

APPENDIX 14.1

Historical and Archaeological Background

Prehistoric Period

Mesolithic Period (c. 8000-4000 BC)

The Mesolithic Period is the earliest time for which there is clear evidence of prehistoric activity in Ireland. During this period people hunted, foraged and gathered food and appear to have had a mobile lifestyle. The most common evidence indicative of Mesolithic activity at a site comprises of scatters of worked flint material; a by-product from the production of flint implements or rubbish middens consisting largely of shells (Stout & Stout, 1997). The latter are commonly discovered in coastal regions or at the edge of lakes.

Whilst there are no recorded sites of this date located within the environs of the proposed road, a Mesolithic site was excavated in Ballycahane Lower, c. 3.9km southeast of the eastern end of the proposed road in 1986. This site, which consisted of a layer of heat-affected stone lay on and within a deposit of peat, also contained butchered animal bones and was dated to 5036-4792 BC (O'Sullivan 2001, 3; Bennett 1986:37). In addition, a wooden plank that was found within the foreshore of the Shannon Estuary c. 9.8 km north of the proposed road, was also dated to the later part of the Mesolithic period (c. 4789-4551 BC) (O'Sullivan 2001, 71-2). Within the wider context of County Limerick, a late Mesolithic/ early Neolithic axehead and lithics were found within alluvial deposits on the northern bank of the River Shannon as part of the Limerick Southern Ring Road (Bermingham *et al.*, 2013, 45). The most significant discovery of this period and arguably within the country, took place within the townland of Hermitage on the banks on the River Shannon, c. 19km to the northeast of the proposed road. Here two cremations were excavated, the earliest of which dated to 7550-7290 (cal)¹ BC. These Mesolithic burials provide the earliest evidence in Ireland for formal burial practices (Collins and Coyne 2006).

Whilst no Mesolithic sites are known within the receiving environment, the size of the proposed road, and the range of topographic and geological features it traverses, including river valleys, peat deposits and areas of high ground, mean that there is general potential for sites of this date to be encountered.

Neolithic Period (c. 4000-2500 BC)

During the Neolithic period communities became less mobile and their economy became based on the rearing of stock and cereal cultivation. This transition was accompanied by major social change. Agriculture demanded an altering of the physical landscape, forests were rapidly cleared and field boundaries constructed. There was a greater concern for territory, which saw the construction of large communal ritual monuments called megalithic tombs, which are characteristic of the period. In Ireland four main types of megalithic tomb have been identified: court-tombs, portal-tombs, passage-tombs and wedge-tombs. The first three types are earlier in date (pre-2000 BC) and are largely confined to the northern half of the country, while wedge-tombs are slightly later in date and are most numerous in the west and south-west. There are no recorded megalithic tombs located within the receiving environment of the proposed road. However, within the wider area, a wedge-tomb is recorded c. 2.7km north of the proposed road in the townland of Clorhane (LI012-067).

Neolithic settlement, in the form of houses with associated domestic activity, is becoming more common within the archaeological record. Whilst no definitive Neolithic habitation sites have been identified within the receiving environment of proposed road, houses and settlement activity has been recorded in the southeast of the county, at Kilmallock, 22km south of the

¹ Calibrated Carbon 14 date

proposed road (Gowen 1988, 26-43). A Neolithic enclosure and settlement has also been recorded at Lough Gur, 15.5km southeast of the proposed road (Grogan *et al.* 1987, 305). In addition, two stone axes that are likely to be Neolithic in date, have been recovered from the townlands of Shanbally (4.5km east of Askeaton) and Ballyhomin (1.1km northeast of Askeaton) (National Museum of Ireland (NMI) Files 1985:83 and IA/23/83).

As with the Mesolithic period, no Neolithic sites are known within the receiving environment, however, the size of the proposed road and the range of topographic and geological features it traverses, including river valleys, peat deposits and areas of high ground, mean that there is general potential for sites of this date to be encountered.

