



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESKTOP REPORT ON A DEVELOPMENT
SITE AT RATHDOWN ROAD, GRANGEGORMAN, DUBLIN 7**

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JUNE 2018**

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Introduction

This report describes the archaeological background and potential of a development site at Rathdown Road, Grangegorman, Dublin 7.

In the course of any construction on the site, all earlier deposits on the site, including any archaeological deposits, if such remain, will be removed.

The site is located outside the zone of archaeological potential for Dublin City (DU018-020). It is also located beyond the zone of notification of any recorded monuments.

Development sites in the immediate area have however been subject to pre-development archaeological test trenching.

The report concludes that the subject site lies adjacent to an unmarked cemetery of the 1830s relating to the Dublin Cholera epidemic. Human remains were transferred to charnel pits by railway workers in the 1870s.

Sources

The following sources were used in the compilation of this report;

- Record of Monuments and Places, Dublin City

- Cartographic sources

- Published sources, cited in the Bibliography

- Web sources, primarily www.excavations.ie, and archaeology.ie

- Grey literature, such as planning files and reports on Dublin City Council's website, EIS reports, etc.

Archaeological background to the site

The pre-historic period is not well represented in the artefactual and site record from this part of the city. The area did not develop until the later 19th century, and the first and second editions of the Ordnance Survey indicate that the site was in fields and light woodland.

Rathdown Road lies well north of the Hiberno- Norse and later medieval suburb of Oxmantown. The main route north in the medieval period is thought to be a continuation of the earlier road, the Slighe Midluachra, which is oriented on Church Street and its northern alignment. A second route led northwards through Stoneybatter/ Manor Street, and the site at Rathdown Road lies approximately midway between these two routes.

Expansion of the town in the Anglo- Norman period led to a period of stabilization, with larger farms and manor houses becoming established in the relatively peaceful zone north of the river

The manor of Grangegorman was one of three manors in the possession of the Priory of the Holy Trinity (Christchurch) until dissolution. The manor house is considered to be located on Stanhope Street (Du018-020565). According to D'Alton, the manor was confirmed to Francis Asgard in 1559 by Royal mandate, and remained in his possession until his death in 1577. It remained in possession of members of this family until the mid-17th century. The Civil Survey of 1641 records the lands of 'Grang Gorman' as part of the parish of St Michans. Of the 800 acres in Protestant hands (Agar, English Protestant) 500 are recorded as arable, 100 as meadow and 200 as pasture. There is also an old stone house. The building is shown on Rocque's 1756 map. It was known as Grangegorman house in the early 19th century, when it became a refuge for 'Unprotected girls of good character'. It was demolished in the 20th century.

Broadstone, in one version, derives its name from the Norse "Bradog Steyn' the stone of the Bradogue. The alternative name for this stream, culverted from 1681, is Glasmacanog (Sweeney 1991, 48). A hamlet existed at Glasmenogue, probably in the vicinity of Broadstone. Cosgrove (1909) records that the Irish Parliament once met here due to a plague in the city.

There was a ford on the Bradogue at Broadstone, a record of 1629 referring to a 'Bradocke Bridge leading to Finglas'. The small river flowed south of the site, to the rear of the former Engine Shed and Turntable of the railway terminus. The watercourse maintained the line of the old parliamentary boundary of the city of Dublin.

The Royal Canal Company was formed in 1789 to construct a canal linking the river Liffey at Dublin to the river Shannon at Tarmonbarry, county Longford. The works included a short branch line and harbour at Broadstone. Work commenced in May 1790, at the junction of the Broadstone branch with the main line close to Cross Guns Bridge at Phibsborough. The works were plagued with difficulties, and by 1801 the harbour at Broadstone remained incomplete. Records show that the construction of a harbour on an elevated site required the introduction of large quantities of soil, much of this deriving from the Blessington Street Basin. Boreholes and test pits in the vicinity of the infilled harbour indicate a substantial depth of embankment soils in the area. Some of this may spill into the subject site.

The entire concern was acquired by the Midland and Great Western Railway Company in 1845, which had intended to run the line on the dewatered canal. However they were required to maintain it, and ran the line alongside. Broadstone Railway Terminal was constructed in 1850. The company had no interest in maintaining the canal however, and the harbour was infilled in 1877.

