

Re: Proposed UNESCO Designation at Valentia Island – buffer zones

I am writing to outline my concerns about and opposition to the contents of the Draft Kenmare Municipal Local Area Plan (LAP), regarding the proposed designation of Heritage and Culturally Sensitive Areas (H&CSA) in Portmagee and Valentia Island.

As a resident of the area, I have serious concerns about the practical impact of the proposals contained in the draft LAP on us, the residents of the area, and future generations. There is an unacceptable and disappointing level of uncertainty and a lack of transparency as to how this will impact the local community in practical terms.

There is scant regard for the potentially huge impact this designation, and its associated restrictions, will have on the residents of the area.

As Kerry County Council will be well aware, there are already strict conditions in place for any development in the area, and the proposed designation will lead to further restrictions on development. I question why such further restrictions are necessary in practice to preserve the character of the areas to be designated. The introduction of the H&CSA designation would undoubtedly contribute to a further decline in population in an area already hugely affected by rural depopulation and will have a stifling effect on current inhabitants and future generations.

I trust Kerry County Council will act on the concerns outlined above and remove the H&CSA designations from the draft LAP.

