

ROSSBEIGH LOCAL AREA PLAN

1.0 CONTEXT

1.1 Location

Rossbeigh is a small coastal development node on the northern coast of the Iveragh Peninsula directly south of Inch Sandspit. It is situated 2 kilometers to the west of Glenbeigh and 15 kilometers to the southwest of Killorglin.



Figure 1: Location of Rossbeigh settlement

1.2 Population

There are no population statistics for the plan area. The settlement is located within the Glanbehy ED. This ED has displayed consistent population growth since the 1996 census, increasing by 12.7% in the intercensal period 1996 - 2002 and again by 5.8% in the 2002 - 2006 census period. This growth however, has not been occurring within the development node. Rossbeigh is largely comprised of holiday homes and, the permanent population is small.

1.3 Functions and Facilities

The area is primarily a tourist location. A significant percentage of houses are holiday homes many of which are for rent. In addition, its fine beach, scenic location, availability of outdoor pursuits, ensures it is a popular destination for day trippers. It also supports tourism in Glenbeigh as the proximity of the two settlements allows for a natural pooling of tourist attractions.

Tourist facilities include a public house, hot food take away, public toilets and a playground has recently been constructed. There is also a beach front tennis court and a basketball court. Local retail and service needs are met in the adjacent village of Glenbeigh.

1.4 Infrastructure

The settlement is currently serviced by a collection network entering an overloaded septic tank. It is proposed to pump the effluent from this tank to a new treatment system. This system will ensure that effluent entering the designated cSAC on the coast does not have a detrimental effect on the natural environment where it is important that the quality of the waters is maintained if species and habitats vulnerable to water pollution are to be protected.

1.5 Urban Form

Rossbeigh consists of a relatively compact cluster of largely single storey houses. It is situated on the lower reaches of the Curra Hill which provides the settlement with a dramatic backdrop. The density of development is significantly higher than one would expect in a rural area and its impact when viewed from the R564, Rossbeigh Beach and other locations on the Dingle Bay is emphasised by its hill side location. It is important to ensure that the existing settlement envelope is not extended in height or width if the innate qualities of this natural rural landscape are to be retained. An important element of the settlement pattern is the uniformity in the ridge line direction which adds to the simplicity of the appearance.

A car park at the entrance to the beach offers seasonal tourist related facilities such as public toilets and takeaway food. The settlement itself does not cater for day trippers with the exception of a public house and the amenities. As such, the car park and its structures are an important part of the tourist experience and this area should present as an attractive public space. The lack of delineated pedestrian areas and roads particularly at the junction creates confusion and impacts on safety. The upgrading of the beachside structures and public spaces in conjunction with the picnic area would make a significant contribution to improving the entrance to the beach and enhancing tourist facilities.

1.6 Built Heritage and Archaeology

The development of Rossbeigh as a holiday settlement on its current scale has occurred relatively recently and does not, to any appreciable extent, feature structures or streetscapes of heritage value.

1.7 Natural Environment

Rossbeigh's coastal landscape is the keystone of its tourist industry with some of the most picturesque and striking land and seascapes in the county. The beach extends out into the estuary and is bounded by a large sand dune system. The northern end of the spit has been transformed significantly over the past year due to erosion and given the changing weather patterns in recent years it is difficult to predict what changes may occur here over the coming years. Looking north the settlement enjoys spectacular views of Inch Beach and the mountains of the Dingle Peninsula. Against this coastal setting the Seefin Mountain provides a dramatic back drop. Within the Rossbeigh area some land has been zoned Prime and Secondary Special Amenity. (See the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015). This natural landscape has little capacity to absorb development while maintaining its character. It is an objective of this plan to ensure the protection of the landscape when determining the location, scale and form of new development, in order to protect its natural heritage, recreational values and its contribution to the tourist industry. Rossbeigh is bounded by a candidate Special Area of Conservation (site code: 00343) and is in close proximity to a proposed Special Protected Area (site code 004154). These designations are intended to protect important species and habitats.

This plan therefore, prioritises the protection of these areas and includes objectives to ensure that any development arising on foot of this plan will not have a detrimental effect on the quality of the receiving waters.

The views of the Rossbeigh Spit and Dingle Bay are striking when viewed from the R564 and consequently it is protected as a Secondary Special Amenity area (See the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015). Those leaving or arriving at Rossbeigh do so via the R554, which connects to the Ring of Kerry Tourist Route. It is desirable that views and prospects along this road are preserved and development on the seaward side of the road is not considered.

1.8 Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

The settlement is located on the R564 which offers spectacular views over Dingle bay. Tourist traffic is significant on fine days throughout the summer. There are no pavements along the R564 or around the service and picnic area. It is necessary in the interests of safe movement to secure the provision of pavements.

1.9 Employment

The area offers some seasonal tourist related and agricultural employment opportunities. Tourist facilities however, are minimal and it is likely that people travel to other urban centres such as Cahersiveen and Killorglin for employment.

1.10 Growth and Residential Development

The sensitive nature of the natural environment, the topography, the landscape, and the extent of existing development limit Rossbeigh's capacity to absorb additional development on any substantial scale. The envisaged wastewater treatment upgrade will provide proper treatment of existing effluent with additional capacity for future development.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Rossbeigh is a tourist generated settlement with few services and limited infrastructure and is located within an environmentally sensitive area. The topography and sensitive landscape limit the expansion of the settlement outside the existing development envelope to a significant degree. These constraints limit its capacity to accommodate sustainable growth. The strategy for the area therefore, is to allow small scale infill development within the existing development envelope.

This will maintain the existing compact settlement pattern while minimising any negative environmental impact. The development of a settlement core with improved tourism and service facilities is envisaged. Development on the seaward side of the R564 would interfere with sea views and dilute the compact form of the existing development pattern and may harm biodiversity interests. Development will not therefore, be considered on sites on the seaward side of the R564.

3.0 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	It is an objective of the Council to:
OO-1	Ensure that future development in the area shall be small in scale and shall take the form of infill housing within the limits of the existing development cluster.
OO-2	Ensure that development on Curra Mountain does not occur above the level of existing development
OO-3	Ensure that development proposals will not be permitted on the seaward side of the R564.
OO-4	Require that new developments should be designed to a high standard to ensure integration with the landscape.
OO-5	Ensure that the design response to multiple level sites minimizes the impact on the residential amenity of existing and proposed properties and also minimizes visual impacts.
OO-6	Facilitate the development of the junction area, improve its delineation and upgrade its appearance
OO-7	Facilitate the improvements to the appearance of the beachfront service area and of the entrance to the beach, in a manner compatible with the conservation objectives of adjoining Natura 2000 site designations.
OO-8	Facilitate the provision of additional disabled parking spaces on the existing tarmacadamed area which is located in proximity to the beach access.
OO-9	It is an objective of the Council that development proposals adjacent to or on Rossbeigh beach shall be screened for an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Directive