

VARIATION NO 1(ii) TO THE WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010-2016

DONARD SETTLEMENT PLAN

1. Purpose & status of this plan

The purpose of this plan is to put in place a structure that will guide the future sustainable development of Donard. The plan, in conjunction with the County Development Plan (CDP) 2010-2016 will inform and manage the future development of the town.

The aim of this plan is to establish a framework for the planned, co-ordinated and sustainable development of Donard, and to enhance and facilitate the balancing of economic, social and environmental infrastructure in order to maintain and develop a high quality of life without compromising the protection of the environment and the needs of future generations.

In addition to the objectives set out in the County Development Plan, that are relevant to the development of Donard, it is an objective of this plan, to identify the special characteristics of Donard and accordingly craft objectives to meet the town's specific needs. As this plan will be part of and form a subset of the County Development Plan, it is not proposed to include a repetition of the objectives or strategies as set out in the County Development Plan. Unless standards or objectives for a particular development are included in this plan the provisions of the County Development Plan shall apply. The plan will however seek to formulate appropriate Donard specific development objectives and guidance, compatible with those of the County Development Plan, to assist the Development Management process in managing sustainable progress for the town.

2. Context

2.1 Settlement Profile

The town of Donard is located in the west of County Wicklow, almost equidistant between the higher order settlements of Blessington and Baltinglass located along the N81 national secondary road. Donard itself is located only 2km off the N81, nestled between the N81 corridor and the western foothills of the Wicklow Mountains. Donard had an enumerated population of 182 in the 2006 Census of population.

Donard is one of the most historic towns in County Wicklow, with an historic core comprising the remains of a Monastic enclosure (now occupied by the graveyard and medieval church), parts of a 12th. century motte-and-bailey, a triangular market area and 18-19th century architecture. For the most part, the buildings are in residential use, but there are also a small number of commercial / public service properties, in particular a general grocery / newsagents / post office, two public houses and a community centre. Surrounding the historic core, housing has generally occurred as 'one-offs' along the approach roads into the centre, with only one 'housing estate' having been developed on the southern end of the town. There is also a primary school, a community crèche, a Garda Station, two Churches and a GAA sports facility in the town.

Donard provides services to a wider rural catchment than the town itself and it is therefore important that it remains a viable town, with a strong retail and service base. In this regard, additional population in the town would strengthen this role.

The town's link with its historic origins is very much evidenced by its current form and built heritage, with the presence of an ogham inscribed stone in the town green being of particular significance. There is a range of 18th and 19th century architecture in the town, comprising standard estate type houses, cottages and lodges, many of which survive in their original form. The presence of a number of single storey houses with metal roofs in the town is unusual, and adds greatly to the historic interest given that these would originally have been thatched. A number of these structures are on the County Wicklow Record of Protected Structures, and an additional number are identified as being of historical and / or streetscape

value in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, including a 1930's handball alley. The town core is however suffering from dereliction and decay, with a number of buildings currently unoccupied and falling into disrepair.

Landscape plays an important part in the character of Donard. The town green provides an attractive open space while the views of the surrounding wooded landscape from the town enhance its rural setting. Donard is located in close proximity to Lugnaquilla Mountain, the highest peak in Wicklow and is well positioned to take advantage of the natural and recreational amenities in the surrounding hinterland, particularly with regard to potential to serve visitors and tourists

2.2 Growth parameters

Donard is designated a 'Rural Town' in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. These are strong rural towns, usually with a good range of infrastructural services and are suited to accommodating a significant element of urban generated housing demand, with necessary controls in place to ensure the local demand can also be met. These towns are differentiated in this plan from Small Growth Towns (Level 5) having regard to their more rural character and the rural nature of their catchments. Such rural centres contain the potential to consolidate rural development needs and support the maintenance of essential rural social and community infrastructure such as schools, shops, public houses, post offices and local sporting organisations.

