

INISHOWEN PENINSULA DESTINATION & EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SUMMARY PLAN



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This page: Grianán of Aileach, Co. Donegal
Cover: Fort Dunree, Bunrana, Co. Donegal

INTRODUCTION

This is a summary document. A copy of the full Inishowen Peninsula Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is available on www.failteireland.ie or on request to waw@failteireland.ie

The Inishowen Peninsula in Co. Donegal, Ireland's most northerly point, provides both a dramatic ending and an awe-inspiring beginning to the Wild Atlantic Way. A peninsula surrounded by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean to the north, Lough Foyle to the east, and Lough Swilly to the west, has its geological and cultural story shaped by the endless *tides of time*. Located on the border, the Inishowen Peninsula's identity is inextricably linked with its neighbours in Northern Ireland and Derry-Londonderry is an integral part of the peninsula's story. The diversity of the marine environment recognises no boundaries and the shipwrecks that rest on the ocean floor tie the Inishowen Peninsula to countries around the globe – all adding to the distinctive personality of Ireland's most northerly location.

The oldest rocks in Ireland lie to the north-east of Malin Head on Inishtrahull. The striking and windswept landscapes are dominated by the solitary loveliness and bewitching grandeur of Malin Head with its spectacular natural features and deep chasms; by the fortified coastal promontories that capture stories of defence down through the centuries; the estuarine waterways, tidal islands and sandy bays; the gentle lowlands and raised beaches marking progressive changes in sea level; and by Sliabh Sneacht and the peninsula's mountainous interior.

The landscape and the culture today are marked by the legacies of these tides of time. The dramatic stories of maritime and military might; the creativity that ties present-day artists and artisans back through the centuries to the creative energy of bygone generations and eras; and the wild oasis that awaits the visitor with the Inishowen Peninsula's cherished viewsapes and internationally renowned ecological significance have the potential to provide an unforgettable experience.

The sustainable development of a tourism destination requires the input from a range of stakeholders and this DEDP has been developed in consultation with a working group made up of representatives from all the key agencies and local tourism groups involved in influencing or delivering tourism, together with individuals interested in the sustainable promotion of the Inishowen Peninsula as a tourism destination. This Plan focuses on identifying strategic directions for the Inishowen Peninsula that will strengthen the visitor experience and elevate its story. It addresses infrastructural requirements, highlights actions that will build capacity, and promotes a community-led approach to establishing a destination with international appeal. This 5-year



DEDP provides a shared vision and clear direction towards strengthening and growing the destination's market share through the delivery of Catalyst Projects and Hero Experiences that seek to maximise the key strengths of the Inishowen Peninsula.

In addition to focusing on the visitor experience, this DEDP is equally cognisant of the need to consider the other elements of the VICE model which are foundational to this DEDP. The VICE model focuses on the interaction between Visitors (V), the Industry (I) that serves them, the Community and Culture that hosts them (C) and their collective impact on and response to the Environment (E) to guide the future sustainable development of tourism. Getting the balance right is critical in building long-term sustainable tourism and is a core objective to the actions outlined.

VISION

A destination recognised for our internationally significant marine ecosystem, our distinctive maritime and military heritage, our creative story, and the opportunity to pursue adventure, health, and well-being year-round.

GOALS

- ▶ To enrich our communities through sustainably growing and spreading the benefits of tourism across the peninsula year-round.
- ▶ To adopt new ways of working collaboratively to differentiate the Inishowen Peninsula and deliver compelling **Hero experiences**. A hero experience is an authentic and iconic tourism experience. It is the 'must see or do' element for visitors.
- ▶ To add value to our sense of place and to ensure that the integrity of our ecosystems, landscapes, and traditions are respected.

OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the Inishowen Peninsula Destination and Experience Development Plan are to develop compelling experiences for this stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way that will:

- ▶ Protect the natural heritage and special environmental character of the region.
- ▶ Position the Inishowen Peninsula as a 'must do' destination and motivate visitors to stay overnight and spend more.
- ▶ Extend the length of the season.
- ▶ Improve the overall economy of communities through strengthening individual businesses, creating new entrepreneurial opportunities, sustaining and increasing

job creation, and increasing the attractiveness of the area for other forms of economic growth.

- ▶ Support community values and aspirations and strengthen community appreciation of local culture and intangible heritage.
- ▶ Support sense of place enhancement.
- ▶ Promote collaboration, partnership and engagement of businesses and build lasting links between national and regional partners, local agencies and associations and local tourism experiences.
- ▶ Align to the Wild Atlantic Way brand and target markets.

The recommendations on implementation and monitoring will be critical to ensuring success in delivering this DEDP and in assessing its impact.

OUR STRATEGIC AREAS OF ACTION

- ▶ Implementing Catalyst Projects to accelerate momentum.
- ▶ Developing Hero experiences.
- ▶ Strengthening supportive infrastructure and sense of place.
- ▶ Building industry capacity and supporting services.

TARGET MARKETS

- ▶ Culturally Curious.
- ▶ Great Escapers.
- ▶ Social Energisers (secondary).
- ▶ Educational and scientific markets.

Malin Head, Co Donegal



THE EXPERIENCES OUR VISITORS ARE SEEKING

Having a detailed understanding of what motivates visitors to travel to Ireland can help to grow market share through more effective experience development and targeted marketing.

Recognising the benefits of global consumer market segmentation, Fáilte Ireland has undertaken significant research on the country's key consumer segments, including their travel motivations, lifestyle, values, interests, and travel information sources.

Through this research, two primary market segments have been identified for the

Wild Atlantic Way – the **Culturally Curious** and the **Great Escapers**. As appreciation for the peninsula's activity tourism grows, there is increasing potential to attract **Social Energisers** as a secondary market. In addition to these leisure segments, the peninsula has the potential to attract an educational market with an interest in the marine environment and ecotourism.

The following tables highlights what the three leisure segments are seeking from a holiday in Ireland, together with key attributes of youth travel (as a key element of the educational market):

LEISURE SEGMENTS

Culturally Curious

are very independently-minded and are interested in places of historic and cultural interest.

- ▶ Want to learn about Irish culture, customs, and traditions.
- ▶ Looking for authentic local experiences.
- ▶ Interested in history being brought to life by storytelling and re-enactment.
- ▶ Seek to venture off the beaten track – often by hiking, walking or biking.
- ▶ Curious to explore natural landscapes and seascapes, small towns and villages, castles, ancient sites and historic houses.
- ▶ Seek quality, fresh, well-prepared local food.
- ▶ They want to hear the insider perspective through local stories.

Great Escapers

want to get away from it all, renewing family bonds and spending time together in a beautiful place.

- ▶ Feel connected to nature – travel in autumn and/or spring when nature is going through a transformative phase.
- ▶ Seek value for money.
- ▶ Rural touring holidays with a promise of local, authentic communities, and activities.
- ▶ Meeting authentic local people to learn about the Irish way of life.
- ▶ Little interest in formal cultural artefacts, e.g., museums.
- ▶ Seek an urban-rural experience, but will want to experience the less touristy parts of the cities.

Social Energisers

have a passion to experience new things – the more unique and exciting, the better.

- ▶ Socially energetic; young at heart spanning all age groups.
- ▶ Seek fun, social interaction, and excitement, and want to engage fully with the destination – looking for areas frequented by the locals and quirky, spontaneous, unplanned experiences.
- ▶ Want to visit the top attractions and activities, particularly if they are presented in an energetic, engaging, and unusual way.
- ▶ Professionals with a busy life – can be a more lucrative segment than others.

