



northern
beaches
council

Northern Beaches Cultural Collection Management and Gifts Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection Management and Gifts Policy (the Policy) provides the principles and rationale for the development, management, access and care of the artworks, objects, archives and ephemera held in the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection.

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection (the Collection) includes artwork, objects and historic and civic material acquired by and managed by the former Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Councils and all public artworks acquired by and managed by the three former councils and commissioned by Northern Beaches Council since 2016.

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection Management and Gifts Guidelines (the Guidelines) have been developed alongside the Policy to manage these existing cultural collections to the highest standards, and to ensure that future collection development reflects and records the distinctive cultural identity and artistic expression of the Northern Beaches area. Both the Policy and Guidelines documents will be reviewed on a regular basis in order to remain relevant and reflect the changing needs and interests of both the Council and the community.

1.2 Aims of the Policy and Guidelines

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection Management and Gifts Guidelines aim to address:

- The purpose of the Collection and what the Northern Beaches Council collects
- How, from whom, and under what circumstances Council acquires material for the Collection
- How Council cares for the Collection
- How Council deals with removing items from the Collection
- What kind of loans Council will enter into and what conditions will apply
- How the Collection and its records are made accessible to researchers and the community

1.3 Objectives of the Policy and Guidelines

The Policy guides the decision making processes that shape the cultural collections of Northern Beaches Council. The Guidelines provide a set of principles to manage:

- **Collection development** – purpose and priorities of The Collection
- **Acquisitions** – purchases, commissions, donations, long-term loans
- **Gifts** – acceptance of financial gifts, including donations of material associated with the Commonwealth Government's [Cultural Gifts Program](#) which provide tax incentives to encourage gifts of culturally significant items from private individuals to public collections
- **Preservation and care** – documentation, conservation, storage and security
- **Access** – digital and physical access through exhibitions, loan agreements, publications, public programs and research
- **De-accessioning** – disposal and removal of material from The Collection

2.1 Definition and Description of the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection

Northern Beaches Council is the custodian of a diverse cultural collection that includes artworks, public art, civic ephemera and local history items which directly relate to the Northern Beaches area and its communities.

The Collection encompasses a series of existing sub-collections established by the former Manly, Pittwater and Warringah Councils. These include the Manly Art Gallery & Museum Collection, Local Studies Collections (Manly, Warringah and Pittwater), Community Art Collections (Warringah, Pittwater), Public Art Collections and Civic Collections (Manly, Warringah, Pittwater).

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection consists of many items of local, state and national significance, which document the unique social, artistic, cultural and local governance history of the Northern Beaches. It includes many nationally significant artworks and an unparalleled assemblage of historic material relating to both local beach culture and the history of surfing.

2.2 The Sub-Collections

The Manly Art Gallery & Museum Collection

MAG&M's collection comprises over 7000 objects, including both contemporary and early Australian paintings, prints, drawings etchings, and ceramics. This eclectic regional art collection was created in the 1930s through the generosity of artists and donors. MAG&M also has an important museum collection including rare examples of swimwear, surf craft, beach memorabilia and over 3000 historic photographs associated with the Manly area.

The Local Studies Collection

Extensive collection of historic material (photographs, archives, published and unpublished monographs, council reports and rate books, maps and plans, paintings and posters, objects ephemera and audio visual material) associated with the wider northern beaches areas (Manly, Warringah, Pittwater) and its communities. c.1870s to the present.

The Community Art Collection

Approx. 250 artworks, craftworks and objets 'd'art produced by local Northern Beaches artists from the 1970s through to the 2010s. Acquired by Warringah Council as part the acquisitive Warringah Art Prize and Pittwater Council to decorate community and administrative spaces.

The Public Art Collection

An unknown number of artworks and memorials (estimated at 100+) of varying quality located in public places and spaces across the Northern Beaches. A small number, located along West Esplanade, the Corso and Manly Beachfront, are by significant Australian artists' commissioned from the 1930s-2000s.

The Civic Collection

Gifts, awards, memorabilia, heritage photographs, honour boards, furniture, Mayoral regalia and other objects associated with Manly, Warringah, Pittwater and Northern Beaches Councils c.1877 to the present.

