

CHAPTER 6

TOURISM

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Kerry's tourism industry is a significant economic and social force in the county with 15% of the county's workforce employed in this sector in 2006. With the growth in affluence, mobility and leisure time, tourism is one of the major growth areas of the national economy. A total of €1,233m was spent by 3.6 million visitors to the south west region in 2006, having increased by an average of 10.6% per annum since 2001. Outside of Dublin counties' Kerry and Cork have the greatest inventory of tourism infrastructure in the country- combined they account for 20% of the country's capacity. The region dominates across most tourism product categories and has particularly strong position in the organised tour market. Fáilte Ireland South West is the tourism authority for the counties of Cork and Kerry and through surveys of tourist satisfaction levels has established that the quality of Kerry's tourist product is amongst the highest in the country. Fáilte Ireland South West – Regional Development Plan 2008 -2010 does however, identify significant opportunities for product development and improvement in relation to the quantity and quality of the county's tourism resources, which on fruition will enhance the tourism function and potential of the area. This regional plan has provided the **framework for the development of the land use tourism strategy, objectives and policies set out in this plan.**

6.1.2 Kerry is a well known international and domestic tourism centre with a varied tourism profile which draws on the county's natural advantages as a highly scenic county with a unique lifestyle and cultural offering which has to date supported the continued growth of the tourism industry. A visitor survey carried out by Fáilte Ireland in 2006 found that 80% of respondents cited Ireland's scenery as an important reason for visiting while 74% were attracted by the natural unspoilt environment. In addition, 58% of respondents cited Ireland's attractive cities and towns as a reason for choosing to holiday in Ireland. In all of these categories Kerry is well placed to attract visitors motivated by the quality of the natural and built environment. The other major resource for tourism is the county's cultural, linguistic, literary, historical and archaeological heritage. Increased interest in heritage, both nationally and internationally, has resulted in these assets becoming a major resource.

6.1.3 A major review of the 'Ireland' brand undertaken by Tourism Ireland last year found that Ireland was still an attractive destination for holidaymakers in key markets. The review also noted that to continue to be successful and grow visitor numbers in what is highly competitive global marketplace; the 'Ireland' brand will need to differentiate itself even more strongly. Following on from this, Kerry's tourism product will need to be shaped by those characteristics which are unique to Kerry in order to differentiate it from domestic and overseas markets. This emphasis on differentiation by necessity calls for diversification of tourism products into new and unexploited areas which draw on the physical and cultural assets, particular to the county while continuing to build capacity in sectors of the tourist market in which Kerry is already successful.

6.1.4 Fáilte Ireland – South West have identified the nature and heritage sector, combining wellness centres and facilities, as a market in which Kerry's natural resources make it well placed to succeed. These resources also lend themselves to the further development of the recreation sector through the development of niche markets, for example cycling/ walking holidays, archaeological and nature tours, English language learning tours, and specialist markets such as

activity holidays, environmental or cultural based tourism. Each of these activities provides the opportunity to diversify and grow Kerry's tourism product and benefit from the generation of spin-offs and demand for additional services. Kerry is well positioned to become a significant destination for the growing market for culture and arts based activity holidays through the development of its indigenous cultural assets. These culture based activities are often a complimentary activity supporting other holiday experiences.

6.1.5 Growth in the tourist industry must be shaped not only by our landscapes, our cultural heritage, our environment and our linguistic heritage particular to Kerry, but also on the understanding that each of these assets has an intrinsic value which outweighs its value simply as a tourism asset. It is an objective of this plan therefore, to pursue a strategy for the development of a sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species leaving them undiminished as a resource for the future, while supporting social and economic prosperity. Sustainable tourism planning therefore requires a balance to be struck between the needs of the visitor, the place, heritage assets and the local community.

6.1.6 Niche tourism by its nature has the capacity to develop in locations throughout the county and as such can contribute to the economic development of peripheral and rural areas with an otherwise weak economic base, and where tourism activity is often already focused. The NSS in addition to advocating the enhancement of already successful areas by building up their tourism capacity also promotes the development of the tourist potential in economically weak areas with tourist capacity.

6.1.7 This plan provides a policy and objective framework for the development of a more diversified and sustainable tourism sector in line with the newly adopted Regional Tourism Development Plan for 2008 – 2010 for the South West Region. In the implementation of this plan however, it is recognised that tourism and heritage policies are not 'stand alone' policies and this plan mainstreams and supports tourism through related policies – such as transport, natural resources and settlement policies. It is also recognised that the development of a diversified and sustainable tourist industry will require an integrated multi-agency approach and it is an objective of this plan to work with the Councils strategic partners and in particular with Fáilte Ireland - South West Region.

