

LLYFRGELL MAINDEE LIBRARY + PHASE 1 CONCEPT NARRATIVE AND MATERIAL PALETTE

**19.09.17 To be shared with the project board,
volunteers & wider library community**
Comments Welcome!

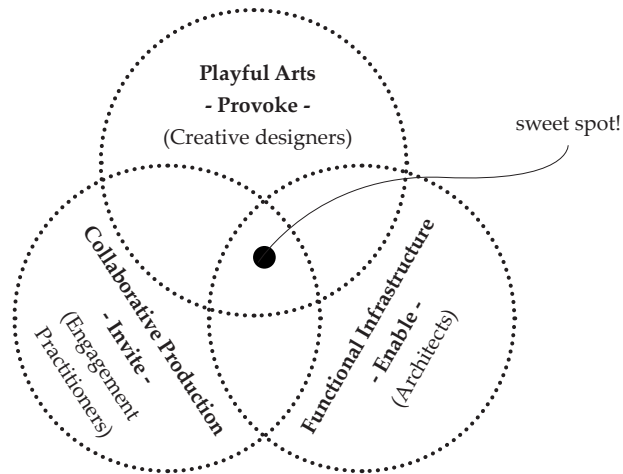
George Lovesmith - Integrated Workshop
Sarah Hollingworth - Architecture 00

PHASE 1: FUNCTIONAL ...BUT STILL FUN

Part of the shared approach to the development of the spaces at Maindee library has always been the thread of 'Functional Infrastructure' and we are committed to shaping facilities that work.

Phase 1 of the library development works is perceived by many as a largely functional set of spaces; service spaces that enable all the good stuff that happens in the main reading room. This is largely true.

However, another critical strand within the project approach is that of 'Playful Provocations' - Creative arts based thinking within the design process.



This document shares a set of ideas, concepts or narratives for how these functional spaces can be delivered without losing sight of the desire to test ideas about how Maindee Library + might evolve & develop and to express it's identity as a volunteer led venue where exploration and dialogue take place...

With these narrative concepts we hope to reflect different aspects of what we have understood about the operations, ethos, desires, and ambitions of Maindee Library +

They are described here through a series of precedent images that we feel may capture aspects of the ideas. Accompanying material palettes are suggestions for the built elements and finishes of phase 1 that we'd like your feedback on as we develop drawings and specifications for builders & the authorities.

1. FINDING, MAPPING, CHARTING

2. TESTING, EXPERIMENTING, WORKSHOPPING

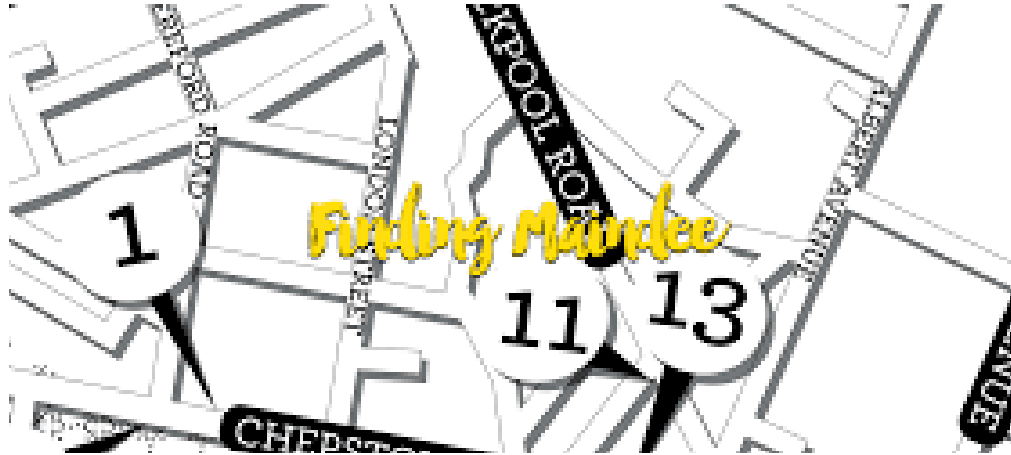
3. TRANSPARENCY + LIGHT

4. PATCHWORK, COLLAGE, BRINGING TOGETHER

1: FINDING, MAPPING, CHARTING

Finding Maindee started in 2015 and is funded by the Arts Council of Wales as part of the Ideas: People: Places programme.

