



Sustainable Action Plan

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We acknowledge and pay respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation, and the continuation of the cultural, spiritual and educational practices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Photo: Moonah Tree House by Kirby Architects



“We believe that design can bring a positive outcome to the people who are using it, the environment, and bring out the economic value of the building. We seek opportunities to see where our design can influence its surrounding community positively.”

Kirby Roper

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kirby Architects welcomes this opportunity to present our Sustainable Action Plan.

Kirby Architects are well known for our open, collaborative culture and ability to deliver projects.

We have a philosophy that architecture and design are important and that the quality of our environment profoundly affects how we live and express our culture and social values. We believe well-designed environments make people happier and healthier.

A sustainable action plan is a document that outlines the strategies and actions that Kirby architects will take to reduce the environmental impact of their projects and operation of the practice. These plans typically include a variety of measures, such as using sustainable materials, designing for energy efficiency, and reducing waste. We enjoy educating and working with our clients to find design and built outcomes that efficiently and effectively achieve practical solutions while inspiring creativity.

By preparing sustainable action plans, it ensures our designs are environmentally responsible. This not only benefits the planet, but it also benefits clients and community for sustainable solutions. We incorporate sustainable design features into projects as a given.

Through our Sustainability Action Plan (SAP), we aim to establish a firm basis and framework to ensure that we move forward and develop in a more sustainable model of architecture through our work practices, internal culture, consideration of individual elements and actions. This includes engagement with our community and the broader environment, as well as the design outcomes and solutions we provide to our clients and building users.

More than the need to stay competitive in a rapidly changing industry it allows us to educate both ourselves, our clients and the extensive team of individuals involved in the design and creation of a building.

We often assume that we are doing our best but it's not until you find the time to discuss, process and put pen to paper that you become aware of the many varied and simple ways we can extend and incorporate into our daily lives, not just those of our building design, actions for sustainability. Cumulatively together we can have a great impact in benefiting the world we inhabit.

We also think that will help us to communicate these values with our clients and help our clients to share in this knowledge. We have enjoyed the process and do not plan to put the SAP "on the shelf" rather to continue to grow, learn and incorporate in every aspect of daily life.

Kind regards

Kirby Roper
Director, Kirby Architects



Australian Architects Declare Climate and Biodiversity Emergency

As signatories to Australian Architects Declare, we have committed to seek to:

- **Raise awareness** of the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the urgent need for action amongst our clients and supply chains.
- **Advocate** for faster change in our industry towards regenerative design* practices and a higher Governmental funding priority to support this.
- **Establish** climate and biodiversity **mitigation principles** as the key measure of our industry's success: demonstrated through awards, prizes and listings.
- **Share** knowledge and research to that end on an open source basis.
- **Evaluate** all new projects against the aspiration to contribute positively to **mitigating climate breakdown**, and encourage our clients to adopt this approach.
- **Upgrade** existing buildings for extended use as a more carbon efficient alternative to demolition and new build whenever there is a viable choice.
- **Include** life cycle costing, whole life carbon modelling and post occupancy evaluation as part of our basic scope of work, to reduce both embodied and operational resource use.
- **Adopt more regenerative design principles*** in our studios, with the aim of designing architecture and urbanism that goes beyond the standard of net zero carbon in use.
- **Collaborate** with engineers, contractors and clients to further reduce construction waste.
- **Accelerate the shift** to low embodied carbon materials in all our work.
- **Minimise** wasteful use of resources in architecture and urban planning, both in quantum and in detail.

In Australia, we as architects are aware that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have long espoused the cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits embedded in the holistic relationship of Caring for Country.

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Australian
Architects Declare

OUR BUSINESS

Kirby Architects is a medium size architectural studio established over 25 years ago, in Melbourne on Wurundjeri, Woi Wurrung Lands. We offer architectural and project management services.

The work of our practice encompasses projects in healthcare, public/community buildings and residential homes.

Our work extends across a wide area in Australia, extending to Mansfield - Taungurung Country, Geelong - Wadawurrung Country, Port Douglas - Dawul Wuru (Yirrganydji) Country and inner Melbourne suburbs on Wurundjeri and Bunurong Countries.

Our studio is located in Malvern, Kurnan on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples of the East Kulin nation.

We employ a tightly knit team of six people who all collaborate closely and bring knowledge of diverse backgrounds to our work. As a team we enjoy sharing and learning from each other and our experiences and cultures and bring these values to all aspects of the practice including this Sustainable Action Plan.