Objective No.	Overall Objectives
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-1	Facilitate the development of a diversified tourism industry through the growth of niche markets in a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable manner.
T 6-2	Protect and conserve those natural, built and cultural heritage features that form the basis of the County's tourism industry, including areas of important landscape, coastal scenery, areas of important wildlife interest, historic buildings and structures and the traditional form and general appearance of towns and villages.
T 6-3	Promote the sustained growth of the Tralee – Killarney Hub, the Ring of Kerry and the Dingle Peninsula as the primary tourism hubs.
T 6-4	Facilitate tourism development in areas where tourism is currently underdeveloped and where there is a need for local tourism development initiatives to realise their full tourism potential.
T 6-5	Promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria, the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and other planning considerations.
T 6-6	Promote the development of tourist related infrastructure such as transport, access and high-quality tourist accommodation, where proposals are in accordance with the provisions of this plan.
T 6-7	Secure the establishment of a flagship visitor attraction in the County, subject to normal development management standards.
T 6-8	Identify and safeguard areas for tourism development within settlements through the local area plan process.
T 6-9	Support the implementation of the Regional Tourism Plan for the South West, 2008 - 2010 with the aim of increasing visitor numbers, increasing spend per visitor, and reducing issues of seasonality.
T 6-10	Liaise with strategic partners such as Fáilte Ireland (South West Region), the National Parks and Wildlife Services, the Regional Fisheries Boards, Waterways Ireland, Coillte and other relevant bodies on the identification of land use strategies for areas focussing on their tourism, environmental and heritage value.

6.2 Landscape Tourism

6.2.1 The physical characteristics of the County are a key attribute in its tourism offering with the scenic beauty of the area underpinning a long-established tourism industry. The name and the image of the county has captured the imagination of visitors searching for the ‘wild’, ‘remote’, ‘real’ Ireland with open roads, unspoilt culture and countryside – The Irish experience. The County has a varied landscape ranging from mountains and uplands to the striking Atlantic coastline with its picturesque villages and islands. The low lands and gentle hills of the North of the County contrast significantly with the rugged Atlantic coastline and the hills and mountains of the South and West.

6.2.2 Features including the Lakes of Killarney, the Dingle and Beara peninsulas and Valentia Island, offer dramatic scenery and beautiful places to visit. In addition, the backdrop of the Macgillicuddy Reeks provides a stunning backdrop to many of the County’s towns and villages, as well as an enduring fascination for walkers and climbers. The County boasts many of the Country’s most significant landscape features, with Carrauntuohill being the country’s highest mountain and the Conor Pass being Ireland’s highest mountain pass. The Ring of Kerry and Lakes of Killarney are among the best known destinations in the country.

6.2.3 The heritage gardens, mountains, forests, woodlands, lakes, rivers, coastline, offshore islands, magnificent beaches and areas of unspoiled rural landscape offer the opportunity to develop the widest range of natural amenity, wellness and recreational pursuits. The tourist market is moving steadily away from short-stay coach and car- touring visitors towards authentic natural and heritage-based experiences focussed on visitor involvement with the regions natural assets. To capture this growing market it is necessary to develop the county’s natural resources to accommodate nature-based holiday experiences integrating wellness with adventure related activities. This sector includes cycling holidays, archaeological and nature tours, equestrian holidays, hill walking touring, sight- seeing, mountaineering, wildlife, heritage trails, geology and health related activities such as mediation, alternative medicine, health farms agri-tourism and food centred holidays. This sector of the market is high yield in terms of greater visitor spend and the increased length of time visitors stay in the county.

6.2.4 Environmental sustainability will be central to the development and protection of a long-term and viable tourism sector in the County where tourism attractions are located in environmentally sensitive areas, such as along the coast, on the islands and close to historic areas. The quality of the built heritage and natural environment must be protected from inappropriate development whether tourism related or not. Protecting the environment is a mainstay of this plan with objectives for the protection and enhancement of natural areas. Objectives are included for the protection of water bodies and groundwater. Significant areas of the county are designated as protected habitats namely, Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas with landscape protection objectives for sensitive landscape areas. Objectives are also outlined for the protection of woodlands and amenities. Furthermore, the settlement strategy as outlined in this plan recognises the need to protect sensitive landscapes from inappropriate development and includes a framework of policies to minimise the impact of development on the natural environment.

