

CASTLEGREGORY

1.0 CONTEXT

Location

The town of Castlegregory is located at the western end of the R560, 24 km west of Tralee and 23 km northeast of An Daingean. It is situated at the southern (landward end of the Maharee's sandspit which divides Brandon Bay from Tralee Bay on the north side of the Dingle Peninsula. The name is believed to be derived from Gregory Hoare who built a castle in the area in the early sixteenth century.



Population

The population of the Castlegregory ED increased by 8% over the 1996-2002 inter censal period. from 805 to 870 persons. This trend continued in the inter-censal period 2002 to 2006 with a recorded population increase of 7.6% from 870 to 936 persons.

Functions

Castlegregory is an important service town for its rural catchment area, especially as it is located a good distance from other major service towns such as Tralee and An Daingean. It is also a busy tourist stopping point on the Dingle Peninsula and is the gateway to the Maharee's.

Facilities

The town has a wide range of services and facilities, including a supermarket, post office, pharmacy, hardware store, furniture store and a number of public houses and restaurants. The town also has a primary school, a secondary school, a Garda Station, a fire station and Catholic Church. The town has an active tennis club located off Forge Road, the local GAA club is located to the east of the proposed plan area and Castlegregory Golf Club is less than 4km from the town.

Infrastructure

The current wastewater treatment system serving the town is inadequate. A report has been prepared which highlights the town's need for a full secondary treatment plant. The plant is expected to progress to construction in 2008. There will therefore be a constraint on future developments in the town until the new treatment plant is in operation. The town is served by public mains water.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

Urban Form

Unlike many other settlements in the county, which tend to have followed a linear settlement form, Castlegregory has developed as a compact urban form and has a street network which has facilitated this development. The triangular development pattern which has evolved as a result of the configuration of

the three principal streets; Main Street, Strand Street and Tailors Row has contributed to the evolution of a compact settlement. Main Street has the most developed streetscape with an eclectic mix of building styles and heights. The street is punctuated by buildings with street side gables and garden walls, which adds to the overall variety and interest. Forge Road, which bisects the town has a relatively undeveloped streetscape. Strand Street is partly bounded to the north by farmland. Tailor's Row which is now the main commercial area in the town has a variety of buildings styles with varied setbacks. A new housing development located at the southern entrance to the town is an attractive addition to the town. The design of the individual buildings and the overall layout reflect the architectural character of the older parts of the town. Similarly a new development to the east of the town core has streetscape elements, which reflect that which is found in the older parts of the town

There are a number of semi derelict vernacular cottages and other buildings within the settlement, the renovation of these structures will serve to enhance the architectural heritage of the town.



Growth and Residential Development

The town is experiencing significant residential growth, and while there is already a significant level of service provision within the town, including a new supermarket, further parallel growth in retail, employment, civic and other services and facilities will be necessary if the town is to continue developing. Commercial activity on Main Street has been significantly reduced in recent years and is now concentrated mainly on Tailor's Row. This plan attempts to address this imbalance in commercial activity by zoning land for commercial/mixed use activity on Strand Road.

There has been a significant level of residential development in the town within the last three years with two developments comprised of over 100 units between them having been completed or nearing completion. Quite a high proportion of the dwellings have been bought as holiday homes. While this can be viewed as a positive development and creates a demand during the summer months, thereby sustaining employment in the service sector, it has its drawbacks. People wishing to reside on a permanent basis in a location are reluctant to do so if a high proportion of the neighbouring houses are unoccupied for a substantial portion of the year. Such neighbourhoods tend to lack a sense of place or community spirit. While it is not proposed to prohibit the development of holiday homes within the town, larger developments must, through design, provide discreet separate areas within developments which are reserved for permanent residential development. It is considered that the level of holiday home development within the zoned lands should be limited to 60% of the zoned land. This provision will apply to developments in excess of four dwellings. It is considered that this provision will contribute to attracting more full time residents to the town and so create a more vibrant dynamic settlement.

