



Irish Architectural Archive

Acquisitions Policy Statement

May 2016

Introduction

This policy statement sets out the terms and criteria of the accessioning by the Irish Architectural Archive of material held in private hands and acquired by means of purchase, donation or loan. It is not intended to cover accrual of material from public sources, or as a result of any statutory or other role which has been or may be assigned to the Irish Architectural Archive by any public agency, nor is it intended to cover the accrual of material by survey or other work carried out by the Archive itself. However, the basic principals set out in section 1 below may be regarded as universally applicable to all material acquired in whatever way by the Archive.

1. General Collection Policy

The primary aims and objectives of the Irish Architectural Archive are set out in the institution's Memorandum and Articles of Association, and in particular, in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association. This reads as follows:

'The objects for which the Company is established are to act as a central and authoritative organisation or body for collecting, making, compiling, collating, classifying, indexing, reproducing, storing, preserving and making publicly accessible records (whether photographic, written, diagrammatic, literary, graphic, pictorial or of any other description) of buildings (which expression as herein used includes roads, paving, bridges, harbours, street and garden furniture, structures and artificial erections of all kinds, whether temporary or permanent, groups, arrangements and surroundings thereof, together with their relationship to each other and to the landscape) wherever situated within or outside the State or special features therein which are or may be considered to be buildings or features of architectural, artistic, historical or literary merit or interest or buildings or features of which records should for any reason, be procured or obtained and preserved'.

Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association established that the Irish Architectural Archive is a collecting institution, and provides the parameters which must govern the collection policy in terms both of the physical nature and intellectual content of the material acquired.

The Irish Architectural Archive seeks to acquire material which will further the objectives set out in and meet the criteria established by Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association.

2. Conditions for Acceptance of Material

- 2.1 Material acquired by the Irish Architectural Archive should further the aims of the institution as set out in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association. Acquisitions which do not meet the criteria set out in this Section will only be accepted under very exceptional circumstances. The Archive reserves the right to transfer collections (or parts thereof if appropriate) which are considered superfluous to an appropriate public institution or body.
- 2.2 The provenance of all items acquired by the Archive should be ascertained and recorded in the Accessions Register in as much detail as possible. The Archive will not seek to acquire any material unless it is satisfied that the donor, vendor or lender has valid title to the material and that the material has not been acquired in or exported from its country of origin in violation of that country's laws.
- 2.3 The Archive's preferred way of acquiring material is as a gift (or bequest). All gifts to the Archive should be accompanied by a written transfer of title.
- 2.4 Conditions attached to gifts or bequests are to be considered carefully before acceptance. Conditions which hamper the Archives ability to usefully process, conserve or make publicly available the material in question will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances. Any conditions accepted by the Archive will be adhered to fully.
- 2.5 The Archive may purchase material as and when the need arises, and as funding permits. However, the funding available for purchase acquisition is extremely small and special fund-raising may need to be undertaken to finance specific purchases.
- 2.6 The Archive will accept material on loan provided only that the following conditions are adhered to:
 - i The minimum term of deposit is 10 years.
 - ii The minimum notice of intention to withdraw the collection is 6 months.
 - iii The Archive is allowed to make and incorporate into the public access collections permanent copies (photographic, microfilm or other as appropriate) of the entire collection or such parts of it as the Archive sees fit prior to the withdrawal of the collection.
 - iv In cases where the collection being withdrawn is to be sold, the Archive is to be given first refusal on the collection.
 - v In relation to conditions which might be imposed by the lender while the collection is with the Archive, the Archive's stance is the same as that set out at 2.4 above.
 - vi In cases where the lender requires that the collection be insured, that insurance must be paid for by the lender.

- vii Material loaned to the Archive will be kept in the Archive's safe custody and under reasonable storage conditions and the Archive will take all reasonable precautions for its preservation, provided that nothing in this statement shall be deemed to require of the Archive at any time any greater amount or degree of care protection or security than the Archive normally provides for its own records and provided further that no liability shall attach to the Archive for any loss or damage to loaned items.
- 2.7 In all cases where original or unpublished material is acquired by the Archive, be it by gift, purchase or as a loan, the issue of copyright should be fully clarified. If copyright interest in the material is to be transferred to the Archive, this transfer should be made in writing by the relevant copyright holder and care should be taken to insure that the individual making the transfer has the legal right to do so. If copyright is to be retained by the copyright holder, the Archive may by agreement administer copyright on the Donor's behalf. This will include granting permissions to reproduce items in the Collection, charging such fees as may be agreed from time to time with the Donor and passing these fees on to the Donor. The Archive may also waive such fees where it deems this to be appropriate.