Objective No.	Landscape Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-11	Encourage the provision of recreational and tourism infrastructure where proposals comply with the objectives and policies of this plan.
T 6-12	Ensure that built development and other activities associated with tourism shall in all respects be appropriate to the character of the place in which they are situated. This applies to the scale, design and nature of the place as well as to the particular land use, economic and social requirements of the place and its surroundings.
T 6-13	Protect the natural resources upon which tourism is based including landscape character, bogs; water quality and biodiversity.
T 6-14	Promote the growth of the County's 'nature and heritage' sector combining outdoors activities such as walking, rambling and cycling and adventure with specialised wellness centres and facilities.
T 6-15	Promote the development of eco-tourism in order to diversify the range of tourist experiences available in the County and extend the tourist season.
T 6-16	Support agri-tourism initiatives in the form of on-farm visitor accommodation and supplementary activities such as health farms, food centred activities, heritage and nature trails, pony trekking and boating in appropriate locations in accordance with the development objectives and standards of this plan.
T 6-17	Generally permit the commercial redevelopment of derelict, vacant or redundant buildings to provide for visitor accommodation and tourism development.
T 6-18	Generally permit the use of houses in rural areas for the provision of small scale commercial visitor accommodation, where such provision does not give rise to a traffic hazard, or have an adverse impact on residential amenity or the environment.
T 6-19	Encourage use of mountains, moor lands and forests, valleys and lakes, for activities such as hill walking and nature related activities, in co-operation with state agencies, landowners and other interested bodies and local community groups. In this regard, the Council shall, subject to financial resources, improve access and create public rights of way where appropriate.

T 6-20	Support and promote, with the co-operation of private landowners, public access to heritage sites and features of archaeological interest, coastal areas, mountains, rivers, lakes and other natural amenities.
T 6-21	<p>Consider in appropriate locations activity/wellness related tourist uses and facilities where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The character of the existing landscape is retained and the proposed development will not be detrimental to scenic and heritage assets in cSACs, SPAs, proposed NHAs, designated protected landscapes or visually sensitive areas along designated scenic routes. - A proposed development is in proximity to an existing tourist/recreational attraction and will not have an adverse impact on the area or detract from the existing development. - The proposed design is in keeping with the character of the area. A design statement in accordance with the criteria set out in Chapter 13 shall be submitted with any planning application. -Any development, including ancillary residential development is to be retained in single or common ownership <p>The proposed development complies with the objectives and policies of this plan.</p>
T 6-22	Ensure that where the development of facilities for commercial accommodation for tourists and visitors is proposed, that these facilities are encouraged to locate within settlements. Such proposals will be required to be of an appropriate scale to the settlement in which it is to be located in order to retain the vibrancy and sustainability of the settlement when such accommodation is not occupied.

6.3 Coastal Tourism

6.3.1 The Kerry coastline, stretching to over 1000 km has a rich maritime heritage and is renowned for its variety and beauty. The Maritime tourist sector is continuing to grow and Kerry is well placed to capitalise on this growing sector. There is a developed network of coastal and seaside villages along the Atlantic seaboard and the County boasts some 13 of the Country's 81 blue flag beaches – at Ballinaskelligs, Ballybunion (North and South), Ballyheigue, Banna, Derrynane, Fenit, Inch, Kells, Maherabeg, Rossbeigh, Ventry and Caherciveen.

6.3.2 Kerry therefore, has the capacity for extensive coastal development involving marinas, new and improved sailing centres, angling and improved access to the coast. Wave action around parts of the Kerry coastline is considered by surfers and windsurfers to be outstanding. Such wave action, taken in conjunction with the quality of Kerry's beaches, provides an ideal location for surfing activities. The world surfing championships have been held in Kerry, thus marking the county out as a quality surfing environment.

6.3.3 In recent years, coastal erosion has caused significant damage in some areas. The protection of existing infrastructure and the unspoilt beauty of the whole coastline are of major importance if it's recreational and tourism potential can be realised in a sustainable manner. Given the importance of a scenic coastline the establishment of additional caravan sites needs great care to ensure that the amenity value of the coastline and the sand dune system is not reduced.

