Beara Breifne Way

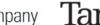
Visitor Experience Strategy Summary Document

October 2022 - Rev A01









Pontents reifne Way

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Introduction if ne Way

The Beara Breifne Way is remarkable on so many levels. As Ireland's longest national waymarked trail running nearly the length of the country, it follows the route of an epic 14 day march made in 1603 by Dónal Cam O'Sullivan Beare and his one thousand supporters. The events that occurred over those days are difficult to comprehend by modern standards, but are compelling, emotive and in need of being understood.

Given how deeply entwined the route is in the lives and landscapes through which it passes, it should come as no surprise that the route has been created and driven forward by local communities. It is the result of this unique collaboration, that O'Sullivan Beara's great march has not been consigned to history books.

In its current form, the visitor experience varies along its length, and has in places been adversly affected by poor walking conditions, a lack of signage, a disproportionate amount of on-road walking. In combination, these aspects have led to a loss of consistency along the route, and in places a disassociation with the O'Sullian Beara story, and the overarching trail proposition.

The potential economic and tourism impact is recognised by this project, and Fáilte Ireland seeks to build on the work that has been done, and develop the Beara Breifne Way into a world class visitor proposition, that engages people in the deeply emotive and compelling narrative of the march, and celebrates the rich diversity of landscapes through which it passes.

This document summarises the principles and guiding strategy that has been developed for enhancing the visitor experience along the route, as guided by community consultation, desk based work, extensive site visits, visitor and walker accounts, and a collaborate input from various professional consultants.

The visual concepts for trail hardware provided in this summary document, accompanies the extensive work that has been developed in relation to the alignment of the route, and trail surfacing and infrastructure proposals that in themselves will significantly enhance visitor experience.



Beara Breifne Way

Beara Breifne Way

Visitor Experience Strategy

Visitor Experience Val

Concept trail hierarchy strategy

A key opportunity of the Beara Breifne Way is its potential role in providing a framework, from which to cluster and promote visitor experiences.

Role and aspirations of the route to Visitor experience

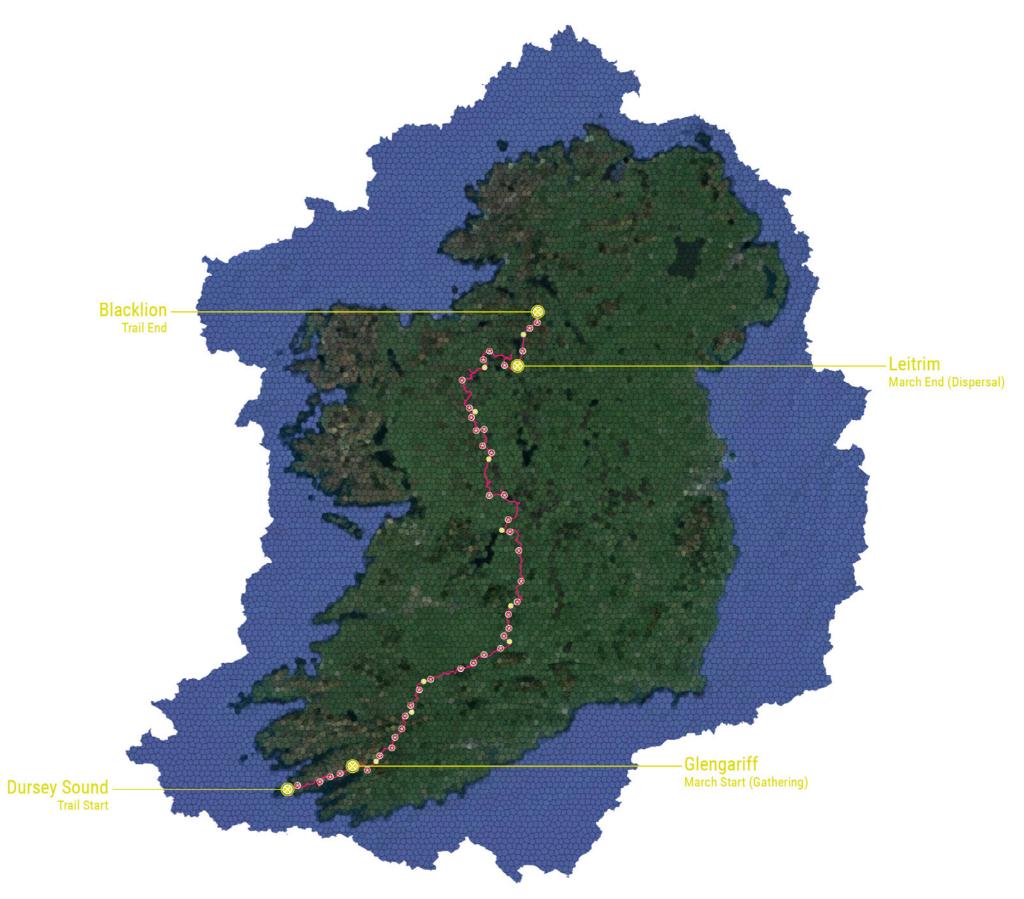
The opportunity exists for the BBW route to act as a 'framework' or 'spine' for locals, visitors and walkers to explore and engage with the stories and landscapes of the route and surrounding area.

This includes:

- Improvements to local communities, key hubs, and access points along the route
- Increased levels of local and visitor footfall
- The BBW route to tell the story of the march
- The BBW route to deliver experiences at local, visitor, and longdistance walker levels

The strategy for trail hardware and enhancing the visitor experience is focused on the following key contexts:

- Trail heads
- Signature Points
- Discovery Points
- Welcome Points
- Rest Points



Proposed Hardware Strategy

In addition to trail improvements, it is proposed to improve visitor experience by enhancing strategically identified locations along the route with physical hardware. Locations have been guided by a number of various aspects but include important points along the route in respect of the march, locations where visitors access the route, and highly scenic/memorable locations, including those that offer spectacular views.

The hierarchy of trail hardware that has been developed, looks to provide a consistent visual character along the route and delivers the functional requirements of a given location, whilst avoiding 'clutter.'

Trail heads

- Important locations tied into walking propositions, both the overall Beara Breifne Way proposition and the individual ways,.Important in terms of the communities that have developed these and associating with the overall offer.
- Iconic location / feature that provides a photo moment and a sense of excitement / achievement / reflection.

Hardware

- Official start and finish points
- Individual Waymarked Ways start / finish

Welcome points

• Specific locations at which the walker / visitor interacts with the route and requires a sense of welcome, orientation and association with the wider Beara Breifne Way offer.

Hardware

- Official start and finish points
- Major towns and visitor attractionsSmall villages / towns along the route

Signature Points

 Specific locations that provide an exceptional, stand-out experience that connect the walker / visitor to a dramatic or emotional location-specific aspect of the O'Sullivan Beara story and/or of the landscape it passes through.

Hardware

- Official start and finish points
- Authentic start and finish points
- Beara Campsites
- Key Beara stories / events
- Landscape experiences specifically the experience of a spectacular view

Discovery Points

 Specific locations that require an interpretive response to communicate an aspect of significance (Beara Breifne or otherwise)

Hardware

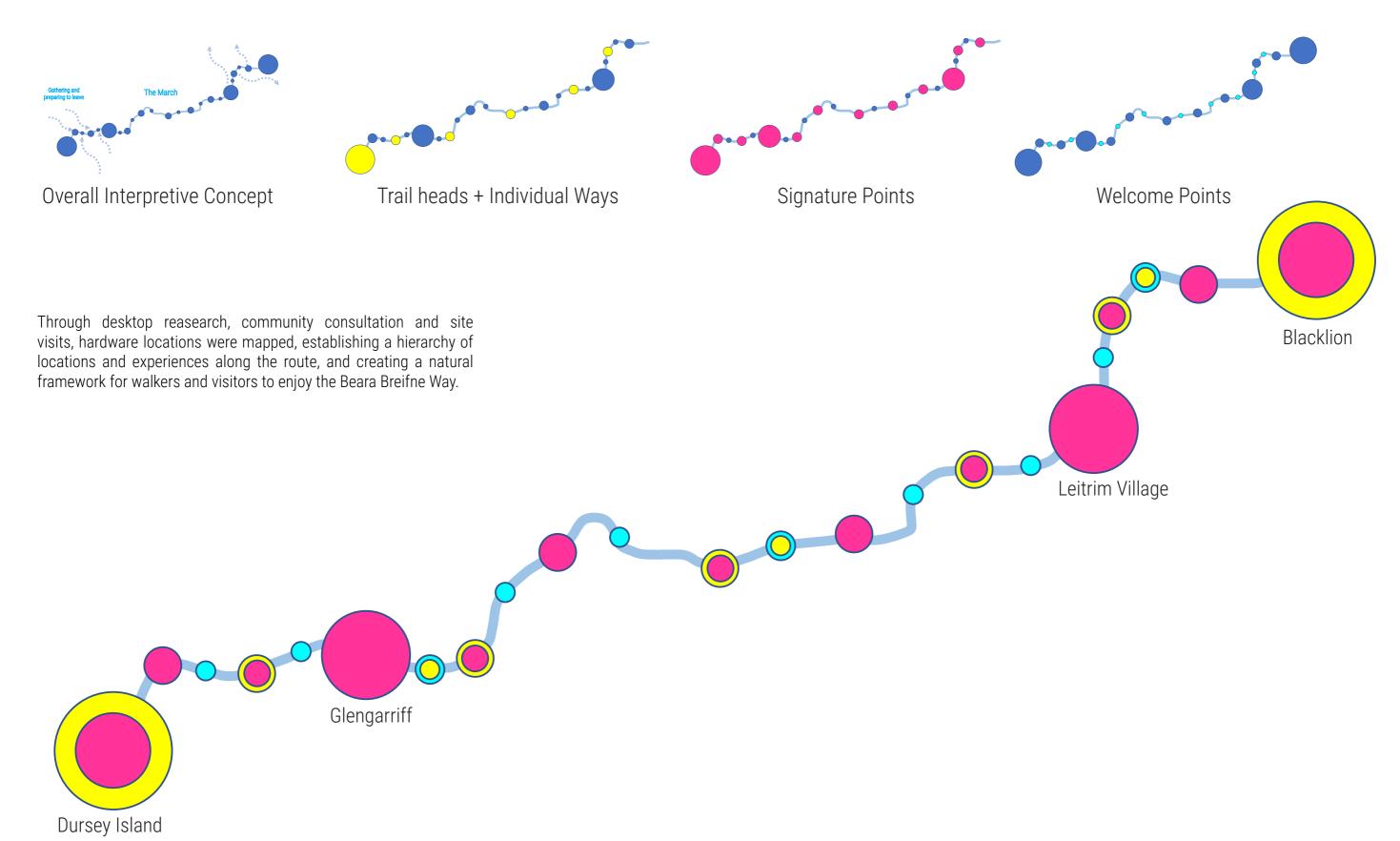
- A non location specific aspect of the Beara Story
- An interesting feature of the landscape
- A point of reflection / rest