Bronze Age (c. 2500-600 BC)

The Bronze Age was characterised by the introduction of metalworking technology to Ireland and coincides with many changes in the archaeological record, both in terms of material culture as well as the nature of the sites and monuments themselves. Although this activity had markedly different characteristics to that of the preceding Neolithic period, including new structural forms and new artefacts (such as Beaker pottery), it also reflects a degree of continuity. Megalithic tombs were no longer constructed and the burial of the individual became more typical. Cremated or inhumed bodies were often placed in a cist, a small stone box set into the ground, a stone-lined grave or even a simple pit. Burials were often made within cemeteries and marked within the landscape with the construction of an earthen barrow or cairn of stones. A small cremation pit was excavated in 2012 directly south of the proposed road in the townland of Sroolane North (EX 2 – see Appendix 14.14). Analysis of the cremated bone confirmed that it was human and identified it as the partial remains of a young juvenile individual. The bone was radiocarbon dated to 2283–2038 cal. BC, placing the burial in the early Bronze Age. The charcoal assemblage was atypical of Bronze Age cremation burials, in that hazel rather than oak was the dominant wood type present. No further archaeological remains were identified during works in this area, however the cremation pit may be associated with other remains in the wider area that currently have no surface expression.

The most common Bronze Age site within the archaeological record, and indeed the overall study area of the receiving environments, is the burnt mound or *fulachtaí fia*. Over 7000 *fulachtaí fia* have been recorded in the country making them the most common prehistoric monument in Ireland (Waddell 2010, 183). Although burnt mounds of shattered stone occur as a result of various activities that have been practiced from the Mesolithic to the present day, those noted in close proximity to a trough are generally interpreted as Bronze Age cooking/industrial sites. *Fulachtaí fia* generally consist of a low mound of burnt stone, commonly in a horseshoe shape, centred around an earth-cut trough. They are found in low-lying marshy areas or close to streams or rivers, often at the interface of between wetland and dryland, with easy access to drier ground (Grogan, O'Donnell and Johnston, 2007, 87). Often these sites have been ploughed out and survive as a spread of heat-shattered stones in charcoal-rich soil with no surface expression. There are a number of *fulachtaí fia* recorded within the vicinity of the proposed road (AH 68, 72, 73, 75, 78, 79, 81, 85, 87, 94, 103, 105, 106, 109, 111, and 113 – see Appendix 14.14 for details of previous excavations), most have been excavated as part of the Gas Pipeline to the West, which excavated a total of 109 *fulachtaí fia* across the project, with 39 recorded across Limerick (*ibid.* 82). At AH 81 (EX 4; 85m north of the proposed road) a *fulachtaí fia* was excavated as part of the project, this site was separated into three areas, consisting of the *fulacht*, a limestone trackway and a roasting pit area. The *fulachtaí fia* contained a trough, which relied on the groundwater table and a nearby stream for water. After a relatively short period the focus appears to have shifted to an upslope area, which contained six dry-roasting pits and was linked to the *fulacht* by the limestone trackway (*ibid.* 308).

Another common feature of the Bronze Age landscape is the standing stone, usually a single upright orthostat. They are known by various names including *gallán*, *dallán*, *leacht* and long stone (Power et. al. 1992, 45). Although it is thought that the standing stones were erected across a wide time span and had multiple functions they are most often associated with the Bronze Age. They are generally unworked stones and often have packing stones around their base providing additional support. A large number of standing stones are orientated on a north-east–south-west axis corresponding with those of other megalithic architecture, such as stone rows or circles (Ronan, Egan and Byrne 2009, 22). A wide variety of functions have been attributed to these stones, such as burial markers and route or territorial markers. More recent stones have been erected as scratching posts for cattle. A standing stone is recorded c. 55m south of the proposed road (AH 51) at Rathkeale.

A previously unrecorded standing stone is located in the townland of Ardaneer (CH 102), within the proposed road boundary, although it is thought this is more likely to represent a scratching post or gate post rather than a prehistoric monument.

The LiDAR survey carried out for the proposed road has identified a relict field system (LI 7) which extends from the proposed road to c.125m west of the proposed road boundary in the townland of Ardaneer, which may have prehistoric origins, though this would need to be confirmed by intrusive investigations. A large D-shaped enclosure (LI 25) located in the townland of Rincullia may partially extend into the proposed road boundary and may be of prehistoric date. As with LI 7 however, this would need to be confirmed by intrusive investigations.

