

**Report to the Future Melbourne Committee****Agenda item 6.6****MPavilion 10 extension to June 2025**

9 April 2024

**Presenter:** Rick Kwasek, General Manager Infrastructure and Amenity**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to request the Future Melbourne Committee approve MPavilion 10 remaining in the Queen Victoria Gardens until 30 June 2025. The report results from a request by Naomi Milgrom Foundation (NMF) (refer Attachment 2).
2. MPavilion 10 was approved by Council, Heritage Victoria and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (now Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)) as a temporary structure. It is due for closure and removal on 28 March and 9 June 2024, respectively.
3. If retained, MPavilion 10 is proposed to remain free and open to the public, 10am to 3pm daily on non-event days. Programming runs from start November to end March. During the off-season (April to October), NMF will offer MPavilion for select events, including council programs.

**Key issues**

4. MPavilion is a significant contributor to Melbourne's global design and cultural identity; and the result of a longstanding partnership between CoM, Creative Victoria and NMF. The partnership is in its tenth year.
5. Council has supported MPavilion through \$300,000 funding and \$50,000 in-kind support, annually. Funding covers program delivery and events, in-kind support covers council officer time on MPavilion design and delivery. Council funding ceases in June 2024. Creative Victoria program funding expires in June 2025.
6. The City of Melbourne Domain Parklands Masterplan (2019) recommends a continuation of the current ornamental and passive recreation status for Queen Victoria Gardens.
7. MPavilion 10 was designed by globally revered architect, Tadao Ando. The design is an iconic piece of architecture and a challenging urban intervention. Safety, security and public access are key concerns that have been considered in assessing NMF's proposal (refer Attachment 3).
8. Between the program's end, and a decision being made by Council, NMF propose to continue public access to MPavilion 10.
9. The design community is divided about the opportunity.
  - 9.1. Some individuals have expressed concerns with the removal of a well-constructed pavilion, and the perception of material waste in a climate and biodiversity emergency. Granting the extension enables the delivery of the 2024/25 program within the current MPavilion structure. At the end of the one-year extension, parts of the structure can be relocated, while other elements can be recycled.
  - 9.2. Some individuals have expressed concerns with the ongoing safety, presentation and maintenance of the pavilion, given its enclosed nature and expansive perimeter walls. NMF have confirmed that it will take full responsibility for the maintenance and security of MPavilion 10 throughout the extension period, including covering financial costs of operation and minor modifications.
  - 9.3. Multiple letters of support accompany NMF's proposal (refer Attachment 2).
10. If approved, NMF have committed to fund and cover all costs associated with:
  - 10.1. ensuring ongoing safety, security and maintenance
  - 10.2. working with council to run potential activations within and around MPavilion 10
  - 10.3. reuse and repurposing of MPavilion 10 at the end of the extension period

10.4. reinstatement of the site in line with the terms of the licence.

11. A decision from Council is required to retain MPavilion 10. Its retention is also dependent on approval from Heritage Victoria and DEECA. Subject to DEECA approval a new licence will be negotiated. No planning permit is required.

**Recommendation from management**

12. The Future Melbourne Committee:

- 12.1. subject to the necessary consents under the *Heritage Act 2017* and the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, approve the MPavilion 10 remaining in the Queen Victoria Gardens until 30 June 2025.

**Attachments:**

1. Supporting Attachment (page 3 of 35)
2. Proposal (page 4 of 35)
3. Considerations (page 33 of 35)

## Supporting Attachment

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### Legal

1. Council is the trustee for the Queen Victoria Gardens and the Committee of Management for the Gardens pursuant to the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 (Act)*.
2. The extended use of Queen Victoria Gardens for MPavilion will require the consent of the Minister responsible for the Act and a further licence from the Council under the Act. This includes the publication of the consent in the Victorian Government Gazette and the consent to be tabled in Parliament for five sitting days.

### Finance

3. There are minimal financial issues arising from the recommendations contained in this report. Queen Victoria Gardens is only suitable for low impact events, so loss of revenue is considered negligible as the space is not generally hired out for events.
4. NMF will cover all costs associated with the ongoing safety, security, maintenance, activation and reuse/repurposing of the MPavilion and reinstatement of the site.

