

MÚSCRAÍ GAELTACHT CONSERVATION, MANAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION PLAN 2017-2031



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CLIENTS: CORK COUNTY COUNCIL AND ACADAMH FÓDHILA

DRAFT

RESEARCH + DIG

Conservation/Heritage/Archaeology



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Definitions

Gaeltacht	The word 'Gaeltacht' is used for areas where the Irish language is, or was until the recent past, the main spoken language. Gaeltacht areas are defined by Government order. One of them is Múscaí.
Heritage interpretation	Heritage interpretation is the communication of the meaning or meanings of a place through a variety of media. According to the international charter that guides interpretation this 'can include print and electronic publications, public lectures, on-site and directly related off-site installations, educational programmes, community activities, and ongoing research, training, and evaluation of the process itself' (<i>Ename Charter</i> , 2008, p. 3).
Spirit of place	The tangible (buildings, sites, landscapes, routes, objects) and intangible elements (memories, narratives, written documents, rituals, festivals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colours, odours, etc.), that is to say the physical and the spiritual elements that give meaning, value, emotion and mystery to a place (<i>Québec Declaration</i> , 2008).
Sustainability	Development that sustains the economic and social needs of the present without compromising core cultural distinctiveness or the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Vision

Múscraí is an incredibly vibrant place. It is a place where the character of its people and landscape are both intertwined and co-dependent. Change always occurs. The role of this document is to help the people of Múscraí manage that change and protect the core significant aspects of the region in which they live. Ultimately, it is envisaged that this document will help make the Gaeltacht become a better place in which to work, live and visit.

1.0 Introduction

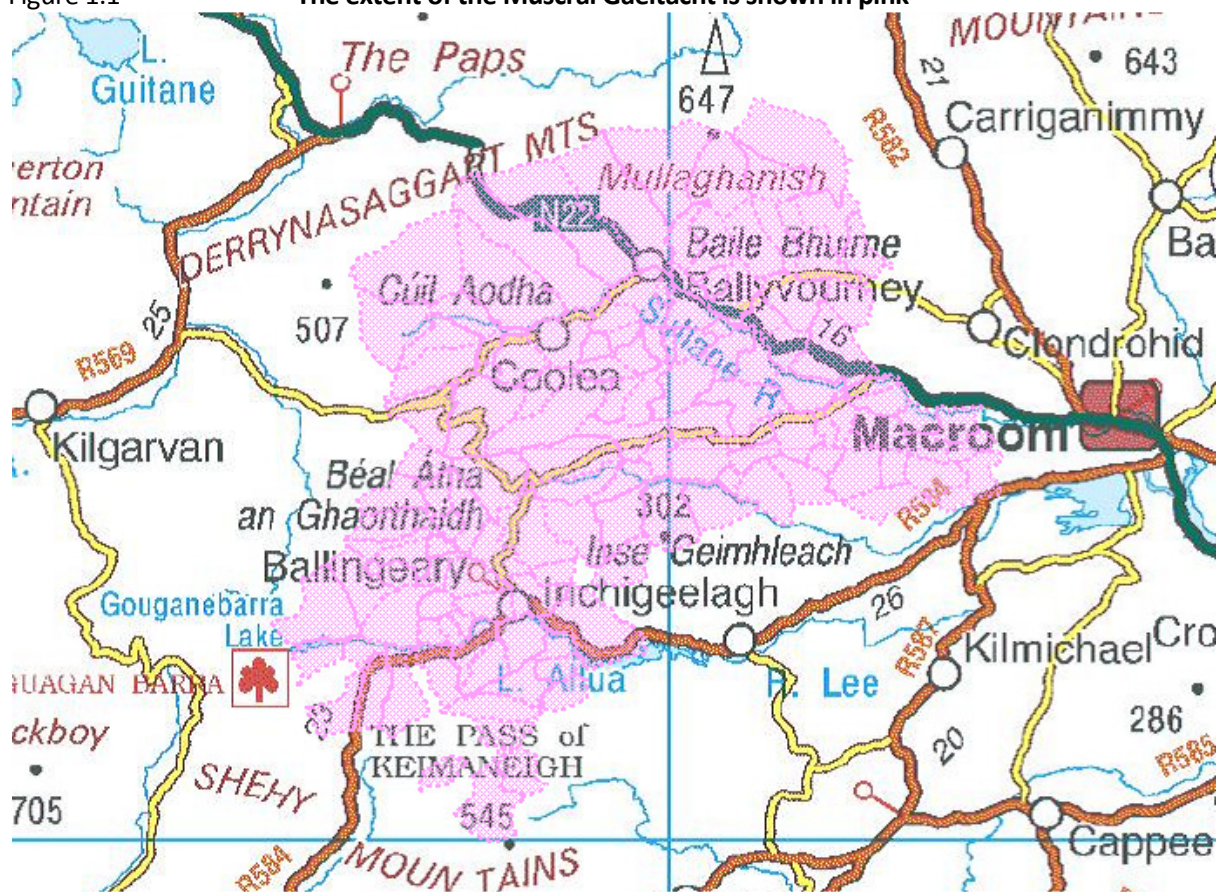
1.1 Background

This fifteen year Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan was commissioned by Cork County Council in conjunction with Acadamh Fódhla. The project's main aims are to highlight the importance and heritage significance of the Múscraí Gaeltacht and to devise a number of heritage policies and actions to ensure that the area is appropriately conserved, managed and maintained into the future.

1.2 Site Identification and Profile

Lying along the Cork/Kerry border, the Múscraí Gaeltacht is located 48kms to the west of Cork City (fig. 1.1). Its population of 3,771 (CSO, 2011), represents 4% of the total number of Gaeltacht inhabitants. The Cork Gaeltacht encompasses a geographical area of 262km². This amounts to 6% of the total Gaeltacht area. The largest settlements are the villages of Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne and Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. Other significant settlements include Cúil Aodha, Réidh na nDoirí and Cill na Martra.

Figure 1.1 The extent of the Múscraí Gaeltacht is shown in pink



(Source: Cork County Council, 2014)

The landscape is dominated by numerous high craggy hills and the Derrynasaggart Mountains. The tallest peak, Mullach an Ois, rises to 647m. The pattern of daily life is directed along the river valleys of the Lee and Sullane. The two principal roads that cut through the Gaeltacht (R586 and N22) follow these river valleys. Both routes meet at the market town of Macroom. The harsh nature of the landscape and the importance of the two main roads have led to a certain fracturing of the Gaeltacht. Many people in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh have little to do with people in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne and vice versa. The now ubiquitous car has led to a greater use of Macroom for services. There is no shop in Cúil Aodha. In Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, only one survives. Recently, the post office closed. Indeed, such is the level of retail

business closure in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh that its ability to act as a meeting place for locals has been severely curtailed. Should the planned N22 upgrade through the Gaeltacht be completed, access to Macroom will improve and Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne will be bypassed. This will challenge the ability of Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne to act as an engine of socialisation.

The 2011 census population of 3,771 represented a modest increase of 2.5% on the 2006 figure. However, it marked an important reversal in a prolonged trend of declining numbers (table 1.1). The previous four census periods recorded a continuous decline with an overall reduction between 1986 and 2006 of 242 people (6%).

Table 1.1 **Population Change Múscraí Gaeltacht 1986-2011**

ED Name:	1986	1991	1996	2002	2006	2011	1986-2011	1986-2011
Múscraí Gaeltacht								
								%
Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh (part), Co. Cork	227	218	211	238	220	194	-33	-14.5
Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh (Ballingeary), Co. Cork	524	517	523	494	542	544	20	3.8
Ceann Droma, Co. Cork	271	260	256	257	292	317	46	17.0
Claonráth (part), Co. Cork	210	215	205	189	169	168	-42	-20.0
Doire Fhínín, Co. Cork	235	230	243	217	229	251	16	6.8
Gort na Tiobratán, Co. Cork	440	426	438	425	420	450	10	2.3
Cill na Martra (part), Co. Cork	540	563	558	619	378	382	-158	-29.3
An Sliabh Riabhach, Co. Cork	871	761	747	761	816	833	-38	-4.4
Na hUláin, Co. Cork	602	561	564	537	612	632	30	5.0
Totals	3,920	3,751	3,745	3,737	3,678	3,771	-149	-3.8

(Source: CSO Ireland)

In 2006, almost 87.7% of those living in the Gaeltacht were born in Ireland. By 2011, that had increased slightly to 88.3%. Due to the overall decrease in population figures this indicates that non-Irish born residents were more likely to leave the Gaeltacht than Irish residents when the recession arrived in 2008. The two most common foreign countries of birth were the UK (5.9%) and Poland (2.2%). Overall, almost one in eight people living in Múscraí were not born in Ireland. According to the Údarás na Gaeltachta commissioned report *A socio-economic and cultural needs analysis*, this figure ‘presents an enormous opportunity/challenge as regards integration into the community, [and] recognition of diversity within the community’ (2007, p.6).

According to the same document, the level of home ownership was high. Just over 90% of households were owned by the occupying family (Údarás, 2007). This was above than the national average. By 2011, only 82% of homes were owner occupied.

There appears to be a significant educational divide between older and younger inhabitants. Primary school and/or the Junior Certificate were the highest educational achievements for 36.5% of people (Census, 2011). This is slightly down from the 2006 figure of 37.3% (Údarás, 2007, p.8). Anecdotally, it would seem that the vast majority of the less formally well-educated individuals are from the older generations. By contrast, the young are largely focused on gaining a third level qualification. Worryingly,

it was discovered in the aforementioned Údarás report that many of the 3rd level students emerging from Múscraí tended to settle outside of the area (2007). Evidence from our interviews has suggested that one of the main reasons for the trend is the insufficient number and breadth of quality professional jobs in the Gaeltacht. This is particularly the case for those qualified in the creative sector (e.g. web design, architecture, marketing). In 2011, 633 people were employed in companies supported by Údarás na Gaeltachta (<http://www.udaras.ie/en/an-ghaeilge-an-ghaeltacht/an-ghaeltacht/corcaigh/>: accessed 14/02/2017). These companies were primarily focused on manufacturing with the majority of roles not requiring a third level qualification. That being so, there are still large proportions of third level education people working in many of these companies (e.g. Somex Teo, Folláin Teo and Firebird Heating Solutions). Indeed, Údarás are attempting to satisfy the heightened expectations. Nonetheless, supply is not yet meeting demand. Perhaps given the relatively small population of the Gaeltacht and proliferation of careers, it never will. Aside from manufacturing, the farming sector remains a prominent component of the local economy. The cumulative impact of all this is that for many young people the current provision of opportunities is not enough.

One of the key reasons for the lack of professional opportunities is the scarcity of high speed broadband. Another contributing factor is the absence of a high quality office hub where small professional firms could set-up and collaborate.

Almost 14% of Gaeltacht residents have obtained a degree or higher (Census, 2011). Many of these have chosen to stay or move into Múscraí despite the lack of career opportunities. Unless they are lucky, they commute. Illustrating this is the fact that the quantity of teachers living in Múscraí (108) far exceeds the number of positions available in the Gaeltacht's schools (Údarás, 2007).

Almost one third of respondents to the 2007 Údarás report indicated that Irish was the primary language in their household (p. 20). Nearly three quarters said it was the secondary language used. Geographically, 45-50% of residents in seven of the eight district electoral divisions that make up the Gaeltacht are daily Irish speakers (ibid, p. 23). The one outlier was Cill na Martra. There, only 23% of the people spoke Irish daily. This is despite two in every three individuals being able to speak the language. In 2007, overall fluency across the Gaeltacht was put at 40.5% of the population. A further 34.6% had a mediocre ability in Irish. Of those who speak Irish daily, over three quarters did so in their homes. Outside of the family house, usage was found to fall drastically. Encouragingly, a more recent study, *Nuasshonrú ar an Staidéar Cuimsithheach Teangeolaíocht Ar Úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht: 2006-2011* (2015), put fluency in Irish across Múscraí at 43% with usage especially increasing in Cill na Matra.

Nuasshonrú ar an Staidéar Cuimsithheach Teangeolaíocht Ar Úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht: 2006-2011 offers a broad reflection on the status and use of the Irish language within the country's Gaeltachts.¹ While it does not offer much specific detail on Múscraí, the analysis on broader Gaeltacht trends are still applicable.

Significantly, the report's authors offer a sometimes robust critique of an earlier 2007 document.² The broad findings of the 2015 report are critical of the earlier study and suggests that that document was 'too positive' towards the state of the Irish language and did not reflect the reality at a ground level, as found in the latter study. Despite the increase in fluency in Múscraí, the report makes for somewhat grim reading with regard to future predictions for the Irish language. The authors - Ó Giollagáin and Charlton - refer to 'bás na teanga' (death of the language) on a number of occasions and alarmingly suggest that within ten years (i.e. by 2021), Irish will not be the dominant language in any area of the Gaeltacht in any part of Ireland. Their conclusion that Irish as a

¹ The report title translates as 'Update of the Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht: 2006-2011'

² Conchúr Ó Giollagáin was also involved in the compilation of the earlier report.

vernacular in Gaeltacht districts will not survive under current conditions beyond the next decade is alarming and should be taken very seriously within the context of Múscaí.

The writers of the 2015 report reflected positively on the school system within the Gaeltacht areas and suggest that without the contribution of schools, the status of the language in the Gaeltacht could potentially be worse. Ó Giollagáin and Charlton found the highest rates of vitality amongst school goers and recorded a fall within older age groups.³

Both in the earlier 2007 report and in the 2015 document, there are a number of methods used to measure the status and strength of the Irish language. The overall aim of the assessment is to establish the position of the language as a 'dominant language' within the relevant community, ranking Gaeltacht areas within a grading system of A, B and C in descending order (table 1.2). Importantly for the Múscaí Gaeltacht, none of the areas within its boundaries are afforded a Category A status (Over 67% of the people using Irish as first and dominant language). The categorisation of Gaeltacht regions shows that most of the Category A regions are within the area of South Connemara with five also in Corca Dhuibhne and four in North West Donegal.⁴ However, from a statistical point of view Ó Giollagáin and Charlton note that some Category C areas have moved up to Category B, in particular in Corca Dhuibhne and Múscaí.

Table 1.2 **Daily use of the Irish language**

Catagóir Ghaeltachta	% Cainteoirí Laethiúla Gaeilge do réir an Daonáirimh	% Teaghlaigh a bhfuil leanaí acu i dteideal an deontais faoi Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge
A	67%+	65% +
B	44% - 66%	30% - 64%
C	30% - 43%	10% - 29%
Gan Stádas	< 30%	< 10%

(Source: Ó Giollagáin and Charlton, 2015)

In the Múscaí Gaeltacht, Cúil Aodha was ranked in Category B (44% - 66% of daily Irish speakers), while the remainder of the Gaeltacht (apart from a part of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh) was placed in Category C (between 30% and 43%).

Overall, the picture on the use of Irish within Múscaí from the available written material, our interviews, and observations, is a complex one. Several interviewees stated that there is a greater use of Irish amongst teenagers now than there was fifteen or twenty years ago. It seems that the language has become cooler! Another person told how the adoption of Irish by a number of Eastern European children and the support from their parents has almost embarrassed indigenous parents into using Irish more in their lives. Even within the electoral areas through which the language is officially analysed there was significant variation in the use of Irish.

1.3 Statutory Context and Listings

This plan has been commissioned by Cork County Council for the purpose of providing an understanding of the heritage values of Múscaí and to guide the authority in the conservation, management, and interpretation of the place. The plan is informed in particular by the Cork County Development Plan 2014 (CCDP), which supports and is supported by the provisions of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), the South West Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG), and the North and West Strategic Plan (N&WSP).

³ Ibid, p. 8

⁴ Ibid, p. 7

The CCDP includes important provisions in relation to rural planning, housing and infrastructure development that will have a bearing on the Múscraí region. Identified under rural policy objective RCI 4-5 as a Transitional Rural Area, the region's specific development and economic characteristics are acknowledged and a positive approach to population and enterprise is set out. This plan has considered the CCDP's strategic approach to the area's settlement and population framework as outlined in the Core Strategy, as well as its policy considerations for natural and physical heritage, economic development in rural areas and local area planning. The Plan also outlines comprehensive policy guiding rural housing development in such areas, requiring that new rural housing development outside the village settlements to be predicated on authentic social and economic ties to the locality.

The CCDP also has specific policy provisions aimed at protecting the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Múscraí Gaeltacht in 'HE 5-3: Gaeltacht Areas':

- Encouraging development within the Gaeltacht, which promotes, facilitates or complements the cultural heritage, including Irish language use;
- Encouraging development within the Gaeltacht, which provides employment or social facilities, especially, but not exclusively, where these are of relevance to local young people;
- Resisting development within the Gaeltacht, which would be likely to erode the cultural heritage (including the community use of Irish language), unless there are overriding benefits for the long term sustainability of the local community or for the proper planning and sustainable development of a wider area;
- Ensuring that where the County Council erects signs within the Gaeltacht, these have Irish as their primary language, unless there are positive and overriding reasons for doing otherwise;
- Discouraging the exhibition of advertisements within the Gaeltacht which do not use Irish as their primary language;
- Considering the desirability of demanding linguistic impact analyses with planning applications for particular major developments. These would be cases where the potential impact of the development on the use of Irish as the community language is not immediately apparent and pivotal in the determination of the application.

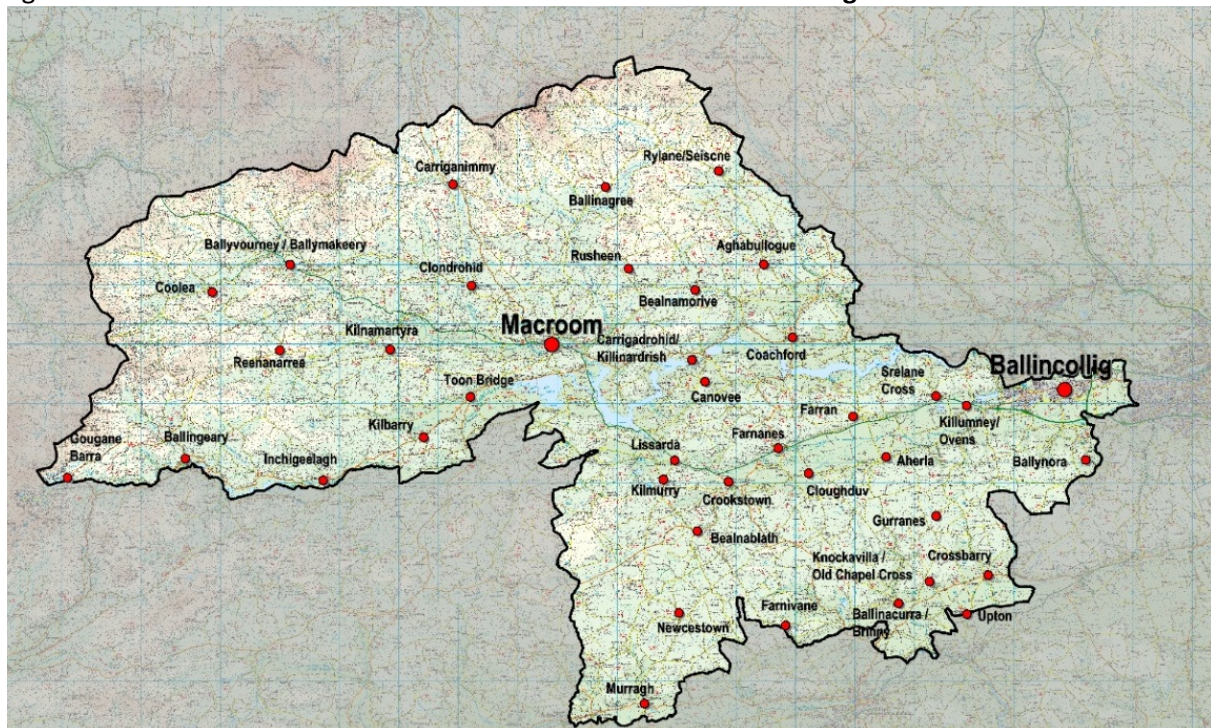
In addition to the CCDP, there are three other significant and relevant local-level initiatives which will have an impact on the Múscraí area. Firstly, under new legislation, Cork County Council in partnership with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) will be preparing six year Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP). These will have two distinctive themes; a local economic element and a community development element. Secondly, Cork County Council will be preparing a suite of Local Area Plans (LAPs) to provide focused, area-based planning and land use zoning for each of the Municipal Districts, and the Blarney-Macroom Municipal District statutory LAP will cover the Múscraí region dealing with the range of planning, development, heritage, housing, infrastructure and economic issues. Finally, in accordance with the Gaeltacht Act (2012) Múscraí will receive an area plan of the same status of a town plan. These plans will direct planning so as to protect their unique linguistic identities.

More detailed planning policy and land use zoning is provided by way of the Macroom Electoral Area Local Area Plan (2015; Second Edition) (fig. 1.2). The key considerations for the Múscraí area include the following issues;

- A core settlement strategy which identifies a hierarchy of planned population settlement from large towns through to smaller rural villages and open rural areas;
- This structure accommodates a hierarchy of services to ensure that that investment in housing, transport, employment, education, shopping, health facilities and community services can be delivered;

- A housing and population strategy based on strengthening the role and function of existing villages by directing development within development boundaries, whilst accommodating genuine rural housing needs in the countryside;
- Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh and Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne have been identified as ‘Key Villages’ – which possess a reasonable amount and range of local services and which are identified as locations for growth;
- A set of policies covering economic development, infrastructure provision, transportation and environmental matters; and
- Policies which recognise the Múscraí Gaeltacht’s particular needs as a distinct region, and its unique culture, language. The LAP supports the protection and promotion of Gaeltacht settlements and areas, promotes employment and development opportunities in the Gaeltacht areas.

Figure 1.2 **Macroom Electoral Area Local Area Plan coverage**



(Source: *Macroom Electoral Area Local Development Plan*, 2015, piii)

There are eleven structures in the Múscraí Gaeltacht listed in the County Cork Record of Protected Structures (RPS). As a result, these properties are protected under the *Planning and Development Act* 2000. Should any building owner wish to make alterations that would change the character of one of these buildings planning permission must be applied for from Cork County Council. There are 28 buildings listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Ascription in this inventory does not provide legal protection. However, the inventory is used to inform future judgment on whether a building should be listed as a protected structure. There are no Architectural Conservation Areas in Múscraí.

The area contains 392 archeological sites listed within the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). Being listed provides these places with protection under the *National Monuments Acts 1930-2004*. When the owner or occupier of a property, or any other person, proposes to carry out any work at, or in relation to, a recorded monument, they are required to give notice in writing to the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht two months before commencing any work. There are no national monuments.

Múscraí has a number of battlefield sites. As befits the mountainous nature of the landscape, these tend to be small ambush sites. One notable exception is the relatively large area covered by the War of Independence Cúl na Catharach ambush site. According to historian Turtle Bunbury 'some hold that the Coolnacaheragh Ambush was one of the most decisive engagements of the entire struggle. Precisely how decisive it was is hard to gauge, but it certainly gave the IRA a much needed boost in their belief that they could actually send the British into retreat (www.turtlebunbury.com/history/history_irish/history_irish_ambush.htm; accessed 22/06/17). Despite the importance of Cúl na Catharach or any of the other battlefield sites, none have legal protection. No War of Independence or Civil War site is mentioned as worthy of protection in the County Cork Development Plan (2014).

Protection to a number of species and designated landscapes are provided under the European Birds (1979) and Habitats (1992) directives, Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011, the Wildlife Acts 1976 and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000-2010. Where development is proposed that impacts upon a protect species or protected place, a derogation license must be sought from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. There are eight sites designated for nature conservation in Múscraí (fig. 1.4).

There is no national legislation providing legal protection for intangible heritage. It is not mentioned in the *Heritage Act 1995*. Likewise, there is no mention of intangible heritage in the heritage section of the current County Cork Development Plan (2014). In December 2015, Ireland ratified the *UNESCO convention for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage* (2003). In it, article 11 (a) states that 'each state party shall: (a) take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention; accessed 29/09/2016). Furthermore, Article 13 (a) states that 'each State Party shall endeavour to: (a) adopt a general policy aimed at promoting the function of the intangible cultural heritage in society, and at integrating the safeguarding of such heritage into planning programmes' (ibid).

1.4 Methodology and Terminology

This report is based upon archival research, site visits, and an extensive programme of public consultation.

The land area of the Múscraí Gaeltacht is large. No document of the proposed CMIP's breath has ever been conducted on a place of such size. Combining the conservation of a place along with its interpretation in an area of 100 square miles provides challenges. However, it also presents the unique opportunity to have one coherent document guiding the care and presentation of all the area's heritage.

It was concluded that the only way a document like the Múscraí CMIP could be done both economically and to a high standard was for the consultants to retreat. Instead, the role of the professionals was to inform and facilitate discussions amongst those living in the Gaeltacht. Accordingly, in addition to the Steering Group meetings with Acadamh Fódhla and the County Cork Heritage Officer, an extensive series of public consultation meetings took place. The seven events happened in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne and Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. In conjunction with the open public sessions a series of interviews with representatives from a cross section of local community organisations, schools and businesses also occurred. The aim of these unstructured interviews was to obtain an illustrative sample of various viewpoints on Múscraí and its heritage. The formal interviews were supplemented by informal conversations with locals held throughout the project. Copies of ongoing drafts of the plan were posted on Cork County Council's website and emailed to participants of the public meetings. Drafts were also left at the public library in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne. Comment sheets were left in the library. Finally, the lead consultants email and mobile number were distributed widely.

A small steering committee comprising Peadar O’Riada of Acadamh Fódhla and Conor Nelligan, Heritage Officer with Cork County Council provided valuable guidance.

The report incorporates relevant principles and processes of the *Granada charter* (1985), the *Burra charter: the Australia ICOMOS charter for places of cultural significance* (2013), and the *Ename charter, the ICOMOS charter for the interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage sites* (2008). The terminology used in this report is consistent with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht’s *Architectural heritage protection guidelines* (2004) and the *Burra charter* (2013).

1.5 Limitations

This report is a strategy document directing the management of heritage in Múscraí. Its role is to identify what is significant about the Gaeltacht’s heritage and create a framework through which that significance is promoted and protected. Accordingly, an exhaustive inventory of the various monuments and heritage places is outside its scope. Similarly, an evaluation as to the health of the Irish language is outside the scope of this document. Please note that the following three chapters on the built, natural, and intangible heritage of Múscraí are only intended to provide an introduction to the profile and essence of these aspects of the Gaeltacht.

Such is the breadth of this document that in addition to being the conservation, management and interpretation plan for the Gaeltacht’s heritage, it may also be considered to contain sufficient information to be used as a rural development plan and tourism framework plan by those who wish to do so.

The Irish language version of the document takes precedence over the English language version. This plan is to be reviewed at least every five years.

1.6 Author Identification

This conservation, management and interpretation plan has been conducted and prepared by:

- Will Brady – Planner
- Terry Connell – Licensed archaeologist and farmer
- Tighearnach Dunne – Cartographer
- Dr Janice Fuller – Ecologist
- Dr Tomás MacConmara – Folklorist
- Liam Mannix – Heritage consultant

The document was edited by Liam Mannix.

1.7 Acknowledgements

Research and Dig gratefully acknowledges the help of Peadar O’Riada and Criostóir Ó Cróinín from Acadamh Fódhla and Conor Nelligan of Cork County Council. Special thanks goes to those who have hosted the public meetings. These include: Séan Óg Ó Duinnín, Don O’Leary and the whole staff at the Mills Hotel, and Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh GAA. Finally, the whole team wish to send our deep appreciation to all those who gave us the benefit of their knowledge and opinions. Thank you!

To be fully completed.

The cover photo is the view north from Beal a Ghleanna.

2.0 Historical and Archaeological Profile

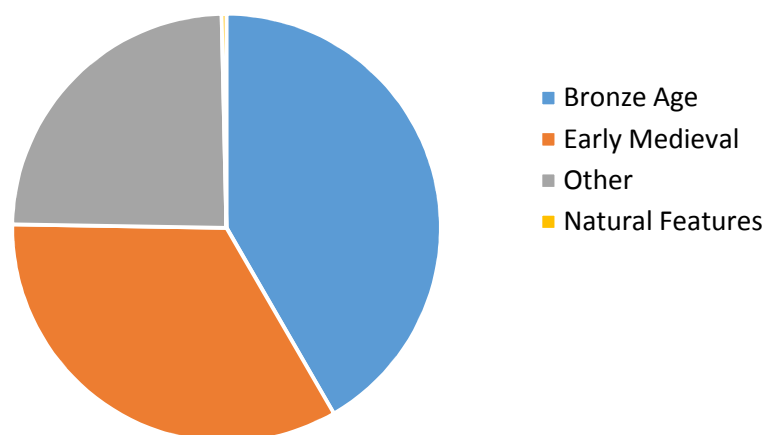
2.1 Introduction

The history and archaeology of Múscraí indicates a diverse region speckled with monuments, incidents and people that weave a picture of an area steeped in places of local, regional, national and international importance. This chapter will trace the area from its proven ancient Bronze Age beginnings right through to the twentieth century, and offer a glimpse into Múscraí's tangible archaeological and historical past.

The area contains 392 archeological sites listed within the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) (fig. 2.1). Of these, the vast majority have been ascribed either a Bronze Age or Early Medieval date (table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Múscraí monument types



(Source: Record of Monuments and Places)

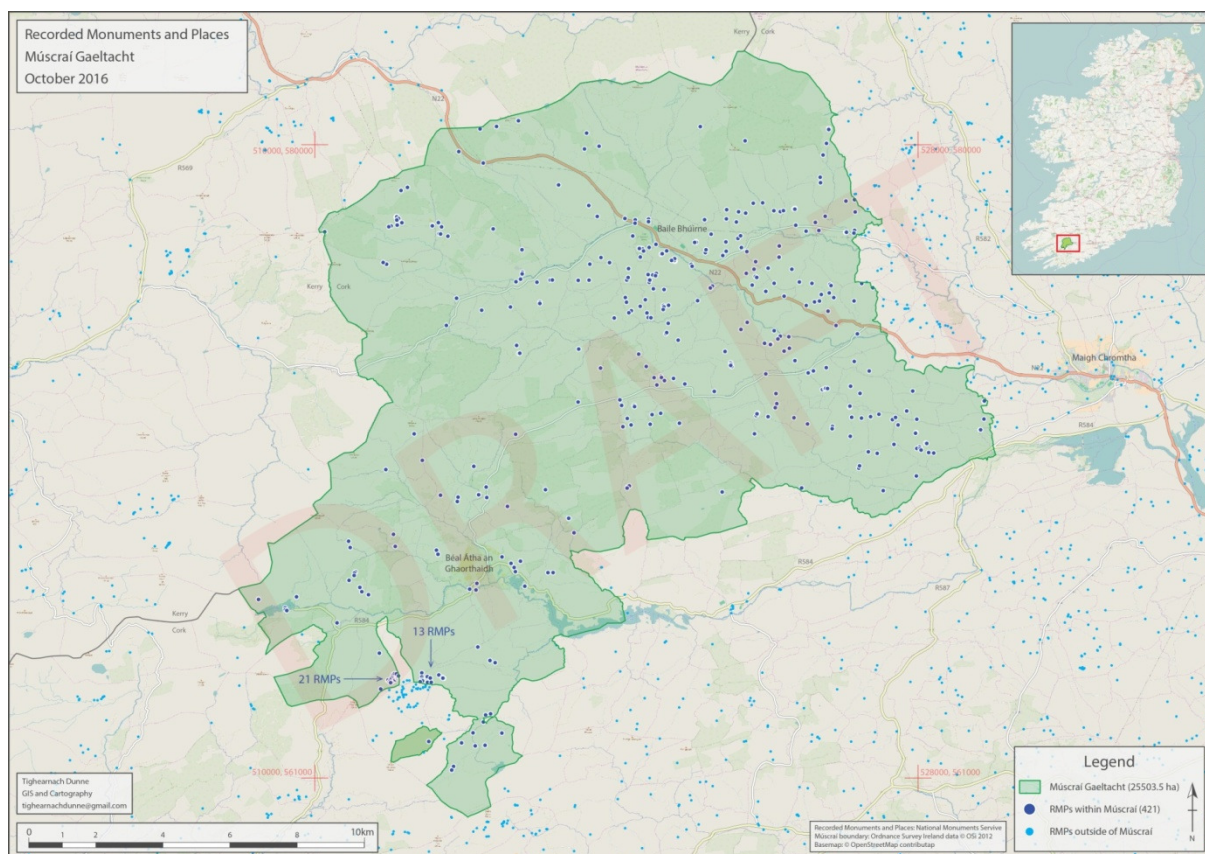
2.2 Bronze Age Beginnings

According to the RMP there are no definitive Neolithic field monuments in the Gaeltacht. However, numerous pre-bog hut sites have been locally identified. This would suggest that human habitation in Múscraí could possibly date back as far as the Mesolithic Period. To validate this, thorough archaeological investigation is required.

