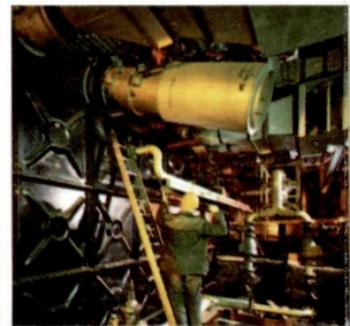
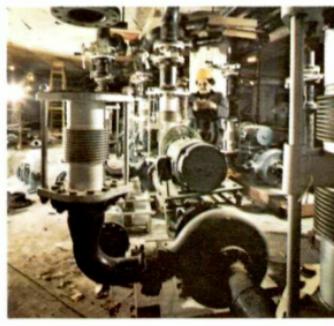
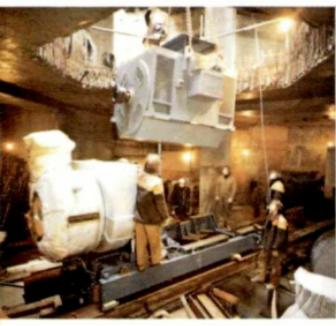
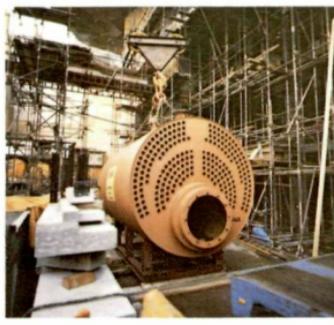


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 National Westminster Tower





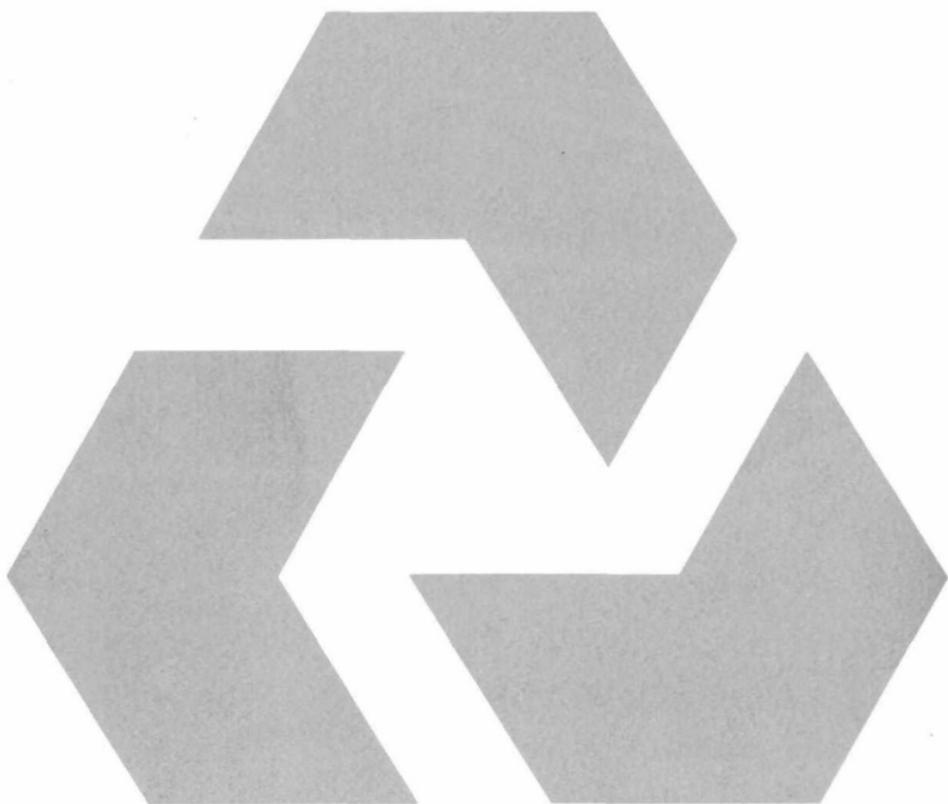
National Westminster Tower

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National Westminster Tower is the second tallest occupied building in Europe. It soars 600-feet above the surrounding streets and from the top you can see Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Surrey and Sussex, in addition to unrivalled views over London.