6.3.4 Maritime uses present an opportunity to diversify the county's tourist product. Given the extent of the county's maritime heritage and the indigenous strengths of the region's coastal environs there is significant capacity to develop this niche tourist market. It is an objective of the council therefore, to encourage maritime related uses. This objective is supported by the provisions of the Fáilte Ireland South West – Regional Tourist Development Plan which proposes the development of a 'necklace' of marinas along the Cork and Kerry coasts and a cluster of up to five sailing 'Centres of Excellence' in the region.

Objective No.	Coastal Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-23	Encourage the development of maritime tourism where it complies with the objectives and development standards of this plan, including the provision of necessary maintenance and storage facilities.
T 6-24	Prohibit development which would significantly diminish the amenity and/or economic value of lakes or beaches or any of their assets or amenities.
T 6-25	Restrict new non-maritime development in the vicinity of shorelines. Proposals for such development will not generally be considered.

T 6-26	Support and promote, with the co-operation of private landowners improved access to the coastline.
T 6-27	<p>Facilitate the development of marinas where they comply with the following standards –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposal is at a location where associated activity is already underway, or where a tangible demand for such a facility exists. - Adequate water depth, berthing arrangements for pleasure craft, navigation aids, pontoon, lighting, fire safety equipment, toilet facilities, a sufficient level of road access, car parking, direct access and walkways to boats is provided. <p>Facilities such as boat quays shall be integrated into the shoreline and avoid water intake points.</p> <p>Facilities to handle waste water and litter/solid waste is provided in compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency standards and regulations and those of Kerry County Council's Environment Department.</p>

6.4 Inland Waterways

6.4.1 The rivers and lakes of mid- Kerry support a diverse range of flora and fauna. These waterways provide significant leisure and amenity opportunities – including walks, angling, and eco-tourism and cycle ways. The tourism potential of the county's waterways has not, in general, been realised. Chapter 9 addresses the development of walking routes in the county. In addition to the routes themselves, it is necessary to identify visitor requirements and service centres along the waterway corridors to ensure such routes are practicable. Walkers require services such as accommodation, toilet facilities and food outlets. Similarly, angling relies on such infrastructure and on direct access to the river/lake. All recreational water related uses are dependent on protecting the quality of the environment and it is an objective of the planning authority to prohibit development which impacts negatively on the natural heritage values of waterways.

Objective No.	Inland Waterways
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-28	Consider proposals for tourist/recreational facilities in appropriate waterway locations where a need has been identified.
T 6-29	Support access improvements to waterways where appropriate.

T 6-30	Facilitate infrastructure for water-based activities such as boating, angling, and river cruising, to promote increased linkages with the County's rivers and lakes.
T 6-31	Ensure that all proposals which impact on the views and vistas from waterways, with a prime tourist function, shall identify the area upon which the development would visually impact. The information submitted shall be sufficient to assist the Planning Authority in a satisfactory visual analysis. All applications at a minimum shall include a map indicating the 'zone of visual influence' and maps/illustrations identifying the impact of new development on the views and vistas from the waterway.

6.5 Urban Tourism

6.5.1 The County has a number of important tourist towns and these are in themselves destinations to which tourists come. These urban centres such as Killarney, An Daingean, Kenmare and Killorglin are attractions because of their character, location and setting, and also due to the unique range of entertainment, activity and lifestyle options that they offer.

6.5.2 The three main towns of the County – Tralee, Killarney and Listowel are important service and tourism centres. Retail is in itself an attraction and important aspect of the 'urban tourism' experience. Tralee, being the County Town, has a reasonable profile among business related visitors while Killarney is renowned for its beautiful setting and proximity to natural landscapes such as the lakes and the National Park. Listowel is best known for its literary heritage and historic town centre. The qualities of the environment of these, and other centres, are key to this 'urban experience' and differentiate towns in Kerry from towns in other counties and countries. Retaining the character and uniqueness of tourist towns is important in differentiating the county's tourist product and attracting the 'cultural and experience' seeker while promoting the Kerry tourist brand. The urban experience is significantly affected by the way towns are planned, designed and managed to enhance and reinforce identity rather than create culturally homogenous environments.

Objective No.	Urban Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-32	Protect of the inherent character of the county's towns and villages through the implementation of the design and heritage objectives of this plan and those of local area plans.
T 6-33	Improve the visual appearance of towns and villages by the continuance of environmental schemes, design control and the removal of dereliction.

