

HISTORY UNFOLDS

RICH, detailed archaeological discoveries at the site of a £6 million development in Cork city centre have slowed construction work.

However, the city archaeologist Maurice Hurley has said he cannot anticipate if further finds would

jeopardise part of the planned apartment and office development at Crosses Green.

Currently, a 25-strong archaeological team is on site excavating the remains of a 13th century Dominican Abbey, while the dig has also brought to light a number of well-preserved intact human skeletons.

It was quite normal to have a cemetery next to an abbey, explained Mr. Hurley, who added burials probably continued at the grave yard up, to the 1700 hundreds.

Farm site

The abbey ceased during the dissolution of the monasteries period in the 16th century, and the location was subsequently a site for a farm, and more latterly mills, he stated.

The current excavation at the site began in August and as more and more detail emerged it was necessary to bring in additional workers. It is hoped to conclude by mid October, but this is subject to change.

Work was going as quickly as possible, but there were more structures and wall surviving than expected, while the fact some of the dig was below

...but progress slow at Crosses Green dig



● The dig site: first the site of an abbey, then a farm and subsequently a mill.

By TOMMY BARKER

high water level also made progress slow, he said.

Review

"We, as the local authority, are reviewing the situation all the time,"

commented Mr. Hurley, pointing out that An Bord Pleanála had imposed conditions on the developer, Michael O'Flynn construction, which must be adhered to.

"We are endeavouring to facilitate completion of these for the developer - it is not a case of 'them' and 'us', he stated.

Asked if he anticipated finding such a quantity and quality of information to merit preserving the site in the longer term, the city

archaeologist said he simply could not say - "you are asking me to look around corners," he said. An archaeological dig, he continued, constantly threw up surprises. "If you knew what to expect and what you'd find, there'd be no point in doing it," said Mr. Hurley.



● UCC archaeology students stand near a well-preserved skeleton at Crosses Green.

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COLUMN

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