Educational-Youth Travel

do not consider travel as a luxury but as part of their lifestyle – they 'collect experiences'.

- ▶ Mix travel ambitions with study, work, volunteering, or adventure while often seeking to support career aspirations.
- ▶ Seek novel and engaging experiences that go beyond leisure – want to engage in a country's culture.
- ▶ Tend to travel light with iPad/laptop – Wi-Fi is essential.
- ▶ 40% is group travel.
- ▶ Keen interest in water-based activities.
- ▶ Prefer budget accommodation such as hostels – economise on accommodation/transport to optimise on cultural immersion.
- ▶ Trend-setters and influencers.
- ▶ Likely to return.

HERO EXPERIENCE THEMES

An aerial photograph of a coastline. The sea is a vibrant turquoise color, transitioning to a deep blue further out. A long, narrow sandy beach runs along the shore, with white foam from the waves washing onto it. To the right of the beach is a grassy, hilly peninsula. In the distance, a small, rocky island sits in the water. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds.

IMAGINE a peninsula...

Where ripple marks from tides of time tell our stories of land and sea;
Where past and present are intertwined on our hills and in our songs;
Where kings and chiefs and garrisons proudly defended our shores;
Where saints traversed and our sons and siblings sailed forth;
Where cherished traditions of times gone by infuse our lives and our creative expressions today;
Where the call of the wild unleashes our energy, stirs our passion and calms our soul;
And, where our giants of the deep leave us mesmerised and reconnected with life around us
... this is **INISHOWEN** – Ireland's most northerly point.

Pollan Bay, Ballyliffin, Co. Donegal

HERO EXPERIENCE THEMES

1. MARITIME AND MILITARY MIGHT
2. INISHOWEN'S CREATIVE STORY
3. WILD OASIS

The Story of the Inishowen Peninsula

The stories of past eras have left their mark across the intricate landscape. Defensive fortifications that date from prehistoric times through to the World Wars of last century offer a captivating experience for today's visitor. The interplay of the maritime and military themes comes to life at Fort Dunree, a site now undergoing a multi-million Euro transformation to create a world-class visitor attraction. The stories unfold elsewhere with Grianán of Aileach and Malin Head offering compelling experiences in spectacular settings of ancient and modern defence systems, while relics of warships and sunken vessels lying under the waves and the ruins of castles and towers around the peninsula allow visitors to further imagine the strategic role that the Inishowen Peninsula has played through the centuries.

The Creative Framework

The story of the Inishowen Peninsula is a story of time. Understanding the essence of the Inishowen Peninsula can shape the Hero experiences and can be used to differentiate the peninsula. It provides the basis for identifying experiential themes that in turn can provide a sense of cohesion to the destination experience. The **THREE HERO EXPERIENCE THEMES** reflect the strengths and personality of the Inishowen Peninsula – *'Maritime and Military Might'*; *'Inishowen's Creative Story'*; and *'Wild Oasis'*.

Maritime and Military Might

The maritime and military heritage of the Inishowen Peninsula is unrivalled along the Wild Atlantic Way. Key chapters of Ireland's history unfolded on the Inishowen Peninsula. Visitors to the peninsula can explore sites that reveal the legacies and stories of defending the peninsula from threats near and far, down through the centuries.

Inishowen Peninsula's Creative Story

Creativity is a theme that resonates along the Wild Atlantic Way, but nowhere is its story so strongly etched into the land and culturescape, as on the Inishowen Peninsula. The opportunity to explore art and artistic traditions from Neolithic times through to the present, and to engage in immersive experiences is on offer across the peninsula.

Wild Oasis

Whether today's visitor is looking for elemental wildness or peace and serenity, both can be readily found on the Inishowen Peninsula. Against a backdrop of natural heritage that has potential world acclaim, the visitor can pursue adrenaline-filled coastal adventure or can slow down in a landscape that promises an enhanced sense of well-being.

The way forward for the Inishowen Peninsula is through working collaboratively to develop new experiences and to create a stronger enabling framework. The framework should be regarded as a tool – one that is designed to elevate the region's best and to bring to life those stories that underlie its very essence in a way that enables the visitor to make an emotional connection with the Inishowen Peninsula and to clearly recall the memories of their experiences. Taken together, the themes play an important role in shaping experience development priorities, particularly the catalyst projects, and underpin the direction of the entire DEDP.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN

Vision - A destination recognised for our internationally significant marine ecosystem, our distinctive maritime and military heritage, our creative story and the opportunity to pursue adventure, health and well-being year-round.

Malin Head, Co. Donegal

INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN

The Vision, detailed opposite, highlights the significant eco-cultural heritage of the Inishowen Peninsula. Elevating this distinctive identity lies at the core of this DEDP. To work towards realising the vision will require a collaborative approach that brings the diverse community of interests together – including agency representatives, community groups with ecological and cultural heritage aspirations, and businesses. This approach has the potential to play a pivotal role in the ongoing development and promotion of the Inishowen Peninsula as a unique bio-cultural region on the Wild Atlantic Way.

Action Plan

Below is a summary of the key actions outlined in the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP. The full DEDP can be found on www.failteireland.ie or on request to waw@failteireland.ie. The plan is presented in four sections:

1. **Catalyst Projects**
2. **Developing Hero Experiences** – these are additional experiences that will strengthen the Inishowen Peninsula as a destination
3. **Strengthening Supportive Infrastructure and Sense of Place**
4. **Building Industry Capacity and Supporting Services**

The alignment of the Catalyst Projects and Hero Experiences with the three themes is illustrated in the table opposite. Darker check marks indicate primary themes and lighter check marks indicate secondary themes.

The focus of this DEDP is ultimately on developing compelling and marketable experiences that can differentiate the Inishowen Peninsula, encourage the visitor to stay longer and spend more, and to develop a new appreciation for the unique values of the peninsula and its people.

SUMMARY: Catalyst Projects and Hero Experiences by Theme

CATALYST PROJECTS	MARITIME & MILITARY MIGHT	INISHOWEN'S CREATIVE STORY	WILD OASIS
Fort Dunree	✓	✓	✓
Malin Head	✓		✓
North West Greenway Network	✓		✓
Creative Hubs		✓	
Inishowen Blueway	✓		✓
SUPPORTING HERO EXPERIENCES			
Grianán of Aileach	✓		
Inishowen Maritime Museum & Planetarium	✓	✓	✓
Inch Wildfowl Reserve			✓
Inishtrahull Island			✓
Heritage Sites – the O'Doherty Story	✓		
Adventure Activities			✓
Dark Skies			✓
Marine Ecotourism	✓		✓
Well-being from Nature		✓	✓
Inishowen's Culinary Experience		✓	✓

SECTION 1: CATALYST PROJECTS

Transformational projects which can act as a catalyst for tourism growth. The Catalyst Projects presented here are initiatives designed to generate significant momentum across the region. It is anticipated that they will strengthen the positioning of the Inishowen Peninsula as a visitor destination and will act as a stimulant for both local and regional sustainable economic growth. In the case of Fort Dunree, Malin Head, and the North West Greenway Network, considerable progress has already been made and this DEDP seeks to build on the strategic significance of these projects.

