The Design Hub at RMIT will have a second skin of 16,000 rotating discs that will help power the new building.

**SMART DESIGN**

**RMIT building to follow the sun**

Anna Brain

The former Carlton United Brewery site in Swanston St is set to be transformed into a environmentally sustainable Design Hub for RMIT University.

The design by architect and RMIT graduate Sean Godsell features a smart “second skin” made of 16,000 sand-blasted discs that will rotate with the sun to help heat, power and cool the building.

“The outer skin is designed to reduce energy consumption, shade the building and also gather energy to help power the building,” Godsell said.

“The idea is to look at a way of integrating it into the appearance of the building.”

RMIT vice-chancellor Margaret Gardner said the 12,000sq m centre would be used across disciplines on projects in industrial and urban design, fabric and fashion design, architecture and landscaping to develop world-class concepts and initiatives.

“This project is a significant component of the university’s $500 million investment into the RMIT Quarter of Melbourne’s central business district,” she said.

“It has been made possible by a $28.6 million grant from the Federal Government’s Education Investment Fund.”

Currently a demolition site, the building at the corner of Swanston and Victoria streets is due to be completed by 2011.

Invitations to tender will be made this month.