

**PROPOSED VARIATION NO.1 (II) TO THE WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2010-2016**

DONARD SETTLEMENT PLAN

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING

1.0. Introduction

Wicklow County Council intends to make the Donard Settlement Plan. The Plan is to be made as a variation to the current Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016, under Section 13 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 2000(as amended). The purpose of this report is to consider whether the Donard Settlement Plan will have any likely significant environmental effects, which would require Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

2.0. Objectives of the Plan

The preparation of the Town Plan will consider the following:

- Review relevant policy documents
- Undertake land use survey
- Review existing development boundary
- Review land bank
- Review supply of residential units in the context of growth projections
- Review retail and commercial activities
- Review community facilities and amenities
- Identify appropriate land uses at appropriate locations

Figure 1 attached is the settlement boundary of Donard, as set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. Figure 2 attached is the proposed Donard Settlement Plan for your information.

3.0. Mandatory Requirements

The EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (Strategic Environmental Assessment - SEA) are given effect by the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).

Article 13K of the Regulations determines that where a planning authority proposes to make a variation of a development plan under Section 13 of the Act, it shall before giving notice under Section 13(2) of the Act, consider whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A.

4.0. Criteria for determining the likely significance of Environmental effects

4.1. Characteristics of the Plan.

(i) The degree, to which the Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.

The Donard Settlement Plan's purpose is to provide a framework to deliver development projects within the town including location, nature, and size and operating conditions and allocating the necessary resources. It is a land use plan within the terms of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) which will seek to provide guidance using policies and objectives for the development of social, physical and environmental infrastructure in a sustainable manner for Donard.

(ii) The degree to which the Plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy.

This Plan is set within the context of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. The Donard Settlement Plan will be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan.

(iii) The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The Donard Settlement Plan is to be adopted as a variation to the current Wicklow County Development Plan. The plan is prepared under the Planning and Development Act 2000-(as amended) and therefore must confine itself to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. All polices and objectives of the Town Plan must be informed by the principles of sustainable development.

The preparation of the Town Plan is also guided by the overall objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan which seek:

- To implement the overarching guidance offered by the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, and manage the spatial organisation of the county in an efficient sustainable manner.
- To facilitate and encourage the growth of employment, enterprise and economic activity in the county, across all economic sectors and in all areas
- To integrate land use planning with transportation planning, with the dual aim of reducing the distance that people need to travel to work, shops, schools and places of recreation and social interaction, and facilitating the delivery of improved public transport.
- To enhance existing housing areas and to provide for high quality new housing, at appropriate locations and to ensure the development of a range of house types, sizes and tenures in order to meet the differing needs of all in society and to promote balanced communities.
- To maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of settlements, to ensure that towns and villages remain at the heart of the community and provide a wide range of retail, employment, social, recreational and infrastructural facilities.
- To protect and enhance the County's rural assets and recognise the housing, employment, social and recreational needs of those in rural areas.
- To protect and improve the county's transport, water, waste energy and communications infrastructure, whilst having regard to our responsibilities to respect areas protected for their important flora, fauna or other natural resources.
- To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable communities through land use planning, by providing for land uses capable of accommodating, community, leisure, recreational and cultural facilities, accessible to and meeting the needs of all individuals and local community groups, in tandem with the delivery of residential and physical infrastructure in order to create a quality built environment in which to live.
- To protect and enhance the county's diverse natural and built heritage.

- To address climate change challenge, as a plan dynamic, throughout the county plan, directly in the areas of flooding and renewable energy, and indirectly by integrating climate change and sustainable development into statements of plan policy, strategies and objectives.

(iv) Environmental problems relevant to the Plan.

Initial analysis of the environmental issues relevant to Donard indicates that there are a number of environmentally sensitive areas and features within and surrounding the town.

- The Slaney River Valley and the Wicklow Mountains, which are designated Special Areas of Conservation, are within 5km of the settlement boundary of the town. The Special Protection Area of the Wicklow Mountains is also within 5km of the settlement boundary. In addition the Hollywood Glen, which is a Natural Heritage Area, is within the 5km radius.
- The Donard River (Brown's Beck Brook) flows north-south to the west of the town boundary, this river joins the Carrigower River south of the town as part of the Slaney River Valley cSAC.
- There are a number of buildings located within the Donard Settlement Plan area, which are on the County Wicklow Record of Protected Structures, while others are included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). There are two national monuments within the settlement boundary. There are a number of historic stonewalls within the town which contribute to its historical interest and setting.
- The town has a wooded setting with a large number of mature trees and hedgerows occurring within the town and surrounding area.

