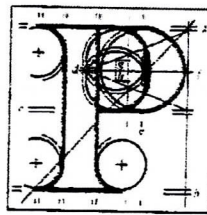


F

Our Case Number: ABP-319843-24



**An  
Bord  
Pleanála**

~Failte Ireland  
Environment & Planning Unit  
88-95 Amiens Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 WR86

**Date:** 28 June 2024

**Re:** Proposed development for a Facility Centre for Water Based Activities.  
Magherabeg Beach, Castlegregory, in the townland of Magherabeg, Co. Kerry.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

Please note that the proposed development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it with or without modifications.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board at [laps@pleanala.ie](mailto:laps@pleanala.ie)

Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

*PP Edwina McGoldrick*  
Edwina McGoldrick  
Administrative Assistant  
Direct Line:

AA02

**Teil**  
Glao Áitiúil  
**Facs**  
Láithreán Gréasáin  
Ríomhphost

**Tel** (01) 858 8100  
**LoCall** 1800 275 175  
**Fax** (01) 872 2684  
**Website** [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie)  
**Email** [bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde  
Baile Átha Cliath 1  
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 V902

## Edwina McGoldrick

---

**From:** LAPS  
**Sent:** Monday 1 July 2024 10:55  
**To:** Edwina McGoldrick  
**Subject:** FW: JP08.319843 Facility Centre for Water Based Activities Magherabeg, Co. Kerry-Fáilte Ireland  
**Attachments:** JP08.319843-Facility Centre Water Based Activities, Magherabeg Beach, Kerry.pdf

---

**From:** Yvonne Jackson <[Yvonne.Jackson@failteireland.ie](mailto:Yvonne.Jackson@failteireland.ie)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 10:40 AM  
**To:** Bord <[bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)>  
**Subject:** JP08.319843 Facility Centre for Water Based Activities Magherabeg, Co. Kerry-Fáilte Ireland

**Caution:** This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Dear Secretary,

Fáilte Ireland would like to take the opportunity to make a submission to a planning application which is currently lodged with An Bord Pleanála Ref: JP08.319843. Planning Permission for proposed development for a Facility Centre for Water Based Activities, Magherabeg Beach, Castlegregory, Co. Kerry.

The attached submission has been prepared by Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority.

I would be grateful if you could send a reply email acknowledging receipt of submission.

Regards,

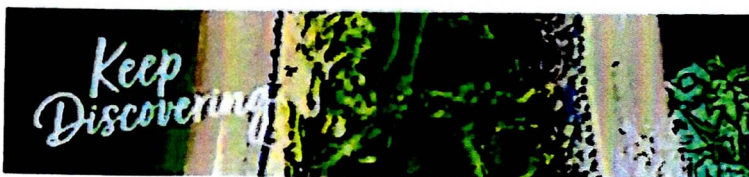
Yvonne

**Yvonne Jackson**  
Product Development-Environment & Planning Support | Fáilte Ireland

88-95 Amiens Street, Dublin 1, D01 WR86  
M +353 (0)86 0357590



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## Aisling Reilly

---

**From:** LAPS  
**Sent:** Wednesday 26 June 2024 16:11  
**To:** Aisling Reilly  
**Subject:** FW: JP08.319843 Facility Centre for Water Based Activities Magherabeg, Co. Kerry-Fáilte Ireland  
**Attachments:** JP08.319843-Facility Centre Water Based Activities, Magherabeg Beach, Kerry.pdf

---

**From:** Bord <[bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 10:48 AM  
**To:** SIDS <[sids@pleanala.ie](mailto:sids@pleanala.ie)>; LAPS <[laps@pleanala.ie](mailto:laps@pleanala.ie)>  
**Subject:** FW: JP08.319843 Facility Centre for Water Based Activities Magherabeg, Co. Kerry-Fáilte Ireland

---

**From:** Yvonne Jackson <[Yvonne.Jackson@failteireland.ie](mailto:Yvonne.Jackson@failteireland.ie)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 10:40 AM  
**To:** Bord <[bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)>  
**Subject:** JP08.319843 Facility Centre for Water Based Activities Magherabeg, Co. Kerry-Fáilte Ireland

**Caution:** This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

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The attached submission has been prepared by Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority.