The County Development Plan includes targets for the future population growth of Donard. The targets indicate that the population of Donard can grow to a maximum population of 300 people by 2016 and a maximum population of 400 people by 2022. Based on the calculations and assumptions set out in the Appendix attached hereto, the settlement is to grow by a maximum of an additional 96 residential units between 2010 and 2022.

2.3 Engineering Services and Infrastructure

Water Supply

The public water supply to Donard is from Donard/Hollywood scheme. Currently the scheme is close to capacity, for future development an additional source of water will be required.

Sewerage

The town's wastewater treatment and disposal system, which was constructed in 2007, was a significant departure from the traditional wastewater treatment systems that have been constructed within the County in the past. The Donard system is sustainable in nature and it uses a willow plantation to bio-filtrate the effluent. The willow plantation is harvested every three years and then a new crop of willow is sown. The harvested willow is dried and used as a fuel (wood pellets.) However it will be necessary to monitor applications to ensure that capacity limits are not breached during the lifetime of this plan.

Roads

Donard is located at the intersection of four roads. The roads that lead into the town are local secondary roads, which are generally of poor alignment and narrow width. Donard is located in close proximity to the N81 via the local road L-4317, which is the primary transport artery in the west of the County. Donard therefore is well connected to major settlements along the N81 principally the large towns of Baltinglass and Blessington and further north to South County Dublin. The larger town of Dunlavin is also located in close proximity on the west side of the N81.

The other local roads meeting in the town centre provide links to the Glen of Imaal and Hollywood Glen.

3. Settlement Strategy

Settlement vision

In 2022 Donard shall be a strong, vibrant and attractive rural town, that provides a good range of the essential day-to-day service and community needs of the local town population and the population of the town's hinterland. The settlement shall have a good range of housing options that provides for both local and urban generated demand, and shall provide employment opportunities for at least twenty five percent of the local labour force, in a range of employment options, including local services, tourism and small scale industry.

Settlement Objectives

Where objectives and policies are not covered directly by this plan, the objectives and policies of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 apply. All development proposals shall be comply with the qualitative and quantitative development standards set out in the County Development Plan.

The objectives included herein shall apply to all lands that are located within the development boundary, as shown on the map.

It is an objective of the Council to:

DON1 Facilitate the population growth of the settlement up to a maximum of 300 people by 2016 and 400 people by 2022. No permission shall be granted that would increase the population of the settlement (i.e. the area within the plan boundary) above 300 / 125 residential units (which ever is reached first) by 2016 and 400 people / 185 residential units (which ever is reached first) by 2022. The Council will control the development of residential units in accordance with this growth target and occupancy objectives as set out in the settlement strategy.

DON2 Increase the quality and range of employment opportunities by facilitating development that involves local investment in a variety of forms, including 'people' and 'product' intensive industries. The Council will facilitate the development of 'people' intensive employment generating developments that provide for the local convenience and social service needs of the area and that provide for the needs of visitors. The Council will facilitate the development of a limited amount of 'product' intensive industries and particularly will support developments that involve the use of a local rural resource.

DON3 Provide for an expansion in the variety of retail facilities so that the town includes a range of retail outlets that provide for the day-to-day needs of the local population and the needs of tourists.

DON4 Facilitate the development of a range of high quality community and recreational facilities that meet the needs of the local population

DON5 Support recreation and heritage related tourist developments of an appropriate scale and design that would promote the natural and historic assets of the town such as its proximity to Lugnaquilla Mountain, the Wicklow Mountains National Park, archaeological sites and those sites associated with the 1798 rebellion. Initiatives centred on the development of outdoor recreational activities such as horse riding, walking and climbing will be encouraged.

DON6 Preserve and improve public and private open space and recreational facilities

DON7 Protect and enhance the character, setting and environmental quality of heritage, including natural, architectural and archaeological heritage.

DON8 Encourage the redevelopment and regeneration of vacant, underutilised and derelict sites.

DON9 Promote the development of a safe and accessible pedestrian and traffic routes. New developments located on roads currently inadequately served by infrastructure (including footpaths, water services, public lighting etc) will be required to provide such infrastructure prior to the occupation of that development.