Our studio has a strong focus on innovative future proofing, sustainability and equitable considerations, producing projects with lasting positive impacts to both the community and environments where they are situated.

We have a dynamic, nimble and flexible design process that allows us to passionately uncover the existing and future context and stakeholder perspectives. We explore innovative and customised solutions for each project scenario.

For practice founder, Kirby Roper, her architecture practice is about making a lasting and positive impact through beautifully considered spaces that heighten the senses, alter human experiences, and shape the future.

We understand that construction industry contributes 40% of the world greenhouse gas emissions. We know our impact to the environment is not miniscule.

Knowing this, we acknowledged that there is a significance in our design to the environment. We believe through good design and careful material selections, we can reduce our carbon footprint as architects, for a better and sustainable future.

Kirby Architects are well known for our open, collaborative culture and ability to deliver projects.



OUR VALUE

We have a philosophy that architecture and design are important and that the quality of our environment profoundly affects how we live and express our culture and social values. We believe well-designed environments make people happier and healthier.

We think architecture should respond to the users' physical and spiritual needs. It also needs to respond to its urban context, the streetscape, the neighbourhood and climate and social context.

Because the whole of our environment is important to us, our interest spans from the detailed design of interiors through the built form to urban design and town planning.

We are enthusiastic and ambitious to design collaboratively on innovative and sustainable contemporary environments in Australia.

We believe a successful project is a project that has considered the environmental, social, and cost impact of the design to benefit our clients.



OUR COMMITMENT

As architects, we understand and are conscious of the impact that we have to places and our surroundings. We are committed, as individuals and collectively as an architecture practice, the journey for us is about growth, learning, awakening, challenging our long-held biases and beliefs, and developing practice and design strategies that could be beneficial for the environments

We are committed to learn and educate ourselves on the industry knowledge to equip us with the know-how for a sustainable practice.

We are committed to re-evaluate our projects to consider a better and more sustainable system and design that we could employ.

We are committed to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of our office operations by evaluating our GHG emissions to employ further governance and review.

We are committed to assess all materials and resources we use in our project and our office and to propose a sustainable option.

We are committed to engage with the communities and authorities, to educate, empower and encourage others to raise the awareness of climate crisis.

*We are a practice that
is environmentally
conscious and we have
been working along with
like-minded people in
the industry to achieve a
better, more sustainable
design and management.*

OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Kirby Architects have a close engagement with Sustainable Architects Forum or SAF. SAF is a group of architects under the Australian Institute of Architects that aspire to:

- Sharing and evaluating architects' sustainable principles knowledge including regenerative and biophilic design.
- Engaging with the public so architects can share their sustainable practices and procedures.
- Promoting sustainability practice, ecology, and adaptation to climate change through public and professional events via multiple media platforms.
- Bridging the gap between Practice and Academia through an exchange of knowledge, events, and collaboration Informing and assisting AIA with government and regulations sustainability policies.

Within SAF, we are also engaged with Architects Declare to be a part of the Materials Form Working Group. The working group aims to create a form to pre-select and qualify building materials and products for all architects to be able to specify a sustainable product. The form aims to be accessible to architects as a tool to consider the environmental impact of building materials in the project.

Kirby Architects has also attained a B-Corp Certification. The certification is a designation that a business is meeting high standards of verified performance, accountability, and transparency on factors from employee benefits and charitable giving to supply chain practices and input materials.

Certified B Corporations are leaders in the global movement for an inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economy. Unlike other certifications for businesses, B Corp has the ability to measure a company's entire social and environmental impact.

As part of our commitment, we want to set a standard for ourselves to be able to improve our practice in order for us to provide a service that benefits our society and environment.

Kirby Architects is also a member of the Association of Consulting Architects Australia (ACA). The ACA leads the discussion on business and employment matters in Australian architecture. They provide timely advice, information and resources; promote debate and advocate for better business practices and legislative frameworks.

One of Kirby Architects initiative is to connect all of our employees with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Telus Health platform (previously LifeWorks). The platform provides businesses around the globe to support employees with health and wellbeing solutions encompassing physical, mental and financial health. Through EAP Kirby Architects are able to provide mental, social, health and financial wellbeing support for each of their employees.

