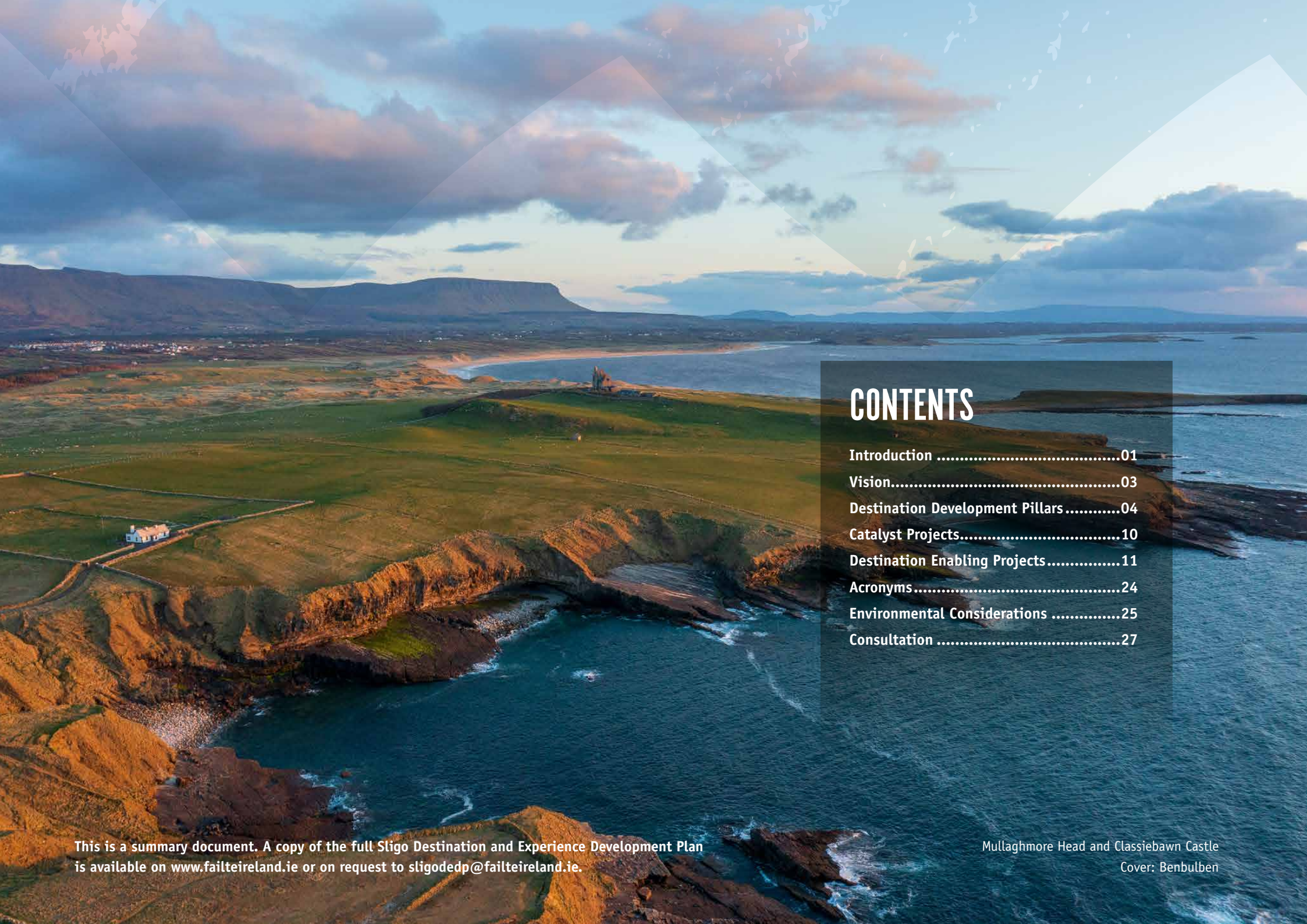


SLIGO DESTINATION & EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SUMMARY PLAN – APRIL 2024





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This is a summary document. A copy of the full Sligo Destination and Experience Development Plan is available on www.failteireland.ie or on request to sligodedp@failteireland.ie.

