

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT  
AT  
THE FORMER BLAKES SITE,  
STILLORGAN ROAD,  
DUBLIN 4**

**ON BEHALF OF:  
CAIRN HOMES PROPERTIES LTD**

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

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## **ABSTRACT**

This report has been prepared on behalf of Cairn Homes Properties Ltd, to study the impact, if any, on the archaeological and historical resource of the proposed development at the former Blakes and Esmonde Motors Site at Stillorgan, County Dublin. The assessment was carried out by Faith Bailey of IAC Archaeology.

There are two archaeological sites within 250m of the proposed development area, both of which are recorded monuments. The site of a medieval house (RMP DU023-012001) is recorded c. 176m east of the proposed development area. A Bronze Age flat cemetery (RMP DU023-012002) is recorded c. 200m east of the site.

The assessment confirmed that the site has been subject to extensive disturbance, which was also confirmed during archaeological testing in 2017. Given the level of this disturbance, the archaeological potential of the proposed development area is considered to be very low.

Due to the level of ground disturbance across the development area, no adverse impacts are predicted upon the archaeological resource as a result of development going ahead. It is highly likely that any archaeological deposits that may have been located within the site have been removed during modern development.

No archaeological mitigation is deemed to be necessary as part of the proposed development.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 GENERAL

The following report details an archaeological assessment undertaken in advance of a proposed development at the former Blakes and Esmonde Motors Site, Stillorgan Road, Dublin (ITM 720265/728003, Figure 1. This assessment has been carried out to ascertain the potential impact of the proposed development on the archaeological and historical resource that may exist within the area. The assessment was undertaken by Faith Bailey of IAC Archaeology (IAC), on behalf of Cairn Homes Properties Ltd.

The archaeological assessment involved a detailed study of the archaeological and historical background of the proposed development site and the surrounding area. This included information from the Record of Monuments and Places of Dublin, the topographical files within the National Museum and all available cartographic and documentary sources for the area. A field inspection has also been carried out with the aim to identify any previously unrecorded features of archaeological or historical interest.

## 1.2 THE DEVELOPMENT

The development will consist of the construction of a mixed use scheme of 377 no. "Built to Rent" BTR apartments, Community Sports Hall (933 sq. m), along with 5 no. restaurant/café (c. 841.2 sq.m), creche (c. 215 sq. m), office hub (195.3 sq. m) and ancillary residents' support facilities/services (1,016 sq. m) laid out in 6 no. blocks ranging in height from 3-9 storeys (over basement) comprising 21 no. studio apartments, 189 no. 1 bedroom apartments, 159 no. 2 bedroom apartments & 8 no. 3 bedroom apartments, and public realm upgrades on a site of c. 1.41 hectares (Figure 2).

## 2 METHODOLOGY

Research for this report was undertaken in two phases. The first phase comprised a paper survey of all available archaeological, historical, and cartographic sources. The second phase involved a field inspection of the site.

### 2.1 PAPER SURVEY

- Record of Monuments and Places for County Dublin;
- Sites and Monuments Record for County Dublin;
- National Monuments in State Care Database;
- Preservation Orders List;
- Topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland;
- Cartographic and written sources relating to the study area;
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, 2016-2022;
- Draft Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, 2022-2028;
- Stillorgan Local Area Plan, 2018-2024
- Aerial photographs; and
- Excavations Bulletin (1970–2021).

**Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)** is a list of archaeological sites known to the National Monuments Section, which are afforded legal protection under Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments Act and are published as a record.

**Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)** holds documentary evidence and field inspections of all known archaeological sites and monuments. Some information is also held about archaeological sites and monuments whose precise location is not known e.g. only a site type and townland are recorded. These are known to the National Monuments Section as ‘un-located sites’ and cannot be afforded legal protection due to lack of locational information. As a result, these are omitted from the Record of Monuments and Places. SMR sites are also listed on a website maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage (DoHLGH) – [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie).

**National Monuments in State Care Database** is a list of all the National Monuments in State guardianship or ownership. Each is assigned a National Monument number whether in guardianship or ownership and has a brief description of the remains of each Monument.

The Minister for the DoHLGH may acquire national monuments by agreement or by compulsory order. The state or local authority may assume guardianship of any national monument (other than dwellings). The owners of national monuments (other than dwellings) may also appoint the Minister or the local authority as guardian of that monument if the state or local authority agrees. Once the site is in ownership or guardianship of the state, it may not be interfered with without the written consent of the Minister.

**Preservation Orders List** contains information on Preservation Orders and/or Temporary Preservation Orders, which have been assigned to a site or sites. Sites deemed to be in danger of injury or destruction can be allocated Preservation Orders under the 1930 Act. Preservation Orders make any interference with the site illegal. Temporary Preservation Orders can be attached under the 1954 Act. These perform the same function as a Preservation Order but have a time limit of six months, after which the situation must be reviewed. Work may only be undertaken on or in the vicinity of sites under Preservation Orders with the written consent, and at the discretion, of the Minister.

**The topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland** are the national archive of all known finds recorded by the National Museum. This archive relates primarily to artefacts but also includes references to monuments and unique records of previous excavations. The find spots of artefacts are important sources of information on the discovery of sites of archaeological significance.

**Cartographic sources** are important in tracing land use development within the development area as well as providing important topographical information on areas of archaeological potential and the development of buildings. Cartographic analysis of all relevant maps has been made to identify any topographical anomalies or structures that no longer remain within the landscape.

- William Petty, *Down Survey, Barony of Rathdown, Parishes of Kill and Monckstowne*, c. 1655
- John Rocque, *An Actual Survey of the County of Dublin*, 1760
- John Taylor, *Map of the Environs of Dublin*, 1816
- William Duncan, *Map of County Dublin*, 1821
- Ordnance Survey maps of County Dublin, 1843-1938

**Documentary sources** were consulted to gain background information on the archaeological and cultural heritage landscape of the proposed development area.

**Development Plans** contain a catalogue of all the Protected Structures and archaeological sites within the county. The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan (2016-2022), Stillorgan Local Area Plan (2018-2024) and draft County Development Plan (2022-2028) were consulted to obtain information on cultural heritage sites in and within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development area.

**Aerial photographic coverage** is an important source of information regarding the precise location of sites and their extent. It also provides initial information on the terrain and its likely potential for archaeology. A number of sources were consulted including aerial photographs held by the Ordnance Survey, Google Earth and Bing Maps.

**Excavations Bulletin** is a summary publication that has been produced every year since 1970. This summarises every archaeological excavation that has taken place in



Ireland during that year up until 2010 and since 1987 has been edited by Isabel Bennett. This information is vital when examining the archaeological content of any area, which may not have been recorded under the SMR and RMP files. This information is also available online ([www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie)) from 1970–2020.

## **2.2 FIELD INSPECTION**

Field inspection is necessary to determine the extent and nature of archaeological and historical remains, and can also lead to the identification of previously unrecorded or suspected sites and portable finds through topographical observation and local information.

The archaeological and architectural field inspection entailed -

- Walking the proposed development and its immediate environs.
- Noting and recording the terrain type and land usage.
- Noting and recording the presence of features of archaeological or historical significance.
- Verifying the extent and condition of any recorded sites.
- Visually investigating any suspect landscape anomalies to determine the possibility of their being anthropogenic in origin.

## **3 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **3.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The proposed development area is located immediately west of the N11 and south of the Kilmacud Road Lower, in Stillorgan, Co. Dublin (Figure 1). There are two recorded monuments within 250m of the proposed development area. There are no National Monuments in State Care or sites under Preservation Orders within the vicinity of the site. The proposed development area once formed part of the demesne lands associated with Stillorgan House and the smaller Grove House. In recent years the site was fully developed with modern structures and car parking. Today, those structures have been demolished and removed and the site is now vacant.

