**DESIGN STATEMENT**

The Solar Pavilion is the conduit that connects people to the sea, the land to the sky, us to extinct ecologies and local and international communities to one another.

The St. Kilda triangle and broader site were previously part of a fluctuant ecosystem with major topographical and water level changes over thousands of years. At various points in time, the landscape was part of a deep river that flowed through the centre of the now Port Philip Bay, in addition to mangrove systems and other such systems, as the water level changed and the form of the land was altered. Due to this, the pavilion is designed to replicate the form of a river delta, connecting the key entry point of the site. The Pavilion’s Atrium extends from the now shared Palais Theatre forecourt along its many Arbours to the shallow depths of the bay. This serpentine form connects the ground plane to the sky, harnessing solar energy through luminescent solar concentrators in a dragonfly-wing pattern, again tying into the river concept. This representation also adds context to site as it complements the surrounding historical art deco architecture.

To increase circulation from the upper esplanade, the existing fence along this area has been removed. The grassy slopes have been replaced with large concrete terraces and steps which seek to facilitate a gathering space. In addition, they introduce a new and contrasting geometry into site that contradicts, cutting into the continuous form of much of the remainder of the site.

The site already operates as a transient space, so our design prioritises/features pathways that facilitate both direct routes and experiential wandering towards the beach. The terraces and steps also enable a sense of entry point from anywhere from that section of upper esplanade

Two planting palettes were established to cater for the needs of both the dry planting areas and the water sensitive urban design (WSUD) areas. The flora included is minimalistic and seeks to introduce a contemporary Australian landscape aesthetic, primarily utilising three species for each of the regions, looking into ecological vegetation classes (EVC); EVC48 heathy woodland and EVC6 sand heathland were prominent in this site area. Species selection was informed by these documents, including ground cover plantings, shrubs, reeds and small trees, and implemented into the designated planting and WSUD areas.

Superficially the design is about creating continuity and enabling access and to the St Kilda foreshore from the upper esplanade and busy Acland street shopping precinct, but on a deeper level its aim is to reconnect people to the surrounding landscape and to our fellow human beings. The Solar Pavilions glass facets seamlessly reflect the day and night sky connecting the Earth to the stratosphere while the Terrace provides a place to rest after a busy day, to connect with others and witness another stunning sunset.

With a new knowledge of the site and while meandering through the rejuvenated wetlands we are able to connect to the local histories as we imagine the extinctions that occurred. The Pavilion has a relationship with the renewed landscape giving us a greater understanding of reciprocal systems.

**Environmental Impact Study Assessment**

Within the surrounding site of the Sunset Pavilion, we will reintroduce vegetation from Ecological Vegetation Class’s that have been extinct from the region since Victorian era development. Through the re grading of the land and treatment of soil we will be creating a climate that can support the sandy heathland that was previously abundant.

In implementing water sensitive urban design we will create a system of water catchments used to irrigate the heathlands. These temporal wetlands are a response to the ‘billabongs’ that were common to the surrounding region and will mitigate the site from flooding.

Using cut and fill calculations excavated soil from the terrace and swales will be used to reshape the undulating topography. No soil will be introduced to or leave site.

The Sunset Pavilion is reciprocal by design. Though not intrinsically linked the performative landscape will harvest solar energy and act as an aqueduct channeling water to revitalise the surrounding site.

The Pavilion will be constructed using locally sourced materials. The cast steel vaulting and structural aluminum framing will be from recycled material.

4 out of 5 horizon sightlines will be maintained according to the council brief. The sight line that will be reduced is that which we believe is currently obstructed by the Stoke House.