6.0 Assessment

The assessment of existing facilities and amenities has been carried out having primary regard to the field surveys and consultation undertaken, supplemented by user surveys, household surveys and policy review.

The methodologies employed for assessing open spaces, sports facilities, ecological sites and water amenities are set out below in diagrammatic form.

Figure 11: Assessment Methodologies

- **Open Space and Sports Facilities**
  - Consultation
  - Policy and Standards
  - Audits

- **Ecological Sites**
  - Consultation
  - Policy and Standards
  - Ecological Audits
  - Open Space Audit

- **Water Amenities**
  - Consultation
  - Policy Review
  - Open Space Audits
  - Ecological Assessment
  - Sport Facility Audit
The overall open space and recreation assessment is made for a number of criteria including quality, accessibility, usage and management. A number of other key criteria which will vary with amenity / facility category include hierarchical provision, spatial distribution, function, maintenance and awareness / promotion.

6.1 Open Space Assessment

Galway City has generally a high quality of park provision at most levels in the hierarchical network.

Substantial progress has been made in recent years, and is ongoing with regard to the provision and quality of open space. For example, master plans are being prepared for a number of open spaces including Ballyloughnaun, Merlin Woods City Park, Barna/Lough Rusheen Park and RA lands at Clybaun.

Citywide Parks

Galway city is well served with a good distribution of citywide parks, three of which are located within the city, and a fourth, Rinville Park, which is outside the city boundary and jointly owned by Galway City Council and Galway County Council. These parks are the top tier of the parks hierarchy and are important resources for passive and active recreation for Galway City.

Terryland Forest Park is a relatively recent park and its development is ongoing. Rinville Park and Barna/Lough Rusheen Park (including Cappagh Park) are considered to be of generally high quality. Facility provision and awareness of these parks is good, which contributes to relatively high levels of usage. Anti-social activity and vandalism are low in these parks. Rinville Park, although of good quality also has potential for increased facility provision and improved access, as it serves both city and county residents. At the time of survey, Terryland Forest Park and Merlin Woods City Park were identified as less well used compared to the other citywide parks. Measures to improve overall awareness, formal access and increased facility provision are seen as key issues in improving the quality and attractiveness of these parks.

There is scope for providing more amenity use including play areas in these city parks. There is considerable potential to combine a range of active and passive recreational facilities at some of these locations, as demonstrated successfully in Barna/Lough Rusheen Park (including Cappagh Park). Any development proposals should also take into consideration the different aims of parks, for example, Terryland Forest Park is being developed as a forest park and for passive recreational activities. Facilities for wildlife education and conservation, including bird hides and information plaques, are evident in the Lough Rusheen area. Potential also exists in Barna Woods, Terryland Forest Park and Merlin Woods to provide and promote wildlife conservation and education. These citywide parks are of high importance as they contain a significant proportion of the city’s mature woodland, which is in excess of 200 acres in total. While the city parks are an effective element of the parks hierarchy, there is a need for enhanced accessibility to the open space network in general including other parks in the hierarchy, woodlands, rivers and beaches within the city.

All city parks would benefit from individual master and management plans to set out a strategic vision for the development of the parks and outline current and future management priorities respectively.
Neighbourhood Parks

There is a reasonably balanced distribution of neighbourhood parks throughout most of Galway city. Neighbourhood parks are instrumental in providing the city with opportunities for active recreation. Some of these, e.g. Westside, have been recently improved and there are a number of good quality parks with a range of facilities, e.g. McGrath’s Field. These parks are in general well used by a variety of age groups. However some neighbourhood parks have potential to provide additional facilities and amenities in order to increase usage. Access is generally good in city centre locations, however there is scope for improvement in some outlying areas. The preparation of master plans would benefit the development of neighbourhood parks throughout the city. Management and linkage to other open spaces are also key issues which need to be addressed in the development of neighbourhood parks.

Local Parks

Local parks are important components of the urban fabric and function both as open spaces for residents as well as important gathering spaces for events. There are a high number of local parks, mostly located in the older city centre core and inner/established suburb areas. Scope for improved provision exists in suburban areas. It is noted that the City Development Plan indicates that a formal park should be provided in new developments which are in excess of 100 units. It can therefore be expected that the local parks network will be further developed in tandem with new housing.

It is important to note that there have been significant improvements to local parks, including the recent upgrading and development of open spaces such as Eyre Square (Kennedy Park), and Millennium Park. Quality is generally good in most local parks with high levels of facility provision, especially in recently developed parks. City centre locations assist in facilitating high levels of access, usage, management and maintenance. Signage to and linkage between these city centre open spaces is good in most cases. As with neighbourhood parks, local parks would benefit from the preparation of master plans and improved management and facility provision.

Civic Spaces

Civic spaces are concentrated in the city centre as might be expected, in locations such as Eyre Square (Kennedy Park), Fishmarket Square and Courthouse Square. These spaces are generally of a high quality and well equipped. Access and usage are good and these spaces play an important civic role, for example during festivals, facilitating street theatre and markets.

Management, awareness and linkage are generally good. There is also potential to enhance existing areas of the city such as the Small Crane, the Woodquay area and for new civic spaces to be implemented along with new development.

Greenways

A reasonably comprehensive network of existing and proposed greenways exists, as identified in Map 3, Section 4.2. Existing greenways are generally of high quality with good access, resulting in high usage, as demonstrated by the recently developed Bruach na Coiribe walkway. Management is generally good. However there is scope to improve awareness and linkages, for example existing linkages could be further improved by interventions such as improved signage.

Greenways are of key importance in linking green space amenities and a strategic measurable approach is required to develop all forms throughout the city including designated walking routes and cycleway paths. There is potential for further expansion of existing greenways/walkways, for example, along the coast to the east of the city and linking Blackrock to Silverstrand. Priority should be given to completing a cross city coastal walkway, linking with the riverside walkways, which would provide maximum benefit to the city in the context of greenway development.
Residential Open Space
Significant areas of residential green space exist throughout the city, mostly in suburban areas. Consultees expressed a desire for pocket parks / play areas in emerging residential locations during the public consultation. There is scope for local parks and recreational amenities to be provided in tandem with new developments, as set out in City Development Plan standards.

Residential open spaces in older parts of the city are often fragmented and in need of improved design to fulfil potential for increased usage. Schemes such as the Community Planting Initiative are in place to enable local residents to improve these spaces. Recent developments have also shown a marked improvement in design and management of open space, reflecting an evolution of policy and enhanced standards for open space areas over the years.

Commercial and Industrial Open Space
Commercial and industrial open spaces provide a setting for buildings and soften their visual impact. Generally, very few large spaces of recreational and amenity value exist within the city, with the exception of some recent IDA Ireland business parks. Potential linkages to other open spaces are an important consideration for future development.

Institutional Open Space
There are a number of institutional open spaces throughout the city which are generally of good quality and well managed. Institutions, in particular NUIG and HSE (Merlin Park), contain a significant open space resource for the city. These lands are generally easily accessed. The riverside walkway from Dangan to Newcastle in particular is an important resource for recreation and is well used. There is also potential for increased usage, for example through the enhancement of greenways and amenities.

Cemeteries
There are two public cemeteries in the city and a number of smaller private burial grounds. These display high levels of management, allowing them to complement their function.

New Developments
It is noted that there are a number of amenities which were under construction or in planning at the time of the survey. These are identified in Map 18, under Section 6.4.

6.2 Ecological Assessment
Galway city contains a varied array of semi-natural habitats of international, national and local importance as identified in Chapter 4.