#### **3.1.1 Prehistoric Period**

##### **Mesolithic Period (6000–4000 BC)**

Although, recent discoveries in the southwest of the country may indicate an earlier date for human occupation of Ireland (Dowd and Carden 2016), the Mesolithic period is the earliest time for which there is clear evidence for prehistoric activity on the island. During this period people hunted, foraged, and gathered food and appear to have had a mobile lifestyle. The most common evidence found to show the presence of Mesolithic communities is scatters of worked flint material, a by-product from the production of flint implements. The current archaeological evidence suggests that the wider area in which the proposed development area is located was first inhabited towards the later part of the Mesolithic period. At this time people made flint tools previously known as Bann Flakes and now referred to as Broad Blade technologies. Small numbers of these flakes have been found at Dalkey Island, Dún Laoghaire, Rathfarnham, and Loughlinstown and may indicate small-scale transient settlement along the riverbanks and seashores (Corlett 1999, 10). There are no recorded Mesolithic sites located within the proposed development area or surrounding landscape.

##### **Neolithic Period (4000–2500 BC)**

The Neolithic period was revolutionary; for the first time there was evidence of the emergence of farming societies in Ireland. There was profound change as people moved (both gradually and rapidly) from peripatetic lifestyle to one organised around animal husbandry and cereal cultivation. Understandably, the transition to the Neolithic was marked by major social transformation; communities expanded and moved further inland to create more permanent settlements. This afforded the further development of agriculture, which altered the physical landscape. Forests were rapidly cleared, and field boundaries constructed. Pottery was also being produced, possibly for the first time as well as a variety of other artefacts including polished stone axes, a variety of flint tools and saddle querns for grinding corn. People lived in rectangular houses that contained hearths as well as specially demarcated areas for activities such as food preparation.

With the advent of the Neolithic period the emergence of large communal ritual monuments known as megalithic tombs occurred. The most common type of megalithic tomb within the Rathdown area is the portal tomb, although there is none of this type of monument in the vicinity of the proposed development area; however, a round flint scrapper was found in Mount Merrion or Callary, c. 1.1km to the northwest of the proposed development area, during the 1980s (NMI Ref. 1989:47).

### **Bronze Age (2500–800 BC)**

The Bronze Age saw the use and production of metal for the first time in Ireland. During the Bronze Age, the megalithic tomb tradition declined rapidly and ended, with a focus on the individual in burial emerging. Cremated or inhumed bodies were often placed in a cist, which is a stone-lined grave, usually built of slabs set upright to form a box-like construction and capped by a large slab or several smaller lintels. Bronze Age burials are often accompanied by pottery vessels and can be marked by mounds or occur where no surface indication survives. A small Bronze Age flat cemetery (RMP DU023-012002), consisting of several urns and a cist burial, was identified c. 200m east of the proposed development area during the construction of Stillorgan House.

### **Iron Age (800 BC–AD 500)**

There is increasing evidence for Iron Age settlement and activity in recent years as a result of development-led excavations as well as projects such as LIARI (Late Iron Age and Roman Ireland). Traditionally this period was distinguished from the rather rich remains of preceding Bronze Age and subsequent early medieval period by a relative paucity of evidence for material culture in Ireland. There is no known evidence of Iron Age activity in the vicinity of the proposed development area, though the area would have continued to appeal to prehistoric communities.

#### **3.1.2 Early Medieval Period (AD 500–1100)**

The early medieval period is depicted in the surviving sources as entirely rural characterised by the basic territorial unit known as *túath*. Byrne (1973) estimates that there were likely to have been at least 150 kings in Ireland at any given time during this period, each ruling over his own *túath*. The proposed development area was located within the territory of the sept of *Uí Briúin Cualann* during the early medieval period (Murphy and Potterton 2010). During this often-violent period, roughly circular defensive enclosures known as ringforts were constructed to protect farmsteads. They are typically enclosed by an earthen bank and exterior ditch and range from 25m to 50m in diameter. The smaller-sized and single banked type (univallate) were more likely to be home to the lower ranks of society while larger examples with more than one bank (bivallate/trivallate) housed the more powerful kings and lords (Edwards 1996).

The south Dublin area is likely to have been a relatively densely populated area during this period, especially when considering the number of ecclesiastical establishments within the area and the close proximity to the coastal resource. It is therefore surprising that there is not greater evidence for settlement in the form of ringforts, within the area. It is of course possible that there was no need for a large number of

defended settlements within the area as it was out of reach of the constant attention of the Kings of Meath to the north of Dublin city and the Kings of Leinster to the west of the Wicklow Mountains. It is also possible that many of the sites were removed during the medieval period, when the arrival of the Anglo-Normans and their new techniques of warfare rendered the ringfort obsolete (Corlett 1999, 53). There are no ringforts located within the wider vicinity of the proposed development area.

From the 6th century onwards, the landscape was dominated by scattered rural monasteries, which were often surrounded by large circular or oval enclosure, as is the case with the ecclesiastical remains at Woodland (RMP DU023-007), c. 343m north-northwest of the proposed development area. No visible remains of this site survive although it is annotated as a 'monastery (in ruins)' on the first edition OS map of 1843. It is possible that the ecclesiastical remains at Stillorgan South (RMP DU023-011001/2/4), c. 263m south of the proposed development area, may also date to this period as a graveslab (RMP DU023-011003) was noted there in 1781 by Austin Cooper as having 'rude circles' of the Rathdown type. Rathdown slabs, thought to be associated with Christianised Vikings and unique to the Rathdown area, exhibit a form of decoration that is not found anywhere else within early medieval Ireland. They are found at church sites throughout the Rathdown area, including Kilgobbin, Ballyman, Dalkey, Rathfarnham, and Tully. No two slabs are decorated the same, but there is a general repetition of motifs. The most common decorations include a herringbone design and cupmarks, often enclosed by concentric circles. It is thought that these symbols are influenced by Viking art forms and may symbolise the burial place of a Viking Christian (Corlett 1999, 42).

### **3.1.3 Medieval Period (AD 1100–1600)**

The beginning of the medieval period is characterised by political unrest that originated from the death of Brian Borumha in 1014. Diarmait MacMurchadha, deposed King of Leinster, sought the support of mercenaries from England, Wales, and Flanders to assist him in his challenge for kingship. Norman involvement in Ireland began in 1169, when Richard de Clare and his followers landed in Wexford to support MacMurchadha. Two years later de Clare (Strongbow) inherited the Kingdom of Leinster through marriage to Aoife MacMurchadha, Diarmait's daughter. By the end of the 12th century the Anglo-Normans had succeeded in occupying much of the country (Stout and Stout 1997, 53). The initial stage of the invasion of the country is marked by the construction of motte and bailey castles, none of which are present within the vicinity of the proposed development, these were later replaced with stone-built castles.

This time period is synonymous the creation of new towns and enlargement of older urban centres. The Anglo-Norman tenurial system more or less appropriated the older established land units known as túaths in the early medieval period but renamed the territories as manors (MacCotter 2008). The original medieval manor house of Stillorgan (RMP DU023-012001) is situated c. 176m east of the proposed development in the approximate location of Stillorgan House (NIAH Garden 2483). The manor of Stillorgan was originally owned by John de Clahill, Raymond de Carew, and by 1360 was occupied by Sir John Cruise. The castle (RMP DU023-071) of the

manor was situated c. 324m to the southeast in the approximate location of Stillorgan Castle.

At the time of the invasion the ruling clan of Rathdown were the MacGillaMoCholmóc family in the northeast of Wicklow, and the Mac Turcaill family in the southeast of Dublin. However, after the Norman conquest much of Rathdown was granted to Walter de Ridelesford, a councillor of Strongbow and a man known to his peers as a brave and noble warrior. It appears that Henry II took back some of these lands as he wanted to keep much of Dublin and its surroundings for himself. A large part of Rathdown then became part of the royal estate of Obrun. This estate included parts of Ballycorus, Kilternan, Powerscourt, and Corke, near Bray (Murphy and Potterton 2010, 85). The king also established a royal forest in the Wicklow Mountains. The greatest landowner within the region under the Norman regime was the Archbishop of Dublin, who retained those lands owned since before the invasion, including Dalkey, Rathmichael, and Shankill. Land in the area that was not under royal or religious ownership, was also granted away to smaller religious establishments. St Brigid's Church (RMP DU023-011001), c. 297m to the south, was granted by Raymond Carew to the Priory of the Holy Trinity in 1216 (Ball 1995, 130; Igoe 2001, 322). The church fell into disrepair after the Dissolution of the Monasteries of 1535-41.