Hardware

Rest Points

- Specific locations that require an interpretive response to communicate an aspect of significance (Beara Breifne or otherwise)
- A non location specific aspect of the Beara Story
- An interesting feature of the landscape
- A point of reflection / rest

Proposed Hardware Strategy - Hierarchy



Guiding Principles \

Proposed Function

The Beara Breifne Way will provide an important role as a framework from which to cluster and promote visitor experiences. As such, trail hardware is being developed to perform specific functions focused on enhancing walker / visitor experience and identifying with the overarching offer.

Hardware will complement the trail build and re-routing of onroad sections which are in combination anticipated to significantly enhance the walker / visitor experience in themselves.

The primary role of the Beara Breifne Way hardware is to:

Welcome

Provide a welcome and sense of wider offering to the visitor

Deliver experiences

Orientation

Educate

Provide information on the story and the landscapes the route passes through

Motivate

Motivate the visitor to continue walking and to explore

Reassurance

Points to rest and meet



Characteristics

Through the initial baseline studies and the initial consultation, the following underpinning characteristics are deemed important to any hardware proposal:

Consistency

Consistency through the suite of hardware to generate a strong sense of the overall way

Quality

A quality that reflects the national and international significance of this story and the intended visitor proposition

Emotive

A form that responds to the landscape variety and stimulates an emotional connection with the story.

Tactile

A tactile quality that becomes part of the visitor experience

Materiality

A material character that is sympathetic to the variety of landscape contexts and

Neutrality

A timeless and neutral quality/character that will age well and present itself positively in a variety of contexts

Durability

A robust and durable quality that will ensure longevity in the context of the harsh environments.

Adaptable

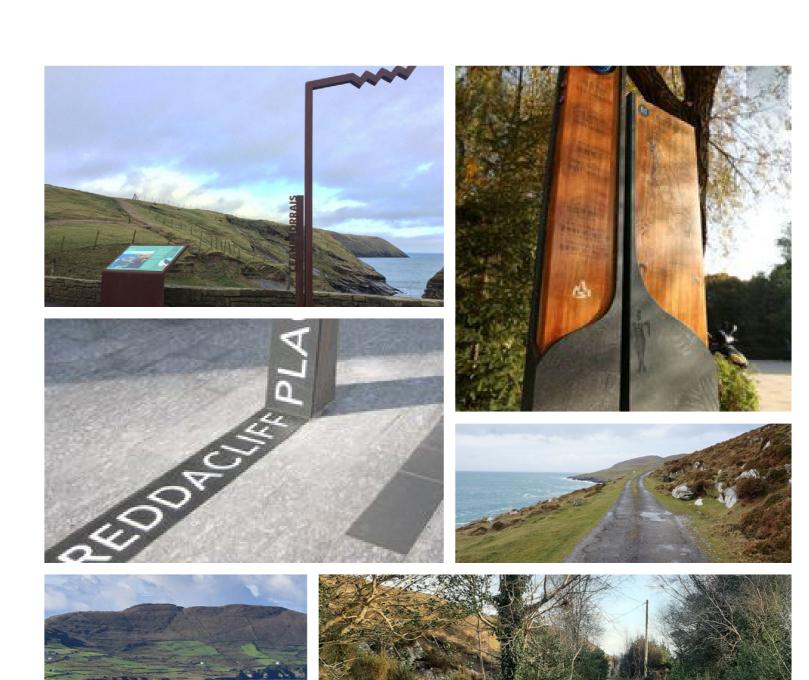
A design that considers practical management and replacement issues

Trail headseifne Way

Trail heads will be located to signify the beginning and end of the Beara Breifne Way, and mark the gathering and dispersal of O'Sullivan Beare's march.

Trail heads will also mark the transition point of each of the 12 individual ways that make up the BBW, offering a sense of welcome, orientation and association with the wider Beara Breifne Way offering.





Welcome Points \

Specific locations at which the walker / visitor interacts with the route and requires a sense of welcome, orientation and association with the wider Beara Breifne Way offering.

Welcome points will be located within cities/towns/villages that are situated near or on the BBW route. This is to inform any visitors about the overall Beara Breifne Way and about the local Signature/Discovery points that they could visit in the vicinity.















Signature Points Val

The Signature Points are the special stand-out 'Wow!' experiences that connect the visitor to a dramatic or emotional, location-specific aspect of the O'Sullivan Beare story or the landscape that the route passes through, including the Trailheads that signify the beginning and end of the Beara Breifne Way.

Each of the Signature Points will include the BBW Beacon, acting as a guide to the walker / visitor and communicating the significance of the march.

These Signature Points have been broken down into three specific sub-category types that respond to a particular aspect of the visitor experience:

Shelters

As well as a Beacon, each of these locations will include a sculptural shelter, interpreting the locations and stories of where O'Sullivan Beare and his followers camped during the march.

Landscapes

Due to the quality of the landscapes, some of these locations will only require a Beacon, whilst others will include a Beacon as well as larger proposals to enhance the landscape and improve the walker / visitor experience.

Beara Story Interventions

As well as a Beacon, each of these locations should include an artistic installation, interpreting an emotive aspect of the O'Sullivan Beare story in a bespoke, creative intervention.















Beara Breifne Way

Beara Breifne Way

Proposed Hardware - Inspiration and Design

Proposed Hardware - Inspiration

BEACON CONCEPT

Initial concepts sought inspiration from the form and function of a "beacon". A beacon is "a thing that guides or offers support. A friend who offers direction and guidance".

Whilst these features were not present at the time of the march, there would have been allies throughout the country as well as features & elements in the landscape with which Donal Cam O'Sullivan Beare and those on the march used to plot their forward, navigate and strategise.

The concept felt appropriate in terms of the role of hardware in guiding the walker / visitor, and communicating the significance of the march at key points which one would walk through.

BEACON:

The definition of a beacon is a person or thing that warns, guides or offers support. ... A friend who offers direction and guidance is an example of a beacon for someone in need.

TRIG:

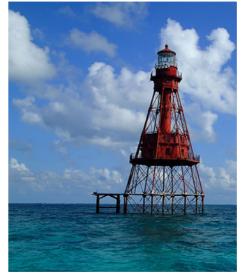
A reference point on high ground used in surveying, typically marked by a small pillar.













GUIDANCE N

NAVIGATION

REASSURANCE

REFERENCE

SUPPORT

MOTIVATION

DISTANCE

DIRECTION

PLACE

Proposed Hardware - Character

CHARACTER

The aesthetic inspiration is driven by a desire to create trail hardware that has a distinctive, attractive and collectable quality, which sits comfortably within a variety of landscape contexts.

In identifying a form, reference has been made to examples of clear, elemental geometries. This form being distinctive and able to generate a poignancy that is relevant to the importance of the march.

Abstract, asymmetrical forms are considered to offer the best fit with this variable landscape contexts along the route.

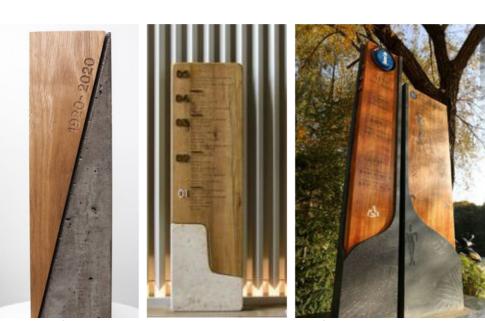




Inspiring form: Chemin des Carrieres, France Inspiring form: Festival Hall, Muhlgraben, Austria



Inspiring form: Community Church Knarvik, Norway









Proposed Hardware - Materiality

MATERIALS

In considering the materials that would work with this disctinctive form, these should draw reference to the qualities of the surrounding landscape as well as traditional materials and craftsmanship.

We see the hardware as being of its landscape

The route passes through various landscapes typologies, providing different experiences for the user as they move along the trail.

The materials proposed for the trail hardware have been selected to reflect that of the surrounding landscape; responding to the rocky outcrops, crafted walls, and various woodlands that are scattered throughout these landscapes.



Woodland - Burren Woodland



Rock formations - Beara Peninsu



Cropped stone walling - Throughout









Concepts informed by Timber / stone / metal use in a variety of waymarking projects and award trophies.