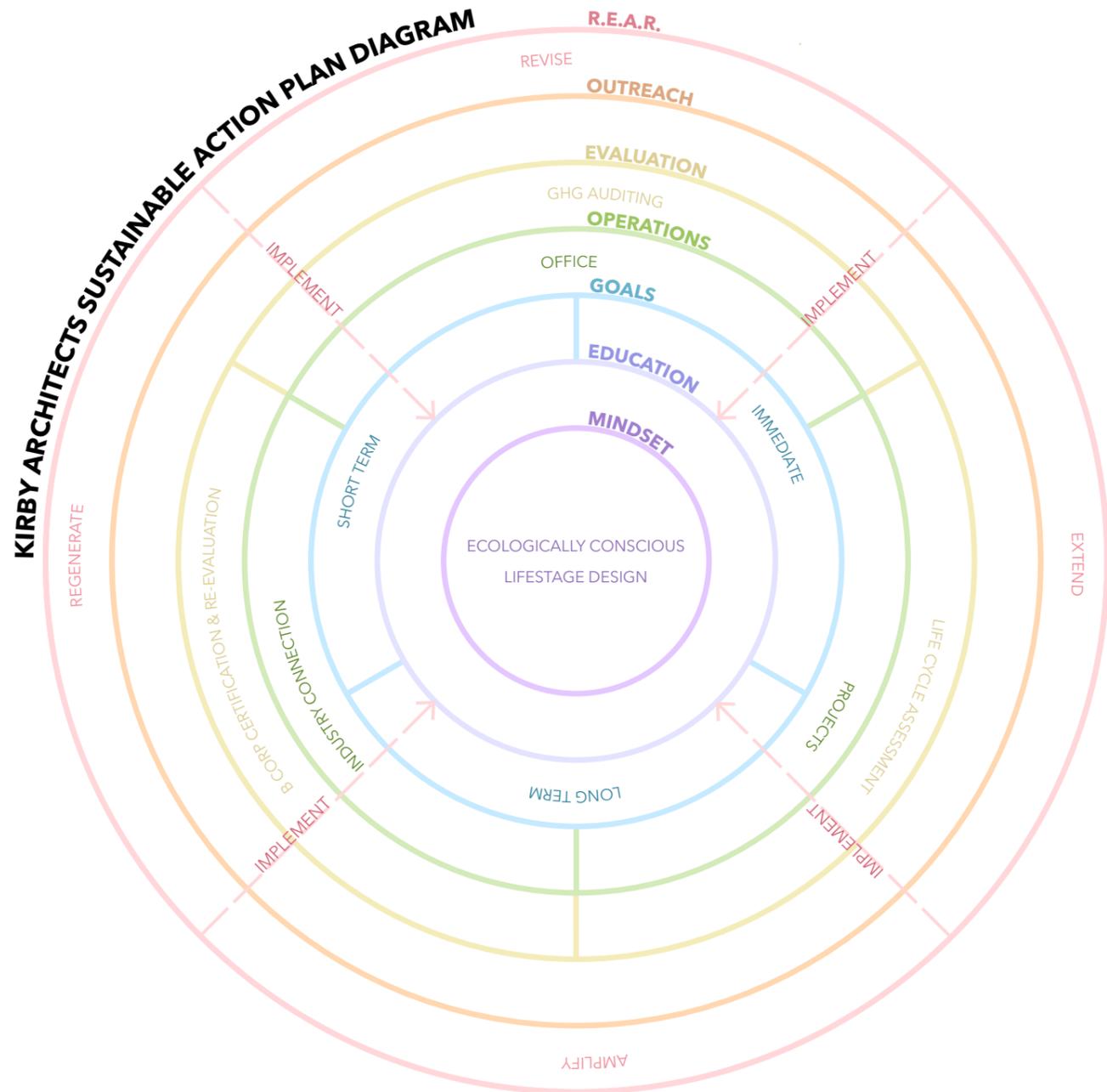


Association
of Consulting
Architects
member practice

OUR SAP FRAMEWORK

In creating our Action Plan, we set out a framework to approach and tackle our vision for a sustainable practice. The framework is divided into 7 values, starting from the inner circle, the core of our operation. The diagram below shows our framework, setting up hierarchy of importance to understand how we should proceed to create and action the plan.

The goal of this framework is to identify and document the process of our practice, as an office and as an architect, in order to re-evaluate and change the way we work, so we could achieve our sustainable goal as an architecture practice.



OUR SAP FRAMEWORK

Mindset

Philosophy and value of Kirby Architects is the foundation for Kirby Architects to proceed actioning the SAP. These are the mindset for each employee to have and to be implemented as a culture within the workplace.

