



PROPOSED INDOOR LEISURE AND VISITOR CENTRE

NEXT STEPS

MARCH 2013



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## 1. Background and Strategic Context

In 2009 the Council commissioned a feasibility study into the provision of an Indoor Leisure/Visitor Facility. The study, which included wide-ranging consultation, was conducted by Strategic Leisure with BDO Stoy Hayward providing the supporting Business Plan. It reported in April 2009 and it concluded:

- There is a lack of indoor provision in the Moyle district for both residents and tourists.
- Moyle offers many main tourist attractions including; the Giants Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, Glens of Antrim, Rathlin Island, Old Bushmills Distillery and Auld Lammas Fair but there is a lack of corresponding indoor attractions.
- There are a significant number of tourists to the Moyle area.
- The development of additional tourism attractions in the area is supported by the strategic plans at regional and sub-regional level for tourism development.
- Local residents support the development of a new indoor swimming pool in the District, given the lack of an existing publicly accessible pool.
- A substantial number of sites were investigated and assessed with the outcome of the analysis selecting the Quay Road site, which is the existing home for the public outdoor grass and synthetic pitches in Ballycastle.
- The facility mix for the new Leisure/Visitor Centre was developed with core elements to include an indoor swimming pool, a Tourism Information Centre, fitness and health suite facilities, plus a large multi-purpose area.
- The estimated cost of development is circa £10.3 million plus VAT.
- Estimated revenue figures, developed and sensitised by BDO in March 2009, state that the required level of annual subsidy will be around £540,000; driven by the operating costs of the new facility and user throughput.
- Capital funding will need to be sourced.
- Employment will increase but fluctuate due to seasonality of use.

Following the 2009 Council report, Ballycastle Strategic Town Development and Action Plan included an action to improve the provision of indoor leisure and tourist facilities in the Moyle area. It proposed the Quay Road area – the principal link between the town centre and the seafront – be developed to jointly meet the needs of the community and visitors to the area.

Based on the work undertaken, it is clear there is a strong rationale and support for the development of an indoor leisure/tourism facility in the Moyle area. The challenge will be realising the required capital and revenue resources to deliver this quality development for the benefit of both residents and visitors.

## 2. Current Position

Since 2009, a number of events have occurred, which impact on Moyle District and on the thinking behind the realisation of a Leisure/Visitor facility for the area. These can be categorised under a variety of headings and include:

### 2.1 Publications and Research

- Active Places Research Report – May 2009
- Sport NI - The NI Strategy for Sport & Physical Recreation 2009 -2019
- NI Sport & Physical Activity Survey (SAPAS) 2010
- NISRA Continuous Household Survey 2010-11
- Programme for Government 2011-2015
- Population Census 2011
- Moyle District Council Corporate Plan 2012-2015
- NI Assembly: Grassroots sport in NI: A summary of participation and potential challenges – November 2012
- CCGTP Tourism Area Plan 2012-2017

### 2.2 Leisure & Tourism Developments

- Club Pulse Gym opened October 2009
- Marine Hotel & Country Club closed in December 2010
- Giant's Causeway Coast (Cycling) Sportive established September 2011
- Ballycastle Marina Visitor Centre opened September 2011
- Ballycastle Best Kept Small Town Award 2011 and 2012
- Runkerry Golf Resort Development approved Feb 2012
- New Causeway Visitor Centre opened July 2012
- Bushmills Salmon & Whiskey Festival established August 2012

### 2.3 Political Change

- Local Government Reform - Moyle to become part of Causeway Coast and Glens super council in 2015

### 2.4 Economic Change

- UK in Economic Recession 2011-12
- UK Base Rate expected to remain at 0.5% until 2016
- Fuel price increases by over 50% 2009 – 2013

### 2.5 Legal/Financial Change

- Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
- Prudential Code applied to Local Government Borrowing from April 2012

### 3. Key Findings and Conclusions

How have the changes since 2009 impacted the case for a new Leisure/Visitor Facility in Moyle?

#### 3.1 Local Indoor Leisure Provision

##### Findings

- The Active Places Research Report, funded by Sport NI, scored Moyle as the worst performing local government district in NI in respect of meeting the demand for swimming pools and sports halls. See Appendix 1.
- The same report scored Moyle as the best performing district in respect of its provision of tennis courts and grass and synthetic playing pitches (outdoor).
- NISRA 2012 Statistics on Swimming Pool provision by local government district indicates that Moyle is the only district in Northern Ireland which does not provide a local publicly accessible swimming pool, whether provided by the local authority, private sector or education sector. See Appendix 2.
- Based on the 2011 Census, the proposed Causeway Coast and Glens Council District has a population of 140,877 of which Moyle District at 17,050 would represent 12%.
- Coleraine Borough has 4 publicly accessible local swimming pools; Limavady Borough, 3 and Ballymoney Borough, 1, a total of 8 pools in districts inhabited by 88% of the population of the new Causeway Coast and Glens district.

##### Conclusions

- Clearly, there is a dearth of indoor leisure provision of swimming pool and sports hall facilities in the district. This affects all ages and sections of the community.
- It is testament to the resourcefulness of the local authority that whilst it has by far the lowest revenue streams of all of the NI Local Government Authorities it is one the best in its provisioning of outdoor sports facilities.
- Based on 1 pool to every 15,400 (140,000/88) of the population of the super district, Moyle is more than 1 pool underprovided.

## NEXT STEPS

### 3.2 Proximity and Price of Facilities

#### Findings:

- DCAL/Sport NI - Strategy for Sport 2009-2019 set as one of its 26 targets for Sport and Physical Recreation – “By 2019 to ensure that 90% of the population have quality accredited, multi-sports facilities, that have the capacity to meet demand, within 20 minutes travel time.
- Three principal Moyle district settlements, namely; Ballycastle, Cushendall and Cushendun have travel distances to their nearest pool ranging between 27 minutes and 49 minutes. See Appendix 3.
- The 2010 NI Sport and Physical Activity Survey (DCAL funded) found that 20% of adults were dissatisfied with the level of sports provision in their local area – a high level of that dissatisfaction related to the proximity of facilities.
- The same survey identified that proximity of facilities, closely followed by cheaper admission prices were the most important factors in encouraging people who don't participate to participate in a sporting activity.

#### Conclusions

- The majority of Moyle District inhabitants would have a journey time in excess of 20 minutes to their nearest indoor swimming pool. As such, Moyle District would fail the Sport NI target – up to 90% of its population would not be within 20 minutes travel time of a quality accredited, multi-sports facility.
- A new facility would encourage local participation from all sides of the community and make a significant contribution toward meeting Sport NI regional targets for place and participation.
- It would seem preferable to adopt a business model which enables entrance charges to be subsidised. Such an approach would be able to place participation above profit and reduce unmet demand.

## NEXT STEPS

### 3.3 Popularity, Cost of Travel and PE for Schools

#### Findings

- Swimming is the most frequently participated sport in NI, followed by Keep Fit (NISRA - Continuous Household Survey 2010/11).
- Over the period since 2009, unleaded fuel prices in Northern Ireland on average have increased from 90p per litre to £1.37 per litre. An increase of 52%. A typical 35 mile round trip for a Ballycastle based family to the nearest swimming pool in Ballymoney would now cost £6.23 in fuel compared with £4.10 in 2009.

#### Conclusions

- Unmet demand will surely have increased due to more expensive travel. This trend would be expected to continue if fuel costs carry on rising.
- An unseen cost and risk/danger of unmet demand is that which relates to schoolchildren, who need to be transported some distance out of the area in order to fulfil a basic Physical Education need – learning to swim.
- Provision of local quality swimming facilities, where there is significant unmet demand as in Moyle, should be considered a front line service priority.



## NEXT STEPS

### 3.4 Impact of Tourism

#### Findings

- Visitors to Giants Causeway and Carrick-a-Rede exceeded 750,000 in 2011. Surveys have indicated in excess of 3 million trips annually to the district including Bushmills Distillery, Rathlin Island, The Glens of Antrim and the Auld Lammas Fair.
- Ballycastle was awarded best kept small town in 2011 and 2012, but it is also a picturesque seaside resort with many other fine qualities – blue flag beach, attractive promenade, 200 berth Marina, lawn tennis courts, bowling green, 18 hole golf club, walking trails, historical places of interest, day trips to Rathlin to see the puffins, a number of fine restaurants and taverns and probably the best fish and chips and ice cream on the North Coast.
- Runkerry Golf Resort Development approved Feb 2012 – despite fierce resistance
- New Giants Causeway Visitor Centre opened in July 2012
- Marina Tourist Information Centre opening in April 2013
- With the Causeway Sportive in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year in 2013, the area is fast becoming a mecca for cycling enthusiasts.

#### Conclusions

- Moyle offers many main tourist attractions but there is a lack of corresponding indoor attractions.
- Perhaps the merits of Moyle, especially Ballycastle are undersold.
- The development of a Leisure/Visitor Facility with pool and indoor attractions could help to fill the gap and add to the attraction of Ballycastle as a serious alternative holiday resort with all of the spin-offs that would bring to local businesses.



### NEXT STEPS

#### 3.5 Local Government Reform

##### Findings

- New powers are to be vested in Statutory Transition Committees who would represent the best interests of the 'super councils' from as early as June 2013. Power would then move to Shadow Councils from June 2014 and on to the New Councils in April 2015.
- The Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 increased the powers of local authorities to borrow money to finance capital investment which is central to the delivery of quality local public services.
- The implementation of the Prudential Code of practice within local authorities in NI from April 2012 supports the capital investment financing process. The Code of practice includes the requirement for each local authority to set upper limits for external debt (borrowing) within which it is expected to operate.
- The authorised limit for total external debt in 2013/2014 is £9.7 million. This provides for £500,000 of headroom over what is operationally planned.
- The extent of centralisation and convergence is as yet unknown. However, it would be expected that many local authority activities, currently performed in Ballycastle, would move elsewhere.

##### Conclusions

- Moyle Council's present capacity to increase its borrowing would equate to less than 5% of the capital cost of the envisaged facility. Clearly, this places the emphasis on first being able to secure other significant sources of finance.
- Whilst premature, but a matter for the Transition Committees/Shadow Council, there may be opportunities to realise cash from surplus assets in those local authorities where a number of activities move elsewhere. For example, the occupancy of Mary Street.
- Might there be opportunities also to relocate other local (government funded) services, such as the Library, to a new Leisure/Visitor Centre.
- With the imminent change in the structure of local government it would seem sensible to develop and take the case for a new Leisure/Visitor Facility to the Statutory Transition Committee/Shadow Council.



### 3.6 Impact on District Rates

#### Findings

- Based on capital costs of £10.3 million, 50% grant, 50% loans, annual net running costs of £540,000 and a GLF interest rate of 3% over 25 years, the net annual costs to the Moyle District Fund would be circa £834,000.
- This would equate to around a 17% increase in the Moyle District rate. If the loan were 'soft' this would reduce to circa 15%. See Appendix 4
- If the investment were appraised from a Causeway Coast and Glens perspective the approximate impact on the district rate would be 2.3%.
- From approval to completion, the Leisure/Visitor Facility could take 3 years.

#### Conclusions

- The economics would point to the project needing to be funded by the public sector. This does not exclude the possibility of a private sector partner.
- It would seem preferable to approach the development of the new Leisure/Visitor Facility through the structures of the Causeway Coast and Glens' super council.
- The position concerning outline/full planning permission for the Quay Road site should be given careful consideration in advance of any firm proposals being drawn up.
- As the capital costs would be staged, a phased increase in the district rate could be considered in the lead up to completion. E.G. 1% per year for 3 years. This would soften the impact for the citizen.



### NEXT STEPS

#### 3.7 Sources of Finance

##### Findings

- Historically, places for sport would have been funded 20% District Councils, 80% DCAL/Sport NI. Based on 2009 figures.
- Since then, absolute levels of DCAL funding into grassroots sport (as opposed to elite) have fallen by over 50% - in the 3 years to 2011/12.
- DCAL planned investment in capital infrastructure for sport in 2013/14 and 2014/15 totals almost £95 million of which £89 million is allocated to the development of Regional Stadium.
- Sport Matters (Sport NI Strategy) strategy describes it as “essential that district councils retain existing and develop new income streams, in support of sport.
- Bank interest rates are at a low and likely to remain so for some years.
- The local construction industry is in difficulties and any new business would be keenly contested.

##### Conclusions

- As illustrated by the numbers and suggested by central strategy the responsibility to develop the funding models to support local needs rests with local councils.
- It may be an opportune time to borrow to build.

## 4. Next Steps

Initially, obtain agreement by Moyle District Council to the following resolution:

“This Council resolves that the provision of a local quality Leisure/Visitor Attraction is a front line service priority”

Then:

### Phase 1 – Preparatory Work

- Review the original Quay Road plans in terms of the location, facilities mix and build costs. Consider utilising the Council’s Architects for this work. Would also require the detail behind the Gibson Hamilton build plans/cost.
- Critique the revenue projections with a view to reaching a conclusion on an acceptable level of annual subsidisation under the super council scenario.
- Arrange preliminary discussions with the Planning Service on site location and likely outcome, timeframes and costs for outline and full planning permission.

### Phase 2 – Developing and Submitting the Case to the Super Council

- Prepare a draft Case Paper for submission by the Council to the Statutory Transition Committee of the new Causeway Coast and Glens Super Council. Much of the Case Paper could be based on the content of this proposal paper.
- Legacy Council CEOs to conduct preliminary discussions on the Case with a view to reaching a consensus.

### Phase 3 – Submit the Case Paper for inclusion in the new Corporate Plan

- Soundings could be taken from central government department on the possibility/scale/timing of grant funding.
- Finalise the Case Paper and arrange for presentation to and adoption by Moyle District Council.
- Arrange for formal submission of the Case Paper to the Statutory Transition Committee with a view to inclusion in the Super Council’s first Corporate Plan.



## 5. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Active Places 2009 Research Report – Bridging the Gap (Sport NI)
  - Unmet demand for Swimming Pools by District Council
  - Unmet demand for Sports Halls in NI by District Council
- Appendix 2 – Swimming Pools by Super Council & Legacy Council 2012 (NISRA)
- Appendix 3 – Distances and Travel Times to the Nearest Public Pool
- Appendix 4 – New Leisure Centre – Cost Analysis





Moyle District Council

# Feasibility Study Leisure/Visitor Facility

## Final Report

April 2009





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## **Executive Summary**



## Executive Summary

### Introduction and Background

For some time MDC has considered the possibility of developing an indoor Leisure/Visitor attraction which will contribute to the local leisure infrastructure and tourism product. Such provision would need to complement existing facilities and attractions and incorporate a suitable mix of facilities to cater for both active and passive leisure time activities.

Part of the rationale for undertaking this study is to identify the opportunity for MDC to leave a legacy for the area following the Re-Organisation of Public Administration (RPA). In order to affect this 'legacy' MDC needs to provide information, which will be available for the subsequent administration for the area.

This study will inform MDC and its subsequent entity in its strategic and tactical decision-making for any future investment in provision of leisure and tourism facilities in the Moyle district.

### Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to:

***'assess and analyse the options for the provision of an indoor leisure/visitor attraction in Moyle, and to identify what it should comprise, where it could be located, and how it would be funded'.***

### Rationale for the Study

The lack of indoor/wet weather leisure facilities in the district is acknowledged by the Department of the Environment's District Council annual Performance Indicators, which highlight MDC as having the poorest indoor leisure provision compared to all other 25 Councils in Northern Ireland.

The MDC Corporate Plan also acknowledges the need to appraise its Indoor Leisure provision – Theme 3 - *"Providing Services that people want and appreciate"* MDC Corporate Plan 2005 - 09

### Context for the Study

MDC indoor recreation provision is made predominantly at Sheskburn Recreation Centre (SRC) in Ballycastle and community facilities in Bushmills and Mosside. Ballycastle also has two private sector swimming pools at the Marine Hotel and Silvercliffs Caravan Park. The district has no public swimming provision.

The lack of indoor/wet weather leisure facilities in the district is acknowledged by the Department of the Environment's District Council annual Performance Indicators, which highlight MDC as having the poorest indoor leisure provision compared to all other 25 Councils in N Ireland. Neighbouring provision includes Coleraine Leisure Centre (18 miles); Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney (16 miles); Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena (25 miles) (Distances from Ballycastle).

## Responses and Findings from Consultation

### Schools

Based on the responses received the following summarises the schools' consultation:

- There is very limited indoor recreation provision, the majority of which is not actually fit for purpose i.e. it is not designed specifically for recreation
- There is limited outdoor recreation provision, not all of which is fit for purpose
- There is some community use of existing school facilities

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- Many schools would be interested in developing increased community use of their existing facilities
- There are currently no significant plans for the development of indoor or outdoor recreation provision on the school sites

### Street and Visitor Attraction Survey

Six (6) surveys were administered at the following locations during the months of July and August 2006 by MDC staff:

Ballycastle; Cushendall; Bushmills; Giant's Causeway; Glenarriff Forest Park and Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge (40 questionnaires at each totalling 240 questionnaires)

The purpose of the survey was to establish from visitors, during high visitor season, what type of facility/service they would like to see in the District, which would make their visit more enjoyable.

### Findings

Most frequent responses to the following question were:

**"If a new leisure/visitor facility were to be developed in the Moyle district, what type of facility or mix of facilities would you like to see provided?"**

• Water/swimming facility – indoor/outdoor	21%
• Bars/Restaurants	18%
• Cinema	9%
• Adventure Park/Amusements	6%
• Children's play	5%
• Shops	5%
• Leisure Centre	5%

Based on the above responses, it is clear that the provision of indoor /outdoor swimming pool facilities, accessible to visitor, is a key priority. The second priority identified by respondents to the survey is bars and restaurants, which could potentially complement, or be linked to, the development of indoor/outdoor water space.

### User Survey – Sheskburn Recreation Centre (SRC)

The following results have been collated following a user questionnaire at SRC September/October 2006.

- The majority of current users utilise the facility around one to two times a week
- Most users would travel by car and one in ten would walk. Public transport is not a key mode of transport
- Most users live in close proximity to the facility with 50% living within 10 minutes
- Organised classes and the fitness suite were the primary reason for the visit
- Most users are very satisfied with the availability of facilities and fairly satisfied with the range of facilities
- Of the 48% who utilise other facilities, 26% use the Marine Country Club, predominantly for use of the swimming pool. (12.5% of Users surveyed use swimming facilities at the Marine Country Club)
- Most users put the development of new facilities as the most important priority for the Council followed by investment into current facilities,
- A new swimming pool is the key recommendation to be included within the development of new facilities
- Opinions are split almost 50:50 on whether users would travel further to access new facilities and the majority would pay more to access them.

Consultation with existing users of SRC highlights that although there is majority satisfaction with existing services and provision, if a new facility was to be developed, an indoor swimming pool would be the highest priority for respondents to this survey.

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#### Focus Groups

A series of four public Focus Group meetings were held. A separate meeting with Moyle Sports Advisory Committee was held on 07 Sept 06.

#### Findings

Generally, each of the Focus Group meetings considered the following points:

- **Current Provision** – Strengths; Weaknesses and Gaps/Opportunities and
- **Future Provision** – What should it be? And where should it be located?

Local residents' views are that there is a need for indoor provision to provide opportunities for activity when there is bad weather. The priority facility to be included in such a development is an indoor swimming pool, accessible to the public. Critically, residents identified the need for such a facility to be in Ballycastle, which is the main centre of population in the District, although views varied on the exact development location within the town.

#### Stakeholder Meetings

A number of strategic stakeholders were identified by the Client; these individuals were consulted on a face to face basis to inform the study. A list of consultees is included at Appendix 1.

The consultees' feedback reflected, and supported that already identified through the surveys and Focus Groups. Stakeholders highlighted the lack of indoor provision in the District, which means there is little to do when the weather is bad. This impacts both on residents and visitors. They also confirmed that the district lacks an accessible public swimming pool, as the private facilities are not open all year round, and they are not available to everyone.

The opportunity to develop a public swimming facility meeting residents' needs, and at the same time provide a new wet weather attraction for tourists was highlighted.

Stakeholders agreed that such a facility needed to be located in Ballycastle as the main population centre of the district, and the focus for the majority of tourist visits.

#### Summary of Overall Consultation Findings

The overwhelming consensus of the consultation undertaken is the need for an indoor facility to provide activities when the weather is bad. An indoor swimming pool is the facility identified by the majority of consultees responding to the consultation process. Other facilities identified include bars, restaurants, and indoor hall space.

Local residents emphasised the fact that if a new facility were to be developed it should be in Ballycastle as the main population centre; from a tourism perspective, this would also provide for visitors to the District.

Although opinions differed on the exact location of the site for a new facility, the majority of respondents confirmed that it should be in Ballycastle.

#### Site Visits

A number of site visits were carried out by SL, B3 (Architects) and Council officials. This group met with Planning Office representative and were advised of current and potential issues relating to each of the sites identified as having potential to be the location of the new facility.

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Based on the site options analysis, which uses a number of key criteria to assess the identified sites, there are four (4) sites, which are identified as suitable for shortlisting to Concept design stage:

- Ballycastle High School site
- Council Offices site
- Sheskburn Garage, Ballycastle
- Huggins Field. Ballycastle

### Emerging Key Issues and Opportunities for the Future

The following have been identified as key issues from the consultation exercise; these are listed in no particular order and have been summarised from the feedback received:

### The Role of Tourism in Moyle

In 2007 (published January 2009) the Northern Ireland Tourist Board reported that the top ten tourist attractions were:

- 1) Giants Causeway Visitor Centre
- 2) W5
- 3) Ulster Museum
- 4) Oxford Island National Nature Reserve
- 5) Belfast Zoological Gardens
- 6) Ulster Folk and Transport Museum
- 7) Derry Walls
- 8) Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge
- 9) Portstewart Strand
- 10) Saint Patrick Centre

Regional tourism estimate figures for 2007 (January 2009) published by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) account for all out of state visitors to Northern Ireland, visiting for any reason (holiday, business, visiting friends and relatives) and staying for at least one night. Added to these figures are Northern Ireland residents on holiday at home. Day trips are not included. The estimates for the Causeway Coast and Glens area recorded 0.89m trips and £134.2m of spending in 2007.

### Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership – Tourism Statistics Review

The above refer to the NITB annual reporting of visitor numbers; number of nights and spend in a particular area/region as an indication of the economic impact of tourism at a local level. As part of the Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership Review of Tourism Statistics 2008 (research undertaken by TTC International, Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd and TNS Travel and Tourism) an alternative method of tourism data collection has been used to illustrate economic performance in the causeway Coast and Glens region. This method, named **STEAM** is currently the only available method that can effectively produce reliable and comparable local area results year on year (or quarter on quarter) for a given local authority. [Victor Middleton, "Measuring the Local Impact of Tourism" 2002]

In comparison, the STEAM figures for the same area record 10.60m trips to the overall area, with spending of £483.3m.

Specific STEAM information for Moyle for 2007 (statistics for 2007 which were published in 2009) identifies a total estimate of 2,927,000 visitors to the area, spending £108.1m, based on 3, 240,000 tourist days. This accounts for 28% of all regional trips made (10.6m), and is highest in the Region, ahead of Coleraine (27%).

Moyle has the largest amount of trips in the Causeway Coast and Glens area with 2,927,000 with Coleraine behind with 2,837,000. It is second behind Coleraine in respect of visitor spend with £108.1m compared to Coleraine's £154.5m .



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There is a significant swell in visitor numbers in the Moyle District over a prolonged tourism season.

The table below (Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership Tourism Statistics Review published in 2009) shows the estimates of tourist numbers and expenditure in each of the 8 local authorities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership and again it can be seen that in each authority the STEAM estimates for the impact of tourism are considerably higher, but particularly for Moyle, whose visitor numbers (because of the inclusion of day visitors) are almost 20 times the size.

Table 1 Comparisons by Council Area

	Trips (000s)		Days (000s)		Spend (£m)	
	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM
<b>TOTAL</b>	884	10,603	3,535	12,747	134.2	483.3
Ballymena	78	965	512	1,150	13.4	47.7
Ballymoney	29	708	173	795	4.1	25.1
Carrickfergus	62	1,289	260	1,404	8.9	47.2
Coleraine	328	2,837	1,153	3,747	55.4	154.5
Larne	97	526	330	689	11.6	31.3
Limavady	54	862	260	1037	8.9	43.5
Moyle	165	2,927	541	3,240	21.8	108.1
Newtownabbey	70	488	306	686	9.9	25.9

Showing the same figures as a percentage of the total for the region highlights the increase in relative importance for Moyle:

Table 2 % Comparisons by Council Area

	% Share of Regional Total Trips		% Share of Regional Total Days		% Share of Regional Total Spend	
	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM
Ballymena	9%	9%	14%	9%	10%	10%
Ballymoney	3%	7%	5%	6%	3%	5%
Carrickfergus	7%	12%	7%	11%	7%	10%
Coleraine	37%	27%	33%	29%	41%	32%
Larne	11%	5%	9%	5%	9%	6%
Limavady	6%	8%	7%	8%	7%	9%
Moyle	19%	28%	15%	25%	16%	22%
Newtownabbey	8%	5%	9%	5%	7%	5%

Under the NITB estimates, Coleraine was easily the largest contributor to the total number of trips, followed by Moyle, and then Larne. STEAM estimates show Moyle as the largest authority for visitor numbers but still have Coleraine generating the most expenditure. Larne has become relatively less strong with Carrickfergus increasing its position.

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**Ballycastle Strategic Town Development and Action Plan – Nov 2008**

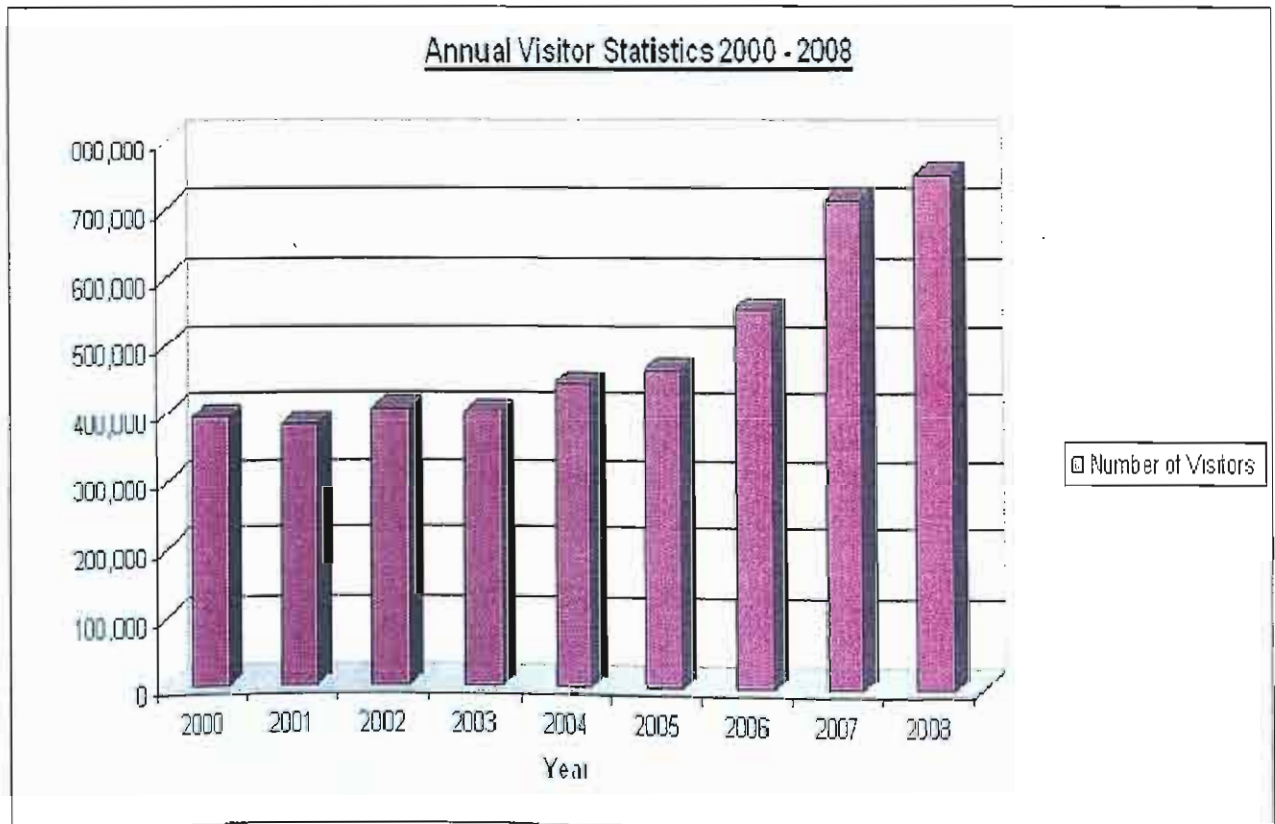
In November 2008, The Paul Hogarth Company was appointed by the Ballycastle Town Partnership to prepare a Strategic Town Development and Action Plan.

The Plan, which was a key requirement of the Causeway Coast and Glens Masterplan, identifies the Quay Road location as a strategic opportunity to provide leisure/tourism facilities and refers specifically to this project as a priority for the area.

**Giants Causeway Visitor Centre – Throughput Figures**

Annual Visitor Statistics 2000 - 2008

Year	Number of Visitors
2000	395,247
2001	383,133
2002	406,801
2003	398,977
2004	445,327
2005	464,243
2006	553,063
2007	712,714
2008	751,693



Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre

## Moyle District Council Feasibility Study Leisure/Visitor Facility

The above tables indicate a significant annual growth in visitor numbers and NITB estimates continued growth in these numbers. ; this in itself suggests the potential to further exploit what is an extended visitor season, but one where poorer weather can have an impact.

### Tourism in Northern Ireland: A Strategic Framework for Action 2004-2007

In adopting a sustainable approach, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board seeks to strike a balance between economic growth, impact on the environment and community support. The framework sets out ten programmes, which are divided into three areas. These are:

#### Attracting Visitors

- Know the visitor
- Develop a compelling proposition
- Reach the consumer
- Take care of our visitors- every step of the way

#### Business Enhancement

- Develop signature projects
- Focus on winning themes
- Develop internationally competitive businesses
- Deliver memorable experiences

#### Communicating Effectively

- Share information
- Strengthen effective relationships for delivery

Identified within the developing signature programme section are five best prospect short/medium projects including the **Giant's Causeway/Antrim and Causeway coast area**.

The wining themes sections are highlighted as those with the potential to help deliver a competitive advantage for Northern Ireland, which includes activity tourism and culture and heritage tourism.

There is significant opportunity to develop additional tourism provision in Moyle to complement the natural features already in existence, and provide alternative indoor activities for wet weather. This is supported by the Vision set out in the Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Masterplan (2004 – 2013).