1. FORT DUNREE

Fort Dunree has the potential to be a significant attractor and has the capacity to offer a range of experiences that will appeal to a spectrum of audiences. In June 2021, the existing attraction was awarded almost €12.5 million under Fáilte Ireland’s Platform for Growth Programme to transform the site into a world-class visitor attraction thereby enabling it to become a lead attraction in Donegal and the entire north west of the island of Ireland. A proposed funicular (a type of cable railway which will be the only

one in Ireland) will offer visitors a “thrilling ascent” to the High Fort, whilst its descent will provide breath-taking views of Lough Swilly and its surroundings. A further key value proposition is the development of the glass walkway, bridging two elements of the site and providing spectacular views of the natural environment. The Fort Dunree Business Case prepared for the funding application provides an initial guiding document.



Proposed developments at Fort Dunree, Co. Donegal

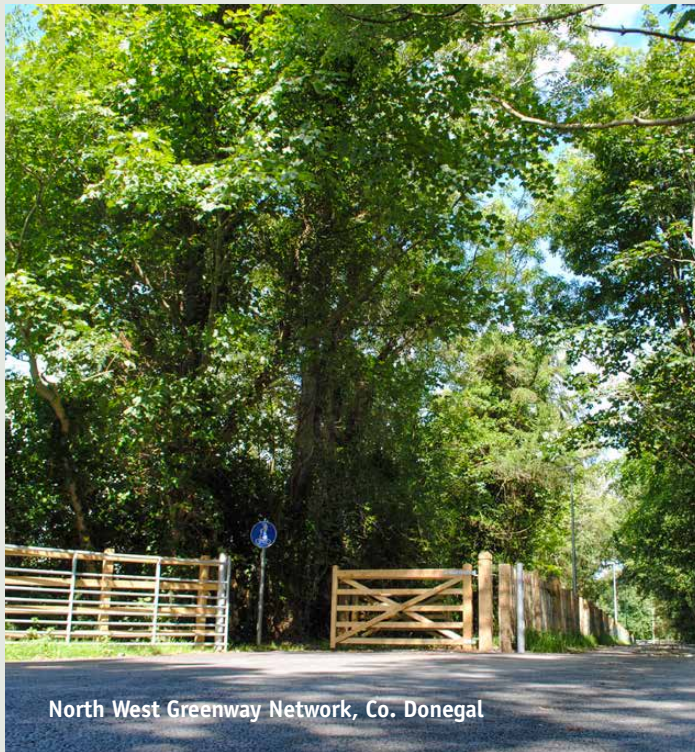


2. MALIN HEAD

As Ireland's most northerly point and the first (or last) Signature Discovery Point on the Wild Atlantic Way, Malin Head has been growing in popularity as a destination. It is the focal area of many of the Inishowen Peninsula's maritime and military stories and offers an excellent land-based viewing location for marine wildlife and outstanding scenery for walking. The *Malin Head Visitor Management Plan* has been completed, although has yet to be fully adopted. The aim of this DEDP is to leverage Malin Head's position as the most northerly Signature Discovery Point on the Wild Atlantic Way and guide the future development of tourism for the area in a sustainable way which will deliver economic benefits to the local community.



Malin Head, Co. Donegal



North West Greenway Network, Co. Donegal

3. NORTH WEST GREENWAY NETWORK

This cross-border initiative is well underway and will ultimately create an active travel corridor between Derry-Londonderry and the Inishowen Peninsula. It is one of a number of greenway projects that are currently under consideration in Co. Donegal.

While the North West Greenway Network is positioned as a modal shift project primarily designed to change local travel behaviour, it will have a major impact on the destination's visitor experience. Within the Network, the Inishowen Greenway concept in its entirety envisages a circular route that will provide connectivity between Derry-Londonderry, Buncrana, Carndonagh, Moville, Quigley's Point, Muff, and back to Derry-Londonderry, with the potential for the development of spurs and linkages to key sites and existing walking trails. Ultimately there are plans to link through to Lifford and Strabane via the Foyle Valley Greenway and to an expanding greenway network in Northern Ireland. Both the Inishowen Greenway and the Foyle Valley Greenway are two of a range of greenways highlighted in the National Development Plan 2021-2030, as part of the Government's commitment to strengthening opportunities for active travel.

Although completion of a circular greenway route on the Inishowen Peninsula will take time, its potential to connect a series of attractions and communities to a cycle and walking market that is rapidly growing is substantial and needs to be continually explored as development moves forward. The Inishowen Greenway will play a critical role in elevating the three experiential themes and telling the story of the peninsula, while being a Hero experience in its own right and a vital new route for active travel.

The initial routes to be constructed are between Derry-Londonderry and Buncrana via Inch (32.5km) and between Derry-Londonderry and Muff (10.5kms). The section through Muff was completed in June 2022.

4. CREATIVE HUBS

The creativity found within the Inishowen Peninsula today has a long history and remains a key hallmark of the peninsula. However, like many rural areas, it is a fragmented sector and market awareness of the collective offering is low. The concept of a creative hub is aimed at fostering growth in the local and regional creative economy. It can take on different formats and can be established for different purposes with the focus generally being on smaller providers. This strategic priority has identified two potential hubs – the Market House in Clonmany and the proposed Creative Maker’s Hub in Carndonagh. Each creative hub concept is distinctive in its own right and when taken together they add significant value to the creative sector and to tourism. Both have the potential to act as staging areas to engage the visitor further in *Inishowen’s Creative Story*.



Moville Pottery, Co. Donegal



Moville, Co. Donegal

5. INISHOWEN BLUEWAY

The peninsula offers a range of water-based activities and has become well-recognised regionally for the activities offered at Moville and Fort Dunree. However, it has no strong stand-out water-based experience that would compel international markets or domestic markets from further afield. The concept of an Inishowen Blueway would meet that requirement and would strengthen the marine ecotourism offering.

The implementation of the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP is based on stakeholder commitment to project delivery. Key stakeholders will take ownership or partner on the delivery of the key tasks required to implement the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP.

This DEDP is designed to build on existing project plans and integrate all related activity for a co-ordinated series of outputs. This includes projects that are being implemented, projects featured in existing plans, and new concepts to build the destination’s capacity for new visitor experience development.

The implementation phase is structured around an Action Plan approach. This 5-year DEDP provides a shared vision and clear direction towards strengthening and growing the destination’s market share through the delivery of Hero Experiences that seek to maximise the key strengths of the Inishowen Peninsula. In addition to focusing on the

visitor experience, this DEDP is equally cognisant of the need to consider the other elements of the VICE model which are foundational to the DEDP.

Getting the balance right is critical in building long-term sustainable tourism and is a core objective to the actions outlined. This includes the measurement of projects that will enhance tourism industry capacity development, experience creation and enhancement, and catalyst and elevation destination enabling projects.

Below is a summary of the key actions outlined in the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP.