The following infrastructural issues in Donard should also be considered in assessing the impact of the plan on environmentally sensitive receptors:

- There are areas in Donard, which are at risk of flooding. A flood risk assessment has been prepared as part of the plan. The assessment identifies "flood zones" that are at a high and moderate risk of flooding. As set out in the Flood Risk Assessment, the Justification test has been applied to the plan in order to examine alternatives / options for the use of land in areas at risk of flooding in order to ensure that risks are reduced to an acceptable level.
- The public water supply to Donard is from Donard/Hollywood scheme. Currently the scheme is close to its 342 cubic square metre capacity and where it is found that the existing water source would not be able to meet the future needs of the plan area an additional source of water will be required. The implementation of objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan (namely Objectives WS1 & WS2) and objectives of this Town Plan (namely Objective DON 10) will ensure that any new water source that may be required will not cause significant environmental effects.
- The town's wastewater treatment and disposal system was constructed in 2007 and effectively treats effluent through a willow plantation bio filtration system. The Donard River (Becks Brook) is part of the catchment of the Slaney River Upper, which in turn flows through the Slaney River cSAC. The ecological status of this water body is classified as good. The implementation of the objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan (namely Objectives WW1) and the objectives of this Town Plan (namely Objective DON 10) will ensure that the current good ecological status of the Donard River will be maintained.

The environmental impact of the plan results from the provision of policies and land designations, to accommodate a target maximum population of 300 by 2016 and 400 people by 2022. It should be noted that these targets and a description of the future role of the settlement are included in the Settlement Hierarchy of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016.

The Environmental Report of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has already considered the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the future accommodation of growth in certain areas of

Wicklow, including the projected growth targets and role for the settlement of Donard. This Assessment concluded that, subject to the integration of migration measures¹ included in the CDP, the potential adverse environmental effects that could arise as a result of implementing the plan are likely to be avoided, reduced or offset. As per this evaluation, the projected growth of Donard will not result in significant environmental issues.

The environmental impact of the plan results from the provision of land use designations and objectives, which aim to accommodate future growth targets. These objectives provide for the planning and management of land for a variety of uses including residential, retail, employment, community and recreational uses and incorporate conservation objectives to protect the integrity of the environment and guard it from significant adverse effects. Subject to adequate inclusion of appropriate policies and objectives, which will result in the optimum location, layout, and design of any new development resulting from this plan, it is considered that no significant environmental issues can be identified in relation to the target populations and associated designation of lands for particular uses.

(v) The relevance of the Plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste management or water protection).

These plans and programmes are considered under the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 and will not be specifically addressed in this town plan. The Donard Settlement Plan will therefore be guided and informed by waste management and water protection policies and objectives set out within the County Development Plan 2010-2016.

4.2. Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be affected.

(i) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.

In the case of the Donard Settlement Plan, any environmental effects generally result from the land use designation and development of land. The plan includes three land use designations - the "primary lands", "secondary lands" and "tertiary lands". The zoning objectives of the primary lands is to create a consolidated and vibrant mixed use settlement centre that is the focal point for the delivery of the retail, commercial, social service and activity needs of the local population and its hinterland whilst ensuring the protection of the special character and heritage of this area.

The zoning objectives of the secondary lands is 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 allow for the future growth of the settlement. It should be noted that all areas within the plan area are mixed development areas with primary uses, but not excluding all other types of uses. The zoning objectives for the tertiary lands is 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. The following table summarises the probable effect according to the overall objectives of the plan and the objectives for the different land uses promoted with the three designated areas.

It should be noted that this plan forms part of the current Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 and as such where polices are not directly covered by this plan, the objectives and polices of the CDP apply. All development proposals shall comply with the qualitative and quantitative development objectives of the CDP. The environmental effect of these objectives have been considered in the Environmental Report of the Wicklow CDP 2010-2016 SEA and, subject to the integration of the mitigation objectives (set out in Appendix 1 attached) of the CDP, it was concluded that any potential adverse environmental effects resulting from the implementing the plan are likely to be avoided, reduced or offset.