The vision underpinning the Masterplan is that,

***"The Causeway Coast and Glens area will be a 'must-see', world-class tourism destination. It will be known for its scenic beauty, its spectacular coastline and its key jewels. The area will set new standards in environmental management and sustainable tourism, while tourism interests will work closely together to create a quality visitor experience".***

The Masterplan covers the period 2004-13 and has the following key objectives:

- To increase the number of tourists visiting the area
- To achieve a coordinated approach to tourism in the area
- To spread the benefits of visits attracted by the Giants Causeway to a wider geographical area
- To develop strong attractions elsewhere in the area

### Moyle District Local Strategy Partnership: Integrated Local Strategy 2001-2006

The strategy is designed to transform the socio-economic environment within which people currently live and transform Moyle from being the 6th most deprived area in Northern Ireland into a more vibrant, prosperous area where the community is able to enjoy a good quality of life.

## Moyle District Council Feasibility Study Leisure/Visitor Facility

The document identifies eight priority areas including:

### Tourism and Environment

The rationale behind prioritising tourism and environment is that Moyle has a unique environmental and cultural heritage that attracts visitors from all over the world. Developing the tourism industry in Moyle will help to ensure continued economic growth for the local economy in addition to providing employment. The overall aim is to protect and enhance the natural resources and promote sustainable tourism in the area.

### The Role of Sport

#### Delivering Corporate priorities and objectives

MDC has identified 4 Themes in its current Corporate Plan 2005 – 09 and Theme 3 states the following:

Providing services that people want and appreciate

- Addressing social issues – health; sustainability; employment; tackling anti- social behaviour
- Regenerating local communities

### Facilities

#### Condition of Existing facilities – Sheskburn Recreation Centre;

Throughout the consultation exercise, reference has been made to the facilities available at SRC and their unsuitability for many activities and school use.

The lack of swimming pool facility in the District, and in particular at the main public leisure facility, highlights the need for new provision.

#### Need for new facility in Ballycastle – quality; mix; delivered through partnership?

The points raised above have been raised throughout this study and those responding to the various consultation exercises have indicated what they believe is needed for any future investment in leisure facilities.

#### Accessibility – transport; cost; location

Within the Noble Index (2005), Moyle remains the fifth most deprived District in NI. It has particularly acute problems in the area of Proximity to Services.

80% of users of SRC travel by car or motorcycle and 50% of users travel over 10 minutes to attend activities in the Centre. Two thirds of users have stated that they would pay more for new facilities and half would be prepared to travel further to use facilities.

#### Provision for Youth

The lack of specific youth-focussed facilities and programmes was highlighted in the consultation. MDC is however not the only Council area where this situation has become a major issue. Consideration of innovative and contemporary provision should form part of the final matrix for any new facility and it may be possible to develop opportunity through new organised programming, or through investment from the private/voluntary sector.



## Moyle District Council Feasibility Study Leisure/Visitor Facility

### Timeframe for investment

Decisions on the future needs and appropriate provision to meet those needs must be taken now. The implementation of the recommendations made by MDC can also be made now. It is possible, likely probable however, that any strategic provision will impact on a new Council structure.

### Department of the Environment, Local Government Policy Division – 2007/08 Performance Indicators

Highlighted below is the 2007/08 Performance Indicators for Council's Indoor Leisure Provision in Moyle and other Councils in the proposed RPA Council cluster, including Limavady; Coleraine and Ballymoney.

Council	IL/1	IL/2	IL/3	IL/4	IL/6	IL/7
Ballymoney	£29.21	£1.91	15,273	88%	372	N/A
Coleraine	£20.69	£3.87	5,352	87%	84	41
Limavady	£31.10	£5.40	5,756	89%	650	30
Moyle	£14.26	£5.08	2,802	79%	N/A	32

- IL/1 Net cost of indoor leisure per head of population
- IL/2 Net cost of indoor leisure per admission
- IL/3 Number of admissions per 1000 population
- IL/4 % level of customers satisfied with indoor leisure
- IL/6 Nature and scale of provision for indoor leisure
- IL/7 Existence and performance of quality Health and Safety arrangements

### Need – The Key Driver

Whilst considerable focus of this study to date has been attached to the RPA and its impact on Moyle in relation to the legacy, which the current Council wishes to secure for its community, the emphasis appears to have shifted towards considering the expressed and obvious needs of the District in terms of its leisure and tourism product and services.

In particular, the lack and quality of existing indoor leisure provision has been highlighted throughout the consultation exercise. The location of, and historical lack of financial resources in, the District has created a situation where sports and leisure provision and in particular provision of public swimming facilities, along with many other services, which communities elsewhere accept as of their right, have not been developed.

### Funding

MDC is not a cash-rich Council and it has many services and projects to manage through its limited resources. The development of a new capital project will place the Council in a more challenging position where it needs to balance available funds between ongoing demands.

Given this situation, if the development of a new indoor facility is to proceed, MDC and its subsequent entity will need to consider the most effective way of resourcing both capital and revenue needs, given the identified potential options highlighted in this report. The funding package will depend on the date for construction of the facility, availability of in-house funding, opportunities to access external funding pots, and the cost of borrowing. All of these factors are likely to change as the new Council body is established.

Appendix 7 includes details on Funding Options appraisals and Financial Viability Forecasts; the final section of the Appendix 7 report also includes an analysis of potential funding options.

### Urban/Rural

The MDC district is rural in nature and its largest population base is in Ballycastle.

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A number of those consulted (Minority) expressed the view that any new provision should be made in areas where there is clearly a low population base. The majority agreed that any such development would require the largest population base to make any development more likely to be sustainable.

### Strategic Role of MDC – RPA

Essentially consultation identified that MDC should take a lead role if progressing the development of an indoor facility, although it is recognised that funding may need to be accessed from a variety of sources. Local residents and stakeholders highlighted that the proposed indoor facility could be of benefit in economic and tourism terms as well as providing the local community with an accessible and public indoor swimming pool.

- Leadership
- Funding
- Community Economic Development

### Site Options Analysis

MDC identified an initial list of 9 sites, which were visited and assessed by the consultancy team.

Using the criteria in the Evaluation Matrix, there are four (4) sites, which have been identified as suitable for shortlisting to Concept design stage. These are:

- Ballycastle High School site
- Sheskburn House (Council Offices) site
- Sheskburn Garage, Ballycastle
- Huggins Field, Ballycastle

The detailed site assessment and analysis resulted in a new site having to be chosen; this resulted from a number of planning, location and operational issues identified in relation to the four initial preferred sites during further consultation and analysis work.

The final preferred site identified for the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility is the Quay Road site. Plans, drawings and capital costs for the development of the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility on this site are included at Appendices 5, 6 and 7.

The identified capital cost of the new facility is circa £10,276,004 plus VAT.

### Conclusions

The feasibility study undertaken into the potential development of a new indoor leisure tourism facility in Moyle has identified:

- There is a lack of indoor provision in the Moyle district for both residents and tourists
- Moyle offers many main tourist attractions, the Giants Causeway and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, Glens of Antrim – Rathlin Island – Bushmills Distillery – Lammas Fair etc but there is a lack of corresponding indoor attractions
- There are a significant number of tourists to the area (2,927,000 in 2007, spending around £108.1m)

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- The development of additional tourism attractions in the area is supported by the strategic plans at national and sub-regional level for tourism development
- Local residents support the development of a new indoor swimming pool in the District, given the lack of an existing publicly accessible pool
- The consensus of opinion is that any new facility should be located in Ballycastle, the main centre of the district's population
- The facility mix for the new facility was developed with core elements including an indoor swimming and leisure pool, a Tourism Information Centre, fitness and health suite facilities, plus a large multi-purpose area. This is however still very fluid and can change as the project progresses.
- A substantial number of sites were assessed and investigated to provide a location for the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility; the outcome of this analysis was the selection of the Quay Road site, which is the existing site of outdoor recreation provision in Ballycastle
- The estimated cost of developing the proposed facility mix is circa £10.276,004 plus VAT
- Capital funding will need to be sourced from a variety of sources, which could include PPP/PFI, Interreg, RDP, TDA, sale of land, or potentially other capital funding schemes. For details of available funding sources see Appendix 7.
- Estimate revenue figures have been developed by BDO (December 2008 and revised March 2009), which state that the required level of subsidy will be around £538,556 (five year revenue figures); this subsidy level will be driven by the operating costs of the new facility, which will be dependent on user throughput. Details of the assumptions and basis for this high level business plan (five year) are included in the BDO report (Appendix 7).
- Given the nature of the new indoor facility, it is envisaged that it will operate on varying staff levels due to seasonality of use. Whilst local residents will require year-round use, this can be provided through a core operation, with minimum staffing, complying with all health and safety regulations. During the tourist season, the facility will require a higher level of staffing, the costs of which should be offset by the higher numbers of users.

Based on the work undertaken, it is clear there is both a need and a strategic rationale to support the development of an indoor leisure/tourism facility for the Moyle area. The challenge will be realising the required capital and revenue resources to support and deliver this development for the benefit of both residents and tourists.







## **Section 1**

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# **Introduction and Background**



## 1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Strategic Leisure Limited (SL) responded to an Invitation to Tender Notice in the Belfast Telegraph w/c Mon 10 April 2006 for consultants to carry out a Feasibility Study for the Development of a Leisure/Visitors' Facility for Moyle District Council (MDC).
- 1.2 For some time MDC has considered the possibility of developing an indoor Leisure/Visitor attraction which will contribute to the local leisure infrastructure and tourism product. Such provision would need to complement existing facilities and attractions and incorporate a suitable mix of facilities to cater for both active and passive leisure time activities.
- 1.3 Part of the rationale for undertaking this study is to identify the opportunity for MDC to leave a legacy for the area following the Re-Organisation of Public Administration (RPA). In order to effect this 'legacy' MDC needs to provide information, which will be available for the subsequent administration for the area.
- 1.4 This study will inform MDC and its subsequent entity in its strategic and tactical decision-making for any future investment in provision of leisure and tourism facilities in the Moyle district.

### Aim of the Study

- 1.5 The aim of this study is to:

***'Assess and analyse the options for the provision of an indoor leisure/visitor attraction in Moyle, and to identify what it should comprise, where it could be located, and how it would be funded'.***

### Rationale for the Study

- 1.6 The lack of indoor/wet weather leisure facilities in the district is acknowledged by the Department of the Environment's District Council annual Performance Indicators, which highlight MDC as having the poorest indoor leisure provision compared to all other 25 Councils in Northern Ireland.
- 1.7 The MDC Corporate Plan also acknowledges the need to appraise its Indoor Leisure provision – Theme 3 - "Providing Services that people want and appreciate" MDC Corporate Plan 2005 - 09

### 'Public Sports and Recreation Services – Making them fit for the future' - June 06

- 1.8 The Audit Commission in its recent report – "Public Sports and Recreation Services – Making them fit for the future" - June 06 suggests ....  
***"No single management option delivers the best overall value for money, or consistently results in more investment or higher levels of participation. However, in-house services tend to be significantly more expensive than the other options"***
- 1.9 Note is made of the recent (June 06) Audit Commission Report on "Public sports and recreation services – Making them fit for the future" in which reference is made to the current lack of strategic planning and delivery of services on cross-boundary terms between Councils and also with other sectors such as education and health.
- 1.10 Central Government policy points to the development of partnership with the private sector, particularly in capital-build projects through PPP and PFI initiatives. Any opportunity for joint provision of new capital-build projects should be explored.

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- 1.11 A number of other Councils in NI are already engaged with private sector partnerships in the management of fitness facilities within leisure centres, some receiving significant financial injections from the private partner in the refurbishment of aging facilities. This approach appears to have been successful.

#### Approach to Study

- 1.12 The study has involved:
- ✦ Review of the National, Regional and local context for leisure and sport including regional and locally specific documents/policies
  - ✦ Audit of Existing Provision – facility audit on Council-owned sites and facilities and also site visits to other identified facilities indicated by the Client for consideration
  - ✦ Consultation – Stakeholders – Planning; Education; Sports Advisory Committee; Tourism Branch DETI; NI Tourist Board; Causeway Coast Tourism Group; Private Sector; Health Action Zone; Youth; Community Safety; Sports Council for Northern Ireland; Governing Bodies of Sport; Local Strategy partnership
  - ✦ Visitor Surveys – Ballycastle; Bushmills; Cushendall; Giant’s Causeway; Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge; Glenarriff Forest Park
  - ✦ Postal Surveys to local Sports Clubs
  - ✦ Postal Surveys to local Schools
  - ✦ Community Consultation – Postal Survey to Community Groups
  - ✦ Focus Group Meetings – 4 No – Cushendall (05.09.06); Bushmills (06.09.06); Ballycastle (07.09.06 and 26.09.06)
  - ✦ Internal Staff Meetings – Senior Staff and Facility Managers
  - ✦ Consultation and further analysis has also been undertaken of the local context and in particular the implications of the Review of Public Administration vis-à-vis neighbouring provision
  - ✦ Identification of preferred facility mix
  - ✦ Site Options Analysis
  - ✦ Identification of preferred site
  - ✦ Indicative plans and layouts
  - ✦ Production of revenue estimates

#### Context for the Study

#### Existing Recreation Provision

- 1.13 Existing MDC indoor recreation provision is made predominantly at Shesburn Recreation Centre (SRC) in Ballycastle and through community facilities in Bushmills and Mosside. Ballycastle also has two private sector swimming pools at the Marine Hotel and Silvercliffs Caravan Park. The district currently has no public swimming provision. Indeed, based on DOE Performance Indicators, Moyle is ranked as the worst council in NI for indoor leisure provision.
- 1.14 Recent Best Value Performance Indicators published for all councils in NI identify that of the four councils which will merge under RPA to become the Causeway Coast Moyle has the lowest spend per head on indoor leisure provision.

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**BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TABLES**

Council	IL/1	IL/2	IL/3	IL/4	IL/6	IL/7
Ballymoney	£29.21	£1.91	15,273	88%	372	N/A
Coleraine	£20.69	£3.87	5,352	87%	84	41
Limavady	£31.10	£5.40	5,756	89%	650	30
<b>Moyle</b>	<b>£14.26</b>	<b>£5.03</b>	<b>2,802</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>32</b>

**Indoor Leisure PIs**

- IL/1 Net cost of indoor leisure per head of population
- IL/2 Net cost of indoor leisure per admission
- IL/3 Number of admissions per 1000 population
- IL/4 Percentage level of customer satisfied with indoor leisure
- IL/6 Nature and scale of provision for indoor leisure
- IL/7 Existence and performance of quality Health and Safety arrangements

- 1.15 Recent outdoor provision has been made in Ballycastle at Quay Road Recreation area with floodlit ATP and grass playing pitches. The project was funded through the PE and Sport in Schools programme administered on an Education and Library Board area basis.
- 1.16 The limited indoor recreation provision means there is currently very little available for tourists to the area; residents tend to use either the public or private facilities in the District, or travel to nearby provision (all of which is some considerable distance).
- 1.17 Neighbouring provision includes Coleraine Leisure Centre (18 miles); Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney (16 miles); Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena (25 miles) (Distances from Ballycastle).
- 1.18 By contrast, outdoor sports and leisure provision in the district caters for both visitors and residents alike. Golfers of all levels are accommodated at golf clubs at Ballycastle (18 Hole) and Cushendall (9 Hole), whilst Ballycastle also provides 5 grass and 6 all weather tennis courts and outdoor bowling at the SRC. A number of playing pitches are also provided in the District.
- 1.19 Other outdoor activities include rafting, rock-climbing and abseiling, available at the Ardclinis Outdoor Adventure in Cushendall, Pony Trekking at Watertop Farm, Ballycastle and Sailing at Cushendall Sailing and Boating Club. Shooting, sea angling, game fishing and rambling are also available in the area.

**Tourism**

- 1.20 Ballycastle is home to a Blue Flag winning facility - its beach and marina. In addition, the area hosts the Giant's Causeway, and many other natural attractions and amenities, such as Rathlin Island, Glens of Antrim, White Park Bay, Fairhead, and Murlough Bay.
- 1.21 It is a popular tourist destination, predominantly for its outdoor attractions. Whilst these draw tourists to the area, and drive significant inward investment in terms of e.g. bed nights, there is a lack of indoor provision particularly when the weather is bad. This can mean that visitors do not linger in the area once they have 'done' the outdoor attractions; this means that the Moyle area is losing valuable revenue, and developing a reputation for only having outdoor tourism provision.
- 1.22 Whilst it would not be sustainable simply to develop indoor attractions for the benefit of tourists, there is potential to provide all year round indoor facilities, which appeal to both the resident and visitor markets.





## **Section 2**

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# **Consultation and Site Visits**



## 2 Secondary Education (SE) Responses and Findings from Consultation

### Responses and Findings from Consultation

- 2.1 Given the scope and focus of this study, it is important that consultation reflects both the views of the local community and visitors, to ensure any future new provision meets the needs of both residents and tourists, and in so doing is sustainable. For this reason, a number of different consultation exercises were undertaken within the District. Consultation included face to face meetings with stakeholders, Focus Groups with local residents, postal surveys to schools and sports clubs in the District and hard copy surveys distributed at identified visitor attractions.
- 2.2 The following information represents a summary of the consultation undertaken, and the findings identified.

### Schools

- 2.3 Consultation was undertaken with all schools within the Moyle district boundaries. Schools who returned the questionnaire include:

- Ballycastle High
- St. Aloysius Secondary School
- Armoy Primary School
- Ballycastle Primary School
- Barnish Primary School
- Bushmills Primary School
- Cross and Passion College
- Dunseverick Primary School
- Glanaan Primary School
- St. Ciarans Primary School
- St. Olcans Primary School
- St. Mary's (Cushendall) Primary School
- St. Patricks
- St Patricks and St Brigid's School,
- Straidbilly Primary School

- 2.4 The aim of this survey was to identify the nature and level of recreation provision (indoor and outdoor) currently available on the school sites, or available to then schools through other means, and what the schools would like to have access to in the future in terms of indoor facilities.

### School Survey Findings

#### Outdoor Facilities

- 2.5 Collectively there are only a few schools with outdoor pitches; only three have junior football pitches and one has a mini football pitch. There are no grass cricket, rugby or hockey pitches on school sites in the District. There are two schools with pitches which are not regulation size (1 football and 1 GAA); although both of these schools have some community use of their pitches, they cannot be used for competition as they are not regulation size.
- 2.6 Most respondents described the existing pitches as invaluable and emphasised that they are utilised on average for around two or three times a week.

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- 2.7 Only one of the facilities was described as poor with the majority average/good; however, the GAA pitch cannot be used competitively given its size, and the soccer pitch is in very poor condition.
- 2.8 Ten schools have a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA); it is important to stress that descriptions of these varied considerably from that of a full size hockey pitch to a small tarmac area used for all leisure activities.
- 2.9 Only two such facilities are rated as good by the schools, three are of average quality, and five are rated as poor/very poor.

#### Indoor Facilities

- 2.10 Eleven of the schools have some use of indoor facilities although again descriptions of these facilities varied from a gymnasium to a multi purpose room utilised for PE lessons, breaks, classes and school lunches. Responses on the quality of these facilities varied between good, average and poor.
- 2.11 Three of the schools have secured community use of their indoor facilities by groups such as the guides and local clubs.
- 2.12 The importance of these gyms was again stressed by respondents due to the fact there is such a reliance on them for a wide range of activities. They are however generally described as inadequate for sporting activity. Most gyms are used between five and six times a week for PE lessons.

#### Ancillary Facilities

- 1 Most schools have car parking (10) although most descriptions were of a small facility with around 6-10 spaces. Seven respondents described the car park as either poor or very poor
- 2 Only three schools have changing rooms, two with shower facilities
- 3 The majority of schools have toilets although they are for the main facility; most were described as average or above
- 4 No schools have social areas

#### Access to the Grounds

- 2.13 Five of the thirteen sites allow informal access to the school grounds although this was described as either tolerable or not applicable.

#### Future Community Use

- 2.14 Two thirds of schools would consider allowing community use of their facilities in the future; the only barrier to this would be the quality of existing provision, which may be deemed as of a low standard.

#### Future Plans

- 2.15 Twelve of the schools explained that they have no future plans to improve the school/college facilities. Only Army Primary School has plans to extend their Multi Use Games Area. St. Patrick's and St. Brigid's explained they would be amalgamating their lower and upper buildings as part of a new build; this due to be opened in the future.



### Summary of Schools' Survey

2.16 Based on the responses received the following summarises the schools' consultation:

- ✦ There is very limited indoor recreation provision, the majority of which is not actually fit for purpose i.e. it is not designed specifically for recreation
- ✦ There is limited outdoor recreation provision, not all of which is fit for purpose
- ✦ There is some community use of existing school facilities
- ✦ Many schools would be interested in developing increased community use of their existing facilities
- ✦ There are currently no significant plans for the development of indoor or outdoor recreation provision on the school sites

### Street and Visitor Attraction Survey

2.17 Six (6) surveys were administered at the following locations during the months of July and August 2006 by MDC staff:

- ✦ Ballycastle;
  - ✦ Cushendall;
  - ✦ Bushmills;
  - ✦ Giant's Causeway;
  - ✦ Glenariff Forest Park and
  - ✦ Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge
- (40 questionnaires at each totalling 240 questionnaires)

2.18 The purpose of the survey was to establish from visitors, during the peak visitor season, what type of facility/service they would like to see in the District, which would make their visit more enjoyable.

### Findings

2.19 Most frequent responses to the following question were:

**"If a new leisure/visitor facility were to be developed in the Moyle district, what type of facility or mix of facilities would you like to see provided?"**

✦ Water/swimming facility – indoor/outdoor	21%
✦ Bars/Restaurants	18%
✦ Cinema	9%
✦ Adventure Park/Amusements	6%
✦ Children's play	5%
✦ Shops	5%
✦ Leisure Centre	5%

2.20 Based on the above responses, it is clear that the provision of indoor /outdoor swimming pool facilities, accessible to visitors, is a key priority. The second priority identified by respondents to the survey is bars and restaurants, which could potentially complement, or be linked to, the development of indoor/outdoor water space.

**User Survey – Sheskburn Recreation Centre (SRC)**

- 2.21 The user survey was undertaken to identify the views of local residents and existing users of MDC recreation facilities in Ballycastle.
- 2.22 The following results have been collated following a user questionnaire at SRC during September/October 2006.

**Table 1 – User Analysis Sheskburn Recreation Centre**

<b>Frequency of visit</b>	
Daily	16%
2 or more times per week	38%
Weekly	14%
Fortnightly	4%
Monthly	0%
Occasionally	14%
<b>Mode of transport</b>	
Car	78%
Taxi	0%
Bus	0%
Motor Bike	2%
Walk	16%
Bicycle	4%
<b>Journey time to facility</b>	
0-5 mins	38%
5-10 mins	12%
10-20 mins	42%
Over 20 mins	8%
<b>Reason for visit</b>	
Class (Activity/Fitness)	44%
Fitness Suite	30%
Football	10%
Other	16%

- 2.23 Table 1 Highlights:

- That the majority of current users utilise the facility around one to two times a week
- Most users travel by car but one in ten would walk. Public transport is not a key mode of transport
- Most users live in close proximity to the facility with 50% living within 10 minutes
- Organised classes and the fitness suite are the primary reason for the visit to SRC

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Table 2 – User Analysis - Satisfaction of Services

	Accessibility			
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	No opinion	Fairly dissatisfied
Availability of facilities	48%	34%	12%	4%
Range of facilities	28%	44%	16%	10%
Ease of booking	46%	28%	18%	8%
Range of activities	24%	40%	30%	4%
Availability of car parking	58%	24%	16%	2%
Opening times	32%	34%	26%	6%
	Quality of facilities/services offered			
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	No opinion	Fairly dissatisfied
Overall quality of facilities used	28%	40%	24%	2%
Overall quality of equipment used	30%	20%	30%	20%
	Staff			
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	No opinion	Fairly dissatisfied
Reception Staff	70%	18%	8%	2%
Leisure Attendants	72%	18%	10%	0%
Management	44%	26%	26%	2%
Coaching / Class Instruction	60%	30%	8%	0%
	Value for money			
	Very satisfied -	Fairly satisfied	No opinion	Fairly dissatisfied
Cost of use / fees and charges	52%	24%	18%	4%
				Very dissatisfied
				2%

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2.24 Table 2 Highlights that:

- Most users are very satisfied with the availability of facilities and fairly satisfied with the range of facilities
- The majority of users are very satisfied with the booking processes
- Most people are satisfied with the range of activities and the facility opening times
- Almost three quarters of respondents are satisfied with the car parking
- A low percentage of users are dissatisfied with the overall quality of facilities used
- There was a varied satisfaction response regarding the equipment at the facility

Table 3 - Site Options Analysis

Key:	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	Site 7	Site 8	Site 9
	Plots Field Ballycastle	Huggins Field Ballycastle	High School Ballycastle	IDB Ground Ballycastle	Sheskburn House Site Ballycastle	St Aloysius School Cushendall	The Clayfield Bushmills	Health Club Marine Hotel Ballycastle	Sheskburn Garage Ballycastle
Adequate Space	2	4	5	5	2	4	5	0	1
Central Location	3	4	4	1	4	0	0	4	4
Greenspace Issues (could prevent/impact on development)	2	3	4	0	4	4	1	5	4
Planning Issues (could impact on/prevent development)	2	1	4	0	4	3	0	2	4

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Key: 0 = 'Deal Breaker' 1 = Poor 3 = Average 5 = Excellent	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	Site 7	Site 8	Site 9
	Plots Field Ballycastle	Huggins Field Ballycastle	High School Ballycastle	IDB Ground Ballycastle	Sheskburn House Site Ballycastle	St Aloysius School Cushendall	The Clayfield Bushmills	Health Club Marine Hotel Ballycastle	Sheskburn Garage Ballycastle
Car Parking (sufficient space for on-site provision)	2	4	4	4	3	3	3	0	3
Disruption during Construction	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	1	4
Highways (impact on existing routes/access/egress from site)	1	4	3	3	4	2	3	3	4
Public Transport – is it available close to the site?	3	4	3	2	4	1	1	4	4
Pedestrians/ Cyclists – would access be available for this mode of transport?	3	5	4	3	5	2	2	4	5



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Key: 0 = 'Deal Breaker' 1 = Poor 3 = Average 5 = Excellent	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	Site 7	Site 8	Site 9
	Plots Field Ballycastle	Huggins Field Ballycastle	High School Ballycastle	IDB Ground Ballycastle	Shesburn House Site Ballycastle	St Aloysius School Cushendall	The Clayfield Bushmills	Health Club Marine Hotel Ballycastle	Shesburn Garage Ballycastle
Site Access – is it good?	1	3	3	4	3	4	2	3	3
Awareness – is the site visible?	2	4	5	0	5	4	1	5	4
Commercial Opportunity – would there be potential for enabling development?	3	3	3	0	5	4	1	1	4
Value for Money	2	3	3	0	2	0	0	0	3
Subtotals	31	47	50	27	48	36	24	32	47

2.39 Based on the above site assessment and analysis, the following sites have been identified as having significant potential as a location for the proposed new indoor facility. However before a final decision is made, more detailed consideration of these sites is required.

- Ballycastle High School
- Shesburn House (Council Offices)
- Huggins Field
- Shesburn Garage

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Site 1 - Plots Field





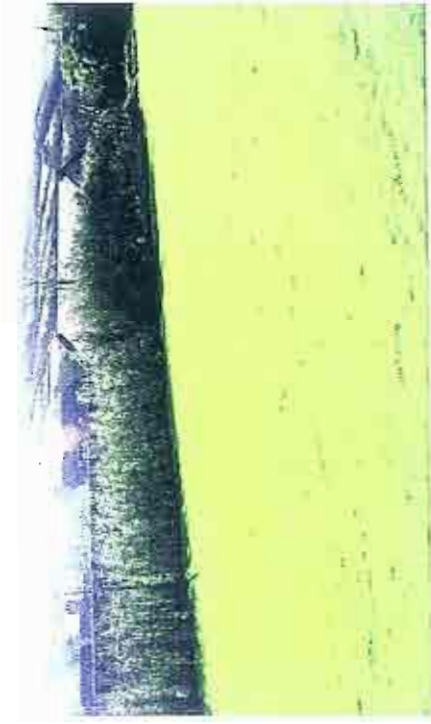
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Site 2 – Huggins Field



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Site 3 - High School





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Site 4 - IDB Ground



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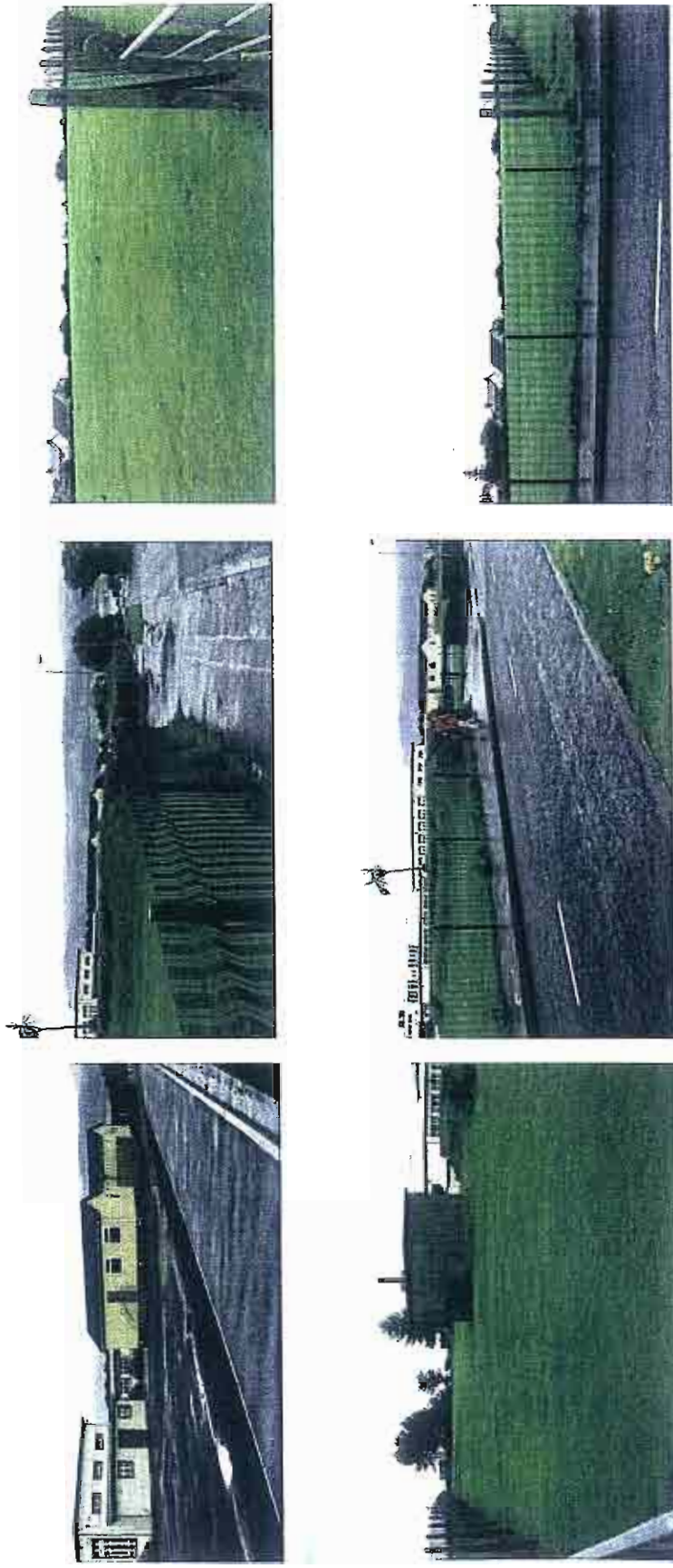
Site 5 - Sheskburn House Site





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Site 6 - St Aloysius School



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Site 7 - The Clayfield





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Site 8 - Health Club Marine Hotel



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Site 9 - Sheskburn Garage







## **Section 3**

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# **Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities**



### 3 Emerging Key Issues and Opportunities for the Future

- 3.1 Based on the consultation undertaken and the wider review of strategic context (see Appendix 2), the following have been identified as key issues. These are not listed in any priority order but reflect the feedback received:

#### The Role of Tourism in Moyle

- 3.2 In 2007 the Northern Ireland Tourist Board reported that the top ten tourist attractions were:

- 1) Giants Causeway Visitor Centre
- 2) W5
- 3) Ulster Museum
- 4) Oxford Island National Nature Reserve
- 5) Belfast Zoological Gardens
- 6) Ulster Folk and Transport Museum
- 7) Derry Walls
- 8) Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge
- 9) Portstewart Strand
- 10) Saint Patrick Centre

- 3.3 Eight of the top ten attractions experienced an annual increase of visitor numbers. Of the top ten, two are within the Moyle area, the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge.

