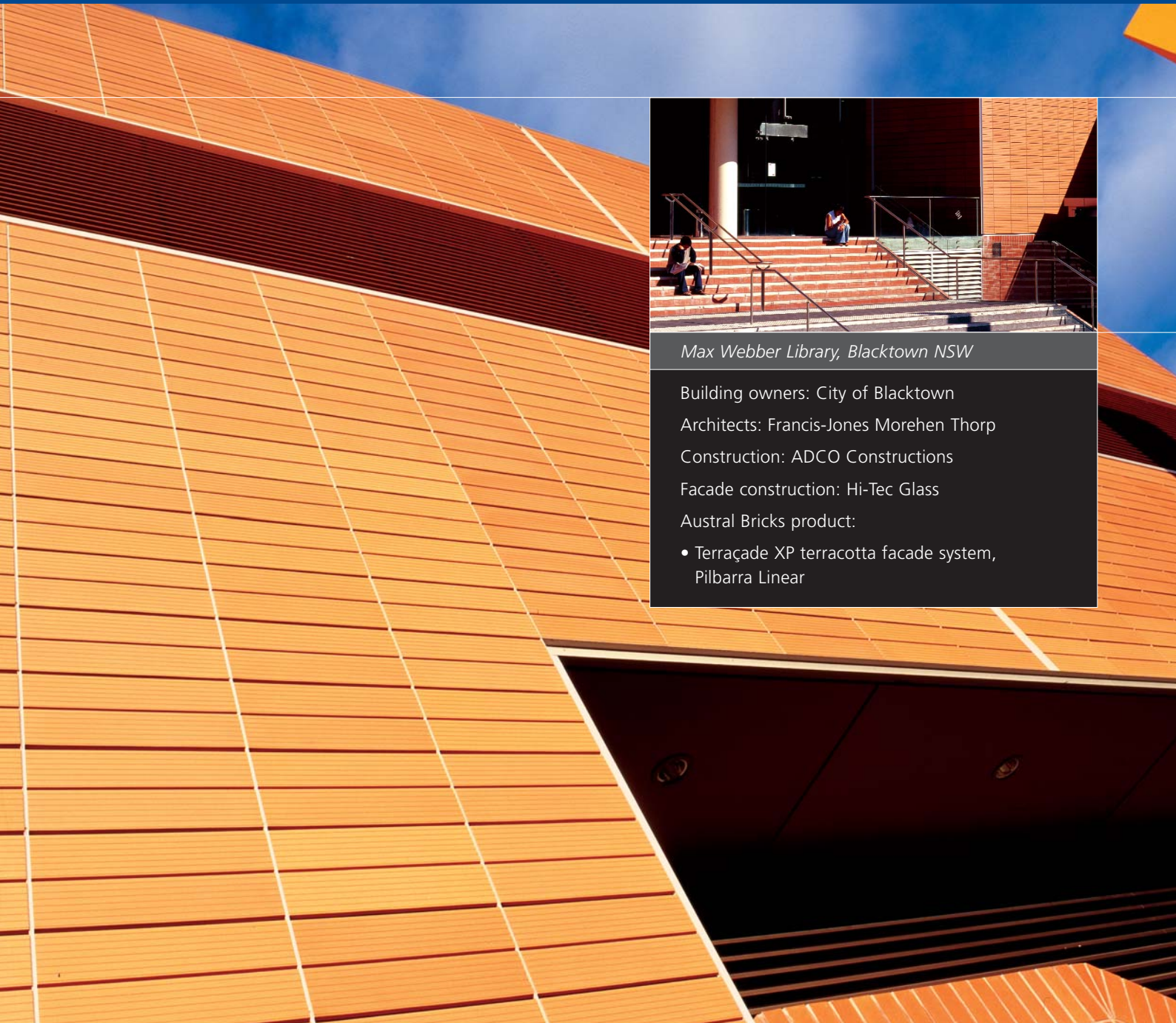


# Natural Qualities “Enrich Character”

NUMBER 8



*Max Webber Library, Blacktown NSW*

Building owners: City of Blacktown