The design was chosen after models of alternatives were placed on display in the Royal Exchange and members of the public were asked to indicate their preference. We are sure the right choice was made and believe that public opinion generally endorses our pride in this significant contribution to the architecture of the city.

The pages that follow tell something of the Bank, the history of the site and the development itself.



National Westminster Bank PLC

The National Westminster Bank is relatively young, having come into existence on 8th July 1968, although it was 1st January 1970 before it formally traded under that name. On that day, the assets and liabilities of three Banks, District, National Provincial and Westminster, were vested in the new Bank by private Act of Parliament.

Its antecedents, however, stretch back to the beginning of the British banking history when around 1658 Thomas Smith, a Nottinghamshire draper, began to provide banking services and, to this day, the name of Smith is retained in some of our branches as proof of continuity of Thomas Smith's business into the present time. Other famous banking names abound — Parr, Prescott, Stuckey and Loyd Entwisle, for example,— indicating the origins of our business in various other parts of the country.

The signing of the merger documents made National Westminster one of the largest banks in the world. It has over 3,000 branches in the United Kingdom and offices in the major international financial centres of the world. It provides financial services to meet the needs of millions of customers ranging from private individuals to the largest multinational companies.



Abel Smith II established Smiths Banks in London, Lincoln and Hull.



Vincent Stuckey, the first Chairman of Stuckey's Bank Company in 1826.



Thomas Parr, the first Chairman of Parr's Banking Company Limited.

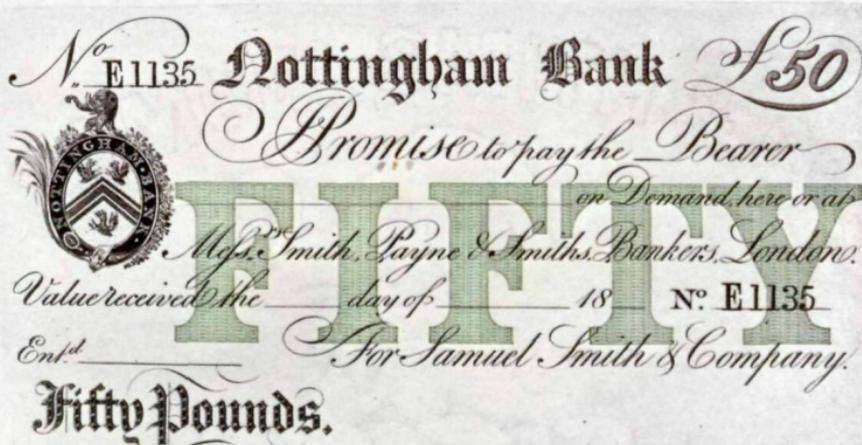
41 Lothbury, head office of National Westminster Bank from a watercolour drawing by Cyril A Farey.





A five pound note issued by Stuckey's Banking Company.

A fifty pound note issued by the Nottingham Bank of Samuel Smith and Company.



James Gilbart, first General Manager of London and Westminster Bank.



Daniel Robertson, first General Manager of National Provincial Bank.

A one hundred pound note issued by Lancaster Banking Company, the first joint stock bank in England.



History of the Tower Site

This triangular site, occupied mainly by NatWest buildings, has always played an important part in the development of the City. During the Roman occupation various villas of some size were erected although it is open to speculation exactly how significant these were to the life of London.

It was really from about 1231, after the Dark Ages, that a picture began to form. The story is a complicated one involving religion, education and commerce.

There was, for example, St Anthony's School which, during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, rivalled St Paul's School.

French refugees were allowed to establish their own church there. They contributed to the silk manufacturing industry in no small a degree. The last of their churches stood at 51 Threadneedle Street and was demolished in 1841.

