



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Local Development Plan

Tourism Opportunity Zones

and

Tourism Conservation Zones

Purpose: To provide members with further information on the topic of Tourism and specifically the potential candidates for designation as Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZ) and Tourism Constraint Zones (TCZ).

Content: The paper provides:

(i) Information on the purpose of TOZ's and consideration of the suggested candidates and recommendation of those areas to be contained within the draft Plan Strategy.

(ii) Information of the purpose of TCZ's and consideration of the suggested candidates and recommendation of those areas to be contained within the draft Plan Strategy.

Recommendation: That members note the information contained within this paper and agree the recommendations in relation to those TOZ's and TCZ's to be contained within the draft Plan Strategy.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide members with further information on the topic of Tourism in the context of the new Local Development Plan. Members will recall that the approach to Tourism was discussed at a Special Planning Committee Meeting on 17th October 2017. At that meeting it was agreed that further consideration would be given to the proposed Tourism Opportunity Zone's (TOZ's) and Tourism Conservation Zones (TCZ's) identified in the Preferred Options Paper, in addition those identified in the Public Consultation Report following representations. At that Special Planning Committee meeting members also suggested some additional candidates for consideration. It was agreed that all candidates would be considered by the development plan team and a further meeting would then be held with members. This paper can be read with the tourism topic chapter for the draft Plan Strategy which is also presented to members at this meeting.

2.0 Background - Tourism – Preferred Option

2.1 Members will be aware that within the POP we stated that the preferred approach to tourism development is a flexible sustainable plan led approach.

2.2 This option introduces a tailored approach to Sustainable Tourism¹ specific to Mid Ulster's strategic and local tourism priorities, objectives and aspirations. In

¹ PAGES 2-3, Planning Policy Statement 16, Tourism, June 2013

considering this flexible approach to strategic Tourism policy it allows for the protection, promotion and sustainable management of existing tourism infrastructure, facilities and associated outdoor activities and the identification of underutilised tourism assets related directly to Mid Ulster's three strategic tourism strands.

- 2.3 Our sustainable approach allows for investment and job creation within the tourism industry while safeguarding and protecting our unique natural and built heritage assets for the benefit of our constituents, in terms of their health, wellbeing and to help tackle social deprivation. It is Mid Ulster's aim to facilitate sustainable tourism in an environmentally sensitive manner and, where possible, enable the protection, conservation and enhancement of our natural and built heritage assets as tourist destinations.
- 2.4 It is important to note that there are instances where a sustainable tourism approach consists of conserving one area and allowing tourism development in another area adjacent or adjoining each other. In such instances local planning policies will be considered. It should also be noted that supplementary planning guidance bespoke to Mid Ulster's unique tourism activities and heritage offer shall be prepared in due course.
- 2.5 It is acknowledged that sustainable tourism promotes economic growth through job creation and investment. Well-maintained, distinctive historic landscape, places and spaces attract businesses, investors and visitors and will increase spend in our local economy. This is a key theme of our Community Plan² to capitalise more on our tourism assets of outdoor activity, heritage both built and natural and the Seamus Heaney Homeplace project which has the core objective of getting more people to visit and stay overnight within the District.
- 2.6 Our Tourism Strategy puts in place four tailored policies to promote sustainable tourism development within Mid Ulster. These policies allow more flexibility for major tourism development and are less prescriptive regarding tourism accommodation, facilities and attractions, while continuing to safeguard our tourism assets and important tourist accommodation. Sustainable tourism development is a balance between the needs of tourists and the tourism industry, coupled with the need to protect the tourism asset. Given that tourism is underdeveloped in Mid Ulster there is room for a more flexible, less prescriptive approach. Our strategy to attain sustainable tourism development is to achieve a balance between meeting the needs of the tourist coupled with the need to conserve tourist assets and the environment. To assist in achieving this we have introduced Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZ's) and Tourism Conservation Zones (TCZ's) as well as more generic policy for urban and rural areas. The detail of the TOZ and TCZ approach are set out in the following sections.

² Our Community Plan 10 Year Plan for Mid Ulster, MUDC, 2ND May 2017

3.0 Tourism Opportunity Zones

- 3.1 The purpose of Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZ) is to identify zones or areas where Tourism Development will be acceptable in principle. The approach of Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZ) are contained within the existing Area Plans³, which state that favourable consideration will be given to proposals for tourism and recreational development provided that the proposal integrates appropriately with its surroundings, provides adequate infrastructure and will not have any significant detrimental impact on natural and built conservation interests. Under the existing area plans TOZs are positioned nodes at the shore of Lough Neagh and Davagh. These established zones, within which the principle of sustainable tourism development is deemed acceptable under existing planning policy.
- 3.2 As agreed with the Planning Committee, the existing TOZ's have been reviewed and reconsidered based on their established tourism infrastructure and facilities, as well as their ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change, take account of ecological and biodiversity systems and improve health and well-being of our constituents. (Table A)
- 3.3 New TOZ's identified via the Preferred Options Paper (POP) and the Public Consultation Report have also been assessed and considered based on their ability to facilitate sustainable tourism development focused on the strategic themes of our MUDC Tourism Strategy (which are summarised below); their ability to accommodate tourism infrastructure and facilities without causing significant detrimental impact on identified and designated natural and built heritage assets; promote and enhance principles of sustainable tourism development and conservation; and, comply with our local development plan objectives.
- 3.4 **Tourism Strategic Strands of Tourism Strategy:**
Lough Neagh and its Waterways: As the largest freshwater lough in Ireland Lough Neagh and its associated waterways such as the Tyrone and Ulster Canal; are key environmental and built heritage assets. The international importance of Lough Neagh in terms of environmental designations limit its function as a tourism designation in that it must be protected, conserved and enhanced; however there are a number of established TOZ already established along the shoreline, which will be brought forward in our Plan Strategy. The proposed TOZs at Lough Neagh where The Battery, Tamnamore Jetty and Newferry. Each proposed zone has been assessed on its own merits and it is recommended that both The Battery and Newferry are taken forward as TOZs. Please refer to Table A for further information.

Tyrone and the Sperrins: Mid Ulster currently has one Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) namely, the Sperrins which extends beyond our

³ Cookstown Area Plan 2010 and Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010.

District. When considering strategic policy options for this key natural heritage asset discussions have taken place with our neighbouring Councils as part of cross boundary forums. Following these discussions the established Davagh TOZ will be taken forward in our Plan Strategy. In addition, the proposed TOZ for the Sperrins 'Sixtowns' is recommended for inclusion in the Plan Strategy. Please refer to Table A for further information.

Seamus Heaney, Homeplace: This is one of our key signature tourism designation projects. The internationally established heritage project is the base for a programme of events, activities, tours and trails related to the life and literature of renowned laureate Seamus Heaney. Homeplace is located within the village of Bellaghy, which has many other important heritage assets, such as the Bellaghy Bawn, all of which have sustainable tourism potential if well maintained, managed and monitored incorporating an approach of heritage led tourism and regeneration of the village and surrounding environment. For example, Ballyscullion House Demesne, used as a location for the hit series '*Game of Thrones*', could be developed further as a local tourism asset if the principle for sensitive and appropriate sustainable tourism was deemed acceptable at that location. The wide and variety landscape that incorporates Heaney's Legacy is not subject to particularly restrictive planning policy, namely, Special Countryside Area (SCA) or Area of Constraint (AoC) and therefore does need to be formally designated as a TOZ.

- 3.5 Table A attached to this paper sets out the key details of each existing or proposed TOZ. Each proposed zone has been assessed on its own merits against the purpose of the proposed designation. It considered that suggested zones located within established settlement limits are not required as there is no specific restriction on Tourism Development within settlement limits.
- 3.6 It is recommended that the following proposed TOZs are brought forward in the draft Plan Strategy and Maps are attached to this paper identifying the boundaries of each:
- Washingbay
 - Mountjoy
 - Curran Quay
 - The Battery
 - Traad Point
 - Davagh Forest
 - The Sperrins – Six towns Road

4.0 Tourism Conservation Zones

- 4.1 The purpose of a Tourism Conservation Zone (TCZ) is to protect the sensitive historic landscape and natural and built heritage assets, including archaeological sites, from inappropriate tourism proposals that may cause detrimental harm to the designated or identified asset, either directly or

cumulatively. The SPPS provides the authority to take forward TCZ's within the LDP. It states that the tourism strategy of the local development plan should safeguard key tourism assets.

