Foreword

The City Development Plan is centred on a vision for Galway City to be a successful, sustainable, socially inclusive regional capital. It aspires to create prosperity while also being environmentally responsible. While encouraging development, growth and innovation through the best use of land and resources, this vision supports a high quality of life, a rich cultural experience and, that which we are very proud of, the objective to retain our distinctive identity.

The Plan, inspired by this vision and set within the overall national and regional planning contexts, gives a framework for the other city plans and strategies such as the Galway Transport Strategy, the Local Economic and Community Plan and the Cultural Sustainability Strategy. Together, our focus and direction led by the City Plan, will enable Galway to be a significant player in the continued positive economic growth of the country. This will be of benefit to the city and complement its role as a Gateway and a driver of growth within the region.

This Plan has had robust environmental examination, having undergone Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). These processes were undertaken in tandem with the preparation of the Plan and we are confident that the full integration and consideration of environmental issues has been considered throughout each stage of the Development Plan process.

The preparation of the Plan also included for a significant level of public engagement and we wish to acknowledge and thank all the contributors to this process. We would like to express our appreciation in particular to the Elected Members of the Council for their detailed deliberations over the various drafts and their final adoption of the Plan. We would also like to thank the staff and in particular the Development Plan and Policy team for their expertise and commitment in producing a Development Plan for the city in which we are both proud and confident.

The Elected Members and the Executive of Galway City Council will continue to work together to achieve the strategic vision of the Plan to shape this great, attractive and vibrant city of ours as a place where people want to live, work, visit and continue to invest.

Galway City Chief Executive
Mr. Brendan McGrath

Galway City Mayor
Cllr. Noel Larkin
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Preface

The Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023 sets out Galway City Council’s policies for the sustainable development of Galway City to 2023. It has been prepared following intensive public consultation with the general public, statutory bodies and relevant stakeholders. In addition to the statutory requirements for consultation, public consultation meetings, presentations and clinics were organised at different locations throughout the city.

Legislative Background

The Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 and Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. The Planning and Development Act sets out the mandatory requirements which must be included in the Development Plan. These include, inter alia, objectives for the zoning of land, the provision of infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the environment, and the integration of planning and sustainable development with the social, community and cultural requirements of the city and its population. The preparation of a Core Strategy, consistent, as far as is practicable with the National Spatial Strategy and the West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2020, is also required.

In accordance with European and national legislation, Galway City Council carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment, an Appropriate Assessment and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; all of which informed the Plan and have ensured full integration and consideration of environmental issues throughout each stage of the Development Plan process.

Strategic Policy Framework

The Plan sets out a strategy for the city within the context of various national and regional level strategies, plans and guidelines that impact on proper planning and sustainable development. Those with most direct effect on the formulation of the core development strategy are summarised hereunder.

- **Planning Policy Statement 2015** sets out key principles for planning authorities, other public bodies and those that engage with the planning process to observe. It includes for high level priorities for the continued enhancement of the planning system in Ireland.
- **National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)**, establishes a spatial planning framework for Ireland and designates a Gateway having the characteristics and critical mass that can facilitate the national objectives and sustain and drive the wider regional economy of the west.
- **Putting People First Action Programme for Effective Local Government, 2012**, outlines Government policy for reform of the local government system, placing a strong emphasis on accountability and providing for better engagement with citizens and local communities.
- **National Climate Change Adaption Framework, 2012**, outlines how Ireland will seek to adapt to, and mitigate against, climate change.
- **Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland, 1997**, which provides a framework for the achievement of sustainable development at local level. With regard to spatial planning it is acknowledged that development plans are significant vehicles for shaping the environment and should be led by considerations of sustainability.
- **Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, 2009-2020**, sets out government policy towards the development of sustainable transport and travel. Its implementation will also assist in meeting Ireland’s international obligations towards tackling climate change.
- **Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region (RPG), 2010-2022**, sets out a regional planning framework for the West region and reflect the objectives of the NSS. The RPG supports the role of the City as a Gateway and a key economic driver for the West Region.
- **Ministerial Guidelines and Directives**, including those on Core Strategies, sustainable urban housing, creation of sustainable residential developments, urban design, retail, apartment design, the provision of

1. See Schedule 2 Statement of Compliance with Ministerial Guidelines.

Structure and Format of Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023

The Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023 is presented in three sections:

1: Main policy document, which is arranged in topic-based chapters intended to make policies on particular issues easier to find. It is arranged as follows:

- Introduction and Core Strategy sets out an overarching strategy for the spatial development of the city over the medium to longer term and will form the basis for policies and objectives throughout the Plan. It translates the strategic planning framework set out in the NSS and the RPG to city level.
- Chapters 2 to 10 set out detailed policies and objectives under a range of specific topics.
- Chapter 11 incorporates land use zoning objectives and development management standards and guidelines to be applied to future development proposals in the city.
- Chapters set out the overall Aim, Planning Context and Strategy. The Strategy provides the framework for the related policies and specific objectives. Policies are the Council’s general objectives on a topic basis while specific objectives are more area/site specific relating to various land-use and/or project proposals.
- Schedules are included in the policy document and comprise of; the Housing Strategy Details, Statement of Compliance with Ministerial Guidelines and the list of structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

2: Two maps provide the graphic representation of the policies and objectives in the main policy document. These are,

- Overall City Map – Land use Zoning and Objectives, scale 1:10,000
- City Centre Map – Land Use Zoning and Objectives, scale 1:2,500

3: The associated Environment Assessments of the Plan including, the SEA, NIR and SFRA.

Local Planning

Where appropriate, the policies of the Plan will be developed in more detail at a local level through Local Area Plans, Area Plans, Masterplans and Framework Plans. It is proposed to prepare Local Area Plans for Ardaun, Murrough and Headford Road area and Area Plans for Castlegar and Menlough.
Introduction and Core Strategy

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1.2 Strategic Vision Galway
1.3 Core Strategy – Context and Format
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1.5 Population Households and Housing Targets
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1.1 Introduction

This City Development Plan has been prepared following an extended period of economic crisis. However recent trends in economic activity suggest the beginning of a recovery with forecasts indicating an increase in market growth which will increase the prospects for employment, incomes and consumption. In this scenario population is likely to increase, creating additional pressures for housing and the associated land use requirements. The Core Strategy has been prepared with this outlook in mind and includes for a plan to guide development in the medium to longer term. It has also taken cognisance of the legacy over the last four years, since the adoption of the 2011 development plan, where there have been very low levels of development activity resulting in marginal changes in the amount of undeveloped zoned land between 2011 and 2015 and the impact this might have on future requirements.

1.2 Strategic Vision Galway

The vision for Galway City is to be a successful, sustainable, competitive, regional centre that creates prosperity, supports a high quality of life and maintains its distinctive identity and supports a rich cultural experience. A city that is environmentally responsible and resilient to challenge. A city that can attract and retain talent and skills and fosters innovation and creativity. An inclusive city where civic engagement is valued and a shared vision is pursued through good governance and leadership. A city that offers sustainable choices in housing, work, transport and lifestyle opportunities.

This is the vision for Galway that the City Development Plan 2017-23 aspires to achieve into the future and beyond the life span of the current plan.

Strategic Goals

The overall goals of the Development Plan have been arrived at following consideration of national, regional plans and relevant EU directives. They build on previous development plans and assume a continuing link into the future beyond the life span of the current plan term. The goals represent the strategic priorities of the Council in respect of the future development and use of land and resources in the city. They also reflect public consultation, City Council Members direction and the emerging vision aspired to by the City Council including all current initiatives being undertaken to help deliver that vision for the city.

The goals provide for direction with regard to the framework for planning in the city and consequently for the inclusion of associated policies and objectives in the development plan. These ultimately contribute to promoting the concept of sustainability, resilience, social inclusion and collective engagement. They support the delivery of critical services, community and cultural infrastructure, the achievement of an accessible environment and an economically buoyant city.

The realisation of the vision for Galway City will be supported through the following strategic goals:

1. Achieve a high quality of life for all citizens through the provision of a good quality, attractive, built environment, through the protection of the unique natural environment and through facilitation of key economic, cultural and social supports.

2. Enable the city to fulfil its role as a National Gateway, a Regional centre and contribute to the economic recovery through the provision of balanced and sustainable economic opportunities for growth, innovation and investment across all employment sectors and allow the role of the Gateway to harness the strengths and maximise the economic development for the whole West Region.

3. Promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through proactive measures in line with EU commitments to tackle climate change and reduce vulnerability to the harmful effects of climate change, in particular sea level encroachment and extreme weather events, through specific adaptation measures.

4. Apply the principle of sustainability particularly where it relates to the uses of land, buildings, water, energy, waste and through the encouragement of sustainable modes of transport and the integration of transportation with land use.

5. Aspire to make Galway an equal and inclusive city, particularly through facilitating all forms of social inclusion in the built environment, including in the public realm, housing, community facilities, in access to employment opportunities and public transportation.
6. Protect the distinctive and diverse natural environment in the city and strengthen the green network and linkages, recognising the biodiversity value of the amenity, the range of recreational benefits this provides, the potential for facilitating active and healthy lifestyles, the effect it can have on the quality of general health and well-being and the value it has for providing an attractive city setting.

7. Encourage a sense of collective identity and a shared vision through civic engagement on projects such as the development of a Local Economic and Community Plan for Galway and also on the promotion of specifically focused projects such as the European Capital of Culture 2020, that will promote the unique form and character of the city, give opportunities for the development of cultural, community and other beneficial infrastructure and enhance and diversify the city economy.

1.3 Core Strategy – Context and Format

The concept of a having a Core Strategy in development plans was introduced into planning legislation in 2010 and supported subsequently by guidance issued by the DEHLG (2010). The 2010 Planning (Amendment) Act placed an obligation on development plans to include for medium to long term policies and objectives that are shaped by evidence, are robust and can show consistency with national and regional spatial planning strategies.

In particular, and in the case of Galway City the Core Strategy is required to align with the designated role of the city as a Gateway under the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and to include for a plan – led approach to settlement distribution that reflects this role. Allied to this, is the need for evidence based and qualified need for zoned land linked to the regionally defined population targets and the consequent identification of housing targets. In addition, the Core Strategy is required to show how the objectives for retailing have had regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012).

Core Strategies are not specifically required to demonstrate the same level of reasoning for other land uses, such as that which supports employment, but it is recommended in the accompanying guidelines that there is an appropriate level of analyses undertaken to ensure that sufficient lands are identified for employment purposes at suitable locations.
Critically also in the Core Strategy it is necessary to show how future development can be linked to and support existing public transportation infrastructure/services and planned investments.

In summary, the intention of including a Core Strategy in a development plan is to present a solid case demonstrating the alignment of the development plan as far as is practicable with both the regional and national planning strategies. It is to show sufficiently robust, evidence based, rationale for the amount of lands that are zoned for particular purposes and demonstrate that in the overall approach such decision making has had regard for sustainable and environmental considerations and relevant EU Directives.

Core Strategies are required to give a strategic picture only, giving key statistics and priorities, expressed in text, table and illustrative diagram. These, in conjunction with the broadened details included in the balance of the plan, should provide a robust enough case to benchmark future planning decisions as being consistent with national and regional policy.

1.4 Core Strategy - Galway City

The Core Strategy for Galway City Development Plan 2017-23 has been informed by the strategic goals of the plan as referenced in Section 1.2. It has also been prepared having regard to the requirement to be consistent with regional and national planning strategies. These include the following -

National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)

The NSS sets out a planning framework for the future sustainable development of Ireland. It proposes a more balanced pattern of population, employment and physical development between regions. It advocates the continued support of development in the Greater Dublin Region but with a focused development in the nine Gateway Cities and nine Hub Towns. Galway has been identified as a Gateway having the characteristics and critical mass that can facilitate the national objectives and sustain and drive the wider regional economy of the west. This approach was reaffirmed in the Update and Outlook NSS (October 2010) but owing to recent economic, societal and demographic changes, the DECLG in 2013 advised that a comprehensive review of the NSS was intended. This review is still awaited, in the interim the NSS still remains the national policy on spatial planning.
Regional Planning Guidelines West Region (RPGs) 2010-2022

The NSS has been implemented at regional level through the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs). The RPGs provide a broad planning framework at regional level and reflect the objectives of the NSS. With respect to Galway City this means that the guidelines support the role of the Gateway and acknowledge the role of the city as a key economic driver for the West Region. The RPGs, based on the NSS regional population projections, aim to concentrate population in the Galway Gateway and have included for a targeted population of 98,700 for the city by the year 2022.

Galway City

The Core Strategy includes for Galway to continue to be the regional growth centre and to create the synergies for wider prosperity in the West Region. The strengthening of the Gateway is considered to be mutually beneficial to the region and providing for housing demands and employment opportunities will be a critical factor in achieving this role. This is in line with the RPGs.

The Core Strategy for development is guided by the overall goals of the City Plan as previously outlined. The context of the economy, the environment, the anticipated population growth and the settlement and transportation strategies contribute also to establishing an overall framework for the development of the city. In the course of this exercise other options for development have been considered but not deemed appropriate, in the interests of achieving the vision set for the city and in meeting the desired outcome from the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

The Core Strategy includes for a development scenario that supports significant further development within the city. Such development will be required to complement the character, sensitive environment, cultural legacy and built form of the city. An overriding focus will be to consolidate the built imprint of the city and keep it as physically compact as possible in the interests of sustainability.

Galway Transport Strategy

The Core Strategy is supported and informed by the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS). This is a strategy prepared by Galway City Council and Galway County Council in partnership with the National Transport Authority (NTA). The GTS consolidates the recommendations from transportation studies and strategies carried out by the Galway Transportation Unit (GTU) since 2008, with national transport policy direction and transport guidance from the NTA. It is also informed by the ongoing N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) project.

The objective of the strategy is to help address the transportation issues experienced in the city and the environs. It recognises the need to do so in an integrated, sustainable manner that aligns transport investment with settlement patterns, travel movements and also supports a sustainable use of land as promoted in the Core Strategy. This implies an approach that supports opportunities that will reduce congestion and car dependency through increased capacity of reliable public transport and the promotion and facilitation of cycling and walking, which in turn promotes the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. It also recognises that Galway needs to fulfil the role of a Gateway and regional growth centre where accessibility and connectedness will be paramount. This implies the need to facilitate city bound, cross-city, cross-county, including strategic east-west movements in order to relieve congestion in the city and in turn improve the quality of the city environment and increase opportunities for and the quality and experience of public transport, walking and cycling.

Survey, analysis and multi-modal transport modelling tools have been used to define the existing transport problems, predict future travel demands, assess mode share, recognise the key constraints and establish an optimum solution. This work included for assessment of a number of transport measures and their mutual impacts and interdependencies. It reflects an integrated approach where the objective is to arrive at the optimum sustainable transport solution which will deliver the most benefit for all transport users while also taking into consideration environmental, economic and social factors.

The strategy arrived at a range of measures which relate to public transport, walking and cycling, modifications to the traffic network, improvements to the public realm and use of ‘smarter mobility’. These measures will be linked to a 20 year implementation programme which will allow for funding applications and for phased implementation based on priority needs.

Notwithstanding the extent of such measures, it also affirms the need for a strategic ring road incorporating a new river crossing. Public transport measures alone have been deemed incapable of delivering a solution to the specific, significant problems associated with transport in the city, which will be further exacerbated by additional future demand unless addressed now.
The delivery of the components of the GTS supports the work being undertaken by Galway County Council on behalf of both authorities and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) on the N6 Galway City Ring Road project. This project includes for an emerging strategic east-west road. The project is at Stage 3 as defined under the NRA Project Management Guidelines (2010). This is where a preferred route corridor has been selected and the necessary further assessments are being carried out in order to bring the project to a level where the statutory consents can be sought from An Bord Pleanála i.e. Stage 4. It is anticipated that the application for such approvals will be made in the second quarter of 2017.

Cumulatively the components of the GTS, which includes the N6 GCRR, will address the congestion on the major routes through the city. The proposals in the GTS will reduce car dependency through the combined increased capacity of a modern, high quality public transport system in conjunction with the delivery and promotion of a core and feeder cycling network and an attractive prioritised pedestrian network. These measures are linked with existing and future development areas as defined in the Core Strategy and are incorporated into the policies and objectives in a number of chapters particularly Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. Some of the main elements of the GTS, including the corridor for the N6 GCRR, are also expressed in the City Development Land Use Zoning and Objective Maps.

The strategic objectives which include the plan commitments to preserve the N6 GCRR Preferred Route Corridor and the associated land requirements will take priority over other land uses and objectives. In this regard proposals for developments within the corridor will be assessed, in addition to other standard criteria, in the context of their potential to impact and potentially prejudice the development of the road.

The width of the corridor required for the construction of the road may reduce, but this can only be confirmed at a more advanced stage in the project management following completion of the full design phase. However regardless the full corridor will be required to be reserved in advance of assessment by An Bord Pleanála, who in the event of an approval for the scheme has discretion to approve the scheme with modifications also. In this regard it is necessary to preserve the route corridor in its entirety in the City Development Plan.

**Development Strategy**

In general the development strategy focuses on the brownfield site opportunities offered by both Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour. These areas, owing to their proximity to the city centre, their combined scale and attractive location on Galway Bay, offer great potential for a sustainable mixed use quarter. They offer a sequential solution to the expansion of the city centre, linked with a transportation hub, reinforcing the prime role of the city centre in both Galway City and the Gateway region. Expanding the city in this direction not only responds to future commercial floorspace demand it also can, with good design enhance the image of the city, the tourism function and allow for an expansion to a scale commensurate with Gateway designation. These regeneration areas are of large scale and it is anticipated that development will occur over a period, extending longer than the current development plan period. The development of these sites will be plan – led, with the benefit of masterplans which will complement and have regard to the interdependence of the sites.

The Headford Road Area – south of the Bodkin junction, represents a development form which requires modernisation, has potential for intensification and for the development of a better urban form and street network. It also has potential for increased amenity use, having direct links with the River Corrib and Terryland City Park. The Core Strategy includes for the regeneration of this area to include for more sustainable use of the land which currently includes a number of surface car parks. A more mixed use area is anticipated with significant levels of new residential uses, increased retail floorspace, commercial office type employment opportunities and cultural and civic uses.

Regeneration will require a high urban design standard. It is anticipated that sustainable modes of transport will be key to improving access to the commercial and residential areas, amenity areas, and will address current traffic congestion problems. The strategy for this area includes for better linkage into the city centre in particular for walking and cycling, a revised road network to accommodate improved public transport links and the location of public transport facilities within the Headford Road area. Critical also will be the provision of a pedestrian and cycle bridge link across the river to the university campus. Regeneration plans for the Headford Road have been examined through the framework plan process and will be brought forward as a statutory Local Area Plan in the near future.

The direction for residential development is to focus a significant amount of the growth anticipated for the Gateway into the east side of the city at Ardaun. This will be the key greenfield development area for Galway City. It has been selected as it meets the sub-regional requirements for settlement for Galway City and the environs. It offers a significant bank of land capable of being extended in the longer term into the county. It provides a continuous link out from the city and is capable of benefiting from proposals for sustainable transport modes. It also has potential for a high level of connectivity, both regionally and intra-regionally, located on the M6/N6 and with proximity to the N18/N17. This is further enhanced by its location close to the
main rail line station at Oranmore (Garraun) and also near Galway Airport which is currently being examined as an opportunity site.

It will provide opportunities for high density residential development structured and co-ordinated with other essential community services. It is well placed to develop good employment opportunities having close physical links with the existing technology parks at Mervue, Ballybrit / Parkmore and strategic IDA sites at Oranmore and Athenry. It is also well placed to link in with and take advantage of the proximity of higher level institutes – GMIT and NUIG and two significant health institutions – Merlin Park Hospital and the Galway Clinic. It would be important that the servicing of this area be given a high priority particularly in the Strategic Investment Program of Irish Water as it currently lacks critical basic services that are needed to facilitate development.

It is anticipated that other residential areas of the city will grow but at a more constrained rate and in character with the established nature of development. These areas include the newer suburbs of Knocknacarrar, Castlegar and Doughiska. The policy here is to allow for consolidation and densification where appropriate. The settlement strategy also anticipates new communities evolving from the regeneration of brownfield sites in the city on the surplus lands at Ceannt Station, the Inner Harbour area and on the Headford Road south of the Bodkin junction. The LAP lands at Murrough, although primarily designated for recreation and amenity purposes, will also sustain mixed uses including residential uses. In Knocknacarrar, lands are set aside also for a significant level of employment opportunities which will focus on the technology /office based industries thereby providing potential employment close to this large suburb linking land use and transport requirements sustainably.

The key designated centre of commercial, retail and local community activities are so located to co-ordinate with the prime role of the city centre. These take the form of District and Neighbourhood centres. The objectives for the economy and retailing are elaborated on in Chapter 5 and 6. In general, lands near the main areas of population and anticipated growth centres such as that at Knocknacarrar, Doughiska, Westside and Ardaun are designated as district centres, lower tier neighbourhood centres are located at a number of locations including Salthill, Ballinfoile -Castlegar, Renmore and local centres are as provided for under the retail hierarchy. At these locations there are opportunities for a scale of mixed uses to service the catchments increasing the range of local commercial and community facilities. These centres give easy access to the local communities and are of a scale and nature that will not threaten the prime function of the city centre core shopping area.

1.5 Population Households and Housing Targets

The population target for Galway City as set out in the Region Planning Guidelines for the Western Region is for the city to reach a population target of 98,700 by 2022. These targets were prepared in 2010 and took direction from the DEHLG circular SP4/09. It is apparent from the preliminary results of the 2016 Census, and 2014 CSO Regional population forecasts, that the growth of the city is at such a pace that it is unlikely to reach this target by 2022.

A DECLG circular letter issued in February 2013 indicated that owing to societal, fiscal, economic and demographic changes there is a need to develop a new spatial direction which would constitute as a “successor” to the NSS. This has not been introduced to date despite apparent misalignment of national population trends with the NSS targets. In the interim the NSS and the associated population targets continue to be the official direction for spatial policy in Ireland. The Core Strategy is therefore obliged to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to satisfy the housing needs of the targeted population until such time as these targets are revised. Specific details of population and housing trends are included for in the Housing Strategy in Schedule 1.

It is estimated based on the RPG population targets, that the increase in the number of households in Galway City from 2011 to 2022 will be in the order of **8,510** (See Table 1.1). This is taking the census records of 2011 households as the baseline and adopting the average size of city households then at **2.72** to be constant from 2011 to 2022. As the estimates relate to ambitious population targets the marginal difference should household size diminish does not frustrate the exercise of examining land banks for housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Average household Size</th>
<th>Household No’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSO Census</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>75,529</td>
<td>27,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPGs Targets</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>88,500</td>
<td>32,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPGs Targets</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>98,700</td>
<td>36,286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The house completions since 2011 need to be taken into consideration. In total from January 2012 up to September 2016 there have been 467 house completions in Galway City. Taking account of the 467 housing units completed up to September 2016, there would be an estimated residual demand for 8,043 housing units to meet the needs for housing of the population target. Although the targets are up to 2022 and the City Development Plan is up until 2023 it is not considered necessary to allow for additional population growth as it is considered that the NSS targets reflect a longer term growth scenario already.

The low figures for house completions in the last four years demonstrate the low level of construction rates. These are in contrast to the previous years where a historical peak of house completions was at a rate of 2,305 units in 2003. The four year figures undoubtedly reflect the poor economic climate in recent years and the current uncertainty in the housing market.

The targets for housing are predicated on a significant increase in population in the city which is unlikely to be reached by 2022. The demand for housing units however should be considered, as notwithstanding the ambitious NSS targeted population, evidence of housing demand is apparent in the city. It has been estimated by the Housing Building Agency (HBA) in a recent publication that Galway City will require 2,316 housing units from 2015 to 2018. This did not include for any pent up demand legacy from previous years. The other factor which will need consideration in housing demand is the increasing trend towards one, two and three person households which will also create a demand for a range of suitable housing types and consequently a revision to estimates which have historically been calculated on average household size. This may not represent an accurate projection as the lowering of the average household size will generate additional demands for housing also.

In consideration of all these factors and to plan for a more long term growth scenario to support the Core Strategy the targeted housing demand has been considered valid until reviewed by central government. In this regard the Core Strategy will indicate how the RPG targeted population can be accommodated within the city subject to sufficient investment in services including water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure.

1.6 Housing Land Availability

The lands available for residential development are predominantly undeveloped lands zoned for residential use. The Housing Land Availability (HLA) as prepared by the City Council provides an estimate of the quantum of zoned residential land available for development. Residential units can also be delivered from brownfield sites in the CC zone and Headford Road LAP lands. These lands are either underutilised and are suitable for intensification or are vacant/in transition and are likely to become available in the future. In addition there are lands that are not specifically zoned yet for residential purposes but are anticipated to be required as part of the settlement approach of the Core Strategy. These include Ardaun where population allocations have been made and where work is ongoing with an anticipated publication in Q2 of 2017. This LAP will include for the phasing of development within the area. Some other designated zoning can sustain housing such as CI zones, but as the objectives in the main are for commercial uses it is not considered appropriate or feasible to include a yield from such land in the estimation for housing.

Table 1.2 includes a summary of the estimated capacity of housing units on specifically identified suitable zoned lands. It confirms that there is capacity to meet the housing needs of the targeted population subject to the servicing of lands not currently serviced fully. This includes estimated yields on lands designated for LAP’s and regeneration sites and mixed use zones. Density and the quantum of units have been calculated based on recent development patterns of density, extant planning permissions, pre-consultation and preliminary land use studies for LAP areas and regeneration lands. Additional details on housing supply are included in Schedule 1 (Housing Strategy 2017-2023).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Land Availability in Development Plan 2017-23</th>
<th>Estimated No. of Housing Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Zoned – High Density</td>
<td>6020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Zoned – Low Density</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardaun Phase 1</td>
<td>1098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy/Obsolesce/Other Adjustments</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total capacity available</td>
<td>9093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This analysis demonstrates that there is sufficient land zoned that can satisfy the housing needs of the NSS targeted population for 2022. While it is the intention to continue to promote sustainable development through consolidation and through intensification on existing serviced lands, not all lands available for residential purposes have the requisite infrastructure. These lands, in particular Ardaun LAP are not sufficiently serviced with critical infrastructure such as water, waste water, roads, transport and telecommunication services. This is a particularly constraining factor in the supply chain. In addition it is considered that the balance of lands will all require some form of infrastructure investment to upgrade services or investment to ensure that public transport and sustainable modes of transport are satisfactorily provided. Table 1.3 illustrates the distribution of such lands zoned specifically for residential use within the city.

Table 1.3 Housing Land Capacity in the City*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Estimated Housing Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>3510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>3325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Specifically zoned for residential use so excludes regeneration and Ardaun Phase 1 lands

1.7 Employment Lands

The Core Strategy guidance indicates that the Core Strategy should involve “an appropriate level of analysis” that will ensure that sufficient lands are identified for employment purposes. In this regard the quantity of jobs that will need to be created up to 2023, the nature of such jobs and the likely geographical spread is not specified in the NSS or in the RPGs.

In the absence of any guidance methodology or specific growth estimates in these documents, that would enable the adequacy of employment lands in the development plan to be determined, a general analysis of the zoned lands that can support job creation has been made and current national policy taken into consideration.
The high-level national goal of the Action Plan for Jobs (APJ), first introduced in 2012, is to create an environment where the number of people at work will have increased by 100,000 by 2016 (from 2012 base). It also includes for a medium-term goal of having 2.1 million people in employment by 2018. The progress report in 2015 issued by the Department for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation indicates that there has been a significant net increase in jobs created in the national economy since 2012. It is noted also that the rate of unemployment (using the CSO Standardised Unemployment Rate) was 10.0% in March 2015, down from a high of 15.1% in February 2012. These are indicators of an economy in recovery.

The APJ for the West Region 2015-2017 frames specific actions for the region in the context of the regional strengths and competitive advantages in the West Region. This plan includes for a distillation of the national approach to job creation and targets. It also includes for a target for job creation in the region over the coming years. It is anticipated that many of these anticipated jobs will be located in Galway City. This would reflect current patterns where CSO records (2011) show that there is a working population of 41,402 in the city, which includes a significant commuting population of 20,560.

The long-term view of the Core Strategy is therefore to focus on sustaining existing jobs and building on the Gateway and the regions distinctive strengths to ensure that Galway City remains a competitive environment that can lead in the economic recovery. In this regard the Core Strategy identifies the future direction for growth and the required infrastructure, including transport investment and resources needed to support economic sustainability and growth. This has been generally described in Section 4.

The Core Strategy Figure 1.1 illustrates this approach.

It has not been considered either necessary or feasible to quantify the potential for actual jobs linked with specific land banks. However more detailed policies supporting an environment that will encourage job creation are included for in Chapter 5 and 6 which deals with the economy including the retail needs. These chapters set out the strategy and objectives in the plan to facilitate opportunities for further growth, innovation and investment in the economy of the city acknowledging the significant potential for job creation also on the periphery of the city in Co. Galway.

Table 1.4 illustrates the distribution of land use zoning noting that I for Industry and CI for Commercial/Industry would be considered specifically employment zones, while CC City Centre and CF Institutional support a higher density of employment both in the commercial and medical – education sector.
Noting the foregoing points it is considered that the Core Strategy has included for a sufficient amount of lands that can meet a range of employment types and at locations that are integrated with the strategy for sustainable transportation and co-ordinated with settlement strategies. The lands are highly unlikely to be all developed during the currency of the development plan reflecting the slow rate of growth in the economy. There is a need to have sufficient lands included in the plan to support a longer term plan - led approach to providing for economic opportunities linked with public investment in services and infrastructure.

The city already provides for a diverse range of economic activities, services and employment opportunities. Professional services are very significant, reflecting the knowledge based industries in the city. Having a regional role, it is understandable that the commercial/trade sector is also important as is the general manufacturing sector. There is a strong FDI presence reflected in the niche manufacturing industries including the medical technologies sector and the internationally traded ICT services and software that have clustered in Galway. With a range of schools, higher level institutes, hospitals and government services, the economy associated with education, healthcare and administration, mostly in the state sector, provides an existing strong job base.

The Core Strategy has acknowledged the nature and location of employment patterns in the city and noted the trends also in the employment economy too. These factors have consequently influenced the direction for development policies and objectives and the zoning of lands.

In general the Core Strategy includes for new employment opportunities at the business and technology lands at Ballybrit, Mervue, Dangan and Knocknacarra. The potential for job creation at Ardaun is also part of the long term development of the city. The IDA lands just outside of the city boundary at Parkmore and Oranmore are seen as having huge potential to accommodate future large FDI investment. The regeneration sites in the city centre – Ceannt Station Quarter, Inner Harbour and Headford Road are of such a scale and nature that they can, with re-development, satisfy the recent trends for office technology sector to locate both international investment and indigenous investment in high quality city centre locations.

Industrial lands at Mervue, located close to the city centre offer good opportunities for expansion through densification and re-organisation. Other smaller manufacturing enterprises located at Liosban and the Tuam Road area are considered very important in particular for the indigenous economy, start up, small businesses and the plan gives support for these lands to be retained for these purposes.

The City Centre area is the main focus of commercial activity. The Retail Strategy for the city as included for in Chapter 6 demonstrates the capacity for the core shopping area and also the specifically designated District and Neighbourhood centres to accommodate future commercial demands and other service needs. (See Figure 1.1)

A significant element of employment in the city is concentrated in the hospitals, educational establishments, in particular the third level institutes and also in other government services. Most of these large institutions have capacity for expansion through intensification and re-development on their existing sites and/or buildings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Zoning</th>
<th>Total area of lands Zoned (Ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Centre CC</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Institutional CF</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial –Industrial CI</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture G</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture A</td>
<td>816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Area Plan dedication LAP</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential R</td>
<td>1319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Density Residential LDR</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and Amenity RA</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial I</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,705</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, the approach of the Core Strategy is not only to ensure that there are opportunities for the expansion of job potential but also to protect and sustain the existing jobs. It is considered that the measures in the plan, including the amount and distribution of zoned lands support this approach.

Notwithstanding the need for land and services to facilitate job creation, the need to retain and build on the characteristics that give Galway its distinctive character and the quality of life experiences it has to offer is also a key element. This will sustain and attract a highly motivated and educated labour force, an important factor in creating an environment to meet employment targets.

1.8 Conclusion

The Core Strategy for the city has demonstrated that the development plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives as set out in the NSS and the RPGs for the West Region. In particular this has shown that the development plan shows alignment with the hierarchy of the NSS and the Gateway status of Galway City and also the allocated population targets and the associated requirements for housing land and employment opportunities. The Core Strategy has through the SEA also demonstrated that the development options considered have included for environmental considerations. In particular it demonstrates that the Planned Growth approach seeks to develop the city in a manner that strikes a balance between enabling the future urban development of the city and protection of the environment and natural assets. Development is focussed in key identified areas and specific land use zones, away from protected habitats and amenity open spaces.

The Core Strategy also demonstrates the consideration of the necessity to co-ordinate between planned development and existing and planned investment in public transport and services. The Core Strategy diagram included in figure 1.1 illustrates in map format the composite elements of the Core Strategy. As referenced previously, the subsequent chapters and Schedule 1 Housing Strategy give more supporting details on the overall approach defined in the Core Strategy.

Figure 1.1 – Core Strategy Diagram
Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods

2.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
2.2 Housing Strategy
2.3 Traveller Accommodation
2.4 Neighbourhood Concept
2.5 Neighbourhoods: Outer Suburbs
2.6 Neighbourhoods: Established Suburbs
2.7 Neighbourhoods: Inner Residential Areas
2.8 Neighbourhoods: City Centre Residential Areas
2.9 Low Density Residential Areas
2.10 Village Envelopes/Areas
2.11 Mews Housing Development
2.12 Specific Objectives
2.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim
To provide for good quality housing for all sectors of the community in sustainable neighbourhoods that are attractive places to live and are within easy access to a range of local services, amenities, community facilities and public transport networks. To ensure that these neighbourhoods have a sense of identity and foster sustainable living and movement patterns. To enhance the quality and to protect the character of Galway’s older neighbourhoods and regenerate the city centre’s neighbourhoods.

Context
The Council supports the vision that everyone should be able to live in good quality, affordable homes in sustainable communities. This approach reflects national housing policy and guidance. Currently the topic of housing is mainly focused on achieving a sustainable balance between the supply and demand which is critical but it is also fundamental to encourage the right kind of supply based on a vision of the residential areas people are going to call home. This requires a holistic approach and clear policy direction for the whole housing system. The Development Plan plays a significant role in this regard, it provides the framework for integrating housing into the economy, linking housing and transportation infrastructure and ensuring that housing is supported by basic services. This approach to housing gives more certainty for investments by both the private and public sector and will contribute to a good quality of life experience for generations in Galway into the future.

The Core Strategy of the Plan gives this direction. It includes for a policy direction for settlement and is influenced by the conclusions of analysis in the Housing Strategy. In general the Plan directs housing to be developed on key brownfield sites in the city centre, on the designated growth area of Ardaun and through infill and consolidation within existing housing areas. This settlement strategy is considered the best and most sustainable use of resources in terms of land, infrastructure and services. It ensures the best options for integration with transportation infrastructure. It is coupled with a robust policy in relation to the development of sustainable neighbourhoods to create communities with a strong identity where a good standard of living can be achieved by all. The strategy promotes a range of house types, sizes and tenures suitable for households with different income levels. It promotes sustainable densities, incorporating high design standards and provides for a co-ordinated approach with investment and the delivery of essential infrastructure and a range of services.

The settlement strategy also plays an important role in reducing the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions through the promotion of higher densities, a more compact urban form, sustainable transportation patterns and energy reduction and efficiency in the design of new housing. The use of LAPs, masterplans / framework plans is required in order to set out guiding principles for development to secure high standards in design and quality of housing and to generally create good well connected living environments. The strategy is supported by the GTS which sets out a range of measures which relate to public transport, walking, cycling, modifications to the traffic network, improvements to the public realm and use of smarter mobility, increasing opportunities for greater accessibility and connectivity in the city.

An important aspect of the sustainable neighbourhood concept is the protection and enhancement of existing neighbourhoods in the established suburbs and inner residential areas and in particular encouraging more housing in the city centre to maintain a vibrant city centre.

The Housing Strategy has reviewed trends in supply and demand of housing and assessed the capacity of the Development Plan to meet land requirements in the future. Similar to national trends the supply of housing in the city has been very low with only 363 units built between 2012 and Q3 2016. The demand for housing is projected to grow over the next few years, as the economy begins to show signs of recovery. Demographic trends point to population increases and smaller household sizes. This new requirement for housing will be in addition to the legacy of historic demand. The ability to address this demand will be fundamental to economic stability.

Social housing is included in this demand for housing. While in the past social housing provision tended to focus on new house build, national policy has been broadened widely with a focus on long term leasing, rental and upgrade of existing stock. Housing associations and voluntary bodies play a much greater role also.
Strategy

- Implement the recommended settlement strategy for the city ensuring that sufficient land is zoned to meet future demand, in the interests of sustainability and to achieve the optimal integration of land use and transportation.
- Accommodate through land use zoning the requirements of the Housing Strategy.
- Encourage sustainable neighbourhoods of high quality residential development, with a mix of house types and tenures with a strong identity and sense of place.
- Promote sustainable neighbourhoods where community facilities and services of an appropriate nature are easily accessible.
- Enable each household to have access to housing suitable to their needs and promote the provision of social housing, housing for persons with special needs and the provision of homeless and emergency accommodation.
- Promote climate adaptation measures as part of the development of sustainable neighbourhoods.
- Prepare Local Area Plans for key development areas and require masterplans, framework plans, design statements and site briefs for significant sites in advance of proposals.
- Protect and enhance existing residential areas and explore opportunities for environmental improvements in particular in city centre residential areas.
- Secure the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.

2.2 Housing Strategy

Planning Authorities are required to prepare and integrate Housing Strategies into their development plans. Such Housing Strategies are required to be aligned with Core Strategies. The Housing Strategy for Galway City Council is included in Schedule 1 of this Plan and highlights of the strategy and associated policies are included in this Chapter.

In general the purpose of a Housing Strategy is to ensure that the housing needs of the existing and future population are met. In addition the needs for social and affordable housing is also to be a material planning consideration in the strategy, in formulating policies and in decision making associated with planning applications. Since September 2015, the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act (2015), responding to the urgent need for social housing, has set the concept of affordable housing aside until and unless it is deemed necessary by a future Ministerial Directive.

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 allows for the implementation in 2018 of a vacant site levy to be paid by the owner of a registered vacant site. The levy is intended as a mechanism to incentivise the development of vacant sites, enabling them to be brought into beneficial use or encouraging their sale to those who have an interest and resources to develop. Monies raised from the levy will be required to be spent on housing or public improvements in the vicinity of the site. In this regard the Council will commence in 2017 the preparation of a vacant sites register for the city in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and 2016 DECLG guidance.

Housing Strategies, led by the Core Strategy, are required to include estimates of the present and likely future demand for housing in the area and ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is available within the Development Plan to meet such existing and future needs. They are also required to ensure that a 10% social housing requirement will be applied to developments in excess of 9 units located on land zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses. In this regard, consideration of alternatives in the context of the City Council’s needs can be given to the transfer of housing units on other lands, or through the option of long term leasing of properties or rental accommodation availability agreements.

The Housing Strategy seeks to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to satisfy the requirements of various categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities and to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

The Housing Strategy is obliged to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to satisfy the housing needs of the target population of the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs), as distilled from the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). It is acknowledged that for Galway to reach a population of 98,700 by 2022 is an ambitious target, this population target will be reviewed in conjunction with the imminent review of the NSS. The target indicates that there will be an estimated 36,286 households in the city by 2023, and a need for 8,245 new housing
units from 2015 to 2023. Of the overall households, 5,706 are estimated to be in need of social housing unless the current waiting list of 4,458 is reduced in the interim.

The Development Plan demonstrates that there is sufficient land zoned to allow for the housing need to be met but some of these lands will require infrastructural investment. A significant amount of the need will be required to be met through the private sector where delivery is currently very low and impacted by a variety of factors. This is consequently impacting the supply in all tenures.

Social housing supply is being led by the national Social Housing Strategy 2020. Changes in housing legislation have impacted too on social housing approach and delivery, where Local Authorities are required to prepare and adopt Housing Service Plans, Homeless Action Plans and Anti-Social Behaviour Strategies. Provision has also been made for the rental for social housing purposes by means of lease or contract arrangements (RAS) and for provision of support households under the more recent Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme. Additional measures to address the social housing need have been by broadening the supports for delivery through the voluntary and co-operative housing sector. Specific national policy has also been prepared to address the housing needs of people with disabilities and to respond to homelessness.

Councils including Galway City have received funding also for the regeneration of social housing stock. In addition it is anticipated that direct build of 518 social housing units will be delivered in the city through central government commitments under the 3 year Housing Capital Programme and other initiatives. Supply will also be added to through Part V (10% element) when the private housing market recovers. Specific plans have been prepared for the homeless and the travelling community and initiatives are in place to support housing for the elderly and those with a disability.
### Policy 2.2 Housing Strategy

Secure implementation of the Housing Strategy 2017-23, which has been informed by the Core Strategy, by ensuring that sufficient suitable lands are zoned to meet the extent of housing needs identified in the strategy in accordance with the NSS and RPGs targeted population for Galway City.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Require as provided for under Section 95 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that 10% of all housing developments in excess of 9 units, on lands zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other use be reserved for the purposes of social housing. Alternatives to delivery which can include the transfer of housing units on other lands not the subject of the specific planning permission, or provision through the option of long term leasing of properties, or through the provision of accommodation agreements are open for consideration. These latter arrangements will only be deemed acceptable in the context of the Local Authority’s needs for social housing and where they effectively and efficiently meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have regard to all Government policies on housing and specifically include for consultation, support and assistance to all Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) in their role as social housing providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in pre-planning consultation with private sector developers to facilitate the delivery of housing in accordance with the vision for the housing sector as expressed in the national Housing Policy Statement 2011 and the requirements of the Housing Strategy for Galway City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support a diverse range of housing types, size and tenures within housing developments in the interests of countering undue segmentation and to allow for choice of community, for all persons irrespective of age, culture, social background or ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the specific housing needs of older people including independent living options as well as semi-independent living options and nursing home accommodation. These facilities should be preferably accommodated within established neighbourhoods and at locations that have good access to community facilities and amenities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-18 and any subsequent plan in the interest of providing a satisfactory standard of suitable, sustainable accommodation that meets the needs of the Travelling community. Include for engagement in this regard with Galway Traveller Movement and the local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the specific needs for housing persons with disabilities and develop a strategy to address these needs in conjunction with the HSE, the Brothers of Charity, community support groups and voluntary housing bodies including the Approved Housing Bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address the demand for additional social housing and social housing supports through a number of means including the construction of housing, direct acquisition of housing, delivery in conjunction with AHBs and the use of the RAS, HAPs, long term leasing and any other appropriate housing delivery initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to work with the voluntary, community and public sector in the provision of emergency and crisis accommodation and associated advice services. Take cognisance in this regard to the actions included in the Local Homeless Plan for Galway City (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to work with the HSE and the voluntary sector in the provision of housing for refugees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the provision of good quality, well regulated, private rented accommodation in order to provide a real choice, stable and attractive housing option to meet the general demands for both short and long term accommodation including for those on social housing support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the development of third level student accommodation both on campus and through private student accommodation schemes. Require such private student accommodation, in particular new build, to generally be of the type that would have otherwise qualified for tax relief under Section 50 of the Finance Act 1999. Allow for such schemes to be exempt from the Part V social housing requirements as provided for under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and the Housing Strategy, noting also that any change of use from permitted and built student accommodation to any other type of accommodation will require planning permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the Housing Strategy two years following adoption as is required under legislation or at a sooner point should it be required in view of trends in the housing market or changes in national policy such as that which may come about following the preparation of revised national spatial policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning applications for multiple housing units will be required to submit a Statement of Housing Mix detailing the proposed mix and demonstrating that it provides a sufficient minimum in house sizes and types to satisfy the demands of the emerging reduction in household sizes. The needs of special groups such as the elderly and disabled will be required to be considered as part of this process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the development of sustainable communities and ensure that all new housing developments – private, public and voluntary are carried out in accordance with the DECLG guidelines Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas (2008) and Section 28 Ministerial guidelines – Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2015).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Traveller Accommodation

A mandatory requirement of the Development Plan is inclusion of objectives for the provision of accommodation for Travellers and for the use of particular areas for that purpose. In accordance with the provisions of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1996 the Council have prepared the Traveller Accommodation Programme which covers the period 2014-2018. This plan specifically deals with the accommodation needs of the travelling community, details of which are set out in the Housing Strategy in Schedule 1. Through zoning objectives for different land uses, the Development Plan can facilitate achieving the recommendations contained in the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 and any subsequently adopted recommendations.

Policy 2.3 Traveller Accommodation

Have regard to the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-18 and any subsequent plan in the provision of accommodation for the Travelling community.

Facilitate the specific accommodation needs of Travellers through land use zoning objectives.

2.4 Neighbourhood Concept

An essential element of urban sustainability is the development of a compact city, which is characterised by the consolidation of existing neighbourhoods and the establishment of new neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods are areas where an efficient use of land, effective integration in the provision of physical and social infrastructure and high quality design are combined to create places where people wish to live, have a sense of belonging and feel socially inclusive. Sustainable neighbourhoods can contribute to fostering community spirit, to reducing traffic movements and to the provision of high quality residential environments. They can also contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through decreased travel demand, provision of sustainable transport networks through SUDS and improvements to energy efficiency in residential design. It is the policy of the Council to promote this neighbourhood concept in existing residential areas and in new developments. Table 2.1 and Fig. 11.34 sets out the framework of residential neighbourhoods in the city.

Table 2.1 Indicative Neighbourhood Areas in Galway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outer Suburbs</th>
<th>Established Suburbs</th>
<th>Inner Residential Areas</th>
<th>City Centre Residential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardaun</td>
<td>Renmore</td>
<td>Bohermore</td>
<td>Woodquay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doughiska</td>
<td>Mervue</td>
<td>College Road</td>
<td>Long Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roscam</td>
<td>Ballybaan</td>
<td>Lough Atalia</td>
<td>Henry Street Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Fr. Griffin Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knocknacarra</td>
<td>Dangan</td>
<td>Claddagh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballyburke</td>
<td>Salthill</td>
<td>Shantalla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballymoneen</td>
<td>Taylor’s Hill</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Westside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castlegar</td>
<td>Tirellan</td>
<td>Tieveilly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuam Road</td>
<td>Ballinfole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods, the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2009 (SRD) provide detailed design guidance. They set out a number of high level aims to achieve in creating successful places. These include to:

- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport and minimise the need to use cars;
- Deliver a quality of life which residents and visitors are entitled to expect, in terms of amenity, safety and convenience;
- Provide a good range of community and support facilities, where and when they are needed and that are easily accessible;
- Present an attractive, well-maintained appearance, with a distinct sense of place and a quality public realm that is easily maintained;
• Be easy to access for all and to find one’s way around;
• Promote the efficient use of land and of energy and minimise greenhouse gas emissions;
• Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand;
• Promote social integration and provide accommodation for a diverse range of household types and age groups;
• Enhance and protect the green network and biodiversity;
• Enhance and protect the built environment.

*The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2013 (DMURS)* complements the SRD guidelines by providing guidance in relation to the design of the urban street network and encouraging an integrated design approach that views the street as a multi-functional space and focuses on the needs of all road users ultimately to create safe and successful residential streets.

A number of key development areas within the city will be subject to Local Area Plans (LAPs), details of which are set out in Chapter 10. The draft LAP for Ardaun is being prepared and sets out a framework for the development of a high quality living and working neighbourhood based on urban design principles and includes for integration with a sustainable transportation network. An LAP is also proposed for the Headford Road area south of the Bodkin junction and for Murrough, both of which will include for accommodation of sustainable residential communities.

The Council also recognises that there are a number of undeveloped residential zoned areas within the city which may benefit from more detailed design guidance within the context of the broader policy set out in this Plan. In these cases the Council may prepare supplementary guidance in the form of masterplans / framework plans / area plans or development briefs. In addition, the Council will require planning applications for large scale residential developments or planning applications on sensitive sites, to include a design statement which describes the proposed development in terms of its context, the movement within the site, the relationship to adjoining developments and the contribution to good urban design. This will include a character appraisal of the area indicating how the proposed development responds to and enhances the character of the area.

### Policy 2.4 Neighbourhood Concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encourage the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods, which will provide for high quality, safe, accessible living environments which accommodates local community needs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage sustainable neighbourhoods, through appropriate guidelines and standards and through the implementation of local area plans, masterplans / frameworks / area plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect and enhance new/existing residential neighbourhoods through appropriate guidelines and standards, preparation of framework plans, development briefs and design statements.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 2.5 Neighbourhoods: Outer Suburbs

Successful residential development is reliant on the creation of neighbourhoods which have a distinct and special character, that are places which have recognisable features where people live and form an attachment. In the outer suburbs of the city, the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods will include for local shopping, community, leisure infrastructure and local employment opportunities. Access to public transport, walking and cycling is also an integral part of a sustainable neighbourhood.

New residential development will have regard to its surrounding context, provide for linkages with local facilities, a mix of house types and a layout that will provide for a high quality living environment. Infill development in the outer suburbs will have regard to the context of the area and will not adversely affect the character of an area. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces. The Council will require that all new developments take into consideration the following principles that contribute to the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods.
Residential Densities
The SRD guidelines promote higher residential densities in appropriate locations, especially in conjunction with public transport facilities subject to ensuring that the highest quality of residential amenity is achieved. In the design and assessment of higher density residential development, regard shall be had to these guidelines and the accompanying design manual which sets out certain criteria including the following:

- Acceptable building heights;
- Avoidance of overlooking and overshadowing;
- Provision of adequate private and public open space;
- Landscaping where appropriate and provision of safe play spaces;
- Adequate internal space standards;
- Suitable parking provision;
- Provision of ancillary facilities such as community facilities and local services.

The Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines – Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2015 which set out requirements for size and design of apartments shall also be adhered to.

The density of housing achieved in newer city neighbourhoods has been well balanced achieving the necessary critical mass to sustain essential infrastructure and sustainable communities. Future growth targets can be met using these densities. In the older established neighbourhoods, densities have been balanced with protection of existing residential amenity and character of these areas.

Context for New Neighbourhoods
The successful integration of new housing development within its surrounding context is one of the most important elements in fostering sustainable neighbourhoods and sustainable patterns of movement within Galway City. In designing a distinct place, a full assessment of the overall site context is required. The context includes the natural environment, the form of settlement, buildings and spaces, landscape features, contours, historical/archaeological features and local biodiversity.

The extent to which new housing responds to its local context depends not only on the design of the houses themselves but also on the design of the public realm and equally important, the linkages between new housing and:

- Local facilities and community infrastructure;
- The public transport network and network of walking and cycling routes;
- The green network.

New residential development should have regard to the layout of adjoining developments achieving good permeability with opportunities for connections between streets and open spaces, while maintaining its own character and legibility.

Streets and Movement
The layout of residential development needs to create spaces where the car becomes secondary and where the street has an important public realm function beyond the movement of traffic. The Council will encourage new development to be based on a network of spaces rather than a road based layout, a development in which roads play their part but are not dominant. Design principles and measures to consider include the following:

- **Connectivity and Permeability**: provide convenient access to places, particularly to schools and places of work. Routes within the area should be accessible for everyone and as direct as possible.
- **Sustainability**: prioritise the needs of walking, cycling, public transport and the need for car-borne trips to be minimised.
- **Safety**: provide for safe access on streets, paths and cycle routes for users of all ages and degrees of personal mobility.
- **Legibility**: ensure residents and visitors can easily find their way around the area.
- **Sense of place**: ensure streets contribute to the creation of attractive and lively mixed-use places. Streets should not just serve a movement function, their design should include consideration of appropriate opportunities for events and social interaction. The use of street names with a connection to the area can also reinforce a sense of place and evocation of the past in new buildings.
The DMURS sets out design approaches and standards moving away from the inflexible roads based design standards of the past to implementing a more integrated approach to street design with the pedestrian at the top of the user hierarchy.

**Homezones**
Within new residential development the Council will encourage the use of homezones. These consist of shared surfaces, indirect traffic routes, areas of planting and features to encourage the use of the street for amenity. These elements allow for traffic calming and include design features that are used to indicate to traffic the presence of a homezone. Homezones allow streets to become play and amenity areas and therefore can contribute to Galway’s role as a ‘Child Friendly City’. Detailed guidelines will be available which demonstrate opportunities for homezones and give advice on their design and the range of elements required to create a homezone.

**Mix of House Types and Tenures**
The creation of successful residential neighbourhoods is about the provision of opportunities for homes which respond to people’s needs and which provide a framework where communities can become established and grow. Providing a mix of house types and tenures can create neighbourhoods for people of different ages and lifestyles. This has a number of important benefits. It provides opportunities for ‘lifetime communities’ where people can move house without leaving the neighbourhood. It allows for more sustainable use of community services and increased social inclusion. It also provides a more attractive residential development due to diversity of form.

**Universal Design**
The application of universal design principles and lifetime adaptability in the design and layout of new development is more inclusive and future proofs housing for changes in individual lifecycles. This approach assumes that every person experiences barriers, reduced functioning, or some form of disability, either temporary or permanent, at some stage in life and seeks public places and the built environment to be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.
Sustainable Housing
The creation of sustainable neighbourhoods can be enhanced through the integration of energy efficiency into the design and layout of development. This involves optimising the benefits of sunlight, daylight and solar gain through consideration of topography, building orientation and building layout. It may also involve consideration of sustainable heating systems and district level heating. New developments should aim to achieve high levels of natural daylight entering buildings to maximise solar gain including dual aspect design and orientation broadly to the south. Other measures include use of insulation and the provision of shelter through planting, walling and green design features.

Open Space and Amenities
Open space in residential developments is a key asset. The best open spaces are those which not only provide for safe play, passive recreation and relaxation but also contribute to the development of a sense of identity and community. To give new developments a context and identity, new open space should use natural features such as trees, hedgerows and rock outcrops. Open space should be integrated, accessible, overlooked and well supervised. They should provide a highly amenable outlook for surrounding residents and serve a range of amenity functions from passive and active recreation to provision of habitat and enhancement of biodiversity. Linking open spaces and recreational areas can contribute to extending the green network as mentioned in Chapter 4 and can enhance wildlife corridor provision. Open spaces can also be receptors for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

In order to increase the amenity value of open spaces, the Council will require that suitably located recreational infrastructure is provided as an integral part of residential development containing more than 10 units, for example, seating and play areas. The recreational facility provided should serve the needs and profile of future residents and the scale and type of development. These facilities can also contribute to achieving Galway’s role as a ‘Child Friendly City’.

Provision of Services and Community Facilities
Local facilities bring residents together and reduce the need for traffic movements. The Council through zoning objectives will encourage the provision of community, commercial and local employment facilities of a scale appropriate to serve the local community. The grouping of services can facilitate viability where they are within walking distance of local residents and can create a focal point for the neighbourhood. The range of facilities can include schools, childcare facilities, community centres, primary health care centres and local commercial services. The provision of school facilities in tandem with new development is critical to supporting sustainable communities and reducing the need to travel. The planning system can facilitate the provision of schools through land use zoning and designation of particular sites. An assessment of the demand for school places and the capacity of nearby schools has been incorporated into design guidance requirements for large scale residential development.

Placenames
In the development of new neighbourhoods, the naming of places and areas contributes to the legibility of the city. Naming can reflect local neighbourhood identity, heritage and cultural associations and can be important in knowledge, orientation and travel function.

The naming of new residential developments in the city reflects the locality, local heritage and landscape expressed in the Irish language. In the interests of community identity and legibility, naming of parks, community facilities and roads is also promoted, using a bilingual approach.

Redevelopment
In the interest of protecting the amenity of existing residential neighbourhoods in the outer suburbs demolition of existing dwellings for higher density apartment development will not be acceptable. Exception to this policy will only be considered on recently zoned residential lands, undeveloped lands where no pattern of development has been established, on main distributor roads where mixed uses have already been developed and where the existing form of development is not predominantly conventional housing and where the development will not reduce the existing residential amenity.
2.6 Neighbourhoods: Established Suburbs

Galway has a variety of established suburbs, all of which contribute to the diversity and character of the city. The character of the Taylor's Hill area is very different to that of Renmore or Mervue, but each area has an important function in the provision of housing and essential local services and community facilities in the City. It is recognised that these areas are dynamic and that potential still exists for some additional residential development which can avail of existing public transport routes, social and physical infrastructure. It is the priority of the Council to ensure that new development will not adversely affect the character of these areas.

Infill should not be of such a scale that represents a major addition to, or redevelopment of, the existing urban fabric. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces. Such development will also have regard to the scale and proportion of existing buildings, building lines, massing and height of buildings in relation to the street.

Demolition of existing dwellings for higher density apartment development in the established suburbs will not be acceptable. Exceptions to this policy will only be considered on recently zoned residential lands, undeveloped lands where no pattern of development has been established, or on main distributor roads where mixed uses have already been developed, or where the existing form of development is not predominantly conventional housing and where the development will not reduce the existing residential amenity.

Demolition of existing dwellings for replacement dwellings will not be acceptable in the established suburbs except in cases where it is demonstrated that the proposed development would make a positive contribution to the area's urban design and where it does not represent a major intervention into or redevelopment of the urban fabric. This assessment will be balanced with the contribution that any proposed replacement would make to enhance the character of the area and will have regard to any sustainable benefits of such development. Where replacement is acceptable, new development will be required to comply with the Council's development standards.

It is recognised that the housing needs of people change. This need may generate a demand for additional space. Where extensions are required these should have regard to Development Plan standards, its impact on surrounding residential amenity and will be considered in terms of sustainable benefits.

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Policy 2.5 Outer Suburbs

Encourage higher residential densities at appropriate locations especially close to public transport routes and routes identified in the Galway Transport Strategy as suitable for high frequency, public transport services.

Ensure that sustainable neighbourhoods are places where housing, streets, open spaces and local facilities come together in a coherent, integrated and attractive form.

Ensure the layout of residential developments has regard to adjoining developments.

Encourage a mix of housing types and sizes within residential developments.

Encourage the use of homezones within residential developments.

Require residential developments of over 10 units to provide recreational facilities as an integral part of the proposed open space.

Ensure a balance between the reasonable protection of the residential amenities of the outer suburbs and the protection of the established character and the need to provide for sustainable residential development.

Encourage the integration of energy efficiency in the design and layout of residential development.

Encourage the promotion of universal design principles and lifetime adaptability in the design and layout of residential developments.

Promote the use of appropriate placenames for new residential development in accordance with the policy of An Coiste Logainmneacha.
It is acknowledged that established suburbs may require additional community and local services. The Council will encourage such additional services along main roads and in existing mixed-use areas or where it is demonstrated that the proposed development will not adversely affect the character of the area.

Regeneration

There are neighbourhoods in the established suburbs which have extensive tracts of communal open space lands. The scale and layout of the communal open space in these areas has created pockets of open space lands which are under-utilised and which do not contribute to the urban structure. This can consequently lead to these areas becoming derelict and attracting uses that have no community value.

Opportunities exist in these areas to improve this situation through enhancement in urban design. Through a high standard of infill development great improvements in environmental quality can be brought about. This infill development could be in the form of community facilities and/or residential development. This development can contribute to the quality of the neighbourhood and can enhance the built environment by providing effective linkages between residential areas, better informal supervision of open spaces and introducing a mix in size and type of housing units.

There are opportunities to achieve improvements in Ballinfoile Park as set out in the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled *A Better Ballinfoile*. It highlighted a number of actions within the neighbourhood which if implemented would bring about significant improvements. Some of the actions involve development of private lands and may not be readily achievable. It is an objective of the Council to implement the actions of this plan where feasible, funds permitting and subject to public consultation (see Fig. 2.2). Similarly in Ballybaan, there are opportunities to achieve improvements and potential for infill development (see Fig. 2.3). In this case a regeneration plan for the open space areas will be prepared with potential infill housing on lands zoned residential only. Extensive public consultation will be part of the process and the recreational requirements and residential amenity of the existing neighbourhood will not be prejudiced.

Environmental Improvement Schemes

There are opportunities to achieve improvements in residential and visual amenity in the Mervue area. The Council will examine, in conjunction with local residents, the potential for environmental improvements for the Mervue area (see Fig. 2.4) through traffic management and landscaping.

