Equipment and Associated Development Avon House Phase 1&2

Ref. No: 02/01670/FUL | Received: Mon 16 Dec 2002 - Link Extension to Town Centre Incorporating Retail, Food and Drink, Public House and Bus Station on Solumn of Central Way: Phase C

Ref. No: 03/00254/ADV | Received: Thu 27 Feb 2003 - Erection of Two Advertising Signboards Site At Central Way&Tryst Road

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Ref. No: 03/01205/ADV | Received: Wed 13 Aug 2003 - Erection of Various Signs

Ref. No: 03/01319/FUL | Received: Tue 02 Sep 2003 - Construction of 2 Entrance Areas, Re-Cladding of Unit 1 and Alterations to Parking Layout Phase 4

Ref. No: 03/01404/FUL | Received: Fri 19 Sep 2003 - Extension to Retail Unit to Provide Additional Exit Lobby

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