- 4.2 Following further consultation, discussion and review it is considered that the introduction of a Special Countryside Area (SCA) in the Sperrins and at Slieve Beagh, which is a restrictive designation, will protect some of those areas where a TCZ would otherwise be appropriate.
- 4.3 The already established TCZs located either side of Davagh Forest have been reviewed. It is recommended that these TCZs are brought forward in the draft Plan Strategy with slight amendments to the boundaries to remove locations of existing well established Mineral Development, i.e. Quarries to the east of Lough Fea. It is unlikely that Tourism Development proposals will come forward within or adjoining such enterprises due to health and safety issues. It is also recommended that there are slight amendments to the boundaries of these TCZ's to include part of a prominent ridge to the east of Davagh forest where tourism development would have the potential to impact of the environmental assets close by. Maps showing the proposed TCZ's are attached to this paper.
- 4.4 Proposed TCZ's identified via the Public Consultation Report and following discussions with members have also been considered. The proposed zones were Sperrins AONB, Slieve Gallion and Slieve Beagh. It is considered that the introduction of an SCA in these areas has the same impact in terms of restricting development and protecting the assets of the area and a TCZ is therefore not necessary.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that members note the contents of this paper and attached map and agree that the TOZ's and TCZ's as suggested are brought forward in the draft Plan Strategy.

TOURISM

OVERVIEW

Our tourism industry is one of the most underdeveloped of all of the 11 council districts and this is evidenced by the fact that we have the third lowest number of overnight trips and the third lowest amount of expenditure during overnight stays of all the 11 council districts. We also have the third lowest number of beds available in licensed accommodation in Northern Ireland. As a result we generate less employment from tourism than any other council in Northern Ireland.

Only a small number of people visit Mid Ulster for holiday and leisure purposes and this is at a level lower than the NI average. Most visitors come here primarily to see friends and family. Therefore if we wish to grow the economy and create jobs we need to improve the attractiveness of Mid Ulster as a holiday / leisure destination in its own right.

One way in which we can increase our holiday / leisure appeal is to promote appropriate activity tourism at sites such as Lough Neagh (fishing, cruising, and water sports) and the Sperrins (hill walking, nature watching). These two sites have been identified as key destinations in the Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020. While using these sites to increase our appeal to tourists, we must also ensure that the impact of promoting tourism at such sensitive sites is borne in mind to ensure that development does not impact negatively on our natural / built heritage and our environment.

Within Mid Ulster there are opportunities for enhancing the tourist offer linked to council initiatives such as the bike trails and proposed observatory at Davagh Forest, and new Seamus Heaney centre in Bellaghy. Activity based trips are also to be encouraged with local private enterprises such as Todds Leap and Jungle NI drawing people to the area. There is also a proposed motor race track at Coalisland and Mid Ulster has a good offer of traditional activities such as golf, fishing and water-sports.

The key issue is not an inability to attract visitors but is a failure to get them to stay and contribute to the wider economy. At present the district offers some quality independent hotels such as the Greenvale and Glenavon and country houses such as Corick and Tullylagan however there is a lack of variety in relation to the offer and Mid Ulster would benefit from a resort destination hotel and facilities linked to where there are activities. As well as more affordable accommodation such as Motels, Chain Hotels and Boutique Hotels.

There are some existing tourism assets within the District such as Beaghmore and some well-known activity tourism sites. These sites must be utilised in order to attract more people to the district but not in a manner which will not harm our sensitive landscapes and areas of scientific and nature conservation importance.

REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

The Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) recognises tourism as a key element underpinning sustainable economic growth in Northern Ireland and regional guidelines seek to promote a sustainable approach to the provision of tourism infrastructure.

The SPPS aims to manage the provision of sustainable and high quality tourism developments in appropriate locations within the built and natural environment. The strategic objectives focus on sustainable and environmentally sensitive tourism development, whilst emphasising the need to protect tourism assets and facilities. The strategic objectives recognise the role of settlements and rural communities in delivering tourism development of an appropriate scale and character to their area. To achieve this Local Development Plans are expected to provide a tourism strategy that accommodates future demands, identifies potential growth areas whilst safeguarding key tourism assets.

OUR COMMUNITY PLAN

Our Community Plan seeks to maximise tourism investment and employment in Mid Ulster, via our tailored Tourism Strategy and action plan, with the core objective of getting more people to visit and stay overnight in the District. This objective shall be met through our Local Development Plan and Tourism Strategy, which concentrates on three strategic strands: Seamus Heaney; Archaeological sites, History and Heritage; and Outdoor Activities, with the core objective of getting more people to visit and stay overnight in the District.

The Seamus Heaney Homeplace is an important fixture on the cultural asset landscapes of Mid Ulster and it can be maximised as a cultural hub contributing to increased visitors and tourism as well as aiding night time economy in Bellaghy and its Environs. The visitor centre has made Bellaghy and the Mid Ulster area a tourist destination nationally for scholars, enthusiasts and the public. Its importance in national and international terms should not be underestimated.

A bespoke Cultural Tourism Strategy shall be facilitated through the Local Policies Plan and supplementary site-specific design guidance, focusing on our existing natural, cultural and built heritage assets, including Seamus Heaney Trail, O'Neill Heritage, Lough Neagh, Sperrins, Beaghmore and our forests. Our historic landscapes and unique townscapes, the stories they tell, the people that live in them and the opportunities to engage with aspects of traditional culture generate a strong appeal to visitors, sightseers, and cultural seekers. The promotion, protection and enhancement of our local tourism assets through the Strategic Plan will stimulate investment, job creation and increased visitor numbers.

OUR TOURISM STRATEGY

Our Tourism Strategy puts in place four tailored policies to promote sustainable tourism development within Mid Ulster. These policies allow more flexibility for major tourism development and are less prescriptive regarding tourism accommodation, facilities and attractions, while continuing to safeguard our tourism assets and important tourist accommodation.

Sustainable tourism development is a balance between the needs of tourists and the tourism industry, coupled with the need to protect the tourism asset. Given that tourism is underdeveloped in Mid Ulster there is room for a more flexible, less prescriptive approach. Our strategy to attain sustainable tourism development is to achieve a balance between meeting the needs of the tourist coupled with the need to conserve tourist assets and the environment. To assist in achieving this we have introduced Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZ's) and Tourism Conservation Zones (TCZ's) as well as more generic policy for urban and rural areas.

TOZ's recognise the areas that have the most to offer, either by way of existing outdoor activities, facilities or location and promotes tourism development within them. TOZ's have been designated at key locations along the shoreline of Lough Neagh at Washingbay, Mountjoy, Curran Quay, Traad Point. TOZ's have also been designated within the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at Davagh Forest and the Sixtowns Road valley.

Within these zones tourism development will accord with the plan provided they are sustainable and environmentally sensitive and result in development of a high design quality.

TCZ's recognise areas of the District where conservation interests are paramount and restricts tourism development within them. These are in the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, where landscape, ecology and heritage are of the utmost importance.

PROTECTION OF TOURISM ASSETS AND TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

POLICY TOU 1 - PROTECTION OF TOURISM ASSETS AND TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Development shall conflict with the plan where it would in itself or in combination with existing and approved development in the locality have a significant adverse impact on a tourism asset.

Proposals for new tourism development (facilities and / or accommodation) within Tourism Conservation Zones will conflict with the plan, except where;

a) The proposal includes minor improvements to infrastructure such as walking and cycle-ways, fishing and canoe stands; or

b) The proposal includes the provision of tourism accommodation or facilities through the re-use of existing vernacular buildings.

Special care should be given to ensure that any proposal should respect and be sensitive to the character of the local landscape, wildlife and heritage interests.

