

CASTLE COVE LOCAL AREA PLAN

1.0 CONTEXT

1.1 Location

Castlecove (Cuan A'Chaisleáin/An Siopa Dubh) is a small coastal village, east of Caherdaniel and south west of Sneem. The village is situated on the N70 Ring of Kerry tourist route.

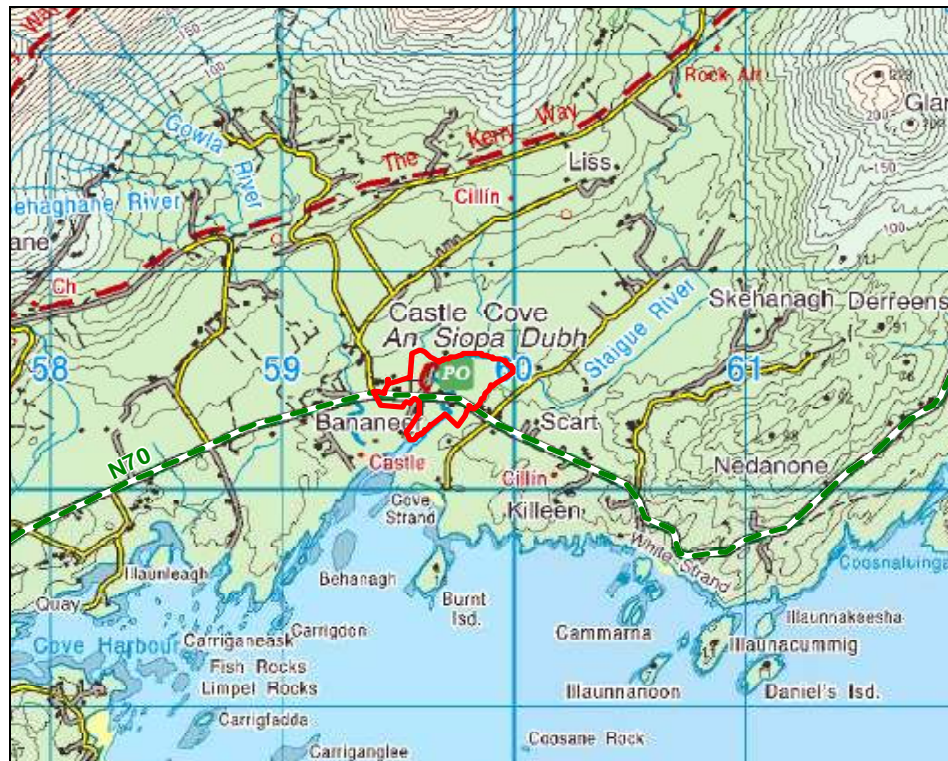


Figure 1: The location of the Castlecove settlement

1.2 Population

There are no population figures for the village of Castlecove in the census. It is located within the Electoral District of Castlecove. Population figures for this ED displayed an increase from 293 persons to 319 persons (8.9% increase) between 2006 and 2011.

1.3 Functions & Facilities

The village has a post office, a public house, a shop/petrol pumps, a Church and a café/surf shop. Lúb ná hÁbhann residential development is part constructed at the eastern end of the village. Staigue Fort exhibition centre is located to the west of the settlement on the road leading to Staigue Fort. The exhibition centre also has a pub and café. There is a camping site to the west of the village.

There is a small amenity area in the village between the bridge and the N70, adjacent to the River Staigue. This river provides an opportunity to provide amenity areas adjacent to it and along its banks. A pedestrian bridge would also be beneficial to connect amenity areas on opposite sides of the river as well as providing safe access for pedestrians through the village. These bridges and walkways should be designed and constructed in a manner which does not facilitate the spread or introduction of introduced/invasive species or which would increase flood risk in the area.



Figure 2: The view along the N70 in Castlecove when viewed from the west

1.4 Infrastructure

There is no wastewater treatment plant in the village and there are no plans to introduce one during the period of this local area plan. Dwellings in the area are served by individual septic tanks and waste water treatment systems. This is therefore a constraint on the future development of the village. The village is served by public mains

1.5 Urban Form

The village is an attractive dispersed rural settlement in close proximity to the coast characterised by a small number of detached one-off houses and a limited number of commercial properties. New streetscape was formed at the eastern end of the village with the development of Lún na hÁbhann residential development. This development remains unfinished. The village centre is poorly defined and the addition of mixed use streetscapes in the village will improve the definition between the rural area and the village. There is a large car park adjacent to the Church which is underutilised except during Church services.

1.6 Built Heritage & Archaeology

There are no protected structures or recorded monuments within the settlement boundary.

1.7 Natural Environment and Amenity

The village is located in a high quality natural environment with a number of natural amenities and has been relatively untouched by large-scale development to date. The quality and sensitivity of the environment and landscape will pose a challenge to the appropriate development of the settlement.