In 1842 a Hall of Commerce was built to a very grand design, but businessmen preferred to use their traditional haunts, the coffee houses and the inns, and the venture eventually failed.

Then there was the bizarre business of the South Sea Company born in 1711. They had buildings fronting Threadneedle Street and Old Broad Street.

Perhaps the most memorable figure in the story of the site was Sir Thomas Gresham, merchant, mercer and banker. He financed the Exchange Centre for Trade — forerunner of the Royal Exchange. He also built an impressive mansion which he planned would become Gresham College. Christopher Wren was one of its lecturers. From the college grew the Royal Society, constituted by Charles II in 1662.

The College building finally became the home of the Excise Office. Their work of collecting duties on behalf of the Crown grew dramatically and in 1848 the Commissioners and their Officers moved to more spacious premises at Somerset House.

A new Gresham House was built on the site, which was purchased by NP Bank in 1959 to make way for their new Head Office.

Westminster Bank was already well established elsewhere on the site so that, when the merger came in 1968, the new group found itself inheritors of much of an area which had, and continues to have, a vital role to play in the worldwide eminence of the City of London.





A Roman pavement found near Bishopsgate in the City of London.
Guildhall Library.



A medieval map by Agas, c. 1560, of the City of London clearly showing Lothbury and Bishopsgate.
Guildhall Library.



A medieval bottle and Roman dagger found near Bishopsgate.



A recent view of the City of London from Waterloo Bridge showing how the National Westminster Tower dominates the skyline.

- 1 National Westminster Tower
- 2 The Stock Exchange
- 3 National Westminster Bank
Drapers Gardens
- 4 St Pauls Cathedral
- 5 City of London Boys School
- 6 HMS President
- 7 HMS Chrysanthemum
- 8 The Temple
- 9 St Brides Church
- 10 The Old Bailey
- 11 The Barbican
- 12 Blackfriars Bridge
- 13 Blackfriars Station



The Redevelopment

This development of the 2½ acre (1.075 hectare) site is the culmination of many years of planning and negotiations which started when the purchase of Gresham House in 1959 added that property to the rest of a site which had been acquired gradually over a period of more than a century. By that time, it included the historic banking hall in Bishopsgate designed by John Gibson in 1863, and this has been preserved and incorporated into the redevelopment.

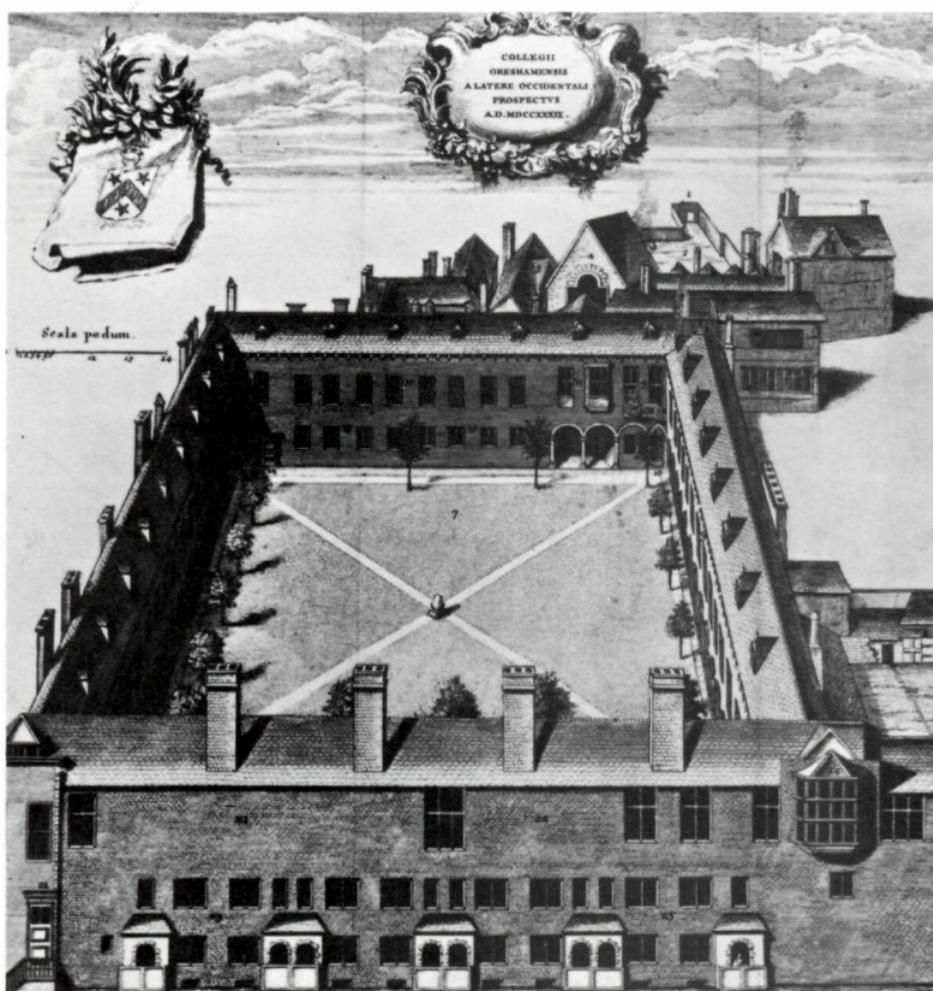
The tower block, now to be known as the National Westminster Tower, rises from a courtyard and a number of low blocks around it.