- 3.4 Regional tourism estimate figures for 2007 (January 2009) published by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) account for all out of state visitors to Northern Ireland, visiting for any reason (holiday, business, visiting friends and relatives) and staying for at least one night. Added to these figures are Northern Ireland residents on holiday at home. Day trips are not included. The estimates for the Causeway Coast and Glens area recorded 0.89m trips and £134.2m of spending in 2007.

#### Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership – Tourism Statistics Review

- 3.5 The above refer to the NITB annual reporting of visitor numbers; number of nights and spend in a particular area/region as an indication of the economic impact of tourism at a local level. As part of the Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership Review of Tourism Statistics 2008 (research undertaken by TTC International, Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd and TNS Travel and Tourism) an alternative method of tourism data collection has been used to illustrate economic performance in the causeway Coast and Glens region. This method, named **STEAM**, is currently the only available method that can effectively produce reliable and comparable local area results year on year (or quarter on quarter) for a given local authority. [Victor Middleton, "Measuring the Local Impact of Tourism" 2002]
- 3.6 In comparison, the STEAM figures for the same area record 10.60m trips to the overall area, with spending of £483.3m.
- 3.7 Specific STEAM information for Moyle for 2007 (statistics for 2007 which were published in 2009) identifies a total estimate of 2,927,000 visitors to the area, spending £108.1m, based on 3, 240,000 tourist days. This accounts for 28% of all regional trips made (10.6m), and is highest in the Region, ahead of Coleraine (27%).
- 3.8 Moyle has the largest amount of trips in the Causeway Coast and Glens area with 2,927,000 with Coleraine behind with 2,837,000. It is second behind Coleraine in respect of visitor spend with £108.1m compared to Coleraine's £154.5m .
- 3.9 There is a significant swell in visitor numbers in the Moyle District over a prolonged tourism season.

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- 3.10 The table below (Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership Tourism Statistics Review January 2009) shows the estimates of tourist numbers and expenditure in each of the 8 local authorities in the Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership and again it can be seen that in each authority the STEAM estimates for the impact of tourism are considerably higher, but particularly for Moyle, whose visitor numbers (because of the inclusion of day visitors) are almost 20 times the size.

**Table 1 Comparisons by Council Area**

	Trips (000s)		Days (000s)		Spend (£m)	
	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM
<b>TOTAL</b>	884	10,603	3,535	12,747	134.2	483.3
Ballymena	78	965	512	1,150	13.4	47.7
Ballymoney	29	708	173	795	4.1	25.1
Carrickfergus	62	1,289	260	1,404	8.9	47.2
Coleraine	328	2,837	1,153	3,747	55.4	154.5
Larne	97	526	330	689	11.6	31.3
Limavady	54	862	260	1037	8.9	43.5
<b>Moyle</b>	165	2,927	541	3,240	21.8	108.1
Newtownabbey	70	488	306	686	9.9	25.9

- 3.11 Showing the same figures as a percentage of the total for the region highlights the increase in relative importance for Moyle:

**Table 2 % Comparisons by Council Area**

	% Share of Regional Total Trips		% Share of Regional Total Days		% Share of Regional Total Spend	
	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM
Ballymena	9%	9%	14%	9%	10%	10%
Ballymoney	3%	7%	5%	6%	3%	5%
Carrickfergus	7%	12%	7%	11%	7%	10%
Coleraine	37%	27%	33%	29%	41%	32%
Larne	11%	5%	9%	5%	9%	6%
Limavady	6%	8%	7%	8%	7%	9%
<b>Moyle</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Newtownabbey	8%	5%	9%	5%	7%	5%

- 3.12 Under the NITB estimates, Coleraine was easily the largest contributor to the total number of trips, followed by Moyle, and then Larne. STEAM estimates show Moyle as the largest authority for visitor numbers but still have Coleraine generating the most expenditure. Larne has become relatively less strong with Carrickfergus increasing its position.

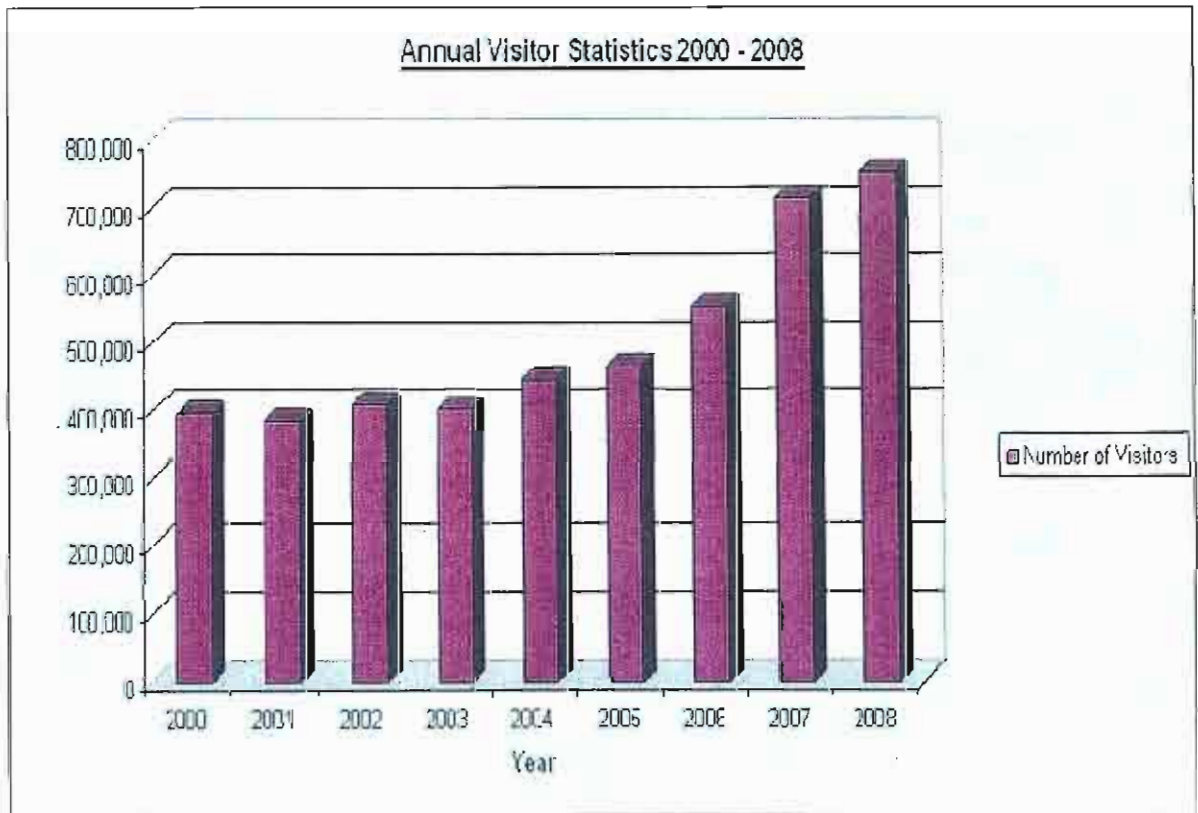
**Ballycastle Strategic Town Development and Action Plan – Nov 2008**

- 3.13 In November 2008, The Paul Hogarth Company was appointed by the Ballycastle Town Partnership to prepare a Strategic Town Development and Action Plan.
- 3.14 The Plan, which was a key requirement of the Causeway Coast and Glens Masterplan, identifies the Quay Road location as a strategic opportunity to provide leisure/tourism facilities and refers specifically to this project as a priority for the area

**Giants Causeway Visitor Centre – Throughput Figures**

Annual Visitor Statistics 2000 - 2008

Year	Number of Visitors
2000	395,247
2001	383,133
2002	406,801
2003	398,977
2004	445,327
2005	464,243
2006	553,063
2007	712,714
2008	751,693



Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre



- 3.15 The above tables indicate a significant annual growth in visitor numbers and NITB estimates continued growth in these numbers; this in itself suggests the potential to further exploit what is an extended visitor season, but one where poorer weather can have an impact.

### Tourism in Northern Ireland: A Strategic Framework for Action 2004-2007

- 3.16 In adopting a sustainable approach, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board seeks to strike a balance between economic growth, impact on the environment and community support. The framework sets out ten programmes, which are divided into three areas. These are:

- **Attracting Visitors**
  - Know the visitor
  - Develop a compelling proposition
  - Reach the consumer
  - Take care of our visitors- every step of the way
- **Business Enhancement**
  - Develop signature projects
  - Focus on winning themes
  - Develop internationally competitive businesses
  - Deliver memorable experiences
- **Communicating Effectively**
  - Share information
  - Strengthen effective relationships for delivery

- 3.17 Identified within the developing signature programme section are five best prospect short/medium projects including the **Giant's Causeway/Antrim and Causeway coast area?**

- 3.18 The wining themes sections are highlighted as those with the potential to help deliver a competitive advantage for Northern Ireland, which includes activity tourism and culture and heritage tourism.

### Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Masterplan

- 3.19 The vision underpinning the Masterplan is that,

***“The Causeway Coast and Glens area will be a ‘must-see’, world-class tourism destination. It will be known for its scenic beauty, its spectacular coastline and its key jewels. The area will set new standards in environmental management and sustainable tourism, while tourism interests will work closely together to create a quality visitor experience”.***

- 3.20 The Tourism Masterplan for the Causeway Coast and Glens forms part of the proposal for new visitor facilities at Giants Causeway and provides a framework for sustainable tourism development in the area over the next ten years. It aims to complement existing plans and strategies of tourism organisations in the area and is a key element in delivering the NITB Strategic Framework for Action 2004-07.

- 3.21 The Masterplan covers the period 2004-13 and has the following key objectives:

- To increase the number of tourists visiting the area
- To achieve a coordinated approach to tourism in the area
- To spread the benefits of visits attracted by the Giants Causeway to a wider geographical area
- To develop strong attractions elsewhere in the area

- 3.22 The New Causeway Coastal Route is one of Northern Ireland's five tourism signature projects. One of the actions in its Masterplan relates specifically to Ballycastle as a Gateway and Resort Town and is identified for special financial input from various government agencies, e.g., DSD.

## Moyle District Local Strategy Partnership: Integrated Local Strategy 2001-2006

- 3.23 This is the first Integrated Local Strategy for Moyle District. It is designed to be used as a plan for the development of the district to raise the standard of living and improve the quality of life for the whole community. The strategy is designed to transform the socio-economic environment within which people currently live and transform Moyle from being the 6th most deprived area in Northern Ireland into a more vibrant, prosperous area where the community is able to enjoy a good quality of life.
- 3.24 The local partnership consists of Moyle District Council, Statutory Bodies and Social Partners all representing the community.
- 3.25 The document identifies eight priority areas including:

### Tourism and Environment

- 3.26 The rationale behind prioritising tourism and environment is that Moyle has a unique environmental and cultural heritage that attracts visitors from all over the world. Developing the tourism industry in Moyle will help to ensure continued economic growth for the local economy in addition to providing employment. The overall aim is to protect and enhance the natural resources and promote sustainable tourism in the area.

### The Benefits of Leisure Provision

*'Leisure Services can be a powerful tool to engage all sections of the community and break down barriers between them. People take part in Leisure activities through choice. Marginalised groups are often more willing to engage with such activities than other government-funded activities. Physical activity and sport can be used as a means of bringing people together from different communities to share positive experiences and gain greater understanding of each other's ways of life.'*

(Community Cohesion – an action guide, Local Government Association 2004)

- 3.27 There is an increasing recognition of the benefits of Leisure provision at national level; this has been reflected by the investment seen in school sports and arts facilities, availability of funding for parks and green spaces development, and the linking of participation in active Leisure pursuits to health improvement.
- 3.28 Participation in Leisure activities at all levels provides the potential for individuals to meet new people, develop additional skills and interests, stay physically active, maintain and improve mental ability, increase personal self confidence and awareness, and enhance their quality of life. This potential extends far beyond the individual level, to the wider community.
- 3.29 Leisure activities and opportunities also provide a means of helping to address key national priorities and local needs such as health improvement, community development and regeneration, social inclusion, lifelong learning, crime reduction, skills development and employment, and improving the local environment.

### The Value of Leisure Provision

*'There are few public health initiatives that have greater potential for improving health and well-being than increasing the activity levels of the population....'*

(Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health 2004)

## Moyle District Council Feasibility Study Leisure/Visitor Facility

- 3.30 Leisure activities take place in people's homes, outdoors, in community halls and in purpose built facilities such as sports centres, museums and art galleries and theatres.
- 3.31 In the District, sports and leisure opportunities are provided through a network of agencies and organisations. MDC provides, manages and delivers sport and leisure activities and facilities; a number of sports facilities and activities are also delivered through voluntary, statutory and private sector organisations, for example, sports Clubs, Youth Service, Education and Library Board, fitness clubs.
- 3.32 In order to maintain, develop and enhance future sport and leisure provision for the benefit of both local residents and visitors it is important to be clear about the needs for leisure provision, and how all providers can best meet these needs. In particular, given that MDC should be providing the central and co-ordinating the strategic policy role in relation to overall specific District-wide leisure provision, it is important to be clear about its role and future responsibilities.
- 3.33 Establishing and delivery of the strategic policy role should be supported by a developmental role in sport and leisure, plus that of enabler and co-ordinator. These roles need to be reflected in the roll out of this strategy - this will require more enabling, co-ordinating and capacity building skills as opposed to direct facility management skills with the exception of the Council's direct provision.
- 3.34 As referred to above, this position remains appropriate both pre- and post-RPA. MDC has a major opportunity to impress its strategic emphasis on indoor leisure provision for its residents now and in the future.

### The Role of Sport

- Delivering Corporate priorities and objectives
- 3.35 MDC has identified 4 Themes in its current Corporate Plan 2005 – 09 and Theme 3 states the following:
- Providing services that people want and appreciate
  - Addressing social issues – health; sustainability; employment; tackling anti- social behaviour
  - Regenerating local communities
- 3.36 The rationale for this Theme is provided in that -
- Delivery of a number of services that play important roles in people's lives is a core part of the Council's business. The Council wants to make sure that those people most in need get the responses and support they deserve. It also wants to make sure the services it delivers are of the highest possible quality and that that "quality" is based on what local people think and say.***
- 3.37 The Council will deliver by
- Reappraising its indoor leisure provision
  - Completion of the quay road recreation project
  - Reflecting/responding to New TSN and agreed measures of deprivation and disadvantage
  - Seeking people's views and acting on them

**'Moyle is a district where sport makes a positive contribution to the lifestyle of its people; this is achieved by placing sport at the heart of the community and providing sporting opportunities for all.'**

Moyle Sports Advisory Committee Strategy for Sport 2002 - 05



### Addressing social issues – health; sustainability; employment; tackling anti- social behaviour

- 3.38 Sport is recognised by many authorities as being an effective vehicle to address various social issues. Investment in sport, both through capital infrastructure, but also through innovative and effective programming of services, can lead to major improvements in society, such as improvements to people's health and life expectancy; creation of employment opportunities; individual and community capacity building and the development of confident participants and performers in sport.

### Regenerating local communities

- 3.39 Many recent sports development projects in U.K. have brought about significant change and improvement to local communities such as the development of Community and Sports Hubs, or Sport Villages.

### Facilities

#### Condition of Existing facilities – Shesburn Recreation Centre

- 3.40 Throughout the consultation exercise, reference has been made to the facilities available at SRC and their unsuitability for many activities and school use.
- 3.41 The facility has not been purpose-built as a leisure centre, it is part of a converted school building and whilst it has functioned for many years (to varying degrees of satisfaction) as a venue for a range of sports and other activity, the reality is that it is not fit for purpose as a leisure venue, in the standards and extent that is available in every other Council area in N. Ireland, and is expected by the public.
- 3.42 The lack of swimming pool facility in the District, and in particular at the main public leisure facility, highlights the need for new provision.

#### Need for new facility in Ballycastle – quality; mix; delivered through partnership?

- 3.43 The points raised above have been raised throughout this study and those responding to the various consultation exercises have indicated what they believe is needed for any future investment in leisure facilities. These are considered later in this report.

### Accessibility – transport; cost; location

- 3.44 Within the Noble Index (2005), Moyle remains the fifth most deprived District in NI. It has particularly acute problems in the area of Proximity to Services.
- 3.45 The dilemma of rural living and its inherent challenge in regard to access to public services is appropriate in the Moyle context. Whilst there is an excellent Rural Community Transport system, it is inadequate to deal with the total needs of the community in Moyle.
- 3.46 80% of users of SRC travel by car or motorcycle and 50% of users travel over 10 minutes to attend activities in the Centre. Two thirds of users have stated that they would pay more for new facilities and half would be prepared to travel further to use facilities.

### Provision for Youth

- 3.47 The lack of specific youth-focussed facilities and programmes was highlighted in the consultation. MDC is however not the only Council area where this situation has become a major issue. Consideration of innovative and contemporary provision should form part of the final matrix for any new facility and it may be possible to develop opportunity through new organised programming, or through investment from the private/voluntary sector.

### Timeframe for investment

- 3.48 Decisions on the future needs and appropriate provision to meet those needs must be taken now. The implementation of the recommendations made by MDC can also be made now. It is possible, likely probable however, that any strategic provision will impact on a new Council structure.

### Competition/Partnership

- 3.49 There already exist two sub-regional groupings for the promotion, management and development of sustainable tourism and protected area management along the North Coast of Northern Ireland, Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Ltd (CCGTLtd) and the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, (CCGHT). The Causeway Coast and Glens area encompasses the Council areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Larne, Limavady, Moyle and Newtownabbey.
- 3.50 The Causeway Museum Service covers the four council areas, Limavady, Coleraine, Ballymoney and Moyle (the proposed new super-council boundary). A similar structure however does not exist for leisure and sport, although the four Council areas are working together on the local delivery of Sport NI's Active Communities Programme.
- 3.51 Neighbouring leisure provision includes Coleraine Leisure Centre (18 miles); Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney (16 miles); Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena (25 miles) (Distances from Ballycastle).
- 3.52 The situation which exists in MDC area with the lack of Public swimming facilities invites a study into the geographic provision of similar wet and dry facilities throughout N. Ireland, but that is not part of this study. A quick analysis of travel time and distance to leisure facilities (including swimming pool) in the North and North-East of the Province shows the gap in provision in the Moyle area.
- 3.53 Assuming reasonable travel time at 15 mins @ 40mph, this provides a travel distance by car/vehicle of 10 miles to a leisure facility. A significant proportion of the Moyle area lies outside of this range.
- **Cross-Boundary provision** - Note again is made of the recent (June 06) Audit Commission Report on "Public sports and recreation services – Making them fit for the future" in which reference is made to the current lack of strategic planning and delivery of services on cross-boundary terms between Councils and also with other sectors such as education and health.
- 3.54 RPA will inevitably cause Councils to consider regional as well as local provision. **This exercise will need to be carried out sooner rather than later, if MDC is to make its mark on local provision, which makes a significant difference to the quality of existing provision.**
- 3.55 Consideration of alternative provision methods and partnership approaches to provision should be made by MDC. Best practice Community and Sports Hubs could offer models for delivery in Moyle.

### School facilities for sport and leisure

- 3.56 During the consultation exercise reference was made to proposals which were being considered by Cross and Passion College to apply for Specialist Sports College status, which was awarded in 2008, with a major financial injection into sports facilities at the school. Provision of a public swimming facility will further enhance the role of and delivery of programme through the College. Apart from this, any planned provision of sports facilities at schools is limited. Therefore, consideration of any school development to incorporate dual-use facilities for public use does not appear to be realistic within the next 3 – 5 years.

### Private Sector

- 3.57 In terms of swimming, provision is solely private sector provided. There is no appropriate or similar facility in the Moyle area (compared to 25 other Council areas in NI) which can provide a facility for the range of swimming needs of residents in the District. The reference above to travel time and distance to facilities is relevant in this respect.

### Need - The Key Driver

- 3.58 Whilst a considerable focus of this study (see Appendix 2) has been attached to the RPA and its impact on Moyle in relation to the legacy which the current Council wishes to secure for its community, during consultation the emphasis appears to have shifted towards considering the expressed and obvious needs of the District in terms of its leisure and tourism product and services.
- 3.59 **In particular, the lack and quality of existing indoor leisure provision has been highlighted throughout the consultation exercise. The location of, and historical lack of financial resources in, the District has created a situation where sports and leisure provision and in particular the provision of public swimming facilities, along with many other services, which communities elsewhere accept as their right, have not been developed.**
- 3.60 Alongside this situation is the apparent apathy of the community to make its voice heard in relation to potential improvements to the level and quality of existing facilities and services in the area.
- 3.61 A comparative exercise on provision and accessibility to leisure facilities in neighbouring Districts, is made later in this section. Whilst the comparison relates to a potential RPA Council area, the arguments are made on their own strength and not on the basis of what might happen under RPA.
- 3.62 The need for swimming facilities is not site dependent, but rather, the principal driver for new provision in the district.
- 3.63 MDC is not a cash-rich Council and it has many services and projects to manage through its limited resources. The development of a new capital project will place the Council in a more challenging position where it needs to balance available funds between ongoing demands.
- 3.64 Given this situation, if the development of a new indoor facility is to proceed, MDC and its subsequent entity will need to consider the most effective way of resourcing both capital and revenue needs.
- 3.65 The private sector has already entered into partnership with a number of Councils to provide, manage and indeed develop facilities.
- 3.66 In particular, a number of Councils' fitness facilities are leased to private sector companies who have introduced a commercial ethos and acumen to the delivery of Council services. This trend is well developed in the UK and is an emerging market in NI e.g. through Competition Line in Limavady BC, Strabane DC and Derry City Council and PULSE Fitness in Ballymoney and Coleraine. At this stage, it is not clear what interest lies within the private sector locally and nationally to work with MDC in a potential joint project. In-house delivery models exist in Ards Borough Council and Armagh City and District Council.



### Urban/Rural Nature of the District

- 3.67 The MDC district is rural in nature and its largest population base is in Ballycastle. A number of those consulted (minority) expressed the view that any new provision should be made in areas where there is clearly a low population base. The majority agreed that any such development would require the largest population base as its catchment area to facilitate its sustainability.

### Strategic Role of MDC (RPA)

- Leadership
  - Funding
  - Community Economic Development
- 3.68 Essentially consultation identified that MDC should take a lead role if progressing the development of an indoor facility, although it is recognised that funding may need to be accessed from a variety of sources. Local residents and stakeholders highlighted that the proposed indoor facility could be of benefit in economic and tourism terms as well as providing the local community with an accessible and public indoor swimming pool.

### Facility Mix

- 3.69 Throughout the consultation, little, if any reference was made to the need or demand for heritage or interpretive centres. Tourism related services and facilities such as wet weather venue and a restaurant/café were however raised as gaps in current provision and highlighted as opportunities, which could add to a visitor's experience.
- 3.70 Similarly, other suggestions made take account of both resident and visitor needs. Facilities such as wet-weather activities, a cinema, a restaurant/café, indoor leisure, multi sport, multi-activity, swimming pool, children's activity and soft play, and performance space all relate to a multitude of user type.
- 3.71 Discussions with Tourism Branch DETI and N.I. Tourist Board emphasised the position of the Causeway Coast Master Plan as the main strategic plan for the development of tourism in the region and the need for any future development to relate to, and add value to, the choice of activity for a visitor, particularly as Ballycastle is highlighted as a Gateway and Resort Town and is identified for special financial input from various government agencies, e.g., DSD.
- 3.72 Consideration should also be given to the continued need for visitor servicing, in terms of Tourist Information, welcome, signposting, orientation and refreshment.
- 3.73 The main potential elements of any future facility mix are identified above in paragraph 3.51. These have been considered in more detail in Section IV.

### Sports Development

- 3.74 In considering the development of a new facility comprising indoor leisure/recreation, it is critical to ensure that it will contribute to a range of sport development initiatives and priorities at local level. including increasing participation, club development, coach development, health improvement etc.
- 3.75 These priorities are reflected in the new MDC sports development strategy which supports the case for further investment in facilities, programmes and capacity building to include:
- Sports Specific development – Club links
  - Club development; Coach development; Player development
  - Training facilities
  - Role of Moyle Sports Advisory Council (MSAC)
  - Funding support – MSAC and Clubs

**Moyle District Council**  
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- Health Agenda – Links to Council services and programmes

**Sites**

3.76 MDC identified an initial list of 9 sites, which were visited and assessed by the consultancy team.

- Plots Field, Ballycastle
- Huggins Field, Ballycastle
- High School, Ballycastle
- IDB Ground, Ballycastle
- Sheskburn House Site, Ballycastle
- St Aloysius School, Cushendall
- The Clayfield, Bushmills
- Health Club Marine Hotel, Ballycastle
- Sheskburn Garage, Ballycastle

3.77 Using the criteria in the Evaluation Matrix, there are four (4) sites, which have been identified as suitable for shortlisting to Concept design stage. These are:

- Ballycastle High School site
- Sheskburn House (Council Offices) site
- Sheskburn Garage, Ballycastle
- Huggins Field, Ballycastle

3.78 Section IV of this report reflects the more detailed analysis of these four sites.





## **Section 4**

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# **Identification of Preferred Site and Facility Mix**



## 4 Identification of Facility Mix

4.1 Based on the review, research and consultation undertaken, the following facility mix was developed as the core elements of the new proposed facility. However this development proposal is still fluid and ongoing consultation may lead to additional or alternative facilities within the mix.

- Swimming and Leisure Pool
- Health Suite
- Fitness Suite
- Sports Hall
- Multi-Purpose Activity Area
- Tourist Information Centre
- Café - Winebar
- Ancillary facilities e.g. changing, toilets, plant room etc
- Creche

4.2 The development of this facility mix, described in detail in Appendix IV has informed the more detailed site analysis summarised below.

### Further Site Analysis

4.3 Following the identification of the four preferred development sites, further detailed assessment of each site was undertaken. This detailed assessment involved additional consultation and site investigation.

4.4 As a result of this work, which was undertaken during late 2007 and early 2008, it became clear that of the four potential sites identified, the Ballycastle High School site offered significant opportunities.

4.5 Detailed investigation and assessment of the other three sites highlighted the planning issues and constraints in relation to each which would also have significant impact in terms of capital costs.

4.6 A significant factor for both the Sheskburn sites is also the existing Council offices; the timescale of RPA is likely to have implications for the re-organisation of local council services and the continuity of provision on this site, which affects its suitability and viability as a site for a new leisure/tourism facility.

4.7 The Huggins Field site, although offering sufficient spaces, poses some issues in terms of topography, and specifically location.

4.8 Having established that the Ballycastle High School site offers significant potential for the development of the proposed new facility, a series of consultation meetings were held between the School, client officers and the consultant team. These meetings focussed on the feasibility of developing on the land adjacent to existing school buildings, how provision could be accessed and shared between the school and the community, and how security and public access could be managed effectively.

4.9 B3 architects developed various initial floor plans to enable consideration of development on the school site, including location of proposed buildings and car parking provision.

4.10 After prolonged discussions and a meeting with the Board of Governors, Council was informed that the school decided that it was not prepared to release its land for development by the Council.

4.11 On the basis of this further detailed site analysis, it became clear that none of the sites originally identified as potential locations for a new facility development, nor the four highlighted as meriting further investigation actually provided the optimum location for development.

### Consideration of the Quay Road Site

- 4.12 This situation resulted in extended discussions with MDC officials, including planning, to re-examine the site options in Ballycastle. Various options were considered and discussed, including the recreation area on the seafront (tennis courts) which has significant planning challenges given its location and the restrictions on building to any height so that the view is not obscured.
- 4.13 As a result of these discussions, the feasibility of developing a new indoor facility on the Quay Road site was raised. This site is the location for the new outdoor facilities, including the all weather pitch, so provides significant synergy with indoor recreation provision. The site is centrally located, with on-site parking and good access/egress.
- 4.14 Although some planning issues were raised, it was felt that overall this site presented the best opportunity for facility development, given the lengthy process of site assessment and investigation already undertaken, which had not actually identified a definitive location.
- 4.15 The consultant team, including architects, were instructed to develop plans and drawings for the development of the identified facility mix on the Quay Road site.
- 4.16 Appendix 5 illustrates the initial three options developed for the possible facility locations of the site. These options were then further refined to produce the plans in Appendix 5. These plans clearly demonstrate that the proposed facility, based on the above facility mix, could be accommodated on this site, with the appropriate level of ancillary provision e.g. car parking, access etc.
- 4.17 Based on the identified facility mix, and the Quay Road location, B3 then developed capital cost estimates for the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility. The identified capital cost of this development is circa £10,276,004 plus VAT.
- 4.18 It is clear that substantial resources will need to be found to facilitate the proposed development. MDC does not currently have access to the level of capital required.
- 4.19 Revenue figures have been developed by BDO (December 2008 and revised March 2009), which state that the required level of subsidy will be around £538,556; this subsidy level will be driven by the operating costs of the new facility, which will be dependent on user throughput (See Appendix 7).
- 4.20 Given the nature of the new indoor facility, it is envisaged that it will operate on varying staff levels due to seasonality of use. Whilst local residents will require year-round use, this can be provided through a core operation, with minimum staffing, complying with all health and safety regulations. During the tourist season, the facility will require a higher level of staffing, the costs of which should be offset by the higher numbers of users.