Later in the medieval period, a new type of residence known as a tower house emerged in Ireland. It was essentially a vertical stack of rooms that was set within a larger walled enclosure often accompanied by a gatehouse. In the Dublin area, especially along the 'frontier zone' there are a substantial number of tower houses and fortified buildings within the Rathdown area. This may be in part due to the presence of The Pale, which was defined as a hinterland around the centre of Anglo-Norman rule based in Dublin. During the 15th century the 'Subsidised Castles Act' provided grants of ten pounds to encourage the construction of castles to defend the Pale against the native Irish. The Down Survey depicts a castle at 'Moltainstowne' at the modern Stillorgan Reservoirs, c. 1.2km to the south-southwest (RMP DU023-045).

#### **3.1.4 Post-Medieval Period (AD 1600–1900)**

In 1609 the Barony of Rathdown was divided in two by the establishment of the county boundary between Wicklow and Dublin. During the 17th century, despite internal conflicts, the English monarchy consolidated its rule in Ireland and by the 18th century, even with the turmoil of the English civil war and arrival of Cromwell in Ireland, the population of southeast Dublin and northeast Wicklow prospered.

The settled political climate of the 18th century saw a dramatic rise in the establishment of large residential houses around the country. This was largely since after the turbulence of the preceding centuries, the success of the Protestant cause and effective removal of any political opposition, the country was at peace. The large country house was only a small part of the overall estate of a large landowner and provided a base to manage often large areas of land that could be dispersed nationally.

During the latter part of the 18th century, the establishment of a parkland context (or demesne) for large houses was the fashion. Although the creation of a parkland landscape involved working with nature, rather than against it, considerable construction effort went into their creation. Major topographical features like rivers and mountains were desirable features for inclusion into, and as a setting, for the large house and parkland. Multiple demesne landscapes and large houses were established throughout County Dublin during this period, due to the proximity of the city.

A number of great estates were established at this time, including Powerscourt House and Rathfarnham House. Smaller estates were also established around this time, which included several houses that still survive within the vicinity of the proposed development area. The proposed development area itself is located within two former demesne landscapes, associated with Stillorgan House (NIAH Garden 2483) and Grove House on the 1843 OS map. The original medieval Stillorgan House (RMP DU023-012001) was demolished in the 1870s/80s and a new residence was built on the site, now known as 'Park House' (RPS 1058).

### **3.2 SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK**

A previous programme of archaeological testing within the proposed development area was carried out under licence 17E0347. Four trenches were excavated within the site, Test trenches 1 and 2 were perpendicular to one another in the restaurant car park while Trenches 3 and 4 were located rear of Esmonde Motors Garage (Figure 3). Nothing of archaeological significance was identified within the trenches. The stratigraphy encountered indicated that the site was previously disturbed during the construction of the existing developments on the site (O Carroll 2017).

A review of the Excavations Bulletin (1970–2021) has revealed that there have been no further archaeological investigations within a 250m radius of the proposed development area.

### **3.3 CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

#### ***William Petty, Down Survey Map of the Barony of Rathdown, Parishes of Kill and Monckstowne, c. 1655***

On Petty's map the proposed development area is situated within the townland of Stillorgan in the parish of Kill. The route of the Bray Road is depicted travelling northwest-southeast through the townland which is annotated as arable meadow and pasture and owned by Wolverston. No other features are depicted. The terroir of the Down Survey records that there is 'a Castle in reaire and about forty Ash Trees and a Corn Mill in reaire.' The castle likely references the castle (RMP DU023-071) of Stillorgan manor, c. 324m to the southeast of the proposed development area.

#### ***John Rocque, An Actual Survey of the County of Dublin, 1760 (Figure 4)***

The proposed development area is depicted to the east of the junction of the Bray Road and Kilmacud Road. The site is situated within Stillorgan House demesne and a

number of structures are depicted in its approximate area. Stillorgan House, occupied by the Wolverton family at this time, is depicted to the east of the site with a large demesne extending to the north, south, and east. Stillorgan Castle (RMP DU023-071) is depicted to the south of the Stillorgan House demesne.

#### **John Taylor, *Map of the Environs of Dublin*, 1816**

This map depicts a similar landscape to Rocque's map; however, the structures are not shown, and the proposed development area is situated within a heavily wooded area annotated as the 'Demesne of Stillorgan'. A small roadway runs through the proposed development area, in a roughly northeast-southwest direction.

#### **William Duncan, *Map of County Dublin*, 1821**

This map is less detailed than Taylor's and the only change of note is that structures are depicted in the approximate location of the site.

#### **First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1843, scale 1:10560 (Figure 5)**

This is the first map to depict the landscape proposed development area accurately. The proposed development area is partially within two demesne landscapes. The southern portion of the site is located within the demesne of Stillorgan House, and is shown as containing a gate lodge. The primary structures including Stillorgan House itself are depicted to the east, outside of the proposed development area. A small structure is depicted within the parkland to the southeast of the proposed development area which may represent the grotto (RPS 1948) though it is unlabelled. There are three ponds shown to the southeast of the site which are likely manmade demesne features. The northern portion of the proposed development area is located within the small demesne of Grove House. The principal buildings of Grove House are depicted to the north.

#### **Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1871, scale 1:10560 (Figure 6)**

By the time of the second edition OS map the Stillorgan House demesne has expanded significantly to the east and northeast, though remains largely unchanged within the proposed development area. The Grove House structures have been extended to the north of the proposed development area and the small associated parkland has been extended in an easterly direction.

#### **Ordnance Survey Map, 1909, scale 1:2,500 (Figure 7)**

On this edition of the OS map Grove House has been renamed Tigh Lorcaín Hall and the associated outbuildings have expanded. There are a number of small structures depicted within the demesne which are located within the boundaries of the proposed development area. Stillorgan House demesne has reduced in size since the 1871 mapping and a gate lodge is again shown within the site. A well is now also annotated within the proposed development area. The original Stillorgan House has been demolished by this time and as a result a more modest structure is shown in its place, though still labelled 'Stillorgan House'.

### **Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1938, scale 1:10560**

By the time of this map, a number of individual residences are now shown within the proposed development area fronting onto the road now known as 'The Hill'.

### **3.4 COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Dun Laoghaire Rathdown (DLR) Development Plan (2016–2022), draft plan (2022–2028) and Stillorgan Local Area Plan (2018–2024) details all of the Recorded Monuments within the vicinity of the proposed development as well as policies and objectives relating to heritage and archaeology (Appendix 2).

There are two archaeological sites within 250m of the proposed development area, both of which are recorded monuments. There are no National Monuments in State Care or site subject to Preservation Orders within the 250m study area of the proposed development area.

The site of a medieval house (RMP DU023-012001) is recorded c. 176m east of the site and a Bronze Age flat cemetery (RMP DU023-012002) is recorded c. 200m east of the site. Further information on these sites can be found in Appendix 1.

### **3.5 STRAY FINDS WITHIN THE SURROUNDING AREA**

Information on artefact finds from the study area in County Dublin has been recorded by the National Museum of Ireland since the late 18th century. Location information relating to these finds is important in establishing prehistoric and historic activity in the study area.

A review of the topographical files revealed that no stray finds have been recovered from the study area of the proposed development area. A number of records are present in the NMI files relating to human remains and flint artefacts discovered within the cist burials which formed the flat cemetery (RMP DU023-012002), c. 200m east of the site.