Mullaghmore Head and Classiebawn Castle
Cover: Benbulbin

INTRODUCTION

The story of Sligo is a story of how the landscape has shaped the people and culture of the county, and how its people and culture have shaped the landscape for thousands of years. The majestic presence of Queen Maeve's Cairn on the horizon of Knocknarea and the megalithic legacy of distinctive passage tombs at Carrowkeel and Carrowmore call out this profound interconnection between landscape and ancient culture. The dramatic prominence of Benbulbin has inspired myths, legends and poetry down through the millennia.

Beyond its ancient allure, Sligo pulsates with a vibrant contemporary energy, fuelled by a thriving arts culture that celebrates its literary and artistic heritage and its musical legacy. It beckons adventurers with the promise of exhilarating outdoor experiences, inviting them to explore its untamed landscapes.

Meanwhile, culinary enthusiasts are tantalised by the distinctive flavours of local cuisine, while music lovers find themselves swept away by the rhythm of Sligo's musical traditions.

Recognising the need for improved development and promotion of the area's unique features to achieve increased international recognition, Fáilte Ireland, working in partnership with Sligo County Council and other industry stakeholders, has developed a Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) for County Sligo. This 5-year plan provides a shared vision and clear direction towards strengthening and growing the destination's market share through the delivery of catalyst and destination enabling projects that seek to maximise the key strengths of Sligo.

This coherent strategic approach will ensure all future infrastructure investment from public realm, signage and transport will be aligned with the ambition for tourism in Sligo. Ingrained within every aspect of the destination development will be distinctive Sligo visitor experiences delivered through our urban, coastal and rural communities, our natural environment and a cultural scene that bounces to a unique Sligo rhythm.



AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Ensure the Sligo visitor experience is brought to life through the development of a mix of tourism products and experiences that will attract visitors and retain them for longer
- ▶ Unlock the economic potential of tourism in Sligo by progressing a range of key initiatives that will disperse tourists across the wider destination
- ▶ Strengthen the value of tourism to the local community by providing sustainable employment opportunities
- ▶ Develop a sustainable basis for commercial tourism development by enhancing and creating strong destination experiences that excite consumers and buyers alike
- ▶ Create the conditions to attract leisure visitors on a year round basis to Sligo and immerse themselves actively in the community while providing the opportunity to interact with local people as part of the Sligo experience
- ▶ Develop the role of Sligo as a key enabler for regional tourism development and transform how visitors engage with the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way
- ▶ Ensure the sustainable development of Sligo into the future.





VISION 2034

Sligo is the adventure capital of the northwest, and a place of immersion in wildness and natural beauty.

This is brought to life through compelling experiences on land and water, across trails and waves of international renown. Sligo's wellness offering delivers a wealth of activities to revitalise and recharge. Its burgeoning music scene, and its thriving culture of art, literature and food enables visitors to truly engage with communities and leave feeling invigorated.

The treasures and mysteries of the ancient megalithic landscape, shaped by those who have gone before, lead the visitor deeper into the land and delights at every turn.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PILLARS

Three destination development pillars help form the framework that will guide the delivery of the Sligo DEDP:

1. A HAVEN FOR ADVENTURE AND WELLBEING
2. THE CULTURAL RHYTHM OF SLIGO
3. A DESTINATION TRANSFORMED

A year-round adventure filled destination where the quality of the outdoor experience has put Sligo on the international stage.

Spectacular walks and hikes, connected greenways and epic mountain biking are combined with incredible golf courses, luxurious seaweed baths and immersive wellness experiences to deliver a new blend of adventure and wellbeing.

Sligo is recognised globally as a world class surf tourism destination where dabblers and enthusiasts share the waves with international surfers across stunning locations such as Enniscrone, Easky, Aughris, Strandhill, and Mullaghmore – where legends ride on the shoulders of giants.

**A HAVEN FOR
ADVENTURE AND
WELLBEING**



Sligo delivers its own unique interpretation of culture. From the spoken word to traditional music, from built heritage through history to artistic and literary culture, Sligo is iconic.

The legacy of the Yeats Family, intrinsically linked to Sligo, is reinterpreted and presented to the visitor through renewed and compelling experiences across the county. The treasures and mysteries of Sligo's ancient megalithic landscape, shaped by those who have gone before, will lead the visitor deeper into this land and delight at every turn.

Sligo's culinary scene boasts a unique fusion of flavours, drawing inspiration from both land and sea, offering gastronomic delights that tantalise the taste buds.

The Sligo experience is a seamless fusion of adventure, culture, natural beauty and rich heritage.

