



ARMADALE

CASTLE, GARDENS & MUSEUM OF THE ISLES

ISLE OF SKYE

**Museum of the Isles
Castle Armadale
Isle of Skye**

Collection Development Policy

2016-2021

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Name of museum: Museum of the Isles, Castle Armadale, Isle of Skye

Name of governing body: Board of Trustees, Clan Donald Lands Trust

Name of Trustee body with delegated decision-making powers: Executive Committee, Clan Donald Lands Trust

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 4th June 2016

Policy review procedure: This is the Policy Statement regulating the acquisition of items for the Collections of the Clan Donald Lands Trust held in the Museum of the Isles and the Library and Study Centre, Armadale, Isle of Skye. The adoption and implementation of such a policy by the Board of Trustees of the Clan Donald Lands Trust is a requirement of the Accreditation Scheme for Museums in the UK.

This policy represents the aims and plans of the Board of Trustees at the time of its adoption in June 2016 and as such will be subject to revision as the Museum develops.

This Policy Statement supersedes all previous and existing practices and policies, formal or informal, relating to the acquisition of items for the collections of the Museum.

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: This policy to be reviewed no later than June 2021

***Museums Galleries Scotland* will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.**

Definitions:

Governing body: the Board of Trustees, which owns the Museum collections and is ultimately responsible for the business and management of the Clan Donald Lands Trust. In the very exceptional event that it is decided to dispose of an item from the collection principally for financial reasons, the full Board of Trustees would have to approve of such a disposal.

Executive Committee: the Committee of Trustees with delegated powers including responsibility for the running of the Trust's operations, and for the development of policy to be approved by the full Board. It has to approve the purchase of objects costing over £1000. It is also responsible for the approval of disposal of items from the collections, except those exceptional cases where the motive for disposal is principally financial.

Museum Advisory Committee: the committee which has general oversight of the museum operation and direction, and which advises the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. Working with the Museum Manager and CEO, it recommends acquisitions and disposals, as well as loans to and from the collections, to the Board or its Executive Committee.

Museum: those premises, staff and collections of original material that may from time to time are under the control of the Museum Manager. At the time of adoption of this Policy, this principally encompasses the building in which the Museum is housed. The term "Museum" is used in a functional sense, and may at all times be taken to subsume the terms "Gallery", "Art Gallery", "Heritage Centre" or otherwise as appropriate.

Collections: any item entered in the Accession Registers of the Museum, whether as gift, or purchase, together with any item not entered in the Accession Registers, but in the possession of the Museum as at 31 May 2016, which was donated or purchased with the intention that it should become part of the Collections.

Museum Manager: the senior professional officer responsible to the Executive Committee through the CEO for the operation of the Museum according to proper professional standards. The Museum Manager to have a relevant degree or diploma in Museum studies (or equivalent), or experience of the principles and practice of Museum operation and management as may be determined to be acceptable by Museums Galleries Scotland. In the event that the Museum Manager does not fully meet this requirement a Museum Mentor will be appointed until they achieve full compliance with the standard.

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation

1.1 The Museum of the Isles supports the Clan Donald Land Trust's mission is to educate, inspire and promote an appreciation of Clan Donald, the Lordship of the Isles and the history of the West Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It aims to promote an understanding and awareness of this history, culture and traditions by educating and inspiring members of Clan Donald, the local community and visitors to Armadale, now and in the future.

1.2 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3 By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5 The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

1.6 The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

1.7 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:

- the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
- the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)

- the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored
- extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
- the item under consideration lies outside the museum's established core collection

2. History of the collections

2.1. Since 2002 the Museum and study centre have been housed in a specially constructed building located within the gardens. Prior to that, the Museum was housed on the ground floor of the 1790 Mansion House section of Armadale Castle, while the study centre was in Armadale House, which was once the Head Gardener's house in the mid-nineteenth century.

2.2. The Museum building was constructed to a detailed specification, using BS guide 54545 and with advice taken from the Master Locksmith's Association (MLA) security advisor. It occupies an area of around 576.29m or 6203.13ft². There are seven galleries, including one reserved for temporary exhibitions, public toilets, a gift shop in the museum reception, a study centre, two staff offices, a staff room and toilets, and a workroom. The storage area is divided into three zones including one that can achieve a greater control over environmental conditions for the storage of photographs and works of art on paper.

2.3 The Museum owns the greater part of its collections, with no more than 15% of items being held on loan. The collections are varied, reflecting the relatively wide remit of the Museum's collecting areas. It includes a significant archive collection, in particular the archive of the Macdonald estate in Skye and North Uist, as well as a substantial library collection of approximately 8,000 titles.

