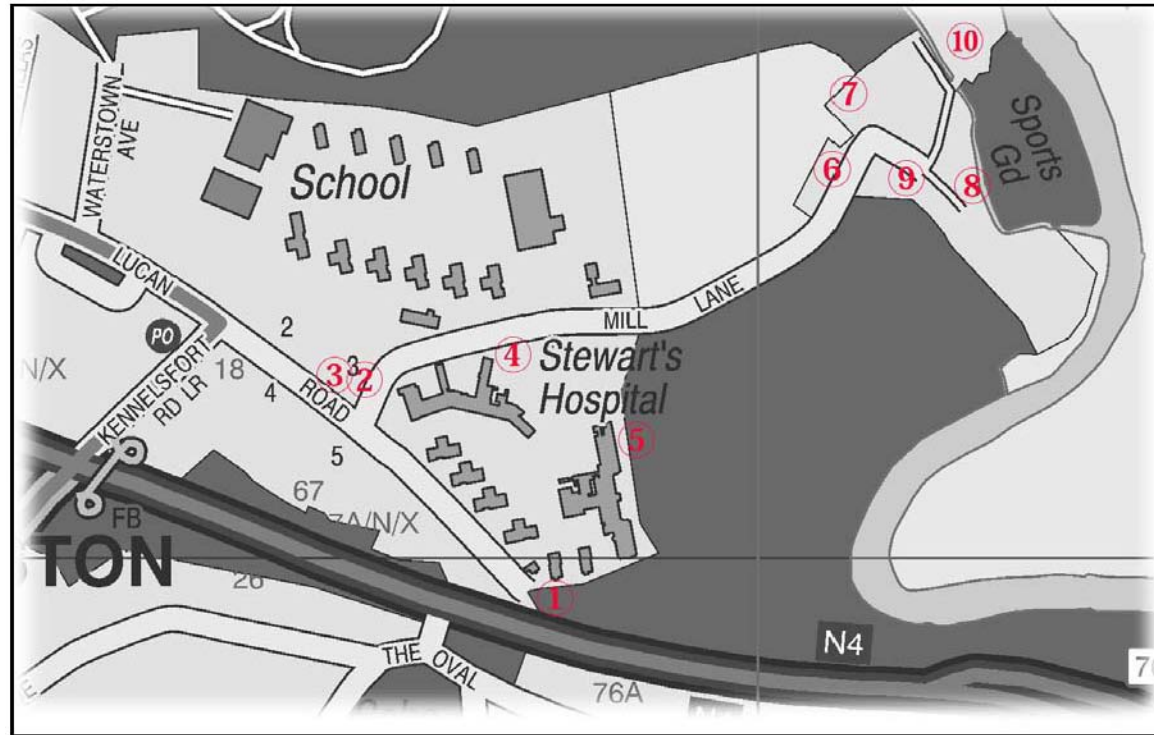


Walking Tour:

The route is from the Palmerstown Bypass, down Mill Lane, incorporating as much of the old village as is possible. Regrettably, despite having a centuries-old industrial, ecclesiastical and architectural heritage, most of Old Palmerstown's most significant areas of interest are inaccessible to the public due to their being located on private property. Please use pedestrian crossings and apply the Safe Cross Code when crossing roads. The distance is approximately 2 km. The walk will take 30 to 40 minutes at a leisurely pace.



Map:

Getting there by Dublin Bus:

- 25A from Wellington Quay (Dublin City-Centre), 25B from Wellington Quay (Dublin City-Centre), 66 & 66A from Wellington Quay (Dublin City-Centre) - 67 & 67A from Wellington Quay (Dublin City-Centre)

Getting there by Car:

Palmerstown Village has disc parking on weekdays and Saturdays, but parking is free on Sundays. It is signposted from the N4. Take the signposted turn at the pedestrian bridge, turning right when you get to a T-junction facing the Palmerstown House pub. Park near the Ulster Bank about 50 metres from the T junction. Walk towards the petrol station along the high wall until you see white gate piers. Go to "Start of Walk" below:

If you've come by bus, alight from the bus just after the Esso petrol station. Walk towards the footbridge in the distance. About 100m before the footbridge, opposite the Palmerstown Service Station you will see a pedestrian crossing. Cross here. Go to the right of the station and behind. You will see a limestone rubble wall with two white gate piers. Go to "Start of Walk" below:

Start of walk:



① These are the old "Galway Road" entrance gates to Stewart's Hospital. Behind the gates can be seen the former gate lodge "Buck House" built in 1850.

In the bald medical terminology of the day, the hospital was founded (in 1872) as the "Stewart Institution for Lunatics", and later split into the "Stewart Institution for Imbecile Children", and the "Asylum for Lunatic Patients of the Middle Classes".

Thankfully the terminology has changed since then, but the hospital still supports vulnerable people with often profound disability. They cater for over 300 residents, and provide specialist services for some 600 non-residents along with running a Home Support Programme.

Follow the wall to the left towards the village. Ahead of you will appear, on a corner, a white 18th Century building called "the Coach House" ②. The Coach House really was originally an actual coach house, with stables, used by travellers when the road on which you stand was the main Dublin to Galway road. It is now part of Stewart's hospital and it offers sheltered employment for people with learning disabilities. Inside is sold hand crafted pottery, ceramics and textiles, many of which are made by Stewarts Workshops.