What is Maindee? Where is Maindee? There is scope to build on this interest in how Maindee is seen and understood in the design of the library: it's past; present and future. As the initial brief suggested, 'a sense of place by drawing on key local references'



Therefore, might the meeting room even serve as a map room of sorts?: To be, or at least test what a space to keep and display the outputs of the Finding Maindee explorations might be as well as a functioning space to be rented out for counselling or indeed meetings?



RIBA drawing archive



The Cabinet War Rooms, WWII

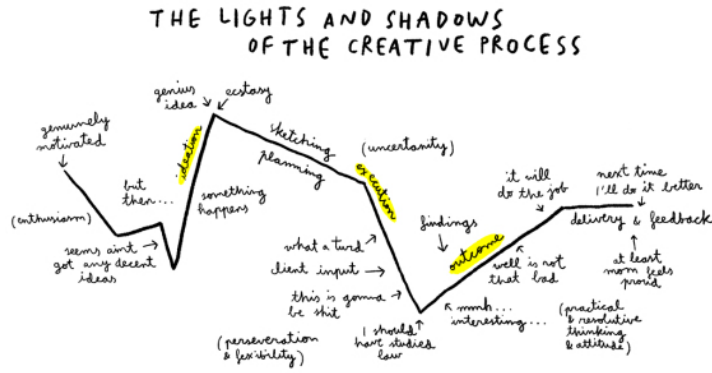
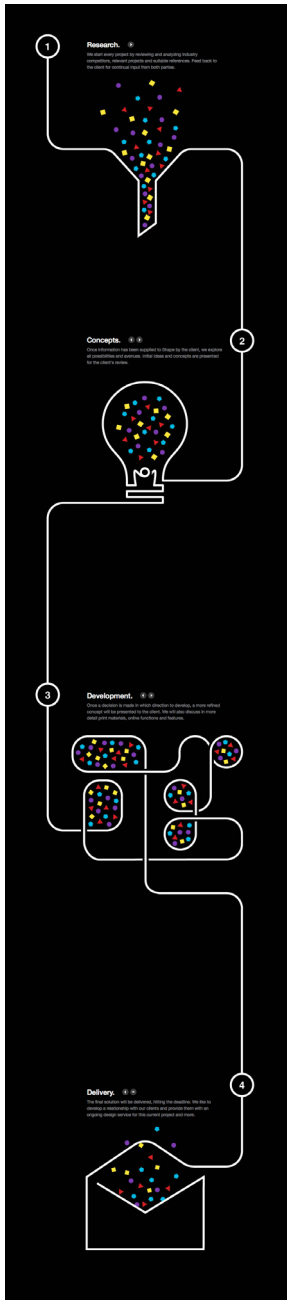