Iron Age (c. 600 BC- AD 500)

There is increasing evidence for Iron Age (c. 600 BC – AD 500) settlement and activity in recent years as a result of development-led excavations. There are two phases of the Iron Age in Ireland, the Hallstatt and the La Tène, which are associated with distinct artwork and metalwork. Whilst the Shannon as a route way was known to Ptolemy in the second century AD (O'Sullivan 2001, 4), there is very little in the way of recorded Iron Age activity within the receiving environment of the proposed road. Sites, including burial evidence, have been identified within the wider area, including Ballysimon 1, Rathbane South and Coonagh West 4 that were excavated as part of the Limerick Southern Ring Road (Bermingham et al. 2013, 24). The NMI files also record that sherds of possible Roman pottery were recovered within the townland of Cloonreask to the southwest of Askeaton, during the 1960s (NMI 1961:275-8).

A ring ditch with 14 deposits of cremated bone was excavated prior to construction of the N21 at Ballybronogue South. The recovery of a decorated bone artefact suggests an Iron Age date for the infilling of the ditch and deposition of the human remains (EX 17 – Appendix 14.14).

Early Medieval Period (AD 500–1169)

During this period Ireland was not a united country but rather a patchwork of minor kingdoms all scrambling for dominance, with their borders ever changing as alliances were formed and battles fought. Kingdoms were a conglomerate of clannish principalities with the basic territorial unit known as a *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*. In Munster the *Eóganachta* formed the ruling dynasties until the middle of the 10th century. These kings were distributed strategically throughout the region and ruled over many tribal units.

During this often violent period, roughly circular defensive enclosures known as ringforts were constructed to protect farmsteads and these are considered to be the most common indicator

of settlement during the early medieval period. One of the most recent studies of the ringfort (Stout, 1997) suggested that there are a total of 45,119 potential ringforts or enclosure sites throughout the island of Ireland. This figure has since been revised upwards to 'over 47,000 ringforts', while O'Sullivan et al suggest that there are 'at least 60,000 early medieval settlement enclosures on the island' (O'Sullivan et al., 2014). They are typically enclosed by an earthen bank and exterior ditch, and range from 25m to 50m in diameter. The smaller single-banked type of ringfort (univallate) was 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. Ringforts were most likely occupied by extended and dispersed family units with the interiors containing features such as domestic dwellings, animal pens, food processing areas, hearths and souterrains (for storage and refuge). A mixed economy would have been practised which would have involved cereal growing and animal husbandry, in particular, dairying.

Evidence for settlement in the preceding Iron Age is rare across Ireland, therefore it can be said that the construction of such a high volume of ringforts in the early medieval period would have had a considerable impact on the Irish landscape.

Ringforts and potential ringforts - often recorded as enclosures - are the most common archaeological sites recorded within the receiving environment of the proposed road. Indeed, West Limerick has one of the highest ringfort densities in the country, at c. 1.52 per square kilometre (Stout 1997, 99).

Of the 122 archaeological sites within the receiving environment, a total of 28 are classed as ringforts (AH 2-4, 6, 8, 10-12, 15-16, 19, 22, 25-27, 29-30, 32-33, 37, 39, 52, 90, 96, and 119-122), a further 35 as enclosures (AH 7, 9, 13, 20-21, 24, 31, 40-44, 46-49, 57-61, 62-66, 84, 92, 97, 99, 102, 104, 108, 114 and 118). These sites were used for both habitation and as stock enclosures. A crannog, a partially or entirely artificial island used as a dwelling place, is also located within the receiving environment (AH 34) and may date to the early medieval period. During the course of the present assessment a significant number of additional sites that are likely to date to the early medieval period have been identified through LiDAR analysis (detailed below). Of the 28 ringforts within the receiving environment, three ringforts (AH 4, 8 and 39) and seven enclosures (AH 7, 24, 40, 58, 60, 62 and 64) are located within or partially within the proposed road boundary. Detailed information of the nature and survival of these monuments are given in Appendix 14.2 and information noted during the site inspection is given in Appendix 14.8 and 14.9.