The Bronze Age in Ireland is noted as a time of extreme change within Irish pre-historic society. This period witnessed a transformation in material culture from flint to bronze. The RMP maps⁵ indicate a large occurrence of Bronze Age (generally dated 2400BC – 700BC) monuments on the landscape. This would fit the national profile for the Bronze Age. During this period there was a large-scale movement of people toward the south-western corner of Ireland due to the abundance of copper in the mines of West Cork and West Kerry. The monument evidence, starting with the Wedge tombs of the Neolithic/Bronze Age transition right through to the later standing stones is indicative of this in Múscraí. O'Sullivan has suggested that – 'Wedge tombs formed an integral part of the development

⁵ RMP stands for Record of Monuments and Place. They show the location of all classified monuments on the ordnance survey 6' inch maps of the early 1900s. Each monument is indicated by an arbitrary circle and given a classification number. This number list the county code (Cork CO) the number of the sheet that the monument is on and the number of the monument. All classified monuments are protect under law by the 1930 National Monuments Act and subsequent amendments.

Figure 2.1 RMP sites in Múscraí



Final map will be A3

of the farmed landscape⁶. Fifty six percent of all wedge tombs occur in the south-west of Ireland⁷. The area fits the regional profile with numerous wedge tombs, fulacht fiadh, stone circles and standing stones.

The enigmatic Iron Age does not definitively appear in the RMP record. The monumental record for this period is sparse with defensive forts and barrows forming the majority of Iron Age site types. This appears to fit a national profile, as only c.10% of sites excavated under the auspices of the National Roads Authority produced Iron Age dates. While apparently monumentally absent, it would be wrong to conclude that no Iron Age activity was present in Múscraí. It may be that the period is represented in early ringforts, ogham stones or other such field monuments generally dated to the Bronze Age or Early Medieval period.

While the RMP is clearly suggestive of a fledging Bronze Age landscape, there are problems concerning recognition and classification. Many sites listed in the RMP are generally classified to a particular period but without scientific dating no definitive dates can be individually given.

2.3 The Early Medieval Period

There is a strong pattern of Early Christian settlement in Múscraí. The most famous saint associated with the region is St. Gobnait, the sacred abbess of the monastery at Baile Bhúirne (fig. 2.2). It is thought that her church was established here in the sixth century most likely by St. Abban, who in local legend is thought to have been Gobnait's brother.⁸ Her pattern day is still celebrated on the February 11th. The All – Ireland Review⁹ of 1900 records it as:

Figure 2.2 **St. Gobnait's hut excavated by O'Kelly in the 1950s**



⁶ M. O'Sullivan, Wedge Tombs, *Archaeology Ireland*, Winter 2010, volume 24, issue 4, p. 38

⁷ IBID, p. 38

⁸ D. Harris, St. Gobnet Abbess of Ballyvourney, *The Journal of the Royal Society Antiquaries of Ireland Seventh Series Vol. 8*, (1938), P. 276

⁹ The National Calendar, *All Ireland Review*, Vol. 1, Number 14, (1900), p. 5

(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

St. Gobnet, Virgin and Abbess of Ballyvourney, Co. Cork (sixth century). It is related of her that she drove away a haughty invader by directing a swarm of bees against him. A fair and patron was held in her honour, at which the young men used to assemble on an eminence and invoke her to send them wealthy partners within the ensuing twelve months.

The archaeological remains left by the monastic settlement at Baile Bhúirne are a testament to its importance. The breadth of this record was greatly increased by the excavations of M.J O’Kelly in the early 1950s. These include the remains of furnaces dating from the Bronze and Iron Age under what became commonly known as St. Gobnait’s house. The site’s link to fire has led Ronald Hutton to speculate¹⁰ that there may be a titled link with the Celtic god of fire Goibniu; who in Irish mythology was the smith to the Tuatha de Danann. This fire based link is also something that he claims may have been associated with the Abbess Bridget at Kildare¹¹. Allied to these remains are the ogham stones generally (but not scientifically) dated to the Early Medieval period¹². While the presence of ringforts show us that Múscraí had a thriving secular population during this period also.

While the cult of Gobnait is an enduring tradition in Múscraí, she is not the region’s sole significant saint. The early monastic settlement at Gougane Barra, west of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh is associated with St. Fin Barre from the seventh century onwards (fig. 2.3).

Figure 2.3 **Gougane Barra**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

2.4 The Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods

The archaeological record for later medieval Múscraí is greatly supplemented by documentary sources. From these a picture of internal power struggles and dispossession of land appears. Throughout the medieval period the McCarthy’s were the ruling Gaelic Irish family. The initial land

¹⁰ R. Hutton, *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles: Their Nature and Legacy*. Oxford, Blackwell, (1991), 285.

¹¹ Ibid, P.285

¹² M. O’Sullivan, Ogham Stones, *Archaeology Ireland*, Summer 2014, volume 28, issue 2, p. 29

grant for what was to become the barony of Múscraí dates to 1352. Lands on the Cork-Kerry border were the subject of a crown grant to Cormac McCarthy after he and Sir Thomas de Rokeby defeated Dermot MacDermot McCarthy after an internal McCarthy power struggle. By 1365 Cormac McCarthy was referring to himself as 'Captain of the Irish of Desmond'¹³. This lineage appears to have continued in various guises with McCarthy lands generally concentrated in the Múscraí area. *Carrigaphooca* Castle (just outside the Múscraí Gaeltacht), built in the mid-1450s by Dermot MacCarthy was one of their strongholds.

The McCarthys sided with the crown forces during the attempted plantation of Munster in the late 1500s. They also sided with the crown forces during the Nine Years War. Following the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the McCarthys were rewarded with the title Earl of Clancarthy, this was an extension of the Earl of Clancare title instituted in 1565. Callaghan McCarthy was the main benefactor. He inherited land in the Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh area. The majority of this land appears to have being in the hands of the O'Learys in the pre-plantation era. McCarthy was distinguished by being a Catholic, something that was in the minority during this land transfer. Nationally, Protestant land ownership went up from 42% in 1641 to 70% in 1670.¹⁴ In County Cork land in Protestant hands rose from 23% in 1641 to 63% by 1670¹⁵. The lands around in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne and Cúil Aodha were granted to John Colthurst who inherited c.15,000 acres of profitable land. The lands granted to Colthurst were in the main disposed from a Catholic named William Herilhy.

The primary idea of this land transfer was, as mentioned above, to repay loyalty. Consequently, these lands often passed from Catholic hands into Protestant hands. Interestingly, the surrounding area retained a higher proportion of Catholic landowners compared to the rest of the county. Nonetheless, this large scale transfer of land laid the foundations for the landed ascendancy that held the sway of power in Ireland throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The importance of the cult of St. Gobnait appears to be very much alive during this period (fig. 2.4). In 1601, Pope Clement VIII offered a ten year indulgence to all those who visited her shrine on her feast day. In 1602, Donal Cam O'Sullivan prayed at the shrine in Baile Bhúirne after fleeing the Crown forces conquering West Cork. The much maligned papal nuncio Rinuccini, sent over to assist the Confederates of Kilkenny, is also known to have celebrated mass at the site on Gobnait's feast day in 1645. All these actions indicate the importance of St. Gobnait throughout the post-reformation period.

There are only two late medieval structures left standing in Múscraí. Both are ruined churches. One is at St.Gobnait's Shrine. The other is the severely degraded ruin of An Teampaillín in Eachros (fig. 2.5). It was at An Teampaillín that Donal Cam O'Sullivan and his followers rested after their first day of marching on their fighting retreat to Leitrim in 1602. The site is also the location of a cillín, or burial ground for unbaptised or stillborn infants. The church is now on the route of the Beara-Breifne Way.

¹³ K. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, Dublin, Lilliput Press, (2003), p. 189

¹⁴ Downesurvey.tcd.ie, [Date accessed 20/10/2014]

¹⁵ Ibid, [Date accessed, 20/10/2014]

Figure 2.4

Late medieval church at St. Gobnait's Shrine



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 2.5

An Teampaillín



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

2.5 Famine and the Age of Revolution

The Great Famine of 1845 – 1852 had a huge impact on the Ireland. Estimates of deaths coupled with emigration are in the millions. While all areas of the country were affected by An Gortha Mór, the marginalised areas of the west of Ireland were certainly the worst affected. This national picture is confirmed locally in the 32.7% drop in population in Baile Bhúirne and 35.1% drop in Cill na Martra between 1841 and 1851¹⁶.

The barony of Múscraí was within the Poor Law Union of Macroom (304sq miles). The town's workhouse officially opened on the 1st of October 1842. The prevailing governmental and economic idea of the time was the policy of *laissez faire*. This hypothesised that nobody should benefit from governmental hand-outs. Therefore, the idea of the workhouse was to ensure that those who were receiving state assistance within it were contributing to society.

Although the workhouses were places of disease, degradation and shame, the conditions outside were worse. Nowhere is this more evident than in the numbers they contained by 1851. In 1845, the numbers in workhouses in Ireland were 38,497. This rose to 83,283 in 1847 and to 217,000 by 1851.¹⁷ Locally, the presence of a porridge house at St. Gobnait's Shrine (Tig na Leitean) and a soup kitchen in the Kerry Yard in Cúil Aodha significantly reduced the level of deaths but not migration. The dire situation was arrested further by the support of the Colthursts through their funding of a series of works on their estate which employed locals.

The story of the Buckley family travelling from Macroom workhouse to Carraigastyra graveyard to mourn their two children and their ultimate death is one of the most enduring stories associated with the region.

The problems did not end with the Great Famine. Evictions were common in Múscraí during this period. An example being in Baile Bhúirne where 44 families were evicted from their homes in the post-famine period. This illustrates the unstable nature of society during this time and indicates how a struggle for landownership, equality and eventual independence came to pass.

Conditions in nineteenth century Ireland laid the foundation for the revolutionary zeal that captured the country in the 1910s and 1920s. The conditions at the time provided ample reason for discontent within the large majority of inhabitants. Múscraí was no different. The majority of the land was still in the hands of largely absentee landlords. This led to tenants doing little in return. They were simply pawns of the landed gentry. At any point they could be removed from their land, consequently, improvements were not made. Agrarian groups such as the Whiteboys and Ribbonmen sprouted throughout the country. Their main aim was to fight for the land rights of the laboring class. An incident at Keimaneigh in 1822 at which three Rockites (another agrarian group) and an English soldier was killed showed the intense nature of the agrarian resistance in Cork.

Although Catholic Emancipation was granted in 1829 it is in the post-famine years when changes really picked up pace. In 1869, the Church of Ireland was disestablished as the main church of the people (regardless of faith), this meant an end to the system of tithe paying to the established church.

The state sponsored numerous schemes to alleviate the agrarian tension that was rising in Ireland during this period, one such was the Congested Districts Board. This was established to help those in marginal areas of the west through grants to improve infrastructure and update farms. The

¹⁶ M. Mac Suibhne, *Famine in Muskerry, An Drocsaol*, Midelton, Litho Press, (1997), p. 82

¹⁷ William J. Smyth, *The Province of Munster and the Great Famine*, in (eds) J. Crowley, W.J. Smyth & M. Murphy, *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, Cork, (2012), p. 363

remaining reports give a good indication of social conditions in Múscraí during the latter stages of the nineteenth century. Table 2.2 outlines the landownerships and values from Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh and the surrounding areas from a Congested Districts Board report of 1892.

Table 2.2 Congested Districts Board Report 1892

Electoral Division	Area in Acres	Poor Law Valuation £	No. of ratings under £10 and over £4 Val	No. of Ratings under £4	Population 1891	No. of families in 1891	No. of families on holdings between £2 and £4 value	No. of families on holdings under £2 val.	No. Families in poor circumstances.	No. of families without cattle
Dromdaleague, North	6089	678	39	24	562	93	9	7	10	
Ahil,	13976	821	25	10	574	85	9	0	6	
Bealanageary	8368	1095	48	28	852	128	2	12	8	
Cleanrath	6868	642	27	18	491	77	7	4	5	
Slievereagh	11684	1562	58	52	1064	167	5	28	16	
Breadagh	4410	1593	38	90	1063	184	19	56	40	60*
Totals	51395	6391	235	222	4606	734	51	107	85	118

Source: (Cumann Staire Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh)

The gradual erosion of absolute power of the landed class eventually led to Land Bills been passed for Ireland. These were to have a dramatic impact on the landscape of Múscraí. The fight for tenant rights was greatly advanced by the formation of the Land League in 1878. Its sole purpose was to gain rights for impoverished landowners. The League quickly spread with branches founded throughout the country. A local branch was formed in Inchigeela in May 1881 to protect the rights of the people of the area.

After two generally ineffective land acts in 1870 and 1881, progress was made on the land issue with a succession of following acts¹⁸. These afforded tenants the opportunity to buy land through governmental grants and also legislated for disused estates to be sold. The landscape of Múscraí now changed. A succession of standard farm cottages were constructed, the people now gained control of their land for the first time. These cottages represented the changed nature of Irish society, the slow erosion of an imperial classist system and its replacement with a burgeoning small independent Catholic farming class.

The changes were not limited to the erosion of the landed class, they were also influenced by the consolidation and enclosing of land, the disappearance of medieval cluster settlement and farmhouses been built close to the newly emerging road network. The cottages of this period, although in various states of disrepair, still dot the landscape especially in the hinterland of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. These are a constant reminder to the great changes that took place in the region during the pre-revolutionary period and stand as monuments to the changing nature of Irish society in the late nineteenth century.

This societal change spurred a cultural and political change and laid the foundations for the revolutionary period.

The War of Independence period (1919-1921) was a time of extreme upheaval in Ireland but especially in Cork. The number of incidents in Cork during this period outnumber any other county. Múscraí proved no exception to this. The recently released records from the Bureau of Military Archives offer first-hand accounts of events. One such account is that of Patrick J. Lynch of Ullanes,

¹⁸ Irish Land Purchase Act 1885, Balfour Act 1887, Wyndam Act 1903 and the Labours Act 1906

Baile Mhic Íre¹⁹. Lynch served as a Captain of the Baile Bhúirne IRA during the War of Independence years. Rebel activity appears to have been constant throughout Múscraí; with 1920 having the greatest recorded instances. Lynch details events such as the attack on Baile Bhúirne RIC barracks on January 3rd 1920, the burning of 'The Lodge' belonging to W.G Williams on June 9th, for which he (Williams) was later awarded £10,000 in damages,²⁰ and the fierce fight that occurred at Gattabaun on 17th July where Captain Ayrie of the Manchester Regiment was killed. The protagonists claim that this was the first attack on a military lorry in the independence period²¹. These events show the unstable nature of society in the Múscraí.

The ambush carried out at Knockanure in August 1920 typifies the activity of the IRA in Múscraí during the War of Independence. On August 17th two military lorries were returning to Macroom after delivering twenty bicycles to the military at Baile Bhúirne when the two outriders of the party ignored an IRA command to stop; instead they sped up to make their escape. The IRA, under the command of Paddy O'Sullivan and Patrick Lynch, opened fire immediately. Patrick Lynch recalls the incident:²²

We opened fire, killing the officer in charge – a Lieutenant Sharman – immediately and wounding four others. The others returned our fire. Shooting continued for about half an hour when eventually the remaining members of the patrol surrendered.

This attack immediately prompted the Crown to act. The *Irish Times* reported on the 23rd of August that – about 200 men of the Manchester Regiment were drafted into Baile Bhúirne on Friday. On Friday night they surrounded the village, and effected several arrests.

The records of Cornelius Cronin a member of the Baile Bhúirne Company, 8th Battalion recalls the formation of the Irish Volunteers in the area in 1913 and the mobilization order given by Tomás McCurtain to 16 volunteers on Easter Sunday 1916. He also illustrates the anti-conscription sentiment that was gripping Ireland in early 1918 – 'at the peak of the conscription scare our strength reached 130 men'²³. Another extract recounts a crisis of conscience suffered by an RIC Sergeant (Sergeant Appleby) at his finding of Tomás McCurtain in a room at the Gougane Barra Hotel – 'When he entered one of the rooms he saw McCurtain, O'Higgins, Hyde and a Scottish Volunteer... He spoke for a few moments to McCurtain in Irish, then turned and left the room, closing the door behind him.'²⁴ This testimony typifies the problems faced by so many RIC members in Ireland during the independence period.

The ambush at Cúl na Catharach is one of the most intense examples of fighting recorded from the War of Independence period. The battle took place on the 26th of February 1921 and comprised a force of 60 IRA men and an Auxiliary force that numbered over a hundred. The fighting was described by Patrick J. Lynch as – "a terrible fight which lasted four hours"²⁵. The fighting that took place at Cúl na Catharach lasted over four hours before a six hour running fight over the Múscraí terrain and resulted in the loss of 28 auxiliaries with the IRA not suffering a single casualty.

Along with Clonbannin and Crossbarry (both March 1921), the ambush at it is recognised as Cúl na Catharach a prime example of the efficient nature of guerilla warfare carried out during the War of

¹⁹ P. Lynch, *Bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie*, [Date accessed, 15/09/2014]

²⁰ *Skibberean Eagle*, October 8th 1920, p. 2

²¹ Op. Cit Lynch p. 9

²² Ibid, p.9

²³ C. Cronin, *Bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie*, [Date accessed, 19/11/2014], p. 2

²⁴ Ibid, p. 4

²⁵ Op. Cit. Lynch, p. 17

Independence. The British response to the ambush was for infantry, armed and air units to be called the scene, thus it has been rightly described as one of the most ambitious military attacks of the entire period. Indeed, the nationally important battlefield at Cúl na Catharach is the only War of Independence battle site that is marked on the ordnance survey of Ireland maps. It exemplifies the region as one that was aware of its regional and national identity and illustrates the sacrifices made to protect and foster its cultural heritage.

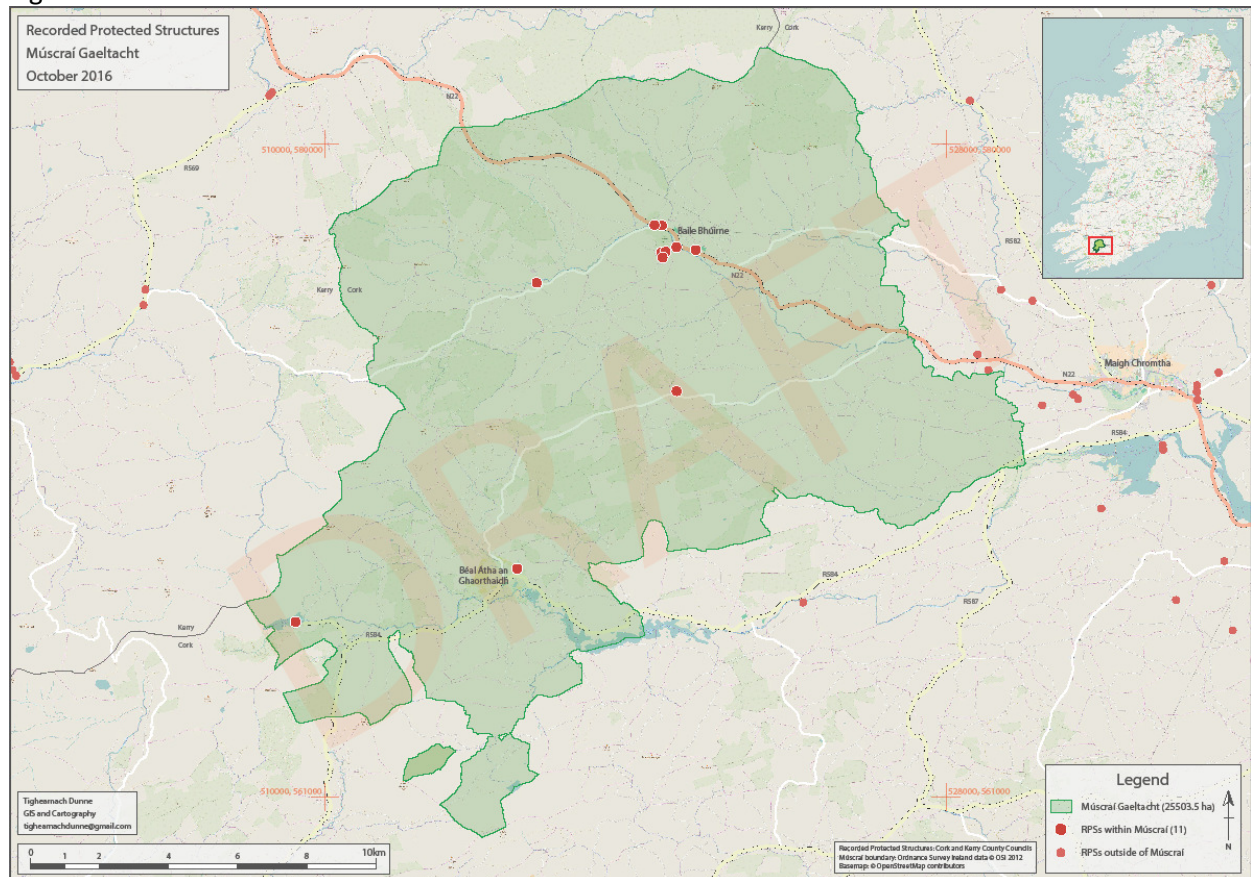
While history mostly focuses on those who fought here, there were also 200,000 Irishmen who partook in World War I, with 55,000 never returning. Múscraí does not appear to have had many among the fallen. John O' Leary (Baile Bhúirne) a member of the Munster Fusiliers was killed on the 22nd of March 1918 in France. Originally from Baile Bhúirne he is the only definitive soldier killed in action (others found but county of origin not available) that was found from the Múscraí region.

The story of Michael O'Leary of Inchigeela (just outside the Gaeltacht) is certainly one of note. He received the Victoria Cross for bravery in action while fighting in France in 1915. He led a charge of the 1st Battalion of the Irish Guards towards a German occupied trench, killing five machine gunners, thus saving his own comrades. A lance-Corporal at the time of the incident, O'Leary was instantly promoted to Sergeant. The exploits of O'Leary led to the British government using him as a recruiting poster boy for the remainder of the First World War.

The collective effort of the War of Independence was quickly replaced by the turmoil of the Civil War. Initially concentrated in Dublin, it quickly spread southwards and was a national affair by June 1922. By October 1922, the National Army had advanced as far as Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. The *Cork Examiner* of October 2nd states – 'severe and intense fighting commenced soon after the advance on Ballingearry'. The article suggests that Baile Bhúirne will be next to fall. The *Irish Independent* dated 1st October states – 'the irregular casualties are believed to be heavy.' There appears to have been little let up in the fighting as 1923 commenced. The *Freemans Journal* dated 2nd March details an ambush in Baile Bhúirne.

Much of the architectural heritage of the Gaeltacht comes from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Múscraí has eleven protected structures (fig. 2.6). Most are concentrated around Baile Bhúirne/Baile Mhic Íre. The main streets of the Gaeltacht's villages are dominated by simple but elegant vernacular two storey terraced and detached houses (figures 2.8 & 2.8). These are complemented by a lovely scattering of vernacular slate roofed farm buildings and their associated outbuildings. There is little of the grand houses heritage in Múscraí. An exception to this is the ruinous Glebe building adjacent to Saint Gobnait's Shrine (fig. 2.9). The 19th century was a period of greatest church building. At St. Gobnait's Shrine there is a good example of an Anglican Board of First Fruits church. Throughout the Gaeltacht there is also a fine collection of post-emancipation Roman Catholic churches (fig. 2.10). Perhaps the most significant Catholic church is St. Fin Barre's Oratory in Gougane Barra. Built at the beginning of the 20th century in the Celtic revival style, it is a physical manifestation of efforts at the time to create of a distinctly Irish national identity. Múscraí has good collection of well built 18th and 19th century masonry bridges (fig. 2.11).

Figure 2.6 Protected structures in Múscraí



Final map will be A3

Figure 2.7 **Terraced shop and home in Baile Mhic Íre**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 2.8 **Vernacular building in Cúil Aodha built incorporating a rocky outcrop**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 2.9 **The Glebe**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 2.10 **Cill na Martra Church**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 2.11

c.1800 masonry bridge in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

2.6 A Cultural Renaissance

It should come as no surprise that Múscraí was an essential component in the Gaelic Revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century considering the lack of permanent incursion by the ruling British classes. The architectural footprint of Múscraí is suggestive of an area that lacked the settled village nature that dominated vast swathes of the country. Múscraí follows a more ancient style of settlement, one that bears witness to its Gaelic roots. This is a system of building in perishable materials, materials that leave no trace on the landscape. The village of Cúil Aodha perfectly illustrates this. The present village (built around the church in 1872) is the fourth incarnation of a settlement in the immediate area. This system of a moveable population very much in the Gaelic tradition and distinctly different from the English model of nucleated settlements appears endemic throughout Múscraí. Roads only came in the 19th century. Before this, movement for purposes of pilgrimage, cattle grazing and trade was done was along Gaelic track ways.

The local resistance to many colonial ideas in conjunction with a fostering of a Gaelic identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries placed Múscraí at the forefront of the national cultural revolution.

The importance of place and tradition is something that is reflected in cultural work undertaken in Múscraí in the early twentieth century. This is typified by Dochtúir Donal Ó Loingsigh (b.1842 – d.1913). A native of Cúil Aodha, he was a pioneer of the National Cultural movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His career path was somewhat stifled by the hanging of one of his uncles as a convicted Whiteboy,²⁶ thus preventing him from joining the priesthood. Instead, he fought with papal armies in the Italian War of Unification and on the French side in the

²⁶ An agrarian group that fought for the rights of subsistence farmers in the eighteenth century. Given the name whiteboys due to their dress when they raided landlord estates.

Franco-Prussian war before returning to Baile Bhúirne to practice medicine. He was a leading light in the establishment of the first dedicated Irish language school in Baile Bhúirne in 1898, in a public house ran by the Colthurst family. He was also instrumental in founding the renowned Coláiste Na Mumhan in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh in 1904. Quickly, the Coláiste became hugely significant to the Gaelic revival movement. Both Terence McSweeney and Tomás Mac Curtain were visitors. Ó Loingsigh's expansion of feis to Killarney and Dublin from Baile Bhúirne laid the foundations for Baile Bhúirne to become recognised as one of the core centres for Gaelic culture in a new independence seeking Ireland. He represented Ireland (along with Padraig Pearse and Douglas Hyde) at the Celtic Convention in Paris in 1900. His cultural work also included his endeavours with Conradh na Gaeilge which he promoted throughout Múscraí and beyond. The impact of Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh was such that scholars from Múscraí were sought countrywide to lead the teaching of Irish and its promotion at a time of great change for Ireland.

While the expansion of Gaelic culture out of Múscraí is perhaps what Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh is most remembered for; his contribution to the local community through industry is something that cannot be over looked. He realised that local industry was an essential tool in ensuring the survival of the region. He first founded a general store that provided animal feeds and met the agricultural needs of the locality. He further demonstrated this entrepreneurial zeal with the opening of a bakery and later a knitting factory that employed up to 20 local women. This element of Ó Loingsigh is something that contributed greatly to the region and laid the foundations for its economic sustainability in the fledgling Irish Free State.

It's not often that a single person, however gifted, can alter the character of a nation's culture. O'Riada managed to do this – Thomas Kinsella

Composer Sean O'Riada managed to intertwine numerous cultural influences throughout the 1950s and 1960s and reinvigorated Irish traditional music in the process. He is credited with changing the perception of Irish traditional music and reintroducing it to a new modern Ireland. O'Riada had many musical tastes. He played with a jazz band in Cork in the early 1950s, while also being influenced by European classical ways throughout his life. His career included spells working for Radio Éireann, composing in Paris, serving as musical director at the Abbey theatre, and lecturing in the music department at University College Cork.

His realisation that Irish traditional music was something that was in grave danger led him to impose his classical training upon the corpus of traditional music. He opted to perform in a theatre setting, something more akin to the classical music of European tradition. His traditional group Ceoltóirí Chualann offered him the platform to move away from the céilí band tradition and enabled him to establish a "folk orchestra" idea.

O'Riada was commissioned to compose the score for Mise Éire, a programme chronicling Ireland's break from a colony to an independent nation. This was one of the seminal points in his career, further popularising his music and making the score a source of pride for the Irish nation. This left an imprint on the Irish people and pushed Irish traditional music to the forefront of national identity.

Throughout this period O'Riada lived and worked in Dublin. His home at Galloping Green, was a Mecca for traditional gatherings of music, language, poetry, song and debate. In 1963, O'Riada took up a lecturing position at University College Cork and moved to the ancestral land of his mother in Múscraí. Once resident in Cúil Aodha, he became a fervent ambassador for the people of Múscraí through his work with Ceoltóirí Chualann and the establishment of Cór Cúil Aodha.

The revolutionary Second Vatican Council established a basis for the Mass to no longer be celebrated in Latin, but rather in the vernacular of a region. Consequently, the participation of the congregation was encouraged in a greater way. O’Riada embraced this opportunity to combine the chanting of the Latin style Mass with the ancient tradition of sean-nós singing, which became the blueprint for Masses in Irish speaking areas (and in English speaking areas offering an Irish Mass). These liturgical works were sang throughout Ireland by the Cór Chúil Aodha, heightening awareness of the Irish language, and reaffirming O’Riada as a cultural ambassador for Irish language speakers throughout the country (fig. 2.12). Indeed, the O’Riada Masses are still used throughout the country.

Figure 2.12 Interior of Séipéal Ghobnatan, home of Cór Chúil Aodha



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

The achievements of Sean O’Riada are not limited to what has been written. He reintroduced the harp to Irish traditional music (controversially favouring the harpsichord) and made the bodhrán a central instrument in his traditional works. His collection has enriched the corpus of Irish traditional music available and he managed to link it to the people and therefore increased its identity at a time when it had decreased in popularity. Like Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh before him, O’Riada used his base in Múscaí to radiate a nationally recognised cultural contribution to Irish society. He managed to revitalise Irish music by blending newer traditions with the old, thus cementing his place among the greats of Irish traditional music.

The history and archaeology in Múscaí is suggestive of a region that was at the forefront of regional and national issues. The Bronze Age monuments tell us that it was a fertile landscape that was had relatively intensive occupation during pre-history. It appears to have flourished in the Early Medieval period with religion playing a hugely important role. This devotion continued throughout the medieval and post medieval periods and is still evident today. The late medieval period was characterised by internal land struggles and land-grabs; none greater than the transfers in the late sixteen hundreds. The famine period once again brought Múscaí to the forefront of the national agenda. It was one of the worst affected areas during the mid-1800s, with horrendous scenes of starvation and anguish. The push for independence and the cultural reawakening of the twentieth century show how the area led the fight for both political and cultural independence.

3.0 The Natural Heritage of the Múscraí Gaeltacht

3.1 Introduction

The Irish landscape is a cultural landscape that has been shaped by millennia of human habitation and land-use. Likewise the landscape has shaped patterns of human settlement and the nature of human activity. The high mountains, steep hills, woodlands and fertile river valleys in the Múscraí Gaeltacht area have undoubtedly influenced life in the Múscraí area for thousands of years. The strong links between the people, the language and the landscape is evident in the place names, music and other intangible heritage of the area.

Natural heritage is defined by the UNESCO World Heritage Convention²⁷ as follows:

1. **natural features** consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;
2. **geological and physiographical formations** and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation;
3. **natural sites** or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

3.2 Geology

The Múscraí Gaeltacht is framed by the Derrynasaggart Mountains to the north and north-west, the Shehy Mountains to the south, and the Lee River valley to the east. The underlying bedrock of the Múscraí area is Devonian Old Red Sandstone²⁸. This is evident in outcropping rocky slopes and corries in the uplands. The highest peak is Mullach an Ois (647m) at the northern edge of the Múscraí in the Derrynasaggart Mountains but there are several other high peaks on the western and southern edge of the area (Knockbwee 461m, Mweelin 487m and Coomataggart 530m). The central part of Múscraí is also hilly with several hills c. 200m in height.