Steph Robert, Maindee Library +



Project by Jer Thorp, St Louis, USA

1: FINDING, MAPPING, CHARTING

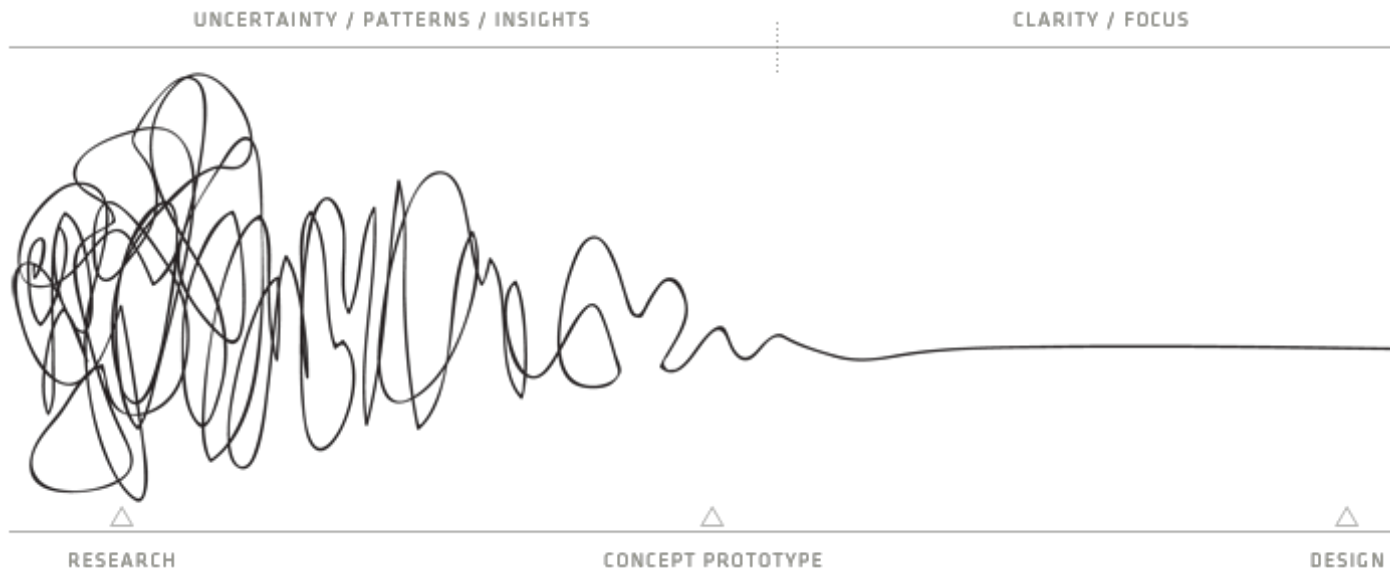


Right: Steph Roberts, an image used for the workshop 'Drawing, Space & Articulation' - Themes of the exploratory work of this artist actively involved in the Maindee story.



Diagrams mapping creative processes from; above, D.Lawrence's Linked-in; left, Shape Ltd; below, Newman, IDEO

The theme of mapping is not solely geographical. A characteristic of the Maindee Library + community is a desire to brainstorm together, record the creative process, chart explorations and share.

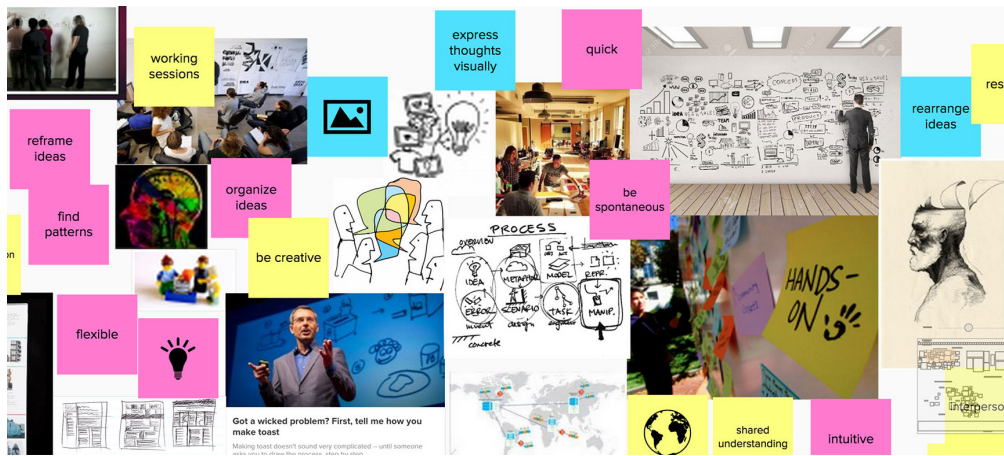


1: FINDING, MAPPING, CHARTING

So might a surface(s) of the building be a repository or canvas for this process?

This could take the format of a permanent mural, an idea which came up repeatedly in the chats hosted by Maggie & Kim, as well as during the You Be The Architect game event.

Or it could take the form of a constantly changing surface on which ideas evolve such as a giant blackboard or an area of glazing / perspex that can be used like a white board... (NB This has overlaps with Theme 2; 'Testing Experimenting, Workshopping', reminiscent of the scientist's lab wall scrawled with equations and hypotheses!)



Blackboard wall



Mural's from the website: 'Mural'