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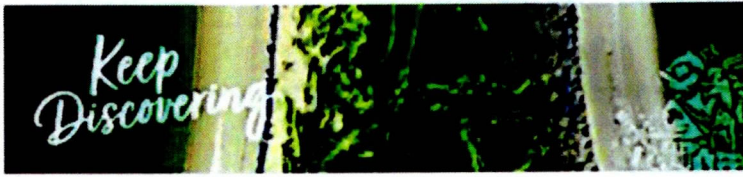
Yvonne

**Yvonne Jackson**  
Product Development-Environment & Planning Support | Fáilte Ireland

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**Fáilte  
Ireland**

**Turasóireacht Náisiúnta  
An tÚdara Eorbartha  
National Tourism  
Development Authority**

The Secretary,  
An Bord Pleanála,  
64, Marlborough Street,  
Dublin 1,  
D01 V902

By email to: [bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)

26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Re: L.A. Dev.-AA Application JP08.319843**

**Proposed development for a Facility Centre for Water Based Activities.**

Dear Secretary,

I refer to the planning application reference number JP08.319843 which has been lodged with An Bord Pleanála for the proposed Fáilte Ireland Platforms for Growth: Facility Centre for Water Based Activities at Magherabeg Beach, Castlegregory, Co. Kerry.

#### **Background**

In order to be recognised internationally as a best-in-class activity destination, it is crucial that Ireland invests in compelling activity infrastructure to improve the visitor experience and at the same time, building the capacity of the activity providers to ensure the Irish tourism experience meets and exceeds visitor expectations. With a temperate climate, Ireland has the potential to offer high-quality outdoor experiences for a minimum of nine months of the year, however, the quality of activity experience currently falls behind international standards due to the lack of adequate visitor facilities and an ad hoc approach to the delivery of activity experiences.

In April 2021 Fáilte Ireland announced a €19 million investment to develop state-of-the-art facilities for outdoor water-based activities. This was increased to €28 million in 2023, and falls under the Government's Project Ireland 2040 strategy. Unlike any other Fáilte Ireland project it explicitly targets 'platforms' or project types that have the greatest potential to grow tourism across Ireland throughout the year. These facilities developed in partnership between Fáilte Ireland and Local Authorities, will support the local economy and the outdoor activity sector by significantly enhancing the overall visitor experience, providing new business opportunities in local communities and allowing for the extension of the tourism season beyond the traditional summer months. The funding will be used to build world-class facility centres at locations across the country where water-based activities are a key visitor attraction and Magherabeg Beach is one of the locations to benefit from this strategic investment.



### **Policy**

The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport published national tourism policy in March 2015 entitled 'People, Place and Policy: growing Tourism to 2025'. The National Tourism Policy notes that to provide an effective tourism product, there must be a diverse range of activities for visitors. While much of our attractiveness as a tourism destination is down to the natural environment, since the early 1990s, the State has supported the development and improvement of our place by investing in our physical visitor attractions, visitor infrastructure, and facilities for visitor activities. It is considered the proposed development is critically important to implementing on a key national tourism policy.

Fáilte Ireland is currently developing a Dingle Peninsula Visitor Experience Development Plan. A key project of the plan is to strengthen the profile of outdoor tourism activities in Kerry and in particular on-the-water experiences through the delivery of shared water sports facilities at Magherabeg Beach. This seeks to maximise the local tourism opportunity through the development of the platforms for growth facilities centre at Magherabeg Beach as the basis for developing year-round outdoor recreation activity. From the research undertaken and community engagement as part of the plan preparation, a recurring theme is that the use of the water and outdoors offers a strong opportunity to the Castlegregory area to develop into a much more sustainable destination offering more than what is currently approx. 10 weeks of the year, when businesses are open fulltime. This would also align with a strategic product development objective of the Wild Atlantic Way Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027, which in partnership with local authorities seeks to deliver a suite of water sports facility centres across the region (both coastal and inland) to enhance and expand the quality and seasonality of water-based activities throughout Ireland.