DON10 Provide for a reliable and effective water, drainage, energy, waste management and communications infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlement, in an environmentally friendly manner, and to allow for the improvement of public services and public utility installations.

DON11 Ensure that the density, design, scale and use of developments shall reflect the scale and context of the area.

DON12 Protect the amenity of existing residential properties.

DON 13 To restrict the types of development permitted in Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B to the uses that are 'appropriate' to each flood zone, as set out in Table 3.2 of the Guidelines for Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG, 2009).

The planning authority may consider proposals for development that may be vulnerable to flooding, and that would generally be inappropriate as set out in Table 3.2 of the Guidelines, subject to all of the following criteria being satisfied:

- The planning authority is satisfied that all of the criteria set out in the justification test as it applies to development management (Box 5.1 of the Guidelines) are complied with.
- The development of lands for the particular use is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the settlement, and complies with at least one of the following:
 - i. The development is located within the 'primary lands' and is essential for the achievement of the 'vision' or for the achievement of a specific objective for these lands.
 - ii. The development comprises previously developed and/or under-utilised lands/sites,
 - iii. There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use, in areas at lower risk of flooding.

Zoning Objectives

The following table indicates the vision and objectives for each of the different areas that are within the settlement, as identified on the map.

Primary Lands: Town Core Zone
Zoning objective: To create a consolidated and vibrant mixed use settlement centre that is the focal point for the delivery of the retail, commercial, social and activity needs of the local population and its hinterland, and to promote this area for tourist uses and for supervisory residential use, with an animated and high quality streetscape, whilst ensuring the protection of the special character and heritage of this area
Objectives: DON14 To support existing uses and facilitate the development of new uses that add to the vitality and vibrancy of the primary historic town core and to promote these lands for the development of 'people' intensive employment generating developments, including retail, local services, commercial developments, office, civic, institutional and tourist uses. DON 15 Ensure the preservation of the archaeological and architectural heritage of the town core through ensuring that the impact of new development on this heritage is assessed as part of the development management process. DON16 To promote the development of a range of retail and retail services outlets, including a variety of small-scale convenience units, a small number of comparison outlets and shops to provide for the tourist market (i.e. 'tourist retail'). DON17 To allow for the development of small-scale light industrial or manufacturing developments at sites that are located at the edge of these lands. DON18 Mixed use applications which comprise a housing element will be accepted, although loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will be not be permitted and to generally require new development with street frontage to include non-residential uses at ground level e.g. retail, services, commercial and community uses, and to promote the use of upper floors for "Living over the Shop" and office accommodation. DON19 All new shop fronts shall be strictly traditional in style, with the use of appropriate proportions, design and materials required. DON20 To facilitate the appropriate redevelopment and regeneration of vacant / derelict buildings in the town core, particularly buildings of heritage and streetscape value. DON21 To consider reduced provision of car parking, open space and other ancillary services for development proposals that would positively contribute to the regeneration (particularly of derelict buildings) in the town core. DON22 Development in this area shall have a maximum plot ratio of 1.0 DON23 Promote the safe movement of traffic and pedestrians in and around this area, with particular emphasis on footpaths.

Secondary lands: Mixed Use Zone

Zoning objective: To provide for the sustainable development of a mix of uses including residential, employment, community and recreational uses that provide for the needs of the existing settlement and that allows for the future growth of the settlement.

Objectives:

DON24 Allow for the limited extension or “spill-over” of the primary core area type uses onto the secondary lands that immediately adjoins the primary core. New development of this type should be compatible with or reinforce the function of the primary core and shall be visually and physically linked with the primary core. No development will be permitted that prejudices the viability and function of the primary core.

DON25 Any developments on lands (identified as DON 25 on the plan map) shall include the provision of a link road from Irishtown Road to the GAA fields and the Caravan Park.

DON26 Retail developments shall generally not be permitted within the secondary lands.

DON27 In existing residential areas, to protect existing residential amenity and to provide for infill residential development at a density and design that reflects the established character of the area in which it is located.

