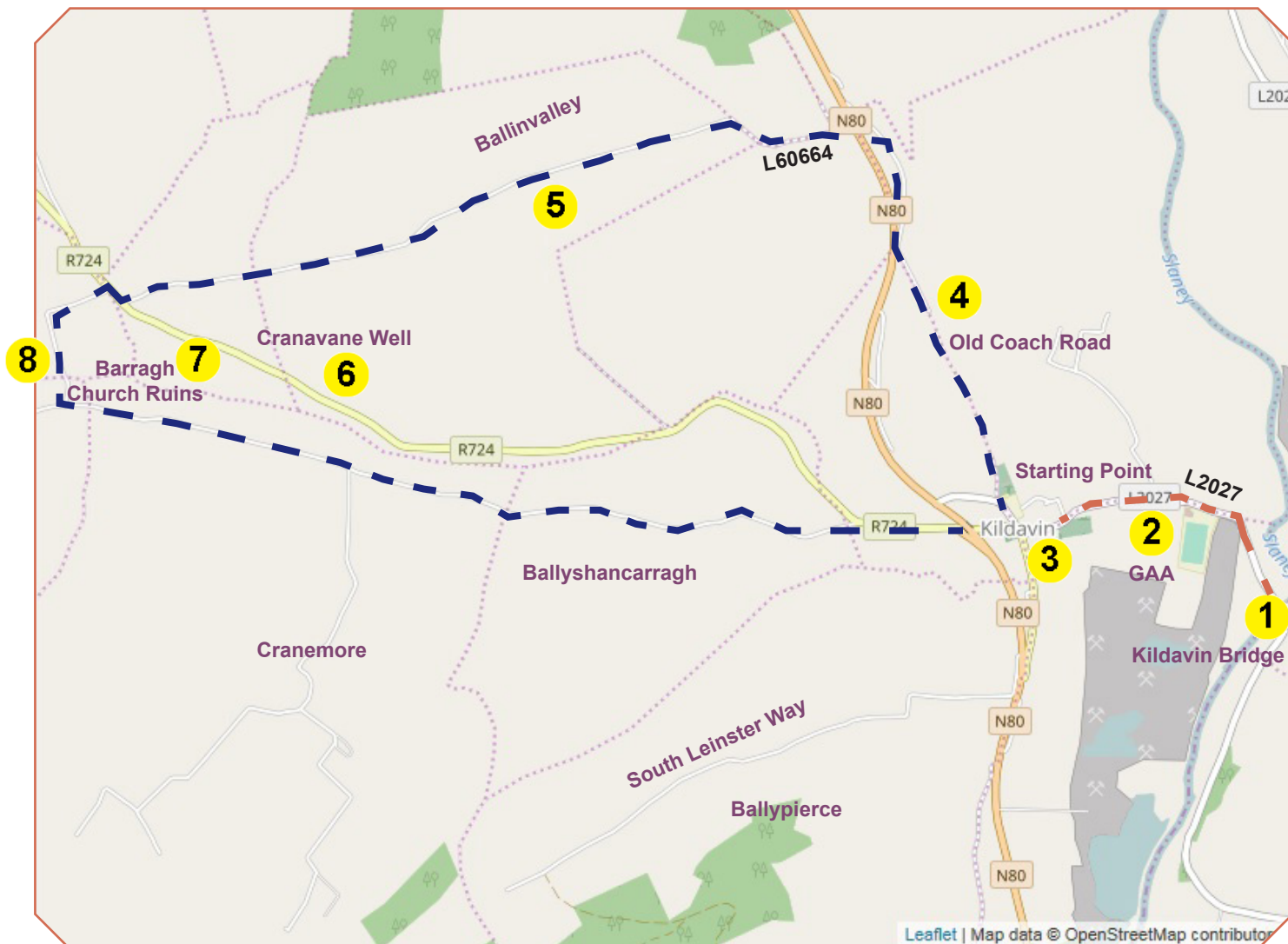# Kildavin Loop Walk.

An enjoyable scenic walk in Kildavin Village and surrounding district.