1. FORT DUNREE	
Key Actions	Lead
Secure professional engineering design services to design and deliver/manage all the consultancy services required to develop the proposed funicular, the Lough Swilly glass walkway, and the upgrades to existing buildings and heritage artefacts. Commence development on these initiatives.	Donegal County Council, Fort Dunree Board
Develop a comprehensive visitor management plan based on the funding awarded under Fáilte Ireland’s Platform for Growth Programme to transform the site into a world-class visitor attraction thereby enabling it to become a lead attraction in Donegal and the entire north west of the island of Ireland. The Fort Dunree Business Case, prepared for the funding application, provides an initial guiding document.	
Proceed with the animation of the entire site through enhanced interpretation that includes elements of augmented and virtual reality, live performances in the Marching Square, guided themed tours, and special events. Facilitate ease of movement through clear signage. ▶ Integrate the virtual experience that will be an output of the EU TIDE project.	
Establish Fort Dunree as an experiential hub for a range of offerings that tie all three Hero experiences – including ecotourism and wildlife-watching, marine-based adventure, and artistic experiences.	
Work with partners to develop safe, active travel options, and public transportation.	
Develop a strategic and sustainable approach when working with coach tour operators.	
Work with partners who attract educational markets to explore opportunities to integrate Fort Dunree into any potential educational programming that is focused on the eco-cultural heritage of the peninsula.	

2. MALIN HEAD	
Key Actions	Lead
Work towards implementing the Malin Head Visitor Management Plan. Focus initially on traffic management.	Donegal County Council
Continue to advance the preferred infrastructural projects that are designed to bring the Malin Head story to life.	
Reassess the importance of Malin Head from a marine-ecological perspective.	Irish Basking Shark Group, National Parks and Wildlife Service
▶ Continue to explore opportunities for developing a facility that has a strong marine focus and a mandate to work with a range of audiences.	

3. NORTH WEST GREENWAY NETWORK	
Key Actions	Lead
Establish a multi-departmental approach to developing this project within Donegal County Council.	Donegal County Council
Establish a communications and consultation strategy to engage relevant businesses that are adjacent to the proposed Inishowen Greenway to explore the potential commercial opportunities of the development.	
Work collaboratively to review signage and interpretation requirements, location of viewpoints, and general greenway infrastructure.	Fáilte Ireland
Assess opportunities to connect with visitor experiences within the vicinity of the proposed Inishowen Greenway and identify actions required to improve access from the greenway route to sites and attractions of interest to visitors.	Fáilte Ireland
As the Inishowen Greenway develops, encourage the improvement of cycling infrastructure within hub communities, particularly Bunrana and Carndonagh.	Donegal County Council, Fáilte Ireland
Support the advancement of stage two of the Inishowen Greenway development. Funding is already in place to begin assessing opportunities to extend both arms – one to Carndonagh and the other to Quigley's Point.	Donegal County Council
▶ Pursue funding for the remaining development phases that will eventually create a full circuit of the peninsula.	

4. CREATIVE HUBS	
Key Actions	Lead
Continue to explore repurposing the use of The Market House in Clonmany in association with the Clonmany Community Centre. The proposed concept has an emphasis on traditional crafting skills with tentative plans to display artefacts and to offer demonstrations of traditional skills and opportunities for visitors to engage in immersive learning experiences. This facility, combined with Clonmany's existing community centre programme of traditional crafts would give Clonmany a strong position as the learning centre for these traditional skills.	Clonmany Community Centre
Move forward with the establishment of the Creative Maker's Hub for artists and artisans through the TÚS Nua Regeneration Project in Carndonagh.	Spraoi agus Spórt, Carndonagh Traders' Association

Where a creative hub has potential to function as a staging area and to play a role in encouraging visitors to discover further studios within the Inishowen Peninsula and take part in organised guided activities, expand relevant business or development plans to determine the nature of this potential.

Fáilte Ireland, Explore Inishowen

Work with larger arts and crafts providers to develop new and enhanced existing visitor experiences in their location.

Fáilte Ireland, artisan businesses

5. INISHOWEN BLUEWAY

Key Actions

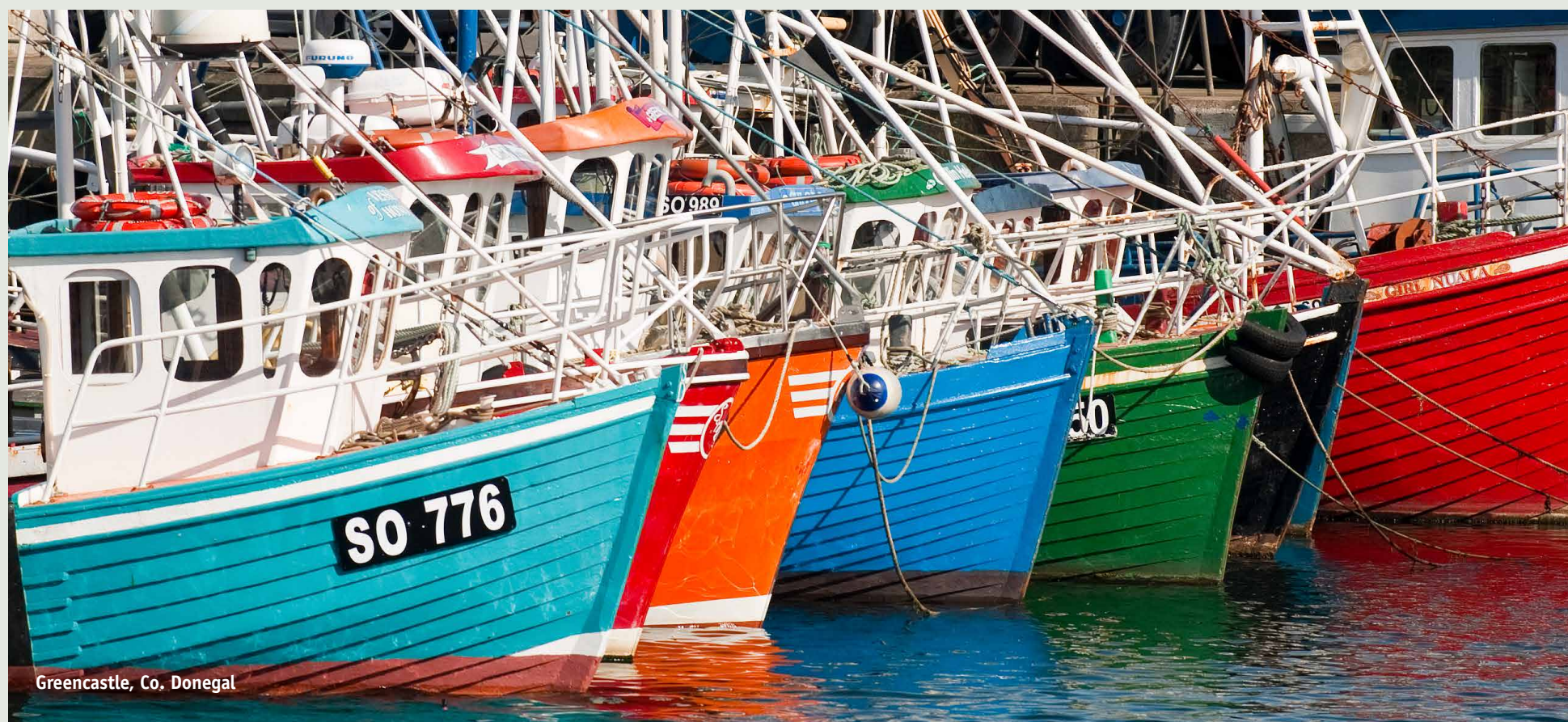
Lead

Develop international recognition for kayaking in the area through the establishment of a Marine Blueway that incorporates the East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail from Lifford to Moville (developed by the Loughs Agency) and extend this trail around Malin Head and into Lough Swilly, with the potential of going to Letterkenny.