### Summary

- 4.21 The detailed site assessment and analysis resulted in a new site having to be chosen; this resulted from a number of planning, location and operational issues identified during further consultation and analysis work.
- 4.22 The final preferred site identified for the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility is the Quay Road site. Plans, drawings and capital costs for the development of the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility on this site are included in Section VI and at Appendices 5, 6 and 7.





## **Section 5**

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# **Financial Review, Risks and Sensitivities**



## 5 Operation and Management of the Facility

### Introduction

- 5.1 This section of the report is taken from the BDO report Dec 2008 and March 2009. The BDO report was prepared to demonstrate the capital and revenue implications of building the new facility based on the identified facility mix (Strategic \Leisure) and the capital costs (B3).
- 5.2 It has been assumed the operation and management of the Moyle Leisure Facility would be based on operation and management of similar sized leisure facilities in the neighbouring areas. The following shows proposed staffing, marketing, pricing policy and opening hours of Moyle Leisure Facility

### Staffing

- 5.3 Strategic Leisure suggested that for a Tourism / Leisure Centre of the proposed size, approximately 37 full time staff would be required, as shown below:

Position	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility (proposed)
Manager	1	1	1	1
Assistant Manager	3	3	-	-
Senior Recreation Assistant	-	5	-	2
Recreation Assistant	-	13	-	9
Recreation Officers	-	-	-	3
Duty Officers/Duty Managers	-	-	2	-
Senior Attendants	15 (+13 Casual)	-	2	-
Leisure Attendants	-	-	-	-
Gymnastics Coach	-	-	-	2
Assistant Gymnastic Coach	-	-	-	1
Fitness Instructors	4	5	2	2
Community Sports Development Staff	-	-	2	-
Swimming Teachers	6	2	6	6
Creche Attendants	1 (+1 Agency)	-	-	5
Maintenance Supervisor	1	-	1	-
Administrative Officer	2	-	1	1
Receptionists	6 (+4 Casual)	6	4	4
Cleaners	3	4	-	-
Coaching Staff	-	15	-	-
Sports Development Staff	-	3	1	-
Exercise Class Instructors	8	-	-	-
Plant Operator	-	-	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50 (+18 Casual/Agency)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37</b>

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**Marketing**

- 5.4 Marketing for the current Leisure Facility is currently conducted in-house with some use of a local printing company. However with the development of a larger facility it is likely all the marketing would be undertaken by an outside printing company.

**Pricing Policy**

**Swimming**

Pricing Policy	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility (proposed)
Adult	£3.00	4.20	3.30	£3.50
Child	£2.20	2.80	2.45	£2.50

**Five-a-side Hall**

Pricing Policy	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility (proposed)
Five-a-side	£30.50	£24.60	£22.75	£28.50

**Gym Membership**

Pricing Policy	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility
Membership (per annum)	£198	£349	£349.50	£298
Usage	£4.00/£5.75	£37/ £10	£10.40/ 4.10	£4.10

**Opening Hours**

Day	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle (Proposed Hours) <sup>1</sup>
Monday	9am – 10pm	9am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Tuesday	9am – 10pm	8.15am – 10pm	8.45am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Wednesday	9am – 10pm	9am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Thursday	9am – 10pm	8.15am – 10pm	8.45am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Friday	9am – 10pm	9am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Saturday	9.30am – 6pm	9am – 5.30pm	9am – 5.30pm	8am – 6pm
Sunday	2pm – 6pm	1.30pm – 5.30pm	12noon – 5pm	1pm – 6pm

<sup>1</sup> Details supplied by Damian McAfee 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008

## Financial Projection Assumptions

### Projected Development Phase Costs

5.5 Costs were provided by B3 Gibson Hamilton in March 2009. Full costs are shown in Appendix 4

		m <sup>2</sup>	Cost
Internal	Swimming Pool	1,393	£3,236,400
	Health Suite	132	£422,400
	Café	327	£543,000
	Crèche	60	£84,000
	Tourist Information	45	£56,250
	Reception / Circulation Area	358	£447,500
	Plant Room / Possible Plant Area	290	£290,000
	Multi Activity Space	358	£574,000
	Beauty Treatment	42	£52,500
	Fitness Suite	281	£449,600
	Dry Changing	178	£222,500
	Foyer & Circulation @ 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	160	£160,000
	Admin	153	£191,250
	Lift	1	£55,000
External	Sports Hall	808	£996,250
	Car parking <sup>2</sup>	415	684,750
	Site Access Road	-	100,000
	Landscaping	-	100,000
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>4,578</b>	<b>£8,665,400</b>
Other	Contingency (5%)	-	£432,270
	Professional Fees (12%)	-	£1,137,334
	Other Fees	-	£40,000
	<b>Cost of Building</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>£10,276,004</b>

5.6 Assumptions include:

- Abnormal foundations, removal of contaminants, archaeological issues;
- Abnormal costs associated with mains and sewer connections e.g. site sub station;
- Off site roadworks;
- Discharge of onerous planning conditions;
- Renewable energy allowances excluded;
- Boundary treatment e.g. acoustic fencing;
- Mini soccer pitches excluded; and
- Excludes loose fixtures, fittings and equipment, catering equipment and café fit out.

<sup>2</sup> Includes an additional 180 car parking spaces and a couch park



## Usage Levels and Income – STEAM Tourism Figures

### Project Income

5.7 The projected annual income is as follows:

User Group	£	Reference
Tourism – Swimming	1,669,702	6.3.3
Tourism – General	364,500	
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>2,034,202</i>	
Local Residents – Swimming	55,766	6.3.4
Local Residents – General	31,649	
Parties / Functions	5,472	
Outsourced / Franchise	8,000	
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>100,887</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,135,089</b>	

### Tourism Usage - STEAM

5.8 Annual visitors are estimated using the STEAM methodology as 3,240,000 (TTC December 2008 report), with seasonality as follows:

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	84,240	May	356,400	September	356,400
February	97,200	June	356,400	October	226,800
March	226,800	July	518,400	November	97,200
April	226,800	August	609,120	December	84,240

### Assumptions:

- I Assume 21% will use the water facility in April to October; and
- II Assume 5% will use the leisure facility throughout the year;

Assumption 1 – 21% will use the facility in April to October

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	74,844	September	74,844
February	-	June	74,844	October	47,628
March	-	July	108,864	November	-
April	47,628	August	127,915	December	-

5.9 Assuming 556,557 visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With a swim cost per adult of £3.50 and a Child of £2.50 the following income will be achieved

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	£224,532	September	£224,532
February	-	June	£224,532	October	£142,884
March	-	July	£326,592	November	-
April	£142,884	August	£383,746	December	-

Total Income of £1,669,702

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Assumption II – 5% will use Leisure Centre throughout the year

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	4,212	May	17,820	September	17,820
February	4,860	June	17,820	October	25,515
March	25,515	July	58,220	November	10,935
April	25,515	August	68,526	December	9,477

- 5.10 Assuming 44,500, visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With the cost of visiting the Leisure Facility to be £2.25 the following income is expected.

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	2,603	May	11,014	September	11,014
February	3,004	June	11,014	October	7,009
March	7,009	July	16,020	November	3,004
April	7,009	August	18,824	December	2,603

Total income of £100,125

### Local Usage

#### General

- Estimated resident population of 15,933;
- Current users of Sheskburn use 1 – 2 times per week for classes;
- Assume Sheskburn users will transfer to new facility;
- Assume pricing policy will be raised as survey indicated willingness to pay additional amount for improved facilities<sup>3</sup>;
- Usage for 2007-2008 equated to 46,787;
- Annual Income is £31,469; and
- Assume all usage locally derived and transferable to new facility.

### Local Resident Usage – Swimming Pool

Leisure Facility	Population	No. Usage P.a.	Average Usage P.a.
Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre	58,500	80,000	1.37
Seven Towers Leisure Centre	131,564	294,894	2.24

- Assume resident population of 15,933
- Assume residents use Moyle Leisure Centre Swimming Pool once per annum
- Total Income will equal £55,766

### Local Resident Usage – Hall

- 5.11 Assuming 4 parties are held each week in the hall at a cost of £28.50 per one hour rental of the hall, total income for the Hall would equate to £5,472.

<sup>3</sup> Reference: Feasibility Study, Strategic Leisure Limited

### Outsourced / Franchise Income

- 5.12 Research carried out with comparator facilities indicated that the catering franchise attracts an income of up to £4,000, but this is dependent on passing trade and location.

### Sensitivity - Usage Levels and Income – NITB Tourism Figures

#### Sensitised Projected Income

- 5.13 In this section of the report, we seek to reduce the assumed level of tourism income, to reflect the impact this would have on the viability of the centre. Above in Section 6.3, we estimate that tourism income will be £2,034,202 per annum. This drops to £340,371 per annum on the following basis:

- Reduced visitor levels to the NITB 2007 visitor levels; and
- Reduced swimming pool users from 21% to 11%.

#### Tourism Usage – NITB Basis

- 5.14 Annual visitors are estimated at 8900,000 (TTC December 2008 report), with seasonality as follows:

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	23,140	May	97,900	September	97,900
February	26,700	June	97,900	October	62,300
March	62,300	July	142,400	November	26,700
April	62,300	August	167,320	December	13,000

#### Assumptions:

- I Assume 11% will use the water facility in April to October; and  
II Assume 5% will use the leisure facility throughout the year;

##### Assumption 1 – 11% will use the facility in April to October

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	10,769	September	10,769
February	-	June	10,769	October	6,853
March	-	July	15,664	November	-
April	6,853	August	18,405	December	-

- 5.15 Assuming 80,032 visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With a swim cost per adult of £3.50 and a Child of £2.50 the following income will be achieved

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	£32,307	September	£32,307
February	-	June	£32,307	October	£20,559
March	-	July	£46,992	November	-
April	£20,559	August	£55,215	December	-

Total Income of £240,246

##### Assumption II – 5% will use Leisure Centre throughout the year

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	1,157	May	4,895	September	4,895
February	1,335	June	4,895	October	3,115
March	3,115	July	7,120	November	1,335
April	3,115	August	8,366	December	1,157



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- 5.16 Assuming 44,500, visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With the cost of visiting the Leisure Facility to be £2.25 the following income is expected.

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	2,603	May	11,014	September	11,014
February	3,004	June	11,014	October	7,009
March	7,009	July	16,020	November	3,004
April	7,009	August	18,824	December	2,603

Total income of £100,125

### Projected Costs

#### Overview

- 5.17 The projected costs for the facility, as supplied by B3 Gibson Hamilton include operating (utilities, chemical, etc.) and lifecycle costs; as well as staffing costs. These are set out as follows:

Cost	£	Reference
Operating	389,130	
Lifecycle	128,184	
Staff	462,500	6.5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>979,814</b>	

### Staff

The cost of the projected staff of 37 employees (see Section 5.2) will have to be scoped in detail by Council upon final design stage. Based on staff costs of comparable facilities, the average annual salary cost is estimated as £12,500.

Centre	£	Employees	Average
Coleraine	798,122	68	£11,737
Joey Dunlop	693,946	57	£12,174
Ballymena	673,738	53	£12,712

### Financial Projections – Base Case

5.18 The annual revenue financial impact of the proposed project is detailed below:

Income	£
Tourism – Swimming	1,669,702
Tourism – General	364,500
Local Residents – Swimming	55,766
Local Residents – General	31,649
Parties / Functions	5,472
Outsourced café and crèche	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,135,089</b>
Cost	£
Operating	389,130
Lifecycle	128,184
Staff	462,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>979,814</b>
<b>Net Operating Profit / (Cost)</b>	<b>1,155,275</b>

5.19 The ability for the centre to cater for this level of seasonal tourism users would need to be checked once the detailed design of the building has been developed. It is the opinion of BDO Stoy Hayward that these figures appear far too optimistic, especially compared to income levels of less than £600,000 for Coleraine Leisure Centre, which attracts more tourists to the area than Moyle (STEAM: Coleraine 3,747,000 compared with Moyle 3,240,000) and recording a higher spend therein (STEAM: Coleraine £41.25 compared with Moyle £33.36). Therefore, the sensitised projections will show the impact of varying the tourism level assumptions.

### Sensitised Financial Projections

Income	£
Tourism – Swimming	240,246
Tourism – General	100,125
Local Residents – Swimming	55,766
Local Residents – General	31,649
Parties / Functions	5,472
Outsourced café and crèche	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>451,258</b>
Cost	£
Operating	389,130
Lifecycle	128,184
Staff	462,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>979,814</b>
<b>Net Operating Profit / (Cost)</b>	<b>(£538,556)</b>

5.20 It is noted however that even at these reduced levels, this annual subvention level compares favourably to the benchmark comparator facilities – ranging from £616k to £731k per annum.





## **Section 6**

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# **Conclusions and Recommendations**



## 6 Conclusions

6.1 The feasibility study undertaken into the potential development of a new indoor leisure tourism facility in Moyle has identified:

- There is a lack of indoor provision in the Moyle district for both residents and tourists; Moyle ranks as the worst of all councils in NI in relation to provision of indoor leisure facilities (DOE Performance Indicators).
- Moyle Offers many tourist attractions including the Glens of Antrim, Rathlin Island, Giants Causeway and the Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge but there are no complimentary indoor wet weather facilities to engage visitors during the numerous inclement weather days that are regularly encountered.
- Moyle attracts the highest level of tourists to the Causeway Coast and Glens Region with 2,927,000 visitors in 2007, spending around £108.1m.
- The development of enhanced tourism infrastructure in the area is supported by the strategic plans at national and sub-regional level for tourism development
- Local residents and tourists support the development of a new indoor swimming pool in the District, given the lack of an existing publicly accessible pool
- The consensus opinion is that any new facility should be located in Ballycastle, the main centre of the district's population
- The facility mix for the new facility was developed with core elements including an indoor swimming and leisure pool, main hall, a Tourism Information Centre, fitness and health suite facilities, plus a large multi-purpose area The facility mix will continue to be reviewed as the project is still fluid.
- A substantial number of sites were assessed and investigated to provide a location for the proposed new indoor leisure/tourism facility; the outcome of this analysis was the selection of the Quay Road site, which is the existing site of outdoor recreation provision in Ballycastle
- The cost of developing the proposed facility mix is circa £10,276,004 plus VAT
- Capital funding will need to be sourced from a variety of sources eg PFI/PPP, capital receipts, Interreg, RDP, TDA, possible sale of land, or potentially other capital funding schemes. Potential funding sources are detailed in Section 9 of Appendix 7.
- Revenue figures have been developed by BDO (December 2008 and revised March 2009), which state that the required level of subsidy will be around £538,556; this subsidy level will be driven by the operating costs of the new facility, which will be dependent on user throughput. More detailed analysis is provided within the Business Plan and Appendix 7.
- Given the nature of the new indoor facility, it is envisaged that it will operate on varying staff levels due to seasonality of use. Whilst local residents will require year-round use, this can be provided through a core operation, with minimum staffing, complying with all health and safety regulations. During the tourist season, the facility will require a higher level of staffing, the costs of which should be offset by the higher numbers of users.

6.2 **On the basis of the work undertaken, it is clear there is both a need and a strategic rationale to support the development of an indoor leisure/tourism facility for the Moyle area. The challenge will be realising the required capital and revenue resources to support and deliver this development for the benefit of both residents and tourists.**





## APPENDICES





**Appendix 1**  
**Study Consultees**



## **APPENDIX 1 – STUDY CONSULTEES**

### **Face to Face**

Margaret Craig – Trade Development Officer MDC

Elaine Gaston – Arts Development Officer MDC

Marc Mc Gerty - Economic Development officer MDC

Esther Mulholland – Head of Development - MDC

Damian McAfee – Facilities manager

Grace Mc Mullan – Sports Dev Officer/Quay Road Project Officer

Ken Bustard - Planning Service

Michael Dallat – Cross and Passion College

### **Telephone Interviews**

Noleen McConnell – NEELB

Philip Pentland – NITB

Kathleen Mc Bride - Project Officer Causeway Coast MasterPlan

Ciaran Mc Garrity – Tourism Branch DETI



## Appendix 2

Focus Group Attendees



## APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDEES – FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

### 5<sup>th</sup> September 2006

#### Focus Group - Cushendall

Name	Organisation
N/A	N/A

### 6<sup>th</sup> September 2006 - Focus Group - Bushmills

Name	Organisation
Cllr. George Harten	Cllr. Causeway ward
Joan McMillan	Members of Public
Rita McKelvey	
Helen Dunlop	
Ian Page	
Ann Creith	

### 7<sup>th</sup> September 2006 - Focus Group – Ballycastle

Name	Organisation
Don Fielding	
Kathleen Fielding	Over 55 Club
Jacqueline Dooley	
Frank Nealis	North Antrim Community Transport
Sean Dooley-Nealis (9)	
Roisin Dooley-Nealis (5)	
Rory Gallagher	staff
Kyle Hughes	

### 7<sup>th</sup> September 2006 - Focus Group – Sports Advisory Committee

Name	Organisation
Melanie Shillington	Moyle Tennis Club
Orla Black	Moyle District Council
Seamus Blaney	Moyle District Council
Brian Dillan	Ballycastle Golf Club and MSAC
Theo Laverty	Apology
Cath McCambridge	MDC
Oliver McMillan	Chair of Moyle SAC and Cllr
Jonathan Bishop	

### 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006

#### Focus Group – Ballycastle

Name	Organisation
Margaret Gault	Craft Connections
Mary Brown	Private
E Mc Mullan	Moyle Twinning Association
Dr Maurice Laverty	
Cllr Oliver Mc Mullan	
Louise McAuley	
Nicola Blaney	
Anne Mc Canaghan	
Lyle McMullan	Moyle Swifts



## Appendix 3

### Strategic Context



## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### Strategic Context

#### Review of Key Documents

#### Moyle

The Moyle district is situated on the North east corner of Northern Ireland and is very popular with tourists as it includes the three best known features of Northern Ireland: the Giants Causeway, the Glens of Antrim and Rathlin Island. The main sources of income in the district are farming, tourism and a little light industry. There is a distinct absence of any major industry due mainly to strict planning policy regulations which are in force because of the 'Areas of outstanding natural beauty' which cover most of the Moyle district. Within Northern Ireland the district is peripheral and relatively isolated.

#### NINIS: Moyle LGD (95UU)

The Northern Ireland Neighborhood Information Service (NINIS) provide Local Government District (LGD) information for Northern Ireland. The area profile of Moyle uses Census 2001 and other administrative sources.

#### Geography

Moyle Local Government District falls within the Northern Health and Social Services Board and the North Eastern Education and Library Board.

#### Population

Moyle has a resident population of 15,933. Of this population:

- 23.7% were under 16 years old and 19.6% were aged 60 and above;
- 49.1 of the population were male and 50.9% were female; and
- 60.3% were from a Catholic Community Background and 38.3% were from a Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related community background).

The average age of population in Moyle LGD was 37.0 years compared to 35.8 years for Northern Ireland. The population density in Moyle was 0.33 persons per hectare, compared to 1.19 for Northern Ireland.

#### Crime

There were a total of 825 offences recorded in Moyle LGD in 2004/05 financial year. These can be broken down by type of crime, the categories are shown below:

- Offences against the person - 28.6%
- Sexual Offences - 1.7%
- Burglary - 11.5%
- Robbery - 1.0%
- Theft - 16.5%
- Fraud and forgery - 4.2%
- Criminal damage - 33.8%
- Offences against the state - 0.8%
- Other offences - 1.8%

#### Deprivation - NIMDM 2005

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 (NIMDM 2005) was published in May 2005. The report identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivations across Northern Ireland. The results for Moyle LGD are shown below. Moyle LGD has an Extent of 13%; this means that 13% of the Moyle population lives in the most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland. The Income Scale shows that there are 3899 people in

## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Moyle LGD experiencing Income Deprivation, while the Employment scale shows that a total of 1432 people in Moyle LGD experience employment deprivation. On the Average SOA Rank measure Moyle LGD has a rank of 3 out of 26 LGDs. On the Income Scale measure Moyle LGD has a rank of 26 out of 26 LGDs.

Within Moyle LGD the most deprived Super Output Area is Armoy and Moss-side and Moyarget (ranked 194 in NI) and the least deprived Super Output Area is Bonamargy and Rathlin and Glenshesk (ranked 430 in NI).

### Education, Employment and Economic Activity

On Census Day, in Moyle LGD looking at the population aged 16-74:

- 13.3% had degree level or higher qualifications;
- 58.7% were economically active, 41.3% were economically inactive; and
- 4.8% were unemployed; of these 44.4% were long-term unemployed.

On Census Day, of the 5871 people aged 16-74 in employment who lived in Moyle LGD 3399 worked in Moyle LGD ( 57.9%). The top three LGDs where the working age population of Moyle LGD worked were:

1. Moyle ( 57.9%);
2. Coleraine ( 12.5%); and
3. Ballymoney ( 8.9%).

Of those who left school in 2002, 52.2% gained 5 or more GCSEs at grade C and above and 69.7% went on into further and higher education. In 2006 19.9% of the school population was entitled to free school meals.

In 2004:

- 11.2% of persons aged 18-59 were claiming Income Support<sup>1</sup>;
- 11.0% of persons aged 16-59/64 were claiming Incapacity Benefit<sup>1</sup>; and
- 10.5% of persons aged 16+ were claiming Housing Benefit<sup>1</sup>.

In 2001 there were 3148 employee jobs in Moyle LGD.

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) provide a wide range of information on hourly, weekly and annual earnings of employees in Northern Ireland. The median gross weekly earnings for all employees in Moyle LGD at April 2005 were £x compared with a figure of £ 320.5 for NI and £ 349.6 in the UK. Figures use the home postcode of employee. The median measures the amount earned by the average individual i.e. the level of earnings above which half the population fall.

The Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) showed there were 720 VAT registered Businesses in Moyle LGD in 2004.

There were 597 farms registered to addresses in Moyle LGD in 2005 and the total agricultural labour force was 1212 persons.

The size categories of the 597 farms were as follows:

- Very small - 391;
- Small - 117;
- Medium - 53; and
- Large/very large - 36.



## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### Health and Care

On Census Day 29th April 2001, in Moyle LGD:

- 21.2% of people had a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability;
- 10.3% of the population noted that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others; and
- 69.4% of people stated that their general health was good.

In 2002, residents of Moyle LGD had 3671 hospital episodes.

### Housing and Transport

On Census Day 29th April 2001 there were 5888 households in Moyle LGD. Of these households:

- 67.9% were owner occupied and 32.1% were rented;
- 37.0% were owned outright;
- 13.9% were lone pensioner households;
- 7.6% were lone parent households with dependent children; and
- 43.9% had one or more persons with a limiting long-term illness.

On Census Day 29th April 2001 the average household size was 2.68 for Moyle LGD, compared to 2.65 for NI.

There are projected to be 7200 households in Moyle LGD in the year 2015, with an average household size of 2.43 persons.

In 2003 there were 7408 domestic properties in Moyle LGD:

- Terraced - 20.2%
- Apartments - 5.0%
- Semi-Detached - 24.6%
- Detached - 50.1%

The average new house price in Moyle LGD in 2004/05 was £ 112910 - this compares to an average of £ 117756 for NI the same year.

On Census Day in Moyle LGD 76.6% of households had access to a car or van, 70.0% of persons aged 16-74 in employment usually travelled to work by car or van. This compares to 70.6% in NI.

In 2004, 7056 cars were licensed to addresses in Moyle LGD, 7.5% of which were cars registered to a disabled driver or for transporting disabled people.

### Moyle District Local Strategy Partnership: Integrated Local Strategy 2001-2006

This is the first Integrated Local Strategy for Moyle District. It is designed to be used as a plan for the development of the district to raise the standard of living and improve the quality of life for the whole community. It is hoped the strategy has the potential to transform the socio-economic environment within which people currently live and transform Moyle from being the 6<sup>th</sup> most deprived area in Northern Ireland into a more vibrant, prosperous area where the community is able to enjoy a good quality of life.

The local partnership strategy consists of Moyle District Council, Statutory Bodies and Social Partners all representing the community. The overall strategic aims of the partnership are:

- To identify and draw up plans to deal with deprivation, disadvantage and social exclusion in the district
- To ensure that the plans and activities of the various organisations that provide the services to the community:
  - Are better co-ordinated
  - Are responsive to the concerns of local people
  - Are delivered in ways that meet the needs of people who depend on them
  - Take account of the needs of the future

## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- To promote and where necessary, fund services and facilities that are needed in Moyle to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy a high standard of living and a good quality of life.

The document identifies eight priority areas. These are:

- Health and Well-being
- Building Communities
- Tourism and Environment
- Rural transport
- Youth
- Learning, employment and business development
- Culture, arts and leisure
- Agriculture and rural development

Each priority area has a rationale and overall aim behind why it has been chosen as a priority.

### Tourism and Environment

The rationale behind prioritising tourism and environment is that Moyle has a unique environmental and cultural heritage that attracts visitors from all over the world. Developing the tourism industry in Moyle will help to ensure continued economic growth for the local economy in addition to providing employment. The overall aim is to protect and enhance the natural resources and promote sustainable tourism in the area.

### Culture, Arts and Leisure

This priority is designed to complement work on health and community as well as improving the quality of life in Moyle. It will encourage social integration and benefit the local economy by attracting visitors into the district and providing employment. With this priority the overall aim is to have in place the facilities and programmes necessary to meet the social needs and aspirations of residents and visitors to the district.

### Moyle Sports Advisory Committee: Strategy for Sport 2002-2005

This document explains how Moyle Sports Advisory Committee proposes to support and develop sports activities in Moyle over the next three years. This strategy for sport seeks to support and promote all sport, pulling the various sports providers together in a partnership approach. This is because Moyle is the only council district in Northern Ireland that lacks indoor sports facilities and does not have a public swimming pool. Sports clubs tend to operate independent of one another. The strategy approach is also intended to help address community issues such as social exclusion and healthy living. The Moyle Sports Advisory Committee has developed a vision statement in consultation with local sports people and groups. It is:

'Moyle is a district where sport makes a positive contribution to the lifestyle of its people; this is achieved by placing sport at the heart of the community and providing sporting opportunities for all.'

The document identifies four key areas:

- Leadership
- Resources
- Networks
- Lifestyle

### Resources

The strategy considers resources to be facilities and finances with the human resources being dealt with under the leadership section. Approximately 20% of sports clubs operate in club owned facilities but some clubs feel they are disadvantaged through not owning facilities.

## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Other clubs who do own facilities find the financial commitment in operating and maintaining facilities becomes a major part of their operation and fund raising becomes a regular club activity. Most clubs require a facility base rent or lease facilities, usually from the council; however there is a perception that sports facilities in public ownership do not meet demand. Moyle district is the main provider of sports facilities that are available for public use.

Other facility/service providers are found in the statutory, commercial and voluntary sectors. For example, in the statutory sector the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Food manages access to natural facilities such as Ballycastle Forest. In the commercial sector the Marine Hotel and Silvercliffs Holiday Park operate indoor swimming facilities. In the voluntary sector, church halls are the base for all the indoor bowling clubs in the district.

The strategy then establishes fifteen goals across the four key areas, each with a number of actions. The resources goals are:

- Create a facilities development plan for sport and recreation based on social need and ensuring long-term sustainability
- Maximise the use of existing sports facilities whether in government, community or private ownership
- Develop a funding package to support a sports development officer post and a sports development programme
- Maximise financial opportunities to assist in developing sport

A lack of sufficient facilities for sport in the Moyle area is evident across all sectors and this is highlighted by the priority given to facilities within this document. ?

### Causeway Coast and Glens: Countryside Recreation Strategy 2002

The Causeway Coast and Glens area encompasses the Council areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickergus, Coleraine, Larne, Limavady, Moyle and Newtownabbey. The strategy aims to provide an effective and sustainable framework for the future management of countryside recreation within the Causeway Coast and Glens area. Specific objectives are:

- Any recreational use of the Northern Ireland countryside is managed in a way which provides high quality and consistent experience for all recreational users
- New and developing facilities for countryside recreation within Northern Ireland are resourced, supported, provided and managed in a strategic way and
- The public's awareness of countryside recreation opportunities within Northern Ireland is raised and participation in countryside recreation by well-informed users is encouraged.

The document gives a summary of the current position for each of the twenty nine activities with the Causeway Coast and Glens. From this a number of issues have been identified some of which are listed below:

- Common issues
  - There is a need to establish the area as a destination for day activity visits which would help to develop a critical mass
  - There is a relative scarcity of activity events throughout the year which might coincide with a holiday visit
  - Access to recreation opportunities is restricted for the non car user
- Issues for water activities
  - In support of activities there is a lack of services such as cafes, parking, guided walks and rural transport
  - Extensive areas of public lands are underused for recreation
  - New facilities are required for mountain biking so as to formalise the use and provide a cycling product that can attract day visitors
- Issues for water activities
  - Little or no equipment hire and instruction(only surfing)Safety supervision would be needed if this was introduced



## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- Little provision of information on accessible water sports for day visitors and tourists
- Issues for air activities
  - No provision of day visitor activities based on their air sports
  - Need for improvements and security of tenure of some facilities

A number of key themes and relating actions have been identified within the paper to improve on the issues identified. These are:

- To ensure that the countryside resource is both maintained and appropriately managed
- To ensure that countryside recreation is managed to reduce conflicts between users and between recreation and other land users
- To increase the number of sites available for land recreation
- To make activities more accessible to beginners and visitors
- To raise the profile (amongst potential visitors) of the Causeway Coast and Glens area for activities
- To realise economic returns for business associated with countryside recreation
- To develop the potential of the coastline
- To improve the accessibility of air sports
- Maintain and improve the ability of natural resources in the area to continue to support countryside recreation.

Along with the key themes, six action programmes are proposed. Action programme three specifically relates to facilities and infrastructure with the proposed actions being:

- Develop a number of focal points for water sports on inland waters and along the coast
- Develop a surfing centre at Portrush
- Support air sport clubs in securing sites and facilities
- Develop a canoe trail along the Lower Bann with supporting infrastructure and services
- Promote the development of the official sites for off road two wheel motor sports
- Develop official sites for the activities that may conflict with other users/site management e.g. jet skiing

These proposals were published in 2002 with a proposed timescale ranging from 2002-2006.

### Tourism

In 2004 the Northern Ireland Tourist Board reported that the top ten tourist attractions were:

- 1) Giants Causeway Visitor Centre
- 2) W5
- 3) Ulster Museum
- 4) Oxford Island National Nature Reserve
- 5) Belfast Zoological Gardens
- 6) Ulster Folk and Transport Museum
- 7) Derry Walls
- 8) Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge
- 9) Portstewart Strand
- 10) Saint Patrick Centre

Eight of the top ten attractions experienced an annual increase of visitor numbers. Of the top ten, two are within the Moyle area, the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge.