### **3.6 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Inspection of the aerial photographic coverage of the proposed development area held by the Ordnance Survey (1995–2013), Google Earth (2005–2021) and Bing Maps (2021) revealed that the former modern buildings that occupied the site were removed c. 2018/2019. No features of archaeological potential were identified from the aerial photography and satellite imagery. The site is shown as being fully developed from at least 1995. Plate 1 shows the site fully developed and Plate 2 shows the site following the demolition of structures.

### **3.7 FIELD INSPECTION**

The field inspection sought to assess the site, its previous and current land use, the topography, and any additional information relevant to the report. During the course of the field investigation the proposed development site and its surrounding environs were inspected (Figure 1).





Plate 1: Proposed development area prior to removal of structures (Google Earth 2016)



Plate 2: Proposed development area following removal of modern development (Google Earth 2021)

The proposed development area comprises a roughly triangular portion of land, which slopes gradually to the south (Plate 3). The site can be classed as ‘brownfield’ as it is now vacant following the demolition of modern development across the site (as part of an earlier planning permission). Hard standing and tarmac surfaces are all that remain from the previous development. Today the site is surrounded by modern boundary treatments, with metal fencing along the eastern and northern extents. A residential unit borders the site to the south and is separated from the site by a modern wall and wooden hoarding. The eastern boundary is formed by a modern masonry wall and wooden hoarding.



Plate 3: Proposed development area, facing south

No sites or areas of archaeological potential were noted during the course of the field inspection.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development area is located immediately west of the N11 and south of the Kilmacud Road Lower, in Stillorgan Co. Dublin. There are two archaeological sites within 250m of the proposed development area, both of which are recorded monuments. The site of a medieval house (RMP DU023-012001) is recorded c. 176m east of the proposed development area. A Bronze Age flat cemetery (RMP DU023-012002) is recorded c. 200m east of the site.

A previous programme of archaeological testing within the proposed development area was carried out under licence 17E0347. Four trenches were excavated within the site. The stratigraphy encountered indicated that the site was previously disturbed during the construction of the existing developments on the site and nothing of archaeological significance was identified (O Carroll 2017).

The cartographic sources show that the proposed development area once formed part of two demesne landscapes, Stillorgan House and the smaller Grove House (later renamed Tigh Lorcaín Hall). Stillorgan House (NIAH Garden 2483) is included within the NIAH Garden Survey but has been completely developed with no original features remaining. Grove House demesne is not included in the NIAH Garden Survey but is visible on the historic OS mapping. It has also been subject to extensive development and nothing remains of the original parkland.

The aerial photography and satellite imagery of the proposed development area shows that the site was subject to extensive development during the modern period and cleared of the existing buildings c. 2018/2019 as part of an earlier grant of planning.

A field inspection has been carried out as part of this assessment and confirmed that the site has been subject to extensive disturbance. Given the level of this disturbance, the archaeological potential of the proposed development area is considered to be very low.

## 5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION STRATEGY

Impacts can be identified from detailed information about a project, the nature of the area affected, and the range of archaeological resources potentially affected. Archaeological sites can be affected adversely in a number of ways: disturbance by excavation, topsoil stripping; disturbance by vehicles working in unsuitable conditions; and burial of sites, limiting access for future archaeological investigation. Upstanding archaeology can be affected adversely by direct damage or destruction arising from development, from inadvertent damage arising from vibration, undermining etc. and also by indirect impacts to a building's visual setting, view, or curtilage.

### 5.1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Due to the level of ground disturbance across the development area, twinned within the results of the 2017 testing, no adverse impacts are predicted upon the archaeological resource as a result of development going ahead. It is highly likely that any archaeological deposits that may have been located within the site have been removed during modern development.

### 5.2 MITIGATION

- No archaeological mitigation is deemed to be necessary as part of the proposed development.

**Please note that all recommendations are subject to approval by the National Monuments Service of the Heritage and Planning Division, Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage.**

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## **CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES**

William Petty, *Down Survey, Barony of Rathdown, Parishes of Kill and Monckstowne*, c. 1655

John Rocque, *An Actual Survey of the County of Dublin*, 1760

John Taylor, *Map of the Environs of Dublin*, 1816

William Duncan, *Map of County Dublin*, 1821

Ordnance Survey maps of County Dublin, 1843-1938

## **ELECTRONIC SOURCES**

[www.excavations.ie](http://www.excavations.ie) – Summary of archaeological excavation from 1970–2021.

[www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) – DoHLGH website listing all SMR/RMP sites.

[www.osiemaps.ie](http://www.osiemaps.ie) – Ordnance Survey aerial photographs dating to 1995-2013 and 6-inch/25-inch OS maps.

[www.heritagemaps.ie](http://www.heritagemaps.ie) – The Heritage Council web-based spatial data viewer which focuses on the built, cultural, and natural heritage.

[www.googleearth.com](http://www.googleearth.com) – Satellite imagery of the proposed development area.

[www.bingmaps.com](http://www.bingmaps.com) – Satellite imagery of the proposed development area.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 SMR/RMP SITES WITHIN THE SURROUNDING AREA

<b>SMR NO.</b>	DU023-012001
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Stillorgan Grove
<b>PARISH</b>	Stillorgan
<b>BARONY</b>	Rathdown
<b>I.T.M.</b>	720488,728072
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	House - medieval
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	c. 176m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Situated in a flat urban site. Site marked as 'Sillorgan House' the site may mark the location of the original manor house, or main residence of the lord of the manor, which by 1360 was occupied by Sir John Cruise. The Wolverston family resided here during the 16th/17th century between the dissolution of the monasteries and the Cromwellian period. Stillorgan House is mentioned in the Depositions of 1641 (Stokes 1895, 8-9). Improvements were made to that house in 1684 by Sir Joshua Allen, said to be a master builder. In 1695 the then owner Viscount John Allen replaced the fortified manor house with a large mansion. This was described as "a house with wings containing, on one side a miniature theater and on the other side, the stables and enclosing in the centre a large courtyard, the gardens were so extensive as to cover 12 acres and were laid out in the old fashioned style" Internally it was recorded as having a splendid mantelpiece, representing the judgement of Solomon (Stokes 1895, 9). A water-colour owned by Mr Verschoyle which depicts the house, shows a seven-bay two storey mansion over semi-basement, with projecting front gables either end of the façade and with side wings attached to the main house by rails (op. cit, 9). There were dormer windows in the attic storey and large chimneystacks. Demolished c. 1880. No visible surface remains.
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

<b>SMR NO.</b>	DU023-012002
<b>RMP STATUS</b>	Scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the RMP
<b>TOWNLAND</b>	Stillorgan Grove
<b>PARISH</b>	Stillorgan
<b>BARONY</b>	Rathdown
<b>I.T.M.</b>	720506,728092
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Flat cemetery
<b>DIST. FROM DEVELOPMENT</b>	c. 200m east
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Situated in flat open ground now built on. A flat cemetery of several urns and a cist burial discovered during the construction of Stillorgan House



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	(Price 1940, 125; Waddell 1970, 116). Not visible at ground level.
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<a href="http://www.archaeology.ie/">www.archaeology.ie/</a> SMR file

## **APPENDIX 2 LEGISLATION PROTECTING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

### **PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The cultural heritage in Ireland is safeguarded through national and international policy designed to secure the protection of the cultural heritage resource to the fullest possible extent (Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht, and the Islands 1999, 35). This is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (Valletta Convention), ratified by Ireland in 1997.

### **THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

The *National Monuments Act 1930 to 2014* and relevant provisions of the *National Cultural Institutions Act 1997* are the primary means of ensuring the satisfactory protection of archaeological remains, which includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. A National Monument is described as ‘a monument or the remains of a monument the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching thereto’ (National Monuments Act 1930 Section 2). A number of mechanisms under the National Monuments Act are applied to secure the protection of archaeological monuments. These include the Register of Historic Monuments, the Record of Monuments and Places, and the placing of Preservation Orders and Temporary Preservation Orders on endangered sites.

