

CHAPELTOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN

1.0 CONTEXT

1.1 Location

Chapeltown (An Caol; the Narrows) is located on the southern side of Valentia Island. It is a small village on the island and connected to Knightstown by the R565. It is halfway between Knightstown and Portmagee. 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.

1.2 Population

There are no population figures for the village of Chapeltown itself. The DED of Valencia covers the village and the entire island. The 2006 census showed 713 persons. This figure increased from 690 in 2002. This represented a 3% increase in population. The population decreased in the 2011 census to 664 people.

1.3 Functions & Facilities

Chapeltown has a range of social facilities including a Roman Catholic Church, community centre, a public house, shop. There is no grocery shop within the settlement. The local GAA ground & pitch is located here. Scoil Naisiúnta Dar Earca and the community centre serve the entire island. In this sense Chapeltown acts as the social centre for the island.

1.4 Infrastructure

There is a public water supply available in the village. There is no wastewater treatment unit in the village. There is a preliminary report for the provision of a new system but it is unlikely to be provided within the life of this plan.

1.5 Urban Form

Chapeltown was one of many villages developed around newly constructed churches following Catholic Emancipation in the 1830s. Chapeltown is a traditional rural village, linear in form comprised of mainly detached structures without a set building line. The village has developed in a linear fashion along the R565 with limited development along the local roads, which intersect with the R565 at the village centre.

A recently constructed terrace type development along the R565 serves to enhance the village streetscape. If this streetscape was further developed it would give the village a more defined core area and urban structure.

There are a variety of building types within the village. Building heights vary throughout the village. Some new cluster type developments in the village are of a uniform design which is untypical of the older built forms.

1.6 Built Heritage & Archaeology

There are no Protected Structures or recorded monuments within the proposed plan area.

1.7 Natural environment and Amenity

Chapeltown is located in a low lying pocket of land about 1km from the shoreline of Valentia Island which forms part of the Valentia Harbour/Portmagee Channel SAC.

A number of invasive introduced species, including Japanese knotweed and Giant Rhubarb are found within the village. These plants are not native to the area and as well as being harmful to biodiversity can look out of place as they form dense thickets along roadsides, waste ground and waterways.

They reproduce rapidly and are difficult to kill once established. It is therefore very important to prevent the movement of earth contaminated with rhizomes, cuttings from hedge trimming or other fragments from one area to another.

Given the prevalence of these plants in the settlement, development proposals, where appropriate, will be required to submit a suitable scheme for their eradication and/or control, prior approved by the Planning Authority.

1.8 Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

Due to its location on the R565 roughly midway between Portmagee and Knightstown there is a considerable amount of through traffic especially during the summer months. Insufficient car parking space is a problem. There is no car park attached to the church and the community centre has minimal parking available. Parking along the R565 is problematic and providing additional parking space within the village centre is a priority. Sightlines at the junction of the R565 and the Coast road in the village centre are inadequate and need to be improved

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.

1.9 Growth and Residential Development

Unlike Knightstown, the recent level of development in Chapeltown has been limited. However there has been a considerable demand for development along the R565 both to the east towards Knightstown and to the west towards Portmagee. This reduction in the level of open countryside between the settlements is considered undesirable and in the long term would lead to a lack of definition for the settlement.

Chapeltown has the capacity to attract and absorb future demand for detached dwelling houses that would otherwise be met through linear roadside development in rural areas. This will contribute to a reduction in unsustainable ribbon development, while ensuring the demand for larger detached dwellings is catered for in a sustainable pattern and in close proximity to the school and other services.

The development boundary for Chapeltown defines the existing extent of the area where new development may be considered, whilst also allowing for some expansion for some re-development in 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.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The overall vision for Chapeltown 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.

The development strategy for the village is to:

- Maintain the open countryside between Chapeltown and Knightstown.
- Ensure that future development supports the existing role and function of the village as a small local focal point for it's surrounding rural community
- Ensure that future residential development within the village caters 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.
- Development proposals should not facilitate the introduction or spread of invasive introduced species, such as Japanese Knotweed or Giant Rhubarb.

3.0 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 & develop a riverside park.

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

Objective No.	Architectural & Built Heritage It is an objective of the Council to:
AH-1	Encourage the appropriate reuse and sensitive restoration of unused/derelict properties.

Objective No.	Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic It is an objective of the Council to:
T-1	Provide for an additional car parking area within the village.

Objective No.	Natural Environment It is an objective of the Council to:
NE-1	Where invasive introduced species, including Japanese Knotweed are identified on a site or in the vicinity of a site (underground parts of the plants may extend laterally up to 7 meters), the planning Authority may request a suitable scheme for their eradication and/or control as part of the planning application process.
NE-2	Ensure that any significant future developments on these lands are subject to a flood impact assessment