There are two key values that Kirby Architects hold within the practice:

Ecologically Conscious

Sustainability mindset refers to a holistic approach of building design to include the impact of the environment, economical construction, and operation, and creating a positive impact for the users' social, health and wellbeing.

Lifestage Design™

Kirby Architects Lifestage Design is a bespoke design approach we employ in our projects to future proof the design by considering the adaptability of the space for future occupants and users. Lifestage Design ensures a timeless design that is still adaptable to different stages of life for the user.

Both of the mindsets above represent what we value within our sustainable action plan. We are committed to provide architectural services and products that bring positive impact to the environment, social, health and wellbeing of the clients and users, and the economical yield value to the clients. For us, sustainable design is achieved when we have considered the impact of the environmental, social, and economical decisions within our design.

Education

To ensure we can proceed with the SAP, all employees in Kirby Architects must be equipped with the same value and mindset. Internal education is key to ensure everyone has the same capacity and empowerment to conduct sustainable practice in the project and workplace.

Kirby Architects always seek to learn new things and keeping updated with the industry, new construction strategies, design processes and innovative materials to improve the company's practice.

Innovation Day

Kirby Architects allow once a month for all employees to educate themselves and innovate the company's practice. Employees are encouraged to learn new things within the industries i.e., new construction method, sustainable design, material research etc., to innovate the process and administration within the project to improve efficiency, and to work on administrative tasks within the office that are usually postponed due to project schedule.

Innovation day allows employees to conduct internal workshops, so everyone is equipped with the right knowledge to employ their skills within a project and workplace.

Career Progress Development

Kirby Architects provide opportunities for all employees to take the CPD courses as laid out by the AIA. We encourage employees who are registered to take the CPD for their registration but allows for graduates and students to join the CPD course to improve their knowledge in the practice.

Industry Knowledge

Kirby Architects allow employees to learn and improve their knowledge within the industry. Members are allowed to register for forums, lectures, seminars, and webinars to improve their knowledge in architecture, the surrounding industry, construction, and products and materials that are environmentally friendly. We believe by educating ourselves with the knowledge from other experts in the field, we will be able to provide a better service and product to our clients.



OUR SAP FRAMEWORK

Goals

The goals are divided into three phases to prioritise the tasks that need to be completed first.

Immediate

Our immediate goal is to setup internal Kirby Architects Infrastructure in implementing a sustainable practice in our operations. This includes: policies and governance to ensure that all our action plan has been implemented into our business

Short Term

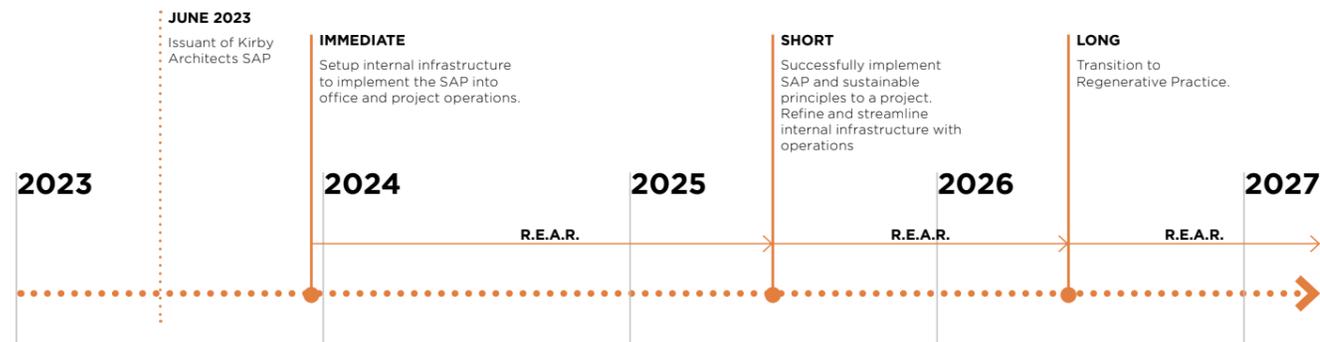
Our short term goal is to be able to successfully implement the infrastructure into our project. By implementing our policies to one of the project as a prototype, the aim is to revise and evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of our infrastructure and how it can be implemented into our projects.

The short term goal is related to our overall Sustainable Action Plan to refine, re-evaluate, and reform our infrastructure, and re-educate ourselves as a team, to be re-implemented again into our next project.