A range of institutions were established on the lands of Grangegorman from the late 18th century onwards, spreading northwards from the original House of Industry established on Brunswick Street North in 1773. These included the Richmond Lunatic Asylum, the Richmond Penitentiary, Chapel, District Asylum, Laundry and Mortuary. Demolished remains of several of these buildings were excavated in advance of redevelopment of the DIT campus in 2013-2014. Excavation for TII of the nearby site of the LUAS stop at Grangegorman included the reinterred human burials from their original location in an unmarked burial ground following the Cholera epidemic of 1832.

In 1870 the Midland and Great Western Railway Company acquired three acres of land from Grangegorman prison, for the construction of a new boundary wall, sidings and an engine house. It is thought that construction of the engine house disturbed the burials, and resulted in their reburial at this period. The engine house is shown on the second and third editions of the Ordnance Survey map, and lay east of the subject site. The remains are recorded as having been reinterred on an isolated patch of ground within the immediate area. This was to the immediate south of the site, on what is now the entrance to the Grangegorman LUAS stop (see Excavations, below).

Cartography

The site lies outside the zone of archaeological significance for Dublin City (DU-0180020). Grangegorman is not annotated on the series of Down Survey maps, 1654. The 'road to Cabaragh', with a settlement group, is however depicted on the map of the Barony of Nethercross.

Grang Gormond Lane, and Finglas Road, are both annotated on de Gomme's 1673 map of the 'Citty and Suburbs of Dublin'. No features are shown in the area of the site, apart from the ridge of higher ground.

Rocque's map of county Dublin, 1760, indicates that this area lay in large, open scrubby fields. Houses did line the road nearby, annotated on this map and the greater detailed city map, 'road to Glassnevin'.

The 1848 Ordnance Survey map shows the site remained at that time in fields. This remained the case into the early 20th century, when the site to the east was developed as the main railway line. Engine sheds lay to the south east of the site, but the main block of industrial buildings lay on the east side of the tracks.

Rathdown Road was developed as a residential road by the mid- 20th century. Several buildings on the road are marked on the NIAH, on National Monuments Historic Environment Viewer.

Reg. no. 50070366, 60-62 Rathdown Road, dating from 1925-35, house, is rated as of local significance.

Reg. no. 50070365, Rathdown Road, dating from 1890-1900, terrace of houses, on both sides of Rathdown Road, is rated as of local significance.

Reg. no. 50070364, Rathdown Road, dating from 1890-1900, terrace of houses, on both sides of Rathdown Road, is rated as of local significance.

The Midland and Great Western Railway Station at Broadstone, to the east of the site, was built between 1842-50 to the design of John Skipton Mulvany, and the Engine House, between 1850-5 by G.W. Hemans. The Railway Station (reg. no. 50070370 has been compared by Maurice Craig to the temples at Karnak or Luxor (Casey 2005, 282-4). The (infilled) final stretch of the Royal Canal entered the Royal Canal Harbour (also now infilled) at the south- west corner of the station forecourt, and now carries a section of the Luas Line. The aquaduct, which carried the canal across the Phibsborough Road, was removed as late as 1951. The whole complex is now Broadstone Bus garage, and the adjacent renewed LUAS line and Broadstone stop.

Broadstone Bus Station is of regional interest on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. It was originally known as the Director's House, and housed the offices of the Midland and Great Western Railway Company.

The complex is included on the Record of Protected Structures in Dublin City Council's current Development Plan: entry: 2029 Constitution Hill, Dublin 7, 'Broadstone Station terminal building. Dublin Bus Phibsborough garage. Curtilage buildings and features'. A section of the wall of the curtilage forms part of the eastern boundary of the subject site, at the entry off Rathdown Road. This section of walling is of calp, and stands to two differing heights. Both are capped, and a section has been lime pointed, possibly as part of the recent LUAS relaying. The outside of this wall is supported by a series of buttresses, where there is an entrance laneway to the LUAS platform at Grangegorman. This wall forms part of the original boundary to the railway, as indicated on the 1880-1913 Ordnance Survey map, when the subject site was still in fields.