Black glass wall at Jestico & Whiles' Graphene Institute, Manchester

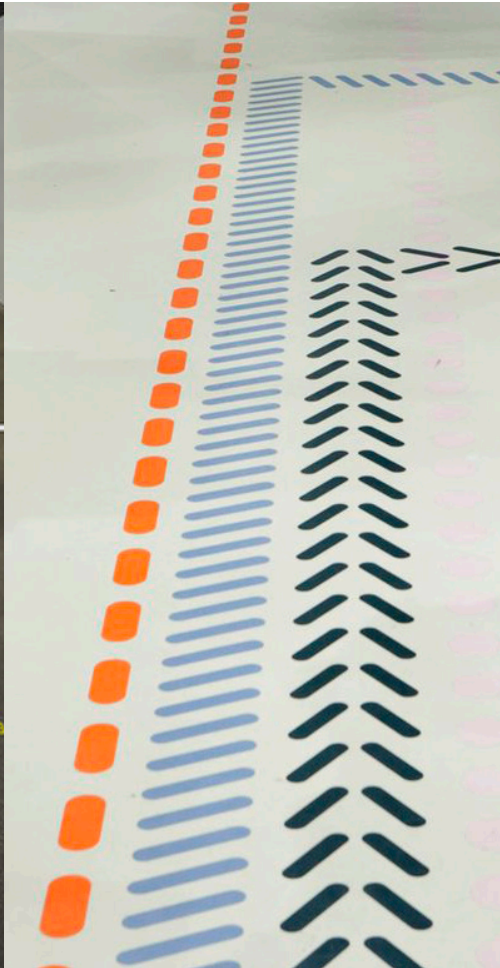
1: FINDING, MAPPING, CHARTING

This mapping & mind-mapping doesn't have to be restricted to a wall...

Simple graphics on the floor can be a simple, expressive and cost effective way of adding colour & interest to a space. They can also be used to help people find their way...



Floor graphic image from 'Burri Preis'

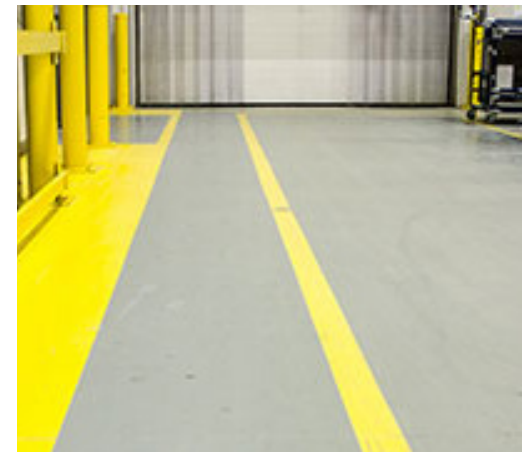


Floor graphic image from 'Merx Girod'



Floor graphic image from 'Design Print Digital'

...& even if there isn't a graphic design applied, floor paint on a concrete base can be a cheap, easily cleaned, robust flooring solution for small utilitarian spaces.



2. TESTING, EXPERIMENTING, WORKSHOPPING

Maindee Library + is a test bed for ideas and the community of volunteers and users are unnecessarily modest about the way they are pioneering forms of social, community and arts organisation.

Desires in the initial brief included 'to explore emerging functions and relationships'; 'test new ways of working' and 'communicate the library as a volunteer-led space'. Might the materials and products palette be able to express something of this ethos?

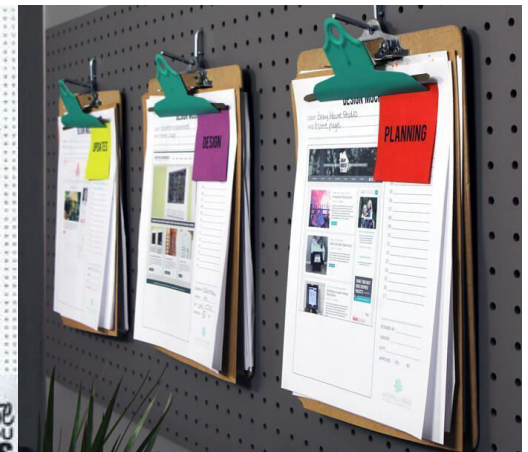
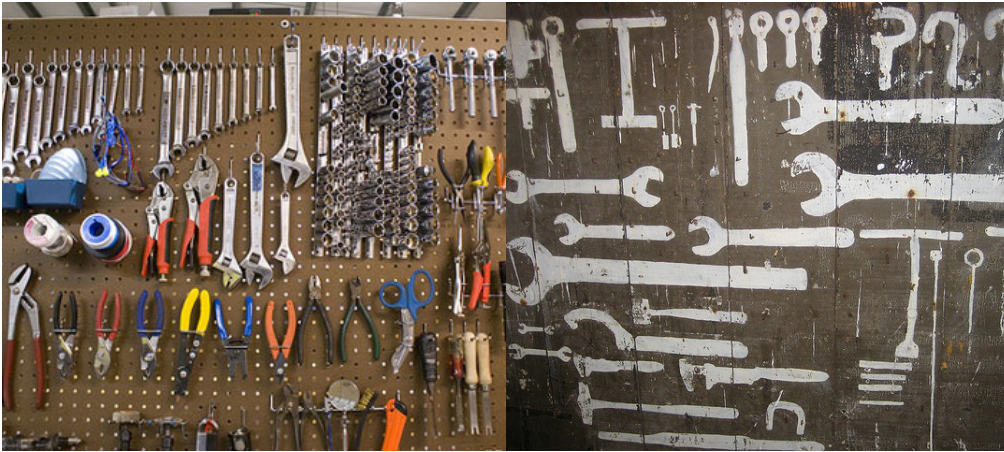