### Conflict of interest

5. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

### Health and Safety

6. Relevant considerations including potential amenity impacts that could impact on health and safety have been reviewed as part of the assessment process.

### Stakeholder consultation

7. The project is led by the Naomi Milgrom Foundation. The program has operated for 10 years. Noting the item is confidential, informal stakeholder consultation has been undertaken with select members of the design community.

### Relation to Council policy

8. The proposal is consistent with 'Council Plan 2021-2025':
  - Page 21: Continues to strengthen Melbourne economic recovery
  - Page 21: Public events driving visitation showcasing Melbourne creative strength
  - Page 23: Deliver public art projects attracting visitors and help stimulate city's recovery
  - Page 23: Champion high quality development and public realm design
  - Page 23: Aboriginal Melbourne Strategy; support partnership forum
  - Page 27: Activate public spaces to create a vibrant and inclusive public realm with diversity of uses
  - Page 31: Implement the new strategic direction for the Creative Spaces Program
  - Page 33: Create more public art. Piloting diverse and creative artists and community groups

### Environmental sustainability

9. The 12-month extension will allow for further consideration of the reuse and repurposing of MPavilion 10 at the end of the extension period.



# PROPOSAL FOR EXTENSION OF MPAVILION 10 BY TADA0 ANDO AT QUEEN VICTORIA GARDENS

MPAVILION 10

NAOMI  
MILGROM  
FOUNDATION



“A thing of beauty... concrete work is immaculate, beautiful to the touch as well as the eye, a concrete bijou... a remarkable collaboration between Ando’s Osaka office and the Melbourne team under Sean Godsell’s guidance. It is amazing to have a project by Ando in Melbourne”.

ArchitectureAU





“The tenth structure commissioned by the Naomi Milgrom Foundation – an institution that has been promoting a public initiative since 2014 that has become over time one of the most popular cultural festivals in the whole of Australia...lacks only the monumental scale to which the architect has accustomed us, for example in the Parisian Bourse de Commerce or in the dreamlike museum circuit of Naoshima. But for the rest, it can be considered a manifesto of his way of understanding places intended for cultural enjoyment and sharing.”

Artribune (Italy)





“I create buildings with clients. I gravitate towards clients with strong visions, who are passionate about their projects. Naomi Milgrom is very passionate about commissioning spaces that inspire an emotional relationship between design, nature, and people.

I appreciate MPavilion’s civic ambitions and cherish the opportunity to create something that could stay in people’s hearts forever.

Architecture must always be an act that stimulates the existing environment and presents society with new question.

I think Naomi Milgrom understands this.”

Tadao Ando  
Architect MPavilion 10





"I am impressed with and intrigued by what Naomi Milgrom has created in Melbourne with MPavilion.

We share the belief that architecture must contribute to public life and can contribute in meaningful ways to society, especially by encouraging social interaction, I am honored to have received this important commission and to create an MPavilion in Australia."

Tadao Ando  
Pritzker Prize winning architect, Osaka,  
Japan





“The site is vitally important as my work is a dialogue between architecture and nature. Each site is unique with its layering of history and meaning.

The design is responsive to the site.

For MPavilion, I have imagined an architecture that serves as a counterpoint to the lively character of modern life in Melbourne and the site in the Queen Victoria Gardens.”

Tadao Ando





# MPAVILION

**MPavilion** is Australia's most idea-driven architecture commission and design festival.

Since 2014 MPavilion has delivered nine architectural commissions (the 2020 MPavilion program took place in a car park). The nine architects have included two Australian architects, both Australian Institute of Architect Gold Medalists, and seven international architects whose first work in Australia was MPavilion.

MPavilion is not a program or activity of any institution. It is offered by a philanthropist as a a unique fixture in Melbourne's summer calendar. MPavilion is created as a place celebrating and encouraging deeper knowledge and appreciation of the role of architecture and design in improving Australian lives, through a program which is free and open to all.