Loughs Agency, user groups

Work with Donegal County Council and select user groups and businesses to identify preferred locations for basic beach service facilities, to include showers, that could be used on a shared basis by blueway kayakers.

Loughs Agency, Donegal County Council



SECTION 2: DEVELOPING HERO EXPERIENCES

This section looks at a range of potential experiences that can be enhanced through improving the existing on-site experience or developed through creating new experiences. It is not exhaustive, as there are areas of product development that are addressed in subsequent sections, particularly when the focus is primarily on infrastructure, capacity building, or supporting services.

A *'hero experience'* is an authentic and iconic tourism experience. It is the *'must see or do'* element for visitors.

6. GRIANÁN OF AILEACH	
Key Actions	Lead
Work collaboratively to form a sustainable management and visitor experience stakeholder group to review elements of the visitor experience, including signage and interpretative requirements.	Office of Public Works, Fáilte Ireland, Donegal County Council
Work with An Grianán Hotel to leverage the interpretative value of the Old Church Visitor Centre and the role of the centre in the overall experience.	An Grianán Hotel
Address the opportunity to develop a guided tour programme during the peak season.	Office of Public Works, Fáilte Ireland
Work with partners and stakeholders to carefully manage the use of Grianán of Aileach for events.	
7. INISHOWEN MARITIME MUSEUM AND PLANETARIUM	
Key Actions	Lead
Reassess the narrative positioning of the museum and continue to identify ways of delivering a compelling visitor experience that will give the museum a stronger profile.	Inishowen Maritime Museum and Planetarium
Improve directional signage to the museum and explore the potential to enhance the use of the space to the front of the building.	
Continue to build a strong partnership and association with the Tower Museum in Derry-Londonderry.	
Refresh the museum website to strengthen its appeal and capacity to motivate visitation.	
8. INCH WILDFOWL RESERVE	
Key Actions	Lead
Continue to explore options for developing additional visitor infrastructure – particularly toilets and the feasibility of providing café facilities.	National Parks and Wildlife Service
Review site management implications that will arise if and when the proposed North West Greenway Network links into the site.	
Continue to develop visitor interpretation at Inch Wildfowl Reserve.	

9. INISHTRAHULL ISLAND

Key Actions	Lead
Support the NPWS proposal to secure a long-term lease from Irish Lights with the intention of managing the site as a Nature Reserve.	National Parks and Wildlife Service
Develop an integrated conservation and visitor management plan for Inishtrahull.	

10. HERITAGE SITES – THE O'DOHERTY STORY

Key Actions	Lead
Maintain a level of support for local initiatives that are seeking to elevate stories and experiences relating to the O'Doherty castles and work towards raising the profile of this era of history.	Fáilte Ireland

11. ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

Key Actions	Lead
Strengthen the profile of this sector through an enhanced and consolidated online presence that highlights the activities, qualified operators, and activity clubs.	Explore Inishowen
Work with activity providers and organisations to actively support adventure events.	
Assess the need for enhanced infrastructure and operators to service scuba diving. The requirements for scuba diving are technical rather than recreational and there are no operators based on the Inishowen Peninsula at present. The demand is largely serviced by businesses located outside the peninsula.	Activity operators



12. DARK SKY RESERVE

Key Actions	Lead
Establish a Working Group of interested stakeholders to look at the concept of a Dark Sky Reserve on the Inishowen Peninsula and the level of commitment to pursuing international accreditation.	Fáilte Ireland, Dark Sky Working Group, Explore Inishowen
Explore opportunities to develop Dark Sky experiences and build into existing experience offerings.	

13. MARINE ECOTOURISM

Key Actions	Lead
Support ongoing dialogue on marine biodiversity and how this can be promoted through strategic initiatives such as formal designation. At the time of writing, there are no marine national parks in Ireland, although there is growing interest in the development of such designations. Advancing this opportunity is likely to require a national assessment of suitable locations.	National Parks and Wildlife Service
Work with national, regional, and local partners on the development of a regional marine leisure and ecotourism plan, including the commercial fishing sector. This plan should provide an overview of the potential for marine ecotourism and needs to identify specific ways of addressing infrastructural and capacity-building issues.	Fáilte Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Services
Explore the feasibility of designating a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) around the Inishowen Peninsula in order to ensure that our seas remain clean, healthy, and productive, and that our unique habitats and biodiversity are protected.	Fáilte Ireland, Irish Basking Shark Group
Explore educational initiatives focused on generating awareness about the presence of basking sharks; providing guidance for how to report sightings; providing best practices for boaters and swimmers; and informing the public of important conservation efforts.	Fáilte Ireland, Irish Basking Shark Group
Explore Malin Head as a staging area to offer both a low-impact and a high-quality marine ecotourism experience, as basking sharks are readily viewed from the high cliffs there. Shore-based viewing at Malin Head can provide an opportunity to establish small-scale, low-impact, land-based basking shark tourism, allowing for slower growth of the industry and time for regulatory process to be established.	Fáilte Ireland, Irish Basking Shark Group
EXAMPLE: The Manx Wildlife Trust promotes the viewing of basking sharks from the shore (Manx Wildlife Trust, n.d.), and whale watchers in western Scotland report they chose the region because of the landscape, seascape, and wildlife (Parsons et al., 2003). Both locations have similar coastlines to Co. Donegal.	
Advocate responsible whale and dolphin watching tours which can be incredibly rewarding for visitors and can provide a much more compelling opportunity for conveying conservation, protection, and sustainability messages than seeing and interacting with whales and dolphins in captivity.	Fáilte Ireland, Irish Basking Shark Group

14. WELL-BEING FROM NATURE

Key Actions	Lead
Support the Well-Being from Nature project and work with stakeholders to raise the profile of this project and the value of strengthening this well-being positioning within the wider eco-cultural identity of the Inishowen Peninsula.	Inishowen Development Partnership
Explore ways of integrating the spiritual themes and experiences with the concept of well-being.	Community groups
In developing online resources, ensure that there is a well-being travel filter that promotes well-being experiences, local foods, sites, and activities related to spirituality and related practitioners.	Explore Inishowen

15. INISHOWEN'S CULINARY EXPERIENCE

Key Actions	Lead
Bring together key Inishowen Peninsula champions that represent chefs, restaurants, and producers and explore how the distinctive eco-cultural identity of the Inishowen Peninsula could be used to differentiate and raise the profile of the food offering. ▶ Continue to work with the Food Coast Donegal to leverage the county-wide initiative.	Local culinary and food producer champions



Inishowen Yoga, Inishowen Peninsula, Co. Donegal



Nancy's Barn world award-winning chowder, Ballyliffin, Co. Donegal



Wild Ireland, Burnfoot, Co. Donegal

SECTION 3: STRENGTHENING SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SENSE OF PLACE

Strengthening Supportive Infrastructure and Sense of Place relates to capital assets that are needed to improve the destination experience, open up new opportunities, and facilitate ease of access. It encompasses a spectrum of hard infrastructure (trails, transportation etc.) while soft

infrastructure, such as technology, is dealt with in Section 4, Building Industry Capacity and Supporting Services. The recommendations outlined address challenges that were raised in DEDP planning discussion and/or related reports and strategies.

