

Museum Accreditation Scheme

Acquisition and Disposal Policy

Museum: North Lincolnshire Museums Service.

Governing Body: North Lincolnshire Council

Date approved by governing body: December 2006

Date at which policy due for review: October 2011

1.0 Existing Collections

1.1 Introduction.

The North Lincolnshire Museums Service (NLMS) has wide - ranging collections of archival and three - dimensional material reflecting the geology, natural history, and archaeology of the region in and around North Lincolnshire. The collection can be divided into subjects the approximate sizes of which are:

Archaeology:	160,000
Natural Sciences:	17,460
Social History:	46,500
Local History:	<u>69,000</u>
Total:	292,960

1.2 Archaeology

- 1.2.1 The Archaeology collection consists of approximately 160,000 three-dimensional objects, mainly from the region in and around North Lincolnshire, together with excavation records and associated documentation.
- 1.2.2 All periods of the past, from the Palaeolithic to modern day, are represented in the collection.
- 1.2.3 This includes finds from a number of nationally and regionally important major excavations and field projects.
- 1.2.4 The collection includes human skeletal material.
- 1.2.5 There is also a small but significant collection of coins and medals.

1.3 Natural Science

- 1.3.1 The Geology collection consists of approximately 5,000 fossils, primarily of local origin, and 2,000 rocks and minerals mainly of non-local origin.
- 1.3.2 The fossils include a small collection of type, figured and cited specimens and a nationally important collection of fossils from the Frodingham Ironstone rocks.
- 1.3.3 There is also a collection of borehole specimens and logs, and geological maps dating from the first half of the 20th century.
- 1.3.4 The Biology collection consists of approximately: 400 herbarium sheets, 3,000 Lepidoptera, 2,000 marine invertebrates (mainly mollusc shells), 60 vials of spiders

in alcohol, 1,000 vertebrate specimens and 4,000 photographic transparencies.

1.4 Social History

- 1.4.1 The Social History Collection consists of approximately 45,500 three-dimensional objects, including 5,500 items of costume, and 1,000 paintings and sculptures.
- 1.4.2 The collection covers the entire Post Medieval period but the majority of the collection dates from the mid 19th Century to the mid 20th Century.
- 1.4.3 The collection covers the whole of North Lincolnshire including agriculture, industry, particularly iron and steel, transport and domestic life.
- 1.4.4 The costume collection is of regional importance and items date from the early 18th to early 21st Centuries.
- 1.4.5 Fine art is represented by paintings and sculptures dating from the 17th Century onwards including a collection of local paintings dating from c. 1960 – 1990.
- 1.4.6 Decorative art consists of a good collection of furniture, ceramics and metalwork, mainly from the Regency period, a collection of European and Far Eastern ceramics, and a collection of ivory.

1.5 Local History / Archive

- 1.5.1 The Local History collection consists of approximately 44,000 archival documents, and 25,000 photographs, 6,000 of which have been digitised on to a computer based Image Archive.
- 1.5.2 Types of material can be categorised as:
 - Unique historic documents
 - Photographic negatives and prints
 - Books, printed documents and ephemera
 - Sound recordings
 - Newspapers and magazines
 - Maps
 - Videos.
- 1.5.3 The NLMS does not collect original film, and any offers of donations are passed on to the appropriate film archive.
- 1.5.4 Most of the archival documents are on deposit at the North East Lincolnshire Archives.
- 1.5.5 The collection consists of material from the Medieval and Post Medieval periods but the majority of the collection dates from the mid 19th Century to the mid 20th Century.
- 1.5.6 The collection covers the whole of North Lincolnshire and complements the Social History collection.

2.0 Criteria Governing Future Collecting Policy.

2.1 Archaeology

- 2.1.1 Archaeological material charting human history in and around North Lincolnshire will be collected subject to the requirements of section 5 below being met.
- 2.1.2 This includes excavation records and associated documentation as well as artefacts.
- 2.1.3 The archaeological material collected may come from:
 - a) Controlled archaeological methods of recovery including excavation and other fieldwork.
 - b) Casual finds including material initially recorded under the Portable Antiquities Scheme.
 - c) Private collections.
 - d) Treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.
- 2.1.4 Important archaeological material, however, will not be excluded on the grounds of unscientific recovery alone, subject to the requirements of paragraph 8.5 below, provided that such recovery did not infringe existing legislation.
- 2.1.5 Human skeletal material from excavations will continue to be collected. It will be treated in accordance with legislation either being re-interred or retained for study on the advice of relevant specialists.

2.2 Natural Sciences

- 2.2.1 Natural Science material will be collected from within the historic county of Lincolnshire subject to the requirements of section 5 below being met.
- 2.2.2 Natural Sciences will include both geological and biological specimens and publications, maps, and archive materials relating to the natural history of the collecting area.
- 2.2.3 Acquisition may occur by field collection, gift, purchase or bequest, subject to legal and ethical considerations.
- 2.2.4 Material from the local ironstone mines, other threatened sites and to fill gaps in the collection will continue to be collected as a priority.