To make the best possible use of the site within the constraints of plot ratio, building regulations and angles of light, the Bank was left with a choice of one high or two lower towers. The consensus of public opinion indicated a single tower.

The central core of the Tower includes 21 lifts (five being double-decker), staircases and lavatories, surrounded by three linked wings containing the office accommodation; each wing is of a different height, giving a stepped profile at the top. The wings are faced with vertical stainless steel ribs which are 1.5m (5 ft.) apart from each other, measured from their centres with bronze-tinted glass windows and bronze-coloured spandrels, giving a strong vertical emphasis and increasing the apparent slenderness of the Tower. The office wings do not come down to the ground but start at varying levels, and each is supported at its base by a massive reinforced concrete cantilever.

The central core of the Tower is of reinforced concrete and forms a rigid structure capable of resisting all wind forces. In fact a movement of 2mm — about the thickness of a match — is required before it can be registered, and at the maximum likely wind speed of 99 m.p.h., which is only expected about once every fifty years, the movement would only be about 0.86mm. The foundations consist of a concrete raft sixty feet below the ground supported on large-diameter piles extending eighty feet into the London clay, which anchor the building into the ground and transfer the loads to a depth where the soil is least compressible.

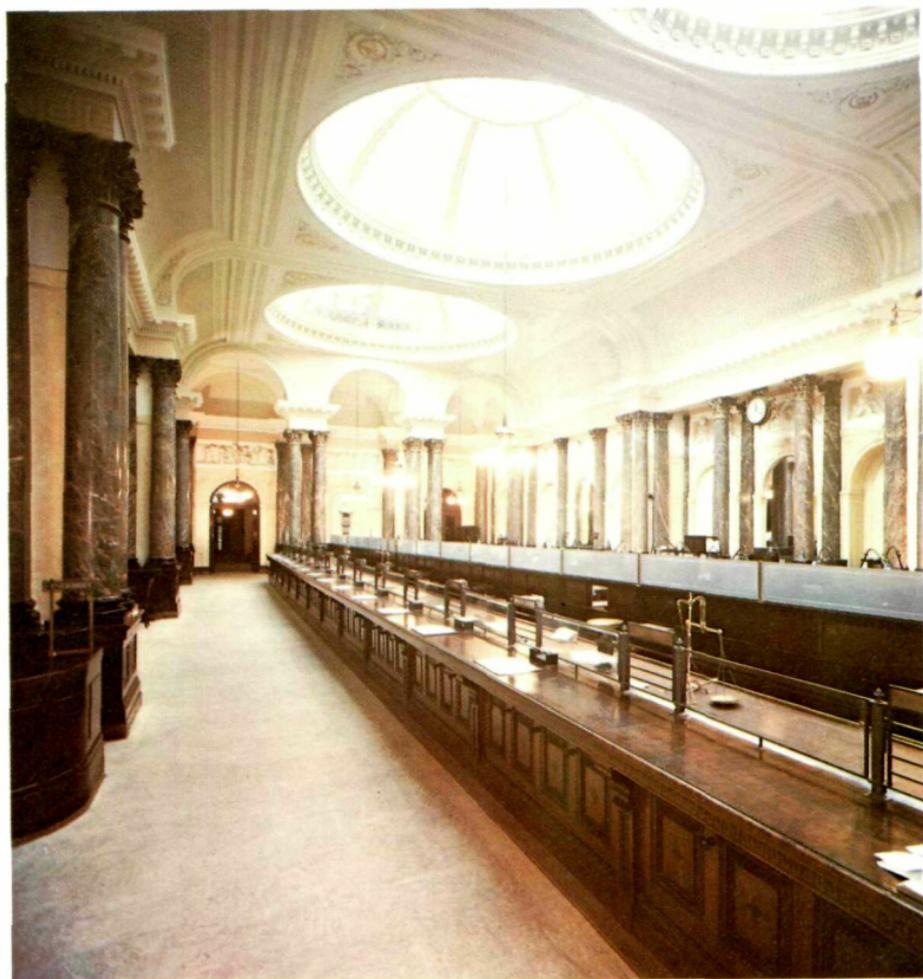
A print of Gresham College,
c. 1739.
Guildhall Library.





Exterior view of a part of the Bishopsgate site which has been retained in the redevelopment.

The banking hall Bishopsgate designed by John Gibson, 1863, which has been preserved.





The 24 hour Water Clock in the entrance hall.

A view of the mezzanine floor

The Tower is believed to be the tallest cantilevered building in the world and required 100,000 tonnes of concrete and 3,000 tonnes of steel in its construction. Another remarkable feature is that the 12,000 square metres of windows are washed automatically by a system unique in the United Kingdom.

Features which have been incorporated in the Tower include a very advanced computerised control system for the building's extensive mechanical plant, lifts arranged on the 'sky lobby' principle (which economises on the number of lift shafts required) and the automatic window-washing mentioned earlier.

National Westminster's rapidly growing International Sector occupies the Tower and the adjoining annexe. About 2,500 members of our staff are housed in the Tower and this makes for an economical and efficient headquarters for our international operations in contrast to the many fragmented offices previously at their disposal.

The Architects for the development are Messrs. R. Seifert and Partners, the Main Contractors are John Mowlem & Company PLC. The Consulting Engineers are Pell Frischmann and Partners, the Quantity Surveyors are C. E. Ball and Partners and Thomson and Alexander, and the Environmental Engineers are Troup Bywaters and Anders.