As part of the ecological assessment, five specific areas of ecological value were surveyed which are covered by a variety of designations. A more general assessment of key issues affecting the main habitats across the city was also carried out. These five areas provide a passive recreation role. They currently experience low levels of active recreation and are generally not threatened by active recreational pressures. Preservation of sensitive areas requires a strategic approach to trail creation, control of invasive species and appropriate use of natural resources.

All the sites surveyed under the ecological assessment are zoned Recreation and Amenity, with the exception of Menlough Woods, which is zoned Agriculture and High Amenity.

With regard to recreational opportunities identified for all five areas, stakeholders such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service, should be consulted at the earliest possible stage on any development. The impact on the environment should also be assessed to ensure that recreational development does not lead to adverse
impacts on the ecological value of sites and designated areas.

1. Barna Woods and Rusheen Bay

Habitat Location and Significance
Barna Woods are located on the western edge of the city almost on the coast, just north of Rusheen Bay, and are one of the best known areas of woodland in the city. Of the 61 hectares of broadleaved woodland in the city, only Barna Woods is protected under cSAC and pNHA designations. Barna Woods includes areas of wet woodland. There is little understorey or ground flora in much of the southern half of the woodland. This is likely as a result of trampling pressure. The northern half of the woodland is denser and less affected by recreation so that younger trees and understorey species are found. A small area in the northern part of the woods is fenced off. Efforts have been made to restrict visitors to marked paths by introducing signage to this effect. Woodlands are also to the south of the road but access is restricted.

Rusheen Bay is primarily a soft coastline with areas of gravel, sand and muddy shoreline. Reedswamp, calcareous grassland, marsh and inter-tidal habitat are found in the bay. Rusheen Bay also contains a bird sanctuary which was acquired in 1997 by Birdwatch Galway. Rusheen Bay is designated cSAC, SPA and pNHA as well as being a Wildfowl Sanctuary.

Current Pressures
Current recreational pressures upon the ecological attributes in the Barna Woods area include pedestrian and off-route biking in the woodland, causing erosion and suppression of ground flora. Recreational pressures on Rusheen Bay (or Lough Rusheen) include possible disturbance to birds by the windsurfing school and passive recreation, including kite-surfing on Silver Strand. None of these activities are currently deemed to be unsustainable under the current levels of use.

Future Pressures
In the light of proposals for the future development of this area, further increase in recreational activity is possible in Barna Woods and therefore proactive management is required. The disturbance of the heronry, as well as increased pressure on the soft shoreline at Rusheen Bay, are also possible future pressures.

Consultation
Consultation indicated high levels of awareness and use in Barna Woods, as well as the potential of the area for wildlife education.

Opportunities
Both Barna Woods and Rusheen Bay have potential to be promoted as wildlife education and conservation areas, as well as areas for passive and controlled active recreation and birdwatching.

2. Lough Atalia

Habitat Location and Significance
Lough Atalia is a well known area of open estuarine water on the eastern side of Galway city, near the city centre. A shallow inlet, it is surrounded by saltmarsh and coastal meadow to the east and amenity grassland to the north and west.

Lough Atalia is designated as a Special Protection Area under the EC Birds Directive, is within the Galway Bay Complex candidate SAC (cSAC) under the EC Habitats Directive, and is a proposed NHA (pNHA) under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000.
As a habitat, Lough Atalia is deemed to be of high quality. The eastern shore is especially significant, comprising saltmarsh as well as wet coastal grassland and marsh habitat. These areas are likely to be of importance to many roosting birds. The north-eastern end of the Lough has been modified by man-made sea walls and coastal protection works which is surrounded by amenity grassland. The western shore of the Lough is composed of boulders and shingle surrounded by amenity grassland and some planting. This is unlikely to be used by large numbers of birds.

Current Pressures
Current pressures on the estuarine habitats, both terrestrial and aquatic, include vandalism and anti-social behaviour, water pollution, erosion of the soft coastline on the eastern side and disturbance to breeding birds. These are not regarded as significant at present but will need to be addressed in conjunction with safe access if the area is further developed. Usage is presently confined to the paths and amenity grassland areas.

Future Pressures
Under the City Development Plan (Section 4.11), it is an objective to develop a park at Lough Atalia for passive recreation and develop boating and sailing activities (for non motorised craft). Among the potential impacts of boating/sailing are disturbance to breeding birds, sedimentation of water and erosion of soft shorelines, which may be addressed by appropriate design and management. The boundaries of the cSAC site must also be treated sensitively.

Consultation
During consultation, concerns raised included dredging and concern over water quality in the Lough, as well as improved access for water sports and swimming, upgrading and increased linkage of footpaths, vandalism and the provision of information boards.

Opportunities
Lough Atalia has the potential to function as both an important habitat and an area for environmental education, as well as catering for water based recreational activities, provided that these objectives are reconciled. An overall master plan is recommended to reconcile these objectives.

3. Merlin Woods City Park (Aintini and Uncailí Woods, South of the Dublin Road)

Habitat Location and Significance
Merlin Woods City Park is a significant area of broadleaved and coniferous plantation located on the eastern side of Galway City. It is a City Park and is also designated as an area of Local Ecological Importance. The ecological assessment refers to the woods to the south of the Dublin Road, which are also known as Aintini and Uncailí Woods.

These woods are regarded as being of moderate to high quality and are almost entirely composed of broadleaved woodland, with some invasive species (Cherry Laurel). At the time of survey, usage was regarded as moderate to low and access and awareness were identified as in need of improvement.

Current Pressures
Pressures on the site include anti-social behaviour, erosion of slopes and loss of vegetation, erosion of woodland floor by uncontrolled passive recreation (cycling) and the import and spread of alien vegetation.

Future Pressures
Future recreational development of the site could add to current pressures experienced if not provided in a
manner sensitive to the protection of the ecological value of the site. Any vegetation removal and the provision of paths, seating and parking will require a professional ecological assessment.

**Consultation**

Issues identified in consultation were primarily concerned with access to and awareness of the woodlands.

**Opportunities**

The woods have the potential to be enhanced by reconciling protection of ecological value with increased passive recreation opportunities. The removal of invasive species (which is a key factor in protecting the woodland) has commenced.

An overall site master plan is recommended to reconcile these objectives.

### 4. Menlough Woods and Corrib Area

**Habitat Location and Significance**

This site is located to the north of the City, centred over the River Corrib and the townland of Menlough. The Study area boundary takes in the ‘Menlo Strait’, Menlough Castle and Menlough Woods located on the eastern side of the river.

Whilst Menlough Woods is not itself designated under nature conservation statute, the River Corrib and bank sides are designated as cSAC and pNHA as part of the Lough Corrib cSAC.

This Study area included the woodland near Menlough Castle and the eastern bank of the Corrib. The river is over 100m wide in this area and the bank sides are a mixture of reedbeds with rocky and shallow grassy banksides. The woodland forms a strip approximately 200-300m wide between the narrow unsurfaced access track and the river. It is a typical calcareous woodland with dense hazel and oak trees and less frequent ash. Exposed limestone pavement and loose boulders are found throughout the woodland.

There are no formal paths along the banks or through the woods. Whilst there is much evidence for use of the banks by anglers, there are no formalized facilities. Section 4.11 of the City Development Plan includes a proposal to develop a greenway along this shore of the River Corrib.

**Consultation**

Several stakeholders have made submissions regarding the use of the Corrib for recreational purposes and water based activities. For example, the potential for this section of the Corrib to be a nationally important rowing venue was highlighted. The problems of reed/weed encroachment have been identified and represent a clear overlap between ecological issues and active recreation. Similarly, the maintenance of the river as a racing area for rowing poses a threat to reedbeds and the species that may rely upon the reeds for shelter, food and for breeding sites.

