The following Variation to the Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 was made in accordance with Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2011 on the 12\textsuperscript{th} January 2015.

Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 Land Use Zoning and Specific Objectives Map

The following changes have been made to the Land Use Zoning and Specific Objectives Map of the Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017:

The Specific Objective for the entire east to west road alignment / reservation expressed as Proposed New Roads shown graphically, as a double hatched line in pink that is the line associated with the Galway City Outer Bypass has been deleted.

The following text shown in red with a strikethrough has been deleted from the Map Legend of Galway City Development Plan 2011-17 Land Use Zoning and Specific Objectives Map:

Key Note (iii) Galway City Outer By Pass including associated Junctions and alterations to existing road network are indicative and maybe subject to design alterations.
Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 Written Statement

The following changes have been made to the Written Statement of the Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 (text shown in red with a strikethrough has been deleted and text shown in blue has been inserted).

Chapter 1 Overall Strategy Including Core Strategy

The graphic showing the expressed route of the Galway City Outer By Pass in Figure 1.1 (page 7), Figure 1.2 (page 9) and Figure 1.3 (page 11) and also the associated key symbol has been deleted from the Galway City Development Plan 2011-17.
1.5 Transportation Strategy

The ongoing development of strategic routes – M6/N6, N17, N18 is critical to the Gateway development and to ensure linkages between Gateways in line with the Atlantic Gateway Corridor. The need to separate through traffic from local traffic was originally supported in the GTPS and subsequently designed as a bypass route known as the Galway City Outer Bypass (GCOB). Construction of the GCOB is an important element in the transport strategy for the city not only for relieving traffic but also for releasing road space that can be rededicated for bus/cycle use. The line for the extent of the approved element of this route is a reserved corridor in the Plan and corridors for alternative design options for the western section will be prioritised when future development proposals are being considered. It is critical for the city that this relieving road is constructed in full and that the N18/N17 – Gort – Tuam (57km) advances expeditiously.

The GCOB was submitted to An Bord Pleanála for approval. The Bord consequently issued a split decision with permission granted for the section of the project east of the N59 Clifden Road but refused for the section from the N59 to the R336 Spideal Road. The decision granting approval of the eastern section was subsequently appealed to the courts and was ultimately deemed invalid in 2013. Notwithstanding this Galway City Council and Galway County Council remain committed to developing a transportation solution to the existing congestion on the national and regional road network within the Galway Gateway and Environs.

1.7 Environment

In addition, owing to the designation of Natura 2000 sites, (a network of important ecological sites across the EU), within the vicinity of the city, a Habitats Directive Assessment of the Development Plan has also been prepared. This process is carried out to ensure that potential development that could have an adverse impact on these designated sites is not permitted or is required to be modified. The assessment indicated that adverse impacts could be avoided through appropriate policies and measures which have been incorporated into the Development Plan. It is also acknowledged that before implementation all plans, including lower tier plans and projects identified as having potential to adversely impact on Natura 2000 sites, are required to adhere to the requirements of the Habitats Directive to ensure no adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

In this regard a plan or project 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 the plan or project is in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
Policy 1.7  Environmental Strategy

- Promote the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment of the city while facilitating sustainable development and growth in line with EU and national legislation and encourage appropriate measures to reduce man-made greenhouse gas emissions and increase the use of renewable energies.
- Ensure that all 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 for 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.

1.8.1 Elements of the Core Strategy

Page 14 - Investment in strategic routes will also be important in particular the M6, N17 and N18 and the Galway City Outer Bypass and other transportation solutions as these will result in a release of additional capacity on the existing road network some of which can be rededicated to bus and bicycle use. Initiatives with respect to walking and cycling have been advanced and will have a high priority in new settlement areas where such opportunities can be designed into layouts. The services of Galway Airport and Galway Harbour are also of significant importance.
Chapter 3 Transportation

3.1 Aim, Context & Strategy

Page 26 - The previous plan highlighted the need to integrate land use and transportation and supported the settlement and transportation strategy as recommended in the Galway Transportation Planning Study GTPS (2003). The GTPS sets out a strategy for transportation and settlement within the study area which included the city and a hinterland area of approximately 30km radius. The recommended strategy for the city sought to maintain and build on its critical mass, to strengthen economic growth and competitiveness focusing on a preferred growth area in Ardaun to the east. It recommended a significantly improved public transportation system as a key element including the continued development of the bus network, development of park and ride facilities, commuter rail services and improvements to cycling and walking networks. It also supported the development of the GCOB recognising the need to separate through traffic from local traffic. This specific project has not succeeded in being granted approval however commitment by Galway City Council and Galway County Council remains for the development of a transportation solution that will address the existing congestion on the national and regional road network within the Galway Gateway and Environs and offset all of the associated negative social and economic impacts.