16. IMPROVING ACCESS WITHIN THE INISHOWEN PENINSULA

Key Actions	Lead
Maintain and, if feasible, extend the ferry services from Greencastle to Magilligan and from Buncrana to Rathmullan. These ferry services can play a critical role in developing stronger continuity between the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route and in improving opportunities for creating cycling loops.	Ferry operators
Review road signage and improve the visibility of the Inishowen Peninsula as a destination through enhanced signage and through highlighting the connectivity between the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route.	Fáilte Ireland
Work towards minimising the environmental impact of public transportation through electrification of buses or the use of alternative fuels and ensure adequate electric vehicle (EV) charging points for private vehicles.	Bus Éireann, Local Link
Review access from both Donegal Airport and City of Derry Airport to the Inishowen Peninsula.	Airports/bus service providers

17. IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE AND POLICY FOR MARINE TOURISM

Key Actions	Lead
Support Donegal County Council and the Loughs Agency in conducting an assessment of marine tourism opportunities and in identifying the infrastructural projects required to improve the peninsula's positioning as an axis point to the whole North Atlantic and as a marine destination.	Fáilte Ireland
Continue to advocate for a streamlined and timely approach to foreshore licensing and leasing through the proposed Maritime Area Regulatory Authority that will create a more favourable environment for investment in coastal infrastructure and for maintaining and improving existing facilities.	Local communities and related interest groups
Advocate for dual licensing of select boat operators to strengthen marine ecotourism and help to off-set the significant reduction in fish quotas arising from Brexit.	Boat operators, Irish Basking Shark Group
Continue to advocate for acceptable solutions to the treatment of wastewater around the peninsula and work with Irish Water on the implementation of relevant projects.	Local communities

18. DEVELOPING A TRAIL NETWORK

Key Actions	Lead
Conduct a full audit of all trails and walking sites within the trails network planning process to assess trailhead requirements relating to signage and parking and the potential to connect or extend existing trails.	Donegal County Council
Where feasible, encourage a community-driven approach to trails development.	Donegal Local Development Company
Assess the opportunity to use old bog roads for further trails development in the uplands.	
Develop a visitor-oriented searchable database of trails.	Sports Ireland Outdoors
Work collaboratively to strengthen the enabling environment for trails and hillwalking.	Donegal Local Development Company, Donegal County Council
Continue to assess the viability of developing a coastal trail that can be integrated into national efforts to create a Wild Atlantic Way coastal walking/hiking trail.	Fáilte Ireland
Explore the concept of developing a sustainable mountain bike park in an appropriate location. Work collaboratively to assess potential areas for trails development.	Fáilte Ireland

19. PROMOTING INVESTMENT IN ACCOMMODATION

Key Actions	Lead
Encourage the creation of conditions that will promote investment in developing and/or improving diverse categories of bed stock in the accommodation sector while also encouraging new levels of innovation in accommodation delivery, e.g., glamping and enhancement of quality.	Fáilte Ireland, Local Enterprise Office
Promote the development of hostel accommodation suitable for the education market.	
Work with Donegal County Council to implement the findings of the <i>Caravan Camping and Camper Van Study</i> .	Donegal County Council, Fáilte Ireland

20. STRENGTHENING SENSE OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY HUBS

Key Actions	Lead
Develop a much stronger sense of arrival at the start/finish point of the Wild Atlantic Way in Muff.	Fáilte Ireland
Review opportunities to improve sense of place through litter management policies, promote participation in the Tidy Towns Competition and assess the provision of basic visitor infrastructure along the Wild Atlantic Way.	Fáilte Ireland, town and village groups
Develop a masterplan for the entire shorefront area in Bunrana.	Donegal County Council
Support the implementation of the Carndonagh Tús Nua Regeneration Project and undertake the development of a local tourism plan for Carndonagh.	Carndonagh Traders' Association, Spraoi agus Spórt, Fáilte Ireland

SECTION 4: BUILDING INDUSTRY CAPACITY AND SUPPORTING SERVICES

Building Industry Capacity and Supporting Services is a crucial element of destination management that needs to occur if the Inishowen Peninsula is to build a strong economy based on tourism and the elevation of its natural and cultural assets. At the core of the vision for the Inishowen Peninsula is the need to develop a new approach to working collaboratively. With this in place, the implementation of the various recommendations in this section will gain significant momentum and the overall approach to developing sustainable tourism within the Inishowen Peninsula will become community-driven in a new and catalytic manner.

To be successful, there will need to be an ongoing emphasis on collaboration to build on localised community enthusiasm and to create new synergies between this enthusiasm and public sector initiatives. It will require a focus on establishing a strong knowledge base and pride in the distinctive natural and cultural attributes of the peninsula and its marine environment; and an emphasis on coordination, quality assurance, and delivering exceptional experiences. This represents a holistic approach to developing tourism as a sector that integrates with all other aspects of community and environmental well-being.

21. ESTABLISHING A NEW APPROACH TO DIALOGUE AND LEADERSHIP

Key Actions	Lead
Support the establishment of an Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership to maintain and develop the region's natural and cultural heritage through ecotourism and cultural heritage initiatives that contribute to the sustainable growth of local communities across the Inishowen Peninsula.	Fáilte Ireland, Inishowen Development Partnership

22. DEVELOPING INDUSTRY CAPACITY AND PROMOTING QUALITY ASSURANCE

Key Actions	Lead
Create a business support programme for the Inishowen Peninsula that focuses on existing tourism businesses and potential new businesses and reflects the commitment to implementing sustainable business practices.	Fáilte Ireland
Develop a programme to strengthen the capacity to deliver guided services and immersive experiences in an authentic and safe manner.	
Review the specified needs of sectors that are diversifying into tourism, including the commercial fishing sector, the farming sector, and the well-being sector.	

23. BUILDING THE ECO-CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE BASE AND STRENGTHENING THE ASSETS

Key Actions	Lead
Develop a database of all community organisations with an active interest in protecting natural and cultural sites and in stimulating grass-roots guardianship.	Fáilte Ireland, Inishowen Development Partnership
Initiate a process of participatory mapping. This involves engaging community members in compiling a map and database of local assets.	Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership
Continue to explore and support initiatives that are designed to strengthen the conservation of the peninsula's intangible cultural heritage.	Inishowen Development Partnership
Continue to strengthen links with international partners to explore ways of promoting and preserving rural and maritime heritage.	Inishowen Maritime Museum and Planetarium
Encourage ongoing citizen participation in programmes and projects that focus on the conservation of natural and biocultural diversity.	Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership
Scope the potential of developing a regional/community-focused portal to promote the eco-cultural distinctiveness of the peninsula in a way that complements the traditional online marketing.	Inishowen Eco-Cultural Network, Inishowen Development Partnership
Promote the research activities that are currently underway on the Inishowen Peninsula and support initiatives that are designed to build partnerships with Irish and overseas academic and research institutions.	Inishowen Development Partnership, Fáilte Ireland
Promote the Inishowen Uplands European Innovation Partnership project which is a new initiative that is looking at sustainable farming practices in the uplands.	Inishowen Uplands, European Innovation Partnership

24. PROMOTING THEMATIC EVENTS

Key Actions	Lead
Work collaboratively to develop a programme and regional calendar of events and experiences that includes existing events and new experiences.	Explore Inishowen, Fáilte Ireland
Within the cultural heritage sector, identify all existing and recently hosted events and group experiences, including those no longer currently offered.	
Create regular dialogue/networking events that are used to brainstorm new ideas, inform participants of planned or proposed events and identify options to build on existing initiatives.	Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership
Work collaboratively to strengthen the arts and artisans' sector through establishing a 'Meet the Maker' trail event.	Explore Inishowen

