

Courtown and Riverchapel Local Area Plan 2015-2021



Appendix 4

Coastal Path

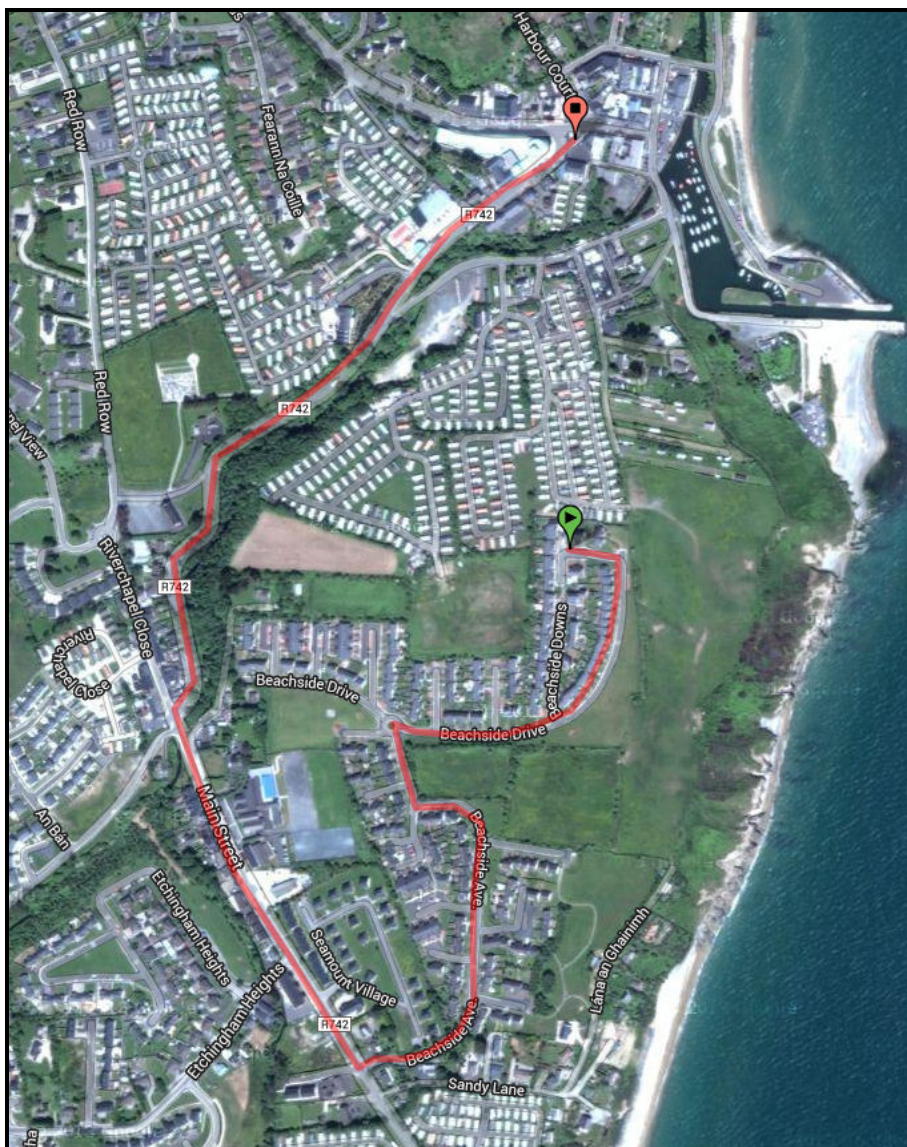


Purpose of the Coastal Pathway

The development and upgrade of the coastal pathway is necessary for increased connectivity in the plan area but it will also provide benefits in the areas of tourism and recreation.

The residents of Beachside Estate have a considerable walk to Courtown village centre. It is necessary to follow a route marked from start to finish shown on Figure 1 below. This distance is approximately 2.4km and some of the walk (between Riverchapel and Courtown) lacks footpaths.

Figure 1



An improved and re-instated coastal path could provide a link from Beachside Estate to the village centre. The walking distance would be reduced and would encourage individuals and families to walk to the village centre instead of making a car journey. It would make an enormous difference to the lives of children and young people and to those who do not own cars.