Architectural Heritage

There are five structures included in the Record of Protected Structures, which are as follows:

Ref. no. 21302701 O'Donnell's Main Street

Ref. no. 21302702 Detached House Main Street

Ref. no. 21303603 St. Mary's Catholic Church

RPS 036-001-A/B Two cottages off Main Street.

There are two additional structures which are considered to be of sufficient architectural and heritage significance to warrant consideration for inclusion in the record of protected structures, namely Melville at the junction of Tailor' Row and Caher Road and a single storey vernacular building at the north west end of Tailor's Row.

The town has a number of significant streetscapes and ACA's (Architectural Conservation Areas) which are also proposed in order to maintain the architectural integrity of these areas.



Archaeological Heritage

There is one Recorded Monument within the proposed plan area:

Ref. No. KE027-008 The site of the old castle to the west of Tailor's Row.

Natural Environment

Castlegregory has a unique natural setting located at the head of the Maharees peninsula. The town is located within an area of mostly good agricultural land, which is flat and low lying. Some of land, however, especially to the east of the town can be prone to flooding. The town is surrounded by very regular field systems with few trees. Lough Gill is famous for it's fishing and bird life is less than 1 km from Castlegregory. Most of the land surrounding the town to the west, north and east is zoned Secondary Special Amenity in the current Kerry County Development Plan.

The plan area is within 400 metres of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane candidate Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002070). The site is a candidate SAC selected for lagoons, fixed dunes and alluvial forests, all priority habitats on Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive and the site is of considerable ecological and conservation significance for the excellent diversity of habitats it contains.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

The regional road, the R560 terminates in Castlegregory and a number of local roads also converge on the town. During the summer months there is a considerable amount of through traffic heading to the Maharees. The town is also a stopover for traffic using the Conor Pass route to An Daingean. The Sli Chorca Dhuibhne (walking route) also passes through the town. The opening of a car park to serve the new supermarket has considerably improved parking facilities.

Footpaths do not extend throughout the plan area and in general are piecemeal where they exist. New footpaths and footpath improvements are needed in certain areas of the town to improve pedestrian connectivity and pedestrian safety.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The overall strategy for Castlegregory is one that facilitates the successful development of Castlegregory as a residential, tourist and service centre. Much of the landscape surrounding the town is sensitive to development. This means that its ability to absorb development without altering its nature and character is limited. The Maharees Peninsula has in recent years



developed a reputation as a prime location for watersports; Castlegregory as the only urban centre in the area needs to capitalise on this popularity. This plan aims to develop Castlegregory in a sustainable manner capitalising on the town's indigenous strengths and qualities.

It is proposed to zone an area of land on the north western edge of the town for commercial development in order to allow for the expansion of retail/commercial activity

While there has been a significant growth in the provision of residential development within the town in recent years Castlegregory is still dependent to a large extent on the summer tourism trade to support many of the services provided. The overall development strategy for Castlegregory is to promote the development of the town in a manner which will attract permanent residential development which will support all-year round service provision. This will require the inward migration of people to reside permanently within the town. People considering moving to Castlegregory on a permanent basis require a number of criteria to be satisfied before making such a decision. Firstly, they need to be satisfied that they will live in a development where there is a sense of community and belonging. This cannot be achieved in developments where many of the houses are unoccupied over the winter months. It is proposed therefore to designate areas for permanent residential development within the plan. These areas have been identified having regard to their proximity to the town centre, accessibility and the need to maintain a vibrant village core. They need to live in an area with an attractive urban environment and they need to have a broad range of services available on a year round basis. It is important that a broad range of housing options is available within the town. It is considered that an area of land to the south of the town core is the most suitable location for additional housing given its proximity to the town centre and due to the environmentally sensitive nature of the terrain to the north and west of the town.

The settlement pattern of the town currently provides good permeability and it is the intention of the plan to maintain this desirable characteristic through the provision of link roads and pedestrian connections throughout the plan area.

This local area plan aims to provide for the development of the town as an important tourist town and a local service

centre on a scale commensurate with its infrastructural capacity. It also aims to ensure that the unique character of the town is retained in its high quality environmental setting so that the town continues to be an attractive place to live and visit.

