



Flinders Street Perimeter [L] reframing a key civic site

situation.

The rail yards at Flinders Street Station have long been considered an underutilised space ripe for development. The stagnant nature of this stretch of riverside land, one of the key civic locations within the city, means that it is often felt to be unsafe and lifeless. Beneath the rail yards are the 'Banana Alley Vaults'; a series of spaces that are unique but also somewhat neglected. The majority of the vaults are currently occupied by commercial sports clubs.

The entire site has already been the subject of several urban development concepts. However, to date nothing has gained momentum. Major problems include the narrowness of the space left on either side of the rail lines, and the high cost of spanning them. Equally significant is the challenge of finding an appropriate building type or civic function for this important stretch of the Yarra River.

proposal.

This project ties a number of elements together to bridge the gap. Following the city council's suggestion, a key component proposed is a youth cultural centre combined with a youth crisis centre. As sport is a valuable tool to re-engage at-risk groups with society, the next component is an indoor sports multiplex. The final component of this troika could be the headquarters of a major sports company (such as Nike or adidas), whose marketing initiatives could be enhanced by proximity to a vibrant social sports scene, and whose public reputation could be enhanced through sponsorship of and collaboration with the youth centre. The co-location and partial integration of these programs enables a range of synergetic effects.

The building is configured as two slabs running along either side of the rail tracks. On the Flinders Street side, the youth centre is situated in one half of a building shared with the sports company headquarters. On the other side the public indoor sports multiplex overlooks the Yarra. The two volumes are interlocked, linking the different entities and user groups metaphorically and programmatically.

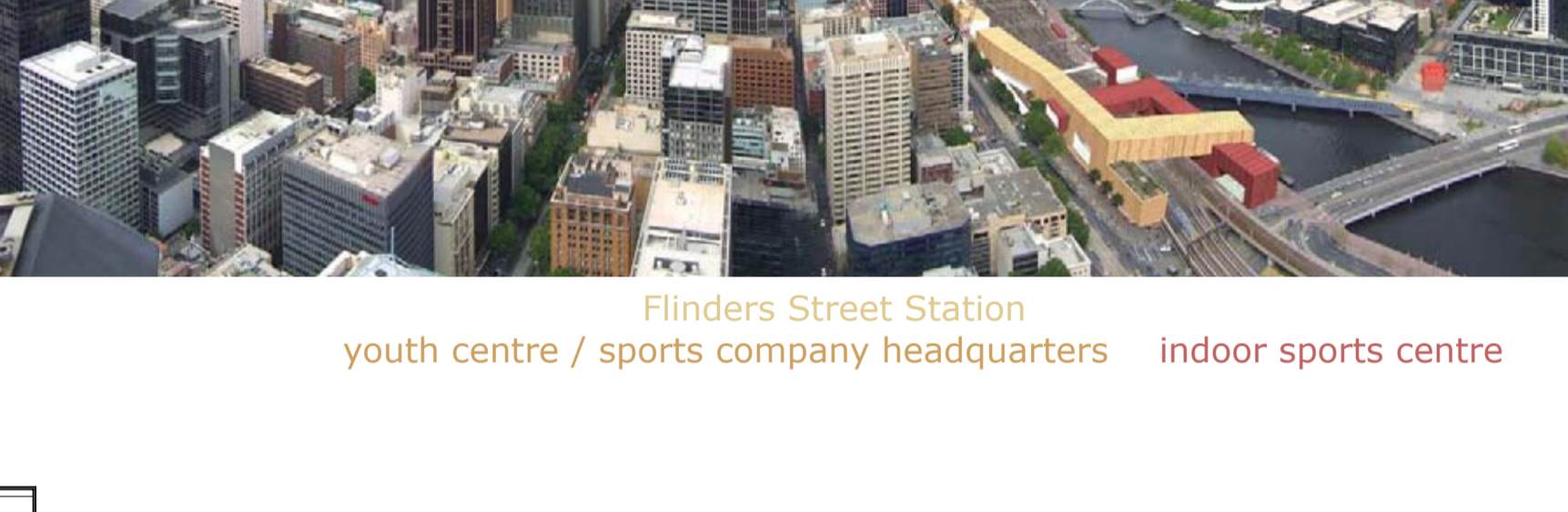
Large, protruding windows frame various activities staged within the building, creating a showcase of local Melbourne sport and culture. These are hoisted high above Banana Alley Vaults to enable strong visual impact and dialogue within the surrounding environment.

conclusion.

