

The Kells & Burry



Townlands Trail

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1. Introduction

The Townlands Trail will be a 10km looped Heritage Trail on the outskirts of the historical town of Kells Co. Meath. The Trail will be suitable for walking, running, cycling etc. The Townlands Trail will pass through 10 townlands in the parishes of Kells and Burry. The area is steeped in history with the Trail passing by (or very close to) 30 attractions including National Monuments, Protected Structures, Houses of Architectural Heritage etc. There will be a self-guided tour facility containing information on the attractions. The Townlands Trail celebrates Irish Heritage and has huge tourism potential, particularly given its proximity to the Heritage town of Kells.

The Trail will greatly benefit the residents of Balrath and Drumbaragh, the residents of Kells, neighbouring towns, villages and communities, and beyond.

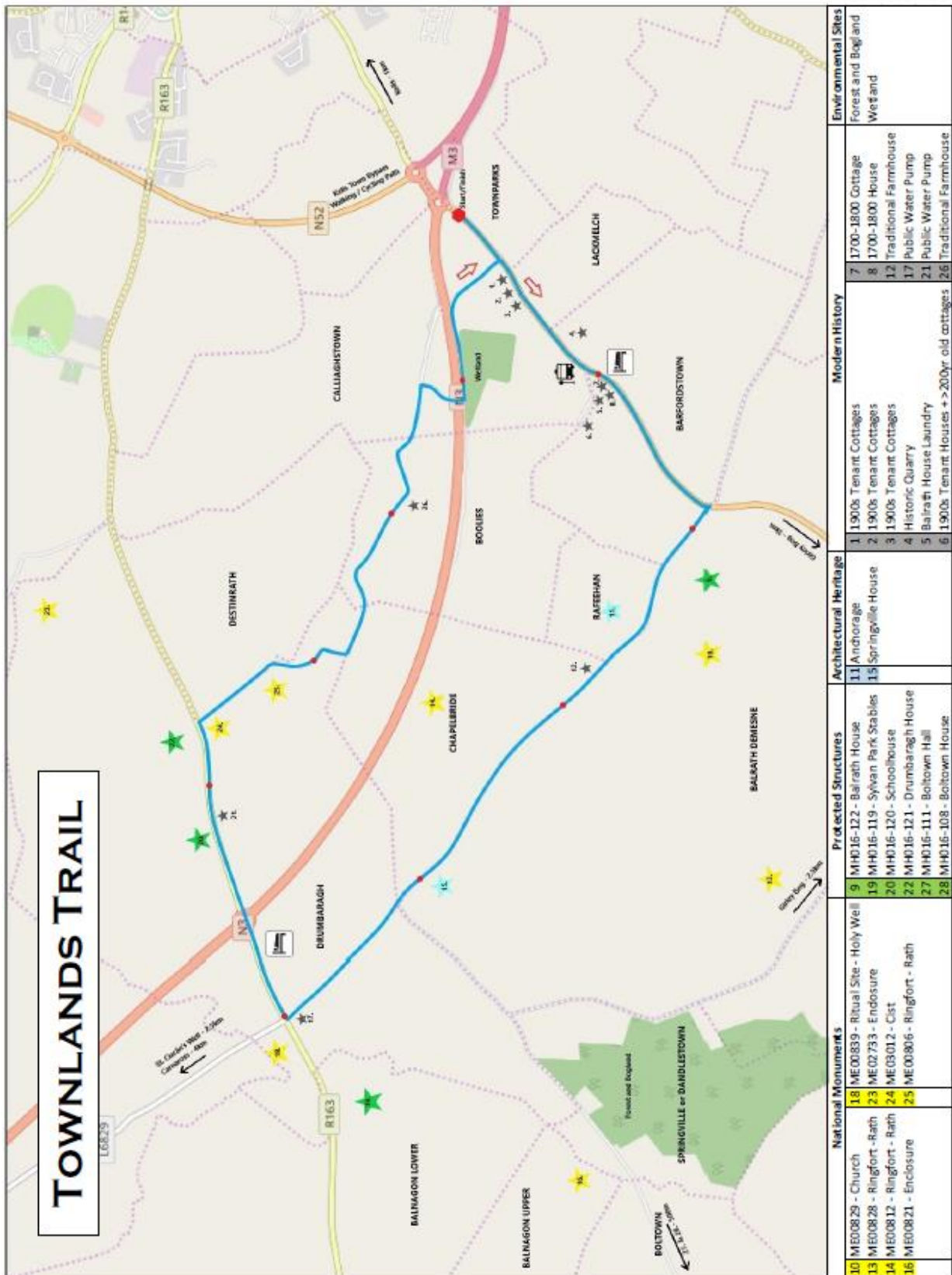
With only 1/3 on footpath and 2/3 on quiet country road and country lane, the Trail immerses the user in the natural beauty of the unspoilt Irish countryside, away from the hustle and bustle of street and road noise. The area is steeped in historical significance and natural beauty. The Townlands Trail provides a means for locals and visitors alike to safely explore the area, something schools and sports clubs are crying out for.

