built his house in town, and Lutyens never owned the little white house that he dreamed of in the country.

Maufe's intense loyalty to Oxbridge and familiarity with its inner workings led to his becoming the leading voice in a school of clean-lined Scandinavian-inflected design that made up a large part of the universities' building in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. His works at Oxford and Cambridge include a new court at St John's College, Cambridge, a memorial room at Trinity College, Cambridge, and several works at St John's College, Oxford, including Dolphin Quad. The latter is still sought-after accommodation, largely thanks to Maufe's devotion to spacious sets.

The book is well produced with good illustrations. It is currently relatively easy to obtain, but has a limited print run; like Gavin Stamp's excellent *Architect of Promise* and Eitan Karol's *Charles Holden*, it may therefore be hard to find in future years.

Sam Wetherell, *Foundations: How the Built Environment Made Twentieth-Century Britain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 272 pp. incl. 43 b&w ills, ISBN 9780691193755, £30
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Reviewed by ALISTAIR FAIR

Sam Wetherell's elegantly written new book examines the relationships between architecture, planning and politics in twentieth-century Britain. With a close focus on six case-study urban forms and building types, Wetherell explores how the built environment was implicated in the rise of a 'developmental social infrastructure' from the 1930s (especially in the 1950s and 1960s). He then explores the relationships between the reconfiguration of the built environment and neoliberal impulses from the late 1970s onwards.

The first type of urban space examined in *Foundations* is the industrial estate, not least the government-funded developments of the 1930s. These estates were intended to generate employment and to support industrial diversification and decentralisation at a time of economic crisis. For some planners, they offered a compelling vision of 'a new type of capitalism tamed by the state'. The reality was sometimes more prosaic, with disputes about such things as who was responsible for repainting and maintenance. Wetherell's discussion usefully adds to a growing literature (for example, the work of Elizabeth Darling, Jessica Kelly and Neal Shasore) which shows how the 1920s and 1930s generated a distinct set of policy concerns and architectural responses that should be seen on their own terms, rather than as the precursors of post-1945 developments.

If the 1930s industrial estate was intended to embody a new kind of economy, the post-war built environment was frequently shaped by a desire to create new, community-minded citizens. Wetherell explores shopping precincts (in particular post-war Coventry) and council housing (including Park Hill and Thamesmead). Much of this takes in relatively familiar territory, well known from the work of historians such

as Elain Harwood, Jeremy and Caroline Gould and John Boughton, although there are some useful insights which add to the story. Particularly significant is the discussion of the extent to which the allocation of council housing frequently discriminated against those from ethnic-minority backgrounds. Although this argument is not new, it remains relatively uncommon in architectural discussions of post-war housing, and so usefully complicates the more celebratory narratives of some of the existing literature.

At this point, the typological sequence goes into reverse. The second half of the book mirrors the first while showing how each type of space was transformed after 1975 in the light of new social, political and urban imperatives. Whereas earlier planners had believed the users of urban space to be malleable — ready to be transformed into new citizens and new communities — and also predictable in their desires, late twentieth-century spaces were, Wetherell argues, shaped by such concerns as reducing crime, accommodating individualism and the perceived needs of a consumerist, entrepreneurial economy. Chapter four examines the reconfiguration of council estates in the wake of the Conservative 'right to buy' policy and theories of 'defensible space', and also considers the rise of the private gated community. Meanwhile, chapters five and six — on shopping centres and business/science parks, respectively — present much new material, and make a particularly valuable and important contribution to the emerging history of Britain in the 1980s and 1990s. Wetherell shows how these types of space reflected particular assumptions relating to work, gender and the individual's situation in a community.

Throughout, the book combines moments of panoramic context with close discussion of particular case studies. A running theme is the idea that the built environment frequently outlives the assumptions which generate it: Britain's 1930s industrial estates survive, as do post-war council estates, despite changes in policy and practice. Wetherell outlines what he terms 'an uneasy interplay between old and new', as new ideas are forced to reckon with spaces and buildings that already exist. There is sometimes a similarly 'uneasy interplay' between intention and reality: 'urban forms […] were not totalizing machines that instantly brainwashed all who passed through them', he writes. For example, the community at Thamesmead came together to fight the estate's damp problems, rather than in the idealised ways imagined by planners. In the light of this, more on the ways in which people took charge of (and subverted) their environments would have been welcome. So, too, would more on Scotland and Wales: despite the 'Britain' of the book's title, most of the examples are English (with occasional detours to the United States).

Foundations offers a lively discussion of the relationships between people and the built environment, and will be particularly useful for those interested in the history of the last quarter of the twentieth century. It offers stimulating food for thought on such concepts as the welfare state (a term Wetherell rejects), the nature of neoliberalism and, indeed, the ways in which architecture and planning might have a role to play in shaping contemporary society and the contemporary city. In the light of the coronavirus pandemic, continuing arguments about the role of the state in the modern world and debates about Britain's place on the European and global stages, Wetherell's book makes a timely contribution.

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