



Permanent Memorial **Concept Design Report**

We acknowledge and respect the palawa/pakana peoples of lutruwita (Tasmania) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across Australia as the traditional custodians of our shared lands, waters and seas.

We recognise their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection with the land, waters and seas – the same land, waters and seas which are a central focus of our profession.

We honour Elders past, present and emerging whose knowledge and wisdom will ensure the continuation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



Permanent Memorial

Concept Design Report

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This report was prepared for the Department of Premier
and Cabinet by Inspiring Place Pty Ltd



In collaboration with:

futago_

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Background

Six children tragically lost their lives, and three others were seriously injured during the Hillcrest Primary School end-of-year celebrations on the morning of 16 December 2021. The tragedy deeply affected the families, the school community, first responders, and the entire community of Devonport. Deep sorrow was expressed by many individuals, agencies, and groups from across Tasmania and Australia.

Shortly after the tragedy, The Hillcrest Affected Area Recovery Committee (HAARC) was formed to be a point of contact for the local community. The Committee is made up primarily of local representatives, people who are well-known and active in the community. It includes representation from the local Council and Government departments who have a role in the recovery effort.

A one-year commemoration of the tragedy was held in December 2022, during which a temporary memorial was created.

In 2023, the Department of Premier and Cabinet engaged Tasmanian consultants Inspiring Place to collaborate with the families of the deceased and injured children, key stakeholders, the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, and Devonport City Council to develop a concept for a permanent memorial.

The design and construction of the memorial will be fully funded by the State and Federal Governments.



The temporary memorial created to mark the one year commemoration of the Hillcrest tragedy.
(source: ABC News, Maren Preuss)

Design Process

In creating a permanent memorial to respond to the Hillcrest tragedy, it was essential that the voices, memories, and wishes of the families who lost their children were at the heart of the design process. Co-design with the families has ensured that the memorial will be more than a place of remembrance; it is a shared space of comfort, reflection, and enduring community strength. This collaboration also offers an opportunity for healing by providing a sense of ownership, connection, and purpose amidst unimaginable loss.

To begin, the families of the deceased children were invited to a series of discussions. These conversations explored examples of contemporary memorials from around the world, what a memorial meant to them personally, the qualities and emotions the memorial should express, what they wanted to see — and, importantly, what they did not want to see. The families shared their thoughts on how the memorial should look and feel, what should be avoided, and where in Devonport the memorial might be most appropriately located.

Their responses formed the basis for a series of key design drivers, translating the families' wishes into guiding principles to ensure the memorial is meaningful, authentic, and sensitive to their lived experience.

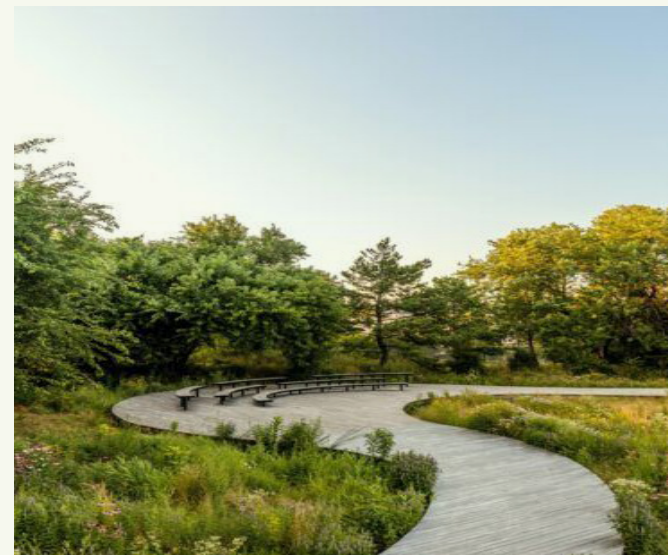
The following concept design report illustrates the outcomes of this co-design process to date, while recognising that the direct involvement of the families will continue through further design development, testing, and prototyping. Many details of the memorial remain a work in progress, allowing space for ongoing refinement and care as the project evolves.

