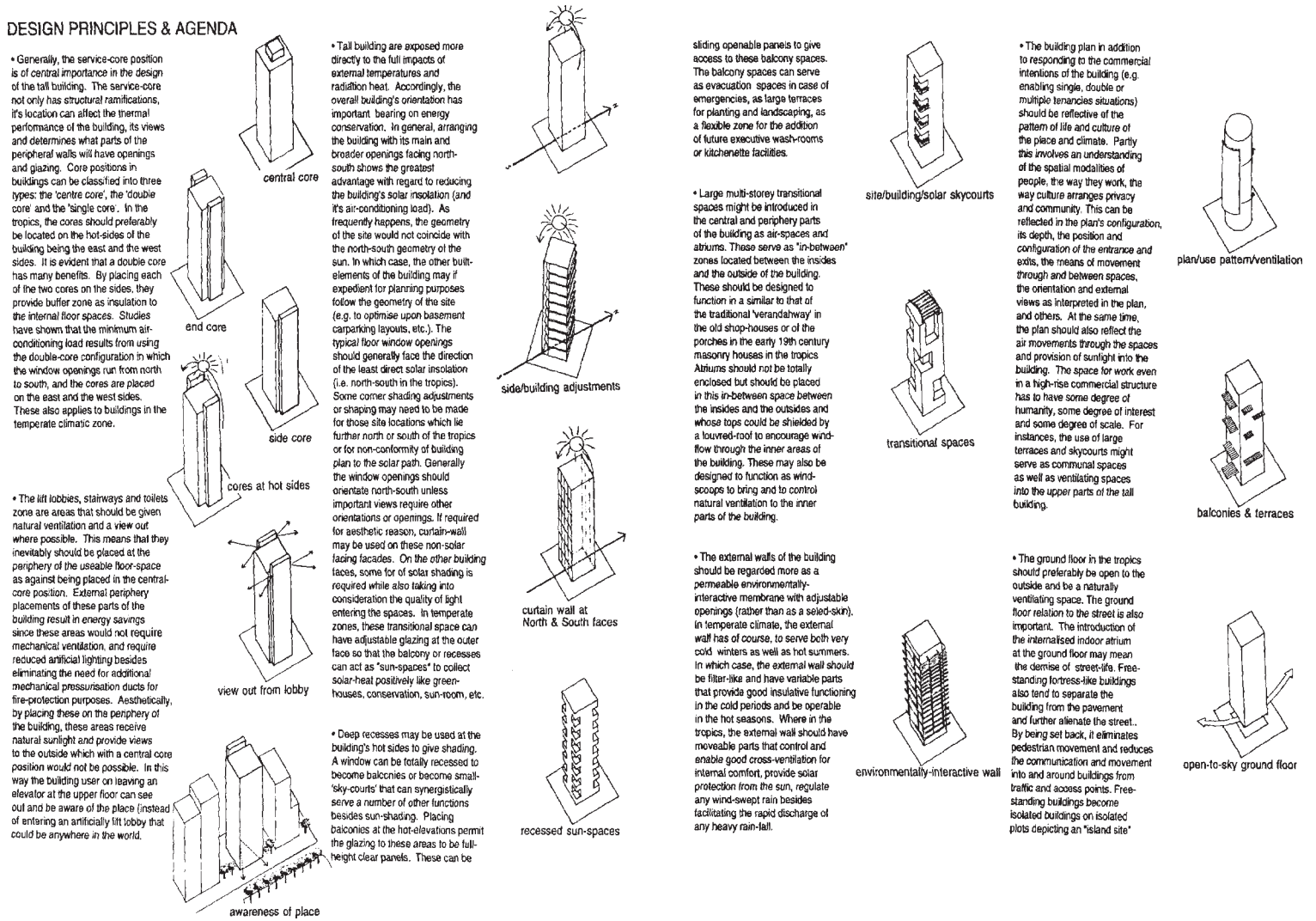

Figure 10.5
Some of Ken Yeang's principles for designing the ecologically sound tropical skyscraper

a different approach to the external skin of the building to that employed in the more northern climes of Europe and the USA:

> Climate, viewed in the overall perspective of human history and built settlements, is the single most constant factor in our landscape, apart from its basic geological structure. While socio-economic and political conditions may change almost unrecognisably over a period of, say, one hundred years as may visual taste and aesthetic sensibility, climate remains more or less unchanged in its cyclical course.
>
> (Yeang 1994)

Thus here we see Ken Yeang resolving his interests in ecological architecture, the climate of the tropics and his concern to develop new forms of regionally expressive architecture. Finally he combines this with his interest in a particular building type, the commercial skyscraper commonly found in the central business districts of Asian cities. These interests then range across practical, symbolic and radical constraints but can be absorbed into an overarching set of guiding principles with which Ken Yeang designs. So well resolved are these principles that he has now drawn them up quite explicitly into a sort of guide for use by members of his design practice (Fig. 10.5). After designing many notable tall buildings Ken Yeang was able to refine and extend these ideas sufficiently to publish them in book form (Yeang 1996).

Here again we see the way these guiding principles have been formed over a number of years of practising design. There is clearly a two-way process. On the one hand the guiding principles influence and set the mental context for each design process. On the other hand, each design problem enables the designer to learn more about the guiding principles and express them ever more clearly, eventually resulting in books and lectures. In this sense, design is also a form of research, it offers an action-based method of advancing knowledge. In the next chapter we shall see how important these guiding principles are during the design process and how they operate in practice.

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