Architects: Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp

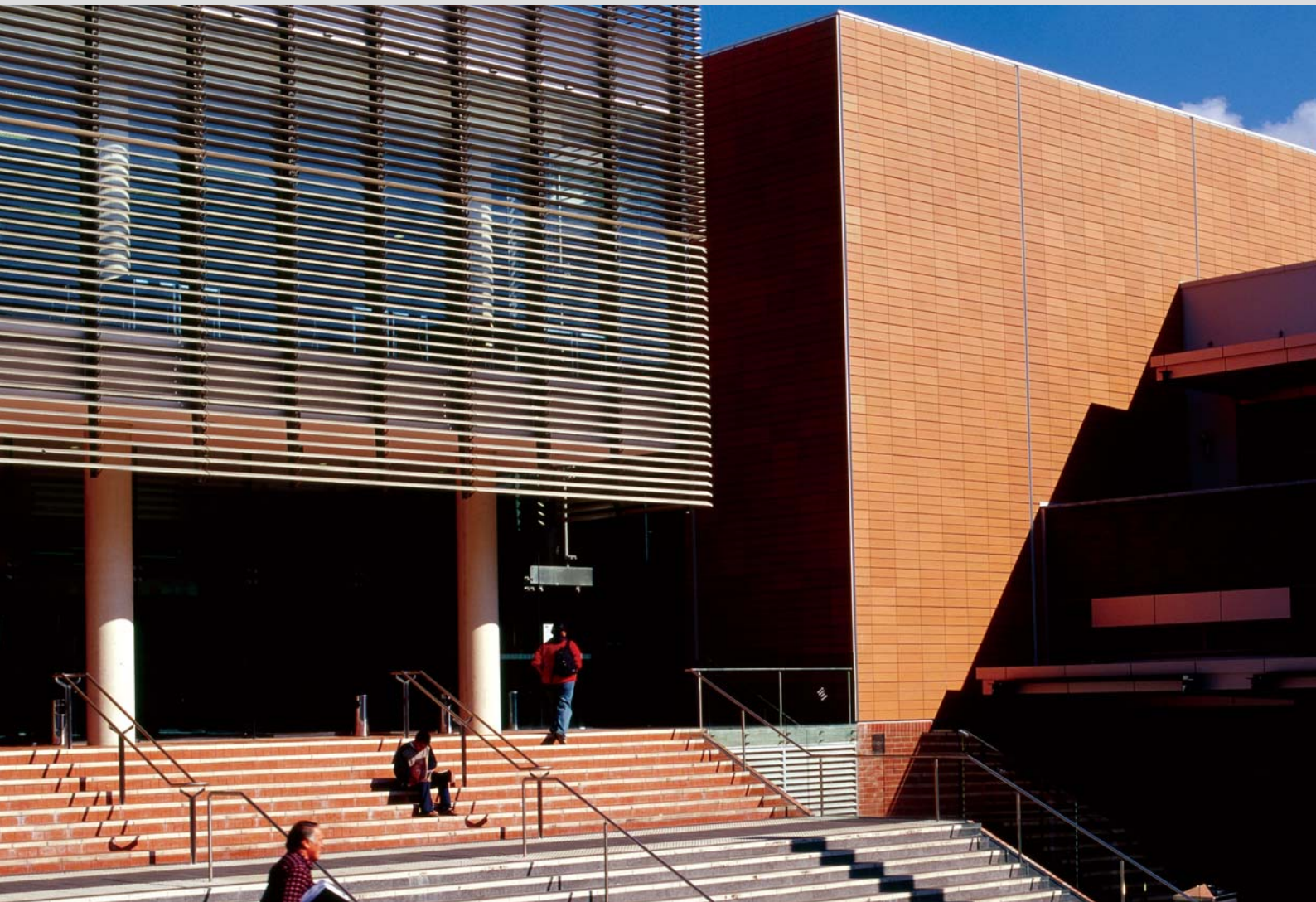
Construction: ADCO Constructions

Facade construction: Hi-Tec Glass

Austral Bricks product:

- Terraçade XP terracotta facade system, Pilbarra Linear





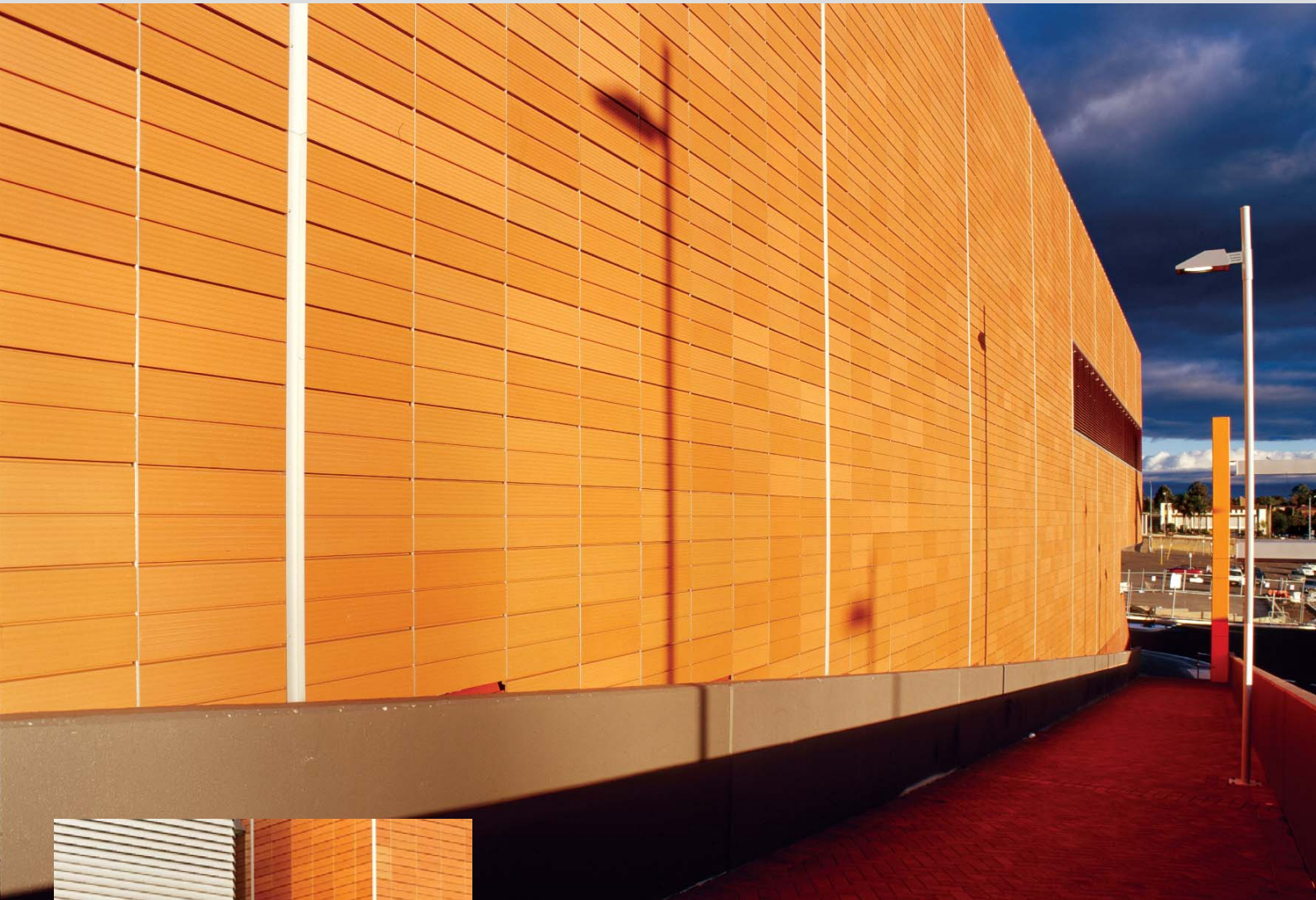
“The Terraçade tiles give a warmth to the building, contrasting with the metallic character of the louvres and the transparency of the glass.”



Traditionally libraries are introverted in function; upon passing through the imposing portal, visitors are enveloped in metres of tall shelving. The Max Webber Library turns this paradigm upside down. Well, partly. In concept the building is a simple design – two rectilinear boxes, one transparent, the other opaque – sitting atop a three-level underground car park. The glazed box holds the public lending and browsing area, and is shaded by external metal louvres. Its opaque neighbour houses book stacks on the lower level, with a multi-function centre above. Its facade is clad in Terraçade XP, the innovative terracotta facade system developed by Austral Bricks. Timber louvres were originally proposed to shade the glazed areas but this was changed to metal for greater durability. “Tectonically, we wanted to maintain an



in practice



earthy feel, utilising natural materials," explains project associate, Lance White. "The Terraçade tiles give a warmth to the building, contrasting with the metallic character of the louvres and the transparency of the glass." FJMT's Richard Francis-Jones was design director, working with project director, Richard Thorp.

Fire protection was also an issue, with the library being bound on three sides by a shopping centre, as was durability and maintenance. "Terracotta is a maintenance-free product," White explains. "It is robust and durable, has a very long life span, and is inherently graffiti resistant." If required, the tiles are also replaceable. Interestingly, vandalism has not been a problem because, he contends, "if you apply good design and a quality level of finish, people appreciate it."

The building structure comprises post-tensioned floor slabs. The Terraçade-clad box has concrete masonry walls waterproofed with applied liquid membrane. (The Terraçade XP system has been tested to AS/NZS 4284, *Testing of Building Facades*



in practice



for water penetration and structural integrity, and to AS 4040.3 for resistance to wind pressures for cyclone regions.)

“Construction-wise, it was fairly seamless. It’s a well thought-out product,” White considers. “The (Terraçade) system was very easy to construct and everything worked well. Aesthetically, the product was specifically chosen for its natural qualities, which like clay bricks, has minor colour variance which enriches its character, rather than a flat monotone manufactured colour. All in all, I think it is a successful product.”

Lance White describes Austral Bricks products as “top of the market for quality. It was good to support a local company developing a new product.”

  
**Telephone 13 BRIC (13 2742)**  
**[www.australbricks.com.au](http://www.australbricks.com.au)**