

RURAL AREA

1.0 OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section of the plan is to make provision for planning policies in rural areas that are below the strategic level of the County Development Plan and are more local in nature. The rural area of the Castleisland Functional Area Local Area Plan, shown in Figure 1.1, is defined as all the rural area within the functional area boundary and outside the boundaries of the towns and villages that are zoned in this local area plan. The rural area as defined in this plan is functionally linked to the urban settlements. The area extends from north of Knocknagoshel and Brosna, south of Scartaglin and Currow, west of Castleisland and Currans to the Cork boundary to the east and has a total area of 406.3 sqm. A large part of the rural area is known as the Sliabh Luachra area, an area known for its rich heritage of traditional music.

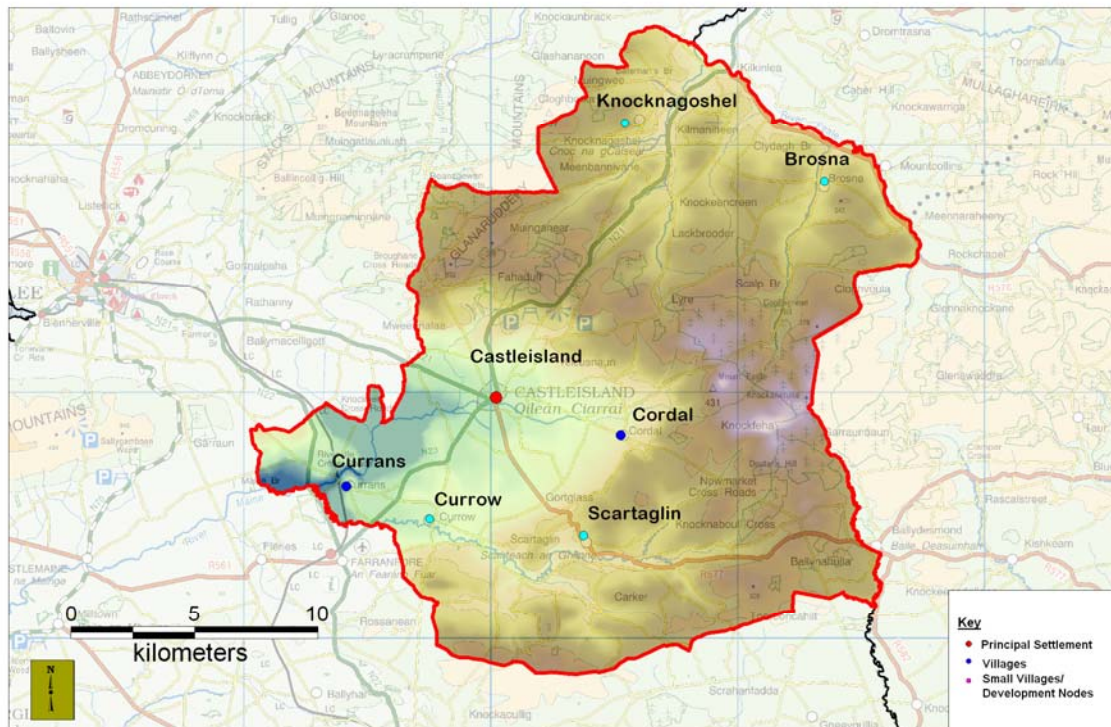


Figure 1.1 Castleisland Functional Area

Those living in the rural area are largely dependent on the towns and villages for services such as schools, services and employment. It is likely that a substantial proportion of people travel to larger towns such as Tralee and Killarney for employment. Agriculture is strong in the area.

1.2 Purpose of Rural Area Plan

- Look at rural area at a local level as opposed to the more strategic level that it is looked at in the County Development Plan.
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats in rural area.
- Gather information on rural area.
- Identify protected structures in rural areas.
- Identify objectives for the rural area that are not at the strategic County Development Plan level.

1.3 SWOT Analysis for Rural Area

<i>Strengths</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural area has a strong urban centre (Castleisland town) as a focal point.• Attractive and varied landscape.• A large part of rural area has been relatively untouched by development.• Strong economic and social linkages between rural area and urban settlements.• Only area under strong urban pressure is immediate area outside Castleisland town.• Villages in particular have in the most part retained their character.• Area with strong cultural heritage, in particular Sliabh Luachra area.
<i>Weaknesses</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has not benefited from tourism as much as other parts of the county.• Lack of employment opportunities.• Develop the renewable energy sector.
<i>Opportunities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve built heritage• Identify walking routes.• Protect the natural environment and biodiversity.
<i>Threats</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over-development of rural area.• Pollution of groundwater.• Loss in quality of landscape.• Emigration and decrease in population.• Unemployment.• Loss of natural habitats.

1.4 Population

The population of the entire functional area, excluding Castleisland town, was 7428 persons in 2006 which was a slight increase from 7346 persons in 2002. The projected population for the functional area during the plan period, up to 2015 is 8198 persons.