**Current Pressures**

There is little evidence of adverse impacts of the current recreational use. The bank sides are used by anglers and there is some minor littering around Menlough Castle. There is also evidence of some damage to dry stone walls (loss of capstones etc) and campfires near the castle. Use of the river for rowing does not itself pose a threat to the ecology along the river apart from short-term disturbance of birds. Use of the river by powered craft does pose more of a threat and the wash caused by such craft can lead to erosion of soft bank side areas. The issue regarding the reed beds and rowing lanes is a significant concern and warrants an appropriate informed response.
Future Pressures

Future potential recreational pressures along the river include the following: the proposed pedestrian route that will pass through protected sites could have significant adverse effects if not carefully designed; loss of vegetation during clearance for a path; erosion of soft bank sides through unrestricted access to soft compressible zones; and disturbance to breeding birds during construction by noise and visual disturbance. Management of Menlough Woods would also be important to protect its ecological value.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity for passive recreation such as walking and angling to co-exist with the ecological constraints of the area. The Council should consider a sustainable basis for future use of this area and for ensuring that increased recreational use does not lead to a deterioration of habitats. Measures to mitigate any adverse impacts include preparing a visitor control strategy for the area, (including the area around Menlough Castle and Woods), and liaising with interested parties. Adding any access points to the water (e.g. slipways) should be carefully scrutinised and alternative locations looked at and compared, prior to selecting the best location. A management plan for the area is recommended.

5. Crestwood

Habitat Location and Significance

Crestwood is a little known area in the north of the city to the south of Coolagh. It is a limestone pavement feature that covers a south-facing slope and the crest of a hill that has the residential estates of Crestwood and Tirellan Heights on its flanks. It is an extension of the habitats found on Coolagh Hill. The habitats are located around the grass pitches and tennis courts.

This semi-natural habitat is divided into two areas. Area 1 to the south-east of the tennis courts contains thin calcareous soils covering limestone pavement with low scrub. This is an area of high ecological value and the habitat is listed as a priority Annex 1 habitat under the EC Habitats Directive. Area 2 to the north and north-west of amenity grassland comprises dense hazel and blackthorn scrub, with some bramble. Thickets of scrub occasionally open out into small patches of exposed limestone and grassland.

Current Pressures

Although there is active recreation adjacent to these areas of semi-natural habitat, there are few symptoms of recreational pressure. The site is more useful as an example of habitats that can be restored and improved to create a passive recreational resource.

Future Pressures

Future recreational opportunities could create pressures unless properly managed and developed in a manner sensitive to the protection of the ecological value of the site.

Consultation

Concern over antisocial behaviour in the neighbouring areas was an issue raised at consultation. The need for consultation with local residents would be important in relation to any proposals for the site.

Opportunities

This site offers many opportunities to be used for passive and active recreation and a well-designed plan could be prepared to maximise the natural heritage that exists on the site. Management of the site should agree a Scrub Control Plan to control spread of hazel and blackthorn scrub. Possible recreational uses include jogging, walking and orienteering along with uses as a nature trail, nature reserve and a wildlife education area. It is recommended that a master plan for the site be put in place.
6.3 Water Assessment

Water resources are amongst the most significant natural recreational assets that the city has. The city’s location on Galway Bay, together with the River Corrib, the canal and associated waterways and Lough Corrib provide enormous potential for enhanced recreation and tourism activities. This potential, however, is currently hampered due to undersupply of facilities and limited access to water resources. Development of the water resource should take into account the various ecological designations which are in place. In addition, restrictions on high powered craft due to their effect on the natural heritage must also be considered.

Enclosed Marine, Wetland and Coastal areas

The city’s coastal areas cater for a variety of water based activities such as swimming, diving, sailing and angling. They also provide an invaluable amenity for passive recreation activities. Walking adjacent to water amenities is a popular recreational activity, for example, the Promenade is a well known and very well used feature of the city’s coastline. The high ecological significance of the coastal areas is reflected in the international and national designations of SPA, cSAC and pNHA.

Galway is fortunate to have a number of beaches, well equipped and frequently used for formal bathing, close to the city centre. Both Silverstrand and Salthill have been awarded blue flag status in 2007. The coastal open spaces around the city centre, including the areas around Fishmarket Square, Nimmo’s Pier, and the Promenade are also of good quality. These areas function well as civic spaces, walkways and areas for informal recreation.

User surveys indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Promenade. However there are some conflicting uses which need to be resolved, namely the use of the Promenade for walking, cycling and rollerblading. During consultation, Lough Atalia emerged as a valuable but untapped coastal resource for both passive and active recreation, including water based recreation. This is also reflected in the City Development Plan’s objectives (Section 4.11).

Coastal access and linkage is good in the west of the city, both in terms of beaches and greenways/walkways. The extension of the coastal walk to the west of the city is proposed. Coastal protection works to Silverstrand have been approved by An Bord Pleanála. However considerable potential exists to improve access to the city’s eastern coastline, which is also an area undergoing significant development. There is further potential to enhance coastal walks in particular both within and outside the city boundary. The development of Ballyloughaun Amenity Area and linkages into the Murroogh area and onto Lough Atalia are ongoing.

The opportunity to work with Galway County Council and with landowners in this area should be investigated with a view to providing a coastal walkway to strategically link the city to Oranmore and Barna village.

Linkage to inland water and land based recreational facilities including parks and open spaces should also be enhanced.

Rivers and Waterways

The River Corrib is an important recreational asset for the city, both in terms of formal and informal recreation, including rowing, boating and angling. Both the river and the canal system are important for informal recreation and amenity, as evidenced by the popularity of the walkways. The River Corrib is designated as a cSAC and pNHA, while the city canal system is recognised as an area of local ecological importance in the City Development Plan.

In general, the river and associated open spaces are of good quality. Accessibility is good in city centre locations, especially for informal recreation such as walking and angling. Access for watercraft in the city centre emerged as an issue during consultation, and it is recommended that the potential for improved access,
including improved slipway design and functionality be addressed, having regard to the conservation status of protected areas. It should also be noted that some of these structures are included in the Record of Protected Structures. Eglinton Pier is a facility well used by the Corrib Princess, which is a valuable tourist attraction. Pier facilities at the docks, NUIG and Menlough, appear well used. There is potential to investigate facilities currently in disrepair, for example, Menlough Castle pier and the ‘mud dock’ (Claddagh Dock).

The Bruach na Coiribe walkway, the Eglinton Canal Walk and the NUIG riverside walk provide good linkage along the waterways in the city centre. There is however, potential to extend walkways along the river and canal system and further improve linkages to other walkways such as the Promenade. The proposed path along the eastern bank of the River Corrib, as outlined in the City Development Plan (Section 4.11), would further enhance linkage. Due consideration must be given to the ecological designations as outlined in section 6.2 above.

6.4 Sports Assessment

The assessment has considered both public and private sports facilities and appraised these in the context of their range, scale, access, use and management.

Facilities which allow public access are shown in Map 14.
6.4.1 Overview

Range of Facilities

Research indicates that there is a range of facilities catering for traditional activities such as GAA and soccer as well as gym, golf and hockey. As with open space in the city there is an emerging hierarchy for these and other multi-purpose facilities. Pearse Stadium and Terryland Park are arenas well known nationally for GAA and soccer respectively. The greyhound track is also home to Connacht Rugby. NUIG and Leisureland are developing as city wide facilities serving a large catchment.