### **OWNERSHIP AND GUARDIANSHIP OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS**

The Minister may acquire national monuments by agreement or by compulsory order. The state or local authority may assume guardianship of any national monument (other than dwellings). The owners of national monuments (other than dwellings) may also appoint the Minister or the local authority as guardian of that monument if the state or local authority agrees. Once the site is in ownership or guardianship of the state, it may not be interfered with without the written consent of the Minister.

### **REGISTER OF HISTORIC MONUMENTS**

Section 5 of the 1987 Act requires the Minister to establish and maintain a Register of Historic Monuments. Historic monuments and archaeological areas present on the register are afforded statutory protection under the 1987 Act. Any interference with sites recorded on the register is illegal without the permission of the Minister. Two months’ notice in writing is required prior to any work being undertaken on or in the vicinity of a registered monument. The register also includes sites under Preservation Orders and Temporary Preservation Orders. All registered monuments are included in the Record of Monuments and Places.

### **PRESERVATION ORDERS AND TEMPORARY PRESERVATION ORDERS**

Sites deemed to be in danger of injury or destruction can be allocated Preservation Orders under the 1930 Act. Preservation Orders make any interference with the site

illegal. Temporary Preservation Orders can be attached under the 1954 Act. These perform the same function as a Preservation Order but have a time limit of six months, after which the situation must be reviewed. Work may only be undertaken on or in the vicinity of sites under Preservation Orders with the written consent, and at the discretion, of the Minister.

### **RECORD OF MONUMENTS AND PLACES**

Section 12(1) of the 1994 Act requires the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht, and the Islands (now the Minister for the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage) to establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes that such monuments exist. The record comprises a list of monuments and relevant places and a map/s showing each monument and relevant place in respect of each county in the state. All sites recorded on the Record of Monuments and Places receive statutory protection under the National Monuments Act 1994. All recorded monuments on the proposed development site are represented on the accompanying maps.

Section 12(3) of the 1994 Act provides that ‘where the owner or occupier (other than the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands) of a monument or place included in the Record, or any other person, proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such a monument or place, he or she shall give notice in writing to the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands to carry out work and shall not, except in case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the Minister, commence the work until two months after giving of notice’.

Under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, anyone who demolishes or in any way interferes with a recorded site is liable to a fine not exceeding €3,000 or imprisonment for up to 6 months. On summary conviction and on conviction of indictment, a fine not exceeding €10,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years is the penalty. In addition, they are liable for costs for the repair of the damage caused.

In addition to this, under the *European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989*, Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) are required for various classes and sizes of development project to assess the impact the proposed development will have on the existing environment, which includes the cultural, archaeological, and built heritage resources. These document’s recommendations are typically incorporated into the conditions under which the proposed development must proceed, and thus offer an additional layer of protection for monuments which have not been listed on the RMP.

### **THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000**

Under planning legislation, each local authority is obliged to draw up a Development Plan setting out their aims and policies with regard to the growth of the area over a five-year period. They cover a range of issues including archaeology and built heritage, setting out their policies and objectives with regard to the protection and enhancement of both. These policies can vary from county to county. The Planning and Development Act 2000 recognises that proper planning and sustainable

development includes the protection of the archaeological heritage. Conditions relating to archaeology may be attached to individual planning permissions.

### **Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, 2016-2022**

The development plan contains the following policies with regard to the archaeological resource:

**AH 1** Protection of Archaeological Heritage – It is Council policy to protect archaeological sites, national Monuments (and their setting), which have been identified in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), whilst at the same time reviewing and assessing the feasibility of improving public accessibility to the sites and monuments under the direct ownership or control of the Council or the state.

**AH 2** Protection of Archaeological Material in-situ - It is Council policy to seek the preservation in-situ (or as a minimum, preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places, and of previously unknown sites, features and objects of archaeological interest that become revealed through development activity. In respect of decision making on development proposals affecting sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, the Council will have regards to the advice and/or recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (now Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht).

**AH 3** Protection of Historic Towns – It is Council policy to protect the Historic town of Dalkey as identified by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (now Department of Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht).

**AH 4** Designation of Archaeological Landscapes – It is Council policy to identify, designate and protect Archaeological landscapes in co-operation with relevant government departments.

**AH 5** Historic Burial Grounds – It is Council policy to protect historic burial grounds within the County and encourage their maintenance in accordance with good conservation practice.

**AH 6** Underwater Archaeology – It is Council policy for all developments, which have the potential to impact on riverine, inter-tidal and sub-tidal environments to require an archaeological assessment prior to works being carried out.

### **Draft Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, 2022-2028**

11.3.1.1 Policy Objective HER1: Protection of Archaeological Heritage.

It is a Policy Objective to protect archaeological sites, National Monuments (and their settings), which have been identified in the Record of Monuments and Places and, where feasible, appropriate and applicable to promote access to and signposting of such sites and monuments.

#### 11.3.1.2 Policy Objective HER2: Protection of Archaeological Material in Situ.

It is a Policy Objective to seek the preservation in situ (or where this is not possible or appropriate, as a minimum, preservation by record) of all archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places, and of previously unknown sites, features and objects of archaeological interest that become revealed through development activity. In respect of decision making on development proposals affecting sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, the Council will have regard to the advice and/ or recommendations of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG).

11.3.2.1 Policy Objective HER3: Protection of Historic Towns It is a Policy Objective to promote and protect the Historic Town of Dalkey as identified by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) (consistent with RPO 9.27 of the RSES).

#### 11.3.2.2 Policy Objective HER4: Carrickmines Castle Site

It is a Policy Objective to support the implementation of the (Archaeological) Conservation Plan for the Carrickmines Castle Site.

#### 11.3.2.3 Policy Objective HER5: Historic Burial Grounds

It is a Policy Objective to protect historical and/or closed burial grounds within the County and encourage their maintenance in accordance with good conservation practice and to promote access to such sites where possible.

#### 11.3.2.4 Policy Objective HER6: Underwater Archaeology

It is a Policy Objective for all developments, which have potential to impact on riverine, intertidal and sub-tidal environments to require an archaeological assessment prior to works being carried out.

## **APPENDIX 3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE**

### **POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL REMAINS**

Impacts are defined as ‘the degree of change in an environment resulting from a development’ (Environmental Protection Agency 2017). They are described as profound, significant, or slight impacts on archaeological remains. They may be negative, positive, or neutral, direct, indirect, or cumulative, temporary, or permanent.

Impacts can be identified from detailed information about a project, the nature of the area affected, and the range of archaeological and historical resources potentially affected. Development can affect the archaeological and historical resource of a given landscape in a number of ways.

- Permanent and temporary land-take, associated structures, landscape mounding, and their construction may result in damage to or loss of archaeological remains and deposits, or physical loss to the setting of historic monuments and to the physical coherence of the landscape.
- Archaeological sites can be affected adversely in a number of ways: disturbance by excavation, topsoil stripping and the passage of heavy machinery; disturbance by vehicles working in unsuitable conditions; or burial of sites, limiting accessibility for future archaeological investigation.
- Hydrological changes in groundwater or surface water levels can result from construction activities such as de-watering and spoil disposal, or longer-term changes in drainage patterns. These may desiccate archaeological remains and associated deposits.
- Visual impacts on the historic landscape sometimes arise from construction traffic and facilities, built earthworks and structures, landscape mounding and planting, noise, fences, and associated works. These features can impinge directly on historic monuments and historic landscape elements as well as their visual amenity value.
- Landscape measures such as tree planting can damage sub-surface archaeological features, due to topsoil stripping and through the root action of trees and shrubs as they grow.
- Ground consolidation by construction activities or the weight of permanent embankments can cause damage to buried archaeological remains, especially in colluviums or peat deposits.

- Disruption due to construction also offers in general the potential for adversely affecting archaeological remains. This can include machinery, site offices, and service trenches.