Ultimately, an ongoing process ensures that the memorial will serve as a true gift to the families who endured unimaginable loss, and as a place of collective remembrance for all, where grief and love can be held with care and respect.



SECRETS OF LIGHTNESS MEMORIAL GARDEN

Melbourne, Australia.



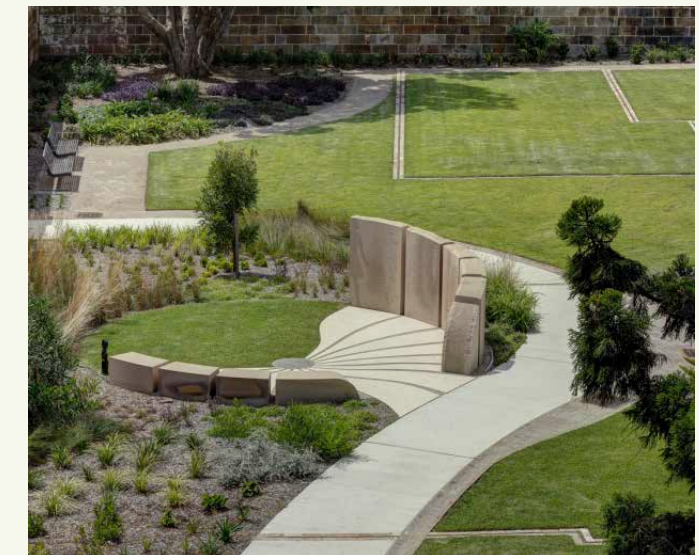
NAVAL MEMORIAL GARDEN

Brooklyn, USA.



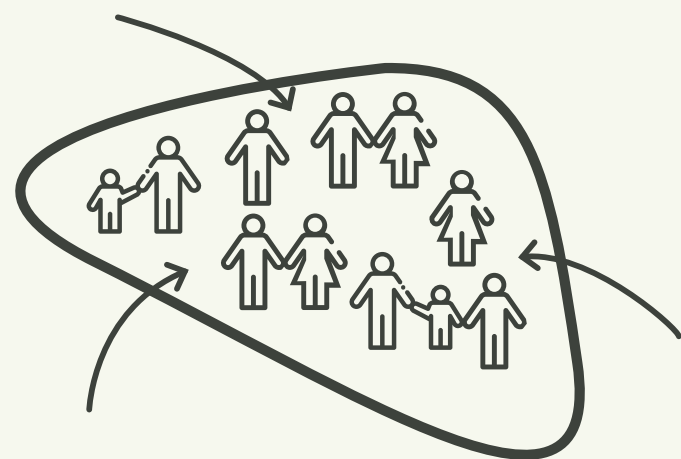
VICTORIAN FAMILY VIOLENCE MEMORIAL

Melbourne, Australia.

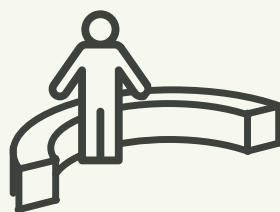


PARRAMATTA GIRLS HOME MEMORIAL

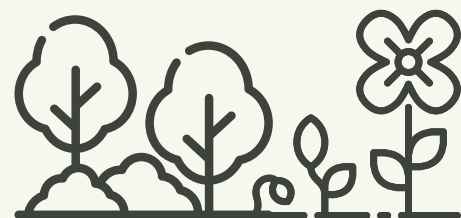
Parramatta, Australia.