6.6 Rural Tourism

6.6.1 Although Ireland's tourist product is generally associated with rural based holiday activities the expansion in tourist numbers and revenue has largely benefited urban areas with rural tourism remaining a relatively small niche in the overall tourism context. Rural tourism is based on local amenities, natural heritage and farm diversification projects which enhance the local rural economy and involves rural activities and services including accommodation facilities. Rural communities are in a period of rapid social and economic change. This is particularly true in the rural areas where employment opportunities in agriculture are in decline. As a result the importance of tourism to rural economies is growing and in some instances is critical to the economy of these areas.

6.6.2 The future of rural tourism relies partly on capitalising on the opportunities presented by landscape tourism as set out above, but also on the need for farm diversification or alternative farm activity encompassing equestrian holidays, archaeological and nature tours, heath farms, food related holidays, niche products including food and crafts. Consequently it is an objective of the council to support on-farm or farm related tourism ventures and associated infrastructure where proposals accord with the provisions of this plan, with particular regard to preserving landscapes and eco-systems.

Objective No.	Rural Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-34	Promote tourism related developments in the countryside.
T 6-35	Promote the development of high quality nature based holiday experiences integrating wellness with adventure and related activities - 'Nature and Nurture'.
T 6-36	Consider proposals for on-farm or farm related tourism ventures/developments and associated infrastructure having regard to the landscape classification policies of this plan and the primary purpose of family farms.
T 6-37	Seek the best balance between permitting developments which facilitate the expansion of the tourist industry and protecting the eco-systems and cultural ethos which form part of the heritage values unique to the area, and which are attractive to visitors.
T 6-38	Ensure that all built elements of agri-tourism are appropriately designed, integrate satisfactorily into the landscape and comply with the design and development standards set out in this plan.

6.7 Heritage Sites

6.7.1 Heritage holidays are becoming an important niche market through visits to particular sites, heritage trails, touring buses and educational tours. The County is particularly rich in terms of its heritage and history with internationally recognised features such as Skellig Mhichil (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and Staigue Fort - two of the most renowned of the County's many features, and a large variety of other sites – ranging from the coastal forts to castles, archaeological sites and monuments. The Blasket Islands, the most westerly lands in Europe, are a major attraction, with ferry crossings from Dun Chaoin and An Daingean enabling visitors to experience the remote and largely unspoilt beauty and history of the Great Blasket. In recognition of the island's cultural and natural heritage which bears testimony to a cultural tradition which has disappeared, and which can directly be associated with events, living traditions and literary works, the designation of the island as a World Heritage Site is being sought.

6.7.2 In addition to built features, the landscape of the County is inherently linked to folk stories and a culture of traditional storytelling including stories of the fairies and historical events such as the famine. There is a need to preserve the county's heritage and setting for both its intrinsic value and to ensure a sustainable tourist product. While it is necessary to improve public access in order to make these assets available to both the people of the county and to visitors, these the natural values of these sites must protected.

6.7.3 The county's historic castles, houses and gardens have the potential to expand nature and heritage tourism throughout the county. Derrynane and Muckross houses with their spectacular historic gardens are popular tourist attractions, which together with similar sites, can be developed into a themed holiday experience. It is an objective of Fáilte Ireland –South West to develop tourism around the theme of 'Castles, Houses and Gardens of the Southwest'.

Objective No.	Heritage Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-39	Preserve the county's built heritage through the application of the objectives and policies set out in Chapter 10 under Built Heritage.
T 6-40	Support and promote, with the co-operation of private landowners, public access to heritage sites and features where appropriate.
T 6-41	Support measures to secure the designation of The Great Blasket Island as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
T 6-42	Cooperate and facilitate Fáilte Ireland – South West and other relevant agencies in the development of tourism related to promoting castles, historic houses and gardens as linked tourist attractions.

6.8 Arts and Culture Tourism

6.8.1 The County's sense of place and the many strands of its cultural inheritance have been substantially maintained despite the social changes of recent times. Ireland's culture as expressed in its language and architecture, through to its art forms and heritage sites, is becoming increasingly valued as an expression of our identity, history and achievements. It is also within the context of tourism an economic asset, which can be used to cultivate niche tourist markets while contributing to other tourist sectors.

