

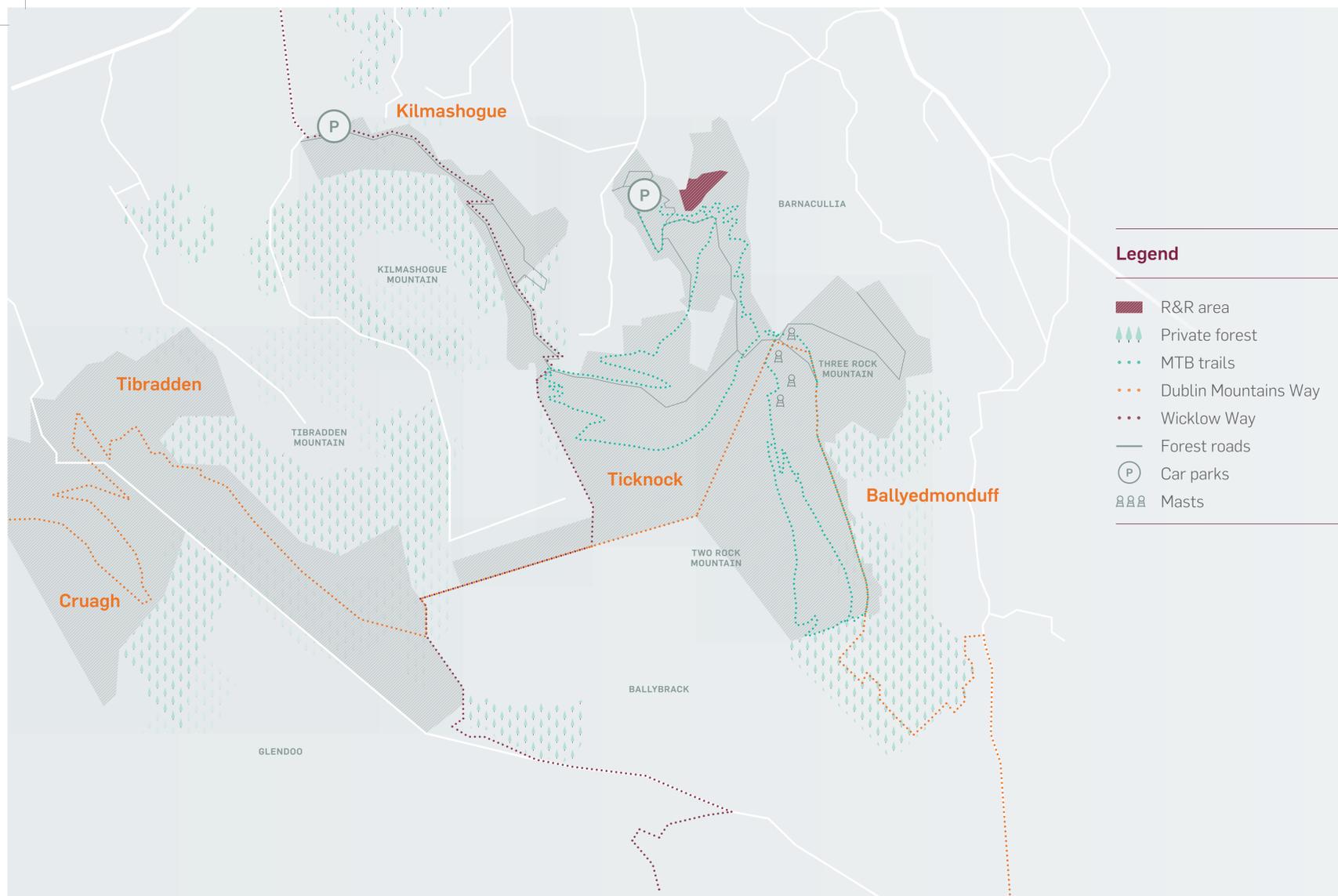


What's going on in Ticknock?

Here in Ticknock, as part of the Dublin Mountains Makeover plans we are converting an area of Sitka spruce and Corsican pine forest into native woodland to enhance the habitat for wildlife, enrich the forest's recreational appeal for people and bring more autumn colour to the hills. We call this approach to forest management 'R&R': Removing the productive timber trees and Replanting with native trees like Scots pine, birch, rowan, oak and holly.

We'll start by clearfelling the spruce and pine trees. Afterwards, we'll fence the area to keep the deer out. Then we'll plant native tree species next winter.

This is the second year of operations as part of the Dublin Mountains Makeover – a long-term plan to transform nine Dublin mountains forests for people and nature. To stay up to date, sign up for our newsletter at www.coillte.ie/coillte-nature/



What is R&R (Remove & Replant)?

In the 1950s, the first conifer trees were planted here to produce a home-grown supply of timber. At that time, Dublin was a much smaller city and nobody thought much about outdoor recreation in forests. Today, these forests are among the most important recreational sites for a growing urban population: Ticknock saw over 1,100 visits a day last year. As well as enhanced recreation, there is also a strong call for more native woodlands to benefit nature.

We've identified another R&R area here in Ticknock for new native woodlands. Early in 2021 we will clearfell the conifers. Then later in the year the site will be cleaned by pulling the old branches into 'windrows' which will decompose over time, and then cultivated to give the new seedlings the best chance on these exposed mountain slopes. Then we'll erect deer fencing: Sika deer are very common in these forests and they like to eat our native trees, so we have to protect the new seedlings we plant.

This site was surveyed last year by an ecologist and forester to examine the soil type, ground flora and moisture regime. These factors determine the best mix of native tree species and the most suitable native woodland type. A pioneer birch woodland is most suitable on this site with its peaty podzolic soils and we will plant a mix of downy birch, Scots pine, sessile oak, rowan and holly. Willow cuttings will be collected nearby and planted in the wetter areas particularly along the stream.

There are a number of small areas of biodiversity within the site which will be protected during the harvesting and replanting operations. These include the small stream flowing through the site, the small rocky grove of Sweet chestnut trees and the group of granite boulders covered in moss, all of which form important microhabitats.

Next winter, we'll be back on site to plant the new native woodland.

How does forest harvesting work?

Today, most tree felling is done by harvesting machines, with the operator using hi-tech controls to cut the tree, take off the branches and cut the trunk into different lengths.

Another machine called a forwarder works alongside the harvester, bringing the different lengths of log to the side of the road. The branches that are cut off the trunk are put on the ground to make a 'brash mat' so that the machine can drive over them as it works. This helps to stop rutting and protect the soil.

Some trees have grown so big – particularly along the edges – that a chainsaw operator will also be needed to fell these trees.

You'll see different stacks of logs along the road. Each stack is a different timber product sawlog, pallet wood or pulpwood. Timber hauliers collect the logs from the side of the road and deliver them to the sawmills for processing.

What happens to the timber harvested here in Ticknock?

The trees that we remove from the forest will be cut into different lengths and processed into a range of different renewable products by an industry that supports 12,000 jobs across Ireland, mainly in rural areas. Modern timber processing is extremely efficient – no part of the tree gets wasted.

The **long straight logs** will be processed into sawnwood for construction to build our homes.

The **shorter logs** will be processed into pallet wood (for transporting goods) and fencing products.

The **pulp wood** from the tops of the trees will be made into wood-based panels like OSB and MDF.

The **poorer quality logs** will be used for biofuel.

Please take care!

In a few weeks, this section of forest will be open again to explore and enjoy. In the meantime, please take care if you visit the forest while works are taking place.

- Some trails and roads will be diverted temporarily to ensure everyone's safety.
- Watch out for timber lorries.
- Don't climb on the stacks of logs along the side of the road.

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