THE CULTURAL RHYTHM OF SLIGO



WB Yeats Statue

Building the appeal of Sligo Town as the hub for the county and key attractor to the Northwest will play a key role in transforming Sligo as a well-recognised tourism destination.

It will grow the attractiveness of Sligo in the domestic and international marketplace, leverage the accommodation base and develop its own signature day and evening experiences. Significant urban regeneration investment, a new attraction of scale, developing the cultural visitor experience base and how visitors engage with the water will be key elements to the development of Sligo Town as a tourism hub.

It will play a key future role in how visitors will be influenced to explore the north of the Wild Atlantic Way and grow the regional connections, help to disperse the visitor throughout the county and create cross border opportunities.

**A DESTINATION
TRANSFORMED**

THE PLAN FRAMEWORK



VISION

Sligo is the adventure capital of the northwest, and a place of immersion in wildness and natural beauty.

This is brought to life through compelling experiences on land and water, across trails and waves of international renown. Sligo's wellness offering delivers a wealth of activities to revitalise and recharge. Its burgeoning music scene, and its thriving culture of art, literature and food enables visitors to truly engage with communities and leave feeling invigorated. The treasures and mysteries of the ancient megalithic landscape, shaped by those who have gone before, lead the visitor deeper into the land and delights at every turn.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PILLARS

A HAVEN FOR
ADVENTURE AND
WELLBEING

THE CULTURAL
RHYTHM OF
SLIGO

A DESTINATION
TRANSFORMED

CATALYST PROJECTS
DESTINATION ENABLING PROJECTS

CATALYST PROJECTS

The plan outlines a range of initiatives that are designed to bring each Destination Development Pillar to life. Initiatives that are likely to have a particular transformational impact are identified as *Catalyst Projects*.

Project	Key Actions
National Outdoor Activity Centres	Maximising the potential of two national outdoor activity centres to develop Sligo as the adventure capital of the Wild Atlantic Way.
Attraction of Scale (Hazelwood Demesne)	Supporting the plans to develop a world class visitor experience at Hazelwood.
Enniscrone Regeneration	Supporting the repositioning of Enniscrone as a revitalised destination. Enniscrone has become the focus of significant regeneration projects and can anticipate a new period of tourism growth.
SLNCR Greenway	Development of the Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway (SLNCR) Greenway linking Sligo, Leitrim and neighbouring northern counties.
Sligo Town Experience	Enhancing and re-imagining the visitor experience in Sligo Town, including the completion of Queen Maeve Square and the Garavogue River Walk. This will see a focus on developing the town as a tourism hub for the county and the wider Northwest.
World Class Golf	Developing Sligo as a world class golf destination through the quality of the county's three natural links courses and how the sector can be developed to realise the opportunity.
Iconic Sligo Walks and Trails	Enhancing the wide base of trails that offer exceptional experiences linked to the cultural and natural heritage assets of the destination. This is also extended to include building on thematic trails such as food and drink, Yeats and new opportunities such as music.
Industry Development	A collective approach to developing tourism through the strengthening of the tourism industry's capability to work together, package the destination, develop new experiences and grow their commercial approach.
Accommodation	Developing the accommodation base across Sligo through the development of new accommodation options from growing hotel bed stock to examining niche accommodation in rural and coastal communities.



DESTINATION ENABLING PROJECTS

The plan further identifies *Destination Enabling Projects* – a broad spectrum of destination development factors relating to governance, access, supporting infrastructure, capacity building, storytelling and sense of place.

Project	Key Actions
The Yeats Story	Continuing to reinterpret the legacy of the Yeats Family and their connection to Sligo through new and refreshed visitor experiences across Sligo Town and the wider county.
Rural and Community Tourism	Supporting and promoting distinctive Sligo experiences throughout the county, across key themes such as outdoor activities, food and drink, traditional Irish music, Great Houses.
Passage Tomb Landscapes	Promoting sustainable and sensitive visitor interaction with the treasures of Sligo's ancient landscape such as Carrowmore, Carrowkeel and Knocknarea.
Wellbeing	Elevating and developing the strengths of Sligo's wellbeing experiences, from its long association with seaweed baths to more modern wellness activities and events.
Coastal Tourism Experiences	Continuing to ensure the development of authentic coastal experiences across Sligo.
Festivals and Events	Continuing to provide a platform for all aspects of live events and performance, to offer the visitor opportunities to enjoy the best of the Cultural Rhythm of Sligo.
Experience Clusters	Fostering the development of tourism clusters both by themes and locations, to ensure a critical mass of visitor experiences.