25. UTILISING TECHNOLOGY TO ENRICH AND JOIN UP HERO EXPERIENCES

Key Actions	Lead
Work with partners to determine how technology can encourage visitor dispersion and strengthen existing experiences. This will become particularly relevant as the North West Greenway Network is developed and visitors are looking for 'slow' discoveries.	Fáilte Ireland

26. VISITOR AWARENESS OF HERO EXPERIENCES ON THE INISHOWEN PENINSULA

Key Actions	Lead
Work with Fáilte Ireland to profile key Hero experiences on the Discover Ireland platform and ensure that the positioning of the Inishowen Peninsula on this platform is in line with this DEDP.	Fáilte Ireland
Work collaboratively with partners on both sides of the border to highlight the connectivity between the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coast.	
Work with marketing partners and local stakeholders to ensure that messaging and visual material relating to the Inishowen Peninsula are aligned with the Wild Atlantic Way and the direction of this DEDP.	
Work with the industry to host familiarisation visits to various sites and attractions as part of networking in the off-season.	Explore Inishowen

27. IMPLEMENTATION

Key Actions	Lead
Fáilte Ireland will facilitate the formation of an Implementation Group with representatives from key agencies and tourism groups with a direct role in implementation. Progress on implementing the DEDP will be further accelerated through the establishment and evolution of the Inishowen Eco-Cultural Partnership (Action 23).	Fáilte Ireland
Set up an inclusive stakeholder Implementation Group with independent co-chairs.	
Develop annual work plans with actions, timelines and clearly identified outputs and work with local government and national or local agencies to promote implementation of projects that fall within their remit.	

ENVIRONMENTAL & SUSTAINABLE CONSIDERATIONS



People want to experience an off the beaten track experience that genuinely immerses them in multiple ways so that they feel stimulated, energised and uplifted.

Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme 2015-2019

Glenevin Waterfall, Clonmany, Co. Donegal

ENVIRONMENTAL & SUSTAINABLE CONSIDERATIONS

Sustainable Tourism

Fáilte Ireland recognises that it has never been more important that the safeguarding and successful growth of Ireland’s tourism sector is based on a sustainable and balanced approach. Environmental protection, economic competitiveness, community & visitor awareness, and involvement, all play a part in successfully achieving and benefiting from this approach.

This Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) provides an opportunity to ensure that all existing and future tourism projects and initiatives within the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP area are planned, developed, and managed in a sustainable and integrated manner. The DEDP has full consideration for the following:

- ▶ The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goals and specifically the implementation of policies to promote sustainable tourism;
- ▶ The Sustainable Tourism Working Group – Guiding Principles; and
- ▶ The VICE (Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment) Model for Sustainable Tourism.

The VICE Model has been integrated into this DEDP in the following way:

- ▶ The delivery of an exciting and motivating tourism experience that is easy to find, access, and navigate and exceeds their expectations as **visitors**;
- ▶ Building and unlocking capacity in the local tourism sector, increasing employment levels in tourism, and supporting the development of the required skills in the **industry**;
- ▶ Spreading the economic and social benefits of tourism more widely to **communities** that currently do not derive significant benefits from tourism; and
- ▶ Valuing, promoting, protecting and enhancing the **environment** and heritage as the cornerstone of Irish tourism.

This DEDP will enable and motivate stakeholders and industry in the area to amplify their local tourism offering. The DEDP aims to increase visits, dwell-time, and spend in the locality in a sustainable manner. The key objectives and aspirations of this DEDP is creating, maintaining, and enhancing sustainable tourism for the Inishowen Peninsula region.

The implementation of the following guiding principles is key to the success of the DEDP.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

- ▶ Assess the feasibility of developing and implementing visitor management plans where relevant.
- ▶ Encourage the adoption of a responsible tourism approach with ongoing monitoring of environmental impacts.
- ▶ Increase awareness and appreciation of the Inishowen Peninsula region’s unique landscape and environment.
- ▶ Increase environmental performance among tourism businesses.
- ▶ Encourage sustainable modes of transport and ensure they are accessible to tourists.
- ▶ Introduce and implement minimum sustainable standards for tour guides.
- ▶ Increase and promote environmental protection and enhancement when progressing actions derived from this DEDP.
- ▶ Ensure the EPA’s Environmental Sensitivity Mapping Webtool is consulted when implementing projects resulting from this DEDP.
- ▶ Ensure the Plan contributes towards delivering on Ireland’s Climate Action Plan 2021.
- ▶ Monitor the quality of visitor experiences and local social/cultural impact at key sites.
- ▶ Ensure the Inishowen Peninsula visitor experiences are accessible to all where possible.
- ▶ Support voluntary and community-led environmental protection projects, which in turn benefit tourism.
- ▶ Advocate for the protection of key environmental and tourism assets.
- ▶ Improve tourist management, particularly in mature and established tourist areas.
- ▶ Encourage tourism-related businesses to engage in the Leave No Trace Programme.
- ▶ Ensure crucial infrastructure including water and wastewater services are in place and adequate.
- ▶ Harness the importance of ecosystem services and protected sites to encourage sustainable levels of ecotourism growth and awareness.
- ▶ Ensure invasive species management is in place through the promotion of effective biosecurity measures.

Environmental Considerations

Fáilte Ireland recognises the need to integrate environmental considerations into this DEDP in a way that responds to the sensitivities and requirements of the wider natural environment. Environmental considerations including inland and coastal water quality and amenity, climate change, traffic, biodiversity, built and cultural heritage, landscape, critical infrastructure, and communities, all play a vital part in our tourism sector.

The protection, enhancement, and promotion of our most important tourism asset – the natural environment – has been an integral part of the formation of this DEDP as is evidenced in the following:

- ▶ A firm commitment to ensuring sustainable and responsible tourism principles are practiced, (as mentioned in the previous section);
- ▶ Environmental assessments and resulting measuring and monitoring;
- ▶ Compliance with statutory decision making and consent granting at DEDP implementation stage; and
- ▶ Integrating requirements for environmental protection and management.

Environmental Assessment

Consideration has been given to the requirement to undertake environmental assessment of this DEDP in order to ensure full legal compliance and to further integrate protection, enhancement, and promotion of the environment in developing and implementing the DEDP. The SEA and AA documents provide a comprehensive description of the environmental baseline including natural heritage, ecosystem services, designated sites, and protected species within and beyond the DEDP area. The findings of SEA and AA should be read in conjunction with the DEDP. The following sets out the two types of environmental assessments that were considered:

1. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The DEDP was examined for the need to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). On initial examination of the DEDP, it was determined that full SEA would be required. The assessment process was completed having full regard to SEA Directive 2001/42/EU and to Statutory Instrument No. 435/2004 as amended. The outcome of this process can be referenced in the relevant environmental documents that accompany this DEDP.

2. Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The DEDP was examined for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment (AA). On initial examination of the DEDP and in completing screening for AA, it was determined that Stage 2 AA would be required. The assessment process was undertaken having full regard to the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and to Statutory Instrument No. 477/2011. The output and outcome of this process can be referenced in the relevant environmental documents that accompany this DEDP.

