

**Appendix 2**  
Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum Management Committee  
June 2025  
Disposal Report

**Disposal Report for – BORGM:2024.172-175 'Lighthouse Fields, Purbeck' by Pádraig Mac Miadhacháin plus associated sketches**



### **Introduction**

The RCAGM (Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum) is considering the disposal at the specific request of the donor. It is not part of its planned disposal activity and would not normally be considered for disposal as these items relate to the RCAGM's 'Core Offer'<sup>1</sup>.

Since donating the items subject to this report, the donor, who is the artist's widow, has come to regret her decision. She contests that as the artist did not want to ever sell this work it should remain within family ownership. She has offered to provide the RCAGM with an alternative work in lieu.

### **Object Description and Provenance**

The specific details of the items under consideration in this report are as follows<sup>2</sup>:

BORGM:2024.172 – A framed oil painting on canvas titled 'Lighthouse Fields, Purbeck' (1979) by Pádraig Mac Miadhacháin (1929-2017). Signed by the artist in the bottom right corner of the image. Dimensions: 398mm x 455mm

BORGM:2024.173 – A pen and ink sketch on paper by Pádraig Mac Miadhacháin for the 'Lighthouse Fields, Purbeck'. Showing the Anvil Point Lighthouse and associated buildings. Dimensions: 135mm x 171mm

BORGM:2024.174 – A pen and ink sketch on paper by Pádraig Mac Miadhacháin for the 'Lighthouse Fields, Purbeck'. Showing a view of the Anvil Point Lighthouse and associated buildings with an incomplete curved decorative motif on the reverse. Dimensions: 125mm x 180mm

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for the full text of the 'Core Offer' of the RCAGM

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for images of the item

BORGM:2024.175 – A pen and ink sketch on paper by Pádraig Mac Miadhacháin for the 'Lighthouse Fields, Purbeck'. Showing two views of the Anvil Point Lighthouse and associated buildings near Swanage, Dorset, with two incomplete curved decorative motifs on the reverse. Dimensions: 125mm x 180mm

All of the above were gifted to the RCAGM by the artist's widow in 2024 ahead of the 'Artists in Purbeck' exhibition in which all of them featured. The donor completed all the RCAGM donation paperwork as required.

Due to the group of artworks being on display only the oil painting has thus far been added to the RCAGM's presence on the Art UK website.

### **The Case for Retention**

#### **Meeting the 'Core Offer' of the RCAGM**

This group of artworks does fit within 'Core Offer' of the RCAGM.

#### **Relevance to the RCAGM Interpretation Strategy**

This group of artworks are relevant to the RCAGM Interpretation Strategy.

#### **Public Benefit**

The retention of this group of artworks by the RCAGM would benefit the public. This artist of regional and national note is currently only represented in seven other public collections across the UK.

#### **Effect of Disposal on Remaining Collections**

The disposal of this group of artworks by the RCAGM would have a slight detrimental effect on the rest of its collections. The artist would no longer be represented (subject to accepting a similar work in lieu from the donor).

#### **Implications for Public Collections Holding Similar Material**

No other public collections in the UK would suffer from the RCAGM disposing of this group of artworks.

#### **The Costs of Retention (Including Conservation)**

The oil painting is in good condition. The sketches are on acidic paper, which over time would have to be dealt with, but stable and display ready. Currently this group of artworks do not place an excessive cost the RCAGM other than storage and insurance (although that cost is small).

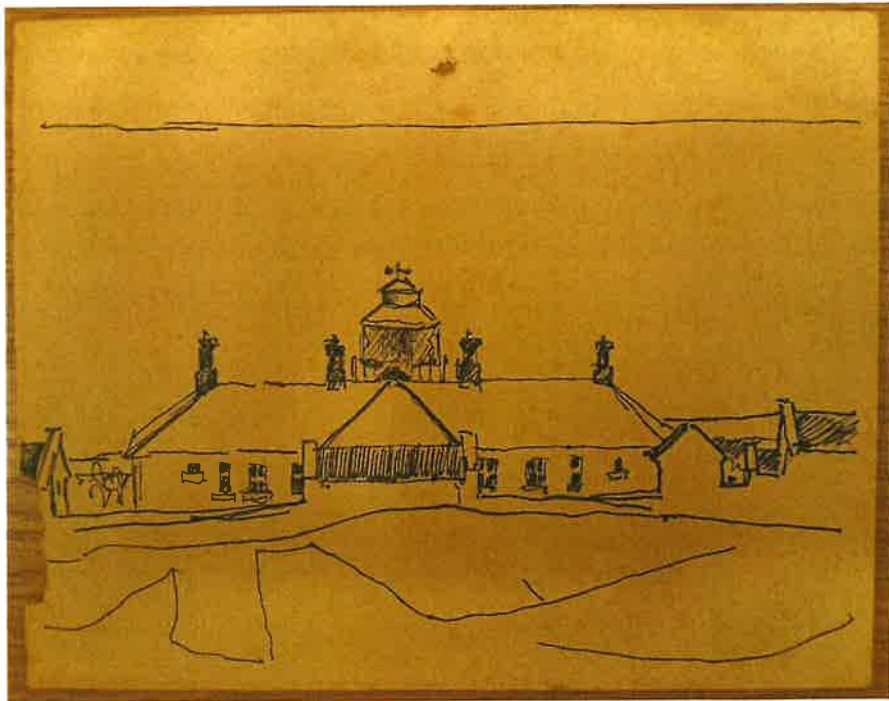
### **The Case for Disposal**

#### **Meeting the 'Core Offer' of the RCAGM**

This group of artworks does meet the 'Core Offer' of the RCAGM being by a regional artist of note.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Images



