
Objectives and key actions

This section identifies the main objectives of this management plan and, where necessary, recommends the key actions for addressing these, taking into account the resources available.

7.1 Protection

7.1.1 Legal mechanisms must be used to ensure protection of this World Heritage Site and the local authority must continue to adopt specific measures to protect the landscape in terms of maintaining and enhancing views and encouraging high design standards for permitted development.

The National Monuments Acts provide a strong legislative base for the protection of archaeological monuments in the area. The Minister is committed to updating and strengthening the legislation.

- Action 1.** In order to provide further legal protection for Brú na Bóinne, consideration will be given to the Registration of all Recorded Monuments in the World Heritage Site area.
- Action 2.** A structured monitoring programme of all Recorded Monuments and areas of archaeological potential in Brú na Bóinne will be undertaken.
- Action 3.** Dúchas will work with the farming community and their agricultural advisers to encourage farming practices that respect and preserve the cultural and natural resources of the area.
- Action 4.** The Boyne River Islands and the River Boyne itself have been listed as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) for designation under the European Habitats Directive and the proposed Natural Heritage Areas in Brú na Bóinne will be established under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Dúchas will monitor the conservation status of the SAC through the National Monitoring Programme.
- Action 5.** Dúchas will designate an officer with responsibility for monitoring development applications within the area of the World Heritage Site. This officer will have an advisory role at local level and will liaise with the local authority on planning matters in relation to the protection of archaeological sites and the protection and enhancement of views and prospects in this area as listed in the Meath County Development Plan.
- Action 6.** Whilst it has been the policy of Dúchas, in the context of the protection and presentation of national monuments, to acquire lands in the World Heritage Site, a further acquisition programme in this regard is not envisaged during the life of this plan.
- Action 7.** The Minister for the Environment and Local Government will publish the Interim Inventory of Architectural Heritage of County Meath before the end of 2002.
- Action 8.** Two of the three nineteenth-century churches in Brú na Bóinne are listed as Protected Structures in the Meath County Development Plan. The Minister for the Environment and Local Government will recommend that the Catholic church at Cruicerath, in Donore village, be listed as a Protected Structure by Meath County Council. The Minister may also avail of the Interim Inventory of Architectural Heritage of County Meath to make further recommendations.

7.2 Conservation

7.2.1 The passage tombs present major challenges for management, especially with regard to conservation. While excavations have revealed features in and around the tombs, the work has also exposed them to new threats such as pollution, weathering and human impact. The artwork at the three passage tombs is unparalleled and its conservation is a major issue. A balance has to be struck between the obligation to present the World Heritage Site to the public and its protection. Conservation must take precedence in balancing these twin aims.

- Action 9.** Dúchas will implement ongoing monitoring of the effects of conservation works to date at Knowth and Newgrange. It will also monitor the effects of pollution, weathering and human impact on the decorated stones at Knowth, Dowth and Newgrange, with particular attention being given to the entrance stone at Newgrange.
- Action 10.** Dúchas will review the condition and vulnerability of all archaeological sites and monuments in Brú na Bóinne and will prepare a management plan for each site in consultation with individual landowners.
- Action 11.** Dúchas will investigate alternative options for grass management for sites in State care.
- Action 12.** Management plans will be drawn up to ensure the conservation of the Natural Heritage Areas in Brú na Bóinne.
- Action 13.** During the life of the plan, Dúchas will restrict archaeological investigation of Dowth to non-invasive techniques.

7.3 Presentation: interpretation and access

7.3.1 Interpretation and presentation are powerful means of raising public awareness and appeal. The guide service, the wide range of literature and the site signage all contribute to public education and the interpretation of the cultural and natural heritage of the World Heritage Site. The impact of tourism growth on the carrying capacity at the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre needs to be assessed. It is highly desirable that some of the Brú na Bóinne monuments in private ownership be made accessible to the public. However, it is recognised that this can only occur where there is the full agreement of landowners and the local community.

- Action 14.** Dúchas recognises the need for a co-ordinated approach to the provision of directional signage for the World Heritage Site area. In this context Dúchas will seek to agree a revised signage programme with the relevant Local Authorities and the National Roads Authority and which is acceptable to local interests.
- Action 15.** Dúchas will seek to provide an access point from the Boyne Navigation Towpath to the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre in order to allow more convenient access to visitors who choose to walk to the site from Drogheda.