	2002	2006	2015
Castleisland Functional Area (excluding Castleisland town)	7346	7428	8198

Table 1.1 Existing and Projected population in Castleisland Functional Area (excluding Castleisland town)

1.5 Transport

The area is served by the N21 and N23, national primary routes, the R577 and a network of local roads. It is important that any development in the rural areas is acceptable in terms of traffic safety and does not impact negatively on the carrying capacity and general safety of public roads. The town of Castleisland is located on the junction of the N21 and N23 national primary roads. The by-pass under construction will help alleviate through-traffic from the town.

The other smaller settlements within the study area are located on the R577 regional road and local roads. The Tralee Killarney railway line stops at Farranfore, just outside the study area. Kerry Airport is also located at Farranfore. The area is serviced by public bus.

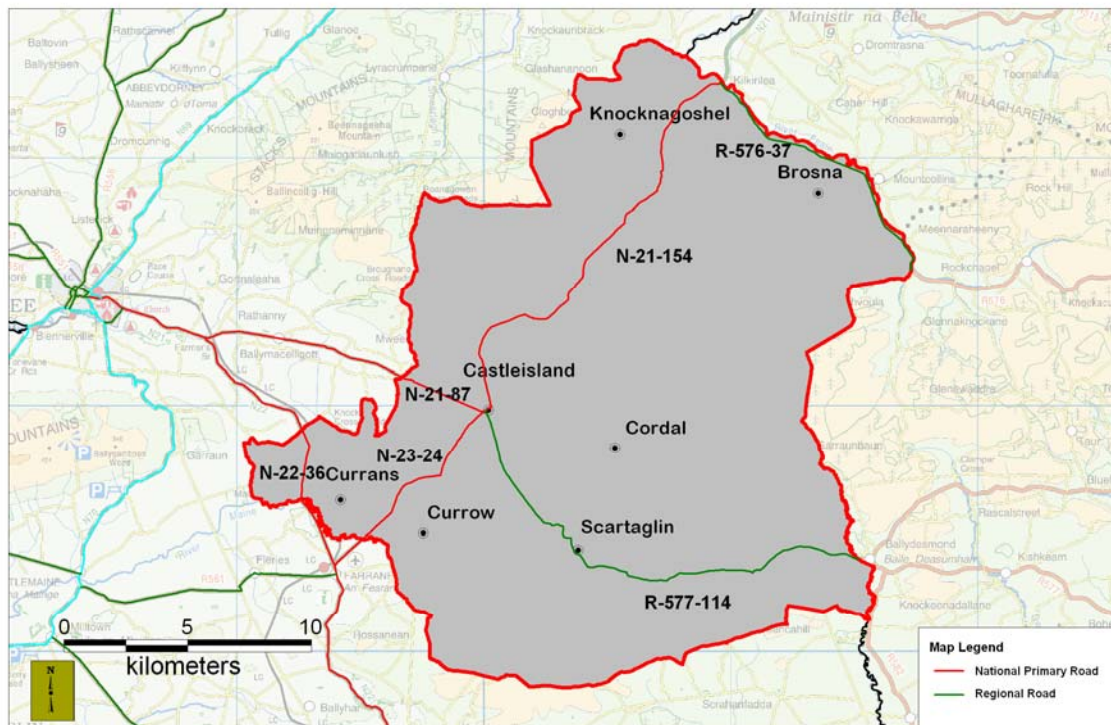


Figure 1.2 Road Network

1.6 Water supply

The area is served by public water mains, group water mains and private water supplies. It is imperative that groundwater in the area is protected from polluting development.

1.7 Wastewater treatment

Developments in the rural area are served by individual septic tanks/treatment units based on an assessment of soil characteristics in accordance with the EPA's "*Wastewater Treatment Manuals Treatment Systems for Single Houses.*"

1.8 Landscape

The study area predominantly consists of pasture with pockets of peat bogs, transitional woodland-shrub and coniferous forest (Source Corine 2000 Landuse Database). Land use in the rural area can be seen in Figure 1.3.