There is a huge demand for an amenity such as this in the area, as is evident from the below list of supporters and the many endorsements received from schools and clubs in the area. Our supporters are very excited by the proposed Trail. They foresee their organisations utilising the Trail for routine educational, sporting and general health exploits. Through our supporters, the Townlands Trail will be immediately exposed to and promoted to over 7000 people.

The Trail is supported by;

- An Garda Síochána
- Flexibus
- Drumbaragh NS
- Our Lady of Mercy NS
- St. Colmcille's NS
- Carnaross NS
- Scoil Mhuire Carlanstown
- Scoil Mhuire Moynalty
- Ballinlough NS
- Kilskyre NS
- Rathmore NS
- Ultan's NS Bohermeen
- Kells Community School
- Eureka School Kells
- Gaeil Colmcille C.L.G.
- Ballinlough GFC
- St. Ultans GFC
- Drumbaragh GFC
- Carlanstown GFC
- Kilmainham GFC
- Crossakiel Handball Club
- Kells Badminton Club
- Carnaross Comm. Games
- Navan Trekkers
- Kells Tennis Club
- Castle Villa FC
- North Meath Rugby FC
- Athboy Rugby Club
- Oldcastle Cycling Club
- 5th Meath Kells Scouts
- Tri an Mhí
- Bohermeen AC
- Moynalty Running Club
- Special Olympics – Kells
- Club Active Kells
- Cllr Bryan Reilly
- Cllr Sean Drew
- Minister Helen McEntee
- Deputy Shane Cassells
- Deputy Thomas Byrne
- Minister Damien English
- Cllr Sarah Reilly

2. Trail Map



3. Trail Route Description

Trail Beginning/End GPS Coordinates: 53°42'56.6"N 6°53'49.6"W (53.715715, -6.897112)

Beginning on the N52 close to the M3 roundabout in the townland of *Townparks*, the Trail heads southwest along the N52 road past the townlands of *Calliaghstown*, *Lackmelch* and into *Barfordstown*. This section of Trail features a variety of points of interest (described in more detail in section 7), Bed & Breakfast Accommodation, and an optional detour down the beautiful “Rhine” laneway.

After approximately 2kms, the Trail leaves the N52 footpath and enters the quiet country road L6835. The Trail passes *Balrath Demesne*, *Rafeehan*, *Chapelbride* and enters *Drumbaragh*. This 3km section of Trail boasts exceptional views towards Crossakiel and Lockcrew Cairns. The section is through beautiful farmland with the remnants of historic estate boundary walls, much of which is still intact, on both sides of the road.

The Trail then turns onto Regional Road R163 through the rural village of Drumbaragh. This section of Trail is just over 1km long and features Drumbaragh National School, Hillside Stores, Bed & Breakfast Accommodation, The Crea Centre, Drumbaragh Emmett’s GFC and other points of interest (described in more detail in section 7).

Staying in the townland of *Drumbaragh*, the Trail turns onto a quiet country lane known as Boolies Lane. Already a popular walking location for the communities of Balrath and Drumbaragh, Boolies Lane is an exceptionally tranquil section of the Townlands Trail, particularly given its proximity to the N3 road. Passing by *Destinrath* and *Chapelbride* then entering *Boolies* and back into *Calliaghstown*, this section of Trail really immerses the walker / cyclist in nature. There are beautiful hedgerows teaming with birds, wildlife, and an abundance of blackberries and other wild berries. The trail passes by a natural marshland area with native flora and fauna visible (common rush, bulrush, red fox etc). Meandering through this tranquil rural country lane relaxes the mind and opens the senses.