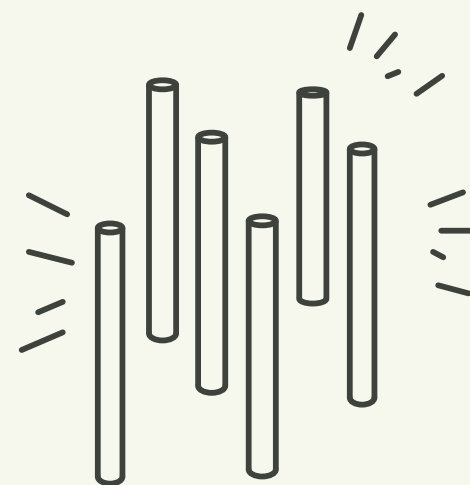
A place to connect, accessible to all, where everyone can go to gather



A place that is private, calming, reflective, enclosed, spiritual and quiet



A place that is beautiful and natural, playful, interactive, joyful, friendly and colourful



A place that has artwork, lighting or sculptural elements to recognise the children unique characters

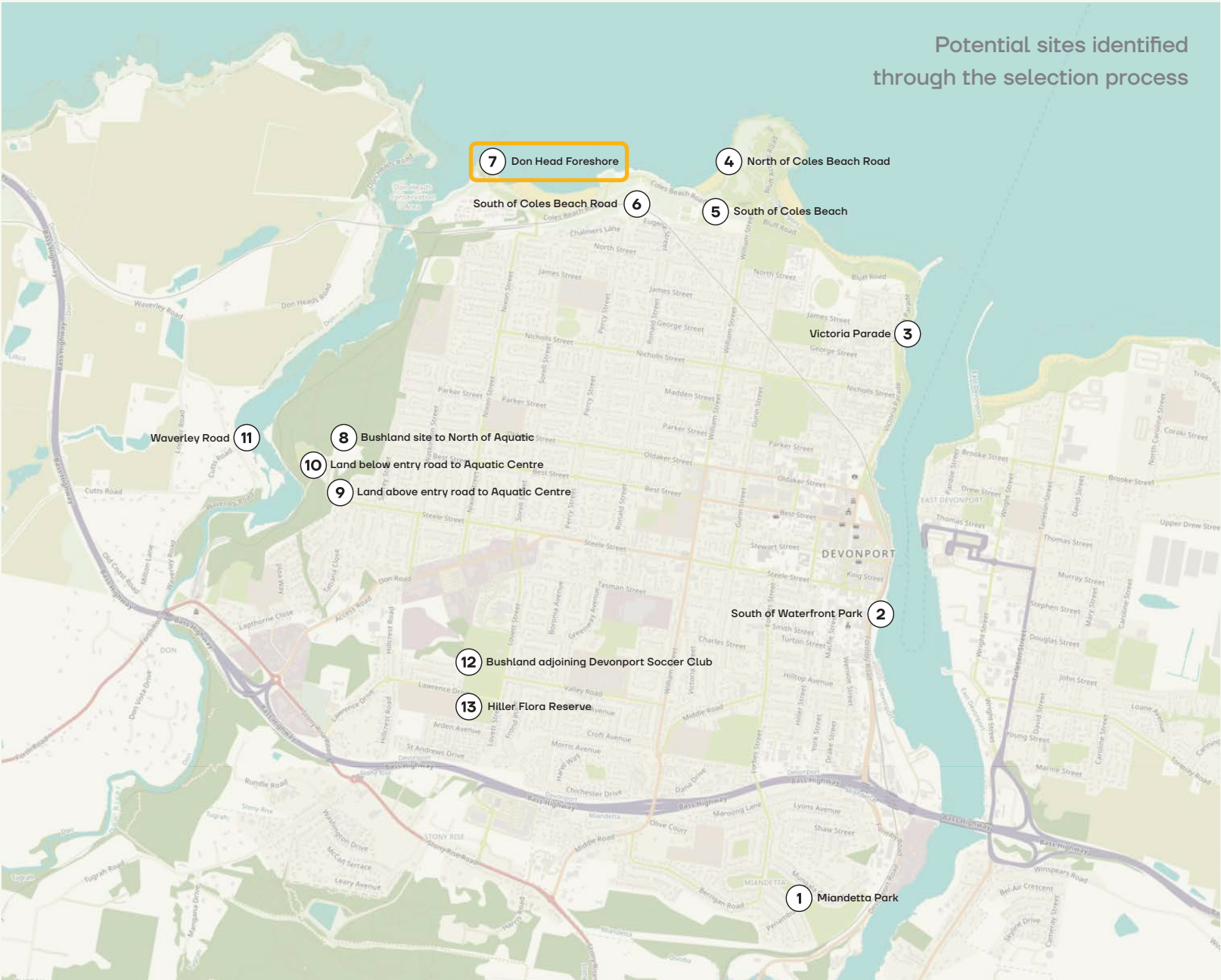
Selecting a Site

A range of possible locations for the memorial were investigated based on suggestions from the families, a review of Council-owned land, discussions with HAARC, and exploratory fieldwork.