*Although not widely appreciated, positive impacts can accrue from developments. These can include positive resource management policies, improved maintenance and access to archaeological monuments, and the increased level of knowledge of a site or historic landscape as a result of archaeological assessment and fieldwork.*

### **PREDICTED IMPACTS**

The severity of a given level of land-take or visual intrusion varies with the type of monument, site or landscape features and its existing environment. Severity of impact can be judged taking the following into account:

- The proportion of the feature affected and how far physical characteristics fundamental to the understanding of the feature would be lost;
- Consideration of the type, date, survival/condition, fragility/vulnerability, rarity, potential and amenity value of the feature affected;
- Assessment of the levels of noise, visual and hydrological impacts, either in general or site-specific terms, as may be provided by other specialists.

## **APPENDIX 4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE**

### **POTENTIAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE REMAINS**

Mitigation is defined as features of the design or other measures of the proposed development that can be adopted to avoid, prevent, reduce, or offset negative effects.

The best opportunities for avoiding damage to archaeological remains or intrusion on their setting and amenity arise when the site options for the development are being considered. Damage to the archaeological resource immediately adjacent to developments may be prevented by the selection of appropriate construction methods. Reducing adverse effects can be achieved by good design, for example by screening historic buildings or upstanding archaeological monuments or by burying archaeological sites undisturbed rather than destroying them. Offsetting adverse effects is probably best illustrated by the full investigation and recording of archaeological sites that cannot be preserved *in situ*.

### **DEFINITION OF MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE**

The ideal mitigation for all archaeological sites is preservation *in situ*. This is not always a practical solution. Therefore, a series of recommendations are offered to provide ameliorative measures where avoidance and preservation *in situ* are not possible.

*Archaeological Test Trenching* can be defined as ‘a limited programme of intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality, and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate’ (ClfA 2014a).

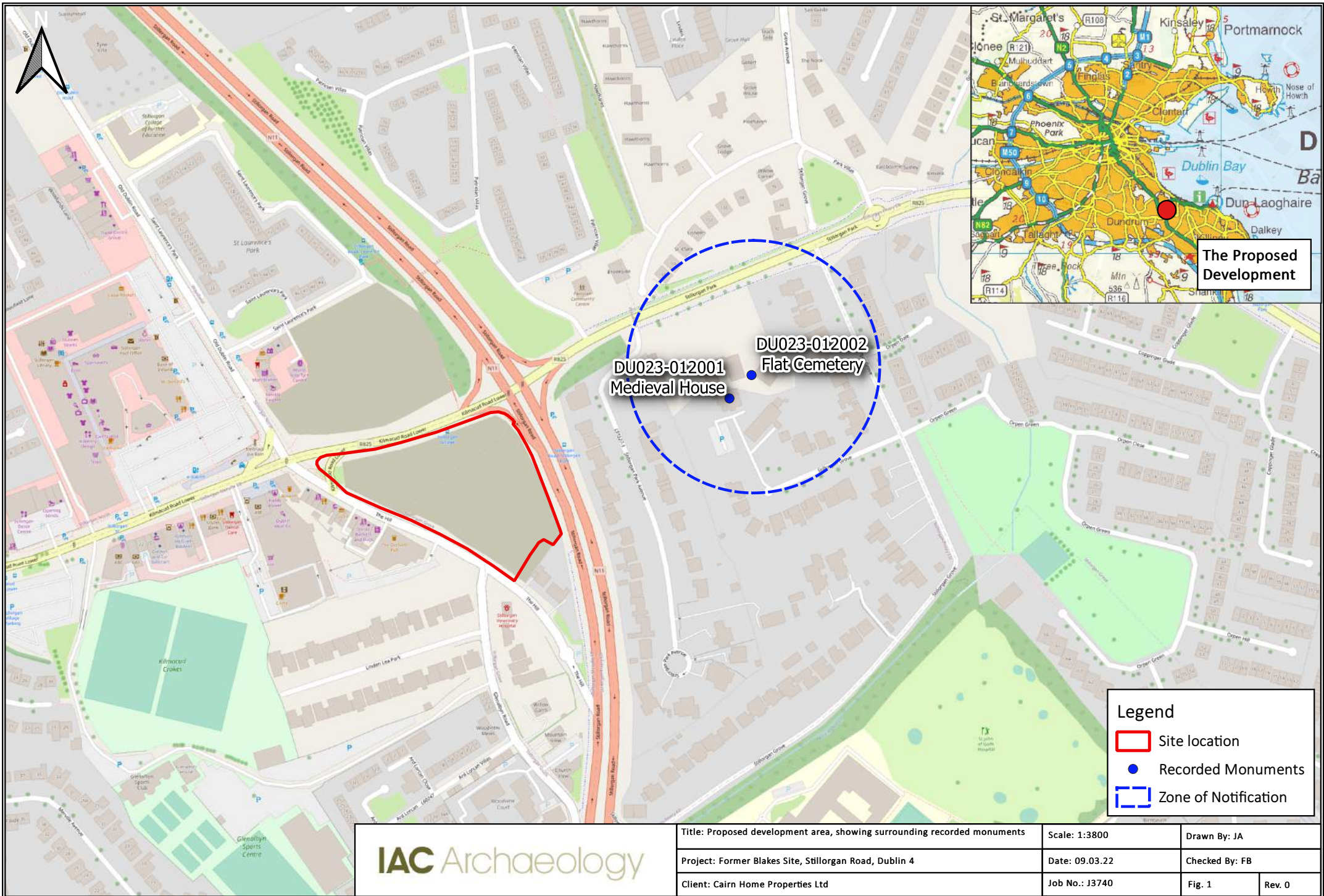
*Full Archaeological Excavation* can be defined as ‘a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. The records made and objects gathered during fieldwork are studied and the results of that study published in detail appropriate to the project design’ (ClfA 2014b).

*Archaeological Monitoring* can be defined as ‘a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be



disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive (ClfA 2014c).

*Underwater Archaeological Assessment* consists of a programme of works carried out by a specialist underwater archaeologist, which can involve wade surveys, metal detection surveys and the excavation of test pits within the sea or riverbed. These assessments are able to access and assess the potential of an underwater environment to a much higher degree than terrestrial based assessments.



The Proposed Development

DU023-012001  
Medieval House

DU023-012002  
Flat Cemetery

**Legend**

- Site location
- Recorded Monuments
- Zone of Notification

<b>IAC Archaeology</b>	Title: Proposed development area, showing surrounding recorded monuments		Scale: 1:3800		Drawn By: JA	
	Project: Former Blakes Site, Stillorgin Road, Dublin 4		Date: 09.03.22		Checked By: FB	
	Client: Cairn Home Properties Ltd		Job No.: J3740		Fig. 1	Rev. 0



