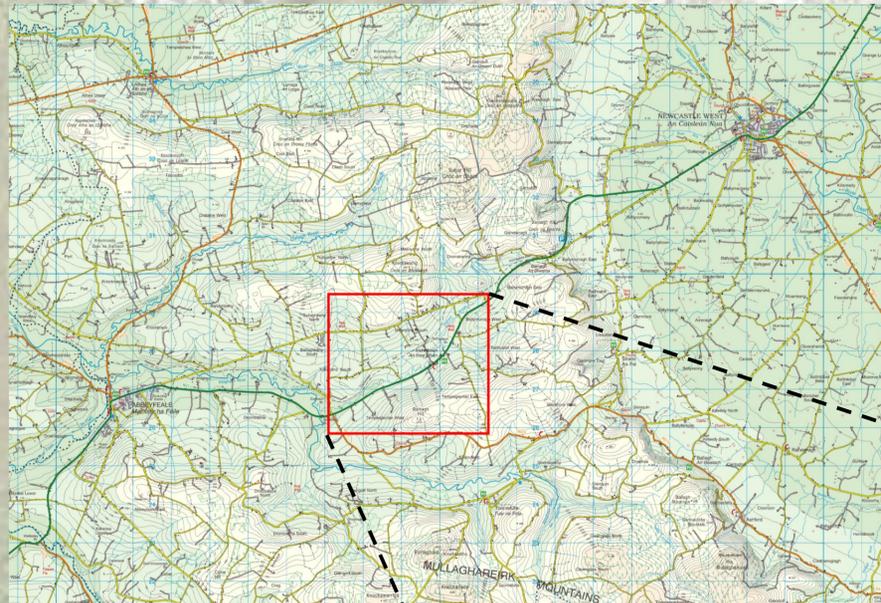


Templeglantine's Golden Mile 2015

Slí an Dúlra Teampall an Ghleanntáin



Templeglantine's Golden Mile 2015

Templeglantine's mile is located on the L21006-30, north of the N21, accessed from the road known locally as the 'Bothairín', between the national school and Balla na hInse (approximate grid reference 519777, 627543). The walk ends at the junction of the Great Southern Trail and the L7056 (approximate grid reference 534540, 6200025). This walk takes in the county road and the disused railway line which is part of the Great Southern Trail, an 85km walkway and cycleway through West Limerick. The walk starts relatively flat along the bothairín, progressing to a comparatively steep incline which meanders for approximately 200m until you join the Great Southern Trail. At this point the route is flat and generally open with access confined to pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic on the county road is very local in nature and considered intermittent and generally safe.

Taking this pleasant quiet rural walk you find yourself walking through the townland of Meenylines South. As you pass over the bridge over the River Eoghan, upstream a short distance according to local knowledge there is a small well. According to local folklore the water from this well, Tobair Leathphinge, cured blindness. Other interesting historical and folklore features along this route include the field name 'Gort na Marbh', which is known locally as a famine burial ground. This burial ground is located north of the vernacular single storey house that is vacant but well maintained. This feature highlights the importance of cataloging field names as they give an insight to the past. Take a look at the historic 6" maps first edition from the 1840s and you will see this house is indicated on map but the railway is not represented as it was not constructed until the 1860s. This map also indicates a number of lime kilns in the vicinity of the walk.

In terms of built heritage there is an example of the simple vernacular rural house from the 1800s. There are many examples along the trail of traditional gateway, stone pillars and stiles associated with the railway line.

In terms of biodiversity this walk takes you along open ditches, hedgerow, and tree canopies. One finds the native ash, blackthorn, whitethorn, oak, sycamore, beech, birch, holly and alder. There is also planted conifer forestry on the route. Nice native verge vegetation is also observed along the way. This diversity is essential to support wildlife corridors for mammals, invertebrates and birds alike. From ground level to the canopy of the hedgerows you will find, beetles, woodlice, invertebrates, spiders and other insects, field mice, shrews, and birds such as blackbirds, thrushes, tits, robins, and finches. Butterflies, and bees seek the nectar of flowers by the roadside. At night bats seek the insects along the hedgerow and indeed use the hedgerow for navigation as sonar detection is best guided by the hedgerow and they avoid the open fields. The kestrel and the occasional barn owl hunt along the grass verge of the hedgerow. Thus, hedgerows are the necessary links between burrows and feeding sites.

Wildlife is very important and appreciated by the local community. There are many ideas for natural wildlife along this mile including habitat surveys to look at floral diversity and information points for those walking along the route. While walking this mile, with very little traffic on the county road and the absence of vehicular traffic on the Great Southern Trail you get a distinct sense of peacefulness as you listen to bird song.

Useful links:
www.hedgelayers.ie
www.invasivespecies.ie
www.biodiversityireland.ie
www.nativewoodlandtrust.ie
www.wildflowersofireland.ie
www.heritagecouncil.ie
www.limerick.ie – Limerick's heritage
www.maps.osi.ie

lmaps.osi.ie