Each site was assessed against the key design principles emerging through the co-design process with families, as well as broader planning and design considerations typically used to evaluate the suitability of a memorial site.

Three sites were shortlisted, and a more detailed assessment of their advantages and constraints was undertaken.

The Don Head Foreshore site selected by the families from the short list.



Don Head Foreshore

The preferred location of the families was on the Don Head foreshore. The advantages of this location were identified as:

- › the site being on Council and Crown owned land;
- › The proposed use would be exempt from requiring a planning permit under the exemption provision 4.2.7 for minor infrastructure, as outlined in the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Devonport;
- › Don Head is well known and a popular foreshore location;
- › the site is not developed, there is no existing facilities and there are no planned developments for the site;
- › the construction of a memorial space will have limited impact on residential view-lines given the location and distance of existing residences;
- › the site is an attractive foreshore location with great coastal views;
- › there are no known or likely impacts on natural or cultural values;
- › the site provides a large flat space which allows easy access and creative options for design of memorial;
- › the vegetation borders are attractive (both native and introduced species) and frame the site which also contributes to sense of enclosure and privacy;
- › the site is easily viewed from Coles Beach Drive which allows passive surveillance;
- › there is an existing car park at Don Head and

only a short walking distance to the site;

- › there is potential to provide some additional car parking near the site on Coles Beach Drive catering for people with mobility issues;
- › there are existing toilets and picnic facilities a short walking distance from the site;
- › The recently constructed shared coastal path catering for pedestrians, runners and bike riders can be retained without impact on the site.

The constraints with use of the site were identified as being:

- › the land tenure will require approval and support from both Council and Crown (however preliminary discussions indicate no major concerns with the proposed use);
- › the site has some exposure to coastal sea breezes and sea spray (summer months) although the existing vegetation plantings offer some protection;
- › the need to limit existing vehicle access onto the foreshore for management purposes (currently there is temporary access for supply of materials to Don Head foreshore embankment works);
- › there is a shallow open space drain on eastern side of the site (which can be piped or landscaped to reduce any issues); and
- › there is small scale erosion of the foreshore bank.



Aerial view of the proposed site at Don Head Foreshore

Site Context Diagram



Site Analysis Diagram



Early Site Response Diagram investigating how each key element could be integrated into the space



‘Look and Feel’ precedent imagery
selected with the families to help
illustrate early thoughts on the qualities
of the space and the key design drivers



Proposed Permanent Memorial Location Plan

- ① Permanent Memorial Site
- ② All abilities car parking to support memorial site
- ③ Future Coles Beach coastal pathway route (by council)
- ④ Existing car park to be upgraded (by council)



(Scale 1:1000 A3)

Proposed Permanent Memorial Site Plan

- 1

A generous hard paved arrival area announces the entry to the memorial and provides space to gather before entering the site
- 2

The future Coles Beach coastal pathway will connect the memorial to the broader foreshore and to the city beyond
- 3

5 parallel car parking spaces (including 2 all abilities spaces) provide amenity for those visiting the site. Additional car parking is available within 2 minutes walk to the east and west
- 4

Grass covered earth mounds provide a physical and visual buffer to the road and a playful element for visitors to explore
- 5

Staggered stepping stones create an entry threshold into the site.
- 6

A continuous ring of paving embraces the memorial garden. This serves as both a pathway and sculptural feature.
- 7

Generous integrated seating provides a place to sit and look inward to the memorial garden. The seating also provides an opportunity to carry a quote or message chosen by the families.
- 8