The Engine House or Shed, is indicated on the Ordnance Survey map of 1871, and of 1875. It was gone by 1907. Construction of this building, and new boundary walls, appears to have resulted in the discovery of cholera burials, and their replacement in trenches to the immediate south of the site.

Many of the buildings and features of the Grangegorman DIT campus are of architectural significance. They were formerly part of the extensive complex of institutions founded in this area from the 1770s. The complex included the House of Industry, later named the North Dublin Union Workhouse, which was accessed from a curving laneway off Brunswick Street North. The campus includes also the lands of the Richmond Lunatic Asylum, designed by Francis Johnson and built in 1810. Casey (2005, 238) remarks on the institutional design that 'nowhere in the city does one encounter such extensive minimally dressed calp rubble walling'.

The cartographic study of the site indicates that it remained as open ground into the 20th century. The wall which forms a section of the south- eastern boundary is included on the Record of Protected Structures, being part of the curtilage of the mid- 19th century Broadstone Railway Terminus.

Record of Monuments and Places Sites

This is a list of sites presently on, and scheduled for inclusion in the Record of Monuments and Places of National Monuments, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in the vicinity of the site.

DU018-020251, House, 18th-19th century, at Prussia Street
DU018-020565, Grange Gormond Manor, medieval manor house, marked on Rocque's 1756 map of Dublin.

The site lies well beyond the zone of notification of these sites.

Archaeological investigation of neighbouring developments

1-3 Royal Canal Bank, 04E0620. On the east side of Constitution Hill, Monitoring of groundworks associated with construction of a student residence uncovered deposits associated with the construction of the canal at the beginning of the 19th century.

LUAS BDX, 09E0537. Archaeological monitoring of a trial pit at Broadstone retrieved a piece of 17th century pottery. Up to 3.5m of 'made ground' was observed, probably associated with the canal works. BXDBH006, 'at 10m this borehole was completed. It is unclear if it reached natural geology..pottery recovered included post- med and possibly some late medieval sherds'. Further work at Broadstone did not uncover medieval remains.

St Brendan's Hospital, 11E0351. Monitoring of ground investigations, comprising 24 test pits, on this large site did not uncover any deposits of archaeological significance. Subsoil lay from 1.10m to 1.60m below present ground level.

St Brendan's Hospital, Grangegorman 11E0048. Grading of a large site for a Mental Health Facility did not uncover any features of archaeological significance.

Monitoring of 44 slit trenches, Broadstone, 11E0459. No archaeological significance.

Broadstone, 12E0310. Monitoring of 15 slit trenches uncovered evidence for the canal and harbour at Broadstone.

Grangegorman Campus. 12E0370. Monitoring of enabling and geotechnical works, in the form of trenches, did not uncover any definitive archaeological material.

Grangegorman Campus 2013-2014. Excavation uncovered remains of the 18th century and later institutional buildings, including a wing of the Richmond Penitentiary, which later served as a Cholera Hospital during the 1832 epidemic.

Broadstone Bus Terminal, 14E0410. Archaeological monitoring of construction of a boundary wall between the LUAS line and the bus depot uncovered the foundations of 19th century railway buildings, and a disarticulated human bone.

Former Royal Canal Harbour. 14E0018. A section of the infilled canal to the harbor was excavated, exposing the south wall, which was built on a timber baseplate. The canal had a puddle clay base. The harbour was infilled after 1877.

Stanhope Street, 14E0051. Part of the likely remains of the late medieval Grange Gorman house were revealed in archaeological monitoring of limited refurbishment works. The masonry remains are preserved in situ.

LUAS stop, Grangegorman, 15E0185. . Burials, which appear to be associated with the use of a field immediately north of the Penitentiary as an overflow cemetery in the 1830s, were uncovered in the course of test excavation associated with recent LUAS works. Human remains had been placed in two trenches or charnel pits, which was on the line of the new path to the LUAS Grangegorman stop. The excavated bones were disarticulated, consisting mainly of skulls and longbones. Records of the Railway indicate that the human remains were uncovered during construction works in the 1870s, associated with the construction of a new engine shed, sidings, and boundary wall, and that the remains were reinterred in a walled area close by. An additional four in situ burials and another charnel pit were excavated further south along the line of the LUAS track, while twenty-seven graves, containing thirty individuals, were located at the northern end of the former field. Most were in coffins. Richmond Penitentiary was closed as a prison in 1831, but reopened as the Dublin Cholera Hospital in 1832.