Hanging plug sockets, perhaps on extendible flex, are both useful and give a sense of the workshop



2. TESTING, EXPERIMENTING, WORKSHOPPING

Pegboard is a simple & cheap material typical of tool sheds which may usefully serve the small service spaces of Phase 1



2. TESTING, EXPERIMENTING, WORKSHOPPING

Even the kitchen might take on a laboratory like character where it would always be clear to new volunteers where each saucepan lives!

& if it works it could be used further in the main reading room for the display of newspapers & magazines, stationary, &/or items for sale.



3. TRANSPARENCY + LIGHT

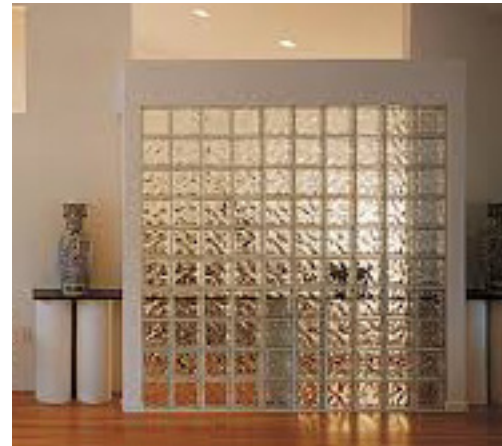
Repeatedly we have heard how people feel the small spaces of phase 1 are cramped, dark and claustrophobic. Critically, if the meeting room is to serve as a lettable space & a source of revenue it needs to feel as welcoming as possible. Department for Health guidelines describe the importance of a view (below) as well as both natural and artificial lighting for activities such as counselling.



This section on transparency & light explores how different materials might be used to bring 'borrowed light' into the depths of the spaces



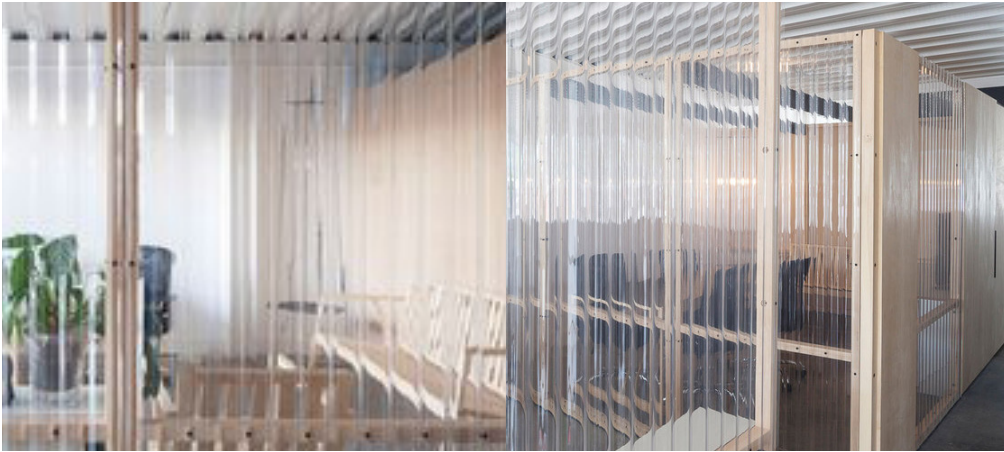
CHALLENGES	CONSIDERATIONS
CHARACTER & INNOVATION	Being able to see the sky and nature gives people a feeling of wellbeing. In particular here it may counteract the feeling of being temporarily cut off from the normal world. This will also be important to consultants who may spend long periods in these spaces.
MATERIALS & DETAILING	
LIGHT	
PRIVACY & DIGNITY	
BACKGROUHD	
VIEWS	Research shows the benefits of views when people spend long periods of time in a space.
COMFORT & CONTROL	
WAYFINDING	
FURNITURE & FITTINGS	



Glass bricks could be used within some partitions to bring light into the central circulation spaces

