The N7 Castletown to Nenagh scheme is 35 km long, running south of Roscrea, past Moneygall and connecting to the N7 Nenagh Bypass, east of Nenagh. The route passes through the low wetland of the upper River Nore, across high hills connected with the Devil’s Bit range and over the flat, well-drained gravels west of Moneygall.

Sixty archaeological sites were excavated by spring 2008 in advance of road construction. The archaeological work was undertaken by Eachtra Archaeological Projects and Valerie J Keeley Ltd on behalf of the National Roads Authority and Laois County Council.

### In brief:

1. **Arrowhead**
   - Broken barbed-and-tanged arrowhead from Castleroan.
   - (Photo: Niall Roycroft)

2. **Silver penny**
   - Edward I long-cross silver penny from Busherstown.
   - (Photo: J. Sunderland)

3. **Saddle quern**
   - Saddle quern and rubbing stone (found in adjacent pits) from Park.
   - (Photo: Niall Roycroft)

4. **Palstave axe**
   - Bronze Age palstave axe from Camlin before cleaning.
   - (Photo: Studio Lab)

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prehistoric
settlement and burial

The two sites closer to Castletown were

**Early medieval round and oval enclosures**

Camlin and Derrymore were the last of a series of settlements established in the area after the decline of the Roman Empire. Camlin and Derrymore are examples of this type of settlement, characterized by the presence of round or oval enclosures surrounded by a single or double moat. The enclosures were usually occupied for a short period of time, often serving as locations for temporary settlements or as defensive installations against potential adversaries.

**Medieval rectangular enclosures**

At Busherstown, near Crawfordsburn, a large rectangular enclosure was found, measuring 50 m by 50 m internally, with an associated ditched field system. The enclosure appears to have been used as a defensive location during the early medieval period and was later expanded, necessitating the narrowing of the ditch. Outside this enclosure were at least three contemporary buildings. One of these had two large porches and all appeared to be within a ditch-free area.

**Medieval bearded axe from Castletown. (Photo: AirShots Ltd)**