Key Findings of the SEA and AA Process for the DEDP

Having completed full SEA and AA on the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP it is evident that these processes have had a positive influence on the evolution of the DEDP and will also continue to have a positive environmental influence as the DEDP enters its implementation phase. The outcome of completing the above environmental assessments has resulted in the following:

- ▶ Identifying and mitigating where relevant potential environmental impacts resulting from the DEDP.
- ▶ Identifying relevant positive environmental impacts arising from the DEDP and ensuring the implementation of actions that result in environmental protection, enhancement and promotion, e.g., visitor management actions, environmental and sustainable education.
- ▶ Developing a suite of mitigatory actions to ensure that any negative environmental impacts are reduced or eliminated at DEDP implementation stage.

This suite of mitigatory actions includes:

- ▶ The requirement to establish the status of the DEDP and its interrelationship with statutory decision-making and consent-granting frameworks.
- ▶ Integrating the requirements for Environmental Compliance into the DEDP. Particular emphasis is placed on the following:
 - Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment,
 - The *Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024* (as varied),
 - The *Climate Action Plan 2021*,
 - Visitor management,
 - Consideration for infrastructural capacity and green infrastructure, and
 - Ecosystem services.

Development and execution of an Environmental Monitoring Programme for the DEDP during implementation and operation.

- ▶ The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. Section A5a details the measures that have been selected in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing this DEDP.
- ▶ Monitoring can demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the DEDP and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.
- ▶ The occurrence of persistent significant adverse environmental effects which are directly attributable to tourism would necessitate consideration of the effects in the context of the DEDP and a possible review of part(s) of the DEDP.
- ▶ Environmental monitoring will be based around indicators that allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives.
- ▶ A variety of sources of information will be used to run the Environmental Monitoring Programme.
- ▶ Environmental monitoring will be executed by Fáilte Ireland and will run concurrent with the implementation phase of the DEDP itself. It will be reported on to the DEDP's implementation group on an annual basis where relevant information sources allow, and the findings of the monitoring will influence the actions of the DEDP as it progresses. The monitoring will be linked directly to the DEDP's KPI's, including monitoring of visitor numbers where relevant.
- ▶ Environmental monitoring for the DEDP and other existing/future Fáilte Ireland plans, programmes, etc. may be undertaken and reported on at the same time.
- ▶ Appendix 5A sets out the indicators that will be used in the operation of this Environmental Monitoring Programme.

Implementation and Consent

This DEDP is situated alongside a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for land use development, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection, and environmental management. These include the National Planning Framework (NPF), Regional Spatial and Economic (RSEs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans.

Implementing the Inishowen Peninsula DEDP will involve Fáilte Ireland helping to facilitate, promote, support, and coordinate stakeholders (including local authorities, other Government agencies, tourism operators, communities, and visitors) in their activities in a way that is consistent with existing and emerging plans that have been subject to environmental assessment. The DEDP does not provide consent, establish a framework for granting consent, or contribute towards a framework for granting consent.

In order to be realised, projects included in this DEDP will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans, and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which this DEDP is not part and does not contribute towards.

Further detail on requirements in this respect are set out in Section 9.2 of the accompanying SEA Environmental Report.

Integrating Requirements for Environmental Protection and Management into the DEDP

The SEA and AA team worked with the plan-preparation team at Fáilte Ireland in order to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the DEDP.

Fáilte Ireland provides funding for sustainable tourism projects that emerge as part of specific, competitive, themed, and time-bound grant schemes or as part of wider strategic partnerships. These include projects relating to land use, infrastructural development, and land use activities and attractions. Reference made to such projects included in the DEDP does not guarantee funding. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer.

In order to achieve funding (including promotion) for land use or infrastructural development or land use activities from Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland's stakeholders shall be required to demonstrate compliance with measures relating to sustainable

development, environmental protection, and environmental management contained within the following Fáilte Ireland published documents:

- ▶ *Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 5 'Site Maintenance Guidelines'* and other relevant measures from the Fáilte Ireland visitor and habitat management guidelines series (and any subsequent replacements); and
- ▶ *Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme Appendix 6 'Environmental Management for Local Authorities and Others'* (and any subsequent replacements).

In order to be realised, projects included in the DEDP (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans, and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which the DEDP is not part and does not contribute towards. Such legislation, policies, plans, and programmes include:

- ▶ Requirements for lower-tier environmental assessment, including EIA and AA;
- ▶ Statutory land use plans that form part of the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework (e.g., Development Plans, such as the Donegal County Development Plan and Local Area Plans) and that have undergone environmental assessment, as appropriate, including various provisions relating to sustainable development, environmental protection, and environmental management; and
- ▶ *The Climate Action Plan 2021* and *The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework 2018* (and any subsequent versions).

Infrastructure Capacity

With respect to infrastructural capacity (including drinking water, wastewater, waste, and transport) the potential impact on existing infrastructure as well as the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourism-related traffic volumes along any routes resulting from the relevant initiative shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate, where relevant.

Fáilte Ireland will follow National Planning Framework guidelines and liaise with relevant planning authorities to ensure any proposed developments are adequately provided for in terms of critical service infrastructure.

This consideration and associated mitigation shall take into account the need to provide for climate resilience.

The promotion of developing visitor-friendly infrastructure where it is required will also be encouraged.

Any proposed site management and maintenance guidelines produced by Fáilte Ireland will encourage site owners and operators to consider environmentally sustainable solutions and compliance with the Water Framework Directive.

Visitor Management

Those receiving funding shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new projects are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities.

Extensive research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas with visitor management strategies. Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes, and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.

Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services

Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services while taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

Where possible, extension of existing greenways and future development of new greenways and blueways should complement and integrate rather than replace existing green infrastructure. Stakeholders considering the development of greenways and blueways should have regard to the Fáilte Ireland publication *Greenway - Visitor Experience & Interpretation Toolkit* and *Connecting with Nature for Health and Wellbeing* EPA Research Report 2020.

CONSULTATION

A wide range of stakeholders were consulted during the preparation of this DEDP. Individual organisations and agencies include:

- ▶ Donegal Tourism
- ▶ Carndonagh Traders' Association
- ▶ Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
- ▶ Clonmany Community Centre
- ▶ Clonmany Development Association
- ▶ Donegal County Council
- ▶ Donegal Local Development Company
- ▶ European Innovation Partnership
- ▶ Environmental Protection Agency
- ▶ Irish Basking Shark Group
- ▶ Inishowen Development Partnership
- ▶ Inishowen Uplands European Innovation Partnership
- ▶ Irish Farmers' Association
- ▶ The Loughs Agency
- ▶ Local Enterprise Office
- ▶ Local Government Districts

- ▶ Atlantic Technological University Donegal (ATUD)
- ▶ North West Community Development
- ▶ Local enterprises/food producers/representatives from each area throughout the Inishowen Peninsula
- ▶ Explore Inishowen
- ▶ Local tourism/community groups/Tidy Towns
- ▶ Leave No Trace Ireland
- ▶ National Parks and Wildlife Service
- ▶ Office of Public Works

The views of local business operators, community groups, regional and national agencies, and local government within the Inishowen Peninsula were of fundamental importance in the development of this DEDP.

In undertaking the work, 146 attendees participated in four community workshops, an online series of eight themed workshops and in-depth online interviews with a cross-section of 39 stakeholders, together with site visits.

In addition to the consultation, a significant number of national and county plans and strategies have informed this DEDP.

Fáilte Ireland would like to thank all stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of this ambitious vision for the Inishowen Peninsula.

Five Fingers Strand, Co. Donegal



Banba's Crown, Malin Head, Co. Donegal

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