Regional tourism estimate figures for 2004 published by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board account for all out of state visitors to Northern Ireland, visiting for any reason (holiday, business, visiting friends and relatives) and staying for at least one night. Added to this are Northern Ireland residents on holiday at home. Day trips are not included. The Causeway Coast and Glens area recorded 779 000 trips and £99million of spending in 2004. Specific information for Moyle was published in 2002. Moyle recorded 83 000 trips to the area and £12million worth of spending. This was the second largest amount of trips and spending in the Causeway Coast and Glens area. Top was Coleraine with 325 000 trips and £47million of spending.

## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### Tourism in Northern Ireland: A Strategic Framework for Action 2004-2007

This document from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board provides guidance on the development of tourism over the three years in Northern Ireland. In adopting a sustainable approach it seeks to strike a balance between economic growth, impact on the environment and community support. The framework sets out ten programmes which are divided into three areas. These are:

- **Attracting Visitors**
  - Know the visitor
  - Develop a compelling proposition
  - Reach the consumer
  - Take care of our visitors- every step of the way
- **Business Enhancement**
  - Develop signature projects
  - Focus on winning themes
  - Develop internationally competitive businesses
  - Deliver memorable experiences
- **Communicating Effectively**
  - Share information
  - Strengthen effective relationships for delivery

Identified within the developing signature programme section are five best prospect short/medium projects including the Giant's Causeway/Antrim and Causeway coast area. It is stated though that the Northern Ireland Tourist Board will seek to promote the identification of additional signature projects as longer term opportunities.

The winning themes sections are highlighted as those with the potential to help deliver a competitive advantage for Northern Ireland which includes activity tourism and culture and heritage tourism.

The framework is designed to address the challenges and deliver improvements in tourism performance in Northern Ireland across the three key objectives.

### Northern Area Plan 2016 Draft

The Northern Area Plan 2016 is the development plan for the four Council Areas of Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle, an area covering 1,969 square kilometers or about 14% of the total Northern Ireland land area.

The purpose of the Plan is to guide development in the period up to the year 2016 and it has been prepared in the context of the priorities of the Northern Ireland Executive. It comprises two volumes:

**Volume 1:** a broad introduction, strategic plan framework and policies for the Countryside and the Coast.  
**Volume 2:** specific policies relating to each of the individual Council areas.

The European Union and the United Kingdom have embraced the principle of sustainable development encompassing the following objectives:

- Social progress that meets the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

The Plan will provide a framework for development throughout the Northern Plan area, in general conformity with the principles and policies of the Regional Development Strategy, facilitating sustainable growth, meeting the needs of communities and protecting environmental attributes.

## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Plan objectives are:

1. To facilitate and promote sustainable development throughout the Northern Plan area in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy.
2. To promote the continued development of Coleraine and Limavady as main hubs, and Ballymoney and Ballycastle as local hubs, consistent with their identified roles in the Regional Development Strategy.
3. To allocate land for housing development within settlements consistent with the Regional Development Strategy.
4. To identify land for housing development at locations that will create compact and more sustainable settlements, with preference for sites within the urban areas.
5. To promote development that enhances the character and identity of existing settlements, avoids urban sprawl and protects the countryside.
6. To facilitate economic development and the creation and maintenance of employment, consistent with New Targeting Social Need.
7. To promote the vitality and viability of town centres.
8. To improve access to, and the range of, employment, commercial, health, education and community services.
9. To promote the integration of public transport, cycle and footpath networks and new development, in order to ease congestion, reduce dependence on the private car, and encourage the use of more sustainable forms of travel, particularly walking and cycling.
10. To protect and enhance the character, quality and biodiversity of natural and man-made environments.
11. To promote equality of opportunity between persons and groups identified under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion or racial groups.

### Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Masterplan

The vision underpinning the Masterplan is that,

***“The Causeway Coast and Glens area will be a ‘must-see’, world-class tourism destination. It will be known for its scenic beauty, its spectacular coastline and its key jewels. The area will set new standards in environmental management and sustainable tourism, while tourism interests will work closely together to create a quality visitor experience”.***

The Tourism Masterplan for the Causeway Coast and Glens forms part of the proposal for new visitor facilities at Giants Causeway and provides a framework for sustainable tourism development in the area over the next ten years. It aims to complement existing plans and strategies of tourism organizations in the area and is a key element in delivering the NITB Strategic Framework for Action 2004-07.

The Masterplan covers the period 2004-13 and has the following key objectives:

1. To increase the number of tourists visiting the area
2. To achieve a coordinated approach to tourism in the area
3. To spread the benefits of visits attracted by the Giants Causeway to a wider geographical area
4. To develop strong attractions elsewhere in the area

There are eleven recommendations included in this report:

1. Adopt an area-based approach that sets specific priorities for parts of the area, based on their different needs and stages of development
2. Develop a Tourist Trail as a major signature project for attracting and distributing overseas visitors to the area
3. Focus on the maritime heritage of the area as a major interpretation and attraction theme in the coastal area and along the Tourist Trail
4. Regenerate the resorts and gateways of the area through a programme designed to meet and exceed visitor expectations
5. Invest in accommodation priorities in the area including improving the quality offered and seeking to attract a full service 4-star hotel to the area



## APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

6. Improve the standard of food and beverage and value for money offered to visitors in restaurant, pubs and hotels
7. Focus investment on those events and entertainments likely to be of most appeal to out-of-state visitors and adopt a more coordinated and professional approach to events provision
8. Provide opportunities for visitors to purchase local Northern Ireland and Causeway Coast and Glens retail and craft specialties
9. Review tourism structures with the objective of moving towards closer coordination of tourism product development, tourism marketing and visitor and environmental management
10. Focus attention on the development of the human resources in the area and particularly on developing a 'tourism ethos' and on ensuring that tourism managers understand the needs of the overseas market and the standards offered by main competitors
11. Make a sustained commitment to the marketing of the Causeway Coast and Glens over the next three years

The Masterplan also includes a proposed action plan for implementation of the Plan. It is a working document subject to review.

### Moyle District Council Corporate Plan 2005-2009

The Corporate Plan outlines issues and objectives that the Council intends to embark upon over the next four years. It identifies what the Council believes are priorities for Moyle and then what the Council intends to do in response. It builds on what the Council intends to do to achieve Best Value, a key part of the Government's overall modernization programme.

The Council highlights a number of strategic conclusions drawn from their research: these conclusions will influence both what the Council does for Moyle and how it will do its business.

The Council has concluded that Moyle:

- Is small and disadvantaged making life difficult for many people. The Council's resource and income bases are limited so new resources need to be won for Moyle and its social capital protected and developed.
- Is physically remote and peripheral so that many major services won't have a presence locally and Council service delivery will be costly. There is a need for new approaches to be developed.
- Has an 'old' rather than 'new' economy base and has issues of under-employment and low paid employment so economic development must continue as a priority activity and be based on local strengths
- Has phenomenal and unique natural assets and resources but is also a growing District meaning social, economic and environmental sustainability has to be at the centre of local planning and development which equally have to make best use of the local tourism potential. Other vital areas of interest to the Council are waste management, open space and Harbour management.
- Has particularly poor housing – a key task will be improving the quality and availability of housing.
- Can look attractive from the outside but be problematic to live in so efforts will need to be made to constantly put 'the case for Moyle' and make it attractive for local people to remain in Moyle.

The Council defines its overall purpose as being:

***“Moyle District Council exists to maintain and improve the well-being of the people of Moyle. It does that by listening to them: by being the voice for Moyle: and by providing good local government services within Moyle. In its work the Council wants to:***

- Defend the uniqueness of Moyle District
- Be open, friendly and transparent
- Promote and demonstrate equality and good relations
- Make best use of resources.”

The Council's planning work has led to the development of four broad Themes which are dealt with in turn in this Plan. A rationale behind each is given along with a clear idea of what the Government intends to do to deliver each.

## **APPENDIX 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

The themes are:

- Providing civic leadership and encouraging the participation and involvement of local people
- Achieving the sustainable growth and development of Moyle
- Providing services that people want and appreciate
- Being a well-run Council

Best Value is an important part of the Government's vision for local government. Councils now have a legal duty to make arrangements for continuous improvement in the way they do their work. In Moyle, the Council has developed a four stage approach:

- Doing the homework
- Teasing out the issues
- Planning to improve
- Telling how they've done (i.e. reporting back)





## Appendix 4

Facility Mix



**MOYLE: PROPOSED LEISURE CENTRE  
B3GIBSON HAMILTON FEASIBILITY FLOOR PLAN 90879-001A  
OUTLINE BRIEF AND SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION**

**Introduction**

The feasibility plans have been developed together with Strategic Leisure to respond to the demand analysis for the development of a proposed facility to accommodate the leisure, recreational and sporting needs of:

- the resident community of Ballycastle and the surrounding area
- visitors and tourists to the area
- the surrounding schools and college

**1. Entrance**

Alternative entrances for:

- general public from car park
- separate access for school users

**2. Tourist Information Centre**

- adjacent to reception and available to all visitors without having to pass through control barriers.

**3. Cafe**

- café/wine bar for 60 to 70 covers
- kitchen and servery area
- highly visible at entrance to building
- views into pool hall
- possible franchised facility

**4. Children's Centre**

- 'drop in' centre for up to 45 children
- children's toilets plus stores
- possible franchised facility

**5. Reception**

- reception desk and control barrier
- back-up office
- toilets

**6. Pool Hall**

- 25 m x 13.5 m 6 lane pool
- leisure pool with beach, flume and slide
- optional moveable floor and bulk head to main pool to cater for wide variety of use ranging from competitive swimming to recreational bating in shallow water.  
NB. Would also facilitate access for people with disabilities.

**7. Health Suite**

- plunge pool with water features
- relaxation area



- sauna room
- steam room
- saunarium
- impulse showers
- toilets
- directly accessible from pool surround

**8. Wet Change**

- 'village change' – unisex cubicles and lockers
- visible from pool hall to facilitate supervision
- 2 no. group changing rooms – capacity 24 people each room
- toilets
- showers

**9. First Aid Room**

- adjacent pool hall
- accessible for ambulances

**10. Fitness Suite**

- 40-45 work stations
- visible from car park

**11. Treatment Rooms**

- 2 no. treatment/consultation rooms
- possible franchised facilities

**12. Multi Activity Space**

- large activity area 29 m x 12 m x 4.5 m capable of being subdivided into two or three spaces with folding acoustic screens
- capable of accommodating range of activities including:
  - aerobics
  - dance
  - keep fit
  - martial arts
  - functions
  - fashion shows
  - exhibitions
  - drama groups for audiences up to say 150 people

**13. Dry Changing**

- 2 no. group changing rooms – capacity 24 people each room

**14. Administration**

- general administration office
- staff room

**15. Plant Rooms**

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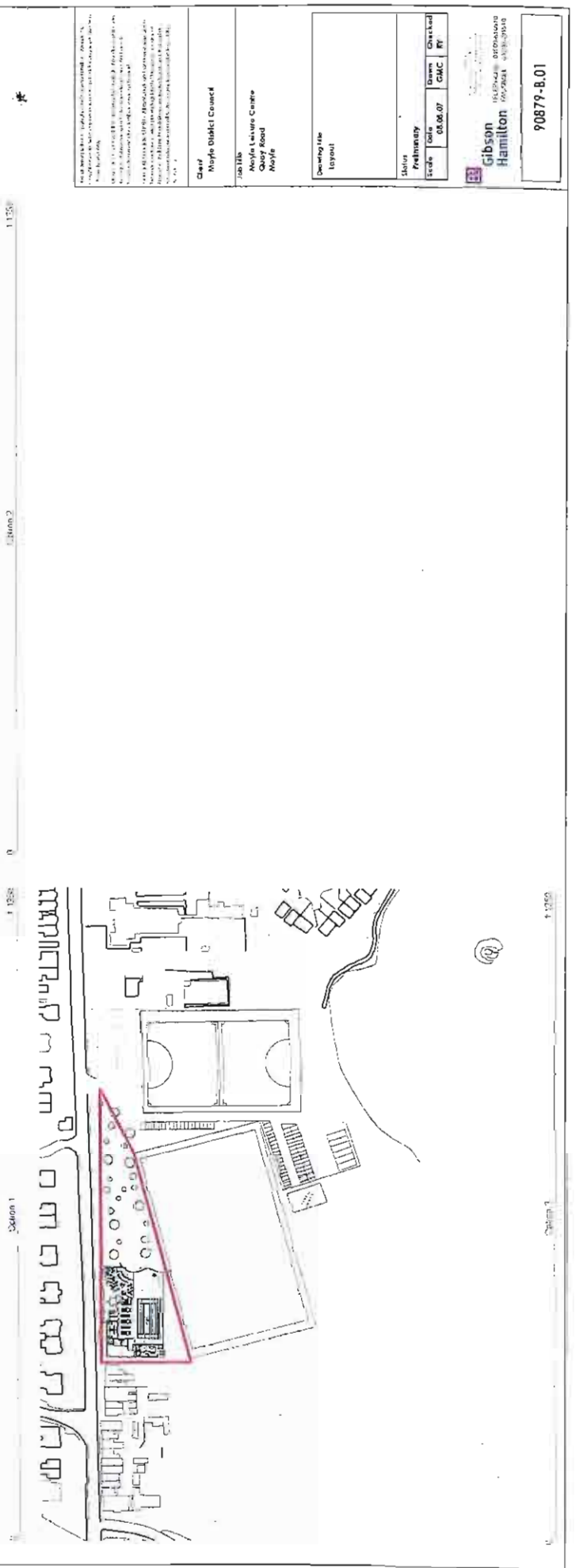
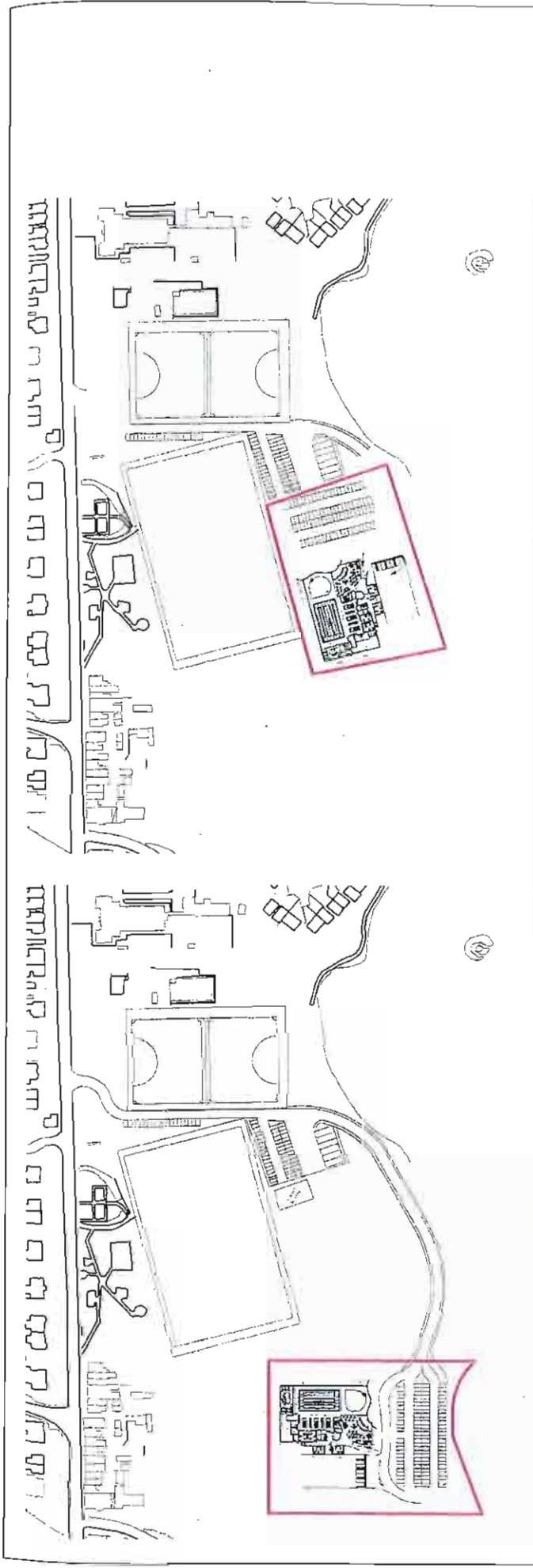




## Appendix 5

Facility Plans





1. This drawing is a preliminary site plan and is not to be used for construction purposes. It is intended for informational purposes only. The design is subject to change without notice. The client is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals. The design is based on the information provided by the client and is not a guarantee of performance. The design is not a contract and does not constitute an offer of insurance or any other financial product. The design is not a recommendation and does not constitute an offer of investment or any other financial product. The design is not a recommendation and does not constitute an offer of investment or any other financial product.

Client  
Wayle District Council

Job Title  
Wayle Leisure Centre  
Quey Road  
Wayle

Drawing File	Layout		
Status	Preliminary		
Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked
	08.06.07	GMC	RY

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## Appendix 6

Cost Estimates



SPACE SUMMARY		GIFA (m2 / SF)	4,578.00	49,277.59	Note
		m2	Cost/m2	Cost	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Swimming Pool</b>				
1.1	25 x 13.5 completion pool; minimum depth 1.1 m incl ozone disinfection system and heat recovery	542.00	2,400.00	1,300,800.00	
1.2	Moveable floor to pool	1.00	0.00	0.00	Excluded
1.3	Village/group changing	384.00	1,650.00	633,600.00	
1.4	Storage space	124.00	1,000.00	124,000.00	
1.5	Perimeter fixed benching	1.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
1.6	Leisure pool and fixed equipment	340.00	3,200.00	1,088,000.00	Full height glass wall; no wave machine
1.7	Disabled hydraulic access platform	1.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	
	<b>Sub Total:</b>			<b>£3,236,400.00</b>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Health Suite</b>				
2.1	Health suite including sauna/steam/solarium/spar pool	132.00	3,200.00	422,400.00	Sauna/Steam/Solarium/Spar pool
	<b>Sub Total:</b>			<b>£422,400.00</b>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Café</b>				
3.1	64 cover café area plus food preparation and store	325.00	1,600.00	520,000.00	Glazed elevations
3.2	Lounge area	1.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	
3.3	External seating area	1.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	
	<b>Sub Total:</b>			<b>£543,000.00</b>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Creche</b>				
4.1	Children creche area	60.00	1,400.00	84,000.00	
	<b>Sub Total:</b>			<b>£84,000.00</b>	

SPACE SUMMARY		GIFA (m2 / SF)		Cost	Note
		m2	Cost/m2		
<b>5.0 Tourist Information</b>					
5.1	Office	45.00	1,250.00	56,250.00	
	Sub Total:			£56,250.00	
<b>6.0 Reception/Circulation Area</b>					
6.1	Generally	358.00	1,250.00	447,500.00	
	Sub Total:			£447,500.00	
<b>7.0 Plant Room/Possible Plant Area</b>					
7.1	generally	290.00	1,000.00	290,000.00	
	Sub Total:			£290,000.00	
<b>8.0 Multi Activity Space</b>					
8.1	Generally: including storage to sport England guidelines	356.00	1,500.00	534,000.00	
8.2	Demountable partitions	2.00	20,000.00	40,000.00	
	Sub Total:			£574,000.00	
<b>9.0 Beauty Treatment</b>					
9.1	Generally	42.00	1,250.00	52,500.00	
	Sub Total:			£52,500.00	
<b>10.0 Fitness Suite</b>					
10.1	40 stations	281.00	1,600.00	449,600.00	
	Sub Total:			£449,600.00	
<b>11.0 Dry Changing</b>					
11.1	Generally (2 floors)	178.00	1,250.00	222,500.00	
	Sub Total:			£222,500.00	

SPACE SUMMARY		GIFA (m2 / SF)		49,277.59		4,578.00		Cost		Note	
		m2		Cost/m2							
<b>12.0 Foyer &amp; circulation @ 1st floor</b>											
12.1	Generally	160.00		1,000.00		160,000.00					
	Sub Total:					£160,000.00					
<b>13.0 Admin</b>											
13.1	Generally	153.00		1,250.00		191,250.00					
	Sub Total:					£191,250.00					
<b>14.0 Lift</b>											
14.1	13 person lift	1.00		55,000.00		55,000.00					
	Sub Total:					£55,000.00					
<b>15.0 Sports Hall</b>											
15.1	4 court sports hall - 9m high	753.00		1,250.00		941,250.00					
15.0	Viewing gallery	55.00		1,000.00		55,000.00					
	Sub Total:					£996,250.00					
<b>16 External Works</b>											
16.1	Carparking including lighting, drainage and landscaping	415.00		1,650.00		684,750.00		inc coach parking + extra 180 spaces			
16.2	Extension of existing site access road	1.00		100,000.00		100,000.00					
16.3	Outdoor play area	1.00		0.00		0.00		Excluded			
16.4	Public access	1.00		0.00		0.00		Excluded			
16.5	School access	1.00		0.00		0.00		Excluded			
16.6	Boundary treatments	1.00		0.00		0.00		Excluded			
16.7	Trim Trail	1.00		0.00		0.00		Excluded			
16.8	Landscaping/Building Perimeter treatment	1.00		100,000.00		100,000.00					
16.9	Security & perimeter lighting	1.00		0.00		0.00		Excluded			
	Sub Total:					£884,750.00					



SPACE SUMMARY		GIFA (m2 / SF)	4,578.00	49,277.59	Note
	m2	Cost/m2	Cost		
<b>Base Cost of Building</b>	<b>4,578.00</b>		<b>£8,665,400.00</b>	<b>Excl VAT</b>	
Add: Project Contingencies		5%	433,270.00		
Add: Consultant's fees		12.5%	1,137,333.75		On cost + contingencies
Add: Planning & Building Control Fees		say	40,000.00		
<b>Total Cost of Building</b>	<b>4,578.00</b>		<b>£10,276,003.75</b>	<b>Excl VAT</b>	

	Cost/m2	building only	£1,700
		base cost	£1,893
		total cost	£2,245

17	Annual Costs			
17.1	Running costs	4,578.00	85.00	£389,130.00 At current price levels
17.2	Lifecycle/planned maintenance & annual testing etc (over 25 yrs)	4,578.00	28.00	£128,184.00 At current price levels

**Assumptions/Qualifications**

- 1 Excludes VAT, Land Purchaser & Legals
- 2 Abnormal foundations, removal of contaminants, archaeological issues
- 3 Abnormal costs associated with mains and sewer connections e.g. site sub station
- 4 Off site roadworks
- 5 Discharge of onerous planning conditions
- 6 Renewable energy allowances excluded
- 7 Boundary treatment e.g. acoustic fencing
- 8 Mini soccer pitches excluded
- 9 Excludes loose FFE, Catering equipment and café fit out.
- 10 Estimate at current prices @ RICS BCIS TPI 240



## Appendix 7

BDO Final Moyle Report



**BUSINESS PLAN FOR A  
LEISURE / TOURISM  
FACILITY IN BALLYCASTLE**

**DRAFT IN CONFIDENCE  
FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSE  
ONLY**

**March 2009**

*The report is confidential to Moyle District Council and prepared solely for the purpose(s) set out in our engagement letter. You should not refer to or use our name or the report for any other purpose, disclose it or refer to it in any document, or make it available or communicate it to any other party. No other party is entitled to rely on our report for any purpose whatsoever and we accept no duty of care or liability to any other party who is shown or gains access to this report.*



**MOYLE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**BUSINESS PLAN FOR A LEISURE / TOURISM FACILITY IN BALLYCASTLE**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Terms of Reference

BDO Stoy Hayward has been commissioned by Moyle District Council to prepare a business plan as part of an overall feasibility commission led by Strategic Leisure. The subject matter of this feasibility study and business plan is a leisure / tourism facility in Ballycastle.

BDO Stoy Hayward is working in partnership with Strategic Leisure (Sports Consultants) and B3 Architects in delivering this business plan. Strategic Leisure carried out the feasibility and site survey, whilst B3 Architects provided outline costs and footprints for the facility.

As required by the Terms of Reference, dated March 2006, the consultant is required to *“undertake a detailed feasibility study to assess what may or may not be feasible and what key components should be included to ensure the success of any proposal”*.

The Terms of Reference stated that the following considerations would be required:

- a. Market Research;
- b. Competitor Analysis;
- c. Stakeholder Consultation;
- d. Site Options Appraisal;
- e. Capital Funding Options Appraisal; and
- f. Financial and Viability Forecasts.

The purpose of this business plan, which has its roots in the aforementioned feasibility study, is to provide the Council officers and representatives with the following:

- Strategic fit of any such investment, from a sporting participation, healthy lifestyle and tourism perspective;
- Context of the investment decision with respect to the Review of Public Administration;
- Rationale for the investment to include consideration of the area as the primary tourism trail in the region and the historical level of poor indoor leisure provision;
- Comparative analysis of the facilities offered to residents compared to neighbouring Council areas;
- Financial detail on the capital and revenue costs of any such facility, with the likely level of subvention required based on reasonable (and evidenced where possible) income assumptions; and
- Funding mechanisms for the project to include consideration of lands owned by the Council, Sport NI, Big Lottery, Private Sector, etc.

## 1.2 Introduction to Project Promoter

### 1.2.1 Renewed Role of Councils

Councils in Northern Ireland have three main functions:

1. **Direct Service Provision:** Each council is responsible for the provision of a range of services within its own area.
2. **A Representative Role:** Councillors are appointed to represent their councils or elected members in general, on a number of public bodies, such as Education & Library Boards, Health & Social Services, Road Safety Committees, etc.
3. **A Consultative Role:** In Northern Ireland some functions, which in other parts of the UK would be undertaken by councils, are provided by government departments or agencies. In most cases these bodies engage in consultation. The consultative role covers functions such as planning, roads, water and conservation.

Following the signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998, and the subsequent establishment of the institutions of devolved government, it was decided that there should be a review of all other aspects of public administration in Northern Ireland. The purpose of this review was to develop a system of public administration, which fully meets the needs of the people in Northern Ireland.

On 31 March 2008, the then Environment Minister Arlene Foster presented details of the future shape of local government following the results of the Review of Public Administration "RPA", that are to have a far-reaching impact on the role of local Councils in the future.

In a statement to the Assembly, the Minister said that the Executive's vision for local government would mean a reduction in the number of councils, with these new councils responsible for added functions. The Minister stated:

*"Our vision is one of a strong, dynamic, local government, creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core. Central to this is the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and continuously improve over time. It reflects the strong desire that central and local government should work in partnership."*

*"The current 26 council areas will be rationalised to create 11 new council areas. This strikes a balance between reducing some of the diversity between the existing areas in terms of population characteristics and rating wealth and promoting the ability of councils and their communities to identify and interact with each other."*

*"New innovative and creative models of service delivery will be developed to promote modern and efficient practice, by grouping councils together for the delivery of significant services, such as planning, regeneration, building control and environmental health. These will work in tandem with other service providers."*

The Minister outlined that the functions to transfer to local government would include:

- Local development plan functions, development control and enforcement;



- Local public realm aspects of roads functions including street-scaping; town and city centre environmental improvements; street lighting; off-street parking; permitting local events to be held on roads etc ;
- Urban regeneration and community development delivery functions including those associated with physical development, area based regeneration (such as Neighbourhood Renewal) along with some community development programmes and support for the voluntary and community sectors;
- A range of housing functions; and
- A number of functions associated with driving forward local economic development, local tourism and local arts, sports and leisure.

The Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 provided for the establishment of eleven new district councils in Northern Ireland based on the amalgamation of existing councils incorporating the whole or a major part of the following districts:-

Cluster	Population
Antrim, Newtownabbey	128,361
Ards, North Down	149,567
Armagh City and District, Banbridge and Craigavon	176,326
Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne	127,101
<b>Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady, Moyle</b>	<b>131,564</b>
Belfast	277,391
Castlereagh, Lisburn City	175,182
Cookstown, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough, Magherafelt	154,003
Derry, Strabane	143,314
Down, Newry and Mourne	150,886
Fermanagh, Omagh	105,479

Under the new 11 council arrangement, Moyle District Council will amalgamate with Limavady , Ballymoney and Coleraine Borough Councils. Notably this is the only new cluster with four legacy Councils and the revised population will be 131,564

Cross boundary planning in terms of leisure and sport is limited. The Audit Commission highlights the shortcomings as follows;

- Councils often focus on maintaining and managing their historic pattern of local sports and recreation provision. Cross-boundary planning and rationalisation of sport and recreation facilities is limited. Few councils work in partnership in the procurement of their sports and recreation services; and
- Strategic partnerships between Council, with the private sector and with other external partners, including the voluntary sector, provide the potential to improve planning and develop facilities.

The Audit Commission in its recent report – “*Public Sports and Recreation Services – Making them fit for the future*” - June 06 suggests ....

*“No single management option delivers the best overall value for money, or consistently results in more investment or higher levels of participation. However, in-house services tend to be significantly more expensive than the other options”*

Central Government policy points to the development of partnership with the private sector, particularly in capital-build projects through PPP and PFI initiatives. **Any opportunity for joint provision of new capital-build projects should be explored.**

A number of other Councils in Northern Ireland are already engaged with private sector partnerships in the management of fitness facilities within leisure centres, some receiving significant financial injections from the private partner in the refurbishment of aging facilities. Generally this approach has been well received.

### 1.2.2 Moyle District Council

Moyle District Council area is situated on the north-east corner of Northern Ireland overlooking the Scottish coast which is only 13 miles away across the North Channel. It has a rich cultural heritage and is famed for its scenic land and seascapes. The area is home to many of Ireland's most popular visitor attractions including The Giant's Causeway, The Glens of Antrim, Old Bushmills Distillery, Rathlin Island, "Carrick a Rede" Rope Bridge, Murlough, Fairhead and the many scenic bays and harbours along its 50 miles of coast.

As one of Northern Ireland's leading tourist destinations, Moyle has a well-established hospitality industry. The district boasts four hotels, 11 guesthouses, 68 B&B's, 75 self-catering premises and seven youth hostels, providing quality accommodation to suit all budgets.

Moyle District Council headquarters are in the town of Ballycastle where the population of the area is estimated at 16,740<sup>1</sup>.

Moyle District Council will join with Limavady, Ballymoney and Coleraine. Below, we have set out the comparators for all areas, along with the Northern Ireland average.