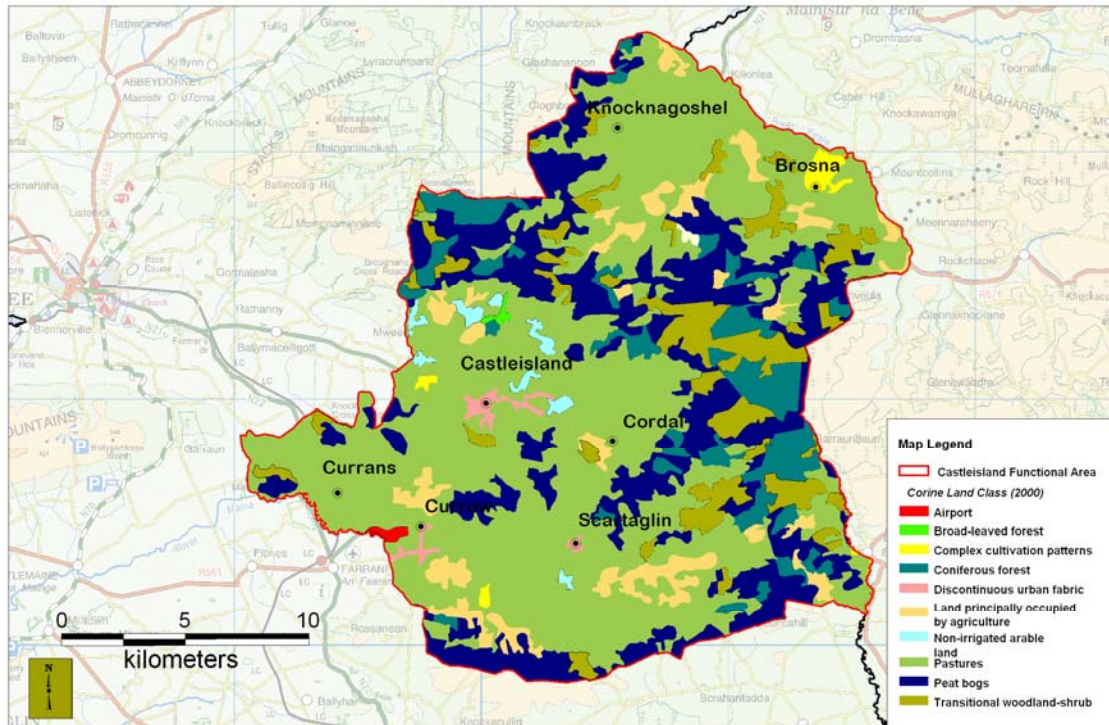


Figure 1.3 Landcover (Corine)

1.9 Natural Environment

The extent of NHA (Natural Heritage Areas), pNHA (Proposed Natural Heritage Areas), SPA (Special Protection Areas, and cSAC (candidate Special Areas of Conservation) areas in the rural area are shown in Figures 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 and are listed in Table 1.2