4.0 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	It is an objective of the Council to:
OO-1	Encourage the development of a compact and sustainable town structure by ensuring that new development is contiguous with existing development and makes effective use of backland and infill sites.
OO-2	Ensure that development shall not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural environment or on the visual or physical character of the area. .
OO-3	Promote attractive streetscapes and approaches into the town and preserve and enhance the elements of the built environment which define the unique character of the town.
OO-4	Ensure that the scale and balance of tourist facilities in the town is managed so that excessive or inappropriate tourist developments do not detract from the unique character of the town.
OO-5	Ensure that the provision of social and retail facilities keep pace with the development of housing to support a growing population and create a viable community.
OO-6	It is an objective of the Council to ensure that 60% of the land zoned in the plan for residential development shall be reserved for permanent residential use.
OO-7	Ensure that a broad range of housing options is available in the town.
	Facilitate the development of an additional network of streets and

OO-8	pedestrian routes to integrate new development and ensure that permeability and accessibility is maintained.
OO-9	Ensure that, where required, new development shall be preceded by works to widen and improve the carrying capacity of local roads serving the development.
OO-10	Encourage the re-use and renovation of derelict buildings
OO-11	Ensure that future development is carefully designed to avoid, where possible, and incorporate where appropriate, existing archaeological and historical features.





5.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Objective No	Residential Development: It is an objective of the Council to
R-1	Reserve 20% of the land zoned in this plan for residential development or for a mix of residential and other uses, for the provision of social and affordable housing.
R-2	Ensure that the lands as indicated on the zoning map are reserved for permanent residential use.

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	Facilitate improvements at the junction of Strand Street/Post Office Square & Strand Road.
T-3	Provide for the widening and improvement of the link road between New Road and College Street to allow for access to development lands to the north and south of this road.
T-4	Seek the provision/improvement of footpaths as indicated on the Zoning Map.
T-5	Ensure that new developments will include provision for pedestrian movement and connectivity throughout the town.

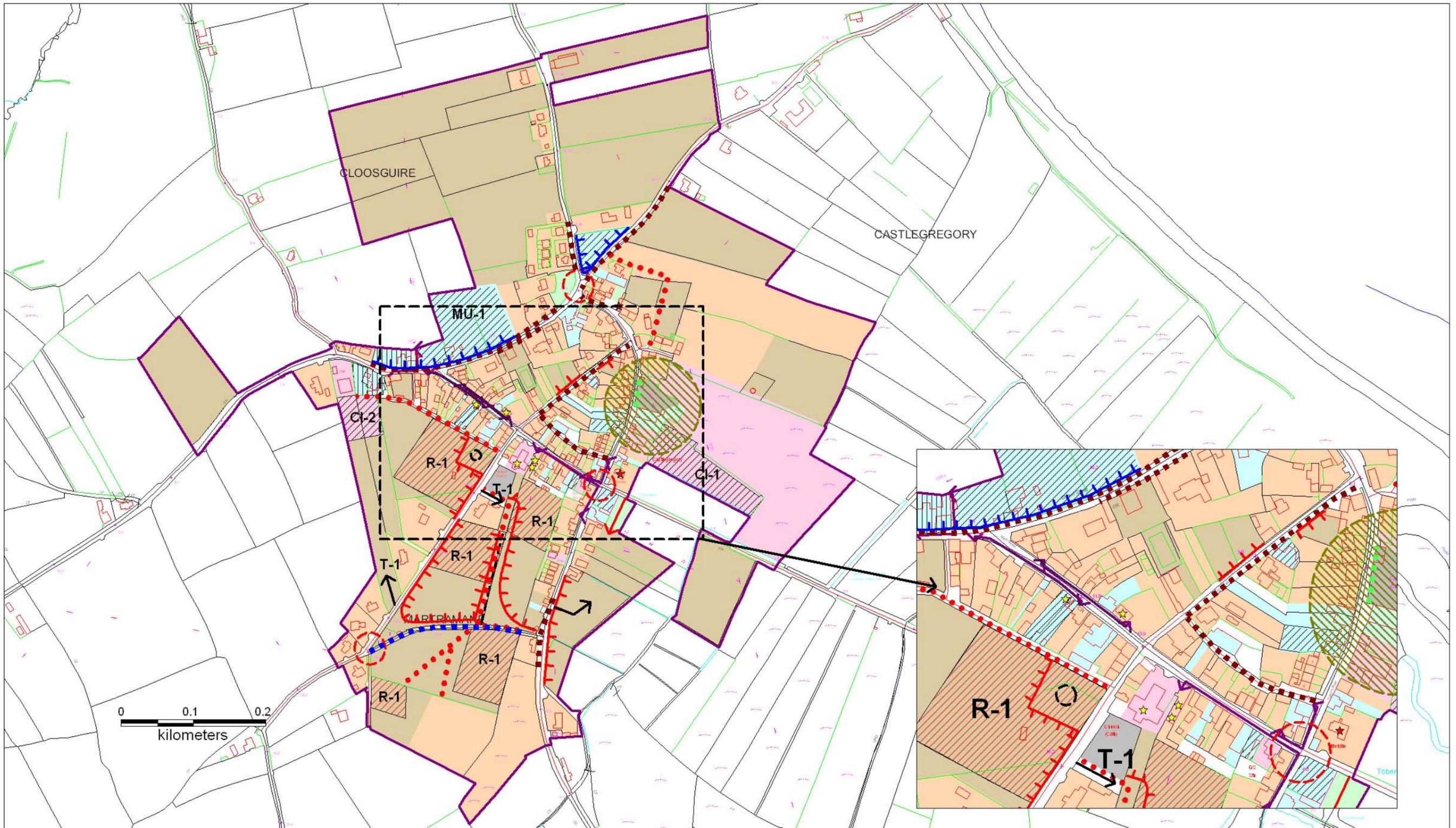
Objective No.	Architectural Heritage It is an objective of the Council to/that:
AH-1	Designate those areas indicated on the zoning Map as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's) in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the guidelines for designation issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
AH-2	Secure the inclusion of the structure indicated on the Zoning Map in the Record of Protected Structures.
AH-3	Preserve the town's architectural heritage and encourage development to be designed in a manner that is in keeping with the scale and character of the existing town. New developments should respect local design features.
AH-4	New developments in the town will be required to submit detailed colour scheme proposals in order to ensure integration with the existing built fabric.