Proposed family of Hardware

Following the principles established throughout the research and development stage of the process, the design of the hardware seeks to create a family of hardware elements that have a distinctive but authentic style that is:

- · Consistent in style & character
- Sympathetic in scale whilst being visible
- Simple, adaptable form that can relate to multiple contexts
- Recognisable and distinctive

It is proposed that these elements will be installed throughout the route to enchance the visitor experience, act as a guide to the walker & visitor, interpret the stories of the march, and provide points in which to rest and reflect.

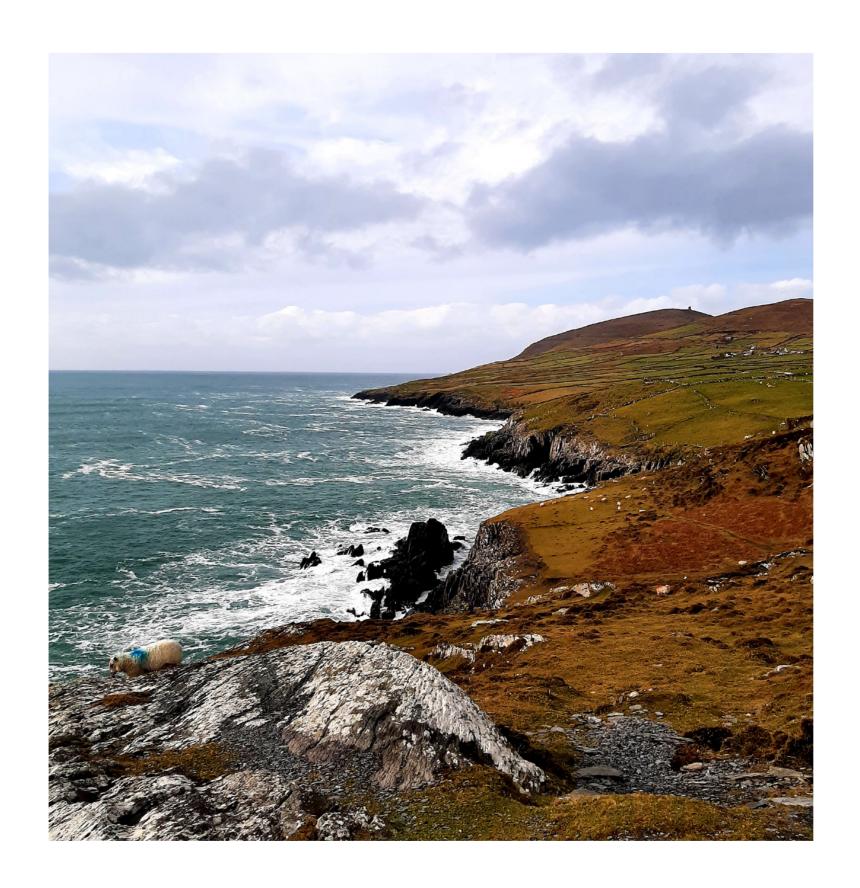
The proposed family of hardware include:

- BBW Beacon
- BBW Beacon variations (site specific)
- Lecterns
- Benches
- Directional Posts









Beacon Design e Way

The BBW Beacon has been designed to reflect the nature of a beacon, providing a feature within the landscape to guide and reassure walkers. Using stone to and timber to draw from the materials of the surrounding landscape, the Beacon's form and scale has been designed to be a visible precence within the landscape, whilst being sympathetic to it's surroundings. The reflective plate at the top of the beacon aims to catch the light and guide walkers along the trail.

The BBW beacons will be located at each of the Signature Points along the trail.

Primary Viewing band

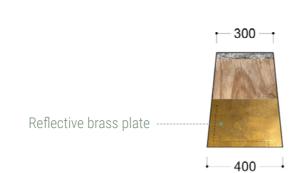
Secondary Viewing band

750mm

1800mm

1600mm

1200mm



BEACON PLAN VIEW





BEACON LEFT ELEVATION

BEACON FRONT ELEVATION

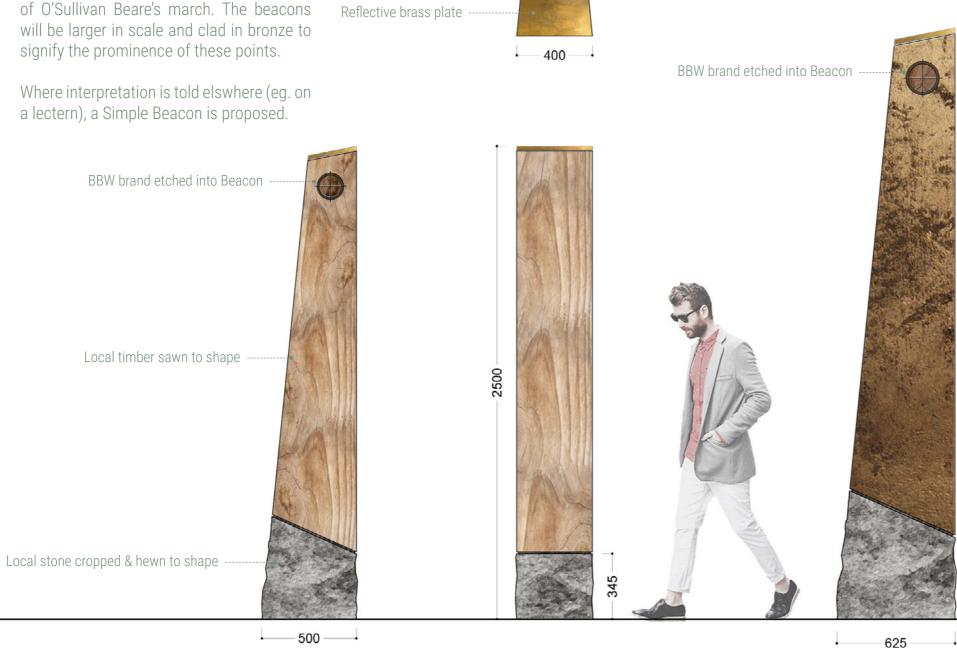
BEACON RIGHT ELEVATION

BEACON REAR ELEVATION

Beacon Variations

Variations of the Beacon have been developed for specific Signature Points on the route.

It is proposed that Signature Beacons are installed at the start and end of the BBW trail, as well as signalling the start and end of O'Sullivan Beare's march. The beacons signify the prominence of these points.

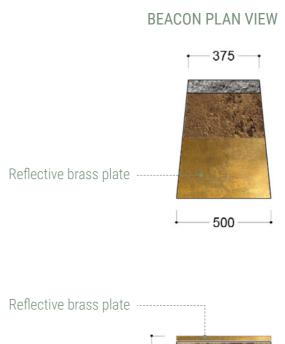


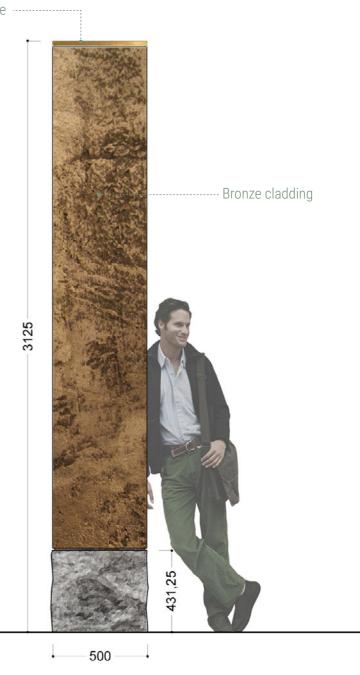
SIMPLE BEACON

FRONT ELEVATION

BEACON PLAN VIEW

→ 300 →





LEFT ELEVATION Beara Breifne Way - Visitor Experience Strategy

SIMPLE BEACON

Proposed Beacon Setting

As the trail passes through a variety of landscapes and urban areas, the setting of the beacons within the landscape is extremely important. The paving surrounding the beacons has been designed to draw in the surrounding materials so that it sits comfortably within every environment.

PLAN VIEW OF BEACON & RADIAL PAVING cropped stone paving bands gaps allow for paving to blend into surrounding surface Radial steel edge



Concepts informed by Timber / stone / metal use in a variety of waymarking projects and award trophies.

PARTIAL RADIAL

HALF RADIAL

NO PAVING

FULL RADIAL

Beacon Visualisation



Proposed Trail head Markers

It is important that each of the of the 12 individual Ways that make up the BBW are identified and celebrated as part of the Visitor Expereince. By including in-ground markers at each of the Way start and end points, we can create a threshold, signifying the transition from one Way to the next.