There is a candidate Special Area of Conservation to the south of the plan area (002158 Kenmare River cSAC). Otters are listed for protection in this Natura 2000 site and are likely to travel from the SAC through the village via the river Staigue. Development proposals, including bridges, amenity areas and walkways will be required to be designed and operated in a manner which would not adversely impact on Otter populations in the area. The village is located on the estuary of the River Staigue which runs through the village from the mountains to the north. The River presents an opportunity to develop amenity areas and walkways along its banks. There are a number of beaches in the vicinity, the closest being Cove Strand (see Fig 3). There are also large wooded areas within the village giving it a rural character.

A number of invasive introduced species, including Japanese knotweed are found in the village. These plants form dense thickets along roadsides, waste ground and waterways. It reproduces rapidly by vegetative means and is difficult to kill once established. It is therefore very important to prevent the movement of earth contaminated with Japanese Knotweed rhizomes, cuttings from hedge trimming or other fragments from one area to another. Given the presence of these plants in the settlement, development proposals will be required, where appropriate, to submit a suitable scheme for their eradication and/or control prior approved by the Planning Authority. Developers shall have regard to the NPWS guidance documents relating to this.



Fig 3: Cove Strand

1.8 Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

The village experiences a certain amount of through traffic during the summer months due to its location on the Ring of Kerry. There are no footpaths serving the village and these are required to improve pedestrian connectivity in particular in the vicinity of the bridge. There is adequate parking in the village as there are two centrally located car parks, one adjacent to the Church and the second across from the Black Shop bar.

1.9 Employment

There is limited employment in the settlement. The main source of employment in the area is the service industry and tourism related employment.

1.10 Residential Development

The village is characterised by dispersed dwellings and most of the housing needs of the local population have been provided for in the surrounding rural countryside.

A large development of 43 houses was previously granted permission on a site at Scart, across from the petrol station in the village. To date development has commenced on 10 units with 4 dwellings completed and occupied. Having regard to the limited predicted growth of the settlement no lands for proposed residential use will be allocated in Castlecove during the lifetime of this plan.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Castlecove is an attractive coastal village on the Ring of Kerry Route which is rich in natural amenities. Future development should be sympathetic to the natural environment and should be in keeping with the scale of the existing settlement.
- The extent of development proposed for the village is limited mainly due to the richness and sensitivity of the natural environment and the lack of short-term proposals for the provision of a treatment plant in the village. The extent of recently permitted residential development in the village has also been considered.
- New residential and mixed use development should be in the form of attractive streetscapes where indicated. These will add definition and help create attractive entrances into the village. There is potential to develop mixed use and residential streetscapes at four different locations in the plan area.
- At present there is a scattering of one-off dwellings and a basic range of services in the settlement and it has not experienced suburban-type development to date. Any future development should further enhance the character of the village.

- The river and wooded areas of the village should be protected from inappropriate development. Those areas of land that are adjacent to the river and are zoned for development are zoned for amenity use only. Large wooded areas have been omitted from the development boundary.
- Development proposals should not facilitate the introduction or spread of invasive introduced species, such as Japanese Knotweed.

3.0 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	Overall Objectives It is an objective of the Council to:
OO-1	Ensure that the high quality natural setting of the village is maintained and protected from inappropriate development by ensuring that new development is in keeping with the scale, bulk and design features of the existing urban fabric and integrates with the landscape.
OO-2	Promote attractive approaches into the village and ensure that any new developments are of a high architectural standard and contribute to the public realm.

4.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic It is an objective of the Council to:
T-1	Reserve new access points to facilitate orderly in-depth development as indicated on the Zoning Map.
T-2	Seek the provision/improvement of footpaths throughout the village as indicated on the Zoning Map.
T-3	Facilitate/improve pedestrian access at both sides of the Bridge over the River Staigue.
T-4	Seek the provision of a pedestrian bridge as indicated in order to allow pedestrian access to amenity areas on both sides of the river.

Objective No.	Opportunity Site It is an objective of the Council to:
OS-1	Redevelop the centrally located site within the village as a mixed use development subject to the outcome of a Flood Impact Assessment.

Opportunity Site Village Centre

Aim: To sustainably redevelop and improve this site as a new mixed use urban streetscape providing new residential, commercial outlet

Site Location and Description

This site comprises of a number of derelict commercial structures adjacent to the bridge and river. The site is adjacent to An Siopa Dubh. Currently it is rather poorly presented, particularly when viewed from the road with a number of low-grade commercial buildings

Development Potential

The development of this site presents an opportunity to regenerate a site which is a focal point in the settlement. The development would be mixed use including a mixture of residential, small scale commercial and tourist related units typical of any settlement node.

General Requirements

To ensure that the proposed development is a success and will integrate easily into the surrounding townscape, the design and layout of the development will be required to be of a high design standard and must contribute to a visual identity that can be marketed outside the area. Permeability for pedestrians is of utmost importance through the development and into the adjacent riverside amenity areas.