- Action 16.** Dúchas will examine the current scheme for the provision of tickets to B&B proprietors who operate within the core area with a view to extending it over a wider area.
- Action 17.** Dúchas will approach Bus Éireann to discuss the possibility of reopening the bus service from Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre to Slane.
- Action 18.** Dúchas will undertake a survey of visitor needs every two years to ensure a continued high standard of presentation.
- Action 19.** The main exhibition at Brú na Bóinne will be reviewed during the lifespan of this plan. In addition, consideration will be given to the provision of ancillary thematic exhibitions at the Visitor Centre which will interpret the site's broader cultural and natural significance.
- Action 20.** Dúchas will review existing publications relating to the World Heritage Site and, where necessary, produce further interpretative literature.
- Action 21.** Dúchas will promote improved access to other monuments in Brú na Bóinne by building stiles and fenced walkways. It is recognised, however, that to achieve such improved access Dúchas requires the co-operation of landowners and the local community.
- Action 22.** In order to forge a greater appreciation of the Boyne Valley Region, links will be forged with other cultural heritage sites in the area.

7.4 Research

7.4.1 The plan recognises the important role of research and excavation in establishing the international significance of Brú na Bóinne. Recent scientific research has been largely confined to archaeological investigation of the complexes at Knowth and Newgrange. Very few of the many other sites have been investigated to any appreciable extent. The World Heritage Site listing recognises the continuity of settlement at Brú na Bóinne evident in its broad range of prehistoric and historic archaeological monuments. In order to interpret these for the public, a multi-disciplinary research programme is needed which would set key priorities for the period of this plan.

- Action 23.** Dúchas will encourage a programme of third-level research focused on areas of investigation specified by them through the provision of bursaries to improve an understanding and interpretation of the area.
- Action 24.** Dúchas will undertake a feasibility study for the adaptation and future use of the Knowth House complex.
- Action 25.** Dúchas will encourage the completion to publication of all major archaeological excavations in the area to date, subject to agreement with the excavators of the individual sites.
- Action 26.** Dúchas will continue to update its aerial photographic coverage of Brú na Bóinne with the particular objective of identifying new archaeological sites.

7.5 General management objectives

- Action 27.** Dúchas will seek to have Meath and Louth County Councils formally adopt this management plan and append it to their County Development Plans.
- Action 28.** Dúchas will maintain a liaison with the Steering Committee of the Boyne Valley Integrated Development Plan.
- Action 29.** This management plan recognises the need for closer co-operation with the local community, government departments and agencies which have responsibility for undertaking activities in Brú na Bóinne. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the management plan the Minister for the Environment and Local Government will establish a consultative committee to assist the implementation of this management plan while at the same time providing a channel for communication between Dúchas and the local community.

Appendices

Appendix 1

List of Recorded Monuments in the core and buffer zones of Brú na Bóinne.

Mon. No.	SH/PL/TR	Nat. Grid	Townland	Classification
ME019-015	019-/12/1	30043/27520	Monknewtown	Enclosure
ME019-01601	019-/08/5	30071/27547	Monknewtown	Henge
ME019-01602	019-/08/5	30071/27547	Monknewtown	House site
ME019-01603	019-/08/5	30071/27547	Monknewtown	Ring-ditch
ME019-01604	019-/08/5	30071/27547	Monknewtown	Pit burial(s)
ME019-017	019-/08/5	30089/27543	Monknewtown	Tumulus
ME019-018	019-/08/5	30103/27530	Monknewtown	Font(s)
ME019-019	019-/12/2	30109/27519	Monknewtown	Church
ME019-027	019-/12/4	29988/27387	Knowth	Field system
ME019-028	019-/12/4	29989/27384	Knowth	Enclosure
ME019-029	019-/12/4	29997/27395	Knowth	Enclosure
ME019-03001	019-/15/3	29967/27344	Knowth	Cemetery
ME019-038	019-/15/3	29956/27291	Knowth	Promontory fort inland
ME019-039	019-/16/1	30057/27307	Newgrange	Ringfort (rath/cashel)
ME019-040	019-/16/3	30202/27327	Dowth	Tumulus site
ME019-041	019-/16/3	30209/27329	Dowth	Mound
ME019-042	019-/16/3	30217/27333	Dowth	Tumulus
ME019-043	019-/16/2	30141/27300	Dowth	Tumulus
ME019-04401	019-/16/5	30084/27277	Newgrange	Cursus
ME019-04402	019-/16/5	30084/27277	Newgrange	Henge
ME019-046	019-/16/4	30061/27268	Newgrange	Megalithic tomb(s)
ME019-048	019-/15/6	29922/27222	Rossnaree	Souterrain
ME019-04901	019-/16/5	30114/27230	Newgrange	Passage tomb
ME019-04902	019-/16/5	30114/27230	Newgrange	Henge
ME019-050	019-/16/5	30133/27247	Newgrange	Earthwork site
ME019-051	019-/16/5	30140/27277	Newgrange	Tumulus
ME019-052	019-/16/6	30158/27275	Dowth	Mound
ME019-053	019-/16/6	30166/27259	Dowth	Standing stone
ME019-054	019-/16/6	30204/27250	Roughgrange	Sheela-na-gig possible
ME019-055	019-/16/6	30162/27249	Newgrange	Standing stone
ME019-05801	019-/16/6	30157/27213	Newgrange	Tumulus site
ME019-05802	019-/16/6	30156/27212	Newgrange	Mound site