2.4 The Museum relies on the donation of objects and on financial donations, some relating to specific purchases, in order to add to the Museum and Library collections. Objects relating to the Clan Donald clans are represented in the collections in varying degrees. Glengarry and Sleat are particularly well represented through the Cuninghame collection for Glengarry and items derived from Lord Macdonald as well as the Macdonald estate archives for Sleat. Clanranald is relatively under represented; the 23rd chief bequeathed his family memorabilia and archives to the National Museums and to the National Archives of Scotland in 1944. The material relating to the now defunct Clan Donald Society of Aberdeen has been acquired.

2.5 Other more recent key acquisitions include:

The Gunna Breac (a 1700s raffle)

Bronze Age Dig Assemblage (including ceramics)

A Viking Anchor

A set of Applewood bagpipes made in Nova Scotia in the 1840s

The Great Book of Skye
The Ellice Macdonald collection received 2014

An overview of current collections

3.1 The Museum collection is made up of a mix of broad categories - weapons and militaria, decorative arts, costume and textiles, art works on paper etc -supported by a library of manuscripts and archives, antiquarian books, and secondary reference material. It can be divided into the following subject categories:

- Art works on paper (prints, paintings, pencil drawings etc) [360+]
- Maps and plans [438]
- Archive and manuscript material [64] plus the Macdonald estate papers [6000+ catalogue entries]
- Antiquarian books and pamphlets [1100 +]
- Reference books [8000 +]
- Photographic collections (photographs, slides and transparencies) [9000+]
- Weapons and militaria [76]
- Textiles and costume [37]
- Musical instruments [7]
- Decorative arts [36]
- Medals and coins [82]
- Social history including domestic bygonies [185]
- Agricultural and fishing equipment [19]
- Miscellaneous [17]
- Archaeological assemblages [2]
(Totals by accession numbers)

The Museum also has two handling collections, one relating to the Vikings and the other to the Second World War.

3. Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 The aim of the Clan Donald Lands Trust is to collect the full range of material evidence and assorted information bearing on the history, culture and traditions of Clan Donald and the Lordship of the Isles in support of our statement of purpose above. The main subject themes as outlined above will continue to be the Museum's collecting areas. The period of time to which the collection relates will be from the 12th century to the present. The only exception to this will be the acquisition of archaeological material relating to Skye, particularly to the Trust's estates there.

4.2 The Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. There are several factors

that might influence future collecting. These relate to the good management and sustainability of the collections. Limitations on storage and display space are such factors which must be considered. The Museum storerooms are already full and some large objects have to be housed elsewhere, not always in suitable conditions. Display space for large objects is also limited in the current Museum.

4.3 The themes of our collecting areas are as follows:

- Materials relating to the several clans etc within Clan Donald, their history, culture and antecedents
- Material relating to the cultural heritage and history of the Lordship of the Isles and the geographic area covered by its territories on the western seaboard
- Material relating to the geographic areas in the western highlands and islands from which Clan Donald originated
- Material bearing on the lives and careers of individual clansmen throughout the world
- Material relating to the Trust's Skye estates

4.3.1 Materials relating to the several clans etc within Clan Donald, their history, culture and antecedents

There are six main branches to the clan – Antrim and Clan Donald South, Clanranald, Glencoe, Glengarry, Keppoch and Sleat - as well as several lesser-known branches in Scotland and Ireland. The term Clan Donald also embraces a wider group of associated names, as well as the name MacDonald. Material relating to these associated families will also be covered by this collecting area.

This section includes quite a large group of general clan material such as badges, grants of arms, etc which cannot always be easily categorised under individual clans. These items may not be of great historical import or monetary value, but have contextual relevance to the collections as a whole in that the Museum is a clan centre.

We will continue to collect objects, manuscripts etc relating to this theme, when and where we can.

4.3.2 Material relating to the geographic areas in the western highlands and islands from which those clans originated

This is an area that is sometimes impossible to separate from 4.3.1 above and so will include items that could be categorised under that heading. Of the rest, a large proportion is made up of secondary reference works in the library, with a small amount of primary manuscript material (eg the Glenaladale/Borrodale letter books, ref: MS.1) and early maps and charts.

The exception is the territory of the Macdonalds of Sleat ie parts of Skye (Trotternish, Strath and Sleat) and North Uist. We hold a wealth of manuscript and photographic material on this area including our main archive collection, the Macdonald Estate Papers. We hold a number of artefacts originating from Skye including the Col Jock Macdonald collection of crofting bygones, which was collected in Skye in the 1930s. This is the part of our collecting area that may most directly impinge on that of other Museums. It is therefore envisaged that future acquisitions in this area will continue along broadly the same lines ie they will concentrate on the local history of the Macdonald estates in Skye, particularly Sleat. It is felt that the active collection of material on crofting agriculture in Skye would not always be appropriate, given that a number of other Museums on Skye already cover this area more than adequately. However we will still continue to collect this type of material where appropriate, in particular if it originates in south Skye.

Material relating to the remaining geographical areas will be collected where appropriate and with due regard to the concerns of other Museums in those areas. At present these areas are largely represented in the collections by secondary reference works in the library. This part of the collections will continue to be added to on a regular basis, as and when interesting and relevant titles can be acquired.