3.3 Habitats

The landscapes in this area are characterised by uplands and lowlands, peaks and valleys, rivers and wetlands. The uplands are covered in upland blanket bog and heath, coniferous forestry and rough grassland. At lower elevations productive farmland with improved pastures is more prevalent and wet grassland on more marginal land. There are a few pockets of native oak woodland and stands of wet woodland in association with river and lake edges, and small areas of lowland blanket bog. There are two important river catchments in the Múscraí area, the River Lee and the Sullane River. Both rivers rise in the uplands on the western edge of the Múscraí and flow eastwards. The Sullane River and its tributaries have a good stock of Brown Trout, and fly fishing is popular in the area²⁹. Water quality of the rivers is generally of good or high quality but there are a few water bodies with poor water quality¹.

Land-use is predominantly coniferous forestry and rough grazing with sheep in the uplands, and pastoral farming with cattle in the low-lying areas of the Múscraí. Wind farms are a feature of the skyline at higher elevations.


²⁷ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

²⁸ www.gsi.ie

²⁹ <http://www.fishinginireland.info/trout/southwest/sullane.htm>

The main natural and semi-natural habitats in the Múscraí area are in brief described below (table 3.1). They include several habitats of high nature conservation value that are listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive³⁰. This list of habitats is based on a limited survey of the area by Janice Fuller, the sites synopses for designated sites³¹ and a review of the literature³².

Table 3.1 **The main natural and semi-natural habitats that occur in the Múscraí, Co. Cork. Habitats are classified according to Fossitt (2000) 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland'**³³


Habitat	Habitat code*	Description
Upland blanket bog	PB2	Upland blanket bog is abundant at higher elevations (>150m) often in a mosaic with wet heath. Much of this bog and heath has been planted with conifers. There are still large open and intact areas (e.g. Mullaghanish Bog SAC). The bog vegetation includes Ling Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), Common Cotton-grass (<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>), Hare's-tail Cotton grass (<i>E. vaginatum</i>), Crowberry (<i>Empetrum nigrum</i>) and bog mosses (e.g. <i>Sphagnum papillosum</i>). Overgrazing by sheep is an issue in some places. This habitat corresponds with Annex I habitat 'Blanket Bog 7130' when actively growing.
Dry heath	HH1	<p>Dry heath is common on steep slopes and high or rocky ground. Dwarf shrubs such as Ling Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), Bell Heather (<i>Erica cinerea</i>) and Gorse (<i>Ulex</i> spp.). This habitat corresponds with Annex I habitat 'Dry siliceous heath 4030'.</p> 
Wet heath	HH3	Wet heath is common, often in association with blanket bog and

³⁰ Annex I habitats are listed on Annex I of the European Union Habitats Directive. These habitats are considered to be of the highest nature conservation value within the context of the European Union. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/nature_and_biodiversity/l28076_en.htm



³¹ www.npws.ie/protectedsites



³² AOS Planning Limited. 2010. Constraints Report- Flora and Fauna. Dunmanway to Clashavoon 110kV Overhead Line Environmental Reports. Unpublished report; Dixon Brosnan. Ecology. Cleanrath Wind Farm. Unpublished report; Peppiatt, C. 2013. Chapter 5, Flora and Fauna. In 'Shehy More Wind farm- Environmental Impact Statement'. McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan. Unpublished report.



³³ Fossitt, J. 2000. A Guide to Habitats in Ireland. The Heritage Council, Kilkenny.

		dry heath. It occurs on shallower peat (15-50cm) than blanket bog but has similar vegetation cover. This habitat corresponds with the Annex I habitat 'North Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica cinerea</i> 4010'.
Coniferous plantation	WD4	There are extensive areas of coniferous plantation within the Múscraí area. Much of this forestry is managed by Coillte (e.g. Glendav and Cúil Aodha Forests ³⁴) but some is privately-owned. The primary species is Sitka Spruce (<i>Picea sitchensis</i>) and it dominates most of the plantations. Wind farms have been developed in association with the forestry in some areas just outside the Gaeltacht's boundary. Associated with the conifer plantations are recently felled areas (WS5) and young plantations.
Rivers-upland/lowland	FW1/FW2	<p>There are many rivers and streams within the area and two important river catchments, the Sullane and the Lee. The Sullane is an important tributary of the Lee. It rises in the hills west of Baile Bhúirne and flows east to join the Lee near Macroom. The Lee rises in the Shehy mountains near Gougane Barra and flows east through Macroom and on to Cork City. The Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) has been widely reported in both catchments, as have Otters. Both are listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. The image below depicts the Sullane River in Cúil Aodha and associated wetlands.</p> 
Lakes	FL	There are several small and medium-sized lakes in the Múscraí area, the most iconic of which is Gougane Barra Lake. Most of the upland lakes, including Gougane Barra Lake, would be classified as 'dystrophic' lakes (FL1). Those with a higher nutrient status would be classified as 'mesotrophic' (FL4) e.g. Lough Allua. Dystrophic lakes correspond with the Annex I habitat 'Natural

³⁴http://www.coillte.ie/coillteforest/plans/forest_management_plans/progress_on_revising_our_forest_management_plans/cork/?tx_r3co086forestsdb_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=CK11&cHash=f248a02ccc;
http://www.coillte.ie/coillteforest/plans/forest_management_plans/progress_on_revising_our_forest_management_plans/cork/?tx_r3co086forestsdb_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=CK29&cHash=2ba771fe72

		dystrophic lakes and ponds 3160'.
Lowland blanket bog	PB3	<p>There are small areas of lowland blanket bog in the valleys and in association with rivers. Dominant species present include Bog Myrtle (<i>Myrica gale</i>), Ling Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), Purple Moor Grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>), Common Cotton Grass (<i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i>), Cross-leaved Heath (<i>Erica tetralix</i>) and Bog mosses (<i>Sphagnum</i> species). This habitat also corresponds with the Annex I habitat 'Blanket Bog 7130' when actively growing.</p> 
Dry humid-acid grassland	GS3	<p>This type of grassland occurs in the uplands on acidic soils and much of it is grazed by sheep. This type of grassland tends to be less intensively managed but can be heavily grazed. The main grasses present are generally Bent Grasses (<i>Agrostis</i> species) and Mat Grass (<i>Nardus stricta</i>).</p> 
Wet grassland	GS4	<p>Wet grassland is abundant through the Múscraí area in areas that are poorly drained, or in association with water bodies. It is characterised by rushy fields with Soft Rush (<i>Juncus effusus</i>),</p>

		<p>Creeping Bent Grass (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>), Yorkshire Fog Grass (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>) and Cuckoo Flower (<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>).</p> 
Oak-birch- holly woodland	WN1	<p>There are a few areas of Oak woodland in Múscraí. The most notable are St. Gobnet's Wood and Cascade Wood where there is a large but fragmented area of old Oak woodland. Much of the Oak woodland present is dominated by Sessile Oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) and Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) with Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) in the understorey. This habitat corresponds to the Annex I habitat 'Old Oak woodland 91A0'.</p> 
Wet woodland	WN6	<p>Small patches of wet woodland dominated by Grey Willow (<i>Salix cinerea</i>) with some Alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) can be found along the edges of rivers and streams, and on the edges of bogs or in boggy depressions.</p>

		
Hedgerows	WL1	<p>A notable feature in the area is the richness of the hedgerow flora. Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) is the dominant hedgerow shrub but Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) and Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) are common, as well as Oak (<i>Quercus</i> spp).</p> 
Oak-Ash-Hazel woodland	WN2	<p>Another type of Oak woodland that is found in the Múscraí, especially on damp or flushed ground is dominated by Pedunculate Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>), Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) with Hazel abundant in the understorey (<i>Corylus avellana</i>). This type of woodland occurs in a mosaic with WN1 (and is present in St. Gobnait's Wood and Cascade Wood).</p>

* Habitats are classified according to Fossitt (2000) 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland'

3.4 Sites Designated for Nature Conservation

There are eight sites designated for nature conservation in the Múscraí area including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and a Special Protection Area (SPA) (fig. 3.1). They are described in brief below. Further details on all the sites are available in the sites synopses on www.npws.ie.

SACs are the prime areas for nature conservation in Ireland and the European Union. Sites are designated based on the presence species (listed on Annex II of the EU Habitat Directive) and habitats (listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive) that are considered of conservation importance in a European context.

SPAs are designated for birds of conservation concern (listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive) (including resident and migratory birds) in Ireland and the European Union, and their habitats.

NHAs are sites that are considered to be important for nature conservation in an Irish context. They are designated under the Wildlife Acts.

1. St. Gobnet's Wood SAC (Site Code 000106)

This SAC includes St. Gobnet's Wood and Cascade Wood. These woods are situated on hilly land on either side of the N22 in Baile Bhúirne with Cascade Wood to the north and St. Gobnet's to the south. They form a relatively large but fragmented stand of mature woodland. They appear to exist on the area's first edition 6" Ordnance Survey map for the area, suggesting it can be considered as old woodland³⁵.

Much of the woodland consists of Oak-Birch-Holly woodland (as described above) but Oak-Ash-Hazel woodland is also present particularly in flushed areas and towards the base of the slopes³⁶. There are also small areas of alluvial woodland along the Sullane River, where Alder, Ash and Downy Birch are abundant. The Oak on the site includes Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), Sessile Oak (*Q. petraea*) and their hybrid, *Q. rosacea*. Large old Beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica*) are also common within the woods. Hazel is common in the understorey of the woods and Holly is present in places. The field layer is species-rich with woodland herbs such as Bluebell, Wood Anemone, Wood Avenas, Enchanter's Nightshade and Hart's Tongue Fern. Opposite-leaved Saxifrage and Bugle are abundant in the damper spots. Rocky faces and boulders are abundant throughout the site and they are draped in mosses, liverworts, and in many cases, St. Patrick's Cabbage (*Saxifraga spathularis*).

The site supports Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*), a rare and protected species listed in Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. Parts of Cascade Wood are known to be frequented by at least seven species of bat: Soprano and Common Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared, Leisler's, Daubenton's, Natterer's and Whiskered/Brandt's Bat³⁷. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat (a rare species in Europe and therefore listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive) was also recorded in Cascade Wood in recent years (2007) by the Cork Bat Group. There is also an old record of the Killarney Fern growing in this Wood³⁸. This is an extremely rare plant and listed on the Flora Protection Order (1999)³⁹.

Old Oak Woodland is an Annex I habitat in the EU Habitats Directive.

³⁵ <http://www.npws.ie/publications/irishwildlifemanuals/IWM46.pdf>

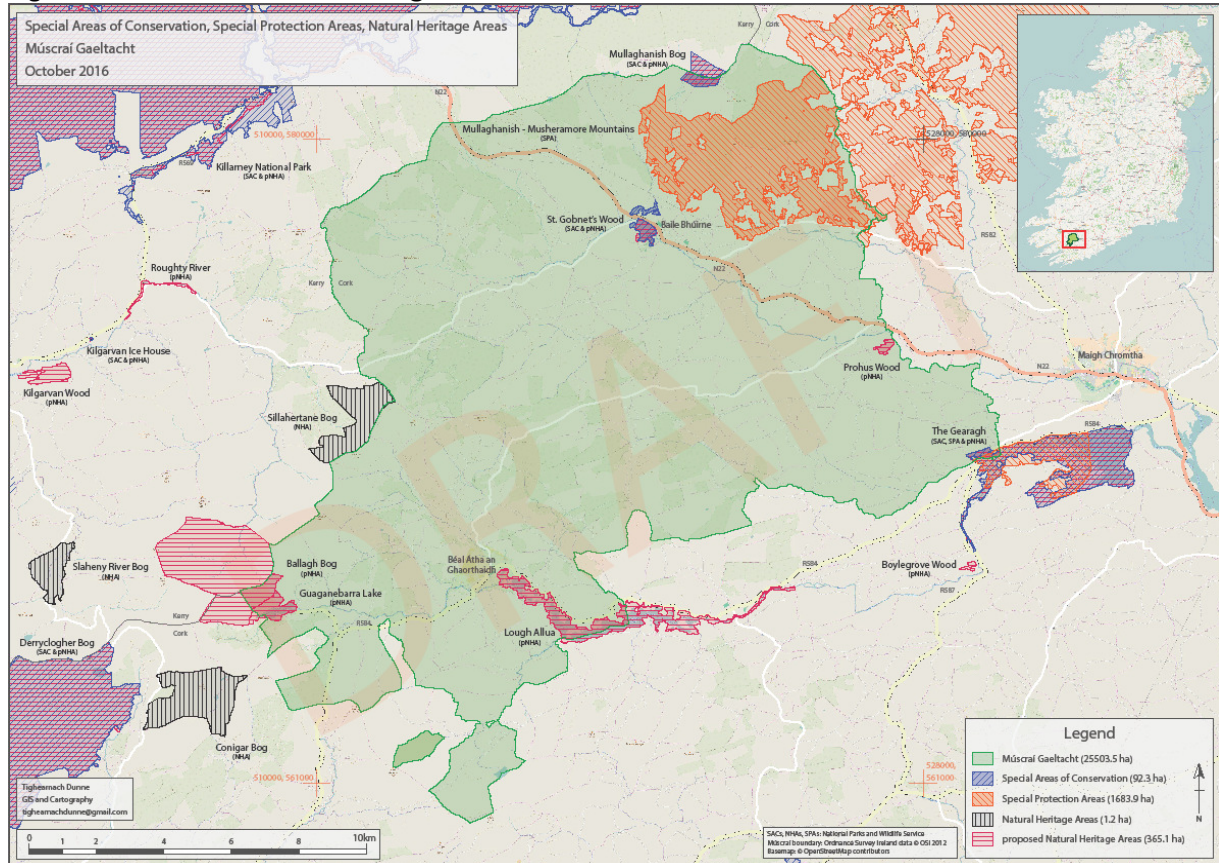
³⁶ Perrin, P., Martin, J., Barron, S., O'Neill, F., McNutt, K., and Delaney, A. 2008. National Survey of Native Woodland. Volume 3c Site reports. National Parks and Wildlife Service.

³⁷ <http://www.corkcountybatgroup.ie/page/the-bats-of-cascade-wood>

³⁸ <http://www.bsbimaps.org.uk/atlas/main.php>

³⁹ www.npws.ie/legislationandconventions

Figure 3.1 Sites designated for nature conservation



Final map will be A3

2. Mullaghanish Bog SAC (Site Code 001890)

Mullaghanish Bog is centred around the summit of Mullach an Ois Mountain. The site is designated as an SAC due to the presence of blanket bog (listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive). This small area of bog is of particular nature conservation interest because it is relatively intact (not damaged by overgrazing or erosion) with blanket bog and flush habitats.

3. Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA (Site Code 004162)

The Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA comprises a substantial part of the Boggeragh/Derrynasaggart Mountains. A portion of this large SPA lies within the Múscraí area. The site consists of a variety of upland habitat including coniferous forestry, blanket bog, wet heath and dry heath. This site is designated as an SPA due to the presence of Hen Harriers (*Circus cyaneus*), one of our rarest birds of prey and an Annex I species on the EU Birds Directive. The site provides excellent nesting and foraging habitat for breeding Hen Harrier and is an important stronghold for the species. The site also supports a breeding population of Merlin (*Falco columbarius*), another rare bird of prey and Annex I species.

4. Prohus Wood NHA (Site code 001248)

Prohus Wood appears to have been cut in the 1950s and is now dominated by multi-stemmed Oak (*Quercus* spp.) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*) with an understory of Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Holly (*Ilex avellana*)⁴⁰. A number of streams flow through the wood and into the Sullane River. There are abundant rock faces and rocks with St. Patrick's Cabbage and Irish Spurge.

5. Lough Allua pNHA (Site code 00165)

Lough Allua is a ribbon lake (part of the River Lee system) surrounded by a mosaic of habitats including wet grassland, woodland, bog, and heath. The rare and protected Pale Violet (*Viola lactea*) grows along the northern shore, west of Inchigeela⁴¹.

6. Gouganebarra Lake pNHA (Site code 001057)

Gouganebarra Lake is situated in an upland setting surrounded by mountains. The high level of acidity in Gouganebarra Lake, combined with the peat content of the water means that there is little aquatic vegetation. Peregrine Falcons (another bird of prey and protected species that is rare in Europe) have been known to breed on the cliffs above the lake⁴². In the evening, a large number of bats feed on insects over the water.

7. Ballagh Bog pNHA (Site code 001886)

About one third of this site lies within the Múscraí area. The site comprises a high-level river plain and surrounding mountain slopes. It includes a series of small, slightly raised valley bogs situated in the bends of a mountain stream⁴³.

⁴⁰ Perrin, P., Martin, J., Barron, S., O'Neill, F., McNutt, K., and Delaney, A. 2008. National Survey of Native Woodland. Volume 3c Site reports. National Parks and Wildlife Service.

⁴¹ AOS Planning Limited. 2010. Constraints Report- Flora and Fauna. Dunmanway to Clashavoon 110kV Overhead Line Environmental Reports. Unpublished report.

⁴² Peppiatt, C. 2013. Chapter 5, Flora and Fauna. In 'Shehy More Wind farm- Environmental Impact Statement'. McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan. Unpublished report.

⁴³ Peppiatt, C. 2013. Chapter 5, Flora and Fauna. In 'Shehy More Wind farm- Environmental Impact Statement'. McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan. Unpublished report.

8. The Gearagh SAC (Site Code 000108) and SPA (Site Code 004109)

The Gearagh is a special area of wet woodland that occurs in the River Lee floodplain south-west of Macroom. The north-western corner of the woodland occurs within the Múscraí Gaeltacht.

This type of alluvial woodland is very rare in Ireland today. Much of the woodland in The Gearagh was felled in the 1950s to facilitate the development of a hydro-electric scheme on the Lee. The area that remains has probably been wooded since the end of the last ice age 10,000 years ago and therefore can be described as an ancient woodland. Today the woodland consists of a series of wooded islands with a complex network of river channels.

Oak woodland occurs on the islands with a rich mix of trees and shrubs including Birch, Ash, Hazel, Hawthorn, Holly, Purging Buckthorn, Bird Cherry, Willows and Alder. A diverse aquatic flora occurs in the river channels. As part of the River Lee system, the Gearagh supports important bird populations including Whooper Swans, Wigeon, Teal, Tufted Duck and Golden Plover.

3.5 Species of note

Several rare and protected species have been recorded in the Múscraí area. These include several birds of prey such as Hen Harriers, Peregrine Falcon and Merlin, which occur in the Derrynasaggart and Shehy Mountains. The elusive Barn Owl and Kingfisher have also been recorded in the area, as well as wading birds such as Lapwing and Curlew⁴⁴.

Múscraí is the heartland for the Kerry Slug, which has been recorded in Cascade Woods and at other sites in the area⁴⁵.

The Lee and Sullane River catchments are both known to contain Freshwater Pearl Mussel, which is a very rare species that requires water of the highest quality in which to live and breed.

The Lesser Horseshoe Bat (a rare species in Europe which has its stronghold in the west of Ireland) was recorded in Cascade Wood by the Cork Bat Group in recent years (2005- 2007). It has also been recorded in other locations, including in the southern half of Múscraí near Inchigeela⁴⁶.

There appears to be a record of the very rare Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*) within the hectad in which Múscraí is located. It was recorded 1987-1999⁴⁷.

Otters have been widely reported in the Múscraí area. Although rare in much of Europe, Otters are widely distributed in Ireland. The extensive river catchments provide excellent habitat for Otters.

Sika Deer are abundant on the landscape, especially on the edge of the forestry. They are not a native species and they can have a negative impact on woodland habitats. The native Red Deer also occur in the area and they are thought to be linked to the native Red Deer population in Killarney National Park⁴⁸. Red Deer also like woodland edge habitats, blanket bog and heath. They are the largest type of deer found in Ireland. Other woodland and woodland edge specialists such as Red Squirrel, Badgers and Jays are on the increase due to the extensive woodland habitat available. Pine Marten, however, have not been recorded in Múscraí to date⁴⁹.

⁴⁴ McCarthy Hyder Consultants. 2009. N22 Baile Bhuirne- Macroom. Environmental Impact Statement, Volume 1 Non-technical Summary. Report for Cork County Council.

⁴⁵ NPWS. 2010. Threat Response Plan Kerry Slug *Geomaculus maculosus*.

⁴⁶ DixonBrosnan. Ecology. Cleanrath Wind Farm. Unpublished report

⁴⁷ <http://www.bsbimaps.org.uk/atlas/main.php>

⁴⁸ Declan O'Donnell (National Parks and Wildlife Service) pers. comm.

⁴⁹ Ted Cook pers. comm.

3.6 Nature outside of the designated sites

While the Múscraí area contains some important sites designated for nature, many species and habitats of ecological interest occur outside of these sites and in the wider landscape. Many of the species of note listed above occur outside of designated areas.

The Lee catchment is hugely important as a water source and wildlife habitat. Otters, Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Kingfisher have all been reported in the River Lee and Sullane River. There are also extensive wetlands associated with these rivers and their tributaries.

Much of the upland area in the Múscraí is not designated but contains large if fragmented areas of blanket bog and heath, and habitat for birds such as Hen Harrier and Merlin.

In addition, there is small but significant area of Oak woodland within the region in the designated sites listed above and in other small sites such as the woodland at Derrylahan near Cúil Aodha. Both species of *Hymenophyllum* filmy ferns have been recorded in this wood, and Irish Spurge⁵⁰.

The extensive network of hedgerows within the Múscraí provides corridors for wildlife to move through the landscape. Most Irish hedgerows were established between 1750 and 1850 as landlords enclosed former commonage to create fields⁵¹.

The National Forest Park at Gougane Barra is a very popular amenity site with many kilometres of walking trails for people to enjoy, and picnic sites.

⁵⁰ Perrin, P., Martin, J., Barron, S., O'Neill, F., McNutt, K., and Delaney, A. 2008. National Survey of Native Woodland. Volume 3c Site reports. National Parks and Wildlife Service.

⁵¹ *Conserving Hedgerows*, The Heritage Council, Kilkenny, p. 1.

4.0 Intangible Heritage

4.1 Introduction

The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* under the auspices of UNESCO, defines the intangible cultural heritage as the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills (including instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural spaces), that communities, groups and in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage.⁵² It is sometimes called living cultural heritage and is manifested in a number of cultural domains including oral traditions and expressions, language, performing arts, knowledge and practices concerning nature and traditional craftsmanship.⁵³

Intangible cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation. It is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history.⁵⁴ This chapter has been guided by the definitions and principles of the ICOMOS *Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter)*. Within the category of intangible heritage there are a diverse range of values which lead to methodological challenges, including how to frame the exploration of intangible heritage in the context of Múscraí. In consideration of the latter, it is important to foreground a key dynamic, observed in the process of researching this chapter, that of the relationship between the intangible and the tangible.

Early in the research, the importance of acknowledging that intangible and tangible heritage are not mutually exclusive was determined. Public workshops and consultation has reinforced to Research and Dig the holistic way in which the people of Múscraí interpret their heritage. An excellent example of this is the role of St. Gobnait. Her church and hut are not only archaeological sites. They are also key points for any pilgrim doing the rounds. Just beside her hut is a Seamus Murphy carved statue with bees under her feet. Naomh Gobnait was believed to control bees in order to protect the area from cattle rustlers. It is in part because of the continued adoration of the saint that bee keeping is still an active tradition in the area.⁵⁵ Additionally, folklore states that Gobnait used a 'bulla' (bowling ball) to disrupt the building of castle on a high rock, 'all the better to subdue the people.' The game of road bowling that is still popular across Múscraí and County Cork today.⁵⁶

4.2 Public Consultation/Methodology

Research and analysis were carried out through desktop research and fieldwork. A wide range of historical documents was consulted to establish the history and folklore of the place. Interviews with local people informed a further understanding of the extent to which intangible heritage plays a role in the lives of people in Múscraí. The identification of heritage significance by professionals is incomplete without acknowledgment to the local ascription of importance. The conservation of heritage is a social and cultural activity and is ultimately dependent on a positive engagement from local people. In the context of Múscraí, an evident commitment and dedication to the latter

⁵² 'Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage', <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention> (accessed 20 October 2014)

⁵³ Definition of Intangible Heritage, http://www.unesco.org/services/documentation/archives/multimedia/?id_page=13&PHPSESSID=743f303zf0b2452205c4a672fde9310bc (accessed 13 October 2014)

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Eilís Uí Dháiligh, *Saint Gobnait of Ballyvourney*, (Dublin, 1983), p. 7.

⁵⁶ Uí Dháiligh, *Saint Gobnait of Ballyvourney*, p. 8. Road bowling is part of the social, cultural and sporting fabric of west Cork, one of the few counties with a documented tradition of the sport. Fintane Lane has explored the history of the sport in the area; see Fintane Lane, *Long Bullets: A History of Road Bowling in Ireland* (Cork, 2005).

presents a uniquely positive platform from which the long term conservation of the area can be achieved.

In addition to local consultation, a number of people whose parents were natives of Múscraí were contacted in order to establish the significance of Múscraí in the lives of their parents and also to themselves. Frances Madigan from Ennistymon in county Clare is connected to the area by her mother Mary Kelleher from Baile Bhúirne, who migrated to Clare in the 1930s. When asked to describe her connection to the area, Frances explained that;

‘Yes, I have gone to Baile Bhúirne for St. Gobnait’s Day. Since I retired I am free to attend on the Feast Day. While others refer to February 11th as the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, in our house it was referred to as St. Gobnait’s Day. We always had a St. Gobnait’s Measure in the house ... I have visited at least once every year since I was seven or eight years old. I hope that will continue as long as I live, le Cúnamh Dé. My roots are there. I feel as strong a connection there as I do with my native place, Ennistymon. Reilig Ghobnatan is where generations of my ancestors are buried. It is a magical, peaceful, spiritual place. As I approach Baile Bhúirne from the Milstreet or the County Bounds I feel a deep sense of connection and I feel as if I am coming home’.⁵⁷

4.3 Language

The continuing use of the Irish language across the Gaeltacht has been a critical factor in the retention of Gaelic tradition in song, poetry, dance, lore and music. Its retention as the primary language must stand as the central aim of any plan concerned with intangible heritage. According to the 2011 Census of Ireland, 3,895 people comprise the population of Múscraí, 2,951 of whom were Irish speakers (4% of the national Gaeltacht population).⁵⁸ Results of the ‘Socio-economic and Cultural Needs Analysis’ of the Múscraí Gaeltacht, identified the need for strategies to strengthen the foundation of Irish as the primary language.⁵⁹ Údarás na Gaeltachta assists strategically in the promotion of Irish in business and the community. The main regional Údarás na Gaeltachta office is in Daingean Uí Chúis with a local office being located in Baile Mhic Íre. In 2011, 633 people were employed in a full time capacity in Údarás client companies in the Múscraí Gaeltacht.⁶⁰ Údarás and the Arts Council have also combined to help develop the arts in the Gaeltacht and collectively fund a broad range of tradition and contemporary arts initiatives through the subsidiary company, Ealaíon na Gaeltachta.

While a gradual decrease in the use of the Irish language was noticed from the early 1990s (with the exception of Cúil Aodha), the distribution of Irish speakers across Múscraí seems to have remained relatively static since 2002.⁶¹ There remain areas which seem stronger than others. In 2008, the area north-west of Cúil Aodha and south-west of Béal Átha an gCaorthaidh, was regarded as the strongest

⁵⁷ Correspondence, Frances Madigan to the author 21 October 2014

⁵⁸ Údarás na Gaeltachta, <http://www.udaras.ie/en/an-ghaeilge-an-ghaeltacht/an-ghaeltacht/corcaigh> (accessed 26 November 2014).

⁵⁹ Results of the Socio-economic and Cultural Needs Analysis of the Múscraí Gaeltacht <http://www.udaras.ie/en/nuacht/anailis-ar-riachtanais-socheacnamaioch-agus-culturtha-ghaeltacht-mhuscra/> (accessed 29 November, 2014)

⁶⁰ Údarás na Gaeltachta, <http://www.udaras.ie/en/an-ghaeilge-an-ghaeltacht/an-ghaeltacht/corcaigh> (accessed 26 November 2014).

⁶¹ For a detailed assessment of the status of the Irish language in Múscraí see, John Walsh, *Contests and Contexts: The Irish Language and Ireland's Socio-economic development* (Switzerland, 2011), pp. 232 – 243, Also see Reg Hindley, *The Death of the Irish Language*, (USA, 1990).

with regard to the Irish language.⁶² Contributors to this research also noted an upsurge across broader Béal Átha an gCaorthaidh in recent years. While Hindley noted a significant decrease in younger Múscraí people speaking Irish in the early 1990s, our research found that at least anecdotally, the number of younger people speaking the language has increased. The project team met with a number of younger people throughout the process, who showed a remarkable ability with the language as well as a desire to use it as their first language. However, during research and consultation across Múscraí, it was evident that while the majority of people were able to speak the Irish language, English was the language primarily used for communication in the pubs and shops of the area.

As an inland Gaeltacht similar to the Gaeltacht in Waterford, the area of Múscraí is linguistically isolated. This adds a further importance to the preservation of the language, as a result of the area's unique linguistic form and expression. The memory and lore of Múscraí are best retained, represented and communicated in Gaelic form and through the linguistic distinctiveness of the area. Therefore, the future health of the intangible heritage is inextricably connected to the health of the Irish language in the area.

4.4 Landscape and Place

The enclosed setting of the Múscraí Gaeltacht has been a critical influence in the retention of cultural aspects peculiar to the region. In 1965, Daniel Corkery, in his foreword to Mícheál O'Suilleabháin's *Where Mountainy Men have sown*, articulated the symbiotic relationship between the people of Múscraí and the landscape. In describing O'Suilleabháin's ability to communicate a sense of place to the readers, Corkery explains;

‘His feeling for it. He is at one with it. As he makes his way towards some appointed hillside or hidden nook, the names of the rocks, the wells, the streams, the cumars he encounters seem almost to sing to him: their associations, their very dressings of moss, or holly, or basil, he almost fondles. It is obvious they always have been part of his consciousness, of the depths of it; one and all they cannot now but counterpoint the excitement that is possessing him ... such scholarship as it needs is also in the possession of his every neighbour in this Irish speaking countryside’.⁶³

4.5 Continuity of Tradition

A continuity of tradition and artistic expression within geographically and culturally defined frames is evident in Múscraí. The history and tradition of music and song, poetry and dance is accepted as amongst the strongest in Ireland. As an area with such a depth of tradition in language, literature and culture, it is not surprising that it has been home to many creative and artistic people. Seán Ó Riada, Seán Ó Riordáin, Máire Bhuí Ní Laoighre, Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonnail, Séamus Ó Ceilleachair, An tAthair Peadar Ó Laoighre and Donal O Muláin are among those who have honed their artistic trade in Múscraí. While the area has been home to national figures, including Ó Riada and Ó Riordáin, at a local level the traditions have continued for generations according to local practice for the primary benefit of local people and has continued to renew itself with every generation. Both poetry and music benefit from a rich creative energy in the broader Múscraí area. Acadamh Fódhla have suggested that almost 2,000 poets are buried in Baile Bhúirne graveyard alone. The area's rich hedge school and Bardic School tradition still live on in Dáimh Scoil Mhúsraí and Acadamh Fódhla.

⁶² Kendall A. King, Natalie Schilling-Estes, Lyn Fogle, Jia Jackie Lou, and Barbara Soukup, (Eds.), *Sustaining Linguistic Diversity: Endangered and Minority Languages* (USA, 2008), p. 119.

⁶³ O'Suilleabháin, Mícheál, *Where Mountainy men have sown, War and peace in rebel Cork in the turbulent years 1916-21*, (Kerry, 1965), pp. 8-9.

