



BALLYHEIGUE

1.0 CONTEXT

Location

Ballyheigue is a small coastal town situated in an attractive landscape to the south of Kerry Head, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. It is approximately 18km from Tralee, to the north of Banna Strand, immediately south of Kerry Head and is located on the R551 regional road.

Functions

Ballyheigue is a residential town and a seaside resort and serves as a service centre for its agricultural hinterland providing a variety of local services. The town is a popular destination for day-trippers in the summer months and contains a large number of holiday homes. In addition, the town is growing in popularity as a dormitory town of Tralee.

Demographics

The preliminary census figures of 1,460 for 2006 for the Ballyheigue ED (of which Ballyheigue forms a part) show an increase of 126 persons or 9.4% above those recorded by the 2002 census.

The census population for Ballyheigue town in 2002 was 626 persons, down 7.8% from the 1996 census figure of 679.

The 2006 census figure for the town itself is not yet available.



Facilities

The town has a relatively good range of facilities including a Garda Station, a community centre (with laundry and gymnasium), a crèche, post office, supermarkets, shops, a number of public houses, a butchers, hairdressers, pharmacy, an off-licence, restaurants, hotel, GAA Pitch, a 9 hole golf course, a playground, a slip and a very fine Blue Flag Beach

Infrastructure

A wastewater treatment plant, with a capacity of 4,234 p.e. and associated collection network was constructed in 2003. The town is also serviced by a public water supply. The construction of a reservoir for Ballyheigue and upgrading of the water network is included in Kerry County Council’s Assessment of Needs 2006. However the earliest commencement of its construction is 2012.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

Urban Form

Ballyheigue Castle dominates the town and gives it a distinctive character. It was built in the early 1800’s and remained the residence of the Crosbie family (local landlords) until it was burned during the troubles of 1921. In recent years the grounds have been turned into a golf course and the castle façade is retained to front a clubhouse.

The settlement pattern is linear in nature, with little in-depth development. The town has a central core area, centered on a crossroads and car park at the entrance to the castle ruins and the access point to the beach. This has the potential to be an attractive focal point of the town. The main streetscape is comprised mainly of two-storey structures, with many single storey structures on the approach roads which add character and variety to the overall streetscape. Roof profiles vary throughout the town. The formality and uniform design evident in the Kerry County Council estate to the west of the central core area contrasts with the variety and informality of the core area.

There has been an increase in recent years in the number of holiday homes within the town. In addition there are a large number of mobile homes and caravan parks in the town and on adjacent lands. The presence of these caravan parks defines the tourist image of the area and do not contribute to an attractive urban image.

Historically, the town has been characterised by a compact urban form. In recent years however, developments on the approach roads leading into the town have diluted this development pattern creating a more linear urban structure.

Heritage and Archaeology

There is one National Monuments within the plan area – namely the area including Ballyheigue Castle. There are two Protected Structures within the plan area – namely Ballyheigue Castle and Ballyheigue Castle Gateway.



Natural Environment

Ballyheigue is situated on the Cloghaun and Maulin hillsides with majestic views of Ballyheigue Bay and beach. There is an NHA, SAC and SPA to the south of the plan area including Akeragh Lough – an important sanctuary for migrating flocks of sea birds who find first refuge here after long flights from their northern homes. There is little tree cover in the vicinity of the plan area which is typical of the north Kerry landscape. There are however, wooded areas adjacent to Ballyheigue Castle and Golf course which, due to its scale and extent, makes an important contribution to local amenity and to the natural environment.

The local seafront walk provides an important recreational facility. This plan will seek to preserve this walk and it is proposed that the Kerry County Council will make a tree preservation order in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in the locations as indicated on the zoning map.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic

Ballyheigue experiences some traffic congestion in peak summer months, particularly in fine weather at weekends. The main street is insufficient in width to cater for summer traffic volumes while accommodating the on-street parking needs of residents. This congestion detracts from the attractiveness of the town and limits the potential for streetscape improvements.

The footpath network while adequate in parts of the town is fragmented and discontinuous at some locations. This is most notable on the secondary road (L-6089) running north from the castle gates, along portions of the L-1033 Kerry Head Road and along Main Street.

The Main Street possesses significant potential for improvements and the formation of a very attractive urban streetscape. Pavement improvements, hard landscaping, tree planting, under grounding of services and high quality street furniture could transform the street and raise the general image of the town.