Mon. No.	SH/PL/TR	Nat. Grid	Townland	Classification
ME019-059	019-/15/6	29925/27254	Rossnaree	Tumulus site
ME019-064	019-/12/6	30186/27443	Dowth	Architectural fragment
ME019-065	019-/15/6	29961/27267	Newgrange	Enclosure site
ME019-066	019-/16/5	30111/27256	Dowth	Archaeological complex
ME019-06601	019-/16/6	30207/27261	Dowth	Weir
ME019-06602	019-/16/6	30191/27255	Roughgrange	Mill site
ME019-067	019-/16/5	30118/27264	Dowth	Archaeological complex
ME019-06701	019-/16/2	30074/27284	Newgrange	Architectural fragment
ME019-06702	019-/16/4	30053/27231	Newgrange	Enclosure site
ME019-06703	019-/16/4	30048/27216	Newgrange	Potential site – map
ME019-06704	019-/16/5	30104/27204	Newgrange	Pot. site – aerial photo
ME019-06706	019-/16/6	30184/27239	Newgrange	Weir
ME019-068	019-/15/6	29945/27233	Newgrange	Archaeological complex
ME019-06801	019-/15/6	29937/27272	Newgrange	Weir
ME019-06802	019-/15/6	29938/27254	Rossnaree	Weir
ME019-06803	019-/15/6	29948/27220	Newgrange	Weir
ME019-06804	019-/15/6	29963/27210	Newgrange	Mill site
ME019-069	019-/12/4	29994/27389	Knowth	Archaeological complex
ME019-070	019-/08/5	30073/27533	Monknewtown	Archaeological complex
ME019-071	019-/16/3	30206/27337	Dowth	Archaeological complex
ME020-001	020-/09/2	30351/27506	Proudfootstown	Castle site
ME020-002	020-/05/6	30396/27585	Oldbridge	Cist
ME020-003	020-/06/4	30475/27567	Oldbridge	Enclosure site
ME020-004	020-/06/5	30530/27532	Oldbridge	Souterrain
ME020-00401	020-/10/1	30534/27528	Oldbridge	Standing stone
ME020-007	020-/09/3	30438/27483	Oldbridge	Souterrain
ME020-009	020-/09/5	30355/27445	Dowth	Passage tomb site
ME020-010	020-/09/5	30343/27418	Dowth	Henge
ME020-011	020-/10/5	30557/27406	Sheephouse	Church
ME020-012	020-/09/5	30306/27396	Dowth	Tumulus
Mon. No.	SH/PL/TR	Nat. Grid	Townland	Classification
ME020-013	020-/09/4	30301/27391	Dowth	Passage tomb

