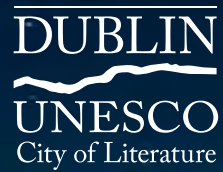


what is the stars?

A DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DUBLIN CITY PUBLIC LIBRARIES 2012–2016



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What has been done?

The realisation of a project such as this entails three distinct stages – site selection, design and procurement: where the library should be, what it will look like and how to achieve it.

“ I am an avid reader and the Central Library really meets my needs but there is not much space to sit comfortably.

– Central library user

A site selection process has been completed by Dublin City Council’s City Architect’s Department, assessing sites in the four quadrants of the city. A number of criteria were used to assess each area such as accessibility and transport links, complementary cultural and educational uses, footfall and permeability of area by the local and wider population, opportunities to create new civic presence and a destination building.

At the same time DCPL has undertaken detailed research to help to specify requirements in preparation for moving into the design phase of the project. We have looked at the best in international learning, analysed population and demographic trends and assessed and reviewed current services. We are planning continuously for services and programmes that reflect what a 21st century city library should be for the people of Dublin.



Grace Harper, Cabra library

A number of key issues have emerged in terms of the minimum requirements for the new city library:

Size:

Dublin requires a city library of a basic minimum of 5,000 sq. metres. The Dublin City Development Plan isolates four model

“ It should be a cathedral for the city. A landmark, rising above it, visible to all around and allowing views over the city from within it. The building’s commanding presence marking its importance to the citizens and inviting people to ask the question ‘what is that place?’.

– Philip Maguire, Assistant City Manager

cities as exemplars of good practice against which to benchmark the city. These are Lyon, Copenhagen, Helsinki and Oslo. These cities are comparable in terms of size and have similar populations of around 500,000. All have city libraries in excess of 8,000 sq. metres. If the new city library is to compare with the best international standards it should ideally be of 8,000 sq. metres or more.

Place

The most successful international libraries are beside dense residential zones, are located at urban hubs, close to public transport, and have adequate outdoor public space associated with them. They are transparent and open – not necessarily iconic buildings but capable of engaging their communities. Street level access to the library is key, helping to promote interaction between outside and inside.

What happens next?

A number of locations are currently under active consideration and a final site will be selected in due course. Following on from this, the detailed design process will commence.

How much will it cost?

The ultimate cost of a new city library will depend on the kind of project undertaken. A new-build project will entail a different set of costs and challenges to those presented by a conservation project.

