

**Minutes of Special Meeting of Galway City Council
held on Friday 15th July, 2022, at 3pm
in the Galmont Hotel, Galway and online via zoom platform.
Consideration of the Draft Development Plan 2023-2029 and the Chief
Executive's Report on the Draft Development Plan Consultation Process
Meeting No. 5**

Presiding:	Cllr. C. Higgins, Mayor of the City of Galway
Present:	Councillors: A, Cheevers, J. Connolly, M.J. Crowe, O. Hanley, E. Hoare, P. Keane, D. McDonnell & N. McNelis
Present Virtually:	Councillors: I. Byrne, C. Connolly, F. Fahy, D. Lyons, M. O'Connor, N. Murphy & T. O'Flaherty
Apologies:	Cllr. M. Cubbard & Cllr. N. Larkin
In Attendance:	Mr. B. McGrath, Chief Executive Ms. P. Philbin, Director of Services Ms. C. Phelan, Senior Planner Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner Ms. K. Moloney, A/Executive Planner Mr. C. O'Riordan, Senior Executive Engineer Mr. M. Lally, A/Senior Executive Engineer Ms. M. Kilgarriff, Assistant Staff Officer Ms. A. Rohan, Meetings Administrator Ms. S. King, Assistant Staff Officer
In Attendance Virtually:	Ms. R. McNally, Director of Services Ms. S. Watson, Senior Staff Officer Ms. M. Harrington, Executive Planner

Ms. A. Rohan, Meetings Administrator commenced the meeting with a statement of intention to conduct the business of the Meeting in line with Standing Orders followed by a moment of silent reflection. A presentation was then made with regards to Member's statutory obligations concerning:

- Ethics Framework
 - o Ethical Framework for the Local Government Service
 - o Code of Conduct for Councillors advising chapters on Conflict of Personal and Public Interest and Planning
- Disclosure at Meetings
- Disclosure in Advance of Meetings
- Planning Legislation
- Code of Conduct and Regulation of Lobbying information

Councillors were advised that they are individually responsible for being compliant and that it is an offence if you fail to comply with some sections of the Ethical Framework.

The Meetings Administrator advised Councillors that they will be requested to indicate if they are 'In Favour', 'Against' or wish to 'Abstain' when making a resolution by raising their hand. She advised that this will be done for each resolution taken at the meeting. This was noted by Council.

It was agreed to consider the remaining motions in relation to Chapter 4 which were deferred from the meeting held on Wednesday 13th July, 2022.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly **Seconded by:** Cllr. M. O'Connor

I would like to propose the following insertion of text on p.14 Chapter 4.8.17

Insert the following text before 'Prioritise'

'Develop a plan to address the pedestrian infrastructure deficit in the city.'

Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner advised that this Motion is not recommended by the Executive and that an audit of the street network was inserted into the Plan by Council previously with a priority of locations.

Mr. M. Lally, A/Senior Executive Engineer advised that Chapter 4.8 of the Draft Plan prioritises the city centre.

Cllr. C. Connolly proposed adding the word 'throughout' to the Motion.

Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner noted that Specific Objective 17 is related directly to the city centre and therefore the wording proposed by Cllr. Connolly would not necessarily address the issue.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly **Seconded by:** Cllr. M. O'Connor

I would like to propose the following insertion of text on p.14 Chapter 4.8.17:

Insert the following text before 'Prioritise'

'Develop a plan to address the pedestrian infrastructure deficit ~~in~~ throughout the city.'

In Favour: 2 Against: 11 Abstain: 2 Present: 15

This Motion was defeated.

Cllr. C. Connolly spoke on the Motion she submitted regarding car parking at the Dyke Road and Ceannt Station.

Mr. M. Lally, A/Senior Executive Engineer advised that section 4.6 of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) proposes to reduce the capacity for car parking in the city and that the Transport Department would be recommending the retention of the two locations in the Plan.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly **Seconded by:** Cllr. N. Murphy

I would like to propose the following deletions on p.107 re: car parking. Delete text p. 107 2nd para. Referring to' exceptions.... of Ceannt Station and Dyke Rd car parks.

In Favour: 3 Against: 12 Abstain: 0 Present: 15

This Motion was defeated.

Councillors discussed the Motion submitted by Councillor C. Connolly regarding the introduction of segregated cycle lanes across the city, where possible.

Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner and Mr. C. O’Riordan, Senior Executive Engineer made contributions regarding same.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly **Seconded by:** Cllr. P. Keane

I would like to propose the following amendment p.113 of the Draft 4.8 Insert the specific objective as follows: *Introduce segregated cycle lanes across the city, where possible.*

In Favour: 15 Against: 0 Abstain: 1 Present: 16

The Motion was approved by Council.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly

That the following statement be entered in the new City Development Plan: *"We will create a master plan for Galway's unique waterways during the life of this plan in cooperation with the responsible agencies for them at local and national level and with representatives from the user community"*

Cllr. O. Hanley had submitted a similar Motion to Cllr. C. Connolly and it was agreed that both motions would be discussed together.

Proposed by: Cllr. O. Hanley

Amend Policy 5.3. no.9 to include italicised text:

Work with stakeholders, including IW, OPW, EPA, Inland Fisheries and Corrib Navigation Trust in the management of the river and canal system ***as well as in enhancing the public realm, heritage, safety, and character of these blue spaces in the city***

Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner suggested amended wording that may satisfy both motions. Cllr. C. Connolly and Cllr. O. Hanley withdrew their motions and agreed to accept the wording proposed by Ms. H. Coleman.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly **Seconded by:** Cllr. O. Hanley

To include italicised text:

9. Work with stakeholders, including IW, OPW, EPA, Inland Fisheries, and Corrib Navigation Trust and local user representatives in the management, use, enhancement, protection and safety of ~~the river and canal systems~~ *waterways and their context in the city.*

In Favour: 16 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Present: 16

This was approved by Council.

Proposed by: Cllr. D. Lyons **Seconded by:** Cllr. D. McDonnell

To accept the text of Chapter 4: Sustainability Mobility and Transportation.

In Favour: 16 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Present: 16

This was approved by Council.

Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) submissions

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) submissions were then considered. Ms. C. Phelan, Senior Planner, gave a presentation outlining the role of the OPR in the Development Plan process. She advised that should the Council disagree with any of the OPR recommendations, a reason stated which must be rational and justified.

Following a discussion on the role of the OPR and the way in which the submissions should be examined by the Elected Members, Ms. C. Phelan, Senior Planner, began going through the OPR Recommendations, beginning on page 13 of the Chief Executive's Report. It was agreed that Chief Executive's Recommendations 1-4 be considered together as these had interrelated issues.

Ms. Phelan explained that the OPR had suggested that the core strategy settlement hierarchy as provided for in the draft was too broad in categorisation. In response a new more detailed Core Strategy Settlement hierarchy was now proposed (reference page 25 of the Draft Plan). It was relayed also that the OPR identified that an excessive amount of land was zoned for residential purposes and requested adjustments to be made. Ms. Phelan stated that the Chief Executive's Response included for a case to be made to the OPR that there was justification in retaining all R zoned lands and a portion of the LDR lands. This also included for more clarity with respect to the regeneration sites. These regeneration sites were explicitly now prioritised in the timeline for their delivery allied to the plan cycle. The Sandy Road Regeneration site was stated to be added as one of the priority regeneration sites.

The OPR as per National Planning Framework advised to include for a tiered approach to zoning to give specifics on targeted housing delivered, i.e. Ardaun Phase One. Targets are now refined and specifically identified as being included in Tier 1, 2 and long term delivery in order to give better clarity and allow for ease of monitoring of progress throughout the Plan cycle. In this regard also, Ms. Phelan explained that the OPR had requested that the planning authority demonstrate compliance with the population targets in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). It was explained that it was important to include all regeneration/opportunities sites, with priority but explain that it was not anticipated that all sites would be developed to full capacity in the lifetime of the Plan. For clarity, it was confirmed that the Ardaun Network design, which would be an enabler for Ardaun phase 1 was likely to be completed by Irish Water in the first couple of years of the plan period.

Following queries, Ms. Phelan advised that an allocation of units has been given to each of the settlement areas in the city. The entire allocation for a city for the plan period as per the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) was approximately 4,500 units. The zoned lands had capacity for approximately a 20% exceedance of this threshold to allow for flexibility and for market challenges but Ms. Phelan emphasised that as per the OPR and national policy there wasn't discretion to zone lands in excess of this capacity. It was also clarified that the Local Authority doesn't deliver all of the social/community infrastructure necessary for sustainable community development but the draft development plan has make provision in zoning, policy and objectives to allow for other state agencies and the private sector to deliver, where appropriate.