**Policy 2.6 Established Suburbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensure a balance between the reasonable protection of the residential amenities and the character of the established suburbs and the need to provide for sustainable residential development.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage additional community and local services and residential infill development in the established suburbs at appropriate locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance established suburbs, such as the Mervue residential area, through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes and the protection of all open spaces including existing green spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and implement the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled <em>A Better Ballinfoile</em> in consultation with the local community and stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine potential for a regeneration plan for open space areas in Ballybaan in consultation with the local community and stakeholders.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.7 Neighbourhoods: Inner Residential Areas

Galway has a variety of house types in the inner residential areas, with a mix of private and public housing. Places such as Claddagh, Shantalla and areas of Bohermore provide valuable housing in strong sustainable communities close to the city centre. These areas are under pressure with demand for housing extensions and for limited infill development. They have also experienced considerable pressure from traffic and car parking which has reduced their residential amenity. It is recognised that these areas are dynamic and that potential still exists for some additional residential development which can make efficient use of existing public transport routes and social and physical infrastructure. It is the priority of the Council to ensure that new development will not adversely affect the character of these areas. In this regard infill development and housing extensions should not be of such a scale that represents a major addition to, or redevelopment of the existing urban fabric. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces. Infill development will also have regard to the scale and proportion of existing buildings, building lines, massing and height of buildings in relation to the street.

Redevelopment

Demolition of existing dwellings for higher density development will not be acceptable in the inner residential areas except in cases where it is demonstrated that the proposed development would make a positive contribution to the area's urban design and where it does not represent a major intervention into or redevelopment of the urban fabric. This assessment will be balanced with the contribution that any proposed replacement would make to enhancing the character of the area and will have regard to any sustainable benefits of such development. Where replacement is acceptable, new development will be required to comply with the Council's development standards.

Environmental Improvement Schemes

To address traffic and parking pressures the Council will examine, in conjunction with local residents, the potential for environmental improvements for the areas of Claddagh, Shantalla, and St. Finbarr's Terrace, Bohermore. The aim will be to implement changes that increase the residential amenity of these areas, reduce traffic and reorganise car parking.

Policy 2.7 Inner Residential Areas

Protect the quality of inner residential areas including Claddagh, Shantalla and Newcastle (to Quincentenary Bridge) by ensuring that new development does not adversely affect their character and has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.

Enhance inner residential areas such as Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore, through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes and the protection of all open spaces, including existing green spaces.
2.8 Neighbourhoods: City Centre Residential Areas

In the city centre there are areas which have retained their residential character. Communities such as Woodquay, Long Walk and Bowling Green contribute significantly to the vitality and livability of the city core. These residential communities have experienced pressures of commercial encroachment and have been retained as neighbourhoods through policies of the Development Plan. It is recognised that certain city residential areas have experienced a reduction in residential amenity due to the impacts of adjacent city centre development and traffic pressures. In this regard the Council will endeavour to address some of the negative impacts on amenity through improvements particularly in traffic management and the public realm. Chapter 10 sets out policies and objectives for certain city centre residential areas.

New residential development in particular has contributed to the vibrancy of the city centre. The Council will continue to encourage residential development by requiring a residential content of at least 20% of new development in the city centre. Exceptions may be made on small scale redevelopment sites. On certain key sites in the city centre namely the Ceannt Station lands, Inner Harbour and the Headford Road LAP areas, a higher residential content of 30% will be required. The Council will also promote the Living City Initiative which encourages through provision of tax relief, refurbishment of older buildings for owner occupation in certain areas of the city centre.

Policy 2.8 City Centre Residential Areas

- Protect and enhance city centre residential areas by discouraging encroachment from commercial development and unacceptable infill developments.
- Enhance city centre residential areas through implementation of environmental improvement schemes and improvements to the public realm, including, where appropriate, homezones and recreational facilities in conjunction with local residents.
- Encourage the expansion of the city centre residential community by requiring a residential content in new development proposals.
- Consider the redevelopment of the City Council car park at Bowling Green to meet social housing needs.
- Support and promote the Department of Finance Living City Initiative Scheme (2015).
2.9 Low Density Residential Areas

Low Density Residential areas (LDR) are areas, which have been zoned for residential development at a lower density than other lands zoned residential. The prescribed residential densities in these areas are considered appropriate due to the established residential pattern, deficiency in service provision and significance of landscape. Such areas require specific development objectives, as outlined in Chapter 11.

**Policy 2.9 Low Density Residential Areas**

- Protect the character of these areas by ensuring new development has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.
- Protect the characteristics of these areas through development standards and guidelines.

2.10 Village Envelopes/Areas

Galway has retained a number of village settlements within the city. These are Menlough, Castlegar, Coolagh-Briarhill and Coolagh-Menlough. These villages have a historic pattern of development and have opportunities for sensitive infill development. It is Council policy to allow housing and limited local services or community facilities where they contribute to enhancing the area’s character.

Menlough village and environs have a distinct character, informed by its location on the Corrib, historical pattern of development and vernacular buildings. The area has a significant natural environment including the Lough Corrib cSAC and SPA and Menlough Woods. The area has a rich built heritage which includes a ‘clachan’ settlement pattern and contains a number of thatched cottages which are protected structures. Menlough Castle is adjacent to the village and in conjunction with adjoining lands has potential for use for recreation and amenity purposes.

While the area still maintains a distinctive character it has potential for an increase in amenity and recreation facilities making it a valuable resource for the city. Potential also exists for community facilities, for limited local services serving the area and for improvements to the built environment through conservation and high quality new development. In recognition of this the Council will carry out, in conjunction with local residents, a plan which will have the aim to conserve and improve the distinctive quality of Menlough and explore the potential of the facilities of the area as a major asset to the city.

It is recognised that the Castlegar area has a certain distinctive character and established community. However there is a need to reinforce the identity of this area through improved community facilities, better network of linkages which also facilitate increased access to local natural amenities and facilities. The Council will carry out in conjunction with local residents, a plan for the area which will have as an aim, to build on the existing assets of the community, protect and enhance the existing character and amenity of Castlegar.

Initial public consultation for the Castlegar Area Plan highlighted issues such as protection and enhancement of the rural character, heritage and biodiversity and requirements for additional facilities and amenities. The next stage of the process is to complete the background data analysis/research, to define the extent of the plan area and to establish the plan priorities in consultation with the community. The plan will consider and prioritise improved linkages, improved pedestrian, cycle and traffic movement, heritage enhancement, development of amenities and community facilities and design and layout of new development. Guidelines for the village envelope and the wider area and a planning/design framework for the residential zoned lands will also be included in the plan.

**Policy 2.10 Village Envelopes/Areas**

- Strengthen the character of specified villages through encouraging appropriate development.
- Protect and enhance the character and amenity of Menlough and prepare a plan for the area, which will include for flood mitigation measures.
- Reinforce the identity of Castlegar through protection and enhancement of existing amenities and through provision of additional community facilities.
2.11 Mews Housing Development

Within the city there are limited opportunities for the development of mews housing. The development of mews housing must be done in a co-ordinated manner and can only be achieved where there is no impact on existing residential amenity. The Council will examine certain areas of the city for potential for this type of development. Such development will not be permitted in advance of a co-ordinated plan for those areas which have potential for mews housing. Certain criteria must be adhered to and the development must have regard to the existing built form, the character of the area, the impact on residential amenity and must satisfy standards for access, open space and parking.

Policy 2.11 Mews Housing Development

Prepare a co-ordinated plan for areas of the city which have potential for mews housing development in consultation with local residents.

2.12 Specific Objectives

- Set up a Local Housing Forum, to investigate measures to expedite construction of housing in the city.
- Prepare an environmental improvement scheme for the Mervue residential area.
- Prepare environmental improvement schemes for Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore residential areas.
- Prepare a regeneration plan for the open space areas of Ballybaan.
- Review the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled 'A Better Ballinfoile' and implement actions where feasible and subject to funding.
- Develop best practice advice for the design of homezones.
- Prepare an enhancement scheme for Whitehall.
- Prepare a plan for the Menlough area. This will include guidance on new design and conservation and will explore the amenity potential of the area.
- Prepare a plan for the Castlegar area in consultation with local residents.
Transportation

3.1 Aim Context and Strategy
3.2 Integration of Land Use and Transportation
3.3 Galway Transport Strategy
3.4 Traffic Network
3.5 Public Transport
3.6 Cycling and Walking
3.7 Road and Street Network and Accessibility
3.8 Smarter Mobility and Mobility Management
3.9 Galway Port
3.10 Specific Objectives
3.1 Aim Context and Strategy

Aim
To integrate sustainable land use and transportation, facilitating access and choice to a range of transport modes, accessible to all sections of the community that ensures safety and ease of movement to and within the City and onward connectivity to the wider area of County Galway and the West Region.

Context
Despite the economic difficulties of recent years, Galway City has continued to grow in population and employment. As the economy recovers, the opportunities afforded by the city will continue to attract more people to live and work in Galway. In excess of 60,000 vehicles enter and leave the city on an average weekday\(^2\). This highlights the significant pressures on the existing transport network with greatest volumes of traffic experienced in the morning and evening peak and in particular along the main routes into the city.

CSO census records for 2011 indicate that 90% of those commuting into the city for work travel by car. Within the city, travel patterns also indicate a heavy dependency on car usage in particular for journeys to work and school trips. The high levels of commuter and local car usage gives rise to significant congestion on the road network which seriously impacts on the economy and the experience of the urban environment.

National policy emphasises the need to align land use and transportation which encourages sustainable patterns of travel. This is reflected at national and regional level through spatial planning and transportation policy.

The investment programme of the National Transport Authority (NTA) also reflects this approach.

At local level, the focus of the Core Strategy is to align land use with investment in sustainable transportation. The Galway Transportation Unit (GTU) set up in 2008, is specifically functioned to develop and implement national transport policy. Since its inception it has carried out a range of studies and projects to promote public transportation and sustainable modes of transport in the city.

Whilst the implementation of various measures have made improvements to the transport network, serious traffic congestion still prevails which impacts on peoples’ quality of life, the economy of the city and the regional role of Galway as a Gateway.

These issues have now been assessed in the context of preparing a transport strategy for the city. The Galway Transport Strategy 2016 (GTS) is a strategy prepared by Galway City Council and Galway County Council in partnership with the NTA. It is also informed by the ongoing work being undertaken by Galway County Council on behalf of both authorities and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), namely the N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) project. The aims of the GTS are to address the current and future transport requirements of the city and the settlements within the city environs and to identify the level of service requirements for each mode of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicle.

The GTS consolidates the recommendations from transportation studies and strategies carried out by the GTU since 2008, with national transport policy direction and transport guidance from the NTA. The objective of the strategy is to help address the transportation issues experienced in the city and the environs. It recognises the need to do so in an integrated, sustainable manner that aligns transport investment with settlement patterns, travel movements and also supports a sustainable use of land. This implies an approach that supports opportunities that will reduce congestion and car dependency through increased capacity of reliable public transport and the promotion and facilitation of cycling and walking which in turn promotes the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. It also recognises that Galway needs to fulfil the role of a Gateway and regional growth centre where accessibility and connectedness are critical for the functioning of the city.

\(^2\) Galway City Council Traffic Counts, November 2014.
3.2 Integration of Land Use and Transportation

The integration of land use and transportation is essential in creating sustainable city living. The alignment of settlement and land use patterns with an integrated transportation strategy can provide opportunities to reduce car dependency and allow for greater investment in alternative means of travel including public transport, walking and cycling. It also delivers considerable benefits in terms of reduced congestion, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced health and well being and has benefits for the public realm.

The consolidation of settlement into areas that are proximate to employment, shops, community and educational facilities is a strategic policy and is reflected in policies and objectives relating to these land uses. The strategy for the city promotes the sustainable development of key brownfield sites - Ceannt Station, Inner Harbour and Headford Road LAP area. It also focuses on consolidation of existing residential areas and the expansion of Ardaun to the east. This strategy is supported through policies for the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods (Chapter 2), where the reliance on private transport is reduced and where services are provided locally, allowing access by walking and cycling. It is also supported in the Retail Strategy (Chapter 6) where a hierarchy of centres encourages easily accessible shopping and essential services.

The consolidation and concentration of development reduces travel demand, allows for the effective provision of services including public transport and enables more sustainable patterns of travel. In the absence of this strategy, city growth would put additional pressures on roads, public transport and other key services and lead to increased congestion and journey times.

At a local level, the preparation of plans including local area plans and masterplans provide a framework for mixed-use development in conjunction with a transport strategy and use of sustainable densities at locations adjacent to public transport routes. These plans will ensure that sustainable patterns of travel can be achieved.
3 Transportation

Policy 3.2 Land Use and Transportation

Promote close co-ordination between land use and transportation through policies, land use zoning and objectives.

Facilitate the future development of Galway City and environs within the strategic framework of the Galway Transport Strategy and the associated implementation phasing to ensure that the city has the necessary transport infrastructure and services to support its continued growth and development.

Provide ease of access to public transport and include for the promotion of walking and cycling in the design and development of residential neighbourhoods.

Provide for development of high volume, trip intensive, developments such as commercial centres and employment hubs at locations that will minimise the need, distance and time taken to travel and promote the use of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport to access these locations.

Promote sustainable residential densities particularly along and close to routes where the Galway Transport Strategy has proposals for a high quality sustainable transport network service.

Use Local Area Plans and masterplans, to give direction for future settlement expansion that includes for integration of land use with transportation.

Require new developments to be permeability proofed for walking, cycling and for access to public transport routes and endeavour to maximise permeability in existing developments and retain existing local links.

3.3 Galway Transport Strategy

The Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) 2016 represents a partnership approach between Galway City Council, Galway County Council and the National Transport Authority. It includes a series of measures which will address the serious transport problems experienced across the city particularly during peak hours. These transport problems are having a significant effect on quality of life, the urban environment, safety and the economic performance of the city as a Gateway and driver of the economy in the West Region. These effects are also extending into the wider county and region due to the large commuter population reliant on the city for jobs and education.

The GTS builds on previous transport studies carried out for Galway City and environs and sets out an overview of actions and measures for implementation over a phased and co-ordinated basis over the next 20 years, based on priority needs. These measures are designed to both address the current significant problems and inefficiencies in the movement of people and goods within and around the city and also to establish a long term transport plan that will underpin the future sustainable growth of the city as supported by the Core Strategy.

These measures were arrived at following transport modelling which included defining the existing transport problems, predicting future travel demands, assessing mode share and assessing their mutual impacts and interdependencies. The strategy includes traffic management, giving priority to walking cycling and bus movements, modifications to the traffic network, management of parking activities and heavy goods vehicles, improvements to the public realm and use of ‘smarter mobility’. These measures are to be linked to the 20 year implementation programme which will allow for funding applications and for phased implementation based on priority needs.

Notwithstanding the extent of the strategy measures, the GTS has established that the reduction in traffic congestion requires both improvements to public transport, cycling and walking networks and the provision of a new orbital route. This route is not considered to be in conflict with an enhanced sustainable transport network as it will focus on supporting trips that cannot be facilitated by such measures such as city bound, cross-city and cross county movements. In this regard the planned N6 GCRR is considered to be part of the transport strategy for the city in order to deliver the necessary capacity and support the delivery of sustainable transport measures.

The GTS has not been developed in isolation. It builds on previous work by both Galway City Council and Galway County Council, supports the vision for development in both development plans and has also taken account of national and regional policies and guidelines.
It complements the recently implemented measures to improve public transportation and traffic management in the city such as the N6 Multi Modal Corridor Improvement Scheme, the Seamus Quirke Road/Bishop O’Donnell Road Improvement Scheme, pedestrian/cycle improvements and the establishment of the Urban Traffic Management Centre.

The following sections set out the key elements of the Galway Transport Strategy.

### Policy 3.3 Galway Transport Strategy (GTS)

Continue to progress a sustainable transport solution for the city through the implementation of measures included in the GTS and required supporting projects in particular the N6 GCRR project.

### 3.4 Traffic Network

The road network caters for a range of users and a variety of journeys within the city. The city will continue to grow and without intervention the current congestion will worsen and inevitably impact on the overall function and success of the city. The GTS outlines the measures needed to address this problem. These include traffic management, new improved roads and links and the management of parking.

The challenges in the city centre are very acute and characterised by heavy congestion and significant traffic volumes but this is not only a transport problem. Such conditions impact also on the experience of the urban environment and the attraction and comfort of walking and cycling.

The approach of the GTS is to remove non-essential motorised traffic from the city centre and re-route these journeys around rather than through, the city centre. Private car journeys and HGVs that will require access to the city centre will be provided for on a defined ‘City Centre Access Network’ (see fig 3.2). Other modes such as walking, cycling and public transport can consequently be given priority via a ‘cross-city link’. It is proposed that this link will be restricted to these modes and local vehicle access only. It will therefore enable an efficient and reliable public transport service to access into and through the city centre and facilitate public realm improvements creating an enhanced environment for walking and cycling.

Some journeys across the city, in particular through journeys on national and regional roads are not always capable of being accommodated by non-car modes. Transport surveys and modelling carried out for the GTS indicate that strong demands for such journeys remain at present and will increase in the future. While there will be a shift to sustainable modes on implementation of the GTS through a number of measures, the efficiencies of these modes are jeopardised by the significant level of congestion that will still remain on the network and on the main river crossings. The strategy therefore indicates that it will only be successful where improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks are delivered in conjunction with a new orbital route.

![Fig 3.2 GTS-City Centre Access Network. Source: Galway Transport Strategy 2016](Image)
Parking
The GTS acknowledges that the supply and management of parking is fundamentally linked to the management of travel demand. Parking is a key element in choice of travel and currently within the city centre there are almost 6,000 spaces available with some offering very low priced daily rates. The GTS includes for the reduction of on-street parking and the rationalising of access to off street facilities. This is in order to minimise car circulation within the city centre and to provide more road space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. It is considered also that some rationalisation of on-street parking on routes outside of the city centre will be necessary also to facilitate bus movements and improve the walking and cycling environment. Disabled driver parking will continue to be accommodated in all areas.

In addition it will be required to adopt a parking pricing mechanism to ensure that parking is not priced so as to undermine the attraction of public transport. This combined approach not only helps increase opportunities for an efficient public transport service but will also encourage those making trips, in particular commuters, to transfer their choices of travel to public transport.

In addition, the Council will restrict car parking for future developments within the city centre. Exceptions to this will be on the large designated regeneration site at Ceannt Station where parking will support a transportation hub and a substantial extension to the city centre and on lands included in the Headford Road LAP area where new car parking provision would replace the existing surface car parking. A reduced car parking standard may also be considered acceptable for new development located along strategic public transport corridors depending on the prevailing level of service at that time.

Consideration for new developments within the city will also be given to grouped and dual usage car parking, where peak demands do not coincide and cognisance will also be taken of where there is the potential for multi-purpose trips. Each case will be considered on its merits, based on traffic management and modelling assessment and subject to an overriding presumption in favour of sustainable transport. Where a reduction in car parking standards is considered, the Council may attach a condition to any permission requiring a financial contribution towards the cost of providing sustainable transport services in the city.

The introduction of electric vehicles (EV) and the government target of 10% of all road vehicles to be powered by electricity by 2020 will require additional EV charging points in the city. The Council will work in conjunction with ESB networks in the provision of charging points in public areas in the city.

Goods Vehicles Management
The economic activity of Galway and the environs does require an efficient freight transport and delivery system. However the city core with a historical legacy of narrow streetscapes is unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles (HGV). The GTS approach is that the city core area should be restricted to only those vehicles of a suitable size with destinations (or origins) in the city centre only. This would be carried out in combination with management arrangements for routing and timing of deliveries. This loading and delivery strategy would be similar to the current arrangements operating in Shop Street and Quay Street.

Any HGV strategy however will need to balance the operational requirements for Galway Port and the industrial areas which will need reliable transport connections for the movement of supplies and outputs. However services will be required to be restricted to dedicated routes only, in particular for Galway Port traffic.

Policy 3.4 Traffic Network
Support the GTS proposals for a reduction of car movements through the city centre to be achieved by specific traffic management arrangements including the implementation of a City Centre Access Network.

Support the GTS proposals to prioritise public transport movements in the city centre through the implementation of a designated public transport route, the Cross-City Link.

Enhance the delivery of an overall integrated transport solution for the city and environs by supporting the reservation of a corridor route to accommodate an orbital route as provided for in the N6 GCRR project.

Promote changes in the management of car parking, including for the reduction of on-street parking, improved access arrangements and a revised pricing structure.

Implement the GTS proposals for a HGV management strategy and a loading and delivery strategy in the city centre.
3.5 Public Transport

Bus Network – Local

The development of an integrated transport solution for the city to promote the increased use of public transport services is a key element in the Core Strategy. In this regard the Council is committed to collaborate with transport providers and agencies in particular the NTA to achieve this goal. Many of the recommendations of previous studies relating to public transport have been implemented and improvements have included the provision of bus priority measures, additional bus facilities and bus termini. However public transport usage still remains low, with mode share below 10% of that of motorised travel.

The GTS undertook an options assessment to identify what was the best form of public transport that could attract a high proportion of trips to and within the city environs. The analysis included a review of population and employment catchments, key origin-destination combinations, existing bus route alignments, spatial catchment and the potential for cross-city interchanges. The objective was to ensure that the adoption of such an option would not only give a choice of a modern, high quality public transport system but that it would allow the city to become a more attractive location to live, work and visit.

The GTS identified that a high quality, high frequency bus service is the most appropriate form of public transport provision for Galway City and the environs. This would include for a cross-city network of bus services which can serve the major trip attractors. Sections of the network would be the primary focus for the implementation of priority measures such as bus lanes and the removal of pinch points and delays. The bus network would require traffic management measures as already referenced to be implemented in conjunction with the removal of through traffic from the city centre. To maximise the range of destinations served, convenient opportunities for transfer between services are designed at key locations, with Eyre Square as the primary location for interchange. This approach could be further enhanced by the implementation of cross-ticketing which would allow for passengers to transfer between different routes without additional charge.

The optimum arrangement as indicated in figure 3.3 is that there would be five core routes that would operate cross-city and seek to provide a minimum 15 minute frequency service during the peak periods and sustain a high frequency service throughout the day. These may be complemented within the bus network by less frequent subsidiary type services. The focus overall being on matching the service capacity to passenger demand which will be continued to be reviewed and developed over the strategy period.

Fig 3.3 GTS – Proposed Core Bus Routes. Source: Galway Transport Strategy 2016
Bus Network – Regional
For regional and long distance bus and coach services, journey speed and reliability are the crucial issues rather than frequency. The principal destinations for these within the city will remain at Ceannt Station, Fairgreen Coach Station and Eyre Square. Coach parking, in particular, for tourists will continue to be provided at Merchant's Road and adjacent to Galway Cathedral. These can be complemented by controlled drop off and pick up locations in the city centre area following investigation in the context of the designated access routes into this area.

The infrastructure proposals provided as part of the local bus network will enhance the regional services also, as the regional buses will be able to avail of the priority routes in the city and others, such as that proposed along the Tuam Road. Sufficient access to and from the termini in the city centre will be required to be provided.

The proposed GTS traffic restrictions along College Road will significantly benefit connectivity for these regional services in conjunction with the priority measures proposed for the local bus network coming from the west, including the restrictions proposed along University Road and Salmon Weir Bridge.

The GTS sees the attraction of these services being enhanced further by the provision of interchanges between regional and local public transport at key locations both inside and outside the city centre road network.

Public Transportation Hubs
Ceannt Station is designated as a major transportation hub for both local and regional services. The Plan requires the station site to be re-developed in a sustainable manner and to a strategic scale for the entire West Region. The redevelopment of the station affords the opportunity of providing an integrated public transportation hub and multi-modal interchange capable of accommodating enhanced inter-urban, commuter and city rail and bus services linked to other sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling. Additional dedicated bus bays are anticipated and associated car parking and set down facilities dedicated for public transport users. Planning consent for such improvements have issued and when implemented will, in addition to recent improvements, bring the station up to a modern city standard.

Two lower tier public transportation hubs are designated at strategic locations in the city near the Cathedral and within the Headford Road LAP area. These hubs will, in the future, have passenger facilities and will be important interchanges in the overall enhanced bus network of the city.

Taxi services
The GTS recognises the role of taxi services as part of the overall development of an integrated transportation system. They will be facilitated at appropriate locations within the city and will be required to be accommodated within major developments. Where appropriate, they will be able to use bus priority infrastructure.

Rail
Galway City is a significant rail destination and this is recognised in the GTS. The long term redevelopment of Ceannt Station as a new major multi-modal transport interchange will involve rail services expanding in frequency where there is sufficient passenger demand and usage. Improvements in service provision in recent years, has seen increased frequency in inter city services and the opening of the Oranmore rail terminus at Garraun.

The planned upgrades at Ceannt Station will improve the passenger experience greatly and coupled with the longer term regeneration of the overall area, will in conjunction with Eyre Square and Fairgreen Coach Station act as a collective hub for interchange between transport services in the city.

Although not included in measures as part of the GTS, the double tracking of the railway line from the city to Athenry, or a more limited accommodation of stopping bays is to be investigated for both passenger services and potential freight services from Galway Port. The facilitation of rail stops within the city which can support commuter services is also supported by the Council.

Park and Ride
The GTS has considered the options for the development of park and ride facilities on the periphery of the city. Such facilities will reduce the amount of commuter traffic entering into the city and thus contribute to a reduction in traffic congestion. It is considered that these facilities can be linked in with the scheduled bus
services, which will maximise their financial viability and offer a wide range of destinations from the interchange services that will be available on the bus network.

Suitable sites will be identified in conjunction with the development of the bus network and will be so designed to allow for growth over time as demand increases.

Policy 3.5 Public Transport

Support the GTS proposals for implementation of a local city bus network which will include for a high frequency cross-city network of services and all associated infrastructural requirements, traffic management and priority arrangements.

Facilitate public transport interchanges and associated proposals for transfer ticketing and flexible payment methods.

Progress plans for traffic restrictions in the city centre to accommodate bus priority.

Promote the availability of the city bus network including the priority measures for use by the national, regional and tour bus services.

Ensure ease of access to all bus termini in the city centre and facilitate tourist coach drop-off /pick up locations and bus layover areas.

Continue to support the taxi service where these are located conveniently for access and where appropriate, permit the service to use bus priority infrastructure.

Facilitate rail transport, in particular the development of commuter rail and improved inter-urban services.

Facilitate the provision of park and ride facilities in conjunction with the provision of the public transport network as proposed in the GTS.

Promote access to public transport services for those attending primary and post primary schools in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills.

3.6 Cycling and Walking

Cycling

Given the compact urban form of the city and the relatively flat topography there is great potential for walking and cycling to become the preferred choice of travel, in particular for short trips. In this regard a critical element of the GTS is to develop a high quality, dedicated cycling network which includes for measures that gives priority to cyclists. The objective would be that this would encourage the uptake in cycling both for commuting and as a leisure activity.

This accords with national policy which gives guidance on measures to create a strong culture of walking and cycling. Figure 3.4 highlights the range of national policy guidance which promotes cycling and aims to maximise permeability and connectivity for cyclists, to create direct safe links to road networks and greenways and to provide additional cycle parking facilities.
The GTS has built on previous studies and proposes the development of a core, secondary and feeder network. Where possible, the proposed routes are fully segregated from motor traffic. In other locations the network includes on-road cycle lanes and/or wide bus lanes to cater for both buses and cyclists along the same route. Where traffic is limited, particularly in the city centre, the cycling environment will become much more attractive.

Figure 3.5 highlights the proposed cycling network. The primary network of cycle routes will comprise of two greenways connecting into the county settlements. This includes the Oranmore to the City Centre and onwards to Bearna Greenway and City Centre to Oughterard Greenway. Some of these are currently being progressed in conjunction with Galway County Council. The former includes connection with the national proposal for a Galway to Dublin Cycleway. As well as supporting tourism, the section close to the city will also offer opportunities for use as a commuter option for work and education. The route selection will be examined and the exact alignment of the route will be arrived at only after detailed consultation with the general public including landowners and the subsequent report will be brought via a Part VIII to full Council. Additional primary routes include cross-city routes to the north of the city and some key north–south links.

The secondary network provides connections from residential areas and areas of employment to the primary network accessing key destinations. Feeder links have been identified on streets and roads which are highly constrained or suited to other modes but need to cater for cyclists too. Providing convenient cycle parking near bus stops and at key destinations across the city will also be essential to this network and needed to encourage the uptake in cycling.

The Public Bike Share Scheme – “Coke Zero Bikes” – was introduced across the city centre in 2014 with bike docking stations at 16 locations. These are primarily in the city centre, accommodating 140 bikes. Nine further stations are planned and likely to include extensions out to Salthill, NUIG and GMIT. These will be progressed in partnership with the NTA and in the context of ongoing demand.

Chapter 4 sets out the policies for the development of other greenway networks which identify key connections and linkages and have more of a recreational function, some with a capacity for walking only and some with potential for both walking and cycling.

Walking

Census records for 2011 indicate that 17% of workers in the city walk to work. It is a key objective of the Council to sustain and increase this level. The GTS recognises this potential and the opportunities that exist also to enhance the pedestrian environment not only for workers but also residents, students, shoppers and tourists also.

The benefits of pedestrian priority have been experienced already in the city centre in the pedestrianised zones, along the riverside walkway, canals and at Salthill. The GTS sees the need to improve on this and give priority to the pedestrian network and the associated environment. This will include reducing traffic in the city centre core. Outside of this area emphasis will be given to increasing permeability within suburban residential areas, improving the pedestrian networks, making them safer and maximising pedestrian
accessibility to the public transport network. The GTS also includes for measures to increase connectivity and permeability within and to places of employment, in particular the business and technology parks on the east side of the city at Parkmore and Ballybrit.

Safe access and improved permeability will be secured also through a number of new river crossings. These include a new pedestrian bridge adjacent to the Salmon Weir Bridge, a new link from the Headford Road area to NUIG campus via a new bridge on the piers of the old rail line and possibly a new crossing linking Newtownsmith with Gaol Road.

Supporting measures will include increased legibility of the street network and the introduction of smart information and wayfinding. Revisions will also be required to be integrated into road junction layouts to give dedicated, safe and convenient opportunities for pedestrian crossings. The GTS also recommends that the introduction of lower speed limits should be examined for the city centre and residential areas in conjunction with the relevant authorities.

It is anticipated that the introduction of restrictions in the city centre area will correspondingly allow for an associated improvement in the public realm. These will not only improve the quality and safety of walking but will also have a positive impact on land use, environment, community and the local economy. The improvement of pedestrian facilities in particular safe crossings and use of universal design are critical to the GTS also in meeting the needs of vulnerable roads users and the mobility impaired.

These measures are especially relevant to advancing a key priority of the Development Plan which is to facilitate the expansion of the commercial area of the city centre into Ceannt Station Quarter and the Headford Road LAP area. In particular, improved pedestrian linkage between the City Centre, Woodquay, Bóthar na mBan and the Headford Road area will, in addition to the city core area, require improvements to the quality, connectivity and safety of these pedestrian links.

**Behaviour Changes**

Behavioural change as it applies to transport, is about increasing awareness of travel choices available for the range of movements that are made on a daily basis and encouraging the more sustainable travel choices where these are feasible. The Council in conjunction with the NTA are active in this regard in particular in targeting walking, cycling, use of public transport and car sharing. The GTS sees this continued promotion of use of sustainable transport options in conjunction with travel planning, in particular with large employers/institutions as a critical element of the plan.
3.7 Road and Street Network and Accessibility

The national road and motorway network provides vital inter-urban and inter-regional connectivity, critical to the Gateway development and to maintain its competitiveness. The completion of the M6 motorway significantly reduced travel times from Dublin to Galway and has made the city more accessible nationally. This route is a highly important national road and is identified as part of the TEN-T Comprehensive Network. The completion of the M17/M18 Gort to Tuam motorway will add to the accessibility of the city and improve strategic linkage within the West region. The N59 and N84 national roads are important regional links to and from the city also. At local level the N6 Multi Modal Corridor Improvement Scheme and the Seamus Quirke Road/Bishop O’Donnell Road Scheme have made improvements to the road network. However, there remains significant traffic congestion with most main junctions operating over capacity.

The key strategy of the GTS is to provide sustainable and reliable alternatives to travel by private car however the management of the road network will remain critical. As noted in section 3.3 the extent of the sustainable measures in the GTS and their full implementation is incapable of delivering a solution to the specific, significant problems associated with transport in the city, which will be further exacerbated by additional future demand unless addressed now.

The evaluation of the transport options affirmed the need for a strategic ring road incorporating a new river crossing. Although some elements of the GTS, can be implemented independently from the delivery of such a road, the full extent of measures and the success of the GTS needs the provision of a new orbital route.

### Policy 3.6 Cycling and Walking

| Support the Galway Transport Strategy proposals for a primary cycle network to facilitate safe and convenient medium distance journeys. |
| Support the proposed Greenways as part of the primary cycle network and as part of a link to Béarn, Oranmore, Máigh Cuilinn and Oughterard. |
| Support the Galway Transport Strategy proposals for a secondary cycle network and feeder links to facilitate safe and convenient local journeys and to afford linkage into the primary cycle network. |
| Facilitate cycling on the proposed bus network where appropriate and on the proposed Cross-City Link in the city centre. |
| Improve bicycle parking at key destinations and near bus stops /interchanges. |
| Promote and facilitate the extension of the Public Bike Share Scheme across the city. |
| Implement a structured programme of improvements across the whole city pedestrian network and at road crossings. |
| Promote accessibility for all users including persons with disabilities and reduced mobility and have regard to best practice guidance from the National Disability Authority (NDA). |
| Promote, facilitate and maintain maximum connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the design of new developments and in upgrading existing developments in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) and Permeability a Best Practice Guide, NTA (2015). |
| Promote the implementation of a Wayfinding Scheme with provision of directional information and signage at appropriate locations across the city as part of a greater public realm strategy. |
| Ensure facilities for pedestrians and cyclists are designed in accordance with national standards. |
| Support and promote initiatives such as Park and Stride, Green Schools Programme and the concept of having safe routes to school. |
| Consider the introduction of reduced speed limits in the city centre and residential areas of the city. |
| Continue to encourage an increase in the use of sustainable transport modes including public transport through targeted promotion. |
Such a provision is not considered to be in conflict with an enhanced sustainable transport network as it will focus on supporting trips that cannot be facilitated by measures such as city bound, cross-city, cross county movements. By providing this additional capacity for such traffic the orbital road will increase the opportunities for re-allocation of existing road space for use by pedestrians, buses and cyclists. In this regard the orbital route identified as part of the N6 Galway City Ring Road project, being undertaken by Galway County Council on behalf of both authorities and the TII, is considered to be a critical part of the transport strategy for the city in order to deliver the necessary capacity and support the delivery of sustainable transport measures.

This project includes for an emerging strategic east-west road. The project is at Stage 3 as defined under the NRA Project Management Guidelines (2010). This is where a preferred route corridor has been selected and the necessary further assessments are being carried out in order to bring the project to a level where the statutory consents can be sought from An Bord Pleanála i.e. Stage 4. It is anticipated that the application for such approvals will be in the second quarter of 2017.

The Council will continue also to carry out road and junction improvements some of which will be necessary for the implementation of measures associated with GTS and also others to improve general safety and efficiencies in the network. Improvements in the network to provide such upgrades and key linkages are listed in the specific objectives section of this Chapter.

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) DMURS reflects a revision in national policy regarding road and street design. It sets out a series of principles, approaches and standards that are necessary to create safe and successful streets serving all users. Design standards in the past have led to less flexible road layouts dominated by vehicular movements resulting in poor pedestrian linkage and permeability. DMURS seeks to promote the street as a place, incorporating elements of urban design, creating streets with a high quality public realm and a balanced approach to all users.

Of note also is the recent publication from the NTA Permeability a Best Practice Guide (2015). This encourages the transformation of neighbourhoods into permeable ones, where people can walk or cycle through areas safely and conveniently, and in a manner which can give advantage to these modes over private car travel in particular.

Allied to the design of the street network, the development of universal design to improve accessibility in particular for people with reduced mobility will be a critical element in any new street design or street improvement schemes. The Council will liaise with the NDA and have regard to best practice guidance including Buildings for Everyone (2012) which provides guidance on the design of spaces that can be readily accessed and used by everyone, regardless of age, size, ability or disability.

### Policy 3.7 Road and Street Network and Accessibility

Support the N6 Galway City Ring Road project in conjunction with Galway County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in order to develop a transportation solution to address the existing congestion on the national and regional road network.

Support the proposals in the Galway Transport Strategy for design interventions, revised traffic management arrangements and priority arrangements for walking, cycling and public transport on the road network.

Implement improvements on the general road network, including new links and junction revisions where needed in the interest of safety and convenience.

Facilitate the future sustainable development of Galway City supported by a transport solution that ensures the city has the necessary transport infrastructure and services, capable of optimising the capacity for modal shift and enhanced public transport options.


Promote accessibility for people with disabilities and people with reduced mobility and have regard to best practice guidance from the National Disability Authority (NDA).

Promote a permeable urban and suburban environment in accordance with best practice guidance as provided for in Permeability a Best Practice Guide (NTA 2015) and implement permeability schemes in existing areas where appropriate, permeability proof proposed developments and endeavour to retain existing local links with enhancements where needed.
3.8 Smarter Mobility and Mobility Management

The Urban Traffic Management Centre (UTMC) manages, monitors and optimises transport on the road network including signalisation and traffic flows. It contributes to making improvements to the flow of traffic particularly during peak times and during specific events likely to generate large volumes of traffic. It also assists the Council in the dissemination of real-time information to the public. The GTS recommends expansion of the UTM network in addition to using Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). The use of ITS – smarter mobility will allow transport modes to communicate with each other and the wider environment and provide integrated transport solutions for the customer. For example it can be used to manage parking more efficiently, improve wayfinding and increase efficiencies in junctions and provide real time information to customers. In general these systems can provide additional capacity in the network, incorporate demand management measures and deliver efficiencies and cost savings to the passengers. Smarter mobility policies and intelligent systems can be used also to future proof proposed infrastructure. The GTS sees the adoption of smarter mobility measures as being a huge contribution to how the city will function now and in the future.

Travel planning is important too in transport management. The GTU are committed to work with major employers and schools within the city in the preparation of Travel Plans for existing and proposed developments that generate significant trip demand. Plans will be prepared in accordance with NTA guidance on Travel Plans for workplaces and schools.

Travel Plans are required to show how reliance on car-based travel can be reduced, both during construction and operation. Realistic and implementable measures to encourage sustainable travel modes within a development, such as proposals to encourage cycling, walking, car sharing, car clubs and flexible working hours should be included in such plans.

### Policy 3.8 Mobility Management and Smart Technologies

Support and promote the use of smarter mobility and Intelligent Transport Solutions (ITS) to increase efficiency, safety and co-ordination across all transport networks.

Promote the implementation of Travel Plans with employers and schools.
3.10 Specific Objectives

Traffic and Road Network

- Implement the programme of actions and measures as provided for in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) in partnership with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and on a phased and co-ordinated basis, based on priority needs.

- Reserve the preferred route corridor of the N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR) project which has been selected to accommodate the requirements of an emerging strategic road and the associated bridge crossing of the River Corrib.

- Give priority to the reservation of the N6 GCRR Preferred Route Corridor and the associated land requirements over other land uses and objectives in the City Development Plan and prohibit developments within the corridor which could potentially prejudice the development of this strategic road and river crossing.

- Investigate and develop road improvements, junction improvements and traffic management solutions in the context of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) and strategic developments, to maximise the operating efficiency and safety of the network having regard to the requirements of all categories of road users and road network capacity constraints. Such solutions or interventions will be developed in conjunction with the relevant agency, such as the TII, NTA, and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and will, where necessary, be subject to the requirements and consenting procedures of the Planning and Development Acts and the Roads Acts.

- Implement the traffic management and infrastructural changes to facilitate the provision of the City Centre Access Network as part of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS).

- Re-organise car parking in the city in particular to reduce on-street provision in the city centre and along key sustainable transport routes as provided for in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS).

- Provide for upgrading of the Tuam Road (N17) from Bóthar na dTreabh (N6) to the city boundary and including the realignment of the Castlegar Road/ Tuam Road (N17) junction

- Facilitate a new access to Merlin Park Hospital from the Dublin Road.

- Implement road widening and improvements at Bóthar na Cóiste.

- Investigate a road link on undeveloped residential zoned lands between the Ballymoneen Road and the Clybaun Road subject to requirements of strategic road objectives.

- Implement junction improvements at the Parkmore/Monivea Road (R339) junctions.

- Continue to implement junction upgrades as part of the N6 Multi Modal Corridor Improvement Scheme to improve the functioning of the junctions, provide for pedestrian and cycle movements and to facilitate public transport.
• Ensure that along the Western Distributor Road, new access points will only be considered where adequate traffic and public safety can be ensured, where the objective to provide bus lanes can be secured and where the proposal provides improved permeability and contributes to the public realm. Minimum distances between existing and proposed junctions of 100m will be required.

• Expand the use of mobility management and smart technologies in conjunction with service providers and the NTA.

Public Transport

• Implement traffic management and infrastructural changes to facilitate the provision of the ‘Cross–City Link’ as part of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS).

• Implement traffic management and infrastructural changes to facilitate the development of a public bus network in accordance with the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS).

• Facilitate the development of Ceannt Station as a multi-modal transportation interchange.

• Support the improvement of access for public transport, pedestrian and cyclists to and within major employment areas and institutions.

• Reserve lands parallel with the rail line from the city centre to the eastern city boundary for future rail transport requirements.

• Explore the provision of an on-road quality bus corridor to serve Merlin Park Hospital, Doughiska and Ardaun and the existing route through Merlin Park Woods will be reserved for pedestrian and cycle use only.

• Continue to provide for bus termini and appropriate passenger facilities at/near Galway Cathedral and within the Headford Road LAP area.

• Provide bus shelters on all routes within the city capable of incorporating future integrated ticketing and future real-time scheduling.

• Provide for possible commuter rail stops within the city.

• Prioritise the accommodation of a bus and pedestrian bridge crossing of the River Corrib adjacent to the Salmon Weir Bridge.

• Provide measures to allow for the repair/replacement of Wolfe Tone Bridge in the interests of safety.

• Promote the provision of appointed taxi stands on the public road network and in new developments as appropriate.

• Develop the Tuam Road Bus and Cycle Corridor from Claregalway to Moneenageisha Cross via Joyces Road in conjunction with Galway County Council and reserve lands accordingly.

• Identify appropriate locations in the city to accommodate tour bus parking facilities and drop off/pick up points in accordance with the Tour Bus Parking Study.

• Provide for park and ride schemes at strategic locations on approach roads to the city and at key modal change locations in particular to the east and west of the city as part of the proposals in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS).

• Provide for bus transport and infrastructure along the Western Distributor Road.
Cycling

- Implement traffic management and infrastructural changes to facilitate the development of a cycle network including for a core, secondary and feeder network in accordance with the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS).

- Provide cycle parking facilities at appropriate locations including the City Centre, District Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, schools, beaches, cemeteries and parks.

- Provide cycle parking facilities in conjunction with proposals included in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) in particular for the cycle network and close to public transport interchanges.

Pedestrian

- Investigate the potential for the construction of a new pedestrian bridge from Gaol Road to Newtownsmthy.

- Provide a new pedestrian and cycle bridge on the piers of the Old Clifden Railway Line from the Headford Road LAP area/Waterside to NUIG.

- Prioritise improvements to pedestrian movements and safety within the city centre including extension of pedestrianisation, provision of wider footpaths and shared streets.

- Prioritise improvements to pedestrian movements and safety between the City Centre, Woodquay and Bóthar na mBan to the Headford Road LAP area.

- Improve permeability and linkages within the city centre, between the city centre and designated regeneration areas and linkages with the immediate environs.

- Improve permeability within residential neighbourhoods, commercial areas and workplaces.
4 Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity

4.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
4.2 Protected Spaces
4.3 Blue Spaces
4.4 Green Spaces
4.5 Community Spaces
4.6 Open Spaces
4.7 Specific Objectives
4.1 Aim, Context & Strategy

Aim
To provide for a green network in the city that allows for the sustainable use, management and protection of natural heritage, recreation amenity areas, parks and open spaces in an integrated manner. The green network will ensure the protection of nature and provide for the enhancement and expansion of passive and active recreational opportunities. It will be accessible to all and by sustainable modes of transport, where feasible. Ensure better integration of environmental and natural resource considerations in the Development Plan through the SEA process and provide the highest level of protection for European Sites, taking account of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Context
It is widely recognised that protecting and enhancing the natural assets and open spaces of Galway City has significant economic and social value. These spaces are a vital part of everyday urban life and a high quality environment within a city improves the health and well being of the community, helps to attract visitors and economic investment. The landscape setting of the city, at the foothills of Connemara where the River Corrib meets Galway Bay creates a distinctive place and influences the culture and image of the city. The city has a diversity of natural resources including coastline, woodlands, river, canal system and protected habitats. A fifth of the total land area of the city is designated as protected habitats, recreational amenity open space and agricultural land. In order to protect the quality of the city's natural resources, to reflect its multi-functional aspect and to provide for its sustainable management and protection, these natural resources have been linked together into a green network. This is to ensure that combined environmental and quality of life benefits can be delivered at a strategic level. The European Commission - Green Infrastructure Europe’s Natural Capital 2013 endorses this approach and promotes the use of green infrastructure across Europe, as a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural spaces with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services and societal benefits. A green network of open spaces and natural resources has the ability to fulfil several functions simultaneously, such as providing opportunities for recreation and leisure and hosting important habitats. With careful planning the green network can also support climate change resilience, provide aesthetic value, enhance biodiversity and improve public health and well being.

The National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 provides the national policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape. The Strategy recognises that strategic networks of green and blue spaces can provide a wide range of environmental benefits including flood water storage, urban cooling, improved air quality and habitats for wildlife as well as contributing to human health and well-being. Conserving and enhancing these networks though appropriate land use and management is critical. Alternative approaches in the management and development of spaces within the
green network is warranted, as spaces perform different functions within the urban environment. A balance needs to be achieved between future recreation and amenity requirements and the preservation of the city's ecological heritage. The green network approach seeks to manage and protect the environment in order to meet the requirements of a number of European Directives including Habitats, Birds, Water Framework and Floods Directives. It is considered that strategic linking of the spaces within the green network enables the integrated management of this important natural resource. A green network will promote conservation and sustainable use in a balanced way. This approach is endorsed by a number of national and local policy documents, the National Heritage Plan 2002, National Biodiversity Plan 2011-2016, National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025, the Galway Heritage Plan 2016-2021, and the Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024. The City Council’s Recreation and Amenity Needs Study (RANS) 2008 provides a coordinated framework for future planning and management of recreation facilities and activities within the city, based on current and projected future needs. The findings of the study have informed the policies and objectives of this Development Plan with regard to recreation and amenity. The strategic policies and key actions of the RANS which possess an integral land-use dimension have been amalgamated into the policies and specific objectives of the plan.

The green network approach supports the linkage between different multi-functional spaces within the city. These spaces include:

- Blue Spaces of the city’s coastal areas, rivers, lakes and canals,
- Protected Spaces of ecological and biodiversity importance,
- Green Spaces of woodland parks,
- Open Spaces including recreational and amenity and agricultural zoned lands and,
- Community Spaces, which afford direct access by the community to nature and amenity e.g. greenways.

These spaces define and form the landscape of the city.

The city has a hierarchy of European, national and local sites of ecological importance. Protected European habitat sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Galway Bay Complex SAC and Lough Corrib Complex SAC, the Special Protection Areas (SPA) Inner Galway Bay and Lough Corrib. A section of Moycullen Bog Natural Heritage Area (NHA), a habitat of national importance, is located at the western fringes of the city. Other local habitat areas and natural features such as views and prospects of amenity value, trees and features of geological interest are important elements of the city’s landscape, forming part of an ecological network of corridors and stepping stones allowing the movement of wildlife in the urban environment. The ecological sensitivity of open spaces varies and the Council will continue to ensure the conservation and protection of designated sites of ecological importance and habitats in the development of green network.

**Strategy**

- Promote a green network for the city that allows for sustainable use, management and protection of natural heritage, protected ecological sites, flora and fauna, recreation and amenity areas and parks in an integrated manner where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites and for where the competent authority has ascertained that the use of the site is in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitat Directive.
- Support and advance the strategic and specific policies and actions of the Galway City Council Recreation and Amenity Needs Study (2008).
- Promote accessibility to the city’s green network for the wider community and by sustainable modes of transport where European Sites, protected ecological sites, flora and fauna are adequately safeguarded.
- Promote Galway as a ‘Healthy City’, ‘Child Friendly City’ and an ‘Age Friendly City’.
- Conserve, protect and enhance the designated and non-designated sites and natural habitats, while enabling the sustainable development of the city.
- Monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Development Plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process in accordance with Article 10 of the EU SEA Directive (2000/42EC).
### Protected Spaces
- European Designated Sites of ecological importance - SACs and SPAs
- National Designated sites - NHA and pNHA
- Local Biodiversity Areas - wildlife networks, corridors and stepping stones

### Blue Spaces
- Coastal area
- River Corrib, Terryland River, canals and waterways
- Lough Corrib and lakes
- Enclosed marine and wetlands

### Green Spaces
- Citywide Parks - Barna Woods/Lough Rusheen, Merlin Park Woods, Terryland Forest Park
- Neighbourhood Parks
- City Centre Parks

### Community Spaces
- Greenways
- Allotments and community gardens
- Cemeteries
- Recreational facilities and playgrounds
- Protected views of special amenity value and interest

### Open Spaces
- Civic spaces – Eyre Square, Fishmarket Square, Shop Street/Quay Street, Courthouse Square, Woodquay, The Small Crane
- Residential, commercial and industrial open space
- Institutional open space
- Recreation and amenity zoned lands
- Agricultural and high amenity lands
Table 4.2: Open spaces within the Green Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Space Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Primary Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Three City Parks              | • Barna Woods/Lough Rusheen  
• Merlin Park Woods  
• Terryland Forest Park       | Large scale open spaces for passive and active recreation, wildlife conservation and education (over 10 hectares)                              |
| Neighbourhood Parks           | Mixed sized parks located adjacent to residential areas e.g.  
Renmore Park, Cappagh Park,  
Mervue, McGrath’s Field  
(Knocknacarra), Ballinfoile Park,  
South Park, Shantalla.         | Parks formally designated for passive and active recreation (1-10 hectares)                                                                        |
| City Centre Parks             | Central city locations including  
Kennedy Park, Millennium  
Children’s Park, Riverside Walk, Fr.  
Burke Park, Celia Griffin Memorial  
Park and Woodquay             | Small scale parks designated for passive and active recreation, streetscape value and civic function (less than 1 hectare).                 |
| Enclosed Marine/Wetland and Coastal areas | Silverstrand to Roscam including Lough Rusheen, Lough Atalia,  
Ballyloughane Beach               | Naturally occurring environments used for passive and active recreation, bathing and shore fishing wildlife conservation and education. |
| Rivers, Waterways and Lakes   | River Corrib, canal systems, Sandy  
River and Ballindooley Lough     | Open spaces adjacent to river and canal system or means of access to river and canal system offering townscape value, water based sporting opportunities,  
passive recreation, fishing and wildlife conservation. |
| Civic Spaces                  | Eyre Square, Fishmarket Square,  
Shop Street/Quay Street,  
Courthouse Square, Woodquay,  
The Small Crane             | Urban spaces composed of soft or hard landscape treatment or a combination of both, offering venues for civic events or passive recreation. |
| Greenways                     | Greenways including coastal, river,  
canal and woodland walk and cycle ways | These are established or potential amenity corridors facilitating non-motorised travel along linear routes (including rights of way), often with wildlife corridor importance along coastal areas, through woodlands and parks, river or canal corridors. Recreation and alternative circulation routes for pedestrians and cyclists. |
| Residential Open Space        | Open space in residential areas occur throughout the city | Provides for general amenity, biodiversity, passive and active recreation in particular children’s play. In general all open space lands above 0.2 hectares. (1/2 acre) in residential areas are zoned RA Recreation and Amenity. |
| Commercial and Industrial Open Spaces | Throughout the city including IDA  
lands and St. James Health Centre | Areas offering general amenity value often with landscape planting within the grounds of commercial or industrial developments. These areas can provide a setting for buildings and soften the visual impact of development and contribute to biodiversity. |
| Institutional Open Space      | Throughout the city including NUIG and GMIT grounds and Merlin Park  
Hospital grounds             | These comprise of open space as part of educational, health, religious or residential institutional use, often with some access to the wider public. |
| Cemeteries                    | Throughout the city Including St. James Cemetery and Rahoon  
Cemetery                        | Graveyard or burial ground, often located adjacent to a church or within a churchyard providing a green area within the heart of the community. |
| Recreational and Amenity Zoned Lands | Located at the fringes of the city  
including Ballybrit Racecourse,  
Dangan Woods, Roscam Woods  
and lands at Kingston             | Areas zoned recreational and amenity, which do not fall into any of the above categories. |
| Agricultural Lands and High Amenity | Throughout the city including land at Menlough Castle and woods and lands at Roscam | Lands used for agriculture purposes, often forming greenbelt, offering amenity, passive recreation and visual aspect, contributing to biodiversity. |
## Policy 4.1 Green Network

Support sustainable use and management of areas of ecological importance, parks and recreation amenity areas and facilities through an integrated green network policy approach in line with Galway City Recreation and Amenity Needs Study, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.

Support the actions of the Galway City Council Recreation and Amenity Needs Study.

Provide adequate recreation and amenity open space for the future development of the city.

Achieve a sustainable balance between meeting future recreational needs (both passive and active) and the preservation of the city's ecological and cultural heritage.

Continue to acquire and develop lands zoned for recreation and amenity use. These lands will be used predominately for public use, but opportunities for public/private partnerships will also be investigated where a high standard of recreation facility can be developed and where opportunities for public access is provided.

Improve accessibility to the City Parks, recreation and amenity areas and facilities and include for sustainable modes of transport, including the measures proposed in the Galway Transport Strategy.

Retain, extend and enhance opportunities for recreation within the green network for all members of the community including people with disabilities.

Retain where appropriate the grounds of schools, colleges, sports clubs and other institutional facilities for recreation and amenity use allowing for increases in the physical capacity of the institutions or clubs and for policies in relation to CF zoned lands.

Support the participation of the city in the WHO Healthy Cities Project and its aim to enhance the health of the city, its environment and its people.

Support the actions of the City Council's Heritage Plan 2016-2021 and Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 relating to the promotion of ecological awareness and biodiversity.

Co-operate with the NPWS, landowners and stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of management plans for designated sites.

Promote the multi-use of indoor and outdoor (both private and public) recreation and leisure facilities and amenities to accommodate a diverse range of recreational needs.

Enhance linkages and connectivity within the green network identified in Table 4.1.

Promote public art, cultural events and exhibitions, as an important part in the design of facilities and amenities.

Ensure that all passive and active recreational proposals are considered in the context of potential impact on the environment, sites of ecological and biodiversity importance and general amenity.

Ensure that notwithstanding land use zoning objectives, significant change of use from existing recreational facilities will only be considered if it is clearly demonstrated that either the loss of such a facility would not have an unacceptable impact on recreation and amenity provision in the city, or if an alternative facility is provided of equal or preferably superior benefit to the local community or the city’s hierarchy of facilities and amenities.

Support the actions of the Galway City & County Sports Partnership Strategic Plan.

Support the actions of the Northern and Western Assembly’s Outdoor Recreation in the West Report 2014.

4.2 Protected Spaces

The green network approach seeks to protect or improve connectivity between habitats, reducing the effects of fragmentation which can lead to permanent loss of species. It is crucial that the Development Plan complies with environmental legislation, including the EU Birds Directive and the EU Habitats Directive, so as to prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of protected European Sites. The city has a more diverse range of habitats and wildlife of national and european importance when compared with other urban areas of comparable size. This natural heritage legacy contributes to the attractiveness of the city as a place to live, work, do business and visit as a tourist destination. The protection of wildlife corridors prevents habitat fragmentation, increases ecological connectivity and biodiversity. Climate change and biodiversity are inextricably linked, the protection of biodiversity and natural heritage being an important aspect of climate change resilience. The Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 notes that the main threats to biodiversity within the city are associated with development and water pollution. The key objectives of the Biodiversity Action Plan seek to raise awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the city.

4.2.1 European Designated Sites

The city supports a number of European designated sites and protected habitats, including Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib Complex SACs, designated under the EU Habitats Directive and the Inner Galway Bay and Lough Corrib SPAs, designated under the EU ‘Birds’ Directive. These areas host the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the protected species listed in Annex II and are part of the Natura 2000 network of ecologically important sites across the EU.

Plan and projects should consider DEHLG Guidance for Planning Authorities on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009) and potential impacts identified in the Natura Impact Report (NIR) of the City Development Plan relating to habitat loss and fragmentation, water quality, disturbance and in combination effects. The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance/protection, mitigation and compensatory measures and is based on a precautionary approach. The Directive provides an auditing tool to help deliver sustainable development. It provides a case-by-case mechanism for recording the implications for a European Site and its conservation objectives and enables the decision making process.

It is critical that there is continued protection and sensitive management of these sites, so that the sites’ intrinsic high ecological and biodiversity value is safeguarded and in some cases restored. The policies and objectives of the City Development Plan have been drafted taking cognisance of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. All plans including lower tier plans and projects identified as having potential to adversely impact on European Sites are required to adhere to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, to ensure no adverse impact on the integrity of European Sites. Under current legislation any plan/project and any associated works, individually or in combination with other plans/projects are subject to Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening to ensure there are no likely significant effects on the integrity of any European Site and that the requirements of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive are fully satisfied. When a plan/project is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site or there is uncertainty with regard to effects, it shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. The plan/project will proceed only after it has been ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site or where, in the absence of alternative solutions, the plan/project is deemed imperative for reasons of overriding public interest. The designated European conservation areas in the city are as follows:

- Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site Code 000268)
- Lough Corrib Complex SAC (Site Code 000297)
- Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code 004031)
- Lough Corrib SPA (Site Code 004042).
4.2.2 National Designated Sites

Sites of national ecological importance are designated and protected under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. A Natural Heritage Area (NHA) is an area considered important by reason of its flora, fauna, habitat type and geological or geomorphological interest. Sections of Moycullen Bog NHA, (site code 002364), an extensive lowland blanket bog, are located east of Tonabrocky. In addition, there are proposed NHA (pNHA) designations, for areas of that are known to be of importance for biodiversity but have not yet been fully evaluated. Many of the pNHAs in the city also have SAC status. A number of sites of geological heritage importance have been identified by the Geological Survey of Ireland in the city. These are categorised as County Geological Sites (CGS) pending any further NHA designation by the NPWS and include the following:

- Menlough Mushroom Rock
- Merlin Park Quarry
- Barna Drumlin Swarm
- Angliham Quarry
- Menlough Quarry

4.2.3 Local Biodiversity Sites

In addition to European and national nature conservation designations, the Galway City Habitat Inventory 2005 identified a network of Local Biodiversity Areas in the city. These Local Biodiversity Areas can be classified into a range of different habitats such as lakes, exposed limestone pavement, woods, wetlands and peatland, all making an important contribution to biodiversity and amenity within the city. The Article 10 of the EU Habitat’s Directive requires member states to protect those features of the landscape which provide linear features or stepping stones essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species, through planning and development policies. Local Biodiversity Areas provide vital habitat for many species, provide important wildlife corridors and ecological stepping stones in the city and contribute to the ecological coherence of the network of European Sites. The Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 expanding on the City Habitats Inventory 2005 identifies the River Corrib as a main wildlife corridor which provides a link between the coast and the rich mosaic of habitats in the city’s hinterland. The Biodiversity Action Plan proposes to resurvey and map Local Biodiversity Areas and seeks to identify additional wildlife corridors and stepping stones for inclusion in future development plans.

Many of these areas are located on lands zoned for agriculture and recreation and amenity use and overlap with sites with nature conservation designations, which contribute to their continued conservation. The Council acknowledges that developments are likely within the vicinity of some of these Local Biodiversity
Areas. A precautionary approach will be adopted and the Council will have due regard to the sensitivity and the biodiversity importance of these areas, where developments are proposed. Local Biodiversity Areas shall be taken into account in the planning, design and assessment of development applications and inform local area plans, where appropriate. The Council will include measures to encourage biodiversity and ecological stepping stones in developments, including open space provision, the retention of existing natural features such as trees, hedgerows, stone walls, native species planting, and the use of green design features such as green roofs, green walls and SUDS.

