

INCH

1.0 CONTEXT

Location

Inch (Inse) is a dispersed coastal settlement located approximately 23km to the East of Dingle and 19km to the West of Castlemaine along the R561 on the southern side of the Dingle Peninsula. The settlement is nestled into the southern foothills of the Sliabh Mish Mountains. Inch strand stretches for approximately 5.5 km and is westerly facing with a large sand dune system to the east.



Population

The settlement is located within the ED's of Inch and Lack. The population within these ED's decreased in the census period between 1996 and 2002 and increased in the census period between

2002 and 2006. The population is likely to be higher in the summer months.

Facilities & Functions

Inch is a small dispersed coastal settlement on a busy tourist route located approximately half-way between the major tourist towns of Killarney and Dingle. It's location and it's attractive blue flag beach make it a popular all-year round stopping off point for tourists. It therefore has a strong recreational function all year round, and serves as a popular seaside resort during the summer.

Inch provides a very limited number of services to the local permanent population. There is a café/tourist shop adjacent to the beach where there is also public toilets and a small car park. In addition there are two public houses and a Church in the settlement. Inch Community Centre is housed in the former primary school building a distance to the east of the Church. Local children now travel to Annascaul for their primary education. There are several holiday home developments and guesthouses dispersed throughout the area.



Infrastructure

There is currently no waste water treatment plant in the area and dwellings are served by individual septic tanks and waste water treatment systems. There are no plans to install a treatment unit and this will be a limiting factor in the future development of the area.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

Settlement Form

Inch is a coastal settlement with clustered and linear development occurring along the northern side of the R561 at the foothills of the mountains and overlooking the sea. Very little development has occurred on the seaward side of the road throughout the settlement. The limited services available are dispersed at different locations and there is no singular identifiable focus to the settlement. It could be said that there are two separate elements to the settlement focused around the strand and the other focused around the Church. In effect, it is a linear dispersed rural settlement.

It is considered that to zone land for development in the Inch area which would result in a nucleated form of development will not be in keeping with the existing dispersed settlement pattern of the area.

Built Heritage and Archaeology

There are no protected structures in plan area. It is proposed to add St Josephs Catholic Church which dates from 1886 to the Record of Protected Structures (see picture below).



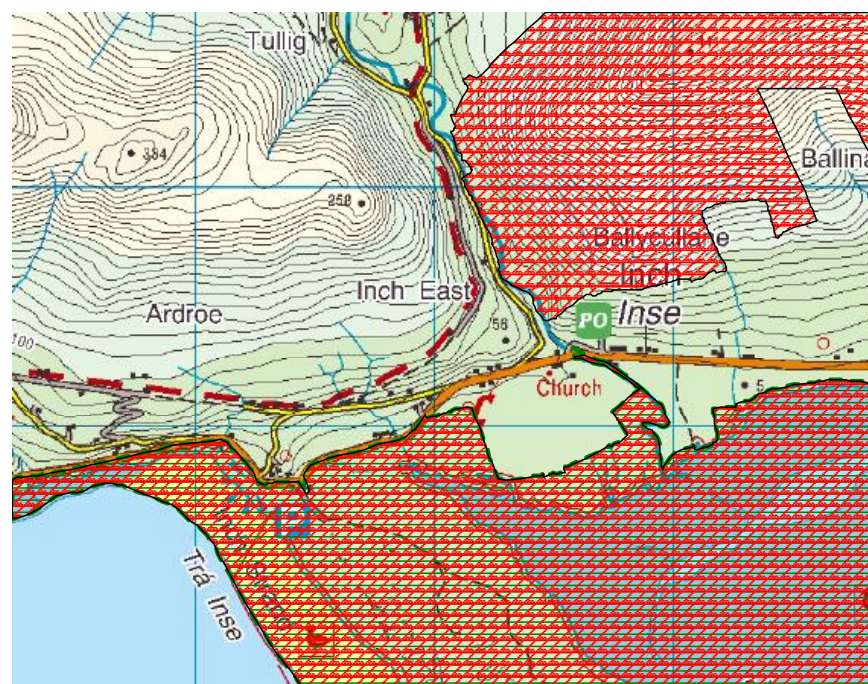
The area is rich in archaeological monuments. Development in or near such monuments will be dealt with through the development management process.