The excavator believes that the unmarked cemetery occupied up to two thirds of the field shown on the 1847 Ordnance Survey map, which lies immediately north of the Richmond Penitentiary. The boundary wall on the south side of the subject site was constructed in the 1870s, at the same period that the bulk of the human remains were transferred to the long charnel pits on the LUAS walkway. It appears to replace an earlier field boundary (see maps, below).

Former Highfield House. No archaeological finds or features of interest have been found in archaeological monitoring of development at this site located immediately north of the subject site.

Summary of Archaeological Potential/ suggested mitigation

No significant archaeological deposits have been uncovered in works to the north of the site. However, the site immediately south, excavated as part of the recent LUAS Broombridge line, uncovered substantial numbers of human remains associated with the 1832 Dublin cholera epidemic. The remains were reinterred in the 1870s on discovery of the unmarked cemetery by railway workers. A large field, immediately north of the former Richmond Penitentiary, has been provisionally identified as the site of the cemetery. It is likely that the cemetery was confined to the eastern part of this field, as the subject site is shown as more woodland. The southern boundary of the site forms the boundary with this probable cemetery site.

It is advisable that archaeological test trenching on this site be undertaken as part of initial works, and that all geotechnical investigations be monitored by an archaeologist. It is expected, however, that the results will be largely negative, although disarticulated human bone may be recovered as part of groundworks monitoring.

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Casey, C. 2005. The Buildings of Ireland. Dublin. Yale.

Sweeney, C. 1991. The Rivers of Dublin.

Websites:

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Figure 1. Extract from RMP map.



Figure 2. Extract from de Gomme's map 1673.



Figure 3. Site location on Rocque 1756.

