1964 2021

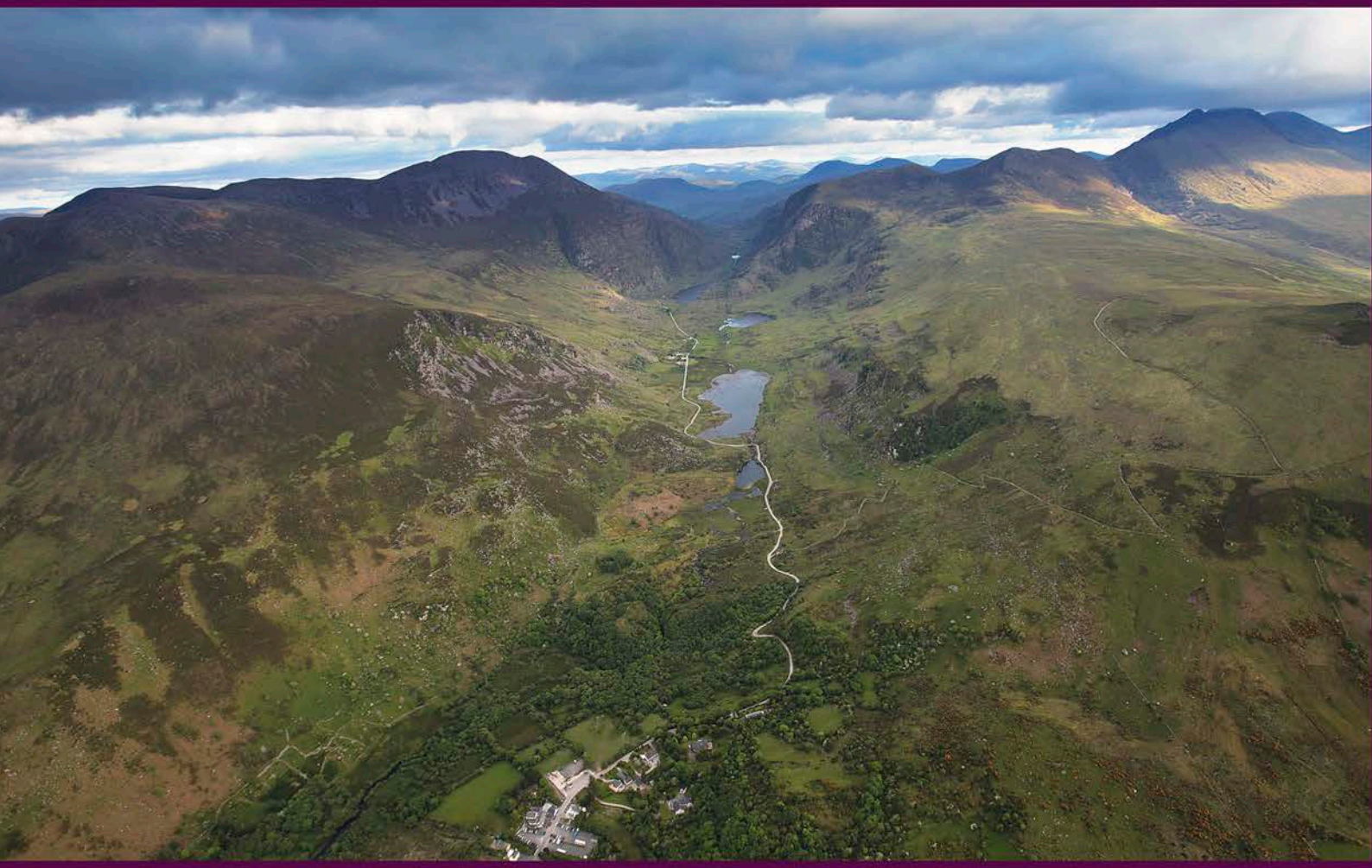
MORIARTY'S

GAP OF DUNLOE IRELAND

Public Consultation on the Future Management of the Gap of Dunloe 2021

www.moriartys.ie

INTRODUCTION



We would firstly like to acknowledge that this process of engagement is to be welcomed. As a local who has lived at the Gap all my life an overall proactive plan for the Gap is something we have always wished for. The Gap is a truly a unique and stunningly rugged place and ensuring it remains a desirable and attractive place to visit, live and work into the future is absolutely vital.