Length:	8 km. (or 5 miles approx.)
Duration:	1½ - 2 hours.
Difficulty:	Easy - on minor roads + 1km of track
Climb:	Lowest point at 50m above sea level
	Highest point at 150m above sea level
Footwear :	Sensible everyday walking footwear

Start in Kildavin village itself at Conway's Pub, from this position you will notice **(a)** St. Lazerian's Catholic Church, **(b)** Kildavin National School, **(c)** St. Paul's Church of Ireland, **(e)** 1798 - 2016 memorial, and **(f)** Spellman Hall, **(h)** Mother Earth Garden. *(See detailed map of Kildavin and photographs on pages 3 and 4).*

Walking north from Conway's, **3** passing the school and Catholic church on your right, take the lane/track leading uphill immediately adjacent to the church grounds. This is the only climb of note on this route and the under foot conditions return to paved roads after this section. Continue on this track which used to be the old coach road route *(photo left)* for a little over a kilometre. **4**

Some of the spectacular views from the highest point of this route

Turning west at the end of this lane it is necessary to cross the busy N80 road. On the opposite side "Ballinvalley Lane" (signposted L60664) awaits. A short walk uphill will bring you to the highest point on this route with spectacular views at every turn *(photos above)*.

A culm stone **5** once used to grind anthracite slack and yellow clay into culm balls for burning on a "raised hearth" grate, a practice unique to the Barrow Valley, is visible from the lane, in one 'of the gardens halfway along this 3km section.

Culm Stone

This lane then meets the Myshall road (R724), to continue turn right for 50 metres and then turn left onto "Bayley's Lane", or you may wish to take a short detour (l km each way), back in the direction of Kildavin, to take in the beautifully kept Cranavane Holy Well **6** . It can of course, be accessed by car at a later stage. Either way, it is well worth a visit as its atmosphere of peace and tranquillity will not disappoint.

Cranavane Holy Well

On Bayley's Lane you will notice fine examples of Carlow stonework from the hands of local stonemasons in the old farm buildings that you pass. It may be of interest to note that close by is the site of the Battle of Moneygrogh c.980 between the Munstermen of Brian Boru's era and the Leinstermen. **8**