Percentage Comparisons	N.I. Average	Moyle	Limavady	Ballymoney	Coleraine
Under 16 years of age	23.6	23.7	25.6	23.7	22.3
Over 60 years of age	17.6	<b>19.6</b>	13.6	18.0	19.2
Male	48.7	49.1	50.9	49.5	47.7
Female	51.3	50.9	49.1	50.5	52.3
Catholic (Community Background)	43.8	<b>60.3</b>	56.6	31.9	27.2
Protestant and Other Christian	53.1	38.3	41.6	66.2	<b>69.4</b>
Persons with limiting long-term illness	20.4	21.2	19.1	19.6	18.3
Providing unpaid care	11.0	10.3	9.0	9.4	9.6
Owner-occupied households	69.6	<b>67.9</b>	70.4	72.6	69.2
Detached houses/bungalows	35.6	50.1	46.9	50.3	42.5
Access to a car or van	73.7	76.6	78.0	81.3	75.2
Degree level education or higher	15.8	13.3	10.4	10.1	17.3

Key Salient Points to note:

1. Moyle has one of the highest proportions of those over 60 years of age. These people are less likely to travel distances to make use of Leisure Facilities and so

<sup>1</sup> Based on NISRA June 2007 Mid Year Estimates

the development of such a facility may encourage older people to participate in sporting activities. With higher participation rates in sport for older people, this may lead to a healthier population within the Moyle area.

2. Moyle has a high proportion of Catholics compared to the other Councils within its cluster. The development of a Leisure Facility may lead to increased interaction between Catholics and Protestants within the cluster and so improve community relations.
3. Moyle has the lowest proportion of owner occupied households within the Cluster. This implies residents are less well off and so are unable to afford leisure facilities, or to travel to leisure facilities. Therefore the development of a new Leisure Facility in Moyle will attract such people to participate in leisure activities in the area as they will be of a lower cost than the current facilities offered.

### 1.3 Background to the Proposed Investment

Moyle District Council Corporate Plan acknowledges the need to appraise its indoor leisure provision under its third theme “*Providing Services that people want and appreciate*”. What this effectively means for the Council is the determination of a quality, fit for purpose schedule of accommodation for the Tourism / Leisure facility provision within the district that meets the demand from local residents and seasonal tourists alike.

The following section shows current indoor and outdoor provision within Moyle District and Neighbouring areas.

**Neighbouring indoor provision** within either the new Council area of a 25 mile drive is as follows:

Venue	Distance from Ballycastle (miles)
Sheskburn Recreation Centre, Ballycastle	-
Coleraine Leisure Facility	18
Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney	16
Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena	25

**Moyle District Council outdoor provision** is through Quay Road Recreation area, which offers a floodlit astro turf pitch and grass playing pitches. The project was funded through the PE and Sport in Schools Programme, which was administered on an Education and Library Board area basis.

**Moyle District Council indoor provision** is predominantly offered at Sheskburn Recreation Centre (SRC) in Ballycastle, as well as community facilities in Bushmills and Mosside.

**Government Acknowledgement** - The lack of indoor/wet weather leisure facilities in the district is acknowledged by the Department of the Environment’s District Council annual Performance Indicators (PIs) which highlights Moyle District Council as having the poorest indoor leisure provision compared to all other 25 Councils in Northern Ireland. 2007/08 Annual PIs released by the DOE Local Government Policy Division are provided below for Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle:



Council	Net cost of indoor leisure per resident	Number of admissions per 1,000 population
Ballymoney	£29.21	15,273
Coleraine	£20.69	5,352
Limavady	£31.10	5,756
Moyle	£14.26*	2,802*
<b>Average</b>	<b>£26.63</b>	<b>7,627</b>

*\*Notably the lowest of all Councils*

#### Key Salient points:

- 1. The amount spent per resident in Moyle is lower than all other Councils in Northern Ireland; and**
- 2. The level of usage of existing facilities is lower than all other Councils – this may indicate a lack of extensive facilities to provide sporting options for all age groups or that local residents are travelling to other venues. The latter may be partly explanatory for Ballymoney’s large usage levels.**

In terms of swimming, provision is solely private sector provided. Ballycastle has two private sector swimming pools in the Marine Hotel and SilverCliffs Caravan Park. There are no appropriate or similar facilities in the Moyle area (compared to the remaining Council areas in Northern Ireland) which can provide a facility for the range of swimming needs of residents in the District.

Key points to note from the feasibility report are as follows:

**Tourism Uplift** - Outdoor sports and leisure provision in the district caters for both visitors and residents alike. Golfers of all levels are accommodated at golf clubs at Ballycastle (18 Hole) and Cushendall (9 Hole), whilst Ballycastle also provides Five grass and six all weather tennis courts and outdoor bowling at the SRC. A number of playing pitches are provided in the District. Other Outdoor Activities include cycling, rambling, sea-angling, rafting, rock-climbing & abseiling, available at the Ardelinis Outdoor Adventure in Cushendall, Pony Trekking at Watertop Farm, Ballycastle and Sailing at Cushendall Sailing & Boating Club.

**Optimising Natural Assets** - Ballycastle is home to award winning facilities - its beach and marina. In addition, the area hosts the Giant’s Causeway and many other natural attractions and amenities.

## 1.4 Strategic Context

In order to carry out an appraisal of the proposed project, it is necessary to take account of the particular objectives and aims of the various strategic interest groups in order to identify the context within which the project fits. For this project we have identified the following stakeholders, as having strategic importance to this project:

- Northern Ireland Executive;
- Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL);
- Sport Northern Ireland (SNI);
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB);
- Department for Social Development (DSD); and
- Moyle District Council.

## 1.5 Northern Ireland Executive

### 1.5.1 Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2008- 2011

The Programme for Government (PfG), launched in January 2008, sets out the strategic priorities and key plans for the Northern Ireland Executive, covering the period to 2011. Government notes the need to pursue an innovative and productive economy and a fair society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal health and wellbeing. It must also do this in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment and use resources as efficiently and sustainably as possible.

Five key priorities have been identified, with the economy the top priority. Sustainable economic growth and increased prosperity will provide the opportunities and means to enhance quality of life, reduce poverty and disadvantage, increase wealth, health and wellbeing and build stronger, more sustainable and empowered communities.

**The proposed project will contribute directly to the relevant themes, reflected in the Programme for Government as follows:**

#### ***Growing a Dynamic, Innovative Economy***

The Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2008-2011 states that 'we need to address problems of economic inactivity and ill-health amongst the working age population and promote greater employment opportunities in rural and disadvantaged communities. There will be a focus on growing the private sector, increasing productivity and supporting growth in well paid high skilled jobs. This project focuses on the renewal of tourism, sport and leisure infrastructure within the Moyle Borough Council area.

#### ***Promote Tolerance, Inclusion and Health and Well-Being***

The project will assist in securing and possibly expanding leisure employment at the proposed Tourism / Leisure Facility (e.g. ongoing facility operation, maintenance and management). It may also contain facilities to help provide training, offices and a neutral meeting venue for interaction between Catholic and Protestant Communities.

#### ***Protect and Enhance our Environment and Natural Resources***

There are recognised links between a healthy environment, a thriving economy and a high quality of life. The proposed development of a new Tourism / Leisure Facility is hoping to better meet the health, well-being and sporting needs of both the local population and visitors to the area.

#### ***Invest to Build our Infrastructure***

A modern, efficient infrastructure is an essential requirement for economic and social development. It provides a platform to allow our businesses to compete more effectively, to attract investment and skilled workers and to promote inclusion and access to services and raise the quality of life for everyone. Ballycastle has been identified in NITB's Tourism Masterplan as both a gateway town and a resort town which will be prioritised for funding for infrastructure development as part of the Causeway Coastal Route Signature Project.

*Deliver Modern High Quality and Efficient Public Services*

The Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2008-2011 states that they are committed to taking forward key reform programmes in areas such as health, education, water and planning. Delivering a more flexible and joined up service will ensure we are better able to respond effectively to the needs of local communities and businesses.

1.5.2 *Shaping Our Future - Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025*

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is the national strategy framework tasked with ensuring a better quality of life for now and for future generations. The RDS provides an overarching strategic framework to help achieve a strong spatially balanced economy, a healthy environment and an inclusive society. Specifically, RDS provides the context for:

- Strengthening the competitiveness of the regional economy and tackling social and economic disadvantage;
- Protecting and enhancing the physical, natural and man-made assets of the Region;
- Housing, transport, air and water quality, energy and waste strategies and infrastructure providers and public service promoters; and
- Development plans for guiding public and private investment decisions relating to land use.

**The proposed project fits, in particular with the aim to encourage the further development of recreational and leisure facilities in the Moyle Area, delivering both an economic and social benefit to the area.**

1.5.3 *Lifetime Opportunities: Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy 2007*

Lifetime Opportunities is the NI Executives Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland. Within the strategy it is reported that policy makers all agree about the need to prioritise getting rid of child poverty, **promoting social inclusion** and long-term targets with the necessary resources allocated to meet these. The Strategy states that concentrating effort on reducing inequality in areas such as **social capital** and **childhood ill-health** is likely to produce the greatest results in promoting equal of opportunities and preventing social exclusion from carrying on from one generation to the next. The Strategy sets out a goal “to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in economic, social and cultural life.” In terms of the lack of **physical activity**, being an underlying cause of overweight and obesity, it is reported that there is clear evidence that **some groups within the population undertake less physical activity. It is therefore important to encourage healthy exercise habits, especially for children who are most at risk of poverty. The report highlights that it is essential to reduce inequalities in health between geographic areas, socio-economic and minority groups and to direct spending towards those in greatest need.** It is also highlighted that activities and facilities are needed to divert children from crime and substance abuse. The proposed project is in keeping with the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy as it works to promote social inclusion and health and well-being.



#### 1.5.4 Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 provides that public authorities in carrying out their functions in Northern Ireland shall have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between certain specified individuals and groups, and have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

**With reference to the proposed project the intent is that the proposed redevelopment will not exclude any groups within Section 75.**

#### 1.6 Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

##### 1.6.1 Corporate Plan 2008-2011

Some of the key priorities for DCAL over the next three years include the implementation of a new Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation and major capital programmes in the sports sectors.

Over the period, DCAL will contribute to the Programme for Government Priority: “Promote tolerance, inclusion, health and wellbeing”, via specific goals to increase the number of children and young people participating in sport and physical recreation; and by increasing the number of people with disabilities also participating in sport.

Under the Programme for Government Priority: “Invest to build our infrastructure:” DCAL will also invest in sporting facilities nationwide to ensure a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

To help ensure the success of the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2007-2017, the following associated targets have been set to achieve this objective:

- By 2011 to halt the decline in adult participation in sport and physical recreation;
- By 2011 to have 125,000 children participating in sport and physical recreation; and
- By 2013 to have at least a third of people with disabilities participating in sport and physical recreation.
- Helping to build a modern and efficient infrastructure – through investing £110m in sports facilities by 2011, thereby ensuring a lasting legacy from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The provision of an appropriate indoor Tourism / Leisure Centre would allow the Council to expand its current range of children’s sports programmes and offer a more diverse range of activities to appeal to all sections of the community thereby increasing the potential of sports participation in the area. The provision of the new facility will be operational all year round, providing programmes and activities that will encourage local residents to lead a more active lifestyle.

## 1.7 Sport Northern Ireland

### 1.7.1 *Corporate Plan 2008 – 2011*

Sport NI is the lead facilitator in the development of sport in Northern Ireland and works with its partners to:

- Increase and sustain committed participation, especially amongst young people;
- Raise the standards of sporting excellence and promote the good reputation and efficient administration of sport; and
- Achieve its aims by developing the competencies of its staff who are dedicated to optimising the use of its resources.

Sport NI's Corporate Vision is:

*“Through sport, to contribute to an inclusive, creative, competent, informed and physically active community”.*

Sport NI aims to create and develop programmes and partnerships that will contribute to the following strategic objectives:

- Increased participation in sport and physical activity;
- Improved sporting performances; and
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness in the administration of sport.

**The proposed project in keeping with and closely aligned to the Sport NI aims and objectives outlined above and in particular its contribution to increased participation in sport and physical activity. Moyle is actively bidding for substantial funding within the guise of the Active Communities Cluster.**

### 1.7.2 *Draft Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2007-17*

A new 10 year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation is being developed. This Strategy will complement the government's drive to improve the health of our citizens, as well as maximising the sporting, social and economic opportunities of London 2012.

Through a policy and resource framework, the government commits to taking action that will develop sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland. By enhancing the impact of sport and physical recreation on society, it will be possible to achieve people's aspirations and realise the vision underpinning this document. Led by the Minister responsible for sport and physical recreation, Government will therefore:

- Promote the value, importance and priority of sport and physical recreation;
- Secure the commitment of, and partnership working across, relevant Government Departments, particularly those responsible for health, education and regeneration, in realising the vision for sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland;
- Clarify the roles and secure a commitment to implementation from district councils and other public bodies with responsibility for sport and physical recreation;

- Promote increased participation in sport and physical recreation among under-represented groups;
- Support governing bodies of sport, sports clubs and local communities;
- Promote community cohesion through sport and physical recreation in the context of 'A Shared Future';
- Maximise the benefits for Northern Ireland from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London;
- Establish world class sports services that enable world class performances by Northern Ireland athletes;
- Establish Northern Ireland as a world class venue for sporting events; and
- Develop and protect world class facilities and places for playing and watching sport that are accessible to all.

The Strategy states that in addition to its intrinsic importance, there is a growing awareness of the significant contribution that sport and physical recreation can make to improve society. This contribution can be made in the following areas:

- Community cohesion;
- Public health;
- Education and skills;
- The economy; and
- Northern Ireland's image at home and abroad.

Area	Detail
<b>Community cohesion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport and physical recreation can make a significant contribution to local communities and achieving the vision of a "Shared Future"</li> <li>• Sports volunteers are the single largest group in the voluntary sector in the UK and Ireland</li> </ul>
<b>Public health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing concern in Northern Ireland about public health issues</li> <li>• Recent data suggests that more than 2000 deaths per annum can be attributed to physical inactivity. In the period 1997-2004, the incidence of overweight or obese boys has increased from 13% to 19% and among girls has risen from 20% to 27%<sup>19</sup></li> <li>• Sport and physical recreation, as forms of physical activity, can play a vital role in improving public health</li> <li>• Finland has succeeded in stemming the rise in obesity/overweight levels through a combination of healthier eating and increased levels of participation in sport and physical recreation. In Finland, 70% of the population attain physical activity levels recommended by the Chief Medical Officers in the UK (at least 30 minutes five times per week), compared to only 32% in the UK.</li> </ul>
<b>Education and skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence to suggest that participation in sport and physical recreation can contribute to a child's improved academic performance and perceived self esteem and are effective vehicles for re-engaging marginalised young people</li> <li>• Coach education and sports volunteer support programmes make significant contributions to the skills and competencies available to the community and to employers</li> </ul>
<b>The economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steady decline in traditional industries, and Government is seeking to ensure Northern Ireland's economic sustainability through a more highly developed service sector</li> <li>• Sport and physical recreation are already net financial contributors to the economy and their economic value is firmly established.</li> <li>• The most recent available figures in Northern Ireland show that spending on sport has contributed £293 million per annum to the</li> </ul>



Area	Detail
	<p>economy or 1.92% of Gross Domestic Product. Sports events alone generated a direct economic benefit of almost £8 million per annum in 2003/04 and 2004/05.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's (NITB) growth agenda identifies activity tourism as one of five 'winning themes' which will generate 'competitive advantage for tourism in Northern Ireland'. Indeed, based on 2003 data, NITB estimate that activity tourism contributes c. £30m per annum to the Northern Ireland economy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Northern Ireland's image at home and abroad</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government is using a range of initiatives to improve Northern Ireland's image. All are set in the context of a broader vision for a more sustainable, cohesive and prosperous society which, in turn offers the visitor a world class experience.</li> <li>Sports events and activity tourism provide numerous opportunities for promoting Northern Ireland as a society that is flourishing and proud of its cultural identity.</li> </ul>

### 1.7.3 Strategy on Sport for Young People 2002-2011

This strategy was produced by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and aims to maintain and expand current programmes and to integrate into the strategy, new programmes in response to needs which have emerged in recent years. Four key issues were highlighted:

1. Maintaining and extending the delivery infrastructure;
2. Realising greater social inclusion;
3. Capacity building within communities; and
4. Including 'lifestyle activities' that are important to young people.

**The proposed project in keeping with, and closely aligned to the key issues outlined above, and in particular its contribution to realising greater social inclusion and capacity building within communities.**

## 1.8 Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)

### 1.8.1 Corporate Plan 2008-2011

NITB's Vision is to build a sustainable tourism industry that drives the Northern Ireland economy. The plan is to develop Northern Ireland's full potential for tourism. NITB will make its own 'step change' in terms of what they do directly; where they will work in partnership; and where they will influence others to make most effective use of our resources and fulfil their role and remit.

For NITB, as one of DETI's Non Departmental Public Bodies, the challenge will be to ensure that priorities and resources are directed towards delivering maximum progress in support of the Vision.

The strategic priorities of NITB include brand implementation, looking after unique assets, supporting the industry, growth throughout Northern Ireland and investment in people. Key areas NITB will focus on include:

- Increasing hotel capacity;
- Encouraging golf resort development;
- Development of industry skills;

- Positioning of Northern Ireland for conferences, corporate meetings, incentive and exhibitions; and
- Development of the next Strategic Framework for Action.

### 1.8.2 Tourism

In August 2008, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board reported that the top ten tourist attractions were:

- Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre;
- Belfast Zoological Garden;
- W5;
- Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge;
- Oxford Island National Nature Reserve;
- Historic Walls of Derry;
- Belfast Lough RSPB Reserve;
- Belleek Pottery;
- Ulster Folk & Transport Museum; and
- Ulster American Folk Park.

Seven of the top ten attractions experience an annual increase of visitor numbers. Of the top ten, two are from the Moyle area, the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge.

In a report (December 2008) "Causeway Coast & Glens Tourism Partnership – Tourism Statistics Review", tourism to the Moyle area in 2007 using the STEAM Methodology was as follows:

	Million	% regional
Trips to Moyle	2.927	8%
Days to Moyle	3.24	25%
Spending in Moyle	£108.1	22%

This analysis shows that most trips are day trips and the average spend per trip was £36.93. This level of trips to the Moyle area represents 28% of total trips to the Northern Ireland region, but only 22% of expenditure indicating a lack of opportunities to maximise the economic benefits to the local economy.

### 1.8.3 Causeway Coast and Glens Masterplan

The vision underpinning the Masterplan is that,

*"The Causeway Coast and Glens area will be a 'must-see', world-class tourism destination. It will be known for its scenic beauty, its spectacular coastline and its key jewels. The area will set new standards in environmental management and sustainable tourism, while tourism interests will work closely together to create a quality visitor experience".*

The Masterplan covers the period 2004-13 and has the following key objectives:

- To increase the number of tourists visiting the area;
- To achieve a coordinated approach to tourism in the area;

- To spread the benefits of visits attracted by the Giants Causeway to a wider geographical area; and
- To develop strong attractions elsewhere in the area.

The Action Plan refers to specific objectives within the Ballycastle and Moyle areas. These include:

Action	Rationale	Lead	Support	Cost
Gateway towns and villages programme – enhancement programme for key gateways	Improve quality	Moyle BC	DSD	£50,000 strategy £2m
Implement village renewal/environmental enhancement programmes in selected	Improve quality	Council Communities	DARD RDC CCGHT	£600,000
Reinstate ferry route from Ballycastle to Scotland	Increase visitors Develop infrastructure	Moyle BC	Argyll Bute Scottish Office NIO	£1m +
Traditional resort enhancement programme – major funding and support programme to improve appearance and function of resorts in relation to the needs of international visitors. Actions are:  1. The development of town centre partnerships  2. Reinvigoration strategy for each town (Work with Planning Service to ensure that the Northern Area Plan proposals for the resorts will meet the objectives of the Masterplan)  3. Secure additional funding for resort enhancement.  4. Implementation	Improve quality	Moyle BC	DSD Roads Service Planning Service NITB Invest NI	£50,000 strategy £20 m
Provide Antrim Glens Rambler bus service from Belfast or Larne to Ballycastle and back on an inland route via points of interest to walkers (May to October.)	Develop infrastructure	Translink	DETI	TBC

## 1.9 Department for Social Development

The Department for Social Development (DSD) was established in December 1999 as part of the new Northern Ireland Executive. Prior to the creation of the Executive, DSD's physical regeneration powers were vested in the Department of the Environment. Amongst other matters, DSD has strategic responsibility for urban regeneration.

The Department aims to improve the physical, economic and social environment to breathe new life into our towns and cities. This plays a critical part in regenerating the economy and, both directly and indirectly, creates new job opportunities that will



offer people the chance to move into employment and, for many, out of a cycle of disadvantage and deprivation.

The Department's policy objective for regeneration is to promote and implement a comprehensive approach to tackling social, economic and physical regeneration and redressing disadvantage in cities and towns.

The mission of DSD is to "together, tackling disadvantage, building communities." In support of the mission statement, and to ensure a consistency of approach, the Department has three key strategic objectives:

- To provide a fair system of financial help to those in need and to ensure that parents who live apart maintain their children; encouraging personal responsibility and improving incentives to work and save;
- To promote measurable improvements to housing in Northern Ireland; and
- To improve the physical, economic, community and social environment of neighbourhoods, towns and cities in Northern Ireland with particular emphasis on tackling disadvantage.

Tackling disadvantage and exclusion is a key priority for the Executive and is at the heart of DSD programmes and services. The Department embraces the Executive's priorities in the Programme for Government to grow a dynamic, innovative economy; promote tolerance, inclusion, health and well-being; protect and enhance our environment and natural resources; invest to build our infrastructure; and deliver modern, high quality and efficient public services to create a peaceful, fair and prosperous society.

DSD will build communities, tackle disadvantage and encourage social responsibility by, inter alia, building effective partnerships and promoting the role of the voluntary and community sector, including faith based organisations, in assisting Government to deliver its objectives. A key objective is to promote a strong vibrant and sustainable voluntary and community sector to enable better delivery of services.

For the voluntary and community sector DSD will implement the Advice Services Strategy and promote volunteering and active citizenship; a strong, vibrant and sustainable voluntary and community sector is the objective.

## 1.10 Moyle District Council

### 1.10.1 Northern Area Plan 2016

The Northern Area Plan 2016 is the development plan for the four Council Areas of Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle, an area covering 1,969 square kilometers or about 14% of the total Northern Ireland land area.

The purpose of the Plan is to guide development in the period up to the year 2016 and it has been prepared in the context of the priorities of the Northern Ireland Executive. It comprises two volumes:

**Volume 1:** A broad introduction, strategic plan framework and policies for the Countryside and the Coast.

**Volume 2:** Specific policies relating to each of the individual Council areas.

The European Union and the United Kingdom have embraced the principle of sustainable development encompassing the following objectives:

- Social progress that meets the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

The Plan will provide a framework for development throughout the Northern Plan area, in general conformity with the principles and policies of the Regional Development Strategy, facilitating sustainable growth, meeting the needs of communities and protecting environmental attributes.

The Plan objectives are:

1. To facilitate and promote sustainable development throughout the Northern Plan area in accordance with the Regional Development Strategy.
2. To promote the continued development of Coleraine and Limavady as main hubs, and Ballymoney and Ballycastle as local hubs, consistent with their identified roles in the Regional Development Strategy.
3. To allocate land for housing development within settlements consistent with the Regional Development Strategy.
4. To identify land for housing development at locations that will create compact and more sustainable settlements, with preference for sites within the urban areas.
5. To promote development that enhances the character and identity of existing settlements, avoids urban sprawl and protects the countryside.
6. To facilitate economic development and the creation and maintenance of employment, consistent with New Targeting Social Need.
7. To promote the vitality and viability of town centres.
8. To improve access to, and the range of, employment, commercial, health, education and community services.
9. To promote the integration of public transport, cycle and footpath networks and new development, in order to ease congestion, reduce dependence on the private car, and encourage the use of more sustainable forms of travel, particularly walking and cycling.
10. To protect and enhance the character, quality and biodiversity of natural and man-made environments.
11. To promote equality of opportunity between persons and groups identified under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion or racial groups.

#### 1.10.2 *Moyle District Council Corporate Plan 2005-2009*

The Corporate Plan outlines issues and objectives that the Council intends to embark upon over the next four years. It identifies what the Council believes are priorities for Moyle and what the Council intends to do in response. It builds on what the Council intends to do to achieve Best Value, a key part of the Government's overall modernisation programme.

The Council highlights a number of strategic conclusions drawn from their research. These conclusions will influence both what the Council does for Moyle and how it will do its business.

The Council has concluded that Moyle:

- Is small and disadvantaged making life difficult for many people. The Council's resource and income bases are limited so new resources need to be won for Moyle and its social capital protected and developed.
- Is physically remote and peripheral so that many major services won't have a presence locally and Council service delivery will be costly. There is a need for new approaches to be developed.
- Has an 'old' rather than 'new' economy base and has issues of under-employment and low paid employment so economic development must continue as a priority activity and be based on local strengths.
- Has phenomenal and unique natural assets and resources but is also a growing District meaning social, economic and environmental sustainability has to be at the centre of local planning and development which equally have to make best use of the local tourism potential. Other vital areas of interest to the Council are waste management, open space and Harbour management.
- Has particularly poor housing – a key task will be improving the quality and availability of housing.
- Can look attractive from the outside but be problematic to live in so efforts will need to be made to constantly put 'the case for Moyle' and make it attractive for local people to remain in Moyle.

The Council defines its overall purpose as being:

*“Moyle District Council exists to maintain and improve the well-being of the people of Moyle. It does that by listening to them: by being the voice for Moyle: and by providing good local government services within Moyle. In its work the Council wants to:*

- Defend the uniqueness of Moyle District;
- Be open, friendly and transparent;
- Promote and demonstrate equality and good relations; and
- Make best use of resources.

The Council's planning work has led to the development of four broad Themes which are dealt with in turn in this Plan. A rationale behind each is given along with a clear idea of what the Government intends to do to deliver each. The themes are:

1. Providing civic leadership and encouraging the participation and involvement of local people;
2. Achieving the sustainable growth and development of Moyle;
3. Providing services that people want and appreciate; and
4. Being a well-run Council.

Best Value is an important part of the Government's vision for local government. Councils now have a legal duty to make arrangements for continuous improvement in the way they do their work. In Moyle, the Council has developed a four stage approach:

- Doing the homework;
- Teasing out the issues;
- Planning to improve; and
- Telling how they've done (i.e. reporting back)



### 1.10.3 Strategic Town Development & Action Plan

The role of Ballycastle is changing. It is in that context that the Strategic Development and Action Plan is of such importance. The Plan is aimed to articulate a vision of Ballycastle over the next ten to fifteen years, highlighting how its distinctive strengths should be safeguarded and be central to the future of the town as well as outlining opportunities for development in the short, medium and long term.

A consultation plan was conducted in 2008, from which findings were consolidated. Findings relevant to this project are as follows;

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural Beauty</li> <li>- Gateway Location</li> <li>- Outdoor Activities</li> <li>- Marine and Beach</li> <li>- Good Quality Open Spaces</li> <li>- Daytime Translink Service</li> <li>- Welcoming Environment</li> <li>- Built Heritage</li> <li>- Tennis Courts / Outdoor Sports Facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Traffic Management</li> <li>- Off peak public transport service</li> <li>- Lack of tourist facilities</li> <li>- Lack of indoor facilities</li> <li>- Dependent on service / tourism sector</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism and Leisure Facilities' i.e leisure centre, holiday activity centre</li> <li>- Cultural Tourism</li> <li>- Sustainable Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Failure of Planning Service to uphold policies</li> <li>- Global economy</li> <li>- Shortage of visitor bed spaces</li> <li>- Review of Public Administration</li> <li>- Continued withdrawal of services from rural areas</li> </ul>

A number of objectives were identified including

- Protect the strong community confidence that is key to quality of life for residents and to the warmth of welcome for visitors;
- Safeguard existing facilities and organisations and meet identified needs such as the provision of leisure facilities for young people;
- Identify built and natural heritage assets, protecting those that are in good condition and restoring those that are not;
- Strengthen and diversity the economic activity of the town;
- Establish appropriate connections between the part of the town, minimising the impact of vehicles and maximising the enjoyment and ease of movement for pedestrians and cyclists; and
- Maximise the potential for the town to be sustainable, setting exemplary environmental standards and social, economic and physical principles that allow Ballycastle to adapt to changing demands.

Based on the Regeneration Vision and Concept Plan, a comprehensive Vision for the Town has been developed. In outlining the potential project partners, Moyle District Council is named in the context that its role will be assumed by the successor Council after April 2011, and likewise that DSD's regeneration responsibilities will also transfer to the new authority. One key relevant development from this is the development of the Quay Road area.

A strategic opportunity exists in this location to provide leisure / tourism facilities in such a way that it re-establishes the open vista, whilst connecting the economic and social activity of the two parts of the town. Moyle District Council has made significant progress in its objectives to develop facilities which meets the needs of the community and its visitors. As this project progresses, opportunities to integrate these facilities with improvements to the Quay Road street frontage should be considered. This might appropriately utilise the ground profiles to conceal parking below street level with the public realm of the streetscape extending above it, to maximise the impact of the panoramic views. The leisure / tourism facility would not only include the swimming / leisure pools, café and fitness facilities, but also gallery space, multi purpose rooms for community activities, conferences, etc.

Within the development and constructed against the steep ground profiles it is proposed that extensive multi deck parking be provided. This would serve the needs of the development, but also have the potential to be used as an alternative to the seafront car park to allow it for be used for events during busy periods.

Comprehensive streetscape proposals should complement the wider development .The design of southern elevation would be critical, ensuring that it utilises the sunny aspect and appropriately integrates with, and relates to, the environment of the Tow River.

The vision that is conveyed combines short, medium and long term initiatives. Realising this vision will require the concerted and focussed efforts of the community, voluntary, public and private sector organisations. Significant resources will be required, including budget allocations.

## 1.11 Conclusion

The proposed project fits within the key relevant public policy and strategy documents in the following areas:

- Growing as a community;
- Working for healthier people;
- Delivering leisure amenities;
- Improving communities and physical infrastructure;
- Improving participation in sport; and
- Improving sporting performance.

## 2 MARKET AREA OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Northern Ireland – Overview of Economy

The following section looks at tourism within Northern Ireland and specifically tourism within Ballycastle. The section then looks at Sports in Northern Ireland current leisure facilities offered by Moyle (indoor and outdoor).