6.8.2 There are two official Gaeltacht areas in the County – An Gaeltacht Chorca Dhuibhne in the Dingle Peninsula and An Gaeltach Uibh Rathach on the Iveragh Peninsula. The Chorca Dhuibhne Gaeltach is particularly strong with Irish being the spoken language of local communities and playing a strong role in the local sense of place and identity. The County's rich tradition of craft industries including traditional currach making, lace making and art products are particularly strong in Gaeltacht areas but also feature widely in other local centres.

6.8.3 Kerry, with areas such as Sliabh Luachra and Dingle is well known for its traditional music, song and dance. Throughout the County there are a number of centres for traditional culture and music. Siamsa Tire – the National Folk Theatre in Tralee is a showcase for Irish art and drama, while Finuge is the home of Teach Siamsa - a centre for Irish folklore and story telling. Numerous other cultural centres are located throughout the county such as the musical and cultural centre at An Daingean located in what was the Old Church of Ireland and the St. John's Theatre & Arts Centre in Listowel.

6.8.4 Museums and Interpretative Facilities are an important part of the holiday experience providing a cultural, historical and educational aspect to the tourist experience. Throughout the County there are a range of museums such as the County Museum, which offers an audio-visual presentation on the County's landscape, monuments, towns and traditions. Other museums include the Seanchai – Kerry Literary and Cultural Centre in Listowel, Ballyferriter Museum, the Kerry Bog Village Museum, the Blennerville Windmill Visitor Centre and the Kilgarvan Motor Museum.

6.8.5 It is an objective of Fáilte Ireland to develop Kerry (especially Listowel, Great Blasket and Gaeltacht) as leading Irish literary and folklore destinations. It is intended to achieve this through creating a sufficiency in critical mass of heritage based activities to draw tourists to the area.

6.8.6 Land use planning can make a significant contribution to the development of cultural uses through the creation and enhancement of spaces that expresses the cultural identity of particular places and to provide through zoning opportunities for the cultivation of arts uses. The Tralee-Killarney Environs plan makes provision for the development of the arts in a number of forms. The plan proposes a quarter for the development of the creative arts including media, graphics live and recorded music in Tralee and it envisages the development of arts-uses such as craft workshops and show spaces in Killarney.

Objective No.	Arts and Culture Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-43	Work with Fáilte Ireland, the Arts Council and other relevant bodies to promote and development of the arts throughout the county.
T 6-44	Preserve the cultural and linguistic heritage of Gaeltacht areas through the settlement strategy and development objectives of this plan.
T 6-45	Encourage the development of arts through the identification and creation of art hubs through the provisions of local area plans
T 6-46	Consider proposals for workshops, show spaces and art related facilities in appropriate locations where proposals are in accordance with the objectives and development standards of this plan.

6.9 All Weather Facilities

6.9.1 The County's tourism sector is significantly affected by seasonality – the tourism product is highly weather sensitive this undermines the economic sustainability of tourism in the county. This can be addressed to an extent by the development of additional weather-independent activities and products such as quality hotels, leisure facilities, indoor play, all of which can extend the tourist season. It is an objective of Fáilte Ireland South West Regional Tourism Strategy to secure the establishment of a major flagship visitor attraction which is likely to take the form of an indoor facility and the location of which could have a positive influence on the distribution of tourists in the county. Visitor accommodation, interpretation centres, and commercial / retail facilities serving the tourism sector should generally be located within established settlements thereby fostering strong links to a whole range of other economic and commercial sectors and sustaining the host communities.

6.9.2 Such facilities can also contribute to managing over and under-performance of areas within the County. There are extremes in visitor numbers at key attractions while the tourism potential of underdeveloped areas goes untapped. The location of all weather attractions can relieve the pressure on popular attractions while providing the opportunity to direct tourists to economically weak areas which have the potential to grow as tourist destinations.

6.9.3 Seaside holiday villages, traditionally one of the mainstays of the county's tourist industry are in decline as their target market, the domestic family tourist is increasingly holidaying abroad. Seaside villages are particularly weather dependent and a series of poor summers has undermined their attractiveness as a holiday destination. For these villages to regain their position as popular family resorts weather proof facilities are required to supplement existing natural amenities. To support tourism in seaside villages it is an objective of the council to facilitate the development of appropriate all weather tourist related proposals.

Objective No.	All Weather Tourist Facilities
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-47	Promote the development of weather-independent and family-friendly attractions and amenities in locations which will contribute to the dispersal of tourism to areas with an undeveloped range of tourist products.
T 6-48	Support inter-agency initiatives to secure the establishment of a flagship visitor attraction in an appropriate location and subject to the objectives and standards contained in the provisions of this plan.
T 6-49	Provide parking facilities at the Maharees, Lisleibane/ Macgillicuddy Reeks to serve climbers and walkers in the area.