There is a reasonable range of mainstream sports activities catered for in the city. A number of the city’s sporting facilities have mixed functions and cater for a variety of sporting activities, for example, Áras Bothar na Trá contains an indoor hall, gym and squash courts. Galway Lawn Tennis Club provides tennis, badminton, squash courts and a gym and the Kingfisher Club provides a gym and swimming pool facility.

Galway City Council has at its resource large open spaces and their principal use is as public parks. Clubs are facilitated to use areas within public parks for sporting activities under a licence system. It should also be noted that the City Council owned facilities are shared spaces and awareness and promotion should be increased to maximise the potential flexibility of these multi-purpose areas.

More recent facilities are being provided for popular activities such as hockey and rugby. There is also likely to be an increase in the provision of relatively small scale and more informal facilities such as the Gleann Dara 5-a-side area, occupying a lower level of the sports facility hierarchy to meet local needs.

Scope exists for additional activities bearing in mind the broadening of recreational tastes, the city’s increasingly multi-cultural population and the potential for fostering social inclusion through sports and recreation. The provision of facilities catering for multi-cultural activities and for the elderly (e.g. bowling) should also reflect socio-economic and participatory changes in sport and recreation identified in Chapter 3.

City Council Facilities

The City Council provides the majority of pitches which are licensed to soccer, GAA club and rugby clubs. These complement the facilities owned by clubs.

The City Council also operates its own facilities including the Renmore and Westside Recreation Centres. Leisureland is also owned by the Council and provides a popular swimming pool and a ‘pay as you go’ gym to complement the range of private gyms in the city.

Schools/Institutions

Schools and educational establishments provide an increasingly important component of the city’s sports facility stock and this will likely continue. For example, NUIG facilities at Dangan will likely play a more prominent role in providing sports facilities for a more diverse range of activities. Controlled access is also provided to institutional facilities such as St. Enda’s being used by Salthill / Knocknacarra GAA and Merlin Park Hospital grounds being used for sporting needs.

Role of Private Facilities

There is a substantial range of private facilities available to sports participants. These include not only private sports clubs but also hotels which are an element of the sports facility stock in the city.

Environs

There is a significant population of 62,238 in the environs (defined as within a half an hour drive time of the city centre). Certain types of sports facilities such as swimming pools, gyms and indoor halls are limited in the environs and it is likely that residents there will continue to use facilities provided in the city.
particularly those that are readily accessible by road.

The environs also provide an important recreational resource for the city. This area will continue to provide opportunities for extensive recreational activities such as new golf courses which are unlikely to be provided in the city given constraints on space and land. The environs will not only provide further opportunities for active recreation and sport such as golf, sailing and horse riding but will also continue to be an important resource for passive recreation such as walking, cycling and amenity enjoyment.

Ardaun

A significant population is projected to be accommodated within the city boundary of the Ardaun corridor. This population will be likely to sustain a significant range of sports facilities including a swimming pool and floodlit, artificial, multi-purpose and large-scale playing areas. The development of a significant range of facilities in Ardaun has potential to have a city wide catchment taking in users from the surrounding city area and the environs.

Relocation of Sports Facilities to Outlying Areas.

There have been recent examples of sports clubs relocating from the city to outlying areas, such as Drom Soccer Club. It is apparent that some clubs want to relocate their facilities from city locations to outlying areas. In doing so there are several key considerations including accessibility and loss of amenity land. These issues are addressed in strategic policy set out in Chapter 9 which requires the impact on the relocation of sports facilities to outlying areas be considered.

Sports Facility Hierarchy

Map 15 shows the Sports Facility Hierarchy. It illustrates that facilities are being developed or have the potential to serve a regional, citywide, district or local function. The strongest level of the sports facility hierarchy is at local level. Citywide level facilities are under-represented whilst there would appear to be potential to promote accessibility to sports facilities associated with educational facilities. Future proposals should therefore enhance access to existing local facilities and provide new citywide facilities.
6.4.2 Sports Facilities

Map 16 shows accessibility for GAA, Soccer and Rugby pitches.
GAA

Almost half of Galway city’s GAA Facilities are owned by the City Council and are located in or as part of the city parks network, which are leased to clubs on an annual basis. In general playing pitches are well used and there is a demand to develop facilities in areas of population growth. Pearse Stadium serves as a county GAA facility. There are also GAA facilities at NUIG Dangan and GMIT. Cappagh park contains one city-wide GAA facility. Remaining GAA facilities are classified as district or local facilities.

Soccer

Galway City has a good provision of soccer pitches. The majority of these are owned by the City Council and are under licence to local clubs. Some of these pitches form part of the parks network. There are two regional and one citywide facility for soccer. All the rest are district or local facilities. These regional and citywide facilities are located in the west of the city. This shows that the hierarchical provision is unbalanced at present and there needs to be an increase in the number of citywide facilities to the east. There were also issues raised with regards to physical access to facilities in Crestwood and Millers Lane. The temporary closure of South Park has put a strain on existing facilities.

Rugby

There is one City Council owned public rugby facility in Galway City (Laurel Park). Other rugby facilities, e.g. Connacht Rugby grounds, are of a good standard and provide changing facilities. Half of these are floodlit and are owned by third level institutions, rugby clubs or are major stadia all with controlled public access. There are two regional facilities, one in the east and one in the west. It is noted that a district facility (Galwegians) located in the east is planning to re-locate. All rugby facilities, both public and private appear to be running close to or at capacity. The provision of additional training pitches would reduce the pressure on existing pitches for matches.

Playing Pitches - GAA, Soccer, Rugby

A comparison of Galway City Council’s playing pitches can be made with other cities using the benchmark of local authority pitches for soccer, GAA and rugby per 1,000 population. The key findings are shown in Figure 12 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population (2006)</th>
<th>GAA No. of pitches</th>
<th>GAA Pitches per 1000 population</th>
<th>Soccer No. of pitches</th>
<th>Soccer Pitches per 1000 population</th>
<th>Rugby No. of pitches</th>
<th>Rugby Pitches per 1000 population</th>
<th>Total No. of pitches</th>
<th>Total Pitches per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>72,414</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>119,418</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>8,626</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>52,539</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above analysis shows that in terms of pitch provision Galway City scores relatively highly and better than Kilkenny and Limerick cities. Provision of soccer pitches is highest of those cities sampled and compares favourably with the others in terms of GAA pitches.

Consultations also indicated however that in certain instances pitch quality is being jeopardised by the manner of usage of facilities and management practices. This can be addressed through promoting best practice amongst pitch users, e.g. for training purposes. Consideration should be given to multi-functional facilities to accommodate training in particular, and to a lesser degree matches, including all weather and floodlit facilities. This issue was prominent during consultation. Wear and tear on these pitches could also be alleviated by seeking alternative periods of use from traditional times (Sunday afternoon). The City Council owned facilities would also benefit from clearly defined management agreements to address issues such as maintenance.
All Weather / Hard Surfaced Facilities

Of the all weather facilities there is one fully publicly accessible facility (at Gleann Dara) in Galway City, while the others vary from allowing public access with payment to private facilities. The all weather facilities that exist are of a high standard. However these are all well used and may be near or at capacity. Management and maintenance, while generally good, could be improved in some facilities. Galway has relatively few all weather facilities for a city of its size. New facilities can cater for a range of existing sports whose pitches are under pressure in terms of overuse and can cater for emerging sports.