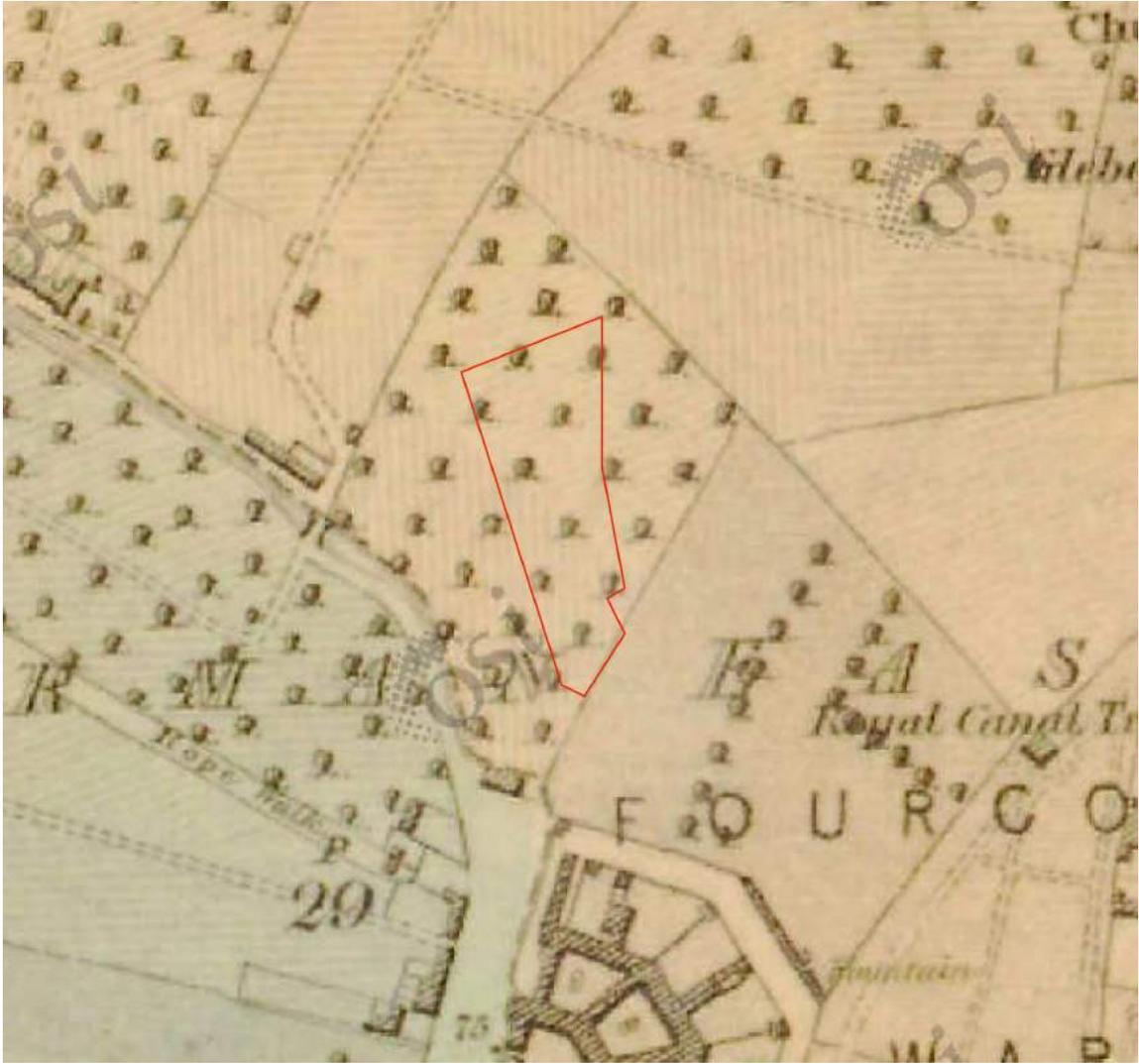


Figure 4. Site location on Ordnance Survey 1846-8.