At the end of each season, the Naomi Milgrom Foundation gifts the MPavilion structure to the community. This has resulted in seven new civic structures designed by the world's leading architects relocated as permanent venues across Melbourne. The owners of the gifted MPavilions host a range of activations and events, and for general use by the broader community.



# MPAVILION 10

MPavilion 10 is the 10th commissioning series of iconic MPavilions in the Queen Victoria Gardens.

Designed by **Pritzker Prize winning Japanese architect Tadao Ando** as his first and likely only project in Australia, due to his advanced age and poor health.

The response to this pavilion has been incredibly strong, with 245 international media articles across Asia, Europe and the USA.

Designboom, the most popular global digital magazine for architecture and design have included MPavilion 10 in their Top 10 Pavilions of 2023.





# ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Tadao Ando's design for MPavilion encapsulates his desire to create a memorable structure that responds directly to the Gardens. It strives for spatial purity, employing the geometry of circles and squares to create a space in harmony with nature, a tranquil sanctuary reminiscent of a traditional Japanese walled garden.

MPavilion 10 features a large canopy, a 14.4-metre aluminium-clad disc resting on a central concrete column. Two offset squares create two entrances that lead to the centre of the pavilion. A long horizontal opening running the length of both the north and south walls frames views of the Melbourne skyline and parklands, connecting the city and lush greenery of the Queen Victoria Gardens to the interior. The geometric forms and symmetry are reinforced by an internal arrangement that is half-paved and half-reflecting pool, which mirrors the canopy, sky, city and surrounds.





# SELECTED GLOBAL MEDIA COVERAGE

- Dezeen, "Tadao Ando unveils MPavilion based on 'pure geometry'" (UK)
  - Total Reach: 2,379,764
- Artribune, "Tadao Ando's first time in Australia. MPavilion 10 opens in Melbourne" (Italy)
  - Total Reach: 613,888
- Arch Daily, "A Look at the First 10 Editions of the MPavilion in Melbourne, Australia" (US)
  - Total Reach: 2,997,058
- HYPEBEAST, "You Can Now Visit Tadao Ando's MPavilion in Melbourne" (HK)
  - Total Reach: 2,949,210
- 外滩TheBund (xw.qq.com) 杨紫琼奥斯卡大作亮相上海, 圣罗兰出高级珠宝, 卡塔尔王子出手曼联 (China)
  - Total Reach: 1,712,793,510





**“YOU ARE GOING TO WANT TO GET TO MELBOURNE TO SEE THE STUNNING MPAVILION 10 IN PERSON. ANDO IS KNOWN FOR THE PURITY OF HIS DESIGN, BUT THE MELBOURNE STRUCTURE IS ARGUABLY THE PUREST HE’S EVER PRODUCED.”**

*– Christian Barker, Travel & Leisure South East Asia*



# WHY SHOULD MPAVILION 10 BE EXTENDED?

- MPavilion 10 has been designed by one of the world's greatest living architects and is likely to be his only project in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere. We believe it deserves a longer presence than this current five month season for Melburnians and visitors alike to enjoy.
- Creative Victoria has confirmed funding a further MPavilion and the Foundation is committed to delivering another season of programming.
- Cultural organisations have already expressed interest in utilising this MPavilion as a venue for their festivals/programs in the off season.





# WHY SHOULD MPAVILION 10 BE EXTENDED?

- MPavilion holds a high educational value as demonstrated by the strong engagement by the architectural and design community including the Australian Institute of Architects who have included MPavilion in its recently released architectural walking tour app.
- The redevelopment of Arts Centre Melbourne and the broader Melbourne Arts Precinct will be disruptive. MPavilion would continue to attract foot traffic and visitation connecting Fed Square to the Myer Music Bowl and the Royal Botanic Gardens.





# OPPORTUNITIES

- MPavilion is unique to Melbourne and contributes to Melbourne's global reputation as the design capital of Australia.
- Much like the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona, the Tadao Ando MPavilion attracts many local, national and international visitors.
- NMF welcome the opportunity for Council to utilise the pavilion during the off-season (April to October) for events that align with their vision for MPavilion, such as Now or Never festival.