Mon. No.	SH/PL/TR	Nat. Grid	Townland	Classification
ME020-015	020-/09/4	30270/27393	Dowth	Mound
ME020-01601	020-/09/4	30239/27374	Dowth	Field system
ME020-01602	020-/09/4	30239/27375	Dowth	Megalithic tomb possible
ME020-017	020-/09/4	30237/27378	Dowth	Passage tomb
ME020-018	020-/09/4	30260/27381	Dowth	Tower house
ME020-019	020-/09/4	30263/27373	Dowth	Church
ME020-020	020-/13/1	30232/27344	Dowth	Mound
ME020-023	020-/13/2	30339/27354	Dowth	Mound
ME020-024	020-/05/6	30389/27565	Oldbridge	Weir(s)
ME020-025	020-/05/6	30460/27561	Oldbridge	Battlefield
ME020-027	020-/13/1	30277/27313	Stalleen	Dwelling possible
ME020-028	020-/13/4	30247/27270	Dowth	Archaeological complex
ME020-02801	020-/13/1	30259/27300	Dowth	Weir
ME020-02802	020-/13/1	30255/27287	Dowth	Weir
ME020-02803	020-/13/1	30263/27302	Stalleen	Mill site
ME020-02901	020-/13/3	30457/27333	Sheephouse	Fulacht fiadh possible
ME020-030	020-/10/1	30523/27514	Oldbridge	Standing Stone
ME026-02101	020-/04/2	30067/27183	Newgrange	Weir
ME026-02102	020-/04/2	30101/27201	Newgrange	Potential site – aerial photo
ME026-02103	020-/04/2	30126/27190	Newgrange	Ford
ME026-022	020-/04/1	30028/27144	Gilltown	Enclosure
ME026-004	020-/03/1	29811/27190	Rossnaree	Tumulus
ME026-00501	020-/03/3	29978/27191	Rossnaree	Sheela-na-gig
ME026-00502	020-/03/3	29977/27188	Rossnaree	Mill site possible
ME026-00503	020-/04/1	29984/27189	Newgrange	Ford
ME026-006	026-/04/2	30078/27189	Newgrange	Henge site
ME026-020	026-/03/3	29968/27196	Newgrange	Weir
ME026-021	026-/04/2	30109/27190	Newgrange	Archaeological complex
ME027-001	027-/01/3	30405/27190	Stalleen	Cemetery possible

Appendix 2

Recorded Protected Structures in Brú na Bóinne listed in the Meath County Development Plan (2001).

Ref. No.	Name	Class
H52	Dowth	House
H98	Netterville Charity	House
H105	Oldbridge	House
CH32	Rossin	Church
CH33	Rossnaree	Church
B19	Oldbridge	Bridge
Ind 11	Rossin Mill	Mill
Ind12	Rossnaree Mill	Mill
M15	Netterville (Dowth)	Monument

Appendix 3

The Irish Wetland Birds Society survey of species in Newgrange.

Species	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
Little grebe	-	1	5	4
Cormorant	5	1	1	2
Grey heron	1	3	1	1
Mute swan	15	12	12	13
Whooper swan	38	20	3	16
Shelduck	2	—	—	—
Wigeon	—	—	—	1
Teal	—	—	27	—
Mallard	2	31	185	57
Moorhen	1	4	17	8
Coot	—	—	3	—
Lapwing	150	11	48	136
Snipe	12	—	15	—
Bar-tailed godwit	—	1	—	—
Curlew	—	225	227	245
Redshank	—	10	—	—
Kingfisher	—	1	—	—
Black-headed gull	0	125	150	171
Common gull	—	18	—	2
Herring gull	182	—	10	—
Great black-backed gull	82	—	3	—

Appendix 4

Natural Recreational Areas in Brú na Bóinne listed in the Meath County Development Plan (2001).

Ref. No.	Site
8	Boyne Valley Walkway
10	Newgrange
14	Knowth
64	Site of Battle of the Boyne
83	Netterville Monument

Appendix 5

Views and prospects in Brú na Bóinne protected within the Meath County Development Plan (2001).

Reference Number	Townland
VP3	Crewbane Knowth Newgrange Proudfootstown Dowth
VP4	Oldbridge
VP5	Oldbridge Rathmullen
VP6	Oldhouse Sheephouse Donore
VP7	Stalleen Red Mountain Cruicerath Roughgrange
VP8	Stalleen Dowth Newgrange Giltown Rossnaree
VP9	Rosnaree Fennor Crewbane

Appendix 6

Rural Environmental Protection Scheme measures

- Follow a farm nutrient management plan prepared for the total area of the farm.
- Adopt an appropriate grassland management plan for the total area of the farm.
- Protect and maintain all watercourses and wells.
- Retain wildlife habitats.
- Maintain farm and field boundaries.
- Cease using herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers in and around hedgerows, lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, except with the consent of the Minister.
- Protect features of historical and/or archaeological interest.
- Maintain and improve the visual appearance of the farm and farmyard.
- Produce tillage crops: without burning straw or stubble, leaving a specified field margin uncultivated where no nutrients or sprays are applied.
- Become familiar with environmentally friendly farming practice.
- Prepare, monitor and update agri-environmental plan and keep such farm and environmental records as may be prescribed by the Minister.

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