¹ List of objectives that comprise the mitigation measures are included in Appendix 1 attached

Development Objective/Land Uses	Summary of Policies/Objectives Proposed	Effect on Environment
Extension of settlement boundary	The settlement boundary is extended to accommodate existing recreational and tourism land uses.	This additional land is being zoned to reflect the current land uses. It is therefore not considered that this will have any significant effect on the environmentally sensitive areas and features.
Residential	<p>The population targets require an additional 96 units up to 2022.</p> <p>While residential units are permitted in principle within the three areas in the plan boundary there is an emphasis on encouraging residential units in the primary and secondary lands rather than the tertiary lands.</p>	<p>Environmental effect of growth targets is considered in the Environmental Report of the Wicklow CDP 2010-2016 SEA. This Assessment concluded that, subject to the integration of mitigation measures² included in the CDP, the potential adverse environmental effects which could arise as a result of implementing the targets is likely to be avoided, reduced or offset. The development of units at particular sites within the boundary will have no significant effect on the environment, subject to compliance with the development management policies of the CDP. Objectives DON 10,11,12,28,33 and 35 of the Town Plan mitigate against negative impacts by ensuring the preservation of local heritage assets and ensuring residential development is appropriately sited and is adequately served by infrastructural services.</p>
Employment	There is a total jobs requirement of 165. The objectives of the plan promote (i) c.50 jobs in a range of existing and future retail, services and tourism activities, mainly within the primary lands, and (ii) c.115 new jobs in manufacturing / enterprise developments at the edge of the primary lands and within the secondary lands.	No significant effect on the environment subject to compliance with development management policies as set out in the CDP.
Retail	Promote a range of retail uses in the primary lands, it is considered provision of 300sqm of convenience floor space would be needed and a number of small comparison outlets and retail services.	No significant effect on the environment, subject to compliance with development management policies as set out in the CDP. Mitigation measures in the Town Plan ensure the local heritage assets are not affected through retail or other development and that new shop fronts are in keeping with the town character (DON 19).
Tourism	Promote tourist developments at suitable locations within the primary, secondary and tertiary lands, that are of an appropriate scale and design and to promote a range of particular tourist products	No significant effect on the environment, subject to compliance with development management policies as set out in the CDP, and relevant mitigating policies set out in the Town Plan (DON 5,10,11 and 16).
Community	Facilitate the development of community facilities in all areas and particularly to allow for the development of youth related developments	Positive and durable subject to compliance with development management policies as set out in the CDP.
Recreation	Preserve and improve public and private open space and recreational provision in all areas, including	Positive and durable

² List of objectives that comprise the mitigation measures are included in Appendix 1 attached.

	Donard GAA grounds.	
Infrastructure	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	Positive and durable - improve human health and safety, reduce risk of accidents and accidental emission of pollutants, reduce demand for vehicular travel thereby reducing CO2 emissions, and to ensure the continued effective operation of the Donard WWTP.
Water Quality	To provide for a reliable and effective water supply and wastewater drainage infrastructure to service the existing and future development needs of the settlement, in an environmentally friendly manner. To implement the <i>EU Water Framework Directive</i> and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and the EU Groundwater Directive to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality.	Positive Effect. No significant effect on water quality, subject to compliance with development management policies as set out in the CDP and the Town Plan.
Built & Natural Heritage	Continued protection of all identified buildings, features and sites of heritage value. Protection of the setting of the town centre.	Positive and durable effect
Flood Risk	Appropriately control development on flood prone areas	As part of the plan preparation process, a flood risk assessment has been carried out. It is considered that the plan will have a neutral effect, subject to objectives, which are included to mitigate risks from flooding.
Regeneration	Encourage the redevelopment / regeneration of vacant, derelict underutilised sites especially in the core area.	Positive and durable effect.

(ii) The cumulative nature of the effects.

The cumulative effects of the implementation of the above development objectives/land uses have been considered and it is concluded that the preparation of the proposed Donard Settlement Plan will overall have positive environmental effect, as it will enable the development of the town to proceed in an orderly and sustainable manner, whereby potential adverse environmental effects can be avoided, reduced or offset through the introduction of mitigation measures.

(iii) The transboundary nature of the effects.

