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## 11

## **Design strategies**

The act of making an architectural decision can perhaps be stripped of its mystique, while some far more viable set of operations is seen to add up to something – not a style, not even a discipline, but some indefinable aggregate of operations which have been intelligent and appropriate and have given a situation its fourth dimension.

Peter Cook, Architecture Action and Plan

I would be the voyeur of myself. This strategy I employed for the rest of my captivity. I allowed myself to do and be and say and think and feel all the things that were in me, but at the same time could stand outside observing and attempting to understand.

Brian Keenan, An Evil Cradling

## Theory and practice

In the last chapter we saw that it is common for designers to carry some set of guiding principles with them through their working lives. This intellectual baggage is most frequently gathered during that career, with each project contributing to it in some way. We saw some examples of sets of guiding principles and many others could have been presented. The intention was simply to suggest that it is not necessary to include revolutionary or fringe ideas about design in order to find considerable variation in approach to the design process. This hopefully acts as a counterbalance to the earlier part of the book when emphasis was laid on the more theoretical writings of design methodologists. If we are to gain any real insight into the complexities of the design process then we must study not only what theoreticians say but also what practitioners do.

The early years of the design methodology movement were characterised by a tendency to look for common features in the design process or at least to classify design strategies. Earlier in this book we examined some maps of the design process which it is assumed will be taken up by all designers. The message from the