Objective No	Tourism: It is an objective of the Council to
TM-1	Facilitate quality development that would promote the tourism potential of the town.
TM-2	Promote Castlegregory as a destination for outdoor pursuits and as a service centre for visitors and tourists to the Maharee's Area.
TM-3	Facilitate the development of high quality accommodation within the town in appropriate locations.

Objective No	Natural Environment It is an objective of the Council to;
NE-1	Ensure that development shall not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural environment.
NE-2	Prepare tree preservation orders for appropriate trees throughout the town.

Objective No.	Commercial / Mixed Use It is an objective of the Council to:
MU-1	Zone lands for the development of commercial/mixed uses at appropriate locations to provide local employment and to allow for the expansion of town centre retail and service facilities.

Objective No.	Community/Institutional It is an objective of the Council to:
CI-1	Reserve land for the future expansion of the post-primary school as indicated on the zoning map.
CI-2	Reserve land for the future expansion of the Community Centre as indicated on the zoning map.
CI-3	Promote and facilitate the provision of public toilets in Castlegregory.



Castlegregory Map
Land Zoning Map
Adopted
June 2008

Kerry County Council
 Planning Policy Unit

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|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Residential (existing.) | Community Facilities Extension | Recorded Monument | Indicative Access Points | Environmental Improvements |
| Residential (proposed) | Amenity | Existing Protected Structure | Indicative Access Road | ACA |
| Permanent Residential Use (proposed) R-1 | Commercial / Mixed Use (proposed) | Proposed Protected Structure | Road Widening | Junction Improvements |
| Commercial/Mixed Use (existing) | Residential/Commercial/ Mixed Use | Residential Streetscape | Pavement Provisions | Indicative Playground |
| Institutional / Community | Carpark | Pedestrian Route | Mixed Use Urban Streetscape | Development Boundary |
| | | Proposed Pedestrian Access | | |