Table 4.3 – Network of Local Biodiversity Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rusheen Bay – Barna Woods – Illaunafamona</td>
<td>A variety of habitats located around the intertidal area of Rusheen Bay including Barna Woods. The entire area is designated as either a SAC and/or SPA. Lough Rusheen is designated a Wildfowl Sanctuary under the Wildlife Acts 1976 &amp; 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cappagh – Ballymoneen</td>
<td>An area of blanket bog, fen, wet grassland and scrub located between Cappagh and Ballymoneen Roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballagh – Barnacranny Hill</td>
<td>Connemara peatland, including blanket bog, fen, wet grassland, heathland and scrub, located east of Tonabrocky. This area is designated a NHA, Moycullen Bog NHA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton Island and nearby shoreline</td>
<td>Intertidal area is a designated SPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lough Atalia and Renmore Lagoon</td>
<td>Lough Atalia and the intertidal area at Renmore, except the Renmore Lagoon, is designated a SPA. Lough Rusheen is designated a Wildfowl Sanctuary under the Wildlife Acts 1976 &amp; 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Corrib and adjoining wetlands</td>
<td>The River Corrib and the associated wetlands is a designated SAC and a Salmonid River.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menlough to Coolagh Hill</td>
<td>Area includes oak-ash-hazel woodland at Menlo Woods and exposed limestone rock, calcareous grassland and small turlough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballindooley - Castlegar</td>
<td>Area centred on Ballindooley Lough, includes fen, reed swamp, wet grassland, scrub and exposed limestone rock. The Castlegar area contains smaller areas of wet grassland, scrub and exposed limestone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballybrit Racecourse</td>
<td>Large open area of species-rich calcareous grassland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merlin Park Woods</td>
<td>Mature broad-leaf trees, mixed broad-leaf / conifer woodlands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doughiska</td>
<td>Area of exposed limestone rock with calcareous grassland and scrub located along the eastern boundary of the city. The grassland contains orchid species and protected Small white orchid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roscam</td>
<td>Relatively undisturbed examples of salt marsh, shingle banks, brackish lagoon, sandy shore and muddy sand shore, with calcareous grassland and scrub.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 - Other Areas/Features of Local importance in the City:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terryland Forest Park</td>
<td>Young urban forest of native broad-leaf trees and pockets of wetland vegetation located on both sides of Terryland River.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Canal System</td>
<td>Western part of the city and one artery to the east of the Corrib River at Newtownsmyth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>Small lake adjoining residential development on Headford Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cave, Merlin Park</td>
<td>A limestone cave near railway bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terryland Glenanail</td>
<td>A small river flowing from the south-eastern corner of Lough Corrib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper’s Cave, Terryland</td>
<td>Square bedding cave chamber located northeast of the Terryland River sink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy 4.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance

Protect European sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) in accordance with the requirements in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) and associated national legislation.

Ensure that plans or projects within the Plan area will only be authorised and /or supported after the competent authority has ascertained based on scientific evidence, screening for appropriate assessment and /or a Habitats Directive Assessment that:

1. The plan or project will not give rise to an adverse direct, indirect or secondary effect on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
2. The plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or
3. The plan or project will have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

Protect, conserve and promote the nationally designated sites of ecological importance, including existing and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs and pNHAs) in the city.

Protect, conserve and support the development of an ecological network throughout the city which will improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

Protect from inappropriate development the County Geological Sites in the city.

Protect Local Biodiversity Areas, wildlife corridors and stepping stones identified in the Galway City Habitat Inventory 2005 and Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 in supporting the biodiversity of the city and in the Council’s role/responsibilities, works and operations, where appropriate.

Encourage, in liaison with the NPWS, the sustainable management of features which are important for the ecological coherence of the network of European Sites and essential, by their linear or continuous nature or as stepping stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

Support the actions of the Galway City Heritage Plan 2016-2021 and Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 relating to the promotion of ecological awareness and biodiversity, the protection of wildlife corridors and the prevention of wildlife habitat fragmentation.

Co-operate with the NPWS, landowners and stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of management plans for designated sites.


Ensure that plans and projects with the potential to have a significant impact on European Sites (SACs or SPAs) whether directly, indirectly or in combination with other plans or projects are subject to Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43 EEC) and associated legislation and guidelines to inform decision making.

Achieve a sustainable balance between meeting future recreational needs (both passive and active) and the protection of the city’s ecological heritage.

Support the inclusion of natural features, such as trees, hedgerows, stones walls, ponds and the use of green design features in development layouts.

Commission an audit of County Geological Sites in partnership with GSI.

Support and implement measures to control and manage alien/invasive species within the city boundary, where appropriate.

Protect the ecological integrity of Statutory Nature Reserves, refuges for fauna and Annex 1 Habitats.
4.3 Blue Spaces

Galway City has an unparalleled water environment with an extensive coastline, Lough Corrib, River Corrib, waterways and canals. These important natural resources, ‘blue spaces’ in the city bring considerable benefits for people and the environment, from improving health and wellbeing by creating an attractive landscape and ensuring a thriving ecosystem. These assets contribute significantly to the positive image of the city and have socio-economic value. The City Council’s Recreation and Amenity Needs Study and the Northern and Western Assembly's Outdoor Recreation in the West Report 2014 recognises the potential of Galway’s waterways in terms of recreation and amenity activities. The development of the recreation and amenity potential of waterways and bodies must be balanced with the protection of designated european and national nature sites, habitats and species. Water based recreation will be supported where the environment, water quality and protected habitats are adequately protected. Greater and improved access to water bodies will be facilitated in order to provide improved amenities for users, where appropriate.

4.3.1 Coast

Galway Bay is an integral part of the aesthetic landscape and culture of the city. The ties between the city and the sea are exhibited in its strong maritime history and the traditions of areas such as The Claddagh, Fishmarket, The Docks and Salthill, a traditional seaside village, which attracts visitors throughout the year. The coastline is an important tourist and recreation attraction stimulating economic activity, providing local amenity and related socio-economic and health benefits. The southern section of Inner Galway Bay is designated as economically significant shellfish growing waters. Both Salthill and Silverstrand beaches are significant assets for the city and have Blue Flag status. The Council will seek to retain the Blue Flag status of Salthill and Silverstrand beaches and extend this status to Ballyloughane and Grattan beaches through improved water quality standards in co-operation with Irish Water.
4.3.2 Canals and Waterways

River and waterways including the Eglinton Canal, the River Corrib system, the lesser waterways of the Cathedral River, the West River and the many headraces, tailraces and minor canals form the aesthetic landscape and structure of the city centre. These waterways, rivers and coastline are significant linear wildlife and biodiversity corridors within the urban environment. The River Corrib is designated a Salmonid River. The canal system is an important architectural feature of the industrial past and economic and physical evolution of the city. The canal system requires special consideration in order to respect its setting and to ensure any developments abutting the canal do not disproportionately affect its amenity and aesthetic quality. Public accessibility to the canal will be encouraged in the design of developments, where feasible. Outside of the city centre the banks of the River Corrib are semi-natural in character and development is restricted in order to protect water quality, ecology and the semi-natural character of the river.

Policy 4.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways

- Protect and maintain the integrity of the coastal environment and waterways by avoiding significant impacts and meeting the requirements of statutory bodies, national and european legislation and standards.
- Conserve and protect natural conservation areas within the coastal area and along waterways and ensure that the range and quality of associated habitats and the range and populations of species are maintained.
- Develop and enhance the recreational and amenity potential of the city's waterways and coastal area, while not compromising the ecological importance of these areas.
- Investigate the extensive water resource in the city with a view to exploring where public access and enjoyment can be improved and where potential sustainable uses and water based recreation can be developed to the benefit of the city, and have regard to ecological conservation and safety considerations.
- Support the implementation of the recommendations of the Western River Basin District – River Basin Management Plan Water Matters (2009) and future plan in relation to the protection of water quality of surface waters, groundwater and coastal waters.
- Ensure development and uses adhere to the principles of sustainable development and restrict any development or use, which negatively impact on water quality.
- Have regard to european and national best practice guidance when assessing development in or near coastal areas which is likely to have significant effects on the integrity, defined by the structure and function, of any designated European Sites, protected coastal and marine fauna and flora.
- Ensure the conservation of the canal corridor and require that developments abutting the canal relate to the context of the adjacent environment and contribute to the overall amenity and explore the possibility of opportunities for public access.
- Work with stakeholders including IW, OPW, WRBD, Inland Fisheries Ireland and Corrib Navigation Trust in the management of the river and canal systems.
- Encourage uses which will facilitate conservation of the industrial archaeology legacy of mill buildings, warehouses and associated features.
- Ensure that developments located adjacent to the River Corrib do not adversely effect the safe and accessible navigation of the river.
- Ensure the protection of the River Corrib as a Salmonid River, where appropriate.
- Restrict the location of structures other than structures with essential links to the waterway and public utilities within 10 metres of the River Corrib in G agricultural zoned lands.
- Facilitate sustainable flood defence and coastal protection works in order to prevent flooding and coastal erosion subject to environmental and visual considerations.
- Maintain and extend the achievement of the Blue Flag Beach status in co-operation with IW.
- Ensure any development within the aquatic environment shall be carried out in consultation with prescribed bodies and with adherence to their guidelines.
4.4 Green Spaces

These green spaces include the various parks and woodlands in the city. Urban green spaces are an important resource for passive and active recreation, with some larger city parks overlapping with protected spaces, containing important habitats and species. These spaces shape the identity of nearby neighbourhoods and provide a sense of place for local communities. The City Council’s *Recreation and Amenity Needs Study* established a hierarchy of parks provision in the city. There are three large Citywide Parks: Merlin Park Woods, Terryland Forest Park and Barna Woods/Lough Rusheen Park; Neighbourhood Parks are located near residential areas, and city centre parks include Kennedy Park, Millennium Children’s Park, Riverside Walk, Fr. Burke Park and Woodquay. The *Recreation and Amenity Needs Study* recommends the preparation of masterplans with a particular emphasis on improving qualitative aspects of parks and promoting the multifunctionality of parks and facilities taking into consideration the different purposes and the continued protection of each park.

Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.

Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on protected species.

The Council will seek to designate shore fishing areas at appropriate locations in the city.

Figure 4.4 Hierarchy of Parks and in the city
4.4.1 Urban Woodland Parks and Trees

Urban woodland parks and trees are important recreational amenities and natural features in the city. These natural assets contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community. Woodland and trees enhance the aesthetic quality of the landscape, providing valuable habitats for wildlife and contributing to climate change mitigation and improving air quality. Woodlands, trees, stands of trees, and hedgerows form important ecological corridors and stepping stones enhancing biodiversity in the urban environment and need to be valued and protected. The Council will, where possible, protect trees, woodlands and hedgerows of special amenity or environmental value. In addition the Council will continue its tree planting programme, in particular, within public amenity areas and will require tree planting within developments. Tree planting and landscaping will be an important part of a public realm strategy for the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy 4.4.1 Green Spaces: Urban Woodlands and Trees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manage and develop woodlands in the ownership of Galway City Council for natural heritage, recreation and amenity use, including Terryland Forest Park, Merlin Park Woods, Barna Woods/Lough Rusheen City Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Tree Preservation Orders for individual trees or groups of trees within the city, where appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrate existing trees and hedgerows on development sites where appropriate and require tree planting, as part of landscaping schemes for new developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to promote partnerships with the community for the management and improvement of local open spaces through schemes such as the Community Planting Initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare and implement a plan which identifies suitable parts of the road and street network for the planting of trees.</td>
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</table>

4.5 Community Spaces

Elements of the green network provide valuable amenity and related healthy living and lifestyle benefits to the community. These ‘community spaces’ allow access to the natural environment, encourage social interaction and provide functional connections between other spaces and facilities. Community spaces include greenways, places for children to play, protected views of special amenity value and interest, allotments, community gardens and cemeteries.

4.5.1 Greenways and Public Rights of Way

Greenways are routes which are exclusively reserved for pedestrians and cyclists, established and proposed along rivers, canals, shorelines, abandoned rail, road corridors or other linear landscape features separated from road traffic. The integrated network of greenways in the city seeks to encourage outdoor recreation and the use of sustainable modes of travel and promoting healthy and active living. The recreational aspect of greenways can generate economic growth attracting visitors to the surrounding area and provide alternative routes to amenities and community facilities for residents in order to improve accessibility. Greenways can also act as linear wildlife corridors linking habitats and open spaces.

Currently a number of major greenway projects are proposed in the city. The creation of the National Galway to Dublin Cycleway project has commenced and will form part of the Eurovelo network of long-distance cycling routes in Europe. A greenway between Galway City and Maigh Cuilinn is proposed, which will run through the NUIG campus. This section of greenway will ultimately link with the planned Connemara Greenway. The Recreation and Amenity Needs Study identified the benefits of an extensive citywide coastal greenway from east to west and linking with riverside walkways to the city. It is important that the city’s network of greenways continue to be developed and improved. The Galway Transport Strategy identifies green corridors which will offer safe and direct routes for both pedestrians and cyclists to work/school and or for leisure; City Centre to Béarna, City Centre to Maigh Cuilinn and Galway/Dublin cycleway. There are other greenways within the city that have an important recreational and amenity role encouraging healthy lifestyles and sustainable tourism. Preliminary studies have taken place regarding the proposed coastal greenway from Oranmore to Béarna. The detailed design of the Silverstrand – Sailín Coastal Protection Scheme is being progressed. The scheme includes the construction of pathways and footbridges spanning the shoreline between Silverstrand and Sailín, while protecting the coast against erosion.
Some greenways are on private lands where public right of ways are established. It is the policy of the Council to preserve existing public rights of way for the common good. Where in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development, the extinguishment of an existing right of way becomes expedient, the Council may require the provision of a suitable alternative. The Council will seek to create new rights of way where necessary for pedestrian convenience or amenity reasons and also to enhance existing public rights of ways, where appropriate. Work is currently ongoing on the compilation of an inventory of established rights of way in the city.

The plan acknowledges that in order to conserve and protect sensitive ecological areas, access may need to be restricted or redirected to less sensitive areas. The routes of proposed greenways shown on accompanying development plan maps are indicative only. Proposed greenways will be subject to a route selection process, which will take cognisance of site-specific circumstances including consideration of ecological sensitivity. Routes will be developed within and adjacent to European Sites where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of the sites as defined by their conservation objectives.

### Policy 4.5.1 Community Spaces: Greenways and Public Rights of Way

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue to develop and improve the greenway network in the city, providing alternative accessible circulation routes for pedestrians and cyclists, for the enjoyment of the entire community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a strategic citywide coastal greenway from east to west linking with riverside walkways having due regard to nature conservation considerations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate linked greenways from the city into the county area in particular to Bearna, Oranmore and Maigh Cuillinn as identified in the Galway Transport Strategy and investigate the potential for an additional link to the Tonabrocky area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create, enhance and maintain accessible and safe public rights of way where appropriate for pedestrian convenience, including public lighting where appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide controlled access and linkages into all parks/public open spaces, areas of natural heritage, including along waterways, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that paths and structures are constructed from suitable materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote and facilitate safe and convenient walking and cycling routes through land use policy and the implementation of measures set out in the Galway Transport Strategy.</td>
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4.5.2 Child Friendly City

The Child Friendly City is a response to the need to consider the requirements of children and their views on issues relating to access to outdoor recreation, play and other day-to-day life of the city. The aim of the ‘Child Friendly City’ is to promote safe streets and play areas, a good quality clean environment with green open spaces, and encourage the participation of children in cultural and social events as equal citizens of the city.

The Galway as a Child Friendly City Report (2000) established a geographical and hierarchical approach to the provision of play areas in the city, from informal play areas and open spaces in residential areas to neighbourhood equipped play facilities. The Galway as a Child Friendly City Report and Recreational and Amenity Needs Study informed the provision of a network of 30 playgrounds including skate parks and multi-use game areas in the city. The Galway as a Child Friendly City Report promotes other measures which are included in this Development Plan, such as the development of home zones in order to provide a safe and quality living environment for play, traffic calming and the establishment of the concept of having safe routes to school which include cycle ways.

### Policy 4.5.2 Community Spaces: Child Friendly City

Enhance and promote Galway as a ‘Child Friendly City’ that will help children understand and feel secure in their environment and will encourage them to experience and respect the natural heritage of the city.

Maintain and enhance existing play areas and provide new, accessible and safe play areas in accordance with the Council’s Recreation and Amenity Needs Study, housing policy requirements and any subsequent strategies.

Continue the improvement and development of playground facilities as outlined in the Council’s Recreation and Amenity Needs Study.

Enhance the provision of facilities for older children and teenagers within the city, including skateboarding areas, teenage shelters and ball courts.
4.5.3 Views of Special Amenity Value and Interest

There are views within the city’s landscape, which require special protection due to their distinctive scenic amenity, aesthetic or cultural value. Views of scenic amenity value and interest define the character of the city, engender a strong sense of place and significantly enhance local amenities. Important views in the city include panoramic views which allow expansive views over landscape for example Galway Bay and over the cityscape and linear views which are views towards a particular landscape, observed from a particular point. The enjoyment of protected views by the community and visitors is a key part of the experience of the city. It is acknowledged that views are not static and some changes in a view can be absorbed without visually depreciating the integrity of the view and in some cases make a positive contribution to the characteristics and composition of protected views, while other changes can have a negative impact reducing the experience of that view irreparably. It is the objective of the Council to assess proposed developments, which are located within the foreground, middle ground or background of a protected view, in the context of their scale, design and location.

### Panoramic Protected Views

| V.1 | Panoramic views of the city and the River Corrib from Circular Road. |
| V.2 | Views from Dyke Road and Coolagh Road encompassing the River Corrib and Coolagh fen. |
| V.3 | Seascape views of Lough Atalia from Lough Atalia Road, College Road, Dublin Road and Lakeshore Drive. |
| V.4 | Seascape views of Galway Bay from Grattan Road, Seapoint, the Salthill Promenade and the coast road to the western boundary of the golf course. |
| V.5 | Seascape views encompassing Lough Rusheen including section of Blakes Hill, sections of Knocknacarra Road, sections of Barna Road from Knocknacarra to city boundary and including the road to Silverstrand Beach. |
| V.6 | Panoramic views of the city, and the Terryland Valley from parts of the Castlegar-Ballindooley Road. |
| V.7 | Views encompassing Lough Corrib from parts of the Quarry Road and Monument Road. |
| V.8 | Seascape views of Galway Bay from the old Dublin Road to the city boundary. |
| V.9 | Views towards the sea at Roscam. |

### Linear Protected Views

| V.10 | Views from Galway-Moycullen Road (N59) of the River Corrib |
| V.11 | Views from Waterside of the River Corrib. |
| V.12 | Seascape views of Galway Bay from Kingston Road. |
| V.13 | Seascape views of Galway Bay at Ballyoughane from south of the railway bridge. |
| V.14 | Views northwards encompassing the River Corrib and adjoining lands from Quincentenary Bridge. |
| V.15 | Views towards Galway Bay from Hawthorn Drive, Renmore. |
| V.16 | Views from Quincentenary Bridge Road southwards over Terryland Forest Park and River Corrib. |
| V.17 | Seascape views from Military Walk, Renmore. |
| V.18 | Views towards River Corrib from junction of St. Bridget’s Place with St. Bridget’s Terrace. |
| V.19 | Views encompassing Ballindooley Lough from parts of the Headford Road. |

### Policy 4.5.3 Community Spaces: Protected Views of Special Amenity Value and Interest

Protect views and prospects of special amenity value and interest, which contribute significantly to the visual amenity and character of the city through the control of inappropriate development. Require landscaping schemes as part of planning applications to have regard to such views and limit any planting which could have a detrimental impact on the value of protected views.
4.5.4 Allotments, Community Gardens and Cemeteries

Allotments and community gardens are acceptable on a number of land use zones. They encourage self-sufficiency, healthy living and create spaces that help bring communities together. Community spaces also include cemeteries, which provide important places for quiet contemplation in the city’s environment, and often support biodiversity and cultural heritage. The Council has commenced the process of the identification of suitable locations for new cemeteries in the city.

Policy 4.5.4 Community Spaces: Allotments, Community Gardens and Cemeteries

Continue to provide and facilitate allotments and community gardens in the city subject to Council approval.

Maintain existing burial grounds and provide for new city cemetery site(s) in the city or city environs and approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities.

4.6 Open Spaces

4.6.1 Open Spaces

Open spaces in the city include urban open spaces, residential, commercial and industrial open space, institutional open space, recreation and amenity zoned lands and agricultural and high amenity lands. These spaces are important elements of the public realm of the city and play a vital role in defining the image of Galway, affecting the perception of an area and fostering a sense of place. These spaces within the urban landscape attract inward investment and business by creating attractive settings, contribute towards climate change resilience and enhance the biodiversity of the city’s environment. The function of these open spaces vary throughout the city, many are meeting and gathering places, providing spaces for social interaction and events, while other open spaces have a passive and active recreation role. Many civic and urban spaces in the city, such as Eyre Square and Fishmarket, have an important cultural and historical legacy. Given the multi-functional aspect of these open spaces, many policies in other sections of this Plan inform the development and management of established and new open spaces within the green network. In order to enhance the attractiveness of the city, prioritise usage and maintain high quality open and public spaces, the Council will prepare and implement a public realm strategy for the public domain in conjunction with the community and relevant stakeholders.
Agricultural lands serve a number of purposes; they provide for agricultural uses, have an important recreation, amenity and biodiversity value and can also facilitate strategic projects, such as roads. They also form part of the unique natural setting, which provides a backdrop to the built environment. In the long term Agricultural lands are a major resource for the future strategic expansion of the city, in particular at Ardaun on the eastside of the city.

There are two different land use zoning objectives for agricultural lands in the plan – A zone and G zone. The G zoning objective are lands that in addition to agricultural uses have an important landscape and aesthetic value, which distinguishes them from less visually sensitive A zoned agricultural lands. The policy of the Council for agricultural zones is to facilitate the continued use of these lands for agricultural purposes subject to the protection of designated ecological sites, environmental considerations and to control non-agricultural development.

A limited type of residential development may be considered in areas zoned A. However unless a convincing case of need is established permission for dwellings will not be granted except to the immediate members of families (i.e. sons and daughters) of persons who are householders and residing in the immediate area and to farmers and the immediate members of their families. In all cases conditions may be applied regarding initial occupancy. Such residential developments will not be permitted where suitable alternative sites are not available on lands zoned for development within the City Council area. Standards for such developments are outlined in Chapter 11, Section 11.12. Outdoor recreation with small scale associated structures may be allowed in A and G zoned lands, but only where suitable alternative sites are not available on lands zoned for development within the city. In these areas, where structures are permitted, the sensitivity of the landscape and the quality of the environment should be reflected in both siting and design.

**Policy 4.6.2 Open Spaces: Agricultural Lands**

- Encourage sustainable agricultural activities, protect the rural character of these lands and where appropriate provide for sustainable recreation/amenity opportunities.
- Prevent developments which could cause environmental pollution or injury to general amenities.
- Ensure agricultural development complies with the measures set out in the Western River Basin Management Plan (2009) and future plans.
- Provide for limited residential development in A zoned agricultural lands.
- Restrict the location of structures other than structures with essential links to the waterway and public utilities within ten metres of the River Corrib, in G zoned lands.
4.7 Specific Objectives

The Council has a number of short term, medium term and long term specific objectives with regards to the different spaces within the green network as set out below. Many of the specific objectives have been informed by a number of studies and plans primarily the Recreation and Amenity Needs Study, the Galway City Heritage Plan 2016-2021, the Galway City Biodiversity Plan 2014-2024, the Galway City SFRA and the Galway Transport Strategy. Projects, plans and developments with potential to have a significant impact on the integrity of European Sites will be subject to Appropriate Assessment.

Blue Spaces

Short Term
- Prepare a masterplan for Lough Atalia and Renmore Lagoon to include the upgrading of the amenity park, walkways, ecological areas and development of water based recreation forming part of a wider coastal path network.

Medium/Long Term
- Investigate possible locations for the provision of municipal water based recreation infrastructure along the River Corrib and canal system.
- Initiate the preparation of a river conservation management plan in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. The purpose of the plan will include examination of best locations for the development of water based activities that will minimise environmental and ecological impacts

Green Spaces

Short Term
- Prepare masterplans for parks in the city in accordance with Recreation and Amenity Needs Study in consultation with local residents, including Barna/Lough Rusheen Park, Merlin Woods City Park (Doughiska RA zoned land) and Terryland Forest Park.
- Prepare and implement a plan which identifies suitable parts of the road and street network for the planting of trees and identifies suitable locations for new tree planting and identifies suitable varieties including fruit trees.
• Prepare and implement a masterplan for South Park.
• Prepare and implement a masterplan for the Kingston RA lands.

**Medium/Long Term**

• Explore the potential for developing lands adjacent to Menlough Castle incorporating Menlough Woods as a park.
• Support the incorporation of art sculptures and installations in parks, in accordance with the City’s Arts Plan.
• Retain car parking of approximately 30 car parking spaces for amenity purposes east of Merlin Park Woods at Doughiska.

**Community Spaces**

**Short Term**

• Develop equipped children’s play facilities in accordance with the Council’s annual playground programme.
• Undertake a feasibility assessment to identify the type and optimum locations for multipurpose/synthetic/floodlit playing facilities to include play facilities for the 0-6 age group.
• Acquire and develop new city cemetery site(s) in the city or city environs and approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities.
• Facilitate the extension of existing coastal greenway and linkages from Bearna to Oranmore in conjunction with the greenway measures as identified in the Galway Transport Strategy including, if feasible, a link extending from Silverstrand to SAILIN.
• Ensure pedestrian access to Mutton Island is retained for heritage and amenity purposes subject to safety protocol.
• Extend the riverside walk relating to the development of the Millennium Bridge at Waterside.
• Prepare a strategy for the long-term improvement and enhancement of the Salthill Promenade.
• Retain an inventory of existing public rights of ways in the city and review annually.
• Develop and upgrade Millars Lane for passive recreation.
• Develop a Community Centre/Sports Hall, a swimming pool with associated ancillary facilities on a phased basis adjoining and linked with the existing changing rooms at Doughiska on RA zoned lands.
• Provide for additional allotment/community gardens in the city subject to Council approval.

**Medium/Long Term**

• Prepare an amenity environs plan in conjunction with Galway County Council which includes the greenway linkages as identified in the Galway Transport Strategy and accommodate additional links to the Tonabrocky area.
• Explore greenways to link Merlin Woods City Park, Murrough LAP area from Ballyloughane and Liam Mells GAA lands to Lough Atalia within the coastal greenway.
• Develop a number of greenways within the city including:
  • Extending from Galway Docks to Roscam Point.
  • Riverside walk along the western side of the River Corrib in conjunction with NUIG to terminate at the access road beside the running track which links Galway/Moycullen Road at Dangan to the River Corrib.
  • Riverside walk from the Dyke Road to NUIG lands on the opposite side of the River Corrib using the piers of the Old Galway - Clifden Railway Line.
  • Riverside walk along the eastern side of the River Corrib from the Dyke Road to the pier at Menlough. A deviation from the route indicated on the development plan map may be permitted, any alternative alignments shall maximise amenity benefits.
  • Riverside walk along the northern side of the Terryland River from the Dyke Road to the point where it disappears underground at Glenanail to the rear of Glenburren Park.
  • Riverside walk along western side of the River Corrib from O’Briens Bridge to Wolfe Tone Bridge.
• Investigate the potential of providing public services for example kiosks or stalls, in or in close proximity to public parks and open spaces and along the coastal greenway.
• Explore the potential of Heritage Council grants and other funding opportunities for the development of greenways in the city.
• Develop and upgrade the two existing boreens at Cappagh and Ballyburke for passive recreation.
• Develop pedestrian and cycle ways at Knocknacarra, Doughiska and Castlegar linking residential areas with existing and future services and amenities as supported in the Galway Transport Strategy.
• Facilitate the development of a modern municipal sports arena in the city.
• Support provision of a floodlit Astro Turf Hockey facility in the west of the city.
• The Council will support the provision of dressing rooms at playing pitches in the city based on an assessment of need for such facilities. A minimum one dressing room per Local Electoral area will be considered and priority will be given to Doughiska, Hazel/Laurel Park and Millers Lane, in consultation with local residents and sports clubs.

Open Spaces

Short Term
• Progress the acquisition of lands, for recreation and amenity purposes, and other lands which will enhance the extent of the green network, in particular key linkages and lands for active and passive recreation.
• Acquire and develop predominately for public use, lands zoned for recreation and amenity use in conjunction with new housing at Castlegar, Doughiska, Terryland Valley, Ballymoneen, Knocknacarra, Roscam and Ardaun.
• Progress the enhancement of civic spaces at the Small Crane and Woodquay/Potato Market area.
• Develop the following guidelines in relation to new development:
  • Best practice advice for design of homezones.
  • Best practice advice for open space.
  • Best practice advice for roof gardens.

Medium/Long Term
• Identify active recreation facilities for the elderly with particular reference to indoor/outdoor bowling.
• Identify and provide active recreation facilities in the vicinity of Castlegar/Bóthar an Cóiste to serve existing and future populations.
5.1 Aim, Context and Overall Strategy
5.2 Economic Activity
5.3 Sectoral Areas
5.1 Aim, Context & Strategy

**Aim**
To facilitate and promote the balanced, sustainable, economic development of the city as a National Gateway and provide for opportunities for growth, innovation and investment across all sectors in order to create a resilient and diverse city economy that meets the need for sustainable employment opportunities and provides for a high level of service provision and drives national and regional competitiveness.

**Context**
After an extended period of recession the Irish economy is growing again and unemployment rates are decreasing. This growth is becoming more balanced also with the strong record of net exports being complemented from 2013 onwards by a slow but steady resumption in consumer demand. However Ireland, as an extremely open and trade-dependent economy is still heavily influenced by the performance of the wider global economy in particular the strength of the UK and US demand.

Maintaining and growing the economy will require the challenges identified by the National Competitive Council (NCC) to be addressed in order to enhance competitiveness and create more employment opportunities to increase incomes and improve the quality of life for all. These include addressing the control of labour, property and energy costs and the need to control public finances while being mindful for the need for public investment. The NCC also sees the need to provide for continued investment in education with a focus on further education and training (FET) and apprenticeship systems. Despite the resilience of the export sector it is considered that a broadening of our economic base is needed also to offset sector specific shocks. A dearth in the supply of credit is seen as stifling the opportunities for growth and investment, particularly in the SME sector and owing to failures in the past, public trust is needed to be rebuilt.

Notwithstanding this, the country still continues to be an attractive place for foreign direct investment (FDI), ranking high in OECD performance. Although historical advantages have been eroded and trends in foreign direct investment show that global investment is shifting to developing countries, Ireland still has the attractiveness for FDI, with a national program of investment in innovation, an increasing supply of highly educated workers and the benefits that established sectoral clusters have had in inducing further similar investment. Galway City, the fourth largest city in the state is fortunate in that it has many of the aforementioned attractors. However it is still considered that there is a need for a focused economic strategy to sustain and expand the role of the city as a regional driver of growth. This will require efficient investment choices, a flexible and responsive educational system, and the development of a more sustainable and diversified enterprise sector that includes outward looking indigenous firms. Such a strategy for the city will also include for a culture that encourages innovation, supports collaboration and appreciates the value of social capital and environmental concerns.

The Government launched the *Action Plan for Jobs* (APJ) initiative in early 2012 with the aim of creating the conditions to support private sector-led, export-oriented economic growth and job creation. Each year since, an annual APJ has been published which adds to the initiatives being taken and draws on the lessons from its predecessors. The APJ initiative reflects a change in the Irish public policy context in that it includes for a co-ordination mechanism that encourages cross departmental engagement, quarterly targets and a monitoring system. A regional APJ for the West Region 2015-2017 frames specific actions for the region in the context of the strengths and competitive advantages in the West Region.

Recent times have seen the labour market becoming more stabilised, unemployment fall and acceleration in job creation. Notwithstanding this, the impacts of the economic recession still lingers leaving a legacy of reductions in incomes and quality of life, high unemployment rates and the fallout from emigration and debt which still prevail. Growth which is occurring too is not occurring at the same rate in all regions.

It is important therefore that the City Council supported by the City Development Plan ensures that private investment and public spending is targeted to deliver the best and the most sustainable economic impacts for the city and consequently for the region. In this regard the role of the Local Authority has been enhanced in order to support the delivery of such a strategy through a number of initiatives and reforms brought about under the Local Government Reform Act 2014. This included for the setting up of Local Enterprise Offices (LEO’s). These offices will facilitate support for start up’s and small businesses and will provide access to a full range of state supports on behalf of Enterprise Ireland and central Government in one accessible location within the local authority. Also relevant are the establishment of Local Community Development Committees (LCDC’s) and the formation of Economic and Enterprise Development Committees in local authorities. The LCDC in conjunction with Galway City Council have completed an Integrated Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the city. In addition, Galway City Council and Galway County Council are
preparing a joint Economic Strategy. The initial stage, the preparation of an economic baseline study was completed in July 2015.

This Economic Strategy, the LECP and the LEO will facilitate the role of the city as a National Gateway and as a regional centre of economic growth as designated in the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS). The NSS emphasises that the attributes of a Gateway are such that they will create critical mass that will help sustain job growth within the region. It indicates that the dynamism of gateways means that these are the areas where the clustering of economic activities occurs. A socio-economic review of the performance of Galway Gateway (2012) found that Galway performed well on both a national and regional level and relative to the other national Gateways. This reflected the particular success in the areas of knowledge and innovation, social facilities and infrastructure. The city did not perform as well in areas of transportation, connectivity and the environment but nevertheless achieved a higher than average score for Gateways. The impact of this poor performance in relation to transportation and connectivity and the consequent congestion is having a critical impact on the economy of the city, county and region. In the absence of a transport strategy and in conjunction with a projected increase in population and activity this situation will worsen. It will inevitably result in a decrease in efficiency of the transportation infrastructure. It will also limit the opportunities for and the success of any smart mobility measures, public transport initiatives and safety improvements. Such circumstances will also impact negatively on the success of the Gateway and all emerging economic plans. This highlights the need to fully implement the recently prepared Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) in conjunction with the proposals for the N6 GCRR which are designed to address the transport problems in the city and deliver the consequent economic benefits for the city and region.

At regional level Galway is guided by the Regional Planning Guidelines (West Region 2010-2022) which provide a broad planning framework at regional level and reflects the objectives of the NSS. These guidelines are scheduled to be superseded by the ‘Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the BMW region’. This follows on from the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 where a number of changes were made to the regional structures in Ireland which replaced the eight regional authorities and two regional assemblies with three regional authorities. Galway City is in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area. The future regional strategy will have a specific economic dimension and will give direction for the city in the context of the greater region and the state.

In Galway City and Suburbs the CSO 2011 records indicate that the working population is 41,402. In addition the records show that 4,715 of the resident population worked outside the city. This figure captures the city’s experience of a significant commuter population of 20,560. Travel to work studies have shown this to be predominantly from Co. Galway but also extending well into Co. Clare and Co. Mayo. This figure for commuting population has increased by 8.6% from that recorded in 2006. This reflects the significant regional economic role of the city and demonstrates that people are willing to travel lengthy distances to access employment in the city owing to the quality and range of job opportunities.

The city provides for a diverse range of economic activities, services and employment opportunities. Table 5.1 shows that the professional services are recorded as being the largest employment industry reflecting the high level of education of the population and the strong presence of knowledge based industries in the city. This is followed by the commercial/trade sector and manufacturing which highlights the strong services regional role and tourism function of the city. It also reflects the niche manufacturing industries that have clustered in Galway which include the medical technologies sector and the internationally traded ICT services and software. The proportion at work in the various sectors of employment reflects those nationally but it is notable that education and health/social work, much of which is in the state sector, are particularly important to the city economy and apparent when workers are viewed by occupation.

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4. CSO Census of Population 2011
Table 5.1 Workers by Industry in Galway City including Commuters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workers by Industry</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and construction</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>7,597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce and trade</td>
<td>9,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
<td>2,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>2,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional services</td>
<td>12,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41,402</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source CSO Population. Census 2011)

The economic resilience of the city is in evidence in Galway, particularly in the areas of education, ICT and medical technologies which have all sustained employment and in some areas experienced growth during the recent economic recession. The city has considerable potential for further development and capacity for new enterprises. The third level institutions are particularly well placed to fulfil the role of sources and drivers of innovation. The National Development Plan (2007-2013), although dated now, is still relevant in recognising the strengths of the city. It indicates that it is important to have an agreed development strategy for the city and environs supported by investments in key pieces of infrastructure such as transport, water, wastewater and the maintenance of a high quality of life and environment. Other critical elements as identified by the National Competitiveness Council of Ireland in 2014 will be the delivery of an adequate supply of both housing and commercial property.

The Atlantic Gateways Initiative which was progressed based on the NSS sought to exploit the potential for a development corridor connected by the Gateway cities of Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford. Critical...
mass and added value was considered to be achievable through collaboration and co-ordination along this corridor, which could provide a competitive scale to balance that already enjoyed in the Greater Dublin Region. The update on the NSS in 2010 supported the progression of this initiative. It is considered that Galway City could benefit from this alliance. It is likely to be examined further in the ongoing review of the NSS.

The city will in the interim still function as a key driver for growth in the West Region. In particular the City Development Plan will through strategies, policies and land use zoning objectives provide for an integrated framework to guide infrastructural, energy and telecommunication investment. It will set out an integrated approach to transportation provision, designate sufficient land for development opportunities and support for educational resources. This will create a favourable environment that will encourage innovation, through research and collaborative ventures, in particular with two of the higher institutes of education, NUIG and GMIT and the existing ICT and medical technologies and emerging creative sectors.

In addition, the health of the economy will benefit from the facilitation through spatial planning of new enterprises and the expansion of existing less mainstream economies such as the cultural, creative economy and the food and marine sectors.

There is room also for exploring the use of ‘big data’ in the interest of enhancing the quality and performance of urban services, to reduce costs and consumption of resources, and to engage more effectively and actively with citizens. This approach is more commonly termed a Smart City approach. Research in the Irish context is currently being carried out in NUI Maynooth under the Programmable City Project. Work is also being carried out in NUIG under the Insight Programme – Centre for Data Analytics. There is potential for Galway City to investigate the potential for adaption in the interests of resource management and economic stimulation.

The significant commercial, in particular retail, function of the city is reflected in the scale of employment it provides (see Table 5.1). The role of the city defined as a regional shopping centre in the national shopping hierarchy is borne out by the level of those recorded as engaged in commercial activities. There was a significant expansion in retail floor space in the early years of the millennium paralleling the buoyant economy and the rapid increase in disposable incomes and consumer spending. In recent years expansion has occurred at a slower rate and mainly in convenience floorspace. As referenced previously this sector is showing recovery and for Galway, owing to its regional role and status as a tourist destination, a low vacancy rate (2.7%) for retail units has been recorded albeit that it references only the ground floor of the main shopping streets in 2014.

The City Development Plan continues to support a retail hierarchy for the city with a prime role for the city centre. In more recent times, in line with the retail strategy, facilities in the suburbs have been developing and providing district, neighbourhood and local centre level services convenient to communities. The retail strategy also includes for other policies in the plan which supports aspects that contribute to maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre, encourages competitive choice, which in turn secures a healthy environment for commerce.

There is a commitment also in the Plan to prepare a revised joint retail strategy with Galway County Council. It is not envisaged that retail policies formulated in the Plan will be amended significantly but this exercise will provide an updated baseline status for the whole county and help better co-ordination of development on the periphery of the city in the interests of sustainability.

Tourism is a major economic activity within the local economy of the city and its continuing growth generates a range of associated economic activities and expanding employment opportunities. Fáilte Ireland indicates that in 2014, approximately 16% of the 7.1 million overseas visitors to Ireland, visited Galway County and City. This was a 10% increase from 2013. Records derived from Fáilte Ireland reports indicate that in 2012 in all of Galway, €253m was generated in revenue from overseas visitors and that domestic tourism spending for 2012 was €148m climbing back up to the highs of €152m experienced in 2010. A high proportion of both these domestic and overseas visitors would have visited and stayed in the city which is reflected by the scale of attendances at festivals and cultural events and the extensive range of tourist facilities in the city. In this regard, tourism is a strong contributor to the local economy and also adds greatly to the atmosphere and ambiance in the city. The City Council’s objective to prepare a Tourism Strategy and together with the completion of the Cultural Strategy for the city and county together with the designation as European Capital of Culture 2020 are likely to enhance the economic benefits from this sector further and will contribute to expanding the importance of the culture and the creative sector to the economy of the city.

6. CBRE Ireland Retail Market view Q1 2015

Other sectors of particular importance are the marine sector or ‘blue economy’ and the food economy. Latest indicators show that Ireland’s maritime economy is outperforming the national growth in the economy and offers good opportunities in commercial expansion. The emerging food sector also shows promise of expansion potential and diversity and has linked benefits with the tourism market.

An overarching aspect in any economy relates to the quality of life and environment. Galway has a distinctive built and natural setting, a rich cultural heritage, a youthful vibrancy and inclusive attitude. These all augur well for an economy that needs to attract and retain a highly motivated and educated labour force. The challenge for the city will be to maintain and enhance this image of the city and the life style it supports in order to sustain the dynamic for job creation and to continue to attract the talent and skills needed to support the economy.

**Strategy**

- Support and facilitate the sustainable economic development of Galway as a Gateway for the West Region.
- Enhance the economic performance of Galway as a Gateway and regional growth centre by addressing the identified current transportation problems in addition to providing for the future transportation requirements through the delivery of the transport components of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) and the N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR).
- Ensure sufficient land is available within the city and city environs to facilitate inward investment and the development and expansion of a resilient and diverse local enterprise sector.
- Support the objectives of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the city and the emerging Draft Economic Strategy for Galway City and County.
- Enhance economic opportunities through consolidation of existing commercial and enterprise areas and the promotion of key regeneration sites.
- Provide for opportunities for growth, innovation and investment across all sectors in order to create a resilient and diverse city economy that will maximise employment opportunities for the entire workforce.
- Strengthen the integration between employment, housing and transportation.
- Maintain and enhance the attractiveness of the city and the life style it supports in order to sustain investment, quality employment opportunities and to attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce.
- Support the development of the Higher Institutes of Education and the strong collaborative research and training roles that they have with industry.
- Ensure that there is a provision of sufficient supporting infrastructure at suitable locations such as transport, water, wastewater and telecommunications.
- Co-operate with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Galway County Council, Higher Institutes of Education, Solas and other agencies in meeting the needs of industry, training and innovation.
- Contribute to delivery of the initiatives in the Action Plan for Jobs (West Region) to improve supports for job-creating businesses and remove the barriers to employment creation across the economy
- Investigate the potential for adaption to a Smart City standard in the interests of resource management and economic stimulation.

**5.2 Economic Activity**

The GeoDirectory records that there are 3,366 commercial address points in the city. These economic activities span the city showing that there are well defined concentrations of activity at particular locations. In the main these are focused into college and hospital campuses, enterprise lands in the city and straddling the eastern boundary of the city and in the city centre, suburban district and neighbourhood centres (see Figure 5.1).

The City Centre area is the focus of the main commercial activity. As is expected, this includes the major retailers, the hospitality sector and a strong presence of health, educational and general professional services ringing the core area. The main business and technology sector, including the clustering of the medical device companies are located in the east of the city at the business parks in Ballybrit, Mervue, Parkmore and immediately outside of the city boundaries towards Oranmore. The east also supports the main bulky goods, wholesale and motor sales activities. In addition this side of the city supports three hospitals and a third level institute. This area also includes bulky goods and smaller manufacturing enterprises at Liosban and the Tuam Road area. The west of the city has a lesser density of enterprise employment concentrations but hosts the major health and educational institutions. In addition there is a concentration of accommodation and food services reflecting the location of a number of hotels, particularly in the attractive seaside location...
Figure 5.1 Galway City Showing Pattern of Commercial Activity.
Source: Geo Directory NACE codes (2016)

at Salthill. As in the east there is a recently established District Centre and a legacy of neighbourhood centres which supports mainly retail, general commercial and professional services.

5.3 Sectoral Areas

Commercial
Commercial, including retail activity are significant contributors to the economy of the city and the region. The main concentration of activities is in the city centre and the Headford Road area, the suburban district and neighbourhood centres and in the Salthill (see figure 6.1). These are key elements in maintaining the attraction of the city and the city centre in particular. The commercial offer in the city centre is broad in range and although challenged by high levels of vacancy over the last number of years has still maintained a high degree of vitality and vibrancy. There is a notable presence of the hospitality sector, cafe culture and the entertainment area bolstered by the tourism market and the strong student population. The medieval core, the walkability and the location on the river and Atlantic sea add to the experience of the commercial core giving it added value. There is also great potential to extend the main commercial area seamlessly onto the Ceannt Station site and to expand and modernise the facilities in the Headford Road commercial area. The Retail Strategy in Chapter 6 expands on the approach to retailing in the city and confirms the priorities for the development of the regional role in this area of the economy.

Specialist Industry
As trends show, Ireland is evolving into a creative knowledge economy. Galway has met this challenge, in particular, with regard to the strong growth in exports attributed to the medical devices sector and the ICT services which have witnessed significant growth in recent years. The environment for these and other office based industries can be different than lower value traditional industries in that they are usually located on low density, high quality landscaped business parks which can accommodate a number of similar type operations and include for clustering and the resultant potential benefits for convergence of ideas and products. These types of companies, which are predominantly driven by foreign investment, are attracted to urban areas of scale, with good services and access to talent and skills. An attractive environment and the opportunity for good housing and lifestyle choices are also very important in investment decisions.

Galway City has all these characteristics including a strong entrepreneurial culture, track record of innovativeness and capacity for business networking. In addition a key to success has been the ability for NUIG and GMIT to devise educational programs that are flexible and responsive to the needs of industry and the emerging knowledge based labour markets. These institutions are also resourced to respond to the research demands of industry.
It is likely that locations for any new large scale operations will gravitate towards the city and the city environs. There is already a concentration of such uses at Mervue, Ballybrit/Parkmore Business and Technology Park with smaller research and innovative companies located at Newcastle/Dangan. Already there are 90 ICT companies (derived from Geodirectory /NACE codes) located in Galway. Enterprise Ireland (2010) reports show also that 31% of Ireland’s medical device sector are located in Galway. This is testament to the strength of the local economy but also reflects the need for a broadening of the enterprise profile in the city to guard against any potential for sectoral shocks.

In the future, demands for large scale operations can be met at the undeveloped IDA Business and Technology lands at Parkmore (38ha), the strategic IDA site at Oranmore (27ha), which has planning permission for a significant bio-pharmaceutical manufacturing campus and the strategic site at Athenry (97ha) which has recently been endorsed as suitable by Apple Inc. as a data centre. However this does not preclude additional industries being located within the city, in particular at Mervue and Ballybrit and on undeveloped zoned lands at Rahoon/Knocknacarra and Ardaun LAP lands.

There is also evidence of a trend, particularly in the information and communication technology sector showing gravitation to more central locations for small and emerging enterprises. These locations are seen to offer opportunities for innovation labs and business incubation in spaces that encourage collaboration similar to that in Dublin Docklands. City locations such as that of medieval Galway with a high quality attractive waterfront setting are perceived to inspire creativity and are particularly suitable for small, emerging enterprises but can with investment support a presence by larger more established companies. The city can meet this challenge in demand having a number of locations ripe for regeneration - Ceannt Station Quarter, Inner Harbour, Nun’s Island area, Eyre Square East and the Headford Road LAP area. Some of these locations have existing buildings that have potential to be adapted for opportunities for start-ups and potential to develop new build, high quality, commercial office space for expansion purposes.

General Industry

The traditional manufacturing sector has been in decline for a number of years. This has not been a completely negative trend as there has been an increase in the skills base in the city and upward social mobility reflecting the broadening of higher quality employment opportunities. However there is a need to retain lands for industrial uses. These traditional industries are particularly concentrated at Mervue and along the Tuam Road and Monivea Road. These lands accommodate predominately light industry, small manufacturing and service units, corporate type offices, warehousing and some bulky goods including motor showrooms. These industries are predominantly indigenous owned and operated. There is a need to protect these lands for industrial uses which are continuously under threat from higher value uses. These lands will also accommodate businesses that do not fall into the categories supported by Enterprise Ireland or the IDA and will also provide opportunities for small starter businesses. This is important in the context of the strategic ambitions of the Government’s Action Plan for Jobs which includes the stimulation of the domestic economy and the generation of employment in the locally traded sector.

The Harbour Enterprise Park currently supports a number of industries also, some of a heavy industrial nature and some with direct links to the harbour facilities. The Council will continue to support these developments and emerging expansion plans envisaged by the Galway Harbour Board subject to approval by An Bord Pleanála where issues including those relating to amenity, environment and the obligations emanating from the EU Habitats Directive will be a consideration in the decision–making.

Office Development

The definition of office use has changed with time. It can include for such uses that are of a direct service to the public – professional, financial, business or be more of a corporate nature or of a processing nature (specialist offices). It is considered that professional services should continue to be concentrated in the city centre, reflecting the role of the city centre, where there are sustainable opportunities for access being located near Ceannt Station transport hub and also where there is potential for availing of a wide range of additional services. District, Neighbourhood and Local centres are also locations where offices are acceptable but only of a nature and scale that does not detract from the primacy of the city centre and that are of a range and type that can service their catchment.

More specialist offices which are usually of a significant scale of employment can have a high element of processing such as insurance companies or call centres. Some of these can be deemed to be appropriate on Industrial (I) or Commercial/Industrial (CI) zones. Currently these office types are located at Rahoon, Ballybrit/Parkmore and the Tuam Road. Other general offices that are of a more administrative nature and have elements of public/retail offices are located in the city centre or edge of centre sites. There is capacity in both CI and I zones, to accommodate additional floorspace demands for specialist offices. There is considerable capacity also on CC zoned brownfield lands at Ceannt Station, and the Inner Harbour to cater for further new general office development. This also has the attraction of being adjacent to a transport hub.
Lands in the Headford Road LAP area have capacity to accommodate commercial office space also. This can be achieved through densification and regeneration. The potential to accommodate a research and development hub type district exists, owing to the site having potential to create synergies with NUIG, where direct access could be achieved by provision of a new pedestrian link from the Headford Road lands directly to the campus. These lands are also favourably placed for large scale office type development and offices of a civic nature. These have the benefit of adjacent public transportation facilities, the status and attraction of being located near the city centre and of being located within a high quality natural environment.

Small scale offices which provide local services such as GP and dental practices are open to be considered in residential areas subject to amenity and traffic considerations. Home based economic offices and activities will also be open for consideration but only where their nature and scale demonstrate that they can be accommodated without detriment to the existing residential amenity.

**Education and Health Sector**

Health and education, much of which is in the state sector, are particularly important to the local economy with up to 10,741 persons recorded in CSO census 2011 as being employed within the education sector alone. The service roles they both play are at city and regional level. In addition to the primary educational function of the third level institutes, they also have collaborative research and training roles with industry which is supported also by national investment research programs such as REMEDI and GMedTech. Research competencies have been growing particularly in the life sciences area in NUIG and also in the medical technologies research group at GMIT.

The presence of a strong educational sector is a huge asset and has contributed to a city population where 45% of adults have been educated to third level which is a much higher proportion of the population than in other Irish cities including Dublin. In addition the presence of a third level student population of over 24,000 contributes greatly to the local economy.

The hospitals provide a significant regional health care service for the West Region. In particular the Galway University Hospitals (Merlin and UHG) provide a secondary, regional and supra-regional service in respect of cardiology and cancer services. They are also one of eight major academic teaching hospitals in Ireland. The institutions have furthered this link with education with the opening in September 2015 of the Institute for Translational Research HRB clinical research facility. The continued support for this sector is recognised as is the support for the trend towards increased specialisations and also for appropriate expansions of all health and hospital institutions. Community and specialist medical services can be accommodated within district, neighbourhood and local centres and be directed to the city centre area. Primary health care centres should be accommodated in these areas also where they can be easily accessed by communities and can enhance the level of local service provision.

There have been sufficient lands zoned to accommodate the demands for expansion in primary and secondary educational provision with four new schools and a number of extensions to existing schools accommodated in the last five years. Continued demand for acceptable expansions can be accommodated on a number of zonings. The plan will also support appropriate development on third level college campus grounds including student accommodation to support this sector’s development.

**Tourism Sector**

Tourism makes a major contribution to the economy and the prosperity of Galway City. The city has a distinctive cultural heritage, vibrancy, intimate urban fabric and also has the attraction of being a traditional seaside resort. Tourist revenue contributes greatly to the hospitality industry as well as support for many festivals and attractions in the city.

As previously referenced, the city is host to significant levels of overseas tourists and is also an important destination for domestic tourists. Overall tourism markets have had a healthy growth since 2013 with record numbers from the US and an increase in visitors from Britain and continental Europe.

Fáilte Ireland acknowledges that Galway is a well established tourism area; a major tourism city with a surrounding attractive region. It recognises the significant role Galway has as a tourism Gateway and the ability the city has to achieve continued sustainable growth. The recent marketing strategy for ‘The Wild Atlantic Way’ as Ireland’s first long-distance touring route, stretching along the Atlantic coast from Donegal to West Cork has proved successful in further attracting overseas tourists both for the city and the western seaboard.

8. CSO – Area Profile of Galway City Census 2011
However there is a perceived need to refine what is the ‘Galway’ tourist experience, given the changes in profile of tourists, their demands and preferences and length of stay. In this regard the City Council is preparing a Tourism Strategy in conjunction with Galway County Council and other main stakeholders. The Development Plan will support this approach and encourage and facilitate sustainable tourism development, in particular, facilities experiences, attractions and activities that reflect the city’s unique culture and heritage.

The Council does already contribute to the tourism potential of the city through a variety of different synergistic measures including improving accessibility, environmental improvements and through, the provision of recreation and amenity areas, protection of the natural and built heritage and the facilitation of the development of visitor attractions such as the Town Hall and Galway City Museum. Tourism covers a wide variety of different activities within the city. Many of the policies and objectives set out in this Plan will facilitate the development of tourism and tourism infrastructure including accommodation benefiting both visitor and citizen alike and contributing to the vitality, local economy and ultimately job creation.

**Emerging and Growing Sectors**

The marine sector is already an important sector for Galway City and County being located in an area with extensive coastline. This sector includes a range of activities in Galway Harbour, marine research at the Marine Institute in Oranmore linked with the environmental, marine and energy research at the Ryan Institute NUIG, local fishing, aquaculture and water based recreational activities. The potential for water-based tourism has been demonstrated by the momentum created in the city during the hosting of the Volvo Ocean Race stops in 2009 and 2012.

The current proposals for a re-development and extension of Galway Harbour includes for reclamation of 27 hectares, construction of commercial quays deepwater port facilities, provision of marina and aqua sport facilities. This project has the potential to contribute to both tourism and enterprise in the local economy. It is acknowledged that such a development could have strategic importance for the city and is supported by the Council notwithstanding that it requires assessment and consent determination by An Bord Pleanála which will include for consideration of impact on European Sites.

The creative/cultural sector which includes for creative goods and services is continuing to grow globally. The sector accounts for 1 in every 10 jobs in the West Region with a significant amount of those employed
in the sector based in Galway City and County. This paper highlights music, visual and performing arts as being the main employer with craft, film and photography following.

The festival calendar for the city generates significant revenue with the big three – The Galway Races, the Arts Festival and the Film Fleadh alone generating almost €100m in revenue in 2010.

This sector is likely to be embellished further with the adoption of the City Council’s Strategy on Culture which will springboard Galway City’s designation as a European Capital of Culture in 2020, which will have many economic, social and cultural benefits for Galway.

The food sector like the general economy is beginning to grow. Of particular interest in Galway are the speciality and artisan foods sector and those that are associated with the hospitality sector. These have been a catalyst in the promotion of food through the recently established food festivals, and the expansion from the iconic Church Lane market at St. Nicholas’ Church to the Christmas and occasional neighbourhood farmer markets at other locations including Woodquay. This area has potential to grow if opportunities are enhanced by support in product development, networking and marketing. A Public Realm Strategy is proposed to be prepared for the city which will give direction on the best locations for associated outdoor events.

9. Collins et Al - Study From Growth to Sustainability (2014)
## Policy 5.1 Enterprise

Preserve the city centre as the prime focus and identity for town centre commercial activities.

Prioritise investment and expansion in high tech manufacturing, research and development at existing strategic key locations at Mervue, Parkmore, Briarhill, and Dangan.

Facilitate the establishment of an enterprise base on designated lands at Rahoon/Knocknacarra and at Ardaun following adoption of Ardaun LAP.

Encourage and facilitate the regeneration of city centre sites in particular at Ceannt Station Quarter and the Inner Harbour for a range of uses including high order commercial office space capable of accommodating a business and technology cluster.

Explore the potential for intensification of enterprise and employment opportunities on lands in the Headford Road LAP area.

Continue to support and facilitate the development of start-up enterprises for local indigenous enterprises.

Co-operate with Galway County Council in the promotion and servicing of IDA lands, designated as business and technology parks at Parkmore and Oranmore.

Support and facilitate the sustainable development of the strategic health and education institutions in their primary functional roles and also where they contribute to innovation, research, training and skills development.

Facilitate the development of the designated District, Neighbourhood and Local centres at a scale appropriate to serve the associated catchment areas.

Encourage the establishment of the city as a hub for the Creative and Cultural Industries, building on the distinctive culture and creative legacy in the city and recognising the particular value of these activities to the overall economy including that of the county and region.

Facilitate innovative work practices such as ‘live–work’ units where they do not negatively impact on residential amenity.

Contribute to delivering the objectives in the Cultural Strategy and support the vision for Galway as a European Capital of Culture 2020.

Recognise the significant contribution that tourism makes to the local economy and facilitate the sustainable development of associated infrastructure, attractions and events particularly where they reflect the distinctive history, culture and environment of Galway.

Support the delivery of the City Council’s emerging Tourism Strategy for the city.

Support the sustainable growth of enterprise activities associated with the Marine Sector including transport, trade, fishing, research, energy, and marine/coastal and cruise ship tourism.

Support the sustainable development and extension of Galway Harbour subject to environmental, visual, economic viability and transportation considerations.

Support the development of infrastructure and marketing events that will contribute to the growth and establishment of a distinctive brand for the food sector in Galway.

Encourage a high quality of workplace environment through architectural design, layout, landscaping and facilities where these can contribute positively to the health and wellness of the workforce and to the urban landscape.

Contribute to the creation of a place branding for Galway City that reflects the unique picture of the city at every level of interaction reinforcing the image of the city as a desirable destination to live, work and visit.

Support the implementation of the phased plan of transportation measures as proposed for in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) including for public transport, walking and cycling, and a strategic new road, the N6 GCRR.

Initiate in conjunction with NUIG, the preparation of a masterplan for the regeneration of lands and buildings at Nuns Island.
Retail Strategy

6.1 Introduction
6.2 Existing Retail Floorspace
6.3 Retail Hierarchy
6.4 Need For Additional Retail floorspace
6.5 Additional Retail floorspace
6.6 Distribution of Retail floorspace
6.7 Core Shopping Area
6.8 Retail Warehousing/Bulky Goods
6.9 Sequential Development Approach
6.10 Retail Impact Assessments
6.11 Design Quality
6.1 Introduction

Retailing is a significant contributor to the commercial life of the city and an essential part of the economy. It is a key element in maintaining the attractiveness of the city, in particular the city centre and also a benchmark in maintaining the competitiveness of Galway City in relation to other Irish cities. Galway, being a tourist destination, also requires the retailing offer to contribute to the visitor experience and consequently the local economy.

The Retail Planning Guidelines (RPG) (2012) issued by the DECLG take the approach that a strong and competitive retail sector demands a proactive approach in planning for retail space. This will it is considered, promote vitality and viability in the city centre and other retail areas. It will also support choice and competition to the consumer’s benefit and give appropriate direction for expansion in floor space for all types of retailing. In addition the Retail Planning Guidelines require the wider policy context to be taken into account in relation to the NSS, RPG’s, the settlement hierarchy, Smarter Travel, Climate Change Strategy, architecture and urban design quality.

The RPG also recommend that for certain authorities, a joint retail strategy can benefit the assessment of retail activity and demand where cognisance has been taken of catchment areas. Galway City and County Council are designated as authorities that would benefit from a joint approach.