Water Sports

Water sports including rowing and sailing are popular activities. There are a number of water sports facilities in Galway and rowing clubs in particular. Access to these facilities is generally restricted to club members. Some educational institutions have their own water sports facilities (NUIG, The Bish/St. Josephs and Colaiste Iognaid). All facilities appear to be well used and the city’s water resource provides great recreational potential. Access to the water for watercraft needs to be improved. Awareness is considerably less than should be the case. Recreational use of the water resources could be greatly assisted by the promotion of the city as a leisure and tourist destination.

Swimming

Leisureland, a public indoor swimming facility, operates as a regional swimming facility. The Kingfisher Club to the east of the city, which offers public hours, was developed through a public private partnership and operates as a district level facility. All the other facilities are classed as serving more local needs. There are other private facilities offering public access on a daily basis with varying costs, the majority being part of gym or hotel leisure centres. There is one institutionally owned and run swimming pool named The Holy Family School. Swimming pool facilities were generally of a good standard across the city. Management and maintenance were extremely good in all swimming facilities, and in particular in the Council owned facility.

To meet anticipated increased participation in swimming, outlined in the household surveys, there is a requirement to consider enhancing public access to swimming pools. More affordable ‘pay as you go’ arrangements could be considered as a potential enhancement. The provision of pools at Cappagh and Doughiska proposed through public private partnerships will assist in meeting future need. Enhanced use of beaches, improved access to tidal pools, and increased supervision would also assist in meeting some likely future need.

Sports Halls

Westside Recreation Centre and Renmore Recreation Centre are well managed and maintained. However the range of facilities provided could be improved with the provision of new or improved sports equipment. Public sports halls have emerged as very well used facilities, in particular the Council owned recreation centres. The City Council facilities in Westside and Renmore have the potential to be linked to adjoining park facilities (e.g. public pitches) in their areas.

There is potential for greater use of private halls, particularly those in educational ownership although some have controlled access arrangements with groups, including soccer and GAA clubs. Many of the city’s halls were designed or used for non-sporting functions. These facilities could be enhanced with minimal physical works to accommodate multi-functional sports and community/education use. Private sports halls are generally well maintained, e.g. NUIG and GMIT.

Map 17 shows the accessibility arrangements for sports halls and gyms.
Gyms
Gym facilities were of a good standard across the city and all gym facilities are well managed and maintained. There were relatively few facilities providing a “pay as you go” service. The remaining facilities were restricted to members or guests, as many are located in hotels. The demand for gyms and pressure on existing facilities is likely to increase as indicated in the household survey. It is noted that gym facilities were recently developed at Leisureland and are proposed as part of new developments at Cappagh Park and Doughiska.

Tennis
Galway City has a number of private and public tennis facilities across the city. Private facilities, e.g. Galway Lawn Tennis Club, were of an excellent standard. Some public parks also provide tennis facilities which would be enhanced by improved management. Private facilities seem to be more frequently used than public ones. Awareness of the public facilities has the potential to be improved.

Golf / Pitch and Putt
Galway has golf, driving range and pitch and putt facilities. The pitch and putt and driving range facilities are the only “pay as you go” facilities. There are additional golf courses in the environs of Galway serving the needs of people within the city, such as at Glenlo Abbey, Barna and Oranmore. The pitch and putt facilities provide an amenity for golfers locally that cannot be met by the provision of any new golf courses within the city.

Running
The formal facilities at NUIG in Dangan are excellent and well used. However this is an institutional facility with controlled access. Westside running track is not well used at present, but with improved management and promotion could become a citywide facility as it is the only public formal running facility in Galway.

Existing informal running facilities have been identified across the city e.g. The Salthill Promenade, NUIG riverside walkway and Terryland Forest Park. Improved informal running areas throughout the city would greatly enhance opportunities for running/jogging to complement formal facilities at Dangan and Westside.

Other
Both Ballybrit Racecourse and the Greyhound track are prominent features of the city’s recreational assets. Future needs could be met with the provision of multi-purpose facilities.

New Developments
It is noted that there are a number of amenities and facilities which were under construction or in the planning process at the time of the survey. These are identified in Map 18.
7.0 Consultation

The purpose of the consultation was to give the public, key stakeholders, recreation and sporting clubs and organisations an opportunity to provide an effective input into the identification of needs and participate in the formulation of a vision and strategies to enable all identified current and future needs to be met.

7.1 The Consultation

The preparation of the Study was extensively advertised through a public notice in local newspapers, on the City Council’s website and on local radio.

There were three main opportunities for engaging in the consultation process. Firstly these included a “drop in” consultation over the evenings of 28th and 29th of June and 3rd and 4th of July 2006 in a variety of publicly accessible locations within the city centre and around the city. Secondly, two presentations and workshops were held with the joint meetings of the Economic Development and Planning and the Recreation Amenity and Culture Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) on 24th May and 28th November 2006. Thirdly, written submissions, both at pre-draft and draft stage, were invited through public notices and by invitation. The draft document was placed on public display from June 28th to August 3rd 2007 and pertinent comments have been incorporated into this document.

Those groups and organisations written to and invited to comment are listed in Appendix 2.

A list of submissions received is contained in Appendix 3.

7.2 The Consultation Process

The consultation methodology and process is set out below.

Figure 13: The Consultation Process
7.3 The Consultees

An extensive range of stakeholders were contacted and invited to make submissions during the consultation process. Some of the groups involved in the consultation were as follows:

**The Council** – Elected representatives, staff from Planning, Parks and Recreation, Transport and Infrastructure, and Community and Enterprise Departments.

**Strategic Policy Committee** – Both the Economic Development and Planning SPC and the Recreation, Amenity and Culture SPC were consulted, which comprised of elected representatives and representatives of key stakeholder organisations.

**Statutory Consultees** – These included the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and An Taisce.

**Local Sports Clubs** – A wide range of local sports clubs and recreation organisations were involved in consultation.

**Interested Parties and key stakeholders** – A wide range of interested parties were involved in consultation, including the Health Service Executive (West), The Sports and Recreation Forum, Natural Environmental and Waterways Group, Health Forum, West Regional Authority, Galway County Council, Galway Harbour Company, NUIG, Galway VEC, RAPID, Galway City Partnership, Galway City Community Forum, Geological Survey of Ireland and Western Regional Fisheries Board.

**Community Groups and Residents Groups** – A wide range of community groups were involved in consultation.

**The Public** – Comments both written and verbal were received from the public.

A Steering Group was also set up comprising Directors of Services for Planning and Recreation and Amenity Services with representation from the Parks and Planning Departments to guide and oversee the preparation of the Study.

7.4 Issues Arising from the Consultation

The issues which arose from the consultation exercise are shown in Figure 14. They have been taken into consideration in the drafting of the strategy, policies and proposals set out in Chapter 9.
Figure 14 Issues Arising from the Consultation

### Written
- Need for a water-based facility strategy and realisation of city’s marine potential.
- Provision for recreation/amenity near surface water should follow best practice with regard to protecting surface water from pollution/siltation and from invasive non-native species.
- The Recreation and Amenity Needs Study should recommend that all new proposals for recreation/amenity provision in the city should include professional ecological input.
- Enhance access to school facilities.
- Need an “iconic” facility.
- Potential partnership between city, education and local authority.
- Link tourism and recreation.
- Effective working relationship with Galway County Council.

### Drop-In
- Public access to swimming pools.
- Open space vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- Delivery of playgrounds and residential open space in tandem with development.
- Perceived lack of open space in certain areas.

### S.P.C
- Enhance information, awareness, promotion and access to amenities, facilities and parks.
- Cater for elderly, young, disabled and minority groups.
- Water related amenities/resources are most important and unique assets of city and should be better utilised.
- Integrated strategy reconciling needs and natural heritage protection.
- More effective maintenance and management.
- More pedestrian, cyclist and disabled friendly city.