The area around the castle entrance and beach access is poorly delineated and does little to highlight the attractive castle gates or the streetscape fronting the area. In addition it blurs the transition from a defined urban area to the beach front area and thereby detracts from the urban environment

and town form. The centre is occupied by parking which does not contribute to an attractive urban environment. There is a lack of pedestrian paths, landscaping or high quality street furniture. This location presents an ideal opportunity, in conjunction with the upgrading of Main Street, to form an attractive town centre at the end of Main Street. Its development as an attractive civic space would create a defined edge to the town and reduce the uncoordinated blurring between town and beachfront.

Employment

There are a number of small commercial enterprises and services which account for most of the employment in Ballyheigue. It is desirable to ensure that large towns such as Ballyheigue are in a position to attract jobs to generate growth in its economy, population and services. It is likely however, that the majority of employment will continue to be based in the larger urban centres of Listowel and Tralee.

Employment in local services such as retailing is limited. It is envisaged however, that there will be some growth in service related employment following expected population growth over the plan period.

Growth and Residential Development

Planning permission was granted for a total of 215 dwellings in the period 2000-2006 or an average of 35 dwellings per year within the plan area. If current trends continue, it can be estimated that there will be a requirement in the order of 215 dwellings units over the plan period.


The construction of 215 dwelling units over the plan period would almost double the existing population. This growth would be in addition to recently permitted housing developments. Development on such a scale could only be accommodated if the social and physical infrastructure to service such development is put in place and future development will be required of necessity, to keep pace with the provision of new infrastructure.



3.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & OBJECTIVES

Ballyheigue is dependent to a large extent on the summer tourism trade to support many of the services provided. A number of services close during the winter months when demand is reduced. The overall development strategy for Ballyheigue is to promote the development of the town for 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. The construction of the wastewater treatment plant in 2003 has removed a significant barrier to development but this development alone will not achieve the aims of the overall strategy. People considering moving to Ballyheigue 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. 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.

The development strategy is to provide for the further development of Ballyheigue as a rural town, seaside resort and local service centre on a scale commensurate with the level of infrastructure provision.

Objective No	Overall Objective: It is an objective of the Council to:		Street				capacity of local roads serving the development.				
OO-1	Promote a more compact, in-depth form in the long term. In addition to securing a more sustainable form of development, it will retain the historically compact character of the town allowing new development to both integrate and reinforce the physical character of the town.	OO-9	Promote the development of suitable amenities throughout the town.		OO-16		Permit employment uses at appropriate locations to provide local employment and sustainable growth.				
OO-2	Promote the development of the town core area as an attractive civic space with high quality landscaping.	OO-10	Retain a compact and sustainable town structure. New development shall contribute towards a compact settlement structure through making effective use of backland and infill sites and zoned lands contiguous with existing development and shall not contribute to unnecessary ribbon development.								
OO-3	Promote streetscape improvements throughout the town to attain an attractive urban environment and in particular, upgrading the urban environment in Main Street.	OO-11	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-4	Promote the development of the town as a location for permanent residential development.	OO-12	Encourage development to adopt existing distinctive local design features where feasible, and which preserves and enhances existing architectural, archaeological and historical features.								
OO-5	Zone land within the town in appropriate locations for permanent residential development.	OO-13	Facilitate the development of a network of minor streets and pedestrian routes to integrate new development and ensure that pedestrian movement is provided for within the existing, and expanded town.								
OO-6	Ensure that a broad range of housing options is available in the town.	OO-14	Ensure that Residential development is accompanied by an increase in the level of social and retail facilities necessary to support a growing population and create a viable community.								
OO-7	Encourage walking and cycling and discourage unnecessary car-use through the provision of cycle ways and/or footpaths on all public roads within the town boundary and through new development where links to existing and proposed pedestrian networks can be created.	OO-15	Ensure that where required, new development shall be preceded by works to widen and improve the carrying								
OO-8	Promote measures to reduce traffic congestion on Main										
Objective No	Residential Development: It is an objective of the Council that										
R -1	The lands as indicated on the zoning map are reserved for PERMANENT residential use and shall be subject to a permanent residential occupancy clause.										
R-2	The lands as indicated on the zoning map are reserved for HOLIDAY HOME/ PERMANENT residential use or a mixture of both.										
R-3	20% of the land zoned in this plan for residential development or for a mix of residential and other uses, is reserved for the provision of social										