The assessment in the current strategy of the city is not a full joint strategy as has been prepared in previous plans but has taken and updated historical conclusions regarding trans-boundary catchments. It also supports the sustainable policy approaches to the county settlements as included for in the County Retail Strategy. It also considers the core strategy and settlement strategies of both the City and the County Development Plans. It has assumed that the main settlements identified in the county retail hierarchy will have supporting scales and type of services for their size so that unnecessary leakage of spend into the city will be curtailed.

The retail strategy was prepared in the knowledge that significant levels of retail floorspace has been built in the main county towns in recent years, strengthening the function of the towns. The vitality of these towns is being assessed with ongoing ‘health checks’ which will inform future policy and development management decisions and feed into the future monitoring of retailing in the whole of County Galway.

In turn, the retailing role of the city, particularly with respect to provision of comparison and bulky goods to a catchment beyond the city boundary is considered to be an acceptable function of the city. This approach is supported in the regional planning guidelines (West Region) where the Galway Gateway is recognised as having the potential to provide a full range of regional level services including retail (Policy ref 3.7 ).

It is therefore considered that the current retail strategy will function as an interim retail strategy until further analysis is carried out in conjunction with Galway County Council in 2017. This accords with the policy objective in Galway County Council Development Plan 2015 – 2021 which includes:

Objective R3 – Retail Survey and Strategy (a) To Engage with Galway City Council to produce a Retail Strategy within 3 years of the adoption of the Development Plan; (b) To commence and complete retail surveys of all major towns listed in the Core Strategy Settlement.

Any requirement for change in policies and objectives consequent on the outcome of the retail study and strategy will have capacity to be incorporated at a later stage in the plan making process for this plan or by variation to both development plans. It is considered by both authorities that this approach will allow for other strategies, namely the Economic Strategy for Galway City and County, the LECP for both areas and the Galway Transport Strategy to be taken into consideration in any future proofing of the retail strategy allowing for an integrated and more comprehensive approach for both local authorities.

Retail Trends

The retail sector nationally has been impacted significantly from the recent economic recession. On review of the CSO retail sales index a record year on year low of -25% was recorded in January 2009. Trends in the last year show that with more confidence exhibited in consumer spending this trend is reversing, but at a slow rate with July 2015 showing a 6.6% increase year on year even when motor sales have been excluded. However according to IBEC -

“Growth has returned but in order to ensure that the recent uplift in fortunes is not a temporary respite from a prolonged period of falling sales, policy makers and industry alike must take the right decisions to secure
This sentiment accords generally with the national Retail Planning Guidelines. The guidelines, in addition require the policy direction to provide a plan led retail approach, that gives guidance on the location and scale of new developments in a way that is efficient, equitable and sustainable and in line with the settlement strategy in the development plan.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Protect and reinforce the strategic role of the city centre as the prime retail area in the City, County and the Western Region.
- Direct strategic investment in commercial, civic, cultural and retail sectors, particularly high order comparison goods and specialist retailing into the city centre where they can enhance vitality and viability, contribute to regeneration and the maintenance of a compact core area.
- Provide for an appropriate range and scale of retail services throughout the city at accessible locations in accordance with the settlement strategy for the city.
- Review the strategies and policies for retailing following the preparation of a joint retail study with Galway County Council in order to ensure an informed and consistent approach to policies relating to shared retailing activities in compliance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 and allow for ongoing monitoring during the currency of the plan period.
- Improve access and permeability in the city centre and other designated centres with particular emphasis on improving access by public transportation, cycling and walking as included for in the Galway Transport Strategy.
- Encourage a high quality of design in retail developments complemented by investment in the public realm that combined, contributes to creating places that are attractive, vibrant, sustainable and safe.
- Ensure that the architecture of city centre retail developments, including extensions and modifications, respond positively to the unique setting, distinctive character and quality of the built and natural environment of Galway.

### 6.2 Existing Retail Floorspace

The GeoDirectory when mapped shows the pattern of retail development in the city as shown in figure 6.1. The general pattern indicates that retailing is concentrated in the prime commercial areas. The figure illustrates that the city centre is the dominant concentration of activity followed by the Headford Road area.

**Fig. 6.1 Galway City Showing the Location of Concentrations of Retail Activity.**

*Source: Geo Directory NACE codes (2016).*
There are definite concentrations in the newer suburbs and in older areas such as Salthill, Westside and Renmore. The bulkier goods are located more peripheral to the city centre in locations such as, Moneenageisha, Liosban and Briarhill.

In the last few years there hasn’t been a significant expansion in retail floor space in the city. This reflects low spending patterns that have prevailed nationally since 2009. The potential for continued investment in high risk, large-scale schemes has reduced following lower consumer confidence in the retail market. The city has been consequently left with a number of schemes in the newer designated centres not completed out and some only partially constructed or vacant.

Growth in floorspace since the 2011 development plan has been mainly in the convenience sector, which can be substantially attributed to expansion in the discount food market. There has been some change from retail space to both education and community uses and an element of turnover in small scale units in the city centre changing to service retail mainly of the café and restaurant nature.

There is also a significant quantum of retail floorspace that has the benefit of planning permission having extended their consent period under the legislative process. These permissions reflect a desire to hold the value of consented retail floorspace presumably in anticipation of an upturn in the economy and an increase in consumer spending.

Vacancy rates in Galway City non-residential property addresses register a high 17% which appears to reflect all commercial properties. Retail vacancies as referenced previously are at a much lower rate. When vacancy rates for retail units on the ground floor of the main shopping streets were surveyed in 2014 these were only 2.7%, lower than that in other cities. However these reflect the three prime shopping streets and at ground floor only. For the purpose of the retail strategy a 7% vacancy rate has been adopted following interrogation of the Geodirectory details. Regardless, it is acknowledged that owing to the interdependence between commercial activities and the need to attract footfall a 17% vacancy rate in business premises has a bearing on retail viability.

It is not clear what impact other changes including e-commerce or internet sales are having, or will have in future, on the retail floorspace in the city. This form of shopping is particularly linked to the advancement of mobile phone technology and is a global phenomenon and an inevitable challenge to traditional forms of shopping.

All of these factors - the economy, the ongoing changes in formats and in the retail market, the extent of unimplemented permissions and the overall vacancy rates will be key considerations in both the retail strategy and consequently the development management process.

In August 2015 an estimate of the extent of the total net retail floorspace in the city was prepared based on an update and quality check of the 2011 floorspace details, see Table 6.1. This relates to net floor area and uses a very strict definition of retail that is in respect to retail involving sales of goods and not services. Therefore this excludes uses such as restaurants, hairdressers and other service retail. It also excludes motor sales floor area.

The table shows that there has been a marginal decrease in the overall retail floorspace. This mainly reflects changes in two large floor plate units in the city which were vacant for a long period but changed to vibrant city centre uses of a non-retail nature. As indicated previously, convenience retailing is the only area experiencing significant growth over the last four years.

Overall bulky goods constitutes 26% of the floorspace, convenience constitutes 20% and comparison 54% which reflects the regional function of the city, and the prime function in particular of the city centre where most of the comparison space is located.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2011 (M2)</th>
<th>2015 (M2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>30,602</td>
<td>33,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>89,831</td>
<td>86,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulky</td>
<td>44,374</td>
<td>43,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>164,807</strong></td>
<td><strong>162,259</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Geoview: Commercial Vacancy Rate Report DKM Q2. 2015
6.3 Retail Hierarchy

A key requirement of the RPG is the need to confirm the retail hierarchy, which in turn informs the retail policy. In particular the hierarchy will inform the basis for determining the appropriate scale and type of new development for specific locations. The classification on the retail hierarchy reflects the retail functions of each centre. The County town element is extracted from the Galway County Development Plan 2015-21.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Major Town Centre</th>
<th>Galway City Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>County Towns</td>
<td>Tuam, Loughrea, Ballinasloe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>District Centres</td>
<td>Doughiska, Knocknacarra, Westside, Ardaun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Sub County Towns</td>
<td>Key Towns in Galway County Settlement Hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Village /Neighbourhood Centre</td>
<td>Neighbourhood &amp; Local Centres in the City; Other lower tier settlements in the County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Corner/Local shops</td>
<td>Rural Villages; Residential Neighbourhoods in the City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level 1: Main Cities – Galway City Centre**

Galway City is at level 1 on the hierarchy. It is the principle retail area within all of County Galway. It has a substantial catchment area that extends out to the County and the wider regional area. The city supports a significant amount of high order retailing and specialist services that are not available elsewhere in the county. This attraction and dominance reflects the city’s role as a national Gateway. The function of the city as a popular tourist destination helps sustain the buoyancy of retailing in the city centre also. This is in evidence in the range of goods and services on offer in the city centre and the year round presence of tourists both overseas and domestic which adds greatly to the vitality of the city centre.

The area defined as the core city centre area for the purposes of the retail strategy is that defined by the city centre zoning in addition to the Headford Road (south of the Bodkin junction) lands which have been the subject of a development framework plan and are also to be the subject of an LAP.

The nature of retailing in the city is dominated by a wide range of comparison goods particularly of the high order variety. The retail importance is also reflected in the strong representation of both national and international multiples which further validate having it at level 1 on the retail hierarchy. Retail vacancy levels are low on the prime streets and the shopping centres but higher on the secondary, side streets and on available upper floors.
Within the area defined as the city centre in the Retail Strategy there are significant extant permissions. The major ones relate to the proposals for re-development and extension of Galway Shopping Centre, intensification of the Eyre Square Shopping Centre and for large sites on Shop Street and Lombard Street. There are also a number of sites that are available and suitable for new uses including retailing. These regeneration lands are located at Ceannt Station Quarter and the Inner Harbour areas. In addition there is potential for more retail floorspace on undeveloped and underutilised sites on the Headford Road LAP lands.

These areas are the priority areas for development in the city for retail, service retail and suitable types of commercial offices. This mix of development in conjunction with the development plan requirements to deliver residential floorspace concurrent with commercial floorspace will consolidate, affirm and protect the prime role of retailing in the city centre.

Level 2: Important Towns – County towns
Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 includes for a retail hierarchy for the county area. The importance of the three main towns in the county ensure that these are given highest level of importance which when expressed in terms of the joint assessment are at level 2. This accords with Objective R2 in the County Development Plan in relation to the Retail Hierarchy for which there is an objective to; “Retain and further develop the higher order shopping functions in Tuam, Ballinasloe and Loughrea as the main retailing centres in the County”.

Level 3: Districts Centres – Suburban Areas
This level includes the three existing and the one planned district centres. In general, district centres function to provide a range of services characterised by large multiple anchors with a mix of convenience and comparison goods. In addition there is generally a range of smaller local services including local offices, restaurants, recreational and community facilities. The district centre is generally of a scale and nature to serve the local catchment and ties in with settlement and other objectives in the core strategy.

Two of these centres, Doughiska on the east and Knocknacarra on the west are located in the new suburbs. Westside is located in the more established inner western suburbs. Doughiska and Knocknacarra have experienced major growth in population in recent years and have a clear need for the benefit of retail, service retail and community facilities.

The area known as Westside is more established than the other two existing district centres. It has a legacy of mainly convenience floorspace with a range of local services including post office, church, community facilities and local credit union office. It exhibits an area in transition from older more industrial nature uses to a gradual delivery of more diversified services and facilities which can serve the local areas including Shantalla, Newcastle and Taylors Hill. It is considered that any new developments in Westside should be so designed to contribute to improvements in the public realm. Investment in access upgrades including bus lanes and cycle lanes and the designation of the main access road as suitable for a rapid transit route reflect the benefit that designation as a district centre may have particularly from future investment in sustainable transport.

Knocknacarra has a population of approximately 12,000 with a zoned capacity to reach 18,000 persons. The settlement strategy for this area is to allow development to reach anticipated growing levels of population through consolidation of existing zoned lands. The aspiration for the Knocknacarra District Centre is to function more as an ‘urban village’ type centre than purely a shopping area to service this scale of population. This is encouraged through specific development objectives for the district centre lands which require a mix of uses including service retail, public health facilities, community, recreational and residential uses. At present only phase 1 of the overall development has been completed. This consists mainly of convenience, some comparison, commercial recreational and some local services. The balances of phases which include a mix of public health care facilities, smaller scaled units, restaurants, residential and a new primary school campus will introduce a welcome mix. The objectives in the development plan which support a wide range of uses including civic and residential are designed to achieve vibrancy, distinctiveness and local ownership.

Doughiska is the most recent suburban development in Galway and grew rapidly during a national period of unprecedented growth in the economy. The population is approximately 4,500 (2011 CSO census), with more potential for consolidation. The area has been fortunate to have services developed in parallel with this growth rather than experience the traditional time lag. The district centre at this location is in the form of a medium sized shopping centre with a national multiple as an anchor selling convenience mixed with comparison goods. The centre also includes a number of local service units and a chain restaurant. It has potential for expansion to service the local catchment including Roscam where there is an additional 2,200 population (2011, CSO Census).
Ardaun is included in the Core Strategy as a future settlement area that will cater for the main residential expansion. It is anticipated that the area can support a population of up to 7,000 and also function as a business district that will attract a broad worker catchment. The vision for this area is to have a distinctive urban village that will support a range of services including retail for the resident population and also to cater for some of the immediate needs generated by the significant commuting population working nearby and the anticipated workforce the area will attract itself. For these reasons it is designated as a location that can support a district centre in the future which will be required to be designed as an urban village centre co-ordinated in design with adjacent residential and business street layouts.

**Level 4: Small Towns – Small County Settlements**

This level accords with the policy in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 which indicates in objective R2 Retail Hierarchy that under the main county towns the objective for the next level in the hierarchy is; “To encourage appropriate retail provision in the other key towns of the County as per the settlement hierarchy in order for them to realise their potential.”

**Level 5: Neighbourhood Centre**

Typically the provision in neighbourhood centres is primarily convenience goods retailing and some local services – e.g. dry cleaners, hairdressers. Neighbourhood centres perform important functions in communities. Firstly they are very accessible and provide for ‘top up shopping’ for the immediate catchment. They are particularly important for those who don’t have a car and are in the main, capable of being reached on foot within 10 -15 minutes.

There are a number of existing developed pockets of commercial activities in the city that function as neighborhood centres e.g. Dublin Road Remore, Joyce’s Knocknacarra, Salthill, Doughiska Road, Castlegar commercial area, Ballinfoile (Tornóg) and emerging sites such as Joyce’s Road Mervue.

It is policy to facilitate the development of new neighbourhood centres and also to allow for expansion in existing neighbourhood centres where it can be demonstrated that there is a deficit of services or where significant population is planned for as indicated in the core strategy. It is important also that where these already exist and serve a local catchment that they are safeguarded for these purposes through the development management process.
Level 6: Local Shopping – Villages; Residential Neighbourhoods in the City

This level of provision is the most basic level and consists mainly of a mixture of corner and parade shopping in suburban areas and village stores and post offices in small rural settlements. They perform an important function at local level providing day-to-day food needs and services to local communities. It is important to encourage these types of developments and retain existing ones in view of their contribution to sustainable neighbourhood development and because they afford access by sustainable transportation options.

This level in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 is included for in objective R2 where it is intended to: “Retain and further develop local shopping facilities in other towns, villages and settlements in the County and encourage appropriate new retail development in centrally located sites.”

6.4 Need for Additional Retail Floorspace

Context of Projections

The RPG recommend that development plans should include, as part of their retail strategy, a broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace over the period of the strategy in this case up to 2023. The guidelines indicate that an assessment should take account of emerging trends in the retail market, and general estimates of future demand based on projected population, which in this case is the NSS targeted population and projected consumer spending. These are however to be treated as broad guidelines as to the additional quantum of retail floorspace needed. Table 6.3 highlights the estimated floorspace in Galway City in 2011 and in 2015 and floorspace with valid planning permissions but as of yet unbuilt. All floor spaces are expressed in net value.

Table 6.3 Retail Floor Space Details 2011-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>M2 in 2015 (net)</th>
<th>Change from 2011-15 m2</th>
<th>Unbuilt Permitted floorspace in 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>33,071</td>
<td>+2,469</td>
<td>6,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>86,065</td>
<td>-3,766</td>
<td>38,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulky</td>
<td>43,123</td>
<td>-1,250</td>
<td>12,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162,259</td>
<td>-2,547</td>
<td>57,790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is agreed that it would be inappropriate to use these estimates of projected floorspace requirements in a prescriptive manner. Trends in the economy, nuances in the property market, rent reviews, leases periods, emerging new formats, vacancy levels all influence the retail market. In addition there are also requirements to focus on the Gateway status of the city, sustainability requirements, and the need to encourage competition, achieve equitable distribution of retailing opportunities and achieve a good geographical spread sensitive to catchment profiles. It is important too, to exploit the best opportunities that arise for the city particularly the core city centre area as is provided for in the Core Strategy.

Notwithstanding this, the projections are being used as a general measure of likely demand and consequently the need for appropriate zoned lands. As recommended in the RPG these estimates will be required to be monitored and adjusted if necessary over the plan period up to 2023.

6.5 Additional Retail Floorspace

The requirement for additional retail floorspace within the city is estimated having regard to a number of parameters but most importantly the NSS population targets for the Galway Gateway. In calculating the estimates, cognisance has been taken of the existing retail floorspace and vacancy levels.

The methodology used to derive the estimate of the required projected retail provision for Galway City for 2017 to 2023 is based on that recommended in the RPG. The determination of both the convenience and comparison retail sales turnover and the associated per capita spend on retail goods for Galway City involves using the CSO Annual Service Inquiry (2012 data - published 2014). These turnover figures accounted for total turnover, including tourism spend and have been converted into forecasts for convenience and comparison on a per capita spend basis for Galway City up to 2023. The CSO Retail Sales Index (April 2015) is used to allow for the determination of the per capita spend for 2013 and 2014 for Galway City. In
subsequent years, the ESRI Medium-Term Review 2013-2020 (July 2013) is used to determine a per capita spend growth rate from 2015 to 2026 for the city. Existing estimated floorspace and distribution between types was also used to get an estimate of existing retail turnover per square metre. Consideration has also been taken of regional catchments and has attributed a proportion of this spend to the city, refined to types of retailing.

It is acknowledged that using the CSO Annual Service Inquiry (2012 data - published 2014), the analysis is using details distilled from the retail sector following a recession where sales fell by 24% from recent year’s peak rates. Recovery is gaining momentum. The recovery scenario in the ESRI Medium-Term Review 2013-2020 is the one used in the current retail floorspace projections. Should consumer spending radically diverge from these projections during the currency of the plan period the retail strategy projections may need to be re-visited.

Based on this approach Table 6.4 expresses the estimated requirements for net additional retail floorspace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Additional Requirement 2017-23</th>
<th>Existing 2015 plus estimated additional requirements 2015-23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>12,156</td>
<td>45,227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>31,634</td>
<td>117,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulky</td>
<td>15,850</td>
<td>58,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59,640</td>
<td>221,859</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adjusted for Vacancy

### 6.6 Distribution of Retail Floorspace

It would be inappropriate to use these estimates of additional floorspace requirement in a prescriptive manner. They will be used in the context of other criterion also which will give an element of flexibility to the decision – making process. In particular the designated Gateway status of Galway City will be an important influence and the regional retailing role of the city. Trends in the economy, nuances in the property market, the need to encourage retail competition and equitable access, emerging new formats, extant permissions, and vacancy levels will all influence the retail market. These will give context, in addition to using the estimated need for additional floorspace in the overall consideration of proposed retail developments.

Retailing will be considered also in the context of the sustainable objectives to regenerate certain city centre sites as is provided for in the Core Strategy. Retailing will not be the exclusive use on these sites but can be seen as an opportunistic driver for more comprehensive mixed use schemes that link in with sustainable use and the city’s transportation investment programme.

The preferred option for the distribution of the estimated additional convenience floorspace will be directed towards the city centre, district and neighbourhood centres. It is anticipated that most demand in the medium term will emanate from the newer suburban areas. Additional demand may increase in the city centre area in tandem with regeneration in the two adjacent sites in the longer term.

The preferred option for distribution of the comparison floorspace will be to allocate 75% of the additional comparison floorspace mainly to the area defined as the core shopping area. This is reflecting the prime function of, and retail market share in the city centre. It accords with the city centre classification on level 1 of the retail hierarchy. It considers the strong tourism attraction of the core area and the sustainable potential for expansion into brownfield sites linked with public transport provision. The balance is allocated to the district centres mainly and it is envisaged that most of the comparison floorspace at these locations would be of a lower order type than what will locate in the core shopping area.

There is scope for expansion in the floorspace of bulky goods in the district centres and on the retail parks previously mentioned. By virtue of their nature and floorspace demands it is not considered that these uses will be located in the core shopping area. They would generally rely on car usage and would most likely not be the most sustainable use of land or buildings with high valuation. More discussion on this type of retailing is included for in section 6.8.

In summary, the analyses carried out to determine additional retail floorspace up to 2023 indicates that there is no increased need for additional zoned or otherwise designated lands from that zoned in the 2011-2017
City Development Plan to meet future retailing needs. This has been arrived at using Regional Planning Guidelines population targets albeit to 2022 but acknowledging the high growth scenario they include for and the likely headroom they also afford.

There are a number of land uses zonings objectives in the city plan that can support retail development, mainly CC and CI. Within these land use zoning and in the context of the retail hierarchy there is a sufficient amount of land and opportunity to meet the requirements for future retailing demands. This is following on from a capacity study of the amount of undeveloped suitably zoned lands, the amount of suitably zoned lands that is currently underutilised and also lands suitable for regeneration. As most of these lands can support a mix of uses typical proportions were allocated to likely future retail capacities. This assessment included for many of the considerations on retailing that are referenced in the beginning of this section as being important in the assessment of need in addition to the estimated additional floorspace requirements.

### 6.7 Core Shopping Area

In addition to focusing on additional floorspace requirements there is a need to direct major expansion in retail development into the city centre with a lesser focus on the district centres. This approach supports retaining the city centre as the prime retail area, it acts to reinforce the function of the city centre as the hub of public life in Galway and it allows for consolidation of a compact core. It helps ensure a diverse and dynamic service provision which enhances the attractiveness of the core area for citizens and visitors alike.

This policy approach also supports the objectives for re-use of historic buildings and regeneration on key sites in the city centre in particular Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour area. This represents sustainable use of land. The extension of retailing to the regeneration areas would bring huge value and vitality through the additional footfall that the development of this area would attract and would also facilitate the co-location of retail, commercial enterprise and residential uses.

The city centre too is where the greatest investment in public transport exists; already having the benefit of extensive bus and rail services and being a focus of the GTS for sustainable modes in particular, therefore this approach would support the smarter travel agenda and help address climate change.

The existing area that currently functions as city centre is very constrained being located in the historic core. There would be difficulty accommodating some modern floor plate sizes. This, in addition to the need to generally accommodate expansion opportunities and to allow for upgrades and modernisation of current retailing facilities requires the definition of the core shopping area. This is a requirement of the RPG.

For the purposes of the retail strategy it is considered that the existing CC zoning objectives in the Plan in addition to the Headford Road lands (south of the Bodkin junction) are of sufficient definition of a core shopping area. These lands include the existing built up area of the city centre, the existing established shopping area at the Headford Road and the substantial brownfield sites at Ceannt Station, and Inner Harbour can accommodate the expansion of retail and other land use requirements of the city. (See figure 6.2)

The Headford Road site in particular will have capacity to cater for large floorplate comparison goods stores which would have difficulty fitting into the grain of the existing historic city centre. The amount, type and phasing of floorspace at this location will be determined at local area plan stage.

In addition to retailing there will be requirements to provide for a significant level of residential development, cultural/civic facilities on regeneration and consolidation lands in the core shopping area to secure diversity of use and vitality and vibrancy throughout the day and evening.
6.8 Retail Warehousing/Bulky Goods

Bulky goods by definition require access by car and when located in a grouped fashion with communal car parking are termed retail parks. In Galway City there are a number of areas where bulky goods retailing is accommodated such as Liosban, Briarhill, Headford Road, some areas on the Tuam Road, some areas on the Seamus Quirke Road and at Wellpark.

There has been some recent change in the provision of bulky goods through the delivery of floorspace. This is in particular at the Knocknacarra District Centre where there are also outstanding grants of permission for additional floorspace. It is not considered necessary to specifically designate any more lands for retail park type uses. This is in view of analyses of floorspace, the future additional retail floorspace demand, existing undeveloped zoned lands and the quantum of extant permissions and vacancy rates.

It is important too that the range of retail goods sold in retail parks is restricted to goods of a bulky nature. This is in order to protect the city centre as the prime location for comparison shopping and to a more limited extent the existing function of the district centres. The retail guidelines recognise that there are formats that include ancillary items associated with an otherwise bulky good but recommend that these are limited to sales space of not more than 20% of the total net retail floorspace of the relevant retail unit.

6.9 Sequential Development Approach

The overall preferred location for new retail development is in the city centre and the designated district centres. Development outside of these areas will only be considered where it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the City Council that there are no sites or potential sites or vacant sites within the city centre or designated district centres before an edge-of-centre or out of centre site will be considered. However these circumstances are not anticipated to arise in view of the opportunities that already exist in the city centre and district centres.

6.10 Retail Impact Assessments

Retail Impact Assessments (RIA) should be submitted to support major proposals in order to demonstrate compliance with the development plan and show that there will not be a material and unacceptable negative impact on the vitality and vibrancy of an existing retail centre in particular the city centre. In general the requirement to submit an RIA will be determined in the context of the development plan policies and objectives for retailing or may be indicated to be required by the City Council at pre-planning stage or in the course of assessing an application.

Retail Impact Assessments should be carried out in accordance with the requirements set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012).

6.11 Design Quality

A high level of design quality can make an important contribution to the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre and generally all retail centres. The Retail Design Manual (DAHG 2012) (a companion document to the Retail Planning Guidelines) highlights 10 key principles that should be applied when guiding retailing in order to deliver quality urban design outcomes. These provide a framework for development of the retail sector in a way which meets the needs of modern shopping formats while contributing to protecting, supporting and promoting the attractiveness and competitiveness of city and town centres as places to live, work, shop and visit. Using this approach is supported and corresponds with the urban design policies in the Plan as outlined in Chapter 7.

The quality of shop fronts too plays an important role in determining the character and the perception of the shopping street. The City Council specifically promotes an awareness of good shop front design in the Galway Shop Front & Signage Design Guidelines 2012.
Investment in the public realm of the city can bring real sustainable socio-economic and physical benefits and enhance the retail function of the city also. Previous investment such as the enhancement of Eyre Square, the introduction of pedestrian zones and the opening up of the riverside walk has shown how the city centre public areas and network of streets can be made more attractive, accessible and have consequent benefits for commercial life. There is potential to re-invigorate the public realm areas in the city particularly the core shopping areas. Chapter 7 includes an objective for this which will include for the preparation of a Public Realm Strategy that will establish a commitment to an overall vision and include for specific direction on a number of measures including guidance on appropriate hard and soft landscaping, street furniture, wayfinding, and the use of public art.

There are also other ongoing aspects such as the continued promotion of the reuse of historic buildings, policies for keeping the city core compact, measures to improve public transport plans, control of litter and policing – all of which impact on the image of the city and enhance the shopping experience.

**Policy 6.1 Retail Strategy**

Adopt the retail hierarchy for the city as identified in the strategy and restrict retail developments at each level on the hierarchy to a scale and nature commensurate with catchment demands.

Protect and enhance the city centre, designated as the most important shopping area in the city and county and facilitate a mixed expansion of services including high order comparison retailing in conjunction with service retailing, cultural and entertainment facilities through appropriate and sensitive re-development, infill and regeneration on key brownfield sites.

Promote the vitality and viability of the District Centres and encourage the provision of an appropriate range of retail, non-retail, community and leisure services, such retail services should be mainly of a convenience or lower order comparison type in order to protect the prime role of the city centre for shopping.

Promote and protect Neighbourhood Centres in their role as providers of a mix of local services including retailing of a basic, predominantly convenient nature that are so located to be easily accessible by the catchment they serve.

Promote and protect small scale local shops in residential areas, in accordance with the neighbourhood concept where they can fulfil a role in the provision of day to day convenience needs where they do not have a negative impact on existing amenities.

Require that major proposals for retail development be supported by a Retail Impact Assessment (RIA), prepared in line with the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2012) and demonstrate compliance with the strategies in the development plan in particular the objective to not negatively impact on the vitality and vibrancy of an existing retail centre in particular the city centre.

Restrict and direct bulky goods retailing to existing identified retail parks and to a more limited extent to District centres and restrict the sale of goods to bulky goods only allowing for ancillary items associated with an otherwise bulky good to sales space of not more than 20% of the total net retail floorspace of the relevant retail unit in accordance with the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2012).

Have regard in general to the assessment guidelines for specific retail formats as provided for in Section 4.11 of the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2012).

Have regard to *The Retail Design Manual* (2012), a companion document to the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2012) to ensure that retail developments provide a high quality of architecture and urban design.
7 Community and Culture

7.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
7.2 Creative City
7.3 Bilingual City
7.4 Inclusive City
7.5 Specific Objectives
7.1 **Aim, Context & Strategy**

**Aim**
To promote an inclusive, creative and bilingual city which is accessible to all members of the community and facilitate the sustainable development of community and cultural infrastructure.

**Context**
The people and culture of Galway are its greatest strengths and are central to the identity of the city. The City Council’s engagement through the *Street Conversations 2013* confirmed that Galway is perceived as having “...a human scale, friendly and culturally vibrant”\(^\text{13}\). Culture and community facilities are vital to the city’s standing and prosperity, for attracting visitors and inward investment and for playing a vital role in the economy. It is recognised that culture, an inclusive community, good lifestyles, and local distinctiveness are critical assets in promoting the city to businesses and tourists. Culture including the Irish language, are key features in the perception of Galway as a vibrant city. Arts and culture provide a platform for community engagement and are central to social cohesion. In recognition of the value of culture, the Council has prepared a cultural sustainability strategy for the city to strengthen the cultural life of its citizens for the period 2016-2025.

The city supports a diverse range of community and cultural facilities, many of which serve the wider region. It is anticipated in the future that there will be increased demand for facilities. These facilities provide a focal point in the community and enable social inclusion enhancing community resilience and cohesion. The provision and enhancement of community, arts and cultural infrastructure is crucial for the continued socio-economic development of the city and is fundamental to the health, well-being and prosperity of the community. Galway City Council plays a role in promoting and facilitating socio-economic, cultural and community development of the city.

The LECP builds on the link between the land use policies of the Development Plan and economic and local community development. The Council’s involvement in the Barcelona Declaration, WHO Healthy City Network and Child Friendly City all contribute to a socially inclusive city.

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13. *Galway City Council, Street Conversations, for proposed Ardaun Local Area Plan, 2013.*
7.2 Creative City

*Culture 2025*, the draft national policy on culture, recognises that culture creates tangible societal value, promotes wellbeing, and provides a positive direct and indirect economic impact. This is apparent in Galway City where culture defines the image of the city, builds quality of place, integrates communities, attributes to the attractiveness, economy and vibrancy of the city. Galway has a vibrant arts scene, strong cultural tradition and well-established local arts community, all of which contribute to the positive image and experience of the city. Arts and cultural heritage is pivotal to the city’s status as an important regional tourist destination as highlighted by the several events, street theatre and festivals of national and international distinction. Galway is unique in being the only city located in a Gaeltacht area. The Irish language forms an integral part of the cultural identity and social experience of the city. There is a strong and well-established local arts community and cultural tradition. It is the ambition of the Council to build upon these cultural assets and as part of this approach, the Council has prepared a cultural strategy to give a framework for the protection and promotion of the city’s unique and varied culture.
The city’s Cultural Sustainability Strategy prioritises actions regarding all facets of culture in the city including language, heritage, sport and recreation, food, festivals, traditions and beliefs, public realm, innovation and creativity. The Strategy supports the City’s Arts Plan, Tourism Strategy, City Museum Strategic Plan and Heritage Plan. The strategic aims of the Strategy are as follows:

1. **Access & Cultural Rights**  
   Develop a framework for cultural citizenship.

2. **Cultural Heritage**  
   Work in partnership with communities, organisations, agencies and individuals to safeguard and enhance our cultural heritage.

3. **Education & Excellence**  
   Encourage and support training initiatives, access to models of best practice and European learning partnerships for creative communities.

4. **Environment & Place**  
   Ensure an integrated approach to cultural development, including environmental, social and economic factors, with sustainability at its core.

5. **Economy**  
   Support measures for artists, creative economy sector incubation, knowledge transfer, design and production.

6. **Health & Wellbeing**  
   Ensure that more of the local population, both visiting and resident, are offered opportunities to engage in health improving arts and cultural activity.

7. **Information & Knowledge**  
   Improve ways to access and use ICT for cultural communication, presentation and production.

The Cultural Strategy sets the context for Galway as a European Capital of Culture for 2020. Through culture and art, European Capitals of Culture can improve the quality of life in cities and strengthen their sense of community. Achieving the European Capital of Culture 2020 will expand the cultural experience of the city, boost socio-economic development, raise the profile of the city, develop new forms of tourism and foster social inclusion by strengthening the role of citizens in cultural expression. It also complements the recent designation of the City as the first Irish UNESCO City of Film in 2014, under the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

Notwithstanding these strategies the cultural life of the city depends on the quality of its environment and physical infrastructure. The Development Plan is a key mechanism for making sure that planning and development in the city encourages culture to flourish. The promotion of high quality urban design and improvement to the public realm can increase opportunities for cultural events and destinations. The Council can facilitate and co-ordinate the development of cultural and arts facilities within appropriate locations to improve the level of service and quality of life for the community. The built environment, parks and public realm of the city lend themselves to outdoor events, festivals and public engagement. In order, to expand arts and culture experience of the city, arts and cultural infrastructure is required to be integrated into regeneration sites within the city; Headford Road, Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour area.
## Policy 7.2 Creative City


Support and facilitate the development of culture, arts and the creative industry in the City.

Facilitate and encourage the provision of new and improved arts and culture facilities in the city and in district and neighbourhood centres where appropriate.

Support and facilitate the aims of the *Galway City Council Arts Plan 2015-2018* and the actions of the annual *City Council Arts Programme*.

Support and facilitate the aims of the *Galway City Museum Strategic Plan 2013*.

Deliver the actions of the *Galway City Council Heritage Plan 2016-2021*.

Ensure that all construction projects undertaken by the Council which are supported by government funding be considered for the ‘Per cent for Art’ Scheme.

Require large-scale developments throughout the city to incorporate works of public art.

Require arts and culture infrastructure to be integrated into regeneration sites within the city; Headford Road, Ceannt Station, and the Inner Harbour area.

Ensure that proposed cultural and arts developments are located, designed and laid out to accommodate maximum opportunities for different transport modes, in particular the sustainable networks and associated proposals included for in the Galway Transport Strategy.

Encourage design flexibility in buildings of culture, arts and community use, so that the buildings can be adapted in ways, which allow for a diversity of different uses and accessibility for all, including people with disabilities.

Co-ordinate with other service providers in the provision of culture, arts and community facilities.

Explore innovative ways to deliver culture and arts facilities and examine best practice models of subsequent management.

Progress the development of a new public library in conjunction with Galway County Council.

Support the development of a conference/concert hall, municipal arts gallery, science gallery and school of performing arts in the city.

Support the establishment of a school of music within the city, in conjunction with all interested bodies.

Develop and facilitate the development of additional cultural facilities at Lower Merchants Road.

Facilitate the refurbishment and reuse of Comerford House, in accordance with the *Galway City Museum Strategic Plan 2013*.

Support the provision of a site/building for a Western Writers’ centre.

Support the provision of a dedicated dance space within the city.

Support the completion of the Picture Palace Art House Cinema.

## 7.3 Bilingual City

The use of the Irish language is part of everyday life in the city. A significant area of the city has Gaeltacht status and the city is a service centre for the Connemara Gaeltacht. The Connemara Gaeltacht has a population of 48,907 and represents 48.5% of the total Gaeltacht population in the state. Approximately 15,300 of this population resides within the suburbs of the city. In the 2011 Census, amongst the cities in the state, Galway City and its suburbs had the highest rate of Irish speakers (44.2%) and had the highest proportion of population who spoke Irish on a daily basis (3.3%).
In this regard organisations such as Gaillimh le Gaeilge, Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe, NUIG, Aras na Gaeilge, TG4 and Arus na nGb€al play a lead role in the promotion of the language in the city. The Development Plan can support and provide the land-use and spatial dimension to promote and protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht. The Council will continue to support initiatives at national and local level to strengthen the bilingualism status of the city including the aims of Gaillimh le Gaeilge to achieve official status for the city as ‘Bilingual Capital of Ireland’. The Council’s initiatives of the naming of new roads, residential place names and signage on shop fronts and commercial development in Irish will contribute to this aim.

### Policy 7.3 Bilingual City

- Protect and promote the distinctive Gaeltacht cultural and linguistic heritage of the city.
- Encourage the use of Irish/bilingual signage in the commercial and public realm.
- Promote the use of the Irish language in the naming of new residential developments, public roads and parks.
- Facilitate the development of infrastructure, which supports the promotion of the cultural and linguistic heritage of the city, where appropriate.

The Council will seek to designate a Gaeltacht Language Planning Area in the city.

### 7.4 Inclusive City

The Development Plan can play an important role in creating a socially inclusive and healthy community. A strategic goal of the Development Plan is to promote social inclusion and achieve the local community goals of the LEP to reduce poverty and alleviate disadvantage in the future development of the city. The Council through the LEP and other initiatives will take a positive and collaborative role in working with communities to improve social inclusion and the health and well being in the city. One of the high level goals for the LEP is to *ensure Galway City is an equal and inclusive city region*. This includes promoting social inclusion by reducing poverty and alleviating disadvantage, supporting the full integration and equality of all and recognising and supporting the value that diversity brings to the city. Galway City Council will continue to support and facilitate social inclusion policies and activities through the works of the Social Inclusion Office.

The social needs of the community are required to be addressed in the development of the built environment and public realm, in order to create sustainable and integrated communities. The policies of the Development Plan on housing, community and cultural facilities, employment, public realm and accessibility seek to encourage social inclusion. It is a requirement of the Housing Strategy to encourage a variety of house types and sizes throughout the city to cater for all including those with special needs, Travellers, older people and homeless. The delivery of community, cultural and recreational facilities and services can precipitate social interaction and engagement improving quality of life and community cohesion.

The Council also supports the provision of specific community and cultural facilities, including resource centres, places of worship, library services, childcare and educational facilities. The Council enables participation in the workforce and increases in household income by designating lands for employment and supporting services that will attract economic activity and investment. The policies of the Development Plan seek to improve accessibility for all in the built environment and encourage the greater use of sustainable and low cost transport modes. Initiatives and partnerships undertaken by the Council such as; Child Friendly City, Age Friendly Ireland, Healthy Cities Project, the Barcelona Declaration, Access for All and Sports Partnership, support the empowerment of different groups, ethnic minorities and culturally diverse people in the City.

The Council as a signatory to the Barcelona Declaration promotes universal access in the public realm, public buildings and services and encourages the participation of people with disabilities in the socio-economic and cultural life of the city. The Barcelona Declaration aims to promote, along with other actions, accessibility and inclusion within the built environment and includes an annual programme of specific measures and actions.

The health and well being of the population is fundamental to an inclusive society and is inextricably linked to a healthy environment. Planning has a key role in facilitating healthy lifestyles by creating activity friendly environments for recreation and amenity, enabling the development of community facilities and services, housing, infrastructure and encouraging sustainable urban design and transportation. The Council will continue to support the Galway Healthy Cities Project and be part of the Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland Network, to improve health and well being in the city.
Policy 7.4 Inclusive City

Work in partnership with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) to achieve the aims of Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) to ensure that Galway City is an equal and inclusive city.

Proactively promote all forms of social inclusion, where feasible in land use planning particularly in the built environment and public realm, housing, community facilities, employment opportunities, transport and accessibility.

Support and promote the various aims of the Council to give effect to the Barcelona Declaration.

Support the development, provision and improvement of essential facilities and amenities within communities in the city.

Support the objectives of the Social Inclusion Office in promoting a socially inclusive society in the city.

Continue to encourage active public participation in the planning process.

Promote the concept of ‘life-time adaptability’ and access for all in housing design.

Facilitate the implementation of the Housing Strategy in particular with regard to reducing undue segregation and the provision of special needs accommodation.

Co-operate with the Access for All Committee and other organisations representing people with disabilities to provide equal access for all citizens particularly in the area of housing, transport, built environment and the public realm within the city.

Support the participation of the city in the WHO Healthy Cities Project and the Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland Network and its aim to enhance the health of the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.4.1 Community Facilities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community facilities and services meet the social needs of communities and enhance well-being and participation in society. Such facilities can include facilities for education, health, religion, meeting places and cultural facilities. Facilities can also be linked to life-cycles, such as those for children, older people and people with special needs. Since the adoption of the 2011-2017 City Development Plan, the Council has developed and facilitated a number of community, educational and cultural projects, including the community centres for Knocknacarra and Ballinfoile. There is a need to continue to provide additional and improved community and social facilities to serve the city. The presence of some community services such as healthcare and third level education can attract investment and enterprise while good access to community and cultural facilities can be part of the attraction for people to live, work and visit the city.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is considered that community and cultural services, which have a wide catchment and patronage, should be at accessible locations in terms of all modes of transport in particular public transport. Small-scale facilities serving local need should be located in residential areas and commercial district/neighbourhood and local centres. The provision of community, social and cultural facilities and services at a local level builds sustainable residential neighbourhoods and accords with national guidelines including the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG 2009).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Policy 7.4.1 Community Facilities

Facilitate balanced and equitable provision of community services and facilities throughout the city, through policies, zoning objectives and specific designations.

Encourage and facilitate the provision of a range of community services, including local health services, services for the elderly, and places of worship.

Promote the development of health care facilities in the city having regard to the regional role of Galway City.

Ensure that proposed community developments are located, designed and laid out to accommodate maximum opportunities for different transport modes.

Encourage design flexibility in buildings of community use to allow adaptation for a diversity of different uses and accessibility for all, including people with disabilities.

Co-ordinate with other service providers in the provision of community facilities.

Encourage and facilitate the provision of community facilities and local services of a nature and scale appropriate to serve the needs of the local community in tandem with the development of residential areas.

Explore innovative ways to deliver community facilities and examine best practice models of subsequent management.

Support the development of primary health care facilities within appropriate locations in residential areas.

Maintain existing burial grounds and provide for new cemeteries and associated services such as a crematorium to serve the city.
7.4.2 Education

The development of education and human capital produces tangible benefits for society and the economy. Education is widely recognised as a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge based economy. The city is a major centre for education from primary to tertiary level with 31 primary schools, 12 second level schools and a number of colleges located within the city. The city has three third level institutions, the National University of Galway (NUIG), Galway and Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and Galway Technology Institute (GTI) with a full time student population of over 24,000 attending these institutions. In recent years, third level and higher educational level institutions in the city have increased R&D programmes and collaboration with industry, increasing the capacity for innovation and the creation of new ideas, products and technologies.

With regard to future school provision, the Council will adhere to the recommendations outlined in The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, DECLG (2008) and Local Area Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DECLG (2013) and will support and assist the Department of Education and Skills, in ensuring the timely provision of school sites. In order to encourage sustainable travel, maximise the sharing of facilities and ensure the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods, the Council will encourage the location of schools adjacent to residential areas, public transport routes and community, cultural and recreation facilities. The provision of education, childcare and other community services and facilities shall be an integral part of Local Area Plans for new settlement areas within the city, Ardaun and Murrough.

Policy 7.4.2 Education

Ensure that sufficient lands are designated and reserved for the establishment, improvement or expansion of education facilities within the city adhering to the recommendations outlined in “The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities” (2008) and Local Area Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2013).

Support the future improvement and sustainable expansion of NUIG and GMIT, recognising their contribution to the continued development of Galway as a Gateway.

Safeguard lands within residential areas for educational purposes in order to serve existing and future need.

Ensure that the design of all educational establishments incorporate facilities for sustainable transport measures and public transport.

Ensure that safe and easy access for people with disabilities is incorporated in the design of all education developments.

Support the further development and diversification of third level education institutions in the city, including the promotion of knowledge based industry linked research and development facilities.
7.4.3 Childcare

Childcare provision provides numerous socio-economic benefits; it strengthens social cohesion, broadens opportunities for work force participation and supports children’s educational and social development. In all new housing areas over 75 units, the provision of one childcare facility with a minimum of 20 childcare spaces is required, in line with the Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (DECLG 2001) and to create sustainable residential neighbourhoods. Exceptions to this will only be allowed, where there are substantiated reasons not to provide such a facility, for example if there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments or the immediate area. The onus is on the developer to substantiate such exceptional cases. The Council will be open to consider alternative arrangements where the overall objectives of providing childcare facilities within new housing areas can be otherwise achieved, e.g. provision of one purpose-built facility with more than minimum capacity shared between housing developments. In addition to the above, childcare facilities will be considered in residential areas through conversion of existing dwellings, where they do not have an undue negative effect on the residential environment. However, a residential accommodation content may be required to be retained in accordance with the provisions outlined under Chapter 11. In order to safeguard residential amenities, the Council may limit the scale of development. In major industrial estates, business and technology parks and any other developments that generate major employment opportunities, the Council will encourage the provision of on-site childcare facilities as part of these developments. In large-scale retail, leisure or tourism developments, in particular, shopping centres, the provision of a drop-in childcare facility for shoppers will be encouraged.

Policy 7.4.3 Childcare

Facilitate the development of childcare facilities, including after school services, at a number of suitable locations, such as, within residential areas, places of employment, city centre, neighbourhood and district centres, schools, in the vicinity of educational and community establishments and adjacent to public transport nodes.

Contribute to the provision of childcare facilities by requiring that such facilities be provided in conjunction with residential developments over 75 dwelling units.

Consider alternative arrangements where it can be clearly established that adequate childcare facilities exist.
### 7.4.4 Institutional Lands

Institutional lands in the city are characterised as generally large tracts of land and associated buildings accommodating uses such as schools, colleges, residential, religious and healthcare institutions. These lands vary in size, layout and function and add to the vibrancy of the city. Many institutional lands display extensive open grounds and mature landscaped areas, which are important components of the strategic green network in the city and are accessible to the public. Some institutional lands have buildings and features of architectural, cultural and historical importance which form part of the city’s cultural heritage and identity.

Previous City Development Plans recognised that some of these lands would become surplus to institutional requirements and in such cases residential use or uses compatible with that of adjoining zones if considered more appropriate, were permissible. While some institutional lands, which become surplus to requirements will in the future be appropriate locations for residential and other development, there are institutional lands, which due to location and/or character should be retained for institutional or community uses for the long term benefit of the city. In these cases specific development objectives have been included in Chapter 11. In situations where remaining institutional lands, become surplus to institutional requirements the Council may permit an alternative use for all or part of the land. However this case must be defined and substantiated in the context of the institutional function. It will not be considered that lands are surplus if the institution has a sustaining and secure future. Where exceptions are permitted, the proposed use will be compatible with residential zoning (or that of adjoining zones if considered more appropriate) and the policies and objectives of the plan. Development of these lands will normally be required to retain buildings of character and some of the original open character. Public access should be promoted where traditionally enjoyed or where there is a significant amenity associated with lands.

Some institutional buildings of merit are included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), which are of major significance to the character of an area and may by virtue of scale or layout prove difficult to convert to residential use. In these cases consideration may be given to conversion to cultural, community or office uses where this would not involve significant changes to the character of such structures and would not be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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**Policy 7.4.4 Institutional Lands**

Facilitate and promote the development of institutional land within the city.

Where it is demonstrated that certain institutional lands are surplus to requirements, the Council will consider residential use or uses compatible with that of adjoining zones or specifically require that the lands be retained for alternative institutional uses.

Retain the existing open character of institutional lands where residential development is permitted and reserve a minimum 20% of the total site area for communal open space.

Promote the retention of public access to these lands where this has been traditionally enjoyed or where there is a significant amenity associated with the lands.
7.5 Specific Objectives

- Facilitate the on-going development of community facilities in neighbourhood areas and emerging new communities in particular at Ardaun.

- Establish and develop new cemetery sites to serve the city, which will accommodate associated services such as a crematorium and approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities.

- Identify and provide a site/building for the establishment of a school of music within the city, in conjunction with the GRETB and all interested bodies.

- Progress the development of a new public library in conjunction with Galway County Council.

- Implement strategies that support the development of culture and heritage in the city including; Cultural Strategy, Arts Plan, Heritage Plan, Tourism Strategy and City Museum Strategic Plan.

- Implement the Local Economic and Community Plan in partnership with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).
8.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

**Aim**
To create a high quality, sustainable built environment and to enhance the distinctive character of the city, through the protection of the built and archaeological heritage and through high quality architecture and urban design.

**Context**
Galway has exceptionally strong links with its past. This is evident in the built form, architecture and archaeology of the city. The city centre has a distinct physical character, with narrow streets, contrasting buildings, canals, millraces and a relationship with the river and sea creating a unique urban setting.

Most of the significant built heritage and archaeology is located in the city centre which largely follows a medieval pattern of irregular streets, varying building heights and plot widths. These characteristics, which include the remnants of the city walls, have endured notwithstanding changes over the centuries. The built heritage of the city is also enhanced by a number of village settlements, such as Menlough and Coolagh.

This heritage is a significant element in the definition and experience of the urban environment. It is a valuable cultural and tourism asset and contributes to the economic vitality of the city.

Growth and redevelopment can impact on the protection of the historic core. Good urban design and architecture can meet the challenge of a historical context and can, with sensitive design, complement the historic core. Where opportunities exist in the city for regeneration, high quality urban design and architecture creates new vibrant areas which will attract investment and new uses. A quality urban design approach is also appropriate for new expanding areas and can create sustainable neighbourhoods with good legibility and a strong sense of place.

**Strategy**
- Enhance the existing character and distinctiveness of the city and maintain its strong sense of place.
- Protect and enhance the built and archaeological heritage of the city.
- Promote the use of urban design principles and high standards of architectural design in the redevelopment of regeneration areas.
- Promote the use of urban design principles and high standards of architectural design in all new developments.
- Encourage the development of sustainable neighbourhoods with a distinctive urban character and identity.

8.2 Built Heritage

The city has a strong legacy of medieval streets and industrial archaeology contrasting with the more planned form of Eyre Square. The city centre derives its character from the combination of buildings of significant architectural and historical value and simple vernacular architecture. The wider city also supports a range of building types which are a valuable part of the built heritage of the city. This built heritage is enriched by a number of modern civic buildings which reflect contemporary architecture such as the Galway City Museum, GMIT Library, Picture Palace and NUIG Engineering Building.

The Council recognises the value of the built heritage to the vitality of the city, its contribution to Galway’s identity and image and is committed to the protection and enhancement of this heritage.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, provides measures for the protection of architectural heritage. These include the establishment of a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs).

**Record of Protected Structures (RPS)**
A protected structure is defined in planning legislation. A significant number of buildings and structures within the city are deemed worthy of protection and 619 are currently on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The RPS list is set out in Schedule 3.
The RPS is not a static document and additions or deletions, where appropriate, can be made to this record, by invoking the statutory process. It is policy to encourage the protection, enhancement and active use of protected structures. Any alteration to protected structures is required to enhance the character or setting of the structure and be carried out to best conservation practice. The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2011) provides detailed guidance in this regard.

A number of measures exist to promote the appropriate restoration of protected structures. In particular, a reduced development contribution can apply when changes to a protected structure includes for a high standard of conservation works. In addition, a change of use of a protected structure to a use compatible with the conservation of the structure, notwithstanding the zoning of the area, can also be considered.

Public funding to subsidise conservation works has diminished in recent years. The main funding stream available for private conservation works is the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs *Structures at Risk Fund*. The Heritage Council provide funding for Local Authority projects under the Heritage Plan Programme.

Normal planning exemptions do not apply to protected structures. Under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act as amended, the Planning Authority can issue a Declaration which sets out the extent of works that can be exempt.

### Policy 8.2 Built Heritage - Record of Protected Structures

| Encourage the protection and enhancement of structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures. |
| Ensure new development enhances the character or setting of a protected structure. |
| Avoid protected structures becoming endangered by neglect or otherwise by taking appropriate action in good time. |
| Consider the inclusion in the Record of Protected Structure of buildings and structures of special interest. |
| Consult with the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs regarding any planning applications relating to protected structures and national monuments. |
| Implement proactive measures to encourage the conservation of protected structures. |

### 8.3 Architectural Conservation Areas

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscapes which is either of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in its own right or which contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. The designation of an ACA ensures that the special character of an area is protected and can be enhanced through sympathetic redevelopment. As part of the measures to protect and enhance the built heritage, ACAs can revitalise areas and be a catalyst for economic investment. The protection afforded by an ACA applies to the exterior of structures and generally does not apply to works to the interior, unless they impact on the external appearance of the structure.

Galway has a number of distinctive areas of special interest, which in terms of streetscape, arrangement of streets and spaces, composition of buildings and structures and architectural styles creates a character worthy of protection. These areas of special character require management, protection and enhancement. Eleven areas are designated as ACAs. They represent different periods in, and functions of, the development of the city. The next stage after designation is the preparation of management plans for the streetscapes which will involve extensive public consultation and will include a strategy for Local Authority works and improvements to the public realm.
The eleven areas designated as ACAs are as follows:

**Fig 8.1 The City Core**

The medieval core of Galway is a mix of streetscape and buildings of many periods. The layout and the scale of some of the streets reflect the medieval street pattern. The City Core is the most important area of built heritage in Galway. Its designation is beneficial in ensuring the area's character is enhanced and protected.

**Fig 8.2 Lower Dominick Street**

Lower Dominick Street contains some of the best 18th and 19th century buildings, facades, shop fronts and original features to survive in long uninterrupted stretches in the city. It is an area of distinct urban form and streetscape. It has a unique setting bounded by the River Corrib and the Eglinton Canal.

**Fig 8.3 The Crescent/Sea Road**

The Crescent is a very pleasant sweep of late Georgian style houses with gardens to the front and with further gardens and ancillary buildings and mews buildings to the rear. Most of the houses on Sea Road date from the mid and late 19th century. This is an area of distinctive urban form and visual richness.

**Fig 8.4 The Long Walk**

The Long Walk has a particularly attractive setting, with views towards the sea and the Claddagh. The area characterises a distinct urban form, which reflects Galway’s historic relationship with the sea and is a landmark area for the city.

**Fig 8.5 St. Nicholas Street**

St. Nicholas Street is a terrace of 19th century artisan’s dwellings and is one of the few such groups of this extent and completeness, which survive in the city, and therefore merits preservation from a social and architectural interest.
Fig 8.6 St. Mary’s Terrace

St. Mary’s Terrace consists of two 19th century uniform terraces of attractive, well maintained, rendered, tudor style houses flanking St. Mary’s Avenue. This group of buildings is of architectural interest retaining many original decorative features including red brick detailing and bay windows at ground floor level and front gardens.

Fig 8.7 Number 1-6 Dock Road

Number 1-6 Dock Road consists of a terrace of Victorian buildings on a prominent position overlooking the commercial dock and forms part of a terrace of the few remaining 19th century buildings on the street. Number 1 Dock Road has historical significance as it was the birth place of Pádraic Ó Conaire.

Fig 8.8 Eyre Square

Eyre Square is a significant historical civic space within the city, the green area (Kennedy Park) itself dates back to the mid 17th Century. The square comprises both historic and modern buildings with varying styles ranging from late Georgian to Victorian and modern. While significant intervention has taken place, it still retains the original form with a unified streetscape.

Fig. 8.9 Number 11-18 University Road

Number 11 – 18 University Road comprises a mid to late 19th century terrace of attractive rendered facades with front gardens, boundary walls and railings. This distinctive terrace was built by the Catholic Church, primarily to house academic staff of NUI Galway. This ACA is of social and architectural interest and is a strong and defining element of the streetscape.
Number 7 – 14 Presentation Road are a group of eight semi-detached dwellings. They date to the early 20th century and were constructed by local builders (McDonaghs) to house staff of the company. The dwellings are attractive, modestly scaled houses which provide a pleasant setting opposite St. Josephs Church which dates from 1886. The intact, unified character of these buildings gives distinction to the streetscape.

Number 34-38 St. Mary's Road comprises a terrace of three dwellings and two detached dwellings dating to the early 20th century. This group of houses retain their historic fabric, with rendered facades, decorative quoins and panelled front boundary walls. They have a set back address and are elevated above St. Mary’s Road giving an intact, unified character to the streetscape.

The first ACA management plan to commence is for the Eyre Square ACA. Phase 1 includes a comprehensive ACA appraisal which considers the public space, streetscape, architectural form and uses in the ACA. Phase 2 will include for preparation of the management plan which will set out a co-ordinated approach to works and operations in the ACA and give guidance on good conservation practice. The management plan will be completed in consultation with the property owners and relevant stakeholders.

### Policy 8.3 Built Heritage – Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

- Encourage the protection and enhancement of the character and special interest of designated Architectural Conservation Areas.
- Prepare and implement management plans for the conservation and enhancement of designated Architectural Conservation Areas.
- Complete the Eyre Square Architectural Conservation Area Management Plan.
- Ensure that developments within Architectural Conservation Areas enhance the character and special interest of the Architectural Conservation Areas.

### 8.4 Vernacular Heritage

Twenty three thatched buildings survive in the city and are excellent examples of vernacular architecture using traditional building forms, local materials and local building techniques. A *Survey and Inventory of Galway City’s Thatched Buildings* was carried out in 2013. It is a valuable detailed record of the remaining thatched structures in the city and will be published in 2017 to raise awareness of this valuable heritage. Their importance is reflected in their designation as protected structures. The active use and maintenance of these thatched structures by their owners, have contributed to their survival and some have been supported over the years by heritage grants.

In addition to structures of special interest included in the RPS and designated ACAs, the city contains a wide variety of structures and features, that contribute to local heritage and the distinctive character of the city. That character can be extensively diminished by their loss through demolition and replacement. The Council will encourage the retention and continued use of such structures recognising their contribution to local identity and continuing a sense of the familiar. The conservation of original windows, doors, roof
8.5 Archaeological Heritage

Galway has a rich archaeological heritage, which extends from the mesolithic, medieval and post-medieval periods and includes considerable industrial archaeology. The archaeological heritage includes a legacy of deposits, features, structures, samples, artefacts and their context. Through archaeology, current and future generations can achieve an understanding of the processes which shaped the city. The medieval legacy of the city is apparent from the form and character of the city centre which has a large group of multi-period buildings containing medieval and late medieval fabric. Outside of the city centre, there is also a range of important sites such as Ballybaan ringfort and Roscam standing stone and monastic site. This archaeology creates an important historical resource, unique to Galway City. The historic relationship between the city and waterways is evident in the industrial archaeology of the city, such as the canals, millraces and mill wheels, all of which are included in the Industrial Heritage Audit of Galway City (2013). Many of these features are also listed on the RPS.

The archaeological heritage of the City is protected by the National Monuments Act, 1930-2004. A list of sites, structures, features or objects of archaeological significance known as the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is compiled nationally by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA). The RMP is mapped and includes an archaeological exclusion zone around each monument where there is the possibility of further archaeological remains.

Given the medieval legacy of Galway, most of the city centre is designated a Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP) - see Fig 8.12. In advance of any new development on a site of archaeological significance or within the ZAP there is a requirement for consultation with the DAHRRGA. It is the policy of the Council to ensure that development within an area of archaeological significance/potential does not adversely impact on the archaeological heritage. The Council will have regard to any archaeological advice received from the DAHRRGA when considering proposed development.

Galway has many multi-period buildings containing medieval and late medieval fabric. Many of these buildings are both recorded monuments and protected structures. Through the planning process the Council will encourage the protection of the archaeological heritage of these buildings. Under National Monuments legislation all underwater archaeological structures, features and objects are protected. Given the location of Galway at the mouth of the River Corrib with an extensive coastline, there is potential for underwater archaeological remains. Where development is taking place it is important that archaeological site reports for sites are compiled. Where appropriate, the Council will require impact assessment, monitoring, surveying or excavation of the archaeological heritage of a site during the development process.

Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023
8.6 Galway City Walls

Galway, having medieval city walls, qualifies to be a member of the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN). This network was established by the Heritage Council to ensure that Ireland's unique cultural and archaeological heritage in relation to the legacy of medieval fortifications is protected and managed in a sustainable and appropriate manner in the long-term.

National monuments legislation gives statutory protection to the city walls. It requires that all works which impact on the fabric of the city defences, or any ground disturbance in proximity to the defences in Local Authority or the Minister's ownership or guardianship, or that have been the subject of a preservation order, are subject to a requirement for Ministerial Consent.