The Tower Opening by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

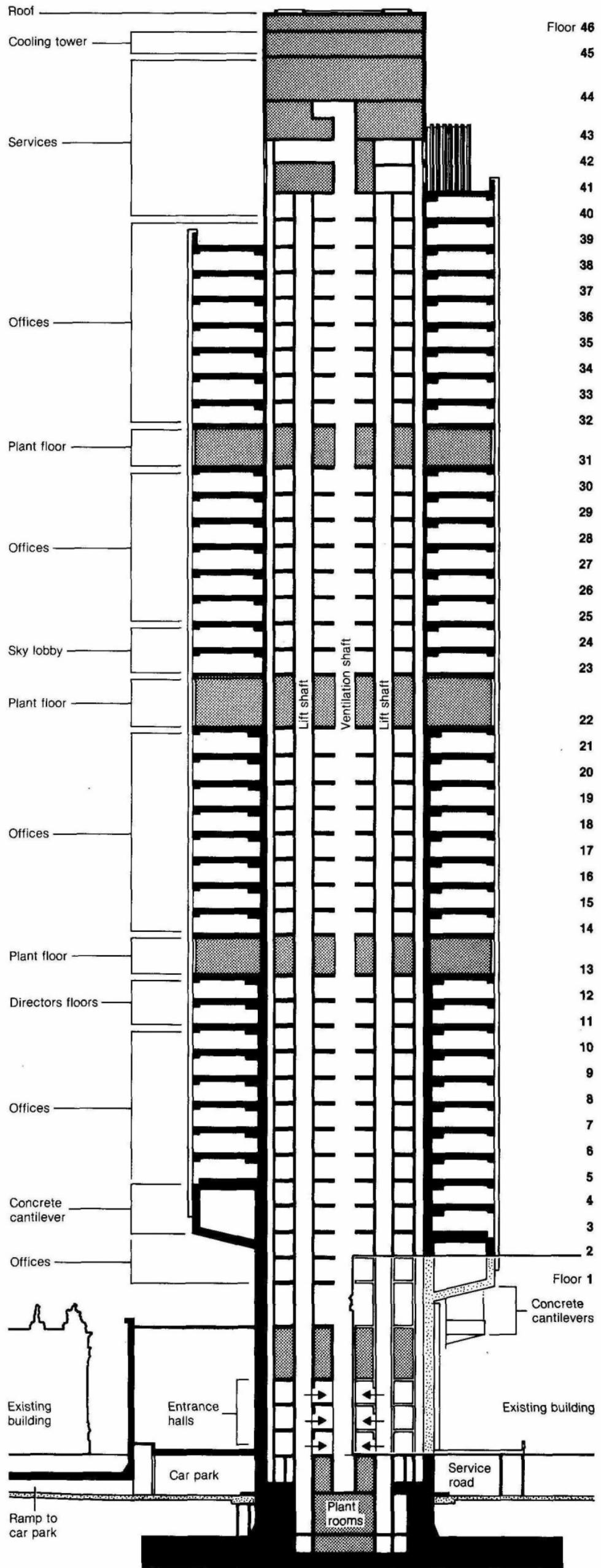


Her Majesty is presented with a posy after unveiling the plaque to commemorate the Opening.

Her Majesty touring the offices.

Her Majesty the Queen accepts four Dresden china figures to commemorate the Tower Opening.