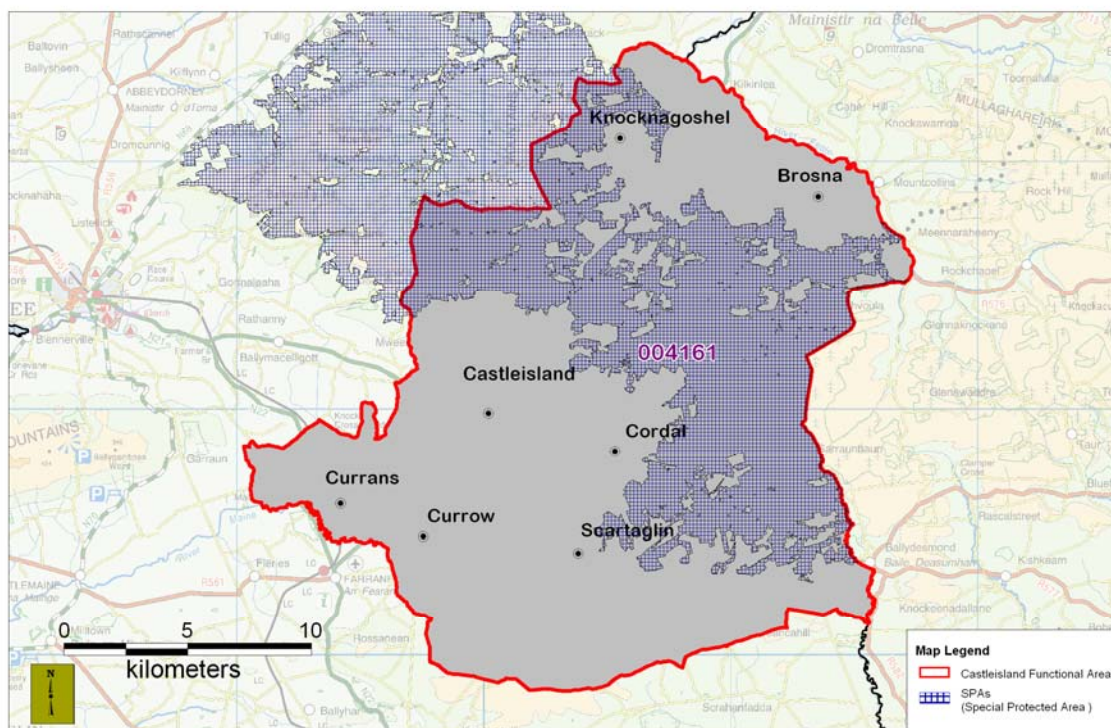


Figure 1.4 SPA in Rural Area

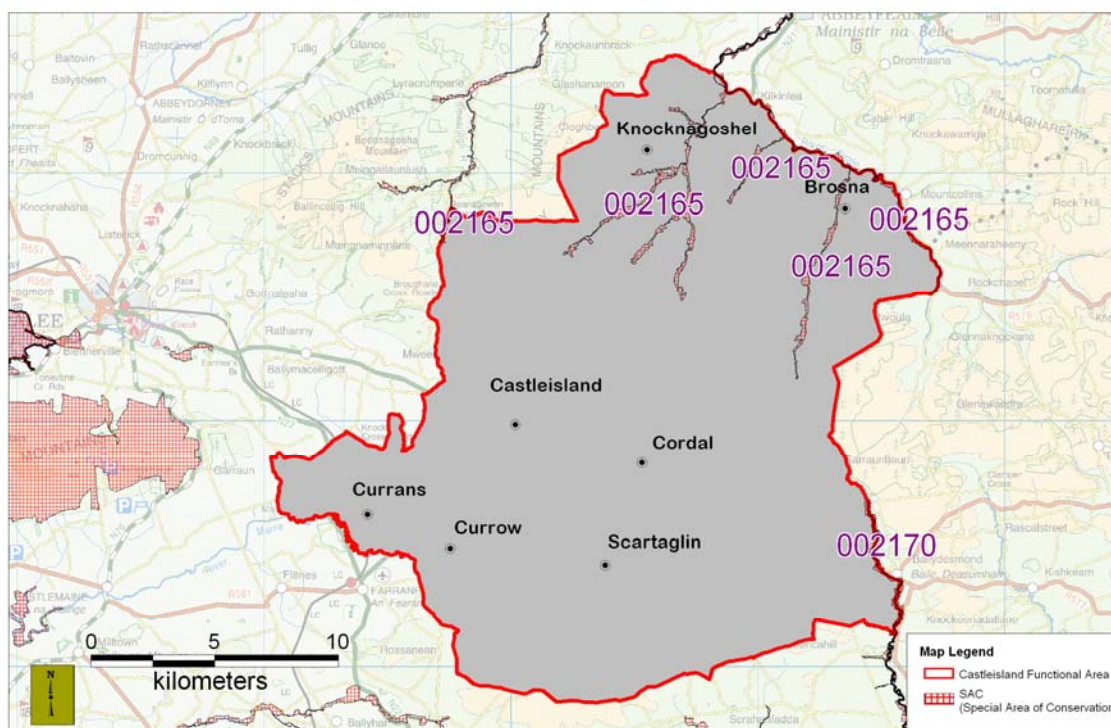


Figure 1.5 SAC in Rural Area

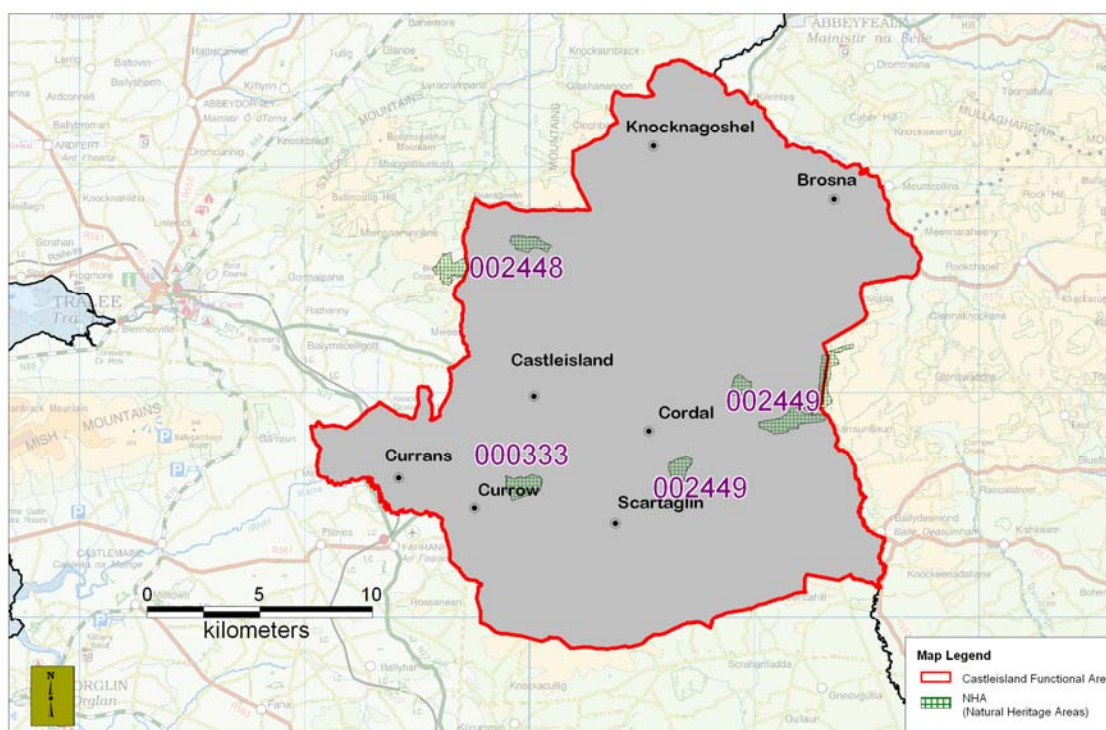


Figure 1.6 NHA in Rural Area

Designation Type	Site Code	Site Name
SPA	4161	Stacks to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West
cSAC	2165	Lower River Shannon
cSAC	2170	Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford)
NHA	2448	Knockatarriv/Knockariddera Bogs
NHA	2449	Mount Eagle Bogs
NHA	333	Anna More Bog

Table 1.2 SPA, cSAC and NHA in Rural Area

The main river channels in the area are the Brown Flesk, a salmonid river and the River Main. There are also important tributaries of the River Feale, which is also a salmonid river, in the Knocknagoshel and Brosna areas. The main surface water features in the area are shown in Figure 1.7.