The LiDAR survey identified an additional 59 possible ringforts/enclosures/cashels (LI 2-3, 5-6, 8-11, 13-15, 17-18, 20-21, 23-29, 33-35, 38, 40-43, 47-49, 51, 54, 56, 59, 61-62, 65-66, 69, 71-72, 75-80, 83, 84, 87-89, 92, 94 and 97), together with 16 field systems (LI 1, 7, 19, 22, 31-32, 36, 39, 45, 62, 64, 68, 85-86, 88 and 95) within the receiving environment. Many of the features identified most likely relate to the early medieval and medieval occupation of the landscape, with two ringforts (LI 9 and 84) and ten enclosures (LI 13, 16, 17-18, 29, 34, 40, 56, 62 and 76) located within the proposed road boundary.

This period was also characterised by the introduction of Christianity to Ireland. The new religion was a catalyst for many changes, one of the most important being literacy. The church created impressive tomes in their official language, Latin. Examples of these include the Book of Kells and the Book of Durrow as well as other works such as The Annals, which were an account of the history of the church and other significant events. Monasticism was known in St. Patrick's time but it was not until the 6th and 7th centuries that the famous monastic houses such as Glendalough, Bangor, Clonfert, Clonard, Clonmacnoise and Durrow were founded. The most significant early medieval ecclesiastical foundation within the wider landscape is located at Mungret, c. 6km northeast of the eastern end of the proposed road.

It was during the latter part of this period that attacks by the Norse on the lower Shannon area were recorded. The Annals of Clonmacnoise record that in AD 843 Foranan, Primate of Armagh, was taken hostage by the Vikings and held on their ships in Limerick (Lenihan 1866, 5). The location of the Norse settlement in the following century is notable as the lowest fording point of the River Shannon, at the head of the tidal reach (O'Rahilly 1988, 141). The Norse fortified a settlement on the southern part of an island bounded by the west by the Shannon and all other sides by the Abbey River. Later known as "Kings Island", this naturally defended location had the double advantage that it was navigable from the sea and was presumably a crossing point over the Shannon. This provided the Vikings with a secure base from which raids could be conducted along the river upstream of Limerick (*ibid*, 141). Coonagh, to the west of the King's Island, was also described as an ancient fishing village of Viking origin, although to date no archaeological evidence for this exists (Spellissey, 1998, 316).

Medieval Period (AD 1169-1600)

The beginning of the medieval period was 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 and by the end of the 12th century the Normans had succeeded in conquering much of the country (Stout & Stout 1997, 53).

At the Council of Oxford in 1177 King Henry II initially granted the kingdom of Limerick to three courtiers and then to Philip de Braose, although the grant was premature as the area was not under Anglo-Norman control in 1197 (Keegan, 2005, 20). The Anglo-Normans arrived at Limerick in 1175; however, they were forced to withdraw in 1176, and did not succeed in occupying the town until 1190 (Lee 1997, 19). Prince John granted Limerick a charter seven years later, declaring that the citizens would have all the liberties and free customs through all Ireland that were enjoyed by the citizens of Dublin (*ibid*, 24). Several early sources state that during the early 13th century King John instructed that a castle should be erected (King John's Castle) along with a bridge (Thomond Bridge) within the English town of the settlement (Wiggins 2000, 16). However, there are references to a castle within Limerick in 1202 and it is possible that this refers to the earlier ringwork, which was constructed by the Norman garrison in 1175 (Wiggins 2016, 3). The 12th century ringwork ditch was identified during excavations at the castle in 1990-91, beneath the 13th century masonry (Wiggins 2000, 17).

Five medieval castles are recorded within the receiving environment (AH 1, 17, 23, 69, and 91) as well as a number of medieval remains in Adare Village, including a church, graveyard and chapel (AH 53, 54 and 56). Full details of these monuments are given in Appendix 14.2.