After the 3km Boolies Lane section, the Trail returns to the N52 in the townland of *Townparks* for the final 200m leg back to the beginning completing the 10km loop.

The Trail will be waymarked at every kilometre mark, every turn and every point of interest.

4. Trail Access

Foot:

The Trail will be accessible by foot from Kells town. There is an existing footpath from Kells out the N52 to where the Townlands Trail begins, close to the M3 roundabout. This existing section of footpath will also link the Townlands Trail to the future Kells Bypass Walking & Cycling path.

Bicycle:

The Townlands Trail is aimed towards cyclists as well as walkers. The Trail is accessible by bicycle at any point.

Bus:

The Trail will be directly accessible by Public Bus with the imminent extension of Bus Éireann route 167 from Dundalk to Mullingar on the N52 via the community of Balrath. We continue to liaise with the NTA, Meath County Council and Bus Éireann in this regard.

The Trail will indirectly accessible by bus via the town of Kells, which has regular services to and from Dublin, Cavan and Donegal.

Car:

There is limited space for car parking on the Townlands Trail. This will be an Eco-Conscious Trail. The use of private motor vehicles will be discouraged, however car parking is available in the town of Kells.

5. Trail Benefits

Balrath Community

The Townlands Trail passes through Balrath, a rural community of over 250 residents in approximately 100 households. There are vulnerable residents in our community including children, elderly people and people with disabilities. The Trail involves the construction of a footpath through Balrath. The Balrath community has been seeking a footpath for approximately 60 years. The Townlands Trail will benefit the Balrath Community greatly by providing a safe place for people to walk, a means to visit our elderly neighbours, a means for the community to attend school, sports clubs, work etc by foot or bicycle rather than by car. The Trail will provide a critical link between this local community and the town of Kells.

Drumbaragh Community

The Townlands Trail passes through Drumbaragh, another rural community. Large sections of footpath already exist in Drumbaragh, however the community has been seeking an extension to the existing footpaths to allow the community safely access Drumbaragh National School and Drumbaragh Emmett's GFC. The Trail involves the construction of some sections of footpath in Drumbaragh linking the village to local road L6835 on one side and Boolies Lane on the other side. This will allow a much greater number of residents access the school and football club by foot.

The communities of Balrath and Drumbaragh are very closely linked. Both communities are members of a joint Community Alert Group (Drumbaragh/Cloncat/Balrath Community Alert). Many Balrath residents send their children to Drumbaragh National School. Many Balrath residents are members of Drumbaragh Emmett's Gaelic Football Club. Many Balrath residents attend wellness classes at The Crea Centre and shop locally at Hillside Stores. The sections of footpath in Balrath and Drumbaragh will make it possible for families to safely travel between the two communities by foot or bicycle, and will encourage them to do so.

Kells Community

The community of Kells desperately needs an amenity such as the Townlands Trail. Other towns and villages such as Moynalty, Carlanstown and Navan have walking trails of varying length and quality. Realistically these are only accessible from Kells by car. A walking and cycling path along the Kells Bypass is in the pipeline for Kells, however this will be alongside a very busy stretch of road. The Townlands Trail, which for minimum infrastructure investment, will produce a 10km loop. The Trail takes the walker or cyclist deep into the Irish countryside away from traffic, hustle & bustle etc. In addition to being a means to exercise, the added physical and mental health benefits of complete immersion in nature come at no additional cost. As is very evident from the endorsements supporting the Trail, it will be a very useful amenity for schools and clubs for learning, fitness training, events etc. Being accessible to Kells by foot, the Townlands Trail ticks all the boxes.

Neighbouring Towns and Villages

Very positive feedback was received from schools and clubs in neighbouring towns and village. For the same reasons as mentioned above, the Townlands Trail will benefit all surrounding areas.