### Spatial balance to provision of amenities and facilities.
Synthesis
8.0 Current and Future Needs

The principal use of dedicated open space within the existing city fabric is as city, neighbourhood and local parks. Good parks are flexibly designed multi-functional open spaces catering for a balance of both passive and active recreation. These are usually the most appropriate location for formal sports and children’s play provision. Parks therefore should be the central component of any assessment of current and future needs.

This needs assessment recognises that Galway is also fortunate to enjoy a number of natural open space assets such as its extensive coastline, waterways and mature woodlands. These areas are unique and valuable assets for the city, contributing immensely to both the city’s environment and quality of life within it. Such areas are unique and cannot be recreated, requiring careful management to ensure their conservation. Whilst these areas facilitate passive recreation such as walking, their ecological sensitivity varies and may limit their carrying capacity and or ability to host active and in some cases even passive recreation activity. They are therefore considered to form part of the base line position from which the assessment of need for additional dedicated open space (capable of supporting passive and active recreation) will be built upon.

To provide a sufficiently detailed level of assessment, the city has been divided into 5 sub areas based on electoral districts. The five sub areas are shown in Figure 15 below and in Map 19.

Figure 15: The Five Sub Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Area 1</th>
<th>Sub Area 2</th>
<th>Sub Area 3</th>
<th>Sub Area 4</th>
<th>Sub Area 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murroogh</td>
<td>Ballybaan</td>
<td>Eyre Square</td>
<td>Rahoon</td>
<td>Barna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mervue</td>
<td>Ballybrit</td>
<td>St. Nicholas</td>
<td>Dangan</td>
<td>Knocknacarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellpark</td>
<td>Castlegar</td>
<td>Claddagh</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Rockbarton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renmore</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nuns Island</td>
<td>Shantalla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lough Atalia</td>
<td></td>
<td>Menlough</td>
<td>Taylors Hill</td>
<td>Salthill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map 19: Five Survey Areas
8.1 Open Space Needs

The quality of open space has been assessed in Section 6.1 and the quantitative assessment is contained below. The most appropriate and up to date standards for assessing current and future quantitative open space provision is the National Playing Fields Association’s 6 Acre Standard. This is an internationally recognised standard which considers open space in terms of provision for children’s play facilities, pitch and non pitch based sports activities. This standard, in the absence of up to date and similar Irish guidance, sets a benchmark for the quantity of open space per 1000 population and for the spatial extent of catchment areas for the different types of open space at the city, local and neighbourhood levels.

The 6 Acre Standard is particularly useful in the absence of any reliable current population projections. However, when considering the holistic role and value of open space, reference is also made to the more dated Irish Guidelines for Local Authorities on Parks and Open Space (1987). These Guidelines are particularly important when considering the value of and needs for forests, woodlands and amenity areas which are an important part of the city’s open space.

Use of the 6 Acre Standard is of benefit in assessing active and play recreation needs. However consideration must also be given to issues including the ecological significance of areas, the passive recreational value of open space and the Study’s objective to also develop passive recreation within the city. Therefore not all open space is available for active recreational activities.

It is also important to recognise that the 6 Acre Standard represents a minimum standard in provision. Ideally a surplus of land should be available not only to exceed minimum levels of provision, but also to incorporate flexibility for future increases in population.

Current Open Space Provision

As a guideline, the public open space requirements using the 6 Acre Standard for each sub area, are shown in Figure 16 below.

**Figure 16 Quantitative Need Identified by the Six Acre Standard (NPFA, England 2002)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Area</th>
<th>Pop (2006)</th>
<th>6 Acre (2.4ha) Requirement</th>
<th>Actual Area of Open Space</th>
<th>Deficit (-) Surplus (+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,512</td>
<td>20ha</td>
<td>29ha</td>
<td>+ 9ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14,151</td>
<td>34ha</td>
<td>57ha</td>
<td>+ 23ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16,920</td>
<td>41ha</td>
<td>68ha</td>
<td>+ 27ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13,714</td>
<td>33ha</td>
<td>18ha</td>
<td>- 15ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19,316</td>
<td>46ha</td>
<td>46ha</td>
<td>0ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71,983</td>
<td>174ha</td>
<td>218ha</td>
<td>+ 44ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The open space requirement over the city as a whole is met with a reasonable level of excess provision (44ha). However, such a level of excess provision is required to provide flexibility and should not be construed as meaning that further open space can be lost to development. Existing open space will be required to meet both current and future needs. This is borne out in Chapter 3 where it is identified that the city’s population has grown rapidly over the last 10 years and will continue to grow for the foreseeable future.
The overall surplus in the city conceals a quantitative shortfall in certain sub areas including just meeting the quantitative standard in sub area 5 and a deficiency in sub area 4. It is noted however, that sub area 4 includes institutional lands at NUIG, which have some accessibility to the public. There is also a relatively small surplus in sub area 1.

It will be necessary to retain open space in sub areas where there appears to be a surplus to compensate for those sub-areas where there is a deficit. Furthermore, linkages also exist between sub areas, and it is important that linkages are enhanced so that general areas of deficit are linked effectively to areas of surplus.

**Park Catchment Areas**

Map 20 shows the catchment areas of the city, neighbourhood and local parks. While city parks serve a city wide function, there are comparatively small areas of the city’s existing residential districts that do not fall within one or more of these catchments. Further analysis is contained below.
Map 20. (A4) Catchment Areas of Local Neighbourhood and City Parks

An A3 version of this map is contained in Appendix 5
Citywide Parks

Galway currently has three city wide parks within the city boundary. These are well located in terms of strategic provision. They are found in the west, centre and east of the city respectively. Additionally a county park which serves a city function and is in joint ownership with Galway County Council exists just outside the city boundary to the south west. While it is implicit in the function of a city wide park that it will attract visitors from across the entire city and the environs beyond, city parks are also allocated likely catchments of 1200m radii to reflect their dual role as neighbourhood parks to the immediate locality.

Neighbourhood Parks

Neighbourhood parks are reasonably well distributed across the city. Coverage, as expressed through their likely 1200m radii catchments, is most comprehensive in the city centre and inner / established suburbs. Areas of shortfall occur in places of more recent growth – i.e. the eastern and western peripheries of the city. It is significant however that a new park is currently being delivered in Roscam and at Rosan Glas on RA zoned lands as an integral part of a new housing development.

Local Parks

Local park distribution is largely in the older parts of the city. Coverage as expressed through their 400m radii or likely catchments, is absent in all areas of the city beyond the more established areas. It is noted that upgrading is ongoing in parks, for example, works have been recently completed at Fr. Burke Park and Toft Park. The City Development Plan also provides standards for the provision of recreational facilities within new residential developments.

Current Open Space Needs

Generally, disabled and cycle facilities need to be addressed in all open space developments. It is noted that Galway City Council has endorsed the Barcelona Declaration and that access for all is of paramount importance in terms of current and future open space development. Recently completed open spaces including Eyre Square (Kennedy Park), Fishmarket Square, Millennium Park and parts of the Promenade which represent a marked improvement providing access for all.

Citywide Parks

There is a need to greatly enhance linkages and accessibility, for example, through the development of green ways, pedestrian and cycle links. City parks would also benefit from enhanced linkages to other open spaces within the green network. All citywide parks need an improved management regime and should be subject to master and management plans. A greater range of facilities is needed to cater for passive and active recreation in all citywide parks, with the exception of Barna/Lough Rusheen Park (including Cappagh Park). Facilities should be provided where lacking, within all citywide parks, taking into consideration the type of park being developed and ecological characteristics, e.g. designated areas. Terryland Forest Park and Merlin Woods City Park in particular need improved awareness and promotion.

