



# Understanding Sustainable Architecture

*Helen Bennetts*

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*Understanding Sustainable Architecture* is a review of the assumptions, beliefs, goals and bodies of knowledge that underlie the endeavour to design (more) sustainable buildings and other built developments. Much of the available advice and rhetoric about sustainable architecture begins from positions where important ethical, cultural and conceptual issues are simply assumed. If sustainable architecture is to be a truly meaningful pursuit then it must be grounded in a coherent theoretical framework. This book sets out to provide that framework. Through a series of self-reflective questions for designers, the authors argue the ultimate importance of reasoned argument in ecological, social and built contexts, including clarity in the problem framing and linking this framing to demonstrably effective actions. Sustainable architecture, then, is seen as a revised conceptualisation of architecture in response to a myriad of contemporary concerns about the effects of human activity.

The aim of this book is to be transformative by promoting understanding and discussion of commonly ignored assumptions behind the search for a more environmentally sustainable approach to development. It is argued that design decisions must be based on both an ethical position and a coherent understanding of the objectives and systems involved. The actions of individual designers and appropriate broader policy settings both follow from this understanding.

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