Tourism

The Townlands Trail has another benefit in that it is a Heritage Trail. There are over 30 historical points of interest on this trail. Kells is internationally recognised as a very historical town. Being accessible to Kells by foot means The Townlands Trail will directly benefit from the existing tourist presence. The Trail shall have a Self-Guided Interactive Smartphone Tour Guide facility available. With the correct promotion, the Townlands Trail shall generate its own tourism which will in turn feed back into Kells and the local economy. The trail has 2 Bed & Breakfasts on the route with much more accommodation available in Kells and beyond.

Environmental and Personal Health

As briefly outlined above, the Townlands Trail when completed will assist with the reduction of greenhouse gases. The community of Balrath are regularly forced to use cars for safety where travelling by foot will be possible on completion of the footpath. The provision of a local amenity in Kells will mean residents of Kells will have a means to exercise without having to travel further afield by car. The positive effects of outdoor exercise, and being in nature, and the physical and mental health benefits of same has been well researched and well documented.

6. Trail Technology

Self-Guided tours are becoming really popular with tourists. They are the preferred tour option for the technology savvy generation. The Townlands Trail will feature a Self-Guided Interactive Smartphone Tour Guide facility. A mobile phone app will be developed which the Trail user will download onto their smartphone. Each waymarker shall have a unique QR Label. When the QR label is scanned using the smartphone, the relevant information will be displayed on the user's smartphone.

In addition to having a written description, the information page shall have an audio description option. Eventually both written and audio information will be available in a range of languages.

The Townlands Trail app will use similar features to the Discover Kells app, and pull information as necessary from other sources such as Dúchas.ie, meathheritage.com, buildingofireland.ie and nationalmonuments.ie.

7. Trail Heritage

This area is steeped in history. There are over 30 sites of historical significance on the trail, and many more very close by. The history of the area is very interesting from ancient history to modern history. Below is a list of some of the sites, which are also identified on the map in section 2. The trail will include information boards along the route however most information will be accessible via smartphone as outlined in section 6.

No.	Name	Summary
1	1900s Tenant Cottages	Evident on the 1888-1913 Ordnance Survey 25 inch survey of Ireland, these semi-detached cottages would have been constructed and owned by the [REDACTED]. The cottages would have been rented from the [REDACTED] by tenants who worked for them on their lands.
2	1900s Tenant Cottages	Evident on the 1888-1913 Ordnance Survey 25 inch survey of Ireland, these semi-detached cottages would have been constructed and owned by the [REDACTED]. The cottages would have been rented from the [REDACTED] by tenants who worked for them on their lands.
3	1900s Tenant Cottages	Evident on the 1888-1913 Ordnance Survey 25 inch survey of Ireland, these semi-detached cottages would have been constructed and owned by the [REDACTED]. The cottages would have been rented from the [REDACTED] by tenants who worked for them on their lands.
4	Historic Quarry	Evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland, this quarry is one of a number of long disused local quarries that would have supplied stone for the construction of tenant cottages and/or land boundary walls.
5	Balrath House Laundry	Evident on the 1888-1913 Ordnance Survey 25 inch survey of Ireland, this building was originally constructed to serve as a laundry to the Balrath House at Balrath Demesne. The building remained the property of the [REDACTED] family until the 1970s. The buildings across the lane are older and evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey of Ireland.
6	1900s Tenant Houses	Evident on the 1888-1913 Ordnance Survey 25 inch survey of Ireland, these semi-detached houses would have been constructed and owned by the [REDACTED]. The cottages would have been rented from the [REDACTED] by tenants who worked for them on their lands.

7	1700s Tenant Cottage	<p>Evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland, this cottage would have been constructed and owned by the ██████████. The cottage would have been rented from the ██████████ by tenants who worked for them on their lands. This cottage remained the property of the ██████████ family until the late 1970s. As is evident from the construction, the cottage was renovated a number of times changing the roof from thatched to slate, raising the roof to increase head room, addition of a chimney etc. Most other similar cottages would have been demolished during the "evictions" following the Great Famine. Many families were evicted or their emigration was facilitated. Vacant houses were quickly demolished.</p>
8	1700s House	<p>Evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland, this house would have been constructed and owned by the ██████████. The house would have been rented from the ██████████ by tenants who worked for them on their lands. This house remained the property of the ██████████ family until the 1980s. As is evident from the more advanced construction, this house is would have been built after the neighbouring cottage and likely underwent significant upgrades over the years.</p>
9	MH016-122 Balrath House	<p>Balrath House is a protected structure and was originally constructed in 1671. It is evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland. Balrath estate was purchased by ██████████ in 1669. ██████████ was a Lieutenant in the Royal Army before 1649. For service done as a commissioner in the Wars of Ireland, he received grants of land in Co. Monaghan, which he sold and purchased Balrath Estate. Balrath House has undergone many changes over the years, most recently in 1942 reducing in size, having been used and damaged by the Army during World War 2.</p>