# PROPOSAL

## Extension to 2025

- The MPavilion 10 program ends 28 March 2024.
- During the off-season, MPavilion will remain free and open daily to the public. On non-event days, opening hours are proposed to be 10am to 3pm (weather permitting).
- The next MPavilion program will commence 21 November 2024.





## PROPOSAL (CONT'D)

- During the off-season, the Naomi Milgrom Foundation (NMF) will offer MPavilion for a limited number of off-season cultural and design events and activations, aligned with the Foundation's objectives.
- NMF, in close consultation with CoM, will work with Architect Tadao Ando and Executive Architect Sean Godsell to undertake minor modifications to the MPavilion for long term security, maintenance and safety. NMF will cover all costs in relation to the modifications.
- NMF will take full responsibility for the maintenance and security of the MPavilion structure throughout this period, including covering financial costs of operation





# APPENDIX

- Testimonials & Media Coverage
- About the Naomi Milgrom Foundation
- Contact





## LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

*"I visited M Pavilion yesterday and marvelled at this jewel of a building. I have seen other works by Ando before, but nothing beats seeing it on home turf. Thank you for your gift to Melbourne!"*

-William Chow, Zoneworks

*"I really think this is the greatest luxury I've had in Melbourne" - Joseph Lee*

*"Best MPavilion of the last 10 years...this one encourages people to linger, not for coffee but for the restful, contemplative atmosphere" - SM*





# MPAVILION TESTIMONIALS

*"MPavilion is a new initiative of quality and innovation, a hugely generous private contribution, a lasting legacy for the city and something all citizens should be proud of."*

**– Ben Evans, Founder, London Design Festival**

"Given our interest in sustainable cities, MPavilion fits beautifully with our aspiration for Melbourne in particular, but also for the country."

**– Shayne Elliott, CEO, ANZ**

"I see MPavilion as part of the general phenomenon around the world where people enjoy congregating in informal situations and contexts and debating, discussing contemporary ideas. It's part of the phenomenon of encouraging people to be participants rather than simply an audience."

**– Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council of England**





# GLOBAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

“Ando's design is, for lack of a better phrase, unmistakably Ando”

– **Wordlarchitects.com (Switzerland)**

Ando's design for MPavilion 10—his first ever project in Australia—reflects his signature use of striking geometric interventions in nature and his precise, assured use of concrete.”

– **World Architecture News (UK)**

“One of the TOP 10 pavilions of 2023.”

– **Designboom (International)**

“No matter how busy your day might be, once inside Ando's pavilion, the effect is calming and contemplative.”

– **Stephen Brook, The Age (Australia)**





# NAOMI MILGROM FOUNDATION

The **Naomi Milgrom Foundation** champions art, design and architecture that improves Australian lives – empowering creation, collaboration and education. Established in 2014 by Naomi Milgrom AC, the not-for-profit organisation pivots on a central purpose: to enhance the presence and influence of creative culture in Australia. This is accomplished through the active support of artists, designers and creative institutions; the fostering of collaborations between bodies and disciplines; the promotion of art and design education; and an overarching commitment to increasing access to the arts.

The Naomi Milgrom Foundation's ongoing flagship projects include MPavilion and the Living Cities Forum. It proudly supports extraordinary projects with extraordinary creators that would otherwise not be realised, spanning architecture and urban design fora; art, design and music commissions; art and design exhibitions; education, research and publication projects; dance and music performances; First Nations cultural projects; and theatre productions.

Naomi Milgrom AC is an Australian business leader, fashion entrepreneur, philanthropist and arts patron with an international reputation for initiating and supporting cultural innovation. In 2020, she was awarded the country's highest honour – the Companion of the Order of Australia – for eminent service to the community through philanthropic leadership and support for the promotion of the arts.