NORTH KERRY SETTLEMENTS

ADOPTED LOCAL AREA PLAN

	and affordable housing.		along the Kerry Head road.		
R-4	50% of the land zoned permanent residential shall be developed at a density of not greater than five to the acre.	T-3	To refurbish the existing footpaths on both sides of the main street and underground overhead services where practicable.	T-11	as to improve traffic flow along the L-6089.
R-5	That any application for development in land south of Main Street shall contain a flood risk assessment.	T-4	To improve pedestrian connectivity within the town by the provision of footpaths on both sides of the R551 by the widening of the road on its eastern edge so as to preserve the stone wall on the western edge.	T-12	To upgrade the definition, finishes and landscaping of the existing public car park area outside the Castle gates.
R-6	That the development of these lands shall be for low density residential development not exceeding 4 units/acre and shall be for permanent residential occupation.	T-5	To facilitate the development of a new relief road with linkages to Main Street from the R551 to the L-10471 Sandhill Road to the south of the existing Main Street.	T-13	To facilitate relocation of the (public) toilets to an alternative location closer to the beachfront.
		T-6	To provide a public car park at this central location to allow for an increase in the provision of public car spaces within the town core and seafront.	T-14	To increase the number of access points onto Main Street where possible.
		T-7	To include indicative access points to allow for the provision of suitable vehicular and pedestrian access to residentially zoned land.		That a relief road from the R551 regional road to the Sandhills Road incorporating residential streetscape should be constructed.
		T-8	To limit public footpath and lighting to within the development boundary of the town.		
		T-9	To improve pedestrian connectivity and safety and Traffic flow by the provision of footpaths along the L-6089.		
		T-10	To examine the feasibility of introducing a one way system on the narrow L-6089 from the proposed public car park outside the castle gates up to the entrance to Church Field subsequent to the proposed link road between it and the main street being open to traffic so		
Objective No	Active Amenity /Recreational: It is an objective of the Council that			Objective No	Institutional & Community Facilities: It is an objective of the Council
A-1	These lands as indicated on the zoning map are reserved for active amenity/recreational use.			ICF-1	To zone the land between the existing community hall site and the proposed realigned L10471 Sandhill Road as Institutional and Community Facilities to replace the portion of the existing site which will be required for the proposed road from the R551 to the Sandhill Road.
A-2	These lands as indicated on the zoning map are reserved for an extension / training pitch to the existing GAA grounds.				
A-3	Preserve and extend the existing amenity area/ walk				
A-4	Preserve designated existing trees and promote additional planting.				
Objective No	Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic: It is an objective of the Council			Objective No	Views/Prospects: It is an objective of the Council::
T-1	To provide a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the castle entrance to provide safe pedestrian access between the north and south sides of the L-1033 Kerry Head Road.			VP-1	To preserve views and prospects on the Kerry Head drive (L-1033) along the western approach road into the town as shown on the zoning map.
T-2	To improve pedestrian connectivity within the town by the provision of footpaths				



Objective No	Amenity: It is an objective of the Council:
ZNA-1	To enhance the town centre by realigning the roads, replacing the existing car park outside the castle gates with a green landscaped area and relocate the car park to the existing green area to the north of the playground and to the north of the public toilets This area will act as a central focus and identifiable civic space Development in this area must protect the integrity, the architectural heritage and preserve the existing streetscape character.
ZNA -2	To reserve lands along the seafront and north from the Castle Gate entrance for its existing use as a recreational walk as indicated on the zoning map.
ZNA-3	To designate the area to the north of the GAA field and east of the Community Centre as indicated on the map as Open Space for accommodating carnival amusements, circuses and/or car parking.
ZNA – 4	To make tree preservation orders in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as indicated on the zoning map.