There are a number of other medieval towns located within the vicinity of the proposed road. These include Askeaton, Adare (AH 117), Rathkeale (AH 116) and the smaller settlement of Clonshire (AH 89), with the settlements of Shanagolden and Munret located within the wider landscape. It should be noted that the medieval borough of Clonshire has no known location, although the earliest references to burgages (agricultural plots to the rear of houses) date to 1252 (Westropp 1906-7, 219) and it is thought the borough may be located in close proximity to Clonshire Castle (AH 69).

The cantred of Rathkeale and Askeaton was granted to Hamo de Valognes in 1199, with the principal town being located at Askeaton. The castle at Askeaton is located on a naturally defensive island in the River Deel and the earliest reference to the establishment of a castle is 1199 (Keegan, 2005, 23). The town is thought to have been incorporated as a borough in 1300 and a Franciscan Friary was established there in c. 1400 (*Ibid*. 23-24). This cantred had

three manors: Rathkeale, Croagh and Clonshire, all of which are located within the receiving environment. Little is known about the settlement of Clonshire (AH 89) and it is thought that it may have grown up around the castle (AH 69) and medieval parish church (*Ibid.* 24). As with Clonshire, little is known about the medieval settlement of Croagh. It is thought the settlement was centred about the church, which has survived, but no elements of the original borough layout are visible (*ibid.*). The settlement at Rathkeale attained borough status by 1300, with an Augustinian priory founded there in the early 13th century (*ibid.*)

The proposed road is located to the north of Adare Village, which contains multiple medieval sites. Desmond Castle (AH 91), 199m to the south of the proposed road, dates to the 13th century and formed part of the estates belonging to the Geraldines of Kildare, after it was passed to Maurice Fitzgerald through marriage in 1266 (Dunne 2007, 155). During the 16th century it was confiscated by the crown due to the rebellion of the tenth Earl and given over to the Earls of Desmond. The Desmond's held it for only 42 years before it reverted again to the Earls of Kildare (*ibid.*, 156). The castle was constructed on the northern bank of the River Maigue, in order to defend the ford across the river.

The village of Adare (AH 117) was established within the environs of the Castle, although the exact location of the settlement is unclear. The village was re-located to the south of the River Maigue and both are defined by the Architectural Conservation Area (BH 35).

The presence of the castle and the wealth of the Earls of Kildare resulted in the foundation of three religious houses at Adare. The first foundation was possibly made in 1230 by Lord Ossory and consisted of a Trinitarian Priory, thought to be the only one to have survived in Ireland (Harbison 1992, 214). This order of friars was founded in France, following the Crusades, with the main purpose of raising ransom money in order to rescue Christian captives taken during the wars (www.buildingsofireland.ie). The monastery was suppressed during the reign of King Henry VIII but repaired and enlarged in the mid-19th century. The building is now called the "Holy Trinity Abbey" and is used as the local Roman Catholic Church (*ibid.*).

The second foundation took place during the early 14th century, when an order of Augustinians established a house to the west of the castle (Harbison 1992, 216). The house was damaged after the reign of Henry VIII but was repaired and renovated during the early part of the 19th century. The building has been used as the local Protestant Church (Church of Ireland) since the early 19th century (www.buildingsofireland.ie). The third foundation took place in 1464, when the 7th Earl of Kildare founded a Franciscan House to the southeast of the castle (Harbison 1992, 214). The ruins of the abbey are extensive and were later incorporated into the demesne landscape associated with Adare Manor.

Askeaton, located to the south of the proposed road, is another town of medieval origin, which contains two impressive medieval sites: Askeaton Castle at the centre of the town and the Franciscan Friary to the immediate south of the existing bypass. In 1199 the castle was founded on an island in the River Deel by the Anglo-Normans under William de Burgo (Keegan 2005, 23). The existing ruined tower is dated 15th century but replaced an earlier tower on the site (Harbison 1992, 216). During the 14th century Askeaton became part of the Desmond lands and they were to hold it as one of their principal residences for two centuries (*ibid.*, 217). The Franciscan Friary was founded c. 1400 by Gerald, the fourth earl of Desmond (Gwynn and Hadcock 1970, 242). Much of the current building dates to 1420-40. In 1579 the friary was plundered and its inhabitants killed. However, it was later revived and was in use until the early 18th century (Harbison 1992, 217). Despite the importance of the settlement at Askeaton, there is no definite evidence that the town was enclosed by walls (Thomas 1992, 3).

