



Understanding Before Building

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does not start with the building.
It begins with understanding
its surroundings.

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Most real estate developments begin with the building itself – its function, size, budget or architectural concept. Yet the most successful projects begin much earlier.

Long before the first design sketches take shape, **the foundation of every well-conceived development is established by understanding the place itself**. Only then can informed development decisions be made about what should be built, how it should respond to its surroundings, and how it can create lasting value.



Understanding the place before creating the project

Every development becomes part of an existing urban or natural environment with its own infrastructure, services, mobility patterns and community needs.

A responsible development strategy therefore begins with understanding the broader context rather than focusing solely on the building itself. Accessibility, public transport, education, healthcare, recreation and the availability of everyday services all influence how successfully a development will function over time.

Understanding the surroundings is only the starting point. The next step is recognising how a development can respond to local needs, strengthen existing qualities and introduce functions that improve the way the wider area works.

The most successful developments do not compete with their surroundings – they complement them.

The principles behind the "15-minute city" reflect this way of thinking. Although they cannot always be fully achieved in every urban context, they remain a valuable reference for creating balanced, liveable neighbourhoods where essential services are easily accessible.



How can a development strengthen its surroundings?

A successful development is defined not only by the quality of the building itself, but also by the positive impact it has on its surroundings. This requires looking beyond individual technical solutions and considering how environmental, ecological and public-space strategies contribute to the lasting success of the project.

Measures such as [biodiversity enhancement](#), [rainwater retention](#), [green infrastructure](#), [renewable energy](#) or [thoughtfully designed public spaces](#) should not be viewed as isolated sustainability initiatives. **They are practical tools that support a broader development strategy** – helping projects integrate more naturally into their surroundings while improving long-term environmental and operational performance.

Integrated from the earliest stages of development, these strategies become part of a coherent development concept rather than isolated sustainability measures.

What is the role of technology?

Technology continues to transform the built environment at an unprecedented pace. Solutions considered innovative today may become standard practice—or even obsolete—within only a few years.

The greatest value of technology therefore lies not in adopting every new innovation, but in selecting solutions that genuinely improve the performance, usability and long-term resilience of a development. **Technology should support a well-defined project vision rather than become a goal in itself.** Every technological decision should answer a practical question: **does it solve a real problem, improve the way the asset operates or create measurable value over its lifecycle?**

The same principle applies to the regeneration of existing urban areas. In many cases, redeveloping brownfield sites or giving existing buildings a new purpose creates greater long-term value than developing entirely new sites.

Successful regeneration not only revitalises individual properties but can also transform entire neighbourhoods by reconnecting them with the surrounding urban fabric.



Ultimately, technology is most valuable when it serves people, supports the development strategy and contributes to creating places that perform successfully over the long term.

Long-term commitment creates lasting value

Long-term value cannot be achieved without long-term commitment. Responsible development requires consistency – from the ambitions defined at the outset of a project to the decisions made throughout design, construction and operation.

Transparency is the natural consequence of genuine commitment. Independent certification, measurable performance indicators and continuous evaluation provide objective evidence that sustainability ambitions have been translated into real outcomes.

Without genuine commitment, sustainability easily becomes communication rather than action. Transparency and objective verification are therefore essential for distinguishing measurable performance from unsupported claims.

Credibility is ultimately defined not by what developers promise, but by what they consistently deliver.

A successful development creates more than a building

Successful developments do not begin with buildings—they begin with understanding the places they are intended to serve.

When that understanding shapes every development decision from the earliest concept stage onwards, the result is far more than a completed building. It is a place that works in harmony with its surroundings, serves its users and remains valuable throughout its lifecycle.

The true measure of a successful development is not the building itself, but the positive impact it continues to have on its environment, its users and the community around it.