6 Sculptural pillars, representing each deceased child, form the focal point of the memorial garden.
- 9

A joyful and colourful wild flower meadow garden with perennial grasses highlights seasonal shifts in colours and textures.
- 10

A meandering gravel pathway invites visitors to interact with the garden and provides an opportunity to walk to each pillar
- 11

Two new advanced trees sits amongst the existing grove of Sheoaks bringing the number of trees to 6
- 12

A detached seat creates a quiet place for private reflection. The seat provides opportunity to chose to face inwards to the memorial space or outwards to the ocean and horizon
- 13

Large, locally sourced quarried stones stabilise the foreshore edge of the site and stone steps formalise access to the beach below
- 14

The existing exposed drainage line is piped and covered and the area regraded and planted with grass.

(Scale 1:400 A3)



Key Plan



Site Section A
(Scale 1:200 A3)



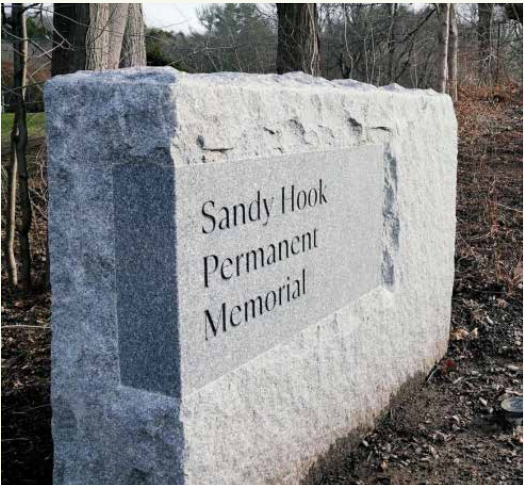
Site Section B
(Scale 1:200 A3)



Arrival Message and Naming

At the arrival to the memorial, generous stone seating will offer a quiet space for reflection and remembrance. This seating provides an opportunity to carry a quote or message chosen by the families, one that encapsulates the deep meaning of the place.

A local writer will work with the families to create this message and to assist with the naming of the space to honour the children, ensuring their memory lives on in a way that is personal and meaningful to all.

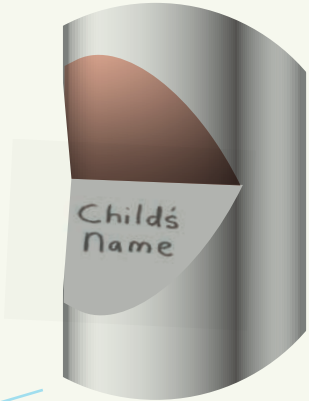


The Pillars

Six sculptural pillars will serve as the central focus of the memorial garden, acting as beacons guiding the families through grief and loss. Each pillar will be individually customized to honour the children that were lost, featuring a message or quote on the side that holds deep meaning for the families. The pillars will stand as a lasting reminder that the children are never forgotten.

Consideration will be given to incorporating subtle LED lighting to illuminate the message from within the pillar, with colours selected to reflect each child’s favourite. If adopted, the lighting will be designed in accordance with dark sky principles and will not operate during nighttime hours.

At the base of each pillar, the child’s name will be etched in their own handwriting, with their favourite colour reflected in dichroic glass above. Below this, drawn elements representing the unique character the child will be etched into satin-finished metal.

