



British Motor Industry Heritage Trust

# **COLLECTING AND DISPOSAL POLICY**

Heritage Motor Centre  
Banbury Road, Gaydon, Warwick CV35 0BJ

svl/2007



**This Collecting and Disposal Policy relates to the collections of motor cars, motoring related artefacts and archive material held at the Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwick.**

**Governing Body:** British Motor Industry Heritage Trust

**Date on which this Policy was approved by the governing body:**  
7th December 2007

**Date on which this Policy is due for review by the governing body:**  
December 2009

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The British Motor Industry Heritage Trust (BMIHT) is based on a company, Leyland Historic Vehicles, which was formed in 1975 as an integral part of British Leyland which, in turn, evolved into Rover Group. BMIHT was incorporated in 1983 as an independent charity. It was proposed to expand the activities to cover all aspects of vehicle manufacture within Great Britain and all the major vehicle and component manufacturers were invited to become involved.
- 1.2 For period from the late 1980s until 2000, over 70% of all income was derived either directly or indirectly from Rover Group and all the staff had been employed by Rover Group or its predecessor companies since the foundation of the organisation in 1975. For that reason, collecting at that time focused on the British motor company marques owned by Rover Group. Following Counsel's advice and that of the Charity Commissioners, the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust was retained as the title for the governing body. Minor changes to BMIHT's Memorandum and Articles were made so that it became a subsidiary of Rover Group
- 1.3 Following the division of Rover Group in 2000, BMIHT and the Heritage Motor Centre came under the management of Land Rover, in turn a subsidiary of the Ford Motor Company. Under Ford's direction, since 2000 the remit of BMIHT has reverted to encompass all British motor manufacturers.

## **2. Review of the Policy**

- 2.1 The Collecting and Disposal Policy needs to be approved by the Board of Trustees as part of the Accreditation Standard for BMIHT / Heritage Motor Centre with The Museums, Archives and Libraries Council (MLA) and to maintain credibility with the regional agency (MLA West Midlands), the Museums Association and the Society of Archivists.
- 2.2 The Collecting and Disposal Policy is not a permanently fixed proposal. It will be reviewed and published on a regular basis, in general terms every two years. The next review will be in December 2009.
- 2.3 The regional agency (MLA West Midlands), will be advised of any changes to this Collecting and Disposal Policy and the implications of any such changes for the future of the existing collections.

## **3. Current collections**

- 3.1 BMIHT's collection is largely formed from the vehicle and archive collections of the founding companies of the former Rover Group.
- 3.2 The Vehicle Collection numbers some 265 vehicles. It is strong in the marques Austin, Morris, Land Rover, MG and Rover and in the years 1950 onwards. The Collection, however, does stretch back to the late 19th century and includes some of the most important early British motor cars. There is also a handful of cycles and pedal cars in the Collection.
- 3.3 From the late 1970s until 2000, BMIHT collected first or last production vehicles (as appropriate) from models manufactured by the Rover Group companies. From 2000, this policy has been confined to Land Rover products.
- 3.4 Through deliberate policy, since 2000 BMIHT has added vehicles from other (non Rover Group / British Leyland) British motor manufacturers to its Collection. Similarly, archive material from other motor manufacturers, such as the Aston Martin company, has also been added recently.

- 3.5 The Archive Collection (photographs, film, brochures and handbooks, business and technical documents) is strongest in the marques of Austin, Land Rover, MG, Morris and Wolseley.
- 3.6 The Archive Collection also includes material from associated industries, significantly the archives of the Lucas company. In 2005 the Nick Baldwin archive of photographs, brochures, press releases and related documents was acquired, increasing the scope of the BMIHT's Archive Collection.
- 3.7 Relative to the quantity of vehicles and archive material, BMIHT has few smaller objects. These smaller objects include company trophies, models (including design models), manufacturing items (hand tools etc.), some paintings and framed photographs and other company motoring ephemera.

## **4. Collecting aims**

- 4.1 To collect, for the benefit of the nation, motor vehicles, artefacts and archive material relating to the motor industry in Britain. The motor industry in Britain is defined by companies that have manufactured or assembled vehicles or components within the United Kingdom for a continuous period of not less than five years.
- 4.2 To collect relevant vehicles, artefacts or archive material to support the core collection from these companies, automobile agents and automotive component companies, past and present. This will mainly assist in the showing of technical, social and economic developments inspired by the motor industry in Britain.
- 4.3 To collect other material which is of importance to the history of the motor industry in Britain but does not fit the categories defined in paragraphs 4.1 or 4.2, which has no other obvious home and would otherwise be lost. This must be considered as an exceptional case (see paragraph 6.5). A good case must be established for the merit of the material and for BMIHT being the correct repository for the material. BMIHT will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and archive repositories with similar interests when considering such material (paragraph 5).

4.4 The current scope of the progression of the collections is two-fold:

First, to widen the scope of the collections to items from companies outside of the Rover Group sphere.

Second, to increase the supporting artefacts and documentation for the motor vehicles in order to improve the interpretation of the rôle of the motor industry in all aspects of British life. These include current motor industry technologies and the development of technology for the future.

This goes hand in hand with the longer term development of the Vehicle Collection in terms of motor cars that are significant in the history of the motor industry in Britain, both historic and new models and of the Archive Collection as the most comprehensive and largest archive of documents, photographs and film relating to the motor industry in Britain. The desire to collect new material will, as a matter of course, be tempered by BMIHT's ability to adequately display, store and conserve such material (see paragraph 6.3).