Scríocht is a central feature of the cultural landscape. The tradition of scríocht (social visiting where songs are sung, music played and stories told) has helped to preserve both aspects of the past and also a sense of community and neighbourly interaction. A recent report by the HSE and University of Ulster, demonstrated the central place that scríocht held for older participants from County Cork.⁶⁴

The vibrancy of tradition is potently represented by the continuing presence of Cór Chúil Aodha. The choir was established in 1963 by Seán Ó Riada (fig. 4.1). In 2013, the choir, now led by Seán Ó Riada's son Peadar, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a special journey to Iona in Scotland. The trip was captured by a TG4 documentary, *O Chúil Aodha go hOileán Í* (*From Coolea to Iona*).

Figure 4.1 Monument to Seán Ó Riada at Cúil Aodha Roman Catholic Church



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

4.6 Folklore and Oral Tradition

A particularly vibrant folklore continues to be preserved in the locality which relates to features in the landscape, both human-made and natural. Oral tradition has always been the central medium of communication and a particularly strong tradition seems to exist in Múscaí. The latter is exemplified by the way in which many poems have been transmitted orally across multiple generations. For example, Máire Bhuí Ní Laoghaire (1774-1849) who wrote *Cath Chéim an Fhia* was illiterate,

⁶⁴ Brendan McCormack and Elizabeth Breslin, *The Implementation of a Model of Person-Centred Practice In Older Person Settings*, (Dublin, 2010), p. 149 .

resulting in a dependence on the oral folk tradition to preserve her work for generations.⁶⁵ Equally, *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire*, written by Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill was primarily transmitted in oral form.⁶⁶ Fr. Pádraigh Ó Tuathaigh published *Filí an tSuláin*, which traces the intense development of Irish poetry in the Múscraí Gaeltacht.⁶⁷

The area is not immune to the forces of change which have affected oral tradition in other parts of Ireland. Therefore, it must be aware of the inherent danger that aspects of oral tradition and community memory may be lost if not documented. A certain resistance to centralise oral tradition was detected in public consultation. While the appropriate retention of oral tradition in its historical cultural form is preferred, strategies to intervene in its potential loss should be considered.

During fieldwork and consultation, it was noted that a number of private audio collections exist. These should be centralised, digitized, and made publically available as soon as possible. Additionally, local school collection projects at Coláiste Ghobnait are being initiated which have been assisted by the Research and Dig team.

4.7 Preservation of Intangible - Motivation

Consistently in public consultation, the concern among the people of Múscraí that the need to connect the conservation of heritage with economic development would have an ultimately corrosive effect on the culture of the area was expressed. However, the picture is more nuanced. Certainly, mass tourism would erode the character of the area. Conversely, low/moderate volume, high quality and high spending tourism that revolves around celebrating the landscape, language, and customs of Múscraí should be welcomed. It should also be carefully managed. Actions associated with cultural tourism such as the provision of quality eating options can improve the livability of the area for all residents. This is particularly relevant for those who have lived outside of the Gaeltacht and now have certain expectations.

In Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh the commercial nature of the village has been significantly eroded. In turn, this has reduced the ability of the village to act as a place where locals meet and socialise. Any effort to rejuvenate the village will need support from cultural tourists. How that is exactly accomplished is outside the scope of this document. Nonetheless, whatever is planned should ensure that the core character of the area which tourists come to experience isn't undermined. Integrity and authenticity must be maintained.

4.8 Acadamh Fódhla

In 2000, the Academy of Irish heritage singing was established by Peadar Ó Riada and Máire Ní Cheocháin. Three further academies were later established around the themes of history, land, knowledge and energy. Acadamh have been critical in the documentation of Múscraí heritage and history. They have created a digital record of the layers of built, natural and cultural heritage in the area.

4.9 Saints/Devotion/Pilgrimage

Múscraí is significant in its continued devotional practices. Folklore and history associate key saints with each of the principle areas of Múscraí. In Cill na Martra, St. Lachtín is the patron saint and his

⁶⁵ The poem records a fight between Yeomen militia and Whiteboys during agrarian resistance in 1822, See Brian Brennan, *Songs of an Irish Poet, The Mary O Leary Story* (Cork, 2000), pp. 12-13.

⁶⁶ Maureen O'Rourke Murphy, James MacKillop (Eds.), *An Irish Literature Reader: Poetry, Prose, Drama*, (Second Edition), (USA, 2006), pp. 45-47.

⁶⁷ Pádraigh Ó Tuathaigh, *Filí an tSuláin*, (Cork, 1993), Seán Ó Muimhneacháin's *Gleanntán an Aoibhnis, Dánta agus Amhrain* also contains significant poetry and song from the Múscraí region.

name is given to the local Gaelscoil. The settlement at Gougane Barra, west of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh is associated with St. Fin Barre (Patron Saint of Cork) who built a monastery on the island in the 6th century. The current ruins are the remains of a settlement built by Rev. Denis O'Mahony around 1700.

In Baile Bhúirne, both St. Abbán and St. Gobnait have formed a key part of the local history and folklore (fig. 4.2). Naomh Gobnait, the best known of the saints, occupies a central place in the consciousness of the people in Baile Bhúirne and surrounding district. Folklore relates that the visiting sick would be cured by Gobnait and that the saint, who had a strong relationship with bees, used the properties of honey in the treatment of illness and healing of wounds. A shrine and holy well is carefully maintained where rosary beads, holy pictures and other personal offerings testify to an enduring devotion to Gobnait at Baile Bhúirne. For centuries, Naomh Gobnait has been a reference point for historians and folklorists. For example the site was mentioned by Charles Smith (1750), W.G. Wood Martin (1902), Edith M. Guest (1937) and Michael J. O'Kelly (1952).⁶⁸ The importance of deer in the folklore of Gobnait is reflected in their adornment of gates at both Reilig Ghobnatan and the parochial house (fig. 4.3). Local businesses have also integrated the lore into their names.

Figure 4.2 **Statue of Naomh Gobnait by Seamus Murphy RHA at Baile Bhúirne**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

⁶⁸ Daphne D.C. Pochin Mould wrote a detailed account of the Pattern Day to Gobnait based on her research in the 1950s, see Daphne D.C. Pochin Mould, *Pattern Day*, in *The Capuchin Annual*, 1955.

Figure 4.3

Deer adorning entrance to Baile Bhúirne Parochial house



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

The site of St. Abbán on the south side of the River Sullane, in the townland of Shanacloon is less visited than that of Naomh Gobnait. However, Abbán plays an important role in the local folklore and lends his name to the local GAA club as well as its official playing field.

4.10 Historical Consciousness

Evidence of a continuous human presence in the area from the early Bronze Age is testimony to the rich continuous history. Local tradition suggests that a significant amount of archaeological material and sites exist that reveal an even earlier human habitation in the broader area than the considerable found archaeology indicates.⁶⁹ The retention of many of these sites into the broader historical landscape of Múscraí forms part of the human consciousness of the area.

The broader historical profile of Múscraí, while characterized by continuity, can be mapped chronologically using key historic and temporal landmarks. These temporal landmarks have been kept alive in folklore, poetry and song. The Irish famine (1845-51) was a key moment in the history of West Cork and of Múscraí (figures 4.4 & 4.5). *Famine in Muskerry - An Drochshaol* by Máire Mac Suibhne, profiles sixteen parishes within the Macroom Poor Law Union in the mid nineteenth century.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Interview with Peadar Ó Ríada, Cúl Aodha, County Cork, 21 October 2014.

⁷⁰ Máire Mac Suibhne, *Famine in Muskerry, An Drochshaol*, (Cork, 1997), See 'Irish Famine Report from Ballyvourney' in 'Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends during the Famine in Ireland'

Figure 4.4

Famine commemorative plaque outside Baile Bhúirne RC Church



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 4.5

Famine Pot in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

4.11 Late 19th century

A very strong volunteer spirit has been identified in Múscraí. In public workshops, some contributors suggested that this could be connected to the spirit of the late 19th century in the area, which witnessed significant political and cultural activity as well as the development of co-operative societies on an unprecedented level (fig. 4.6). The period saw the evolution of the Aeríocht/Feis/Oireachtas in this area which later evolved nationally and was crystallised in the movement towards independence in the second decade of the 20th century. The Gaelic League, The Land League and the G.A.A. were all active in the area. In proposing that the life of the contemporaneous Dr. Daniel Ó Loingsigh be incorporated into transition year curriculum for local students, Donnacha Ó Sé made the following observation.

‘It would have the twin advantages of not alone indefinitely commemorating Dr. Lynch but also contributing in a major way towards the positive formation of minds and character of each successive group, thus not alone laying the foundation for a staple and responsible society but also in the process ensuring that thinking, leadership, motivation and inspiration of Dr. Lynch would be perpetuated’.⁷¹

Figure 4.6 Eviction resistance scene – Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh – 1906



(Source: picture courtesy of Marian O’Leary)

⁷¹ Correspondence, Donnacha Ó Sé to author 22 November 2014.

4.12 Revolutionary Period

The area of west Cork has a well documented association with the Irish revolutionary period. In addition to the Kilmichael ambush of November 1920, the broader area was a hotbed of republican activity, particularly during the Irish War of Independence and Civil War (1919-1923).⁷²

On 8th July, 1918 one of the first attacks on the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) since the 1916 Easter Rising is recorded at Beal a Ghleanna (fig. 4.7), on the road between Béal Átha an gCaorthaidh and Baile Bhúirne. This occurred over six months before the Solahead Beg ambush, which is regularly recorded as the first ambush of the Irish War of Independence. The area remained intensely active over the following two years and on 25 February 1921, a major ambush was inflicted on the British forces stationed at Macroom, in an event known as the Cúl na Cathrach ambush (figures 4.8 & 4.9).⁷³ Cúl na Cathrach is a strong temporal landmark in the local social memory regarding the Irish War of Independence. As with other parts of Ireland, the Black and Tans as a category of memory evoke strong emotional reactions based on oral tradition and post-memory. Tensions between development and existing historical sites became evident in 2009 with the proposal by the National Roads Authority (NRA) to route a new N22 dual carriageway through the Cúl na Cathrach ambush site.⁷⁴ The subsequent impact on the battle site by the creation of the carriageway, functions as a reminder of the importance of local sites and encourages a clearer legislative and policy position with regard to same.

Figure 4.7 View north from Beal a Ghleanna



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

⁷² Fr. Pádraigh Ó Tuathaigh has written about the Civil War in West Cork in *The Dark Secret of Béal na mBláth*.

⁷³ Donal Ó hÉalaithe, *'Memoirs of an old warrior, Jamie Moynihan's Fight for Irish Freedom 1916-1923*, (Cork, 2014), p. 161.

⁷⁴ Irish War of Independence: Coolnacaheragh Ambush Site & Proposed Realignment of N22 Route Macroom - Ballyvourney, <https://sites.google.com/site/coolnacaheragh/> (accessed 20 November 2014).

Figure 4.8 **Cúl na Cathrach ambush site**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

Figure 4.9 **In 2016, a series of flags were installed by locals at IRA positions at the Cúl na Cathrach ambush site**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

There are many mnemonic (memory preserving) sites associated with the revolutionary period across Múscraí. In many cases memory is interpreted as part of a seamless history, stretching back generations. Marian O’Leary noted the connections between different struggles in the past. Referring to a monument on the road between Béal Átha an gCaorthaidh and Gougane Barra, where Volunteer Christopher Lucey (killed on 20 November 1920) and Volunteer Ian MacKenzie (killed on 08 August 1922) are commemorated, O’Leary records that (fig. 4.10);

‘The white cross marks where Criostóir Ó Luasaigh from Cork City died. He was the great grandson of Seamus Walsh who had taken part in Cath Céim an Fhia in 1822 and who it seems was responsible for killing Smith, the only yeomanry casualty.’⁷⁵

Figure 4.10

IRA monument to Christopher Lucey and Ian MacKenzie outside Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. Note white cross in background memorialising the site of Lucey’s death (circled in red).



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

4.11 Múscraí – Sites of Memory

As part of the research methodology, a visual inventory was taken of the overt sites of culture and history in the principal parishes of Múscraí. For the purpose of this project, these sites are referred to as *sites of memory*. These sites are critical in reflecting what the community itself seeks to remember at a public level but also in symbolising what visitors see as representing the social memory of the area.

In each of the principal parishes, central people and events of the local area are celebrated. For example, in Cill na Martra, a bust of local sporting hero, singer and later Director General of the GAA, Seán Ó Síochán is erected in the centre of the village (fig. 4.11). In Cúil Aodha a monument to IRA figure Seamus Ó Muineacháin is integrated into the wall across from Cúil Aodha Roman Catholic Church, where a bronze figure of the musician and composer Seán Ó Riada was installed in 2008. In Baile Bhúirne, monuments to the Cul na Cathrach ambush, republican martyr Liam Hegarty, as well as the noted statue of Saint Gobnait, are among the key sites of memory. In Béal Átha an gCaorthaidh, a famine pot marks the area’s suffering during the Irish Famine (1845-51). In addition,

⁷⁵ Correspondence, Marian O’Leary to the author, 10 November 2014.

a plaque commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 rising on the site of Coláiste na Mumhan, the one hundred anniversary of which in 2004, is also marked by a monument. Finally, in Gougane Barra, the poet JJ Callanan (1795 – 1829), the Roman Catholic Cardinal Timothy Manning (1909 – 1989) and Rev. Denis O'Mahony are memorialised on the site made famous by St. Fin Barre.⁷⁶

Figure 4.11 Monument to Seán Ó Siochán in Cill na Martra



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

4.12 Placenames

Placenames and fieldnames unlock key insights into the history of an area and how people perceived their place. As a Gaeltacht area steeped in tradition, the placenames of Múscraí are of significant cultural and historical value. The need to document both placenames and smaller fieldnames was emphasised at public workshops.

The website www.logainm.ie provides useful insights into the local names and toponymy of the Múscraí area, including archaeological, geographic and historic information. The Cork Placenames Survey under the stewardship of Dr. Éamon Lankford has documented 260 names across the area⁷⁷.

⁷⁶ Callanan wrote 'The Outlaw of Loch Lene'. In 1918, University of Illinois published *The Poems of JJ Callanan*, (USA, 1918)

⁷⁷ Correspondence, Kieran Wyse, Reference & Local Studies, Cork County Library, to author, 20 October 2014.

5.0 Assessment of Significance

5.1 Background

According to English Heritage's *Conservation principles, policies and guidance for sustainable management of the historic environment* 'conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values' (2008, p. 22). Conservation strategy and management is a process by which a site's significance is maintained whilst permitting continued sustainable use.

The study of the physical remains alone rarely provides sufficient understanding of a site. Its significance needs to be set in the context of the social and cultural circumstances that produced the place. This is particularly true in the case of the Múscraí Gaeltacht. For all Irish sites, significance should be assessed according to the following criteria set down in *Architectural heritage protection: guidelines for planning authorities* (Department of the Environment, Heritage and local Government, 2004):

- architectural interest
- historical interest
- archaeological interest
- artistic interest
- cultural interest
- scientific interest
- technical interest
- social interest

Natural heritage is an integral component of our heritage (see definition of 'heritage' in the *Heritage Act*, 1995). As a result, the criterion of natural interest is also considered.

Ideally, all the identified heritage values of a place should be conserved. However, on occasion what is necessary to sustain one criterion will be in conflict with another. If this is the case, then understanding the relative contribution of each criterion to the overall significance of Múscraí as a whole and its constituent spaces and places, will be essential to objective decision making.

5.2 Existing statements of significance

While there is no preexisting plan of comparative scale that has analysed the heritage of Múscraí, there is at least one document that has examined one place of importance in the Gaeltacht. Below is the appraisal of Saint Gobnait's Shrine carried out by John Cronin and Associates in 2003:

In its present form, Saint Gobnait's Shrine is of significance for the following reasons:

- Due to the wealth and range of associative, cultural, aesthetic and economic values that the Saint Gobnait's Shrine possesses, it is considered to be of immense local, regional and national significance.
- The association of the site with Saint Gobnait. The shrine is a very rich site with an unusual density of objects and practices. This places the monastic site at Ballyvourney on par with major sites like Lough Derg and Croagh Patrick. Its resilience, its adaptability and its endless manifestations make Saint Gobnait's Shrine a brilliant palimpsest of Irish religiosity.
- It is one of the most important pilgrimage sites in Ireland; the continued tradition of people/pilgrims making the Round or Turas Ghobnatan heightens the cultural significance of the place. It is a place for worship, prayer, meditation and quiet contemplation.

- There is strong evidence for prehistoric activity in the environs of the site – the area shows evidence for settlement stretching back to the Bronze Age and the site may have been an important pagan site prior to the coming of Christianity to this area of the country.
- The surviving fabric of the structures and features on site reflect the fundamental changes and developments in Irish ecclesiastical history; the historic site also demonstrates many aspects of Christian tradition as practiced in this country over the course of 1500 years.
- The rural setting of the historic place is of high aesthetic significance and allows the modern visitor to contemplate the past.
- The presence of this important religious and heritage site within a Gaeltacht area is another facet of its cultural significance. The lands that surround the historic place have a rich diversity of local (Gaelic) place-names. In addition to the above, the following sub-set of considerations is of importance.
- As a burial place the site has special significance for the local communities of Ballyvourney, Ballymakeera and Coolea. The modern cemetery, located to the south of the former Glebe House, is in frequent use.
- There is a long tradition of community involvement in the care and maintenance of the ancient church site associated with Saint Gobnait. The old graveyard is well maintained through community initiatives and is easily accessible to locals and visitor alike.
- Individual elements ranging from the sculpture of Saint Gobnait by Seamus Murphy to individual gravestones are of cultural significance in their own right. The bridge, located on the approach to the site from the east, is an inherently attractive feature.
- St. Gobnet's Wood, located to the north of the monastic site, has been identified as a candidate Special Area of Conservation, and, as such, has been evaluated by Dúchas as being a site of international importance. However, an evaluation of this area, indicates that, while the site is of high enough quality for cSAC designation, it is at the lower end of the quality scale for cSAC sites.
- The tree-lined approach to the site is of visual and amenity significance and is critical to providing a visual backdrop to the site when viewed from the west.
- The farmyard adjoining the graveyard includes a number of buildings. Of these buildings, the farmhouse is of potential ecological interest as it is a state.

It is worth noting two key differences between the St. Gobnait Conservation Plan and this CMIP. This plan has concluded that St. Gobnait's Wood is of international significance and contains species protected under Irish and EU legislation. Therefore, the wood is not on 'the lower end of the quality scale'. The wood also received a 'very good' conservation assessment in the National Native Woodland Survey. Finally, the complex at St. Gobnait was assessed in this CMIP as being of international importance.

5.3 Assessment of Significance

The following is an analysis of the relevance of the architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical, social, and natural criteria to the significance of the Múscraí Gaeltacht.

Architectural Interest

There are relatively few buildings of architectural significance in Múscraí. An exception to this is the Church or Ireland rectory in Baile Bhúirne (the Glebe). It is the finest classical building in the Gaeltacht. Immediately to the North West is an early 19th century Board of First Fruits style church. Another building of note is the iconic oratory of St. Finn Barre's in Gougane Barra (fig. 5.1). The fine Celtic revival chapel is the best physical manifestation in Múscraí of the late 19th/early 20th revival of Gaelic culture. The late 19th/early 20th century elegant vernacular buildings along the main streets and cores of Baile Mhic Íre, Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, Baile Bhúirne, Cúil Aodha, Réidh na nDoirí (fig. 5.2), and Cill na Martra are of local significance. These streets and cores are complemented by the predominately late 19th century/early 20th century houses and farm yard buildings dispersed

throughout the Gaeltacht (fig. 5.3). Múscraí has a fine collection of 19th century Roman Catholic churches (fig. 5.4) and 18th/19th century masonry bridges (fig. 2.1).

Figure 5.1 **St. Fin Barre's Oratory**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

Figure 5.2 **The centre of Réidh na nDoirí is defined by its late 19th/early 20th buildings**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 5.3 **Farmyard building**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 5.4 **Cill na Martra Church**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Historical Interest

The area has a rich documented history, which is connected with many of the key landmarks in Irish history nationally. However, the historical landmarks in Múscraí, while relevant to broader national history are remembered in folklore according to their local context first. For each official historical record, there exists a rich local context, which deepens and adds to that record. For example, found archaeology indicates a history stretching back to the early Bronze Age. However, local belief and folklore suggests that this may extend to the earliest known human habitation in Ireland. In addition, each historical site and feature carries significant local lore and oral tradition, which was passed from generation to generation in Múscraí and is not always discernible within documentary sources. A particular example of this is the internationally important complex at St. Gobnait's.

In addition, a continuity of historical tradition defines Múscraí. For example, Cath Chéim an Fhia (The Battle of Keimaneigh) in 1822, made famous by the poet Máire Bhuí Ní Laoghaire, was based on a local episode of wider agrarian resistance occurring across the country in the early 19th century. The Whiteboys were a secret agrarian society who used attacks against landlordism to defend tenant farmer's rights. The battle at Keimaneigh between Whiteboys and Yeomanry (fighting on behalf of the British establishment), resulted in the death of one Yeoman. However, the memory of 'Cath Chéim an Fhia' is understood according to a sense of continuity, with the later involvement of decedents of those Whiteboys in the Irish War of Independence in the 1920s. The traumatic local experience of the famine also has an impact on this narrative.

Topography and culture have combined to generate a history, which occurred in a peculiarly local way. This has been maintained by a strong and vibrant folklore, transmitted in predominately Gaelic form within the communities of Múscraí. While not insular, the enclosed setting of Múscraí lends itself to an intense preservation of history, which is rare in Ireland.

Archaeological Interest

Of particular interest are the high concentrations of Bronze Age and Early Medieval monuments in the Gaeltacht. The large number of remaining Bronze Age monuments fit within a wider pattern of high Bronze Age habitation in the south-west of the country. The two pilgrimage sites of St. Fin Barre's and St. Gobnait's are of national and international importance respectively (figures 5.5 & 5.6). The relatively high concentration of clapper bridges is of national interest.

Figure 5.5 **Late 17th century addition at St. Fin Barre's pilgrimage site**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

Figure 5.6 **St. Gobnait's Shrine with Board of First Fruits style church to the left, medieval church in centre and St. Gobnait's grave on right**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

Artistic Interest

The enclosed setting of Múscaí seems to have assisted in the generation of a creative energy and an unbroken tradition of art in its widest form. Poets, singers, musicians, and artists have testified to the rich source of creative energy in the Múscaí Gaeltacht. The history and tradition of music and song, poetry and dance is accepted as amongst the strongest in Ireland. Many artistic and cultural figures have worked locally within Múscaí and achieved national and international recognition as a result. These include Seán Ó Riada, Seán Ó Ríordain, Máire Bhuí Ní Laoighre, Eibhlín Dubh Ní

Chonnail, An Suibhneach Meann (Bessie Shine), Seámus Ó Ceilleachair, An tAthair Peadar Ó Laoighre, Seán O Cuív, Donal O Muláin, Peadar O’Riada, Iarla O’Lionáird and Donnacha Ó Buachalla.

The role of the dramatic landscape which encloses both the people and their culture is a key determinant in the rich artistic energy of Múscraí. It rains a lot. Historically, travel was difficult. Both these things along with the beauty of the place have led to a high level of creativity in storytelling, lore, music, and dance. The area is not impenetrable to the sometimes negative forces of globalisation and homogenisation. However, its setting has allowed it to enter the 21st century with a stronger identity and more intact vernacular cultural heritage than many areas in Ireland, bequeathing a unique platform for artistic nurturing and expression.

Ionad Culthúrtha an Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh in Baile Bhúirne is a vital component to maintaining the artistic creativity of Múscraí. In addition to running a consistently high quality programme of traditional music concerts, it runs classes on playing various traditional music instruments, sean-nós singing, lúiblní (sung dialogue) and agallaimhe beirte (poetry through dialogue). It also supports the visual arts.

There are two statues of artistic interest in Múscraí. Both depict St. Gobnait. An extremely rare 13th century wooden statue of the saint by an unknown artist is currently in the care of the parish priest of Baile Bhúirne. The other statue stands at St. Gobnait’s Shrine. It was carved in the 1950s by renowned sculptor Seamus Murphy RHA.

The interiors of the Gaeltacht’s upstanding churches are of artistic interest.

Cultural Interest

As an inland Gaeltacht, the area of Múscraí is linguistically isolated. This has resulted in a unique linguistic form and expression which reinforces cultural depth in the area. The memory and lore of Múscraí have been historically retained, represented and communicated in Gaelic form and through the linguistic distinctiveness. Therefore, the future health of the intangible heritage is inextricably connected to the health of the Irish language in the area.

According to the geographer Jared Diamond, ‘each language is the vehicle for a unique way of thinking and talking, a unique literature, and a unique view of the world’ (2012, p.370). This assertion can be extended to Múscraí Irish dialect.

On a national level Múscraí has played a significant role in the preservation of the Irish language and Irish music. Dochtúir Dómhnall Ó Loingsigh was a key figure in this and in the development of the Gaeltacht in general. Coláiste Na Mumhan in 1904 was the first dedicated language college in the country for adults. Seán Ó Riada is a figure of international importance. There is no other person more responsible for the 20th century renaissance in Irish music than he.

The area’s intense historical association with saints in each of the principal areas of Múscraí, bequeaths a deep tradition of pilgrimage and devotional practices. This has direct relevance to the local folklore and cultural adherence in Múscraí, but is equally significant to decedents of Múscraí natives. In addition, the latter draws an interest from scholars and visitors from outside of the Múscraí Gaeltacht.

The highly unusual collection of St. Gobnait’s Shrine, St. Fin Barre’s Pilgrimage Site and An Teampaillín all exhibit pre-Christian origins either in their location or folklore or both. All three are still held in high regard. St. Gobnait’s and St. Fin Barre’s are still active pilgrimage sites (fig. 5.7). An Teampaillín with its location atop a steep incline and previous use as a children’s burial ground and

first camp of the O’Sullivan Bere march mean that although unused it is not forgotten. Together, the three sites amount to the physical manifestations of a deep ceremonial landscape with connections to at least the Iron Age. That this vulnerable landscape is still alive is rare in Western Europe. The three sites combined are of international importance.

Figure 5.7 **St. Gobnait’s Holy Well (note the crosses inscribed by pilgrims)**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

Scientific Interest

The archaeological excavations of two Bronze Age cookery sites (*fulachtaí fia*) conducted in 1952 by Prof O’Kelly were of central importance in our understanding of this site type. The experiment he carried out on site proving that meat wrapped in straw could be cooked in an open air water trough was a seminal moment in experimental archaeology in Ireland.

Technical Interest

The tuck mill in Kilmore, just outside of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, is of technical interest. The mill was used in the woolen industry to improve the quality of the woven fabric.

Social Interest

There is a strong sense of place from residents. The physical and cultural landscape is part of who they are and how they identify themselves. The sense of belongingness to townland and parish is often intense. As a result, the sense of loss from perceived negative physical and cultural changes can have an adverse impact upon their own enjoyment of place.

There is great pride taken in the resilience of the Irish language, music, and dance in the Gaeltacht. This trend of resilience and independence of thought is continued by the local pride taken in Múscraí's role during the fight for an independent Ireland.

Across Múscraí, deference to heritage and history is manifested in monuments, memorials, placenames, and in the use of historical names for clubs, teams and buildings. For many inhabitants, Irish language, music, song and dance form a core part of their daily lives. The diminishing tradition of scríocht (social visiting) is a critical factor in the preservation of culture in Múscraí. It also performs an important social function in preserving neighborly interaction.

The pilgrimage sites of St. Fin Barre and in particular St. Gobnait are of significant social importance to the people of Múscraí.

Natural Interest

The Múscraí landscape has considerable variation in topography from mountains to hills to fertile valleys. As a result, there is a rich diversity of habitats in the area including upland blanket bog, wet and dry heath and coniferous forestry at higher elevations, improved grassland, lowland blanket bog, native Oak woodland, hedgerows, wet woodland and wetlands in the lowlands.

A number of these natural and semi-natural habitats in Múscraí are of high nature conservation value and are listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. In addition, there are several rare species that are protected under Irish and EU legislation. These include Hen Harrier, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Kingfisher, Kerry Slug, Lesser Horseshoe Bat, Killarney Fern, and Otters. There are several sites that are designated for nature conservation in the Múscraí Gaeltacht (including SACs, NHAs and a SPA), which reflects the quality and importance of the biodiversity in the area at a national and international level.

There are two significant river catchments in the area, the River Lee and the Sullane River. The Lee is an important source of water, as well as a valuable wildlife habitat and fishing resource. The Freshwater Pearl Mussel is present in both catchments.

The rich natural heritage of Múscraí is a result of climate, geology, topography and land-use history. It greatly enhances the visual and natural amenity of the Gaeltacht, and is an important resource to protect for future generations.

The natural landscape around Múscraí was something that appears to have been used very effectively as an ally by Irish forces during the War of Independence.

5.4 Statement of significance

The tangible heritage of Múscraí is inextricably connected with the intangible. Public consultation has demonstrated that the majority of people in Múscraí interpret their heritage according to a very broad and holistic understanding. Accordingly, the evaluation of one particular place's archaeological or architectural importance without considering its role as a habitat and location within the oral tradition reduces the appreciation of both the individual place and Múscraí as a whole.

The landscape is dense. The hills and mountains surround, while the trees overlook. The clouds are usually low and heavy with incoming rain. It is a place where perceptions can easily become reality. In a simplistic way, the people living of Múscraí have shaped the landscape, and in turn have been shaped by it. However, it is the perception of the people of the character of the landscape itself that is unique. This is the core special quality of Múscraí.

There is a deep, complex, and symbiotic relationship between people and place. One is simply less without the other. It is this relationship that makes Múscraí a place of international importance.

For Ireland, Múscraí's cultural creativity and spirit of place acts a reservoir of meaning and inspiration that helps counter the homogenising nature of globalization.

Due to the region's strong poetry and music traditions, Acadamh Fódhla were asked to supply a poem or song they thought communicated the spirit of Múscraí. Written in the Múscraí Irish dialect, *Ceanntar Ghlas Mhúscraí* is that song:

Ceanntar Ghlas Mhúscraí

A'rabhais riamh i nGugán Barra, nú ar shleasa Chéim an Fhia,
In Uibh-Laoighre Maoineach aiceanta, nú ar mhacha Dhún Dá Radhairc,
Ar Thearman Ghort na Tiobhratan, nú iargúlthacht Fuithirí,
Ceanntar aoibhinn maisiúil, iseadh gaoltacht seo Mhúscraí

Sé'n áit is breághtha in Éirinn é, tá féile ann a's ceól.
Dughaigh áluinn maorgha, faoi bhrat drúchta, maidean cheóig,
Gleannta, gaothraidh, glaise agus cumaracha fraoig,
Dob é sin fód mo shínnsear, i bhfearann ghlas Mhúscraí.

Annsúd a bheir fé gheasa ag fuaim easa an tSulláin,
Na h-éin go binn a' cantaireacht, ar ghéaga a's cnocán,
Caomghuth cuaiche'r chrannaibh, an sionnach glic imníoch,
An fhia'sa hos dea-dhathach, ar shleasa ghlas Mhúscraí

Tá lus na meala go flúirseach ann, go cúmhra fíor, ar feóir
Raithneach a's bláth na fiúise, ar chlathacha, i ngach clós
Fraoch bán, an plúirín sneachta, an rós, 'samn seamar caoin
A's an cuileann, rogha na coille, mar órnáid, ar fuaid Mhúscraí

Tá radharcanna do-chreidte, i bhfolach annsúd faoi scáth,
Planndaí nádurtha fiainne, agus crónán beach ar bhláth,
An méaracán beag dearg, a's lus gleoidhte, na mban sídhe
An Smólach a's an chéirseach, 's iad a fógairt seóide Mhúscraí.

Tá'n earc luachra fé leac ann, an broc, as an gráinneóg,
An lora-rua, an lasair coille, an eala, 'a an easóg,
An clumhar balbh ar a sheachaint, an druid, 'san fheadóg buí,
A's tá radhaise cearca feádha, i dtaobh tíre seo, Mhúscraí.

Annsúd tá aibhní gléineach, an Laoi, a's an t-Siulláin,
An madra uisge ar a léim ann, an breac, a's an bradán
An eascuin i ngach mion-ghliase, 'san corr-iasg, a'leagaint scíth,
An nádúir ar theaspántas ar uisgí ghlan Mhúscraí.