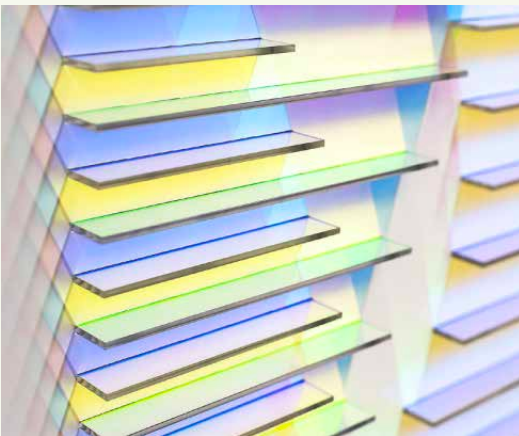
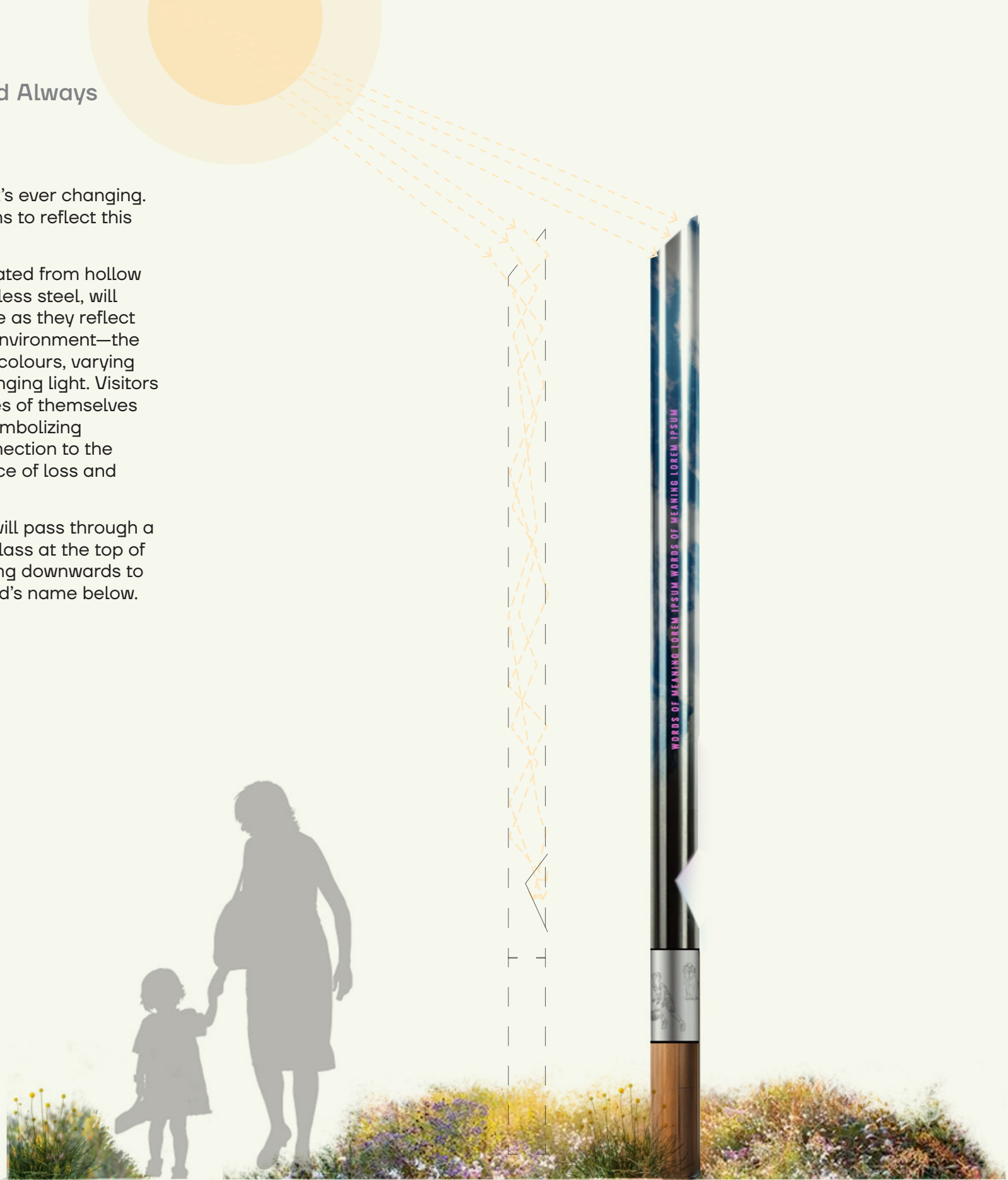


Reflective and Always Changing

Grief isn't static, it's ever changing. The memorial aims to reflect this dynamic nature.