Neighbourhood Parks

Parks in outlying areas need an improvement in public transport linkages, e.g. Crestwood, while car parking provision and cycle access (including cycle parking) is a requirement in many cases. Linkage between these parks and other open spaces would also benefit these parks. Neighbourhood parks need an improved management regime and this can be addressed through area management plans. Provision of a range of both passive and active recreation facilities should exist in all parks. As with city parks, features such as lighting should be provided where lacking, taking into consideration the type of park being developed and ecological characteristics.

Local Parks

Cycle parking and easy access is especially important in city centre parks and should be provided. Man-
agement needs improvement in some parks and this can be addressed through area management plans. Awareness of existing pedestrian linkages between local parks and greenways/ walkways should be improved by signage provision e.g. Millennium Park to Bruach na Coiribe and Nimmo’s Pier. Amenities such as lighting enhances a number of existing local parks such as Eyre Square (Kennedy Park) and Fr. Burke Park and should be considered in the preparation of master plans for local parks.

**Greenways**

While access to greenways is generally good, there is potential for improvement e.g. disabled/cycle access. In some areas conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is evident e.g. along the Promenade. Management of greenways / walkways needs to be maintained and in some cases improved. The provision of amenities such as lighting would also enhance some areas.

Improved linkage is also needed to address fragmentation of greenways and walkways and provide a comprehensive network of open space throughout the city. Awareness of currently linked open spaces and greenways/walkways also needs to be improved. A strategic citywide coastal greenway from east to west linking with the riverside walkways would provide maximum benefit to the city and should be a priority. It is also important that the city’s existing network of linkages and greenways connecting Galway’s parks and open space amenity areas continue to be further developed and improved.

It should be noted that development of greenways and walkways must also take cognisance of site specific circumstances such as ecological designations identified in Section 6.2 (Ecological Assessment).

**Future Open Space Needs**

Future open space needs have been calculated by considering lands that are zoned but currently uncommitted for residential development, by applying an appropriate density of development taken from the City Development Plan and finally by using a uniform household size of 2.72 persons as indicated in page 3 of the City Development Plan. The potential requirement for public open space generated by this population yield, applying the 6 Acre Standard as a benchmark, is shown below in Figure 17. The requirement of the 6 Acre Open Space Standard is set alongside the current requirement to provide 15% open space within residential areas identified in Section 13.3.1 (c) (Amenity Open Space Provision in Residential Development) of the City Development Plan for comparative purposes.

Figure 17 shows the amount of land that Galway City Council must provide to meet its future open space requirements in the form of parks, play areas and pitches based on future potential development. The calculation of open space against the 6 Acre Standard excludes beaches, walkways, greenways, civic areas and cemeteries and zoned but undeveloped recreation and amenity areas, which are an important component of the open space potentially available to any city, as indicated in the 1987 Guidelines to Local Authorities.

**Figure 17 Future Public Open Space Requirements according to Sub Area.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Area</th>
<th>Uncommitted Residential Zoned Land</th>
<th>City Plan’s 15% Requirement</th>
<th>Estimated Projected Pop. Yield</th>
<th>6 Acre Standard’s Requirement (2.4ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>49ha</td>
<td>7.35ha</td>
<td>1382</td>
<td>3.3ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>135ha</td>
<td>20.25ha</td>
<td>4784</td>
<td>11.4ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20ha</td>
<td>3ha</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>1.8ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>32ha</td>
<td>4.8ha</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>1.8ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>68ha</td>
<td>10.2ha</td>
<td>4,619</td>
<td>11ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures 17 and 18 show that in all sub areas, with the slight exception of sub area 5, the City Development Plan requirement for open space exceeds the requirement of the 6 Acre Standard.

Applying the 6 Acre Standard further to each sub area, the following amounts of land for sports facilities and play areas (as opposed to the generic requirement of open space) will be required to meet future developments.

**Figure 18** Future Public Open Space Land Requirements for Future Development in the Five Sub Areas using the Six Acre Standard as a Guideline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Area</th>
<th>6 Acre Standard’s requirement (2.4ha)</th>
<th>Pitch Sports per 3 acres (1.2ha)</th>
<th>Non-Pitch Sports per 1 acre (0.4ha)</th>
<th>Children’s Play Area per 2 acres (0.8ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3ha</td>
<td>1.7ha</td>
<td>.5ha</td>
<td>1.1ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.4ha</td>
<td>5.7ha</td>
<td>1.9ha</td>
<td>3.8ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8ha</td>
<td>.9ha</td>
<td>.3ha</td>
<td>.6ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8ha</td>
<td>.9ha</td>
<td>.3ha</td>
<td>.6ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11ha</td>
<td>5.5ha</td>
<td>1.8ha</td>
<td>3.7ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18 above shows the requirement not only for open space but pitch and non-pitch sports as well as equipped children’s play areas. Due to population yield, derived principally from higher densities, requirements for pitch, non-pitch and children’s play areas will be greatest in sub areas 2 and 5.

To meet future needs it will be necessary to get more from existing open spaces, in particular the city’s parks and to make these more effectively linked to areas of deficit. Need can be significantly met by making more efficient and multi-purpose use of existing parks, by improving local management practices and by acquiring land in private ownership. It is also important to set a timescale for meeting the identified needs. This is set out in Chapter 9.

In considering future open space requirements it is also worth bearing in mind the potential of Ardaun and the city environs.

**Further open spaces/amenities required in the locality**

The most frequently requested space/amenities in the locality, as identified in the household survey, were playgrounds, followed by cycleways and enhanced or additional pedestrian routes for recreational use.

With reference to Map 19 the following space/amenities were identified on an area basis. Within sub area 1 householders surveyed stated an interest for more cycle lanes, playgrounds and walkways in that order. In sub area 2 people expressed an interest for more parks, cycle lanes and playgrounds, while in sub areas 3 and 4, people expressed an interest in an increased number of parks, playgrounds and cycle lanes in that order. In sub area 5 people expressed an interest for playgrounds, walkways, parks and cycle lanes.

**8.2 Ecological Needs**

The need to reconcile ecological and recreational needs in sensitive areas has been previously identified in this document. Both general and specific issues relating to the five areas are identified.

In designated areas (cSAC, SPA, pNHA), including Lough Atalia, Barna Woods, Rusheen Bay and Menlough Woods/Corrib Area, prior consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service is of paramount importance prior to the consideration of any development in these areas. Any measures that are taken to man-
age recreation or any proposals to facilitate future recreation and amenity must be in compliance with con-
servation objectives for these areas.

The impact on the environment should also be assessed to ensure that recreational development does not lead
to adverse impacts on the ecological value of sites and designated areas, e.g. through the removal of vege-
tation, construction of paths. In areas where visitor pressure is likely to become significant, namely in Merlin
Woods City Park, Lough Atalia, Barna/Lough Rusheen and Menlough Woods/Corrib Area, visitor control
strategies are deemed necessary. These strategies would identify areas where access points, paths, seats and
toilets and other visitor amenities should be located to minimise negative impacts on areas of ecological sig-
nificance.

Control of alien species is an issue to be addressed in Merlin Woods, although it is recognised that meas-
ures are currently being taken to rectify this. There is a need for a Scrub Control Plan at Crestwood to pre-
vent further encroachment of hazel and blackthorn scrub.

It is considered that master / management plans should be prepared for each area to reconcile the various
needs and outline a strategy for implementation.