# CONTACT

MPavilion is a flagship initiative of the Naomi Milgrom Foundation

Elaine Chia  
CEO

Naomi Milgrom Foundation

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**NAOMI  
MILGROM  
FOUNDATION**





20 February 2024

Ms Naomi Milgrom AC  
nbgceo@SUSSAN.com.au

Ms Elaine Chia  
elaine@naomimilgromfoundation.org

Dear Naomi and Elaine,

I offer my congratulations on your significant achievement in reaching ten years of the MPavilion in Melbourne. Over and above ten seasons of wonderfully diverse programming, visitors have had the pleasure of seeing ten remarkable interpretations of your architectural challenge. In its various iterations over the last decade, each pavilion has created a unique way to experience the setting of the Queen Victoria Gardens while engaging in conversations about the city and design.

I consider this year's pavilion to be an extraordinary work of architecture that works as a 'place' both with and without programming. As Tadao Ando's first ever work in Australia, we are privileged to host a work from this Pritzker Prize winning architect here in Melbourne. The renowned qualities of his architecture - simplicity, beauty and spatial experience, are all quietly present in this year's MPavilion.

Ando's is a true 'pavilion', a composition of walls and floating roof that is at once both open and enclosed. It draws people in from the surrounding gardens to a contemplative internal experience that stays connected to its context through carefully framed views of gardens, city skyline, and an interior filled with sunlight, daylight and air.

It has been interesting to see how quickly it has become loved by Melburnians and visitors over its summer season. It is exciting to be able to experience an architectural work of this quality that is so well suited to its location. It has added a memorable cultural destination to our city.

I would like to propose and support Tadao Ando's MPavilion remaining in place for another season to allow more visitors to have the rare privilege of experiencing the work of one of the world's finest designers.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Garner AM LFRAIA  
Victorian Government Architect  
Office of the Victorian Government Architect

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22 February 2024

Elaine Chia  
CEO  
Naomi Milgrom Foundation  
Via email: [elaine@naomimilgromfoundation.org](mailto:elaine@naomimilgromfoundation.org)

Dear Elaine,

The 2024 Australian Architecture Conference will take place in Melbourne, Victoria, between 9 and 11 May 2024. With a range of high-profile and award-winning local and international speakers, we're expecting over 1,000 delegates to attend this landmark architectural gathering.

The 2024 conference venues include the iconic Hamer Hall and the immersive Capitol Theatre, with the event showcasing Melbourne's urban fabric and enduring vitality. The Tadao Ando-designed 2024 M Pavilion has added an exciting new building to this architectural landscape, and I am writing to add the Institute's support to the foundation's application for an extension of the pavilion's season. If this extension can be secured, we would be honoured to work with the Foundation to activate the pavilion through the critical conversations and celebrations that the conference supports.

If I can provide any further information, please let me know by return email. We very much look forward to partnering with the Naomi Milgrom Foundation to deliver a very successful 2024 Australian Architecture Conference.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cameron Bruhn', written over a large, faint, light-green architectural graphic that spans the bottom half of the page.

Cameron Bruhn  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Institute of Architects



February 20 2024

Ms N Milgrom  
Naomi Milgrom Foundation

Dear Naomi

**Extension to MPavilion 10 at Queen Victoria Gardens**

I write to support the idea of extending Tadao Ando's MPavilion No 10.

Although seemingly a simple structure, its beauty lies in its understated refinement. Quite simply, it's possibly the most refined and most difficult MPavilion executed to date. A five-month lifespan is not long enough for such a unique object. Melbourne deserves more.

This MPavilion's author is one of the most famous architects in the world. We are lucky he agreed to this commission. It will become internationally recognised and awarded in due course, providing an important tourist destination for Melbourne. Ando's work is keenly sought out, whether in Japan or overseas, by an army of devotees.

Tadao Ando is in the latter years of his career, making MPavilion 10 highly valuable. It is a signature piece, and we are lucky to have it, just like other iconic architectural masterpieces; the Myer Music Bowl by Barry Patten, National Gallery of Victoria by Sir Roy Grounds, and Federation Square by LAB Architecture Studio.

Public response has been overwhelming, given the unique effect it has on its visitors. It evokes an intimate and memorable response, which has generated a lot of debate and positivity from many people I know.

I believe MPavilion 10 is the most refined of all the previous MPavilion iterations. This building is extremely durable and could last for 100 years. I hope that Melbourne City Council will agree to extend its life by at least one year.

