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ABSTRACT

THESIS DEMONSTRATING THE VIABILITY AND GROWING ACCEPTABILITY OF EARTH-SHELTERED BUILDINGS IN THE UK

The Managing Director of Sustainable Ecological Architecture Ltd (SEArch), Jerry Harrall, Dip. Arch. RIBA, began an evaluation of the viability of earth-sheltering in 1997. In the intervening period between then and May 2007, SEArch has undertaken several earth-sheltered commissions as part of this ongoing evaluation. During that period, the number of commissions received has significantly increased and it has become apparent that there is a growing interest in earth-sheltered design solutions in the UK. The development of earth-sheltering in the UK is chronicled in this thesis as are its benchmark buildings and key exponents. The thesis also presents the first compendium of known contemporary UK earth-sheltered buildings. SEArch's portfolio of thirteen earth-sheltered commissions is presented in detail. This body of information is drawn together in a discussion in which the viability and growing acceptability of earth-sheltering in the UK is asserted.

The main contributions to knowledge made by this thesis are:-

- A compendium of contemporary UK earth-sheltered buildings complete as at December 2006;
- An appraisal of the UK earth-sheltering movement from 1997 to 2006;
- A detailed portfolio of thirteen earth-sheltered projects.

The principal conclusions drawn in this thesis are:-

- That earth-sheltered buildings are viable in the UK;
- That there is evidence of a growing acceptability of earth-sheltered buildings in the UK;
- That earth-sheltered buildings can provide a commercially viable commission base for an architectural practice.