Tá láithaireacha stairiúla ann, lorg uasal laoch gan cháim,
Béal A'Ghleanna, Cúl na Catharach, Céim an Fhia 'san Geata Bán,
Cnoc Satharain Chíl na Martra, Tuirín Dubh 'san Charraig Mín,
Go raibh leabaidh ins na Flaithis, ag fir chalma Mhúscraí

Ceanntar mór cultúra é, do cheol a's litiríocht,
Bhí Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill, Ó Riada, a's Máire Bhuí,
Ó Síocháin, an t-athair Peadar, a's Bess Cronin an bhéil bhínn,
Tá na ceoltha sídhe mar annlann, ag amhránaithe Mhúscraí

Tá fotharacha creidimh ann, gur mhór a gclú, a's a gcáil,
Bhí Fionnbarra, agus Gobnait, Lachtín, a's Naomh Abán,
Do mhair an Oidhreacht creidimh seo, ;e paidir, a's aithríghe,
D'aindeoin gear-leannúint an t-Sassanaig, ar phobal seo Mhúscraí

Tá báighiúlacht agus caradas in abhantracht seo na Laoi
Tá mortas cinneadh agus díogras ag borradh l ngach croí
Tá an smior gaelach fós go daingean ann idir cheol is litiríocht
Níl DáimhScoil eile in Éirinn ach amháin ag Báird Mhúscraighe.

Moladh le Rí na hAoine a chruthaigh ár ndúthaig cháidh,
A's a bhron an gabhaltas tíre seo, ar ár sínnsear, le mór-ghrá,
Gan truailiúgha, gan lot, gan aindhise, gan máchail ná ceataighe,
An nádúr mar mhaoín buan-sheasamhach, i gceanntar ghlas Mhúscraí

Má shiulaíonn tú gleannta a's sléibhte, Ó Thorraí go Cúil Aodha,
Beidh radharcanna na h-Éireann, le h-iniúchadh, a's le plé.
Ach níl aon áit chomh dea-thréitheach, dea mhaisithe, dea chroidheach
Leis a' gceanntar áluinn maorga, Múscraí glas Uí Fhloinn.

Composed in 2009. Words by Dónal Ó hÉalaithe. Music by Peadar Ó Riada.

5.5 Threats to significance

Tourism

Tourism is both an opportunity and a threat to the Gaeltacht's heritage values. More visitors are needed to ensure that jobs and particularly amenities of value are available to residents. This is especially the case in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. By contrast, excessive numbers and the wrong category of tourist could have an adverse impact on Múscraí's heritage. For example, inappropriate, large scale retail and hospitality development could employ an excess of non-Irish speakers. This would further reduce the possibility of Irish becoming the language of the public domain. Another threat comes from the dilution of community spirit through the construction of holiday homes. A more prosaic issue is the ability of local roads and waste water systems to handle added pressure. Finally, a badly managed tourism sector could raise house values to such an extent that owning a home in the Gaeltacht becomes beyond the reach of many locals.

It is important to recognise that it is problematic to ascribe a sustainable cultural carrying capacity of tourists for Múscraí. One factor is the reaction of locals to increased numbers. For instance, although roughly 200,000 tourists a year visit Caernarfon Castle in Wales (ECOTEC, 2010), Welsh is still the daily language of the surrounding town's almost 10,000 residents.

High spending cultural tourists want authenticity. Múscraí has that. In the Gaeltacht it is possible for visitors to easily connect into the landscape and the people that fill it. At present, Múscraí is mostly seen as a place to pass through and not as a place to linger. By contrast, in the Dingle Peninsula almost 70% of foreign tourists stay for at least two nights (Dunne & Tobin, 2010). However, while the dramatic landscape may be the key factor in bringing tourists to Dingle, Múscraí's uniqueness lies in the intimate

connection between the people and place. It is this which the tourism sector in the Gaeltacht should focus on. This means creating experiences that connect with the five senses and use the natural and cultural attributes of Múscraí (e.g. hill walking, angling, music, an introduction to Múscraí Irish, dance, and consuming food and ale produced in the Gaeltacht). This is a relatively high end and high value market. These people like to feel that they are discovering something different. Consequently, mass numbers of the type that visit Kilkenny Castle or the Rock of Cashel are not wanted or needed.

Key threats:

- Mass tourism
- Reducing cultural tourist numbers

A commuter Gaeltacht?

Having a stable or increased population is useless and indeed damaging to the heritage of Múscraí unless people incorporate the places and people of the Gaeltacht into their daily routines. Most of Múscraí is within one hour's drive of Cork City. This means that it is within easy commuter range of a large centre of employment. Once the planned upgrade of the N22 happens travel time will decrease even more. This in turn will increase the area's attractiveness for housing development. One large, inappropriately located, badly designed housing estate has the potential to significantly undermine the possibility of Irish becoming the language of the public domain. An influx of non-Irish speaking people attracted by affordable house prices will further normalise English as the language of the everyday and undermine the linguistic character of the region. Analysis carried out in 2007 suggested that at least 67% of a Gaeltacht population must be active, integrated Irish speakers for use of the language to be sustainable (Ó Giollagáin et al, p10). According to a 2011 study, fluency across Múscraí was put at 43% (Comharchumann Forbartha Mhúscraí, n/d). In 2007, it was 40.5% (Údarás, p23).

Of course, an improved N22 makes it easier for those wishing to return to Múscraí to live in the Gaeltacht and work elsewhere. It also makes it easier for those already there to stay. However, this reliance on the car reinforces a strong pattern of using Macroom, Killarney and Cork rather than the villages as the main service centres. There is no shop in Cúil Aodha. In Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, there is no post office or petrol station. Other businesses have also closed. Currently, in the most populated area of Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne local services are supported by a strong N22 passing trade. However, once the village is bypassed many of these businesses will come under significant pressure. In Réidh na nDoirí and Cill na Martra both Post Offices are under threat of closure. Should this happen, the ability of the attached shops to survive will be reduced. Ultimately, with the end of the Gaeltacht's rural Post Offices and possible shutting of the shops, a key place of socialisation will be lost. This undermines community cohesion and the passing on of local knowledge. Combined, the gradual loss of services makes the Gaeltacht a worse place in which to live. This in turn will lessen the special qualities of the place and shift it towards being an area mostly seen in pragmatic economic terms.

In the mid to long term the ability of most inhabitants to commute regularly, freely and relatively cheaply will more than likely be challenged by climate change and our reaction to it. A reduced carbon economy, as prescribed by the Paris Climate Summit will likely impact on the cost of running the family car and the heating of detached homes (Hill, 2016). Of course, technology both existing and yet to be developed may provide solutions that could mitigate against the consequences of climate change.

Under the EU Renewables Directive 2009/28/EC Ireland is required to increase its share of renewable energy to 16% of gross national energy consumption by 2020 (Allen, 2015, p.22). Going beyond that, the European Commission has adopted the Energy Roadmap 2050 which commits the

EU to reducing emissions to 85-95% of 1990 levels. This necessitates a radical increase in renewable energy generation. The objective of all this is to create a secure energy supply and address the catastrophic consequences of unchecked climate change. At present, Ireland is expected to miss its 2020 target (Melia, 2016). This will result in fines and added pressure for development.

Currently, no commercial wind turbines exist in Múscraí. According to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), as of September 2016, there are nine wind farms located within 5km of Múscraí (table 5.1). Combined, they can produce almost 162 MW of power. In July 2016, An Bord Pleanála granted the Grousemount wind farm planning permission. This one scheme will add an additional 38 turbines to within 5km of the Gaeltacht (Lucey, 2016). Grousemount has the capability to produce 114MW (Allen, 2015, p. 8). The total height of these turbines will be up to 126m. Pooled together, the existing and currently planned wind farms will result in 134 turbines with a production capacity of 275.64MW, within 5km of Múscraí. Already, some turbines are so close that their shadows extend out into Gaeltacht territory. In effect, although many of these turbines are located physically outside of Múscraí, they are part of the daily lives of most residents. For many, they are seen as an intrusive and incongruous part.

Table 5.1 **Wind farms located within 5km of Múscraí**

Scheme	No. of Turbines	Power Capacity in MW
Caherdowney	4	10
Clydaghroe	2	4.99
Coomachoo (2)	8	18
Coomagearlahy (1)	15	42.5
Coomagearlahy (2)	10	8.5
Coomagearlahy (3)	13	30
Glanlee (1)	23	29.8
Gneeves	11	9.35
Kealkil	10	8.5
Totals	96	161.64

(Sources: maps.seai.ie/wind/, www.iwea.com/index.cfm/page/bycounty/id/21, www.iwea.com/index.cfm/page/bycounty/id/22: accessed 8/9/16)

In the Cork County Development Plan (2014), almost all of Múscraí is within an area where wind farms are deemed ‘open for consideration’ (2014, p.140) in their Wind Energy Strategy Map. By contrast, areas where wind farms are ‘normally discouraged’ are places where overall sensitivity arising from ecology, landscape, amenity, recreational and settlement considerations limits their development. In these locations, commercial wind farms will only be considered ‘in exceptional circumstances where it is clear adverse impacts do not arise’ (2014, p.139). The County Development Plan’s wind energy policy attempts to balance the provision of new energy infrastructure with the need to protect important assets throughout the county – however, it does not consider the sensitivity of the Múscraí region as a distinctive and important cultural asset of international significance. In the next review of the County Development Plan’s Wind Energy Policies, consideration should be given to better reflect the internationally important and sensitive nature of Múscraí’s landscape. Accordingly, consideration should be given to extending the current Policy Objective ED-3.6 ‘Normally Discouraged’ designation to cover the Gaeltacht area.

Setting aside the economic benefits to landowners/promoters of schemes and the grants provided to community groups in some schemes, the construction of large wind turbine developments by outside agents in Múscraí will likely cause serious antagonism. Such disagreement and enmity serves

are highly likely to disrupt the social coherence that is essential to Múscraí's liveability, character and sustainability. This in turn damages the core heritage values of an internationally important landscape. Accordingly, the imposition of a developer-led approach to renewable energy in Múscraí would not be appropriate.

Key threats:

- Large new housing estates
- Withdrawal of services
- N22 upgrade
- Climate change

Patterns of habitation

Only 22% of Múscraí's population reside in the five key villages of Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne, Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, Cúil Aodha, Réidh na nDoirí, and Cill na Martra. Hence, the majority of the people living in Múscraí do so in one off houses outside the villages. This has resulted in a heavy reliance on the car and the decline of the villages as service centres. The dominance of the car is further aided by the lack of a rural bus/transport scheme. At present, there is no public transport connection between the two main river valleys of the Gaeltacht. The only bus that goes through Múscraí is the Cork to Kerry Bus Éireann route. There was a service from Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh to Macroom. However, this was discontinued in 2011 due to 'low passenger support' (Irish Examiner, 2011).

The freedom of movement that the car brings, coupled with the dispersed nature of settlement has undermined the ability of the villages to act as successful service centres. One of the main reasons behind the loss of certain services and possible future loss of others is that for many inhabitants it might be as easy to go to Macroom as it to go to Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne or Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. This is particularly true for commuters whose routines are orientated towards Cork. With this pattern come reduced opportunities to use Irish in the public domain and to connect with neighbours. In Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh the number of places to socialise has been gradually eroded to such an extent that there are few places available for neighbours to connect with each other outside of the pub or GAA pitch. Compounding the reduction in community connectivity is the significantly reduced Catholic mass attendances.

All the villages are vulnerable to change. All need more residents. Without this, many existing and possible future services and businesses will not be viable. The current reality is a cycle of decline where people aren't using local businesses enough. This results in closures which in turn causes people to go to the villages even less, thereby impacting negatively upon more services and establishments.

In the current map of the Gaeltacht whole townlands are given over to forestry. When the boundary of the Gaeltacht was being drawn in the 1950s people lived in those areas. However, due to gradual depopulation and the economic gains possible from forest plantations the areas denuded of people have become covered by trees. Forestries almost fully obliterate the cultural landscape. Archaeological monuments and certain natural habitats may be protected under legislation but all other visual anchors connecting people with place are usually lost. Current planning practice directs people towards struggling villages. This is proper. Dispersed rural housing has been a contributing factor in economic decline, isolation, environmental degradation, and the under-provision of infrastructure, employment opportunities and public services. However, with no new housing in the rural hinterland a greater amount of forest plantations will occur than would otherwise. This is also the case with wind turbines. Ultimately, without people living on the land the intangible heritage of the Múscraí would be severely undermined. This is in keeping with Cork County Council's rural

housing policy by which local people will be facilitated if they wish to build an individual house for their own permanent use in the Gaeltacht (subject to normal planning considerations). By contrast, people who do not qualify for a rural house are encouraged to locate within the settlement network.

More Irish speakers are needed. Generally, new households should reside in the villages. A lesser amount should be permitted to live in the wider countryside. Renovation of existing structures, should take precedence over new builds. Despite only having eleven protected structures, Múscraí does have a nice collection of late 19th and early 20th century buildings.

There is no bar on non-Irish speakers buying a second hand house in the Gaeltacht. Likewise, there are no restrictions on non-Irish speakers buying new houses in housing estates. This is in sharp contrast to the restrictions on people building one off houses in the Gaeltacht. Such anomalies cause obvious issues for the prospect of Irish becoming the language of the public domain. Nonetheless, care must be taken not to bar non-Irish speakers from purchasing a house in the Gaeltacht. To do so would fail to recognise that many newcomers have a deep appreciation of Múscraí and its heritage. It also discounts the positive impact that many have on the community. Finally, barriers would also limit the number of possible buyers for houses and thereby reduce the value of all housing in the Gaeltacht.

Key threats:

- A falling population both in the villages and hinterland
- Not enough Irish speakers moving into the Gaeltacht

Employment

Despite significant effort from Údúrá na Gaeltachta, the profile of employment available in Múscraí does not fulfill the needs of a large section of third level graduates emerging from the region. It is perhaps unrealistic to think it will ever be so. In 2011, 633 people were employed in Údúrá na Gaeltachta client companies. Manufacturing dominates (Walsh, 2005). Within these factories the majority of roles do not require a third level qualification, let alone Irish. A result of this is that many college graduates leave to further their careers. After gaining experience a large proportion return. However, those that do come back typically commute outside of the Gaeltacht for work. One result of the move by the young towards professional jobs is that the posts which they were supposed to fill in the factories are often being filled by people from outside the Gaeltacht. By and large this workforce does not speak Irish. The result is a dominance of English speaking workspaces. Indeed, many of the companies supported by Údúrá could be located anywhere in Ireland. Most do not incorporate the cultural capital of Múscraí as a key distinguishing factor for their products or services (Walsh, 2005). To be fair, this does appear to be changing. For example, both Folláin and the 9 White Deer Brewery fundamentally incorporate the cultural heritage of Múscraí into their products. By contrast, one company that could be located elsewhere but which adds distinctiveness to Múscraí is the Prince August Toy Soldier Factory and Visitor Centre in Cill na Martra. Recently, its owner acquired the world's largest model battle scene (fig. 5.8).

Údúrá recognise the dominance of manufacturing roles and are actively attempting to support other sectors. One example is Macroom Buffalo Mozzarella. In this company fresh mozzarella is made the milk of Cill na Martra based buffalos.

Despite the over reliance on manufacturing jobs, the maintenance of a strong manufacturing base is vitally important in Múscraí. Many of the factories also provide relevant employment to graduates. Their presence fulfills an employment role for a large section of the population, just not all of it. During interviews with several factory owners, there seemed to be dissatisfaction over the level of

support provided by state agencies. Capital grants have declined and in various cases simple services such as waste water treatment, road alignment changes and broadband were not supplied. Mobile phone reception can also be bad. By and large though, the businesses had overcome these difficulties. However, such variation between available supports and needs is a concern particularly for the attraction of new businesses in the future. It should be noted that all interviewees had been beneficiaries of state assistance. For this, each was appreciative.

Figure 5.8 **The Battle of Waterloo model at the Prince August Toy Soldier Factory**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

The ability of entrepreneurs and professionals to start their own businesses is severely curtailed by the absence of adequate broadband. A further barrier to professionals living and working locally is the lack of a shared co-working space where they could work either individually or together on projects.

In Múscraí, farming practice has traditionally been focused on dairy, although it is now more mixed (Walsh, 2005). Yet, a high proportion of the land in the Gaeltacht is either mountainous or boggy and is thus unsuited to non-indigenous cattle. Milk prices post removal of the quota system have also meant a reduction in profits. These factors, coupled with the loss of REPs supported payments (Hill, 2016) and the unsustainably low prices being offered for sheep fleeces, lamb and beef, have all meant a reduction in the number of farms and amount of land used to produce food. At present, much of the Gaeltacht's marginal land that was once used for grazing is covered by forestry (fig. 5.9). Forests do offer a good rate of return to the farmer. On the other hand, they render the land unusable for agriculture (fig. 5.10). As a result, even though forestry would make monetary sense for a large number of Múscraí's farmers, the amount of land currently given over to plantations is lower than the economic incentive should create in comparison with farming the uplands and other marginal land (figures 5.11 & 5.12). To do so would impact upon their identities as food producers. That being so, nationally there is a fear that this could be the last generation of uplands farmers with younger generations largely forgoing the time heavy and relatively low earning lifestyles of their parents (www.farmersjournal.ie/the-last-generation-of-upland-farmers-210311: accessed 04/09/2016).

Figure 5.9

Spread of forestry plantation on marginal farmland



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 5.10

Post-harvest scene of forestry at Beal a Ghleanna



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

Figure 5.11 Forest cover in Múscraí

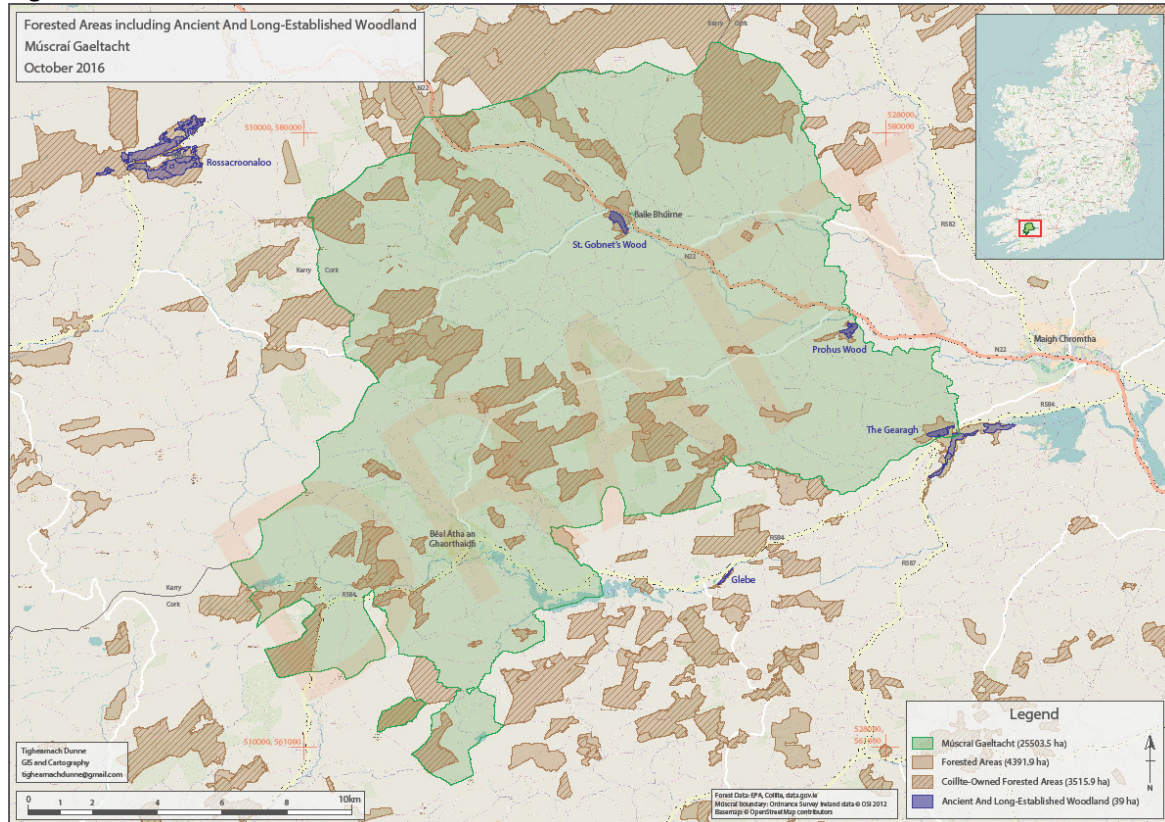
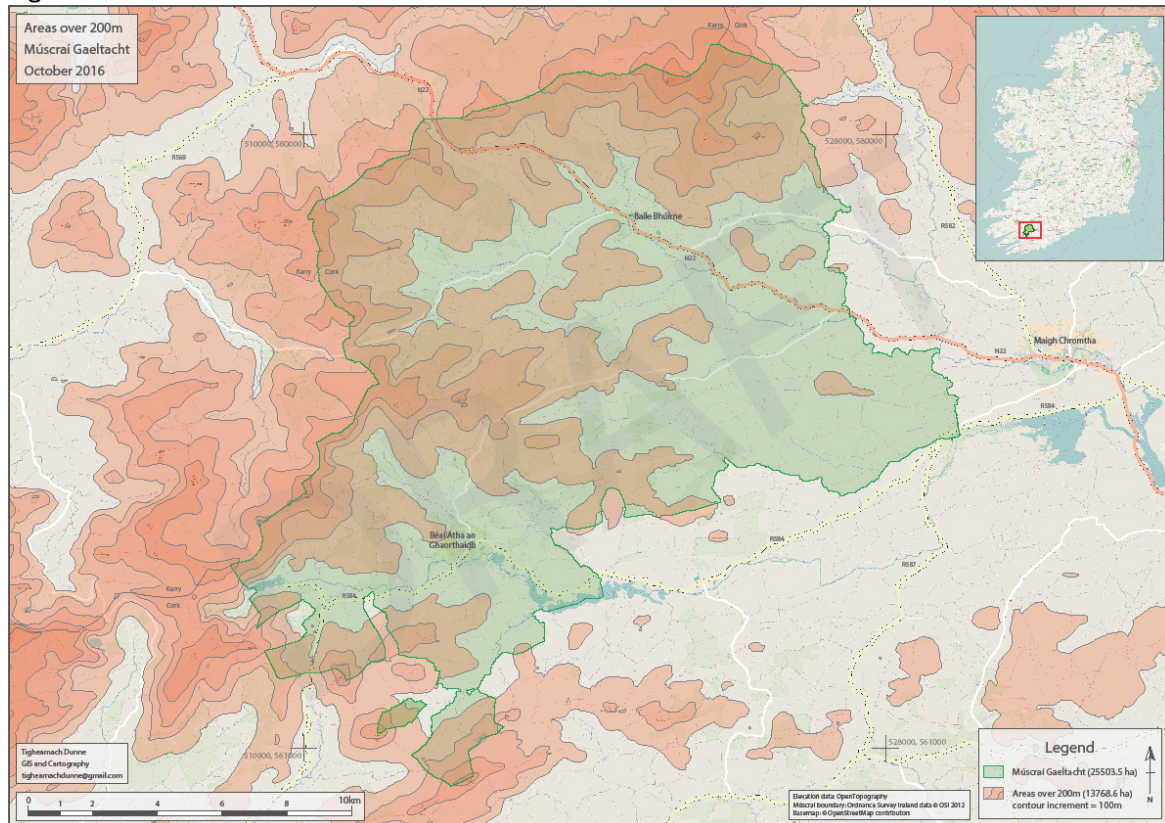


Figure 5.12 Areas above 200m elevation



In 2015, across the country, 53% of farm households have an off-farm job (<http://www.irishexaminer.com/viewpoints/analysis/farming-poll-2015--data-disgraceful-reality-of-need-for-off-farm-income-355102.html>; accessed 16/10/2016). In 2006, it was 59% (Hanrahan et al, 2014). There are no specific figures for Múscraí. Nonetheless, given the mountainous nature of much of the land a similar - if not higher - figure is to be expected. Conversely, only 5,000 farms in Ireland had some form of on-site diversified enterprise (Mulhall, n/d). This is less than 4% of the country's farms. In the UK, the figure is 51%. Although current levels of on-farm diversified enterprise are low, nationally, 33% of farmers are interested in starting their own business (Meredith et al, 2012). Of course, interest and action are two different things. Nonetheless, if only a small proportion of farmers in Múscraí developed on site activities this would reduce commuting to off-site jobs and possibly lessen the temptation to plant their land with evergreen trees. Another consequence could be the creation of a service or product that makes the Gaeltacht a better place in which to live and visit.

One particular area of farming that would suit Múscraí's strengths of environment and culture is the specialty food sector. In 2012, this sector was valued as being worth €615million to the Irish economy (Meredith et al, 2014, p.63). The economic gain is multiplied when the locally produced food is bought in a local outlet. One UK study found that every £1 spent locally on local food generates £2.50 for the local economy.

An additional issue concerning the use of marginal land is drainage and its possible influence on flooding levels. In an effort to increase the productivity of land, local farmers often attempt to drain areas of waterlogged fields. One possible consequence of this is an increase in the likelihood of flooding happening along the Lee and Sullane. This of course can have a very serious impact on the homes, businesses, and daily lives of others in the Gaeltacht.

A large possible solution to ensuring both the viability of farms and their landscape quality is to adapt the example set by the BurrenLIFE scheme. Launched in 2005, BurrenLIFE was the first major farming for conservation project in Ireland. Its objectives were to support the communities, heritage and environment of the Burren. Participating in the initiative sees farmers paid for both work undertaken and for the delivery of defined environmental objectives on their farms. The programme is both farmer led and low on administration (<http://burrenprogramme.com/the-programme/our-approach/>; accessed 04/10/2016). During the second round of the scheme (2010-2014) there were 160 farmers involved in the initiative. In that period almost €5 million was provided to participants. The average annual payment to each farmer was €6,600. For the third round, the number projected to be involved is 500 (Moore, 2016, p.12). In 2005, there were only 25 participating farmers. Such an increase is a testament to the scheme's success. The beauty of BurrenLIFE is that its actions and processes increase the ease by which farmers may farm their land through providing infrastructure while simultaneously providing a direct incentive to farm for biodiversity. This has ultimately encouraged the perseverance of the Burren as a living landscape. Essentially, conflict between nature and farming has been replaced by a virtuous relationship incorporating liveability, economics and nature. Other comparable projects include AranLIFE and the proposed locally led agri-environmental scheme in the Blackstairs Mountains.

Key threats:

- Inadequate broadband
- Over reliance on manufacturing for employment
- Lack of shared co-working space for entrepreneurs and professionals
- Reducing economic viability of farming, particularly uplands farming

Attitudes to Irish

Overall, there is great pride taken by the people of Múscraí in the use of Irish. Despite this, there is reluctance by many to publically use whatever Irish they have. Consequently, people need to see that it is not only acceptable to speak Irish but also desirable to do so. On a national level high profile personalities at various levels of society should be covertly encouraged to embrace Irish. On a local level prominent core groups of influencers must do the same. This will help create an increased desirability factor in speaking Irish. Correspondingly, those who care deeply about Irish should relax about the use of correct grammar or dialect. Even those who have a high proficiency in Irish have been corrected when they have used an apparently unsuitable word or phrase. This results in embarrassment and a reluctance to use the language again. By contrast, English is consistently abused and changed by the vast majority of its speakers whom have little fear of censure. The variance is a significant impediment to the daily use of Irish in the public domain. One of the reasons Welsh underwent a resurgence in use was the ability of young people to adapt it for their lives.

It appears that use of the Múscraí dialect is diminishing and being replaced by a more generic form of the language. This is causing conflict with people correcting others for their use of the supposedly inappropriate form of Irish. This document acknowledges that the distinctive dialect of Múscraí is critical to the cultural identity of the area. It is important that this is maintained and cherished by the local population. The issue of different forms of Irish gradually becoming more prevalent in Múscraí or the standardisation of the language was a concern voiced in consultation workshops. However, this plan takes the view that it is primarily important to animate and engage people in their native language first. By focusing on perceived mistakes or departures from the localised vernacular, a negative experience can result for learners. Once a learner is engaged in their native language and proud of that engagement, the deeper importance of the local vernacular can be encouraged as a further immersion in the heritage of the area.

Although the education system is successful in teaching Irish to young Gaeltacht residents, the rate of raising children in the Gaeltacht through Irish is low.

The vulnerability of the Irish language not only in Múscraí but across Ireland is part of a broad international trend of declining linguistic diversity. By 2100, if current trends are maintained, 95% of all languages in the world will be dead or moribund (Diamond, 2012, p.370).

Key threats:

- The judgement of others
- Reduction in the use of Múscraí Irish

Lack of a strong centralised voice

It is a fundamental weakness of Múscraí that there is no strong, broad based community council. Without this, the Gaeltacht is more vulnerable to outside influences. The ability to lobby and advocate on behalf of Múscraí is also curtailed. Finally, a strong community council or trust would be the ideal body to implement and monitor the recommendations of this report. Funded by Údarás na Gaeltachta, Comharchumann Forbartha Mhúscraí Teo has created a Gaeltacht wide community council. This action is certainly laudable and worthwhile. Unfortunately, as currently constituted, the group lacks the power and influence needed to help the Gaeltacht effectively meet the challenge of change.

Key threat:

- The lack of a strong, central community based voice advocating for Múscraí.

Varying degrees of protection

The best way of protecting Múscraí's heritage is to empower the people of the Gaeltacht with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions on how best to adapt their place to meet the challenge of change. Listing sites can only ever protect a relatively small number of significant places. The beauty of Múscraí is in its densely layered landscape of meanings. This evolving tapestry of small important places needs individuals to take responsibility for their protection and use. It is something the State cannot and should not do. Its role should be to advise and support.

There are many places with no legal protection under heritage legislation. These include: vernacular buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries; local tunes, War of Independence and Civil War ambush sites, natural landmarks associated with local folklore, and certain buildings connected with Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh and Sean O'Riada. Some of these should be listed. Some should not. For those that aren't it will fall to the landowners and the community in general to protect.

A suggestion has been made that the Gaeltacht should go for UNESCO World Heritage Site Status. Certainly there is a strong case that Múscraí could qualify for inclusion under UNESCO WHS selection criterion iv:

to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
(<http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>; accessed 8/9/16)

Furthermore, comparable places such as St. Kilda in Scotland and the Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley in Andorra are on the list. Without doubt, listing would enhance the prescriptive protection levels of the Gaeltacht. However, inscription is by no means certain. What is more, unless the process is carefully managed sizable conflict could be created. Finally, inscription for sites with low levels of tourism often has the effect of significantly increasing tourist numbers. In Múscraí, this could result in visitor numbers growing beyond sustainable levels.

An alternative that would help protect Múscraí without the possible messy consequences, is to list the special connection between people and place, the Múscraí dialect or the adoration of local saints on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The River Lee catchment is hugely important for Cork City as well as the local population. However, it has no protection through designation. The new Flood Management Plan includes features (e.g. flood walls/embankments in Baile Mhic Ire) which may pose a threat to archaeological features, the visual amenity, and St. Gobnait's Wood. Accordingly, inappropriate flood mitigation measures and flooding are both potential threats. This report supports the construction of appropriate flood defences and sensitive land management that protects those living in houses in danger of flooding and the local heritage. There is no flood management plan for the Sullane. The need for an adequate plan and management solutions is heightened by the forecast for increased incidences of long duration, high intensity rainfall resulting from climate change (Fealy et al, 2009).

Key threats:

- Nationally important places that are not legally unprotected
- Awareness of proper heritage management in Múscraí needs to be higher

6.0 Opportunities and Constraints

6.1 Background

The role of the conservation policies is to provide specific guidelines for the conservation and development of the Múscraí Gaeltacht so that its heritage significance is appropriately maintained.

Development of a set of conservation policies involves the consideration of the following issues:

- requirements of the Gaeltacht's inhabitants;
- constraints and opportunities presented for the use and development of the site arising from the statement of significance;
- the principles of the relevant charters and declarations (e.g. *Burra & Québec*);
- relevant legislation, guidelines and development plans.