DON28 To allow for new residential developments, including a mix of residential options within an attractive and accessible setting, at appropriate locations, which have safe access to the public road network, which have pedestrian links to the core area, and which are served by appropriate water services infrastructure and if possible, are in proximity to community and public services.

DON29 Promote densities in the order of 10 dwelling units per hectare. A higher or lower density may be considered appropriate, having regard to the context of the site and the prevailing density in the vicinity of the site.

DON30 Promote these lands for employment generating developments including ‘product’ intensive lower order industrial developments, small scale enterprise units, tourist developments, general business uses and home based economic activity.

DON31 Protect and allow for the improvement of public and private open space and recreational facilities and to require new developments adjacent to the ‘green routes’ identified on the map to provide for such routes.

DON32 Existing stone-walls and mature trees shall be retained other than in extenuating circumstances related to public health and safety. Where stone-walls impede sightlines for new development, they will require to be rebuilt along the required new line using the original materials.

DON33 Allow for the development of new and improved community services, for health, welfare, community, education, civic and institutional uses including schools, childcare, nursing homes, community buildings, churches etc. in close proximity to existing and planned residential communities as well as other ancillary services such as public services.

Tertiary Lands: Peripheral Zone

Zoning objective: To protect and provide for agriculture and amenity in a manner that protects the physical and visual amenity of the area and demarcates the urban and rural boundary.

Objectives:

DON34 To preserve the use of the Donard GAA grounds (identified as DON 34 on the plan map) as recreational and active open space use.

DON35 To restrict the residential development in this area to low density (max 5/ha) single house developments and multi house developments not exceeding 4 units (other than social housing developments). Multi-house development shall only be considered where they share a single road entrance, are sufficiently clustered together and are sufficiently set back from the public road.

DON36 To allow for social housing provided it is located in accordance with firm planning principles especially with respect to proximity to services and connectivity to the settlement core.

DON37 To allow for new and improved community facilities and service infrastructure.

DON38 To allow for the development of existing and new tourism developments, particularly those of a recreational nature and that are of a low buildings density format.

DON39 Prohibit development that would create an uneconomical or premature demand for infrastructural services.

DON 40 Prior to the granting of any permission on lands identified as DON40, a services masterplan for the area shall be agreed with the Local Authority, which shall address the water, drainage and transport requirements of the area and the manner in which such infrastructure is to be delivered and funded.