Rathkeale (AH 115) is located to the south of the proposed road and is a bridging point on the River Deel. After the arrival of the Normans, Rathkeale formed part of the lands granted by King John to Hamo de Valognes in 1199 (Keegan 2005, 23). In the early 13th century an Augustinian priory was established in the town. It appears to have then been held by the Waspayl family during the first half of the 13th century (Westropp 1906-7, 213). The settlement had attained borough status by 1300 as it is recorded as having contributed 40 shillings to the crown as part of a subsidy required for the Scottish War (Martin 1981, 48).

A potential medieval moated site (LI 57) has been identified through LiDAR analysis in the townland of Kilknockan, with the results of the geophysical survey giving further detail of the site (M-39; Appendix 14.5). Moated sites represented the dispersed settlement within medieval manors and due to their morphology, can survive well in the landscape. Moated sites appear as rectangular areas enclosed by a damp or waterfilled ditch. Although the potential example at LI 57 does not possess obvious ditch features visible above ground, evidence for these likely survives below ground as identified on the geophysical survey (*ibid.*). These site types are thought to represent the remains of isolated defended homesteads, there is a distinct absence of any mention of moated sites in medieval texts which indicates they were not directly connected to medieval lords (Keegan, 2005, 35). Another moated site is located at AH 45, in the townland of Gorteen, directly south of the existing N21. The site measures approximately 34m x 44m and is located on the banks of the South Ballybronoge stream, 350m east of the River Mondellihiy in the medieval manor of Adare. Part of this site was excavated prior to the construction of the N21 (EX 16 - see Appendix 14.14).

Post-Medieval Period (AD 1600-1900)

The 17th century in County Limerick, as with other parts of the country, was characterised by two particular conflicts - the Irish Confederate Wars (1641–53) and the Williamite War (or War of the Two Kings; 1688–91). In 1651 a protracted siege by Cromwell's forces left Limerick City besieged with famine, pestilence and death. The city finally surrendered with a death toll of five thousand inhabitants. The Williamite Wars of the late 17th century saw the reactivation of the city mint to finance James II's campaign. Gun money was minted in Dublin and Limerick, allegedly from the brass of old cannons, hence its name. The city withstood attacks by Williamite forces throughout 1690 and 1691, becoming the last Jacobean stronghold to repel William's army. After the slaughter of 600 inhabitants who had become trapped outside the city walls and the failure of French reinforcements to arrive, Patrick Sarsfield signed the Treaty of Limerick in October 1691 (Spellissy 1998, 58).

With the onset of the 18th century, the political climate settled and this saw a dramatic rise in the establishment of large residential houses around the country, including within the receiving environment. This was largely due to the fact that 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 demesnes) 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. Earth was moved, field boundaries disappeared, streams were diverted to form lakes and quite often roads were completely diverted to avoid travelling anywhere near the main house or across the estate. Major topographical features like rivers and mountains were desirable features for inclusion into, and as a setting, for the large house and parkland. A total of eighteen designed landscapes have been identified within the receiving environment of the proposed road and these are detailed in Appendix 14.7. Of these, eleven are associated with a principal structure that is listed as protected within the Limerick County Development Plan, and one is proposed

for entry in the record of Protected Structures. The landscapes are shown as shaded 'demesne' landscapes on the first edition OS mapping and are illustrated on Figure 14.1 – 14.23

The landscapes, which can vary greatly in size, often possess specific features, such as long driveways, gate lodges, stately entrances, walled gardens, bodies of water and belts, avenues and stands of deciduous and specimen trees. The demesnes in the receiving environment include Ballyclogh House demesne (DL 1), Ballycullen House demesne (DL 2), Wellmount House demesne (DL 3), Nantinan House demesne (DL 4), Stoneville House demesne (DL 5), Smithfield House demesne (DL 6), Clonshire Lodge demesne (DL 7), Curraghbridge House demesne (DL 8), Ballycarrane House demesne (DL 10), Ballybronoge South demesne (DL 11), Grove House (DL 12), Monearla Cottage (DL 13), Fort Etna demesne (DL 14), Attyflin House demesne (DL 15), Corrig House demesne (DL 16), Mondellihiy House demesne (DL 17) and Newborough House demesne (DL 18). Also located within the receiving environment is the demesne surrounding Adare Manor (DL 9), which is also an Architectural Conservation Area.

