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Architect Vince Squillace plans City Rd tower with vertical garden over seven levels

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Platinum, a 52-storey tower, will have a vertical garden over seven levels - one of the world's biggest.
Source: Supplied

IT'S not quite the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, but the people behind a proposed apartment tower in Southbank believe a feature of their project could help usher in the greening of the suburb.

Platinum, a 52-storey tower on City Rd near Kings Way, will have a vertical garden over seven levels - one of the world's biggest.

Sydney-based architect Vince Squillace explained that he was shocked when he came to Southbank and was confronted with a concrete jungle.

"What inspired me was the greening of the area," he said.

Mr Squillace came up with the idea of covering the tower's carpark levels with planter boxes containing bougainvillea, star jasmine and passionfruit vines.

"The climbers we have selected will create a year-round, lush dark green appearance and the planting system will have generous soil and drainage allocations, heat insulation and an integrated irrigation system utilising rainwater harvesting," he said.

Melbourne City Council environment committee chairman Arron Wood said parts of Southbank were like a concrete jungle and council encouraged features such as rooftop gardens and plants on balconies.

Cr Wood said he also supported the principle of vertical gardens.

"They are good from an aesthetic point of view but things like green walls and green roofs actually can reduce the heat island effect of the city and make it more liveable."

Platinum is being developed by the Salvo Property Group, with construction to start at the end of the year.

Founder Mario Salvo said he hoped the vertical garden concept would start the greening of Southbank.

The project will also feature a swimming pool, gym and lounge on the top level.

About 200 apartments have already been sold, with strong interest from Chinese investors.

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