

## BAILE AN SCEILG LOCAL AREA PLAN

### 1.0 CONTEXT

#### 1.1 Location

Baile an Sceilg is a coastal village located off the R566 on the Iveragh Peninsula. Dún Géagáin with which it shares many services is located 1.5 km to the north. Although a certain level of development has taken place between the two settlements in recent years they can still be viewed as two distinct settlements. Baile an Sceilg is located within An Gaeltacht Uíbh Ráthaigh.

#### 1.2 Population

There are no population figures for the village of Baile an Sceilg itself. It is located within the ED of Ballinskelligs. The population in this ED decreased slightly between 2002 and 2006 from 358 to 355 people. It increased marginally in the 2011 census to 372 people.

#### 1.3 Functions & Facilities

Baile an Sceilg is an important tourist settlement on the Skellig Ring. It shares many services and functions with Dún Géagáin. It is the more dispersed of the two villages with fewer services. The settlement has a few social facilities including a public house, shop and an industrial unit producing bags and packaging. The local GAA (St Michaels) pitch is located between Baile an Sceilg and Dún Géagáin.

#### 1.4 Infrastructure

There is a public water supply available in the village. Water quality is an ongoing issue during the summer months. If required can be connected with and utilise surplus capacity from the Waterville Scheme

There is a primary treatment unit serving the area. The unit is inadequate and there are no plans to upgrade.

#### 1.5 Urban Form

The village is comprised of a scattered collection of houses, linear in form comprised of mainly detached structures without a set building line. In recent years the development of a number of holiday developments has altered the character of the settlement and has led to a significant increase in the built-up area. The new developments are comprised of relatively uniform house types in a cluster formation. Some recent developments have added to the streetscape element of the village, if this streetscape was further developed it would give the village a more defined core area and urban structure. The complex of buildings attached to the cable station was a significant landmark in the area, but over the years most of these buildings have been demolished. A terrace of four two storey houses remains from the original Cable Station complex.

### **1.6 Built Heritage & Archaeology**

There are no recorded monuments within the proposed plan area. Kinard House is a protected structure (ref KY-097-001). A terrace of dwellings forms a prominent part of the streetscape. These four terraced dwellings (Cable Station) are attractive vernacular style two storey buildings.

### **1.8 Natural Environment and Amenity**

Baile an Sceilg is located in a low lying pocket of land about 500 metres from the shoreline of Ballinskelligs Bay. The beach area has an EU Blue Flag designation

The seaward and southern side of the village is zoned Secondary Special Amenity in the 2009 –2015 Kerry County Development Plan. The bay area is part of the Baile an Sceilg Bay and Inny Estuary candidate SAC which is of considerable conservation significance because of the presence of two types of salt marsh, which are listed in Annex 1 of the EU habitats Directive. The area also has a significant population of Ringed Plover and Common Scoter and the sand dunes in the area support a population of rare liverwort species called the Petalwort (*Petalophyllum ralfsii*).

### **1.9 Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic**

The beach area generates a lot of vehicular traffic during the summer months and the car park area can get very congested at times. Tourist traffic during the summer months creates a busy atmosphere but during the winter months, because of its relatively isolated location traffic is mainly local.

### **1.10 Employment**

The largest employer in the village is Delpac, which manufactures bags and other forms of packaging for the Irish and British markets.

### **1.11 An Gaeltacht**

Baile an Sceilg is located within a Gaeltacht area and the preservation and promotion of the Irish language is critical in its future development. It is considered that the revival of the Irish language college would add a further attraction to an area in need of employment and income.

### **1.12 Growth and Residential Development**

A number of housing developments on both sides of the main street have been completed in recent years. These dwellings are primarily used as holiday homes. A few single houses for permanent residents have been completed over the same period. The number of holiday homes constructed in recent years far outweighs the number of permanent residential completions.

There has been a considerable level of ribbon development on the approach roads over the years. All new residential dwellings will have to comply with the rural settlement policies as contained in the County Development Plan.

The development boundary for Baile an Sceilig defines the existing extent of the area where new development may be considered, whilst also allowing for some expansion for development adjacent to the village core. During the lifetime of this Plan, development will focus mainly on these lands, located close to the village core.

It is the an objective of the plan to encourage the development of a compact and sustainable village structure by ensuring that new development is contiguous with existing development and makes effective use of backland and infill sites. All new development shall occur within the development boundary and shall reflect the existing vernacular design.

## **2.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

*The overall vision for Baile an Sceilig is to ensure that it develops as an attractive location for residents and tourists alike and that future development preserves the village's character and reinforces it where necessary*

It is important to maintain the open countryside between Baile an Sceilig and Dún Géagáin. The development strategy for Baile an Sceilig is to promote a more gradual organic development of Baile an Sceilig as a rural village and tourist centre commensurate with the level of infrastructure provision. Growth in recent years has been largely confined to the holiday home sector.

The village is located within a Gaeltacht area and it is important that no development takes place which will be detrimental to the promotion of the Irish language. It is considered that the revival of the Irish language college would add a further attraction to an area in need of employment and income.

The development strategy for the village is to:

- Ensure that future development should support the existing role and function of the village as a small local focal point for it's surrounding rural community
- Enhance the visual amenities of the village. The village is on an important tourist route, the Skellig Ring, and development should not detract from the amenities that make this drive a popular tourist attraction.
- Promote the use of the Irish language and revival of the Irish language college.
- Ensure that future residential development within the village should cater for the needs of the local population who wish to live in the area on a permanent basis.
- Promote the development of commercial/retail outlet serving the local community at an appropriate location.

### 3.0 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	It is an objective of the Council to:
OO-1	Promote the sustainable development of year round facilities providing increased services to the local area and increasing added value of the tourism product.

### 4.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	Open Space, Recreation and Amenity It is an objective of the Council to:
A-1	Reserve lands for the development of a village green as indicated on the zoning map.

Objective No.	Commercial/retail Facilities It is an objective of the Council to:
CR-1	Promote the sustainable development of commercial/retail outlet serving the local community at an appropriate location.

Objective No.	Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic It is an objective of the Council to:
T-1	Improve pedestrian connectivity within the settlement by the provision of pedestrian routes at appropriate locations.

Objective No.	Gaeltacht Uíbh Rathaigh It is an objective of the Council to:
G-1	Preserve and promote the use of Irish as the community language. Facilitate the revival of the Irish college.