Catalyst Project	A Haven for Adventure and Wellbeing	The Cultural Rhythm of Sligo	A Destination Transformed
National Outdoor Activity Centres	X	X	
Attraction of Scale (Hazelwood Demesne)		X	X
Enniscrone Regeneration	X	X	X
SLNCR Greenway	X		X
Sligo Town Experience		X	X
World Class Golf	X		
Iconic Sligo Walks and Trails	X	X	
Industry Development	X	X	X
Accommodation			X

Destination Enabling Project	A Haven for Adventure and Wellbeing	The Cultural Rhythm of Sligo	A Destination Transformed
The Yeats Story		X	X
Rural and Community Tourism	X	X	
Passage Tomb Landscapes	X	X	
Wellbeing	X	X	
Coastal Tourism Experiences	X	X	
Festivals and Events	X	X	X
Experience Clusters	X	X	X

ACTION PLAN

Below is a summary of the key actions outlined in the Sligo Destination and Experience Development Plan, drawn from Catalyst and Destination Enabling projects. The full Action Plan and complete set of actions can be found on www.failteireland.ie or on request to sligodedp@failteireland.ie.

The alignment of the Catalyst Projects and Destination Enabling Projects with the three Development Pillars is illustrated in the table on the previous page. Darker check marks indicate primary Pillar and lighter check marks indicate secondary Pillar.

The focus of this plan is ultimately on developing compelling and marketable experiences that can differentiate Sligo, encourage the visitor to stay longer and spend more, and attract international visitors while maintaining the domestic market in a sustainable manner.

Reference made to projects in this Plan does not guarantee funding, but where funding is available, it will be in alignment with this Plan. While funding is provided to certain projects, Fáilte Ireland is not the developer. Developers are required to comply with relevant legislation and the provisions of Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including those relating to environment and planning.

CATALYST PROJECTS

NATIONAL OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTRES

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
National Surf Centre Strandhill	Develop and implement the commercial operating plan for the new National Surf Centre	NSC	SCC, FI
	Develop visitor experiences on site to maximise the potential of this new flagship attraction	NSC	FI
	Work to deliver large scale surfing events or festivals to increase the profile of the National Surf Centre	NSC	SCC, FI
Coolaney National Mountain Bike Centre	Continue to work collaboratively to develop the Coolaney National Mountain Bike Centre as a destination of choice for mountain bikers	Coillte, SCC, FI	CMBC, CDC
	Work with the local community to explore new business opportunities	CDC	FI, SCC
	Work collaboratively to develop the outdoor recreational potential of emerging opportunities with the surrounding area	CDC	FI, SCC, HSE, Coillte

ATTRACTION OF SCALE – HAZELWOOD DEMESNE

Experience	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Hazelwood House	Support the ongoing restoration of the Hazelwood House as a house of national importance, and Sazerac's potential plans for an immersive visitor experience within the house	HE	
	Support the further leveraging of the estate's existing tourism assets through continuing to restore the gardens, and developing outdoor activities within the estate, including related interpretation	HE	Coillte, SCC, FI
Lough Gill Distillery	Support the ongoing development of a world-class distillery experience	HE	

ENNISCRONE REGENERATION

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Cliff Bath House and Pavilion	Re-imagine the area between the Bath House and the Old Pavilion, and work towards developing a completely re-landscaped promenade	SCC	
	In refurbishing the Cliff Bath House, use the project to create a strong and renewed association with health and well-being, and highlight the significance of the Bath House by relocating the Wild Atlantic Way Discovery Point to this building	SCC, FI	EDCD
Shared Beach Facilities	Complete the construction of the new shared beach facility	SCC, FI	

SLNCR GREENWAY

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
SLNCR Sligo to Enniskillen Greenway	Support the development and delivery of the proposed SLNCR Greenway. In the short to medium term, advance the current planning process, preliminary design, route selection and public consultation with land owners and communities within Co. Sligo.	TII, SCC	LCC, FODC, FI, LCG
	Councils to collaborate on a cross border basis, engaging with the local business community, local interest groups and landowners along the SLNCR route to explore related tourism development opportunities and maximise its tourism potential	SCC, LCC, CCC, FODC	FI, LCG
Sligo Greenway	Support ongoing efforts to advance the delivery of the Sligo Greenway project from Collooney to Mayo boundary	SCC	FI, SGC