### **Relevance to the RCAGM Interpretation Strategy**

This is relevant to the RCAGM Interpretation Strategy as it meets the Core Offer' around which the strategy is based. The RCAGM has displayed this group in its recent 'Artists in Purbeck' show and would likely do so again in another exhibition.

### **Public Benefit**

The public does benefit from the RCAGM holding this group of artworks. There are very few works by this artist in the public domain and his life in Dorset is represented by only one other piece in the Dorset Museum and Art Gallery, Dorchester.

### **Effect of Disposal on Remaining Collections**

The disposal of this group of artworks by the RCAGM would have a detrimental effect on the rest of its 20<sup>th</sup> century art collections, especially the subgrouping of locally based artists of a similar reputation and stature. However, another work has been offered in lieu by the donor.

### **Implications for Public Collections Holding Similar Material**

No other museums/collections in the UK would specifically suffer from the RCAGM disposing of this group of artworks but it would mean that there would be just the one artwork held by a public collection in this region.

### **The Costs of Disposal**

The cost of disposing of this group of artworks would be minimal. There is no grant aid or funding to be repaid.


### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

These objects fit within the RCAGM's 'Core Offer' and collecting policy as regards art by locally based artists of stature and would not normally be considered for disposal.

However, this is an exceptional circumstance based on genuine regret on the part of the donor and with an offer of a work in lieu.

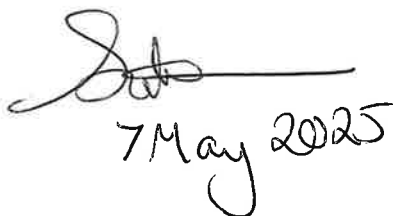
The retention of this group of artworks, despite their obvious quality, is not worth the reputational damage to the RCAGM amongst the artist community of Dorset.

Therefore, the author recommends that this group is deaccessioned and returned to the donor.



