

# Cabinteely Library Conservation Report

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## History

Cabinteely Library is a single storey carnegie library designed in 1912 by Rudolph Maximilian Butler who also designed Glencullen, Dundrum and Shankill libraries, in what is now Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

Each Library is in a different style although Shankill and Cabinteely Libraries are in an Arts and Crafts Style and share a number of similar details such as the design of the windows and the use of dash, timber and stone on the exterior.

Shankill has a double central pitched roof which emphasises its location on a raise area of the contemporaneous housing estate in which it is located, while Cabinteely is set in a landscaped garden adjoining the village.

The building was seriously damaged by a fire in 1987 and was extensively refurbished at that time.



## Description

### Exterior

The front and back boundary walls are of dressed and random granite and the side boundaries are estate railing with extensive hedging. The pedestrian gates in the front boundary wall are of wrought iron are original and lead via a swept path to the centrally located main entrance door in the front of the building. This was modified some years previously to provide level access to the entrance.

### Roof

The roof is an “A” pitched roof over the main area with an intersecting pitched roof on the centre of the plan. Roof finish is a clay tile with an unadorned ridge tile. The intersection of the roofs is marked by a central cupola with horizontal timber vents and clad in copper.

### External Walls

The external walls at high level have decorative timber boarding to ceiling level and dash infill. The fascias to the front have a decorative dental course.

The windows are casement metal frames with rectangular leaded glass in timber sub frames with a dashed weather strip over each head and timber cills. They were largely refurbished and replaced after the fire. Five windows were again recently refurbished by a specialist conservation contractor as they had been sealed up due to leaks in the winter.



The lower level external face of the walls is finished in random granite to the front and sides of the building with dressed quoins to all corners and dash to all other exposed elements. The back is dash finish apart from the quoins and does not have a stone plinth. The main entrance has a dressed granite surround and a bay window element to the left hand side breaks the regular window modules evident in the rest of the elevations.

The design is considered one of R M Butler's most successful library designs and still retains a quality and character of good architectural design.

### Interior

## Interior

The interior is now a simple open space and was once divided by screens into a Men's and Women's areas. There is now no sign of the original screen locations (as is evident in Shankill) due to the extensive renovations after the fire.

The nineteen fifties extension, which is the only other alteration to the building, was constructed extending at the back, in the centre of the plan. A new door formed as an opening through the external wall, led to a Kitchenette and Staff Toilet and a Boiler House, accessible from the exterior. The date is surmised by the flat felt roof and GWD windows typical of this time.

It is likely that the original toilets were built as a separate external block as it appears to also have been the case in Shankill where the foundations are still evident.

The adjoining small window was adjusted to provide a door to the back of the building.

Three chimneys to the rear of the building indicate the location of the original fireplaces, now removed and closed up.





- Proposed alterations
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- The Library has not had a public toilet or adequate working space for the staff and this has been an increasing difficulty in the delivery of service.
- The Disability Act 2005 has also required that efforts be made to suitably adapt publicly accessible buildings, including protected structures, so as to provide accessible sanitary facilities.
- There is no option to include these areas within the existing Library floor.
- Extending the existing Kitchenette and Staff toilet would result in a doubling of the space required as access to the new spaces would have to be from a corridor. This would also require relocating the main desk and its services.
- New Extensions
- The least intrusive solution is to add on two extensions, in a contemporary idiom, by forming two separate mirrored opes in the back elevation between the windows this also crests a small lobby and allows a fire escape door to be included which will increase the numbers of people who can attend special events in the building.
- The direct access to the toilet and baby change room will be appropriate as it adjoins the children's area.
- The office is also entered off a similar lobby with escape provision to meet current fire regulations The intervention in the building fabric is minimal two door opes in the existing external wall at a location where there is no external finish other then a dash render and located between the original window opes



VIEWS BACK ELEVATION LEFT HAND SIDE

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New Extensions con.

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The new extensions will be cedar clad with a zinc roof and aluclad windows to a high thermal value and the flat roof and their location at the back of the building will minimise their impact

All the work will be recorded and carried out in accordance with Conservation principles. The new opes will be pinned and needle propped and the structural works supervised by a conservation structural engineer.



VIEWS BACK ELEVATION RIGHT HAND SIDE