4.3.3 Material bearing on the lives and careers of individual clansmen throughout the world

Material has already been gathered on some of the better known members of Clan Donald of the past, for instance Flora Macdonald, Marshal Macdonald, Sir Hector Macdonald, George Macdonald, and Sir John A. Macdonald, as well as a number of successful 20th century MacDonalds. This is in a variety of media such as biographies, portraits, photographs, newspaper cuttings, uniforms, medals etc.

Items relating to individual clansmen acquired since 2008 include the medals won by Donald Archie MacDonald at the Paris and Antwerp Olympics as well as a memorial ring to Flora MacDonald.

Biographies and other books as well as newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, relating to individual MacDonalds continue to be collected.

This is an area that could be considerably expanded with relatively little cost for instance by the development of a photographic archive of individual MacDonalds. This would be backed up by the acquisition of three-dimensional objects where possible. Areas for collecting include MacDonalds successful in politics, the arts, literature, science, industry, the services etc.

4.3.4 Material relating to the history and cultural heritage of the Lordship of the Isles and the geographic area of the Lordship on the western seaboard

It is unlikely that much original material dating from the actual period of the Lordship of the Isles (ie before 1493) will ever be acquired by the Museum of the Isles. Most of what still exists is either in the National Museums, the National Library or other Museums, or *in situ* at sites relating to the Lordship such as Finlaggan, on Islay. Given this, the main course of action open to the Museum is the acquisition of replicas, to illustrate exhibition themes, if felt appropriate. However, if the opportunity ever arose to obtain original material from this period, the Museum would pursue its acquisition.

Most of the items from the Museum's costume, decorative arts, weapons and music collections, as well as virtually all the reference works in the library collections, relate to the history and cultural heritage of the Highlands and Islands and therefore to that of the Lordship itself. The Museum continues to collect actively in this area.

4.3.5 Material relating to the Trust's Skye estates

The Clan Donald Lands Trust owns a 20,000-acre estate in the southern part of the Sleat peninsula. This once formed part of the estates of Macdonald of Sleat so some of this material has already been discussed above - see section 4.3.2.

The Museum collects material relating to the history of the people and places on this estate. Objects in this part of the collections range from Neolithic scrapers found at Camus Daraich to a Founders medal of the MacDonald of Sleat Masonic lodge, founded in 1931 in the Stables, Armadale.

It has a collection of over 9000 photographs, slides and transparencies. Most of these show the work of the CDLT and the Clan Donald Centre since its inception. This archive is continually added to with day-to-day operations as well as special events and the progress of long-term projects being recorded. The Museum also has a growing collection of old photographs and postcards (late 19th/early 20th century) many of which relate to the estate.

We will continue to maintain a record of own activities and history and collect relevant genealogical material. We will also continue to collect material relevant to the history of the people and places of south Skye.

4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

5.2 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

5.3 A current analysis of the collections of Museum of the Isles, which are relatively small and accrue only slowly, indicates that little in the collections meets the criteria for disposal as laid out below. The exception is the library collection, in which there is a quantity of duplicate material; this is a priority for disposal.

5.4 Further, detailed guidance in deciding themes and priorities and the procedures for disposal can be found in the Museum Association's Disposal Toolkit.

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

- Dingwall Museum
- Finlaggan trust, Island of Islay
- Glencoe and North Lorne Museum
- Inverness Museum
- Kildonan Museum South Uist
- Mallaig Heritage Centre
- Museum of Islay Life, Port Charlotte
- Museum nan Eilean, Stornoway
- Taigh Chearsabhagh, North Uist
- West Highland Museum, Fortwilliam

8 Archival holdings

8.1 As the Museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, the governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

9 Acquisition

9.1 The Museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the Museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10 Human remains

10.1 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the guidelines in the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12 Archaeological material

12.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

12.2 In Scotland, under the laws of bona vacantia including Treasure Trove, the Crown has title to all ownerless objects including antiquities, although such material as human remains and environmental samples are not covered by the law of bona vacantia. Scottish material of chance finds and excavation assemblages are offered to museums through the treasure trove process and cannot therefore be legally acquired by means other than by allocation to *the* Museum of the Isles by the Crown. However where the Crown has chosen to forego its title to a portable antiquity or excavation assemblage, the Museum Manager or other responsible person acting on behalf of the Clan Donald Land Trust, can establish that valid title to the item in question has been acquired by ensuring that a certificate of 'No Claim' has been issued on behalf of the Crown.

13 Exceptions

13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

14 Spoliation

14.1 The museum will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

15.1 The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums')

issued by MGS in 2011), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

15.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in Scotland will follow the guidelines in the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011.

16 Disposal procedures

16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.

16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained **and the views of** stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

16.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from Museums Galleries Scotland.

16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

16.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

16.13.1 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.

16.13.2 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

16.13.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

16.13.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

16.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

16.16 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

16.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.