**IAC** Archaeology

Title: Plan of proposed development

Project: Former Blakes Site, Stillorgan Road, Dublin 4

Client: Cairn Home Properties Ltd

Scale: NTS

Date: 09.03.22

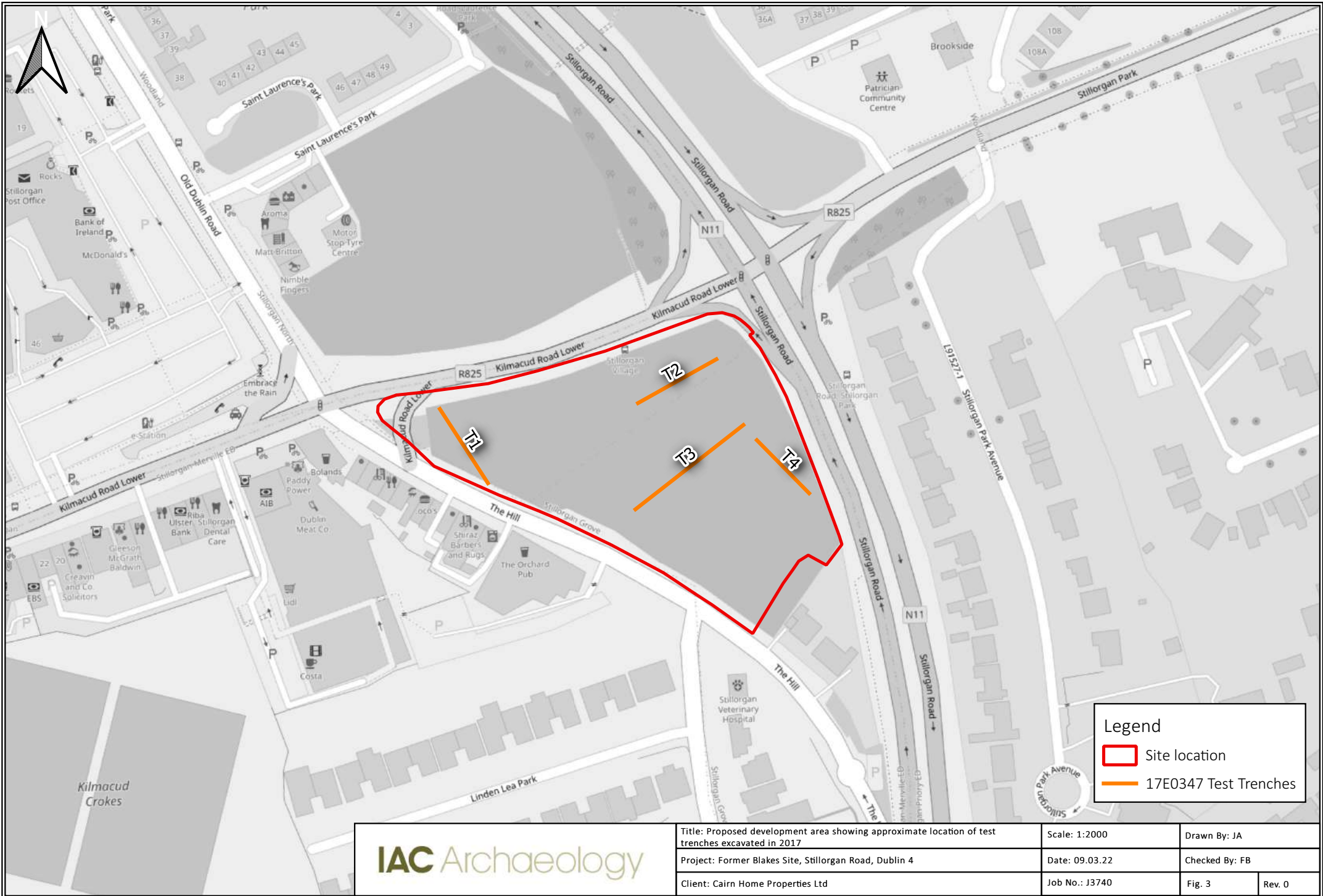
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Drawn By: JA