Important tourism accommodation will be protected from re-development and changes to other uses. These sites comprise of;

- 1. The Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown*
- 2. The Greenvale Hotel, Cookstown*

and any other sites identified in the Local Policies Plan.

Justification and Amplification

A tourism asset is defined as any feature associated with the built or natural environment which is of intrinsic interest to tourists. There are many diverse features of the built and natural heritage of Mid Ulster that can be regarded as tourism assets, in that they are important in attracting tourists and sustaining our tourism industry. The safeguarding of such tourism assets from unnecessary, inappropriate or excessive development is a vital element in maintaining a viable and sustainable tourism industry.

This is achieved across the District through designations such as Scheduled Monuments; Historic Buildings and Demesnes; and Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAs). In and around settlements these can be supplemented with designations such as Areas of Townscape Character (ATCs), Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) and Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs). When assessing applications which impact on such

designations consideration can also be given to the impact on tourism within the countryside where there is a cluster of such attractions.

Some tourism assets are already subject to protection from inappropriate or excessive development through statutory designation, and other planning policies including local policies and other strategic local plan designations such as local landscape policy areas or sites of local nature conservation importance. This policy is intended to complement such measures in the specific interests of tourism while affording protection to other undesignated environmental assets on the basis of their tourism value alone. The requirements of non-planning legislation, particularly in relation to public health and the regulation of environmental pollution may obviate the need to regulate the inappropriate development through the application of this policy.

There are however other areas in the Sperrins where the quality and character of the landscape is considered so special, and the conservation interests so significant, that we have designated Tourism Conservation Zones. Tourism development will be restricted within these zones to minor improvements to infrastructure and re-use of existing vernacular buildings. This will assist the promotion of tourism in the area by helping to conserve its key environmental and historic assets.

In addition to these particular areas we also recognise the opportunity our 2 key Hotels provide because of their location on historical sites and mature gardens. We do not want to lose them to development pressure, particularly if property prices favour other uses.

MAJOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

POLICY TOU 2 – MAJOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Outside of Tourism Conservation Zones and Special Countryside Areas a proposal for a major tourism development that acts as a resort destination providing both accommodation and major leisure facilities, such as a waterpark, theme park and other similar leisure facilities will accord with the plan where it has been demonstrated that it will be of exceptional benefit to the regional tourism industry and the economy and is on a site that is sustainable in terms of any benefits derived for the local economy and in relation to adverse impacts on the wider environment.

All major tourist development must be accompanied by a Design Concept Statement.

Justification and Amplification

Mid Ulster is an ideal location for a resort destination. It has an abundance of tourism assets and is strategically located in the centre of Northern Ireland with close links to other regions. It is well positioned on two Key Transport Corridors connecting it to

Belfast, Londonderry and Enniskillen and perfectly suited to being a stop - off point or base for undertaking day visits to various destinations throughout the region. And its proximity to both Lough Neagh and the Sperrins provide various opportunities in the tourism sector. As such this policy will facilitate a major tourism development project in the countryside.

The ability of the proposed development in itself to attract tourists to the District will be significant in assessing whether it will offer exceptional benefit to the regional tourism industry and the economy. As will the sustainability of the site and the impact of the proposal on rural character, landscape and natural / built heritage, particularly within areas designated for their landscape, natural or cultural heritage qualities.

This policy should be read to accommodate only one resort destination in the District such is the nature of the development associated with it. Smaller scale development such as caravan sites and chalet development is not covered by this policy.

The submission of a Design Concept Statement will be required to support all major tourism development. Quality design proposals should emerge from a careful analysis of a site's location, surrounding context and the specific characteristics of the site itself. The Council will expect to see a clear demonstration of the design thinking behind the scheme and how this has developed from the analysis.

TOURISM ACCOMMODATION

POLICY TOU 3 – TOURISM ACCOMMODATION

Development of hotel and self-catering accommodation on unzoned land within settlements and Dispersed Rural Communities will accord with the Plan provided it does not conflict with the Local Policies Plan and its land use zonings.

Within Tourism Opportunity Zonings the development of hotels and self-catering accommodation of at least 3 units will also accord with the plan provided it can be demonstrated that special attention has been given to the integration of the site and any natural or built heritage features including the landscape character of the area.

Outside of settlements, Tourism Conservation Zone as and Special Countryside Areas, tourism accommodation will also accord with the plan where it comprises;

- a) a hotel, guest house or hostel located at or near to the edge of the settlement and is clearly visually associated with the settlement, where there are no suitable opportunities within the settlement; or*
- b) the re-use and / or conversion of suitable buildings, of permanent construction, excluding 'steel frame' buildings, in the rural locality; or*
- c) the sensitive replacement of an existing suitable building with a new building of proportionate size and scale; or*
- d) part of a Farm Diversification scheme which is visually linked to a cluster of existing farm buildings; or*
- e) tourism accommodation run in conjunction with and visually linked to an existing tourism facility, such as; golf course, fishing lake, or outdoor activity centre; or*
- f) self-catering accommodation located within the grounds of a hotel, guesthouse or holiday park;*
- g) in the case of hotels, self-catering accommodation, camping or touring caravan parks that are located within easy access of tourism amenities and providing it is demonstrated to be of high quality and sustainable form of development;*
- h) a motel situated at or easily accessible to a key transport corridor, link corridor or trunk roads and at the key interchanges (see Tourism Map) but avoiding direct access onto the key transport corridors;*

Castledawson

Dungannon

Ballygawley

Conditions to retain tourism development so as not to be used as residential units are likely to be required where this has formed the justification for development in the countryside.

Justification and Amplification

In the main, the three hubs are the best place for tourist accommodation. It is anticipated that most tourism development will be located in the three main hubs of Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt as these offer existing services and facilities and act as a gateway to the countryside. Thus being able to serve both the business traveller and holiday maker.

All other settlements are also seen as sustainable locations to facilitate tourism accommodation. It is however recognised that in many settlements it may not be possible to provide sufficient land within the settlement therefore tourism accommodation has been provided for, at certain key locations in the countryside.

We recognise that within our district there are areas which offer activities, facilities and other attractions for tourists and therefore there is likely to be a demand for tourist accommodation. Tourist Opportunity Zones (TOZs) have been introduced within our most sensitive landscapes where constraints on development exist, such as Special Countryside Areas (SCA) at Lough Neagh and the Sperrins AONB. The TOZs will act as a counter balance to areas where constraint on development exists and will facilitate sustainable tourism development and thereby avoid potentially inappropriate development in such sensitive areas.

This includes the shoreline of Lough Neagh, which in the main is subject to an SCA but where opportunities exist at certain key locations for sustainable tourist development, within designated TOZs. It also includes the Sperrins AONB where the key valleys can assist in integrating tourist development near to key tourist assets but without interfering with their setting.

Outside of TOZs there are areas of the district where the landscape quality, historic assets and investments in tourism initiatives would benefit from investment in tourism accommodation. These include the Upper Bann where we continue to invest in promoting the Seamus Heaney Country, including recreation activities associated with the River Bann and associated wetlands.

The Clogher valley and Blackwater are impressive river valleys that possess fine country estates, complemented with historic villages. They also benefit from the potential for Ulster Canal and Clogher Valley Greenways to be developed. We encourage investment in attracting tourists to these areas. At the heart of our district lies the village of Pomeroy, the highest village in Northern Ireland with its associated broad-leafed forest, wild moorland and the potential for a greenway along the route of the former Great Northern Railway.

Within these areas we seek to facilitate investment in accommodation for tourists. These areas are not exhaustive however if proposals arise we will consider them in light of any justification provided by the developer.

Where a caravan park is located in the rural area, re-development for another use will not normally be permitted.

Special attention should be given to the character of the local landscape, wildlife and heritage interests and in all cases the development must be sensitive to its setting and achieve a high degree of integration. Special attention should also be given to the provision of amenity, space, landscaping and planting and should be proportional to the size and scale of the development.

