

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

LISTED BUILDING	Central Library, Alexandra Road
Grade:-	II
Date of Notification:-	30.03.87
National Grid Reference:-	6553593425
O.S. 1:10,000 Sheet No.:-	69 SE
CADW Reference No.:-	11550
C & C of S Reference No.:-	LB:086

Notes:-

In a group of public buildings at the north end of the city centre.

Erected 1886-87. Designed by Henry Holtom of Dewsbury, (cost £20,000). Italianate.

Monumental, symmetrical classical design, red brick facings with pale freestone dressings. Two-storey, attic and basement. Advanced centre and end bays with slate pavilion roofs (centre roof destroyed in Second World War), tower to centre with tripartite arched windows. Main dentilled cornice with solid parapets and plain frieze. Banded quoins to upper floor, angle and fluted pilasters below, windows divided two-four-one-four-two, outer bays with fluted tympana and inscribed tablets. Swagged and fluted oculi to inner bays over pedimented and keyblocked studio windows. Oriel treatment to central aedicule flanked by niches and elaborate overthrow with reclining figures. Arched and keyblocked ground floor windows with linked impost bands and panelled aprons. Segmental, keyblocked basement windows behind railings. Mostly T-frame glazing.

Set-back bay on far right, similar style with glazed top storey and two bay return elevation. Porch to street with segmental pedimented doorcase, panelled pilasters and carved tympanum. Main arched and pilastered doorcase has foliage carving to spandrels and keyblock, sliding double doors, quadrant parapets to steps up. Smaller doorcase to far left with guilloche surround, inscribed over door under glazed lunette, flying platform to steps, six-panel doors.

Interior of entrance hall has paired doorways up steps, arched coffered ceiling to vestibule, elaborate timber pedimented doorcases with lunettes over, arched and pilastered treatment to lateral corridors. Aisled, circular rear Reading Room with domes and traceried top lantern with circular ventilator enriched by classical detailing. Cast iron columns with rich acanthus capitals and radiating timber bookcases with guilloche ironwork balconies support entablature.

Group value.

Reference:-

Kelly's Directory 1914, page 845.