

41. Riverstown Mini-Plan



Village Profile

Riverstown is located approximately 20 km to the south of Sligo City, in a designated *Rural Area in Need of Regeneration*. The village provides a range of important services for the population of the wider rural area.

The majority of the village is bound to the north by the Douglas River (SAC / NHA), to the west by the Arrow / Unshin River (SAC / NHA) and to the east by Lough Meharth (NHA). These natural amenities are of particular historic, aesthetic and heritage value to the village.

The traditional village core is focused along Main Street and the local road which runs west of the village to connect with the N4. The village core consists mainly of older terraced development mixed with some new residential and commercial structures. Development in recent years has been concentrated close to the village centre.

In the Settlement Structure, Riverstown is designated as a *village supporting the rural community*. It also has special functions, reflecting its regionally significant cultural role.

Population and housing

According to 2006 Census information, Riverstown had a population of 310 persons in 2006 (13.5 % higher than the 2002 population). A survey carried out by Council planners in mid-2009 estimated that the population was still consistent with the 2006 figure.

Riverstown has experienced growth in residential development in recent years, largely attributable to the Rural Renewal Tax Incentive Scheme and the attractive rural setting of the village. Residential development has taken the form of suburban-type estates.

The 2009 SCC survey found a residential vacancy rate of 12% (20 units). There are a further 24 units permitted but not yet constructed.

It is considered that there is no need for additional residential development or for zoning large areas of land for residential uses. An appropriate policy response should strive to reduce the high vacancy rate.

Community facilities

There is a good range of community facilities in Riverstown: two primary schools, a playschool, a playground, two churches, a community hall and two playing pitches with associated dressing rooms. The village is also served by a Garda Station, doctor's surgery and health centre.

Recent population growth may result in demands for additional community facilities. While some lands have been zoned for these specific purposes, a flexible approach should be taken towards proposals for community developments on other suitable sites.

Commercial and enterprise development

Retail development in the form of small convenience outlets is focused along Main Street and the traditional village core. Riverstown plays an important role as a retail provider for the surrounding rural community. In particular, the NCF co-op provides a valuable service to the wider farming community. Its continued development is important for the vitality of the village centre.

Riverstown Folk Park and the Morrison Centre are Riverstown's cultural and tourist attractions. A supportive approach should be adopted to promote their continued use and future growth.

Infrastructure

Riverstown is served by a network of local roads, one of which runs west of the village to connect with the N4 Sligo-Dublin road (approximately 3 km away).

The water supply is provided via a County Council scheme which is sourced from a well bore adjacent to Lough Arrow. Currently there are no capacity issues.

The 600-PE wastewater treatment plant has spare capacity.

Objectives

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to:

41.1 Natural heritage and open space

- A. Encourage the protection and enhancement of the conservation value of Unshin River SAC / pNHA (including part of the Douglas River) and Lough Meharth pNHA.
- B. Encourage improved access to Unshin River and Douglas River by providing walkways as indicated on the Objectives Map and by requiring their provision in conjunction with the development of adjoining lands.
- C. Reserve land for a public park on site OS-1. The park should be developed as a semi-natural open space area and should protect and highlight the archaeological integrity of the site. Pedestrian links should be provided to adjoining lands.
- D. Retain the existing mature trees and stone wall along the eastern boundary of site VC-1 (as marked on the Objectives Map).

41.2 Built heritage

- A. Seek the protection and conservation of the following Protected Structures and Proposed Protected Structures located within the plan limit:

Protected Structures

- RPS-14** Bridge spanning the Douglas River
- RPS-16** Church of the Sacred Heart (RC)
- RPS-95** Cooper Memorial Hall
- RPS-96** Tawnagh Church (Col)
- RPS-97** Bridge spanning Unshin River
- RPS-106** Kingsville House
- RPS-15** Millview House

Proposed Protected Structures

- P-57** Riverstown Garda Station
- P-70** Riverstown National School

41.3 Circulation and parking

- A. Support the provision of pedestrian links between the village and surrounding natural amenities, whilst also connecting with the Folk Park and community facilities (as shown on the Objectives Map). The provision of such links will be required in conjunction with the development of adjoining lands.

41.4 Village-centre mixe-use zone

- A. Ensure that any development / redevelopment of sites VC-1 and VC-2 shall provide appropriate frontage onto both adjoining public roads.
- B. The mature trees and stone wall along the eastern boundary of site VC-1 should be retained as part of a linear open space and walkway, which shall also extend along the southern and northern boundaries of site VC-1. This open space should be overlooked by development within VC-1.
- C. Any redevelopment of site VC-2 should incorporate a well-designed open space at the junction of public roads at the north-eastern corner of the site.
- D. Where there is an established character of two-storey developments within the village centre, new development will be required to be consistent with this. However, an increased height may be permitted, particularly on visually prominent sites such as VC-1 and VC-2.

41.5 Community facilities

- A. Facilitate the relocation of St Joseph's National School to a larger site on lands zoned for community facilities to the south of the village.
- B. Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the existing sports grounds and associated facilities.

