

High-rise flats and multi-storey car park, Birmingham, 1970 from 'Manplan 5: Religion'. Photo by Peter Baistow

In the background of this black and white photograph there are four tall blocks of flats, 12 to 14 storeys high, photographed at an angle so that they overlap, becoming a single mass divided into horizontal stripes of gritty textured grey concrete and the slightly darker panels of square windows and louvres. Some sections of the windows are nearly black, as if set back behind balconies, but it is hard to make out any detail. The only other variations are in the position of curtains – open, closed or pulled back halfway in a triangle. A small patch of grey sky lies beyond the buildings, in the top left corner. In front of the flats, sloping up from the bottom left corner at a steep angle of 10-12 degrees, two decks of a multi-storey car park are visible. The lower deck is in shadow but the top deck is open to the air. Rows of boxy 1960s cars are parked side by side up the slope. The angle makes them appear to be warehoused, crammed together like the four blocks of flats, while the angle of the shot makes the car park seem to touch the flats directly behind it. A sign on a gantry overhead reads *City Centre*, while other signs warn of *Maximum Headroom* for the carpark and of *Danger: Road Works: lorries turning*.