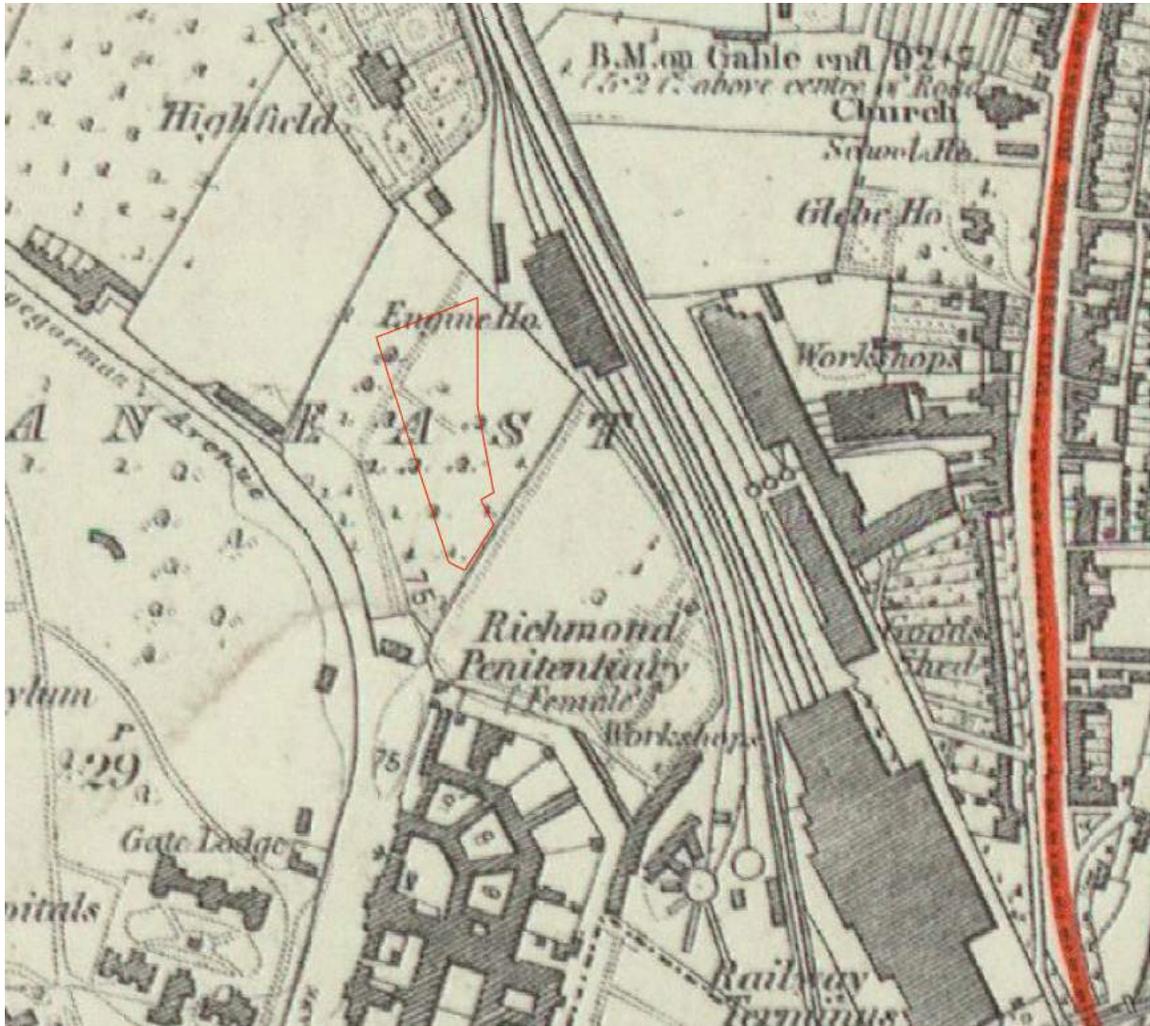


Figure 5. Site location on Ordnance Survey map, 1871.



Plate 1. View north to LUAS realignment.



Plate 2. View to adjacent development site to north.



Plate 3. Boundary wall to railway lands, c. 1870s.

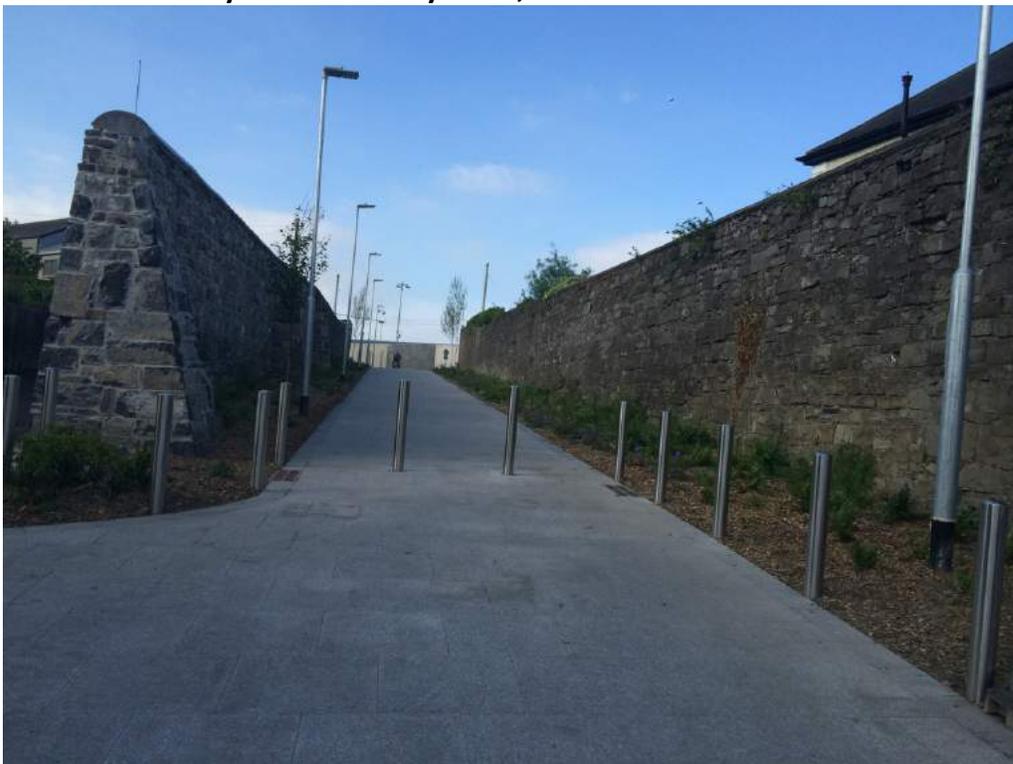


Plate 4. Site of excavated charnel pits, 2015.