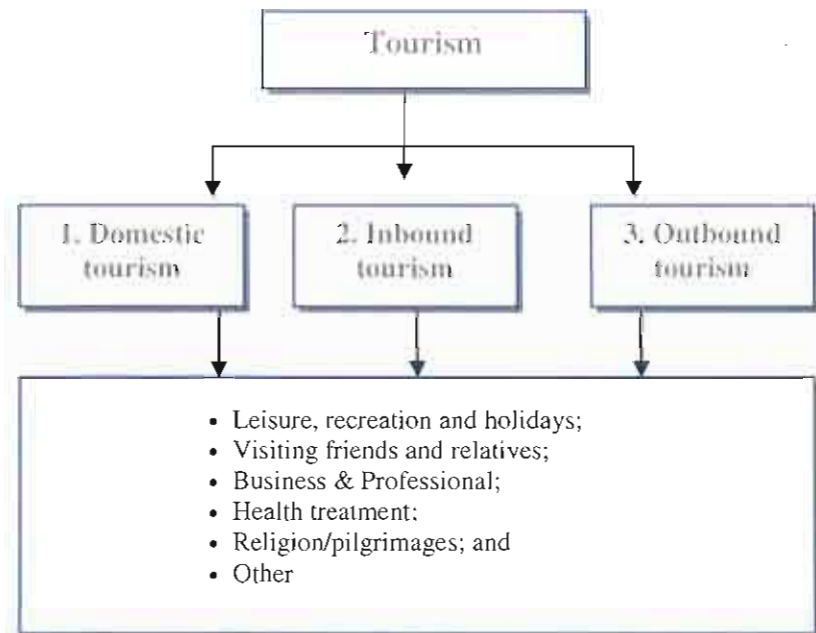
### 2.2 Tourism in Northern Ireland

#### 2.2.1 Definition

Tourism is defined<sup>2</sup> as;

*“The activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment, for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business and other purposes”.*

As shown below it is categorised into three distinct areas, which are outlined below;



#### 2.2.2 Tourism in Northern Ireland – STEAM Reporting

The tourism figures published by the NITB have recently been questioned by the ‘Causeway Coast & Glens Tourism Partnership – Tourism Statistics Review’ Report, published in December 2008.

Part of the scope of the report was to “assess the sustainability & application of data collect... in respect of providing relevant data for the Causeway Coast & Glens Area”. The Report shows an extreme variation in visitor numbers recorded by NITB in 2007 compared to the recommended STEAM method of measurements.

<sup>2</sup> World Trade Organisation (W.T.O)



2007 Data	Trips (m)	Days (m)	Spend (£m)
STEAM	10.60	12.75	483.3
NITB	0.89	3.53	134.2

These show there are considerable differences with STEAM estimating almost 12 times the number of tourists and 3.5 times the expenditure<sup>3</sup>. The NITB estimates do not include any measurement of day visits, which are always a high proportion of any destination's tourist, they only include holidaymakers, and they may underestimate self-catering holidays. This can be further broken down as follows:

2007	Trips (ms)	Days (ms)	Spend (£m)
STEAM Day Visitors	9.46	9.46	258.0
STEAM Staying with Friends	0.55	1.31	55.8
STEAM Non-Serviced	0.20	1.30	69.3
STEAM Serviced Accommodation	0.39	0.67	100.3
<b>STEAM TOTAL</b>	<b>10.60</b>	<b>12.75</b>	<b>483.3</b>
STEAM excluding day visitors	1.14	3.28	225.3
NITB Estimate	0.89	3.53	134.2

STEAM data shows a shorter average length of stay, largely because almost half of staying visits are with friends and relatives, which tend to be short stays.

The table below highlights that the STEAM estimates for the impact of tourism are considerably higher, particularly for Moyle, whose visitor numbers are almost 20 times the size.

	Trips (000s)		Days (000s)		Spend (£m)	
	NITB Estimates	STEAM	NITB Estimate	STEAM	NITB Estimates	STEAM
Ballymena	78	965	512	1,150	13.4	47.7
Ballymoney	29	708	173	795	4.1	25.1
Carrickfergus	62	1,289	260	1,404	8.9	47.2
Coleraine	328	2,837	1,153	3,747	55.4	154.5
Larne	97	526	330	689	11.6	31.3
Limavady	54	862	260	1,037	8.9	43.5
<b>Moyle</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>2,927</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>3,240</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>108.1</b>
Newtownabbey	70	488	306	686	9.9	25.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>10,603</b>	<b>3,535</b>	<b>12,747</b>	<b>134.2</b>	<b>483.3</b>

When shown as a percentage of the total for the region it highlights the increase in relative importance for Moyle. Under NITB estimates, Coleraine is seen as the largest contributor to the total number of trips, followed by Moyle and then Larne. STEAM estimates show Moyle as the largest authority for visitor numbers but with Coleraine generating the most expenditure.

The improvement to Moyle's position is almost entirely due to the inclusion of Day Visitors. When day visitors are excluded from the STEAM analysis, Moyle drops to the 4<sup>th</sup> largest with both Newtownabbey and Ballymena generating more staying visitors.

<sup>3</sup> It must be remembered that they use a fundamentally different research approach and there are not measuring exactly the same behaviour.

	Trips (000s)		
	NITB Estimates	STEAM excl Day Visitors	STEAM total
Ballymena	9%	13%	9%
Ballymoney	3%	5%	7%
Carrickfergus	7%	8%	12%
Coleraine	37%	32%	27%
Larne	11%	9%	5%
Limavady	6%	10%	8%
<b>Moyle</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>28%</b>
Newtownabbey	8%	12%	5%

### 2.3 Tourism in Ballycastle

Ballycastle is a moderate sized market town on the North Antrim coast, with a population of 5,089<sup>4</sup>, with an average age of 36.2 years. It is the main settlement within the Moyle District Council. The area has an unemployment level of 5.5%, which is higher than the Northern Ireland average.

The town provides a limited range of services for the local population although it acts as the administrative centre for the District and its schools serve the majority of the rural hinterland. The town has grown considerably in the past 20 years, with the population more than doubling and a further increase in the holiday population to the town, with a rapid growth in the number of second homes in the past decade.

Ballycastle is viewed as the gateway to the North Coast. It is situated at the foot of the Glens of Antrim and a short distance to some of the most famous tourism sites in all of Ireland, including the Giant's Causeway (15 km west of the town) and Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge, both of which are consistently in the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's top ten visitor attractions.

Visitor numbers to the Giant's Causeway between 2001 and 2006, indicate a 19% rise in visitor numbers since 2005 from 464,243 to 553,063 in 2006.

Ballycastle is a popular tourist destination, with many attractions, including Ballycastle Golf Course, Ballycastle Marina, Rathlin Day Trips, Ballycastle Beach, Fairhead and Bonamargy Friary. Furthermore, it is home to the famous Ould Lammas Fair, which takes place every year in August. It is one of the oldest fairs in Ireland and has taken place, without interruption, for over three centuries. During the fair, the streets in the town are lined with more than 400 stalls selling a wide variety of goods. Accordingly, the population in Ballycastle increases considerably during the summer months, when tourist numbers increase.

It should be noted that the Causeway Coastal Route has gained global recognition in polls and publications around the world, including:

<sup>4</sup> 2001 Census

<p><b>Lonely Planet Blue List - The Best in Travel 2007</b>          “Magnificent vistas, particularly along the Antrim Coast...Witness some bizarre volcanic formations: somehow, over millennia, thousands of hexagonal columns formed, creating a coastline that looks like something out of <i>Myst</i>. It lies along the most windy, breathtaking coastal cliffs.”</p>
<p><b>The Guardian, Travel Edition 2006</b>          Part of the Causeway Coastal Route was ranked by the Guardian as the second most spectacular road trip in the world. <i>“Clinging to the rugged shoreline, the Antrim Coast Road winds through idyllic villages, like National Trust-owned Cushendun, past the foot of the nine glens, under bridges and arches, to the Giant’s Causeway and Dunluce Castle, ending at Portrush. Arguably the most spectacular 60 miles in Britain.”</i></p>
<p><b>Jacob’s Creek</b>          The scenic Antrim coastline was ranked as the fifth most beautiful spot in the world in a consumer poll in November 2006 behind Sydney Opera House, a sunset in Mauritius, Lake Wakatipu in New Zealand and Victoria Falls in Zambia.</p>
<p><b>MSN</b>          The search engine MSN ranked the Glens of Antrim as the second most romantic car tour drive in the UK during February 2007.</p>

2.4 **Access**

**Land** - Ballycastle has an extensive transport network. It is 30 kilometres east of Coleraine, 90 kilometres north of Belfast and 45 kilometres north of Ballymena with good road links to the Northern Corridor. The infrastructure in the region is of a high standard, with easy access from all surrounding locations by road.

Public transport operates effectively between Ballycastle and other main towns and cities. A bus service runs five times daily, except on Sundays, between Belfast and Ballycastle. Furthermore, there is also a private bus company who travel between Belfast and Ballycastle on a Sunday and Friday evening.

The closest train stations are located in Ballymoney, Portrush and Coleraine. These towns are easily accessible to and from Ballycastle.

**Air** - There are three airports within Northern Ireland, from which Ballycastle is easily accessible:

- Belfast International Airport, located approximately 18 miles from Belfast, is served by ten different airlines, to a range of 64 different destinations. Over 5.3 million passengers (2.2% of passengers at all UK airports) travelled through the Belfast International Airport in 2007.
- The George Best Belfast City Airport is located only a couple of miles outside Belfast City Centre and is served by fifteen different airlines, to a range of 29 different destinations. According to the airport’s statistics, the Air Transport Movements are higher in 2007 than they were in 2006 or 2005. Passenger numbers to, and from, Belfast are set to increase further as a result of the development of further routes to and from Belfast.
- Northern Ireland is also served by the City of Derry Airport. The airport is located 7 miles outside the city centre. The airport serves seven different locations, within the UK and Ireland, using two different airline carriers. According to the airport’s statistics, the passenger numbers have increased since 2001, most dramatically from 2005 to 2006 to approximately 350,000 passengers



**Sea** - Ballycastle is also easily accessed by sea, via the ports at Larne and Belfast, both of which are served by Great Britain and the Isle and Man.

Ballycastle is linked to Rathlin Island, the only inhabited offshore island in the Region by a regular ferry service. The harbour, which was enlarged and modernised in the mid 1990s, accommodates the recently reinstated Campbeltown Ferry, providing direct sea links to Scotland.

## 2.5 **Sports in Northern Ireland**

### 2.5.1 *Market Overview*

Sport NI recently documented the three key market failures in terms of the provision of sports facilities in Northern Ireland. These are discussed in turn below:

- Profitability of Investment – there is significant investment required to provide a full range of sports facilities to the general public and many of these facilities do not make a profitable return. As a result the private sector do not invest significantly in sports facilities;
- Equity of Access – the private sector tend to offer ‘exclusivity’ in selling their services to the public and prices often discourage those from lower income groups from participating. This is contrary to Government objectives of ‘inclusivity’ which specifically targets individuals from areas of higher deprivation; and
- Merit Good – many of the benefits derived by participation in sport are wider benefits to society, including improved levels of health (and hence potential savings to the Health Service) and an enhanced image of Northern Ireland. These wider benefits are not captured by the private sector facilities providers, however some are captured by Government. Therefore there is an enhanced justification for the public sector to provide some of these services.

Furthermore, a recent review of the current state of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland concluded with four key findings:

- Participation – against a back drop of a need for moderate intensity physical activity at least 5 times per week, there are a number of participation issues which continue to exist. This includes disparity between men and women; those higher and lower socio-economic groups; and people with and without a disability;
- Sport in the Community – sport can play an important part in developing local communities. However progressing community programmes to club and governing body organised activity remains underdeveloped. Sport can also bring both sides of the community together and can act as a catalyst for cross community working;
- Sport in Education – in schools there has been an emphasis on competition and historically a restriction in the choice of sports available therefore giving some people a negative experience of sport from an early age. In addition, 64,000 students enrolled in higher education have many and varied opportunities to

become involved in sport, however 87,000 students enrolled in further education have much fewer opportunities; and

- Sports Facilities – in general Northern Ireland has a relatively high number of sports facilities. These facilities are targeted at community level.

### 2.5.2 *The Values of Sport*

People in Northern Ireland value sport and physical recreation as an important dimension of their culture<sup>5</sup>. Interest in sport and physical recreation spans the entire community. People value the chance to play, compete, spectate and volunteer and there is evidence to suggest that they would do so more often given the opportunity and if barriers were removed<sup>6</sup>

All of these activities offer lifelong enjoyment and fulfillment. People enjoy sport and physical recreation in a range of settings including the home, schools and colleges, universities, the work place and the community. They also value the opportunities for participation afforded by Northern Ireland's rich and varied natural environment<sup>7</sup>. Sport and physical recreation provides heroes, heroines and moments of inspiration which we collectively celebrate. People value the fact that sport and physical recreation can promote important cultural values in society, including honesty, fair play, respect, tolerance and teamwork.

The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport & Physical Recreation 2007-2017 states that in addition to its intrinsic importance, there is a growing awareness of the significant contribution that sport and physical recreation can make to improve society (see Section 1.7.2).

### 2.5.3 *Sports Facilities – The Challenge*

Facility providers are challenged by rising public expectations, new technical standards, increased maintenance costs and legislative change; however there is limited exchequer and other public funding available for facility development in Northern Ireland.

Many of the major sports facilities in Northern Ireland fall significantly short of modern health and safety requirements<sup>8</sup>. The Sports Council and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure are currently in Year Three of a 10 year investment programme to address this matter.

The first Northern Ireland Sports Facilities Strategy is being prepared. Initial findings indicate that, **at both community and high performance levels, Northern Ireland is under-provided for, in comparison with other regions in the UK and Europe.** Based on current data, approximately 65% of the population in Northern Ireland live within a 20 minute travel time of an accredited, high quality multi sport facility. The purpose of the Sports Facilities Strategy will be to ensure that future provision meets regional needs more effectively.

<sup>5</sup> DCAL (December 2004). The Fans' Perspective – Summary findings of independent research on the views and experiences of soccer fans in Northern Ireland

<sup>6</sup> DCAL (February 2003), Barriers to Participation in Culture, Arts and Leisure

<sup>7</sup> Genesis Strategic Management Consultants (on behalf of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL)). (May 2006) Strategy for Sport in Northern Ireland Testing Report

<sup>8</sup> Scott, P. (1997). A Report Into Safety Arrangements at Larger Sporting Venues in Northern Ireland

## 2.6 Current Council Spend on Recreation

The table below illustrates the current annual spend on indoor and outdoor sport and recreation by Moyle Council.

	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost
Outdoor Sports and Recreation	£50,242	£25,207	£25,035
Indoor Sports and Recreation	£269,553	£31,469	£238,083

## 2.7 Current Moyle Sporting Provision - Outdoor

### 2.7.1 Outdoor Sports Facilities

Recent outdoor provision has been made at Quay Road Recreation area with a floodlit astro turf pitch and grass playing pitches. The project was funded through the 'PE and Sport in Schools Programme' administered on an Education and Library Board area basis.

Outdoor sports and leisure provision in the district caters for both visitors and residents alike. Golfers of all levels are accommodated at golf clubs at Ballycastle (18 hole) and Cushendall (9 hole), whilst Ballycastle also provides five grass and six allweather tennis courts and outdoor bowling at the Sheskburn Recreation Centre. A number of playing pitches are provided in the District.

Other outdoor activities include rafting, rock-climbing & abseiling, available at the Ardclinis Outdoor Adventure in Cushendall, Pony Trekking at Watertop Farm, Ballycastle and Sailing at Cushendall Sailing & Boating Club.

Ballycastle is home to two European Blue Flag Winning Facilities – its beach and Marina.

Collectively there are a few schools with outdoor pitches, 3 have junior pitches and 1 has a mini football pitch. There were no cricket, rugby or hockey pitches. There were two schools that had senior sized pitches (one football and one GAA); both these schools have community use on their pitches.

These pitches were described as invaluable and were utilised on average two or three times a week. Ten schools had a multi use games area (varying from full size hockey pitch to a small tarmac area that was used for all leisure activities).

Two were rated as very good by the schools, three were of average quality and five were rated as poor/very poor.

### 2.7.2 Outdoor Tourism Facilities

The region of Northern Ireland is famous the world over for its history and tourist attractions. County Antrim is home to some of the most famous scenery in the world including the nine Glens of Antrim, the Giants Causeway and the Carrick – a – Rede Rope Bridge.

In 2007, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board reported that the top ten tourist attractions were:



Attraction	Visitor Numbers
Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	712,714
Belfast Zoological Gardens	294,935
W5	247,506
Carrick – a – Rede Rope Bridge	222,613
Oxford Island National Nature Reserve	216,713
Historic Walls of Derry	213,415
Belfast Lough RSPB Reserve	210,000
Belleek Pottery	171,569
Ulster Folk & Transport Museum	168,866
Ulster American Folk Park	157,325

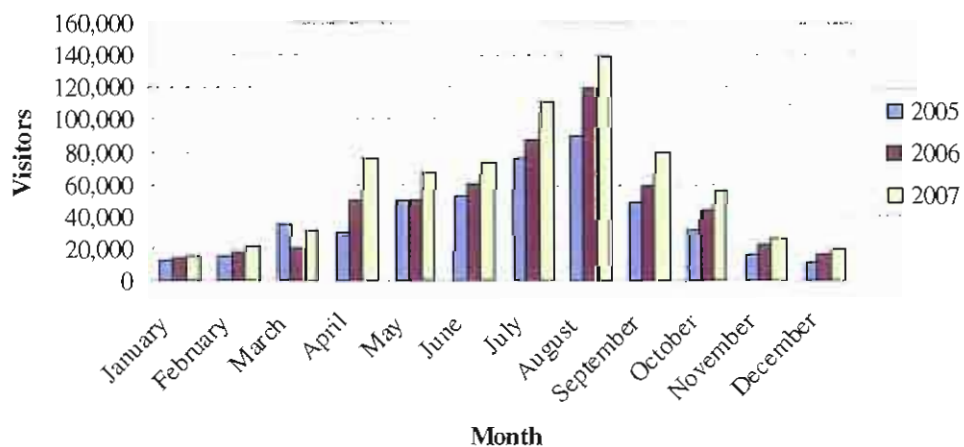
Of the top ten tourist attractions, two are from the Moyle area, the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge. 2007 saw seven of the top ten attractions experience an annual increase.

Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre - A World Heritage site and National Nature Reserve 12 miles from Ballycastle. The three Causeways are made up of approximately 40, 000 hexagonal stone columns and have astonished visitor's for centuries. The visitor centre provides a multi lingual interpretative Audio-Visual Presentation. There is also a Tourist Information Office with All Ireland Accommodation Reservation Service, Bureau de Change and Craft & Souvenir Shop.

The National Trust shop and tea room also form a part of the complex. Entrance to the Causeway is free but there is a car parking charge.

Year	Visitor Numbers
2000	395,24
2001	383,133
2002	406,801
2003	398,977
2004	445,327
2005	464,243
2006	553,063
2007	712,714

Monthly Figures 2005 - 2007



From the above tables it is clear the visitor centre retains significant numbers (approx. 80,000) in the extended period of May and September, which in itself suggests an extended visitor season.

**Carrick – a – Rede Rope Bridge** - A Limestone headland and former quarry, with coastal walks leading to Carrick-a-Rede. The swinging rope bridge which is put up each spring by Salmon fishermen. The bridge is normally taken down at the beginning of November.

**Roe Valley Country Park** also came third in the top ten participation country / forest parks and gardens throughout Northern Ireland with visitor numbers of 300,000.

## 2.8 **Moyle Sporting Provision - Indoor**

### 2.8.1 *Indoor Sports Facilities*

Moyle District Council indoor recreation provision is made predominantly at Sheskburn Recreation Centre in Ballycastle and community facilities in Bushmills and Mosside. Ballycastle also has two private sector swimming pools in the Marine Hotel and Silver Cliffs Caravan Park. The district has **no public swimming provision**.

Neighbouring provision includes Coleraine Leisure Centre (18 miles); Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney (16 miles); Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena (25 miles).

The lack of indoor/wet weather leisure facilities in the district is acknowledged by the Department of the Environment's District Council annual Performance Indicators which highlight Moyle District Council as having the poorest indoor leisure provision compared to all other 25 Councils in Northern Ireland.

Eleven schools had some use of indoor facilities (varying from gymnasium to a multi purpose room used for PE lessons, breaks, classes and dinner). Three schools had secured community use of their indoor facilities by groups such as the guides and local clubs.

The importance of these gyms was widespread due to the fact there was such a reliance on them for a wide range of activities although on the whole they were mainly described as inadequate for sporting activities.

**The lack of swimming pool in the District, and in particular the main public leisure facility, highlights the need for new provision.**

### 2.8.2 *Indoor Tourism Facilities*

Bushmills Community Centre and Mosside Community Centre both fall under Community Services within the Council. The centres are available for hire to any groups or individuals such as sport (football pitches), salsa, weight watchers, community meetings or educational purposes such as playgroup or after schools, subject to availability.

Sheskburn Recreation Centre offers a fitness suite, and astro tuft pitch / tennis courts. Sheskburn Recreation Centre has not been purpose built as a Leisure Centre, it is part of a converted school building and whilst it has functioned for many years as a venue

for a range of sports and other activity, the reality is that it is not fit for purpose as a leisure venue, in the standards and extent that is available in every other Council area in Northern Ireland, and is expected by the public.

Ballycastle Tourist Information Centre is located in the centre of Ballycastle. Over the counter enquiries for the period 2007-2008 within Ballycastle Tourist Information Centre were calculated at 19,529 enquiries. All other enquiries are shown below:

<b>Ballycastle Tourist Information Statistics – All Enquiries</b>					
<b>Month</b>	<b>06-07</b>	<b>07-08</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>06-07</b>	<b>07-08</b>
January	1,115	1,167	July	5,017	5,200
February	1,190	1,226	August	4,819	4,999
March	3,749	3,779	September	4,361	4,587
April	3,865	3,921	October	2,544	2,601
May	5,272	5,623	November	649	770
June	4,643	4,807	December	872	926



### 3 PROPOSED DEMAND

#### 3.1 Determination of Proposed Facility

In order to determine the extent of future demand for the proposed leisure and tourism facility a feasibility study was undertaken by Strategic Leisure. Their methodology included questionnaires, telephone surveys and focus groups. The schedule of accommodation (March 2007) was an agreed output of the feasibility study which forms the basis of this section.

Following a questionnaire at SRC in September/October 2006, the following results were collated:

Frequency of visit	
Daily	16%
2 or more times per week	38%
Weekly	14%
Fortnightly	4%
Monthly	0%
Occasionally	14%
Mode of transport	
Car	78%
Taxi	0%
Bus	0%
Motor Bike	2%
Walk	16%
Bicycle	4%
Journey time to facility	
0-5 mins	38%
5-10 mins	12%
10-20 mins	42%
Over 20 mins	8%
Reason for visit	
Class (Activity/Fitness)	44%
Fitness Suite	30%
Football	10%
Other	16%

Key salient points:

- The majority of current users utilise the facility around 1 or 2 times a week;
- Most users travel by car and one in ten would walk (public transport is not a key mode of transport);
- Most users live in close proximity to the facility with 50% living within 10 minutes; and
- Organised classes and the fitness suite were the primary reason for the visit.

Accessibility					
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	No opinion	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Availability of facilities	48%	34%	12%	4%	2%
Range of facilities	28%	44%	16%	10%	2%
Ease of booking	46%	28%	18%	8%	0%
Range of activities	24%	40%	30%	4%	2%
Availability of car parking	58%	24%	16%	2%	0%
Opening times	32%	34%	26%	6%	2%

Key salient points:

- Most users were very satisfied (34%) with the availability of facilities and fairly satisfied (48%) with the range of facilities.
- The majority of users were satisfied (74%) with the booking processes;
- Most people are satisfied with the range of activities and the facility opening times; and
- Over four fifths (82%) of respondents were satisfied with the car parking.

Quality of facilities/services offered					
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	No opinion	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Overall quality of facilities used	28%	40%	24%	2%	2%
Overall quality of equipment used	30%	20%	30%	20%	0%

Key salient points:

- A low percentage of users were dissatisfied with the overall quality of facilities used; and
- There was a mixed response of satisfaction regarding the equipment in the facility.

Additionally:

- Of the 48% who utilise other facilities, 26% use the Marine Country Club, predominantly for use of the swimming pool (12.5% of user's surveyed use swimming facilities at the Marine Country Club).
- Most users would put the development of new facilities as the most important priority for the Council followed by investment into current facilities, there was also some importance placed on the development of services.
- A new swimming pool was the key recommendation to be included within the development of new facilities. New investment in current facilities was primarily focused on providing better lighting in the car park and the exterior of the facility improving the safety.

<b>If new facilities were provided by the Council, would people be prepared to:</b>	
<b>Travel further to access them</b>	
Yes	50%
No	50%
<b>Pay more to access them</b>	
Yes	66%
No	34%

Opinions were split on whether users would travel further to access new facilities however the majority of respondents would pay more to access them.

### 3.2 **Proposed Schedule of Accommodation**

Appendix I shows a map of the proposed schedule of Accommodation.

Strategic Leisure recommended that the new provision should include:

- Tourist Information Centre – moving from town centre & rationale for inclusion
- Café – Franchised by Council
- Children’s Centre – possibly franchised by Council
- Pool – 25m x 13.5m (Six lanes);
- Health Suite;
- Fitness Suite;
- Multi Activity Space;
- Treatment Rooms; and
- Changing and Administration.



<b>Schedule of Accommodation</b>	
<b>Entrance</b>	<p>Alternative entrances for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General public from car park; and</li> <li>• Separate access for school users.</li> </ul>
<b>Tourist Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjacent to reception and available to all visitors without having to pass through control barriers.</li> </ul>
<b>Information</b>	
<b>Café</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Café/wine bar for 60 to 70 covers;</li> <li>• Kitchen and servery area;</li> <li>• Highly visible at entrance to building;</li> <li>• Views into pool hall; and</li> <li>• Possible franchised facility.</li> </ul>
<b>Children's Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Drop-in' centre for up to 45 children;</li> <li>• Children's toilets plus stores; and</li> <li>• Possible franchised facility.</li> </ul>
<b>Reception</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception desk and control barrier;</li> <li>• Back – up office; and</li> <li>• Toilets</li> </ul>
<b>Pool Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25m x 13.5m 6 lane pool;</li> <li>• Leisure pool with beach, flume and slide; and</li> <li>• Optimal moveable floor and bulk head to main pool to cater for wide variety of use ranging from competitive swimming to recreational bathing in shallow water.</li> </ul>
<b>Health Suites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plunge pool with water features;</li> <li>• Relaxation area;</li> <li>• Sauna Room;</li> <li>• Steam Room;</li> <li>• Saunarium;</li> <li>• Impulse showers;</li> <li>• Toilets; and</li> <li>• Directly accessible from pool surround</li> </ul>
<b>Wet Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Village change' – unisex cubicles and lockers;</li> <li>• Visible from pool hall to facilitate supervision;</li> <li>• Two no. group changing rooms – capacity 24 people each room;</li> </ul>

<b>Schedule of Accommodation</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets; and</li> <li>• Showers.</li> </ul>
<b>First Aid Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjacent pool ball; and</li> <li>• Accessible for ambulances.</li> </ul>
<b>Fitness Suite</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40-45 work stations; and</li> <li>• Visible from car park.</li> </ul>
<b>Treatment Rooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two no. treatment/consultation rooms; and</li> <li>• Possible franchised facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Multi Activity Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large activity area 29m x 4.5m capable of being subdivided into two or three spaces with folding acoustic screens; and</li> <li>• Capable of accommodation range of activities including;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aerobics</li> <li>- Dance</li> <li>- Keep fit</li> <li>- Martial arts</li> <li>- Functions</li> <li>- Fashion shows</li> <li>- Exhibitions</li> <li>- Drama groups for audiences up to 150 people</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Dry Changing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two no. group changing rooms – capacity 24 people each room</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General administration Office; and</li> <li>• Staff Room.</li> </ul>
<b>Plant Rooms</b>	

## 4 COMPARATOR FACILITIES

### 4.1 Council / Local Government

#### 4.1.1 Overview

Currently there are leisure facilities located at Skeskburn Recreation Centre, Coleraine Leisure Centre (18 miles), Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney (16 miles) and Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena (25 miles).

#### 4.1.2 Sheskburn Recreation Centre

Sheskburn Recreation Centre has not been purpose built as a Leisure Centre, it is part of a converted school building and whilst it has functioned for many years as a venue for a range of sports and other activity, the reality is that it is not fit for purpose as a leisure venue, in the standards and extent that is available in every other Council area in Northern Ireland, and is expected by the public.

Sheskburn Recreation Centre offers a variation in activities including Gymnastics, Irish Dancing, Spin Cycle, Aerobics, Football and Circuits. An astro turf pitch and tennis courts (floodlit if required) are located at the centre.

#### *Opening Hours*

Day	Opening Time
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	3.00pm – 10.00pm
Wednesday	3.00pm – 10.00pm
Thursday	3.00pm – 10.00pm
Friday	3.00pm – 10.00pm
Saturday	10.30am – 4.30pm
Sunday	Closed

#### *Staffing<sup>9</sup>*

It was indicated Sheskburn Recreation Centre usually has at least four members of staff on at one time. This consists of one full time receptionist, two attendants and one full time senior attendant.

#### *Admission Charges*

Prices for the Fitness suite are £3.00 for members and £3.50 for non members. A membership scheme is available with an annual cost of £120.

<sup>9</sup> Consultation with Damian McAfee (4th November 2008)



Pricing Policy	Rate per Month
Adult Membership	£10.00
Junior Membership	£5.00
Family Membership	£20.00

From the user survey it is suggested that only 28% of respondents were very satisfied with the range facilities offered by Sheskburn Recreation Centre and 48% utilise other facilities. 68% of respondents visit 1-2 times/week, with 50% of users living within 10 minutes of the centre. 75% of respondents stated their primary reason for visiting the centre was for organized classes and for the fitness suite.

12.5% of users surveyed use swimming facilities at the Marine Country Club.

#### *Income and Costs*

	Indoor
Income	£31,469
Operating Cost	£156,363
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>£124,893</b>

#### 4.1.3 *Coleraine Leisure Centre*

Coleraine Leisure Centre is situated 18 miles from Ballycastle. The area of the centre is estimated as 3,515m<sup>2</sup> (ground floor) and 3,840m<sup>2</sup> (first floor) providing actual usable space of approximately 5,200m<sup>2</sup>. The facilities offered include;

Coleraine Leisure Centre Facilities	
Main Sports Hall (32.5m x 23m)	Swimming Pool (25m)
Minor Hall	Sauna/Sunbed Suite
Committee Room	Squash Courts
Learner Pool	Restaurant
Slides	Fitness Suite (Pulse)
	Health Suite

The Centre's Gallery Health Suite has a Steam Room, Sauna and Spa Pool, along with a relaxation area and two cold water needle showers, with easy access to the 'Super pools.'