Lough Gill and Slish Wood, Co Sligo

SLIGO TOWN EXPERIENCE

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Queen Maeve Square	Complete the construction of the Queen Maeve Square and the enhancement of the immediate environs	SCC	FI
	Establish a governance structure that will oversee the operational use of the facility	SCC, FI	
	Deliver a large scale event or festival for Queen Maeve Square	SCC	FI
	Complete the Garavogue River Walk	SCC	FI
Visitor Experiences	Reassess the existing elements of the visitor experience in Sligo Town, and ways of enhancing the delivery of experiences across key themes such as Yeats, food and drink, music and arts	SCC, FI	Local businesses
Sligo Gaol	Prioritise conservation projects and continue to assess market demand for potential experiences	SCC	
The Model	Continue to explore new approaches to raising its profile as a key national centre for contemporary culture and as a core attractor in Sligo	The Model	FI
The Museum	As part of the master planning of current town centre regeneration sites, explore the potential of a county museum to interpret the historical, cultural, landscape and literary strengths of Sligo as part of the library and other facilities	SCC	
Sligo Abbey	Work collaboratively to explore the opening up of the Abbey grounds	OPW	SCC
Purple Flag	Collectively retain Purple Flag status for Sligo as the basis for developing the evening time economy	BID	DSF, SCC
Evening Time Experiences	Grow the range of evening time visitor experiences in Sligo	FI	BID, SCC, local businesses





Old Cliff Baths, Enniscrone

WORLD CLASS GOLF

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Golf Tourism	Use existing marketing channels to promote the collective strengths of golf across the county, and work with Tourism Ireland to build a similar profile for golf in Co. Sligo	SCC, FI, TI	
	Work with the golf courses to develop exclusive packages that highlight compelling experiences	FI	DSF
	Consider developing a multi-day/multi-course Co. Sligo Trophy event	Golf Courses	FI, DSF

ICONIC SLIGO WALKS AND TRAILS

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Sligo Way	Continue to develop the Sligo Way as an iconic long-distance trail experience	SCC	FI, Coillte, LCG
Miner's Way and Historical Trail	Review the Miner's Way and Historical Trail experience and assess how it could be used to support the Passage Tomb Landscape of Co. Sligo UNESCO initiative	SCC	FI, SNLG, LCG
Beara Breifne Way	Work with Fáilte Ireland to develop opportunities related to the Beara Breifne Way	FI	
Blueways	Explore the potential of developing blueways in Sligo	WI, SI, FI	SCC
Ox Mountains	Work with Coillte to identify areas across the Ox Mountains where the Sligo Way could be taken off road	SCC	FI, Coillte, LCG
Off-Road Trails	Pursue existing initiatives to upgrade and/ or negotiate off-road sections, including diverting the Coolaney to Ladies Bray section off road through the Mountain Biking Centre	SCC	FI, Coillte, LCG
Lough Talt	Continue to work on taking the Sligo Way off-road at Lough Talt and extending it to Bonniconlon	SCC	FI, Coillte, LCG
Wayfinding	Continue to expand on interpretation and signage for trails in the destination	SCC, FI	Coillte, LCG
Local Trails	Pursue ongoing development of local trails through partnerships with local communities and landowners	Land Owners, LCG	SCC, Sligo LEADER Partnership, FI
Local Trails	Encourage communities to develop an action plan for local trails and trails maintenance	SCC	LCG
Sligo Walks	Continue to build on and promote the excellent Sligo Walks platform	SCC	FI, DSF

