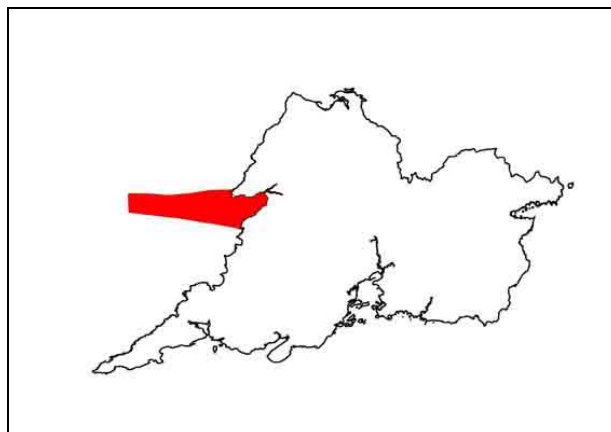


#### *AREA 4: LISCANNOR BAY*



#### *Key Characteristics*

- Broad open bay that affords long views out over the Atlantic Ocean, with low shelving cliffs containing bay beyond beach.
- Sea rescue centre at Lahinch.
- Dolphins are evident around Liscannor Bay.
- A large concrete seawall is located at Lahinch.
- West facing bay that allows views of impressive sunsets.
- Lahinch is a Blue Flag Beach and is also classified as a visually vulnerable and visually sensitive area.

*Typical Photograph: Lahinch*



*Landscape Character types and habitat types*

LCTs	HLTs	HLT codes	HT	HT codes
Moorland Hills	Coastal Intertidal	CI	Tidal Rivers	CW2
Coastal Plain and Dunes	Dunes	D	Estuaries	MW4
Flat Estuarine Farmland and Islands	Enclosed Land 2	EL2	Lower salt marsh	CM1
	Enclosed Land 3	EL3	Marram dunes	CD2
	Enclosed Land 4	EL4	Sand shores	LS2
	Settlement 2	S2	Seawalls, piers and jetties	CC1
	Recreational	R		
	Extractive Industries Quarry	EIQ		

*Seascape Character Area Extent*

Liscannor Seascape extends from Hags Head to Cream Point (just north of Spanish Point).

*Geology and Landcover*

Inagh and Dealagh Rivers drain into Liscannor Bay. These channels meander through a wide, flat valley, which is sheltered from the sea by an extensive dune system to the west. The bay displays yellow sand and Liscannor rock. Liscannor rock is also exposed at a quarry near Hag’s Head (EIQ).

### *Coastal Ecology*

Habitats surrounding the Bay include coastal dunes, an estuarine channel and its associated salt marsh habitat. These salt marshes are found along the tidal section of the valley where the species Glassworths (*Salicornia spp*) are often found, extending out onto the intertidal sands.

Bird species recorded within close proximity to the site include Greenland White-Fronted Goose, Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Lapwing and Curlew. Marram Grass (*Ammophila arenaria*) dunes are found near O'Brien's Bridge.

### *Historic Seascapes and Human Influences*

Settlements are centred on Liscannor and Lahinch (S2). These areas have become highly developed with numerous tourist activities, including holiday homes, apartments, car parks and amusements. However the town centres still retain their traditional character.

Recreational uses such as campsites and golf courses have traditionally clustered around Lahinch and links courses cover the dune system and mhuirbhigh (alluvial plain) behind it.

Promontory forts near Cream Point and at Freagh Point command views to similar monuments across the bay and provide a focal point for the eye – reinforced by the tower house at Freagh Point. Similar small forts concentrate near Lahinch overlooking the inner bay.

A tower house overlooks the coast at Liscannor and another dominates the crossing of the Inagh River at O'Brien's Bridge. The bridge itself was built in 1836 and is of ashlar and cut-stone construction, with decorative pilasters (20401503NIAH). Ladder fields (EL2) adorn the slopes of the north side of the bay, whilst elsewhere the fields are more irregular (EL3 and EL4). Nine shipwrecks are recorded for Liscannor Bay

### *Condition and Sensitivity*

The overall condition of the SCA improves outside the main tourist settlements of Liscannor and Lahinch. The SCA is sensitive to change, the area is already degraded due to tourism development. Less developed smaller cliffs are more sensitive to development such as hotels, which would be highly visible.

### *Forces For Change*

- 
- Pressure on dune system due to golf course development
  - Tourism development e.g. caravan parks and hostels
  - Possible pollution of bay from run off from Inagh and Dealagh Rivers which meander through low lying wet grasslands and farmlands
  - Impacts upon the bays due to climatic change, sea level rise, increasing intensity of storms etc
- 

### *Principles for Seascape Management*

- 
- Control of development in designated landscapes is needed
  - Implement regular monitoring of bays, particularly in areas where tourism activities are prominent
  - Dune systems should be strictly protected
  - Avoid the ongoing development of tourism facilities along the coastal road
-