Natural Environment

Inch is located in a rich natural environment on the coast with large expanses of sand dunes to the east of the strand and with the Sliabh Mish mountain range as a backdrop and is an area renowned for its natural beauty. The natural features which make Inch beautiful should be protected from inappropriate development and the sensitivity of the ecosystems in the area should be respected at all times.

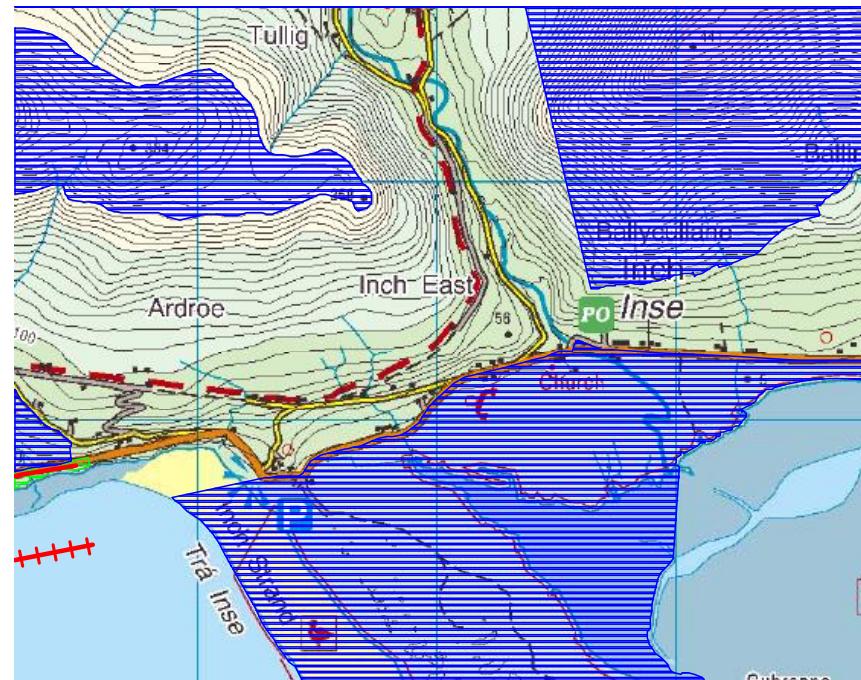
A large extent of the Inch area is designated candidate Special Area of Conservation and Natural Heritage Area (see map 1). They are identified as follows:

000343 Castlemaine Harbour cSAC and NHA
002185 Slieve Mish Mountains cSAC



Map 1: Showing NHA and cSAC areas.

The majority of the area to the south of the regional road is designated secondary special amenity area in the Kerry County Development Plan 2003-2009 (see map 2). There are also views and prospects identified along the regional approach road into the settlement from Annascaul.



Map 2: Secondary Amenity Areas and Views and Prospects as designated in the County Development Plan 2003-2009

Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

There is a footpath and lighting along the northern side of the regional road from the beach to Dan Foleys pub. It is considered that the provision of further footpaths throughout the settlement would be unsustainable as the settlement is too dispersed and footpaths would detract from the rural character of the area.

The area experiences through traffic as cars, coaches and lorries travel through the settlement from Killarney to An Daingean. It is also a busy stop-off point on this tourist route. During the summer months the car park at the beach and the roads adjoining the beach get very congested with parked cars. Cars also park on the beach itself. Limiting car parking on the beach is not practicable in the absence of an alternative location. A large car park is therefore essential in the area to help ease congestion and help reduce parking on the beach during the summer months.