Floor 46

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Floor 1

Concrete cantilevers

Existing building

Service road

Plant rooms

Entrance halls

Car park

Existing building

Ramp to car park

Lift shaft

Ventilation shaft

Lift shaft

Roof

Cooling tower

Services

Offices

Plant floor

Offices

Sky lobby

Plant floor

Offices

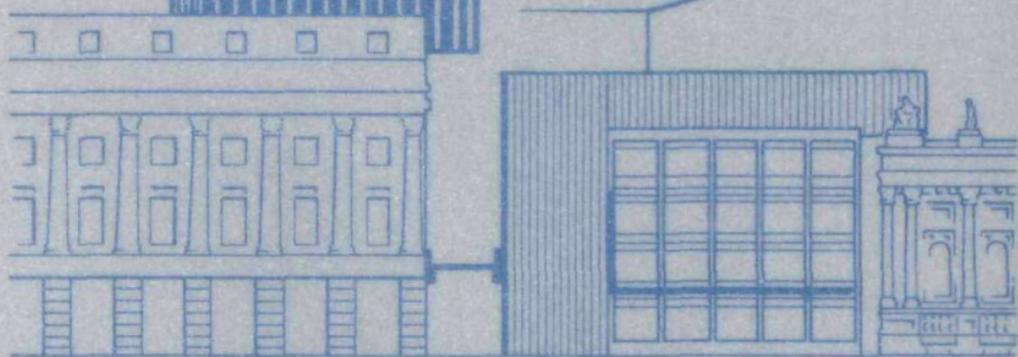
Plant floor

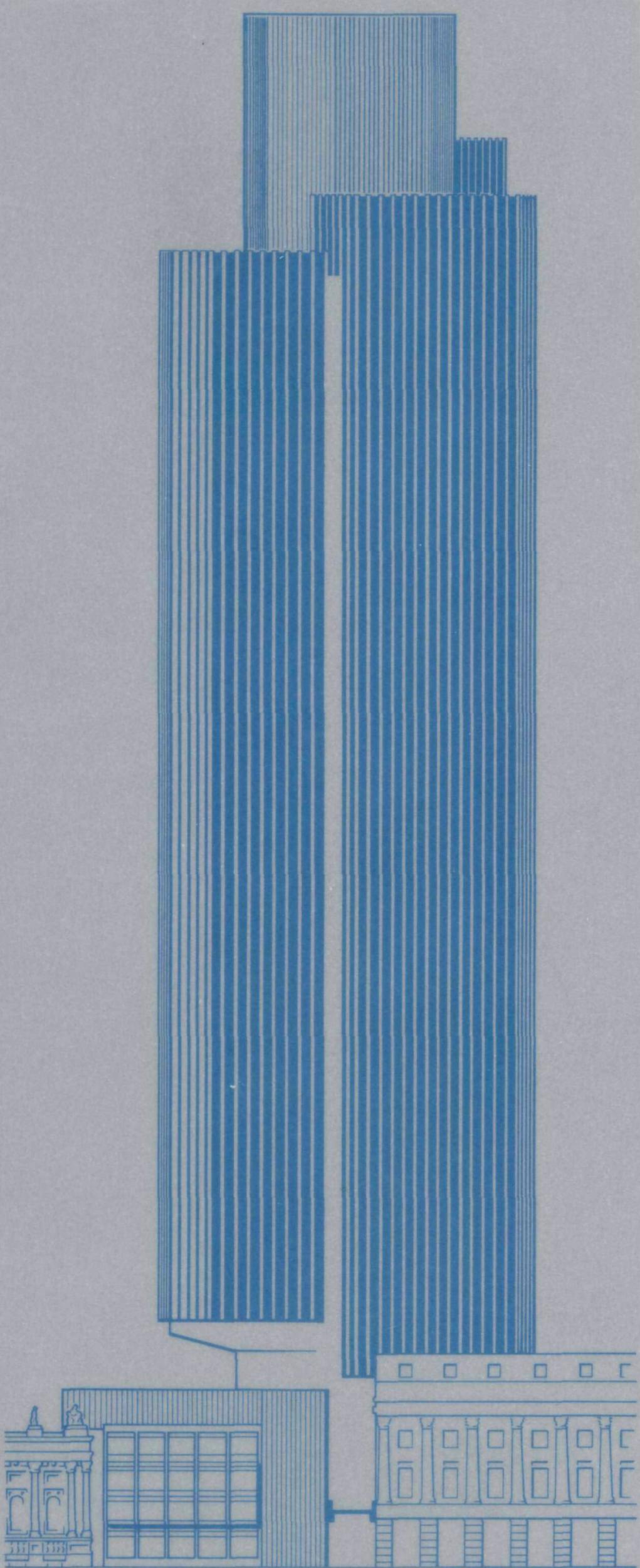
Directors floors

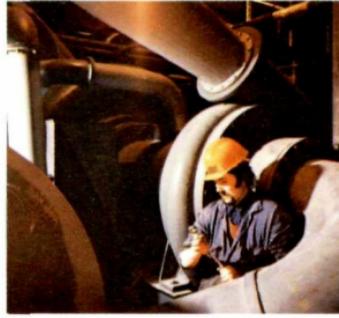
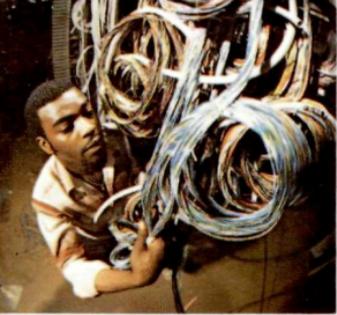
Offices

Concrete cantilever

Offices







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