The pillars, fabricated from hollow mirror-finish stainless steel, will constantly change as they reflect the surrounding environment—the shifting seasonal colours, varying weather, and changing light. Visitors will catch glimpses of themselves reflected back, symbolizing the personal connection to the ongoing experience of loss and remembrance.

Natural daylight will pass through a filter of Dichroic glass at the top of the pillar, projecting downwards to illuminate the child's name below.



The Garden

A vibrant and colourful wildflower meadow, complemented by perennial grasses, will surround the pillars, highlighting the seasonal shifts in colours and textures. A meandering gravel pathway will invite visitors to engage with the garden, providing a chance to walk to each pillar.

The garden will also feature local and Australian native plantings suited to the climate and region, with the final selection of plant species to be made in consultation with the families, as well as with input from Devonport City Council and NRM North.

Flowers collected from the temporary memorial that were dried and mulched will be spread by the families throughout the garden during the opening of the memorial site.



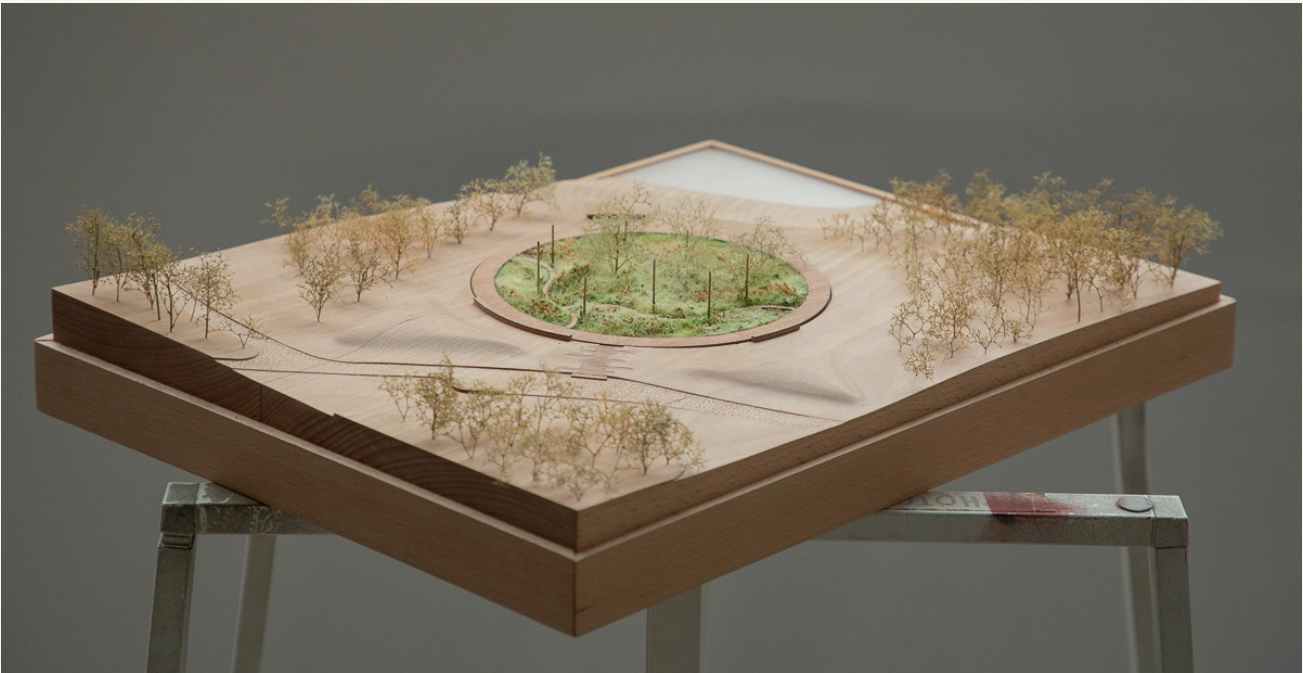


View looking South across the site

Concept Design Model



View looking North-West across the site



View looking North-East across the site



View looking East across the site