Immediately to the left of the old coach house is a granite milestone ③ (its inscription now unfortunately illegible), which has stood here for almost 240 years.

Turning right down Mill Lane you are now heading into the oldest, most interesting, and in its time, most industrialised part of Palmerstown.

As the road starts to descend, there is a set of gates to the right. Stand at the gate entrance (Access to the hospital grounds by general public is prohibited) and inside will be seen, on the right, an imposing three-bay redbrick house.



This is the former Asylum Superintendent's house ④ and was built in 1890. It is currently used as a training centre.

Within these grounds is historic Palmerstown House ⑤ dating from 1760. We will get a panoramic view of this building later.



The steep incline down Mill Lane is a legacy of the movement of gigantic icebergs and the subsequent ice-age flood plain of the Liffey, when melting glacier water eroded away the land.



200 metres along and on the left will be seen a terrace of houses ⑥ dating back to 1885. These were part of the original Palmerstown Village. The house at the end of the terrace (in the foreground) was the village tavern.

Along the side of the erstwhile pub is a narrow path leading to gap in some corrugated iron railings. Although the access route looks quite forbidding, there exists an old right of way here. This was once part of the route to the ferry service from old Palmerstown Village to the Strawberry Beds

About 20 metres walk through the quite overgrown surroundings, along the grassy path, will be seen a very interesting old church ruin and cemetery ⑦, the origins of which go back as far as the Norman invasion. The original Norman church was replaced by another (mentioned in 1220). The current structure was built Circa 1670. It is known locally as Stacgory church.



The churchyard and building were cleaned up by the Board of Works in 1978 (this photo was taken by Patrick Healy shortly after the restoration) but the site has since become overgrown again and appears sadly neglected. Only a small number of the memorials in the cemetery are readable due to its overgrown state, however it retains its serene

atmosphere despite some evidence of vandalism.

In time this would be an ideal point of interest for the proposed Liffey Valley Park when the existing fragments of land along the river are eventually acquired and linked together.

Stepping out of the gap in the cemetery wall and looking right, there is a five-bar gate which is partially cut away to enable you to climb over.

A short number of paces beyond the gate will give a nice view of the Liffey Valley including a white latticework bridge spanning the river Liffey. It was built in 1881 by Lord Iveagh to allow for the conveying of water from the Liffey (via a pumping station nearby) to the imposing water tower in the grounds of his Farmleigh Estate.



The unusual water tower points skyward over the trees in Farmleigh Estate and can be seen from miles around. It presents an unusual sight resembling, as it does, the minaret of a Mosque. Unfortunately the treeline obscures the tower from this point. If time permits, there is a good view of it from nearby Waterstown Public Park.

Retrace your steps now, back past the church and out by the old pub, carefully crossing the road and entering the gates directly opposite. Walk a little further on through the trees and the playing fields of Palmerstown Rangers FC will be revealed.

High on the hill to the right, in an imposing setting unchanged since it was built in 1760, is "Palmerstown House" mentioned earlier. A former country house, it was built by John Hely-Hutchinson, 7th Earl of Donoughmore. Palmerstown House is a fine relic of 19th Century nobility and lives on in its current role as the administrative centre of Stewart's Hospital. A plaque to John Hely-Hutchinson's memory can be seen in nearby St. Laurence's Church in Chapelizod where he worshipped.

Over the wall to your left are two imposing structures.



The one on the left ⑧ is a mustard mill; to the right, further away, is a former oil mill. The two mills are on private land and it is not possible to get a closer look at these, or indeed any more of this area's rich industrial heritage.

Retrace your steps and turn right on exiting the gate and walk around the sharp bend. Behind the wall to your right will appear to be a wooded area. In fact there is a ruin totally hidden within its confines. The ruin is of Mill Lane Girls' School ⑨ dating from the 1850s.



This establishment, along with the nearby boys' school (located at the far end of the terrace of houses containing the tavern) served the mill area as well as pupils from a wide area including Fonthill, Ballyfermot, Palmerstown Upper and the long-vanished village of Cursis Stream which once stood where the pedestrian bridge to the Liffey Valley shopping centre stands today.

A little further on you will see a yellow detached three-bay two storey house associated with the mills.

Walk to the end of the lane and stand at the end of the terrace of former millworkers' houses (the road in front of the terrace is private property).

Straight ahead you will see the "Farmleigh Pump House" ⑩ referred to earlier.



It has the appearance of two conjoined churches, complete with pointed arched windows in the gables. It is now an ink studio. The terrace of single-storey millworkers' houses to your left date from 1910, with the multiple-storey ones further on dating from the 1780s when the industries around these parts were in full swing.

Some of the other inaccessible historical sites in the vicinity are:

A former Scutch Mill from 1780 (Scutching is the first step in the manufacture of linen where the fibres are stripped from flax)



A V-shaped weir and sluice on the River Liffey dating from c. 1760:



A former flax rettory (A rettory or flax steep was used to soak flax bundles in readiness for scutching)