The earliest built heritage assets from the post-medieval period within the receiving environment date to the late 18th century, with Ballycullen House (BH 20) built in 1760 and Smithfield House (BH 4) built in 1780. Both are associated with demesnes (DL 2 and 6), with Ballycullen demesne surviving well, while Smithfield demesne has changed somewhat since its establishment.

From the mid to late 19th century, the landowning classes began to slowly lose their grip on the thousands of acres of Irish landscape that formed a large part of their estates. The house and demesne were often only a small part of the visible wealth possessed by such families and their demise was brought about by a number of factors including The Famine (1845-1850); the Land Acts (1870–1909); the loss of a younger generation to the first world war (1914-1918) and the fight for independence by the Republicans (1919-1921). The lower classes resented the amount of land that was owned by the Anglo-Irish gentry and in 1922 the Land Commission was established. The purpose of the Commission was to purchase these estates (often for a greatly reduced price) so they could be re-distributed amongst the lower classes. As a result of this, many families became little more than upper class farmers and as a result many left Ireland to return to England. The large houses and demesnes were often left to decay with the houses often demolished for building materials and the demesnes subsumed back into the landscape. Within the receiving environment the houses of Ballyclogh demesne, Wellmount demesne and Ballybronoge demesne have been demolished or are in ruins, while the remaining houses at the other demesnes survive intact.

The remainder of the built heritage assets recorded in the County Development Plan and/or recorded by the NIAH date to the 19th century and consist of estate and farm houses and lodges (BH 2, 3, 6, 9, 11, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24, 29, 32, 33, 42, 45, 47 and 48) churches (BH 5, 10, 12, 17-18 31, 43 and 44), railway infrastructure (BH 1, 13, 16, 23, 39 and 46) and bridges (BH 8 and 14). Full details of these structures is given in Appendix 14.6.

Another characteristic of the post-medieval landscape are the vernacular buildings that represent the homes of farmers and workers. 'Vernacular architecture' is a term used to describe traditional buildings constructed using locally available materials and according to local/regional styles i.e. the homes and workplaces of the ordinary people. This is in contrast to formal architecture, such as the grand estate houses of the gentry, churches and public buildings, which were often designed by architects or engineers. Typically, the single-storied thatched cottage would be considered to represent the real vernacular style in Ireland. The majority of vernacular buildings are domestic dwellings, with one example being a Protected Structure (O'Neill's thatched cottage, BH 7). A review of all available historic mapping (Down Survey Barony Map of Limerick (1654 – 6) and Ordnance Survey 6" and 25" maps of Co.

Limerick (1841, 1897 – 1903, 1928 – 29) were reviewed in order to identify all examples of vernacular architecture within the receiving environment of the proposed road. Aerial photography (Ordnance Survey aerial photographs (1995, 2000, 2005), Google Earth coverage (2003–2018), Bing Maps and scheme specific orthophotos (2016) and site inspections were then used to verify the nature and extent of any surviving structures. Examples of other structures that fall into this category within the receiving environment include outbuildings, mills (CH 48), limekilns (BH 40; CH 21, CH 29, CH 31, CH 38, CH 46, CH 64), farmsteads, forges (BH 28) and gateposts (CH 105).

One of the most significant sites of post-medieval development within the receiving environment is the village of Adare. Adare, or Ath Dara is one of the earliest recorded place names in Ireland, it's first mention recorded in AD 485 as 'cath Atho Dara' (Limerick City and Council 2015, p. 51). While there are numerous medieval remains within the village, the 17th, 18th and 19th century development of the village is considered particularly important and this is reflected in its status as an Architectural Conservation Area (BH 35). Adare Manor was the former seat of the Earls of Dunraven. The house, located 1.17km south of the proposed road, was built in the early 19th century and retained some of the walls of the 17th-century structure. The original house was a "calendar house", which means a house that architecturally contains features that represent the numbers of days in a year (365 leaded windows), weeks in a year (52 ornate chimneys), seasons in a year (4 towers) and days in a week (7 stone pillars).