A Design Concept Statement will be required for new hotels, holiday parks and self-catering accommodation of 3 or more units. The statement must provide the justification for the location and the site selection, as well as demonstrating that special attention has been given to the landscape and rural character in terms of layout, design and planting.

OTHER TOURISM FACILITIES / AMENITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

POLICY TOU 4 – OTHER TOURISM FACILITIES / AMENITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

Proposals for outdoor tourism facilities, amenities or attractions, such as golf courses, fishing lakes, outdoor activity centres and picnic sites, interpretation and visitor centres, will accord with the plan where they are located within a settlement or a Tourist Opportunity Zone or in the open countryside outside of a Tourism Conservation Zone

Proposals for indoor tourism facilities in the countryside, outside of an SCA or TCZ, will also accord with the plan where they are located in the countryside, where it can be demonstrated that;

- a) it is in association with and requires a site at or close to a tourism asset; or*
- b) the type of tourism activity in itself requires a countryside location.*

All proposals for tourism facilities, amenities and attractions will be of a scale, design and sited in order to have no significant detrimental effect on the amenity of the area or its landscape character. Such proposals should use existing buildings wherever possible. If a new building is justified it should be of a quality design, well integrated into its setting and supplemented with generous landscaping and planting.

Justification and Amplification

A tourist amenity is defined by the Tourism (NI) Order 1992 as an amenity, facility or service provided primarily for tourists but does not include tourist accommodation.

Tourism can be beneficial for urban areas and help to deliver development that is sustainable. It can support existing services and facilities such as retail, catering, entertainment, leisure, and transport as well as promoting a sense of urban vitality.

Our policy supports proposals for outdoor and indoor tourism facilities, amenities and attractions within settlements.

Tourism amenities are diverse in terms of their nature, scale and function and not all proposals will be suited to an urban location. For example, there may be a functional need for facilities associated with a mountain bike trail to be located in the countryside or a visitor centre may have a specific functional need to be located in close proximity to the particular countryside attraction it is intended to serve. Therefore in the countryside, outside of SCA's and TCZ's, indoor tourism amenities where it is in association with and requires a site at or close to a tourism asset or it is a type of tourism activity that in itself requires a countryside location will accord with the plan.

Such proposals can be facilitated dependant on their impact on rural character, landscape, heritage and other amenity considerations.

HOW WE WILL MONITOR SUCCESS

Success will be monitored by a series of indicators which can be assessed on a 5 yearly basis following adoption of the Strategy. The table below sets out the Objectives of the LDP alongside the desired Outcomes and also a measure as a means of monitoring the success of the LDP over the plan period.

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOME	INDICATOR / MEASURE
➤ Facilitate tourism in an environmentally friendly manner	➤ Develop Mid Ulster's tourism product whilst safeguarding the environment	➤ Number of applications within TOZs / TCZs and SCAs
➤ Contribute to the regional economy through a growth in tourism.	➤ Uplift in the local economy. Grow the visitor economy to £50m by 2021	➤ As measured by overnight visitor expenditure (NISRA). ➤ Number of tourism related start-up businesses
➤ Safeguard tourism assets from inappropriate development	➤ Maintain the quantity and quality of our scheduled	➤ NIEA Historic Environment Division records ➤ Scheduled monument / listed

	sites and monuments	building and demolition consents ➤ Heritage at Risk register
➤ Facilitate tourism in settlements by permitting tourism development of appropriate scale and location.	➤ Increase in tourism offerings within our settlements	➤ Increased tourist expenditure
➤ Support tourism in rural areas which is of appropriate scale, nature and location	➤ Increase appropriate tourism product in our rural areas i.e. outdoor activities	➤ Increased number of approved bed spaces ➤ Increased tourist expenditure
➤ Create at least 8,500 new jobs at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community	➤ Increased number of people employed in the tourism sector. With growth of 2% p.a.	➤ Monitor and evaluate sustainability of full or part time character of jobs (Source: NISRA)

Appendix 1

Table A – Tourism Opportunity Zones

Appendix 1

TOURISM OPPORTUNITY ZONES (TOZs)

Table A Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZs)

Area Plan / POP / Public Consultation Report	TOZ	Public Amenities	Constraints	Recommendation
Cookstown Area Plan 2010	Curran Quay / Kinturk Road (Existing)	Vehicle access, restricted parking, slipway, jetty and access to waterway, limited basic amenity furniture – no public toilets. Nearby Kinturk Cultural Centre	Fluvial / Pluvial Flooding / Q100 Climate change – Flooding; Security Zone (EC); SPA & ASSI; Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Retain TOZ – area of potential local tourism facilities and amenities within an otherwise restricted planning zone.
Cookstown Area Plan 2010	Davagh Forest (Existing)	Car parking, toilets, changing area for cyclists, equipped playpark, mini cycle track, cycle trails, walking trails, open access, basic amenity furniture – litter bins, signage, seats etc.	ASSI; SPA; Local Nature Conservation Importance; AONB; Proposed Area of Constraint (AoC)	Retain TOZ – area of potential local tourism facilities and amenities within an otherwise restricted planning zone.
Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010	Mountjoy (Proposed)	Existing car parking; access to Lough Neagh; slipway; benches; public amenities; no public toilets; basketball court; Castlebay Complex; Community Centre; bar restaurant; afterschool's club / business	ASSI; SPA; Local Nature Conservation Importance; Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Retain TOZ - area of potential local tourism facilities and amenities within an otherwise restricted planning zone.

		commercial units picnic area and boat house; information boards; GAA Pitch		
Public Consultation Report	Mountjoy Castle (Proposed)	Car Parking, information boards; public access but limited parking space.	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies Sate Care and Scheduled Monument; Scheduled Monument Consent	Not recommended Other Planning Policy Historic Environment Policy and legislation. – Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.
Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010	Washingbay; Wetland Park (Existing)	Car Parking, GGA Club and pitches, accessible via an existing gate; Wetland project near loughshore; Information Boards; Canoe Trail; Pitch site; Local Nature Reserve: The Washingbay Centre with toilet facilities however not always open to the public; public amenity facilities such as litter bins, playpark, seating, pathways etc. small wind turbine.	Flooding noted in undeveloped fields. Located within SCA; ASSI; SPA; Local Nature Conservation Importance; Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Retain TOZ - area of potential local tourism facilities and amenities within an otherwise restricted planning zone.
Preferred Options Paper	Traad Point (Proposed)	Public access; limited car parking at waterside; TRAAD Ponds Golf Club Development; TRAAD Ponds Freshwater Fishing; Clubhouse; Changing Facilities; TRAAD Wildlife and Conservation Club (shooting).	SCA; SPA; SAC; Wetland Landscape; Statutory Designations; Flooding 100Q cc; Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Confirm TOZ - linked to existing built infrastructure; area of potential local tourism facilities and amenities within an otherwise restricted planning zone.

Preferred Option Paper	Ballyronan Marina, Ballyronan (Proposed)	Established local marina with a variety of public amenities including; pier, marina, boat club/ house; dock for Antrim Maid two Boats; HQ for Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership; Equipped Play Park; Outside Gym; picnic tables / areas; local wetland nature reserves; walks; car parking; built heritage assets / listed structures; Canoe Trail; Fishing; Community Centre and Facilities; Nursery and Afterschools Club; Camping and Caravaning Site with shower facilities and Basic Infrastructure – Touring Caravans not static; Ballyronan Wood; Bird Viewing Platforms; Wetlands	Within settlement limits of Ballyronan Village; Statutory Designations both natural and built heritage assets; Ballyronan Wetland Forest; Local Nature Reserve; Special Countryside Area (SCA)	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Opportunities to promote local cycle and walking networks and water based activities and local touring caravan sites to increase overnight stays.</p> <p>Planning Policies allow for tourism development within settlement limits – therefore there is existing scope for tourism related development within the settlement limits of Ballyronan.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>
Public Consultation Report	The Battery (Proposed)	Majority of existing facilities are located within the Settlement Limits of Moortown – this location is known locally as the ‘Battery’ Car Parking; Equipped Play Park; Pier access for boats, fishing, water based activities; canoe trail; existing buildings mixed use of residential	Partially within settlement limit of the Battery; Statutory Designations both Natural and Historic Environment Protection; outside settlement limits Special Countryside Area (SCA)	<p>Confirm TOZ outside the development limits of the Battery – Planning Applications within the designated settlement limit will be assessed on its own merits.</p> <p>Planning Policies allow for tourism development within settlement limits – therefore there is existing scope for tourism related development within the settlement limits of the Battery – however outside these settlement limits Special Countryside Area planning policy will apply.</p>