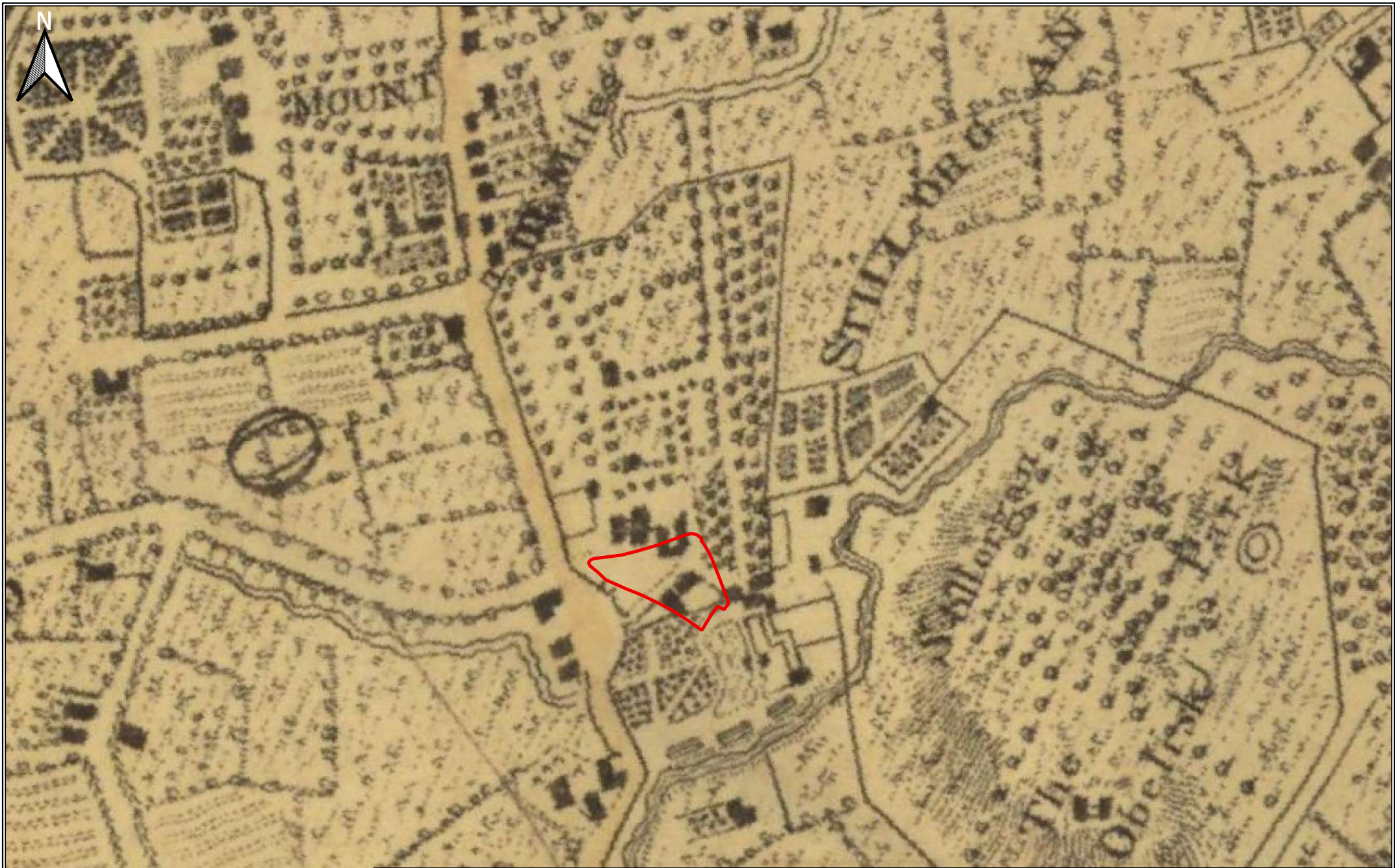
Checked By :FB

Fig. 2

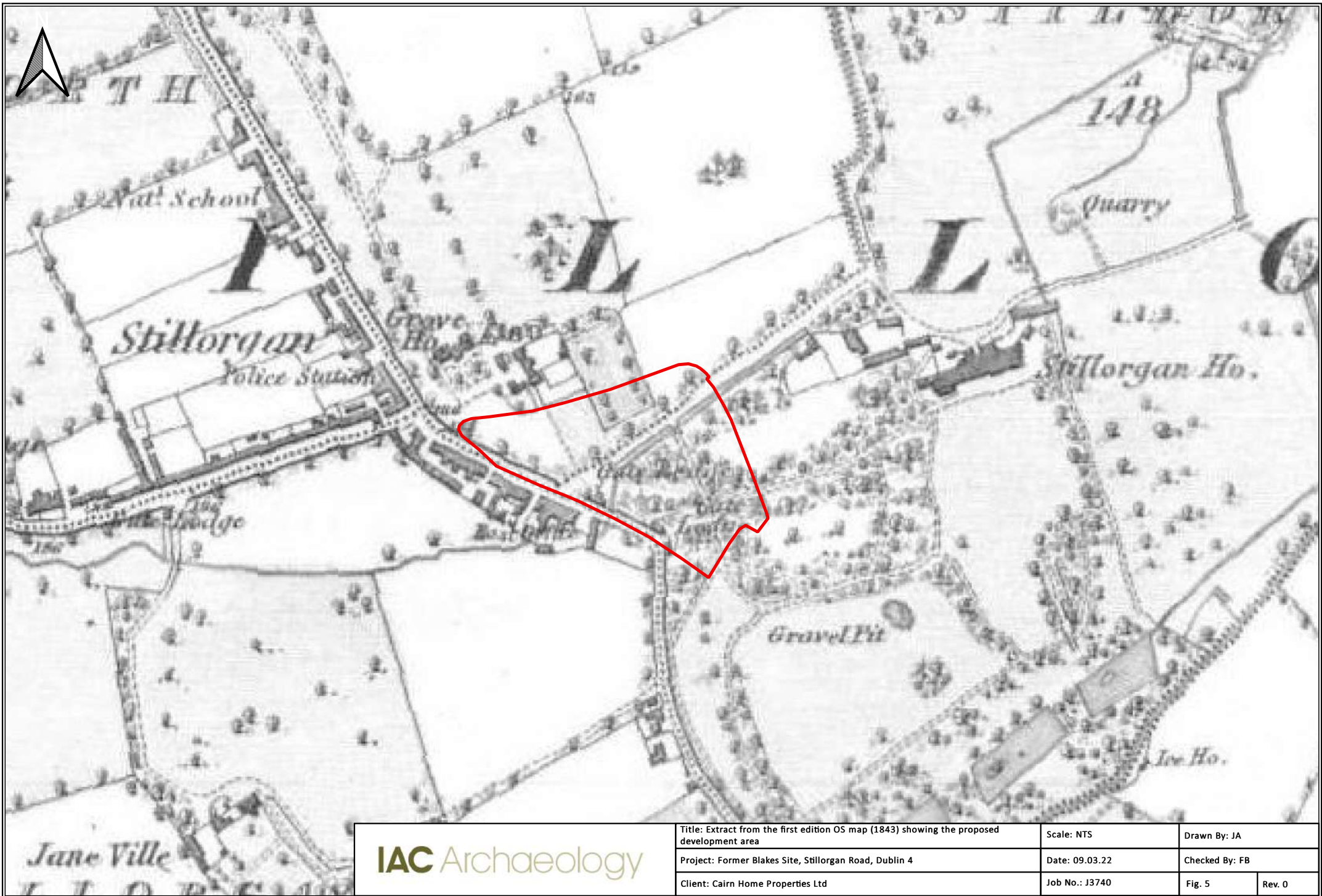
Rev. 0



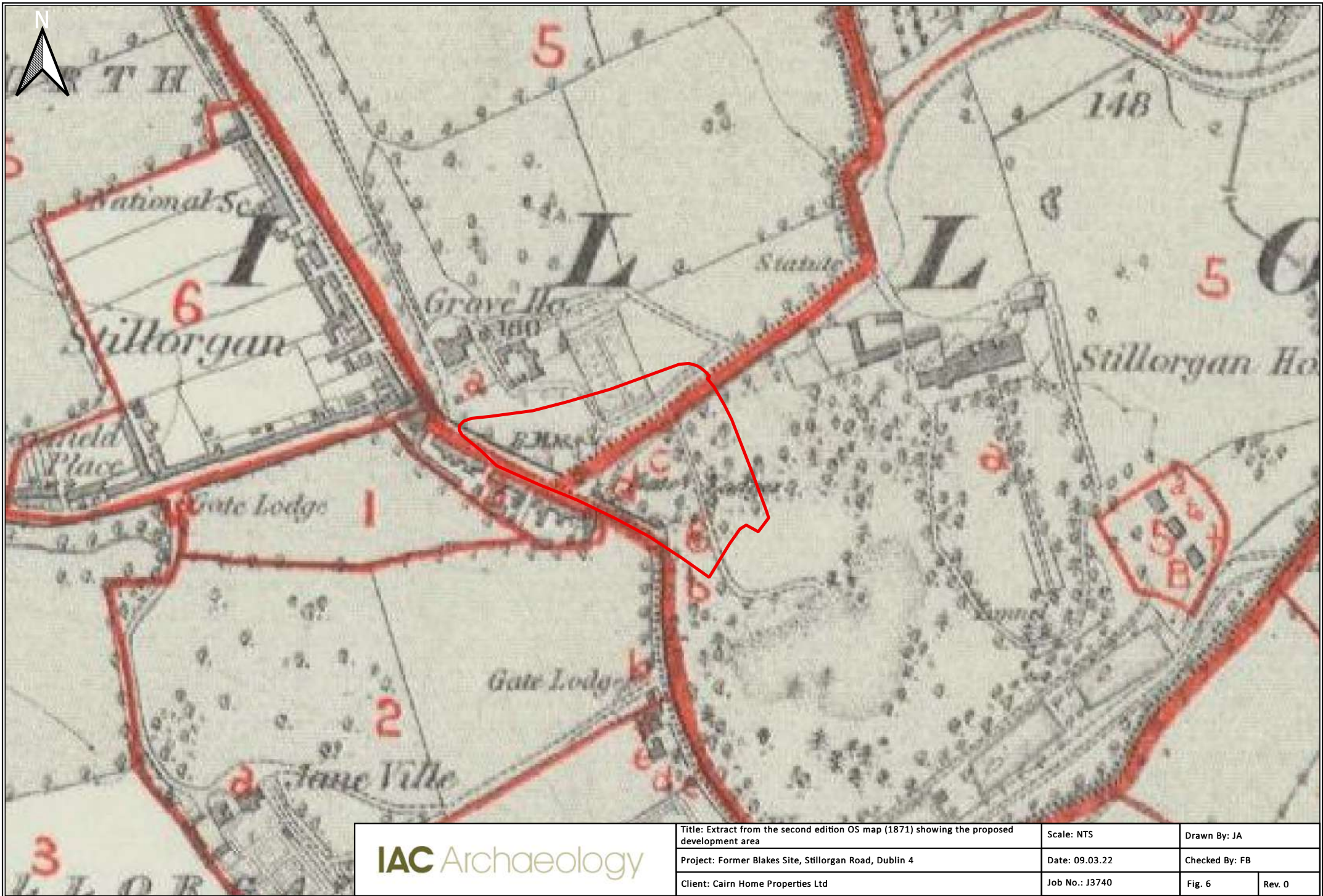
	Title: Proposed development area showing approximate location of test trenches excavated in 2017		Scale: 1:2000	Drawn By: JA
	Project: Former Blakes Site, Stillorgan Road, Dublin 4		Date: 09.03.22	Checked By: FB
	Client: Cairn Home Properties Ltd	Job No.: J3740	Fig. 3	Rev. 0



<b>IAC</b> Archaeology	Title: Extract from Rocque's map of 1760 showing the approximate location of the development area	Scale: NTS	Drawn By: JA
	Project: Former Blakes Site, Stillorgan Road, Dublin 4	Date: 09.03.22	Checked By: FB
	Client: Cairn Home Properties Ltd	Job No.: J3740	Fig. 4



	Title: Extract from the first edition OS map (1843) showing the proposed development area		Scale: NTS	Drawn By: JA
	Project: Former Blakes Site, Stillorgan Road, Dublin 4		Date: 09.03.22	Checked By: FB
	Client: Cairn Home Properties Ltd		Job No.: J3740	Fig. 5



	Title: Extract from the second edition OS map (1871) showing the proposed development area		Scale: NTS	Drawn By: JA
	Project: Former Blakes Site, Stillorgan Road, Dublin 4		Date: 09.03.22	Checked By: FB
	Client: Cairn Home Properties Ltd		Job No.: J3740	Fig. 6