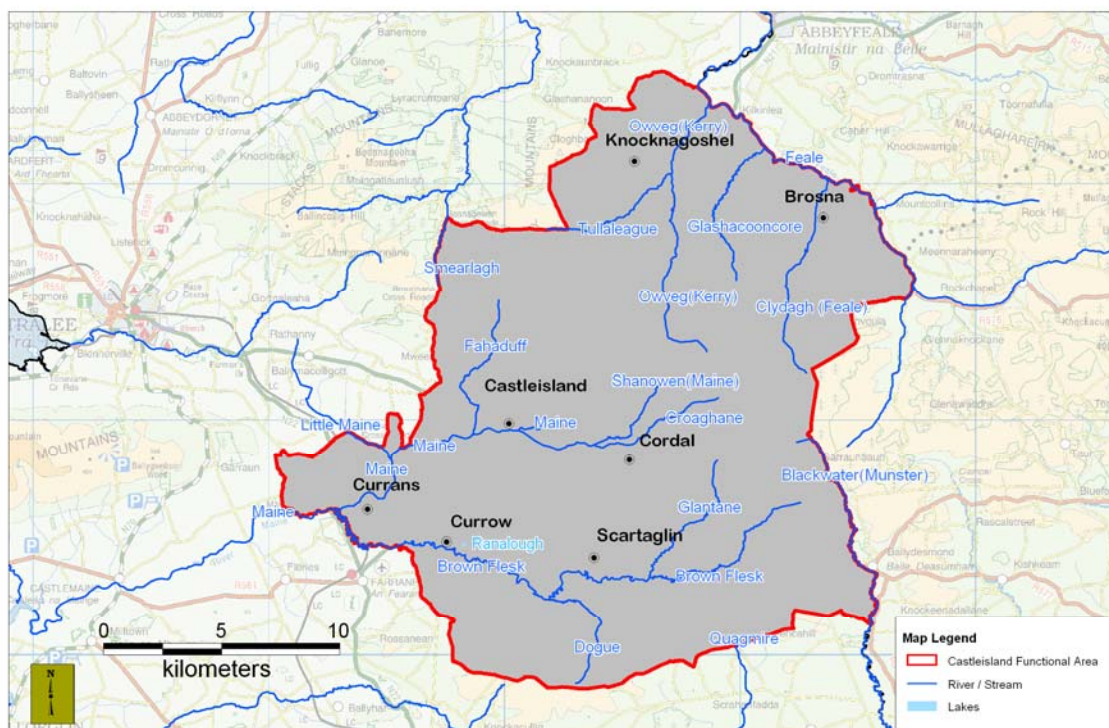


Figure 1.7 Watercourses in Rural Area

There are a number of mature trees and woodlands in the area which are important in terms of biodiversity and providing amenity areas to the public. A TPO (Tree Preservation Order) is proposed for trees to the east of Currow village as indicated on Figure 1.8.



Figure 1.8 Proposed TPO to east of Currow village

1.10 Amenity

It is proposed that a walk be developed along the dismantled railway between Castleisland town and Gortatlea (see Figure 1.9). This would provide a valuable amenity resource for the area and would constitute an additional tourist attraction in the Castleisland area.