6.2 Requirements of inhabitants

The Múscraí Gaeltacht is a continuously changing living landscape. It is a place where people want to be. However, despite an increase in population during the Celtic Tiger period, the Gaeltacht has suffered from a long period of gradual population decline. Without a sustainable indigenous population many of the key aspects that make Múscraí a place of international importance will disappear. Central to the needs of those living in the Gaeltacht are suitable jobs that complement their education, abilities and inclination. Another essential item to enhancing the liveability of the Gaeltacht is the provision of adequate services (e.g. shops, post office, bus, wi-fi).

In all the public consultation meetings and interviews with Gaeltacht residents the intimate connection between people and place came through. While adequate jobs and services are essential to daily life, so too is the quality of the cultural and physical environment. Without this, many would simply move to locations with better infrastructure and employment prospects. Many people have already done so, although anecdotally it seems that most of those would have either preferred to stay or hope to eventually return.

While there are common core needs amongst Múscraí's residents, there can be disagreement about how to resolve these. The Gaeltacht is not a monolithic community. For instance, some may wish to attract more tourists to the region. This would support jobs and local services which may be under threat. Conversely, others may consider tourism a threat to the Gaeltacht's character. A second example is the financial reward that is possible from planting forestry on marginal land. Unfortunately, another consequence is the near obliteration of the plot's heritage. Many may also feel that the trees are visually intrusive. All views in both examples are valid. Where such conflict arises, it is the role of this plan to provide guidance. Change is inevitable. This document will help the people of Múscraí manage that change.

6.3 Constraints arising from significance

6.3.1 Assessed Heritage Values

The Múscraí Gaeltacht has been deemed to be of international importance. Within the region is a tapestry of places and personalities of local, regional, national, and international importance that have created the place that it is today – a living landscape of dense meaning. Its future management should take account of the constraints arising from its identified heritage values.

Aspects of identified significance include:

- The oratory of St. Fin Barre's in Gougane Barra. (importance rating: national)

- The pilgrimage complex at St. Gobnait's. (importance rating: international)
- The Gaeltacht's folklore collection and the connection between people and place. (importance rating: international)
- The role of locals and the landscape in the struggle for land rights and independence. (importance rating: national)
- The high concentrations of Bronze Age and Early Medieval monuments. (importance rating: national)
- The practice of pilgrimage/adoration of local saints. (importance rating: international)
- A ceremonial landscape in continual use since at least the Iron Age. (importance rating: international)
- The living tradition of music and song, poetry and dance. (importance rating: international)
- The two statues of artistic interest in Múscraí. (importance rating: national)
- The unique linguistic form of Irish in Múscraí. (importance rating: national)
- Múscraí has played a significant role in the preservation of the Irish language and Irish music. (importance rating: international)
- The archaeological excavations of two Bronze Age cookery sites (fulachtaí fia) conducted in 1952 by Prof O'Kelly. (importance rating: national)
- The tuck mill in Kilmore. (importance rating: regional)
- The late 19th and early 20th century streetscapes of the villages. (importance rating: regional)
- The late 19th and early 20th century farmhouses and associated out buildings. (importance rating: local/regional)
- The first fruit church and Glebe in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne. (importance rating: regional)
- Collection of 18th and 19th century masonry bridges. (importance rating: regional)
- Collection of 19th century Roman Catholic Churches. (importance rating: regional)
- The rich diversity of habitats and high number of protected species in Múscraí. The quality and importance of biodiversity in the area is at a national and international level. (importance rating: international)
- The River Lee catchment. (importance rating: regional)

Opportunities to retain, and where appropriate reinstate these heritage values should be investigated and implemented. Particular focus should be placed on strengthening the use of significant places and practices within the daily routine of inhabitants.

6.3.2 Guiding Heritage Principles

There is no general conservation charter that specifically deals with the management of large historic regions. The most applicable is the *Burra Charter* (2013). Another document of relevance is the *Québec Declaration on the preservation of the spirit of place* (2008). The principles contained within both the charter and declaration provides specific guidance concerning the development of the Gaeltacht. Accordingly, the conservation and development of Múscraí is to be carried out in accordance with the relevant principles of the charter and declaration. These include:

Burra Charter Article 1.2

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

Burra Charter Article 2.4

Places of cultural significance should be safeguarded and not put at risk or left in a vulnerable state.

Burra Charter Article 12

Conservation, interpretation and management of a place should provide for the participation of people for whom the place has significant associations and meanings, or who have social, spiritual or other cultural responsibilities for the place.

Burra Charter Article 13

Co-existence of cultural values should always be recognised, respected and encouraged. This is especially important in cases where they conflict.

Burra Charter Article 22.1

New work such as additions or other changes to the place may be acceptable where it respects and does not distort or obscure the cultural significance of the place, or detract from its interpretation and appreciation.

Burra Charter Article 24.2

Significant meanings, including spiritual values, of a place should be respected. Opportunities for the continuation or revival of these meanings should be investigated and implemented.

Burra Charter Article 25

The cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent, and should be explained by interpretation. Interpretation should enhance understanding and engagement, and be culturally appropriate.

Burra Charter Article 27.1

The impact of proposed changes, including incremental changes, on the cultural significance of a place should be assessed with reference to the statement of significance and the policy for managing the place. It may be necessary to modify proposed changes to better retain cultural significance.

Burra Charter Article 27.2

Existing fabric, use, associations and meanings should be adequately recorded before and after any changes are made to the place.

Québec Declaration 1

Recognising that the spirit of a place is made up of tangible (sites, buildings, landscapes, routes, objects), as well as intangible elements (memories, narratives, written, documents, festivals, commemorations, rituals, traditional knowledge, values, textures, colours, odours, etc.), which all significantly contribute to making place and giving it spirit, we declare that intangible cultural heritage gives a richer and more complete meaning to heritage as a whole and it must be taken into account in all legislation concerning cultural heritage, and in all conservation and restoration projects for monuments, sites, landscapes, routes and collections of objects.

Québec Declaration 3

Since the spirit of place is a continuously reconstructed process, which responds to the needs for change and continuity of communities, we uphold that it can vary in time and from one culture to another according to their practices of memory, and that a place can have several spirits and be shared by different groups.

Québec Declaration 9

Given that local communities are generally in the best position to comprehend the spirit of a place, especially in the case of traditional cultural groups, we maintain that they are also best equipped to safeguard it and should be intimately associated in all endeavors to reserve and transmit the spirit of

place. Non-formal (narratives, rituals, performances, traditional experience and practices, etc.) and formal (educational programmes, digital databases, websites, pedagogical tools, multimedia presentations, etc.) means of transmission should be encouraged because they ensure not only the safeguarding of the spirit of place but, more importantly, the sustainable and social development of the community.

Following on from the relevant principles outlined above, adverse impacts on aspects of Múscraí's significance should only be permitted where:

- there is sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposal onto the significance of the Gaeltacht;
- a full assessment of alternative options has been undertaken to minimise adverse impacts;
- it makes possible the recovery of aspects of greater significance (only applicable for items of little significance or that are intrusive);
- it helps ensure the continued occupation and use of individual sites of significance and the region as a whole;
- there is no feasible alternative to meet safety and/or legal requirements, and
- the area or element has been adequately recorded.

6.4 Heritage Planning Context

Elements of Múscraí's landscape are protected under international treaties and conventions, national legislation, and both statutory and non-statutory guidance. These include the Planning and Development Act 2000, the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004, the European Birds (1979) and Habitats (1992) directives, Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011, the Wildlife Acts 1976, and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000-2010, Cork County Development Plan 2014, and the County Biodiversity Plan 2009-2014. Other state or local government initiatives such as the CEDRA report, County Cork's tourism strategy, the 20 year Strategy for the Irish Language (2010-2030) and the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 also have a bearing on any proposed policies and actions.

6.4.1 Planning and Development Act 2000

There are eleven structures in the Múscraí Gaeltacht listed in the County Cork Record of Protected Structures (RPS). As a result, these properties are protected under the *Planning and Development Act 2000*. Should any building owner wish to make alterations that would change the character of one of these buildings planning permission must be applied for from Cork County Council.

6.4.2 National Monuments Acts

The area contains 392 archeological sites listed within the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). Being listed provides these places protection under the *National Monuments Acts 1930-2004*.

6.4.3 Wildlife Protection

Protection to a number of species and designated landscapes are provided under the European Birds (1979) and Habitats (1992) directives, Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011, the Wildlife Acts 1976 and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000-2010. Where development is proposed that impacts upon a protected species or place, a derogation license must be sought from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. There are eight sites designated for nature conservation in Múscraí.

6.4.4 County Development Plan

The *Cork County Development Plan 2014* recognises the importance of our linguistic heritage. The policies and objectives set out in the plan give clear protection and guidance on how to deal with developments that might have an adverse impact on the culture of the Gaeltacht. The document states that the Gaeltacht areas of County Cork 'require special treatment to protect their linguistic and cultural heritage

without hindering development and with an appropriate response to opportunities and challenges' (p199). It also recognises that 'an economically and socially vibrant community is a pre-condition for sustaining Irish as a community language' (p199). Finally, the plan acknowledges the central role the planning system plays in the livability of the Gaeltacht, 'recognition that the relationship between development and the Irish language and culture is a complex one not amenable to simplistic measures, and also that planning powers have significant though indirect and not limited, influence on the protection and promotion of culture' (p199).

The development plan proposes to protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht areas of Cork by:

- a) Encouraging development within the Gaeltacht, which promotes, facilitates or complements the cultural heritage, including Irish language use;
- b) Encouraging development within the Gaeltacht, which provides employment or social facilities, especially, but not exclusively, where these are of relevance to local young people;
- c) Resisting development within the Gaeltacht, which would be likely to erode the cultural heritage (including the community use of Irish language), unless there are overriding benefits for the long term sustainability of the local community or for the proper planning and sustainable development of a wider area;
- d) Ensuring that where the County Council erects signs within the Gaeltacht, these have Irish as their primary language, unless there are positive and overriding reasons for doing otherwise;
- e) Discouraging the exhibition of advertisements within the Gaeltacht which do not use Irish as their primary language;
- f) Considering the desirability of demanding linguistic impact analyses with planning applications for particular major developments. These would be cases where the potential impact of the development on the use of Irish as the community language is not immediately apparent and pivotal in the determination of the application (p200).

Concerning the management of rural housing the development plan notes that local people will be facilitated if they wish to build a house for their own permanent use. Indeed, it is a stated policy of the plan to 'sustain and renew established rural communities, by facilitating those with a rural generated housing need to live within their rural community' (p54). People who do not qualify for a rural house are encouraged to live in a village or town. The development plan actively encourages the reuse of derelict structures (Objective RCI 8-1). The construction of second houses/holidays homes outside the development boundaries of settlements is not permitted.

6.4.5 Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Ireland (CEDRA) Report

Established by the government in 2012, CEDRA's primary task was to identify strategic initiatives that would ensure rural areas contribute to sustained and sustainable national economic growth and development in the future. The resulting report, published in 2014, provided an incisive analysis of the issues and presented a set of recommendations for the government. It also established a set of Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ). REDZ are functional rather than administrative geographic areas that reflect the spatial patterns of local economic activities and development processes. The REDZ that Múscraí falls into is Macroom. This CMIP is in keeping with the CEDRA report's philosophy of advocating place specific solutions and engaging in a cross sector approach. The CMIP also acknowledges the role Macroom has to play in the socio-economic vitality of Múscraí.

6.4.6 Growing tourism in Cork: a collective strategy

Published in 2016, the joint City and County Council tourism strategy aims to increase domestic and foreign visits to Cork to 2.8 million by 2020 (<http://www.failteireland.ie/Utility/News-Features/News-Library/Ambitious-Tourism-Strategy-for-Cork-Published.aspx>, accessed: 13/10/2016). The plan focuses almost exclusively on Cork's coast. The words 'Múscraí' or 'Gaeltacht' do not appear.

The document identifies three visitor types that were warm to visiting Cork. They are what Fáilte Ireland calls: the culturally curious; social energisers; and great escapers. Although there are differences between the three categories, by and large, they all want interesting, authentic experiences. The four key markets from which these people currently come from are the U.S.A., the U.K., France and Germany. In 2013, these four countries accounted for 97% of all visitors to Cork (*Growing tourism in Cork*, 2016, p.14). That same year, the typical daily spend of these visitors was €94.59 (ibid, p.11).

Although, the strategy focuses on the natural, physical and intangible heritage of the county, it provides no guidance as to their protection. Indeed, there is no acknowledgment as to the possible damage badly managed tourism can have on historic sites, the natural environment or cultural traditions.

Múscraí's border is 15.7km east of the Wild Atlantic Way tourist route. The Gaeltacht lies outside of Ireland's Ancient East.

6.4.7 20 year Strategy for the Irish Language (2010-2030)

The main objective to this 2010 document is the trebling of daily Irish speakers to 250,000 (2010, p. 9). Two other aims are to increase by 25% the number of people who can speak Irish in the Gaeltachts and to increase the ability of people to access state services through Irish. The document builds upon the 2006 *Government strategy on the Irish language*. Of this earlier strategy's thirteen policy objectives, objective four states that 'the Gaeltacht will be given special support as an Irish-speaking area' (20 year Strategy for the Irish Language, 2010, p.4).

As part of the 20 year strategy each Gaeltacht district area is obliged to create a sustainable language plan that protects and promotes the use of Irish as a community language. Failure to do so within the prescribed two years will result in that area no longer being designated a Gaeltacht. Within Múscraí, Comharchumann Forbartha Mhúscraí Teo was selected by Údarás na Gaeltachta to undertake the language plan. The plan will be submitted in 2017.

Aside from the language plan, the strategy proposes that each Gaeltacht will receive an area plan of the same status of a town plan. These plans will direct planning in each Gaeltacht so as to protect their unique linguistic identities.

6.4.8 National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025

The current plan essentially focuses on research, awareness building and training. Its objective is to provide the data that will allow for better decision making concerning how we manage our landscape.

7.0 Conservation Policies and Actions

7.1 Introduction

Given the fusion of the core heritage significance of Múscraí with those who live there, the only viable approach to the conservation of the heritage values is to incorporate the wider social and economic issues affecting its residents. For several decades both the core heritage values of the Gaeltacht and its socio-economic vitality have been under pressure. This has come from not only incremental change (depopulation and globalisation) but also the reaction to that change.

Effective heritage management demands a strong vision which provides clear direction towards sustainable conservation and development. Any strategy should be both balanced and flexible to the long term needs of Múscraí and its residents. Below is this document's vision:

Múscraí is an incredibly vibrant place. It is a place where the character of its people and landscape are both intertwined and co-dependent. Change always occurs. The role of this document is to help the people of Múscraí manage that change and protect the core significant aspects of the region in which they live. Ultimately, it is envisaged that this document will help make the Gaeltacht become a better place in which to work, live, and visit.

All the following policies and actions are in keeping with this vision. None is an outlier. They have been designed to build upon and support the other.

In addition to being in keeping with the vision, the conservation policies and actions also take into account the relevant constraints, opportunities, resident requirements, and following principles:

- retention of heritage significance of the individual places that make up Múscraí;
- the use of professional advice and competent contractors where required.

7.2 Policies and Actions

General policies

- This CMIP should provide the basis for all future decisions concerning the management of Múscraí's heritage.
- This CMIP should be taken into account by Cork County Council, Údarás na Gaeltachta and other relevant state agencies when making decisions regarding Múscraí.
- Development should be sustainable and consistent with the Gaeltacht's culture and way of life.

Tourism

Policy

Encourage the development of a sustainable tourism industry which focuses on the language, landscape and the traditions of Múscraí. Although the Gaeltacht's identity and sense of itself is strong and distinctive, outside of Múscraí knowledge of the region's existence as a unique and distinctive cultural entity could be improved. A place's uniqueness, attractiveness and coherence can be consolidated and strengthened when it needs to be articulated to a wider audience.

Actions

- Develop a coherent tourist strategy for Múscraí. The strategy should principally focus on attracting high earning cultural tourists that appreciate the region's distinctiveness. Another key target market are school groups that wish to immerse themselves in the Irish language. Specific care should be given to ascertaining the impact of tourism on Múscraí's heritage significance and

how this can be managed. Broader environmental impacts must also be ascertained, addressed and monitored.

- Múscraí should consider a ‘brand proposition exercise’ – whereby the region has a conversation with itself (assisted by specialists) about its image, its identity and how best to shape and present this outwardly. This exercise must be sensitive to the need to protect and not dilute the Gaeltacht’s heritage and language. Consequently, it must not become a shallow or conceited PR campaign. The resulting attractive Gaeltacht Mhúscraí branding should be used by all local tourism, craft and food providers.
- Create an attractive bilingual consumer focused website. It should contain information on what makes Múscraí special, how to get there, activities, and places to stay.
- Local business should be encouraged to work together and create experiential packages that revolve around the five senses. Although to a certain extent this is happening, Múscraí’s businesses would benefit from a best practice rural tourism conference held in the Gaeltacht.
- Develop Coláiste na Mumhan as a year round language centre. Investigate the possibility of developing the Coláiste as a field studies centre for ecologists, folklorists, historians, and archaeologists.
- Scéal Mhúscraí! A list should be created of heritage sites that would give a cross section of Múscraí’s story. Subject to the approval of the relevant landowners and stakeholders the 20 or so places of greatest intactness, accessibility, durability and safety should be opened to the public. Landowners should be indemnified against insurance claims. Where needed, appropriate access, safety and erosion management facilities should be installed (directional signage, warning signage, styles, fencing, bike stand, parking, etc). All locations are to have a bilingual information panel. All interventions should be in keeping with the principles of the *Burra Charter* (2013). The sites are to be checked at least quarterly to ensure the area is safe and undamaged. A maintenance stipend should be paid to the relevant site owners. A legally binding legal guarantee should be supplied to site owners stipulating that access is at the discretion of the landowners and that no right of access has been established. Scéal Mhúscraí will help disperse tourism across the Gaeltacht.
- Local tourist sector enthusiasm for the Múscraí section of the Beara-Breifne Way is being undermined by lower interest levels in certain places along its 500km route. At present, a definitive trail does not exist. Pressure and resources should be put in place to complete the route and thereby create a coherent, marketable product. The *Beara Breifne Way Marketing Strategy* (2014) should be implemented.
- Events revolving around the Beara-Breifne Way should be held to further cultivate local interest in this historic and beautiful walk.
- The creation of themed walks and cycle routes should be supported. Particular focus should be put on folklore.
- There should be eye catching signage at each point of entry to the Gaeltacht. The signage should be inspired by the cultural distinctiveness of Múscraí.
- The post of tourism and events project manager should be created. Their role will be to implement the tourism strategy, run the new tourist website, help drive tourism projects in the region, monitor impacts upon heritage significance, monitor visitor numbers and satisfaction, organise necessary training courses, and finally, to both coordinate and market events.
- Implement the interpretation strategy contained within this document.

A Commuter Gaeltacht?

Policy

Encourage residents to incorporate the various services and amenities of Múscraí into their daily routines and to promote a vibrant and near self-sustaining region. The villages are important service centres and they will not prosper by competing with Macroom or Cork for services. They can however flourish if people live in them.

Actions

- A community bus/transport scheme connecting all the villages with each other and Macroom should be created. One option is to provide additional support to Scéim Sóisialta to allow them to purchase another bus which could fulfil the role. In the future consideration should be given towards developing a communal pool of self drive cars.
- The buses on the Bus Éireann Cork-Kerry route should allow pick-ups and drop-offs near the social welfare office in Macroom.
- The post offices and their ancillary shops in Réidh na nDoirí and Cill na Martra are vital to the social cohesion of these villages. They must not be shut. The post office in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh must be reopened. A post office should also remain in Baile Mhic Íre. There is an immediate and short term cultural-linguistic-economic imperative to maintain post office services and this should involve a state subsidy. However, this forms part of a broader village revival strategy – which includes efforts to enhance the role of the villages, which in turn enhances their attractiveness as places to live, which will in turn increase their population, thereby supporting local services. Thus, the state subsidy should be seen as a stimulus rather than a permanent underwriting.
- The location of public services in village centres matters. Schools, health facilities, the library, and all other services currently located in the villages centres should be retained there.
- Weekly visits should be made by a doctor or district nurse to Cill na Martra.
- The retail and hospitality sector should be strengthened.
 - Create a combined brand for all retailers in the Gaeltacht (this includes restaurants, bars, hair dressers, butchers, chemists, shops, co-ops, etc). If deemed suitable, this could be part of the tourism brand.
 - Develop a Múscraí voucher system. Look at the Letterkenny model (www.shoplk.ie).
 - Retailers and hospitality sector businesses should meet regularly to coordinate discount bundles, cross promotion, and marketing activities.
 - Mentoring for businesses who wish it should be sought from Retail Excellence Ireland or similar.
 - A retail and hospitality focused conference should be held in Múscraí as a way of kick-starting greater cooperation. It should focus on how Múscraí's retail and hospitality sectors can meet the challenge of car dependant customers.
 - Macroom students interested in Irish should be facilitated in finding weekend and summer work in Múscraí.
- A concerted effort should be made to Gaelicise Macroom.
 - Free lunchtime and evening classes on conversational Irish should be provided both for the town's general population and interested businesses.
 - A pin system could be introduced identifying people as Irish speakers in the town. This would allow Gaeltacht residents the opportunity to speak Irish as they shop in Macroom. It would also improve the levels of Irish of people in Macroom. A full green circle pin could identify a person of high competence. A semicircle could identify a person with limited ability. A distinctive sticker on the business's window could identify a place where there are Irish speakers present.
 - Business owners should be encouraged through a small grant stream or VAT reduction to make their signage and printed material bilingual.
 - The primary and secondary schools of Macroom should be encouraged to enter the Gaelbhreach scheme. The initiative promotes the respect and use of Irish in schools.
- In the next review of the Cork County Development Plan wind energy policies, consideration should be given to adapting them to reflect the internationally important and sensitive nature of Múscraí's landscape. Accordingly, consideration should be given to extending the

current Policy Objective ED-3.6 ‘Normally Discouraged’ designation to cover the Gaeltacht area.

- A community-led energy strategy should be devised. This could be a suitable long term solution that reduces possible community divisions and protects liveability. The strategy would address the use of various renewables in the Gaeltacht (wind, solar, biomass), micro generation, energy conservation and transport. Investment in community-led energy schemes could be considered (e.g. Templederry Community Wind Farm, Co. Tipperary and Brixton Energy Solar 3, London). Any income generated could be sent back to local shareholders and used on community schemes. In effect, the document would be a proactive community-led acknowledgement of the challenges climate change brings. The strategy should be adopted by Cork County Council and its findings incorporated into subsequent county development plans. It should also be incorporated into the Gaeltacht area plan proposed under the *20 year Strategy for the Irish language (2010-2030)*. Due to the speed by which renewable technology is progressing, the energy strategy should be reviewed at least every five years. Interestingly, the Aran Islands Gaeltacht is already taking control of its own energy destiny. By 2022, Comharchumann Fuinneamh Oileáin Arainn/Aran Islands Energy Group aim to have all three islands energy independent and carbon neutral (Thompson, 2016). Another relevant scheme is the group heating scheme in CloghJordan Ecovillage.
- Regardless of the presence or absence of a local energy strategy, the local authority, when considering planning applications for wind energy developments, should exercise their powers under Article 103 (1) of the Planning and Development Act and require all planning applications for wind energy developments in Múscraí to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The only exception to this should be for local farms and businesses trying to meet their own energy needs up to a maximum of 800kW. Furthermore, all EISs for commercial renewable energy projects in Múscraí should specify the likely impacts on intangible heritage and liveability. The ascertaining of impact upon intangible heritage and liveability should be done at the scale of the immediate locality and wider Gaeltacht. Such an appraisal will necessitate the involvement of the local community. Due to frequent under reporting of archaeological sites in upland areas, any archaeological assessment should involve comprehensive on site examination for the EIS (Harvey et al, 2013). Likely cumulative consequences to the character of the historic landscape should also be ascertained. These actions are to be in addition to the typical analysis of impacts upon natural and built heritage.

Patterns of Habitation

Policy

In general, there needs to be an effort to sustain the villages through increased population, whilst protecting the vitality and cultural heritage of the countryside.

Actions

- To support the villages as service centres the majority of new housing should be concentrated in the Gaeltacht’s villages.
- High quality social housing should be provided for Gaeltacht residents who require it. The housing should be located in the villages.
- Any new retirement homes should be located in the villages. Single floor retirement homes should be permitted in the villages.
- Múscraí’s villages are an important part of the area’s heritage, as well as being crucial to the area’s survival. The majority of new housing should be accommodated within or close to the villages (within 10 minutes’ walk of the village centre).

- It will be important to dissuade inappropriate housing being developed in the villages. Inappropriate housing for example would include suburban or standardised repetitive forms as well as poorly designed one-offs within the village boundaries.
- New multi-unit housing schemes in the villages should be designed in a manner that is sympathetic to the villages' character and heritage and should only be considered where it can be demonstrated that they enhance the attractiveness, sustainability and appearance of the village.
- The construction of new multi-unit housing schemes should be in keeping with Cork County Council's guidance document *Making places: a design guide for residential estate development* (Melville Dunbar Associates et al, 2011)
- For multi-unit housing schemes where front gardens are planned, that garden should preferably be fully enclosed with a boundary wall. The dividing wall between two properties should preferably be 65cm-85cm in height with a wall cap comfortable to sit on. The enclosing wall will be a strong visual indicator to occupants that their lawn is definitively their own, thereby increasing the likelihood of its usage. The low height of the wall and its relatively flat nature will facilitate casual neighbour interaction. Where enclosing walls are deemed visually incongruous to the overall appearance of the estate, they may be replaced by hedgerows composed of native plant species.
- Only native plant species are to be used in the public spaces of new multi-unit housing schemes.
- The speed limit within any new multi-unit housing scheme is to be 20kmph. This will give parents confidence that their children can play safely with other children.
- Generally, schemes in the villages should provide no more than a 10% expansion of the existing residential building stock.
- The villages should also be considered as places in which the latent demand for rural housing may be accommodated. This would involve identifying locations in and at the edge of villages where loose clusters of houses can be developed in a form that appeals to rural people but in a location that supports village sustainability.
- Each of the villages could be subject to a "Village Appraisal" or "Village Design Statement" process. These would provide a clear framework for sensitive and appropriate development in the villages whilst identifying their core heritage assets, landscape features, architectural and cultural profiles. These would be non-statutory documents but would complement the local area plan and zoning measures already in place. They would in effect be another 'layer' of detail underneath the traditional zoning maps contained in the Macroom Electoral Area Local Area Plan. The Village Design Statements may be included within the upcoming Gaeltacht Plan.
- Additional incentives for Irish speakers wishing to live in the Múscraí Gaeltacht should be considered. A small scale version of the Living City tax incentive scheme should be considered and should be targeted territorially and time limited. For example, incentives could be offered to those refurbishing buildings over 50 years old within village development boundaries and in rural areas. This incentive would be in addition to the residency grant. The conversion of derelict or semi-derelict farm buildings into residences would be included in the scheme. The tax incentive would incentivise redevelopment of existing building stock and the enhancement of the region's physical heritage. The incentives and grants should be marketed to parents of children in Gaelscoilenna outside of Múscraí. In the existing Living City programme tax relief is provided for 'owner-occupiers by way of a deduction from their total income of 10% per annum of qualifying expenditure over a 10 year period and is only available where the property is the claimant's only or main residence' (www.revenue.ie/en/personal/living-city-initiative.html. accessed 16/06/2015).
- In order to ensure that the cultural landscape in the rural hinterland is protected and known about housing will be needed outside the villages. Reuse of existing structures should be

preferred to new build (this includes buildings previously used for agriculture, now derelict). Any new build is to follow the Cork County Council's *Rural Design Guide* (2010). In the Council's rural housing policy local people will be facilitated if they wish to build an individual house for their own permanent use in Múscraí (subject to normal planning considerations).

- Any new forest plantation should follow the best practice *Forestry and landscape guidelines* (2000) as set out by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/forestry/publications/landscape.pdf>
- Before forestry plantations are planted a full record should be made of the proposed site. This should include a detailed photographic record, site history, existing placenames, archaeological features, folklore, and buildings. Electronic and hard copies of the document should then be deposited with Cork City and County Archives, Cork County Library, Baile Bhúirne Library, the Planning Department at Cork County Council, and Acadamh Fódhla.
- The Native Woodland and Neighbourwood forestry schemes provide financial support for the creation or enhancement of local forests as public amenities. These schemes should be promoted in the area.
- A farmer led farming for nature scheme similar to the BurrenLIFE initiative is to be created.

Employment

Policy

A cross section of jobs must be created or supported that match the aspirations and education of Múscraí's population. This can be achieved if the region manages to exploit its competitive advantage and natural assets in terms of promoting sustainable enterprises in agriculture, food, craft/design, tourism, and culture. Manufacturing companies in Múscraí should be supported according to their needs. In addition, Múscraí businesses should be assisted in increasing the use of Irish in their workspaces. Companies should also be encouraged to add distinctiveness to their products and services through the incorporation of the Gaeltacht's culture and traditions into branding, marketing, and composition.

Actions

- High quality broadband must be made available throughout the Gaeltacht.
- A shared-space facility should be established for the use of Irish speaking professionals in one of the villages. This low rent facility could be modelled on the Fumbally Exchange (www.fumballyexchange.com).
- Free lunchtime Irish classes should be provided to businesses. The in-house classes should be conversational and fun. They should also be as practical as possible and tailored to the function of each establishment.
- Organise a conference on the benefits of incorporating local cultural and natural capital into products and services.
- Údarás na Gaeltachta should conduct qualitative surveys every five years to ascertain the employment aspirations of those emerging from education both at second and third levels. This will permit it to target certain business types more in keeping with what residents want.
- The grant programmes and supports being offered by various state agencies should where possible match closely the needs of employers. More communication is needed.
- Food produced in Múscraí should be incorporated into the Gaeltacht's tourism branding programme.
- On-farm economic diversification must be encouraged through a kick-start conference on artisan foods, speciality breeds, and farm tourism. This could then be followed up by a mentoring programme. Particular focus should be placed on assisting farmers in creating businesses, coop schemes or speciality supplier agreements that will bring in an annual profit of c.€10,000.

Attitudes to Irish

Policy

Encourage the use of Irish by residents and visitors at whatever level people have.

Actions

- Provide conversational Irish classes at various levels for those who wish to learn or improve. The classes should be fun and not revolve around the leaving cert.
- All signage and printed material created for specific use in the Gaeltacht should be bilingual. This could be encouraged through a small grant stream or VAT reduction.
- A well-researched publicity campaign should be created inviting people to use whatever level of Irish they have without judgement.
- Create a Scríocht Festival where people are encouraged to meet in neighbours' houses and talk through Irish. The programme could include coffee mornings, dinner parties, music, dance and storytelling in a number of houses.
- Anecdotally it appears that usage of Irish amongst Múscraí's teenagers is better than two decades ago. This needs to be encouraged further. However, the worst thing adults can do is to simply tell teenagers that Irish is "cool" or push them to use it more. It is best to allow them to lead. A fund should be made available for ideas from teenagers that revolve around bringing Irish into their lives through events.
- Establish a small grant stream for organisations that would like assistance in running one-off or regular events through Irish.
- Ensure that adequate Irish language family support services are available. This includes subsidised childcare and pre-school services.
- All financially supported Irish lessons should be in the Múscraí dialect.
- Create a light hearted campaign to encourage people to use Múscraí dialect words and phrases.

Lack of a strong, centralised voice

Policy

The formation of a strong, broad based community council is to be encouraged.

Action

- A strong, broad based community council is to be created. A Múscraí Community Council would provide a strong collective voice for the various interests within the region, providing much-needed advocacy, visibility and coherence. Either the existing group created by Comharchumann Forbartha Mhúscraí Teo should be significantly enhanced or a new one created. Possible models include the Wicklow Uplands Council (<http://wicklowuplands.ie>) and the Bere Island Projects Group (www.bereisland.net).
- The group should be transparent in its decision making and engage in strong public consultation. It should not over promise. To ensure the protection of institutional memory the gradual regular turnover of members is to be encouraged.
- Instead of being merely reactive to outside influences, it should be proactive and reflective in how it helps manage Múscraí.
- The group should acknowledge the limits of its expertise and engage outside assistance where appropriate.
- In order to increase cohesion and reduce the risk of conflict, a group constitution or terms of understanding are required.
- The group is to implement the recommendations of the plan. To aid implementation a series of consecutive three year action plans with actions predominately emanating from this document should be created. Each action should be connected with possible funding sources. The action

plans may form the basis of the council's meetings. The group should also review this Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan at least every five years.