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
County wide tourism leadership	Establish a new county-wide tourism leadership structure that brings together the public and private sectors and the various agencies that influence tourism into a unified partnership	FI, SCC	DSF
Governance	With the definition of a governance structure, develop clear terms of reference, roles and responsibilities for the emergent partnership	FI, SCC	DSF
Destination Stewardship	Embed an emphasis on destination stewardship into the terms of reference for the new governance structure	FI	
	Promote the importance of destination stewardship in messaging to the visitor to encourage visitors to be more conscientious about their impact on the environment and the community	DSF	FI
Visitor Experiences	Grow the number of saleable visitor experiences (B2B and B2C) available in Sligo	Fi	DSF
	Strengthen or develop experiences linked to distinctive Sligo themes (eg Yeats, traditional music, food and drink, Spanish Armada)	FI	
	Work to increase the number of Sligo visitor experiences attending trade platforms and events each year	FI	DSF
Digital Capacity	Build the digital capacity of the Sligo tourism industry through initiatives such as the Digital that Delivers Programme	FI	
Business Support	Create and deliver a focused tourism business support programme for Co. Sligo	FI	DSF
Business Support	Promote engagement with the new Climate Action Programme to reduce carbon emissions from the tourism sector across Sligo	FI	DSF
Business Support	Promote engagement with the Employer Excellence Programme to assist with attracting and retaining tourism staff	FI	DSF
Marketing	Define the appropriate mechanism and approach for marketing Co. Sligo	SCC, FI	DSF
Marketing	Strengthen the Council's capacity and internal resources to strategically deliver on its enabling role in tourism development and promotion	SCC	FI
Marketing	Develop a marketing strategy for business tourism that aligns or is integrated within the leisure tourism marketing strategy	FI	DSF
Transport & Access Planning	Assess the short to long term requirements for Sligo to maximise its current accessibility through rail, bus and road networks and visitor dispersion across the county	SCC, TII	FI
Transport & Access Planning	Work in partnership with Local Link to develop route options that can stimulate day and evening time visitor activity within our Sligo communities	LL	SCC, FI

Accommodation

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Accommodation	Develop an accommodation strategy aimed at attracting new investment and fostering growth in the sector	FI	SCC
	Explore the opportunities to develop bespoke accommodation, camping and hospitality options	SCC	FI, STDA, LCG
Gap Analysis	Work collaboratively to complete an assessment and gap analysis of all accommodation elements	FI	SCC





WB Yeats Trail, Slishwood

DESTINATION ENABLING PROJECTS

Below is a selection of key actions under our Destination Enabling projects. The full plan can be found on www.failteireland.ie or on request to sligodedp@failteireland.ie.

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
The Yeats Story	Reassess how this theme can be presented to the visitor, and explore ways of consolidating the family story which is currently spread over several locations including The Yeats Building (W.B. Yeats), Drumcliffe Church, The Sligo Museum, and The Model (Jack B Yeats), and ensuring that the experience is readily accessible to a wider audience	FI, DSF	Yeats Society, The Model, DCTDA, SCC
	Continue to promote the new Yeats Trail, with its newly landscaped sites and upgraded visitor facilities, as a way to explore Co. Sligo	FI, DSF	SCC
	Review how the Yeats theme can be further explored digitally through the Yeats Unwrapped app and online packaging and distribution	FI, DSF	Yeats Society, The Model, DCTDA
Rural and Community Tourism	Strengthen the focus on integrated experiences that profile the county's deep rooted rural traditions and music and reinforce emerging clusters such as the Riverstown/Tubbercurry/Gorteen area.	FI	DSF, LCG, local businesses
	Great Houses – continue to encourage owners to deliver quality bespoke experiences. The county has a number of estate homes that offer various experiences from accommodation and unique cuisine to historic tours and bespoke wedding packages, including Temple House, Coopershill House, Lissadell House, Hazelwood House and Markee Castle	Estate House Owners	FI, DSF
	Support the development of experiences based around food and drink producers in Sligo	FI	BIM
	Pursue current regeneration initiatives in Sligo, Strandhill, Rosses Point, Grange, Ballysadare, Tubbercurry, Ballymote, Keash and Enniscrone	SCC	LCG
	Work with businesses and communities to explore ways of leveraging regeneration initiatives	FI	SCC, SCCI, DSF
	Continue to build on the work of Spanish Armada Ireland and further explore their identified preferred options in line with Fáilte Ireland consumer insights	SAI	FI, Armada Sites
	Work with traditional music sector to identify ways of raising the profile of the Coleman Irish Music Centre and increasing the visibility of this form of music	Coleman Centre	FI, DSF
Continue to move forward on specific projects that will enhance the destination experience and key themes, including the restoration of the Sally Gardens and the opening up of the Ballysadare River	SCC		