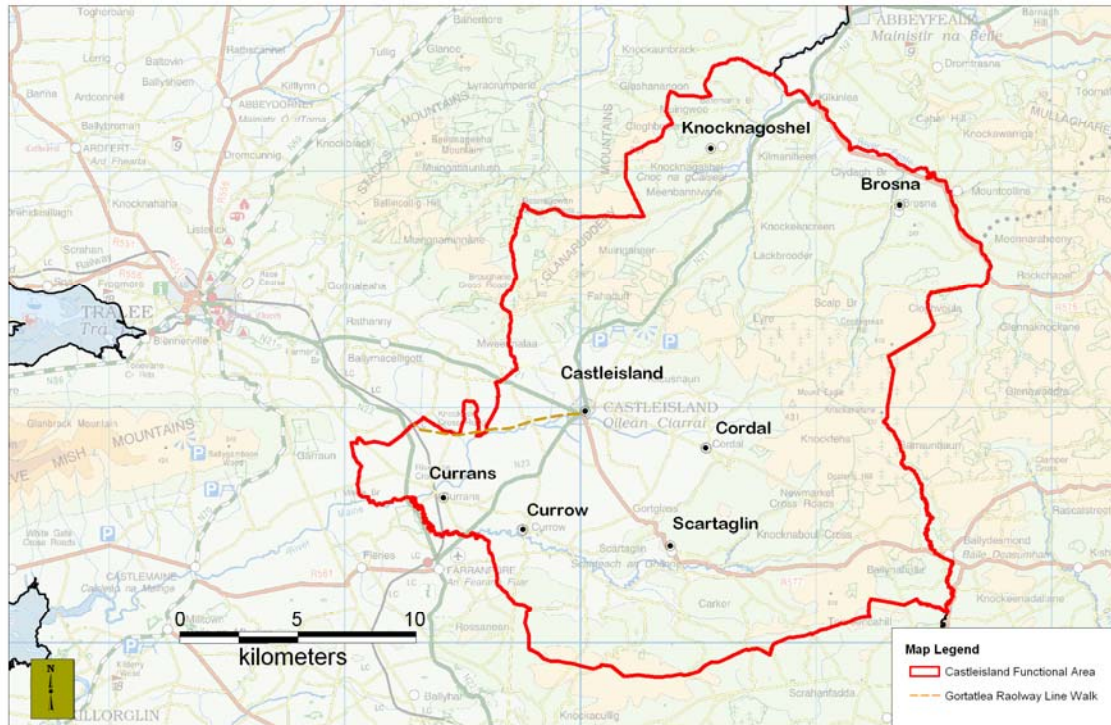


Figure 1.9 Proposed walkway from Castleisland town to Gortatlea along dismantled railway line

1.11 Tourism

Tourism is largely undeveloped in the rural area compared to other areas in the county. Tourism needs to focus on the strengths of the area, namely the untouched rural landscape, the cultural heritage of the Sliabh Luachra area and the areas interesting history. It can be seen as a unique part of Kerry which is undiscovered and off the beaten track. The potential for eco-tourism in the area is a definite possibility.

Ecotourism, is a form of tourism which appeals to the ecologically and socially conscious. Ecotourism focuses on the local environment and culture, typically involving travel to destinations where flora, fauna, high quality environment and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Responsible ecotourism includes programmes that minimize the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment, and enhance the local community. Therefore, an integral part of ecotourism is the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, and the creation of economic opportunities for the local communities.

In order to boost tourism in the area, the profile of the area needs to be highlighted with increased and updated tourist signage at strategic points in the area. Tourist signage at the Glenshearoon viewing point outside Castleisland town on the N21 needs to be improved (see location on Figure 1.10).

This viewing point gives a spectacular view of the Castleisland area and landmarks and points of interest should be indicated on signage to increase the visitor's awareness of what's of interest in the area.



Figure 1.10 Viewing Point at Glenshearoon

1.12 Built Heritage

There is a total of 5 existing protected structures in the rural area and full details of these protected structures are contained in Volume One of the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015. They are also indicated on Figure 1.11

Six additional protected structures will be proposed in the rural area. These consist mainly of large country houses and are located mainly outside the town of Castleisland. These are listed in Table 1.3 and their location is shown on Figure 1.11. Full details are also included in Appendix A.

Proposed Protected Structures	
1. Knocknagashel Mill, Behennegh, Knocknagashel	- RPS KY 023-007
2. Parknageragh House, Tobermaing, Castleisland	- RPS KY 040-020
3. Sandville House, Dysert, Castleisland	- RPS KY 039-001
4. Clashganniv House, Dysert, Castleisland	- RPS KY 040-021
5. Riverstown House, Ballynahown, Castleisland	- RPS KY 040-022
6. Dwelling House, Gleantane, Cordal, Castleisland	- RPS KY 041-001
7. Limekiln, Knocknagashel West	- RPS KY 023-008

Table 1.3 Proposed Protected Structures in Rural Area

1.13 Archaeology

The Castleisland rural area has a large number of archaeological sites and monuments. These include one national monument and three monuments subject to registration. These are indicated on Figure 1.11.