- All actions emerging from the group should be in keeping with the policies and principles of this report.
- Early wins should be conducted by the group so as to gain confidence and competence. These will also help spread the group's profile within Múscraí, develop competence and expand the amount of local supporters.
- In an effort to avoid isolation and enhance its ability to problem solve, the community council should connect regularly with similar Gaeltacht and upland community groups outside of Múscraí.

Varying degrees of protection

Policy

It is the responsibility of the people of Múscraí to care for their heritage. They are to be supported through education, guidance and grant aid.

Actions

- One or more of the following should be inscribed onto the UNESCO list of intangible heritage:
 - the connection between people and place
 - the adoration of local saints
 - the use of the Múscraí dialect
- Other possible inclusions for inscription include:
- Agallaimh beirte/lúibíní
 - Sean-nós singing
- The list of possible archaeological sites compiled by Acadamh Fódhla is to be investigated in the field by archaeologists working on behalf of the Archaeological Inventory of County Cork or Cork County Council. Any verified archaeological sites are to be listed on the Record of Monuments and Places.
 - A list of ambush sites associated with the War of Independence and Civil War should be drawn up. The most important of these sites should be ascribed on the RMP and given protection under the National Monuments Acts. Prime candidates are the Beal a Ghleanna and Cúl na Cathrach ambush sites.
 - A list of non-battlefield sites associated with the War of Independence and Civil War should be drawn up (e.g. safe houses, homes of prominent republicans). The site owners should be made of their place's history. After consultation, consideration should be given to legally protecting some of the more important sites.
 - Funding opportunities for farming in an environmentally sensitive manner and the conservation of agricultural buildings (i.e. GLAS - the successor to REPS 4) should be communicated to Múscraí's farmers. Seminars on writing successful applications and farming for nature on marginal land may be needed. A Múscraí version of BurrenLIFE should be established.
 - A workshop on the importance, conservation and repair of hedgerows should be held.
 - Sectors whose activities are likely to affect archaeology, listed buildings, designated sites, and protected species (e.g. tourism, farming, construction) are to be made aware of their responsibilities as custodians of Múscraí's heritage. They are also to receive information on who to talk to if they suspect their actions might disrupt archaeological deposits, listed built fabric or protected natural heritage. Otherwise, not only would the heritage of the Gaeltacht be damaged but so too would its attractiveness for tourists.
 - Disseminate existing publications on heritage protection throughout the Gaeltacht.
 - Work with the Tidy Towns groups on enhancing their ability to care for built and natural heritage.

- Develop a transition year course on heritage awareness and management in Múscraí. Particular attention should be placed on intangible heritage. A strand of this course should be on the work of Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh.
- Promote use of the Heritage in Schools programme by primary schools.
- Local experts on built, natural and intangible heritage should be encouraged to conduct talks in primary schools and conduct tours.
- It should be an objective that all the primary schools in the Gaeltacht obtain the Green Flag.
- Any tourism strategy for the Gaeltacht must identify threats to the heritage resource and how these will be mitigated against.
- All wastewater must be treated appropriately.
- In addition to the 20 or so sites selected under the Scéal Mhúscraí scheme, as many places as possible of heritage interest should be made accessible to the public. This can only be done with the approval of the land owner. When new sites become accessible the land owners should be indemnified against insurance claims. A register and online map of publicly accessible sites should be created.
- It is vital that a coherent programme be established to document and share the oral heritage and folklore of Múscraí. This should be carefully organised involving long term investment from relevant authorities, ethical, theoretical, technical and practical training as well as a clear long term strategy for its sustainability within the community. While initially, collection will be the primary aim, a well thought out education programme must follow for the use of collected material.
- A number of existing oral history/heritage and folklore audio collections were identified during the research. These should be located, obtained, digitally converted and integrated into the Múscraí oral heritage programme archive. The archive should be available online and incorporated into a map via GIS (check out the Heritage Viewer www.heritagemaps.ie/). The name of the primary collector(s) should always be identified with these integrated collections. All schools in the Gaeltacht should participate in this programme as part of their continual education programme, linking both the collection and use of material to existing strands of the curriculum. The cultural resource which will follow from the development of the above can feed into educational and tourism activities.
- As part of the above programme, a placenames collection and dissemination strategy should be incorporated into the above programme.
- The Irish and English oral histories of the landscape should be collated onto one website and mapped.
- A centralised open access mapping source should be created compiling all places of intangible heritage value. Consideration should be given to using the Heritage Viewer (www.heritagemaps.ie/).
- A folklore education centre could be housed in the middle of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. The folklore education centre should have a close working relationship with Ionad Cultúrtha an Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh. Indeed, ultimately, it could be under its management. Further details provided in chapter 10.
- Ensure that the excellent Ionad Cultúrtha an Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh has sufficient budget to continue its top quality educational programme and schedule of events.
- The more people know about and enjoy heritage sites and traditions, the more likely these places and practices will be passed on to future generations. One sector of society that is often forgotten about is those with physical or mental disabilities. Any future on and off site interpretation actions should be cognoscente of this sector of society. With an aging population in mind appropriate interventions to allow greater wheelchair access may be required in the pilgrimage sites of St. Fin Barre's and St. Gobnait's. Any intervention should be in keeping with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's publication *Access – improving the accessibility of historic buildings and places* (2011).

- The main objective of future heritage interpretation actions will be to enhance the appreciation by both locals and visitors of the heritage significance of Múscaí as a whole and its constituent places.
- Conservation plans are required for An Teampaillín and St. Fin Barre's Pilgrimage site. Deep consultation with the local congregation and clergy is essential.
- An Teampaillín is a structure of concern (fig. 7.1). Emergency conservation work is required for masonry in possible danger of imminent collapse. Alternatively, walkers on the Beara-Breifne Way should be safely diverted around the site and bilingual warning signs erected.

Figure 7.1 **Masonry on right of image is in danger of collapse**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

- There are several areas at Fr. Denis O'Mahony's structure at the St. Fin Barre's pilgrimage site that have a significant lean/bulge (fig. 7.2). An inspection from a suitably experienced conservation engineer is urgently needed to appraise the situation and provide necessary guidance.

Figure 7.2 **Bulge in wall visible on left of image**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

- As part of the conservation of St. Fin Barre's Oratory it is recommended that a scholarly recreation of the original interior be conducted in accordance with conservation best practice (figures 7.3 & 7.4). Deep consultation with the local congregation and clergy is essential.

Figure 7.3

Early 20th century interior of St. Fin Barre's Oratory



(Source: image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland)

Figure 7.4

Current interior of St. Fin Barre's Oratory



(Source: Research and Dig, 2016)

- The holy medieval site of St. Gobnait's is in need of the following actions:
 - Without conservation work the medieval church is in danger of partial collapse. A specialist conservation engineer is required to specify appropriate interventions to ensure the full structure remains upstanding. Wall capping, flaunching, and wall pointing, all using appropriate soft lime mortar, will likely be needed. Grouting may also be required.
 - Existing monuments and the housing for the Stations of the Cross on the medieval church should remain. However, no new monuments should be attached to the medieval walls. They damage the breathability of the church walls.
 - The existing rounds signage probably disturbs human remains. As the signage fades it should be replaced by signage on free standing saw horses or similar (fig. 7.4).
 - The bell tower and roof of the First Fruits Anglican Church should be inspected. If repairs are needed these must be done soon. Waiting will only increase the damage and cost (figures 7.5 & 7.6).
 - Consideration should be given in future to increasing usage of the First Fruits Church.
 - The Church of Ireland rectory should be mothballed. The walls and openings should be secured and the wall heads covered. A temporary roof may be considered. A photographic report should also be conducted. Any loose elements could be removed and secured under a waterproof cover for possible future reinsertion. In the future the house and its associated buildings could be rehabilitated and used as a retreat centre similar to the Glendalough Hermitage Centre (www.glendaloughhermitage.ie).
- Both the Sullane and Lee are prone to flooding. A flood management strategy already exists for the Lee. However, it is more focused on the downstream sections. A flood management plan for the Gaeltacht is required to meet the needs of the local population and the challenge presented by climate change.

Figure 7.4 **Interpretative signage on saw horse, Rindoon, Co. Roscommon**



(Source: Abarta Heritage, 2016)

Figures 7.5 & 7.6

Vegetation growth throughout the bell tower and on north side of roof



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

Expansion

Policy

- If all or the majority of the above actions are implemented the Gaeltacht will become an even better place in which to live. This will incentivise people living in adjacent areas to request Gaeltacht status for their townlands. This should be encouraged. A gradual expansion of the Gaeltacht would make the area as a whole more robust to change.

Action

- If capacity allows it, people in townlands adjacent to Múscraí should be permitted to use Gaeltacht schools and other Irish language services. If capacity needs to be increased, it should be.

7.3 Funding

While it is desirable to carefully ascribe likely state or EU funding sources for the suggested actions, owing to the fifteen year time span on this plan and the as yet unknown strengths of the implementing body, this is simply not feasible. For instance, the emphasis on what type of projects differing organisations will support can change significantly within a few years. Nonetheless, the organisations listed below have through various grant programmes provided funding for social, economic, tourism and heritage initiatives similar to those being recommended. Accordingly, careful observation should be maintained of their grant programmes and how they could help fund the suggested actions. The following list of relevant state and EU funding sources is not exhaustive:

- Cork County Council
- Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (please note: this department has been reconfigured after each election since its inception in 1994)
- EU INTERREG and other EU funding sources

- Fáilte Ireland
- Foras na Gaelige
- Leader
- Local Enterprise Office (now part of Cork County Council)
- Pobal
- Royal Irish Academy
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- The Arts Council
- The Heritage Council
- Údarás na Gaeltachta

Where possible, local business and community sourced funding should be obtained to support projects. Most government and EU funding requires some level of matching funding. The Wheel, which is a representative body for charities and voluntary organizations, provides useful information on fundraising from the public and grants on its website, www.wheel.ie. The website also has a regularly updated directory of live grant opportunities.

Grant aid and tax schemes can have unintended damaging consequences for a community. Unless they are place appropriate, carefully managed and monitored, schemes can lead to unbalanced development that undermines long term livability. By contrast, certain funding that could enhance livability may not be in place (e.g. greater support for uplands farming). Accordingly, an audit of all available tax and grant schemes should be conducted. Recommendations should then be made as to what grant and tax breaks are currently appropriate, possible changes and additions. Some possible additions have already been identified in this document.

7.4 Implementation

It is envisioned that the implementation and monitoring of this report will be conducted by a strong, broad based community council. Meetings should be held at least quarterly. A meeting specifically dedicated to quantifying what has and has not been done from the plan should be conducted at least once a year. Comprehensive reviews of the plan should be undertaken at least every five years.

To aid implementation a series of consecutive three year action plans with actions predominately emanating from this document should be created. Each action should be connected with possible funding sources. The action plans may form the basis of the council's meetings.

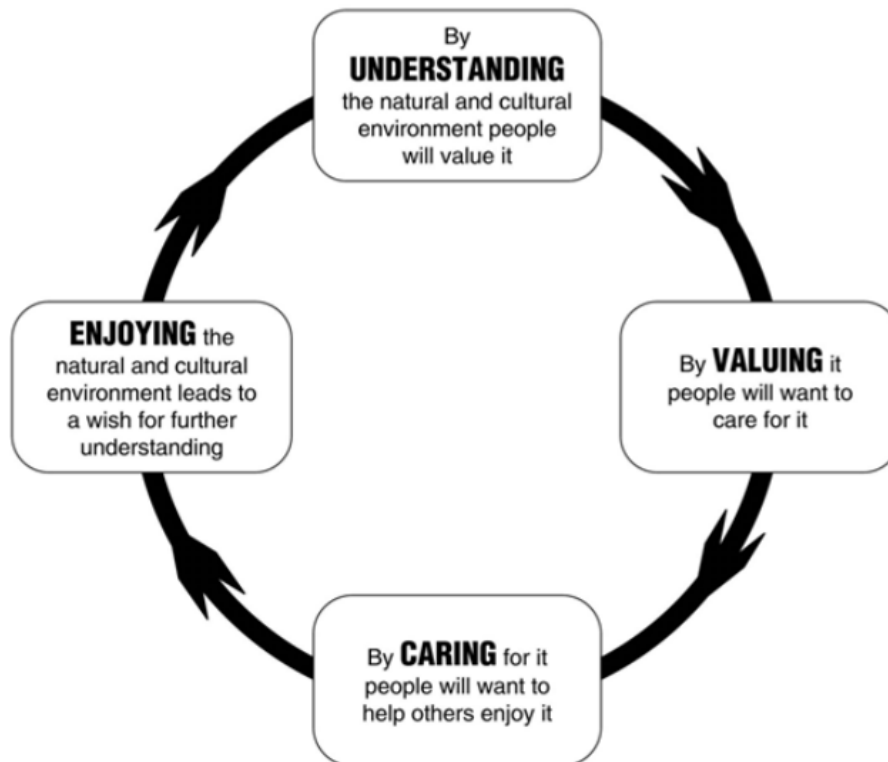
Regardless of the establishment of a strong, community council, this document may be used by any person or group wishing to make Múscraí a better place in which to live, work and visit. The actions suggested in the document are not exhaustive. Nor do the authors of this report have a monopoly on ideas. Accordingly, any actions that are in keeping with the vision, principals, policies and guidelines of the plan are to be welcomed.

8.0 Heritage Interpretation Principles

8.1 Why Interpret?

Múscraí is a cultural landscape of international importance. Unfortunately, its status as such is under threat from a combination of gradual depopulation and the undermining of the social connectors that bind residents together. Within this, the promotion of heritage and the use of heritage interpretation have essential roles to play. Strong, incisive interpretation has the ability to connect people with the story of a place more deeply than would otherwise happen. This in turn leads to an increase in the level of interest as to its management and the advocating for its protection (fig 8.1). It also enhances the level of enjoyment.

Figure 8.1 Heritage interpretation virtuous circle



(Source: GML, 2008)

The key objective of the following interpretation strategy is to improve the breadth and depth of understanding of Múscraí's heritage. The most important audience for this are the locals themselves. They are the region's prime custodians. Although overall awareness from locals of the Gaeltacht's heritage values is high, greater knowledge would lead to a more resilient cultural landscape. The next audience of importance are visitors to Múscraí. In order to sustain certain services and help create others which would enhance the quality of life for residents, high spending cultural tourists that would appreciate the uniqueness of the Gaeltacht are needed. Mass tourism which would undermine the character of the region is to be avoided. Such an occurrence would weaken the authenticity of place that is necessary for a sustainable and high yielding tourism sector. Adequate heritage interpretation actions are required to help connect visitors with the Gaeltacht, enhance enjoyment and deepen their level of respect for Múscraí.

8.2 Múscraí's Meanings

Múscraí's core meaning has been identified as the symbiotic relationship between people and place. One is simply less without the other. It is this relationship that makes Múscraí a place of international importance.

Within this evaluation no one monument, time period or personality dominates. Accordingly, to focus disproportionately on a particular person, monument or period would distort the presentation of Múscraí's complex story. Therefore, the interpretation of Múscraí's heritage must be broad in its implementation.

Typically in Ireland what are seen as the core, impressive attributes of a region tend to be promoted by conservation professionals. Indeed, it is usually the large, imposing sites that are conserved at all (e.g. Dublin Castle, Newgrange, and The Rock of Cashel). The result is a skewed and elitist version of the past revolving around great men and great events. Women, children, the heritage of the everyday are sidelined and placed in the context of powerful men. In Múscraí, the interpretation should aim to demonstrate the complex character of the Gaeltacht and the connection between people and place.

8.3 Guiding Heritage Principles

The interpretation of Múscraí is to be carried out in accordance with the relevant principles of the *Granada*, *Burra*, and *Ename Charters*. The principles contained within the charters provide specific guidance for works on the site. Relevant principles from the *Granada* and *Burra* charters include the following:

Granada Charter Article 12

While recognising the value of permitting public access to protected properties, each Party undertakes to take such action as may be necessary to ensure that the consequences of permitting this access, especially any structural development, do not adversely affect the architectural and historical character of such properties and their surroundings.

Burra Charter Article 2.2

The aim of conservation is to retain the cultural significance of a place.

Burra Charter Article 5.1

Conservation of a place should identify and take into consideration all aspects of cultural and natural significance without unwarranted emphasis on any one value at the expense of others.

Burra Charter Article 7.2

A place should have a compatible use. The policy should identify a use or combination of uses or constraints on uses that retain the cultural significance of the place. New use of a place should involve minimal change, to significant fabric and use; should respect associations and meanings; and where appropriate should provide for continuation of practices which contribute to the cultural significance of the place.

Burra Charter Article 14

Conservation may, according to circumstance, include the processes of: retention or reintroduction of a use; retention of associations and meanings; maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation and interpretation; and will commonly include a combination of more than one of these.

Burra Charter Article 15.2

Changes which reduce cultural significance should be reversible, and be reversed when circumstances permit.

Burra Charter Article 15.4

The contributions of all aspects of cultural significance of a place should be respected. If a place includes fabric, uses, associations or meanings of different periods, or different aspects of cultural significance, emphasising or interpreting one period or aspect at the expense of another can only be justified when what is left out, removed or diminished is of slight cultural significance and that which is emphasised or interpreted is of much greater cultural significance.

Burra Charter Article 25

The cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent, and should be explained by interpretation. Interpretation should enhance understanding and enjoyment, and be culturally appropriate.

The full extent of the *Ename Charter* (2008) is of relevance.

8.4 Possible Tourism and Visitor Management Issues

- Disruptive to daily lives of landowners and other residents
- Increased traffic and parking on roads
- Conflict between conservation and tourism, e.g. one location may be in greater need of conservation work yet is not seen as fundamental to the tourist product
- Increased visitor numbers means increased needs, i.e. toilets and refreshments
- Damage by visitors to fields through the creation of rough dirt paths
- Damage by visitors to monuments
- Some historic sites in Múscaí are still of concern
- Undermining the integrity of local sites, traditions and artistic practices through their commodification
- Some people will benefit directly from tourism (e.g. income), others indirectly (e.g. additional services). However, some will not and may only see inconvenience (e.g. increased traffic).

An increase in the numbers of visitors to Múscaí will bring benefits to local shops, bars, restaurants, B&Bs and hotels. However, it is inevitable that the increased numbers will create management issues which should be taken into account now. If this is not done, conflict will certainly arise between the desire for the public to enjoy the Gaeltacht, the various the landowners' rights to use their land as they see fit within the law and the integrity of region's cultural identity. Consequently, visitor numbers and behaviour must be monitored so as to protect both the heritage values of Múscaí and the rights of the residents to live positively.

Should as recommended by this report a Gaeltacht trust or council be established then a standing agenda item at meetings ought to be a discussion on the impact of tourism on Múscaí's heritage values and the quality of life of residents. All heritage interpretation and tourism actions that emerge from these meetings should be in keeping with this Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan.

8.5 Audience

Improved interpretation of Múscaí will make the place appreciated by a wider population. However, that interpretation must be designed to fulfil the needs of a person with a general interest in heritage and culture. In no way should there be any onsite interpretation created solely for the benefit of specialists. This would simply put off the vast majority of locals and visitors. Instead, all

interpretation works should engage with the audience and provoke them into wanting to learn more.

Typically, heritage interpretation actions are targeted at enhancing the enjoyment of a place by tourists. In Múscraí, the primary aim of heritage interpretation actions as guided by this document will be to broaden the knowledge and appreciation by locals for their region. However, that does not mean that incisive and accessible interpretation for visitors is not important. Such actions are vital to the enjoyment of the region by high earning cultural tourists (both domestic and foreign) that are essential to the maintenance of services and the creation of others.

Overall, locals already have a deep appreciation about Múscraí's special character. No written inventory could do justice to the knowledge they retain about the multitude of places that make up the region. Nonetheless, the promotion of the full breadth of the significance of the Gaeltacht would help deepen each resident's connection with the landscape and bring greater conservation gains. A key local audience is the large number of foreign born residents that make up nearly one eighth of inhabitants. Well planned heritage interpretation actions could help the relative newcomers learn about and connect with Múscraí. This would also be the case for the unknown number of non-Múscraí raised Irish that have moved into the Gaeltacht.

At present, the overall visitor numbers to Múscraí for leisure or tourism purposes is unclear. One indicator is the 63,000 that visited Gougane Barra forest park in 2011 (Fáilte Ireland, 2012). Unfortunately, how many of these are foreign tourists, domestic tourists or locals is unknown. In Cill na Martra, the Prince August model soldier factory attracts over 20,000 visitors annually (www.independent.ie/irish-news/steadfast-tin-soldiers-now-capturing-the-hearts-of-a-whole-new-generation-34313909.html, accessed 13/01/2015). The factory owner hopes that this number will double over the coming years. There are no visitor figures for St. Gobnait's Shrine or any other principal attraction. Within the Gaeltacht here are three small hotels. Two are located on the main Cork-Killarney road while the other one is found in Gougane Barra. The hotel at Gougane Barra is largely dependent on overseas tourists and is consequently closed during the winter. There appears to be a relatively low number of B&Bs and Airb&bs on offer. There are no cafés, food pubs or restaurants in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, Cúil Aodha, Réidh na nDoirí, or Cill na Martra. All the above indicates capacity for higher numbers of cultural tourists, particularly those staying overnight.

According to CSO figures the combined population of counties Cork and Kerry in 2011 was 665,000. Of these, almost 220,000 people were listed as being either professionals, employers or managers. This is particularly relevant as two thirds of committed cultural tourists work in professional or managerial positions (European Travel Commission, 2005).

In 2014, 2,229,000 foreign tourists visited the Cork-Kerry region (Fáilte Ireland, 2015). Of this, no breakdown exists for Múscraí. Nonetheless, it can be surmised that the vast majority of these did not visit Múscraí. Indeed, in a question from a 2012 survey by Fáilte Ireland asking 567 tourists 'is there any one thing about West Cork in particular that [they] would advise other holidaymakers to do or see?' no one said Múscraí. That being so, Gougane Barra did appear prominently in the same survey. Nonetheless, the research displayed that Múscraí as an entity does not widely exist in the perceptions of foreign or domestic tourists. This lack of awareness is particularly worrying for the development of a sustainable tourism sector when just over half of the people surveyed in that same study first heard of West Cork through word of mouth.

Of the tourists that came to Ireland in 2010, 59% were white collar workers (C1). A further 24% were managerial/professional (AB) (Fáilte Ireland, 2011). Forty two percent of all tourists either rented or brought over a car. For visitors to West Cork that figure rises to 85% (Fáilte Ireland, n/d). When they

managed to get to West Cork, the most popular activity to do by far was hill walking/hiking (27% of visitors) (Fáilte Ireland, n/d). This makes sense when considering that the main reason for visiting the area was to experience the beautiful scenery. Another key factor is the friendliness of the people. When planning their trips to West Cork 88% of tourists consulted the internet, 35% guide books, and 25% the Irish tourist board. It is worth noting that in the 2012 edition of the Lonely Planet Guidebook for Ireland only Gougane Barra is mentioned (Davenport et al). The word Múscraí does not appear.

8.6 Target Market

Any future interpretation actions will seek to consolidate the existing audience and provide encouragement to those who have yet to visit Múscraí to do so. Neither local inhabitants nor tourists possibly warm on coming to the Gaeltacht are a homogenous group. There are various audiences within each that may need different interpretation actions.

Not everyone will be interested in visiting Múscraí. The destination quality of the Gaeltacht revolves around the cultural identity of the region, the deep connection between people and place and the beauty of the landscape. Crass overdevelopment or pastiche exploitation of the local traditions and landscape will only serve to undermine the long term sustainability of a high yield cultural tourism sector and erode heritage values. Accordingly, judicious targeting of key markets must be followed.

Target Groups	Interests and Expectations
Irish Speaking Local Residents	Figuring out how the various places that make up Múscraí fit into their sense of self and where the Gaeltacht lies within national and international narratives. Interesting and informative interpretation explaining the region's evolution and distinctiveness. Nice, interesting walks and experiences.
Non-Irish Speaking Local Residents	Figuring out how the various places that make up Múscraí fit into their identity and where the Gaeltacht lies within national and international narratives. Interesting and informative interpretation explaining the region's evolution and distinctiveness. Nice, interesting walks and experiences.
Day Visitors	An interesting afternoon which will enrich their body and mind. High quality interpretation explaining Múscraí within a wider Irish and international context. Easily navigable walks, cycles and drives which provide a sense of exploration. An experience to remember.
Families on Holiday	Great scenery. Child friendly environment where children can explore and learn. An experience that will invigorate the adults.
Older People	Accessible and easily navigable pilgrimage and tourist attractions with high quality interpretation.
Irish Tourists	An interesting visit which will enrich their body and mind. High quality interpretation explaining Múscraí within a wider Irish and international context. Easily navigable looped walks, cycles

	and drives which provides a sense of exploration. An experience to remember.
Overseas Visitors	Multi-lingual, high quality interpretation explaining Múscraí within the wider Irish and international context. They want an interesting experience and a sense that the Gaeltacht is unique. They also want a sense that they are walking through a special place not experienced by the vast majority of tourists.
School and Education Groups	Activity sheets that are linked through Irish with the national school and secondary school curricula. High quality interpretation that makes Múscraí's culture come to life. Additional information available online.
Travel Groups	High quality interpretation explaining the cultural significance of Múscraí. A route that is easily navigable with points of interest that are readily accessible. Múscraí's lack of excessive development and continued operation as a living Gaeltacht will give visitors the satisfaction that they are entering a 'real' place not contrived for tour groups.

8.7 Key Messages and Stories

According to Fáilte Ireland (n/d) only about 10% of the population have learning as a prime objective when visiting attractions. It is a secondary motivation to experiencing something authentic and enriching. The laying out of archaeological or historical facts on lectern units is interesting to only a narrow band of society. What's more, it fails to 'people' the place and give visitors a sense of what the region was actually like. All heritage interpretation should be interesting, informative and accessible. It does not necessarily need to be enjoyable. This is particularly the case for places where unsavoury episodes occurred. Interpretation should seek to enhance the experience or both visitors and locals. This is accomplished by using the key messages and stories of the site. These messages and stories should emerge from the principal themes of the Gaeltacht's existence.

Historic maps, written sources, interviews and site visits have provided much information about how Múscraí has developed. These are the key ingredients when considering the stories through which the Gaeltacht will be interpreted. The key stories are:

People and place are one and the same– The chief story of Múscraí is one of the relationship between people and place (land management, language, folklore). One is simply less without the other. How has this relationship developed over time?

A place apart– What makes Múscraí a distinct region (linguistically, culturally, archaeologically) both now and in the past? Why is it important to maintain the Gaeltacht's cultural integrity?

An independent spirit– Múscraí has a long and multifaceted tradition of doing things differently. During the Medieval period the Gaeltacht was a stronghold of Gaelic culture and self-determination. In the 19th and twentieth centuries there was the struggle for land rights, Irish Independence, and against pro-treaty forces during the Civil War. There was also an interesting relationship with the local ascendancy. Perhaps most importantly is the continued role Múscraí plays in the promotion of the Irish language, poetry, song, and dance.

8.8 Interpretation Objectives

After moving through the Gaeltacht visitors should have significantly enhanced their understanding of Múscraí and why it is significant. Both tourists and locals should have a greater appreciation and breadth of knowledge of this vibrant cultural landscape. Below are the objectives of all future interpretation actions:

Knowledge and understanding

Visitors and locals will:

- learn about the complex relationship between the people and the place and how this has evolved over time
- learn about the landscape of ritual that combines pre-Christian and Christian characteristics
- learn about the role of Múscraí in the emergence of the Irish State and the promotion of the Irish language, music, dance and poetry
- learn about the various flora and fauna that exist in Múscraí and how the physical landscape has impacted upon the cultural distinctiveness of the Gaeltacht.

Skills

Visitors and locals will:

- be introduced to the concept of ‘reading’ the landscape for clues to its use and changes over time.

Enjoyment/inspiration

Visitors and locals will:

- have the satisfaction of learning about a cultural landscape of international importance
- enjoy the sense of exploration and discovery
- enjoy the beauty of the place
- feel inspired and invigorated by the location and people.

Attitudes and values

Visitors and locals will:

- grow to appreciate the complexity of the past and its impact upon the present
- appreciate the valuable addition that monuments, vernacular structures, traditional land uses and the natural environment make to the region’s liveability and tourism attractiveness
- value the continuation of traditional land uses, the Múscraí dialect and the living tradition of Irish music, poetry and dance
- understand the importance of Múscraí as a place of international significance
- understand the role Múscraí has in forming and grounding our national identity
- understand the role Múscraí and other places like it play in allowing us the ability to think differently in a Globalised world.

Activity and behaviour

Visitors will:

- wish to return and stay longer
- encourage friends and family to visit
- wish to find out more about Múscraí
- feel a connection Múscraí and its future
- feel compelled to visit other heritage sites
- support the work of a future Múscraí council or trust.

Locals will:

- have a deeper connection with Múscraí
 - have a deeper interest in the Gaeltacht's future management
 - feel compelled to visit heritage sites within the Gaeltacht
 - protect the everyday heritage sites not legally protected that they have direct control over
 - practice the Múscraí dialect
 - take greater part in Múscraí traditions and community events
 - pass on local stories and folklore
 - support the work of a future Múscraí council or trust.
-

9.0 Interpretation Critical Review and Site Inventory

9.1 Pre visit Information

At present there is a low level of awareness by people nationally and internationally of Múscraí as a distinct region. There is additional confusion in County Cork over the geographical range ascribed to the Múscraí place name. For instance, does Múscraí only mean the Gaeltacht or is it the old Muskerry barony or the GAA division which incorporates areas outside the historical barony? Intelligent branding, assertive marketing and the exclusive use of the Irish place name Múscraí for the Gaeltacht should resolve this.

There is a simple and by now out of date website that covers the Gaeltacht as a tourist destination (<http://homepage.eircom.net/~meithealmhuscraí/guide/>, accessed 13/01/2016). Unfortunately, it is does not match modern expectations of an easy to navigate tourism website. Furthermore, it is not complemented by a social media presence. Indeed, despite there being several social media accounts dedicated to Múscraí there is no single widely used twitter, Facebook or instagram account with uniform branding focused on tourism and events in the Gaeltacht. This diffuse situation is also replicated in print material. There is a good map of Slí Mhúscraí (the local section of the Beara-Breifne Way). Ultimately though, the overall pattern is one of strong individual or single group effort being undermined by the lack of adherence to a single marketing and branding strategy.

9.2 Circulation and Arrival

At the various crossing points into Múscraí there is a simple sign indicating that you are entering the Gaeltacht. The signage is similar to that in other Gaeltachts. Road signage directing people to the various villages is good. Signage along the road network to places of interest is limited for some (St. Gobnait's pilgrimage site, An Teampaillín) and nonexistent for others (Cúil Aodha church, Béal a Ghleanna ambush site). There is no tourist information at the bus stops at Baile Mhic Íre or Baile Bhúirne. In general, for those driving there are few information panels in the middle of the villages showing points of interest in the Gaeltacht. The exception to this is the Beara-Breifne information panels in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. The Beara-Breifne information panel in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne is located away from the main hubs. There are no tourism information panels in Cúil Aodha, Réidh na nDoirí or Cill na Martra.

9.3 Access and Existing Interpretation

The interpretation of heritage sites is very limited. An Teampaillín which is on the Beara-Breifne way has an interpretive sign in English (fig. 9.1). There is no interpretation at St. Fin Barre's or St. Gobnait's. Indeed, aside from An Teampaillín there is no interpretation at any place of archaeological, historical, natural or architectural interest. Monuments to various historical personalities, War of Independence skirmishes and episodes in the past are dotted across the landscape. However, there is little or no context provided. The interpretation panels surrounding the Battle of Waterloo model at the Prince August model factory focus solely on the Napoleonic Wars.

Even taking into account all the limited interpretation in the villages and at An Teampaillín there is no provision for people who prefer a more active engagement when learning. Instead, passive reading dominates. The existing interpretation does not connect the visitor with the character of the place nor does it ask them to use all their senses. For instance, there is no audio guide with music or poetry. There are no onsite interpretive activities that are dedicated to children. Overall, where it exists, the interpretation provision merely permits visitors some comprehension of what they are walking across or that something or someone is being commemorated.

