

MÚSCRAÍ HERITAGE PLAN

SUBMITTED BY RESEARCH AND DIG

The Múscraí Heritage Plan is the largest, most complex heritage and rural development plan ever attempted in the history of the State. It took three years to complete.

The plan is a strategy document directing the management of heritage in the West Cork Gaeltacht of Múscraí. Its role is to identify what is significant about the Gaeltacht's heritage and create a framework through which that significance is promoted and protected.

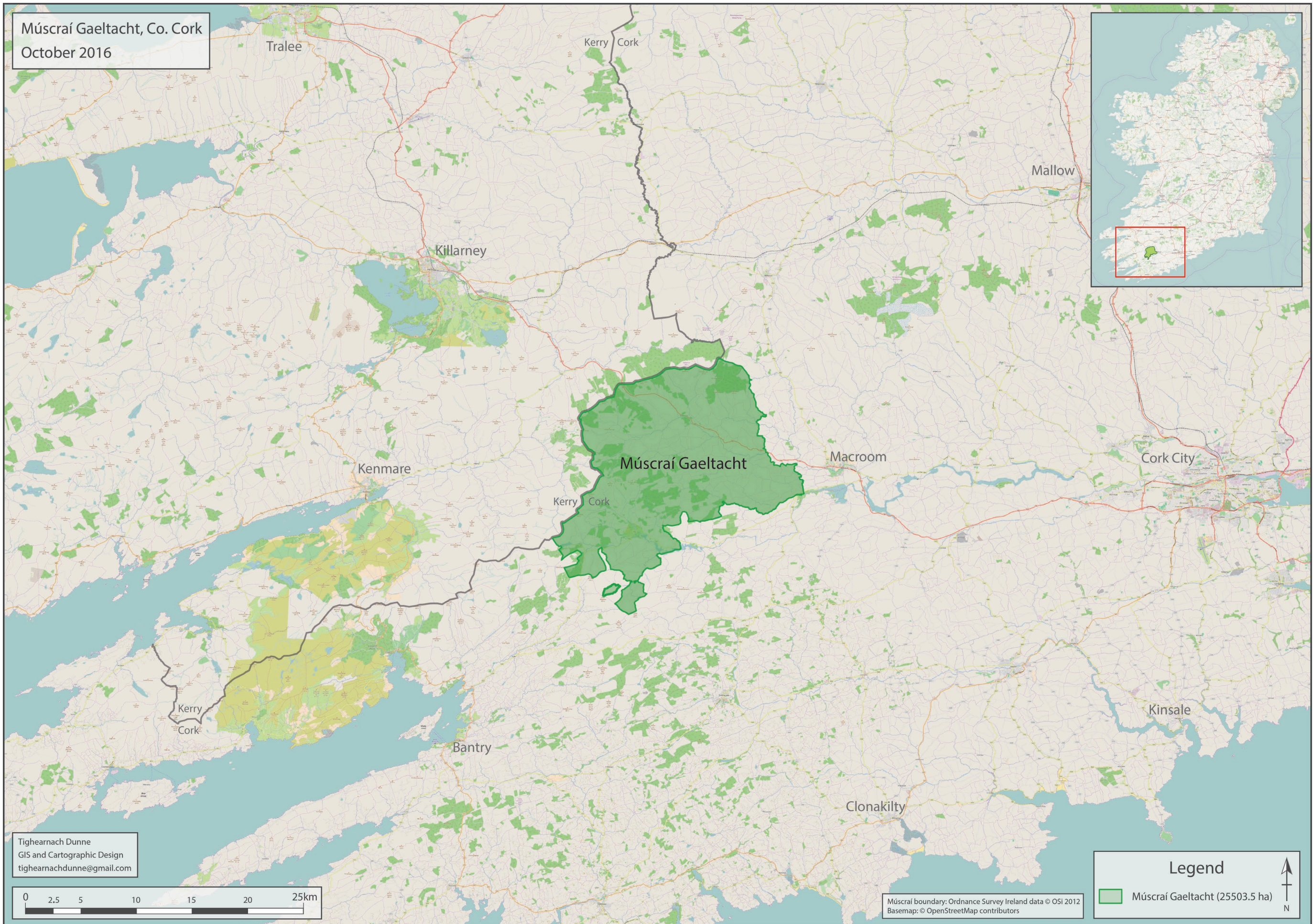
Such is the breadth of the document that in addition to being the conservation, management and interpretation plan for the Gaeltacht's heritage, it contains sufficient information to be used as a rural development plan and tourism strategy.

After much analysis it was concluded that there was a deep, complex, and symbiotic relationship between people and place in the Gaeltacht. Each is simply less without the other. It is this relationship that makes Múscraí an area of international importance.