Long Term

From our short term goal, we want to create a mindset that keeps revising and polishing our infrastructure so we could do better in our next project and so on. We aim to improve and refine our practice for a better sustainable practice in architecture.

Our long term goal is to be able to transition to Regenerative Practice. Along the way, we are building step by step the infrastructure and the thinking of Regenerative Design.



OUR SAP FRAMEWORK

Operations

We created an operational guidelines and manuals to ensure we are able to carry out the SAP in our daily workplace activity. We also aim to implement the SAP not just internally, but also externally with connections to charities, local government area and other businesses to have a positive impact on the environment outside of our practice. We categorise our Operations into three:

Office

This includes all employee's activity on daily basis. This includes the use of water, electricity, stationeries and papers, printer toners, inks, and other equipment and activities that could have an impact in our environment.

The aim is to ensure the culture of the workplace has a conscious act to be accountable of the energy and CO2 emission expended by the company. This applies for all employees.

Following the initiative with our local council, we have separated our wastes into General Waste, Recycleables, and Organic Waste. The following [link](#) outlines our council's initiative to process the organic wastes into mulch and composts.

We also have repurposed our coffee grounds and tea wastes for the compost of our mini garden at the back of our office.

We also engaged with a third-party consultant to assess the office greenhouse gas emissions. This will help the office to revise its operations for a more sustainable outcome. We are in the concluding stage of the date assessment of FY22-23.

Projects

Project operation includes manual to engage a project to ensure we can carry out the SAP within the project. This includes the design and specification of a project, client education, construction site management (in specification), and material selections.

The aim is to reduce the GHG emission in the construction activities since most of the carbon footprint in the architectural practice is in the project.

Industry Connection

Industry Connection guidelines is to set out guides for all employees in proceeding with non-architectural activities within the office. This includes charity, government engagement, voluntary works, education, forums and etc.

The aim is to holistically see how the SAP is implemented into all of the office activities, architectural and non-architectural in order for us to be accountable in our daily operation, and our engagement to other practices within the industry.



OUR SAP FRAMEWORK

Evaluation

Kirby Architects aim to evaluate all of our operation with a standardised metrics in order for us to improve and revise the SAP guidelines and manual in the future. This includes:

- Carbon Auditing in office operation. We have engaged with Pangolin consultant for the office carbon auditing.
- Life Cycle Assessments in projects. We aim to work with the AIA, to propose a Life Cycle Assessment tool that can be used by architects to quickly and effectively to inform client on the Carbon Footprint of their building in the construction and operation stage.
- Stormwater Guidelines. We have created and implemented guidelines on Stormwater management during the construction and occupation within our projects.
- BCorp Certification*. We aim to achieve a BCorp certification that includes an assessment of the carbon footprint of the office operation.

The aim of the evaluation is to see the the environmental impact that is produced for us to improve the practice towards an environmentally friendly culture.

Outreach

We aim to see our pro-forma of material form selections, manual and guidelines to be shared with other architects and standardised as a statewide policy. As we revise our SAP, we aim to share the knowledge and experience with other connection within the industry such as the SAF, AIA, ACA. These would provide platform and connection to a wider community for architects to move towards a sustainable practice in the future.

We also aim to educate the public through our marketing and publication on the importance of the sustainable design and construction in architecture. This is to raise awareness of the impact of housing design and operation to the environment, economy, and their wellbeing.

*BCorp certification is a certification by international network of organisations to support the collective vision of an inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economy.



R.E.A.R.

REAR is the acronym of Revise, Extend, Amplify, Regenerate as defined by the Architects Declare board. The purpose of REAR is to provide a framework in setting improving and revising the SAP.

Kirby Architects will continue to improve and revise the SAP. We are committed to educate all our employees and to update everyone in the office of the revised SAP to have a holistic approach in creating a practice that is ecologically conscious.