Begun in 1832, construction of the House provided work for the people from the village during the potato famine. The initial phase of construction was completed under master mason, James Connolly. Along the top of the building an extract of psalm 127:1 is made from carved stone: "Except the Lord build the house, then labour is but lost that built it". Adare village is an estate village which was developed by the Wyndham Quin family, the Earls of Dunraven. During the 18th century they built a short stretch of canal (BH 30) from the River Maigue to the centre of the village, along what is now Station Road (Adare Local Area Plan 2015 - 2021, p.51). The planned village developed throughout the 19th century and the Architectural Conservation Area which encompasses the village and demesne has been defined in order to protect the special character of the area. The terraced thatched cottages are one of the most iconic elements of the village and are located c.800m south of the proposed road. The 19th and early 20th century core of the village, to the west of the thatched cottages, is dominated by shops, pubs and other services and is also located c. 820m south of the proposed road. The intervening land is dominated by modern housing developments which screen the village from the proposed road.

The demesne associated with Adare Manor covers an area of c.355ha and extends to the north of the Manor House, abutting the southern extent of the proposed link road which will join the existing N21 to the proposed road. Much of the eastern half of the demesne, including the northern area, is now a golf course. The main features of the demesne are largely present, with the riverside setting, woodlands, the Manor and outbuildings, avenues and gate lodges, pleasure grounds and walled gardens all contributing considerably to the character and special interest of the demesne (Adare Local Area Plan 2015 - 2021, p.52).

A review of all available historic mapping (Down Survey Barony Map of Limerick (1654 – 6) and Ordnance Survey 6" and 25" maps of Co. Limerick (1841, 1897 – 1903, 1928 – 29) has shown that landscape of the receiving environment during the post medieval period was primarily a rural, farmed landscape with a dispersed settlement pattern. Nucleated settlement was limited to the towns and villages detailed above. Field patterns at the west and centre of the proposed road were more irregular during the mid-19th century, as depicted on the 1st edition OS maps of 1841, while those at the eastern end of the proposed road, between Rathkeale and Adare were more regular. By the time of publication of the 25" map in 1897 – 1903 more regular field divisions had been established across much of the receiving

environment. As mentioned above, all potential cultural heritage features depicted on historic mapping have been included as Cultural Heritage assets within the EIAR chapter.

Modern (21st century)

Historic monuments dating to the 20th century are represented by built heritage structures, specifically those relating to World War II. Three pill boxes located within the receiving environment are Protected Structures (BH 25-27), while a further 7 (CH 103, 104, 106, 107, 122, 123, and 124) were identified during the site inspection, with details of each given in Appendix 14.8 and Appendix 14.9. In addition to these, a further six pill boxes are located outside of the receiving environment and are also Protected Structures. These pillboxes are located in the townlands of Cloonreask, Moig South and Aghalacka, all in the vicinity of Askeaton.

Although Ireland remained a neutral country throughout World War II, a number of measures were taken to defend the country, should an invasion occur. A number of pill boxes were constructed as a defensive measure, with ten examples recorded within the receiving environment. Other examples are also recorded in the south east of the country, in counties Wicklow, Wexford and Waterford (Osbourne 2008, p.87). In his description of Irish pillboxes, Osbourne (2008) does not mention those recorded in Co. Limerick, rather focusing on those in the southeast and in the Boyne valley. One installation in the region is noted, to the west of Tarbert Island, which was built in 1942, c. 18km west of the proposed road to defend the Shannon Estuary (*ibid.* 89). Those located within the receiving environment would also have served to protect the estuary and surrounding landscape during any potential invasion. The pillboxes within the receiving environment are defined by Osborne as being of 'DFW3/6' type, consisting of a single chamber with three or, more usually, four loopholes.

These examples of military infrastructure are rare across the country and serve as an example of modern cultural heritage features which represent an unusual and often under studied element of the history of Ireland.

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