Its form makes it adaptable to all kinds of events that can occur in Melbourne's unpredictable climate. It is perfect for both summer and winter events, given the protection provided by its perimeter walls, whilst its internal umbrella-like roof provides good weather protection.

I would be happy to accompany you as part of a delegation to Melbourne City Council if you desire, to support this proposal, and I'm available for additional comment.

Yours sincerely



Peter Maddison  
B.Arch, RMIT  
Doctor of Design Honoris Causa RMIT  
Life Fellow RAIA  
Founding Director, Maddison Architects Pty Ltd



21<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Naomi Milgrom AC  
Founder  
Naomi Milgrom Foundation

Dear Naomi,

Congratulations on yet another stunning MPavilion.

It's incredible to believe that it's been ten years since we collaborated on the very first MPavilion when you commissioned me to design the perennial borders that surrounded the first pavilion.

Ten years of MPavilion has seen memorable and lasting impact for Melbourne's reputation as the design capital of Australia, engaging thousands of practitioners and students across architecture, design and the arts.

It's a remarkable achievement secure Tadao Ando, one of the greatest architects of our time, as the architect for MPavilion 10, and for MPavilion to be his first and likely only project in Australia. His design sits perfectly within the gardens and offers visitors new perspectives and appreciation of the architecture and nature.

MPavilion 10 is a signature masterpiece of Mr Ando and has significant design, educational and cultural value. I hope it can remain at the Queen Victoria Gardens beyond this current season.

Kind regards



Paul Bangay OAM



# ALPHA60

ALPHA60.COM.AU

Dear Naomi,

My family and I have truly enjoyed visiting M Pavilion over the summer.

It is amazing. Your generosity in making this happen is so incredible.

I am writing to you today to show my support for the extension of the Tadao Ando MPavilion for another season. As you are aware, this MPavilion holds significant cultural and architectural value, and its extension would contribute greatly to Melbourne's creative landscape.

Designed by one of the world's foremost architects, the Tadao Ando MPavilion represents a unique and unparalleled architectural masterpiece. It marks Mr. Ando's first and likely only ever project in Australia, making it an invaluable addition to Melbourne's architectural heritage.

The MPavilion's long collaboration with Alpha 60 underscores its importance in fostering creative partnerships and community engagement. Through a multitude of events and activities, MPavilion has become a cultural hub that enriches the lives of Melburnians and visitors alike.

The Tadao Ando MPavilion, in particular, has captured the imagination of many, drawing strong interest and engagement from diverse audiences. Its minimalist design and serene atmosphere provide a canvas for designers and artists to explore new realms of creativity and expression. The space continues to inspire innovative responses, showcasing Melbourne's vibrant arts scene on a global stage.

Given its undeniable impact and significance, extending the Tadao Ando MPavilion for another season is crucial. It would not only provide continued opportunities for artistic exploration and community interaction but also reaffirm Melbourne's commitment to promoting culture and innovation. By supporting another year in this initiative, we can ensure that Melbourne remains at the forefront of global artistic discourse, enriching the lives of its residents and visitors alike.

Thank you again Naomi for making Melbourne an even better place,

Georgie



# TRADER HOUSE

29<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Ms Naomi Milgrom AC  
Naomi Milgrom Foundation - MPavilion

Dear Naomi,

Congratulations on another incredible MPavilion. What a fitting celebration of your 10<sup>th</sup> year to work with Tao Ando whose work I admire and find truly inspiring.

In recognition of this incredible collaboration, I wanted to convey my full support for this becoming a permanent fixture in Melbourne. I firmly believe this would be a valuable addition to Melbourne's architectural landscape and provide ongoing interest and inspiration for the wider community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'A' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew McConnell





Date 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Naomi and Elaine,

Congratulations on another wonderful MPavilion season.

MPavilion has been a great gift to Melburnians across ten years, and I've been privileged to be part of it as a photographer, collaborator and admirer.