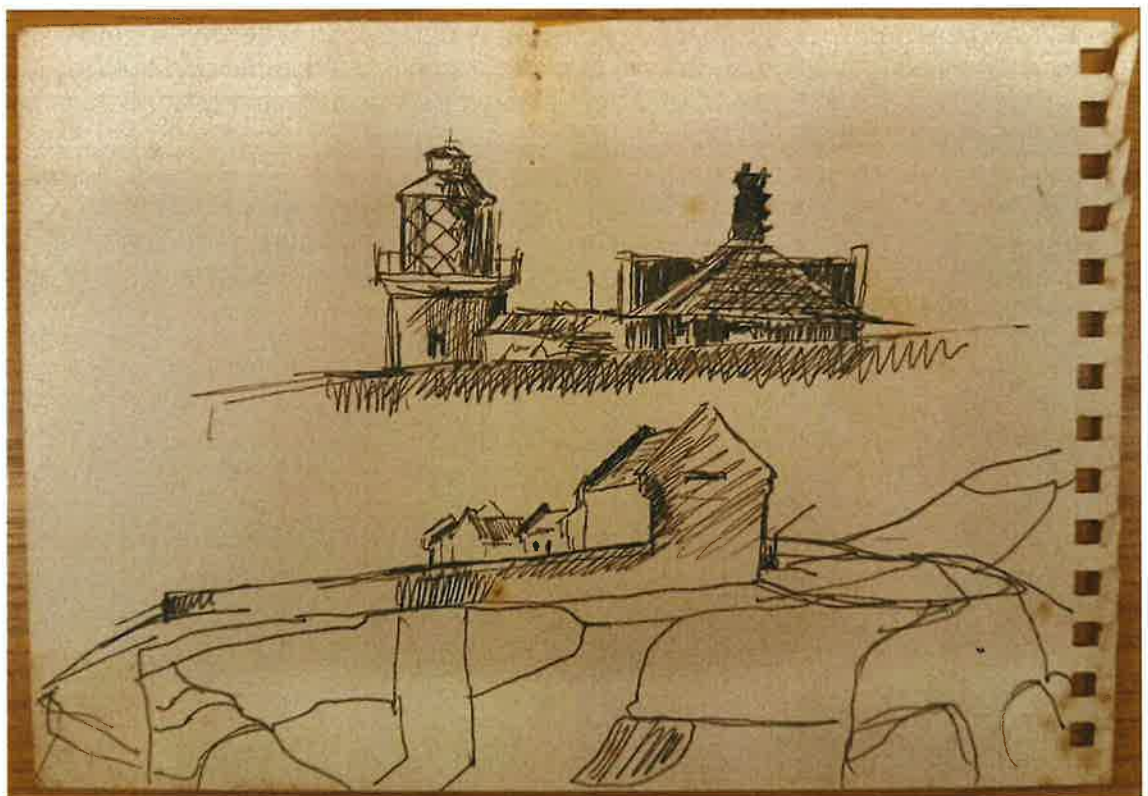
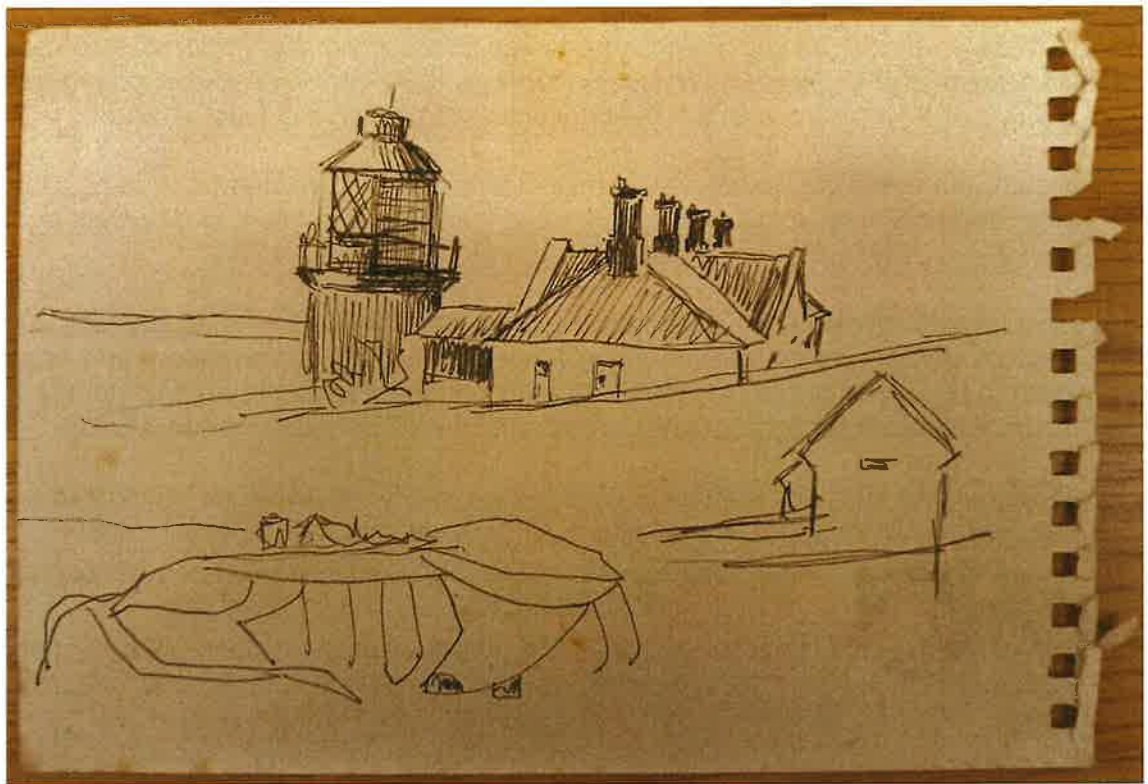
7.5.2025

Duncan Walker MA, AMA – Curator RCAGM



7 May 2025





## **Appendix 2 – The RCAGM Statement of Purposes – Our Core Offer**

Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum is an outstanding celebration of late-Victorian art collectors; their passions and achievements; how they lived and encountered the world; and how they presented their collections to enrich the lives of others.

We are entrusted to present the Russell-Cotes' personal vision and legacy in the most authentic way possible, and to enable learning, enjoyment and access to the house and collections for residents and visitors to Bournemouth.

The 'core offer' is focused on the historic building, East Cliff Hall, its stunning seafront setting, and its internationally-known collections, which attract and astound visitors. However, this is only part of the offer. In addition to the original house, we also have four art galleries added in the early 1900s. We will use this offer to:

1. Explain the story of the Russell-Cotes, the Victorian /Edwardian house and world cultures/art collections, putting it into local, national and international context
2. Encourage use of the galleries, collections, and unique energy and atmosphere of the house to inspire great art, and to stimulate creativity and curiosity
3. Explore aspects of the human condition, which were recognised by the Victorian innovators, philanthropists and social reformers, and which matter to communities today.

Finally, the spaces available at Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum are not the exclusive domain of the Victorians. We are developing a vibrant cultural programme which, while rooted in the era of our founders, will be a stage for wider participation and engagement. We will continue in the spirit of two of Bournemouth's most forward-thinking citizens by striving to make a significant contribution to the development of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum as a cultural flagship for Bournemouth. (MBTS, 2012)

We want our art gallery and museum to do what the very best galleries and museums do: to be spaces where the past, present and future come together in an irresistible mix of life, culture and heritage - a place where everyone can feel at home with a world of art.