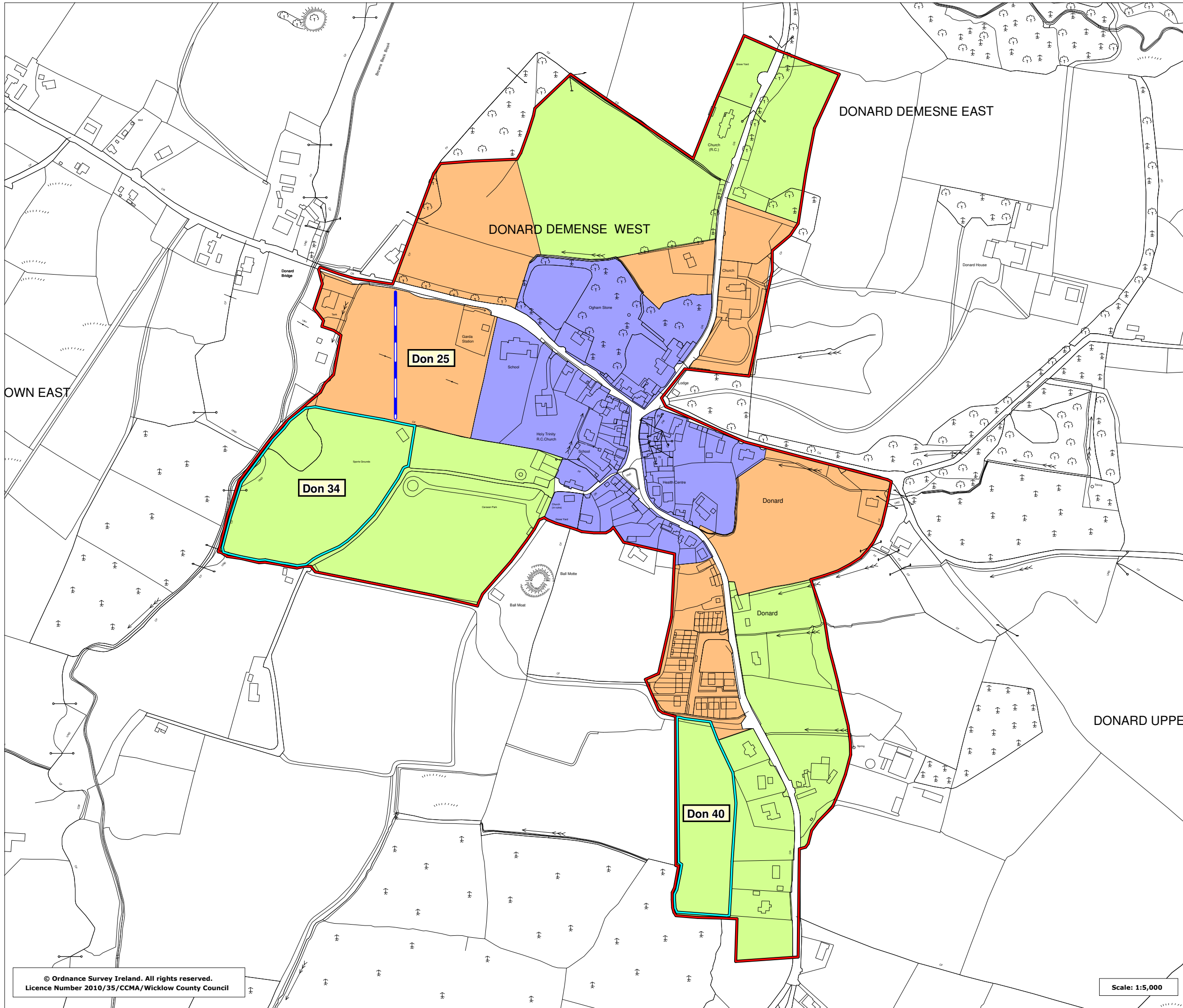
Land uses not referred to in the above table will be considered on the merits of the individual planning application, the general objectives and policies for the area and considerations relating to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. All areas should be considered as mixed development areas with primary uses, but not necessarily excluding all other types of development. Development proposals should be compatible with the objectives and policies set out, however consideration may be given to proposals that, in the opinion of the Council are necessary for the vitality and proper development of the settlement, which benefit the local community and which are in the interest of the proper planning and development of the area.

It is an objective of the Council that development is undertaken in an orderly and sustainable manner. Although it is recognised that it may be unduly restrictive to insist that development takes place in a rigidly phased manner, the Council may, in certain cases phase development where this is considered necessary for the following:

- (i) the promotion of an appropriate balance of employment, residential and service facilities (schools, shopping, community facilities etc.) and other uses that are required to increase the self sufficiency of the settlement, or
- (ii) ensuring the delivery of infrastructural services in tandem with development, including water, sewerage and road infrastructure, that is required to safeguard the environmental quality and public safety of the area.

Notwithstanding the fact that all areas are designated for mixed use development, at locations where different types of land uses adjoin, the Council shall ensure that the amenity and visual integrity of these areas are protected. At these locations, developments shall be designed in

order to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use, through incorporating design solutions including landscaping, screening and appropriate layout of site, that provide buffer areas between different land uses. This is particularly important where there are adjoining residential and employment uses.