PLAN VIEW OF BEACON, RADIAL PAVING & IN-GROUND MARKER SLI GAELTACHT MHUSCRAI NORTH WEST CORK WAY



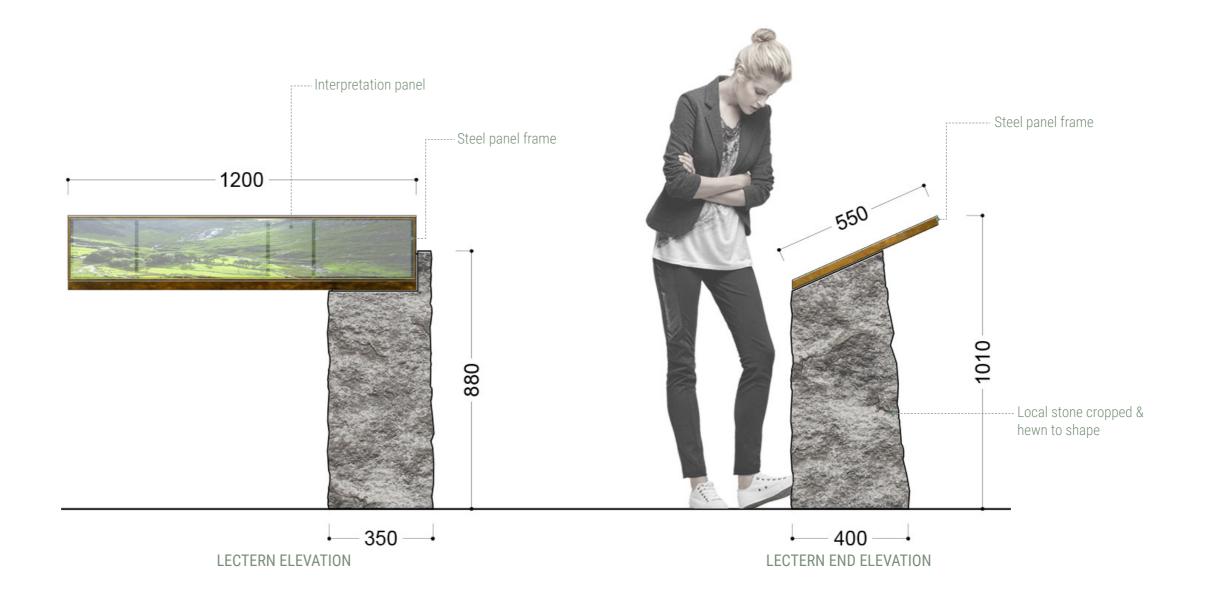
Marker concepts informed by robust stone / metal use in the ground plane at the transition points of the individual ways that make up the Beara Breifne Way

Other Proposed Hardware Lecterns

Where a story or landscape at a specific locations would be better interpreted via a landscape-orientated panel, a BBW lectern design has been developed. This seeks to reflect the form of the beacon and materiality of the beacon.

These lecterns can be located (but not always) in the following locations:

- Signature Points
- Welcome Points
- Discovery Points
- Trailheads

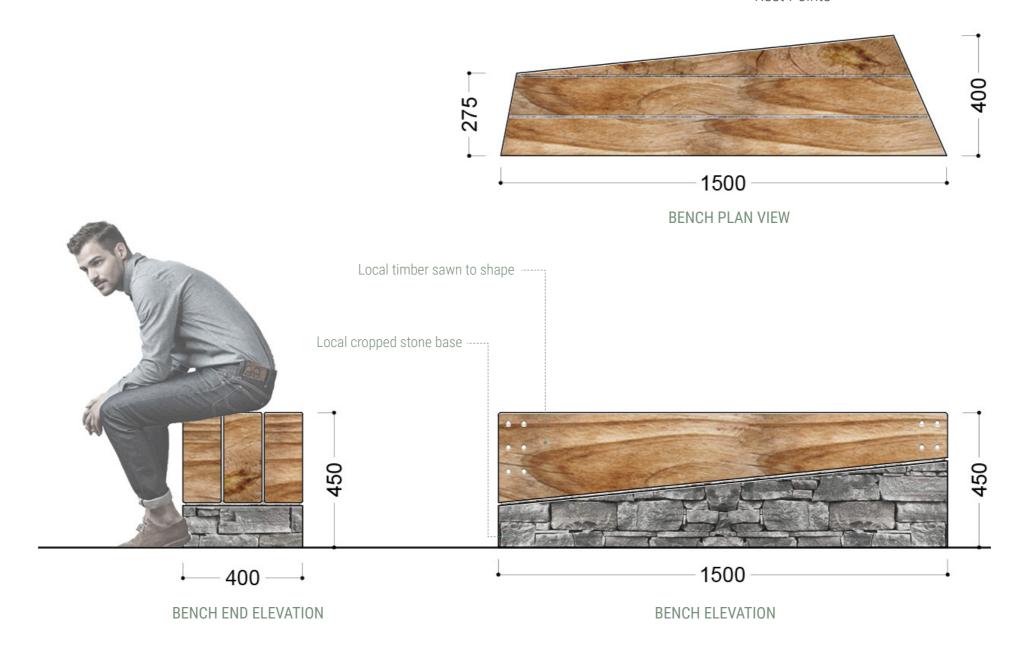


Other Proposed Hardware Benches

A bench design has been developed to, again, reflect the forms and materials of the BBW Beacon. These can be used to as a simple place to meet and rest, or positoned to provide a point to sit and enjoy a particlar view.

These benches can be located (but not always) in the following locations:

- Signature Points
- Welcome Points
- Discovery Points
- Trailheads
- Rest Points



Other Proposed Hardware Directional Posts

Directional posts have also been design to provide reassurance for walkers along the trail that they are still on the BBW. These have also been developed to reflect the style and materiality of the Beacons.



Proposed Shelter - Inspiration

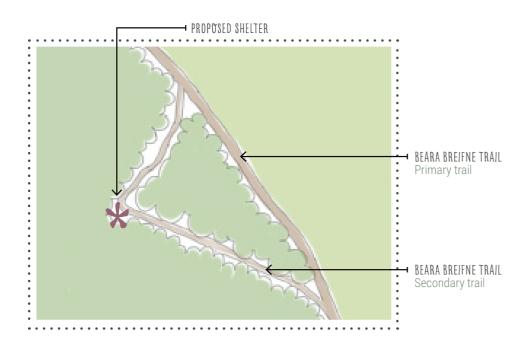
The Beara Brefine shelters will be located at significant points along the route, associated with where those marching would have camped.

Hardware in the form of a sculptural shelter offers the potential to be highly experiential and communicate aspects of reflection, regrouping and planning that are particularly poignant.

This collective architectural hardware, would provide a compelling visitor proposition that would elevate the significance and profile of the trail.

Key aspects:

- Shelter to represent temporary refuge,
- Abstract tented form to promote a strong experiential quality
- Simple elementary geometry to generate a shielded character and drama that responds to the significance and context of the story
- Shelters would be located a short distance from the route to generate a sense of hiding and allow people to experience and view the shelter from the trail.















Inspiring form:

- a Moscow Summer House (Khachaturian architects)
- b Biotope bird hide architecture, Norway
- c Biotope bird hide architecture, Norway
- d Toronto lifeguard tower, Canada
- e Tipperne bird sanctuary, Denmark
- f Bus stop Krumbach, Austria

Shelter Variations

During the march, O'Sullivan and his followers were presented with various opportunities for rest, this involved, overnight camps, spots where they rested and even where they built fake camps to confused the British Forces.

This journey will be interpreted through the form and scale of the shelters.

Type 1: Typical Shelters

(simple shelter repeated throughout to mark camp)

Type 2: Large Shelters - encampments / multiple nights

(scale of camp reflected through size or numbers)

Type 3: Bespoke Shelters - unique to the story

(shelters designed to reflect specific stories from the

march)







Type 3 example

Type 1 example Type 2 example

Shelter Locations

To align the Beara Brefine Way with the story of O'Sullivan and his followers, the location of the shelters is key to providing an authentic experience. The shelter structures proposed will be authentic to the events that occurred during the march, while being mindful that the landscape has changed and the shelters types will adapt to suit the environment they are set within.

Shelter Locations:

- 01 Coomerkane Valley
- 02 **Eochras Church (An Teampaillin, Augheris)**
- 03 **Derrinagree**
- 04 Island Woods
- 05 Ardpatrick Hill
- 06 Glens of Aherlow
- 07 Soloheadbeg (the Sallow Wood)
- 08 Lacken
- 09 Latteragh
- 10 Portland
- 11 Mount Mary (Sliabh Mhuire)
- 12 Crimlin
- 13 Knockvicar

BEARA STORY



O'Sullivan spent the night before setting out from Glengarriff the next day.

They camped here after their first full day of walking.

The group are said to have camped here after crossing the Blackwater above Millstreet.

O'Sullivan Beara and his followers camped here in freezing conditions, some of the followers died from exposure

O'Sullivan Beara and his followers rested here.

Group camped at Solohead and slept under the open sky.

Said to have stayed for one night while surveying the river.

They camped here after climbing Slieve Kimalta.

O'Sullivan and followers stayed here for 2 nights - enemies started to close in on them, leading them to cross the river.

O'Sullivan and followers spent the 11th night here, they woke up to a blanket of snow which led to the loss of people.

Said to have camped overnight at Coolathane, Ballaghaderreen, in the woods north of the town.

O'Sullivan Beare and followers crossed Curlieu Hills and had a rest beside Lough Key.

"

Shelter - O'Sullivan Beare Interpretation

Interpretation of loss through hardware

The shelters offer the potential to deliver a subtle interpretive reference to the number of lives lost along the way, an aspect of the story that is very emotive.

This could take the form of recurring perforations that symbolise the number of people on the march, a change in the size of the perforation representing those still present, and those that have been killed or have left the march.

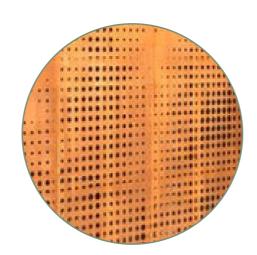
This aspect of the hardware would seek to be poignant without being morbid, and would generate intrigue and interest in terms of being an aspect that one might talk about or pass on after a visit and pass on to those who are visiting and which then becomes part of the experience, i.e.



A message from the march

It is considered appropriate that the shelters be experiential in nature, and that any information, detailed interpretation or orientation is dealt with on the trail, a short distance from the shelter.