The National Policy on Town Defences (2008) requires that medieval walling and associated features be considered as a single national monument and be treated as a unit for policy and management purposes. This policy requires a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of archaeological remains both upstanding and below ground and preservation of the character, setting and amenity of town walls. The Galway City Walls Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan (2013) gives a record of the city walls, assessing their significance and vulnerability and sets out a range of conservation principles and measures to address the future management and interpretation of the walls. The most upstanding and intact sections of the city walls are visible in the Eyre Square shopping centre, to the rear of Dunnes Stores on Rosemary Avenue and at Fishmarket.

The city wall at Fishmarket which includes the Spanish Arch and typical wall features such as corbels and parapets presents significant potential for enhancement and interpretation by virtue of its location and prominence within an important civic space adjacent to the City Museum and adjoining Comerford House. In this regard an Outline Architectural Plan and Design Approach was specifically prepared in 2014 by the City Council for this section of wall. It sets out requirements for measures to ensure essential conservation repairs are carried out; to interpret and showcase the city walls; to carry out improvements to the public realm at this location and to consider direct linkage to the City Museum and Comerford House.

Policy 8.6 Galway City Walls

Secure preservation in-situ of the historic medieval city walls and seek to protect and enhance their settings.

Support the implementation of recommendations set out in the Galway City Walls Conservation, Management and Interpretation Plan (2013).

Progress the implementation of the Outline Architectural Plan and Design Approach for the section of city wall at Fishmarket.
8.7 Urban Design

Good urban design can enhance the character of Galway and convey a sense of what is unique about the city. It is essential in the creation of attractive, well functioning, successful places. A range of national policy documents set out a framework and guidance for achieving good urban design. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2008) and Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide includes principles and criteria relating to good urban design for residential development. The Retail Design Manual (2012) and Manual for Local Area Plans (2012) both set out detailed guidance with regard to achieving good urban design. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) is a key policy document for achieving good urban design in the layout and function of roads and streets. The Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality Within The Built Environment is still valid and seeks to promote the awareness and understanding of the contribution of good design to the general well being of the city. It places emphasis on urban design and sustainable placemaking supporting high quality modern architecture and incorporating architectural heritage in a holistic integrated manner.

Principles of good urban design

The following principles are critical in the consideration of good urban design and will be promoted in new development:

- **Character**: The promotion of character by reinforcing local distinctiveness, identity and sense of place. The typology of streets, layout of parks, open spaces, the natural heritage and the urban morphology contributes to character which evolves over time. New development should enhance this character.

- **Legibility**: The creation of places that are easily recognisable, and while part of the overall city, they have their own identity through recognisable landmarks and/or streets. New development should enhance the legibility of the surrounding place.

- **Ease of movement and connectivity**: The promotion of accessibility, permeability and universal access making places easy to get to and move within. Ease of movement within a city centre may be through pedestrianisation schemes, creation of new streets, permeability through shops. In the wider area it may be through enhanced public transport, provision of greenways and linkages from residential areas to local services and facilities. New development should ensure maximum permeability and accessibility for all.

- **Quality of the public realm**: The promotion of streets and public spaces that are attractive and safe and that allow for social interaction. The design of the public realm in any new development requires careful consideration in terms of its layout, function and use of materials such as surfaces and street furniture.

- **Continuity and enclosure**: The promotion of the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of spaces by clearly defined edges which distinguish public and private areas.

- **Diversity and adaptability**: The creation of places that have variety and choice through a mix of uses which are compatible and viable and which can adapt to changing socio-economic conditions.

- **Environmental Responsibility**: The creation of places which foster sustainable energy consumption and reduced carbon footprint through enhancing sustainable transportation, utilising renewable energy technologies and SUDS, enhancing biodiversity and climate adaptation measures.

Good architecture is essential in creating a good image of the city with a strong identity. The detailed design of a building and use of materials are important considerations. High quality architectural design is also important in the context of urban design having regard to the layout and intensity of blocks, plots and buildings. The density of development and the mix, type and location of uses are also key considerations.

The greening of the city through the use of innovative design features in buildings such as green roofs and walls are important measures in the control of surface water run off, insulation, enhancing biodiversity and promoting a varied streetscape. The use of innovative building design and layout that demonstrates a high level of energy conservation, energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources is a key consideration.

The development guidelines and standards for all new development contained in Chapter 11 are designed to create developments which will contribute to a high standard of urban design for the city. These will also contribute to the protection and enhancement of the urban design quality of existing areas.

**Building height**

The scale of development in terms of height and massing can have a considerable impact on other buildings and spaces as well as views and skylines. Additional building height over and above the prevailing height can usefully mark points of major activity such as business districts, civic functions and transport interchanges. They can also however, have a considerable impact in the context of historic buildings, conservation areas, areas of natural heritage importance and can detract from a city’s skyline and impinge upon strategic views.
In the context of the city which is predominantly low rise with its sensitive historic core and unique natural amenity setting, there is little capacity for dramatic increases in height. However, it is recognised that modest increases at appropriate locations, can help use land efficiently and provide for sustainable high densities.

In the assessment of development proposals, the following principles will be considered when assessing capacity for height:

- Protection of existing built and natural heritage and residential amenity.
- Creation of landmarks that enhance the city’s legibility without eroding its innate character.
- Retention of existing benchmark heights so as to retain strategic views and to protect and enhance the general character of sensitive locations.
- Promotion of higher density at centres/nodes of activity, on large scale infill sites and along public transport corridors.

Areas where major change is anticipated to occur such as at Ardaun, Murrough, Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour may present opportunities for increased heights. As these are major development areas, there is potential for these areas to establish their own distinctive character. Such height increase will only be considered in the context of an LAP in the case of Ardaun and Murrough and in a masterplan in the context of Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour.

Any development proposals for buildings above the prevailing benchmark height will be required to be accompanied by a design statement outlining the rationale for the proposal and an assessment of its impact on the immediate and surrounding environment including buildings, open space, public realm and any views.

**Regeneration areas**

Good urban design within Galway City seeks to reinforce the distinctive character of the city by ensuring a high quality built environment through good place-making and the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods. Within the city centre in particular, it is important to promote new development that respects the city’s existing built form. In regeneration areas, there will be a challenge to secure a new local distinctiveness. These areas will require that the context of the development will be within an overall plan that demonstrates good urban design principles and a number of mechanisms will be needed to achieve this. The redevelopment of Ceannt Station, the Inner Harbour and Headford Road (south of the Bodkin junction) provide major opportunities for high quality urban design to contribute to creating new vibrant areas which can attract investment and uses, provide sustainable residential communities and reinforce the urban structure. There are also opportunities for landmark buildings in these areas which can help form character and establish identity. The use of innovative architecture can also contribute to establishing a strong identity.

**Shop Fronts**

In Galway, in particular in the historic core, the varied nature of shop fronts which has evolved since the medieval period creates a visual attractiveness and intimacy. Many shop fronts incorporate elements of historic fabric and medieval fragments which preserves a rich historical record and contributes to a unique streetscape. The sensitive conservation of these shop fronts is required to protect their quality and to retain the character of the streetscape. There is also a requirement for a high standard in contemporary shop front design. Good quality shop front design enhances the streetscape, encourages investment and promotes a positive image of the city. In order to encourage shop front conservation and good design, the Council have prepared Shop front and Signage Design Guidelines. They provide design guidance on the conservation and restoration of shop fronts and advice regarding sensitive solutions for contemporary design in the historic city centre context. They also give advice on shop front design in Salthill and other commercial centres.

**Public realm**

The character and quality of the city is defined to a significant extent by its public realm. Public realm is a broad term used to describe outdoor areas that are accessible to the public. This includes spaces between buildings, streets, roads, squares, parks and seafronts. It accounts for a considerable part of the city and is a primary area for social interaction and public life.

Public space provides a meeting place, a venue for events, for social entertainment and an important setting to the built environment. It functions as a valuable amenity and recreation resource and facilitates services and transport.
As highlighted in the *Street Conversations Report* (2013), Galway is perceived as human scale, easy, relaxed, diverse, open, friendly, culturally vibrant and fun for all age groups. This report documents the opinions and attitudes elicited from informal engagement with a broad range of people on their experience of Galway streets. The outcome demonstrates that Galway is an attractive place with a vibrant public life.

Significant improvements have been made to the public realm over the years, such as the pedestrianisation scheme, the Eyre Square Enhancement Scheme and the Riverside Walk. These enhancements have brought sustainable socio-economic, environmental and cultural benefits to the city and have improved connectivity and accessibility.

However, other works have been more haphazard, driven by the need to address single tasks and have been carried out often on a single function basis, in the absence of direction from common goals or guidance. In certain cases this has resulted in poor design solutions and conflicting functions and activities. The deficiencies in this approach can be remedied through the preparation of a public realm strategy, embracing a “shared plan” approach which would include for defined goals and targets to enhance the management and use of public realm.

The strategy will co-ordinate with the GTS which includes for a range of measures to improve the quality and experience of the city environment in particular increased opportunities to re-allocate road space for public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce traffic movements in the city centre including for the reduction of on street car parking. The strategy will complement the GTS ensuring that qualitative public realm considerations are integrated into GTS projects.

A public realm strategy for the city will seek to strengthen and enhance the attributes which contribute to the distinctive physical and social character of the city ensuring that the interests of all users are considered in a socially inclusive and holistic manner. The strategy will incorporate a multi-disciplinary approach. It will include for participation of all public and private interests and the community in the process. It will set out the details of phased co-ordinated projects, that will enhance and improve the way the city functions on a day-to-day basis, resulting in long-term socio-economic, cultural and environmental benefits for residents, communities, businesses, and visitors.

The preparation of the public realm strategy will include, at a minimum, for:

- Collaboration with all stakeholders.
- Establishment of common goals and targets.
- A Design Manual to establish design guidance for all elements of the public realm. The manual will include design specification, specification on installation, use, and maintenance/replacement requirements.
- An Activity Manual will indicate where and when various activities will be actively promoted including street cafés, trading pitches, markets, festivals, events, street performances and guidance on public art.

When completed, the public realm strategy will be enmeshed in all future strategies and will be the first point of reference for all works and activities within the public realm.

**Local area plans and masterplans/framework plans**

The concept of Local Area Plans (LAPs) is provided for in planning legislation. Within the framework of the City Development Plan, a local area plan can provide more detailed planning policies for areas where significant development and change is anticipated. Three LAPs are proposed in the Development Plan.

These plans will each include for a specific urban design framework which will have a key role in translating at the local level, the policies included in Section 8.7 relating to urban design. This approach will define the essential elements of local character identified in that section, which respond to the local context.
It will provide detailed guidance regarding layout, density, massing, height, materials, and include indicative layouts to guide the shape and form of future development. Guidance will require integration of green spaces/parks into the overall planning and design process, which will contribute significantly to achieving high-quality places at Ardaun, Murrough and the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin junction).

Where a large area of land requires a masterplan such as at Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour, a similar urban design framework approach is merited. These masterplans will be required to demonstrate how redevelopment will apply a high quality of urban design standard, in accordance with the Development Plan. This approach will ensure that development will result in successful places reflected in their new urban form, linking seamlessly with the existing city centre and resulting in lively places with distinctive character, streets and public spaces that are safe, accessible, pleasant to use and human in scale.

### Other mechanisms to achieve principles of good urban design

In order to facilitate the assessment process of planning applications on sensitive sites such as large infill sites in the city centre, applications will be required to be accompanied by a Design Statement which has regard to best principles of urban design. The Design Statement will include a range of graphic material which may include photomontages and a 3D element where required. The Council will investigate the potential for acquiring a model of the city to facilitate assessment of development. This model could be a simple 3D block model of existing buildings which would enable preliminary assessment of proposals on sensitive sites. This would provide for an early stage of assessment of development and would facilitate efficient use of the pre-consultation process. Other visualisation techniques and illustrative measures will also be investigated as useful tools to aid assessment.

### Policy 8.7 Urban Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encourage high quality urban design in all developments.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that high quality urban design contributes to successful urban regeneration in the city.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage innovation in architecture and promote energy efficiency and green design.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare Local Area Plans for Ardaun, Murrough and the Headford Road Area (south of the Bodkin junction) which provide an urban design framework to contribute to the development of sustainable and vibrant living and working environments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage the use of design statements and masterplans/framework plans for large-scale development where appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare a public realm strategy to guide the enhancement, management, use and development of the public domain in collaboration with all stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposals for buildings which are taller than the prevailing benchmark heights will only be considered where they do not have an adverse impact on the context of historic buildings, Architectural Conservation Areas, residential amenity or impinge upon strategic views.</td>
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<td>Explore the potential for improvements to the environment of the city centre street network that can be delivered through implementation of the traffic management measures and the introduction of the Cross–City Link as proposed in the Galway Transport Strategy and integrate with the strategy for the public realm.</td>
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8.8 Specific Objectives

- Facilitate the restoration and conservation of the Waterworks building at Terryland Water Treatment Plant.

- Finalise Conservation Management Plans for Merlin Castle, Terryland Castle and Menlough Castle and implement conservation and management recommendations.

- Finalise the Conservation Management Plan for the Browne Doorway and implement conservation and management recommendations.

- Facilitate the restoration of Menlough Castle, for public usage, excluding private residential use, to allow for new uses, in particular cultural/recreation uses, compatible with the restoration of the building to best conservation practice where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites.
9 Environment and Infrastructure

9.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
9.2 Climate Change Resilience
9.3 Flood Risk
9.4 Renewable Energy
9.5 Sustainable Building Design and Construction
9.6 Water Quality
9.7 Water Services
9.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems SUDS
9.9 Control of Major Accident Hazards (Seveso III Directive)
9.10 Air Quality and Noise
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9.12 Waste Management
9.13 Telecommunications
9.14 Energy and Associated Infrastructure
9.15 Specific Objectives
9.1 Aim, Context & Strategy

Aim

To secure a high quality, clean and healthy environment, while facilitating the sustainable development of the city, through supporting the continued improvement and expansion of infrastructure services, including for water, drainage, communication, energy and waste management facilities. To ensure that environmental protection is an integral part of the development process within the city, by avoiding potential pollution at source and reducing environmental risks to the city and its community. Address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by facilitating and promoting energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy sources.

Context

Climate change represents a significant challenge for society. Future development and investment decisions from national to local level must incorporate consideration of future climate conditions and adaptation options. Important elements of these considerations include flood risk, accommodation of renewable energy sources, energy conservation and improved management of resources. Climate change impacts are predicted to include intense rainfall events with a rise in sea levels as well as periods of increased drought. The 2020 EU Effort Sharing Decision commits Ireland to reducing emissions from a number of sectors, including transport and construction sectors, to 20 per cent below 2005 levels. In order to meet the 2020 targets, it is essential that the dependence on fossil fuels is reduced and increases are achieved in the use of alternative energy sources and improvements in energy efficiency.

At national level, there is currently an on-going review of climate change policy which will aid in the transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient, environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. This will be through identifying specific policy measures to ensure compliance with relevant emission reduction obligations. In accordance with the EU objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions Ireland is developing a National Low-Carbon Roadmap, which will set out the strategy to be employed to meet these targets. A National Climate Change Adaptation Framework has been in place since 2012. This provides the policy context for a strategic national adaptation response to climate change ensuring adaptation measures are implemented across different sectors to reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. A draft Climate Action and Low-Carbon Development Act 2015 provides for the approval of government plans in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by the year 2050. The National Mitigation Plan is currently being prepared by the DECLG. It relates to the enactment of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. The National Mitigation Plan will specify the manner in which it is proposed to achieve the national transition objective to a low carbon future, and will outline the sectoral mitigation measures.

The EPA’s State of the Environment Report 2012 and Ireland’s Environment - An Assessment 2016 identifies the need to value and protect our natural environment, build a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy, implement environmental legislation and put the environment at the centre of decision-making. The SEA and AA are important tools in ensuring the Development Plan does not have an unduly negative impact on the environment, its water resources, habitats and heritage. A healthy, clean and well managed environment and efficient use of its resources, (water, energy and materials), is a key objective for the city. The environment is of increasing strategic importance to the economic competitiveness of the city and the growth of key economic sectors, such as tourism and recreation, contribute to quality of life and attractiveness of the city to people and investment. Environmental protection and health protection are inextricably linked. The Galway Healthy Cities Project recognises the tangible benefits to health that come from living in a good quality and clean environment. The awarding of the European Green Leaf for 2017 to the city recognises the Council’s ongoing commitment to improved environmental outcomes and awareness.

In order to ensure a good quality and well managed environment and the future sustainable development and well being of the city, there must be support for the continued enhancement of the provision and management of water, wastewater, energy and telecommunications infrastructure. Robust infrastructure is required to have the capacity and flexibility to withstand changes in demand or supply and adapt to extreme weather events associated with climate change. The Council will support the provision of strategic infrastructure for the continued sustainable and economic development of the city in liaison with relevant statutory providers including Irish Water, Eirgrid, ESB and Bord Gáis. The Council is contracted to manage and maintain aspects of the water service networks at a local level through a Service Level Agreement with

Irish Water. The delivery of the Core Strategy is intrinsically linked to the provision of concurrent water services infrastructure by Irish Water to serve the priority growth locations in particular Ardaun.

The policies in this Chapter seek to deliver direct environmental benefits, improve the well-being of the community and lead to a more sustainable environment and to contribute to social, cultural and economic growth.

**Strategy**

- Protect and enhance the environment of the city, while facilitating its sustainable development and growth.
- Have a waste management system in the city in line with EU and national policies, that prioritises waste minimisation, recycling and reuse.
- Protect and manage water resources effectively and improve coastal and fresh water quality.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging energy conservation, energy efficiency and energy generation from renewable sources and support national climate change policy.
- Support the provision of efficient and sustainable water services, energy and telecommunication infrastructure in the city.

### 9.2 Climate Change Resilience

The Development Plan can identify and pursue strategies to increase the city’s resilience to climate change by; enabling sustainable development, encouraging new and existing development to reduce carbon emissions and build resilience to issues such as flood risk. The Council seeks to promote specific policies that make the city less vulnerable to climate change, support a move to a low-carbon economy and protect and enhance the quality of the city’s environment and infrastructure, while also facilitating sustainable development. Climate Change adaptation is reflected throughout the Development Plan, including, the delivery of sustainable patterns of land use, sustainable transport initiatives, green network and biodiversity. Other co-ordinated sustainable land use and transportation policies are detailed in Chapter 2 and 3. These include the creation of self-sustaining, accessible, residential neighbourhoods and sustainable travel patterns, which will also have a beneficial impact on the quality of the environment, particularly in terms of emission levels, air quality and noise. The protection and retention of areas of natural heritage importance, water bodies, parks, local biodiversity areas and green spaces provide carbon capture for the built-up city area and are outlined in Chapter 4. Sustainability appraisal and climate change considerations are fully integrated into the Strategic Environmental Assessment of this Plan. In the future and subsequent to the publication of national guidelines, it is anticipated that a climate change adaptation strategy will be prepared for the city having regard to the EPA *Local Authority Adaptation Guidelines*, (2016), for climate change.

**Policy 9.2 Climate Change Resilience**

Support the implementation of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Framework*, 2012.
9.3 Flood Risk Assessment

Climate change impacts are projected to increase in the coming decades. While uncertainties remain in relation to the scale and extent of impacts, predicted adverse impacts include more intense storms, storm surges, sea level rise, and increased occurrences of long high-intensity rainfall events, all contributing to an increased likelihood of flooding. Galway City, due to its landscape setting, is vulnerable to three key sources of flooding: fluvial, groundwater and coastal. In the city, some areas have been historically and seasonally liable to flooding, including the Spanish Arch area, Quay Street, Flood Street, Lower Salthill and the Docks area. A combination of high tides, high winds and surges can lead to localised flooding within areas adjoining the coast and in the city centre, for example the aptly named Flood Street. To date large sections of the natural flood plains of the River Corrib and coastline have been protected from development through the sensitive application of land use zoning objectives. Increases in flooding can cause significant damage to property, infrastructure and the economy. A balanced view of flood risk while facilitating the necessary development of the city will be taken in the interests of the public, economy, environment and property in general.

The OPW’s Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) and the Western CFRAMs Programme, conducted under the EU Floods Directive, identified the city as an Area for Further Assessment (AFA) and significant work including coastal and fluvial modelling has been carried out. A range of maps have been produced for the city including Draft Fluvial and Coastal Flood Extent Maps and Draft Flood Zone Maps. The CFRAMs study is well advanced and will establish a long term strategy and measures for the management of flood risk in the city. In the interim, in order to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to flood risk, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023 has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009). These Guidelines emphasises the importance of considering flood risk assessment in the development plan.

The SFRA undertakes a two stage assessment of flood risk in the city. The first stage identifies flood risk and is based primarily on the findings of the Western CFRAM. The second stage of the SFRA report presents an indicative flood zone map for the city, based on available data. Potential development areas that require more detailed assessment on a site specific level are highlighted. The SFRA adopts a precautionary and sequential approach with regard to development in identified flood risk areas, taking into account land use zoning objectives and applies the sequential approach and relevant criteria set out under the justification test, for key city development sites. The SFRA also provides guidelines for development within areas at potential risk of flooding, and specifically looks at flood risk and the potential for development within a number of key sites. A Stage 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Three Local Area Plans 2012 was previously undertaken in order to fully assess the vulnerability of land and development to potential flood risks for three proposed LAP areas, Ardaun, Headford Road and Murrough. Specific guidance on development management in relation to flood risk is included in the SFRA and in Section 11.27 Flood Risk Management of the Development Plan.

Rising sea levels predicted with climate change could contribute to greater coastal erosion, tidal flooding, damage to infrastructure, loss of land and habitats along the coastline. The OPW’s Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study (2013) for the West Coast, has produced predictive coastal tidal flooding and erosion risk maps for the western coastline to assist in the identification and development of measures for managing coastal flooding and erosion risk. Where necessary, the Council will facilitate environmentally and economically sustainable coastal protection works in order to prevent coastal erosion and flooding in the most vulnerable areas. The City Council is advancing the detail design of the Sailín to Silverstrand Coastal Protection Scheme and walkway from Blackrock to Silverstrand. It is currently the subject of a Foreshore Licence application. Any future defence works within the shoreline will take account of the long-term inter-relationships between defences and coastal processes in the wider area, the need to protect the environment and natural habitats and include opportunities for maintaining and enhancing the natural coastal environment, where appropriate.

Policy 9.3 Flood Risk Assessment

Support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI no. 122 of 2010), the DECLG and OPW Guidelines for Planning Authorities, the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009), updated superseding legislation or departmental guidelines and have regard to the findings and relevant identified actions of the future Corrib Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study, as the study progresses and incorporate these into the Development Plan, where appropriate.

Have regard to the recommendations of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023 in the assessment of development in identified areas of flood risk.
9.4 Renewable Energy

Ireland’s National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010) sets a target of 16% of the national gross final consumption of energy to be from renewable resources by 2020. This is to be achieved by attaining 40% consumption of electricity and 10% of transport energy from renewable sources. In order to achieve these national targets the use of renewable sources of energy generation including wind, hydro, wave/ocean, solar power, geothermal/CHP and biomass must be optimised. National policy recognises that there is a need to transform Ireland’s economy from one based on a predominantly imported fossil fuels to a more indigenous low carbon economy centred around energy efficiency, renewable energy and smart networks. Sustained growth in the use of renewable energy resources and improved energy efficiency has associated climate change adaptation benefits. It also has the potential for energy sector job creation, and ensures security, diversity and affordability of energy supply which is crucial for the economy, environment and society. The Council plays a key role in assessing and permitting renewable energy projects and infrastructure in the city.

There has been increased prevalence of micro renewable energy technologies, most notably solar panels and small wind turbines facilitated by exemptions from planning permission in domestic dwellings, business premises and industrial buildings. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) notes that residential developments offer the potential to benefit from renewable energy sources within the district or even site. Suitable technologies may include small-scale wind energy plants, and combined heat and power schemes, particularly in high density developments and where bio-energy fuels provide the energy source, and in district heating, particularly if waste heat from nearby industries can be utilised. Part L of the Building Regulations Conservation of fuel and energy in Dwellings requires the mandatory use of renewable energy sources with a minimum of 10 kilowatt hours per square metre per annum. This requirement promotes the use of district heating fuelled by renewables and
cogeneration schemes in new housing developments, encouraging more energy-efficient communities. The Council will encourage the provision of, or potential for using, decentralised energy supply in the design of developments, where appropriate.

There is potential for relatively small-scale wind energy development within urban and industrial areas of the city where visual and residential amenities are safeguarded and there are no adverse environmental impacts. In the assessment of such proposals the Council will have regard to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006). The Galway Energy Agency (GEA) promotes renewable energy technologies and assists the Council in delivering energy efficiency solutions. It is Council policy to support and promote, in conjunction with GEA and other agencies, renewable energy initiatives, including wave and wind, where such initiatives are consistent with proper planning and sustainable development of the city. The Council in the assessment of the development of alternative energy sources will have consideration of the likely positive impacts of such development in conjunction with the potential strategic environmental benefits.

**Policy 9.4 Renewable Energy**

Promote and facilitate the development of renewable sources of energy within the city, and support national initiatives, in conjunction with Galway Energy Agency (GEA) and other agencies, which offer sustainable alternatives to dependency on fossil fuels and a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, subject to the avoidance of unduly negative visual and environmental impacts, or impacts on residential amenity.

**9.5 Sustainable Building Design and Construction**

Improved energy efficiency and enhanced thermal and energy performance in existing and new buildings contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The construction or refurbishment of buildings can demonstrate the practical application of such sustainable measures, which include reduction of heat loss by various methods of insulation, solar orientation and passive solar heating. The introduction of new building regulations, Part L 2013, which requires that all new houses are built to a carbon zero, or nearly carbon zero standard, and the growing demand for low energy, low carbon and passive houses increases good building energy performance. The Council will encourage increased energy efficiency and low-carbon living in existing and future residential, commercial and industrial buildings in the city and will lead with initiatives in retrofitting and in the design of social housing.

Sustainable low-energy design is encouraged in buildings, such as building orientation, layout, massing and landform to capitalise on passive solar gain and natural ventilation. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) encourages more energy-efficient housing layouts. This includes for more quantifiable sustainable development standards, maximising access to sunlight and daylight, facilitating greater movement by pedestrians and cyclists, facilitating the use of public transport and the use of efficient energy supply.

**Policy 9.5 Sustainable Building Design and Construction**

- Increase the energy performance of future buildings in the city by encouraging energy efficiency and energy conservation in the design and construction of development.
- Encourage new development to limit greenhouse gas emissions and make use of opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy including through design, layout, orientation and use of materials.
- Encourage high standards of energy conservation and improved energy performance in all existing and planned local authority housing.
- Liaise with the Galway Energy Agency (GEA) to develop standards, procedures and targets for energy conservation in the Council’s housing stock.
- Encourage consideration of orientation in the siting, layout, massing, land form and aspect in the design of future housing developments, in order to avail of passive solar gain and natural ventilation.
- Continue to support the installation of improved energy conservation measures.
- Ensure that the development of renewable energy and its associated infrastructure avoids negative impacts on European Sites and adhere to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43EEC).
9.6 Water Quality

A high-quality, clean, drinking water supply and good bathing water quality is important for the future economic, physical growth and public health of the city. The City Council does not have the sole stewardship of the sources of potable water for the city but is one of a number of agencies tasked with water source protection. There is a diverse array of natural water assets in the city, including lakes, rivers, canals, ground water and sea. Water quality is a key environmental condition supporting the integrity of all the European Sites within the city. It is vital that these water bodies are protected against pollution and that the quality of water is maintained at good levels. The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) establishes an integrated catchment based approach for the protection, improvement and sustainable use of inland waters, including groundwater with the aim of improving the quality of the water environment. The key objective of the WFD is to preserve existing high waters status and to return all other water bodies to at least good status. The WFD is implemented through river basin management plans which contain a programme of measures needed to deliver water quality targets. The Western River Basin District Management Plan sets out the water quality objectives to be achieved for water bodies and also a programme of actions, which must be implemented in order to achieve these objectives. The planning system has a key role to play in delivering the requirements of the WFD through its influence on location, layout and design of new development. The Development Plan will support and implement the various collaborative water protection measures of the Western River Basin District Management Plan, where appropriate and ensure that future development in the city does not negatively impact on the achievement of its objectives. The River Basin Management Plan is currently being updated and will be completed in 2017. In the interest of water protection, the Council will require developments, that include the storage and/or run-off of potentially polluting substances, such as oil and chemicals, located near watercourses and coastal areas, or at locations that could infiltrate groundwater resources, to use best available practices to reduce the risk of environmental pollution.

Good quality bathing water is an important natural resource for recreational use as well as being a significant tourism attraction. The Bathing Water Directive 2006 and Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 set strict standards for the management for bathing water quality. The Council monitors and assesses bathing water quality, provides bathing information, takes action to protect health and to reduce the risk of pollution. Mutton Island WWTW has led to major improvements in bathing water quality in Galway Bay. This is highlighted by the awarding of an EU Blue Flag and National Green Coast Award for Silverstrand and Salthill beaches over the past number of years. Both beaches play a major role as recreation and coastal amenity areas for the city. The Council in partnership with Irish Water will seek to improve bathing water quality for other beaches within the city including Ballyloughane Beach and Grattan Beach by carrying out remedial works and long term upgrading of the sewer network, where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy 9.6 Water Quality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support the actions of the Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015 and future River Basin Management Plan in order to promote and achieve a restoration of good status, reduce chemical pollution and prevent deterioration of surface, coastal and groundwater quality, where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement the monitoring and management actions of the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 in securing and retaining good quality bathing water quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain and extend the Blue Flag Beach status in regard to water quality, infrastructure and amenity provision for beaches in the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure any development within the aquatic environment is carried out in consultation with prescribed bodies and with adherence to their guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect the city’s groundwater resource in accordance with the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) or any updated legislation and ensure that any development, which threatens the quality of the city’s groundwater is restricted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimise and control discharges to inland surface water bodies, groundwater and coastal waters to prevent water pollution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.7 Water Services

In 2014, Irish Water (IW) took over the responsibility for water services infrastructure and treatment facilities for the city and is now the National Water Services Utility. The Council retains responsibility for surface water services and remains a water protection authority through its functions relating to water quality and monitoring and the issuing of discharge licenses to the surface water network. Irish Water is responsible for the issuing of trade discharge licences to foul/combined sewers.

It is Irish Water’s objective to provide both drinking water and wastewater strategic infrastructure capacity to meet the domestic requirements of the Settlement and Core Strategies of development plans prepared in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. Irish Water will endeavour to secure the provision of the infrastructure necessary to support the evolving population change and economic activity over the next plan period, subject to the availability of the necessary capital investment and in compliance with environmental objectives and regulations.

The continued development and improvement of water services is vital for the future advancement of the city. A good quality and plentiful water supply is important to support future social and economic growth and attract foreign direct investment and support jobs creation. Wastewater infrastructure allows for the achievement of environmental and public health standards and the protection of the city’s environment. The delivery of the Core Strategy is intrinsically linked to the delivery of concurrent water and drainage infrastructure by Irish Water to serve the priority growth locations, in particular, Ardaun. The Council will work with Irish Water in identifying water services investment requirements and priorities in the city and support the delivery of the objectives of the Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP) which outlines the strategic direction of Irish Water up to 2040. Galway City Council is contracted to manage and maintain aspects of the water supply and foul drainage networks at a local level through a Services Level Agreement with Irish Water which came into force on the 1st January 2014.

In relation to wastewater services, Irish Water have upgraded the Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment facility under the Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016 (Galway Sewerage Scheme Phase 3 – Network Upgrade Contract No.1 Volume D). The upgrade increases the capacity of the plant from 92,000 to 170,000 p.e.

The IW Capital Investment Plan includes investment in a Drainage Area Plan (DAP) for Galway City to identify the current performance level of the collection systems and the intervention measures to cater for exiting loadings and future growth areas. There are issues with combined sewer overflows on the wastewater sewer network in Galway City. These sewer overflows are from older combined sewers in the city and occur in times of heavy rainfall with excess surface water run-off and may be an intermittent source of pollution for water bodies. The DAP will determine the solutions required to bring these overflows into compliance. The DAP will also investigate the Merlin Park Drainage Catchment to identify cross connections in this catchment and recommend and advance remedial works required to eliminate cross connections and defects in the system.

The growth of population in the city has been coupled by increases in water demand and the volume of water use per head of population. The demand for water in the city is 41,000m³ per day with the demand being met by IW’s Terryland Water Treatment Plant (maximum capacity of 55,000m³ per day). An interconnection from IW’s Tuam Regional Water Supply Water Treatment Plant provides a strategic security of supply link to the city. The IW Capital Investment Plan includes for the Galway City Water Supply Scheme Terryland WTP Phase 3. This is a 10 year strategy which includes 1) upgrading the infrastructure to secure the water intake for Terryland WTP, 2) provision of new rising main to feed the west of the city and 3) an examination of the possibility of supplying water to the Spiddal area, west of the city.

IW has plans to replace some of the city’s problematic water mains over the next few years in order to reduce the current levels of leakage. Water conservation is a cost effective and sustainable way to limit water demand and increase the efficiency and capacity in the water distribution network to meet existing and future demand. The Council will continue to encourage water conservation initiatives including rain water harvesting and grey water recycling in developments in liaison with IW as part of the Galway City Water Conservation Stage 3 Works and IW Conservation Strategy.

IW, in partnership with Galway City Council, has commenced a €7.3 million project to replace 19.8km of old and ineffective water main pipelines in Galway City. These works will reduce the amount of water lost through leakage and improve the reliability of water supply. The proposed water main rehabilitation works will also involve the replacement of water services connections to properties currently served by communal services in Claddagh, Bohermore and Prospect Hill, Old Mervue, Court Avenue, Raleigh Row and St. Enda’s Road. This water conservation initiative seeks to continue to provide a reliable drinking water supply to the city which will support its future socio-economic development. The Galway City Water Main Rehabilitation Contract is currently at detailed design stage. Ground investigation works are about to commence on site. It is envisaged that construction works will commence in early 2017.
Policy 9.7 Water Services

Work in close liaison with Irish Water in the operation of water and waste water facilities in the city and the upgrade and expansion of the network.

Support the delivery of the objectives of the Irish Water Water Services Strategic Plan (2015).

Provide and maintain a high quality and efficient water supply capable of meeting the needs of the city and ensure continuous supply of high quality drinking water as agents of Irish Water under the Service Level Agreement.

Encourage all significant water users to use best practices in water conservation and continue to promote water conservation measures in all new development in the city in liaison with Irish Water.

Ensure adequate treatment capacity to cater for the future needs of the city in partnership with Irish Water.

Provide a sustainable and effective wastewater drainage collection and treatment system capable of meeting the needs of domestic, commercial, and industrial users in the city in partnership with Irish Water.

Identify and prioritise water mains for rehabilitation and reduce water leakage in conjunction with Irish Water in order to conserve the city’s water supply.

Ensure that all new developments have and are provided with satisfactory drainage systems in the interests of public health and to avoid the pollution of the ground and surface waters.

9.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

The Council is responsible for the surface water drainage network of the city. The urban environment with its associated impermeable surfaces, such as roofs, roads and car parks, prevents the natural percolation of rainfall into the ground which can result in excessive volumes and flows of surface water runoff. SUDS, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems aims to minimise surface water run-off associated with urban development, using a sequence of management practices and control structures, designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable manner and reduce flood risk by reflecting natural drainage processes. The use of SUDS reduces the amount and rate of surface water flow by a combination of measures including infiltration into the ground, attenuation of surface water in storage areas and by slowing down the movement of water. The implementation of SUDS can improve water quality by removing pollutants from run-off at source, by the natural treatment processes of sedimentation, filtration, absorption and biological degradation. SUDS can alleviate the risk of flooding from blocked or over-flowing urban storm water drainage systems, by preserving the existing capacity of the drainage sewerage network. Components of SUDS can be positive landscape features within the urban environment, providing amenity benefits and contributing to biodiversity. Examples of SUDS include surface water retention ponds and basins, wetlands, planted filter strips and swales, permeable surfaces, green facades and green roofs. Generally SUDS proposals for any greenfield development site should be such that the volumes and peak flow rates of surface water leaving a developed site are no greater than the rates prior to the development.

Policy 9.8 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Ensure the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and sustainable surface water drainage management, wherever practical in the design of development to enable surface water run-off to be managed as near to its source as possible and achieve wider benefits such as sustainable development, water quality, biodiversity and local amenity.

Proposals for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) should include provisions for the long term management, operation and maintenance of these systems.
9.9 Control of Major Accident Hazards (Seveso III Directive)

The EU Directive on the Control of Major Accident Hazards Seveso III came into force on 1 June 2015, replacing the Seveso II Directive. The Directive deals specifically with the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances and limits their consequences for human health and the environment and is implemented by the COMAH Regulations 2015. Land use planning is one of the measures in the Seveso III Directive to safeguard against the effects of a major accident in the unlikely event that one occurs. The Directive requires that controls are in place on developments at qualifying establishments and in their vicinity. The Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2016 cover this aspect of the Directive and the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) are required to provide technical advice to the planning authorities, either on a case-by-case basis or generically.

Currently there is one Seveso III site within the city, Topaz Energy Galway Terminal located in New Docks, Galway Harbour Board Enterprise Park. It is classified as an upper tier establishment. A consultation zone is applied by HSA in relation to Seveso III establishments and any relevant proposals for development within these zones or any future amended zones will be referred to the HSA for guidance. This technical guidance will be taken into account in the overall assessment of the siting of new Seveso III establishments, modification of existing establishments and development in the vicinity of such establishments, in addition to standard planning criteria. The city’s Major Emergency Plan addresses potential emergencies which may arise from the current Seveso III site.

Policy 9.9 Safe Environment - Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso III Directive)

Consult with the Health and Safety Authority (also known as the National Authority for Occupational and Health Standards) when changing any policies/objectives and assessing any proposed relevant developments in or in the vicinity of sites identified under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Directive (Seveso III Directive), in order to prevent major accidents involving dangerous substances and to limit their consequences to the environment and community.

Ensure that major developments comply with the requirements of the Galway City Major Emergency Plan.

9.10 Air Quality and Noise

Air quality directly affects human health, the environment and climate change. The EPA report Air Quality in Ireland Key Indicators of Ambient Air Quality (2013) indicates that the current air quality in the city is good and complies with air quality standards, due largely to the prevailing westerly air-flow and the absence of heavy industry in the city. Monitoring checks indicate that air quality in the city meets standards for the protection of human health and the environment set out in the Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive 2008/50/EC. The ‘Smoky Coal Ban’ Regulations 2012 introduced a ban on the burning of restricted fuels in the city, which contributes to safeguarding good air quality. One of the future challenges for air quality will be emissions from road traffic. The sustainable transport and Smarter Travel policies in Chapter 3 that promote a modal shift from private vehicle will help maintain the good air quality in the city. The continued conservation of the city’s parks, urban woodlands, trees and green spaces, as expressed in Chapter 4, has a significant role in improving air quality, cleansing the air of many pollutants and mitigating climate change. The City Council will support the initiatives of the proposed National Clean Air Strategy to reduce harmful emissions, improve air quality in order to meet international clean air obligations.

The Galway City Noise Action Plan 2013-2018 (NAP) has been adopted by the City Council under the provisions of the Environmental Noise Directive. The purpose of the NAP is to manage, ameliorate and reduce environmental noise through the adoption of the action plan. Environmental noise is described as unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities. Noise can have a significant effect on the environment and quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. The long term aim of the NAP is to reduce the impact of environmental noise from major road sources to acceptable levels below 70dB (A) Lden and 57dB(A) Lnight at residential properties along major roads in the city. The strategic noise mapping of the city in the NAP will be taken into consideration in the assessment of relevant development proposals.
Wherever possible, the siting of new development should have regard to noise sensitive locations and site design techniques can be used to minimise noise impact. These include setbacks, landscaping, noise barriers and management controls.

The City Council, through the planning system, can minimise the adverse impacts of noise pollution by controlling developments which are noise intensive away from more sensitive areas such as residential areas. Furthermore, where it is considered that a proposed development is likely to create disturbance due to noise, conditions will be placed on new developments and uses by the Council, that limit the hours of operation and the level of noise generation.

**Policy 9.10 Air Quality and Noise**

Maintain air quality to a satisfactory standard by regulating and monitoring atmospheric emissions in accordance with EU policy directives on air quality and Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC), by promoting and supporting initiatives to reduce air pollution and by increasing the use of sustainable transport modes and developing urban woodland, encouraging tree planting, conserving and creating green open space.

Ensure the design of development incorporates measures to minimise noise levels in their design and reduce the emission and intrusion of any noise or vibration which might adversely impact on residential amenities, where appropriate.

Consider the *Galway City Council Noise Action Plan 2013-2018* in the assessment of relevant development applications, where appropriate.

Implement environmental noise reduction measures as outlined in the *Galway City Council Noise Action Plan 2013-2018*.

Promote best practise in the implementation of radon prevention measures in partnership with relevant agencies.

### 9.11 Light Pollution

Artificial lighting is vital for a safe and secure environment, however excessive levels of light or poorly designed lighting can diminish the quality of life, cause glare to road users and disturb the night time environment. There is a need to strike a balance between the desire for illumination and security with the control of light pollution, and the avoidance of light spillage and glare. In addition to creating a safe environment, lighting installations should be sensitively designed to avoid creating nuisance to adjacent residential properties, limit the possible disturbance to wildlife and promote energy efficiency. Careful consideration should be given to the location and design of lighting fittings and columns, including security lighting, decorative lighting and floodlighting, to ensure that such installations and fixtures do not detract from the visual appearance and character of a building, protected structure, streetscape, protected view or surrounding area. Luminaires and lighting fixtures should be designed, installed and managed to ensure that glare, light spill and energy use is kept to a minimum. In the assessment of developments, the Council will have regard to the *Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light*, *Institution of Lighting Professionals*, (2011).

**Policy 9.11 Light Pollution**

Ensure the design of external lighting minimises the incidence of light pollution, glare and spillage into the surrounding environment and has due regard to the visual and residential amenities of surrounding areas.

### 9.12 Waste Management

National policy on waste management as set out in *A Resource Opportunity Waste Management Policy In Ireland 2012*, established three new Waste Management Planning Regions for the provision of effective and efficient waste management services. The Connacht and Ulster Region (CUR), serving a population of 837,350, includes the administrative areas of Mayo, Donegal, Cavan, Monaghan, Leitrim, Roscommon, Sligo, Galway City and Galway County Councils. The key objective of the *Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Plan, 2015-2021* is to manage waste in a sustainable and self-sufficient manner. The Regional Waste Plan has a number of targets, these are as follows:
• 1% reduction per annum in the quantity of household waste generated per capita over the period of the Regional Waste Plan.
• Preparing for reuse and recycling rate of 50% of municipal waste by 2020.
• Reduce to 0% the direct disposal of unprocessed residual municipal waste to landfill (from 2016 onwards) in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery practices.

The Regional Waste Plan adheres to national and EU climate change policy by encouraging the waste hierarchy of prevention, recycling and processing of waste with a view to becoming resource efficient and contributing to a local carbon economy.

Since the introduction of a segregated kerbside waste collection system in 2001 the city has achieved high recycling rates and a significant reduction in the generation of residual landfill waste. The Council ceased the direct provision of household waste collection in November 2013 and the service is now undertaken by a private operator. The Council still manages other waste management services including the bulky goods collection service, the Liosban civic amenity site and the bring bank facilities across the city.

With regard to litter management, the Council, with help from businesses and communities, continues to endeavour to keep the city litter free, in order to maintain the city’s status as an attractive tourism and investment destination and a good place to work and live. The proposed Litter Management Plan will focus on securing more collaboration with business and the general public in preventing littering and keeping the city clean. This will augment effective local litter prevention, awareness and education initiatives done to date including ‘Green Business’, ‘Green the Galway Arts Festival’, Glan Suas Gaillimh and the Green Schools Campaign. The Council, through the use of planning conditions and obligations, will continue to ensure the sustainable management of construction and demolition (C&D) waste generated by development.

**Policy 9.12 Waste Management**

Secure the provision of waste management facilities and infrastructure with appropriate provision for minimisation, recovery and recycling of waste and regulate waste operations in a manner which reflects the “polluter pays” and “proximity” principles with particular emphasis on large waste producers, in accordance with the objectives of the *Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Plan, 2015-2021* except in relation to incineration.

Support the objectives and targets of the *Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Plan, 2015-2021* relating to Galway City and any subsequent Regional Waste Plans thereafter, except in relation to incineration.

Ensure that adequate recycling and bring facilities are provided within the city, including where those are required in association with the layouts of new residential, industrial and commercial developments and where they comply with the requirements of the Environment Section of the Council.

Ensure the sustainable siting of waste facilities in relation to existing and potential surrounding land-uses, transportation and environmental considerations.

Ensure that planning proposals for new medium and large-scale developments, such as housing estates, retail and industrial developments include C&D waste management plans.

Consider redundant quarry sites as suitable locations for the undertaking of C&D waste recovery, subject to appropriate environmental and planning considerations.

Encourage the development of a C&D waste recycling facility and other measures in the city for the sorting and grinding of C&D waste for reuse, subject to appropriate environmental and planning considerations.

Promote the implementation of the City Council Litter Management Plan and other litter management initiatives in order to minimise and control the extent of litter pollution in the city.

Ensure that development on contaminated lands include appropriate remediation measures.

Continue to promote waste prevention and minimisation.
9.13 Telecommunications

Good and effective telecommunications infrastructure and services are essential for the continuing socio-economic and cultural development of the city, strengthening its role as a centre of enterprise and urban life. Telecommunications increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the city for inward investment and contributes to the creation of jobs. The provision of telecommunication infrastructure, including improved broadband capability, can expand the nature of industry in the city, particularly in newer growth areas such as cloud computing, digital media and gaming. Telecommunications facilitate more flexible working arrangements, social exchange and mobility, reducing carbon emissions.

With regard to other telecommunication installations, the Council will ensure that development for mobile phone installations take cognisance of the updated Planning Guidelines for Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (DECLG, Circular Letter PL07/12), so that any potential environmental impacts associated with installations are minimised. The need for a high quality telecommunications network will be balanced against the need to protect the visual and residential amenities of the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy 9.13 Telecommunications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support the development and expansion of telecommunication infrastructure (including the broadband network) within the city where appropriate, subject to environmental, visual and residential considerations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that development for telecommunication and mobile phone installations take cognisance of the Planning Guidelines for Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (DECLG, Circular Letter PL07/12), so that any potential environmental impacts associated with installations are minimised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the siting of new mobile phone installations to follow the hierarchy of suitable locations proposed in the DECLG Guidelines. Only when a number of other possibilities have been exhausted, masts may be erected within or in the immediate vicinity of residential areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that developers of masts facilitate the co-location of antennae with other operators in order to avoid an unnecessary proliferation of masts. Where this is not possible operators will be encouraged to co-locate so that masts and antennae may be clustered.</td>
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</table>
9.14 Energy and Associated Infrastructure

Investment in national strategic infrastructure, including energy transmission infrastructure, provides a key basis for economic recovery and growth. The provision of secure, reliable and efficient energy transmission supply and infrastructure is of critical importance to the continuing economic, social and cultural development of the city and its ability to attract investment and sustain existing enterprise. The improvement and diversification of the energy transmission distribution networks can contribute to energy efficiencies and strengthen the capacity of the transmission networks to cope with extreme events associated with climate change and shifts in demand.

The Council facilitates the provision of many services such as the gas and electricity transmission networks. *Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow* (Eirgrid 2015) provides a long term view of electricity transmission infrastructure requirements and provides a guide to the scale of grid development required to correctly match the anticipated long term needs. The implementation plan of Grid25 indicates that new electricity transmission infrastructure will be required from west County Galway to the city and beyond. The Council will continue to support the infrastructural renewal and development of energy networks in accordance with the *Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure* (2012). Balanced consideration will be given to the development of necessary energy transmission infrastructure serving the city’s energy needs and the avoidance of unduly negative effects on the environment and the community.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Policy 9.14 Energy and Associated Infrastructure</th>
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<tr>
<td>Support the infrastructural renewal and strategic development of the national transmission grid system and energy networks in the city, underground where at all possible, including the overhead high voltage lines necessary to provide the required networks in accordance with the <em>Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure</em> (2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the implementation of <em>Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow</em> (Eirgrid 2015) to deliver a sustainable electricity system and ensure transition to a low-carbon economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the infrastructural renewal and development of energy networks avoid negative impacts on European Sites and adhere to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43 EEC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support where appropriate the provision of energy networks, provided it can be demonstrated that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts through relevant environmental assessment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The design is such that will achieve least environmental impact;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where impacts are identified mitigation features have been included;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where it can be shown the proposed development is consistent with international best practice with regard to materials and technologies that will ensure a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient high quality network.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9.15 Specific Objectives

- Complete the Sailín to Silverstrand Coastal Protection Scheme and walkway from Blackrock to Silverstrand.
- Prepare a local climate change adaption strategy.
10 City Centre/Area Based Plans

10.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
10.2 City Centre
10.3 Salthill
10.4 Westside
10.5 Ardaun
10.6 Murrough
10.7 Specific Objectives
10.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

**Aim**
To ensure the protection and enhancement of the specific roles and characteristics of areas, which contribute to the overall vitality and diversity of Galway City. To maintain and enhance the distinctive character of the city centre by reinforcing its regional role in commerce, culture, tourism and entertainment, by continuing to support a good residential living environment and by allowing for a plan led sustainable expansion of the city centre into areas suitable for regeneration.

**Context**
Within Galway City, there are distinctive areas, which have specific functions or characteristics that contribute to the diversity, economic well being and character of the overall city.

The City Centre area is particularly important, as it reflects to a large extent the unique and vibrant image of Galway, with a medieval townscape, a waterways setting, hosting a strong arts and cultural heritage. The city centre is also a prime employment location and commercial hub with a wide catchment as well as being a tourist attraction. It is recognised that in order to enhance and strengthen the resilience and wellbeing of Galway that specific policies and development objectives are required for the city centre and in particular for key regeneration lands at Ceannt Station, Inner Harbour and within the Headford Road LAP area.

Salthill is also quite distinctive in character. The advantage of a seafront location has seen it evolve from a traditional resort to a modern, lively entertainment destination attracting visitors and locals alike. In recent years Salthill has re-established itself as an urban village with an increased residential community and a broader range of local services. It is recognised that in order to protect and strengthen the role of Salthill, area based policies and development objectives are required.

Ardaun, on the east of the city will be the main focus of city growth in the short to medium period. It is an aspiration of the Plan to make Ardaun a high quality urban environment, this will require a Local Area Plan (LAP) which will give specific detailed direction and guidance. Considerable work has been carried out to date in the preparation of a Draft LAP, this work has focussed on creating an identity and character for Ardaun, based on high quality urban design and to create a sustainable living and working environment with integrated services and transportation.

An LAP approach will also be adopted for Murrough where there is an opportunity for providing access to the coast, developing recreational facilities, a mix of uses and a new residential neighbourhood. It is also considered appropriate to prepare an LAP for the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin junction), where there is considerable opportunity for sustainable redevelopment, adjacent to the city centre, for the provision of mixed uses, new residential communities, improved transportation services and improved linkages to the city centre.

**Strategy**
- Protect and enhance areas in the city with specific functions or characteristics through area-based policies, specific guidelines and standards.
- Protect and enhance the prime role of the city centre for retail, commercial, social and cultural activity and as a place to live and visit.
- Ensure the integrated and sustainable development of Ardaun and Murrough by the preparation and implementation of Local Area Plans.
- Ensure the integrated and sustainable development of regeneration areas at Ceannt Station, Inner Harbour and Headford Road (south of the Bodkin junction).

10.2 City Centre

The city centre, despite the economic downtown, has remained relatively buoyant and continues to be the primary area for high order shopping, tourism, social and cultural activities. The implementation of strong planning policies, which preserve the primacy of the city centre coupled with improvements to the public realm contribute to reinforcing the positive image of the city as a place to live, work, visit and shop. Initiatives, such as the development of the Latin Quarter branding and securing the Purple Flag Award for excellence in managing the evening and night-time economy, promote the city centre as an attractive and safe
destination. A successful city centre is dependent on many factors, including the diversity of uses, ease of accessibility, a high quality built and natural environment and an attractive and safe public realm. Within Galway City Centre there are other challenging factors, such as the need to address traffic congestion, develop key brownfield sites and reduce vacancy.

Diversity of uses

The diversity of uses in the city centre including commercial, residential, educational, cultural, entertainment, community, uses relating to tourism and the expanding café culture has contributed to the vitality and atmosphere of the city centre. It is important to retain this mix of uses, which gives the city an energy and vitality. Such a balance is needed as trends towards a reduced mix, where some uses can predominate, would diminish the attraction of the city centre and it’s distinction from other places. The principal shopping streets will continue to be the focus for retail development and to protect their prime function, non-retail uses will be discouraged at ground floor level.

The development of key brownfield sites such as that at Ceannt Station and the Headford Road LAP area will complement the retail offer in the city centre, in particular accommodating the larger retail floor plates which cannot be readily accommodated in the historic core. While it is acknowledged that there are considerable market and financial constraints in progressing key city centre sites, the Council will continue to encourage their delivery in the longer term through Development Plan policy and through improvements to the public realm and the transportation network.

Development Plan policies have encouraged city centre living accommodated in a range of innovatively designed residential units, many located within mixed use developments. This has contributed greatly to a sustainable and vibrant city centre. The Council will continue to require new development in the city centre to provide a minimum residential content. It is envisaged that the regeneration sites will have a scale of housing that will create new city centre neighbourhoods. These communities will be characterised by well-designed homes with a high quality of public realm, linked into the city centre network of streets. As well as creating new neighbourhoods, the Development Plan policy in Chapter 2 recognises the importance of the established city centre communities such as those at Woodquay, Henry Street and Bowling Green. Planning policy will continue to protect these areas from the encroachment of commercial activity and will enhance the residential amenity of these areas through environmental improvements. The recently introduced Department of Finance Living City Initiative also promotes city centre living together with the refurbishment of historic housing stock and enhancement of the quality of the built environment.

The rich and varied mix of social, community, visitor and cultural facilities and heritage features are important assets and add significantly to the character of the city centre and to making it a successful place. Examples such as the City Museum, new Picture Palace Cinema, Galway Arts Centre and various theatre spaces contribute to the strong social and cultural attraction of the city centre. The Council will continue to play an important role in conjunction with stakeholders in the facilitation and provision of such facilities. The framework of provision will be guided by the Cultural Strategy, Tourism Strategy and the LECP.
The development of key regeneration lands will be required to incorporate cultural facilities as part of the mix of uses envisaged in these areas.

**Built environment and urban design**

The character of the city centre is to a great extent defined by the built environment. Its importance is reflected in the number of city centre buildings listed as protected structures, the designation of much of the area as a Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP) and the inclusion of many city centre streets in ACAs as detailed in Chapter 8. The compact city centre core derives a strong urban design context mainly from its medieval legacy but also from the more planned form of Eyre Square and Dominick Street. High quality design, which has regard to this context, is essential to protect and enhance the character of the city centre. While varying building heights and diversity of new and old building styles are a characteristic of the city centre streetscape, the overall scale of buildings in the city centre core is relatively consistent. In general, the following specific design elements when adhered to in new infill developments can contribute to visually strengthening the city centre and maintaining its character:

- Continuous unbroken buildings lines,
- Narrow plot sizes,
- Stone/painted plaster finishes,
- Varying building heights with no regular pattern,
- Steeply pitched roofs,
- Strong corners and sharp gables,
- Diversity of building styles,
- Timber windows.

Within the ACAs, management plans will be prepared which will further detail the design sensitivities required for new developments and for refurbishment of properties. The Council will also continue to promote the principles of good shop front design as set out in the Galway Shop Front and Signage Design Guidelines.

Previous development plans have included standards and policies which have maximised the efficient use of land while ensuring the protection of the character of the city centre. In order to maintain this character a similar approach will apply in this Plan. This will require new developments to show how they can link in with the existing urban structure through adhering to plot ratio standards in addition to critical design elements. On certain key sites within the city centre it is recognised that a higher plot ratio may contribute to a higher quality of urban design, innovative iconic architectural form or urban regeneration.

The Ceannt Station, Inner Harbour and Headford Road LAP regeneration sites have potential to create their own character and sense of place but with reference and appropriate linkage, both in movement and design, to the greater context of the city. Within these areas a strong identity will be encouraged through innovative, good and contemporary architecture, good street network and high quality public realm.

**Transport and accessibility**

The city centre is a very accessible location, having a good network of connected streets and spaces linked to public transportation services. Vehicular traffic however is a dominant feature with both local and through traffic creating significant congestion in the city centre, particularly at peak times, impacting on the quality and experience of the city centre environment. Chapter 3 sets out detailed policy and objectives to reduce traffic volumes and remove traffic away from city centre streets. These will afford opportunities for pedestrianisation, shared streets, enhanced cycle facilities and improvements in the public realm. In addition, to improve safety and ease of movement improved pedestrian footways, additional pedestrian crossings and new bridge crossings with separation of users will all enhance the attractiveness of the city centre and improve connectivity. This is particularly desirable for improved linkage into the Harbour, Ceannt Station, Headford Road areas and to key destinations such as NUIG, UHG and Salthill. While it is recognised that limited car access is needed, particularly in relation to service delivery and emergency access, a greater balance between users is required with the emphasis on an improved pedestrian environment. In the consideration of movement, linkage and accessibility the Council will have regard to national guidance as
set out in DMURS and will promote universal design and access for all in line with commitments under the Barcelona Declaration. These issues have been assessed in the context of the GTS which proposes a range of measures which, combined with the proposed N6 GCRR, will reduce the volume of motorised transport in the city centre. The measures proposed in the GTS for the city centre focus on improving and prioritising walking, cycling and public transport with the introduction of a Cross-City Link which gives priority to sustainable transport modes. This is part of a clearly defined city centre access network which will increase the quality and experience of the city centre and afford opportunities for improvements in the public realm and reinforcing the concept of Galway as a “walking city”.

**Public realm and greening of the city centre**

A high quality public realm promotes a positive image of the city centre and contributes to safety, quality of life and wellbeing. It also creates place for “a living city”, providing space for social interaction and activities. The quality of the public realm is also recognised as a significant factor in generating business confidence and a catalyst for investment in cities.

Civic and open spaces such as Eyre Square, Fishmarket, Woodquay, the Riverside Walk and the street network contribute to the attractive image and sense of place in Galway City Centre. The use of public spaces in the city centre for events and entertainment contributes to the atmosphere and vibrancy of the city centre. There is potential to expand such activities and facilitate a broader community engagement. This will require a co-ordinated approach to the management and use of public space together with an agreed range of qualitative measures which will be addressed in the public realm strategy for the city as highlighted in Chapter 8. The proposed managements plans for ACAs will also give detailed guidance in relation to the management and treatment of the public realm in these historic environments which will lead not only to the protection of the ACAs character but also to the enhancement of visual amenity and economic value. Galway City Centre is also enhanced by its rich natural environment and green spaces with direct access to nature, the sea, the River Corrib and canal system. Chapter 4 sets out detailed policies and objectives to further enhance the green network and to protect the natural environment of the city centre. The Council recognises that there are significant opportunities for the greening of the city centre and this will be addressed as part of the public realm strategy.

While previous planning policies in conjunction with Council initiatives have successfully contributed to shaping the physical environment and enhancing the economic role of the city centre, further opportunities for improvement and regeneration exist. It is considered that there are sites of significant scale in the city centre that have great potential to expand and further strengthen the role of the city as a regional retail and commercial centre. Measures set out in the GTS will also provide opportunities for improvements to the public realm.

### 10.2.1 Ceannt Station Area

A rich medieval period has left a strong legacy that gives definition to the city centre. However this tight network of streets has also served to constrain the direction of growth in recent years and limited the ability of the city centre to respond to demand for an increase in commercial floor area space. In the past Galway also had a rich mercantile trading function where the harbour and seafront were part of the town centre activities, in contrast to today where the gravity of attraction is the main shopping streets. This has lamentably resulted in a separation of the town centre from the sea with all the consequential loss of opportunities. The sites at both Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour have experienced economic and functional changes which have left behind inactive brownfield sites. These sites present scope for a significant extension of the city centre and a re-engagement with the seafront.