3. Responsibilities of the Irish Architectural Archive

- 3.1 The Archive has a responsibility to preserve all of the material in its possession, whether that material has been acquired by gift, purchase of loan, and will take all reasonable precautions to preserve that material from damage, loss or theft, but shall not otherwise be liable for any damage to or loss or theft of that material.
- 3.2 The Archive will process, list and index as it deems necessary the material it acquires. The Archive reserves the right to prioritise its listing projects.
- 3.3 The Archive reserves the right to return to a depositor any items deemed to be of no interest to the Archive or to transfer such items to a more appropriate place of deposit or to destroy them.
- 3.4 There is a presupposition that items acquired by whatever means are held by the Archive for public purposes, that is to be made available for public consultation. Only material which has been adequately listed and indexed will be made available for public consultation. The Archive also reserves the right to refuse access to material.
- 3.5 The Archive will take all reasonable precautions for the preservation of the material it acquires, provided that nothing in this statement shall be deemed to require of the Archive at any time any greater amount or degree of care protection or security than the Archive normally provides for its own records and provided further that no liability shall attach to the Archive for any loss or damage to loaned items.
- 3.6 The Archive may lend material from its collections for the purposes of exhibition or display subject to agreements on transport and display conditions.

4. Categories of Material Sought by the Irish Architectural Archive

4.1 Photographs.

- A. Negatives Original negatives of all dates and processes are acquired, provided the subject matter falls within the criteria set out in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association. Exceptions are made in cases of collections which should remain together for historic reasons.
- B. Positives Original prints, slides and transparencies of all dates and processes are acquired. Modern copies of original photographs are equally useful and acceptable to the Archive.
- C. Digital Digital photographs of any date and file format are acquired, but preference is for uncompressed file formats (RAW or TIFF) of JPEGs.

4.2 Film/Video.

The Archive will accept donations of film or videos, provided the subject matter is fully or mainly appropriate. However, for most historical film, the proper Irish repository is the Irish Film Archive.

4.3 Architectural Drawings.

The Archive acquires architectural drawings, measured surveys, interior designs etc. which meet the criteria set out in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association. Copies of architectural drawings, including photographic copies, are also acquired by the Archive, and where it is not possible for original drawings to be acquire, the Archive will seek permission to photograph material.

4.5 Architectural Practice Collections.

The Archive acquires entire collections from architectural practices which have ceased to operate. Under exceptional circumstances, the Archive may also agree to acquire material from practices which are still in business. Where possible, and in order to preserve a complete record of a practice, the Archive seeks to acquire both drawings and ancillary material including the business records (minute books, letter books, accounts etc.) and correspondence files relating to the projects carried out by the firm. Architectural practice collections are treated as discrete collections by the Archive and are processed and listed as such.

4.6 Topographical Drawings and Engravings.

The Archive acquires topographical drawings and engravings whose subject matter is appropriate to the criteria set out in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association. Copies of topographical drawings and engravings are also equally useful to the Archive.

4.7 Maps.

The Archive maintains a small collection of modern printed maps for reference purposes. It does not seek to acquire or to establish a comprehensive collection of historical maps relating to Ireland. However, maps such as estate maps which

directly meet the criteria of Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association, and maps which form part of larger collections, may be acquired by the Archive.

4.8 Manuscripts.

The Archive acquires original MSS material of any kind (deeds, wills, letters, note-books, account books, memoranda etc.) provided the subject matter is appropriate to the criteria set out in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association.

4.9 Printed Matter.

The Archive maintains a reference library of printed matter which meets the criteria of Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association, including material on Irish architecture, material on architecture published in Ireland or written by Irish authors, material on architecture in general which has specific relevance to architecture in Ireland etc. The following types of material are acquired:

Books

Periodicals Irish architectural and architectural history magazines and periodicals.

Pamphlets Ephemeral publications such as guide books, trade catalogues, local history studies, broadsheets, leaflets etc.

Press Cuttings

4.10 Architectural Models.

Architectural models often mark an important point on the evolution of a building design. Consequently they are an important element in the archival record of a project's development. Models are therefore acquired by the Archive either as stand-alone acquisitions or as part of architectural practice collections. . Models present particular storage and conservation problems, and in some cases these can be extreme. In such cases the Archive may chose to photograph the model rather than attempt to acquire it.

4.11 Digital material.

Given the ubiquitous use of information technologies in architectural practice and building recording, the vast majority of modern architectural records are 'born digital'. The Archive will accession digital material, and will, as part of the acquisition process, seek to acquire the meta-data necessary to allow digital acquisitions to be preserved, access, migrated and used in an archival context over time. Required metadata will conform to the *Dublin Core* metadata standard or such other standard as the Archive may from time to time deem suitable. When material is acquired in digital format, the Archive may also seek hard copies, on and in stable media, of at least the principal drawings – main plans, sections and elevations – for all or for selected projects in the collection.

4.12 Miscellaneous.

Material which meets the criteria set out in Section 2 of the Memorandum of Association, but which does not fall into any of the categories listed above.