Figure 2 below shows the route if access to the coastal pathway was restored and upgraded. The distance to the town centre from Beachside Dale would be reduced from 2.4km to 1km.

Figure 2



It is an objective of the Plan (Objective RS07) to facilitate the upgrading and extension of coastal path subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive and all other normal planning and environmental criteria. Objective TE07 also states that it is the objective of the Council to promote the development and use of the proposed coastal path as a tourist and recreational facility subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and compliance with EU Directives.

Preliminary Assessment of the Coastal Pathway

Figure 3 to the right shows the route of the coastal pathway. The sections which are **passable** are shown in green while sections that are **impassable** are shown in red.

The existing pathway from Courtown to the end of the grassy track on Breanoge Head is passable (0.5km). It requires upgrading and improvement, subject to further feasibility and environmental studies prior to the deciding on the design.

From here, there is heavy undergrowth and steep terrain with severe erosion (**Area A**). This section of the coastal pathway is no longer accessible (0.6km).



Figure 3

Beyond this, the pathway is passable to a point just north of Glenbeg Head where the route goes onto the beach (1.6km). From the previous point north of Glenbeg Head to Parknacross, the pathway leaves the beach and is impassable at high tide and there is no access off the beach. This section is shown as **Area B** (0.6km).

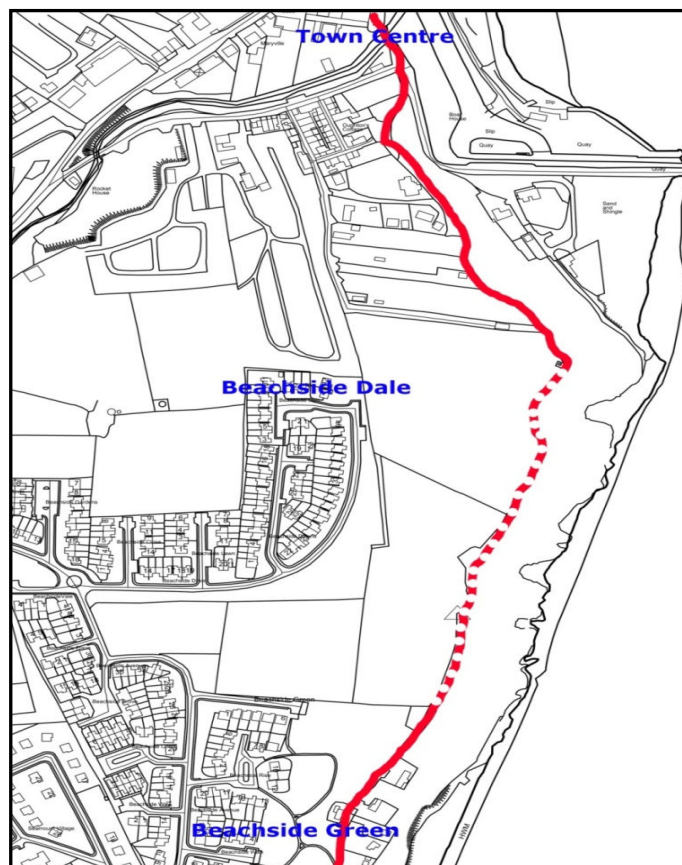
As the pathway continues south after this towards Pollshone Harbour it is passable (0.5km).

While some sections of the “Wexford Coastal Path” are currently suitable for the intended users (i.e. disabled users, ambulant disabled, family groups, casual novice users), many sections are not. The route includes sections which are suitable, impassable, and unsuitable.

Area A is impassable due to the collapse of the existing pathway. There are sufficient private lands to the west of the collapse which could accommodate a re-routing of the pathway to link it with the suitable sections running to the north and south of this area.

Unsuitable sections include those which are passable with difficulty (e.g. climbing over rocks) or beach sections either impacted by the tide or stony beaches which are difficult to walk on, such as **Area B**.