		units, commercial units and local businesses such as a bar, restaurant, lifeboat station and jetties. Existing outdoor activities and further tourism potential. Existing local nature reserve and wetland walks.		
Public Consultation Report	Newferry (Proposed)	Car park; public amenity bins, benches, open green space; public access to River Bann; Canoeing Trail;	Flooding Maps Q100 CC; area is known to flood; either side is a Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Not recommended due to Flooding Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans – Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.
Public Consultation Report	Tamnamore Jetty (Proposed)	Picnic area and open space; public access to River Blackwater	Within settlement limits of Tamnamore Small Settlement; Recreational and Open Space;	Not recommended Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans – Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.
Public Consultation Report	Cappagh / Altmore (proposed)	Various public amenities and tourism related facilities within the settlement limit and adjacent area	Within settlement limits of Cappagh / Altmore Small Settlement no restriction on tourism related development	Not recommended Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans – Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.

Public Consultation Report	Carntogher DRC (Proposed)	Various public amenities and tourism related facilities within the DRC.	Dispersed Rural Community (DRC); AONB; existing Tourism Conservation Zone (TCZ);	Not recommended Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans – Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits. - Existing TCZ to be amended to reflect the DCR designation.
Preferred Options Paper	Sixtowns Road area and lower slopes of the Sperrins (Proposed)	Derrynoid Centre and Forest, Derrynoid Road, Draperstown The Shepherds Rest; Touring Caravan Park and Sixtowns Heritage Trail; Desertmartin, Motocross	Natural Heritage Designations; Built Heritage Designations including AONB; Special Countryside Area (SCA); Proposed Area of Constraint (AoC).	Confirm TOZ - linked to existing built infrastructure; area of potential local tourism facilities and amenities within an otherwise restricted planning zone.
Public Consultation Report	Slieve Beagh	Limited given high priority Natural Heritage and Historic Landscape value to Tourism; Residents and Tourist alike.	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies; Special Countryside Area (SCA); Proposed Area of Constraint (AoC)	Not recommended Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans. The tourism potential of this site is linked to its inherent natural and historic landscape value therefore need to restrict development in this sensitive location. As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.
Preferred Options Paper	Clogher Valley (Proposed)	Various public amenities and tourism related facilities within the proposed TOZ	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies	Not recommended Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural

				<p>Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>
Preferred Options Paper	Parkaur Forest (Proposed)	Various public amenities and tourism related facilities within the proposed TOZ.	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies - Historic Park, Gardens and Demesne	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>
Preferred Options Paper	Favour Royal Forest (Proposed)	Various public amenities and tourism related facilities within the proposed TOZ.	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies - Historic Park, Gardens and Demesne	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>

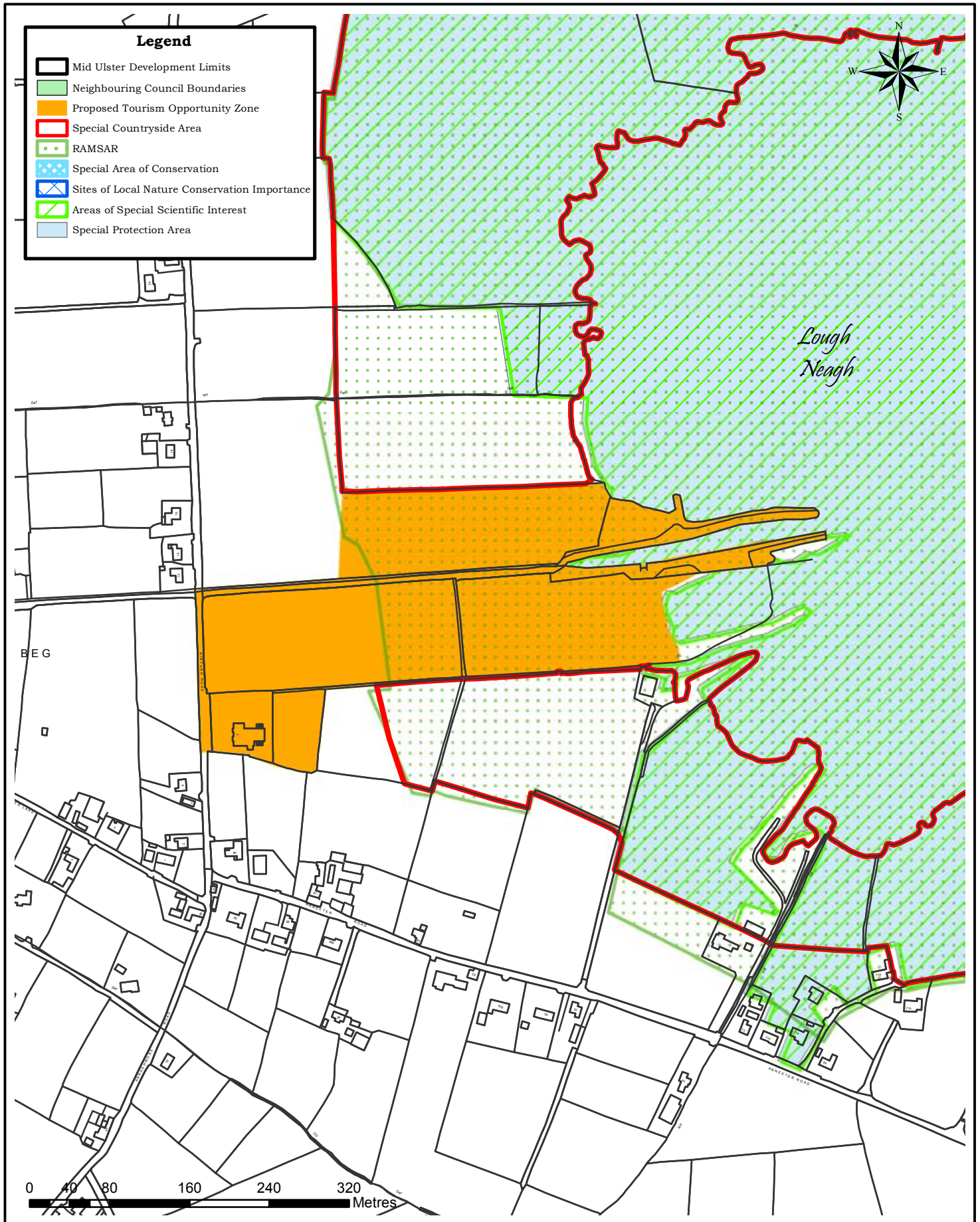
Public Consultation Report	Pomeroy Forest (Proposed)	Various public amenities and tourism related facilities within the proposed TOZ.	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies - Historic Park, Gardens and Demesne	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>
Public Consultation Report	Tullaghogue Fort State Care Monument (Proposed)	Built Heritage Designated Site; Statutory protection	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies Sate Care and Scheduled Monument; Scheduled Monument Consent; Candidate ASSI	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>
Public Consultation Report	Ranfurly House, Dungannon (Proposed)	Hill of the O'Neill Heritage Site, Ranfurly House Arts & visitors centre; café; toilets, wifi, gift shop, parking, heritage tours.	Natural Heritage and Historic Environment Policies Sate Care and Scheduled Monument; Scheduled Monument Consent; within settlement limits;	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p>

				– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.
Public Consultation Report	Seamus Heaney Project (Proposed)	Seamus Heaney Homeplace signature project completed;	Bellaghy Village; tourism opportunities within the existing settlement limits linking directly or indirectly with the literacy trail; Area of Archaeological Potential; LLPA; Heritage Assets within and adjacent to Bellaghy Village; Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP)	<p>Not recommended</p> <p>Identified heritage assets are protected under international and national Heritage Legislation, historic environment planning policy, Natural Heritage planning policy and Conservation Management Plans.</p> <p>As a result of our proposed tailored tourism policies there is now no clear benefit to designating a TOZ in an area where there are no existing environmental designations which act as a planning constraint.</p> <p>– Each planning application will be assessed on its own merits.</p>

Appendix 2

Maps of Proposed Tourism Opportunity Zones (TOZs) and Tourism Conservation Zones (TCZs)

Tourism Opportunity Zones - Curran Quay



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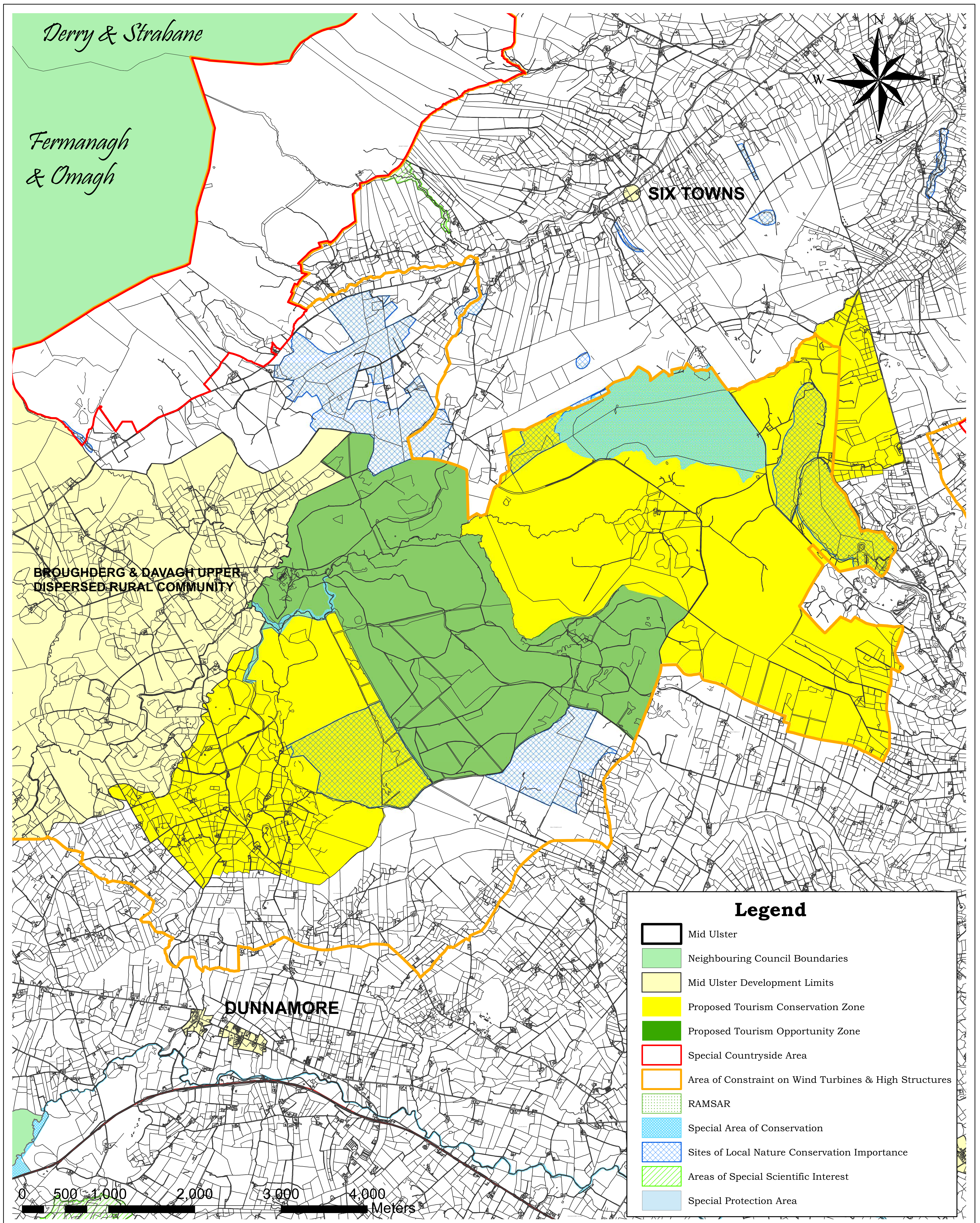
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Tourism Conservation Zone - Davagh



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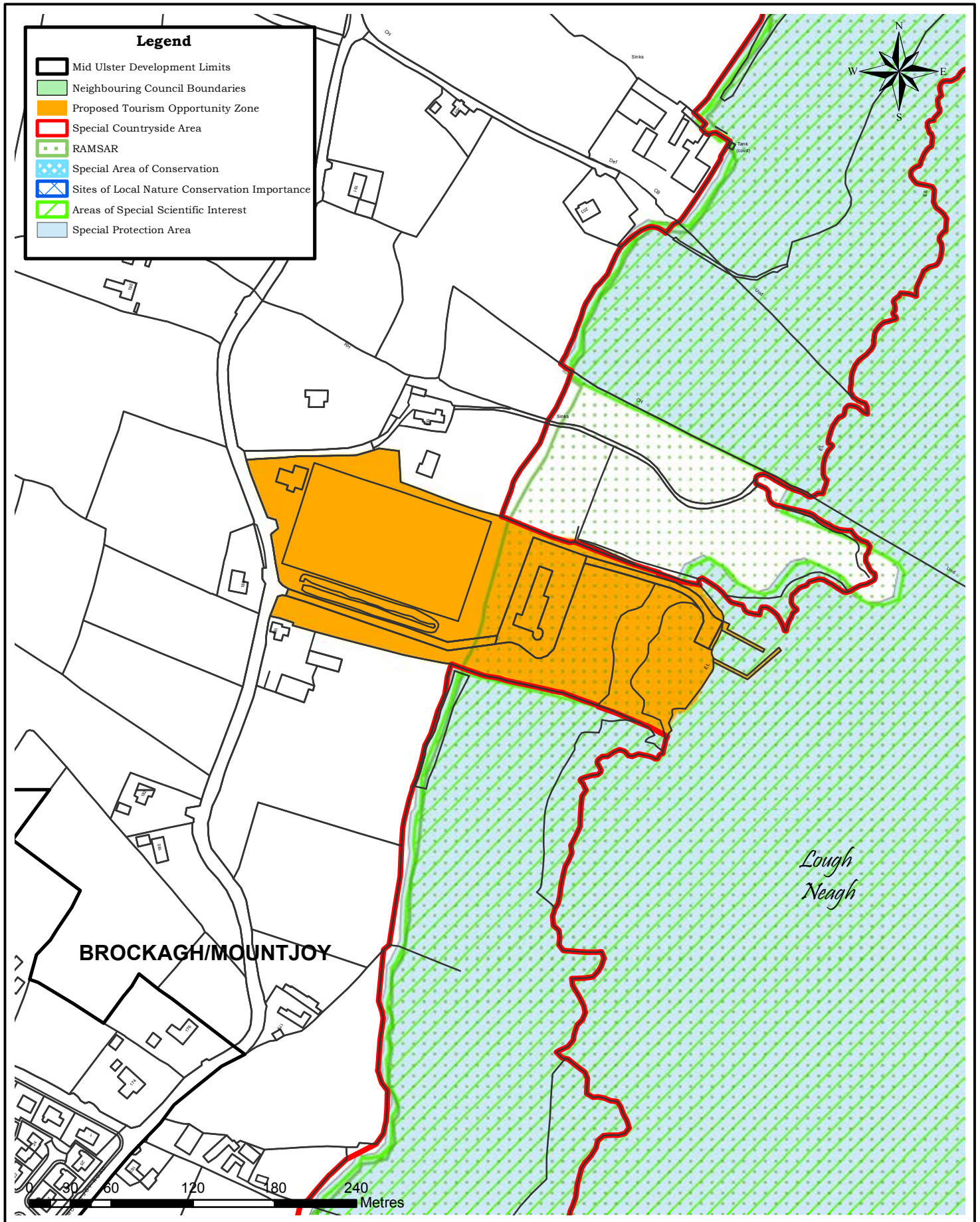
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Tourism Opportunity Zones - Mountjoy