The MPavilion 10 by Tadao Ando is a significant commission, being the only Ando building in the southern hemisphere. The Naomi Milgrom Foundation is to be praised for enabling this extraordinary contemplative experience of a building without parallel in Australia. As the first photographer I had the rare pleasure of being alone in the space with my spirit uplifted, and the more I have explored the more I have appreciated its elegance, simplicity and sublime materiality.

Having met him personally and photographed some of his work in Japan I can attest to his genius and his empathy for the human condition. His sensitivity and braveness to design a spatial experience without compromise is what his MPavilion stands for. It is the only Ando in the southern hemisphere, one that Melbournians can experience right now. It has proved immensely successful as an individual visit, separately to the programme.

I hope it can remain in the Queen Victoria Gardens beyond this current season so many others can experience this work by one of the world's greatest architects.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Gollings'.

John Gollings AM  
FRAIA, M Arch RMIT, Heide Fellow



## MPavilion 10 Extension to June 2025

### Attachment 3 – Considerations

#### Background

1. MPavilion is an annual public program operated by Naomi Milgrom Foundation (NMF) and supported by the City of Melbourne (CoM), Creative Victoria and 30 corporate and community partners. For almost each of the past 10 years, a new pavilion, designed by an internationally prominent architect, has hosted the program from November to March. The pavilions are deconstructed by June of the same year.
2. Council has supported MPavilion through funding of \$300,000 and in-kind support to the value of \$50,000, annually. In December 2021, Council approved program funding for 2022/23 and 2023/24, subject to the necessary approvals. Creative Victoria funding exists for one more year of programming to June 2025.
3. MPavilion 10 was designed by globally renowned Japanese architect and Pritzker Prize laureate, Tadao Ando. Ando is globally recognised as one of the world's greatest living architects. MPavilion 10 is likely to be his only project in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere, due to his advanced age and poor health. The response to this pavilion has been strong, with 245 international media articles from across Asia, Europe and the USA.
4. Ando's design for MPavilion 10 seeks to create a space in harmony with nature, reminiscent of a traditional Japanese walled garden. The pavilion features a large canopy resting on a central concrete column. Two offset squares define the two entrances to the pavilion. A long horizontal opening runs the length of the north and south walls, at eye level. The pavilion interior is half paving and half reflecting pool.
5. NMF propose to retain MPavilion 10 in its current location, for 12 months beyond the current permit end date, to June 2025. Particulars of the proposal are provided below.
  - 5.1. If retained, MPavilion 10 is proposed to remain free and open to the public, 10am to 3pm daily on non-event days (weather permitting). MPavilion programming runs from start November to end March. During the off-season (April to October), NMF will offer MPavilion for a limited number of off-season cultural and design events, including potentially, the Now or Never festival and other council programs.
  - 5.2. NMF, in consultation with CoM, will work with Ando and Executive Architect Sean Godsell to undertake minor modifications to the MPavilion for long term security, maintenance and safety. NMF will cover all costs in relation to the modifications.
  - 5.3. NMF will take full responsibility for the maintenance and security of the MPavilion structure throughout this period, including covering financial costs of operation. NMF currently fund overnight security for asset protection.
6. NMF have not requested further funding and are aware that Council cannot provide additional in-kind support.

#### Issues

7. As MPavilion was initially approved by Council as a temporary structure, a decision from Council is required to retain it. Its retention is also dependent on approval from Heritage Victoria and DEECA. Subject to DEECA approval a new Crown Land (Reserves) Act Section 17B licence will also be negotiated. Due to the temporary nature of the request, no planning permit is required.
8. MPavilion 10's design precludes through views and movements across the site. This presents potential risks to the structure, public safety and City of Melbourne's reputation as follows.
  - 8.1. The design is not consistent with best practice gender equity place principles.