Page 27 - Strategy

• Support the construction of the GCOB as approved in addition to a revised western link to the R336.
• Support the development of a transportation solution to the existing congestion on the national and regional road network in Galway Gateway and environs in conjunction with Galway County Council and other relevant state agencies.

3.4 The Galway Transportation Unit

Page 29 - The emerging strategic policy of the GTU builds on the GTPS (2003) which established a development framework in land use and transportation terms for Galway City and its environs. The recommended transportation strategy contained in the GTPS is to reduce congestion and provide a greater ease of movement, primarily through providing multi-modal choice of travel. It recommends strategic measures to improve public transportation within the wider area including bus priority measures, rail facility improvements, road accessibility and supporting facilities such as park and ride. It also recognises the importance of the Galway City Outer Bypass in the transport strategy for the city for relieving traffic and to improve the performance of the inner city radial network. It also recognises the need to develop a solution to the existing congestion on the national and regional road network within the Galway Gateway and Environs.

3.5 Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan

Page 30 - The Plan will have the aim of achieving a more integrated and managed approach to transportation in the city. This will encourage modal change from car journeys to public transport, walking and cycling. A range of measures in support of the GTPS and the Strategic Bus Study have already been implemented and plans advanced and works commenced for some of the strategic roads projects. Including the Galway City Outer Bypass (GCOB)
Page 32 - Roads
The ongoing development of the M/N6, N17 and N18 strategic routes is critical to the Gateway development and to ensure linkages between Gateways in line with the Atlantic Gateway Corridor. The construction of the GCOB is an important element in the transport strategy for the city, not only for relieving traffic but also for releasing road space that can be rededicated for bus/RTR/cycle use. The GCOB was a strategic objective of the Development Plan 2005-2011, which reserved lands in the city for its construction. This development plan will continue to reserve lands for the approved element and for the likely western link with the R336. The Council will consider in conjunction with the NRA a possible link from the proposed Ballindooley interchange with the Eastern Approach Road between the Kirwan and Efont Roundabouts. The Council will consider the ultimate line of this route and facilitate this road if required.
Within the city the Council will continue to carry out its programmes of road improvements. A number of new roads and road upgrades are proposed to provide key linkages and improvements in the network as listed in the specific objectives section of this chapter. In the context of smarter travel, to ensure the optimum safety for all modes of travel and to encourage increased use of public transport, the Council will investigate proposals to reduce speed limits in certain areas of the city.

Transportation Solutions
In addition the development of a transportation solution to the existing congestion on the national and regional road network is a critical element in the transportation strategy for the city. A solution is needed to address these transportation issues which include congestion on the main routes approaching and in the city; unreliable journey times owing to delays; conflict between through and local traffic; inadequate transport links within the city and westwards to the County area.

In turn these are having an impact on the wider economic and social life of the city, county and region. The quality of life for those living and working in Galway is negatively impacted, accessibility to the City as a Gateway is compromised as is the western part of the County. This restricts development, reduces the attraction of the city and county for visitors and generally impacts on long term sustainability.

The development of a transportation solution in conjunction with Galway County Council and other relevant state agencies will address these issues and will also include for consideration of opportunities to improve public transportation options and also facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.

3.6 Specific Objectives
Page 34 - General

- Reserve lands for the approved section of the Galway City Outer By-Pass including a new bridge crossing of the River Corrib and have regard to the emerging route selection for the revised western link of the GCOB to the R336.
- Support the development of a transportation solution to the existing congestion on the national and regional road network in Galway Gateway and Environs in conjunction with Galway County Council and other relevant state agencies and ensure the strategic requirement to deliver any emerging projects are safeguarded.
Chapter 4 Natural Heritage Recreation and Amenity

4.1 Aim, Context & Strategy

Page 38 - Strategy

- Promote a green network for the city that allows for sustainable use and management of natural heritage, 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 Natura 2000 sites and/or where the competent authority has ascertained that the use of the site is in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.