2.3 Purpose of the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection documents, supports and expresses the role that cultural objects and artworks play in preserving and expressing local identity and creating community well-being and connection to place on the Northern Beaches. As a resource the Collection will be used to:

- Enrich knowledge, understanding and experience of the Northern Beaches area and its communities
- Create a sense of place
- Conserve significant heritage and artistic expression for the benefit of the community and future generations
- Contribute to the development of an outstanding art gallery and museum for the area
- Interpret the history, development and significance of the area and its communities
- Contribute to and foster historical and cultural debate
- Provide an educational, research and display facility for the community

2.4 Collecting Principles

- Council will undertake targeted and coordinated collecting of cultural material to enhance the depth and value of its collections
- Council will only acquire items, including accepting gifts and donations, that fulfil its acquisition criteria and the generic requirements of relevance and provenance
- Artworks, objects or cultural material will only be acquired when Council can provide appropriate resources and storage to maintain and care for them
- No artworks, objects or cultural material will be acquired with conditions or restrictions on the way they may be used or displayed in the future
- No artworks, objects or cultural material will be acquired from significant heritage sites where removal will diminish the significance of the object or the place, except in circumstances where the object is at risk
- Council will encourage interaction and connection with local communities, cultural organisations and the general public through its cultural collections
- Council will document its cultural collections to a standard that ensures it can consistently record the nature and location of its items
- Council will allow the temporary loan of items both into and from its collections, subject to the safety and security of the item being assured and appropriate documentation undertaken
- Council will seek to provide appropriate conditions at all times for the display and storage of its collections, including appropriate environments and housing materials
- De-accessioning of items from Council's collections is acceptable, subject to strict adherence to criteria and detailed documentation
- Disposal of an item in Council's collections will only be undertaken where it is de-accessioned, or has never been accessioned, and will follow strict disposal procedures.

- Where collecting is not an option, Council will actively pursue non-collecting initiatives to benefit the community to record cultural material held in both private and public ownership, that has been assessed as having heritage significance to the Northern Beaches
- All collecting activity and collection management processes will be conducted in accordance with the [ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums](#) and within the framework of the [NSW Heritage Office Movable Heritage Principles](#) and artists' [Moral Rights](#)

3.1 Collection Development - Acquisitions

Acquisitions into the Collection can be made by donation, bequest, or through purchase or commissioning. Civic or ceremonial gifts awarded to or received by Councillors and staff in the course of their duties, may be considered for inclusion in the Collection. Items can only be purchased if funds are available in Council's budget or funds are made available through a financial gift or bequest. If there are no funds available in the current budget, a Report will be submitted to Council seeking funding.

To be eligible for acquisition into the Collection, an item must meet the essential acquisition criteria, as per the adopted Policy. The relevant Executive Managers will oversee all acquisitions that are considered significant to their sub-collections - with special reference to an Art Panel of experts convened as required for public art projects. The Art Panel will comprise of the two suitably qualified Council staff and two qualified art professionals of high standing.

3.2 Donations, Gifts and Bequests

Northern Beaches Council welcomes donations, gifts and bequests to the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection from individuals, businesses, corporations, community groups etc. provided they meet its collection purpose and essential selection criteria as outlined in the Essential Acquisition Criteria. Council also welcomes financial gifts that support the overarching aims and objectives of the Collection, including donations of material associated with the Commonwealth Government's [Cultural Gifts Program](#) which provides tax incentives to encourage gifts of culturally significant items from private individuals to public collections.

There is no obligation for Council to accept items or monies offered by donation or bequest. Donations of more than one item or collections are accepted on the condition that Council reserves the right to decide if each item supports the purpose of the Collection. Gifts and donations must be approved by the CEO.

Process for Accepting Gifts or Donations

The following steps must be followed for all Gifts or Donations:

1. Council is advised of the offer to donate item/s to the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection in writing
2. Council Officers acknowledge the offer and inform the Donor of the selection process and provide the appropriate forms
3. If the Donor believes the items meets the criteria, arrangements are made for a Council Officer to inspect the item/s
4. If the item/s are not suitable the Donor is thanked and referred to another collecting institution if relevant

5. If the material is suitable the Donor is to complete the appropriate documentation to transfer ownership to Northern Beaches Council
6. The Donor is given a Deed of Gift form, a copy is kept by Council. In certain circumstances, depending on the significance of the donation, a special function may be arranged to acknowledge the gift

3.3 De-accessioning

De-accessioning is an integral part of collection development and improvement. To ensure that the Collection remains relevant, in good condition and of high artistic quality, it is necessary to withdraw or de-accession items (including donations) from the Collection.