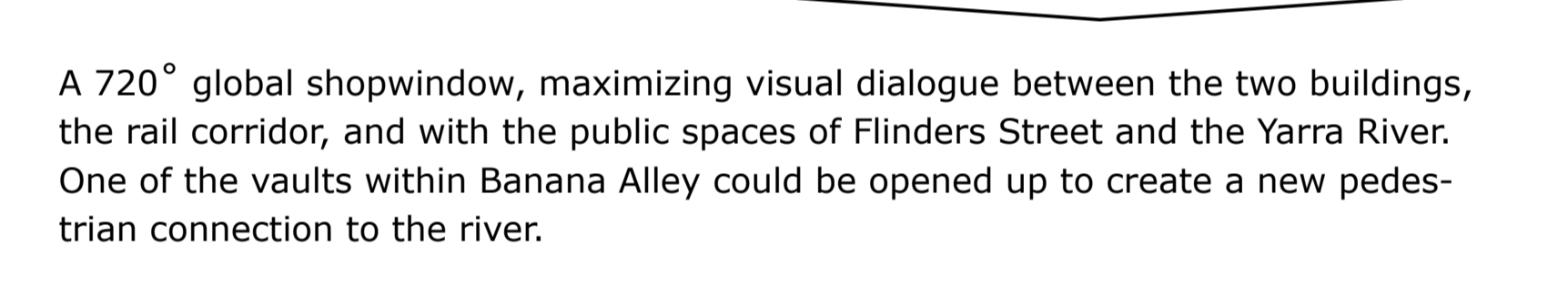
Inscriptions of sport and youth culture are already present in nascent form within the precinct. The project suggests how these could be amplified through collaboration with private partners and the catalyst of a sports branding strategy. By leveraging their branding value for the city, social and public realm projects can have greater breadth and potential for realisation.

complementary scheme next-door!