Wicklow County Council is preparing this Plan. The Plan has no national, regional or inter-county transboundary effects.

(iv) The risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).

There are no designated SEVESO sites within the Plan area.

(v) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effect (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).

The Plan area comprises approximately c 40.83 hectares and approx 245 people live in the area³. This boundary has been extended at the following two sites in order to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area: (i) 2.97ha at the caravan park and (ii) 3.3ha at the local GAA grounds, having regard to the functionality of these lands in providing for the recreational and tourism needs of the area which form an integral part of the town.

The total maximum indicative population of the town as provided by the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 is 300 by 2016 and 400 by 2022.

(vi) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

- **Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,**

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 identifies the following heritage assets relevant to the plan area.

- The Slaney River Valley and Wicklow Mountains Special Areas of Conservation as set out in Schedule 17.1 of Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. It should be noted that the cSACs are not located within the settlement, however are located within 5km of the settlement boundary. The Donard River (Becks Brook) is part of the catchment of the Slaney River Upper, which in turn flows through the Slaney River cSAC. The ecological status of the river is currently classified as 'good'. Threats to the Donard River water quality on foot of this Plan could potentially include exceeded capacity of the wastewater treatment plant due to development, however it should be noted that is mitigated against through CDP policy WW2 and through objective DON 10 of the Town Plan. Another potential threat is the siltation of the river due to site clearance or land drainage for development. This threat is mitigated against by the Town Plan, objective DON 13 restricting development in flood prone areas.
- The Wicklow Mountains Special Protection Area as set out in Schedule 17.3 of Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. It should be noted that the SPA is not located within the settlement, however it is within 5km of the settlement boundary.
- Hollywood Glen proposed Natural Heritage Area (p NHA)⁴ is within the 5km of the settlement.
- There are a number of buildings within the settlement boundary, which are on the Record of Protected Structures.
- There are a number of recorded monuments within the town boundary and in the surrounding area.

These heritage features are considered to be of high cultural and heritage value but they are not considered to be highly vulnerable to impacts from the plan or development that arise from it, subject to compliance with protective measures set out in the County Development Plan 2010-2016⁵ and the various heritage protection measures set out in the plan itself including DON 7,15 and32

³ Source: 2010 An Post GeoDirectory

⁴ All Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) in County Wicklow are "proposed" and are protected through the planning legislation and the Wildlife Acts

⁵BD5 OF Chapter 17 of CDP 2010-2016: "To maintain the conservation value of all proposed and future Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) in Wicklow"

- **Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values**

It is not expected that certain environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas limited as a result of the Plan.

- **Intensive Land Use**

It is not expected that existing land uses in the Plan will be intensified, such that vulnerable areas will be significantly affected.

VP1 of Chapter 17 of the CDP 2010-2016: "To protect listed views and prospects that would either obstruct the views/prospect from the identified vantage point or from an obtrusive or incongruous feature in that view/prospect. Due regard will be paid in assessing development applications to the span and scope of the view/prospect and the location of the development within that view/prospect."

(vii) The effects on areas or landscapes, which have recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

The Donard River (Becks Brook) is part of the catchment of the Slaney River Upper, which in turn flows through the Slaney River cSAC. The ecological status of the water is currently classified as 'good'. The site is not considered to be highly vulnerable to impacts from the plan or development that arises from it, subject to compliance with protective objectives set out in the County Development Plan 2010-2016 and the Town Plan.

It is not considered that the Plan will have any significant effect on the Wicklow Mountains SAC and SPA and the Hollywood Glen NHA, which lie within 5 km of the Plan boundary.

The objectives of the Town Plan and the County Development Plan 2010- 2016 will ensure the continued protection and enhancement of built heritage assets of national importance, namely Recorded Archaeological Monuments and Protected Structures.

5.0. Conclusion

SEA is not mandatory for this Plan as it is a variation of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016.

The plan will accommodate growth of the settlement to 300 by 2016 and 400 by 2022. These growth targets are already included in the Settlement Hierarchy of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016. The County Development Plan 2010-2016 has been the subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This SEA concluded that, subject to the integration of mitigation measures that have been included in the CDP, any potential adverse environmental effects can be avoided, reduced or offset.

A settlement boundary for Donard is included in the Wicklow CDP 2010-2016. The Donard Settlement Plan proposes to extend the boundary at two locations. It is considered that this extension is likely to have no significant environmental effect.