10	ME00829 - Church	<p>The Church in Balrath Demesne is a National Monument. It is evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland. Situated on a slight rise in a level landscape. Bury was a chapel-of-ease to Kells and was in ruins according to Ussher's Visitation (1622) (Erlington 1847-64, 1, xc). According to Dopping's Visitation (1682-5) the parish church of Bury, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, had been a ruin since 1641 and was not enclosed (Ellison 1973, 9). The church is depicted as a roofed structure on the 1836 ed. of the OS 6-inch map, although described as mere remains (Lewis 1837, vol. 1, 234). Portion of the W gable (int. L 5.55m), surviving to the full height with a light in a lintelled embrasure in the roof area, and an adjoining part of the N wall (L 1.55m) of the church is located towards the N edge of a subrectangular graveyard (dims c. 70m NNE-SSW; c. 45m WNW-ESE at N to c. 70m WNW-ESE at S) that might have been circular and is defined by scarps. Roe (1968, 110) records a fragment of an octagonal font with a circular basin (int. diam. 0.39.5m) and one side panel (Wth 0.24.3m; H 0.25m) from the church that was not noticed in 1984. However, this fragment is confirmed at the S end of the church gable (pers. com. ██████████ 1997). The above description is derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Meath' (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1987). In certain instances the entries have been revised and updated in the light of recent research. Compiled by: ██████████ Date of upload/revision: 4 June 2014 Amended: 31 July, 2014 Amended: 26 February, 2019. Oldest gravestone inscription 1722 (Kells Archaeological & Historical Society survey of graveyard 2012)</p>
11	ME-42-N-710738 - Anchorage	<p>Anchorage is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, and evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland. Known locally as "The Captains House", Anchorage is situated in what was Balrath Estate. The house is thought to have been originally constructed in the late 1600s to early 1700s by the ██████████ family. The house is owned by the extended ██████████ family to this day. The house was home of Irish equestrian show jumber ██████████ ██████████ in the 70s and 80s. Boomerang, the famous Irish show jumping horse was buried outside Anchorage on Rafeehan Stud in May 1983. His grave is marked by four evergreen trees. They are symbols of four Hickstead Derby wins, four Championships at Wembley, four clear rounds in the final of the 1978 World Championships, and four years</p>

		in a row without a fence down in the Aga Khan Trophy competition in Dublin.
12	Traditional Farmhouse	This is a traditional Irish Farm House. Constructed in the early to mid-1900s, it is a typical Irish farm house synonymous with farms throughout Ireland.
13	ME00828 - Ringfort (Ráth)	The Ringfort in Balrath Demesne is a National Monument. Ringforts (or Ráths) are circular fortified settlements that were mostly built during the Bronze age up to about the year 1000. Ringforts come in many sizes and may be made of stone or earth. Earthen ringforts would have been marked by a circular rampart (a bank and ditch), often with a stakewall. Both stone and earthen ringforts would generally have had at least one building inside.
14	ME00812 - Ringfort (Ráth)	The Ringfort in Chapelbride is a National Monument. Ringforts (or Ráths) are circular fortified settlements that were mostly built during the Bronze age up to about the year 1000. Ringforts come in many sizes and may be made of stone or earth. Earthen ringforts would have been marked by a circular rampart (a bank and ditch), often with a stakewall. Both stone and earthen ringforts would generally have had at least one building inside.
15	ME-42-N-697745 - Springville House	Springville House is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, and evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland.
16	ME00821 - Enclosure	The Enclosure in Balnagon Upper is a National Monument. An enclosure is an area defined by an enclosing element (e.g. bank, wall, fosse, scarp), or indicated as such cartographically, and occurring in a variety of shapes and sizes, possessing no diagnostic features which would allow classification within another monument category. These may date to any period from prehistory onwards.
17	Public Water Pump	Many of our older community members still recall going to the pumps for water and carrying it home. For some this continued into the 1960s. Most of the pumps followed a common shape and design while a small number differ. The majority are cylindrical with handles, the “cow-tail” handle being the most recognisable. As local water schemes developed, these pumps became part of our landscape in a new way and are now a facet of our social and industrial history. Many local communities have retained the pumps and use them to showcase their areas, decorating them with flowers and maintaining the paint work. In general the pumps have a cylinder-shaped shaft with a spout and handle. Some of the pumps have decorative caps and others are adorned