6.10 Sports and Amenities

6.10.1 With its varied landscape, County Kerry is a natural centre for outdoor pursuits including golf, water sports, cycling, walking, riding and high quality fishing for salmon & trout. There are numerous centres and clubs for hill walking, orienteering and water sports in existence. The County is renowned as a centre for walking with a well-established network of long distance walks including The Beara Way, The Kerry Way, The Dingle Way, The Saint's Walk (Cosán na Naomh), The North Kerry Way and The Shannon Way. It is an objective of the council to promote these uses in order to attract the adventure and amenity tourist.

6.10.2 Kerry has some of the finest golf courses in the Country including the internationally renowned Ballybunion, Tralee and Waterville Links Courses. While it is recognised that golf and other similar activities, are an important strand of the county's tourism offer it is also recognised that such uses often require a rural location which maybe high in natural and cultural heritage values. The council will therefore strike a balance between economic sustainability and the heritage values of the proposed location.

6.10.3 There are numerous leisure centres, swimming pools and a number of indoor and outdoor adventure centres. It is the objective of the Fáilte Ireland South West Regional Tourism Strategy to secure the development of additional adventure based facilities throughout the County, and to work toward the development of an UNESCO Geopark. The Bord are also committed to promoting the clustering of four or five sailing 'Centres of Excellence' and additional centres of excellence in 'sea angling' in the Cork Kerry region. Such initiatives will place Kerry in a strong position as a sport and recreation destination.

Objective No.	Sports and Recreation
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-50	Support, in conjunction with other bodies and agencies, the development of Kerry as a worldclass destination for sports and recreation related tourism.

T 6-51	Promote the development of outdoor adventure sports throughout the county.
T 6-52	Co-operate with the Irish Sports Council, Fáilte Ireland, National Way Marked Way Advisory Committee, Coillte, the Heritage Council and other relevant bodies, in order to support the development, maintenance and enhancement of walking routes throughout the county in an environmentally sustainable way.
T 6-53	Facilitate the provision of infrastructure required by those engaged in walking, cycling and mountaineering activities.
T 6-54	Facilitate the development of water sports, surfing and water related events.
T 6-55	Facilitate in conjunction with Tralee Town Council the development of a walking route from Ballyseedy wood to the River Lee.

6.11 Business Tourism

6.11.1 Business tourism is currently a small sector in the overall tourism market but an area where there is significant potential for growth, particularly in the Tralee-Killarney corridor where the majority of the commercial enterprises are located close to these regional administrative centres. The capacity of this high value sector can be enhanced with further investment in the range of meeting and accommodation options which meet the needs of the business sector. The development therefore, of additional convention and conference facilities with associated entertainment and accommodation capacity is necessary for the development of this sector. Killarney is well placed to exploit the business sector. The town is second only to Dublin in terms of bed spaces and has already entered this market with an existing national conference centre. The Tralee/ Killarney environs plan has identified appropriate locations for conference centres in strategic mixed use sites.

Objective No.	Business Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-56	Support and facilitate Kerry as a destination for business tourism in accordance with Fáilte Ireland South West Regional Tourism Development Plan 2008- 2010.

6.12 Transport and Tourism

6.12.1 The tourist market has changed in recent years with higher numbers of European visitors and a continuing flow of transatlantic tourists. The nature of the tourism demand has also changed with a growing shift from tour led holidays to independent tourists seeking the infrastructure to allow them to move freely and conveniently between attractions in the county. This has particular implications for the integration of tourism, land use and transportation policies. Integrated land use and transport planning will enhance the tourist product and visitor experience and encourage longer term stays in the county. This integration requires transport infrastructure to develop stronger links with the hierarchy of visitor attractions, access to appropriate accommodation and a well signed and interpreted landscape.

Objective No.	Transport and Tourism
	It is an objective of the Council to:
T 6-57	Promote the integration of land use and transportation policies to ensure that the unique needs of the tourism sector are catered for - from arrival to departure in a sustainable and efficient manner.
T 6-58	Promote the improvement of roads, existing amenity and viewing areas on tourist routes, and provide for car parking, local name signage, public facilities and access in scenic areas.
T 6-59	Promote the improvement of transport links between the airport at Faranfore and the County's main tourist hubs.