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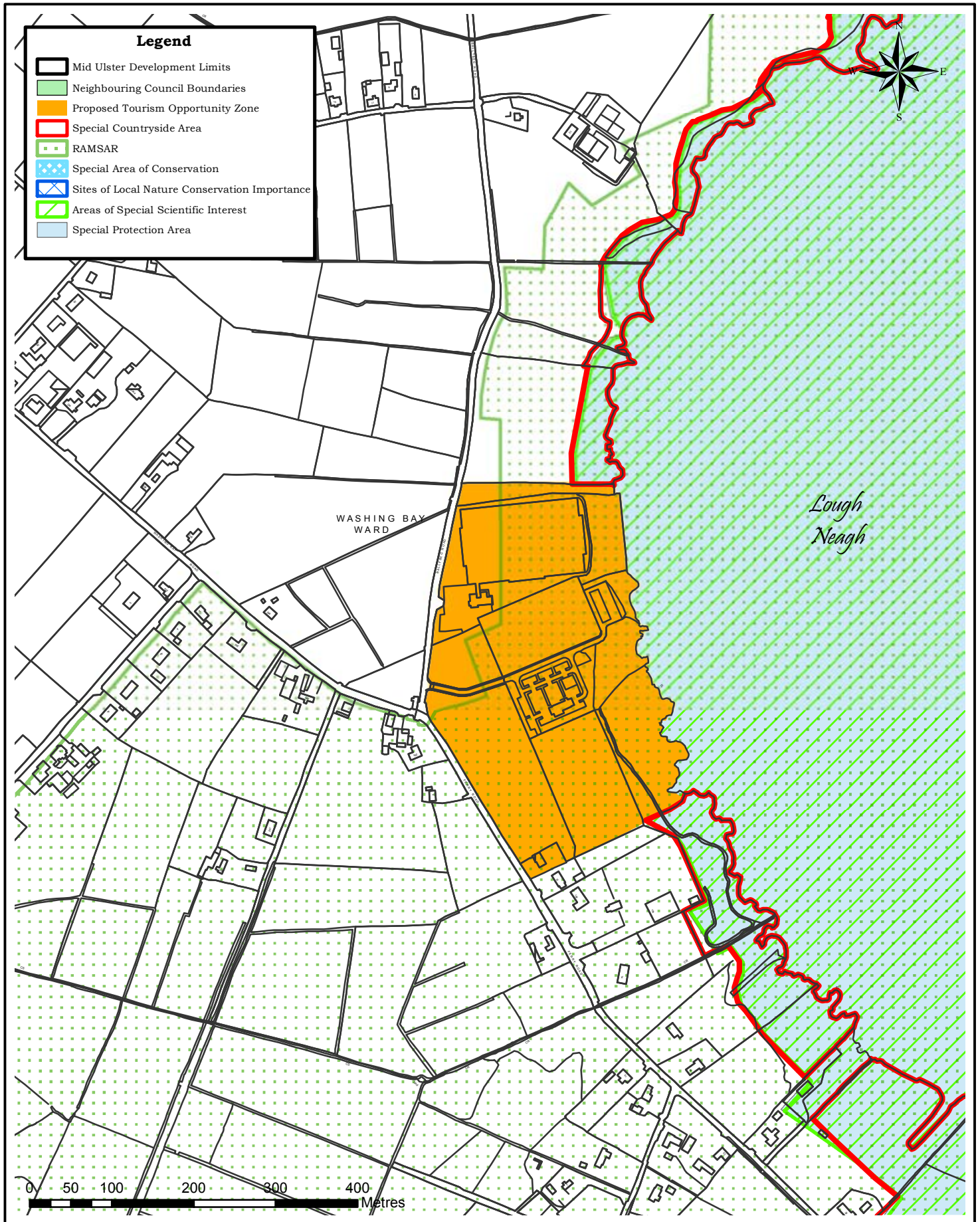
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Tourism Opportunity Zones - Washing Bay



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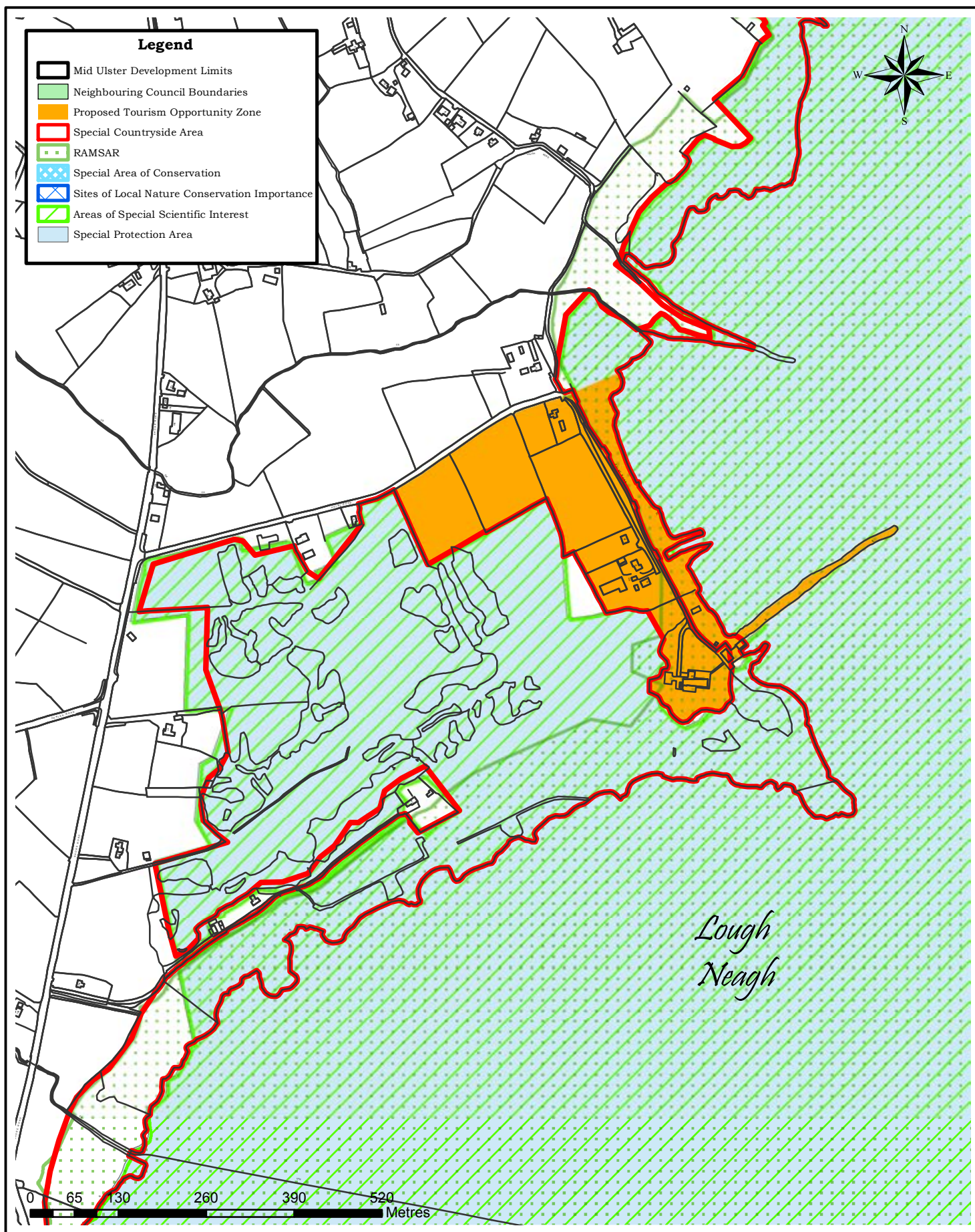
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Tourism Opportunity Zones - Traadd Point