		with raised decorations standing out as beautiful, artistic objects in the countryside.
18	ME00839 - Ritual Site - Holy Well	The Holy Well in Drumbaragh is a National Monument. A Holy Well is a well or spring, though in some unusual cases a natural rock basin, which usually bears a saint's name and is often reputed to possess miraculous healing properties. These may have their origins in prehistory but are associated with devotions from the medieval period (5th-16th centuries AD) onwards.
19	MH016-119 - Sylvan Park Stables	Sylvan Park Stables is a protected structure and was originally part of Sylvan Park House which has since been demolished. Sylvan Park House is evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland.
20	MH016-120 - Schoolhouse	The Schoolhouse in Drumbaragh is a protected structure and is evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland. It is a detached four-bay single-storey national school, built c.1850, with pair of gabled porches. Canted window to east gable. Pitched patterned slate roofs with rendered chimneys and cast-iron finials.
21	Public Water Pump	Many of our older community members still recall going to the pumps for water and carrying it home. For some this continued into the 1960s. Most of the pumps followed a common shape and design while a small number differ. The majority are cylindrical with handles, the "cow-tail" handle being the most recognisable. As local water schemes developed, these pumps became part of our landscape in a new way and are now a facet of our social and industrial history. Many local communities have retained the pumps and use them to showcase their areas, decorating them with flowers and maintaining the paint work. In general the pumps have a cylinder-shaped shaft with a spout and handle. Some of the pumps have decorative caps and others are adorned with raised decorations standing out as beautiful, artistic objects in the countryside.

22	MH016-121 - Drumbaragh House	Drumbaragh House is a protected structure and is evident on the 1829-1842 Ordnance Survey 6 inch survey of Ireland. It is a three storey over basement house built c. 1800, attributed to designs by ██████████, remodelled in late 1860s by ██████████, extended to the rear c.1900. Includes gate lodge, walled garden.
23	ME02733 - Enclosure	The Enclosure in Drumbaragh is a National Monument. An enclosure is an area defined by an enclosing element (e.g. bank, wall, fosse, scarp), or indicated as such cartographically, and occurring in a variety of shapes and sizes, possessing no diagnostic features which would allow classification within another monument category. These may date to any period from prehistory onwards.
24	ME03012 - Cist	The Cist in Drumbaragh is a National Monument. A Cist is a rectangular or polygonal structure used for burial purposes, constructed from stone slabs set on edge and covered by one or more horizontal slabs or capstones. Cists may be built on the surface or sunk into the ground or set within a cemetery cairn or cemetery mound. They date to the Bronze/Iron Ages (c. 2400 BC - AD 400).
25	ME00806 - Ringfort (Ráth)	The Ringfort in Drumbaragh is a National Monument. Ringforts (or Ráths) are circular fortified settlements that were mostly built during the Bronze age up to about the year 1000. Ringforts come in many sizes and may be made of stone or earth. Earthen ringforts would have been marked by a circular rampart (a bank and ditch), often with a stakewall. Both stone and earthen ringforts would generally have had at least one building inside.
26	Traditional Farmhouse	This is a traditional Irish Farm House. Constructed in the early to mid-1900s, it is a typical Irish farm house synonymous with farms throughout Ireland.
27	ME016-111 - Boltown Hall	Boltown Hall is a protected structure. Constructed c.1875, the house is two storey over basement with square entrance porch.
28	ME016-108 - Boltown House	Boltown House is a protected structure. It is a 3 bay, 2 storey Georgian house with a hipped roof and two stacks. The outbuildings to the rear of the house have been converted into a dwelling.