The likely significant environmental effects of the proposed land use designations and objectives has been considered, and it is concluded that subject to the integration of mitigation policies, any potential adverse environmental effect that could arise as a result of implementing the plan can be avoided, reduced or offset.

6.0. Recommendation

Based on the above it is the determination of Wicklow County Council that the Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the plan.

Figure 1: Donard Settlement Boundary in Wicklow CDP 2010-2016

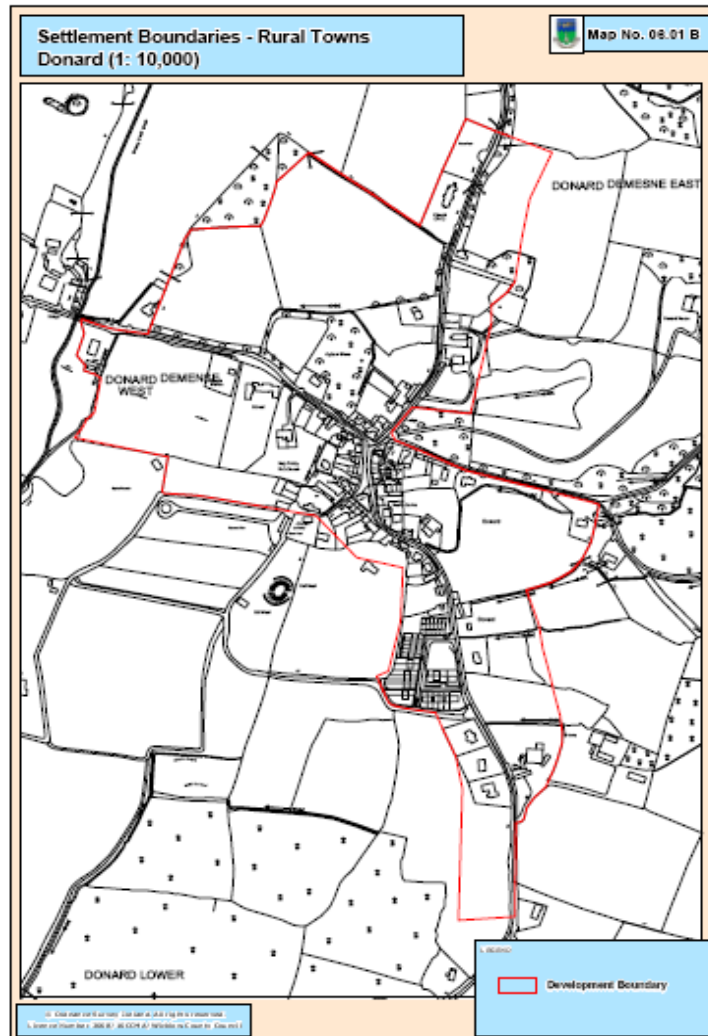


Figure 2: The Proposed Donard Settlement Plan

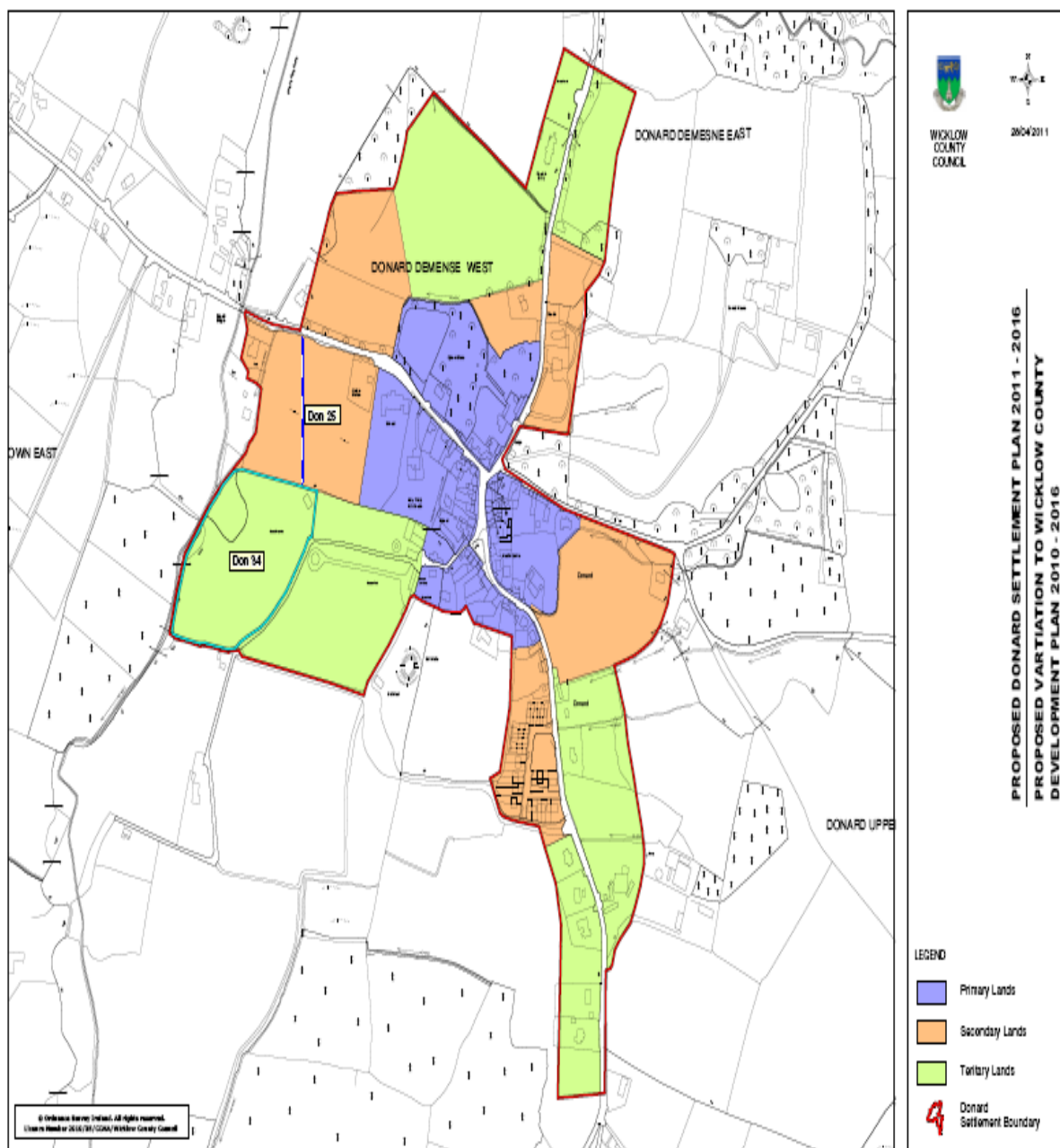
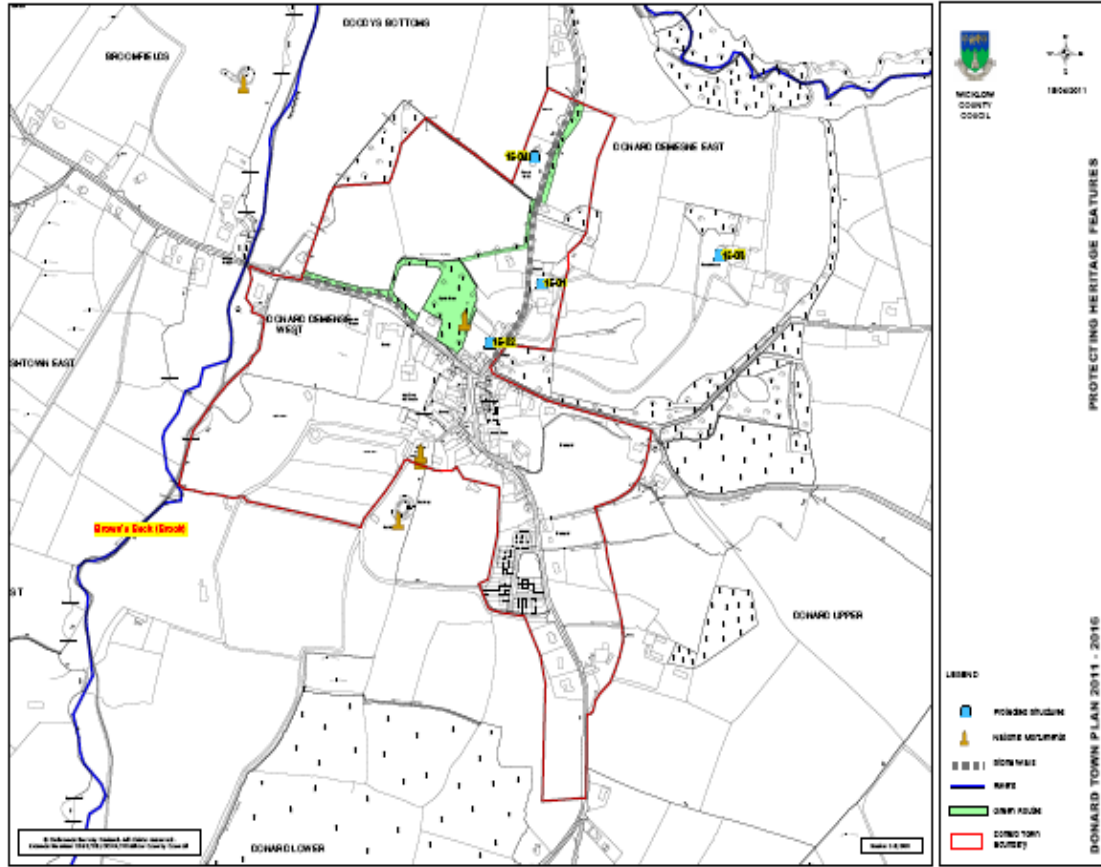