Furthermore, the proposed development would be consistent with tourism policy objective KCDP 10-56 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 which reads as follows;

*Support the provision of appropriately designed and located toilet and changing facilities at blue flag beaches in the county and at other locations subject to need assessment and environmental compatibility.*

### **Scheme Design**

The concept and strategy behind the scheme's design-led approach is to appoint one design team that will develop universal and standardised design options for all of the water sports activity facility centres to be delivered under the scheme, but which are adapted to suit individual location and site specifications (size, dimensions, capacity, etc.) as well as the surrounding environment and landscape. This has allowed for one exemplar design with a consistent function and form, and one material palette, specified to individual sites to be developed. If all water sports activity facilities are granted permission and built, there will be 20 of these buildings spread throughout Ireland, in both coastal and inland locations.

As a condition of the investment grant scheme, all new build facilities are required to conform to nearly zero energy building standards and be appropriately and sensitively designed to integrate with the site's natural environment and surrounding location. The concept behind the scheme's collaborative design-led approach is to drive sustainability and innovation, create efficiencies, leverage economies of scale and deliver a consistent, world class experience for visitors. The



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Development Authority

proposed facility for Magherabeg Beach will provide hot showers, changing and toilet facilities, secure storage, induction spaces, equipment wash down and orientation points. The facility will be fully wheelchair accessible and built using sustainability best practices such as PV solar panels to meet Nearly Zero Energy Building Standards. The building will also provide a new Changing Places facility at Magherabeg Beach, to improve accessibility for all at this location, opening up water sports for all.

The proposed project will also act as a social hub for the local community, acting as a meeting point for locals and local groups and clubs to meet up, spend time together, engage in water sport activities, and provide shelter and better facilities for people to engage in water sport activities throughout the year. The building will also provide the infrastructure required to increase the frequency and seasonality of visitors to the area for tourism and local recreation use.

This investment grant scheme proposes that following the initial capital investment by Fáilte Ireland in the construction and fit out of the water sports activity facility centre, the Local Authority will own, operate, maintain, and reinvest in the facility. It is also proposed that the facility shall be a strong and identifiable element to the settlement and community of Magherabeg at its Blue Flag beach location. It is an ambition of the scheme that this facility becomes a place where locals can meet and spend time together in the outdoors.

#### **Environmental Best Practice**

Fáilte Ireland developed a four phased approach to ensuring that environmental protection and promotion form an integral element of the development, assessment and implementation of the Platforms for Growth and resulting in a proposed facility at Magherabeg Beach. In developing this approach, we believe that the Platform is in line with the VICE Model for Sustainable Tourism Development. It has aided the applicants in choosing suitable sites, contributed to suitable design, siting, construction and operation of facilities. Also, it has supported the development of environmental mitigation and monitoring that will be implemented during both development and operational phases of the facilities.

#### **Summary**

The proposed development at Magherabeg Beach which is located along the Wild Atlantic Way will not only strengthen the appeal of the county of Kerry with strong outdoor water-based activities and facilities, but it will also create new opportunities for activity operators in the area that will benefit local jobs and businesses. It will also entice visitors to stay longer in the area by adding significantly to the range of things to see and do, increasing dwell time and visitor dispersion across the destination. Therefore, from a tourism perspective we are fully supportive of the proposed development in line with all proper planning and environmental requirements being met.

Yours sincerely,

*Shane Dineen*

Shane Dineen-Manager of Environment and Planning, Fáilte Ireland