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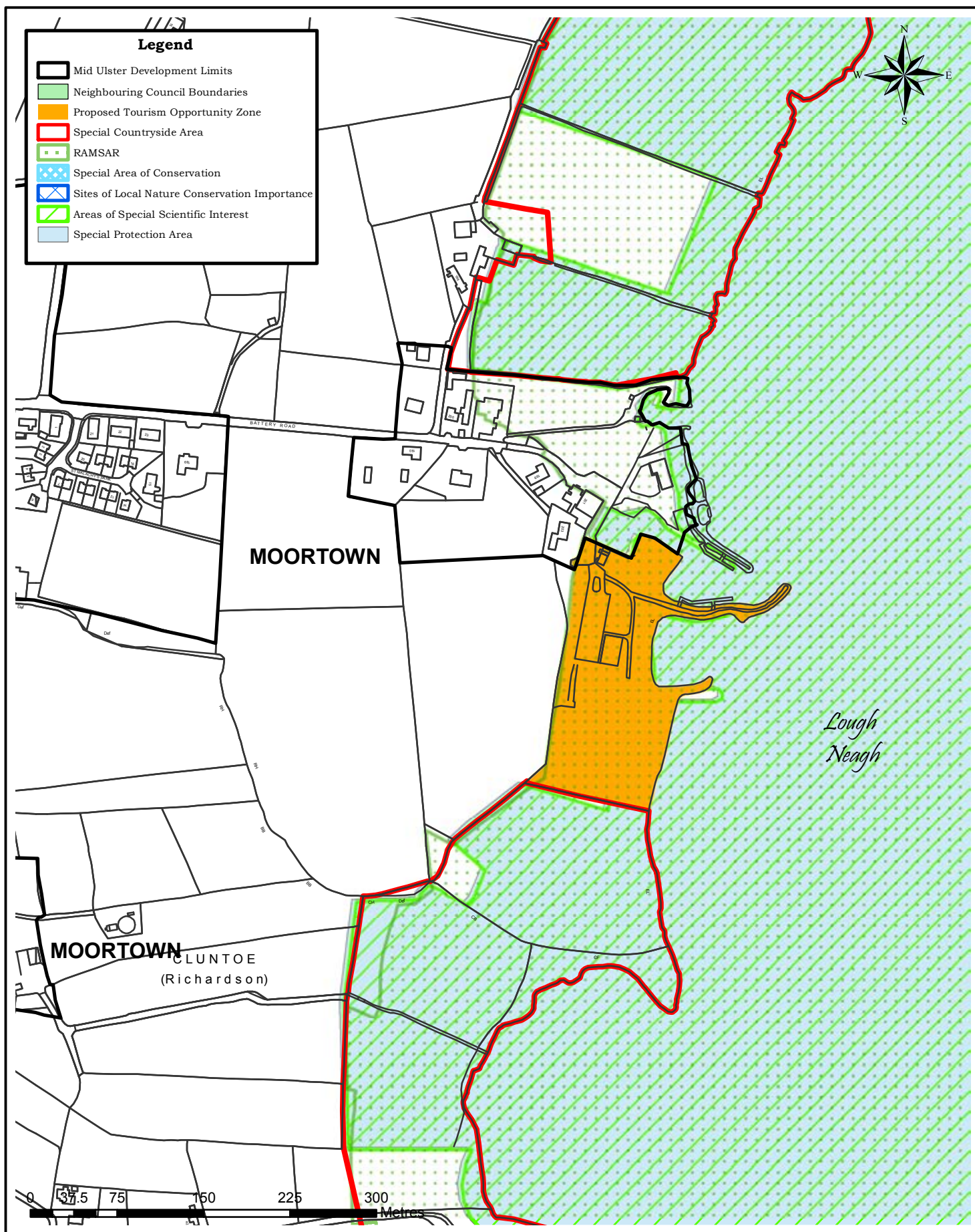
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Tourism Opportunity Zones - The Battery



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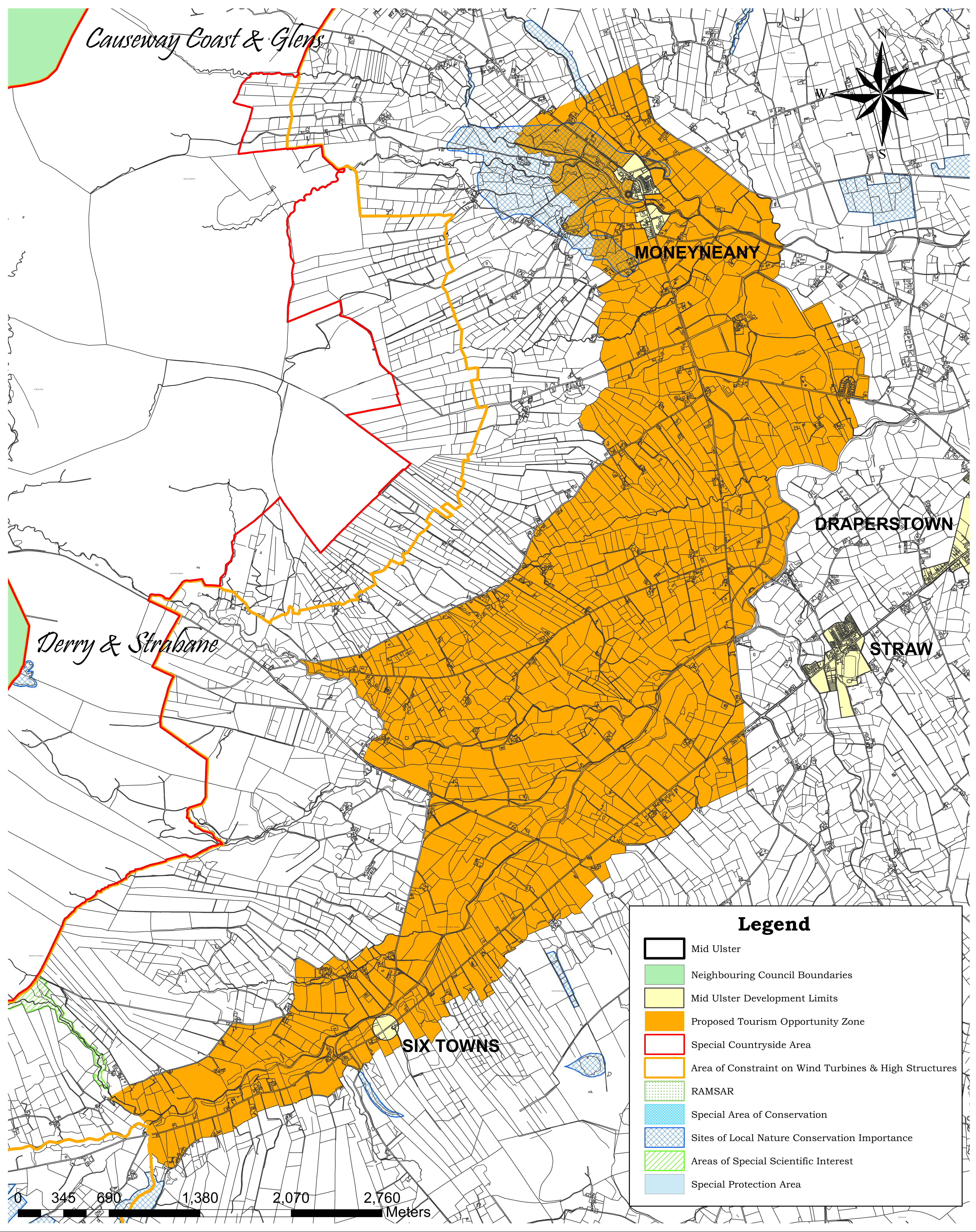
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Tourism Opportunity Zones - Six Towns



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