The Chief Executive advised that the inclusion of a Core Strategy is a mandatory requirement for the City Development Plan and that zoning objectives in cities is different than in rural areas.

Cllr. O Hanley requested that his disagreement with the Chief Executive's Response regarding their use of the 'built-up footprint' of the city including Tier 2 / Long Term Strategic Reserve zoned residential lands be noted.

The Council agreed to take a break for 15 minutes at 15.15p.m., the meeting resume at 15.30 p.m.

Proposed by: Cllr. C. Connolly **Seconded by:** Cllr. D. McDonnell

That the Chief Executive's Response to the Office of the Planning Regulator Submission Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 be accepted.

In Favour: 14 Against: 0 Abstain: 0 Present: 14

This was approved by Council.

A discussion took place in relation to OPR Submission Recommendation No. 5 – Low density residential zoning.

Ms. C. Phelan explained that Low Density Residential Zoning (LDR) and associated lands was a legacy from previous Plans. The OPR have requested that LDR be omitted from the new Plan and zoned Residential (R) only where proximate to the built-up areas of the city. While there is conflict with the titling of LDR zoning and the National Planning Framework (NPF) ambitions, there are some areas where LDR zoning other than R would be appropriate in the city for a number of reasons as stated in the Chief Executive's Report. To regularise and modernise the "low density" concept and description it was now proposed to change the LDR zoning to R2, where applicable. It was also, following the review of the OPR recommendation, proposed to replace the LDR zoning on a number of large land banks where there was no legacy or justification or reasoning for retaining the LDA zoning. On these lands it was proposed to change zoning to more appropriate zoning, such as A or G.

The exceptions had been argued in the Chief Executive's Report. The Chief Executive specifically referred to the locations where the impact of the N6 Galway City Ring Road (GCRR) through Compulsory Purchase Order/demolition would have impact on existing housing especially in the Ballindooley and Castlegar areas. He advised that there may be banks of land that should be retained as LDR to account for the impact of the Galway City Ring Road (GCRR) and provide replacement opportunities for those that might be displaced. In addition Ms. C. Phelan, Senior Planner, referenced other circumstances such as that at Roscam.

The delivery of housing in areas proposed for Residential R2 zoning if accepted would ultimate vary in density and be defined by a number of variables including services available in the area.

Concerns were raised by Councillors that, should this Recommendation be accepted, consideration of some submissions under Chapter 11 may be affected. It was proposed to note this Recommendation and defer consideration of same until Chapter 11.

Proposed by: Cllr. D. Lyons **Seconded by:** Cllr. D. McDonnell

To note Chief Executive's Response and Recommendation in relation to the Office of the Planning Regulator Submission Recommendation 5 and defer for consideration with Chapter 11.

In Favour: 11 Against: 3 Abstain: 1 Present: 15

This was approved by Council.

A discussion took place in relation to OPR Submission Recommendation 6 – Development Management Standards. Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner advised that the Urban Density and Building Heights (UDBH) Study has been prepared and that an amendment is proposed to Section 8.8 Urban Design and Placemaking and Chapter 11 Development Standards. She added that this is a move towards performance based standards and away from maximum densities.

Proposed by: Cllr. O. Hanley **Seconded by:** Cllr. N. Murphy

To accept OPR Submission Recommendation 6 – Development Management Standards

It was agreed that this proposal be considered at the meeting scheduled for Monday 18th July, 2022.

Cllr. M.J. Crowe raised concerns around the wording ‘outstanding architectural design’ and queried how this would be quantified.

Ms. H. Coleman, Senior Executive Planner advised that the UDBH Study gives good guidance regarding height and there is a policy framework in the Plan.

Cllr. M.J. Crowe proposed an amendment to Section 8.8.

Proposed by: Cllr. M.J. Crowe **Seconded by:** Cllr. D. McDonnell

Para 2 on page 47, delete ...’based on outstanding architectural design...’

Para 4 ‘...will only apply’...

Para 4 ‘...include for exceptional design...’

It was agreed that this proposal be considered at the meeting scheduled for Monday 18th July, 2022.

Following discussion, it was agreed that proceedings be ended for the day and that this matter be resumed for consideration at the meeting scheduled for Monday 18th July, 2022.

The meeting ended at 18.55p.m.