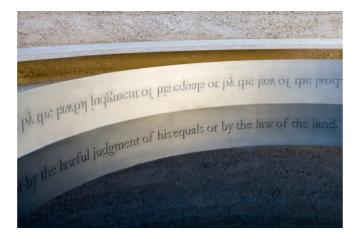
In order to give each shelter a particular locational / contextual relevance, the shelter could incorporate a "message from Donal Cam O'Sullivan Beare" which gives reference to the struggles and challenges of that part of the route and generates a very personal experience.





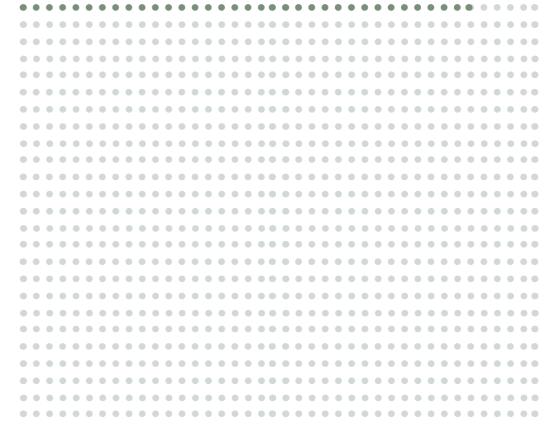








Of 1000 that started, 35 remained

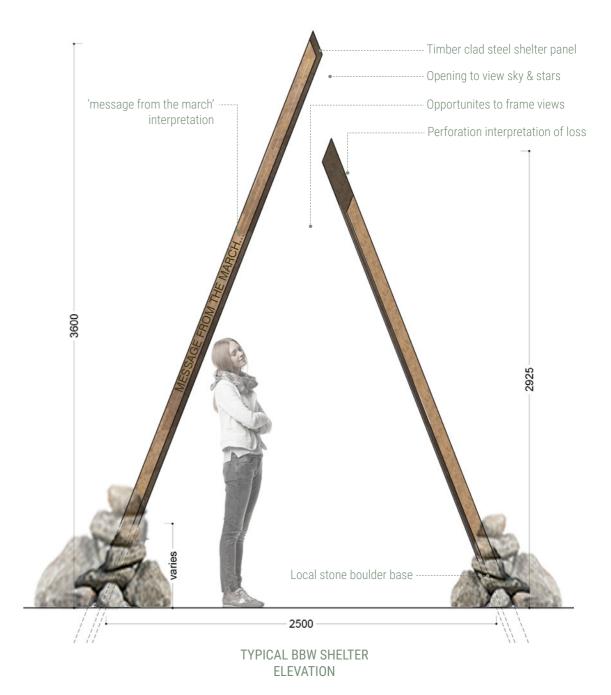


Proposed Typical Shelter

Designed as a contemporary installation to mark locations where O'Sullivan Beare and his followers camped overnight during their march north. These shelters are designed to generate a sensory experience and will be positioned to frame both outward views to the landscape, and upward views to the stars, aspects that would have been relied upon for navigation. Interpretation embedded within the hardware will provide an emotional connection to the story at each location.



Stone boulders positioned at base of shelter panels



Beara Breifne Way

Beara Breifne Way

Proposed key locations

Locational Strategy

We have identified approximately 45-55 opportunities for Signature Points along the route.

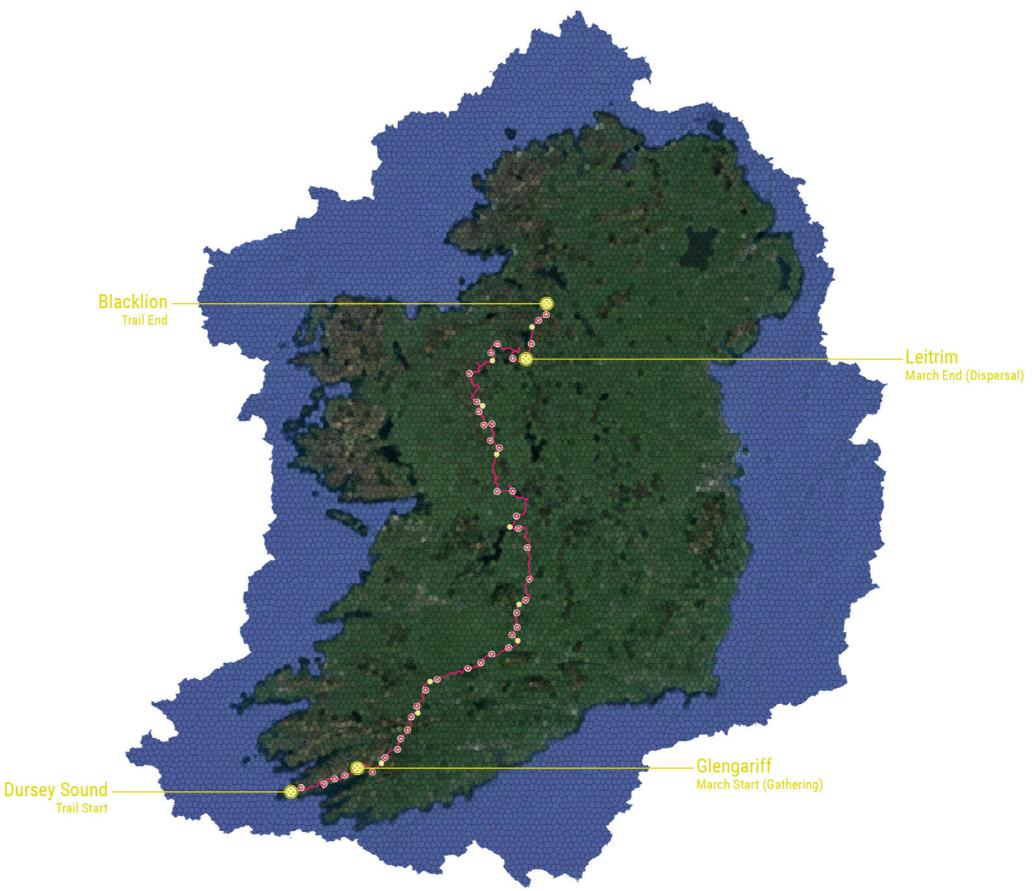
These locations have been chosen as they offer opportunities for locals, visitors and walkers to engage with the story of the march and connect to the various landscapes that the route passes through.

As part of the trail audit works, 'walker days' were identified as a way to break down the route into distances a typical walker would undertake each day. The ambition of the Visitor Expereice design was to deliver at least 1 standout experience per walking day wherever possible.

Each of the Signature Points will include the BBW Beacon, acting as a guide to the walker / visitor as well as providing a consistency over the 700km walk, and generating a recognisable and distinctive feature from start to finish.

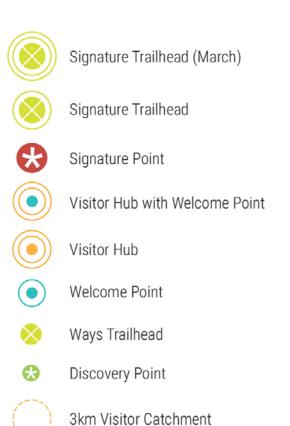
The strategy also seeks to provide visitor experiences within a 5-6km loop walk from key visitor and hop-on locations along the route. This will provide opportunities for visitors to engage with the the BBW story in a more accessible way, and encourage future visits to other locations.

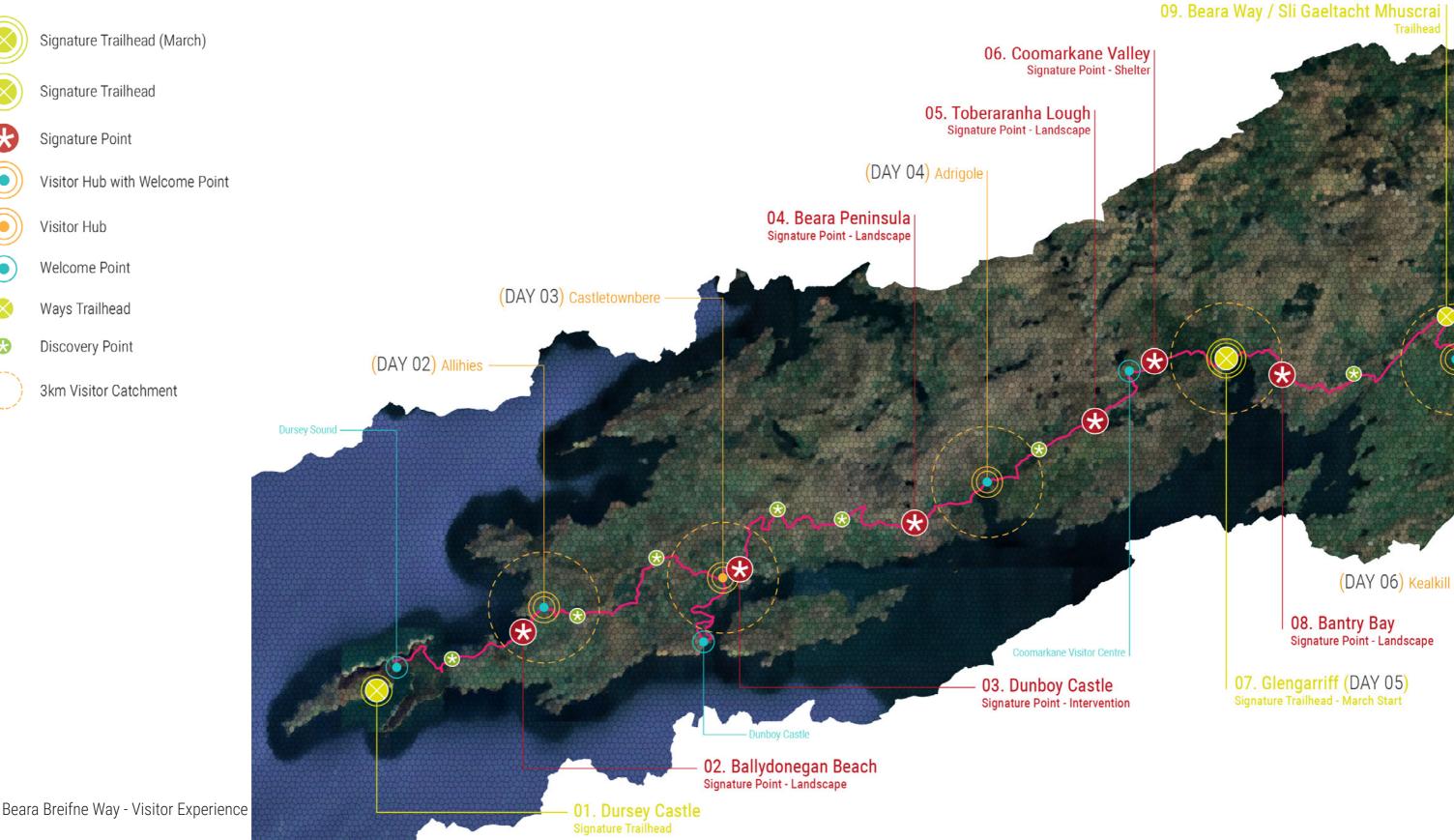
Exact locations of each intervention will be determined further to landowner consultation, and no works till take place without third party consent.