With respect to Ceannt Station, a site of approximately 5.8 hectares, there has been examination of a number of development strategies which include development proposals to modernise and expand the public transportation function of the station and in the longer term release the surplus lands on the site to accommodate more compatible city centre uses, replacing the redundant industrial uses. In principle, this represents a solution to the need for a sequential expansion of the city centre onto a site with the advantage of an improved bus and train interchange. In this regard the Council will consider the regeneration of these lands where they are led by a vision that can demonstrate a clear strategy for the physical, economic and social transformation of the area.
In advance of specific proposals for development, a masterplan will be prepared for the overall site which will address the critical issues that will contribute to making this area a successful place. In general the masterplan will set out proposals for buildings, spaces, movement, and land use. It will include for a delivery of transport requirements, determine the relationship between buildings and public spaces, and show how connectivity will be achieved. It will define building heights and massing, determine the distribution of use and activities, identify movement patterns, provide a good public realm, demonstrate the link with the existing built heritage and culture and show how the unique waterfront setting can be celebrated. This context will need to be linked to a delivery strategy which will give the likely phases of development. Economic and investment strategies will be required to be part of the masterplan which will also include for the role of all agency involvement in the delivery of services and infrastructure to be clarified.

The preparation of this masterplan will be primarily the responsibility of the prime stakeholder but a significant level of engagement with the Planning Authority, the public, adjoining landowners and other stakeholders will be required to be demonstrated as part of the process The masterplan will build on the acknowledged co-operation existing between Ceannt Station landowners and harbour landowners which includes for a common objective to have a co-ordinated and integrated approach embedded into future proposals.

In particular with regard to the masterplan, there will be a requirement for any redevelopment to accommodate and front-load a significantly upgraded transportation interchange with associated underground car parking. A full analysis of future likely and desirable needs for transport facilities including for commuter rail services will be necessary in the context of Galway as a Gateway and a regional centre. This should demonstrate how the dedication of land on the site for commercial development will not inhibit future demand for intensification of rail/bus or any other likely forms of public transport.

Regarding the particulars of urban design, it should be demonstrated that proposed developments can knit seamlessly into the fabric of the medieval core. There will be requirements to connect and integrate with the existing street network, reflect the existing urban grain, structure and link the new public spaces with existing public spaces. The design will be required to maximise public access and permeability throughout the site, give linkage and views to the seafront and Lough Atalia. It should also look at the challenge of transition areas bounding the site and anticipate opportunities for linkage and continuity in the design and layout of these sites. This will be particularly important with regard to the adjoining Inner Harbour area where regeneration is also planned and where maximum advantage of the seafront location can be delivered.

Where taller buildings are part of the composition, it shall be demonstrated how existing important views, vistas and landmarks are respected and how such buildings contribute to aspects of urban design such as accessibility, enclosure, character, permeability and adaptability. The public realm should be designed in a manner that achieves a strong sense of place, achieves permeability and reflects a defined functionality and strong landscape impact. This element too should demonstrate how linkage with existing spaces can be achieved and where continuity with likely scenarios on the adjoining site can be made.

The use mix shall provide for a minimum residential content on the site equivalent to 30% of the proposed gross floor area, in order to achieve a significant level of residential presence and a critical mass to create a new community. In certain limited cases, where a residential content would not represent the optimum use for a specific site within the overall plan area or where a specific development proposal might not in terms of urban design have a more beneficial use mix , the equivalent 30% requirement may be provided for at a more appropriate location within the overall site or as part of a different development. Any alternative measures to achieve the minimum residential content will be required to be part of the framework strategy for the overall development of the area. The commercial use mix shall include for both retail and office use.

The rich historical and architectural heritage of the site should be a major consideration in any proposal and opportunities for the re-use and the re-establishment of relationships between these structures explored in any design and layout. Cognisance should also be taken of the proximity of the Seveso III site in the Harbour Enterprise Park.

In view of the scale of the site and the location, it will be a requirement of any redevelopment to provide for an arts/cultural facility at the developer’s expense and with a management regime incorporated into the development delivery that enables the long term sustainable use of such a facility. The significant location and size of the site and the requirement to deliver an integrated transport hub may justify consideration of a higher density standard on these lands than the prevailing plot ratio of 2:1. In the CC zone increased plot ratio will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would make a significant architectural contribution to the character of the city.

Any scheme for redevelopment should have a phasing programme that demonstrates delivery of public benefits corresponding with each stage of construction such as a public square/cultural facility. The phasing programme should also be so designed that it is sensitive to market changes and that development for each
phase can be, as far as is feasible, completed to a level that is self-contained and will not result in a negative visual impact on any publicly exposed area for a prolonged period. As part of the phasing programme consideration will be given to the identification of an initial phase comprising of lands north of the railway line and fronting onto Fairgreen Road. These lands have the advantage of street frontage, direct accessibility, capacity to complete and further animate this streetscape. These lands are segregated from the lands associated with the function of Ceannt Station but regardless will be required to show how re-development will not inhibit future demand for intensification of rail/bus or any other likely forms of public transport and also how the development will contribute to the upgrading of existing transportation services. There will also be a requirement as part of any masterplan proposals to accord with measures proposed in the GTS.

10.2.2 Inner Harbour Area

The constraints associated with the existing docks require that in order to modernise and address deficiencies, the harbour functions will need to be relocated to an alternative site. Galway Harbour Company has proposals to address this by providing for a major new port development to the east of the existing Inner Harbour and a Strategic Infrastructure Development application for this proposed development is currently being assessed by An Bord Pleanála. The development of new port facilities has the potential to free up the existing site for redevelopment. This represents a welcome challenge to re-establish links with the sea and open up new opportunities for a range of uses including water-related leisure uses. These lands, in addition to other adjoining brownfield lands as defined in Figure 10.3, represent the definition of the Inner Harbour Area and the lands required to be the subject of a masterplan. The regeneration plans for Ceannt Station on the adjoining site will have to be a parallel consideration in any redevelopment of the Inner Harbour in order to maximise the benefits to the city in both land use amenity and urban design terms. In principle the proposals for a mix of uses on these lands complemented by a unique waterfront setting linked to the city centre is acceptable and welcome. It represents a chance to enhance the experience of this area for both visitors and locals. It has potential to reveal the past trading history of the city and celebrate a high quality coastal edge linked to the city centre.

In view of this the Council will consider the redevelopment of these lands where it can be demonstrated that a number of requirements can be satisfied. In advance of specific proposals for development, a masterplan will be prepared for the overall site which will address the critical issues that will contribute to making this area a successful place - (see Fig. 10.3)
This plan will address critical issues including sustainability, protection of adjoining European Sites, access, urban design context, maximum building heights, massing appropriate use mixes, high quality public realm, industrial heritage, climate adaptation measures and likely phasing of construction. The preparation of this plan shall be the responsibility of the applicant in consultation with the local authority, adjoining landowners and stakeholders. This will build on the acknowledged co-operation existing between the harbour landowners and Ceannt Station landowners, which includes for a common objective to have a co-ordinated and integrated approach embedded into future proposals.

There will be a requirement for any redevelopment to ensure that opportunities for water-based recreational facilities are maximised and that public access is secured throughout the area and along the seafront. There will also be a requirement as part of any masterplan proposals to accord with measures proposed in the GTS.

Regarding urban design, it should be demonstrated that the proposal can connect into and extend the historic street pattern of the city centre. Any scheme will show a good relationship with the existing urban grain/structure and link public spaces. The design will be required to maximise public access and permeability throughout the site, give linkage and views to the seafront and key coastal vistas. It should also look at the challenge of transition areas bounding the site and anticipate opportunities for linkages and continuity in the design and layout of these sites. This will be particularly important with regard to the adjoining Ceannt Station site where regeneration is also planned and where maximum advantage of the seafront location can be delivered. In addition, in order to achieve the maximum advantage of this site, any redevelopment should also show how a favourable amenity can be secured in the transition area edging the adjoining industrial lands at the Harbour Enterprise Park.

Where taller buildings and/or landmark buildings are part of the composition, it shall be demonstrated how existing important views, vistas and landmarks are respected and show how such buildings contribute to aspects of urban design such as accessibility, enclosure, character, permeability and adaptability. Opportunities for innovative architecture or architecture by design competitions should be a consideration in any scheme.

The public realm should be designed in a manner that maximises the benefits of the seafront location, achieves a strong sense of place, achieves permeability and reflects a defined functionality and strong landscape impact. This element too should demonstrate how linkage with existing spaces can be achieved and where continuity with likely scenarios on the adjoining Ceannt Station site can be made. Economic and investment strategies will be required to be part of the masterplan which will also include for the role of all agency involvement in the delivery of services and infrastructure to be clarified.

The use mix should provide for a minimum residential content on the site equivalent to 30% of the proposed gross floor area in order to achieve a significant level of residential presence and a critical mass to create a new community. As with the Ceannt Station lands, in certain limited cases, where a residential content would not represent the optimum use for a specific site within the overall plan area or where a specific development proposal might not in terms of urban design have a more beneficial use mix, the equivalent 30% requirement may be provided for at a more appropriate location within the overall site or as part of a different development. Any alternative measures to achieve the minimum residential content will be required to be part of the framework strategy for the overall development of the area.

The distribution of uses should include for commercial, office, recreational and cultural uses. Potential for an iconic building should be explored in view of the significance of the site location and the proven record of such buildings for attracting tourist interest internationally.

The industrial heritage of the site should be reflected in proposals for redevelopment. Due to the sensitivity of the natural environment, which adjoins European Sites, proposals for redevelopment will be required to be assessed in the context of the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Proposals for development in areas at risk from flooding as defined in the SFRA of the Development Plan will require appropriate flood risk assessment to be carried out. Cognisance should also be taken of the proximity of the Seveso III site.
In view of the scale of the site and its location, it will be a requirement of any redevelopment to provide for an arts/cultural facility at the developer’s expense and with a management regime incorporated into the development delivery that enables the long term sustainability of such a facility. The significant location and size of the site and the requirement to deliver a high quality public realm in conjunction with a location in close proximity to a transport hub, may justify consideration of a higher density standard on this site than the prevailing plot ratio of 2:1. In the CC zone increased plot ratio will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would make a significant architectural contribution to the character of the city.

Any scheme for redevelopment should have a phasing programme that demonstrates delivery of public benefits corresponding with each stage of construction such as a public square/cultural facility. The phasing programme should also be so designed that it is sensitive to market changes and that development for each phase can be as far as is feasible completed to a level that is self contained and will not result in a negative visual impact on any publicly exposed area for a prolonged period.

10.2.3 Site Assembly and Key Opportunity Sites

In the event of a site of significant scale emerging within the city centre as a result of site assembly or otherwise, there will be a requirement to address similar challenges as are described for Ceannt Station and Inner Harbour in order to demonstrate that the development strategy being pursued is the best option and most likely to result in successful placemaking. This relates to the requirement to prepare an overall masterplan setting out proposals for buildings, spaces and a movement and land use strategy. This should demonstrate a good urban design context, integration with the surrounding urban context and natural environment and a relationship with the built and natural heritage. An arts/cultural facility or an outdoor space that can support public activities including public art, in addition to the standard development management requirements for city centre sites may be required depending on the scale and location of the site assembled.

Any development proposals for the assembled site area known as Eyre Square East would merit the above attention given its scale, city centre location and its location partially within the Eyre Square ACA.

There are a number of key opportunity sites and a number of vacant sites within the city centre, some of which have the benefit of planning permission. Their development and use would greatly enhance the quality of the city centre streetscape, the diversity of uses and retail offer.
One of the likely sites in this category is the area located to the east of Eyre Square which includes a significant block of properties assembled with the purposes of redevelopment. These lands have the potential to create a new distinctive city quarter. A development strategy for this area would be greatly enhanced where the approach includes for the masterplanning of the assembled site in the context of the overall block as identified in Figure 10.4. Such a masterplan would be required to demonstrate the merits of the development strategy being pursued and show how it would result in the creation of a successful new quarter in the city. It is recognised that this does not infer nor necessitate the replacement of many existing structures within the block nor alter the form of the existing surrounding principal streetscapes within the block, rather it would show how new development could complement and enhance the overall block.

The masterplan would demonstrate how new development would recognise the sensitive location of the block, within the historic core including the context of Eyre Square ACA and structures on the RPS.

10.2.4 Headford Road Area

The Headford Road area located south of the Bodkin junction and the N6 and adjoining the River Corrib is a busy commercial area adjacent to the city centre incorporating the Galway Retail Park and Galway Shopping Centre, two major retail destinations. There are significant natural heritage and amenity assets within the area with the River Corrib, Terryland Forest City Park, Bohermore Neighbourhood Park and the Plots Local Park. The current environment comprises low density development with extensive surface car parking areas. The existing shopping centre has the benefit of planning permission for a major redevelopment which will greatly enhance this area incorporating a significant increase in use mix, a strong urban edge along the Headford Road, a new residential community, an enhanced public realm and a new cultural facility.

The area includes a significant amount of land in City Council ownership which includes the Dyke Road car park. The Council is considered to have capacity to be a key player in the rejuvenation of the area.

Currently however, the area lacks cohesion, a sense of place and identity. The existing parks are underutilised and lack adequate passive surveillance. The upgrade of the Bodkin junction to a signalised junction and the revision of access and traffic circulation measures have made improvements to traffic flow and pedestrian and cycle linkage. Despite this the area still suffers traffic congestion, particularly at peak times and would benefit from improved linkages and connections. The area, which extends to approximately 30 hectares, has great potential for redevelopment given its proximity to the city centre, the existing infrastructure available and the extent of its natural heritage and amenity resources. The successful development/redevelopment of the area is best realised within the structure of a LAP.

Substantial work has been carried out by a multi-disciplinary team who, following analysis of the area and examination of various development strategies, prepared a sustainable integrated development framework for the area. The framework included for the drawing together of the principal aspects of place-making, planning, sustainable transportation, architecture, engineering, landscape design, ecology, access, passive surveillance and development economics. Consultation with the public and stakeholders was included for in this process. Flood risk assessment of the lands was also undertaken and detailed modelling and identification of possible flood mitigation measures progressed.

The preparation of an LAP will revisit this framework in the context of the current social, economic and cultural environment. It will provide plan led direction and context for future development taking account of the current economic challenges and likely future trends and will provide for flexibility. The LAP will take an integrated approach to the comprehensive development of this area. Success will be linked to the creation of a vibrant mixed-use area including for a commercial and residential district with cultural, civic and amenity facilities. The use mix will be required to provide for a significant residential content enabling the creation of a sustainable community.
As with the other key regeneration sites, the use mix shall provide for a minimum residential content on the site equivalent to 30% of the proposed gross floor area, in order to achieve a significant level of residential presence and a critical mass to create a new community. In certain limited cases, where a residential content would not represent the optimum use for a specific site within the overall plan area or where a specific development proposal might not in terms of urban design have a more beneficial use mix, the equivalent 30% requirement may be provided for at a more appropriate location within the overall site or as part of a different development. Any alternative measures to achieve the minimum residential content will be required to be part of the strategy for the overall development of the area.

The LAP will encourage a diversity of uses to sustain an animated and vibrant public realm of streets and urban spaces promoting sustainable transportation options. It will seek to maximise the opportunities that exist to integrate and protect the natural heritage assets of the area, create improvements to the existing parks and provide high quality linkages to the city centre, NUIG and outer residential areas. The Plan will reflect the unique character and culture of Galway and acknowledge the dynamism of this urban area.

The potential for the Headford Road area to develop facilities that can accommodate the need for modern, purpose built civic, cultural and arts space is currently being examined by the Council.

In the event that opportunities arise for the City Council to deliver these facilities on Council lands in advance of the adoption of a LAP, the delivery of such facilities will take cognisance of the integrated development strategy included for in the framework plan for this area. It is considered that the development of such facilities would bring significant socio-economic benefits to the community and be a catalyst for further investment in the area with potential to deliver a building of iconic status.

### 10.2.5 Other City Centre Areas

**Woodquay**

Woodquay has a strong historical legacy, which includes use as a potato market. Planning policies have contributed to the area retaining a strong residential content and traditional townscape. There are opportunities for improvement in the civic quality and residential amenity of the area. This would also improve linkages between the city centre core and the Headford Road commercial area. The Council proposes to carry out a civic improvement scheme for Woodquay, in consultation with the public, building on the ongoing community engagement and recent initiatives in this regard. The aim of the scheme will be to improve the civic quality and residential amenity of the area through improvements in traffic management, parking regime and public realm. The scheme will take account of the public realm strategy and will include measures to enhance the strong community spirit such as community events and market days.

**Small Crane**

The Small Crane is part of a network of civic spaces within the city. The Council, in consultation with the local residents and businesses, propose to carry out civic improvements to the square as part of the ongoing city-wide initiative to improve and enhance public spaces and which will be advanced by the public realm strategy. Civic improvements may include the pedestrianisation of the square, removal of car parking, undergounding of services and provision of high quality public space and an enhanced setting for the Small Crane weighing scales, a protected structure. It is envisaged that the space could be used to re-establish a market and to facilitate community events.

**The West Area**

It is recognised that the West Area has a certain distinctive character and an established business and residential community. The Council will seek to strengthen the character of this area through improvements to the public realm, improved linkages and accessibility and through traffic management measures. The Council will build on pedestrian improvements carried out to date at Raven Terrace to enhance permeability to the West Area and continue to investigate opportunities to carry out improvements taking account of the public realm strategy to be prepared.
**Bowling Green**

Bowling Green is adjacent to the St. Nicholas Church area and Abbeygate Street. It contains attractive turn of the century two-storey terraced housing including the Nora Barnacle House. Due to increased traffic pressure, the lack of footpaths and irregular boundaries the area has a low quality pedestrian environment. There are opportunities for improved movement for pedestrians through Bowling Green which will facilitate linkages with the St. Nicholas Church area and Woodquay. This will improve the residential amenity of the area. The Council will carry out an improvement scheme in conjunction with the public which will include traffic calming measures and improvements in the public realm.

![Fig. 10.7 Bowling Green](image)

**Policy 10.2 City Centre**

Maintain and enhance the resilience of the city centre by reinforcing its dominant role for commerce, shopping, tourist, cultural and leisure activities, enhancing its vitality and attractiveness as a place to work, live and visit.

Control the proliferation of uses which could lead to the deterioration of retailing on the principal shopping streets.

Control the negative impact caused by dominance, due to proliferation or scale, of particular uses.

Encourage a living city centre by requiring a residential content in new developments and promoting a high quality urban environment in the design and layout of new schemes.

Maintain and enhance the environmental quality of the city centre with the overall aim of ensuring a safe and attractive legible environment.

Maintain and enhance the quality of the city centre public realm and enhance accessibility and connectivity to and within the city centre through improvements to the network of streets, footpaths and public spaces and through implementation of a public realm strategy.

Ensure new developments incorporate design features and specifications that complement the character of the city centre.

Encourage the expansion of the city centre into lands at Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour.

Support and facilitate the phased redevelopment of surplus lands at Ceannt Station in accordance with a masterplan.

Facilitate the redevelopment of the Inner Harbour for mixed use development in accordance with a masterplan.

Develop the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin junction) in accordance with a Local Area Plan which will facilitate an attractive mixed use urban quarter and facilitate a new residential neighbourhood, having regard to its natural setting adjacent to the River Corrib and Terryland Forest City Park.

Improve the public realm and residential amenities of Woodquay and Bowling Green by the implementation of improvement schemes and continue to carry out further improvements at Raven Terrace.

Enhance the quality of the urban environment in the West Area through improvements to the public realm, enhanced linkages and through implementation of traffic management measures.

Progress the implementation of a Civic Improvement Scheme for the Small Crane.

Support initiatives to enhance the image and attractiveness of the city centre in co-operation with local businesses, communities and other stakeholders.

Ensure the development of significant city centre sites is carried out to high design standards and in the context of an overall masterplan.

Encourage the use of innovative architecture on key regeneration sites to create a strong identity for these areas.
10.3 Salthill

The character of Salthill has changed over time but still retains its distinctive character and amenity value. In recent years it has re-established itself as an urban village with many of the former hotels and nightclubs replaced by apartments, cafes and restaurants. This has led to an increase in the permanent residential population supporting a broader range of local services for the local community, visitors and an expanded catchment area. The significant attractions of the area are the seafront, promenade and extensive beach facilities. These assets ensure that it retains many of the traditional seaside resort characteristics and uses such as entertainment facilities, funfairs, cafes, restaurants and a range of tourist accommodation and attractions. Other attractions including indoor swimming and leisure facilities at Leisureland and an Aquarium contribute to the diversity of uses, giving Salthill a distinctive character and vibrancy.

The Salthill Promenade is a major recreational facility for city residents, a strong tourist attraction and key city landmark culminating with the iconic Blackrock diving tower. It is an important active and passive amenity space with significant footfalls particularly during the summer season.

Salthill has both natural and built heritage assets. It has secured Blue Flag status for a succession of years, which is a significant asset in promoting a clean image of the city and in developing water based recreation and amenity activities. Toft Park, Celia Griffin Park, Salthill Park and the Circle of Life Park also contribute greatly to important elements of the green network in Salthill. Along the promenade the shelters, seating areas, kiosks and diving tower are unique and hallmark features of social, architectural and technical interest and contribute to the resort character of the area.

Salthill remains an area in transition and requires special attention to safeguard and strengthen its identity and role as an urban village. Issues such as unfinished and unoccupied key buildings, underutilised sites and lack of design consistency along the main commercial spine need to be addressed. The area also lacks good pedestrian permeability, with vehicular traffic and parking dominating the main commercial street and poor connectivity between the commercial area and the promenade.

The Council will seek to strengthen Salthill as an urban village and as a recreation and coastal amenity area by encouraging high quality mixed-use development and by carrying out improvements to the public realm. This will be achieved by guidance on design standards of infill, mix of uses, improved accessibility and more disciplined shop front and signage guidance in accordance with those promoted for Salthill in the Galway Shop Front and Signage Guidelines.

The Council will also discourage the spread of uses, which would lead to the deterioration in the attractiveness and amenity value of the area. In order to reflect the urban village status and streetscape of Salthill, car parking provision may be offset by sustainable transportation contributions where it is deemed appropriate on grounds of urban design or sustainability.

To further strengthen the role of Salthill, the Council will undertake an environmental improvement scheme in consultation with local businesses, residents and other stakeholders, which will identify areas which would benefit from public realm improvements. These will be so designed to improve the visual amenity, calm traffic and improve sustainable linkages between the promenade and the commercial area. Specifically under review will be the need for greater pedestrian priority, traffic management and car parking rationalisation.
along the main commercial spine on Upper Salthill Road. The vicinity of Seapoint and the D’Arcy Roundabout will be examined as an area which could merit improvements together with measures to improve pedestrian connectivity to the promenade and other amenities, provision of high quality paving, landscaping and street furniture. Any scheme will be required to take account of the proposed public realm strategy for the city.

The Council will also seek to improve linkages and accessibility to Salthill from the surrounding areas in particular from the city centre through implementation of measures proposed in the GTS in particular through improvements in public transport, walking and cycling. Proposed measures include the provision of a core bus route through Salthill and improvements in the cycle and pedestrian network which will include implementation of the City Centre to Bearna Greenway and the primary cycle network along Threadneedle Road linking with the Western Distributor Road and Seamus Quirke Road. Other measures such as the proposed City Wayfinding Scheme, extension of the Public Bike Scheme and the Sailín to Silverstrand Coastal Protection Scheme which has capacity to include a pedestrian walkway will improve accessibility and will support environmental and public realm improvements.

In recognition of the importance of the Salthill Promenade as a recreation and amenity resource and a tourist attraction, the Council will carry out a strategy for its long-term management and enhancement. The strategy will consider issues such as access, car parking, support facilities, flood risk, surface treatment, landscaping and street furniture. It will build on improvements carried out following the storm damage in recent years. It will also complement the rehabilitation works proposed for the Blackrock diving tower and works to enhance accessibility for users of these facilities.

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**Policy 10.3 Salthill**

- Enhance the role of Salthill as an urban village, a leisure, recreation and coastal amenity area for the city and service centre for the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.
- Ensure high quality in the design of new developments which has regard to the distinctive character of Salthill.
- Enhance the public realm of Salthill through the implementation of an environmental improvement scheme carried out in consultation with local businesses, residents and key stakeholders, with particular focus on the main commercial street and in the vicinity of Seapoint and D’Arcy Roundabout.
- Continue to improve the amenity recreational quality of the area through the preparation of a strategy for the long term management and enhancement of Salthill Promenade and by the implementation of environmental and coastal improvement schemes and measures included in the Galway Transport Strategy. This shall include for appropriate flood risk assessment and management measures.

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**10.4 Westside**

Westside is an important service centre located in the established suburbs near Newcastle, Shantalla and Taylors Hill. In the retail hierarchy, it is designated as a district centre. It has a wide range of community and commercial facilities and services and is a well established neighbourhood with a strong community. Recent developments including the Seamus Quirke Road Improvement Scheme, Westside Amenity Park, Corrib Park and Shantalla Park improvements have enhanced the urban environment. The area however has a weak urban structure and poor physical cohesion. It lacks a strong urban definition and streetscape which means it has a poor legibility and sense of place.

The objective for Westside is to improve connectivity, to increase attractiveness and encourage more sustainable street level community interaction and activity. This could be achieved through the re-development of some of the brownfield sites, improved permeability, reduction of the “barrier effect” of the Seamus Quirke Road and requirements that re-development include for more enclosure, good use mix, use of scale and massing to create more human scaled address to public areas and in general a better urban design regime. This coupled with more public realm improvements will complement works carried out to date and contribute to a more animated, vibrant streetscape. Particular note will need to be taken of the SRD Guidelines and DMURS.
10.5 Ardaun

Ardaun is located to the east of the city, some 5km from the city centre. Its development is a critical part of the settlement strategy for the city and it is anticipated that this area will accommodate part of the targeted population growth for the Gateway as identified by the RPG West Region 2010-2022.

This bank of land, approximately 164 hectares, enjoys significant strategic accessibility to the national road network and is capable being extended in the longer term into the county area. Ardaun can provide opportunities for mixed use development, structured and co-ordinated with supporting facilities and services and can develop good employment opportunities having close physical links with Ballybrit /Parkmore Technology Parks and strategic IDA sites at Oranmore and Athenry. Ardaun is also well placed to link in with higher level education and health institutes including GMIT, Merlin Park Hospital and Galway Clinic Hospital and is capable of benefiting from proposed and existing sustainable transport modes and connections to adjacent amenities such as Merlin Park Woods City Park and the coast.

It is recognised that in order to create a sustainable environment at Ardaun and to establish a phased development framework, a LAP is required. Considerable work has been carried out to date on the draft LAP which is anticipated to be completed for public consultation in 2017. The plan will provide a development strategy which will contribute to the integration of land uses, urban form and structure, transportation and the natural environment to create a sustainable living and working environment as an extension to the existing built up city area. It will facilitate the creation of a critical mass that will enable it to be a significant urban centre through the co-location of population, jobs and services. At this level it will also be able to support public transportation offering a viable alternative to the car for local trips, travel to the city centre and travel to major employment areas.

It is envisaged that the development of Ardaun will be carried out on a phased basis to ensure an integrated approach between development and availability of services and infrastructure. A schedule of phasing will also ensure that development, in particular residential development, occurs at a pace whereby it is supported by all the necessary infrastructure, services, amenities and community facilities. It is acknowledged that not all of the lands are deemed suitable for development taking into account issues such as ecological constraints, however a significant quantum of development land will be available to sustain the elements required to create a successful living and working environment.

The preparation process of the Ardaun Draft LAP to date has focused on a collaborative and consultative approach in order to devise a sustainable plan. Preliminary studies, including, the Ardaun Urban Design Advices 2012, Street Conversations 2013, the Ardaun Urban Design Charette 2013 and a programme of public and stakeholder consultation, workshops and public information sessions held in 2013-2014, have enabled inclusive and effective consultation creating a collective vision for the area.

A key element of the vision for Ardaun is the creation of an urban village which is a compact walkable and mixed use neighbourhood of a sustainable scale, which is based on the principle that people should be able to access most of their daily living requirements within walking distance, of their homes, reducing the need to travel by car.

The Ardaun Urban Design Strategy 2014 further develops the vision setting out an urban design framework to create a well connected business friendly urban village, a place that is sustainable, connected, pedestrian friendly, memorable, attractive, vibrant, smart and energy efficient. The urban design framework comprises of character analysis, movement strategy, landscape strategy and development strategy. It defines key elements of the urban structure, movement, landscape, network of public realm and development parcels.
in an interconnected manner while allowing for a degree of flexibility to enable the development of Ardaun over time. It identifies the optimum location for the urban village centre and further work has been carried out to examine design and layout options for the centre.

The Ardaun Urban Design Strategy 2014 will be a central tenet of the draft Ardaun LAP which consists of the designated lands within the city boundary. The further development of lands extending out into the county to accommodate population requirements into the future will also be taken into account as part of the LAP and the strategic needs of both elements will be considered in consultation with Galway County Council.

**Policy 10.5 Ardaun**

Develop the overall area of Ardaun, in conjunction with Galway County Council, in a strategic and co-ordinated manner, that will contribute to the integration of land use, urban form and structure, transportation and natural heritage to create a sustainable living environment.

Complete the preparation of the draft Ardaun LAP for public consultation in 2017, in order to create a sustainable business friendly urban village, in consultation with Galway County Council, key stakeholders and the public, taking the strategic needs of the overall city and county area into consideration.

Support the future development of Ardaun which consists of lands within the county area, ensuring co-ordination of key elements such as land use, infrastructure and sustainable transportation and the timely co-ordination of development phasing.

### 10.6 Murrough

Murrough is an extensive area of semi-natural environment adjacent to developed areas east of the city, including Renmore, Ballybaan and Doughiska. The lands at Murrough have the distinction of being of substantial size (approximately 34 hectares) and located adjacent to the coastline, which is defined by a variety of features including cliffs, beach and rocky shoreline. The area has direct pedestrian links to Ballyloughane Beach to the west and possibilities exist for coastal walks to Oranmore, to the east. The railway line and land reserved for a possible public transportation corridor forms the northern demarcation of the lands. There is also road and pedestrian access from Ballyloughane Road and Murrough Road. Given the rapid expansion of residential development in the east of the city and having regard to the future development of Ardaun, there is now a demand for coastal and recreation facilities on the east side of the city. This demand is further increased by the current imbalance of coastal amenity/recreational facilities in the city with the bulk of these facilities, Salthill and Silverstrand being located on the west side of the city. The Murrough area offers potential for the provision of coastal and recreation facilities. These will complement the improved facilities at Ballyloughane Beach. Given the possibility of good public transport links, there is also the opportunity for mixed use development for a portion of the area. Mixed use development would contribute to the vitality of the area and provide a new residential neighbourhood.

In recognition of this, the Council will prepare a LAP for the Murrough area. The aim of the LAP is to ensure the reservation of a substantial bank of land for recreational purposes. The Plan will allow for mixed-use development, which will maximize the development of recreation facilities and will create a vibrant area with efficient public transport links to the rest of the city. It will integrate with the amenity facilities at Ballyloughane
beach. The Plan will take account of the sensitive ecological environment at this location and will incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate against flood risk. In order to achieve the necessary recreational facilities, two thirds of the area will be reserved for this purpose.

Developments compatible with the G zoning which will not prejudice the aims of the LAP will be open to consideration in advance of the adoption of the LAP. In particular and in view of the significant interest of GMIT in lands at Murrough for the development of such uses, the Council will endeavour to work in partnership with the college to achieve a safe and suitable access to service the lands that will in turn facilitate their use for sports and ancillary facilities.

**Policy 10.6 Murrough**

Develop the Murrough area in accordance with a Local Area Plan which will reserve a substantial bank of land for recreational purposes, allow for public access and allow for mixed use development which will create a sustainable neighbourhood and maximise the sustainable development of appropriate recreation facilities.

### 10.7 Specific Objectives

**City Centre Area**

- Require the preparation of a masterplan for the Ceannt Station area.
- Require the preparation of a masterplan for the Inner Harbour area.
- Prepare environmental improvement schemes for Woodquay, Bowling Green and carry out further public realm improvements at Raven Terrace.
- Carry out a Civic Improvement Scheme for the Small Crane Square.

**Headford Road Area**

- Prepare a Local Area Plan for the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin junction).
- In advance of the adoption of the Headord Road LAP, any significant opportunity for the public delivery of community facilities that would have socio-economic benefits for the city will be considered, subject to coherence with an integrated development strategy for the area.

**Salthill**

- Prepare a Strategy for the long-term development and enhancement of Salthill Promenade.
- Continue to develop and enhance the coastal walkway from South Park to Silverstrand including the coastal walk extending from Silverstrand to Sailín in conjunction with approved coastal protection works.
- Carry out an environmental improvement scheme for Salthill.
- Upgrade public facilities including provision of outdoor/indoor showers, changing facilities and baby changing facilities.

**Ardaun**

- Complete the preparation of a draft Local Area Plan for Ardaun.

**Murrough**

- Prepare a Local Area Plan for Murrough.
Introduction
Part A - Land Use Zoning Policies and Objectives
Part B - Development Standards and Guidelines
11.1 Introduction

The Council is required to manage development to ensure that permissions granted under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Development Plan. This part of the Plan is concerned with the standards and guidelines, which will be applied to development proposals. Provision is made for a flexible application of standards and guidelines, in particular circumstances where proposed development is otherwise consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and achieves high urban design quality. The achievement of the policies and the objectives of the Plan and the encouragement of good design, rather than the mechanistic application of development standards, will be the aim of development management.

Matters other than the specific provisions of the Development Plan may be considered in dealing with applications for permission to carry out development, or in enforcement against unauthorised development. While the provisions of the Plan are the main basis of assessment of development proposals, compliance with the standards and guidelines of the Plan does not in itself ensure that a development proposal will be considered acceptable in its entirety.

Many legally established uses exist in locations where they do not conform to the designated land use zoning objective set out in the Plan. Extensions to or improvements of premises accommodating these non conforming uses may be granted, where the proposed development would not be injurious to the amenities of the area, and would not prejudice the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
Part A  Land Use Zoning Policies and Objectives

11.2  Land Use Zoning General
11.2.1  Institutional and Community CF
11.2.2  Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity RA
11.2.3  Agricultural Area A
11.2.4  Agricultural Area G
11.2.5  Industrial I
11.2.6  Commercial/Industrial CI
11.2.7  City Centre CC
11.2.8  Residential R and Low Density Residential LDR
11.2 Land Use Zoning General

The Development Plan sets out the land use zoning objectives for different areas within the city and indicates examples of uses that may or may not be acceptable within each use zone. Zoning seeks to promote the development of uses that achieve the objectives for the area concerned and to prevent the development of incompatible uses. Ten land use zonings are utilised in the Plan to indicate the various objectives for these areas (Table 11.1).

### Table 11.1 - Land Use Zones and Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Zoning Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>To provide for and facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural and institutional uses and development of infrastructure for the benefit of the citizens of the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>To provide for and protect recreational uses, open space, amenity uses and natural heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>To provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the rural character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>To provide for the development of agriculture and protect areas of visual importance and/or areas of high amenity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>To provide for enterprise, industry and related uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>To provide for enterprise, light industry and commercial uses other than those reserved to the CC zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>To provide for city centre activities and particularly those, which preserve the city centre as the dominant commercial area of the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>To provide for residential development and for associated support development, which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity and will contribute to sustainable residential neighbourhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDR</td>
<td>To provide for low-density residential development which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAP</td>
<td>Local Area Plan for Ardaun and Murrough.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The land use zoning objectives in the chapters of the Development Plan give an indication of the acceptability of new uses in each zone. They are intended as a guideline and are not exhaustive. Under each land use zoning, examples of uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective are specified. Examples of uses shown as “Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the location and scale and the proposed development”, are uses which may not be considered acceptable in principle in all parts of the relevant land use zoning objective and will only be accepted where the Council is satisfied that the use would not have undesirable consequences for prevailing uses. A use that is not compatible or does not contribute to the specific land use zoning objective will not be permitted in that land use zone. Uses not cited as examples of uses but which fulfil the land use objective shall be considered in relation to general policy and to the zoning objectives for the area in question.

Uses, which are temporary in nature, may be considered by the Council as uses that are compatible and contribute to the zoning objective.

In the boundary areas of adjoining zones it is necessary to avoid developments which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zones. For instance, in areas abutting residential zones a particular proposal may not be acceptable which could be acceptable in other parts of the zone. Where a site for a proposed development straddles the boundary of different land use zones the permitted density on the overall site will be an average between the different zones subject to residential amenity.

In advance of the adoption of the Local Area Plans for Ardaun and Murrough, minor developments in the LAP zoning which will not prejudice the aims of the LAP will be considered. These uses shall be compatible with and contribute to the G zoning objective.

Priority will be given to the reservation of the N6 GCRR Preferred Route Corridor and the associated land requirements over other land use zonings and specific objectives.
11.2.1 Institutional and Community CF Land Use Zoning Objectives

Zoning Objective CF
To provide for and facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural and institutional uses and development of infrastructure for the benefit of the citizens of the city.

Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:
- Buildings for the care of the health, safety or welfare of the public
- Residential institutions
- Educational establishments
- Places of public worship
- Community and cultural buildings
- Burial grounds and associated services
- Outdoor recreational use
- Accommodation for Travellers
- Childcare facilities
- Public utilities

Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the CF location and scale of proposed development, for example:
- Residential uses on surplus institutional lands where some of the original open character of institutional lands is retained and a minimum 20% of the total site area is reserved for communal open space.
  Note: This will not apply to similar development granted and built under previous development plan policies where a higher open space standard was required pre-2005.
- Additional uses, which are allied to/or have an established supporting relationship with the primary use on lands in the NUIG and GMIT campus such as collaborative activities with industry and student accommodation.

The following are specific development objectives for a number of CF zones throughout the city:
- CF lands at Merlin Park comprising approximately 34 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional or community facilities use either by the Health Services Executive or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.
- CF lands south of the Old Dublin Road opposite the GMIT comprising approximately 3.30 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional or community facilities use either by the GMIT or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.
- CF lands at Ballybane to the south of Castlepark Road comprising approximately 6.27 hectares occupied by the Brothers of Charity Services. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional, amenity or community facilities use either by the Brothers of Charity Services or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.
- CF lands south of the railway line at Renmore occupied by the Defence Forces comprising approximately 9 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional, amenity or community facilities use either by the Defence Forces or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.
- CF lands at Fisheries Field (Earls Island). The Council will consider the development of part of these lands for residential and/or commercial use of a residential nature, where a significant cultural facility is proposed as part of the development, subject to other planning considerations in particular design standards, traffic safety, environmental suitability and where public access is secured.
- CF land at Presentation College, Presentation Road. The design of development shall contribute to the protection and enhancement of adjacent waterways and protected structures on site.
11.2.2 Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity RA Land Use Zoning Objectives

### Zoning Objective RA
To provide for and protect recreational uses, open space, amenity uses and natural heritage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the RA location and scale of development, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of buildings of a recreational, cultural or educational nature or car parking areas related to and secondary to the primary use of land/water body for outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burial grounds and associated services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are specific development objectives for a number of RA zones throughout the city:

- **RA lands in the areas of Ballybaan and Ballinfoile.** The Council will consider regeneration plan(s) which will include for the provision of community services and infill residential developments on existing open space, where it is shown that the open space is obsolete and where the recreational requirements and residential amenity are not prejudiced.

- **RA lands privately owned by NUIG, comprising of 36.98 hectares, but not including the strip of land zoned RA located between the River Corrib and University (CF) lands.** The Council will consider the development of these lands for university and related uses, which are compatible with and contribute to the CF zoning objective. An exception to this will be for the Council to allow for consideration of the development of a secondary school with associated ancillary development on lands of approximately 1.6 hectares (4 acres) between NUIG Hockey Pitch and the N59 Road. Any development of this site for a secondary school shall include for a School Traffic Control Management Plan and a Mobility Management Plan which will be required to set targets for modal shift to sustainable modes and public transport for staff and pupils working at and attending school and shall include for appropriate facilities to support these sustainable modes.

- **RA lands located at Ballybrit Racecourse.** The Council will consider the use of existing catering facilities for suitable commercial purposes including: conferences, exhibitions, agricultural or similar shows and park and ride facilities.

- **RA lands at Doughiska North of Túr Uisce.** The Council will consider the development of part of these lands for a swimming pool/leisure centre with concessionary public use and a childcare facility, where a community facility is proposed as part of the development. This development shall not compromise the provision of a pedestrian and cycleway in this area.

- **RA lands at NUIG in the vicinity of the Quincentenary Bridge.** The Council will consider the strategic requirements to link the northern and southern campus. This will be subject to examination of all potential options, transport, visual and environmental considerations and where it can be demonstrated that the preferred option will have sustainable benefits.

- **RA lands between the River Corrib and the Dyke Road and south of Quincentenary Bridge Road in Council ownership.** The Council will consider the development of these lands to accommodate municipal and club water based facilities. Development of these lands shall include criteria for a high standard of design and shall not proceed if significant or indeterminate impact on the SAC were likely.

- **RA zoned lands at Liam Mellows GAA Club Ballyloughane.** The provision of structures (including additional pitches, lighting, flood lighting and ball stop nets) to improve the playing pitches, operations and facilities will be considered by the City Council at this location with due regard to the protected views from Hawthorne Drive.

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11 Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards and Guidelines
Fig. 11.1 Site at Barna Woods
- RA Lands located adjacent to Barna Woods. The Council will consider the granting of permission for dwellings on a minimum 0.4 hectare site to immediate members of families of persons who are landowners, where the sylvan character of the area is maintained. An exception to the site size will be allowed on site demarcated A where a minimum density of 0.3 hectares will be considered.

Fig. 11.2 Menlo Park Hotel
- RA lands in front of the Menlo Park Hotel adjacent to the Kirwan Roundabout. The Council will consider the development of a leisure centre and swimming pool, both located underground with minimal effect over-ground, as part of the overall hotel development.

Fig. 11.3 Site at Lough Atalia
- RA zoned lands at Lough Atalia (0.5 hectares). The Council will consider the development of these lands for sports facilities and an amphitheatre.

Fig. 11.4 Site at Merlin Park Hospital
- RA zoned lands north of Dublin Road and south of CF zoned lands at Merlin Park Hospital (2.83 hectares). The Council will consider the use of these lands for a Hospice.
11.2.3 Agricultural Areas A Land Use Zoning Objectives

**Zoning Objective A**

To provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the rural character.

- Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:
  - Agriculture and related developments
  - Accommodation for Travellers

- Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the A location and scale of development, for example:
  - Uses as set out in Section 4.6.2 Agricultural Lands and Section 11.3.1 (j) Conversion and subdivision of dwellings part A
  - Waste management facility
  - Public utilities
  - Public transportation facility
  - Burial grounds and associated services
  - Outdoor recreation with small scale associated facilities

The following are specific development objectives for a number of A zones throughout the city:

- A zoned lands located to the north of the Martin Roundabout and south of the Galway Clinic, consisting of 0.73 hectares. The Council will consider the use of these lands for commercial residential purposes which can be demonstrated to be directly linked to the services provided at the Galway Clinic, but shall not include services of a medical nature. Use of these lands can include for services of a step-down nature.

- A zoned lands located at Keeraun (adjoining city boundary) consisting of 0.23 hectares. Any residential development shall be limited to one house only for uses as set out in Section 4.6.2 Agricultural Lands.

- A zoned land located to the north and adjoining the Menlo village envelope consisting of 0.42 hectares. Any residential development shall be limited to one house only for uses as set out in Section 4.6.2 Agricultural Lands.

- A zoned lands located at the junction of Ballindooley Cross, east of the Headford Road and south of Castlegar Road consisting of 0.22 hectares and currently supporting one house. An additional family dwelling house on these lands will be open for consideration.

**Zoning Objective G**

To provide for the development of agriculture and protect areas of visual importance and/or high amenity.

- Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:
  - Agricultural development

- Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the G development, for example:
  - Burial grounds and associated services
  - Public utilities
  - Outdoor recreation with small scale associated facilities

11.2.4 Agricultural Areas G Land Use Zoning Objective

- G zoned lands at Mincloon (0.38 hectares): The Council will consider the use of the dwelling house permitted under Planning Reference Number 10/276 as a place of congregation and worship by the Muslim community.
### 11.2.5 Industrial I Land Use Zoning Objective

**Zoning Objective I**  
**To provide for Enterprise, industrial and related uses.**

**Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:**

- Light industry
- General industry
- Warehousing, storage and wholesale trade (except where a significant purpose of the development is the provision of on-site servicing to the public and where such provision is more appropriately located within CI zones/other zonings
- Car parking (including heavy vehicle parking)
- Specialist office based industries of a business/technology nature
- Accommodation for Travellers
- Childcare facilities
- Specialist industry

**Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependant on the location and scale of development, for example:**

- Shop, office, restaurant or recreational buildings, all of which are ancillary to the use of land for industrial and related uses
- Outdoor recreation
- Large-scale indoor recreation
- Public utilities
- Specialist offices
- Waste management facility
- Public transportation facility

The following are specific development objectives for a number of I zones throughout the city:

- Lands zoned I at Rahoon, comprising approximately 29 hectares, the Council will consider the development of these lands for a technology/business park. Development proposals in line with this objective must achieve a parkland setting compatible with the residential amenity of existing and future adjoining housing areas.

- Lands zoned I at Lough Atalia between the railway line and the seashore comprising of approximately 16.2 hectares. Development on this site will be limited to activities relating to Galway Port expansion and industries which must be located adjacent to the harbour for a viable existence, provided however, that the processes involved are environmentally acceptable and do not interfere with the residential amenity of nearby housing developments.

- Lands zoned I at Royal Tara site, Connolly Avenue. The Council will consider the development of this site for residential purposes, subject to an acceptable design, layout and architectural conservation requirements in the context of Tara Hall.

- Lands zoned I at Ballybrit Business Park (north of the N6 dual carriageway, blocks 1-7) and at Rahoon. On these lands within existing constructed office space (completed pre-2004) change of use to general office space that is non-technology or processing based office use, will be open to consideration subject to the following:
  a) Where such office space will not be dedicated to grouped professional practices/services.
  b) Where it can be demonstrated that there is adequate car parking spaces provided for such office use that is one space per 50m² of gross floor area.

- Lands zoned I located north of the dual carriageway and N6 access road (0.47 hectares) and defined by Planning Reference Number 08/596: The Council will consider the use of these lands for general office use with a maximum car parking standard of one space per 25 sqm of gross floor area.

- Lands zoned I at Ballybrit Business Park north of the N6 dual carriageway and south of the N6 access road (0.21 hectares) and defined by Planning Reference Number 08/639: The Council will consider the use of these lands for general office use with a maximum car parking standard of one space per 25sqm of gross floor area.
### 11.2.6 Commercial/Industrial CI Land Use Zoning Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective CI</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To provide for enterprise, light industry and commercial uses other than those reserved to the CC zone.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Warehousing/Storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Retail of a type and of a scale appropriate to the function and character of the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Specialist offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offices of a type and of a scale appropriate to the function and character of the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Light Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accommodation for Travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Childcare facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community and cultural facilities</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependant on the CI location and scale of development, for example:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• General industry (small scale)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Service retailing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Residential content of a scale that would not unduly interfere with the primary use of the land for CI purposes and would accord with the principles of sustainable neighbourhoods outlined in Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offices</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Car parks (including heavy vehicle parks)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Waste management facility</td>
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<td>• Public transportation facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commercial leisure/indoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Places of worship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The following are specific development objectives for a number of CI zones throughout the city:**

- **Bulky goods retailing and local retailing needs,** will be the only retail types considered on CI zoned lands not provided for in the Retail Hierarchy at/adjoining: Briarhill, Doughiska Road (West of), Tuam Road, Dublin Road, Sean Mulvoy Road, Sandy Road, Headford Road/Bóthar na dTreabh (north of the Bodkin junction), and Seamus Quirke Road. An exception for the consideration of food store and restaurant use will apply to a portion of CI lands at Briarhill, namely the site of Western Motors and the adjoining site to the east, bounded by the Monivea Road and Parkmore Road.

- **Former Crown Equipment Site zoned CI.** The majority of retail floor space shall be dedicated for bulky goods retailing and the balance for local retailing needs. Parking shall be kept back from Monivea Road and separated from the Monivea Road by buildings. The design of frontage facing Monivea Road shall be of a high architectural standard.

- **Retail development of a nature appropriate to the city centre will be considered on the Headford Road (south of the Bodkin junction).** An arts/cultural facility shall be delivered in conjunction with any major re/development of these lands. It is intended to carry out a Local Area Plan as specified under Section 10.2.4 for these lands termed the Headford Road LAP.

- **CI lands at Rahoon (both North and South of the Western Distributor Road) will operate as a District Centre as defined in the DECLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012** as well as providing for the other uses permissible in the CI zone.

**Regarding the Northern Portion of CI lands at Rahoon:**

- The site shall include for a minimum of residential/residential commercial development of a scale equivalent to 20% of the proportion of all likely future floor space proposals. This residential development shall be integrated within the overall scheme.

- Development of these lands will only be considered where it can be shown to be linked in with existing development and shall show how it relates to an overall layout for the area which will include for landscaping, boundary treatment and linkages with the adjoining residential development and transport services. This shall include for adherence with the requirements for high quality urban design as referenced in Chapter 8.

- The provision of a civic open space will be a requirement on this site and lands shall be reserved for this purpose.
- Any additional phase of development shall include for the front loaded delivery of a public /community facility which can be in the form of a community facility, a community health facility, a transport facility, a park and play area over and above normal open space requirements.

- Any future development shall include for a number of small retail /service retail units which can be demonstrated to deliver a broad range of District Centre uses, this shall be assessed in the light of the scale and nature of uses delivered on the site at that period, noting the outstanding permissions on the overall lands to date.

- Uses such as commercial leisure uses and educational uses, which would by virtue of their use and scale serve the needs of the surrounding residential area are encouraged.

- Industry and enterprise of an appropriate type and scale may be permissible on these lands where it is suitably located with reference to the adjoining residential and industrial lands.

**Regarding the Southern Portion of CI lands at Rahoon:**

- Development on these lands will only be considered following agreement on an overall layout for the area. This shall include for adherence with the requirements for high quality urban design as referenced in Chapter 8. In particular it shall ensure an appropriate mix of uses including for the smaller scale retail /service retail units. In particular the development shall address the Western Distributor Road with the avoidance of dead frontages. Quality pedestrian connections with the adjacent residentially zoned lands and open space lands shall be achieved. A structured hierarchy of spaces should be a consideration within the layout maximizing the opportunities for linkage with adjacent developments/future developments. Pedestrian priority shall be required in any access network which should also accommodate public transport access. The overall scheme should demonstrate divisible viable phases of development and should not exceed the maximum standards for car parking and a case may be made for a reduction in standards owing to the designated location being a multi-purpose trip destination.

- The site shall include for a minimum of residential/residential commercial development of a scale equivalent to 20% of the proportion of all likely future floor space proposals. This residential development shall be incorporated into the overall scheme.

- The site shall include for a civic open space/park which shall be reserved on any layout for this purpose and should be of a size and function to reflect the scale of the overall development and shall be over and above the requirement for open space on these lands.

- Each phase of the development shall include for the front loaded delivery of a public /community facility which can be in the form of a community facility, an educational establishment, a community health facility, a transport facility, a park and play area over and above normal open space, requirements.

- Any future development shall include for a number of small retail /service retail units which can be demonstrated to deliver a broad range of District Centre uses, this shall be assessed in the light of the scale and nature of uses delivered on the site at that period, noting the outstanding permissions on the overall lands to date.

- A good balance of use mixes shall be provided for including uses such as commercial leisure uses and educational uses, which would by virtue of their use and scale serve the needs of the surrounding residential area are encouraged.

- Industry and enterprise of an appropriate type and scale may be permissible on these lands where it is suitably located with reference to the adjoining residential lands.

- CI zoned lands on the Headford Road (south of the Bodkin junction), Sean Mulvoy Road, Tuam Road (south of Bóthar na dTreabh), Moneenageisha Road and lands abutting Seamus Quirke Road. Offices appropriate to the CC zoning will be open for consideration on these lands.

- CI zoned lands on Shantalla Road, Nun’s Island Street, and on the former Connaught Laundry site. Residential development on the full extent of these CI zoned sites will be considered. The density of any residential development on these sites will have regard to the surrounding context.

- CI zoned lands at Heneghans Nurseries, Monivea Road comprising of approximately 2 hectares. Use of the lands shall be such that 75% of any future development shall be dedicated to residential use and the remaining 25% shall be dedicated to uses compatible with CI land use zoning.

- CI lands at Wellpark Road adjacent to the Mervue Business and Technology Park. A residential content of up to 75% will be considered on these lands.

- CI lands at former Leaders store, Tuam Road, comprising of approximately 1.2 hectares. Residential uses will be excluded from this site.

- CI lands on the Dublin Road, formally Corrib Great Southern Hotel site. A minimum of one third of the site shall be reserved for higher educational use, and/or research/collaborative ventures between higher education institutes and industry. Notwithstanding this, higher education use and/or student accommodation will be open for consideration on the remainder of the lands. Retail shall be restricted to bulky goods retailing and local retailing needs. Given the significant scale of the site and obligation to deliver certain uses, an overall plan will be required in advance of any redevelopment, which shall
incorporate retention of the green linear space running parallel with the Dublin Road. The plan may include the setting back of the green space to facilitate space required by the Council to accommodate sustainable transportation measures.

- CI lands at Barna Road (petrol-filling station). The current setback of the building, excluding forecourt, shall be maintained.

- CI lands at ‘Joyce’s Supermarket’, Kingston Road, Knocknacarra. The part of the building complex in use as community rooms shall continue to be reserved for community purposes such as uses to facilitate club meetings/recreational classes/community group activities.

- CI zoned lands at Wellpark. The Council will consider the full range of retail uses identified in the Retail Planning Guidelines within Wellpark Retail and Leisure Park.

- CI zoned lands at Terryland adjacent to Sandy Road as defined by Planning Reference Number 02/185. The Council will consider an increase in the maximum plot ratio standard to support the redevelopment and modernisation of the existing hotel on the site, subject to normal planning considerations.
### 11.2.7 City Centre CC Land Use Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective CC</th>
<th>Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To provide for city centre activities and particularly those, which preserve the city, centre as the dominant commercial area of the city. | - Retail  
- Residential  
- Offices, banks and professional services  
- Tourist related uses  
- Cultural and community uses  
- Buildings for education  
- Recreation  
- Childcare facilities  
- Places of worship  

Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the area and the propose development for example:  
- Light industry  
- Public utilities |

#### The following are specific development objectives for a number of CC zones throughout the city:

- **CC lands at Ceannt Station.** The Council will consider the development of these lands for mixed use commercial development, including for commercial offices, retail, residential (equivalent to 30% of the total proposed likely potential floor area) and transportation interchange in accordance with the requirements set out under Section 10.2.1.

- **CC lands at Inner Harbour.** The Council will consider the development of these lands for mixed use commercial development, including for commercial offices, recreation, retail and residential (equivalent to 30% of the total likely proposed floor area) in accordance with the requirements set out under Section 10.2.2.

- **CC land at 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 St. Augustine Street.** Any required development on these sites to facilitate change of use shall not materially alter the elevation of the existing buildings or interfere with the integrity of the terrace.
11.2.8 Residential R and Low Density Residential LDR Land Use Zoning Objectives

Zoning Objective R
To provide for residential development and for associated support development, which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity and will contribute to sustainable residential neighbourhoods.

Zoning Objective LDR
To provide for low-density residential development which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity.

Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:

- Residential
- Residential institution
- Outdoor recreational use
- Accommodation for Travellers
- Local shops, local offices, licensed premises, banks and other local services
- Buildings for education
- Childcare facilities
- Buildings for the care of the health, safety or welfare of the public
- Buildings for community, cultural or recreational use

Uses which may contribute to the zoning objective, dependent on the R and LDR location and scale of development: for example:

- Hotel, Guesthouses, Hostels and B&Bs
- Part conversion or extension of private residence to studio, office, childcare facility or small enterprises by the occupier of the dwelling, at a scale as would not unduly interfere with the primary use of the dwelling
- Places of worship
- Public utilities

The following are specific development objectives for a number of R zones throughout the city:

- Undeveloped R zoned lands at Doughiska adjoining the dual carriageway shall incorporate the provision of an 18 metres wide strip of landscaped open space abutting this road.
- The Council will consider the granting of permission for a fire station on residentially zoned lands adjacent to the Morris junction.
- The Council will consider the granting of permission for small-scale commercial use on the ground floor of the Dun Aengus development on Dock Street subject to protecting residential amenity.
- The development of residential zoned lands in Council ownership adjacent to the school site at Ballyburke will include for the provision of an appropriate level of community facilities to serve the area.
- R zoned lands in the areas of Ballybaan and Ballinfoile. The Council will consider regeneration plans for community services and infill residential developments on existing open space, where it is shown that the open space is obsolete and where the recreation requirements and residential amenity are not prejudiced.
- Provide for additional local centres to facilitate local convenience shopping and services. These facilities will be accommodated at Clybaun, Ballymoneen and Ballyburke as indicated on Development Plan maps.
- R zoned lands at Nun’s Island Street (St. Joseph’s school site). The design of residential development shall have regard to the streetscape context and shall also contribute to the protection and enhancement of the adjacent waterways.
- R zoned lands south of the Dublin Road, Castlegar Hurling pitch. The strip of land adjoining the road boundary shall be reserved free from development and the existing trees be retained and additional trees planted along the road to ensure that the visual impact of any development is minimised.
- R zoned lands at Cappagh. Development on these lands shall be limited to one house only.
- R zoned lands at Crowley Park (Galwegians RFC). The green strip of land at the front of the site shall be retained in RA zoning with adequate access to service the site.
- R zoned lands at Knocknacarra Road (Spinnaker House Hotel site). Any development including ancillary requirements will be designed so as not to impact the integrity of adjacent protected views. The Council will consider the adjoining RA zoned lands of approximately 0.086 hectares, associated with the existing use on the site to be used for the purposes of communal open space requirements associated with the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes, where it can be demonstrated that the entirety of this area will be restored to a natural, open environment and landscaped with native and biodiversity enhancing species. This RA land will not be permitted to be used for compliance with plot ratio standards nor used for car parking purposes. Credit will be given for existing floor space in the assessment of any future re-development.
• R zoned lands located at the junction of the Western Distributor Road, Ballymoneen Road and Blake Roundabout, defined in Planning Reference Number 14/317 and comprising approximately 0.82 hectares. These lands shall accommodate convenience goods retailing and local services of a public/community nature. These uses shall be of a scale that is equivalent to approximately 20% of the development of the overall site and will be so designed as to form an integrated element in the design and layout of the overall development.

• R zoned lands at Ard Fraoigh (0.13 hectares). Any development on these lands shall be so designed to ensure preservation of the adjoining greenway and protection of the associated amenity therein.

The following lands zoned R have the following specific development objectives, subject to design, environmental requirements and traffic safety. See associated maps:

**Fig. 11.5 West of Headford Road**
- Vehicular access points will be limited and residential layouts should demonstrate where connections between developments are feasible, safe and contribute to residential amenity.
- Residential development on these lands shall, by means of density, distribution, layout and design, assimilate into the topography of the site and shall not break the ridgeline.

**Fig. 11.6 North of Bóthar na Cóiste**
- Layout of residential development and boundary treatment shall have regard to the protected views from the Headford Road.
- Any development on these lands shall include for retention of the water body and incorporation of this feature into the development as an ecological amenity in addition to any open space requirements.
- Requirements for road improvements capable of accommodating future developments shall be incorporated into any development proposals.

**Fig. 11.7 North West of Tuam Road: Castlegar**
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.
- Limited access will be allowed onto the Tuam Road.
- No major access will be allowed onto the Castlegar Road.
- Layout of residential development shall protect the existing cemetery site.
- Development on these lands shall have regard to specific objectives for road and junction improvements.
- Development in the northeast section of these lands shall be subject to a detailed flood risk assessment and shall include for flood mitigation measures if appropriate.
- Development shall be taken into consideration ecological sensitivities in the area in their design.

**Fig. 11.8 Junction of Tuam Road and Castlegar Road: Castlegar**
- Any development of these lands will only be considered where appropriate traffic safety measures and compatibility with junction and road upgrade measures are ensured. No vehicular access will be permitted onto Bóthar an Choiste.
Fig. 11.9 Undeveloped residentially zoned land North West of Western Distributor Road

- In this general area, residential development on the higher slopes shall, by means of density distribution, layout and design, assimilate into the topography of the site and protect the ridge view and provide for linkage and address to the adjoining RA zoned lands.
- Development on lands within the Ballyburke Framework Plan 2007 area shall comply with the core principles of the Framework Plan.