Items will be de-accessioned from the Northern Beaches Collection under the following conditions:

- Existing items that have little or no relevance to the Collection purpose or Acquisition Criteria
- Items that have been deemed to have little or no significance
- Items that have been accessioned in error
- Items in a poor condition that have deteriorated beyond repair
- Missing items or incomplete items
- Faulty or damaged items
- Superseded material where the earlier example has no particular value to The Collection
- Duplicates that are not required for preservation purposes
- Item/s that have insufficient documentation to support their authenticity
- Repatriation of cultural material to an indigenous community with proof of a valid claim

Disposal Options

Items which have received approval to be de-accessioned can be disposed of in the following ways:

- Returned to the donor or the donor's family
- Exchange, gift or sale to another public institution, e.g. Museum, Library, Art Gallery
- Sale by public tender or auction
- Private sale having regard to relevant Local Government and ICAC guidelines
- Dismantle and/or destroy in the event of no other options being suitable. Destruction of a work of art will be considered only if the work is dangerous or has deteriorated beyond repair. Where appropriate, the artist will be informed beforehand of the intention to destroy the work

Where possible all monies received by Northern Beaches Council from the disposal of an item should be applied solely to the development of the Collection either by purchase of items or by the conservation of existing items. Northern Beaches Council Staff, Councillors, volunteers, committee members and their families can purchase items only through public tender or sale.

De-accessioning Process

1. The relevant Collection Manager will be responsible for the de-accession process and report to their Executive Manager who will then report to the CEO
2. Only items to which the Council has clear legal title will be considered for de-accessioning. Consideration will be given to any special conditions which pertained to its acquisition prior to de-accessioning
3. The relevant Collection Manager will prepare a formal report to de-accession an item. This will include a description of the work, the reasons for its de-accessioning and the proposed method of disposal
4. The proposal will be approved by their Executive Manager who will then report to the CEO
5. Prior to de-accession, the item will be photographed and documented and this information will be maintained as the official record of the de-accessioning and disposal of the item from The Collection

4.1 Collection Care and Access

The Community, Arts and Culture and Library Services teams will co-ordinate the development, documentation, preservation and care of their elements of the Collection and provide access to their holdings. Tasks include:

- Collection documentation, cataloguing and maintaining a database
- Secure and monitored storage
- Maintain regular collection valuations and insurance as required
- Organisation of conservation work to be carried out on fragile or damaged objects
- Conducting research into the collection
- Preparing exhibitions and displays
- Administering loans to/from other institutions
- Processing donations and acquisitions into The Collection
- Increasing public knowledge of The Collection
- De-accessioning material from The Collection

Display, Storage and Conservation

Procedures will be put into place to ensure the conservation of items held in this Collection. This includes staff training in the correct handling for processing of items and the use of archival quality storage materials.

Displays and storage areas will be monitored on a regular basis, with maintenance of these areas, for example including light and climatic conditions, pest control and security as required.

Collection Documentation

Items will be officially receipted and registered (accessioned) upon acquisition into the Collection. Details of the item will then be entered into a collection database. Collection database documentation will:

- Electronically record essential information including but not limited to provenance, dimensions, photographic image, valuation, loan activity, condition, storage location and legal requirements
- Be maintained and kept secure

Insurance and valuation

The Collection will be valued to its replacement value in accordance with established Local Government Accounting procedures and insurance will be maintained at the current valuation following established Northern Beaches Council guidelines.

Collection valuations to be undertaken on a regular basis and records updated and maintained.

Collection Access

Allowing easy access to the Collection by members of the Northern Beaches community is an important part of the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection Management and Gifts Policy and is encouraged by enabling digital and physical access through exhibitions, loan agreements, publications, online registers, public programs and research as staff resources and budgets allow.

Research Access

The Northern Beaches Cultural Collection will be available as a physical research resource for members of Council, other Councils, individuals, students and researchers by arrangement. Council supports digitising the Collection to create an online research resource for the community into the future.

Exhibitions and Interpretation

The significance of the Collection and the items within it will be conveyed through object labels, exhibitions, education and public programs and web-based resources

- Exhibitions will be displayed in accessible, secure venues, appropriate to the collection material and the exhibition content
- Exhibitions of collection material will represent a diversity of themes and issues relevant to Northern Beaches Council and the broader community. Where appropriate, exhibitions and interpretive programs may involve community participation
- Exhibitions of collection material will be documented and may include a catalogue produced in association with the exhibition

Artists' Moral Rights

Artists' moral rights will be observed when artworks from the Collection are exhibited, with the artwork labelled to include the artist's name, title, date of creation, medium and, as appropriate, name of the donor, or credit for the source of the work. Artworks will be displayed in good repair and condition. When an item on display is a reproduction this will be acknowledged.

Publications and Reproductions

Images of items in the Collection may be included in online and printed publications, including catalogues for specific exhibitions and made available for sale to the public. Copyright use of items acquired, donated or purchased will be according to the agreements signed upon acquisition.

Loans

Items from the Northern Beaches Cultural Collection may be lent to organisations outside the Council at the discretion of the relevant Executive Manager and in accordance with the relevant operational procedures. Outward loans are to be documented on appropriate forms that stipulate the loan agreement conditions.