The visitor numbers to the area have increased massively the past decade. There are many reasons for this such as, the increase of tourism numbers globally, increased participation in Outdoor Leisure activities with more people becoming health conscious and indeed during the Covid Crisis, people once again realising what's on their 'door-step'. This is a trend that will only continue and seeing the success of the new Car Park at Tomies in recent weeks further emphasises this.

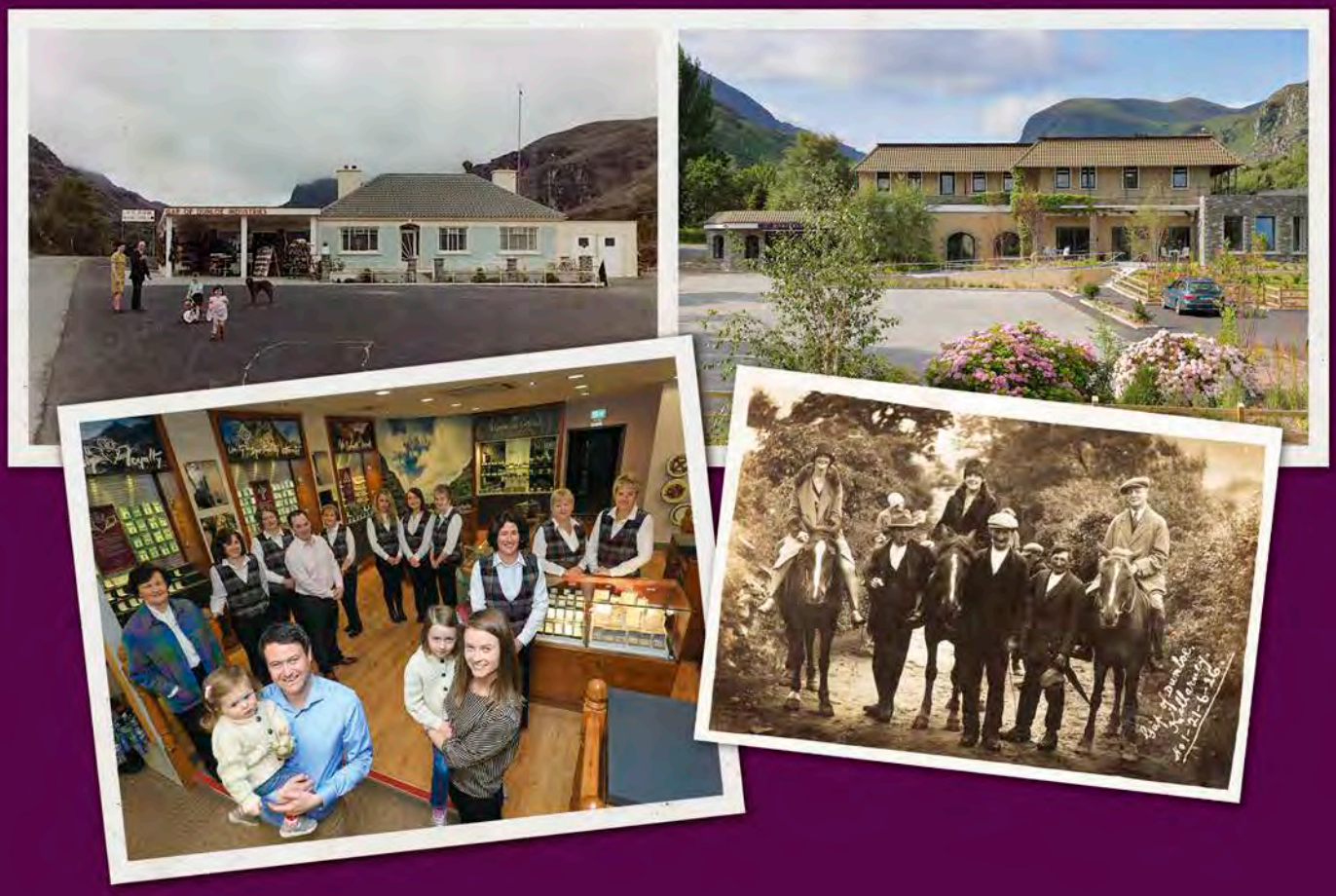
Traffic and Parking are the most visible issues to hand but this is an opportunity to develop the Gap tourism product, involve locals and enhance the local environment as never before if there is truly a desire to do so.