2.3 Social History

- 2.3.1 Social History objects will be collected to illustrate the working life, domestic life and social life of people in North Lincolnshire in the Post Medieval period concentrating on the post 1945 period in particular.
- 2.3.2 Fine and decorative arts will principally be collected, subject to the requirements of sections 5 and 8 below, to improve and extend the period displays in Normanby Hall.
- 2.3.3 Costume will continue to be collected but priority will be given to objects of North Lincolnshire provenance filling weak areas of the collection, such as working clothes and male costume.

2.4 Local History/ Archive

- 2.4.1 Archival records from North Lincolnshire will be collected in consultation with North East Lincolnshire Archives and may be placed on deposit there.
- 2.4.2 The digitised sound archive is to be expanded by undertaking oral history projects, and occasional 'one off' recordings.
- 2.4.3 Photographs, and other graphic material and ephemera, that is representative of North Lincolnshire both topographically and by subject matter will continue to be collected.

2.5 General

- 2.5.1 Acquisition may occur by gift, purchase or bequest, subject to legal and ethical considerations
- 2.5.2 Objects will be collected only for study, research, educational, interpretive or display purposes and the NLMS reserves the right to refuse any object offered.
- 2.5.3 Where possible the full archive relating to objects that are accepted into the collection will be acquired.
- 2.5.4 Loans will generally be accepted only for display. All loans will be of a fixed duration. Efforts will be made to regularise the status of existing loans by seeking to either acquire the title to these objects or to return them to the lenders.

3.0 Collecting Period & Area.

3.1 Collecting Period.

- 3.1.1 Archaeological material will be collected from all periods from the Lower Palaeolithic to recent, including industrial material.
- 3.1.2 Natural Science material will be collected from all periods.
- 3.1.3 Social History material will be collected from the Medieval period to the present day.
- 3.1.4 Local History / Archive material will be collected from the Medieval period to the present day.

3.2 Collecting Area

- 3.2.1 The principal collecting area for the NLMS will be within the boundary of the unitary authority of North Lincolnshire.
- 3.2.2 In addition, archaeological material will be collected from an area:
 - a) South of the centre line of the Humber estuary
 - b) North of a line running east-west from Louth to Market Rasen and Gainsborough, but not including these places

c) East of the course of the Old River Don (the historic north-western boundary of Lincolnshire).

d) West of the North Sea

This is the traditional archaeological collecting area for the NLMS.

3.2.3 Natural Science material will be collected from within the historic county of Lincolnshire, as the North Lincolnshire Museum is the Geological Locality Records Centre covering the historic county of Lincolnshire.

3.2.4 The extensions to the principal collecting area as defined in paragraphs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 are subject to the requirements of section 5 below being met.

3.2.5 Acquisitions outside of this area will only be made if they:

- Originated in this area and were exported either in antiquity or recent times
- Form part of a collection, which for scientific, historic or contractual reasons, cannot be desegregated, providing that the majority of specimens contained within the collection originated or were recovered from the collecting area
- A numismatic, fine art or decorative art item required to improve these respective collections
- Provide comparative material for use in the study of the archaeology of North Lincolnshire, for example finds from pottery kilns whose products appear in North Lincolnshire

Such acquisitions will either be subject to the requirements of section 7 below or, in the case of comparative material for study purposes, subject to the requirements of section 5 below.

4.0 Limitations on Collecting

The NLMS 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. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as inadequate staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

5.0 Collecting Policies of Other Museums.

The NLMS 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 specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources. Specific reference is made to the following Museums and Archives Office:

- North East Lincolnshire Museum Service
- North East Lincolnshire Archives
- Lincolnshire Museums Service

- Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery

6. Policy review procedure

The Acquisition and Disposal Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above.

The Regional Agency, MLA Yorkshire, will be notified of any changes to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

7. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the North Lincolnshire Council, the governing body of the NLMS, having regard to the interests of other museums.

8. Acquisition procedures

8.1 The NLMS will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the North Lincolnshire Council or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

8.2 In particular, the NLMS 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).

8.3 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, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the NLMS will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The North Lincolnshire Council will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by DCMS in 2005.

8.4 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the NLMS 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.

8.5 The NLMS will not acquire archaeological antiquities (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, such as reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or reporting finds through the Treasure Trove procedure (in Scotland).

8.6 Any exceptions to the above clauses 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, or 8.5 will only be because the NLMS is either:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or
- acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded; or
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970

8.7 In these cases the NLMS will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

9. Spoliation

The NLMS 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.

10. Repatriation and Restitution

The North Lincolnshire Council, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, may take a decision to return human remains, 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.

11. Management of archives

As the NLMS holds and intends to acquire archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, the North Lincolnshire Council will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002).

12. Disposal procedures

12.1 By definition, the NLMS has a long-term purpose and should possess permanent collections in relation to its stated objectives. North Lincolnshire Council accepts the principle that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

- 12.2 The NLMS will establish that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Any decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken only after due consideration.
- 12.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the NLMS 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.
- 12.4 Decisions to dispose of items will not be made with the principal aim of generating funds.
- 12.5 Any monies received by the North Lincolnshire Council from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions but in exceptional cases improvements relating to the care of collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases will be sought from MLA.
- 12.6 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), will be the responsibility of the North Lincolnshire Council acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.
- 12.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift, exchange or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 12.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other professional journals where appropriate.
- 12.9 The announcement 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 NLMS may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations.
- 12.10 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.