The route of the M8/N8 Cullahill–Cashel Road Scheme is 39.5 km long and lies in the valley of the River Suir between the Silvermine Mountains to the west and the Slieveardagh hills to the east. The route, commencing in County Laois, runs in a south-westerly direction passing through the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary. Several areas of settlement and historic towns are located in proximity to the proposed route including Glashare, Urlingford and Twomileborris. This road represents a slice through a landscape that is largely located in counties and shares the location of human settlement and development. A programme of test excavations in 2005 and 2006 and subsequent monitoring of construction works identified 46 previously unknown archaeological sites along the route. Full archaeological excavation of these sites was carried out between 2006 and 2007.

The sites investigated yielded a diversity of archaeological evidence dating from the third millennium BC to the 19th century AD. These discoveries have expanded our knowledge of the development of society and landscape in this part of Ireland. Archaeological works were carried out by Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd and Valerie J Keeley Ltd on behalf of the National Roads Authority, Kilkenny County Council, North Tipperary County Council and South Tipperary County Council.

**In brief:**

Some of the findings from the scheme:

1. **Artifacts**
   - Selection of objects from Borrís. (Photo: NRA)

2. **Axehead**
   - Stone axehead from ringfort at Borrís. (Photo: NRA)

3. **Handle**
   - Decorative bone handle from Borrís. (Photo: NRA)

4. **Mounts**
   - Copper-alloy mounts from Borrís. (Photo: NRA)

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Early prehistoric

No evidence of our hunter-gatherer ancestors or the first Neolithic farmers was uncovered on this road scheme.

Evidence from pollen cores from the Lismatihan Round Bog suggests that Bronze Age farmers were present in the area. The pollen record suggests that Bronze Age farmers were present in the area.

A wooden trackway found at Longfordpass North has been dated to the Late Bronze Age.

The presence of 27 polished stone tools found on the site suggests that the site was occupied by Bronze Age farmers. One example from Ballydavid has a wooden trackway found at Ballydavid, with a stone fragment, several bone pins, a stone gaming board and metallurgical waste.

Late medieval

Excavations to the south of the site revealed evidence of a Late Medieval settlement. The village layout is clearly visible and the site includes a number of buildings, including a post-medieval lime kiln and a complex of iron-working sites. A post-medieval lime kiln was also excavated at Ballydavid. The remains of a medieval vertical watermill at Borris were uncovered. The building had a number of phases of use from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Late medieval settlement complex was uncovered at Twomileborris—a site of an Anglo-Norman borough.

In the mid-12th century, a large stone building was constructed on the site of the previous settlement. The building was rectangular and was divided into several rooms. A number of shallow pits, one of which contained an iron knife and a pair of whetstones, were also found. The fill of their shallow ditches contained small quantities of iron and stone. A number of buildings were built within the enclosure, including one example that contained a flint knapping site.

The fill of their shallow ditches contained small quantities of iron and stone. A number of buildings were built within the enclosure, including one example that contained a flint knapping site.

A post-medieval lime kiln was also excavated at Borris. These structures are found dotted throughout the area and were used for processing bones to make powdered lime for use in industry, construction and agriculture and generally date from the 18th and 19th centuries.