Bringing together all Government agencies involved in the area is key. Is this the time to finally 'think outside the box'? We hope so...

OVERVIEW

The Moriarty's have been involved in Tourism at the Gap since the 1880's. Con Moriarty, current owner Denis Pios' grandfather, was one of the first mountain guides in Ireland and a Ponyman. Since 1964 the family have operated Moriarty's gift shop catering for coach tours mainly, and since 2014 have run Heather Restaurant and Gardens catering for the domestic market. We are now a 4th generation tourism business.

In 2019 Moriarty's employed a total of 26 people and envisage doing so again as soon as International travel re-bounds to previous levels.



LOCATION

Moriarty's business is located on both sides of the River Loe at the entrance of the Gap of Dunloe, where it grows much of it's produce for Heather in Polytunnels on the northern side, to a 6,000sq ft retail and dining space on the southern side. The location is approximately 100 mts from the main car park at Kate Kearney's.

VISITOR NUMBERS

Coach visitors CIE:	22,000 pax
Collette Vacations:	6,000 pax
Other operarors:	3500 pax
Domestic Car/Walk ins:	12,000 pax

KEY ISSUES AS WE SEE THEM

On a busy weekend, i.e any bank holiday and much of the summer months, there are serious parking issues at the Gap of Dunloe. I need to have a member of staff as a parking attendant, or otherwise our carpark will be full of visitors who have no where else to park. I cannot provide parking for non customers as this leads to a full car park yet an empty restaurant! In an official response through our local councillor Mr Patrick o'Connor, Kerry County Council have said that 70 spaces at the Gap is sufficient.

16.Cllr. P. Connor-Scarteen: What measures and extra parking can KCC put in place to improve safety on the Gap of Dunloe road, Beaufort.

Reply: There is currently 70 public car parking spaces available serving the Gap of Dunloe and the Council have no plans at present to extend this car park.

(We welcome over 40,000 visitors to our property alone. This reply is simply staggering.)

On December 30 of 2020, in the middle of a Lockdown during a Global pandemic, all car park spaces were full by 11am with cars parked on the side of road leading towards Moriartys. July and August, whilst being unable to welcome overseas visitors, saw traffic mayhem on a daily basis due to the the lack of spaces. We did not open during the 2020 season so we were able to allow our Carpark to be used, which was essentially full by mid day everyday. (See Pics) Once reopen in 2021 we will not be able to afford to do so, leading to the cars simply being forced further down the road, impacting on domestic entrances, and indeed impacting on basic accessibility. With Domestic tourism set to continue in 2021 MAJOR PROBLEMS WILL OCCUR from the very outset of the season.

The main problem we then have, is that our staff are the ones telling visitors that our park is for customer use only, and therefore taking the brunt of their frustration at the lack of facilities. This is unacceptable and from next season onwards intend using social media platforms to highlight the problems we face on a daily basis. If we were to highlight the 'abuse' we take it certainly will not take long to gain traction.

Traffic congestion on the road from Kate Kearneys to Molls Gap remains a huge issue. The road through the Gap is now being use d by more people than previously could have been imagined. The massive increase in Self drive holidays, the impact of Sat Navs in taking people to remote areas and of course the use of Social media promoting 'Iconic Drives' have all changed the landscape immeasurably. There are now more cars going through The Gap per day than would have done so in a month 10 years ago. The road simply cannot handle it all.