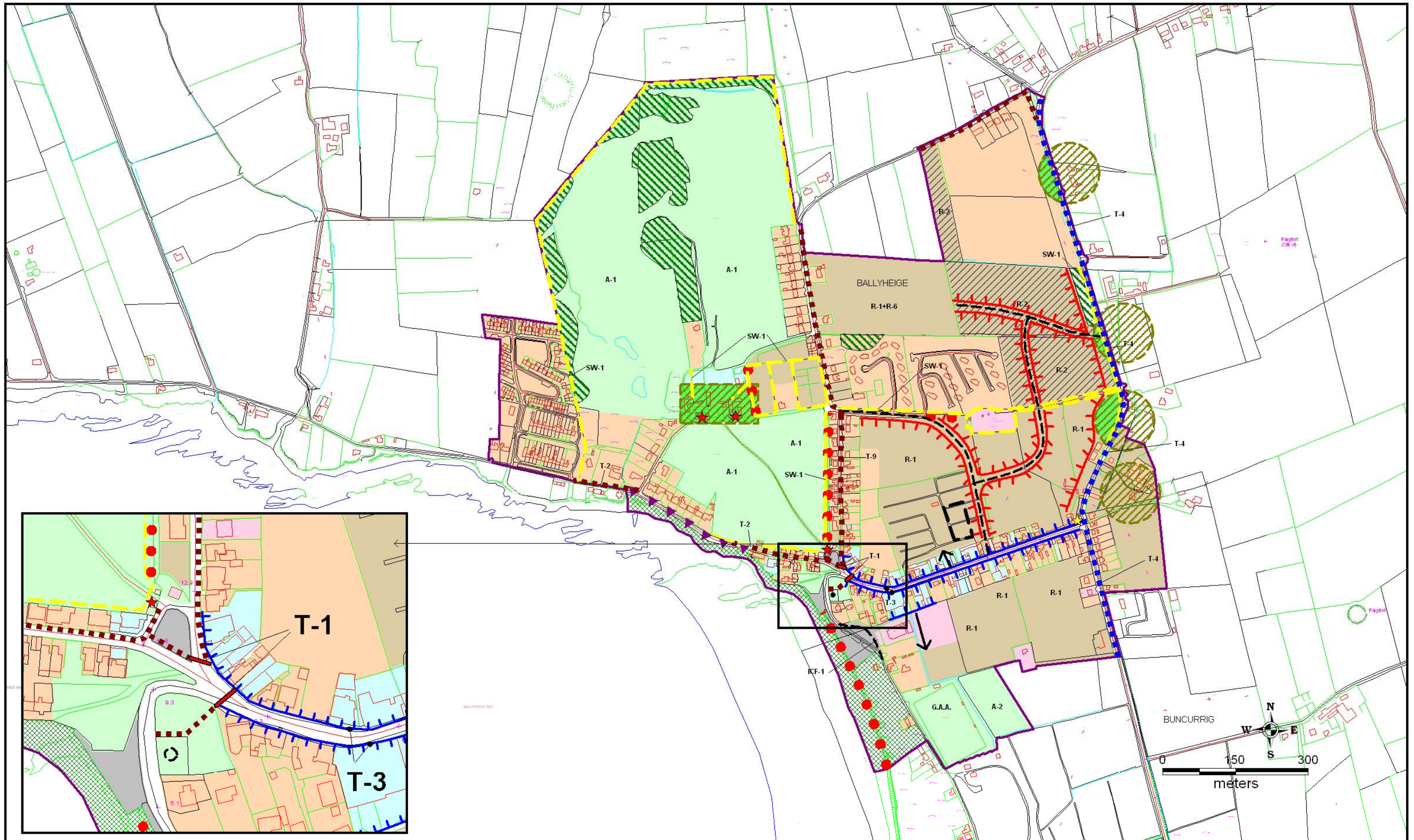


Objective No	Urban Design: It is an objective of the Council that
UD-1	Where land is indicated as “Residential Urban Streetscape” new development must incorporate the traditional architectural values of the existing main street in the conception of proposed massing, scale, form, and street frontage. Local architectural elements shall be incorporated in the design of structures. Proposed development shall incorporate pavement building lines and rear parking in its design and layout where site characteristics allow.

Objective No	Built Heritage: It is an objective of the Council:
AH-1	To secure the inclusion of the three storey stone structure (pictured below) at the junction of the R551 with the main street as identified on the map on the record of protected structures.

Objective No	Stone walls: It is an objective of the Council that
SW-1	Stone walls/fences within the plan area are retained with minimum removal of same. In particular this shall apply to the walls identified in the zoning map as SW-1.

Objective No	Tourism: It is an objective of the Council that
TM-1	To facilitate quality development that would promote the tourism potential of the town.
TM-2	To promote Ballyheigue as a destination for outdoor pursuits and as a service centre for visitors and tourists to the North Kerry Area.
TM-3	To facilitate the development of high quality accommodation and hotel developments within the town in appropriate locations.
TM-4	To facilitate the provision of indoor leisure activities to ensure that year round facilities are available.



Ballyheigue

Map Land Use Zoning

Sept. 2007

Kerry Co. Council
Planning Policy Unit

Ext. Residential	Institutional / Community Facilities	Active Recreational	Indicative Access Points (T-7)	Residential Urban Streetscape (UD-1)	Preserve Stone Walls/Fences(SW-1)	Indicative Sport Facilities
Permanent Residential (Proposed)	Ext. Public Car park	Proposed Tree Preservation Order	Footpaths(T-2, T9)	Indicative Road(proposed) (Possible alternative)	Views and Prospects(VP-1)	Passive Amenity/RMP
Permanent /Holiday Residential (Proposed)(R2)	Prop. Public Car park	Monuments	Pedestrian Route	Road Widening and Footpaths	Ext. Protected Structures	Development Boundary
Mixed Use	Prime Special Amenity	Playground	Mixed Use Urban Streetscape	Pedestrian Crossing(T-1) (indicative)	Prop. Protected Structures (AH-1)	