Figure 3: Donard Heritage and Environmental Features



Appendix 1
Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016 SEA Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Topic	Measure	Provisions Integrating Considerations into the Plan
Designated Sites	Ecological	Objectives: BD1, BD2, BD8 and BD7
Ecological Connectivity		Objectives: BD3, BD4, BD5, BD6 and BD9
Human Health		Objectives: AE1, AE2, AE3, NP1, NP2, NP3, NP4 and EMP 14 Also see measures related to water quality, flooding, waste water treatment and drinking water supply and quality.
Brownfield Development		Provisions of Chapter 4 Population, Housing and Settlement, Provisions of Chapter 5 Urban Development and Objectives EMP8, RUR4 and RW4
Status of Surface and Groundwaters		Objectives: RH3, AGR1, AGR4, FTY2, FSH1, WW3, WT1, WT2, WT3, WT4, WT5 and WT6
Flooding		Goals 7 and 10 and Objectives FL1, FL2, FL3, FL4, FL5 and FL6
Water Services (Waste Water and Drinking Water)		Objectives: WS1, WS2, WS3, WS4, WS5, WW1, WW2, WW3, WW5, WW7 and WW8
Greenhouse gas emissions and car dependency		Objectives: PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4, PT5, PT6, PT7, PT8, PT9, CW1, CW2, CW3, CW4, CW5, TE1 and TE2
Archaeological Heritage		Objectives: AR1, AR2, AR3, AR4, AR5 and AR6
Architectural Heritage		Objectives: AH1, RPS1, RPS2, RPS3, RPS4, RPS5, VA1, VA2, VA3, ACA1, ACA2, ACA3, ACA4 and ACA5
Landscape		Objectives: LA1, LA2, LA3 and VP1

Source: Table 2.1: Mitigation Measures, SEA Statement of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2010-2016

WT1 of Chapter 17 of CDP 2010-2016: "To implement the *EU Water Framework Directive* and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and the EU Groundwater Directive to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality."

WT4 of Chapter 17 of CDP 2010-2016: "To minimise alterations or interference with river/stream beds, banks and channels, except for reasons of overriding public health and safety (e.g. to reduce risk of flooding); a buffer of 10m along watercourses should be provided free of built development, with riparian vegetation generally being retained in as natural a state as possible. In all cases where works are being carried out, to have regard to Regional Fisheries Board 'Requirements for the protection of fisheries habitat during the construction and development works at river sites'."

FL9 of Chapter 12 of CDP 2010-2016: "For developments adjacent to all watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity or where it is necessary to maintain the ecological or environmental quality of the watercourse, any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/maintenance/vegetation. A minimum setback of up to 10-15m will be required either side depending on the width of the watercourse"

FL7 of Chapter 12 of CDP: “To require all new developments to include proposals to deal with rain and surface water collected on site and where deemed necessary, to integrate attenuation and SUDS measures.”