SUGGESTIONS

One overall 'Plan' for the area is vital going forward. This would need to include all local interests, from business's to the wider community, and most importantly all Government bodies with a vested interest in the Gap.

Additional Parking

Additional parking is not just desired but absolutely necessary. We will not provide an overflow any longer for non customers and this will greatly add to the problems immediately on the resumption of tourism in the area. There are a few options and I'm sure your engineers have engaged with local landowners and business owners other than Moriarty's to explore this. A few locations spring to mind and we would be happy to engage with any discussions around these in the future, including the possibility of using some of Moriarty's land on the northern side of the River Loe. We are open to all suggestions.

Thru traffic on the Gap road to be halted between set hours

No public access, except those with necessary business (*B&B access, Hostel access, Tradesmen or deliveries etc). A Barrier system would seem the most logical solution to us. This will make the Gap so much safer for Walkers and Cyclists whilst greatly adding to the enjoyment of those availing of the Jarvey's offering. Cars driving behind traps simply ruin the experience for all involved. As the father of young kids, we simply never take the kids up the Gap due the traffic mayhem

Fossa
Europe Hotel
Killarney Golf & Fishing Club
Castlerosse Hotel
Ferry Bridge
Liebherr
Loch Léin
Tomies Cross
Brown Island
Inisfallen Island
Proposed route through Moriarty's land
Moriarty's
A
B
Kate Kearney's Cottage
Tomies Car Park
Ross Castle
O'Sullivan's Cascade
Tomies Wood
Strickeen
Cullinagh Fields
Gap of Dunloe
Killarney National Park
Darby's Garden
Tomies Mtn
Shehy Mtn
Bricín Bridge
Glena Cottage
Muckross Lake
Dinis Cottage
Purple Mtn
0
1
2
3
Kilometres
Old Weir Bridge
N

Mangerton Mountain
Torc Mountain
Muckross Lake
Molis Gap
Purple Mountain
Killarney National Park
Tomies Mountain
Cnoc na Tarbh
Gap of Dunloe
Tomies Wood
Loch Léin
Tomies Wood Car Park
Potential link
A
B
Moriartys
Mouth of the River Laune
Location from the North

Fossa Way / Loch Léin Loop
with link to the Gap of Dunloe.

SUGGESTIONS

Loch Léin Loop Link to the Gap

A possible extension of the proposed Loch Lein Loop should be explored further. As landowners we have engaged with Kerry County Council in allowing lands to be surveyed. Direct pedestrian access to The Gap would be an incredible addition to the tourism offering. As the popularity of Greenways and loop walks grows this would be a game changer for the Gap, as it would afford visitors the opportunity to leave Killarney on foot and arrive at the Gap having avoided all public roads with traffic. Transport infrastructure already exists to take walkers back to town if necessary, or the more adventurous may wish to walk through the Gap and join up with the Kerry Way.

Wildlife Reintroduction

The re-introduction of the White tailed eagle has shown the potential to reintroduce previously extinct species. A program in conjunction with Fisheries Ireland could be explored with a view of re-stocking the lakes in the GAP. This could generate enormous potential from local and visiting fishermen, further embellishing the tourism product on offer. A stretch of the River Loe could be ideal for a project of national interest.

Hydro-Electric Utilisation

IN 1984 the River Loe was damned in a project driven by Michael Moriarty, creating a Hydro-Electric scheme that generated power. Whilst the Dam is still in place the generator to create power no longer functions. This is approx. 200 mts from the main carpark at the Gap. Could this be recomissioned? How many other tourist a ttractions in Europe could offer ECar charging points with clean power sourced from such close proximity? Certainly worth exploring.

Thank you and we look forward to proactive engagement with all stakeholders in the coming months.

Denis Pio Moriarty

MORIARTY'S

GAP OF DUNLOE IRELAND

MORIARTY'S Heather A TASTE OF THE GAP

Moriarty's Irish Gift Store & Heather Restaurant,
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