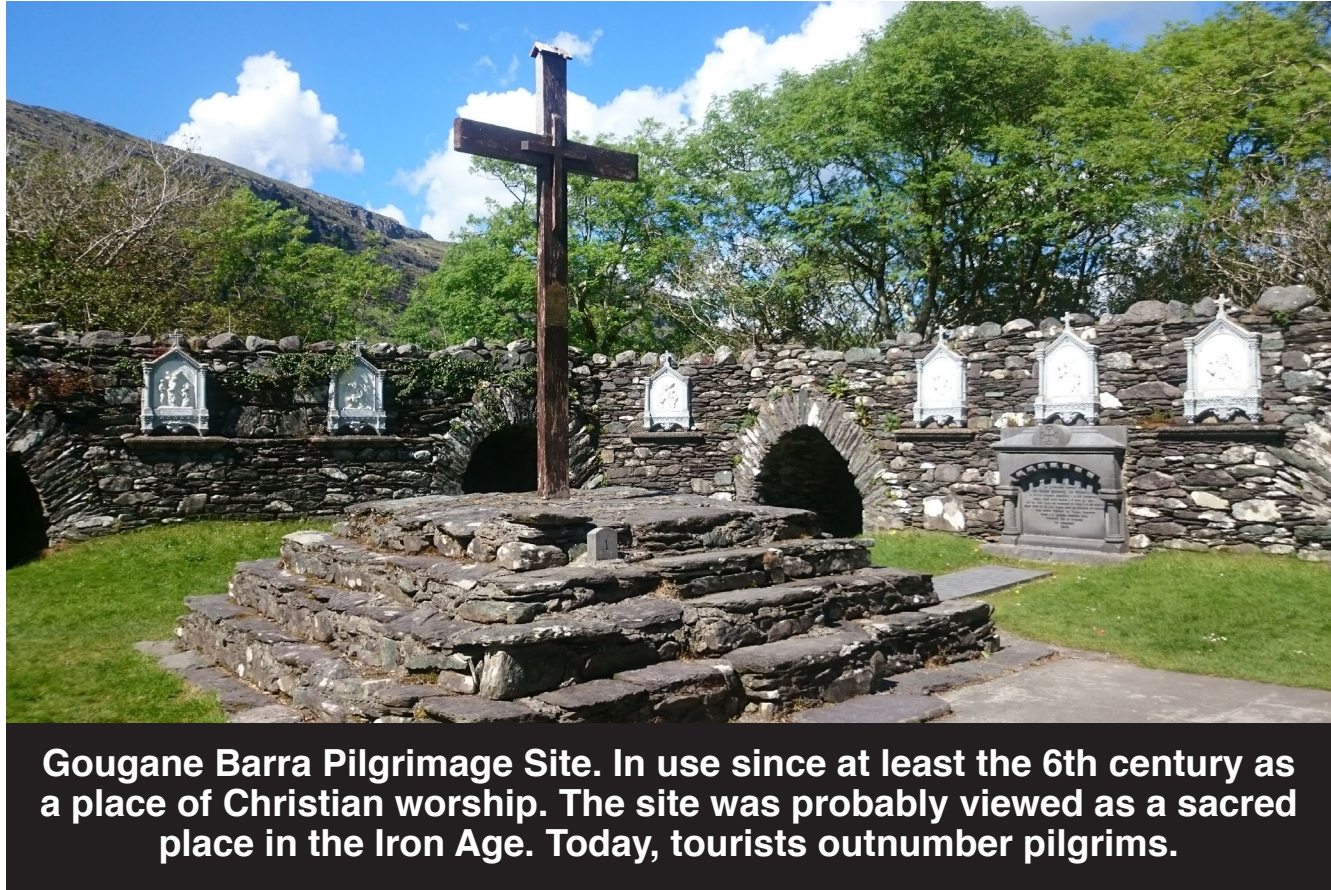
The report identified various threats to the significance of Múscraí. The project team then devised a series of actions that would not only negate these threats but position the Gaeltacht from a defensive to assertive posture as regards the preservation of its culture, landscape, dialect and economic vitality.

The fifteen-year heritage plan was commissioned by Cork County Council in conjunction with local community group, Acadamh Fódhla.

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The Múscraí Gaeltacht is located on the Cork side of the Kerry border. Almost 4,000 people live in an area of 255kmsq. A new road being built across the Gaeltacht will significantly reduce travel times to Cork City. In turn, this will create pressure for the construction of new housing estates to service a commuter population attracted by Múscraí's location between Cork City and Killarney.



Gougane Barra Pilgrimage Site. In use since at least the 6th century as a place of Christian worship. The site was probably viewed as a sacred place in the Iron Age. Today, tourists outnumber pilgrims.



A view across the Múscraí landscape. Much of the Gaeltacht is covered in commercial forestry. This has caused friction within the community.



A vernacular fixing for a vernacular gate outside Cúil Aodha. We took inspiration from this on how to solve the problems facing Múscraí.



Kneel and pray! The pilgrimage site at St Gobnait's Oratory is part of an internationally important ritual landscape present across the Gaeltacht.



Former resident Sean O Riada looking out over Cúil Aodha. Múscraí has played a vital role in preserving and developing traditional music and Irish language poetry.



The villages of the Múscraí are characterised by a single street with by simple yet elegant early 20th century buildings. Keeping these places vibrant is key to the future of the Gaeltacht.