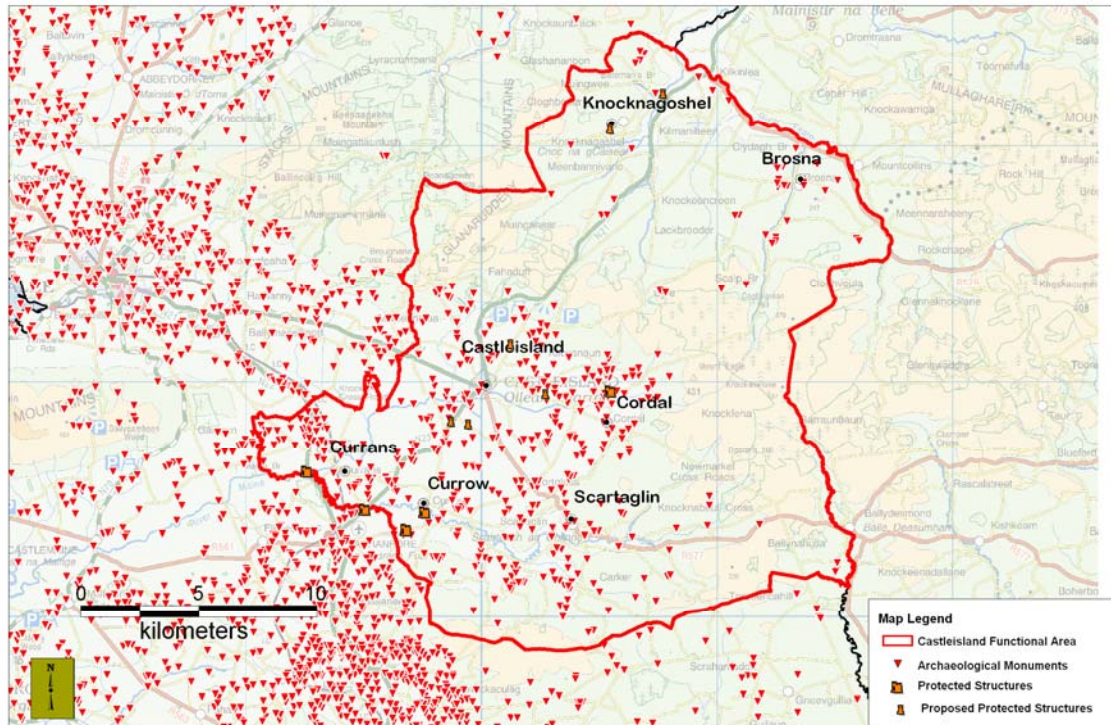


Figure 1.11 Archaeological Monuments and Existing and Proposed Protected Structures

1.14 Flooding

Areas prone to flooding have been indicated on Figure 1.12. Flood Risk Management in the area will be in accordance with Section 11.4 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015.

Figure 1.12 demonstrates flood locations that have occurred in the past and benefiting land areas in the study area. Two flood locations have been recorded near Currow in the recent past and one flood location has been recorded on the River Maine to the east of Castleisland town.