The following are specific development objectives for a number of LDR zones throughout the city:

- LDR lands at Coolagh Road, opposite Crestwood. Development shall be limited to one house only.
- LDR lands at the junction of Gentian Hill. Development on these lands shall not exceed a density of 13 houses per hectare and shall be restricted to single storey dwellings.
- LDR lands comprising of approximately 0.47 hectares at Quarry Road, Menlo north of Menlo village end. Development shall be limited to one house only.
- LDR lands comprising of approximately 0.2 hectares at Monument Road, Menlo. The development of a pre-school will be open for consideration on this site.
- LDR lands comprising of 4.68 hectares at Cappagh Road, Cappagh. Development of these lands shall generally have a maximum density of 2.5 houses to the hectare.

The following lands zoned LDR have the following specific development objectives, subject to design, environmental assessments, water and wastewater services and traffic safety. Communal open space and recreational facilities may be a requirement in certain circumstances:

Fig 11.10 Curragreen LDR

- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained, and supplemented by appropriate landscaping.

Fig. 11.11 LDR Old Dublin Road

- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- House design shall be single storey, dormer or have a low profile ridge line.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.

11.12 LDR Rosshill House and adjacent lands

- The maximum plot ratio density of 0.2:1 shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area. This layout will have regard to the areas zoned RA, the tree coverage, the existing pillars and stone walls.
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.
11 Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards and Guidelines

Fig. 11.13 LDR Roscam Pitch and Putt and adjacent lands
- The maximum plot ratio density of 0.2:1 shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area.
- This layout will have regard to the sylvan character of the site and where appropriate the protection of existing trees and the Roscam Folly.
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.

Fig. 11.14: LDR Roscam Village
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stonewalls shall be retained.
- Protected views shall be preserved and shall have regard to the protected status of existing archaeological structures.

Fig.11.15 LDR Merlin Park Lane, Doughiska Road.
- Development shall generally have a maximum plot ratio of 0.2:1.
- A maximum density shall only be achieved subject to the provision of adequate screening by use of existing trees and hedgerows, the retention of which shall form an integral part of an overall layout of the area.
- Development shall have regard to CGS/pNHA of geological importance and protected structure Quarry House RPS Reference Number 5903.
- Notwithstanding the LDR zoning, the Council will consider, subject to proper planning and development considerations, the expansion of existing businesses, infill development and the redevelopment of existing premises for small scale commercial uses, where it is demonstrated that no adverse impact to existing residential amenities will occur. A maximum plot ratio of up to 0.5:1 will be considered for commercial development in this area. All developments will be required to be suitably landscaped.

Fig. 11.16 LDR Doughiska
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible existing hedgerows, trees and stonewalls shall be retained.
11 Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards and Guidelines

Fig. 11.17 LDR Briarhill
- Development in A and C: A maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area.
- Development shall be low profile single storey with a maximum ridge height of 5.5m above existing ground floor level, except for the sites fronting onto the Doughiska Road and the Old Ballybrit Road.
- Development in B: Development shall not exceed a plot ratio of 0.2:1.

Fig. 11.18 LDR Parkmore
- Development generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.

Fig. 11.19 LDR Tuam Road
- Development shall have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare and shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area.
- Residential development on the higher slopes shall, by means of layout and design, assimilate into the topography of the site and protect the ridge view.
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.
Fig.11.20 LDR Carraig Ban
- Any infill development or extensions shall have regard to the existing pattern of development.

Fig.11.21 LDR Ballindooley
- In order to maintain the established character of the area, development shall generally not exceed a density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.
- The site outlined in black (0.29 hectares) shall be reserved for the provision of community, recreational, educational and heritage facilities and car parking relating to these facilities.

Fig.11.22 LDR Chestnut Lane and Barnacranny
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 2.5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.
- On Site A, an exception shall apply where a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare shall be considered. Any development on Site A shall assess and take into consideration the ecological importance of these lands.
Fig. 11.23 LDR at Circular Road
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.
- Development on Site A (0.5 hectares): A maximum of 3 houses shall be open for consideration on this site. Any new dwellings shall be reserved for the use of immediate family members of the landowner.

Fig. 11.24 LDR Ballagh
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.

Fig. 11.25 LDR Roscam: Coast Road
- Development shall be restricted to two houses only, reserved for the use of immediate family members.
- Development shall have regard to the existing pattern of development and the visual and environmental sensitivity of the site.

Fig. 11.26 LDR Murrough
- Development shall have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Development shall have regard to the existing pattern of development and shall be subject to amenity and environmental considerations.
Fig. 11.27 LDR Rosshill
- Development shall have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare and shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout which includes for an acceptable standard of access.

Fig. 11.28 LDR Coolagh
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 2.5 houses to the hectare.

Fig. 11.29 LDR East of Castlegar NS
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 2.5 houses to the hectare.
11 Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards and Guidelines

Fig. 11.30 LDR Castlegar Road, Castlegar
- Development shall be restricted to three houses only, reserved for the use of immediate family members of the landowner.

Fig. 11.31 LDR Quarry Road, Menlo
- Development shall be restricted to one house only, reserved for the use of immediate family members of the landowner.

Fig. 11.32 LDR Roscam
- Development on each site outlined in red shall be restricted to two houses only, reserved for the use of immediate family members of the landowner.

Fig. 11.33 LDR West of Coolagh Road, Coolagh
- Development shall be restricted to one house only, reserved for the use of immediate family members of the landowner.
# Part B Development Standards

## General Development Standards and Guidelines

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## Specific Development Standards

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11.3 Residential Development


Planning applications for residential development will have to have regard to the aforementioned government guidelines and the following standards and the policies of the Development Plan. Given the different character of residential neighbourhoods in the city, the standards are divided into:

- Outer Suburbs,
- Established Suburbs,
- Inner Residential Areas,
- City Centre Residential Areas.

Where residential development is permitted on lands other than residually zoned lands, the neighbourhood policies as defined in Chapter 2, shall generally apply.

![Neighbourhood Areas](Fig. 11.34 Neighbourhood Areas)
11.3.1 Outer Suburbs

11.3.1 (a) General

• All relevant residential development shall comply with the requirements of the Housing Strategy.
• Planning applications for residential developments on sites over one hectare in area shall include a design statement that demonstrates the relationship between the proposed development to the site context, adjoining developments, the achievement of safe and convenient movement within the site, and how existing features are to be integrated into the development.
• Residential development shall be laid out in such a way as to maximise accessibility to local services, public transport and to encourage walking and cycling.
• Pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movement shall be convenient, safe and integrated into the overall layout of the development.
• The layout of all new residential development shall have regard to adjoining developments and undeveloped zoned land. Where appropriate, linkages and complementary open spaces shall be provided between adjoining developments.
• Gated residential developments will be discouraged.
• Innovative layouts, including courtyard developments, shared open spaces and the clustering of dwellings shall be used, where appropriate, to achieve high standards of amenity.
• Existing hedgerow, trees, watercourses and stone walls shall be retained where feasible. A landscaping scheme including hard and soft landscaping, and incorporating SUDS principles where appropriate, shall be designed as an integral part of the development.
• A plot ratio of 0.46:1 for new residential development shall not normally be exceeded.
• Residential developments of 10 units and over shall normally provide a mix in type of residential units.
• Non residential development shall be considered at appropriate locations on residentially zoned lands where it is of a scale that serves the local need and where all other development management requirements are satisfied. Plot ratio for such commercial, leisure, community and mixed developments on residentially zoned lands shall not normally exceed 1:1. On distributor roads or other major access roads where commercial development will contribute to the quality of urban design and is otherwise acceptable a higher plot ratio may be considered.
• Where commercial developments are acceptable on residentially zoned land, 10% of the area of a site, shall normally be provided as open space. Where the development includes residential uses, communal and private open space standards in 11.3.1(c) shall apply.
• Childcare facilities shall be provided within residential development as indicated in 11.13 and Chapter 7.
• All construction associated with footpaths, sewers, drains and water supply in residential developments, shall comply with Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (DELG 1998) and any subsequent amendments and/or any additional specification required by the City Council, Irish Water and Building Regulations.
• Planning applications for new large-scale residential developments shall be accompanied by assessments of the capacity of local schools to accommodate the proposed development. Cognisance shall be taken of the requirements associated with Traffic Management Guidelines (DECLG 2013), Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DTTS DECLG 2013,) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (NRA 2013) and Manual for Streets (DOT UK, 2007).

11.3.1 (b) Standards for Roads and Streets in New Residential Development:

Local Collector Roads: These roads form the link between distributor roads and residential areas. Any road, which serves more than 400 units or forms part of a scheduled bus route, must be of Local Collector Road standard. These roads may have residential and commercial frontage and there may be significant movements of pedestrians and cyclists. The following apply:

• Measures for pedestrians and cyclists will be included for in the design.
• Direct access to individual dwellings and parking spaces will be open for consideration.
• Buildings that face onto these roads shall be of a scale appropriate to the width of the road and associated open areas.
• Designs should not provide unnecessarily wide roads since these encourage higher speeds.
• The use of landscaping measures in verges will be required.
• Roads shall meet requirements of the Traffic Management Guidelines (DELG 2012) with respect to geometric and visibility standards.
The design of streets and roads shall have regard to the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DTTS and DECLG 2013), and *Manual for Streets* (DOT UK, 2007).

The design of streets and roads shall have regard to Road Safety Impact Assessment (RSIA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA) standards.

**Major Access Roads:** These roads are the main links within housing areas serving between 100-400 units. These roads may have direct access and may have some parking. These roads should allow for ease of pedestrian movement and crossing. For these roads the following apply:

- Measures for pedestrian and cyclists will be included for in the design.
- Individual access from dwellings within 20m from a junction of a Major Access Road with Local Collector Road and will generally not be permitted.
- A 1.8m footpath is generally required on each side of the carriageway.
- Where verges are required, the minimum width is 1.0m rising to 1.8m where services are to be laid.
- The use of landscaping measures in verges will be required.
- Buildings, which face onto these roads, shall be of a scale appropriate to the width of the road, parking and associated open spaces.
- Road shall meet requirements of the *Traffic Management Guidelines* (DECLG 2012) and *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DTTS and DECLG 2013) with respect to geometric and visibility standards.
- The design of streets and roads shall have regard to the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DTTS and DECLG 2013) and *Manual for Streets* (DOT UK, 2007).
- The design of streets and roads shall have regard to Road Safety Impact Assessment (RSIA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA) standards.

**Minor Access Road/Street:** These generally serve small groups of houses up to fifty dwellings, with direct dwelling access and parking. These can take the form of ‘home zones’ or have shared surfaces. These surfaces can be shared between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. For these streets and roads the following apply:

- Where a carriageway is provided the width shall be 5.0 – 5.5m.
- Generally 1.8m footpaths are required.
- Where shared surfaces are provided a road/street shall have varying width, with a minimum width of 4.8m and a maximum of 6m.
- Design of a road/street should encourage the use of the shared space for amenity purposes and ensures the safety of other people using the shared space.
- The design of streets and roads shall have regard to the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DTTS and DECLG 2013) and *Manual for Streets* (DOT UK, 2007).
- The design of streets and roads shall have regard to Road Safety Impact Assessment (RSIA) and Road Safety Audit (RSA) standards.

**11.3.1 (c) Amenity Open Space Provision in Residential Developments**

All residential developments shall provide for amenity open space areas made up of the following ratios:

**Communal Open Space:**

Communal recreation and amenity space is required at a rate of 15% of the gross site area.

Where acceptable ‘home zones’ are proposed, in accordance with Council Guidelines, the shared spaces shall be regarded as communal open space but shall not exceed one third of the total communal open space requirement. Shared spaces shall be regarded as communal open space where it is designed primarily to meet the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, children and residents and where the traffic speeds and dominance of the cars is reduced through design.

Lands zoned for Recreation and Amenity use (RA) shall not be included as part of the open space requirements or used for density calculation for housing developments.

Communal open space in all types of residential development should:

- Be visually as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the residential area.
- Be adequately overlooked by residential units.
• Integrate natural features (for example natural contours, outcrops of rock), where appropriate, as part of the open space.
• Be viable spaces, linked together where possible, designed as an integral part of the overall layout and adjoining neighbouring communal open spaces.
• Not include narrow pedestrian walkways, which are not overlooked by house frontages.
• Create safe, convenient and accessible amenity areas for all sections of the community.
• Generally no rear boundaries should face onto public open space. Blank gables shall not, generally face onto roads or streets. Side boundary walls, which face onto public open space, should be minimised.

In all proposed residential development over ten units, a recreational facility shall be provided as part of the communal open space and funded by the developer. The recreational facility should be provided to serve the needs of the residents and should reflect the profile of future residents, the scale and type of development. Indicative examples of recreational facilities for different sizes of developments are shown in Table 11.2. The Parks and Amenity Department will give further guidance in relation to any proposed recreation facility.

Table 11.2 - Indicative Examples of Recreational Facilities for Different Sizes of Residential Developments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Residential Units</th>
<th>Examples of Recreational Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>No requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>Seating, Barbecue, Picnic Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-50</td>
<td>Play Equipment, Kick About Area, Formal Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>Skateboard Facility, Bowling Green, Basketball Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+</td>
<td>Play Ground, Playing Pitch, Formal Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Private Open Space:
Private open space (areas generally not overlooked from a public road) exclusive of car spaces shall be provided at a rate of not less than 50% of the gross floor area of the residential unit.

This open space should where practicable relate directly to the residential unit, which it serves. Some sites will not have the facility to accommodate all of the required provision of the total private amenity space directly and satisfactorily adjoining each individual unit. Therefore, in certain site conditions and development types, provision of private open space may be made up of areas of communal open space, for example, in apartment developments provision of private open space may be made up of areas of communal open space, balconies or terraces.

The scale of proposed extensions shall ensure that an adequate level of private open space is retained on site.

Apartment Developments shall adhere to the private open space standards set out in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design standards for New Apartments (DECLG, 2015).

11.3.1 (d) Overlooking
• Residential units shall not directly overlook private open space or land with development potential from above ground floor level by less than 11 metres minimum.
• In the case of developments exceeding 2 storeys in height a greater distance than 11 metres may be required, depending on the specific site characteristics.

11.3.1 (e) Daylight
• All buildings should receive adequate daylight and sunlight. All habitable rooms must be naturally ventilated and lit and living rooms and bedrooms shall not be lit solely by roof lights.

11.3.1 (f) Distance between Dwellings for New Residential Development.
• The distance between side gables and side boundaries of dwellings shall normally be a minimum of 1.5 metres.
• Within all other residential developments, including apartment buildings and large dwellings, (greater than 200m²), the distance between buildings shall be greater, to provide a good layout and context for the development.
11.3.1 (g) Car Parking Standards
In order to provide for flexibility in residential layouts the following are the options for car parking requirements:
• 2 on-site spaces per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings or
• 1 on-site space per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per dwellings or
• 1.5 grouped spaces per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings
• 3 spaces for dwellings over 200m² and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings
• 1 space for one bedroom residential dwellings and 1 grouped visitor per 3 dwellings

These standards should not be exceeded unless acceptable additional need can be demonstrated.

Where on site car-parking space is to be provided in the front garden the following standards shall apply:
• The car parking space shall be 2.5m x 5m minimum.
• The vehicular entrance shall not normally exceed 3m in width, and where feasible the maximum extent of boundary wall/hedging shall be retained.
• Where gates are provided they shall not open outwards.
• Front gardens shall not be completely dedicated to car parking. The balance of space shall be suitably landscaped.

To prevent the area to the front of small scale apartment and townhouses developments being completely dedicated to car parking, the parking area shall be visually broken up.

Car parking rows shall be broken up with trees, planters or some other feature which shall soften the visual impact of the car parking areas at a minimum interval of 6 car parking spaces.

Where grouped parking is provided, the parking shall be dispersed throughout a residential development. Group car-parking spaces shall not be allocated to individual residential units.

Where possible the grouped car parking shall be surfaced in a different material treatment or colour to the road surface.

11.3.1 (h) Cycle Parking Standards
• In residential developments, where appropriate, a minimum of one cycle stand per 20 car spaces or over shall be provided. For every additional 50 car parking spaces, an additional cycle stand should be provided. Each cycle stand should accommodate a minimum of five bicycles. Cycle parking must be sheltered where appropriate. Where compliance with this standard is not deemed appropriate a transportation contribution will be levied accordingly.

11.3.1 (i) Bin Storage Standards
• Each residential unit shall have adequate storage for three wheeled bins to facilitate the recycling policy of the City Council. Residential units with no rear access shall provide adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units.
• For residential units without suitable private open space a set of three x 240 litre bins shall be provided for each pair of apartments or a set of three 1100 litre bins shall be provided for a block of ten apartments.
• Bin storage shall generally be on the ground floor of developments and be screened from public view and adjacent to the block it serves.

11.3.1 (j) Conversion and Subdivision of Dwellings
• Small extensions or conversions for use as a studio, office, childcare facility or small enterprises by the occupier of the dwelling, at a scale as would not unduly interfere with the primary use of the dwelling as a private residence or adversely affect the general residential amenity will be considered. This may also apply with the exception of childcare facilities to existing dwellings in agricultural zoned areas.
• Conversion or subdivision of exceptionally large residential units on relatively large sites to multiple units, without a dramatic alteration in the prevailing character of the area will be considered. Part conversion will only be considered when the building is adjacent to commercial premises, adjoining major traffic routes or located on particularly large sites, where the character of the area is not adversely affected. The assessment of such proposals would have to take into consideration the established character of the area, residential amenity, recreation and amenity space, urban design, architectural integrity, parking and traffic considerations. Part conversion to commercial units will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use serves a local need and/or is located with an established commercial area.
11.3.1 (k) Self Contained Residential Units
Self contained residential units will be considered when:
• The unit is an integral part of the main dwelling capable of re-assimilation into the dwelling. Specific prior grant of planning permission is required for consequent subdivision of the site. This will be generally be discouraged on amenity grounds.
• The unit is an addition to the existing structure or a garage conversion and shall generally be located at the side as opposed to the rear garden of the existing house.
• The floor area of the unit does not normally exceed the equivalent of 25% of the floor area of the existing house.
• Self contained units will only be considered so long as the owner of the premises lives in the unit or the remainder of the premises as their main residence.

11.3.1(l) Residential Extensions
The design and layout of extensions to houses should complement the character and form of the existing building, having regard to its context and adjacent residential amenities.

11.3.2 Established Suburbs
As per standards for Outer Suburbs except:

11.3.2 (a) General
In the interests of sustainability and urban design, higher densities may be appropriate when new residential development or commercial/community development has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.

11.3.2 (b) Amenity Standards
Shall be as per Outer Suburbs except in certain circumstances where the established form and layout would deem a reduction in these standards appropriate, in the interests of sustainability and urban design.

11.3.2 (c) Car Parking Standards
• 1 on-site per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor per 3 dwellings or,
• 1 space per dwelling if grouped.

A reduction in these standards for ACA’s may be considered appropriate where the provision of car parking would adversely effect the architectural character of the area. In this case a transportation contribution will be required.

Generally, these standards should not be exceeded.

11.3.3 Inner Residential Areas
As per standards for Established Suburbs except:

11.3.3 (a) Car Parking Standard
Maximum 1 car parking space per dwelling:

For new developments in the inner residential areas where a reduction in car parking standards is considered acceptable by the Council on grounds of urban design or sustainability, a transport contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking spaces.

11.3.4 City Centre Residential Areas
As per standards for Outer Suburbs except:

11.3.4 (a) General
New commercial development will not normally be permitted in residentially zoned land in the city centre.

11.3.4 (b) Open Space
When residential content is proposed in commercial developments in the city centre, an area the equivalent of 30% of the gross floor area of residential content shall be provided as open space except in certain circumstances where the established form and layout would deem compliance with this standard inappropriate.
11.3.4 (c) Bin Storage
Adequate storage for waste disposal shall be provided on site.

11.3.4 (d) Car Parking Standard
Maximum 1 car parking space per dwelling:

For new developments in the city centre residential areas where a reduction in car parking standards is considered acceptable by the Council on grounds of urban design or sustainability, a transport contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking spaces.

11.4 City Centre Area

11.4.1 General
The Council shall take into account the following standards and guidelines when considering the design and layout of development in the CC zone, in so far as they relate to a particular development proposal in the city centre.

- Maximum densities shall only be attainable under optimum site conditions having regard to criteria such as height, open space and protection of amenities.
- Adequate space must be available for on-site storage of materials and waste, loading and unloading, on site circulation of vehicles and parking for motor vehicles and bicycles, where appropriate.
- Adequate provision should be made for storage of goods and materials within the building. Where such space is not provided such goods and materials, if they are to be stored outside, shall be stored in a designated storage area.
- Potential noise and air nuisances and lighting arrangements shall be addressed at the design stage and appropriate mitigation measures included for in the proposed development.
- Plant shall be integrated into the overall design of the building and shall be shown on relevant planning drawings.

11.4.2 Plot Ratio

- The plot ratio density standard is designed so as to help prevent the adverse effects of over-development on the amenities of the area.
- In general for new development, the maximum plot ratio permitted will be 2:1.
- In the Dominick Street Upper/William Street West/Sea Road/Raven Terrace CC zone and in the CC zone adjoining Father Burke Park the maximum plot ratio permitted will be 1.60:1.
- In the CC zone consideration will be given to development proposals in excess of the normally permissible plot ratio where such proposals would contribute to urban regeneration or make a significant contribution to urban character, this excess will be interpreted as a proportional increase only.
- In the case of infill development in an existing terrace or street, it may be necessary to have a higher plot ratio in order to maintain a uniform fenestration and parapet alignment or to obtain greater height for important urban design reasons. In such circumstances, an increased plot ratio may be permitted.
- Where a site has an established plot ratio in excess of the general maximum for its zone, re-development may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted in line with its existing plot ratio if this conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- Minor extensions, which infringe plot ratio, may be permitted where they are necessary to the satisfactory operation of the building.

11.4.3 Residential Content

- Where appropriate, a residential content of at least 20% of the proposed gross floor area will be required for all new development. Change of use of recently constructed purpose built residential accommodation on upper floor level in areas zoned CC will not normally be permitted.
- Where appropriate on certain sites, including Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour area, a residential content of at least 30% of the proposed gross floor area will be required for any redevelopment.

11.4.4 Open Space Requirement

- This shall be an equivalent to 30% of gross floor area of residential content where proposed. In situations where effective open space cannot be provided on site due to the location of existing buildings,
inappropriate aspect, small scale or for other reasons, a relaxation in this standard may be considered. Innovative ways of providing open space will be open for consideration including roof gardens, winter gardens and balconies having considered the characteristics of the site and the capacity for the delivery of sustainable open space.

11.4.5 Uses

- The conversion of the ground floors of premises on the principal shopping streets from retail to non-retail uses, including retail services shall not be permitted. For these purposes the principal shopping streets are Williamsgate Street, William Street, Shop Street, Mainguard Street, High Street, Quay Street and Eyre Square (north western side). Consideration will be given to allow for retail services on Eyre Square (north western side) and for exceptionally small existing units of total retail gross floor space of less than 20m².
- Consideration will also be given, for a period of 12 months from the date of coming into effect of the City Development Plan, to food outlet use excluding takeaway, on the principal shopping streets for premises with a total retail gross floor space of less than 50sqm.
- In High Street, Quay Street and Woodquay the Council will prevent the enlargement of existing licensed premises and night-clubs (except within the confines of the site) and prevent change of use to licensed premises of existing premises.
- Where development for and/or extensions to licensed premises, including off-licences, night-clubs and takeaways are being considered in the City Centre Area, the Council will take into account the following:
  - The effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area,
  - The effect of the proposed development on the mix of uses in the area,
  - The size, number and location of existing licensed premises in the area.
- Notwithstanding the exemption provisions for change of use of shops in the Planning Acts/Regulations, there is a presumption against the establishment of specific retail operators in the city centre. These uses may have a negative impact on the image of the city centre and may discourage the establishment of other retail developments. In particular this will relate to Adult Shops and Lap Dancing Clubs.

11.4.6 City Centre/Other Areas

- There is also a presumption against adult shops and lap dancing clubs in the area known as 'The West' including Dominick Street and in other areas of the city for similar reasoning, as stated in 11.4.5, and in particular where they could have an adverse impact on residential amenity and/or be located near sensitive land uses such as schools.
- Where development for off-licences, are being considered in areas outside of the city centre, the Council will take into account the following:
  - The effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area,
  - The effect of the proposed development on the mix of uses in the area,
  - The size, number and location of existing off-licenses premises in the area.

11.5 Shop Fronts

- Original traditional shop fronts and pub fronts shall be retained or restored.
- Any proposal for shop front design should take account of the heritage of Galway where feasible.
- Contemporary shop/ pub fronts will be considered when;
  - Materials and proportions are appropriate to the scale and fabric of the building and/or street.
  - The design complements the design of the upper floors of the building.
  - The shop front does not extend into the floor above concealing first floor windowsills.
  - Existing elevations are not straddled.
- Generally the use of external roller shutters/security screens shall not be permitted on the front of shops. If required they should be placed behind the shop front display.
- In general canopies shall not be permitted except when they are necessary to protect goods on display or where they are deemed acceptable under the prevailing tables and chairs policy. Canopies are required to be designed in accordance with the City Council’s Design Guidelines: Canopies, 2011.
11.6 Advertisements and Signage

- New signage or advertisements shall respect the scale, character and setting of the building to which it is attached and have regard to the extent of existing signage on the site.
- No large scale internally illuminated signs or digital display signs or projecting spotlights shall be permitted.
- Lettering shall only be permitted when it is in proportion to the size of the fascia.
- In general signage or advertisement shall not be permitted on upper floors.
- In general no projecting signs shall be permitted, consideration will only be given to small scale projecting signs that are integral to the shop front.
- Particular consideration will be given to the incorporation of bi-lingual wording in signage and advertising.
- Further detailed design guidance is given in the City Council’s *Galway Shop Front and Design Guidelines*.

11.7 Salthill

11.7.1 Plot Ratio

In the Salthill CI zone the maximum plot ratio for new development permitted will be 1.75:1. In the lands zoned ‘R’ and directly adjoining Toft Park a relaxation of the maximum plot ratio figure of 0.46:1 may be considered only where the other residential amenity standards have been complied with, and where the development is of a scale and height appropriate to its high profile setting.

11.7.2 Uses

Where development for and/or extensions to licensed premises, nightclubs and take-aways are being considered in the Salthill area, the Council will take into account the following:
- The effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area.
- The effect of the proposed development on the mix of uses in the area.
- The size, number and location of existing licensed premises in the area.

11.7.3 Car Parking

For new developments in the Salthill area where a reduction in car parking standards is considered acceptable by the Council on grounds of urban design or sustainability, a transport contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking spaces.

11.8 Village Envelopes

- Development proposals for housing in village envelopes will be assessed on the design, layout, impact on European Sites and on compliance with the requirements for wastewater treatments units.
- Commercial development will only be considered in village envelopes when it is of a scale appropriate to the village requirements.

11.9 Commercial and Industry

11.9.1 General

The Council shall take into account the following when considering the design and layout of development in CI and I zones in so far as they relate to a particular development proposal:
• Maximum densities shall only be attainable under optimum site conditions having regard to criteria such as height, open space and protection of amenities.

• Adequate space must be available for on site storage of materials and refuse, loading and unloading, on site circulation of vehicles and parking for motor vehicles and bicycles. In this regard adequate on site waste management facilities must be provided.

• Adequate provision shall be made for storage of goods and materials, if they are to be stored outside, shall be stored in a designated storage area.

• Developments shall be required to provide an element of open space which would include a landscaping scheme for the site having regard to screening of boundaries and vehicle parking areas and to the visual appearance of the site, in particular the area between the front building line and the front boundaries.

• Open space shall be provided in a manner which it can function as an effective amenity area taking into account its location on the site, physical size, aspect to avail of sunlight and accessibility. In this regard open space inappropriately sited or sized or open space incidental to roads, boundaries or pathways, shall not be accepted by the Council, as fulfilling this requirement. Such landscaping schemes shall encourage habitat bio-diversity and incorporate SUDS where feasible.

• Surfaces within the curtilage of industrial/commercial sites shall be of hard wearing, dust free and durable material.

• Parking spaces shall be clearly marked out and delineated. Parking spaces for vehicles of people with disabilities shall be provided and clearly marked and located close to main entrances to premises.

• Potential nuisances/polluters sources shall be addressed at the design stage and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the development.

• All plant equipment shall be addressed at design stage and generally shall not be visible from public areas.

• Where security fencing is required it shall not normally be forward of the front building line of the premises. Where in exceptional circumstances, security fencing is permitted forward of the front building line it shall be set behind landscaping. Security fencing shall be of a high visual standard and where palisade or chain-link type fencing is used it shall be plastic coated, coloured or of similar acceptable specification.

• Advertising structures, where required, shall be sized and placed in a manner, which is unobtrusive. Advertising structures and signage shall be minimised, of a high standard, co-ordinated in design and appropriately scaled and located.

• Buildings or structures intended for use by the general public shall be designed to allow access and internal circulation for people with disabilities.

11.9.2 Site Coverage and Plot Ratios for CI and I Land Use Zones

The development intensity standards of site coverage and plot ratio are designed so as to help prevent the adverse effects of over-development. Site coverage and plot ratios are given in Table no. 11. 3. The figures are the maximum attainable only under optimum site conditions. The site coverage is determined by dividing the total area of ground covered by the building by the total area of the site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>CI</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Site Coverage</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Plot Ratio</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• In the case of infill development in an existing terrace or street, it may be necessary to have a higher plot ratio in order to maintain a uniform fenestration and parapet alignment or to obtain greater height for important urban design reasons. In such circumstances, the Council may allow an increased plot ratio.

• Where a site has an established plot ratio in excess of the general maximum for its zone, re-development may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted in line with its existing plot ratio if this conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

• Minor extensions, which infringe plot ratio or site coverage limits may be permitted where the Council accept that they are necessary to the satisfactory operation of the buildings.

• On CI zoned lands, where it is proposed to provide, above ground level, an amenity open space area in association with residential accommodation, this space may be accepted as open space for site coverage purposes.
11.9.3 Open Space Requirements

The minimum open space requirements, which will apply in CI and I zones, are set out in Table 11.4.

Table 11.4 - Minimum Open Space Requirements for CI and I Zoned Lands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>5% of the total site area and 50% of the gross floor area of residential content where a residential content is proposed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>15% of the total site area in the case of the development of two or more industrial units.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Lands zoned RA or G shall not be included as part of the open space requirement for development on commercial or industrial lands.
- In situations where effective open space cannot be provided on sites due to the location of existing buildings, inappropriate aspect, small scale or for other reasons, the Council may consider a lesser standard.

11.9.4 Residential Content

The Council will require a minimum residential content of 30% of the proposed gross floor area of all new large-scale developments in areas zoned CI adjoining the Headford Road, South of the Bodkin junction.

11.10 Transportation

11.10.1 Parking Space Requirement

Parking spaces for people with disabilities shall be provided in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations and best practice as promoted by the National Disability Authority (www.nda.ie), and in particular their publication Building for Everybody: A Universal Design Approach 2012.

In the case of any use not specified above, the Council will determine the parking requirement, having regard to the traffic levels likely to be generated as a result of the development. In the case of developments with significant car trip generation potential, a Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment shall be carried out in accordance with the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment Guidelines (TII 2014).

Consideration will also given to grouped and dual use parking provision where peak demands do not coincide and cognisance will be given to the potential for multi-purpose trips, subject to assessment.

In commercial developments, one parking space shall be equipped with one fully functional and clearly marked EV charging point in accordance with the requirements of Transportation Section and ESB.

In the City Centre area and in the area defined as Inner City Residential areas (see Fig 11.27 and Chapter 2) parking requirements shall not be exceeded. In all other areas these figures shall not be exceeded by more than 10% unless an acceptable case demonstrates a need for additional car parking spaces.

A reduction in these car-parking standards may be acceptable when an application for development includes a Travel Plan, which demonstrates alternative methods of dealing with traffic generation associated with the proposed development.

In the City Centre area, Inner City Residential area and Salthill Area (see Sections 10.3 and 11.7) as defined in Table 2.1 and Fig. 11.34, where developments do not provide car parking, a transportation contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking spaces.
Travel Plans, also known as Mobility Management Plans, comprise of a package of transport measures specific to a certain type, scale and location of development such as workplaces, schools/colleges and mixed use developments. Travel Plans include sustainable and cost effective transport measures, initiatives and incentives to support and encourage sustainable travel for all commuting and travel to that development and to encourage a shift from single occupancy private car use. Measures may include the provision of infrastructure and incentives to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport, shuttle bus or car share schemes, parking restraints, video conferencing and flexible working arrangements.

The requirement for the submission of a Travel Plan will be assessed on a case by case basis by the Council and cognisance will be taken of the location, scale of development, the nature of uses proposed and the anticipated impact on the existing and proposed transport network. In line with the threshold indicated in the Department of Transport’s *Smarter Travel A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2022* and NTA guidance *Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans – Guidance for Local Authorities*, the Council may request a Travel Plan if an existing or proposed development has the potential to employ over 100 people. Developments may include office and commercial buildings, industrial, warehousing and wholesaling, retail, leisure, medical or educational facilities and schools. The Travel Plan shall include the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator to implement the plan and liaise with the City Council. The Travel Plan shall require regular monitoring and review of the achievement of actions, targets and associated timelines to deliver defined transport modal splits as the plan progresses.
11.10.3 Cycle Parking
In developments, where appropriate, a minimum of one cycle stand per 20 car spaces or over shall be provided. For every additional 50 car parking spaces, an additional cycle stand should be provided. Each cycle stand should accommodate a minimum of five bicycles. Cycle parking must be sheltered where appropriate. Where compliance this standard is not deemed appropriate a transportation contribution will be levied accordingly.

11.10.4 Hackney Offices
Hackney offices will only be acceptable when they can demonstrate adequate waiting areas for on-duty cars and where there will not be undue disruption to traffic flow.

11.11 Waste Management

11.11.1 Commercial Developments
Recycling facilities shall be provided at all retail development which exceed a gross floor area of 1,500m² either as one unit or as a development of a number of units and at other retail developments, where the Council consider it appropriate.

11.11.2 Residential Developments
Recycling facilities, for example bring banks, may be required in residential developments depending on scale, location and general access.
Recycling facilities shall be of high specification and screened from public view. In addition where provided within residential areas, they shall be so located and controlled to ensure traffic safety and avoid nuisance.

11.11.3 Industrial Developments
Recycling facilities shall be provided in industrial estates, where appropriate. The option for communal facilities in individual estates can satisfy this requirement.

11.11.4 Waste Management Facilities
Waste management facilities shall comply in general with the policy considerations outlined under Policy no. 9.12 Waste Management Policy.

11.11.5 Construction and Demolition (C & D)
Proposed medium and large-scale developments shall be accompanied by a satisfactory Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan.

11.12 Agricultural Areas

11.12.1 Agricultural Development in Agricultural Areas zoned A and G
• Waste management and storage associated with agricultural buildings shall comply with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine best practice guidelines on good farming practice, protection of water from nitrate pollution and farm pollution control.
• Where possible new buildings shall be located within or adjoining the existing farmyard complex.
• Buildings shall be of minimum scale and external finishes shall be dark green, dark brown or grey in colour.
• Screening and landscaping proposals shall be required where buildings will be exposed to public view.

11.12.2 Residential Development in Agricultural Areas zoned A
• Dwellings shall normally be required to be sited as unobtrusively as possible from a landscape point of view and located close to existing farm dwellings and buildings on sites of not less than 0.2 hectares.
• Access shall be so designed to avoid traffic hazard and shall not be located directly onto national or regional routes.
• Site suitability shall have regard to proximity to the family home, prominence in the landscape, impact on waterline, safety and adequacy of access, water supply and suitability for a wastewater treatment system.

• Where wastewater treatment systems are required, they shall comply with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency: Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single House (EPA 2010) and any subsequent revisions and any new legislative requirements.

• On high grounds, dwellings shall generally be single storey and set into the landscape so as not to be visually prominent. In particular, these developments shall not interfere with views or break skylines.

• Original stone boundary walls shall be retained where possible or if necessary set back to a new line. Hedgerows and trees shall be retained where possible and appropriate landscaping provided.

• Conversion of dwellings shall be permitted subject to the criteria outlined, under Section 11.3.1 (j) Conversion and Subdivision of Dwellings.

Specific Development Standards

11.13 Childcare Facilities

In general childcare facilities will be assessed on the following:

• The suitability of the site/premises for the type and size of facility proposed, taking into consideration the effects on the existing amenities of the area.

• Adequacy of vehicular/pedestrian access and parking provisions, which may be required to include satisfactory and safe collection/drop-off areas where appropriate, for both customers and staff where it is merited by the scale of the development and the resultant intensity of vehicular movements.

• Availability of public transport facilities within the area.

• Provision of an adequate outdoor play area within the curtilage of all full day care facilities. This outdoor play area shall be so located to have minimum impact on the amenity of surrounding properties, particularly in residential areas and should also be separate from car parking and service areas.

• The design of the structure and capability of it being assimilated satisfactorily into the built environment/site. In this regard appropriate purpose built facilities are encouraged.

• Where new facilities are proposed, these should comply with all relevant legislation and regulations, in particular the Child Care (Preschool Services) Regulations 2006.

• Applicants are also advised to consult with the TUSLA, Health Services Executive Environmental Health Officers, Galway City and County Childcare Committee and the Chief Fire Officer.

The following car parking and outdoor play area standards shall apply to new childcare facilities in all land use zones:

• For parking space requirements refer to Table 11.5.

• The provision of an outdoor play area for full day services at a rate of 55% of the gross floor area of the childcare facility will normally be required. However in residential zones a higher than minimum standard may be required where appropriate in order to protect residential amenity.

• Consideration will be given to development proposals less than this rate of outdoor play area provision, where such proposals would represent sustainable development, (or adhere to sustainable development principles), contribute significantly to the amenities of the area or where satisfactory alternatives can be provided.

• For sessional services, after school care/facilities and drop-in facilities the provision of open space is desirable but not an essential requirement.

11.14 Community / Educational Facilities

• Buildings should be designed to high architectural standards and reflect their civic function. Adequate provision within the curtilage of the site should be made for safe and convenient access for different transport modes and people with disabilities.

• The Council will have regard to recommendations and site development standards specified in The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (DES 2008) and relevant technical guidance documents in assessing applications for schools.

• Planning applications for new large-scale residential developments shall be accompanied by assessments of the capacity of local schools to accommodate the proposed development.
11.15 Built Heritage

Notwithstanding the zoning of the area, the Council will encourage the return to use of protected structures for community, cultural or any other purpose compatible with the restoration of the building to best conservation practice and proper planning where the original or current use is no longer viable. The Planning Authority will consider proposals for development or alterations to a protected structure and proposals for development within an ACA based on the conservation principles set out in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DAHG, 2011) and advice from the Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit of the DAHRG.

In accordance with Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), works which materially affect the character of a protected structure will require planning permission. Therefore, works to a protected structure which might constitute exempted development in other structures may require planning permission. This could include proposals for replacement windows/fenestration, plastering, painting, removal of architectural detailing, doors, railings, brickwork, stonework, downpipes, roofing slates or other alterations. It should be noted that in general replacing original windows with those of a different material, e.g. aluminium or PVC, is not normally acceptable in protected structures.

Planning permission will be required for the erection of a satellite dish, mobile phone, telecommunications equipment and other equipment on a protected structure.

11.16 Petrol Filling Stations

Proposals for petrol filling stations will be considered with reference to amenity and traffic safety. An undue concentration of filling stations shall not be permitted along any route.

Where shops are being provided they shall be ancillary to the principal use of the premises as a petrol filling station. In this regard the shopping element will be assessed with reference to the impact that it may have on the existing retail structure of the city including established neighbourhood and local shops in the vicinity. Where such shops are permitted the total floor area devoted to retail sales shall not generally exceed 100m². Where retail space exceeds this net retail sales threshold, the sequential approach to retail development as specified in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012), will apply.

Access to filling stations will not be permitted within 35m of a road junction.

Frontage onto primary, secondary and regional roads shall be at least 50m in length with all pumps and installations set back minimum 5m from the road edge and a wall (minimum 0.5m in height) shall separate the forecourt from the public road.

All external lighting should be directed away from the public road and a proliferation of illuminated signs will not be permitted. In this regard lighting and signs in the canopy will also be taken into consideration.

Signs shall relate only to the business being carried out on the site and shall not be used for general advertising purposes.

11.17 Telecommunication Infrastructure and Installations

In considering applications for proposed telecommunication infrastructure and installations, the Council will have regard to the Planning Guidelines for Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures and DECLG, Circular Letter PL07/12 2012 updating sections of these guidelines. Proposed installations shall have cognisance of any existing aircraft flight paths, where appropriate.

11.18 Renewable Energy Sources

Both a technical and an environmental statement must support any proposal for the development of a renewable energy scheme. Consultation is advisable with the appropriate bodies, such as, Galway Energy Agency, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, SEAI and ESB/Eirgrid.
In the event of any application for a wind turbine, the proposal shall comply with the *Wind Energy Guidelines - Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DECLG 2006) or any update to these guidelines.

With regard to micro renewable energy source the Planning and Development Regulations 2007 and 2008 has introduced exemptions from planning requirements for micro renewable energy sources in domestic dwellings, business premises and industrial buildings, for example, solar panels, heat pumps, biomass and wind turbines subject to certain conditions.

### 11.19 Green Design

New development shall consider the use of innovative design features in buildings including green roofs, walls and roof gardens. These are important measures in the control of surface water run off, providing thermal insulation, enhancing biodiversity and promoting a varied cityscape. Development proposals which include any of the above elements shall be accompanied by details of construction techniques, long-term viability, maintenance and management, prepared by a suitably qualified landscape designer.

### 11.20 Outdoor Events

Applications for licenses of outdoor events shall be considered under Part 16 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 -2015 and proper planning and sustainable development.

### 11.21 Street Furniture, Signs and Structures

Application for licenses for street furniture, signs and structures shall be considered under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 17, of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-15. Further guidance is available in the Councils *Licensing of Street Furniture, Signs & Structures Policy Document 2011* and *Galway Shop Front and Signage Design Guidelines 2012*.

### 11.22 Water Quality

Proposed developments, which include the storage and/or run-off of potential polluting substances, such as oil and chemicals shall be accompanied with details and specifications, which indicate how risk of pollution will be minimised by using best available practices. This shall also apply to the construction stage.

### 11.23 Development Contribution Scheme

Developments of a residential, commercial and industrial nature will have to pay a development contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of Galway City that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the Council.

### 11.24 Access for All

Part M of the Building Regulations 2010, and *Building for Everybody: A Universal Design Approach* (National Disability Authority, 2012) sets out standards and best practice to ensure that buildings and the built environment are accessible and usable by everyone, including the elderly, people with disabilities and people with children. Further information available on the website of the National Disability Authority at www.nda.ie.

### 11.25 Recreation and Sports Facilities

- Recreation and sport facilities should be designed to high architectural standards and have regard to safety and accessibility considerations.
• Developments of a passive and active recreational and sports nature will be assessed against the strategy adopted in the Council's *Recreation and Amenity Needs Study* (2008) and as set out in Chapter 4.
• Developments of a passive and active recreational and sports nature will be considered/assessed in the context of potential impact on the environment, sites of ecological and biodiversity importance and general amenity, where appropriate.

### 11.26 Art/Cultural Amenity

Large-scale development shall include provision for a professional piece of artwork, agreed in conjunction with the Council, which shall be located within an agreed area, accessible to the public and sponsored by the developer.

### 11.27 Flood Risk Management

• Where development is proposed in identified flood risk areas under Western CFRAM, the type or nature of the development needs to be carefully considered and the potential risks mitigated and managed through on-site location, layout and design of the development to reduce flood risk to an acceptable level.
• Development shall have regard to the flood resilient design guidance and flood mitigation measures in the City Council's *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023*, the recommendations and best practice guidelines of Appendix B – addressing flood risk management in design of development in *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009) and the *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Three Local Area Plan Areas 2012*.
• In identified flood risk areas, Flood Zone A or B, it will be necessary to carry out a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising. Proposals shall demonstrate appropriate mitigation and management measures in the layout and design of development.
• All proposed development must consider the impact of surface water flood risk in drainage design. Consideration should be given in the design of new development to the incorporation of SUDS. The drainage design should ensure no increase flood risk to the site or downstream catchment.
• Development proposals in identified flood risk areas shall consider and incorporate the potential impacts of climate change and residual risk into development layout and design.
• In areas of identified flood risk all developments including minor works and changes of use should include an appropriate level of FRA. This assessment must demonstrate that the development would not increase flood risk in the context of use, emergency access and infrastructure. Development should demonstrate principles of flood resilient design.

### 11.28 Extractive Industries/Quarries

The operation of quarries can give rise to land use and environmental issues which require to be mitigated and controlled in the planning process. The protection of residential dwellings, residential amenities, natural amenities, the prevention of pollution, noise/vibration, traffic and the safeguarding of groundwater will be given serious consideration. The Council will have regard to the DEHLG's *Quarries and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004* when assessing all quarry related proposals, in order to achieve more sustainable aggregates development and to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on the environment. Particular constraint will be exercised for sites in the vicinity of areas of residential settlements, areas of archaeological importance, recorded monuments, European Sites and other environmentally sensitive (designated) areas, unless it can clearly be demonstrated that such quarries would not have significant adverse impacts on residential dwellings, amenities or the environment. All developments should have regard to and comply with the EPA publication *Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non-Scheduled Minerals)*, (2006).

### 11.29 Student Accommodation

The City Council supports the provision of high quality, professionally managed, purpose built student accommodation on/off campus at appropriate locations in terms of access to sustainable and public transport modes and third level institutes, in a manner that respects the residential amenities of the surrounding area.
Student accommodation should be designed to be attractive, accessible, safe, and minimise adverse impacts on the surrounding area while creating mixed, healthy and inclusive communities. The nature, layout and design of the development should be appropriate to its location and context and should not result in an unacceptable impact on local character, environmental quality or residential amenity. Proposals should be designed to be safe and secure for their occupants whilst respecting the character and permeability of the surrounding area. An appropriate management plan should be part of student accommodation applications to minimise potential negative impacts from occupants and the development on surrounding properties and neighbourhoods and to create a positive and safe living environment for students. Adequate open space of suitable orientation should be provided within developments.

Proposals for student accommodation should comply in general with the design standards promoted in the Guidelines on Residential Development for Third Level Students (DES 1999), the subsequent supplementary document (2005) and the Student Accommodation Scheme, (ORC 2007) unless superseded by new standards. Alternative design standards will be required to show that they are adapted from other international standards and prevailing best practice.

When assessing planning applications for student accommodation consideration will be given to the following:

- The location and accessibility to educational facilities and the proximity to existing or planned public transport corridors and cycle routes;
- The potential impact on local residential amenities;
- Adequate amenity areas and open space;
- The level and quality of on-site facilities, including storage facilities, waste management, bicycle facilities, leisure facilities, car parking and amenity;
- The architectural quality of the design and also the external layout, with respect to materials, scale, height and relationship to adjacent structures. Internal layouts should take cognisance of the need for flexibility for future possible changes of uses;
- The number of existing similar facilities in the area. In assessing a proposal for student accommodation the Council will take cognisance of the amount of student accommodation which exists in the locality and will resist the over-concentration of such schemes in any one area, in the interests of sustainable development and residential amenity.
- Details of the full nature and extent of use of the proposed use of the facilities outside of term time.
- Consideration regarding compliance with Part V arrangements for social housing will not be required where the accommodation is for student accommodation of a recognised third level institution.

All permissions for student accommodation shall have a condition attached requiring planning permission for a change of use from student accommodation to other types of accommodation. Future applications for change of use will be resisted except where it is demonstrated that continuing over-provision of student accommodation exists in the city.

11.30 Environmental Impact Assessment

The Planning and Development Regulations specify mandatory thresholds above which Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) are required, setting out the types and scale of development proposals that require EIS. Where it appears to the Planning Authority that a development proposal that falls below the thresholds set out in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2015 would be likely to have a significant environmental effect, a ‘sub-threshold/discretionary EIS’ can be requested by the Council.

11.31 Appropriate Assessment

Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive there is a requirement to establish whether, in relation to plans and projects, appropriate assessment (AA) is required. If, following screening, it is considered that AA is required then the proponent of the plan or project must prepare a Natura Impact Report/Natura Impact Statement. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, screening for Appropriate Assessment, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that:

- The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
• The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest – including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or

• The plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest- restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.
S 1.1 Introduction

The Planning and Development Acts, 2000 as amended, in particular Part V requires that Planning Authorities must prepare Housing Strategies and integrate them into their development plans. The Planning Authority consequently, or An Bord Pleanála on appeal, may require a developer, as a condition of a grant of permission, to reserve the specified percentage of housing units for social housing or to agree to any other options considered to be appropriate and as provided for in the legislation. It is acknowledged that many aspects in determining the future issues related to housing and consequently the Housing Strategy are based on estimates and assumptions. This is a particularly difficult task in the current economy where there has not been an efficiently functioning housing market for a number of years. In addition, national policy as espoused in the Housing Policy Statement (2011) issued by DECLG, now encourages a different attitude and vision for housing than what existed heretofore.

The Planning Act emphasises that the need for Part V housing has to be a material planning consideration which must be taken into account when preparing development plan policies, preparing a Housing Strategy and deciding on planning application or appeals. However due to the urgent need for social housing, the concept of affordable housing as provided for in legislation is not deemed necessary at present under national policy unless supported by a future Ministerial Directive. These revisions have been brought about and are included for in the recently adopted Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015.

The requirements for Housing Strategies in 2015 as provided for in legislation are to:

1) Estimate the present and likely future demand for housing in the area and thus, ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is available within the Local Authority’s Development Plan to meet such existing and future needs. (This requirement is now substantially accommodated in the Core Strategy).

2) Include for consultation with Approved Housing Bodies and have regard for all Government policies on housing.

3) Under the Part V agreement process, focus entirely on the provision of social housing in a number of ways, which include the reservation of a specified percentage of up to 10% to be reserved for such developments in excess of 9 units on land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses.

4) Consider the merits of alternatives (in the context of the Local Authority’s needs), to (3) which can include for the transfer of housing units on other lands not subject to the specific planning permission, or also through the option of long term leasing of properties and rental accommodation availability agreements.\(^\text{15}\)

5) Reject any options for payment in lieu of social housing or the transfer of sites or land within the area.

6) Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to satisfy the requirements of various categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

7) Counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

In order to monitor and ensure relevance of the strategy, within two years after the adoption of the Development Plan incorporating the Housing Strategy, the Chief Executive will prepare a report for the Council which will include a review of the progress in implementing the Housing Strategy. In addition a report will also be prepared if there has been a change in the housing market or in the regulations made by the Minister under the Act, which significantly affect the Housing Strategy.

Planning Authorities are required to demonstrate also that their Housing Strategy is aligned with the population projections contained in their Core Strategy. The Core Strategy itself must show that the Plan is consistent with both the national and the regional planning guidelines including allocated population targets.

In consideration of the requirements for housing the Housing Strategy is therefore obliged to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to satisfy the housing needs of the targeted population as defined under the NSS and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region (RPGs).

These targets – to reach a population of 98,700 by 2022 in the Galway City Gateway appear very ambitious. This is noting that the population for 2015 is estimated to be approximately 77,135\(^\text{16}\) which would require a growth in population of 3,038 p.a., equivalent to an increase of 28% from the estimated current population, to reach this target by 2022.

\(^{15}\) Note: A Commencement Order signed on 1st September 2015 brought all sections into operation except section 34 relating to rental accommodation availability agreements.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^{16}\) Galway City Population, Housing, Retail Assessment 2012-2016 commissioned by Galway City Council, 2015
In view of the stated intention of the DECLG to introduce a successor to the NSS which may have consequences for the NSS population targets, it may be necessary to re-visit the Housing Strategy during the lifetime of the City Development Plan.

Notwithstanding the ambitious RPGs target there are sufficiently zoned lands to accommodate the housing demands that this targeted population would generate. It is also recognised that the population target for Galway as a designated Gateway are still valid in the longer term. It is also important also to have headroom in residential zoned lands to allow for a longer term vision regarding settlement, to direct investment in infrastructure and also to allow for choice and flexibility in the property market.

It is acknowledged that the city is growing regardless. This is noting the intercensal growth of 4.3% in population between 2006 and 2011. This has been further supported by the CSO recent regional projections, and the National Housing Building Agency views on the future growing demands for housing. Taking these indicators into consideration, it is critical to plan for growth in Galway City even in the context of the recent economic decline and levels of emigration.

**S 1.2 Legislation**

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 specifically Part V requires all Planning Authorities to prepare housing strategies and to incorporate them into their development plans. The legislation has since been the subject of a number of amendments the most recent being under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 which substantially revised the Part V arrangements on social and affordable housing following a review of Part V provisions.

This new approach came following on from the recent economic crisis which had direct linkage to the housing market. The Government issued a Housing Policy Statement in 2011 which reflects a new vision for the future of the housing sector. This included a need to review Part V, in particular the element relating to affordable housing while still allowing for the capturing of planning gain from private residential developments. This review has been completed and new legislation adopted. As referenced previously the concept of affordable housing is being set aside for the present.

The revised focus includes for the provision of social housing under the Part V agreement process in a number of ways which include the reservation of a reduced, specified percentage of up to 10% to be reserved on developments in excess of 9 units of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses. The emphasis is on maximising the transfer of completed social housing units. The option of providing cash payments in lieu of social housing and the option of the transfer of sites or land elsewhere has been discontinued. The option of transferring completed units on other land not subject to the planning permission is provided for under Part V obligations as is the option of long term leasing of properties. As indicated the option for accepting rental accommodation availability agreements is provided for but has not come into effect as of yet. The legislation also allows for these arrangements to be retrospectively applied to planning permissions where works have not commenced.

Also introduced under this legislation is a vacant site levy to be paid by the owner of a registered vacant site. The levy is intended as a mechanism to incentivise the development of vacant sites, enabling them to be brought into beneficial use or to encourage their sale to those who have an interest and resources to develop. Monies raised arising from the levy will be required to be spent on housing or public improvements in the vicinity of the site. The Council is required to commence the preparation of a Vacant Sites Register for the city in 2017 and the levy will be implemented in 2018.

In addition changes have also been brought about in the Housing Acts which have an impact on the delivery of housing. The Housing Miscellaneous Provision Act 2009 provides Local Authorities with a framework for a more strategic approach to the delivery and management of housing services. The Elected Members are required to adopt Housing Service Plans, Homeless Action Plans, and Anti Social Behaviour Strategies. In addition, this legislation also provided for revised assessments of housing need and allocation policies. It also provided for the basis for the provision of rented social housing by means of leasing or contract arrangements including the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

Consequent legislation, the Housing Miscellaneous Provision Act 2014 has introduced a new scheme of Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) in respect to rent payable by households qualifying for social housing support for private rented accommodation.
1.3 Policy Context

The Housing Strategy has been prepared in line with national and regional policy and has had regard to the overall Core Strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Galway City. The most relevant policy influences come from the following documents:

**National Spatial Policy – 2002-22 (NSS)**

The NSS is the expression of a national spatial planning framework for Ireland. It proposes a more balanced pattern of population, employment and physical development between regions. It advocates the continued support of development in the Greater Dublin Region but with a focused development in the nine Gateway Cities and nine Hub Towns. Galway is identified as a Gateway. This approach was reaffirmed in the 2010 *Update and Outlook NSS* (October 2010). However, taking into consideration the recent economic, societal and demographic changes, the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (2013) advised that a comprehensive review of the NSS was intended and a revised spatial framework needed to be prepared and put on a statutory footing. This review is still awaited. However, in the absence of such a review, there is sufficient evidence to show that there is now a significant misalignment with the NSS aspirations for Galway Gateway in 2022 and actual population growth levels and investment. It is anticipated that these factors will contribute to the review of the NSS.

**Housing Policy Statement (2011)**

This statement was issued in June 2011 and holds that a new vision for the housing sector in Ireland is considered to be a fundamental part of the national recovery. The vision is to be ‘based on choice, fairness, equity across tenures and on delivering quality outcomes for the resources invested.’

The overall strategic objective is to enable ‘all households access good quality housing appropriate to household circumstances and their particular community of choice.’ It is stated that future housing policy will focus on the most acute needs. The statement confirms that there is rationale to continue to use the Part V process for the capturing of planning gain from residential developments in particular for social housing supports.

The main measures include:
- Standing down of all existing Affordable Housing schemes.
- Review of the Part V process.
- Focus on maximising the potential for the delivery of social housing through a number of supports including direct provision and examination of new models of delivery.
- Transfer of the responsibility of the long term rent supplement recipients to Local Authorities.
- Promotion and support of a strong and sustainable voluntary and co operative housing sector.
- Consideration of enhancing the tenant/landlord terms in the private rented sector.
- Prioritisation of the regeneration and improvement of the existing social housing stock.
- Continuation of support for special needs groups and homeless services.
- Support for mortgage arrears management, guidance for private and Local Authority borrowers.
- The tackling of anti-social behaviour across all housing tenures.

This has been subsequently updated by *Rebuilding Ireland– Action Plan on Housing & Homelessness* launched by DHPCLG in 2016. This Plan provides a multi-stranded, action-orientated approach to achieving many of the Government’s key housing objectives.

**Social Housing Strategy (2014)**

The Government approved the *Social Housing Strategy 2020* in November 2014. The strategy re-affirms the role of the State in the provision of social housing through a resumption of direct build by Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) combined with use of the private rented sector. The committed strategy aims are threefold – to provide 35,000 new social houses over a six year period; to support up to 75,000 households through an enhanced private rental sector; to reform social housing supports by providing a more flexible and responsive system.

The national phase 1 targets are to achieve 18,000 additional housing units and 32,000 HAP/RAS units by the end of 2017 and in phase 2 to target the delivery of 17,000 additional housing units and 43,000 HAP/RAS units by the end of 2020.
Construction 2020 (2014)
The national strategy acknowledges that the construction sector is underperforming and an increase in output is required in order to meet future needs. With regard to housing, there is a commitment to maintain a comprehensive database on house completions, commencements, permissions granted and vacancy levels which will be analysed against projected demands.

In addition it has resulted in the establishment of a housing taskforce for Dublin to promote market ready schemes. It also referenced the need to identify the best way to deliver social housing and acknowledged the need to maintain Part V and continue to provide for social housing through private development. It also referenced the need to streamline the planning process and provide for new legislation to accommodate a Planning Regulator and support a new Policy Statement on Planning.

Regional Planning Guidelines West Region (RPG’s) 2010-2022
The RPG’s provide a broad planning framework at regional level and reflect the objectives of the NSS. With respect to Galway City this means that the guidelines support the role of the Gateway and acknowledge the role the city has as a key economic driver for the west region.

Following on from the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a number of changes were made to the regional structures in Ireland which replaced the eight regional authorities and two regional assemblies with three regional authorities. Galway City is in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area. The current RPG’s are scheduled to be replaced by a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly region.

Other Relevant Policy Documents
In 2007 the DECLG published Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, it outlines the Government’s commitment to ensure that housing provision is sustainable and of high quality. The importance of sustainable housing projects depend on the balance struck between a range of factors. Issues such as accessibility, security, safety, privacy, community interaction, availability of appropriate services and the provision of adequate space, are all important and need to be given equal consideration.

The DECLG policy document National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability (2011) outlines the government strategy to address the housing needs of people with disabilities and is part of a cross departmental approach to support people with disabilities in community based living with maximum independence and choice.

The implementation plan of the State’s response to homelessness, the Homeless Strategy National Implementation Plan (2014), sets out a range of measures to secure a ring-fenced supply of accommodation to house homeless households by the end of 2016. The policy direction is to be primarily delivered through a local homeless action plan process.

In 2015 the DECLG published the “Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments” Guidelines, which aims to uphold proper standards for apartment design to meet the accommodation needs of a variety of household types and to ensure that, through the application of a nationally consistent approach, new apartment developments will be affordable to construct and that supply will be forthcoming to meet the housing needs of citizens.

S 1.4 Analyses of Housing Demand and Supply

Demand
The projected demand for housing units in Galway City is based on the Core Strategy which uses population targets as defined under the NSS and the RPGs. The analysis, as is required under recent legislation, has had regard also of the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Galway City.