4.5 Once it is known that a Land Rover vehicle is to go into or out of production, BMIHT will have the option to take as a donation the first and last chassis number, indicating the particular specification required by BMIHT. Where there is variance of engine or body style on a particular model, a choice should be made taking into account the specification of vehicles and engines already held by BMIHT.

4.6 Prototypes, racing and development cars should be preserved when such vehicles have completed their useful life. Management of such vehicles can be undertaken by BMIHT, the ownership of the vehicles remaining with company until such time as deemed fit by the Board of that company to transfer them to the ownership of BMIHT.

4.7 It is known that advertising agencies hold large quantities of film and photographic stills which relate to the collections that the BMIHT owns. There are also numerous corporate and technical documents relating to those companies which were previously part of the British Motor Corporation, British Leyland and Rover Group which are now with private individuals. A particular effort should be made to recover such material wherever possible.

- 4.8 BMIHT may collect records in electronic, digital media and audio-visual format but reserves the right to migrate such data to other formats in order to ensure the readability and long-term preservation of the information.
- 4.9 BMIHT will collect the archives of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust and related bodies.

## **5. Collecting policies of other museums**

- 5.1 BMIHT will take account of the collecting policies of other museums, archive repositories 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. Other major collections currently include:

National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hampshire

Coventry Transport Museum, Coventry

Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, Coventry

Donington Collection of Single Seater Racing Cars, Donington Park, Leicestershire

National Museum of Science and Industry, London

The Haynes Motor Museum, Sparkford, Somerset

The Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey

Glasgow Museum of Transport, Glasgow

Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

Local authority record offices at Birmingham, Coventry and Oxford

## 6. Criteria for collecting

6.1 The criteria for the acquisition of an item for the collection can be classified in four main areas:

- i. Historical interest
- ii. Technical interest
- iii. Social impact
- iv. Condition and usability

Any acquisition would naturally take account of the item's working life as an object of research, public interest and enjoyment.

6.2 Vehicles that do not meet at least two of the criteria and other artefacts which do not meet at least three of the criteria will not be accepted into the permanent collection. Archive material will need to meet any two of the three criteria, 4.1i to 4.1iii.

6.3 BMIHT 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.

6.4 As BMIHT holds archive collections, including photographs and printed ephemera, it will be guided by The Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed. 2002), the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts' Standards for Record Repositories (3rd ed. 2001) and British Standard BS5454:2000.

6.5 The Collecting and Disposal Policy is a guide to both the Board of Trustees and the executive in looking at exhibits and archive material which they may wish to acquire by donation or purchase. The Policy cannot be a totally definitive statement as, on occasion, items offered to BMIHT may be of outstanding interest but not directly covered by the policy statement.

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

## **7. Acquisition procedures**

- 7.1 BMIHT 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 are satisfied that BMIHT can acquire a valid title to the specimen in question.
- 7.2 In particular, BMIHT 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).
- 7.3 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 1st 2002 and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, BMIHT will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. BMIHT will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by DCMS in 2005.
- 7.4 BMIHT will not acquire any biological or geological material.
- 7.5 BMIHT will not acquire any 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 Treasures Act 1996 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or reporting finds through the Treasure Trove procedure (in Scotland).

7.6 Any exceptions to clauses 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 or 7.5 will be only be because BMIHT 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.

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

7.7 Loans do not form part of the permanent collection but will continue in BMIHT for either of the following reasons:

the item proposed for loan is an item which BMIHT would like to form part of its permanent collection but is not in a position to acquire at the time of the loan; or

the item proposed for loan is not an item to which BMIHT would wish to gain title but would benefit in the short term from its public interest or its use in a contextual display.

All loans are subject to a formal loan agreement, on a fixed-term basis and are reviewed at regular intervals during that period.

## **8. Spoliation**

8.1 BMIHT 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.

## **9. Repatriation and Restitution**

- 9.1 BMIHT's Board of Trustees, acting on the advice of its professional curatorial and archive staff, may take a decision to return human remains, objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. BMIHT will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis, within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications.

## **10. Disposal procedures**

- 10.1 By definition, BMIHT has a long term purpose and possesses substantial permanent collections in relation to its stated objectives. BMIHT's Board of Trustees accepts the strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the museum and archive collections, except for sound curatorial and archival reasons.
- 10.2 BMIHT 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.
- 10.3 When disposal of an item is being considered, BMIHT 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.
- 10.4 Decisions to dispose of items will not be made with the principal aim of generating funds.
- 10.5 Any monies received by BMIHT from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This should normally mean the purchase of items for the collections but, in exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of the collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases will be sought from MLA.

- 10.6 A decision to dispose of a vehicle, other artefact or archive material, 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 BMIHT's Board of Trustees acting on the advice of the professional curatorial and/or archive staff and not of an individual acting alone.
- 10.7 In the case where BMIHT has made the decision to dispose of an item (including with the permission of the Charity Commissioners) 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 or archives of equivalent standard, likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 10.8 If the item is not acquired by any Accredited museum or archive of equivalent standard to which it is offered directly, then the museum and archive community at large must be advised of the intention to dispose of the item. This should normally be through an announcement in the Museum Association's *Museums Journal* and in other professional journals where appropriate.
- 10.9 The announcement will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects concerned and the basis on which the material would be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from Accredited museums or archives of equivalent standard. 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, BMIHT may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations.
- 10.10 Full records will be kept of all such decisions on disposals and of the items involved. Proper arrangements will be 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 the SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal or the equivalent archive standard where applicable.

## **11. Approval**

- 11.1 Approval is sought from BMIHT's Board of Trustees, that they accept and will implement the above Policy as part of their responsibility for maintaining and progressing the collection of vehicles, other artefacts and archive material relating to the British motor industry.