At the end of this lane turn left heading back for Kildavin. From this vantage point you can get a good view over the old ruins of Barragh Church and graveyard *(below)* **7** .   It is a pleasant 3.5 km walk past Cranemore and Ballyshancarrgh back down into the village of Kildavin.
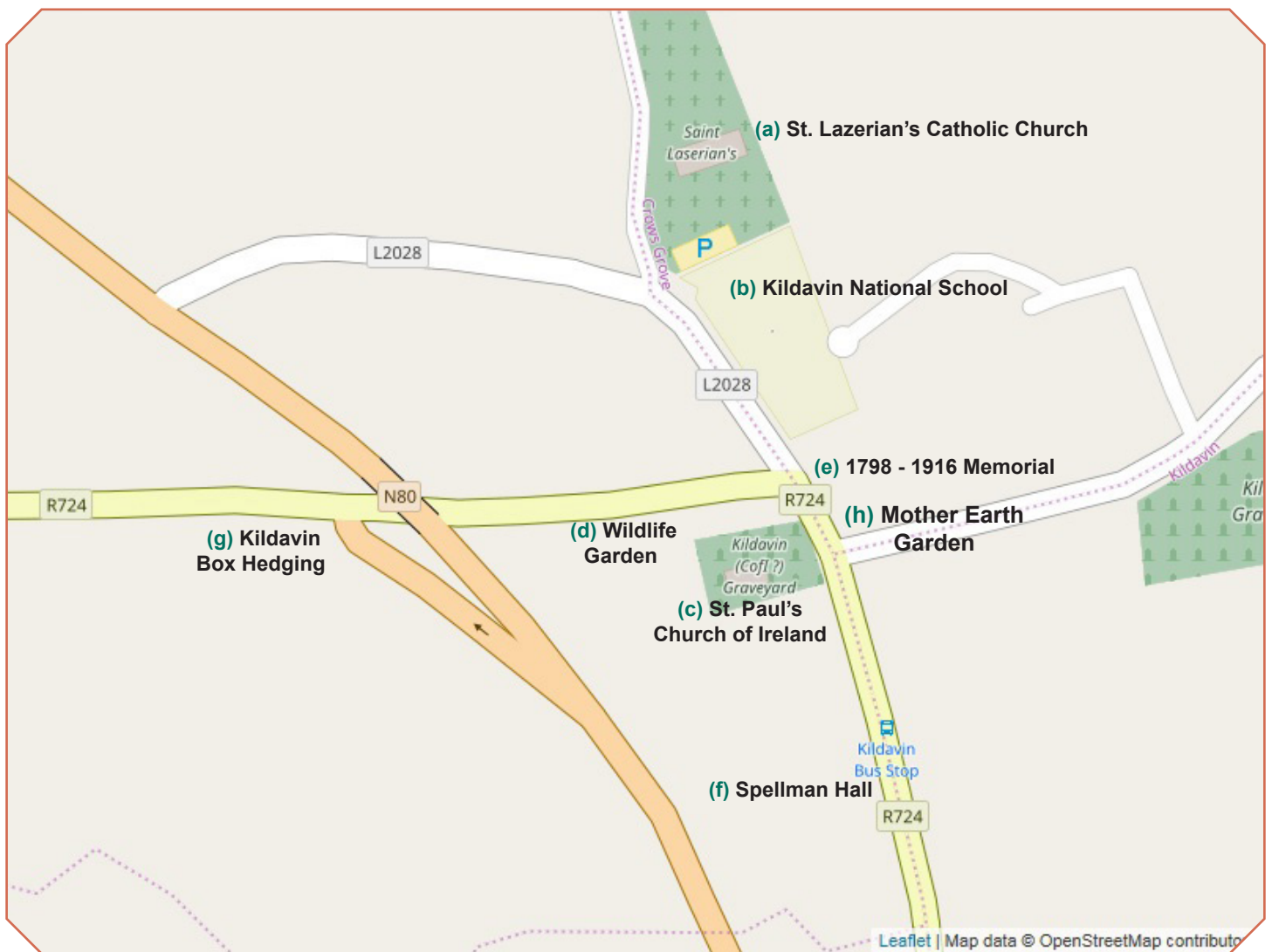

Old Ruins of Barragh Church

Approaching the village on the slip road before the flyover you will notice the recently planted Box hedging with the name "Kildavin" **(g)** and once past the flyover, the Wildlife Garden **(d)** both which are the fruits of labour from the local Development committee. A weighbridge for livestock still remains next to the garden. A superb statue of a stag greets your return to the starting point.

A further detour 1km each way from the village as far as the river Slaney to Kildavin Bridge **1** is worthwhile if time permits and energy levels are up to it. Close to the bridge a plaque inscribed "gateway of tears" was erected to commemorate the famine diaspora. You will also pass the local GAA pitch Spellmnn Park **2** named after Cardinal Spellman of New York whose grandmother hailed from this parish. *(To Kildavin Bridge is indicated by* ▬ ▬ ▬ *)*

Places of Interest in Kildavin

- **(a)** St. Lazerian's Catholic Church
- **(b)** Kildavin National School
- **(e)** 1798 - 1916 Memorial
- **(h)** Mother Earth Garden
- **(g)** Kildavin Box Hedging
- **(d)** Wildlife Garden
- **(c)** St. Paul's Church of Ireland
- **(f)** Spellman Hall

(a) St. Lazerian's Church

(b) Kildavin National School

(c) St. Paul's, Church of Ireland

(d) Wildlife Garden

(e) 1798 - 1916 Memorial

(f) Spellman Hall

(g) Kildavin Box Hedging

(h) Mother Earth Garden

Kildavin Bridge. Inset: "Gate of Tears" Plaque

Kildavin/Clonegal GAA Club - Spellman Park

Commentary, Route and Photographs by Enda Smyth

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