Beara Waye if ne Way

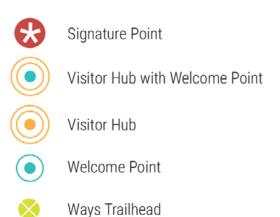
Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.





Sli Gaeltach Mhuscrai

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



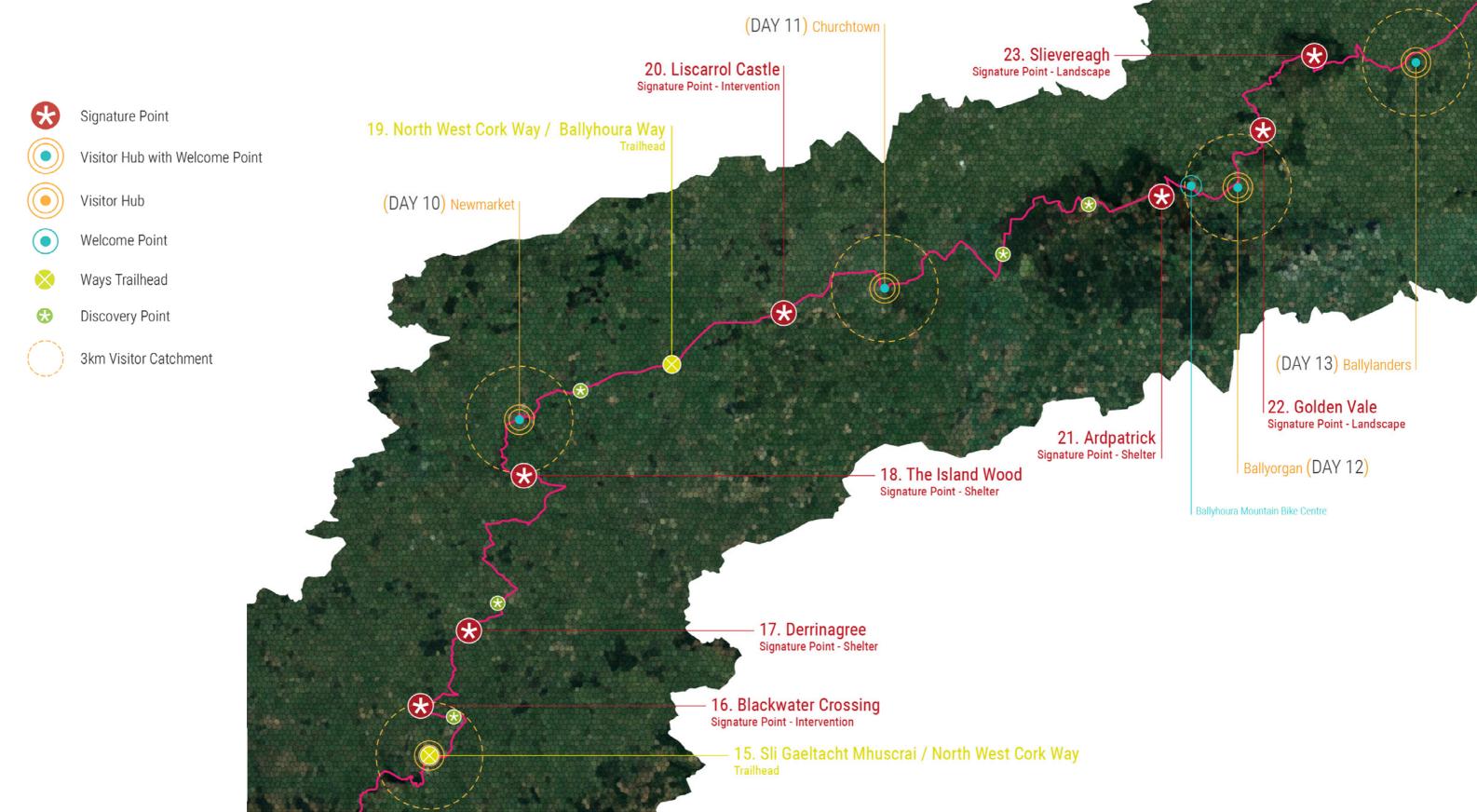
3km Visitor Catchment

Discovery Point



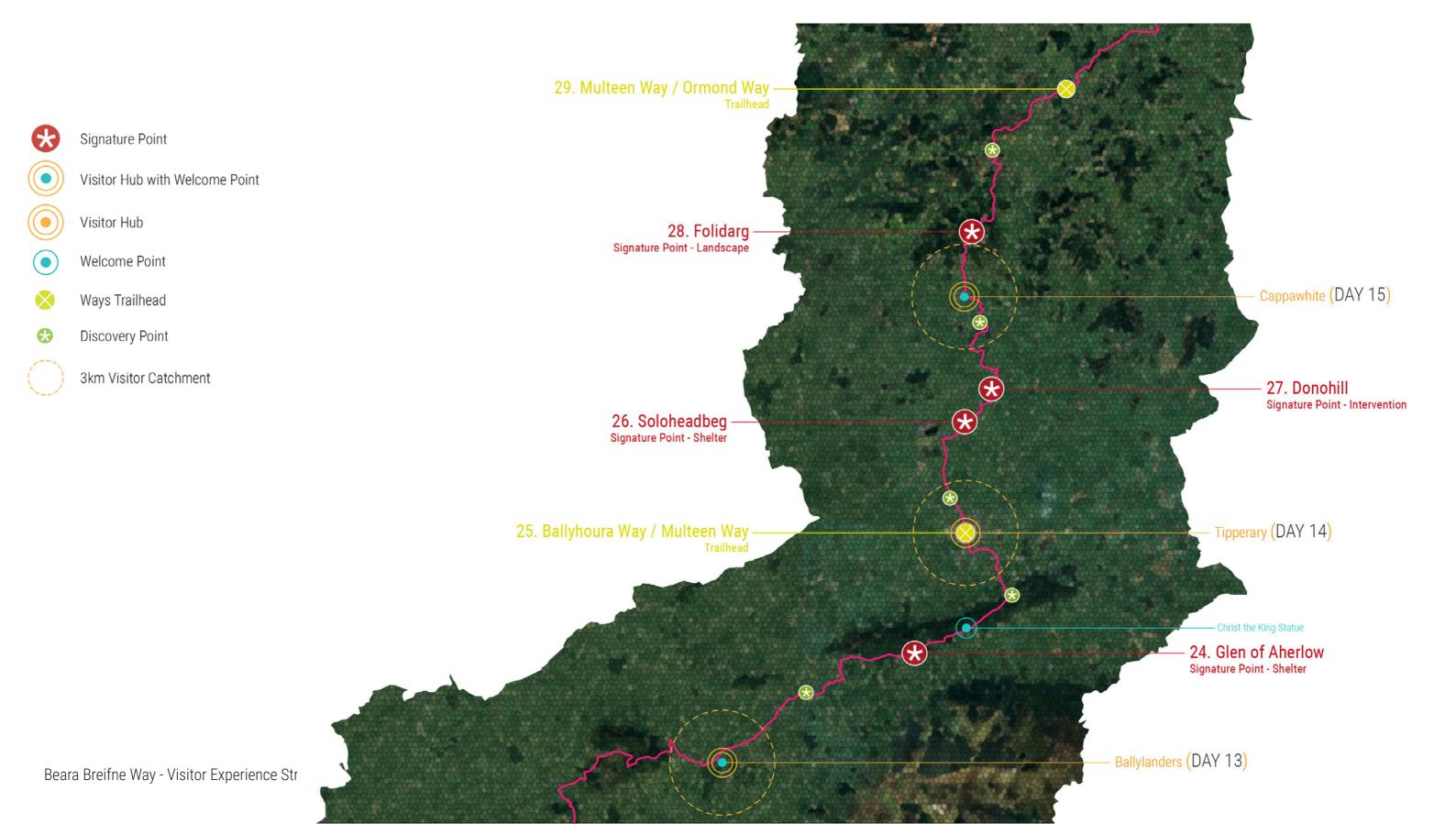
North West Cork Way / Ballyhoura Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Ballyhoura Way / Multeen Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Ormond Way fne Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.