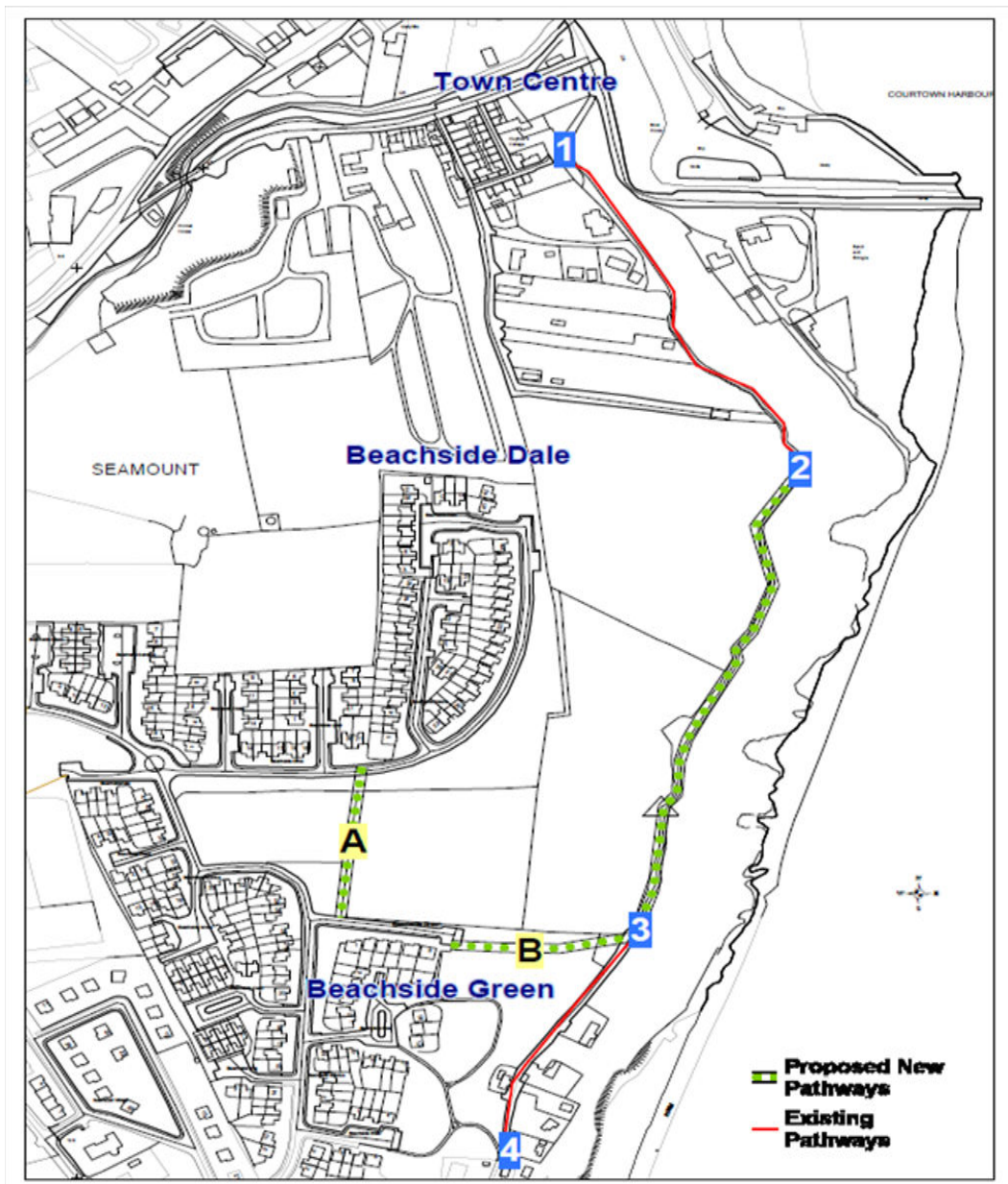
Figure 4 shows a close up of the coastal pathway, showing Area A impassable as a dashed red line.



Proposed Improvements to the Coastal Pathway

An indicative route for the new pathway is shown in blue and green in Figure 5 below. This route is for indicative purposes only and will be subject to further feasibility and environmental studies prior to the deciding on the design and suitability of the coastal path. A range of criteria will need to be considered, including erosion, topography, health and safety and habitats.

Figure 5



New links from neighbouring housing clusters should be established as indicated by A and B.