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Passage Tomb Landscape	Continue to work within the local communities to raise awareness of the Passage Tomb Landscape of Sligo and the World Heritage Nomination bid	DHLGH	SCC, SNLG
	Agree an MoU with DHLGH to frame and resource the preparation of the World Heritage bid for Sligo, and establish a World Heritage Team and World Heritage Steering Group in partnership with key stakeholders	DHLGH	SCC
	Complete the upgrades to the Carrowmore Visitor Centre and the interpretive content.	FI, OPW	SNLG
	Utilise the baseline study of the Passage Tombs of County Sligo (2021) to identify key management issues and potential core sites for delivering sustainable visitor experiences – work collaboratively to develop integrated visitor management plans, including exploring options to interpret the landscape off-site	SCC	SNLG, FI, DHLGH, OPW
	Creevykeel Court Tomb: Work with OPW to address the interpretive needs of this site	OPW	FI
Wellbeing	Work with businesses and communities to undertake an audit of all seaweed products, experiences and services, and highlight linkages with health and wellbeing	FI	DSF
	Promote the wide range of wellbeing activities available throughout Sligo, such as seaweed baths, sauna, yoga, foraging and regenerative experiences	FI	DSF, local businesses
	Work with surf operators in Sligo to identify ways that surfing can further contribute to the county's positioning as a well-being destination.	NSC, Surf operators	FI, DSF
	Continue to support sustainable and active travel initiatives in Sligo	SCC, FI	Sligo Cycling Campaign, DSF
Coastal Experiences	Work with commercial boat operators that are licensed to provide tourism experiences, including chartered fishing, eco-wildlife tours and coastal sightseeing to explore ways of expanding the availability of marine-based experiences	FI, boat operators	
	Support Rosses Point Development Association in their efforts develop the marina	RPDA	SCC
	Continue the current assessment on access to Inishmurray and explore options for guided experiences and/or a virtual reality experience	SCC, NPWS	OPW
	Continue to assess the viability of developing a coastal trail from Mullaghmore to Bundoran	SCC	FI, LCC, DCC

Project	Key Actions	Lead	Partners
Festivals and Events	Finalise and implement the Festivals and Events Strategy for Co. Sligo	SCC	FI
	Work towards raising the profile of food and drink through existing and new events – highlight provenance	SFT	FI, DSF, SCC
	Support the ongoing development of themed events and festivals that align with key themes and stories	SCC, FI	Event Organisers
	Explore opportunities for developing a new multi-faceted music festival that highlights key strengths of Co. Sligo alongside the music events, and work with all artistic sectors to develop and promote immersive experiences	SCC	FI
	Extend and strengthen the emphasis on performing arts, music and cultural events across the entire county	Related arts, music and cultural organisations	SCC, FI, DSF
	Continue to support and promote outdoor adventure events	Event Organisers	SCC, FI, DSF
Experience Clusters	Promote a cluster-based approach to working with communities in rural areas to highlight the critical mass of experiences	LCG, FI	
	Explore opportunities to develop the Sligo Food Trail with a strong focus on developing food and drink clusters	SFT	FI, BIM
	Identify opportunities for strengthening linkages through the development of clusters around key Sligo themes	FI	DSF



Horse Riding, Streedagh

ACRONYMS

BID	Sligo Business Improvement District	LCG	Local Community Group
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara	LL	Local Link
CCC	Cavan County Council	NPWS	National Parks & Wildlife Service
CDC	Coolaney Development Company	NSC	National Surf Centre
CMBC	Coolaney Mountain Bike Club	OPW	Office of Public Works
DCC	Donegal County Council	RPDA	Rosses Point Development Association
DCTDA	Drumcliffe Church Tourism Development Association	SAI	Spanish Armada Ireland
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage	SCC	Sligo County Council
DSF	Destination Sligo Forum	SCCI	Sligo Chamber of Commerce & Industry
EDCD	Enniscrone & District Community Development	SFT	Sligo Food Trail
FI	Fáilte Ireland	SGC	Sligo Greenway Co-op
FODC	Fermanagh & Omagh District Council	SI	Sport Ireland
HE	Hazelwood Estate	SNLG	Sligo Neolithic Landscapes Group
HSE	Health Service Executive	STDA	Sligo Tourist Development Association
LCC	Leitrim County Council	TI	Tourism Ireland
		TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
		WI	Waterways Ireland



Coleman Centre Gurteen



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that all existing and future tourism projects and initiatives within the Sligo Destination and Experience Development Plan area are planned, developed and managed in a sustainable and integrated manner.

