

Conservation Guidelines

Sources of Information

Foreword

This series of booklets has been produced by the Department of the Environment to increase awareness of the value of our architectural heritage and to provide information on the basic principles and methods of conservation and restoration. The titles in the series are listed on the back of each booklet.

These texts are not intended to be comprehensive technical or legal guides. The main aim is to assist architects, builders, owners and others, in understanding the guiding principles of conservation and restoration. They will facilitate the identification of the most common problems encountered in heritage buildings, and indicate the best solutions. It should be appreciated that specialised aspects of conservation and restoration will require professional expertise and more detailed information.

The Department acknowledges, with appreciation, the efforts of the authors of the individual booklets, the Irish Georgian Society who coordinated their production, the Conservation Advisory Panel established under the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development and all others involved.

Summary of Conservation Principles

- Research prior to planning work
- Minimum intervention - repair rather than replace
- Respect the setting.

Summary of Conservation Procedure

- Research and analyse history of building
- Survey building and identify original material
- Plan work according to conservation principles
- Use experts where necessary
- Record all work
- Install maintenance procedures.

Conservation Guidelines

Sources of Information

Introduction

Prior to the commencement of any repair or restoration work on an historic building, it is of vital importance that as much as possible is learned about the history and the fabric of the building.

This can be achieved through research and there are two main types of sources, which are the building itself and the drawings and documentation related to it that can be found in archives and libraries. In addition, there is a need to locate craftsmen, particularly those with traditional building skills.

The purpose of this booklet is primarily to draw attention to the wide range and types of documentary material which might be of use to those engaged in research prior to the repair and restoration of historic buildings.

However, it must be emphasised that documentary sources on their own, particularly the older ones, can present great difficulty with interpretation and need the built sources to complement them.

Part I

Collections of Material relating to Irish Architecture

Abbreviations:

- Irish Architectural Archive (IAA)
- National Library of Ireland (NLI)
- National Archives (NA)
- National Gallery (NG)
- Royal Irish Academy (RIA)
- Registry of Deeds (RD)
- Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
- Gilbert Library (GL)
- Representative Church Body Library (RCB)

1. The Irish Architectural Archive (IAA)

73, Merrion Square, Dublin 2
Tel. 01-676 3430 Fax. 01-661 6309
The principal source for records and information concerning architecture and architects in Ireland. The collection includes over 300,000 photographs, 50,000 architectural drawings and engravings, and a library of 19th and 20th century architectural journals.

2. The National Gallery of Ireland (NG)

Merrion Square, Dublin 2
Tel. 01-661 5133 Fax. 01-661 5372
The Gallery collections include a large number of topographical drawings, engravings, photographs, architectural drawings and paintings.

10. Corporation and County Council

Archives

These archives can provide information on historical procedures and provision of services.

11. History Societies

Local history societies often have historical information and material not found elsewhere.

12. Diocesan records and the archives of Religious Orders

Part II

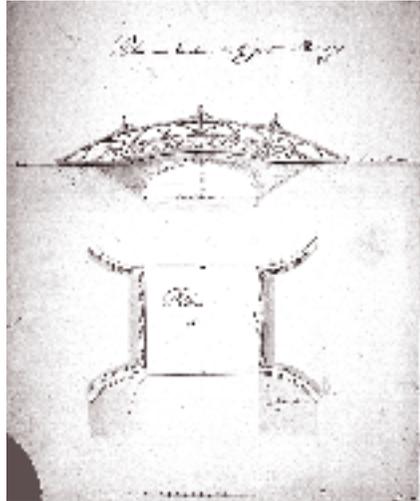
Manuscript Material

1. Architectural drawings (IAA/NLI/NA)

Original architectural drawings, where they survive, are the most important source of information. They can provide valuable information not only for the architectural historian but also for those involved with the repair or restoration of buildings.

For example, in the recent restoration of St. Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy, it was possible to research the correct type of interior decoration favoured by the original architect, Pugin.

Many large collections sometimes contain various schemes for a building and these can then be used to chart the development of a project.



Example of an original architectural drawing.

2. Building accounts and quantity surveyors' papers (IAA/NLI/NA)

These can provide valuable information, such as the identity of the architect concerned, names of craftsmen and costs. For those engaged in restoration, they can also contain useful information about the origins of materials, such as building stone, bricks, timber, etc. Painters' bills might also contain details of original colour schemes.

Part III

Printed material

1. Maps (NLI/ TCD Map Library)

Eighteenth century maps such as Charles Brooking's map of Dublin (1728) or Joseph Ravell's map of Drogheda (1749) include engravings of buildings.

The earlier Ordnance Survey maps of the larger towns and cities include ground plans of public buildings, garden layouts, etc. Different editions of these maps can be used to chart the development of individual areas or buildings.

2. Directories (NL/G L/ IAA)

These may give names of owners, architects, builders and craftsmen, etc. Henry Shaw's *New City Pictorial Directory 1850*, contains useful sketch elevations of the principal commercial streets in Dublin, and is available in a modern reprint. Directories can also contain useful illustrated advertisements. George Henry Bassett's *County Directory for Wexford 1885*, and *County Directory of Armagh 1888*, and Stratten's *Dublin, Cork and the South of Ireland, 1892*, contain very fine illustrations of commercial premises.

3. Architectural and other Journals (IAA/NLI)

The following journals are recommended:

*The Builder** (London)
The Architect and Building News (London)
The Architect (London)
The Dublin Builder, later *The Irish Builder**,
The Architects' Journal (London),
The Architectural Review (London),
Country Life (London)
Institution of Civil Engineers, Minutes of Proceedings (London)
Transactions of the Institution of Civil Engineers of Ireland, (Dublin)
*The Irish Architect and Craftsman** (Dublin)
Plan (Dublin),
Build (Dublin)
The Irish Architect (Dublin),
*Architectural Survey** (Dublin)
*Dublin Penny Journal**.

* indicates that publication has ceased

4. Trade Cards and Bill Heads (NL)

Very often these include useful views of shopfronts and, in some cases, local views.

Conservation **Guidelines** Sources of Information

Select Bibliography

Helferty, Seamus and Refausse, Raymond.
Directory of Irish Archives. Dublin, 1988.

Dos and Don'ts

Do

- check primary sources if possible
- keep accurate notes of research

Don't

- assume anything