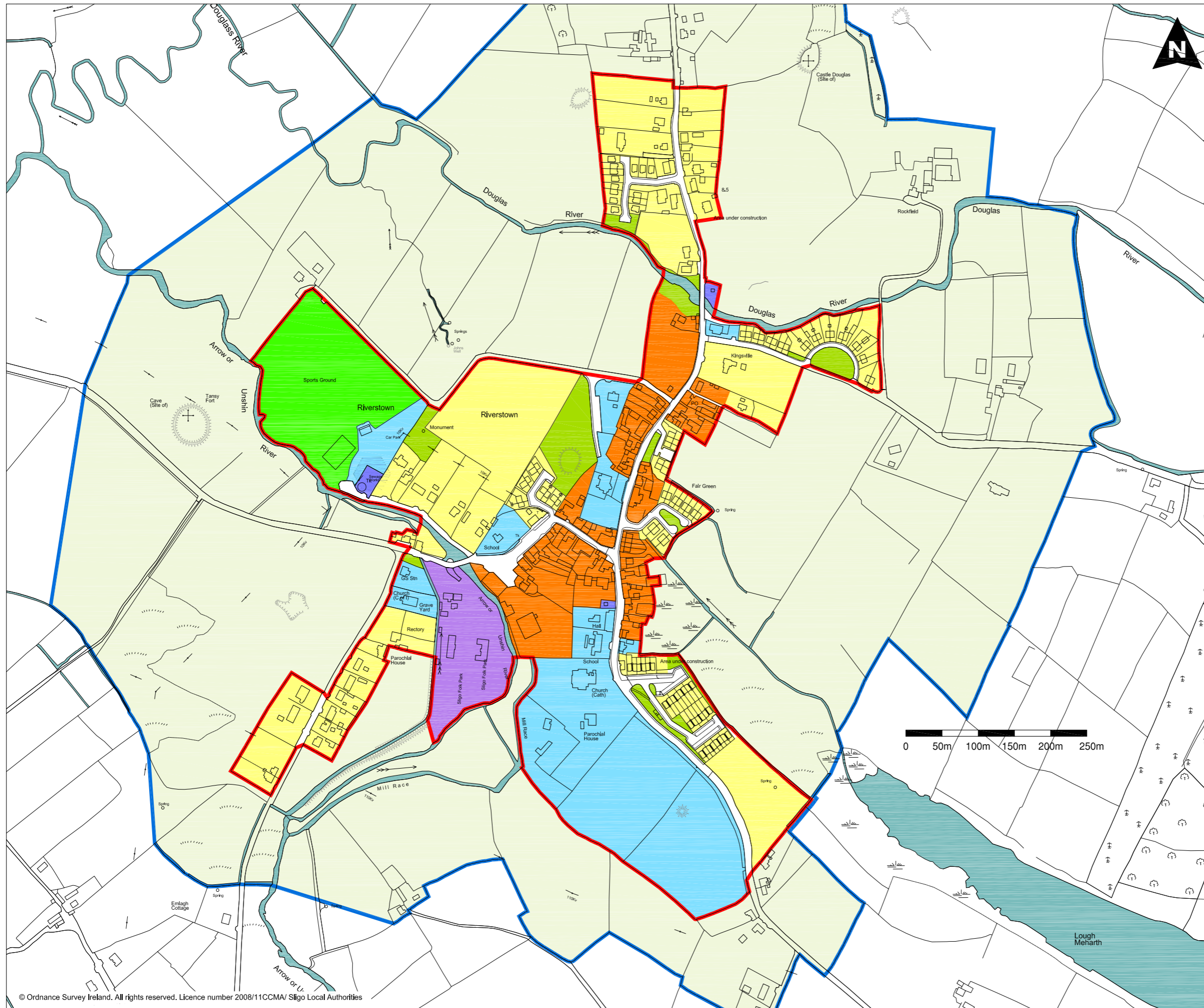
41.6 Business and enterprise

- A. Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the Folk Park as a tourist attraction.
- B. Facilitate the development of additional tourism-related local enterprise initiatives.

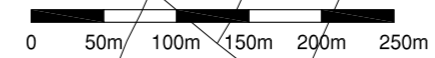
41.7 Wastewater treatment

- A. Allow for development connecting to the WWTP up to a limit of 600 PE (population equivalent). However, notwithstanding this available capacity, residential development shall be permitted only at a rate that is consistent with the Core Strategy and the Settlement Structure outlined in Chapter 3 of this Plan.
- B. Retain and enhance existing landscaping at the site of the wastewater treatment works.
- C. A buffer zone shall apply in the vicinity of the existing WWTP site. Development within this zone may be restricted or prohibited in the interests of public health and/or the protection of residential amenities. The extent of development restrictions in each case will be assessed at planning application stage.

Riverstown Zoning Map



- █ plan limit
- █ development limit
- █ residential uses
- █ mixed uses
- █ community facilities
- █ business & enterprise
- █ utilities
- █ open space
- █ sports and playing fields
- █ buffer Zone



Riverstown Objectives Map

- plan limit
- development limit
- existing RPS structure
- ◆ proposed addition to RPS
- - - river walks, pedestrian and cycle links
- river buffer zone
- for objectives relating to individual site refer to written objectives
- ⬡ WWTP buffer zone (indicative)
- SAC
- pNHA
- RMP