Signature Point

Visitor Hub with Welcome Point

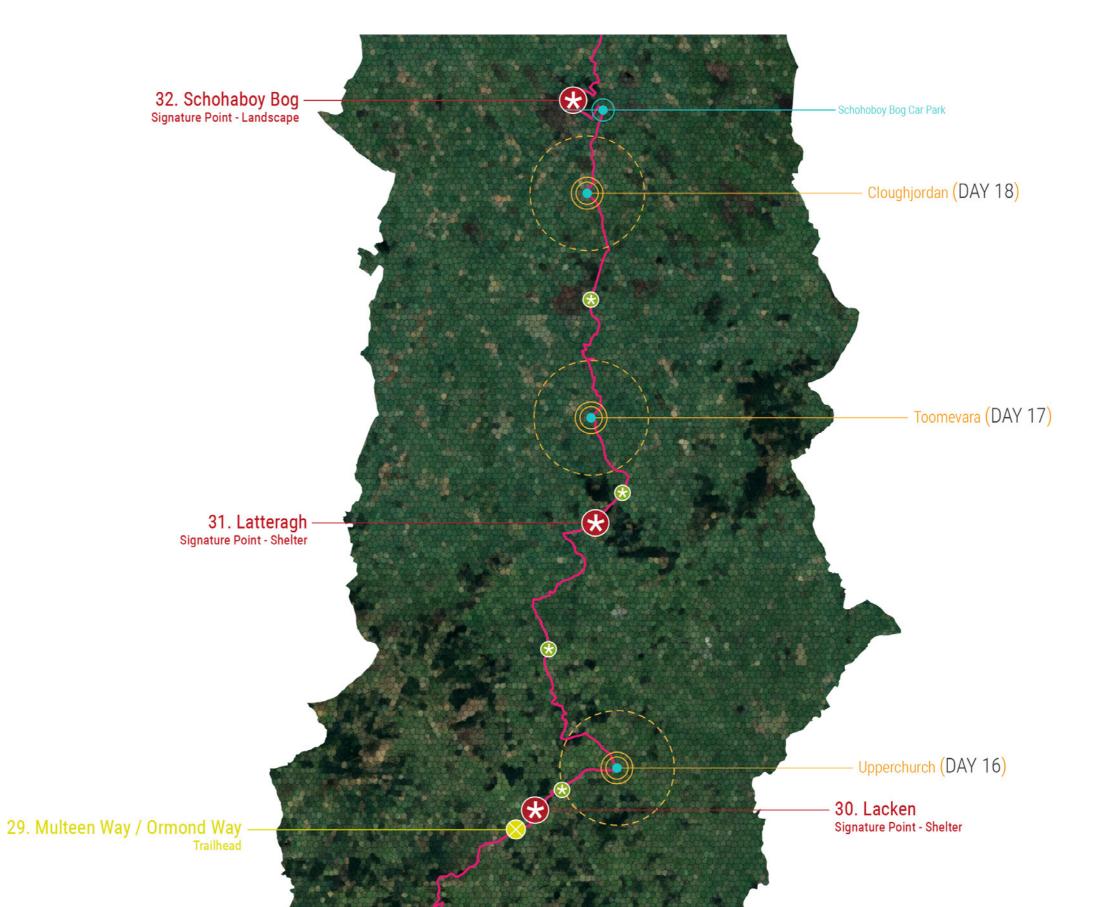
Visitor Hub

Welcome Point

🔀 🧪 Ways Trailhead

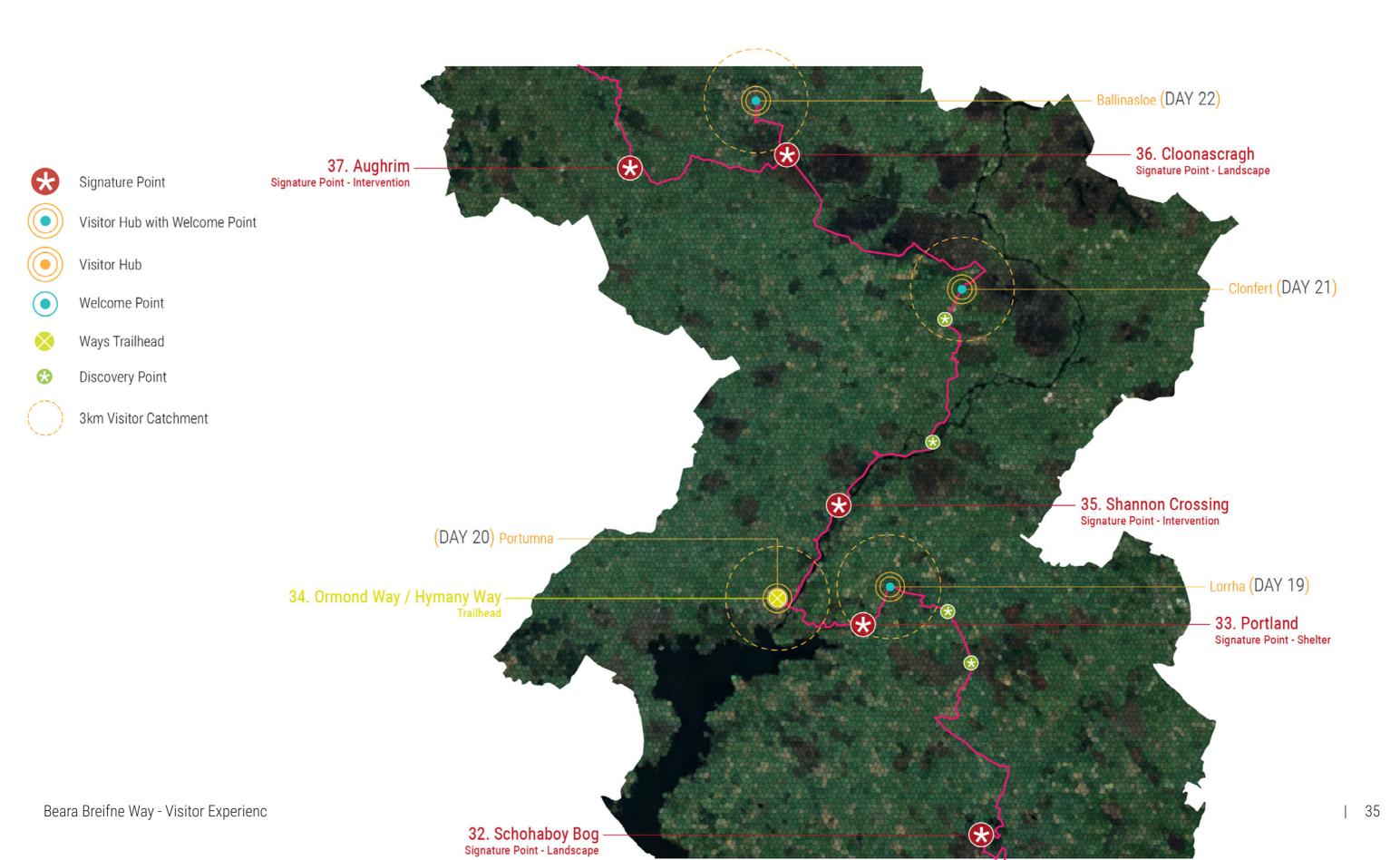
Discovery Point

3km Visitor Catchment



Ormond Way / Hymany Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Hymany Way / Suck Valley Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Visitor Hub with Welcome Point