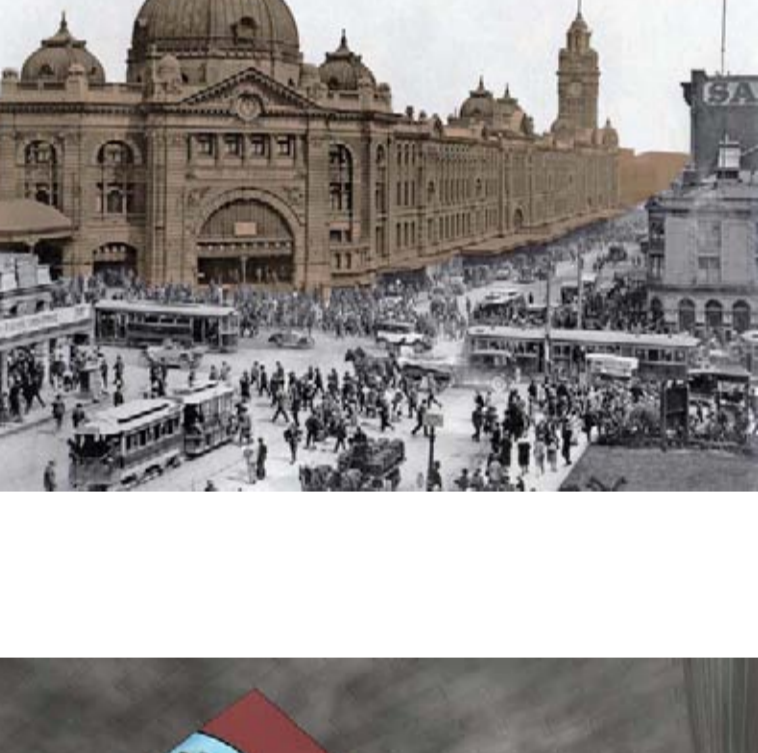
also see THE BOOK in the cafe



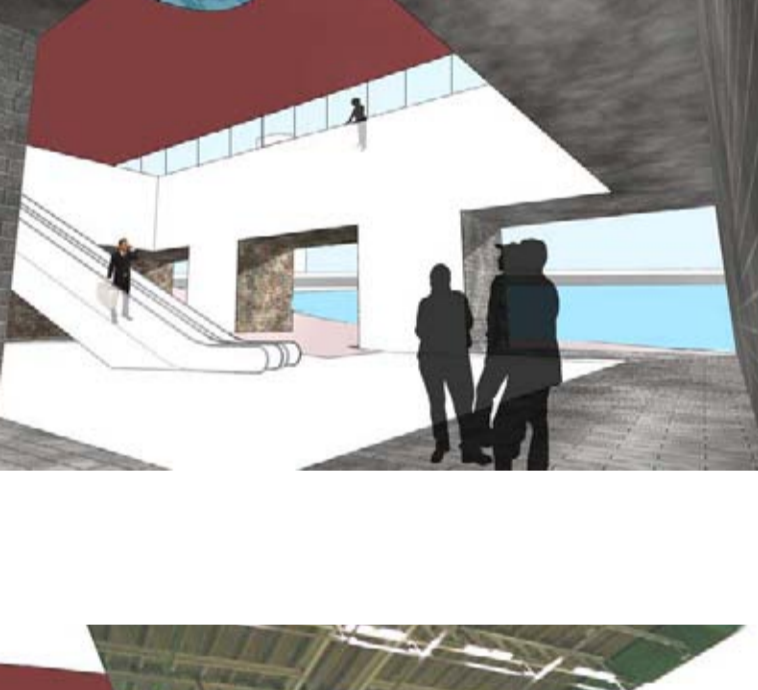
Flinders Street Station
youth centre / sports company headquarters indoor sports centre



A 720° global shopwindow, maximizing visual dialogue between the two buildings, the rail corridor, and with the public spaces of Flinders Street and the Yarra River. One of the vaults within Banana Alley could be opened up to create a new pedestrian connection to the river.



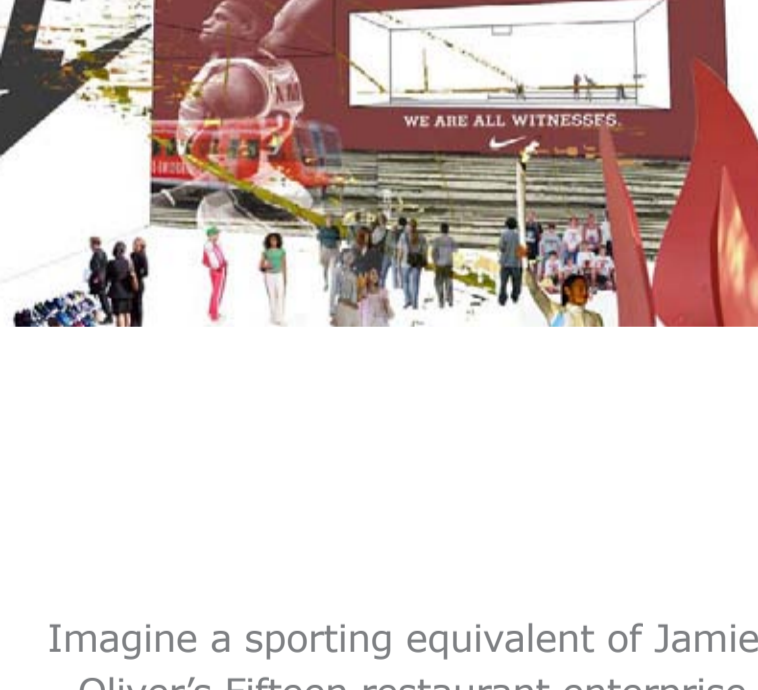
Flinders Street Station is extended to complete the perimeter loop. Its architectural language of large portals and rich surface treatment is also continued.



The public sports centre is entered via an atrium piercing the vaults.



Whilst exercising and enjoying the view over the river to Southbank, Melburnians sporting pursuits also animate giant picture windows floating within the larger public realm.



Within the global sports company exhibition and event space customers are engaged by real sports, inside the store and visible across the rail yards.



Imagine a sporting equivalent of Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant enterprise.