Growth and Residential Development

At present there is a scattering of dwellings in the settlement some of which are holiday homes. There is a holiday home development built on an elevated site overlooking Inch strand. There is also a housing development under construction to the west of the Church. This consists of thirteen dwelling houses, mainly terraced. It is considered that further residential developments in the area should be small in scale and should meet the needs of those wishing to

reside in the area permanently. This is to ensure the vitality of the settlement in the off-season and to help protect the landscape from unnecessary holiday home development.



3.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

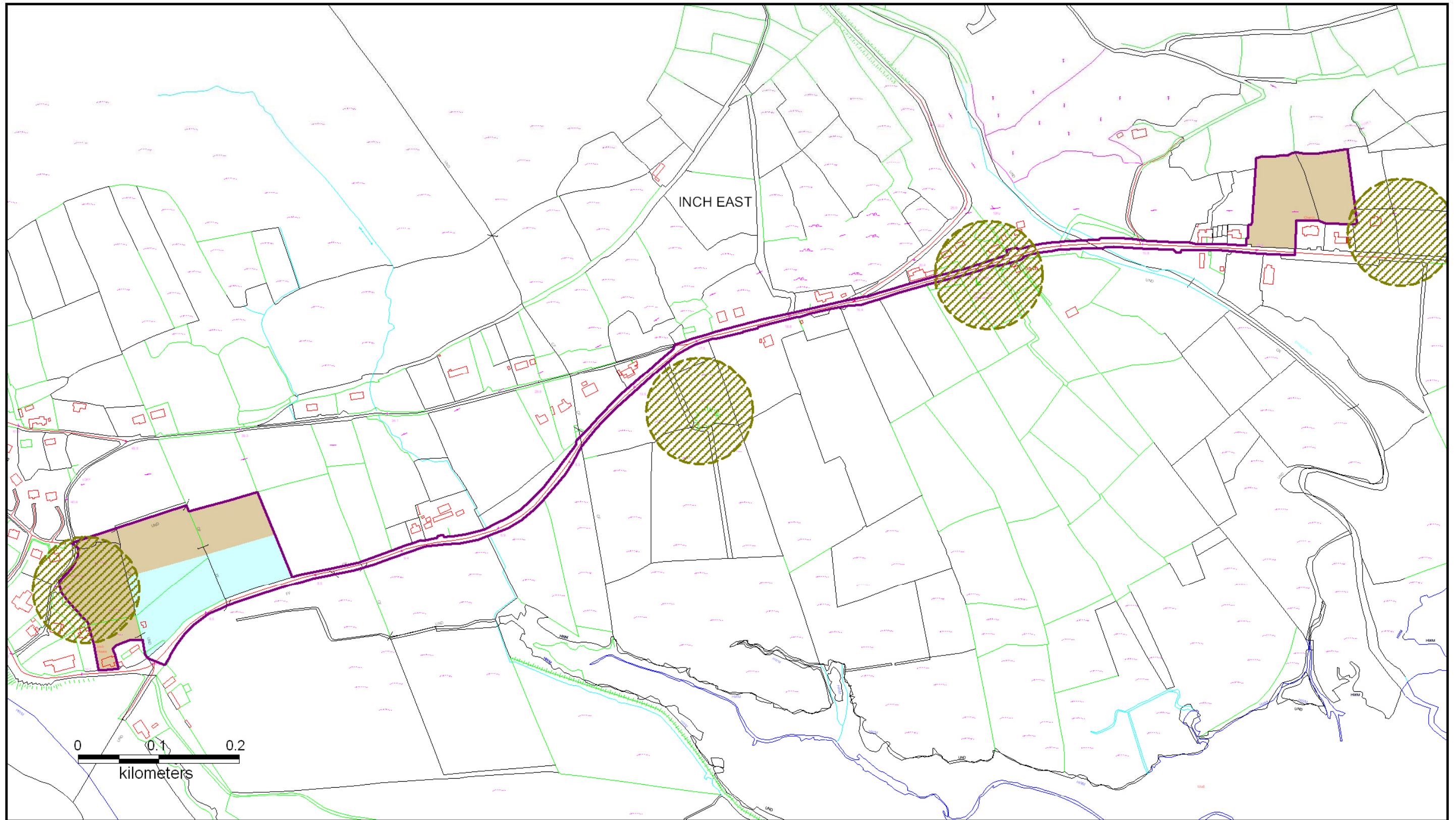
- Inch is essentially a dispersed rural settlement with limited services. It functions mainly as a small-scale residential settlement and seaside resort which attracts visitors all year round but mainly during the summer season. Inch strand gives the area its main identity and function and it should be protected from inappropriate uses and development. Any development in proximity to the beach should be sensitive in design and scale so as to ensure the on-going protection of this valuable amenity and habitat.
- The scale of development envisaged for the Inch area is small due to the nature and scale of existing development in the area and the environmental and visual sensitivity of the area. The lack of plans for a public wastewater treatment plant in the near future will also be a constraint on development.
- Residential development in the area will be dealt with in accordance with the rural housing provisions of the County Development Plan. Any further housing in the area should be for permanent residential use only