3. TRANSPARENCY + LIGHT

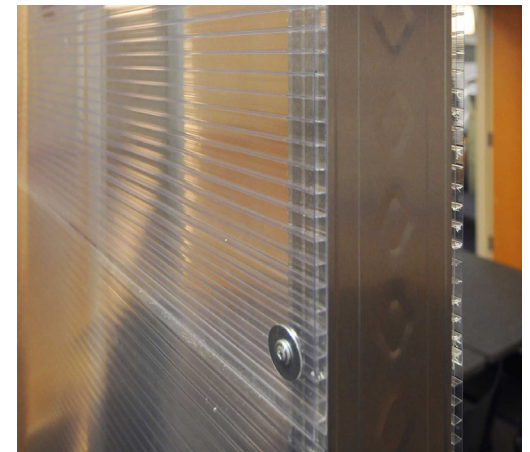
Polycarbonates of different forms are readily available materials which could be used in partitions or door panels to allow dappled light through.



When lit from behind the effect can be striking and cheap bulbs and fittings can be used because they're not clearly seen.



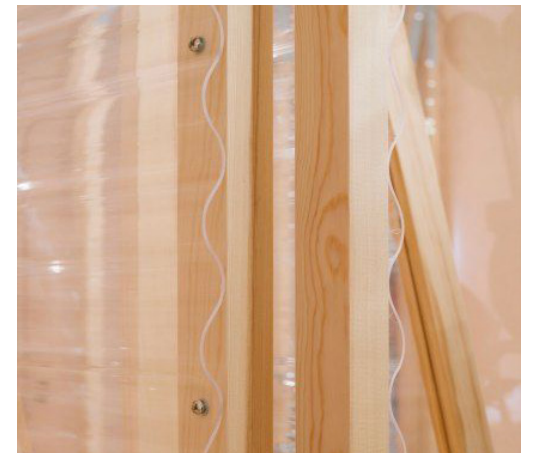
The effect can be very different if used in combination with a timber (workshop / potting shed, warmer?) or metal (industrial / laboratory, clinical?) framework.



Images show the work of Agustin Rojas (above) Lumivisions (above Right) and Muka (right)

3. TRANSPARENCY + LIGHT

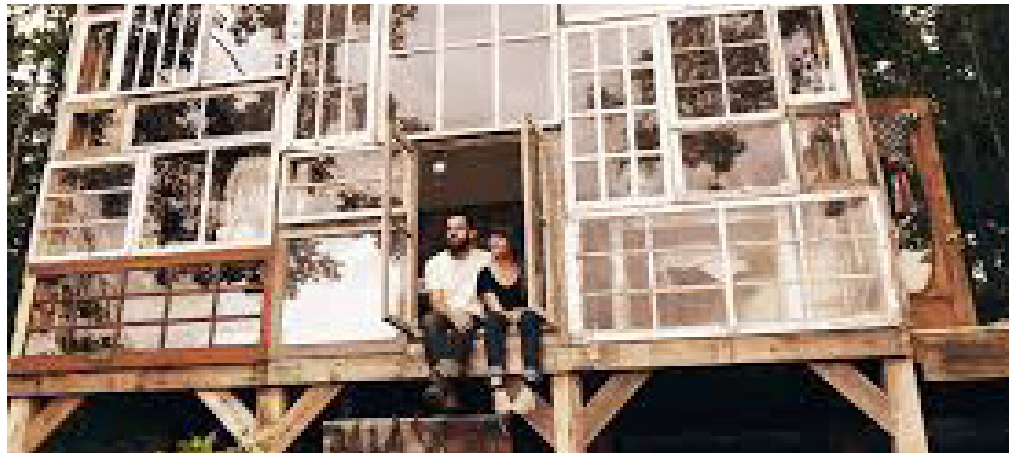
The framework could be integrated with fitted shelving or display cases



Images show the work of MFRMGR (left),
Koreo (above Right) and Husos (right)

4. PATCHWORK, COLLAGE, BRINGING TOGETHER

Maindee Library + is a meeting place of different people & ideas. The brief suggests a desire to reflect this melting pot. Combined with a need for thrift and an environmental imperative there may be some salvaged building components that could be carefully collaged together in an intentionally expressive hotchpotch composition.



For example these could include new windows from the proposed meeting room onto the police station yard to the rear of the building...



4. PATCHWORK, COLLAGE, BRINGING TOGETHER

...or mismatched tiles for wcs, kitchen, or carpet...

...used sparingly to highlight a particular space or place.

