

## FORM



# X Marks the Spot

Plans to change the existing 41 Exhibition St address of the Australian Institute of Architects into an exemplar of integrated and sustainable architecture have come full circle.

**4**1X stands as an impressive contemporary contribution to Melbourne's streetscape. The 22 storey building houses the Victorian chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects over five levels, with the rest to be filled by commercial office oriented strata title clients. This is the first strata commercial office tower in Melbourne to explicitly target a goal of carbon neutrality over its 30 year lifespan and has achieved a 5 Star Green Star rating to boot.

Governor General, Quentin Bryce opened 41X earlier this month, stating that, "41X

successfully shows how private and not-for-profit organisations can have a positive impact on the development of our cities by creating world class, cutting-edge, environmentally responsible commercial buildings."

This environmentally neutral tower is also intended to become a hub for architecture and design. Here the public, architects and design enthusiasts will be able to meet and mingle. Level 1 will house a 'design haven', replete with the Archtext bookshop and boutique cafe, and the Australian Institute of Architects will curate a series of events focussing on architecture and design.



This merging of worlds commercial and public was always a part of the brief for 41X. In 2008, the Australian Institute of Architects held a two-stage design competition to see what would be done with the site. Lyons Architects won the competition with its hybrid design of public/commercial space. Adrian Stanic, Director of Lyons Architects, explains: "The design explores the idea of joining together a

public and commercial building, by connecting the city street space with Institute occupied levels. A major stair, visible from Flinders Lane, facilitates this and makes public engagement a focal point of the building."