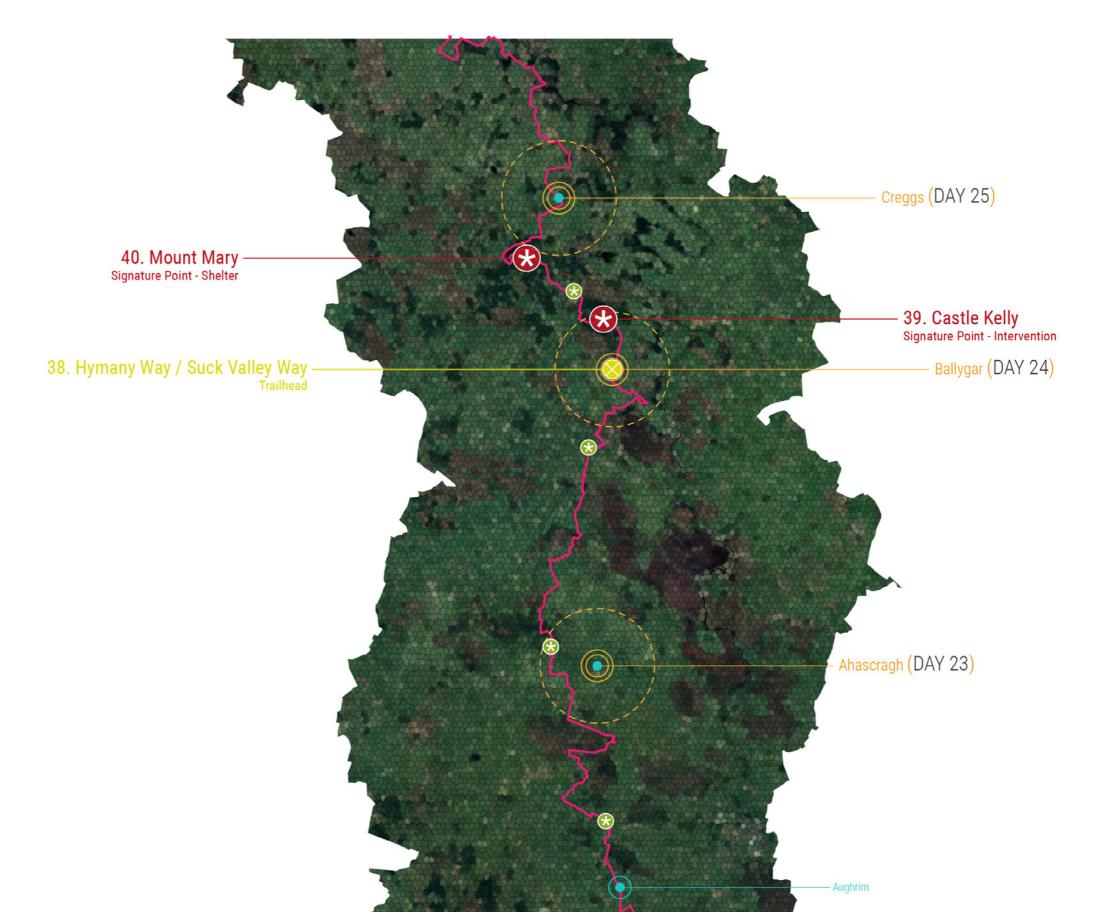
Visitor Hub

Welcome Point

Ways Trailhead

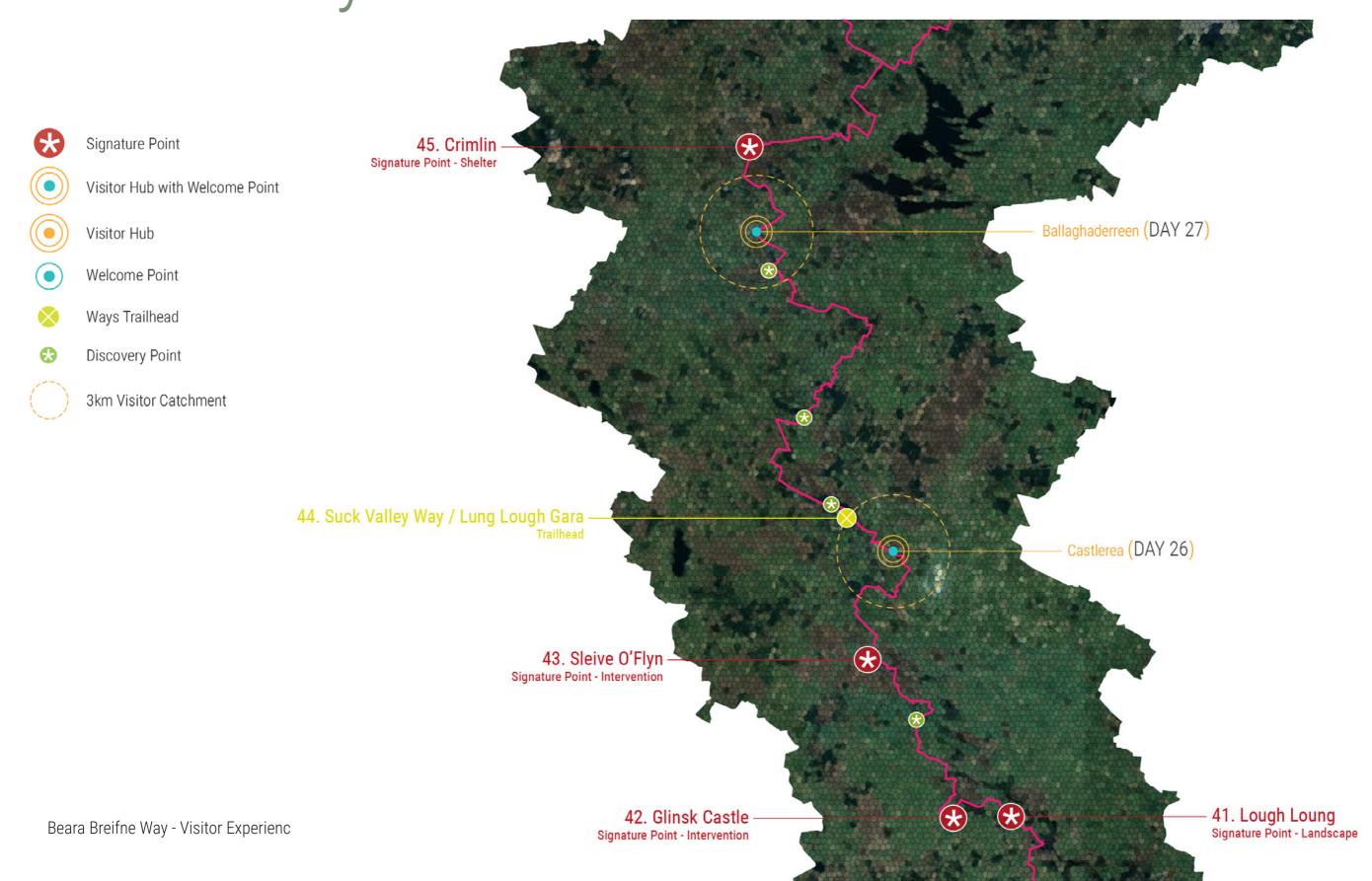
Discovery Point

3km Visitor Catchment



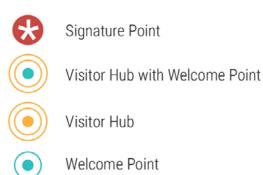
Suck Valley Way / Lung Lough Gara Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Lung Lough Gara Way / Miners Way

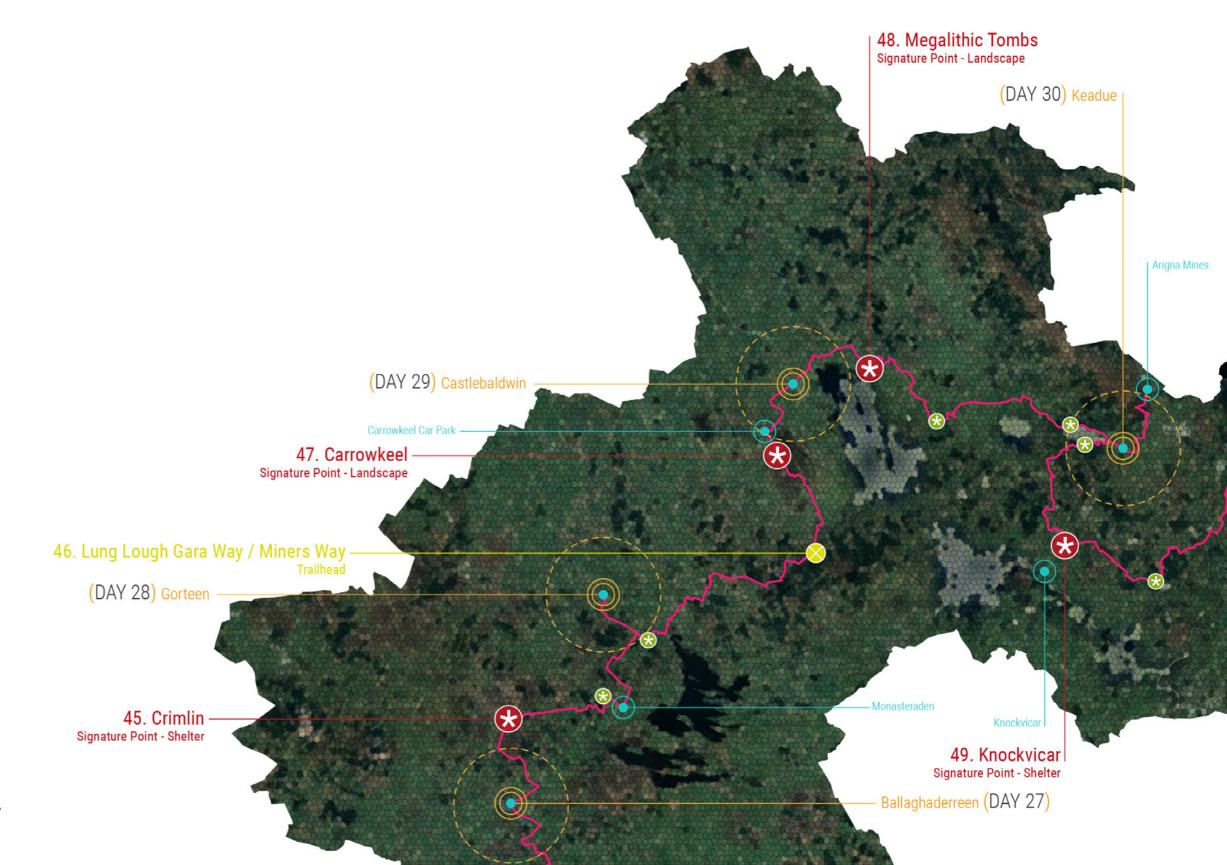
Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Ways Trailhead

Discovery Point

3km Visitor Catchment



Leitrim Way / Cavan Way

Locations shown are indicative of where hardware may be used to deliver visitor experiences, or further enhance it. Specific locations will be determined further to landowner consultation and no works till take place without third party consent.



Signature Trailhead

Signature Point

Visitor Hub with Welcome Point

Visitor Hub

Welcome Point

🔀 🛮 Ways Trailhead

Discovery Point

3km Visitor Catchment