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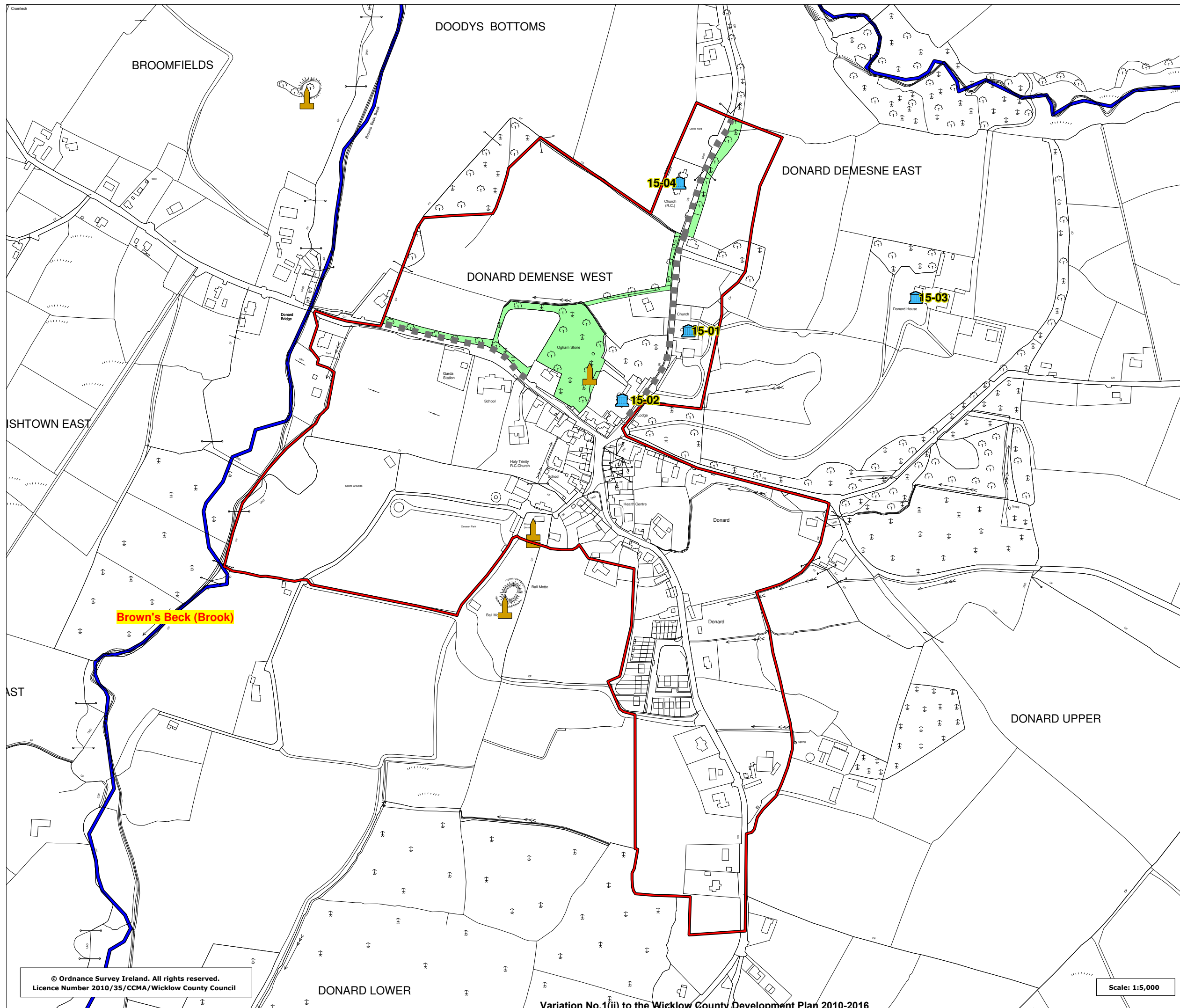
DONARD SETTLEMENT PLAN 2011 - 2016
VARIATION TO WICKLOW COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 - 2016

LEGEND

-  Primary Lands
-  Secondary Lands
-  Teritary Lands
-  Donard Settlement Boundary

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

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PROTECTING HERITAGE FEATURES
DONARD SETTLEMENT PLAN 2011 - 2016
VARIATION TO WICKLOW COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 - 2016

LEGEND

-  Protected Structures
-  National Monuments
-  Stone Walls
-  Rivers
-  Green Routes
-  Donard Settlement Boundary

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