That there is any interpretation or monuments is something that has to be commended. Nonetheless, the existing interpretation should be seen as being only a base to build upon. More is needed to increase the level of appreciation and comprehension that both locals and visitors have for Múscaí.

Figure 9.1 Onsite interpretation panel



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

9.4 Events

The level and intensity of events focused on music, poetry (e.g. Dámhscoil Mhúscaí), art and sport (GAA and road bowling) is impressive in its quantity and quality. The Ionad Cultúrtha has a vibrant, high quality programme of events. Its traditional music programme in particular is exceptional. As the events in Múscaí are primarily put on for locals they are of the highest authenticity and integrity.

10.0 Possible Interpretation and Visitor Management Actions

The role of all onsite heritage interpretation actions should be to develop the connection that both locals and visitors have with Múscraí. Through the use of story, the interpretation of the region should provide clarity about its culture, encourage awareness, and offer insight. Above all, Múscraí's interpretation should enrich people's experience and encourage active engagement with the place.

All installations should be designed to cause the minimal disturbance to the cultural landscape. Care must also be made so as to not impede the activities of locals as they go about their daily lives. Proper adherence to the *National Monuments Act* (1930-2004) and various wildlife protection acts should be followed at all times.

The interpretation actions suggested in this chapter are not exhaustive. The imagination of consultants only goes so far! Accordingly, any ideas that are in keeping with the principals, policies and guidelines of this document's interpretation section are to be welcomed.

10.1 General Heritage Interpretation Guidelines

1. All material should be bilingual. Irish should always be the most visually dominant language.
2. All interpretation actions should be tied in with the key messages and stories described in section 8.7.
3. All interpretation actions should be based on sound scholarly research.
4. Stick to the known facts. Speculation should be avoided.
5. Where there are conflicting accounts consideration should be given to displaying the various versions and allowing the audience to make up their own minds.
6. Researchers and designers should reflect upon their own backgrounds and possible prejudices when devising interpretative schemes.
7. When interpreting places or periods of conflict, commemorate do not celebrate. Do not use emotive or bombastic language.
8. In general, do not use technical terms or complex words where simple ones will do.
9. Do not presume that people know about certain personalities or time periods. Interpretation should be aimed at the general audience.
10. The word length of panels and audio guides should be kept to a minimum.
11. Do not refer to "famous" people or places. If they are truly famous they do not have to be called so.
12. Interpretation should be interesting and relevant.
13. Interpretation should not damage the setting or the physical fabric of the place it is addressing.

10.2 Pre-Arrival Actions

- **Webpage**

Develop a simple, clear, easy to navigate bilingual website for the Gaeltacht. The website should contain information on what makes Múscraí special, on activities, events, accommodation and how to get there. The website should have a series of suggested one, two and three day itineraries tailored to various audiences. Use www.visitchichester.org/ as a model.

- **Brochure and Flyer**

A high quality colour brochure and smaller leaflet telling prospective visitors of Múscraí's heritage value is needed. The leaflet should communicate that Múscraí is a special destination, worthy of a visit. On the leaflet a map showing Múscraí's location should be included, as well as the address of the new webpage. There is room for more information in the brochure on the Gaeltacht's attractions, uniqueness and accommodation options. A distribution plan for both the brochure and

leaflet should be created. Likely locations include tourist offices, Cork and Killarney bus stations, airports, ferry ports, local hotels, shops, pubs and B&Bs, etc. The leaflet and brochure should be available in Irish, English, French and German.

- **Public Transport**

A bus service to Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh should be reinstated. This should be complemented by an internal bus/transport service that would facilitate locals, walkers and other cultural tourists. The internal bus and its bus stops should be distinctly branded.

10.3 Arrival and Circulation

- **Arrival Signage and Public Art**

At present, the entry signs into Múscraí are plain, generic Údarás signs. Large Múscraí specific signage is needed at each main point of entry. They should communicate a sense that people are entering somewhere distinctive. This could be complemented by distinctive roadside and village centre public art that reflects the local heritage (figures 10.1, 10.2 & 10.3).

Fig 10.1 **A horseman commemorating a fording point across the Bandon River on the N71**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

Figure 10.2

Art from the Camino de Santiago. Something similar could be done to honour the O’Sullivan Bere march along the Beara-Breifne Way



(Source: www.google.ie/search?q=camino+monument&esv=2&biw=1366&bih=623&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiSsaKGpsLKAhVFqA4KHdRRAtgQ_AUIBygC#tbn=isch&q=camino+de+santiago+monument&imgc=KCDPnWgJjEwC-M%3A, accessed 16/01/16)

Fig 10.3

The living grass sign in Vitoria Gastiez, Spain, provides a great sense of arrival to a dynamic, interesting city



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

- **Directional Signage for Heritage Sites**

Branded directional signage within the Gaeltacht should be provided for the 20 or so Scéal Mhúscraí heritage sites (e.g. Séipéal Ghobnatan, the clapper bridges, Beal a Ghleanna ambush site), even for those with existing signage (e.g. Gougane Barra, An Teampaillín). In certain locations where the old signage creates clutter it may need to be removed. However, this can only occur with the approval

of the relevant stakeholders. All signage should keep to an agreed design and branding palette (figures 10.4, 10.5, 10.6 & 10.7).

Figures 10.4-10.7

In the Navia district of Asturias, Spain, all directional and information signage for archaeological and historical sites has been standardised. Such uniform but elegant designs are easy for passing motorists and cyclists to identify. They also provide reassurance that the site is of sufficient quality to be worth a visit.



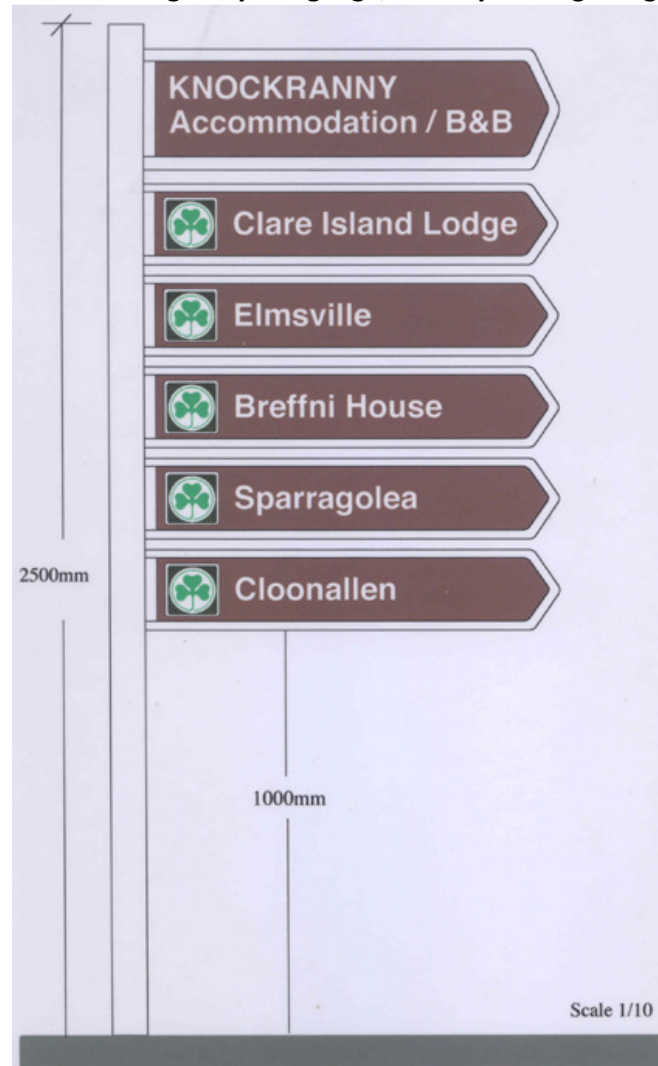
(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

- **Directional Signage for Tourist Accommodation, Activities and Crafts**

Better directional signage within the Gaeltacht should be provided for accommodation, activity sites and craft workshops, even for those with existing signage (e.g. Collavarig Pottery and the Prince August model factory). In certain locations where the old signage creates clutter it may have to be removed. However, this can only occur with the approval of the relevant stakeholders. All signage should be bilingual and be in keep with the agreed branding palette. The signage should be brown and similar to those in Westport, Co. Mayo (fig. 10.8).

Figure 10.8

Westport Town Council in Co. Mayo created a standardised scheme for tourist signage that reduces clutter, improves the public realm and increases the legibility of signage, thereby making navigation easier



(Source: Simon Wall, 2014)

- **Village Information Boards**

A comprehensive set of well designed information boards are needed in the centre of each of the five villages that make up the Gaeltacht (Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne, Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh, Cúil Aodha, Réidh na nDoirí, and Cill na Martra). One is also needed at Gouganne Barra. The board should contain information on the immediate location, local points of interest and a map of the Gaeltacht (figures 10.9, 10.10 & 10.11). All text should be both in Irish and English. Irish is to be the visually dominant language on all signage. Where appropriate, summaries in French and German of local information should be provided. A QR code linking smartphone users to the new Múscaí tourist

website is to be included (subject to adequate broadband being available). The amount of text on the board should be limited. The less the word count, the more likely it will be read. All tourist information signage should keep to an agreed design and branding palette.

Figure 10.9

Tastefully designed information board, Lough Boora, Co. Offaly



(Source: Research and Dig, 2013)

Figures 10.10 & 10.11 **Waterford City Centre now has a standardised series of information signage throughout the city directing visitors to main points of interest.**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2013)

- **Toilets and Refreshments**

There are only two public toilets in Múscraí (both in Gougane Barra). Elsewhere, toilet facilities are provided at the discretion of the owners of the Gaeltacht's pubs, hotels and cafés. In time, consideration may have to be given towards the construction of discrete well designed public toilets in the car park at St. Gobnait's. Between Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh and Baile Bhúirne there is no place where walkers can obtain refreshments. A way of addressing this is to have an honesty box with drinks and snacks (fig. 10.12).

Figure 10.12 **Honesty box along Hadrian's Wall Way, UK**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2011)

- **Bike Rental Scheme**

A low cost bike rental scheme should be established allowing both public transport users and car users the opportunity to explore the Gaeltacht (fig. 10.13). Gougane Barra Hotel already operates a bike rental scheme for their guests. Perhaps this could be opened to the public in general and a partnership agreement entered into with one of the hotels in Baile Mhic Íre/Baile Bhúirne. The bike rental scheme will be complemented by a bike stands where required. Cavan County Council operates a free scheme from their offices www.cavancoco.ie/free-bike-scheme.

Figure 10.13

A bike hire scheme being operated from a pub in Sydney, Australia



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

- **Bike Stands**

In order to facilitate the exploration of Múscraí by cycling, appropriate bike stands should be installed at points of interest throughout the Gaeltacht. The stands should be located immediately beside that point of interest's introductory information panel. The stands would complement the bike rental scheme and facilitate the exploration of Múscraí by long distance cycling tourists and Irish people exercising. In 2014, 8% of foreign tourists participated in cycling when in Ireland (Fáilte Ireland, 2015).

10.4 On-Site Interpretation

- **Interpretation Panels**

The great bulk of heritage interpretation in Múscraí is connected with the Beara-Breifne Way. Although of high quality, almost all the text is in English. All new panels in Múscraí are to be bilingual and in keeping with an agreed design palette (figures 10.14, 10.15 & 10.16). Text is to be kept to a minimum. Simple, easy to understand words are to be used. Authors of text should try to engage their audience and not bore them. Most sites will only have one panel. The panel should not simply be a list of facts. Instead, it should provide context and insight. This will be greatly helped by following one of the three Gaeltacht themes/stories as described in section 8.7 (i.e. people and place are one and the same, a place apart, an independent spirit). There should be three layers to the text. This allows visitors to read to a level they are comfortable with. Layer one tells the visitor what it is, (i.e. the name and site category). Layer two comprises c.50 words in bold that gives basic information (e.g. who built it and why). The final layer provides the reader with more detail on the place. The use of re-creation drawings for certain sites that have undergone severe changes can help visitors visualise what the place once looked like. If there is space, then c.50 word synopses of the site's character should be made available in French and German. The location of the sign must be carefully selected so as to not take away from a visitor's view of the site or disturb any archaeological, architectural or ecological heritage. No interpretative sign should be located directly on religious grounds. Subject to adequate broadband, each panel could have a QR code linking to a

YouTube video where further information could be obtained. All panels should have the address of the proposed Múscaí tourism website.

Figure 10.14

The Interpretative panels in Vindolanda, Hadrian's Wall, UK, are fitted onto concrete trays. This means that no excavation is required. Such an archaeologically non-invasive approach is only suitable in areas with no livestock. In places where sheep or cattle are present a more durable solution is necessary (see fig. 7.2).



(Source: Research and Dig, 2011)

Figure 10.15

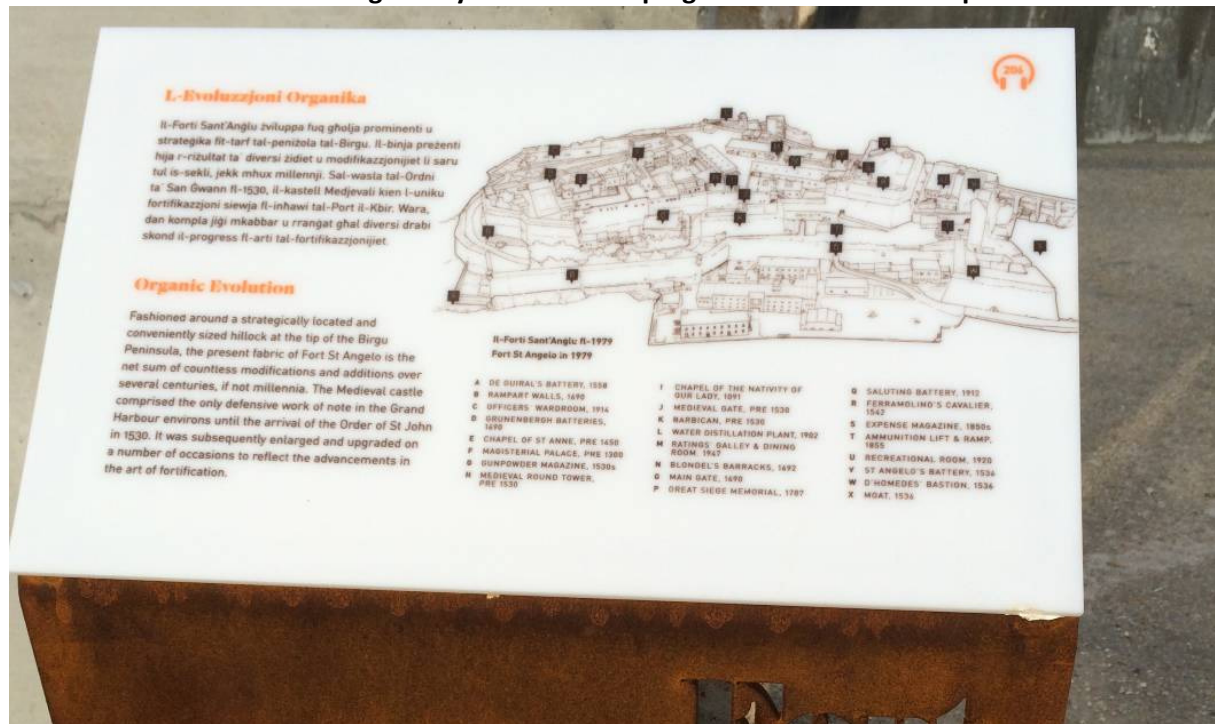
The bilingual text on the interpretation panels in Conwy Castle, UK, are a great example of brevity. The use of contemporary terms acts as a hook to attract visitors' attention.



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

Figure 10.16

Elegant bilingual signage in Fort St. Angelo, Malta. Check out the small audio guide symbol at the top right hand corner of the panel.



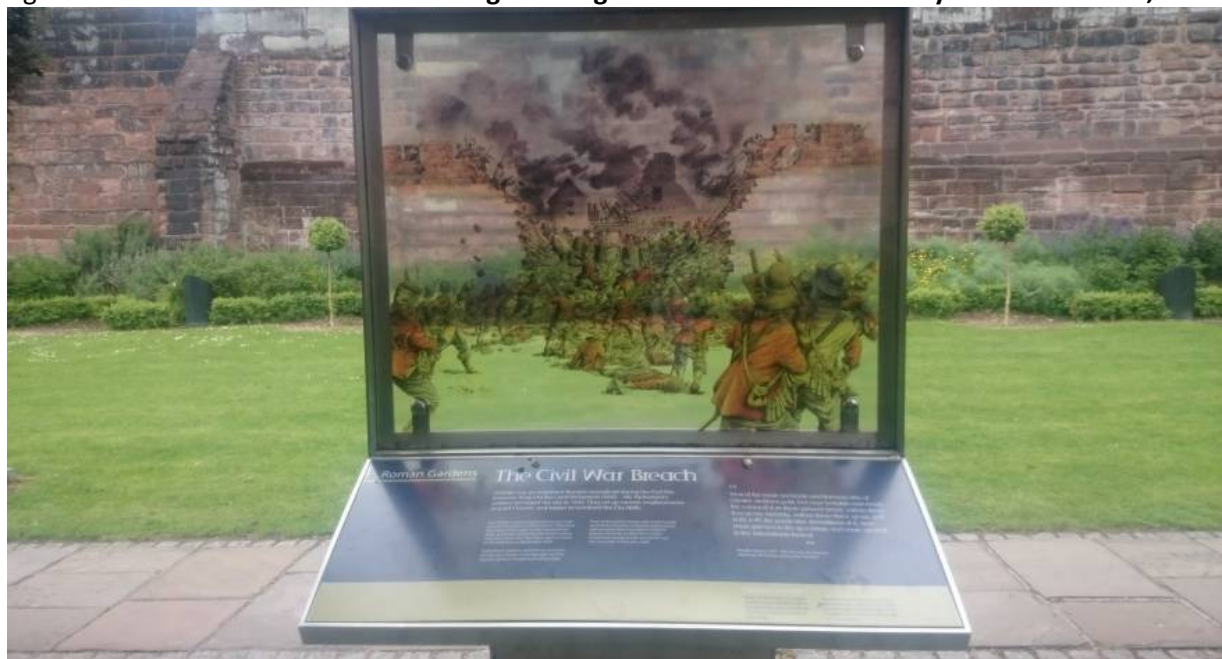
(Source: The Heritage Council, 2015)

- **Windows on the Past**

In a small number of areas protected from cattle ‘windows on the past’ could be erected (fig. 10.17). These would have translucent images on a toughened glass screen showing events or how a site may have looked like in the past. These could be created with the correct perspective across the landscape thereby creating a spatially accurate overlay.

Fig 10.17

Translucent image sowing Cromwellian breach on city walls at Chester, UK



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

- **Murals**

There are several gables in the Gaeltacht's villages that could be used as canvases to help tell the story of Múscraí through high quality interpretations of local folklore or historical events (figures 10.18 & 10.19).

Figure 10.18 **The stylised murals of Vitoria Gastiez, Spain, make something beautiful out of something boring**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

Figure 10.19 **A late 19th/early 20th century photo of a now gone section of a street has been painted onto a wall of the motorway it was destroyed to make way for in Sydney, Australia**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2014)

- **Village Street Signage**

Subject to owner approval, each late 19th/early 20th century street building in the various villages could have a small bilingual plaque noting its various uses over time (figures 10.20 & 10.21).

Figures 10.20 & 10.21 **Signage in Bayonne, France**

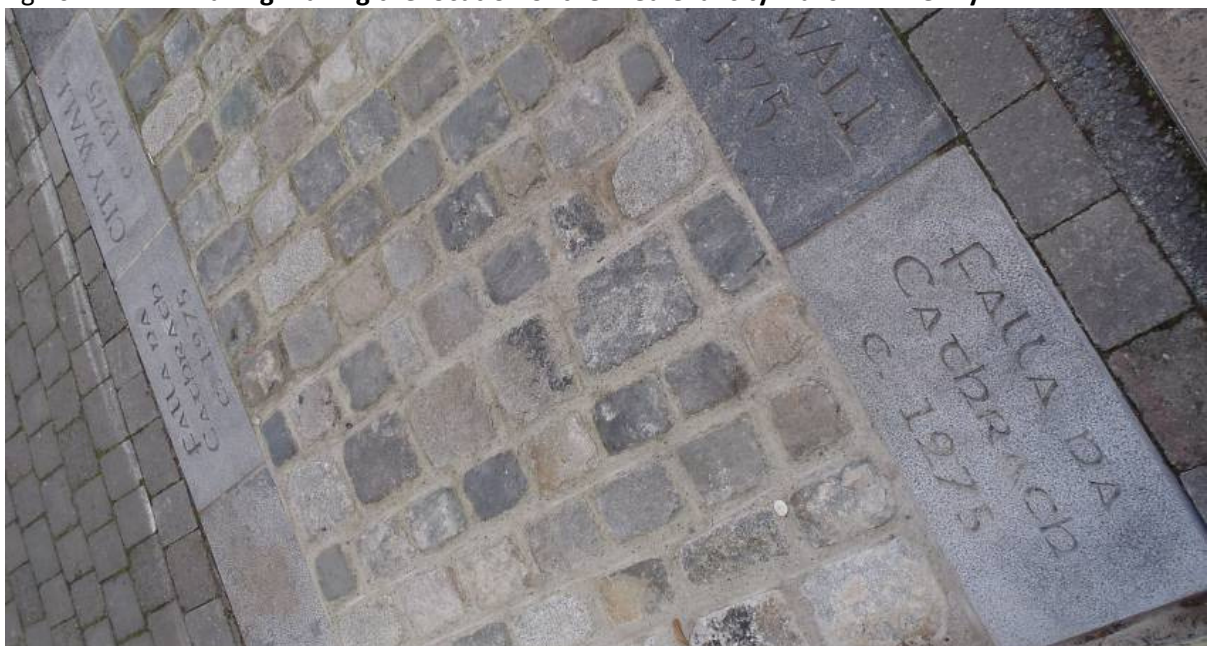


(Source: Research and Dig, 2012)

- **Text Fragments**

On the footpaths of the Gaeltacht's villages insert text fragments of quotes (inscribed on stone) from prominent thinkers (e.g. Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh and Sean O'Riada) and extracts from poetry and local folklore based on Múscraí. In one location a large full length poem should be inscribed in stone and laid out as paving (fig. 10.22).

Fig 10.22 **Paving making the location of the medieval city walls in Kilkenny**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2015)

- **Audio Trails**

Develop a series of audio trails linked with specific sites based on the three key messages and stories (i.e. people and place are one and the same, a place apart, an independent spirit). The trails should incorporate poetry, folklore, song, natural history and historical/archaeological information. QR codes for the various tracks should be present on the appropriate site interpretation panels (this depends on adequate broadband being available). The trail points should be linked to GPS. Should broadband connections be inadequate then portable devices may have to be considered. The audio trails could also be available fully downloadable before starting a tour.

Two additional audio trails aimed at children should be created. One should focus on the daily life of a girl during the Medieval period under McCarthy rule. The other trail audio trail should focus on the daily life of a boy during the War of Independence and Civil War.

The audio guides should be complemented by a well designed, easily to follow map. All audio trails should be available in Irish, English, German and French.

- **Book**

A 15,000-20,000 word book on the character of Múscraí should be commissioned (archaeology, folklore, music, landscape, history and the people). The book should be well designed and be dominated by high quality images. It should be written for a general audience. Versions should be available in Irish, English, German and French.

- **Tourist Office / Folklore Education & Research Centre, Archive / Café**

A year round tourist office and folklore education/research centre should be developed in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. A particular focus should be placed on promoting the area's folklore. The centre should have a high quality café and gift shop selling local crafts and produce. The centre should also be the location of the proposed Gaeltacht tourism manager. The tourist office function will also facilitate visitors in the booking of accommodation and tickets for events. The role of a tourist office in promoting and managing tourism is essential. In 2012, 71% of tourists said they obtained information from tourists offices when in West Cork (Fáilte Ireland, n/d).

A folklore officer should be employed to work with local schools and students attending Coláiste na Mumhan. They could also connect with various departments in third level institutes and facilitate visiting scholars. The centre should be a dynamic space that complements and works closely with Ionad Cultúrtha an Dochtúir Ó Loingsigh. Indeed, it might be part of the same management structure. A public accessible research folklore archive holding written and recorded material should be established within the centre. Lismore Heritage Centre (www.discoverlismore.com) and Beara Island Heritage and Information Centre could be used as models (www.bereisland.net/activities/heritage-centre/).

The centre will in all likelihood not be profitable. This should be accepted. Its role is to introduce visitors to the Gaeltacht, educate students and provide a place where walkers and cyclists can eat and go to the toilet. Another essential function is to be a year round meeting place for locals. The venue should have a sufficient annual budget to run temporary exhibitions and develop interesting education programmes. The café should be McKenna Guides quality.

- **Developing Structured Learning Activities**

Given the proper resources Múscraí can be a national centre of learning in the Irish language, folklore and nature. Developing a strong learning service for primary, secondary, tertiary and research students provides a great opportunity to protect and grow knowledge of Múscraí's cultural

character. It also ensures visitors of commendable values come to the Gaeltacht. The various primary and second level programmes should be linked with the National Curriculum. Connections should be developed with UCC's Department of Folklore and Ethnology and other relevant third level institute departments.

- **Residencies**

A residency programme should be created whereby free accommodation and a small grant is provided to researchers, artists and poets wishing to focus on Múscraí. Accommodation should only be provided in one of the villages. The scholars should not be dispersed. The concentration of artists in one place has been shown to help rejuvenate towns and villages. Workstations should be provided at the Interpretation Centre. Cill Rialaig could be used as a model (www.facebook.com/CillRialaigArtsCentre/).

- **Research Framework**

A series of archaeological research questions should be created in order to fill the information gaps which exist about Múscraí. These questions will dictate the manner of all future onsite investigations. A partnership with the Department of Archaeology at UCC should be developed. Members of the academic staff working with local groups should formulate the questions and encourage students conducting research to gradually answer these over time. All information should be made available on the Múscraí history and folklore archive webpage. Consideration should be given to holding lectures and conferences based on the research undertaken.

- **Excavation Open Days**

If archaeological excavation is deemed necessary, publicised open days should be held. Local schools should be encouraged to visit and take part (fig. 10.23).

Figure 10.23 **Blackfriary Archaeology Summer School in Trim, Co. Meath**



(Source: Research and Dig, 2013)

- **Events**

Create a Scríocht Festival where people are encouraged to meet in neighbours' houses and converse through Irish. The programme could include coffee mornings, dinner parties, music, dance and storytelling in a number of houses. A race/walk/march across Múscraí commemorating the O'Sullivan Bere march should be held each summer. As part of this event a medieval camp could be created along its route (fig. 10.24). This would also be a great opportunity to educate people about the Gaeltacht's Medieval Gaelic heritage. A more adventurous idea would be to create a two week endurance race going from Glengarriff to Leitrim. Each stage of the race would correspond to a day's march by O'Sullivan Bere. A bi-annual conference/festival focusing on local folklore and folklore studies in general could be held during the winter months.

Figure 10.24

Re-enactors cooking rabbit at Fethard Walled Towns Day, Co. Tipperary



(Source: Research and Dig, 2010)

10.4 Managing People on Private Land

It is envisioned that a series of heritage sites previously unknown or inaccessible to the public could become accessible. Some of these may be on farmland or on other private land. It is essential that the rights of the landowners at whose discretion access is permitted be protected. It is also essential that visitors are able to navigate the site easily and in safety. The recommendations below are also applicable to linear or looped walks on farmland.

- **Waymarking Walks**

Ensure that there are adequate way mark posts along the route. This will counteract any uncertainty that walkers may have of not being on the correct route. It will also make sure they do not wander off the path.

- **Safety Signage**

Where required, clearly designed warning signs of possible hazards and responsibilities should be installed telling people how to behave when visiting various heritage sites (fig. 10.25). The behaviour guidelines should be clearly set out on the new information panel. Depending on the site, visitors could be told to: lock their cars and ensure no valuables are visible, respect the archaeological monuments, remain on the route, keep dogs on a lead, close all gates, bring home all rubbish, not to climb the monuments, not to camp, not to light fires, etc. Visitors could also be told to be mindful of: livestock, loose masonry, uneven surfaces, uneven steps, deep water, slip hazards, trip hazards, and sudden drops. The lack of toilets is to be also mentioned. Parents should be reminded to supervise their children at all times. The most important thing is that visitors are told to respect the landowners' property and their right to privacy.

Figure 10.25

Safety information in Wharram Percy, UK



(Source: Research and Dig, 2012)

- **Keeping walkers to the route and managing both erosion and flooding**

Along the vast majority of the Hadrian's Wall route in North England walkers go across open fields. Usually a c.1.5m wide strip of grass is cut to mark the way (fig. 10.26). This ensures that walkers stay to the prescribed route. Over time as the grass is regularly trimmed it becomes more concentrated and better to walk on. Where possible and applicable, walks should be regularly trimmed to encourage better walking conditions. In marshy areas, either diversions should be well marked or remedial actions taken place. Such actions could include the installation of simple plastic grates in small boggy sections (fig. 10.27). In areas of erosion, temporary signage should be erected advising walkers to walk beside but not on the exposed areas (fig. 10.28). Overall, a flexible and adaptive approach should be taken as regards the management of visitors. Regular inspections should be carried out to ensure that walkers can easily navigate the site.

Figure 10.26

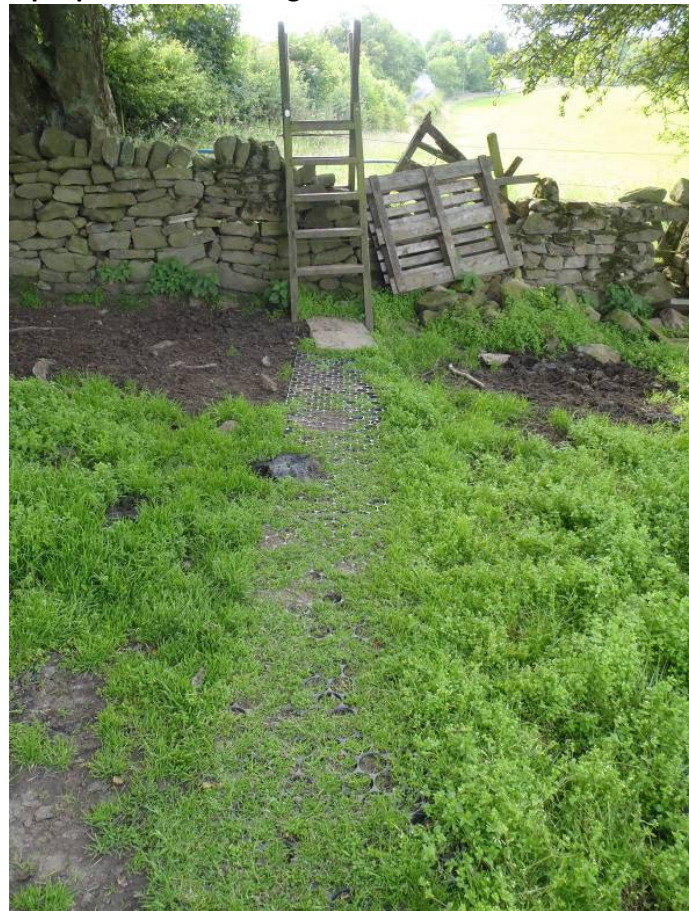
Cut grass path in open field along Hadrian's Wall route, UK



(Source: Research and Dig, 2011)

Figure 10.27

Simple plastic mesh along Hadrian's Wall route, UK



(Source: Research and Dig, 2011)

Figure 10.28

Information about erosion control and lambing, Hadrian's Wall, UK



(Source: Research and Dig, 2011)

- **Managing Localised Danger Spots**

In areas of particular danger such as sharp drops, localised warning signage should be erected (fig. 10.29). Localised signage could also be erected warning people not to climb monuments. Visitors should be directed away from dangerous areas.

Figure 10.29

Localised warning sign, Kirkham Priory, UK



(Source: Research and Dig, 2012)

