



Energy efficient: an artist's impression of the Solar Design Centre's office block in South Perth

# Solar block will cut running costs in half

IN THIS energy-conscious age a building which cuts running costs by half would seem a popular asset.

Not so, says Sam Paolino, project architect for Tecto Corp, the construction arm of the WA Solar Design Centre.

"Developers are not really interested in operating costs," he said. "They are interested in letting space."

The centre has designed a cost-cutting building as a pilot for future owners. But Mr Paolino is not optimistic about selling the idea to developers, unless they are owner-occupiers who must foot their own running costs.

In almost all office buildings, running costs are paid by tenants, over and above rent.

The plans coincide with a national energy survey being conducted by the Building Own-

By JANET NEWMAN

ers and Managers Association which aims to set operating targets for buildings as part of an asset maintenance package for members.

The centre's two-storey block, known as an "energy efficient" building, will be only the second of its kind in WA and the first that was purpose-built.

Last year the centre refurbished the Russell Centre, on the corner of Adelaide Terrace and Bennett Street, reducing running costs by up to 50 per cent.

Sun screen and specially angled blades were used over the windows and the interior was geared for natural lighting.

The new building at 95 Canning Highway, South Perth, will utilise similar design features

and orientation to reduce heating, cooling and lighting costs.

An air-conditioning system, usually reserved for domestic use, will be installed for the first time in a commercial building in WA. The system blows air from inside the building out and sucks in fresh air which is cooled over dry coils.

Mr Paolino said this eliminated the humidity caused by conventional water-cooled systems.

Mr Paolino said the centre would occupy a third of the \$1 million 1000 sq m block which was due to be completed in mid-1989.

A building on the site occupied by the centre would be demolished to make way for the second stage of the new development. Tenants of the existing building would take up most of the lettable space.