OUR PLAN KIRBY ARCHITECTS VERSION: JUNE 2023

GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Roles	PIC
1. Maintain and ensure SAP has been actioned into daily activities.	• Establish Kirby Architects operational policies to include sustainable management	30 Nov 2023	Director, Associates	AR
	• Identify and create Kirby Architects Sustainable Design Guidelines	30 Nov 2023	Director, Associates, Graduates	JC
	• Revise Company Manual on project procedure to include Sustainable design guidelines	30 Nov 2023	Director, Associates	JC
	• Appoint champion to discuss and maintain SAP within the office operations and ensure we meet our goals	Ongoing	Director/ Associate	JC
	• Promote outsourced educational materials in form of webinar, seminar, CPD and general engagement with suppliers on sustainable design and materials to staff.	Ongoing	Champion	AR
2. Provide appropriate support and education to all staff on sustainable design	• Continually research and revise our sustainable design guidelines	Ongoing - Innovation Day Review	Associate, Graduates	JC
	• Establish Material Forms to prequalify and assess materials and resources used in projects	Dec 2023	All members	JC
	• Establish Material Questionnaire for future suppliers.	Nov 2023	All members	AH
	• Establish internal resource library for accessibility on sustainable design principles, and materials.	Dec 2023	All members	JC
	• Engage with ESD consultant within our projects	Ongoing Dec 2023 Review.	All Project Architects	JC
	• Conduct Life Cycle Assessment of new projects	Dec 2023	Associate, Graduates	AR
	• Maintain B Corp certifications	Ongoing	All members	JC
3. Build accountability on the office operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions	• Conduct Periodical review on SAP implementation.	Dec 2023 Review	Champion	JC

EMPOWERMENT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Roles	PIC
1. Promotion of sustainable design and benefits to stakeholder	• Develop client notes to educate clients on Sustainable Design including but not limited to ESD and Passive House design on the benefits for the environment, and for themselves.	Ongoing	Director, Associates, Graduates	AH
	• Share sustainable material questionnaire with suppliers to convey our values and requirements of the materials.	Ongoing	Graduates, Students, Office Manager	AH
	• Prepare sustainable design from past successful projects through life cycle as promotional materials.	Dec 2023	Associate, Graduates	JC
2. Promote sustainable design through our sphere of influence.	• Re-communicate our commitment and benefits of sustainable design to all of our staff	Ongoing - Jan 2024 Review	Champion	AR
	• Engage with suppliers, consultants and contractors that have the same value to sustain the environment. Collect data and contact for future reference.	Ongoing	All members	JC

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Roles	PIC
1. Progress the SAP and our understanding towards a Regenerative Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities and education on regenerative design principles. Build up the library folder for learning purposes 	Ongoing - Nov 2023 Review	Associate, Graduates, Student Arch	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In tandem with the Reconciliation Action plan; build a relationship with local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters to expand learning on Indigenous Knowledges for sustainable design. 	Nov 2023	RAP Champion,	AR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to research analytical tools to generate a bottom-up sustainable design process 	Ongoing - Innovation Day	Associate, Graduates	JC

CULTURE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Roles	PIC
1. Develop an office habit in maintaining the environmental impact in the office operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an office culture of waste management and energy usage management. 	Nov 2023- Ongoing.	All members	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a paperless office culture. 	Nov 2023 - Ongoing.	All members	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with local suppliers and prefer to buy recycled or recyclable products. 	Ongoing.	All members	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage meetings to be done remotely through online to reduce the use of transportation. 	Ongoing.	All members	AR
2. Promote energy saving action through industry connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage charity to companies that develop and empower energy saving products and services. 	Dec 2023.	All members	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with local communities and councils in reducing the environmental impact of our operation. 	Ongoing - July 2024 Review	All members	JC
3. Promote energy saving culture to all our staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging staff to use Public Transport, which the office is well placed to do being located beside the train station. 	Ongoing.	All members	All

SOCIAL

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Roles	PIC
1. Ensure ethical outsourcing in the product and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop governance on Modern Slavery to request manufacturers accountability 	Ongoing Review.	All members	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with manufacturers and suppliers that has ISO standard that has ethical code of conduct 	Ongoing	Project Architects	AR
2. Consider health and wellbeing of user groups in a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a case of collaborative engagement from user groups to propose a design suitable for different user needs 	Nov 2023	All Architects	AR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of LifeStage™ design to projects 	Ongoing - Nov 2023 Review.	All Architects	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining benchmarks on product quality through material forms to specify products that have low to none health impact to users. 	Nov 2023	All members	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Safety in Design for operation and maintenance of the design. 	Ongoing.	All Architects	JC
3. Consider health and wellbeing of contractors in projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining benchmarks on product quality through material forms to specify products that have low to none health impact to contractors through SDS Research. 	Ongoing.	All members	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail to consider constructibility and contractors safety when installing and constructing the products 	Ongoing.	All Architects	JC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Safety in Design for construction and demolition of the project 	Ongoing.	All Architects	JC
4. Considerations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in project group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage with suppliers, contractors and consultants with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. Refer also to RAP 	Ongoing.	RAP Champion, All Architects	AR

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