

Guidance on Undertaking Historic Building Photographic Surveys

Introduction

This document provides advice to developers who need to meet a planning condition requiring an historic building photographic survey.

It is the developer's responsibility to fulfil the requirements of such a condition, and in most cases **it should be able to be undertaken by any competent individual**; however, professional photographers and archaeological contractors may be used if desired or appropriate.

In order to meet the requirements of the condition, and to have it approved and discharged by the Department, the photographic survey must meet the minimum standards specified below.

These are based on the Institute for Archaeologist's (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures (2008)* and English Heritage's *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (2006)*.

These documents are available to download for free from:

<http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/IfASG-Buildings.pdf>

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/understandinghistoricbuildings.pdf/>

Specifications

Format

Photographs can be taken digitally or by film.

- *Film*
 - Any Colour Film

Guidance: ISO 200 is a good standard for most light conditions but minimum of ISO 400 should be used where internal lighting is poor, and/or use of a tripod may be required. It is advisable to bracket each shot with an exposure compensation of ± 1 , to account for unforeseen exposure problems, and multiple shots should be taken for each view.

- *Digital*
 - File format: RAW (if possible) with JPEG versions included as well
 - Minimum 10 megapixels
 - Quality setting (where relevant): Fine/Maximum quality/Least compression
 - **Digital zoom should not be used** but optical zoom is acceptable

Guidance on Undertaking Historic Building Photographic Surveys

Guidance: The Automatic setting on most recent digital cameras should generally provide satisfactory results. However, in poor lighting conditions the use of Aperture Priority/Manual mode and/or use of a tripod may be required. It is advisable to bracket each shot with an exposure compensation of ± 1 , to account for unforeseen exposure problems, and multiple shots should be taken of each view.

Shot Selection and Requirements

- The report should only contain those shots that are correctly exposed and in focus, and where the subject matter is clearly shown.
- **A measured scale of known length (e.g. a colour defined 1m or 2m scale rule) should be placed within each shot** except where general illustrative shots are being taken (i.e. a whole building in its setting).
- **The location, viewpoint direction, and catalogue reference number of each shot must be indicated on an architect's floor plan or similar measured drawing**
- **The location reference number, direction of view, brief description, and length of scale for each shot should be noted in a catalogue**
- The following are suggested views for various types of structures, but the required views will ultimately depend on the project specifications and the focus of the documentation. Shots should be taken of:
 - General or environmental view(s) to illustrate setting, including landscaping, adjacent building(s), and roads
 - perspective
 - All exterior and interior wall elevations
 - All floors and internal ground surfaces
 - Interior roof detailing where altered
 - Obvious differences in wall makeup
 - Windows and doors, including those that have been blocked up
 - Fireplaces
 - Timber framing
 - Stairwells
 - Cellars
 - Exterior details, such as chimney, clerestory, oriel, date stone, gingerbread ornamentation, or boot scrape, indicative of era of construction or of historic and architectural interest
 - Interior views to capture spatial relationships, structural evidence, a typical room, and any decorative elements; these include hallways, stairways, attic and basement framing, fireplaces and mantels, mouldings, interior shutters, kitchen (especially if original), and mechanicals.
 - If they exist, at least one view of any dependency structures, such as privies, milk or ice houses, carriage houses, sheds, detached garages, or barns. These structures

Guidance on Undertaking Historic Building Photographic Surveys

- need to be identified Any extant machinery and equipment, also capturing the spatial arrangements.
- Machinery details, such as the governor on a turbine, valves of a steam engine, or the gearing in machines like fabric looms, or other details that reveal a machine's function like the cone of a rock crusher or drum of a shredder.
 - Power transmission systems, such as line shafting.
 - General views and details of structural framing systems, including roof trusses and floor beam systems and pedestals that supported the building structure and the equipment and machinery.
 - Any other features of note

Guidance: The use of a standard flashgun is recommended to light interior views. Low levels of light and/or use of the optical zoom may require a tripod.

Survey Report Content

The survey report should preferably be digital in form.

Reports submitted solely as a hardcopy must meet the archival standards specified below.

- While a full written report is not required, the photographs must be accompanied with the following information:
- A cover letter that includes the planning application number
- An architect's floor plan or similar measured drawing showing the location, viewpoint direction, and catalogue reference number of each shot
- A catalogue that provides a location reference number, direction of view, brief description, and length of scale for each shot
- Digital photographs (where applicable):
 - Digital images must be submitted in their original file format
 - If this format is RAW then JPEG versions should also be included.
 - **Note: A Microsoft Word document containing the images will not be accepted** unless accompanied by separate image files for each photograph in RAW, DNG, TIFF or JPEG format.
 - **The labels of each image file must be changed to correspond to their catalogue entry** (location reference number, direction of view, brief description, and length of scale).
- Prints (where applicable):
 - **All prints must be labelled on the back to correspond with their catalogue entry** (location reference number, direction of view, brief description, and length of scale).

Guidance on Undertaking Historic Building Photographic Surveys

- **All prints must demonstrably be printed to archival standards** *Resin-coated papers of any kind are not archival and will not be accepted.* **(The standard photo printing service from high-street stores does not meet this criterion.** Specialist advice should be sought on how to obtain archival quality prints).

Report Submission

The report should be submitted electronically to planning@gov.im:

Hard-copies should be sent to:

Planning & Building Control Directorate
Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
Murray House,
Mount Havelock,
Douglas,
ISLE OF MAN,
IM1 2SF

The Department will confirm receipt of the report, review it and subsequently will determine whether or not the condition has been met and can be discharged. Once the report has been approved, it will be attached to the relevant Planning Application file and if appropriate shared with Manx National Heritage / Public Records Office.