The targeted projected population growth as defined in the RPGs for the West Region 2010-2016 for Galway City is expressed in Table 1. These targets were prepared in 2010 and took direction from the DEHLG Circular SP4/09 which prescribed minimum population targets to be used in the preparation of the Regional Planning Guidelines. In consideration of the requirements for housing, the Housing Strategy is therefore obliged to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to satisfy the housing needs of the targeted population as provided for in the Core Strategy and as defined under the NSS and the RPGs.
The CSO census of population 2011 recorded a population of 75,529 in Galway City, which represents 2,871 persons below the NSS 2010 target (3.2% less) see Table 1 and Table 2. Notwithstanding this, the inter census growth from 2006 to 2011 indicates that there was a 4.3% growth in population in the city for this period. To reach the targeted growth for 2022 however would require an increase in population of 23,171 from that recorded in 2011.

Demographic analysis prepared for the Core Strategy, based on recent CSO based assumptions modified for Galway City estimates that the population in Galway in 2015 is approximately 77,135. This would suggest that a growth of 21,565 persons would be required from 2015 to meet the 2022 targets, an average annual growth of 3,080. The preliminary results of the 2016 Census of Population vindicates this growth rate by confirming a population of 79,504 in the city – an intercensal growth rate of 5.3%.

Regardless of estimates, the Housing Strategy is obliged to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to satisfy the housing needs of the targeted population as defined under the NSS and the RPGs.

Notwithstanding the fact that these are ambitious targets, there is, as the Core Strategy has demonstrated, sufficient lands specifically zoned for residential use and Local Area Plan where residential use will predominate, to accommodate the housing demands that this targeted population would generate.

The Housing Agency in the National Statement of Housing Supply and Demand 2014 and Outlook for 2015-17 (July 2015) states that population “… is projected to grow over the next few years, as the economy begins to show signs of recovery and demographic trends point to population increases and smaller household sizes.”

So regardless of the mismatch between estimated population growth levels and RPGs population targets, the strategy in the Development Plan must recognize that there is a demand for housing, and that this will grow irrespective of the rate of population growth owing to changes in household size. However it is also anticipated that population will grow too. It is stated in Chapter 1 of the Plan that recent improvement in economic trends suggests the beginning of a recovery which will consequently create a climate for an increase in population and additional pressures for housing and the associated land use requirements. This is the accepted approach of the Core Strategy to plan for growth.

In adopting a growth scenario there is a requirement to estimate the number of houses that are likely to be required in Galway in the period 2017-2023. In this regard it is essential to examine two key characteristics of the city’s population. Initially the likely changes in the actual population size must be estimated. Secondly, the household formation levels, that is the number of people in each household needs to be estimated. Thus, the number of new households can be estimated which consequently gives an indicator of housing demands. As indicated previously, it is a nationally recognised trend that household size is decreasing. The concept of using household composition is deemed a better method to reflect future housing demand than that of average household size. This is important as national census trends from 2002-11 shows an increase in 1/2/3 person households and a gradual decrease in households of 4 and 5 persons. In Galway the housing composition shows that 3 person households form the core of the resident population and overall there is a slight trend notable, or a move towards households with a lesser number of persons.

NSS Targeted Population

In the context of the Core and Housing Strategy as previously stated there is an obligation to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to satisfy the housing needs of the targeted population as defined under the NSS and the RPGs. These targets, developed under the NSS assumed particular supports for a Gateway/Hub spatial settlement strategy and the associated investment and policy decision making. There is an acknowledged need to update/develop a new spatial planning direction which would constitute as a “successor” to the NSS. This has not been introduced to date. In the interim the NSS and the associated population targets continue to be the official direction for spatial policy in Ireland.

With regard to projections, a cohort component method would be the better method to use for projecting population. However in the context of RPGs targets this cannot be applied as assumptions cannot be made with confidence regarding fertility, mortality and migration rate as the targets are driven mostly by policy rather than scientific methods of projections which reflects their origin coming from the NSS, a spatial planning policy. In this regard an average house size has been used for projecting need in the context of the RPGs targets.

---

**Table 1. Targeted Population Growth for Galway Gateway as defined in the RPG (West Region) 2010-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Growth</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galway City</td>
<td>78,400</td>
<td>88,500</td>
<td>98,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is estimated therefore, based on targets, that the increase in the number of households in Galway City from the end of 2011 to 2022 will be in the order of \(8,510\) (See Table 2). This is taking the census records of 2011 households as the baseline and adopting the average size of city households then at 2.72 to be constant from 2011 to 2022. As the estimates relate to ambitious population targets the marginal difference should household size diminish does not frustrate the exercise of examining land banks for housing. In addition although the targets are up to 2022 and the City Development Plan is up until 2023 it is not considered necessary to allow for addition of population growth as it is considered that the NSS targets reflect a longer term growth scenario already.

In the discussion of demand for housing and in the context of the Housing Strategy the notion of affordability was historically important and legislated for. Housing demand normally consists of households who can afford to buy houses on the open market and also households who will have difficulty doing so. Prior to this amendment to the Part V planning legislation as enacted in July 2015 these latter households were considered in two categories – those that could buy housing if it were provided at a reduced cost, that is cross subsidised private housing (classified as “affordable”), and those who would require publically supported housing - social housing. The current approach has set aside the ‘affordable’ concept and therefore consideration of demand and supply in the Housing Strategy focuses now on the demand for housing overall and the specific requirements to construct social housing and provide housing through specific housing supports.

Supply
Issues relating to supply require an examination of available data including house completions since 2011, housing land availability, CSO records on household numbers and composition. It also requires the review of vacancy rates, trends in housing including house prices and the important role of the rental sector in housing.

Housing Completions
Table 3 below illustrates the house completion rates since 2009. The low figures demonstrate the low level of construction rates. These are in contrast to the previous years where a historical peak of house completion was at a rate of 2,305 units in 2003 alone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016 Q3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House Completions</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the baseline for the strategy has been taken to be 2011 and the house completions from that date are available, the residual demand for housing includes what may at this stage be recognised as pent up demand plus future demand. In total from January 2011 up to September 2016 there have been 467 house completions in Galway City (See Table 3).

Housing Units Required
Taking account of the 467 housing units completed from end of 2011 up to September 2016 there would be an estimated residual demand for 8,043 housing units to satisfy the population targets. Using the estimated development of an average density of 35 units per hectare (average density on recent housing schemes constructed and extant permissions) this would indicate that there is a requirement for 230 hectare of residential land zoned and serviced. The assessment of the capacity of the delivery of this housing has to be considered on lands designated for Local Area Plans at Ardaun also as this is a high priority for the Core Strategy. This is considered on a phased basis of delivery with phase 1 up to 2022. In addition recognition must be given to the Core Strategy objectives for underutilised / vacant Regeneration lands in the city centre. This consideration is in line with the objectives in the Core Strategy to create a compact built environment and to accord with the principles of sustainability. Although other mixed use zoning outside...
of the City Centre area have some potential to deliver housing these are more difficult to estimate and the associated objectives are not primarily for residential on most of these zonings.

As indicated previously the NSS targeted population appear very high but regardless there is a strong need to provide for housing in the context of market trends and a gradually recovering economy. Additional support for this argument for demand has been provided by the Housing Agency. A recent publication by the Agency state that Galway City will require 2,316 housing units from 2015 to 2018. This did not include for the pent up demand legacy from previous years and was based on models of population projections from CSO census figures for 2011. It was based on population alone; it also did not allow for policy driven NSS targeted growth. This is a more conservative approach than the NSS targets, however it emphasises that there is a strong immediate demand for investment in housing in the city.

In contrast, house building rates have been very low. The significant decline in house building in the city reflects what has been experienced nationally. This has been brought about by the economic crisis and further fuelled now by a number of factors including the need for finance, infrastructure investment, skilled construction workers, available and suitable sites and the lack of confidence that buyers and developers have in relation to future price trends. In contrast, house building rates have been very low. The significant decline in house building in the city reflects what has been experienced nationally. This has been brought about by the economic crisis and further fuelled now by a number of factors including the need for finance, infrastructure investment, skilled construction workers, available and suitable sites and the lack of confidence that buyers and developers have in relation to future price trends.

Lands Available for Housing

Galway City Council submits data annually to the National Housing Land Availability (HLA) Study on residentially zoned lands. In 2014 it was indicated that there are 302 hectares of residentially zoned undeveloped land in the city. Of this, 159 hectares is substantially serviced and considered suitable for high density development and the remaining lands are zoned for low density residential for a number of reasons including visual sensitivity, environmental sensitivity and deficit of services.

Following changes in zoning during the making of the plan there have been increases in residential zoned land to 335 hectares, 172 hectares of which are zoned for high density housing. It is estimated that 6,020 housing units can be delivered on all of the high density residential zoned undeveloped lands using an average density of 35 units per hectare and 815 units can be delivered on low density development taking an average density of 5 units per hectare for low density.

As the HLA records only lands that are zoned specifically for residential purposes, it does not reflect the full strategy for settlement as defined in the Core Strategy. The phase 1 Ardaun LAP lands are also important in estimating the lands available for housing. In addition as referenced previously the Regeneration lands are important also in line with sustainable practices.

Adjustments have to be made for vacancy, (vacancy rates recorded in 2011 were 11.2% equivalent to 3,572 units) which has potential for a slow release of properties onto the market, obsolescence in housing and a marginal adjustment for second home/holiday ownership. These have been accounted for in the supply estimates.

Table 4: Estimated Potential of House Delivery from City Development Plan 2017-23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Land Availability in Development Plan 2017-23</th>
<th>Estimated Housing Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Zoned – High Density</td>
<td>6,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Zoned – Low Density</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardaun Phase 1</td>
<td>1098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy/Obsolesce/Other Adjustments</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total capacity available</td>
<td>9,093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 reflects the combination of all lands that can support the delivery of housing. This analysis demonstrates that there is sufficient land zoned specifically and with a priority designation for LAP (Ardaun phase 1) that can deliver 9,093 units, this can satisfy the housing needs of the NSS targeted population for 2022 which is estimated to require 8,255 housing units. It is acknowledged that it is considered acceptable...
to use the NSS 2022 targets until these are reviewed after which the Housing Strategy and the Core Strategy can be updated and the City Development Plan varied accordingly if necessary.

Although the analysis of demand and supply indicate that the housing needs required by the targeted RPGs population, that is a population of 98,700 by 2022, can be met a considerable amount of land will be required to be servoiced in advance of delivery. It is estimated that approximately 15% of the housing will require significant infrastructural investment as these lands, which includes Ardaun LAP, do not have critical infrastructure such as water, waste water, roads, telecommunication services or public transport services. This is a particularly constraining factor in the supply chain. In addition although an allowance has also been included as delivery on Regeneration lands, this will be critically linked with recovery in the economy as development on these sites will first have to be lead by large scale commercial investment which may not be delivered before 2022. These sites will also require critical infrastructure investment.

Grants of Planning Permission
There is a legacy of grants of planning permission for a significant number of housing units in the city. Many of these relate to permissions which have been extended under Section 42 of the Planning and Development Act 2010 as amended. This facility allowed for extensions where the reasoning behind non-commencement related to the economic recession. In total there are 1,351 housing units with the benefit of planning permission in the city. Of these 1,098 are historical permissions that have been extended. This indicates that reinvigoration of the housing market in the city does not rely immediately on having to secure planning permission.

Unfinished Housing Estate Survey 2014
In October 2010 the National Housing Development Survey classified 24 developments in Galway City as “unfinished housing estates”. This description nationally captured a wide range of circumstances from developments that required works to public realm, services and developments where there was significant amount of actual dwellings left in an unfinished state. The latter was not the circumstance in Galway with only one development of 50 apartment units in an unfinished state and this has since been completed out. Currently there are three developments on the list. The remaining developments are currently undergoing remedial works, most of which relate to public areas, utility upgrades and making sites secure. It is not considered that any of the associated works will make a notable contribution to delivery of housing in the city as in the main these developments are already occupied.

Relevant Housing Market Trends
The Irish economy is showing signs of recovery, this is evident from the fact that the unemployment rate is decreasing, exports are increasing, and GDP which grew at almost 5% for 2014 is predicted to grow at a similar rate for 2015. Demographic trends are predicted by the CSO to maintain a continued growth and a return to inward migration from 2017. All of these factors contribute to the need for additional housing.

In contrast there has been very low new house delivery nationally. This is similarly reflected in the Galway construction rates in Table 3. House prices which plummeted from 2007 have been increasing steadily since early 2014. The most recent house price report issued by Daft.ie Q.2 2015 gives an average property price (includes all types of residential property) for Galway City at €207,697, an increase of 29% from the low levels of 2007. The CSO acknowledges an increase in property prices at a national level in the year ending December 2014 of 16.3%. Eurostat published data on the European House Price Index 2014 indicating that house prices in Ireland have increased six times more than the European average (2.3%). The estimates show that the rate at which Irish house prices increased was by far the fastest in the EU for 2014, however there is need to acknowledge that Irish house prices were coming from a low base following the decline in the market.

The private rental market has experienced similar trends in pricing with Daft.ie Q1 2015 rental report indicating that average rent in Galway City is now at €886, this has risen by 16.9% from its lowest point in recent years. Nationally, the demands in the private rental sector as stated in National Statement of Housing Supply and Demand 2014 (Housing Agency) July 2015 have increased substantially with almost 1 in 5 households now in the private rented sector compared with 1 in 10 in 2006. This publication also gives an estimate that the private rented sector supports 32% of all households receiving state support.

In general Irish home ownership rates relative to international standards are very high. Recent DKM research18 of the private rental sector bears out this culture when it found that the sector is seen by the majority 73% of current renters as a short term housing tenure. The lack of long-term tenure security, and rent stability were identified as the negative aspects associated with renting as a housing tenure.

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The private rental sector forms an important element in the housing supply. It is increasing in importance in the housing market. In accordance with CSO Census it supplies 65% of rented homes to the market nationally compared to the remaining 35% being supplied by the Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies. It is likely that reliance on private rented sector will continue. The mechanism of private build and rent/lease arrangements for social housing will also increase in accordance with the vision for housing as expressed in the Government’s Housing Policy Statement (2011). In Galway City currently the rental sector is very important constituting 49% of the housing stock. The private rental sector forms an important element in the housing supply. It is increasing in importance in the housing market. In accordance with CSO Census it supplies 65% of rented homes to the market nationally compared to the remaining 35% being supplied by the Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies. It is likely that reliance on private rented sector will continue. However as the availability of private rental properties is linked to house construction this element of the housing market is very vulnerable to rent inflation and decrease in supply as is currently in evidence.

Specialist Market - Student Accommodation

Owing to the high number of third level students in Galway City there is a significant demand for on-campus accommodation, privately owned student accommodation, and accommodation provided through the private rental market. The latter has been diminishing in recent years owing to additional demands for rented accommodation.

The recently published Higher Education Authority – Report on Student Accommodation – Demand and Supply (September 2015) identifies a significant shortage of on-campus accommodation and privately owned student accommodation in Dublin and to a lesser extent in the other urban areas which include Galway, Cork, and Limerick.

The Planning Authority has had a number of consultations/planning applications with respect to options on the provision of privately owned student housing. In addition NUIG are developing a programme for the delivery of on-campus student accommodation, the first stage of which for a 429 bed unit has been granted planning permission.

S 1.5 Analyses of Social Housing Demand and Supply

Introduction

The Social Housing Strategy 2020 published in 2014 re-affirms the role of the State in the provision of social housing. The aim states “…that to the greatest extent possible, every household in Ireland will have access to secure, good quality housing suitable to their needs at an affordable price and in a sustainable community.”

It recognises that the demands for social housing increased rapidly in conjunction with the decline in the national economy. In tandem with this there was a significant fall in Exchequer funding for social housing which fell from €1.7bn in 2008 to €579m in 2014.

It is now Government policy to reverse this trend and develop a sustainable funding environment for social housing. The general principle is that those who can afford to provide their housing needs should do so either through home ownership or private rented accommodation and those who are unable to provide housing from their own resources should have access to social housing or housing support.

This would include for a resumption of direct build by Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) of 35,000 units over the period to 2020. Additional support will be made available to regenerate the existing stock to improve efficiencies and sustainability. This approach is to be combined with use of the private rented sector, where existing supports are to be streamlined into HAP (Housing Assistance Payment) which alongside the existing RAS (Rental Accommodation Scheme) and leasing schemes will have scope to provide for 75,000 households nationally. Particular emphasis will be put on ensuring security and stability of tenure.

As referenced previously due to the urgent need for social housing, the concept of affordable housing under Part V of the Planning and Development Act as amended will not be deemed necessary unless supported by a future Ministerial Directive.
Social Housing List
There are 4,047 households on the housing waiting list in Galway City, with 411 households in the County area expressing an interest in being housed in the city (30/06/15). The stated basis of housing need is included in Table 5. This equates to approximately 15% of all households in the city based on the CSO Census 2011. This is significantly higher than the national figure of 5.4%.

Table 5 Galway City Council Housing Section: Housing Needs Assessment June 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basis of Need</th>
<th>Galway City</th>
<th>Galway County*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfit</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involuntary Sharing</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Requirement – sensory</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Requirement – physical</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Requirement – mental health</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Requirement – intellectual</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent on Rent Supplement</td>
<td>1543</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluded that Mortgage is unsustainable</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless, Institution, Emergency Accommodation, Hostel</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable – particular household circumstances</td>
<td>1270</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable – medical or compassionate grounds</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of Households</strong></td>
<td><strong>4074</strong></td>
<td><strong>411</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Assessment of Needs indicates the following regarding the primary need for housing:
- Dependency on Rent Supplement constitutes 40%
- Disability/Medical reasons constitute 7%
- Homelessness constituted 5%
- Unsuitability household circumstances constituted 29%
- Involuntary sharing constituted 14%
- Other 5%

Of those assessed the vast majority (80%) requested 1 and/or 2 bedroom accommodation units.

If the growth in demand of social housing is assumed to grow at the same rate as the targeted growth for the city (growing by 25%) then this would give a total of 5,706 households in need of social housing/social housing supports over the period of the Strategy up to 2022.

Table 6 provides details of the increase in the social housing waiting list since 2008. While the demand increased significantly between 2009 and 2010, it has remained at the current high level since. There are many reasons for such a significant level of households on the waiting list including housing affordability issues, turbulent changes in the economy, increased incidence of marital breakdown, significant increase of single applicants, increased anticipation of future housing needs, natural population increases and the significant increase in household formations.

Table 6 Social Housing Demand 2008–2015 (Households Numbers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing waiting list</td>
<td>2,023</td>
<td>2,530</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>4,534</td>
<td>4,943</td>
<td>3,619</td>
<td>4,216</td>
<td>4,458</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Housing Supply
Social housing supply is addressed through a number of mechanisms.

(a) Construction
The DECLG confirmed the Housing Capital Programme for the city over the three year period 2015 - 2017. The programme envisages the delivery of 518 units through the various initiatives, including new build with provisional funding allocation of €28,273,219. In March 2014, the City Council was approved an allocation of an initial amount of €2.5 million for the construction of 15 housing units under the 2014-2015 Construction and Job Stimulus programme. This money is predominantly for the construction of housing as part of Phase 1 of a 69 unit development located off the Ballymoneen Road. The project is scheduled to progress in 2017.

(b) Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)
This scheme is in existence since 2004 and involves Local Authorities progressively assuming responsibility for accommodating certain rent supplement recipients who have a defined long-term housing need, through direct arrangements between the Local Authority and the private rented sector. The City Council has currently 472 households on the scheme. This figure is broken down between households transferred to voluntary housing and private rented accommodation under RAS. There are currently 10 new RAS units being sourced.

(c) Long Term Leasing (LTL)
The Long Term Leasing initiative represents an expansion of the options available to Local Authorities for the delivery of social housing. These properties are leased from the private sector and used to accommodate households from Local Authority waiting lists. The City Council enters into lease arrangements with the property owners for periods of between 4 to 8 years. The landlords are responsible for the maintenance of the properties with rent being guaranteed for the whole lease period. The City Council has 117 households on this scheme. There are in Q.3 of 2015 12 new LTL units being sourced.

(d) HAP – Housing Assistance Payment
The HAP scheme will commence towards the end of 2015. HAP will be responsible for transferring responsibility for the provision of rental assistance to those with a long-term need from the Department of Social Protection to Local Authorities. The short-term provision of rental assistance will remain with Department of Social Protection.

(e) Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) 2014-2016
Proposals for assistance under this scheme have been invited from the DECLG in April 2015. The City Council in turn have sought interest from Approved Voluntary Housing Bodies to submit proposals for new CAS construction and/or acquisition proposals. The resultant projects will be prioritised and submitted to the Department for approval. The projects will be prioritised based on the criteria as outlined in Circular Housing 15/2015 and also having regard to the housing needs of applicants on the Housing Waiting List under the specific categories referred to in the Circular i.e. homeless, older people and people with disability.

A CAS project approved by DECLG in 2014 for a domestic violence refuge/homeless project for nine accommodation units by COPE Galway is being advanced in conjunction with the Department.

(f) Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF)
There are currently three projects approved by the Department under this scheme as detailed in the Table 7. Twelve of these units at An Leargan, Knocknacarra have been allocated.

The Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF) involves an Approved Housing Body (AHB) securing a minimum of 70% private funding for the acquisition of units for the provision of social housing, with the Department of the Housing, Planning Community and Local Government providing up to 30% of the remaining funding requirement as a Capital Advance through the Local Authority. The Local Authority enters into a long term Payment and Availability Agreement with the AHB as approved by the Department and has 100% nomination rights on the tenancies of the units. The Capital Advance is treated as a loan earning simple interest at a fixed rate of 2% per annum and is re-payable by the AHB at the end of the Payment and Availability Agreement.
The Capital Allocation for Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability is issued annually by the DHPCLG. Housing Grants Schemes available include Housing Aid for Older People, which allows for essential repairs to properties of persons aged 66 years and over. Housing Aid for Persons with a Disability enables alterations to be carried out to properties to cater for disability and Mobility Aids Housing Grants Scheme.

There are 2,218 social housing units in the Council area consisting of a mixture of house types. Current stock is predominantly two and three bedroom with a small number of single bedroom units and houses with four or more bedrooms. The demand for particular unit size is being monitored noting the general trend for smaller households in the overall population in order to align social housing needs and support with demands.

There is, similarly to the private market, a number of vacant housing stock. Currently there are 26 units which are undergoing refurbishment and 23 units on the pre-letting repairs programme. The programme for vacant properties involves carrying out pre-letting repairs in parallel with energy efficiency works and is being part funded from the retrofitting allocation from the DHPCLG. This year Fána Glas housing development is being targeted. The retrofit upgrades aim to bring properties to a C1 BER rating.

Additional “shallow retrofit” is ongoing with up to 290 properties the subject of these minor works to improve ventilation. Improved insulation is ongoing on a further 130 properties. It is anticipated that funding for an intensive programme of works to be carried out on a limited number existing vacant City Council owned houses will be made available from the DHPCLG.

The Council currently has control over approximately 18.48 hectares of undeveloped land zoned for housing purposes at various locations throughout the city. It is anticipated that these lands will be used for the development of social housing units as proposed under the Housing Ccapital Programme. An additional amount of land is currently under the control of the DHPCLG having been accepted as part of the Land Aggregation Scheme and may be returned to the Local Authority to facilitate the delivery of social housing units.

Specific Housing Needs
A number of categories of housing applicants require specific response to their housing needs. These categories are outlines below.

(a) Homeless Persons
The Implementation Plan on the State’s Response to Homelessness (2014) sets out a range of measures to secure a ring-fenced supply of accommodation to house homeless households by the end of 2016 and to mobilize the necessary supports. The plan contains 80 actions that aim to deliver nationally a supply of 2,700 units of accommodation between 2014-16. It is intended that these units come from a range of sources including vacant Local Authority units, construction, acquisition and NAMA. The number of units to be provided in Galway City is not specified in the plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No of Units</th>
<th>AHB</th>
<th>Payment &amp; Availability Period</th>
<th>Estimated Occupancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boireann Beag, Roscam</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Cluid Housing Association</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuirt Roiún</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Cluid Housing Association</td>
<td>22 years</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boireann Beag, Roscam</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Cluid Housing Association</td>
<td>30 Years</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reilean, Roscam</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tuath Housing Association</td>
<td>27 Years</td>
<td>Due for Occupancy in March 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reilean, Roscam</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tuath Housing Association</td>
<td>29 Years</td>
<td>Due for Occupancy in March 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since 2013, Homeless Services are provided on a regional basis. Galway City is in the west region which consists of Galway City, Galway County, Mayo and Roscommon. Each Local Authority has a legal responsibility for social housing provision and management within its functional area. Galway City is the lead Local Authority to co-ordinate with relevant organisations on homelessness and related service provision and has overall responsibility and management of the delegated West Region Homeless Service budget. The overall funding allocation is aligned to specific categories of expenditure and builds on the approach in the National Homeless Strategy 2008–2013.

Current homeless provision services consist of:

- Emergency residential accommodation at Fairgreen for men (26 bed unit) and at Osterley Lodge for women and children (13 bed unit – 2 family units).
- COPE day facility, provides advice, support, advocacy and preventative work.
- Emergency accommodation is provided by Tourist Hostels and B&B’s in the City Resettlement residential services – Abbey House and Bridge House.
- Galway Simon community based housing ranging from high support units to medium low support projects.
- Capital Assistance funded units managed by Galway Simon.
- Outreach team supporting individuals and families in various accommodation types.
- GCC provided 3 transitional housing units with support for homeless families, managed by COPE.

The Local Homeless Plan for Galway City 2015-2017 prepared in conjunction with service providers and members of the Local Homeless Forum Committee sets out a range of actions for implementation of improved homeless services in the city.

(b) Traveller Accommodation

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 requires Housing Authorities to consult with Travellers and the general public to prepare and adopt a five year Traveller Accommodation Programme. The current programme is the Galway City Traveller Accommodation Programme (2014-2018). The current accommodation provisions taken from the 2014-2018 programme are illustrated in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Type</th>
<th>No of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Housing</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Rented and on HWL</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Schemes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Accommodation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Housing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Purchase</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Ownership</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Halting Sites</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transient Site</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Halting Site</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Leasing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported Projects</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Services</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>518</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The programme also indicates that following on from the Assessment of Need in 2013 it has been established that there are 277 travellers families assessed as being in need of social housing in the city, this figure captures households approved for transfers such as a transfer from a halting site to standard housing. It also includes the families currently residing at the Transient Halting Site at Carrowbrowne and families requiring a larger/smaller housing unit. Table 9 shows the breakdown in preferences of accommodation.
Seven Traveller families with an original housing need being assessed by the County Council are currently on the City Council waiting list. In turn, 49 Traveller household details have been referred to the County Council for households who have requested an area of preference in the Galway County Council area. The Annual Count of Traveller Families since 2004 highlights an increase in households from 278 Traveller families to 571 in 2012.

The projected need for Traveller accommodation is calculated by using the 4% increase estimate as suggested in the Government Task Force Report on the Traveller community in 1995, and having regard to the All Ireland Traveller Health Study 2010, it is estimated that there will be 22-23 additional new family formations per annum up to 2018.

It is proposed that newly-formed Traveller households can make suitable arrangements for securing private rented accommodation; however, Galway City Council will be cognisant of each household and will endeavour to meet these needs through a number of ways as included for in Galway City Traveller Accommodation Programme (2014-2018). See Table 10. The Council has been approved for a CENA pilot build project by the DHPCLG. The funding approved will cover the costs associated with the build project and incorporates funding for a project manager.

Continued collaborative work will be ongoing with the Galway Traveller Movement and the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC).

Table 9 Assessment of Need of Traveller Households - Housing Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Type Requested</th>
<th>No. of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Housing</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Housing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Residential Caravan Parks</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 Traveller Accommodation Programme – Annual Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Social Housing Allocations</th>
<th>Group Housing Schemes</th>
<th>Permanent Halting Sites</th>
<th>Extensions to Dwellings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Disabled Persons

It is an objective of the Council to provide for the specific housing needs of persons with disabilities. In the 2014 Assessment of Needs, applicants with disabilities represented 7% of all those totally assessed. A new initiative has been developed to support the development of a Disability and Housing Forum and Strategy within Galway City. The HSE, Brothers of Charity, Voluntary Housing Bodies and other community groups are involved in supporting Galway City Council to develop this new strategy from 2015 onwards. This will contribute to identifying the specific needs for housing persons with disabilities and the capacity for both the Local Authority, voluntary and AHB’s to address these needs.

The promotion of a universal design and lifetime adaptability in the initial design and construction of social housing will be required to be re-viewed in the context of meeting different levels of disability and to reduce renovation costs involved in the lifetime of the occupants and for rendering properties suitable for re-letting.

(d) Elderly

It is estimated that the number of older persons in Ireland will double in all regions of Ireland over the period 2006-2026 (CSO projections). Although the CSO Census 2011 shows that Galway City has a higher than national representation of persons in the 20 -34 age cohorts and lower than national in the 50-85 year old cohorts, this is likely to change with time, evolving towards the national trend. The elderly in the census also represented 27% of those registering a disability.
With respect to housing it is important that older people have an opportunity to either modify their properties to their particular need or to have an opportunity to downsize within the communities they have ties with. This will be a consideration in the promotion of the construction of housing suitable in terms of size, access and location within established communities.

Sheltered accommodation can also enable elderly persons to live independently. Such housing including nursing homes should be built at locations accessible to residential neighbourhoods and established social and community facilities, which would allow for interaction with the wider community and afford opportunities for the more able bodied residents to continue to have opportunities to use local services.

State support as previously referenced for modifications is made available under the Capital Allocation for Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for Older People and People with a Disability.

### S 1.6 Key Conclusions

- Changes in planning legislation in July 2015 have altered the Part V arrangements relating to Housing Strategies. The concept of affordability has been set aside and the emphasis now is on maximising the transfer of completed social housing units. The continued use of Part V to capture planning gain now relates to a reduced maximum percentage of 10% on developments in excess of 9 units. This will apply retrospectively. The option for payment in lieu and/or the transfer of sites /land is now not acceptable.
- The national Housing Policy Statement (2011) is the new vision for housing.
- It is estimated that the 2022 RPGs targets for population will generate a demand for **8,255** housing units.
- This demand for housing cannot be solely satisfied on lands zoned for residential development and will require the residential element of Ardaun LAP to be developed also.
- Ardaun is required to meet the estimated need for housing under the RPGs targets but these lands will require significant infrastructural investment to deliver housing.
- Extant permissions can deliver up to 1,351 residential units and can be activated to ‘kick start’ the housing construction sector, which has been languishing in recent years with only 255 units completed since 2011.
- There are 4,047 households resident in the city on Galway City Council’s housing waiting list which is estimated to grow to 5,706, in the context of the RPGs targets if not addressed before 2022.
- A range of mechanisms are been activated to address the specific needs for social housing and social housing supports.
- The Housing Strategy is aligned with the population projections used in the Core Strategy, effectively the NSS and RPGs targets.

The policies that support the Housing Strategy are included in Chapter 2 Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods.
Schedule 2  Statement of Compliance with Ministerial Guidelines
Under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the Council is required to append a statement to the Development Plan to include information which demonstrates:

a) How the Planning Authority has implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the Ministerial Guidelines when considering their application to the area, or part of the area, of the Development Plan.

b) Alternatively, if the Planning Authority has formed the opinion that it is not possible, because of the nature and characteristics of the area or part of the area of the Development Plan, to implement certain policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the Guidelines when considering the application of those policies in the area or part of the area of the Development Plan and shall give reasons for the forming of the opinion and why the policies and objectives of the Minister have not been so implemented.

The required statement in relation to the draft Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023 is set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 28 Guidelines</th>
<th>Galway City Council Development Plan 2017-2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)</td>
<td>The preparation of the Plan has had regard to this Guidance document. The likely impacts to the integrity of European sites that could arise from measures proposed in the Plan have been fully examined through the AA process. Robust and effective mitigation measures have been integrated into the plan to ensure that it will not have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of European sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Revised 2011)</td>
<td>Chapter 8, Built Heritage and Urban Design sets out measures to protect the architectural heritage of the city and takes account of these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Heritage Protection for Places of Public Worship Circular Letter 7/03</td>
<td>Chapter 8, Built Heritage and Urban Design sets out the Council's policy on protecting the City's architectural heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare Facilities Guidelines (2001)</td>
<td>Chapter 7, Community and Culture sets out the Council’s policies regarding childcare facilities and takes account of these guidelines. Specific development management standards for childcare facilities are outlined under Chapter 11, Section 11.13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Standards for New Apartments (2015)</td>
<td>Chapter 2, Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods sets out the Council’s policies on apartments and Chapter 11, Section 11.3 Residential Development take account of these standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Standards for New Apartments (2007)</td>
<td>Chapter 2, Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods sets out Council’s policies on apartments and Chapter 11, Section 11.3 Residential Development talk account of these standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Contribution Guidelines (2013)</td>
<td>A new Development Contribution Scheme will be prepared on during the period of this Plan and it will be in compliance with these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Management Guidelines (2007)</td>
<td>Development management applications will be assessed and determined under the policies, objectives and development standards of the Development Plan and these guidelines will be complied with when assessing applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Plan Guidelines (2007)</td>
<td>The Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with Sections 11 and 12 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and in accordance with the Development Plan Guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 28 Guidelines</td>
<td>Galway City Council Development Plan 2017-2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Guidance for Planning Authorities on Drainage and Reclamation of Wetlands (2011)</td>
<td>Guidance is provided in relation to deciding whether drainage and reclamation of wetlands, despite being below the threshold for permission or for mandatory EIA, could have significant effects on the environment and therefore would require a planning application and/or EIA. These Guidelines are not relevant to the preparation process of the Development Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funfair Guidance</td>
<td>These Guidelines relate to the licensing and requirements for funfairs and are therefore not relevant to the preparation process of the Development Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Policy Statement on Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure</td>
<td>Chapter 9, Environment and Infrastructure sets out the policies on energy and associated infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Note on Core Strategies (2010)</td>
<td>These Guidelines relate to the evidence-based rationale and contents of core strategies. Chapter 1 outlines the core strategy of this Plan and provides a high-level description of the key statistics and priorities underpinning the Plan and articulates a medium to longer term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for Planning Authorities &amp; An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (2013)</td>
<td>These Guidelines relate to procedural and technical issues arising from the requirement to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). They are not relevant to the preparation of the Development Plan but rather for development management and assessment of projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)</td>
<td>Chapter 3, Transportation and Chapter 11 .3.1 refers specifically to these Guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Area Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Local Area Plans Manual (2013)</td>
<td>These Guidelines will be adhered to in the preparation of Local Area Plans that will be prepared within the strategic framework of this Development Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, Housing Supply, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2000)</td>
<td>Chapter 2, Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods takes account of these guidelines. Details regarding the Council's Housing Strategy are included in Schedule 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 (Circular PPL 1/2010)</td>
<td>Amended a number of different sections of the Planning and Development Act 2000, introduced the requirement of evidence based core strategies for Development Plans and clarified in planning legislation the obligation of planning authorities under Birds and Habitats Directive. The Development Plan complies with this legislation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Policy Statement 2015</td>
<td>The Development Plan takes account of the key principles and priorities for the continued enhancement of the planning system in Ireland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarries and Ancillary Activities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004)</td>
<td>Chapter 11, Section 11.28 Extractive Industries/Quarries address quarries and ancillary activities and make specific reference to these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Planning Guidelines and Retail Design Manual (2012)</td>
<td>Chapter 6, Retail Strategy sets out the Council's policies on retail and takes account of these guidelines. Galway City and County Councils will prepare a Joint Retail Strategy in compliance with the Retail Planning Guidelines during the period of this Plan. Chapter 11 sets out retail and commercial development standards and guidelines in accordance with this Design Manual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 28 Guidelines</td>
<td>Galway City Council Development Plan 2017-2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Housing Policies and Local Need Criteria in Development Plan Circular Letter SP/5/08</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity, Section 4.6.2 Agricultural Lands and Chapter 11, Section 11.12 Agricultural Areas addresses residential development on agricultural lands zoned A in the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008)</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Community and Culture sets out the Council's policies regarding schools and takes account of these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 261A of Planning &amp; Development Act 2000 -Guidelines (January 2012) and Section 261A of Planning and Development Act, 2000 Supplementary Guidelines (July 2012)</td>
<td>These guidelines refer to legislative provisions in relation to quarries and are not relevant with regard to the preparation of the Development Plan. Chapter 11, Section 11.28 Extractive Industries/Quarries address quarries and ancillary activities and make specific reference to these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)</td>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes. The results of the SEA process were fully considered and integrated into the preparation and making of the City Development Plan and are outlined in the SEA Statement of this Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines (2005)</td>
<td>Chapter 2, Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods sets out the Council's policies in relation to residential development and takes account of these guidelines. Chapter 11 contains residential development standards and guidelines in accordance with these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking in Charge of Housing Estates/ Management Companies (2006) Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, (DECLG, Circular Letter PL07/12 2012)</td>
<td>These guidelines relate to the taking in charge procedures of housing estates and management companies and are therefore not relevant to the preparation process of the Development Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines</td>
<td>Chapter 9, Environment and Infrastructure sets out the policies regarding telecommunication infrastructure and associated structures. Chapter 11, Section 17 makes specific reference to these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Preservation Guidelines</td>
<td>City Council has carried out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) of the policies and objectives contained in this Plan in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Chapter 9 sets out Council’s policies on flood risk areas and Chapter 11, Section 11.27 Flood Risk makes specific reference to these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations Circular PD 7/09</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity sets out the Council’s policies in relation to trees and woodlands in the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 9, Environment and Infrastructure sets out the Council's policies in regard to renewable energy sources including wind energy. Chapter 11, Section 11.18 makes specific reference to these guidelines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schedule 3  List of Protected Structures in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref: Location</th>
<th>Ref: Location</th>
<th>Ref: Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbeygate Street Lower</td>
<td>Bishop O'Donnell Road</td>
<td>Courthouse Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 No. 2</td>
<td>Summerdale</td>
<td>2601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102 No. 3</td>
<td>Blackrock, Salthill</td>
<td>2602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103 No. 4</td>
<td>Blackrock House &amp; Gateway</td>
<td>2603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104 No. 5</td>
<td>Bohermore</td>
<td>2604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 No. 6</td>
<td>1201 No. 86</td>
<td>2605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106 No. 7</td>
<td>1202 No. 88</td>
<td>2606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107 No. 8</td>
<td>1203 No. 120</td>
<td>George V Post Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108 No. 9</td>
<td>1204 Cemetery Lodge &amp; Mortuary Chapels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109 No. 10</td>
<td>Bowling Green</td>
<td>Crestwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 No. 11</td>
<td>1301 No. 8</td>
<td>Limelink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111 No. 18</td>
<td>1302 Incised Stone Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112 No. 21</td>
<td>Bridge Street</td>
<td>Cross Street Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113 No. 22</td>
<td>1401 No. 1</td>
<td>2801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114 No. 23</td>
<td>1402 No. 2</td>
<td>2802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115 Grainstore</td>
<td>1403 No. 3</td>
<td>2803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbeygate Street Upper</td>
<td>1404 No. 4</td>
<td>2804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 No. 2</td>
<td>1405 Bridge Mills</td>
<td>2805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202 No. 4</td>
<td>Bushy Park</td>
<td>2806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203 No. 5</td>
<td>1501 St. James’ Church</td>
<td>2807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204 No. 6</td>
<td>1502 St. James’ Graveyard</td>
<td>2808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205 No. 7</td>
<td>1503 Single Storey Thatched Cottage</td>
<td>2809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206 No. 8</td>
<td>1504 Bushy Park House</td>
<td>2810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>207 No. 9</td>
<td>1505 Heffernan’s Cottage, Ballagh Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208 No. 11 &amp; 13</td>
<td>Cappagh</td>
<td>2811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209 No. 15</td>
<td>1601 Boylebeg School (St. Joseph’s), Old Rahanon Road</td>
<td>2812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210 No. 16 &amp; 18</td>
<td>Clybaun</td>
<td>2813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211 No. 17</td>
<td>12001 Single Storey Thatched Cottage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212 No. 19</td>
<td>Castlegar</td>
<td>Dangan Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>213 No. 21</td>
<td>1701 Castle</td>
<td>3001 Tea House Folly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>214 No. 22 &amp; 24</td>
<td>1702 Site of Church</td>
<td>3002 Ice House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215 No. 23</td>
<td>1703 Thatched Cottage</td>
<td>3003 Cashel - Remains of Stone Fort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>216 No. 25</td>
<td>1704 Former Schoolhouse Adjacent to Leaders’ Shop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>217 No. 26</td>
<td>1705 Monument, Tuam Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>218 No. 29</td>
<td>Castlawn Heights</td>
<td>Dominick Street Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219 No. 28</td>
<td>1801 Cemetery</td>
<td>3201 No. 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220 No. 33</td>
<td>Castle Street - Barrack Lane</td>
<td>3202 No. 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221 No. 36</td>
<td>1901 Section of Medieval Town Wall</td>
<td>3203 No. 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>222 No. 38</td>
<td>1902 Section of Medieval Wall of Medieval House</td>
<td>3204 No. 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>223 No. 40</td>
<td>1903 Section of Medieval Wall with Medieval Carved Stone Windows &amp; Cut Stone Fragments</td>
<td>3205 No. 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224 No. 42</td>
<td>1904 Castle Street - Barrack Lane</td>
<td>3206 No. 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225 No. 46</td>
<td>1905 Church Lane</td>
<td>3207 No. 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 No. 48</td>
<td>No. 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>3208 No. 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>227 No. 50</td>
<td>2201 Claddagh</td>
<td>3209 No. 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>228 No. 52</td>
<td>2201 Claddagh</td>
<td>3210 No. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Alley Lane</td>
<td>2201 Claddagh</td>
<td>3211 No. 41 &amp; 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 Segment of 17th Century Bastion</td>
<td>2212 No. 42</td>
<td>3212 No. 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>302 Two Former Artisan Cottages</td>
<td>2213 No. 44</td>
<td>3214 No. 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 Ballindoooley</td>
<td>2214 No. 45</td>
<td>3215 No. 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>402 Crannog-Lake Dwellings</td>
<td>2216 No. 46</td>
<td>3216 No. 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballinfoyle</td>
<td>2217 No. 47</td>
<td>3217 No. 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 Limekilin &amp; Shed</td>
<td>2218 No. 49</td>
<td>3218 No. 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>502 Thatched Cottage</td>
<td>2219 No. 50 &amp; 52</td>
<td>3220 No. 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballybaan</td>
<td>2220 No. 56</td>
<td>3221 No. 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601 Uni-Vallet Earthen Enclosure</td>
<td>2222 No. 55</td>
<td>3222 No. 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballybrit</td>
<td>2223 No. 57</td>
<td>3223 No. 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>701 Ballybrit Castle</td>
<td>2224 No. 58</td>
<td>3224 No. 58</td>
</tr>
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<td>702 Graveyard &amp; Lishen</td>
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*Note: The information above is extracted from the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023.*
Schedule 3 List of Protected Structures in the RPS

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**Taylor's Hill Road**
- 10101 Gate Lodge to Lenaboy Castle
- 10102 Lenaboy Castle, St. Anne's
- 10103 Former Dominican Convent
- 10105 Stones from St. Nicholas' Church
- 10106 Cuan Mhuire
- 10107 Post Box
- 10108 Gate Lodge - Ardliaun Hotel
- 10109 Bishop's Palace, Mount St. Mary's
- 10110 Covered Well - Lenaboy Castle
- 10111 Site of Standing Stones
- 10112 No. 1, St. Mary's Terrace
- 10113 No. 2 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10114 No. 3 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10115 No. 4 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10116 No. 5 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10117 No. 6 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10118 No. 7 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10119 No. 8 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10120 No. 9 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10121 No. 10 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10122 No. 11 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10123 No. 12 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10124 No. 13 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10125 No. 14 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10126 No. 15 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10127 No. 16 St. Mary's Terrace
- 10128 The Croft, Taylor's Hill

**The Crescent**
- 10201 No. 1 Palmyra Crescent
- 10202 No. 2 Palmyra Crescent
- 10203 No. 3 Palmyra Crescent
- 10204 No. 4 Palmyra Crescent
- 10205 No. 5 Palmyra Crescent
- 10206 No. 6 Palmyra Crescent
- 10207 No. 7 Palmyra Crescent
- 10208 No. 8 Palmyra Crescent
- 10209 No. 9 Palmyra Crescent
- 10210 No. 10 Palmyra Crescent
- 10211 No. 11 Palmyra Crescent
- 10212 No. 12 Palmyra Crescent
- 10213 No. 13 Palmyra Crescent
- 10214 No. 14 Palmyra Crescent
- 10215 No. 8 Montpelier Terrace
- 10216 No. 9 Montpelier Terrace
- 10217 No. 10 Montpelier Terrace
- 10218 No. 4 Devon Place

**Threadneedle Road**
- 10250 Coláiste Einde

**University Road**
- 10301 Remains of Stone Mullioned Window
- 10302 Group of Heraldic Carvings
- 10303 The Quadrangle, NUIG
- 10304 Gate Lodge
- 10305 No. 19
- 10306 No. 20
- 10307 Martin Ryan Institute
- 10308 Former IMI Building
- 10309 Civil Engineering Block
- 10310 Dept. of Education Block
- 10311 Port Box

**Victoria Place**
- 10401 3-bay Building (Rooneys)

**Waterside**
- 10501 No. 7
- 10502 No. 8
- 10503 No. 9
- 10504 Corrib House, No. 3
- 10505 Corrib Villa, No. 4
- 10506 Lough Corrib House, No. 5
- 10507 Wooden Sculpture of Leaping Salmon

**Wellpark Road**
- 10601 Ornamental Gateway
- 10602 Cluain Mhuire, GMIT
- 10603 No. 1

**Whitestrand Road**
- 10701 No. 6
- 10702 No. 8
- 10703 No. 10

**William Street**
- 10801 No. 16 & 18 & 18A
- 10802 No. 19
- 10803 No. 20
- 10804 No. 21
- 10805 No. 22
- 10806 No. 24
- 10807 No. 23 & 25
- 10808 No. 26
- 10809 No. 27 & 29
- 10810 No. 28
- 10811 No. 38 & 40
- 10812 No. 42
- 10813 No. 44
- 10814 No. 49
- 10815 No. 45
- 10416 No. 46
- 10818 No. 47
- 10819 No. 48
- 10820 No. 51 & 53

**William Street West**
- 10901 Small Crane, Weighing Scales
- 10902 No. 3
- 10903 No. 5
- 10904 No. 6
- 10905 No. 7 & 8
- 10906 No. 23 Silke's & Sons Cash and Carry-Façade
- 10907 No. 23-24 (Formerly Silke's & Sons) - Façade
- 10908 No. 25-Façade

**Williamsgate Street**
- 11001 No. 1
- 11002 No. 5 & 7
- 11003 No. 8
- 11004 No. 9
- 11005 No. 10 & 12
- 11006 No. 15

**Wolfe Tone Bridge**
- 13001 Fisheries Tower
- 13002 Plaque
Appendix 1  Glossary & Acronyms
Glossary

**Affordable Housing** - Owner-occupied or shared ownership housing provided at a price below the market value.


**Barcelona Declaration** - In March 1995, the European Congress “The City and the Disabled” was held in Barcelona, Spain. Following this congress a manifesto on accessibility, known as the Barcelona Declaration which many cities and their associated local authorities in Europe have ratified. The aims of the Declaration include the promotion of universal access to urban spaces, buildings and services, and improvement of mobility of disabled persons. Galway City Council formally signed the declaration in 2002.

**Biodiversity** – A measure of the diversity of species of plants and animals.

**Blue Flag** - The Blue Flag scheme is operated by the Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE), a non-Government organisation. The criteria for the award of Blue Flag relate to water quality, facilities for visitors, beach management (including litter control) and information display. At EU member state level the FEE operates through national bodies for example An Taisce, which are responsible for the administration of the Blue Flag scheme in Ireland.

**Brownfield Sites** - Disused land or buildings available for re-use/development.

**Bulky Retail Goods** - Goods generally sold from retail warehouses where DIY goods or goods such as flat-pack furniture area of such a size that they would normally be taken away by car and not manageable by customers travelling by foot, cycle or bus or that large floor areas would be required to display them, e.g. furniture in room sets, or not large individually, but part of a collective purchase which would be bulky e.g. wallpaper, paint.

**Child Friendly City** - Following the 1996 Istanbul City Summit, UNICEF launched the Child Friendly Cities Initiative to reach urban children, particularly the poor and marginalised with basic services and protection to guarantee their fundamental rights. Many cities world-wide are working to become more child-friendly and a number of local networks have been created like the European Network of Child Friendly. The network was established under the Wurzburg Declaration June 1999. There is no single definition of what a child friendly city is or ought to be. In developing nations the focus is more frequently found on increasing access to basic services while in developed countries the emphasis seems to be on environmental and physical issues such as improving recreational areas, developing parks and green spaces, controlling traffic in order to make streets safer for children.

**Citizen/Citizenship** - An inhabitant and resident of Galway City.

**Convenience Retail Goods** - Food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods.

**Comparison Retail Goods** - Clothing, footwear, furniture, furnishings and household equipment, (excluding non-durable households goods), medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment, education and recreational equipment and accessories, books newspapers and magazines and goods for personal care and goods not elsewhere classified

**db(A) Lden** - Decibel A-weighted Day-evening-night equivalent level, Leq. (equivalent sound level) noise level, measured over the 24 hour period, with a 10 dB penalty added to the levels between 23.00 and 07.00 hours and a 5 dB penalty added to the levels between 19.00 and 23.00 hours to reflect people’s extra sensitivity to noise during the night and the evening.

**dB(A) Lnight** - Night equivalent level: Leq. A-weighted, Sound Level, measured overnight 23.00 - 0700 hours. Also known as the Night Noise Indicator.

**Development Contributions Scheme** - Scheme which allows a Planning Authority to levy financial contributions for the provision of public infrastructure, facilities, project or service as a condition of planning.

**Ecological sites** - Sites of wildlife value.
Environmental Report - The report is required by the SEA Directive as part of an environmental assessment, which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing a plan or programme.


EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive - The aim of Directive 91/271/EEC (as amended 98/15/EEC) is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of discharges of urban wastewater, by the provision of urban wastewater collecting systems (sewerage) and treatment plants for urban centres. The Directive also provides general rules for the sustainable disposal of sludge arising from wastewater treatment.

Gateway City - The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) identifies five Gateway Cities, including Galway City. A Gateway City is a regional centre of socio-economic growth and critical mass supporting more balanced patterns of national level development.

Green Network - A linked network of green areas, parks, and open spaces ensuring a strategic integrated policy approach to the sustainable use and management of these areas.

Greenways - Greenway is an EU term established in a Declaration towards a European Greenway Network, Lille, 12th Sept 2000 for “circulation routes reserved exclusively for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner, which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area.”

Geodiversity - Geodiversity (and Geological Heritage) refers to the variety of rocks, minerals, natural processes, landforms, fossils and soils that underlie and determine the character of our landscape and environment. Geology is the science that comprises the study of the Earth, the rocks of which it is composed and the processes by which it evolves. It is, in effect, the story of our planet and every rock holds clues to understanding its evolution.

Habitats Directive Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) - Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) - An ecological assessment of the likely impact of any plan, programme, or project on the conservation objectives of European sites, (Special Protection Areas and candidate Special Areas of Conservation).

Homezones – Homezones are residential streets in which the road space is shared between drivers of vehicles and other road users, with the wider needs of residents, (including people who walk and cycle and children), in mind. The aim is to change the way streets are used and to improve the quality of life in residential streets by making them places for people, not just for traffic.

Indicator - A measure of variables over time, often used to measure achievement of objectives.

Labour Force - The labour force is comprises of persons who are actually engaged or desirous of engaging themselves in the production of economic goods and services. Therefore, the labour force includes those who are currently employed as well as unemployed people who are seeking employment.

Local Agenda 21 - The UN Conference on Environment and Development took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This has become known as the Earth Summit. The summit produced a blueprint for sustainability policies towards the 21st century, known as Agenda 21. Agenda 21 indicates how countries can work towards sustainable development. The Irish Government endorsed Agenda 21 at the summit.

Mitigation - Measures used to avoid, reduce or offset significant adverse effects on the environment.


Natural Heritage - The Heritage Act (1995) defines natural heritage as including flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks.
Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) - These designated areas form a network of sites of national importance by reason of their flora, fauna, habitat type and/or geomorphologic interest and are protected under the Wildlife Act 2000.

Plot Ratio - The plot ratio for a development is the gross floor area of buildings on a site divided by the gross site area. The gross floor area is the sum of all floor space within the external walls of the building(s), excluding plant, tank rooms, basement storage areas (where floor to ceiling height is less than 2.1 m) and parking areas. In the case of a group of buildings with a common curtilage the floor area will be aggregated. The gross site area includes only such land as lies within the curtilage of the related buildings and in particular does not include adjoining public road area. Plot ratios are written as the ratio of gross floor area to the gross site area, for example, 2:1.

Polluter Pays Principle - Polluter Pays Principle means that the polluter should bear the expenses of carrying out the measures required to ensure that the environment is in an acceptable state. This environmental liability aims both to prevent and restore environmental damage. On the side of prevention, the principle highlights that if a situation is caused that could lead to environmental damage, preventive measures should be taken to avoid that. When environmental damage nevertheless occurs, it is required by the principle that environmental damage is restored.

Precautionary Principle - The precautionary principle is an approach where there is a presumption against any action whose environmental impact is uncertain and there is a strong bias towards avoiding potential environmental risks.

Proximity Principle - The proximity principle is the concept that waste should generally be managed as near as possible to its place of production, because transporting waste itself has an environmental impact.

Ramsar Site - These are wetlands of international importance listed in the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. Ireland ratified the convention in 1984 and it obliges the State to recognise and conserve any internationally important wetlands. The convention notes the presence of rare, vulnerable, endemic or endangered plants or animals as a factor in determining international importance. The inner Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib SACs are both designated Ramsar sites.

Salmonid River - The River Corrib is designated a Salmonid River under the EU Freshwater Fish Directive introduced in 1978 European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988, S.I. no 84 of 1988. This designation aims to protect and improve the quality of fresh waters that support certain species of fish regulation. Specific water quality standards must be maintained and pollution controlled. Ireland is legally required to maintain and improve the water quality of rivers for Salmonid fisheries.

Scoping - The process of deciding the scope and level of detail of an SEA, including the environmental effects and alternatives which need to be considered, the assessment methods to be used, and the structure and contents of the Environmental Report. Scoping is carried out in consultation with the appropriate bodies.

Screening - The process of deciding whether a plan or programme requires SEA or AA.

SEVESO III Sites - Sites involved in the storage and/or production of dangerous substances that present a major accident hazard, subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Directive or Seveso III Directive 2012/18/EU, which seeks to reduce the risk and limit the consequences of accidents.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) - The assessment of flood risk on a wide geographical area against which to assess development proposed in an area.

Significant Environmental Effect - Significance is a function of impact magnitude and the importance/sensitivity of the resources of the receptor. Effects on the environment which are significant in the context of a plan or programme. Criteria for assessing significance are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive.

Site Coverage - Site Coverage is determined by dividing the total area of ground covered by buildings by the total site area excluding the public road.

Social Housing - Rented housing provided either by the Council or a voluntary or co-operative housing body.
Social Inclusion - Social Inclusion is defined as the process through which people are empowered to participate fully in life from an economic, social, cultural or political perspective.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) - The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) was transposed into Irish law by S.I. 94 of 1997, the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997. SACs are marine and terrestrial areas of internationally importance that have been designated for the protection of wildlife habitats and species (other than birds), which form part of EU Natura 2000 network of ecologically significant sites throughout Europe. Special protection measures should be applied regarding these habitats of specified wildlife species, in order to ensure the survival and reproduction in their distribution area. Two SACs designated areas exist in the city, the Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib Complex.

Special Protection Areas for Protection of Birds (SPAs) - Ireland is required under the terms of the EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) to designate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for the protection of endangered species of wild birds. SPAs are sites designated to protect international important and rare bird species and their associated habitats. Two SPA designated areas exist in the city, the Inner Galway Bay SPA and Lough Corrib SPA. The designated protection area provides for a wide range of seabirds and waterfowl and their associated breeding colonies and habitats including Annex 1 bird species. Annex 1 is a catalogue of species and subspecies that, in the European Union, are threatened with extinction, or vulnerable in certain changes of their habitats, or scarce due to small populations or restricted regional distribution, or demand special caution due to the special nature of their habitats.

Strategic Environmental Assessment - The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires that an environmental assessment is carried out on certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. A SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan/programme in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making.

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEO’s) - Methodological measure against which the environmental effects of the plan/programme can be tested. SEO’s are distinct from the plan objectives although will often overlap. SEO’s are developed from, national, international and regional policy.

Sustainable Development - Sustainable Development is usually defined as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs without undermining the integrity and conservation objectives of European Sites and NHAs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs.’ (Taken from Our Common Future, UN World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, also known as the Brundtland Report).

TPO - Tree Preservation Order is used to protect selected trees and woodlands, if their removal would have a significant impact on the environment or amenity. Section 205 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (amended), states that; ‘if it appears to the planning authority that it is expedient, in the interests of amenity or the environment, to make provision for the protection of any tree, trees, groups of trees or woodlands, it may for that purpose and for stated reasons, make an order with respect to any such tree, trees, group of trees or woodlands as may be specified in the order.’ Trees, which are the subject of a TPO, cannot be felled, unless the owner applies for planning permission to the local authority.

Waste Hierarchy - The waste management model, espoused by the E.U. and nationally, gives priority to, respectively:
1. Prevention
2. Minimisation
3. Reuse and Recycling (including biological treatment)
4. Energy Recovery and
5. Environmentally sustainable disposal of waste, which cannot be prevented or recovered.
### Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Appropriate Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>Architectural Conservation Area</td>
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<td>AHB</td>
<td>Approved Housing Bodies</td>
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<td>CALF</td>
<td>Capital Advance Leasing Facility</td>
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<td>CAS</td>
<td>Capital Assistance Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;D</td>
<td>Construction and Demolition Waste</td>
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<td>CFRAM</td>
<td>Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management</td>
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<td>CHP</td>
<td>Combined Heat and Power</td>
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<td>COMAH</td>
<td>Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances, (Seveso III Directive)</td>
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<td>CGS</td>
<td>County Geological Sites</td>
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<td>CPO</td>
<td>Compulsory Purchase Order</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Central Statistics Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>CUR</td>
<td>Connacht and Ulster Region</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAHG</td>
<td>Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAHRRGA</td>
<td>Department of Arts, Heritage, Rural, Regional and Gaeltacht Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCCAE</td>
<td>Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DECLG</td>
<td>Department of Environment, Community and Local Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>DES</td>
<td>Department of Education and Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHPCLG</td>
<td>Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government</td>
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<td>DMURS</td>
<td>Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets</td>
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<td>DTaS</td>
<td>Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport</td>
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<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
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<td>EIS</td>
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<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
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<td>ESRI</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Unit</td>
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<td>ESB</td>
<td>Electricity Supply Board</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EV</td>
<td>Electric Vehicle</td>
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<td>GEA</td>
<td>Galway Energy Agency</td>
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<td>GRETB</td>
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<td>GTI</td>
<td>Galway Technology Institute</td>
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<td>GTU</td>
<td>Galway Transportation Unit</td>
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<td>HAP</td>
<td>Housing Assistance Payment</td>
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<td>Housing Land Availability</td>
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<td>HSA</td>
<td>Health and Safety Authority</td>
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<td>HSE</td>
<td>Heath Service Executive</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
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<td>IROPI</td>
<td>Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAP</td>
<td>Local Area Plan</td>
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<td>LECP</td>
<td>Local Economic and Community Plan</td>
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<td>Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee</td>
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<td>LTL</td>
<td>Long term leasing</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Development Plan</td>
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<td>NHA</td>
<td>Natural Heritage Area</td>
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<td>NIR</td>
<td>Natura Impact Report</td>
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<td>NAMA</td>
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<td>National Transport Authority</td>
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<td>NUIG</td>
<td>National University of Ireland Galway</td>
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<td>OPW</td>
<td>Office of Public Works</td>
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<td>ORC</td>
<td>Office of Revenue Commissioners</td>
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<td>OS</td>
<td>Ordnance Survey</td>
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<td>RANS</td>
<td>Recreation and Amenity Needs Study</td>
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<td>RAS</td>
<td>Rental Accommodation Scheme</td>
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<td>Record of Protected Structures</td>
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<td>SAC</td>
<td>Special Area of Conservation</td>
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<td>SEA</td>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment</td>
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<td>Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland</td>
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<td>Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas DECLG2009</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<td>WRBD</td>
<td>Western River Basin District</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWTW</td>
<td>Waste Water Treatment Works</td>
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