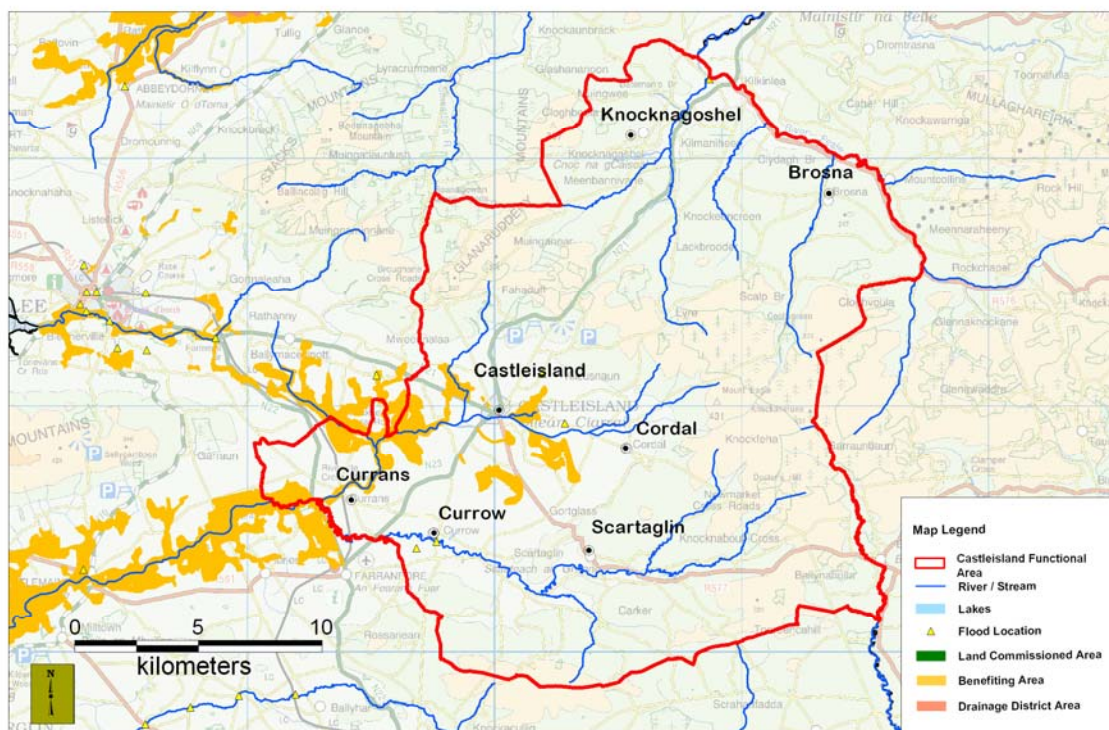


Figure 1.12 Flood Data

Kerry County Council has a policy to limit and manage the permitted runoff from all new developments, in order to protect river water quality and to avoid downstream flooding of the sewer network or river. All new developments must incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to restrict the discharge of stormwater from developments. Kerry County Council has a number of interim standards covering river quality protection, river regime protection and river flooding protection.

1.15 Windfarms

There are a number of windfarms in operation in the rural area of Castleisland and the large portion of the rural area has been designated open to consideration in terms of windfarm development in the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015.

2.0 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Objective No.	Rural Area It is an objective of the Council to;
Ru-1	Ensure that development in the rural area complies with the objectives of the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015.
Ru-2	Ensure that development within the rural area does not lead to deterioration in the quality of surface or groundwater.
Ru-3	Protect natural habitats and the biodiversity of the area.
Ru-4	Ensure that rivers and their riparian zones including flood plains, are protected from structural development and from the effects of wastewater discharges.
Ru-5	Ensure that infill and riverbank alteration will be prohibited where there is a risk of interference with the aquatic habitat and flood discharge.
Ru-6	Ensure that development shall not have a significant detrimental impact on the quality of the natural environment.
Ru-7	Protect existing trees and hedgerows where possible and promote additional planting in new developments.
Ru-8	Make a Tree Preservation Order in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) in relation to trees to the east of Currow village as indicated on Figure 1.8.
RU-9	<p>Protect and enhance structures included in the Record of Protected Structures or proposed for inclusion by requiring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No such building is demolished • The maintenance, alteration, extension, replacement or insertion of any significant feature(s) or part(s) to a protected structure shall not be detrimental to the character of the structure. • Development shall be carried out and designed sympathetically having regard to the architectural character of the structure and the setting. • The erection of any structure within the curtilage, adjacent to, or within the vicinity of the structure shall not be detrimental to the character of the structure and the setting, and shall be sited and designed sympathetically with the character of the structure and the setting. • Any works that will materially affect the character of a protected structure or proposed protected structure shall require planning permission. Consultation with the Planning Department is recommended prior to any works being carried out. • The Planning Authority shall secure retention and preservation of particular features of special interest. • The Planning Authority shall use its statutory powers to ensure protected structures are maintained in good order. <p>The Planning Authority will encourage the appropriate and sensitive reuse of protected structures.</p>
Ru-10	Secure the inclusion of the structures as included in Appendix A in the Record of Protected Structures.
Ru-11	Encourage the appropriate reuse and sensitive restoration of unused/derelict properties in the area.
Ru-12	Encourage the development of walking routes within the plan area and in particular the development of the Castleisland to Gortatlea walking route, as indicated on Figure 1.9.

Objective No.	Rural Area It is an objective of the Council to;
Ru-13	It is an objective of the Council to encourage ecologically sustainable ecotourism in the rural area.
Ru-14	Encourage the development of improved tourist signage at the Glanshearoon viewing point on the N21 Figure 1.10.
Ru-15	Promote the cultural and historical heritage of the area, in particular the Sliabh Luachra area.
RU-16	Encourage windfarm developments at appropriate locations and in accordance with the provisions of the Kerry County Development Plan 2009-2015.
RU-17	Ensure that applications for windfarm developments in or in the vicinity of areas proposed or designated SPA will address the cumulative effects of the proposed, existing and permitted windfarms in the area, on the proposed or designated SPA habitat. These developments are subject to Habitat Directive Assessment screening Applicants are strongly advised to consult with the NPWS in this regard prior to arranging preplanning meetings.
RU-18	It is an objective of the Council to ensure that no projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects unless imperative reasons for over riding public interest can be established and there are no feasible alternative solutions).
RU-19	Ensure that screening for Appropriate Assessment / Habitats Directive Assessment is carried out as part of the environmental assessment process as per the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
Ru-20	Ensure that Planning Conditions are complied with particularly in respect to the installation, operation and maintenance of individual wastewater treatment systems
Ru-21	Facilitate the implementation and enforcement of the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2009.
RU-22	Extend the walkway in Currow Village from the duck pond to the graveyard
RU-23	It is an objective of the Council that where possible an access and maintenance strip of 10m be maintained adjacent to watercourses and main drainage channels and that an access strip of 5m be maintained adjacent to minor channels.