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Preface: Towards a History of DIT College Sites

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Special Issue 2024

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Towards a history of DIT College Sites

PREFACE

The genesis of this special issue of Level3 was in conversations among editors and colleagues about the incremental loss of Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) sites in the city centre. The mantra ‘The city is our campus’ no longer holds as the enlarged Technological University Dublin consolidates on the Grangegorman campus with the addition of significantly large Blanchardstown and Tallaght campus sites. DIT sites tended to be known by their city addresses: Kevin Street, Chatham Row, Rathmines, Bolton Street, Cathal Brugha Street, Linen Hall, Mountjoy Square, Portland Row, Leinster Road, etcetera, with Kevin Street on the same site since 1885 and currently with no physical evidence of having been there. It is likely that the DIT sites, with the exception of Bolton Street and Linen Hall, will be subsumed into their streetscapes and will slip from living memory. A comprehensive, paper-based history of all sites is outwith our capacity just now, unfortunately.

Much has already been published about the histories of DIT colleges and we draw upon that rich resource for this Special Issue. In particular we ‘map’ DIT sites, not only in their educational contexts, but also as embedded entities in the architectural, social, cultural and economic life of the city over two centuries, essentially since the Ordnance Survey Office was established in 1824, two-hundred years ago. Editors invited a team of knowledge-holder colleagues to craft papers about DIT site histories not already covered in publications, or to review recent relevant books, and they responded positively. We drew upon maps, images and photographs as well as documented sources for this Issue and gratefully acknowledge the generosity of authors in this regard.

The Issue is intended for general readership, not only narrating stories in context, but also liberally signposting additional sources and publications. We commend TU Dublin’s ARROW Repository for curating a deep well of unique, historical materials for posterity.

Readers will find commonality of lenses across the papers and much cross-over of information and commentary. This was deliberate and reflects the many conversations and draft papers involved. There is much more to be written yet, with future Special Issues on DIT college sites anticipated.

Issue Editors: Dr Anne Murphy & Dr Phil Hanlon

May 2024

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