#### *Opening Hours*

Day	Opening Times
Monday – Friday	9.00am – 10.00pm
Saturday	9.30am – 6.00pm
Sunday	2.00pm – 6.00pm

#### *Admission Charges*

Day	Price per Usage
Swimming - Adult	£3.00
- Child	£2.20
Five-a-side Hall	£30.50 (1 hour)
Gym	£198 per year £4.00 / £5.75 (off peak / peak)

**Staffing**

Position	Permanent Staff	Other
General Manager	1	-
Assistant Managers	3	-
Centre Attendants / Lifeguards	15	13 Casual
Fitness Instructors	4	-
Swimming Instructors	6	-
Creche Attendants	1	1 Agency
Maintenance Operator	1	-
Admin Assistants	2	-
Receptionists	6	4 Casual
Cleaners	3	-
Exercise Class Instructors	8	-

**Operating Costs & Income**

	£
<i>Operating Costs</i>	
- Employee Costs	798,122
- Premises Costs	365,135
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,163,257</b>
<i>Income</i>	
- Swimming Pool	178,407
- Other	369,185
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>547,592</b>
Revenue Deficit	(615,665)

**Sports Development / Schools Programmes**

*School Swimming* – approximately 22.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday.

*Sports Hall Activities* – approximately 16 hours per week, Monday to Friday (including five-a-side, badminton, archery, basketball, volleyball and squash)

*Fitness Suite* – approximately 9 hours per week, Monday to Friday.

4.1.4 *Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre, Ballymoney*

The Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre is situated 16 miles from Ballycastle and offers the following facilities over a 5,132m<sup>2</sup> floor plan.

Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre Facilities	
Health Suite	Sauna and Steam Room
2 Swimming Pools	Spa Pool
Squash Courts	Snooker
Fitness Studio (Pulse)	Cardio Theatre including 48" television screens
Dance Studio	Conservatory restaurant
Free car Parking	Access for disabled

### Opening Hours

Day	Opening Times
Monday	9.00am – 10.00pm
Tuesday	8.15am – 10.00pm
Wednesday	9.00am – 10.00pm
Thursday	8.15am – 10.00pm
Friday	9.00am – 10.00pm
Saturday	9.00am – 5.30pm
Sunday	1.30pm – 5.30pm

### Admission Charges

Activity	Cost
Swimming - Adult	£4.20
- Child	£2.80
Five-a-side Hall	£24.60 (1 hour)
Gym	£349 per year

### Staffing

Position	Staff
General Manager / Head of Leisure Services	1
Recreation Officer / Assistant Manager	3
Senior Recreation Assistant	5
Recreation Assistant	13
Fitness Instructors	5
Sports Development Staff	3 (inc 1 placement student)
Swimming Teachers	2
Creche Attendants	None
Maintenance Officers	1
Admin Assistants / Office Manager	-
Clerical Officers / Receptionists	6
Coaching Staff (on call)	15
Cleaners	4

### Operating Costs & Income

	£
<i>Operating Costs</i>	
- Employee Costs	693,946
- Premises Costs	621,994
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,315,940</b>
<i>Income</i>	
- Swimming Pool	148,000
- Gym	183,000
- Other	310,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>641,000</b>
Revenue Deficit	(674,940)
	<b>Usages</b>
Total Annual Throughput	454,000
- Swimming Pool Usage	80,000
- Halls Usage	98,000



**Sports Development / Schools Programmes**

Activity	Hours
Swimming Pool	500 Per Year
Indoor Recreation	10 hours per week, 20 weeks per year
EMU Projects	20 hours per year
Coach Education	Ad Hoc

4.1.5 *Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Ballymena*

One of the largest Leisure Centres in Northern Ireland (6,228m<sup>2</sup>), Seven Towers is situated in the heart of Ballymena, 25 miles from Ballycastle. This is a well established leisure centre and was recently refurbished in 2007.

**Opening Hours**

Day	Opening Times
Monday, Wednesday, Friday	8.00am – 10.00pm
Tuesday & Thursday	8.45am – 10.00pm
Saturday	9.00am – 5.30pm
Sunday	12noon – 5.00pm

**Admission Charges**

Activity	Cost
Swimming - Adult	£3.30
- Child	£2.45
Five-a-side Hall	£22.75 (45 mins)
Gym	£349 per year £10.40 (Initial) / £4.10 (thereafter)

**Staffing**

Position	Quantity
Manager	1
Duty Officers/Duty Managers	2
Senior Attendants	2
Fitness Instructors	2
Community Sports Development Staff	2
Swimming Teachers	6
Maintenance Supervisor	1
Administrative Officer	1
Receptionists	4
Plant Operator	1

**Operating Costs / Income**

	£
<i>Operating Costs</i>	
- Employee Costs	673,738
- Premises Costs	567,086
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,240,834</b>
<i>Income</i>	
- Swimming Pool	£273,276
- Other	£235,655
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£508,934</b>
Revenue Deficit	(£731,903)
	<b>Usages</b>
Total Annual Throughput	294,897

***Sports Development / Schools Programme***

Schools programmes operated within the Leisure Facility include summer / Easter Scheme, Schools Swimming Programme and use of dry facilities including sportshall, fitness suite, squash and dance etc.

Sports Development is carried out as a separate entity. Ballymena Borough Council has a Community Sports Development Officer who would introduce sport into the community.

4.1.6 *Summary*

Centre	Hours Open	Income	Costs	Revenue Deficit	Size (m <sup>2</sup> )
Coleraine	77.5	£547,592	£1,163,257	(£615,665)	9,355
Joey Dunlop	78.0	£641,000	£1,315,940	(£674,940)	5,132
Ballymena	81.0	£508,931	£1,240,834	(£731,903)	6,228

4.2 **Private Sector**

4.2.1 *Marine Hotel, Ballycastle*

The Marine Hotel occupies a prime position overlooking the harbour and marina. Marine Country Club is situated within walking distance from the Marine Hotel, with Hotel Residents enjoying unlimited complimentary use of the Marine Country Club's facilities.

The club offers a 20m swimming pool, sauna, Jacuzzi, steam room & fitness suite. Personal trainers are available to assist in formulating individualised fitness programmes.

Circuit training in the fitness suit complements more relaxing activities such as reflexology and aromatherapy, which are available by appointment. Sunbed sessions are available and children are catered for with the Fit Kidz Club.

The Club is open to non-residents and various membership packages are available allowing participation in varied programmes.

Membership fees for the Country Club are as follows;

User	Fee <sup>10</sup>
Individual	£35 per month
Joint	£55 per month
Family	£50 per month
One Parent User	£40 per month
Student (16 – 19 years)	£75 for 3 months (£25 per month)
Seniors	£200 per year (£17 per month)

<sup>10</sup> Based on three month minimum

#### 4.2.2 *Silvercliffs Caravan Park*

Silvercliffs Holiday Village is situated on a mature 28 acre park. Within the surroundings of Silvercliff Caravan Park there is an Indoor Pool, bar and lounge and a kid's play area.

#### 4.3 **Redevelopment of Marine Hotel**

The current Marine Hotel comprises the following facilities:

- 30 ensuite bedrooms;
- Restaurant facilities; and
- Conference facilities.

The new improved and larger hotel proposed will offer guests:

- 200 bedroom in a branded four star hotel
- **Leisure facilities;**
- Retail facilities;
- Restaurant facilities, and
- Ancillary conference provision

In order to facilitate the redevelopment of the proposed site, the existing Marine Hotel will be demolished, whilst further adjacent land holdings will be used to enable the development of a larger, higher specification hotel.

#### 4.4 **Conclusion**

This section shows details of other council facilities provided in neighbouring areas and private sector provision. This shows Ballycastle has limited leisure provision, and for those wishing to make use of a swimming pool, they must travel or make the use of private facilities in the Marine Hotel.



## 5 OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE FACILITY

### 5.1 Introduction

In consultation with Damian McAfee (4<sup>th</sup> November 2008) it was assumed the operation and management of the Moyle Leisure Facility would be based on operation and management of similar sized leisure facilities in the neighbouring areas. The following shows proposed staffing, marketing, pricing policy and opening hours of Moyle Leisure Facility.

### 5.2 Staffing

Strategic Leisure has suggested that for a Tourism / Leisure Centre of the proposed size, approximately 37 full time staff would be required, as shown below:

Position	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility (proposed)
Manager	1	1	1	1
Assistant Manager	3	3	-	-
Senior Recreation Assistant	-	5	-	2
Recreation Assistant	-	13	-	9
Recreation Officers	-	-	-	3
Duty Officers/Duty Managers	-	-	2	-
Senior Attendants	15 (+13 Casual)	-	2	-
Leisure Attendants	-	-	-	-
Gymnastics Coach	-	-	-	2
Assistant Gymnastic Coach	-	-	-	1
Fitness Instructors	4	5	2	2
Community Sports Development Staff	-	-	2	-
Swimming Teachers	6	2	6	6
Creche Attendants	1 (+1 Agency)	-	-	5
Maintenance Supervisor	1	-	1	-
Administrative Officer	2	-	1	1
Receptionists	6 (+4 Casual)	6	4	4
Cleaners	3	4	-	-
Coaching Staff	-	15	-	-
Sports Development Staff	-	3	1	-
Exercise Class Instructors	8	-	-	-
Plant Operator	-	-	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50 (+18 Casual/ Agency)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37</b>

### 5.3 Marketing

In consultation with Damien McAfee (4<sup>th</sup> November 2008) it was stated marketing for the current Leisure Facility is currently conducted in-house with some use of a local printing company. However with the development of a larger facility it is likely all the marketing would be undertaken by an outside printing company.

### 5.4 Pricing Policy

#### Swimming

Pricing Policy	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility (proposed)
Adult	£3.00	4.20	3.30	£3.50
Child	£2.20	2.80	2.45	£2.50

#### Five-a-side Hall

Pricing Policy	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility (proposed)
Five-a-side	£30.50	£24.60	£22.75	£28.50

#### Gym Membership

Pricing Policy	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle Leisure Facility
Membership (per annum)	£198	£349	£349.50	£298
Usage	£4.00/£5.75	£37/ £10	£10.40/ 4.10	£4.10

### 5.5 Opening Hours

Day	Coleraine Leisure Facility	Joey Dunlop Centre, Ballymoney	Seven Towers Centre, Ballymena	Moyle (Proposed Hours) <sup>11</sup>
Monday	9am – 10pm	9am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Tuesday	9am – 10pm	8.15am – 10pm	8.45am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Wednesday	9am – 10pm	9am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Thursday	9am – 10pm	8.15am – 10pm	8.45am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Friday	9am – 10pm	9am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	8am – 10pm
Saturday	9.30am – 6pm	9am – 5.30pm	9am – 5.30pm	8am – 6pm
Sunday	2pm – 6pm	1.30pm – 5.30pm	12noon – 5pm	1pm – 6pm

<sup>11</sup> Details supplied by Damian McAfee 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008

## 6 FINANCIAL PROJECTION ASSUMPTIONS

### 6.1 Projected Development Phase Costs

Costs were provided by B3 Gibson Hamilton in March 2009. Full costs are shown in Appendix II.

		m <sup>2</sup>	Cost
<b>Internal</b>	Swimming Pool	1,393	£3,236,400
	Health Suite	132	£422,400
	Café	327	£543,000
	Crèche	60	£84,000
	Tourist Information	45	£56,250
	Reception / Circulation Area	358	£447,500
	Plant Room / Possible Plant Area	290	£290,000
	Multi Activity Space	358	£574,000
	Beauty Treatment	42	£52,500
	Fitness Suite	281	£449,600
	Dry Changing	178	£222,500
	Foyer & Circulation @ 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	160	£160,000
	Admin	153	£191,250
	Lift	1	£55,000
	<b>External</b>	Sports Hall	808
Car parking <sup>12</sup>		415	684,750
Site Access Road		-	£100,000
Landscaping		-	£100,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>£8,665,400</b>	
<b>Other</b>	Contingency (5%)	-	£432,270
	Professional Fees (12%)	-	£1,137,334
	Other Fees	-	£40,000
	<b>Cost of Building</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>£10,276,004</b>

Assumptions include:

- Abnormal foundations, removal of contaminants, archaeological issues;
- Abnormal costs associated with mains and sewer connections e.g. site sub station;
- Off site roadworks;
- Discharge of onerous planning conditions;
- Renewable energy allowances excluded;
- Boundary treatment e.g. acoustic fencing;
- Mini soccer pitches excluded; and
- Excludes loose fixtures, fittings and equipment, catering equipment and café fit out.

<sup>12</sup> Includes an additional 180 car parking spaces and a coach park



## 6.2 Usage Levels and Income – STEAM Tourism Figures

### 6.2.1 Project Income

The projected annual income is as follows:

User Group	£	Reference
Tourism – Swimming	1,669,702	6.3.3
Tourism – General	364,500	
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>2,034,202</i>	
Local Residents – Swimming	55,766	6.3.4
Local Residents – General	31,649	
Parties / Functions	5,472	
Outsourced / Franchise	8,000	
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>100,887</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,135,089</b>	

### 6.2.2 Tourism Usage - STEAM

Annual visitors are estimated using the STEAM methodology as 3,240,000 (TTC 2009 report), with seasonality as follows:

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	84,240	May	356,400	September	356,400
February	97,200	June	356,400	October	226,800
March	226,800	July	518,400	November	97,200
April	226,800	August	609,120	December	84,240

#### Assumptions:

- I Assume 21% will use the water facility in April to October; and
- II Assume 5% will use the leisure facility throughout the year;

*Assumption I – 21% will use the facility in April to October*

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	74,844	September	74,844
February	-	June	74,844	October	47,628
March	-	July	108,864	November	-
April	47,628	August	127,915	December	-

Assuming 556,557 visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With a swim cost per adult of £3.50 and a Child of £2.50 the following income will be achieved

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	£224,532	September	£224,532
February	-	June	£224,532	October	£142,884
March	-	July	£326,592	November	-
April	£142,884	August	£383,746	December	-

**Total Income of £1,669,702**

*Assumption II – 5% will use Leisure Centre throughout the year*

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	4,212	May	17,820	September	17,820
February	4,860	June	17,820	October	25,515
March	25,515	July	58,220	November	10,935
April	25,515	August	68,526	December	9,477

Assuming 44,500, visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With the cost of visiting the Leisure Facility to be £2.25 the following income is expected.

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	2,603	May	11,014	September	11,014
February	3,004	June	11,014	October	7,009
March	7,009	July	16,020	November	3,004
April	7,009	August	18,824	December	2,603

**Total income of £100,125**

### 6.2.3 Local Usage

#### *General*

- Estimated resident population of 15,933;
- Current users of Sheskburn use 1 – 2 times per week for classes;
- Assume Sheskburn users will transfer to new facility;
- Assume pricing policy will be raised as survey indicated willingness to pay additional amount for improved facilities<sup>13</sup>;
- Usage for 2007-2008 equated to 46,787;
- Annual Income is £31,469; and
- Assume all usage locally derived and transferable to new facility.

#### Local Resident Usage – Swimming Pool

Leisure Facility	Population	No. Usage P.a.	Average Usage P.a.
Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre	58,500	80,000	1.37
Seven Towers Leisure Centre	131,564	294,894	2.24

- Assume resident population of 15,933
- Assume residents use Moyle Leisure Centre Swimming Pool once per annum
- **Total Income will equal £55,766**

#### *Local Resident Usage – Hall*

Assuming 4 parties are held each week in the hall at a cost of £28.50 per one hour rental of the hall, total income for the Hall would equate to **£5,472**.

<sup>13</sup> Reference: Feasibility Study, Strategic Leisure Limited

*Outsourced / Franchise Income*

Research carried out with comparator facilities indicated that the catering franchise attracts an income of up to £4,000, but this is dependent on passing trade and location.

6.3 **Sensitivity - Usage Levels and Income – NITB Tourism Figures**

6.3.1 *Sensitised Projected Income*

In this section of the report, we seek to reduce the assumed level of tourism income, to reflect the impact this would have on the viability of the centre. Above in Section 6.3, we estimate that tourism income will be £2,034,202 per annum. This drops to £340,371 per annum on the following basis:

- Reduced visitor levels to the NITB 2007 visitor levels; and
- Reduced swimming pool users from 21% to 11%.

6.3.2 *Tourism Usage – NITB Basis*

Annual visitors are estimated at 8900,000 (TTC December 2008 report), with seasonality as follows:

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	23,140	May	97,900	September	97,900
February	26,700	June	97,900	October	62,300
March	62,300	July	142,400	November	26,700
April	62,300	August	167,320	December	13,000

**Assumptions:**

- I Assume **11%** will use the water facility in April to October; and
- II Assume **5%** will use the leisure facility throughout the year;

*Assumption 1 – 11% will use the facility in April to October*

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	10,769	September	10,769
February	-	June	10,769	October	6,853
March	-	July	15,664	November	-
April	6,853	August	18,405	December	-

Assuming 80,032 visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With a swim cost per adult of £3.50 and a Child of £2.50 the following income will be achieved

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	-	May	£32,307	September	£32,307
February	-	June	£32,307	October	£20,559
March	-	July	£46,992	November	-
April	£20,559	August	£55,215	December	-

**Total Income of £240,246**



*Assumption II – 5% will use Leisure Centre throughout the year*

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	1,157	May	4,895	September	4,895
February	1,335	June	4,895	October	3,115
March	3,115	July	7,120	November	1,335
April	3,115	August	8,366	December	1,157

Assuming 44,500, visits with 50% adults and 50% children. With the cost of visiting the Leisure Facility to be £2.25 the following income is expected.

Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors	Month	Visitors
January	2,603	May	11,014	September	11,014
February	3,004	June	11,014	October	7,009
March	7,009	July	16,020	November	3,004
April	7,009	August	18,824	December	2,603

**Total income of £100,125**

## 6.4 Projected Costs

### 6.4.1 Overview

The projected costs for the facility, as supplied by B3 Gibson Hamilton include operating (utilities, chemical, etc.) and lifecycle costs; as well as staffing costs. These are set out as follows:

Cost	£	Reference
Operating	389,130	
Lifecycle	128,184	
Staff	462,500	6.5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>979,814</b>	

### 6.4.2 Staff

The cost of the projected staff of 37 employees (see Section 5.2) will have to be scoped in detail by Council upon final design stage. Based on staff costs of comparable facilities, the average annual salary cost is estimated as £12,500.

Centre	£	Employees	Average
Coleraine	798,122	68	£11,737
Joey Dunlop	693,946	57	£12,174
Ballymena	673,738	53	£12,712

## 6.5 Financial Projections – Base Case

The annual revenue financial impact of the proposed project is detailed below:

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>
Tourism – Swimming	1,669,702
Tourism – General	364,500
Local Residents – Swimming	55,766
Local Residents – General	31,649
Parties / Functions	5,472
Outsourced café and crèche	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,135,089</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
Operating	389,130
Lifecycle	128,184
Staff	462,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>979,814</b>
<b>Net Operating Profit / (Cost)</b>	<b>1,155,275</b>

The ability for the centre to cater for this level of seasonal tourism users would need to be checked once the detailed design of the building has been developed. It is the opinion of BDO Stoy Hayward that these figures appear far too optimistic, especially compared to income levels of less than £600,000 for Coleraine Leisure Centre, which attracts more tourists to the area than Moyle (STEAM: Coleraine 3,747,000 compared with Moyle 3,240,000) and recording a higher spend therein (STEAM: Coleraine £41.25 compared with Moyle £33.36). However from further analysis it is clear that it is actually the coastal towns of Portrush, Port Stewart and Castlerock that get the most tourists. Although there is a leisure centre in Coleraine this does not benefit from tourists to the same extent that one would in Ballycastle, given that Ballycastle is the main resort town between Larne and Portrush on the coast. The following sensitised projections show the impact of varying the tourism level assumptions.

## 6.6 Sensitised Financial Projections

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>
Tourism – Swimming	240,246
Tourism – General	100,125
Local Residents – Swimming	55,766
Local Residents – General	31,649
Parties / Functions	5,472
Outsourced café and crèche	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>451,258</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
Operating	389,130
Lifecycle	128,184
Staff	462,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>979,814</b>
<b>Net Operating Profit / (Cost)</b>	<b>(£538,556)</b>

It is noted however that even at these reduced levels, this annual subvention level compares favourably to the benchmark comparator facilities – ranging from £616k to £731k per annum.

## 7 NON FINANCIAL IMPACT

### 7.1 Project Benefits

#### 7.1.1 *Tourism Experience*

The area is home to many of Ireland's most popular visitor attractions including the Giant's Causeway, Glens of Antrim and 'Carrick a Rede Rope Bridge.' The development of such a Leisure Facility will only add to the North Coast Tourism Experience, providing an all-weather alternative for visitors and facilities.

#### 7.1.2 *Social Benefits*

Sport is recognised as being an effective vehicle to address various social issues. Investment in sport, both through capital infrastructure, but also through innovative and effective programming of services, can lead to major improvements in society, such as improvements to people's health and life expectancy; creation of employment opportunities; individual and community capacity building and the development of confident participants and performers in sport.

Sports development projects can also bring about significant change and improvement to local communities such as the development of Community and Sports Hubs.

#### 7.1.3 *Improvement of Standards*

The current facility at Sheskburn is not fit for purpose. The development of a new facility will bring Moyle up to standards with every other Council area in Northern Ireland and will meet public expectations.

### 7.2 Project Risks

#### 7.2.1 *Income*

The facility is highly reliant on seasonal visitors to the area using the pool and facilities as part of their trip or "North Coast Experience". The projections are based on assumed levels of annual use by visitors and residents. However, as this is seasonal, income for the facility is not guaranteed. The facility is therefore dependent on tourists to keep down costs for local ratepayers. Following RPA, ratepayers in Moyle will be paying exactly the same as Limavady, Ballymoney and Coleraine all of whom already have facilities in existence.

#### 7.2.2 *Vandalism*

Like most facilities open for public use there is always a risk (considered as a medium risk) of the facility suffering from vandalism. It will be important that the design of the proposed site during construction and post completion is vigilant to the possible effects of low-level vandalism (e.g. destruction of external fittings, graffiti, litter, etc), so that it is not allowed to take away from the overall aesthetic effect of the development. This will require buy-in from the local community network.



### 7.2.3 *Financial Risk*

All capital costs are estimated by professional architects/quantity surveyors. There is a risk of capital costs increasing through the development of the facility. Competitive tendering for the selection of the contractor will assist in cost control.

The report lacks operating costs which influence / determine annual subvention levels for the facility.

## 7.3 **Project Constraints**

### 7.3.1 *Site*

The proposed works undertaken will require both planning permission and building control. Planning permission will be required before any development may begin. As the new preferred site is above the flood plain, the risk of flooding is significantly lessened and this should have a positive impact on a planning application.

### 7.3.2 *Funding*

As with any project, funding is a constraint. Without sufficient levels and timing of funds, this project will not be able to move forward.

### 7.3.3 *Insufficient Users*

It is important that the newly appointed management maintains a healthy user base (especially after school hours, weekends and during the summer) through a strong sports development plan for the facility. This has not yet been developed, nor costed by Council.

## 8 FUNDING

### 8.1 DSD

A consultation was conducted with Ian Snowden of DSD. Ian stated Moyle Council had received monies from DSD previously, under the Environmental Improvement / Public Realm Improvement. This covered areas such as improvement to car parks, footpaths, public spaces etc. Ian stated there was no particular fund the monies were made available from.

Moyle has always been successful in securing funding from DSD, and DSD would consider funding any environment improvements that would be made to the footpaths, roads etc. within the area of the Tourism / Leisure Facility.

**This funding stream is appropriate for the proposed Tourism/Leisure Facility and should be pursued by Council at further design stage.**

### 8.2 Sport NI

#### 8.2.1 *Active Communities Investment Programme*

The Active Communities investment programme is open to applications from consortia of district councils based upon the Model 11b of the Review of Public Administration.

Active Communities seeks to employ, deploy and train a network of full time and part time sports specific coaches, multi sport coaches, multi skills coaches and sports/physical activity leaders to deliver activities in the community and club settings across Northern Ireland, with a view to increasing participation in sport and physical recreation, especially among underrepresented groups.

The Active Communities investment programme aims to achieve the following outcomes;

- Creation of network of community sports coaches and leaders to deliver sport and recreational activities in sports clubs and community settings;
- Increased participation in sport and physical recreation among under represented groups including young people, older people, women and girls, people with a disability, people from minority ethnic groups and people from socio-economically deprived groups;
- Provision of opportunities that support lifelong participation in sports and physical recreation in sports club and community settings; and
- Development of effective working partnerships within and between district councils, governing bodies of sport, schools, sport clubs, and statutory, community and voluntary organisations.

Investment will be made in five posts including Sports Specific Coach, Multi Sports Coach, Multi Skills Coach, Sports Leader and Physical Activity Leader. Funding will cover areas such as salary costs, start up costs, programme management and equipment.

The development of the new Leisure Facility will encourage people from underrepresented groups to participate in sport. Swimming will be more accessible in the area as residents will no longer have to use the private Marine Hotel. **Therefore it may be possible for the Council to gain some funding under the Active Communities Programme in the delivery of any sports development plan.**

### 8.2.2 *Places for Sport 2009/10*

Places for Sport: Surfaces Programme specifically focuses on three areas:

- Pitches and other outdoor sports surfaces e.g. athletic tracks / tennis courts etc;
- Indoor specialised sports surfaces; and
- Floodlighting for synthetic and training pitches.

Due to a small under-spend during the current financial year, the programme is open for 08/09 spend. Sport NI has not confirmed sufficient budget from DCAL to launch the programme for spend in 09/10 and beyond.

**This funding stream is appropriate for the proposed Tourism/Leisure Facility and should be pursued upon re-opening beyond 2009/10.**

### 8.3 **Peace III**

The PEACE III Programme is a distinctive European Union Structural Funds Programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation. It will assist Northern Ireland and the Border Region and will specifically focus on reconciling communities and contributing towards a shared society.

One of the key themes in the PEACE III Programme will be to take forward the lessons and best practices that have been gained from previous PEACE Programmes. The PEACE III Programme, for example, has been designed to take forward key lessons that include, inter alia:

- Placing a greater focus on reconciliation objectives;
- Identifying targets and indicators: in line with developing a Programme which has a greater focus on reconciliation, targets and indicators have been included that will seek to specifically measure the contribution of the PEACE II Programme towards peace and reconciliation goals;
- Encouraging a bottom-up approach: local partnership approaches will be a key feature of the delivery of Priorities 1 and 2 e.g. public or community partnerships will be supported to deliver strategic new urban infrastructural developments as part of Priority 2. At the same time, however, locally led participative initiatives will be supported within the context of integrated strategic frameworks to facilitate co-ordination; and
- Promoting innovation: local authorities and other public, private and community organisations will be provided the opportunity to develop innovative approaches for delivering elements of Priorities 1 and 2.

The overall aim of the PEACE III Programme is *“To reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation”*.



Taking this overall aim forward, the PEACE III Programme will focus on two strategic objectives outlined as follows:

- **Reconciling communities:** key activities will facilitate relationships on a cross-community and/or cross-border basis to assist in addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance, and accepting commonalities and differences. In addition, key activities will seek to acknowledge and deal with the hurt, losses, trauma and suffering caused by the conflict; and
- **Contributing to a shared society:** key activities will address the physical segregation or polarisation of places and communities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region with a view to encouraging increased social and economic cross community and cross-border engagement.

**Peace III Priority 2: Contributing to a shared society** will focus on two key areas:

2.1 - Creating shared public spaces; and

2.2 - Key institutional capacities are developed for a shared society

*Aim of Priority 2.1 - Creating shared public spaces*

This objective aims to regenerate urban, rural and border areas that appear derelict, segregated, underused, threatening and/or unwelcoming and transform them into shared spaces. The intervention seeks to tackle the problems of separation of communities within society and **address the underlying problems of sectarianism, racism and prejudice** by encouraging the development of physical environments that are not 'marked out' with symbols that define it as a territory of one side of a community but as open to and welcoming to all. By complementing processes and relationships established in Priority 1, this element of Priority 2 will provide funding for new shared public spaces and help **address the issues of physical segregation as manifested by peace walls, sectarian graffiti, flags and emblems.**

By building on what has been achieved under the PEACE II and URBAN II Programmes, the Priority will also develop new and innovative approaches for changing the physical environment in a way which **maximises potential for reconciliation and economic development.** In particular, through new shared public spaces, the Priority will **expand the opportunities for common use, interaction and engagement, and economic development** in areas that have been particularly affected by the conflict. These developments will also **contribute to changes in behavioural patterns in relation to shopping, working and socialising** in the areas supported. In progressing new and innovative approaches for changing the physical environment, project promoters will be required to **develop activities in consultation and partnership to ensure local community engagement and participation.**

In particular, this Priority will support a number of significant developments in the North-West area.

The activities supported in this Priority will also be **consistent with (EU) Regulation No 1080/2006 Article 8** which promotes the development of participative, integrated and sustainable strategies to tackle the high concentration of economic, environmental and social problems affecting urban areas.

*Indicative operations*

The following is an indicative list of the kinds of operations that will be funded by this Priority under the theme of shared public spaces. All operations will demonstrate

how they promote social and economic stability by actions to promote cohesion between communities:

- Urban and rural regeneration activities in areas most affected by the conflict that are likely to have a positive impact on removing/replacing sectarian graffiti, flags and emblems;
- Urban and rural regeneration activities in areas most affected by the conflict that promote cross-community/cross-border interaction in areas most affected by the conflict;
- Public/community partnerships facilitated in support of urban renewal;
- Regeneration projects focused on removing/replacing peace walls; and
- Establishment of an urban development fund under Article 44 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, within the context of an integrated plan for sustainable urban development.

It is envisaged that a small number of strategic projects will be funded and that public bodies will normally act as project promoters for these projects working in partnership with other private and community stakeholders.

**This funding stream is not appropriate for the proposed Tourism/Leisure Facility.**

#### 8.4 **Interreg IV Funding**

The overall theme of INTERREG IV is to strengthen and deepen cross-border co-operation with an emphasis on supporting strategic plans and projects to maximise the impact of the funds throughout the eligible area. The Programme will focus on developing a dynamic economy, supporting infrastructure and promoting innovative ways of addressing specific cross-border problems.

Wholly financed by ERDF and with a budget of €192m, it will focus on the following priorities:

- Encouraging entrepreneurship, in particular the development of SMEs, tourism, culture and cross-border trade;
- Encouraging and improving the joint protection and management of natural and cultural resources, as well as the prevention of natural and technological risks;
- Supporting links between urban and rural areas;
- Reducing isolation through improved access to transport, information and communication networks and services, and cross-border waste, water and energy systems and facilities;
- Developing collaboration, capacity and joint use of infrastructures, in particular in sectors such as health, culture, tourism and education.

In addition, the Programme may contribute to promoting legal and administrative co-operation, the integration of cross-border labour markets, local employment initiatives, gender equality and equal opportunities, training and social inclusion, and sharing of human resources and facilities for R&D.

**This funding stream is not appropriate for the proposed Tourism/Leisure Facility.**

## 8.5 **Conclusion**

The proposed project fits strategically with government, central and local, policy. It will implement quality, fit for purpose leisure accommodation for local resident use, but will rely heavily on tourist usage as part of Moyle's positioning along the Antrim Coast.