

<b>Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme</b>	<b>12th December 2017</b>
<b>To: The Leisure &amp; Development Committee For Information</b>	

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
<b>Strategic Theme</b>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Assets Contributing to Prosperity, Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
<b>Outcome</b>	Managing our natural assets to generate economic and social returns without compromising their sustainability.
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Head of Tourism and Recreation Services Coast and Countryside Manager
<b>Cost:</b> (If applicable)	TBC – subject to further project development

**The purpose of this report is to advise Members on the successful application to Heritage Lottery Fund for the Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme.**

### **Project concept**

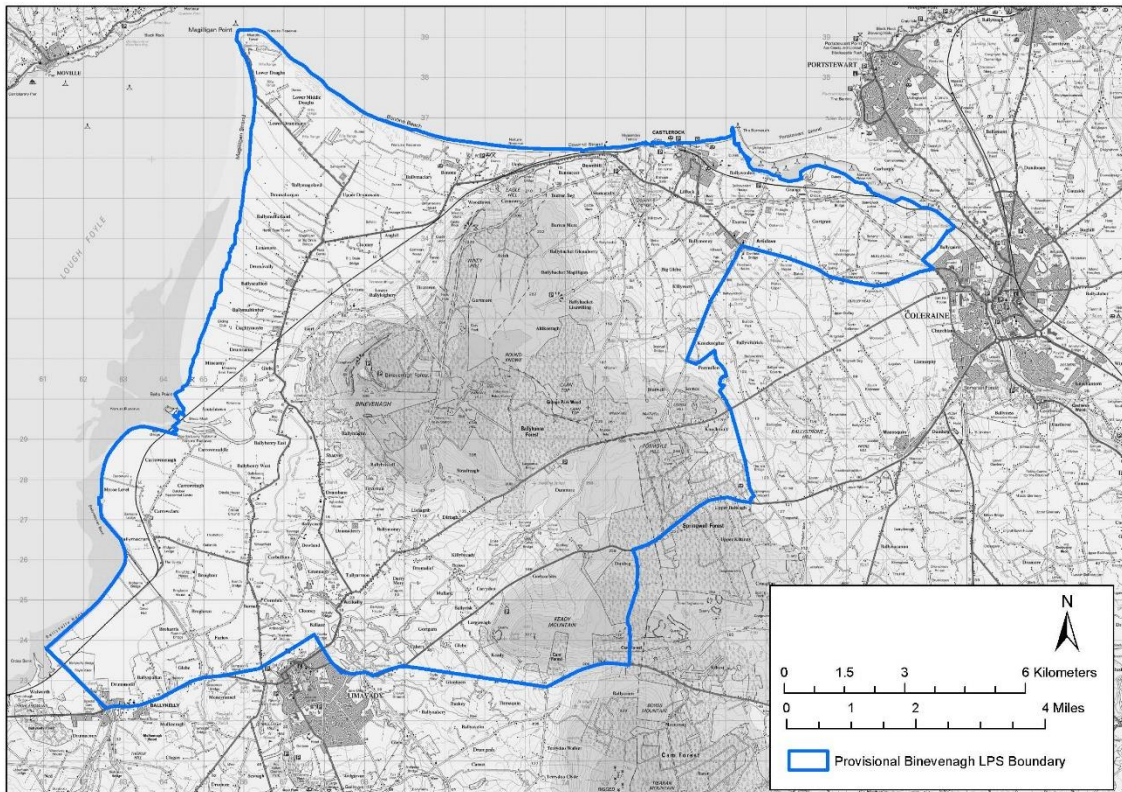
In November 2017 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced initial support for a £3.4 million project to the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) for the Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The project will focus on Binevenagh and the Coastal Lowlands area, stretching westwards from the River Bann to Lough Foyle and south towards Ballykelly and Limavady. This area includes a range of habitat and an incredible landscape taking in sandy beaches, ancient woodland, maritime cliffs and blanket bogs.

HLF has awarded an eighteen-month development grant of £204,200 to enable CCGHT to develop the five-year project which will be assessed for final approval for the full project amount of £3.4 million through HLF's Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS). A dedicated office and three-person development team will be established in the area from January 2018. When the project gains final approval, expected in 2019, five staff will be employed for the five-year delivery phase.

The scheme will explore and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area, with a focus on defence heritage, as well as outdoor recreation opportunities. The project has been developed throughout 2016/2017 in consultation with partners across the area including environment and heritage groups, community organisations, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and other statutory bodies.

## Project Area



The development team will consult widely over a period of 18 months with local communities, businesses, interest groups, government agencies and political representatives to develop projects which secure a sustainable future for the area's heritage and connects to the area's:

- Outstanding natural heritage, which includes six internationally recognised habitats and ten sites of national significance;
- Wealth of internationally and nationally important Napoleonic, WWI, WWII, Cold War and Troubles era defence heritage features;
- Unique status to develop the outdoor recreational potential for the Binevenagh area, to maximise the benefits from the promotion of the area as an activity destination/hub.

The project aims to develop a better understanding and sense of ownership of these features within the local community, so that the landscape and heritage can be valued and shared by the entire community, across all generations along with visitors to the area.

Key project and delivery partners include:

- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.
- Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (NIEA and Forest Service).
- Department for Communities.
- Ministry of Defence.
- Department of Justice (HMP Magilligan).
- Education Authority (Magilligan Field Centre).
- Loughs Agency.
- The National Trust.

In addition, three advisory groups on the themes of natural heritage, defence heritage and outdoor recreation will be established.

## **Council's Role**

As a partner of the proposed scheme, Council actively participated in the early consultations and pre-application preparations, and has continued its commitment to the Binevenagh Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Forum.

Council will play a significant role in the Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) development phase, in terms of operational support from staff across a number of service areas, including;

1. Coast and Countryside Management.
2. Outdoor Recreation.
3. Biodiversity and Habitat Management.
4. Destination Management/Tourism.
5. Causeway Museum Service.

The proposals within the application will help to deliver positive outcomes for heritage, people and communities in the Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands area, and it is the natural progression of work undertaken over the past number of years by Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust in partnership with Council's Leisure & Development Directorate. In addition the project presents an opportunity to develop sustainable tourism to promote the area as a key destination for a wide range of outdoor recreation activities.

It is anticipated that Council will be asked to continue to support the scheme throughout the implementation phase, acting as a key driver of the projects through representation on the LPS Board and as a project delivery partner. The request for any future financial support to deliver on Phase 2 has yet to be discussed, and Council will only be able to commit if projects deliver on strategic it's objectives and if resources can be made available.