The VICE (Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment) Model for Sustainable Tourism is the approach the Sligo DEDP is developed from and strives to implement. Fáilte Ireland recognises the need to integrate environmental considerations into this Plan 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 Plan as is evidenced in the following:

- ▶ Environmental assessments and resulting measuring and monitoring,
- ▶ A firm commitment to ensuring sustainable and responsible tourism principles are practiced,
- ▶ Compliance with statutory decision making and consent granting at Plan implementation stage, and
- ▶ Integrating requirements for environmental protection and management. The following table demonstrates the overarching sustainable principles that form a foundation in the development and implementation of the Clew Bay Destination & Experience Development Plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM	
Assess the feasibility of developing and implementing visitor management plans where relevant	Monitor the quality of visitor experiences and local social/cultural impact at key site
Encourage the adoption of a responsible tourism approach with ongoing monitoring of environmental impacts	Ensure visitor experiences are accessible to all where possible
Increase awareness and appreciation of the Sligo region's unique landscape and environment	Support voluntary and community-led environmental protection projects, which in turn benefit tourism
Increase environmental performance among tourism businesses	Advocate for the protection of key environmental and tourism assets & increase and promote environmental protection and enhancement when progressing actions derived from this plan
Encourage sustainable modes of transport and ensure they are accessible to tourists	Improve tourist management, particularly in mature and established tourist areas
Introduce and implement minimum sustainable standards for tour guides	Encourage tourism related businesses to engage in the Leave No Trace programme
Increase and promote environmental protection and enhancement when progressing actions derived from this plan	Ensure crucial infrastructure including water and wastewater services are in place and adequate
Ensure the EPA's Environmental Sensitivity Mapping Webtool is consulted when implementing projects resulting from this plan	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



Ballidodare Falls, Ballidodare

CONSULTATION

This plan was developed through the 2021-22 COVID-19 period and was finalised in late 2023. The development of the Plan has been guided by a project Working Group and has been facilitated by Fáilte Ireland. The Working Group included representatives from all the key agencies and local tourism groups involved in influencing or delivering tourism. Fáilte Ireland would like to express its sincere thanks to all members of the Working Group for their time and efforts.

Development of the Sligo DEDP involved:

1. Desk research to review on-line presence of destination; relevant best practices; existing plans and strategies of stakeholders; and to undertake the mapping of all tourism assets.
2. Stakeholder consultation and an appraisal of the county through site visits, interviews and community discussions. Over 120 stakeholders were directly involved in discussions during the planning process.
3. Development of the Plan and presentation to the Working Group.
4. Review by the Working Group, and environmental impact assessment of Plan.
5. Public consultation period in early 2024

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

- ▶ Adventure Sligo
- ▶ Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Sligo
- ▶ B&B Ireland
- ▶ Coillte
- ▶ Coolaney Development Company
- ▶ Discover Enniscrone
- ▶ Drumcliffe Church Tourism Development
- ▶ Enniscrone Community Council
- ▶ Friends of Sligo Gaol
- ▶ Glencar Community Development Group

- ▶ Go Strandhill
- ▶ Grange & Armada Development Association
- ▶ Hawk's Well Theatre
- ▶ Hazelwood Demesne / Sazerac Company
- ▶ Irish Surfing Association
- ▶ Local enterprises / producers / representatives throughout Sligo
- ▶ National Surf Centre Strandhill
- ▶ Office of Public Works
- ▶ Rosses Point Development Association
- ▶ Sligo Business Improvement District (BID)
- ▶ Sligo Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Sligo County Council
- ▶ Sligo Food Trail
- ▶ Sligo LEADER Partnership
- ▶ Sligo Neolithic Landscapes Group
- ▶ Sligo Tourist Development Association
- ▶ South & West Sligo Tourism
- ▶ Strandhill Community Development Association
- ▶ The Model, Home of the Niland Collection
- ▶ Yeats Society

The views of local business operators, community groups, regional and national agencies, and local government within Co. Sligo were of fundamental importance in the development of the plan.



Spanish Armada wall mural, Grange

Fáilte Ireland would like to thank all partners in the preparation and implementation of this ambitious plan for County Sligo.

In addition to the consultation, a significant number of national and county plans and strategies have informed this plan. These include:

- ▶ Fáilte Ireland Corporate Plan
- ▶ Wild Atlantic Way Regional Tourism Development Strategies – 2023-2027
- ▶ ‘People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025’ Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
- ▶ Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025
- ▶ Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021
- ▶ Actions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Practices 2021-023
- ▶ Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways
- ▶ County Sligo Tourism Strategy (2018-2023)
- ▶ County Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan ‘Sligo 2030 – One Voice One Vision’
- ▶ County Sligo Heritage Plan

A series of local reports and discussion papers on tourism related initiatives were also reviewed and have informed the actions in this plan.



Schoolhouse, Gleniff Horseshoe Trail