- 8.2. The reflection pool poses water safety issues, exacerbated by a lack of through-site passive surveillance. The presence of a reflection pool is deemed to be a low risk given the presence of other open shallow pools within the gardens.
  - 8.3. The blank external walls of the pavilion are susceptible to tagging and graffiti.
  - 8.4. The structure is climbable.
9. Queen Victoria Gardens is recognised as an ornamental garden and is managed as a passive, low key recreational space. It is a heritage feature at both a State and National Level and also a fragile environment, not designed to accommodate permanent structures and regular activation for events or large gatherings. The City of Melbourne Domain Parklands Masterplan (2019) recommends a continuation of the current ornamental and passive recreation status for Queen Victoria Gardens.
  10. Council events such as the Now or Never festival may be able to utilise MPavilion 10 for some programming, though its small capacity (150 pax, 80-100 seated) limits potential applications. Additional events in Queen Victoria Gardens would be subject to regular permitting and approvals processes and be assessed against the guidelines for use. As identified in point 10 above, the gardens are not ordinarily approved for events due to their ornamental nature, however events within the MPavilion are generally acceptable.
  11. MPavilion is a significant contributor to Melbourne's design identity and cultural reputation. An extension of its use at Queen Victoria Gardens will continue to attract cultural and architectural tourism, and positively activate the site during a period of construction disruption in the Melbourne Arts Precinct. Since opening, an average of 820 people have visited MPavilion each day, with many international, interstate and outer Melbourne residents travelling to the precinct to experience Ando's design.
  12. Multiple testimonials and letters of support accompany NMF's proposal. These are included at Attachment 2. Letters have been received from Jill Garner (The Office of the Victorian Government Architect), Cameron Bruhn (Australian Institute of Architects), Peter Maddison (Maddison Architects), Paul Bangay (PRB Design), Georgie Cleary (Alpha 60), Andrew McConnell (Trader House) and John Gollings (Gollings Photography). Some of the letters outline an interest in activating MPavilion during the off-season.
  13. While in a different context, it is important to be mindful of similar structures which have been demolished in the past due to undesirable behaviour. An example of this is the Fitzroy Gardens toilet, built in 1957 and demolished in May 2006 due to "complaints about offensive and intimidating behaviour from individuals who linger there".
  14. A decision from Council is required by end April to allow time for NMF to coordinate demolition and removal of the structure if the request for an extension is declined. Removal of the pavilion and make good of the site is estimated to take six weeks plus lead time.
  15. NMF is responsible for all make-good works. A \$25,000 security grant, held by Council, will be released to NMF following the return of the site in its original state.

## Risks

16. All previous MPavilion structures on this site have been temporary and relocatable. Unlike previous MPavilions, the concrete walls of MPavilion 10 cannot be disassembled for relocation and will either be repurposed or recycled. The circular steel and aluminium roof, bluestone paved floor and concrete benches are fully relocatable.
17. While an extension could be viewed as opening the door for further advocacy on permanent retention, NMF have confirmed that the request applies to one year only.
18. The design community is divided about the opportunity.
  - 18.1. Some individuals have expressed concerns with the removal of a well-constructed pavilion, and the perception of material waste in a climate and biodiversity emergency. Granting the extension enables the delivery of the 2024/25 program within the current MPavilion structure. At the end of the one-year extension, parts of the structure can be relocated, while other elements can be recycled.





- 18.2. Some individuals have expressed concerns with the ongoing safety, presentation and maintenance of the pavilion, given its enclosed nature and expansive perimeter walls. NMF have confirmed that it will take full responsibility for the maintenance and security of MPavilion 10 throughout the extension period, including covering financial costs of operation and minor modifications.
19. The Queen Victoria Gardens are included on the Victorian Heritage Register and the National Heritage List as a component of Melbourne's Domain Parkland and Memorial Precinct. One of the listed features under the National registration is: *the parkland landscape of the Domain Parklands with its Victorian era features of statuary, garden planting and memorials*. Retention could invite public scrutiny on heritage impact and suitability of this arrangement for the site.
20. Melbourne Arts Precinct Co (MAPCo) have expressed an interest in placing infrastructure (such as a Spiegeltent) in Queen Victoria Gardens to extend their programming. Supporting the extension of MPavilion 10 could make it more challenging to decline other requests to place infrastructure for events in this park. The guidelines for use of this park restrict such activity.
21. Between 28 March (program end) and a decision being made by Council, NMF propose to continue public access to MPavilion 10.

This Considerations report has been developed in consultation with the following directors:

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