- Elevated positions in the landscape should be avoided as should locations on the seaward side of the road. Small clusters of housing and small-scale but necessary commercial facilities will be considered at suitable locations.
- The council will facilitate the development of certain tourism related facilities in the area such as a watersports centre and small enterprise/craft units in order to add to the facilities and attractions in the area and to provide local employment. The reuse of existing buildings in the area for such uses will be encouraged. Any new-build structures will be sensitively designed and will only be considered at suitable locations where they do not interfere with views or with the environment and landscape.
 - A big issue in the area is the lack of adequate car and coach parking in the summer months. The Council will therefore endeavour to facilitate the construction of a new car park in proximity to the beach that will meet the demand for car and coach spaces during the peak summer months.
 - The development of a golf course at the location of the old course presents significant potential for the creation of local employment opportunities and an added attraction for the area. The Council will facilitate the development of a golf course where it can be demonstrated that such development will not have a negative impact on the environment or on any area designated for environmental protection.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Objective No:	It is an objective of the Council to/that
OO-1	Future development in the area will be small in scale. Low density cluster-type development will be considered subject to suitable design and layout at appropriate locations. A limited amount of ancillary facilities such as a shop will also be permitted at suitable locations.
OO-2	New development shall respect the character and high quality coastal setting of the area by means of sensitive design and siting. In particular, the beach area, the seaward side of the road and elevated sites to the north of the R561 shall be protected from inappropriate development.
OO-3	The Council will facilitate the development of a public car park at a suitable location in proximity to the beach to facilitate the demand for car and coach spaces during the peak summer months. New public toilets are also to be provided.
OO-4	The Council will facilitate small-scale commercial and tourism-related facilities in the area such as a watersports centre and craft/enterprise units. Such facilities will only be considered at suitable locations and the re-use of existing structures for such uses will be encouraged.
OO-5	Retain the protected views and prospects and the secondary amenity area as designated in the Kerry County Development Plan 2003-3009.
OO-6	Secure the inclusion of St Joseph’s Catholic Church in the Record of Protected Structures.
OO-7	Ensure that the environmental quality of the cSACs and NHA in the plan area is maintained and protected from inappropriate development.
OO-7	Protect existing trees and hedgerows where possible and promote additional planting in new developments.
OO-8	Dwellings in the area shall be reserved for permanent residential use.
OO-9	Facilitate the development of a golf course where it is demonstrated that there will be no negative impact on the environment or on any designated conservation area.
OO-10	Facilitate the development of a walkway/path from the high car park to the lower park in the vicinity of the strand.



Inch

Map

Land Zoning Map

Adopted

June 2008

Kerry County Council
Planning Policy Unit



Residential (prop.)
Commercial

Recorded Monument
Development Boundary