8.3 Water Based Amenity Needs

Current Water Based Amenity Needs

With reference to Map 19, the household surveys reveal a significant level of existing participation in water
based activities across the whole city, with fishing particularly popular in sub area 1, and significant partic-
ipation is also recorded in sub areas 4 and 5. Rowing is popular in sub areas 1, 4, and 5. Participation in
sailing is most significant in sub areas 3 and 4. It is clear from all lines of research that there is a significant
level of untapped potential in the city’s water and coastal resources.

Enclosed marine/wetland /coastal areas

Access

Marine water access is primarily based around the docks. Two marine sports facilities also currently operate
in the Galway area (city/county), namely a private membership sailing club located at Rinville in the eastern
environs and a “pay as you go” windsurfing & kayaking facility located at Lough Rusheen on the west side of the city. There is a need for at least one other marine sports facility within the city if access is to be offered at a level commensurate with the potential offered by Galway’s natural setting. The harbour/docks areas, Lough Atalia, Ballyloughaun and Murrough offer potential as locations.

Infrastructure / Facilities

Poor or inadequate slipways were evident in some coastal areas. While the advertising and implementation
of bye-laws relating to watercraft has commenced, this should continue to be addressed. There is also a need
for the enhancement of facilities that will assist the development of water sport facilities e.g. marina support
facilities such as power points.

Inland rivers and waterways

Access

There is an opportunity to enhance general access particularly along the eastern bank of the River Corrib for
informal recreation activity such as angling and walking, subject to agreement with landowners and con-
sideration of ecological sensitivity. Water craft access is catered for with a number of slipways and piers.
However, many of these require upgrading. It is noted that existing boating clubhouse facilities are restricted to private club members or members of institutions.

**Infrastructure**

Slipways at some rowing club facilities at Woodquay are limited and there is a need for new or improved water access in this area if these clubs are to remain in their current location.

**Facilities**

There is considerable pressure on some facilities along the river Corrib in the city centre. Some existing water sports clubs are without formal club facilities and there is consequently a need for these facilities to be provided. All needs should be assessed in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

**Future Water Based Amenity Needs**

In terms of future participation and with reference to Map 19, the household survey indicated an interest in sailing in all five areas across the city, but in particular sub areas 3 and 4. Future participation in fishing and angling emerges across all areas, in particular sub areas 3 and 4. Kayaking and canoeing are potentially popular water sports, with people expressing interest across all five areas, in particular sub areas 1 and 4. Future amenities should reflect the need to cater for these activities. From the above information and from existing and future participation rates there is a need for an increased number of publicly accessible facilities both in coastal and river/waterway locations. The ongoing development of greenways / pedestrian and cycle-ways along the River Corrib and canal system and the Galway Bay coastline will be critical to provide both improved levels of access and strategic linkage across the city. Consideration should also be given to the enhancement of infrastructure to facilitate water based activities, e.g. slipways. Opportunities could also be explored to make water sport activities more publicly accessible.

**8.4 Sports Facility Needs**

**Current Sport Facility Needs**

In general terms the greatest need identified, primarily through consultation, was for additional training facilities for pitch sports as intensive training was considered to cause most damage to pitches. There is therefore a need for training facilities to alleviate the use of playing pitches and improved management practices e.g. relating to pitch usage and maintenance. Synthetic floodlit pitches and multi-purpose areas would greatly alleviate the pressure on natural grass pitches for matches by accommodating training. The use of pitches with additional capacity in other areas of the city would also alleviate pressure on pitches.

With reference to Map 19, particular current sports facility needs can be estimated for each of the 5 sub areas of the city using the current (2006) population, participation rates from the household surveys and considering user levels of existing facilities. Participation rates are identified for the key sports activities of GAA, soccer, rugby, indoor halls, gyms and swimming pools and indicate where priorities in terms of new facility provision should be directed.
Figure 19 Current Demand for GAA, Soccer, Rugby, Indoor Hall, Gym and Swimming Pool Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8,512</td>
<td>GAA 6, Soccer 5, Rugby 2, Indoor Halls 1.5, Gym 4.5, Swimming Pool Use 13.5</td>
<td>128, 106, 42, 32, 95, 287</td>
<td>4, 8, 1, 2, 2, 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14,151</td>
<td>GAA 2.5, Soccer 5.5, Rugby 0.5, Indoor Halls 1.5, Gym 2, Swimming Pool Use 11.5</td>
<td>88, 194, 18, 71, 460, 389</td>
<td>1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16,290</td>
<td>GAA 2, Soccer 6, Rugby 0, Indoor Halls 1.5, Gym 6.5, Swimming Pool Use 4</td>
<td>81, 244, 0, 61, 265, 163</td>
<td>3, 4, 0, 0, 0, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13,714</td>
<td>GAA 2.5, Soccer 11, Rugby 1.5, Indoor Halls 4, Gym 8, Swimming Pool Use 9.5</td>
<td>86, 377, 51, 137, 274, 326</td>
<td>1, 3, 0, 2, 0, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19,316</td>
<td>GAA 5, Soccer 4.5, Rugby 1, Indoor Halls 2, Gym 5.5, Swimming Pool Use 18</td>
<td>241, 217, 48, 96, 265, 869</td>
<td>3, 2, 0, 1, 1, 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19 shows the current participation rates and relative popularity of the main sports in each sub area as expressed in the household survey conducted as part of this Study. This participation is set against the provision of publicly accessible facilities in each sub area. Figure 19 also shows the number of publicly accessible facilities in each sub area. Map 14 (shown in Section 6.4) indicates the differing levels of accessibility for these facilities, which along with current use determines the potential need for new facilities.
Sub Area 1

**Participation**
Swimming was the most popular activity with GAA the next most popular with soccer and gym close behind. Indoor hall use and rugby participation were relatively low.

**Access**
There are four full size GAA facilities in this area, all of which are leased from Galway City Council. There are also 4 soccer pitches leased to clubs. There is one swimming pool with public hours (the Kingfisher Club) and relatively limited access to hotel pools.

**Use**
There would appear from consultation to be considerable pressure arising from training practices on all GAA pitches and Renmore in particular and at soccer pitches including Westpark (Renmore). Liam Mellows is also very well used. The Kingfisher Club peak periods are from 5pm to 10pm on week nights and their opening hours have recently been extended.

Sub Area 2

**Participation**
Gym participation is the most popular activity with swimming slightly less popular. Soccer was twice as popular as GAA. Rugby and indoor hall use was relatively low.

**Access**
There are no fully publicly accessible/‘pay as you go’ gyms, swimming pools or rugby pitches. There are full size pitches for soccer and GAA each and one indoor hall at Castlegar. There are numerous private facilities, some of which have controlled public access.

**Use**
Over use is not an issue with any playing pitches in this sub area.

Sub Area 3

**Participation**
Gym participation and soccer were most popular. Swimming was less popular. GAA and indoor halls use was relatively low in terms of popularity.

**Access**
There are no publicly accessible/‘pay as you go’ swimming pools, gyms, indoor halls or rugby pitches in sub area 3. There are satisfactory levels of access to GAA and soccer facilities.

**Use**
Crestwood soccer and the GAA pitches are extensively used in sub area 3. Bohermore soccer facility is very popular and extensively used. Temporary loss of South Park’s GAA and soccer facilities places pressure on other facilities.
Sub Area 4

Participation
Soccer is the most popular activity in sub area 4 followed by swimming and gym participation.

Access
There were no publicly accessible/’pay as you go’ swimming pools or gyms in sub area 4. It is noted however that this area is in close proximity to facilities at Leisureland.

Use
Westside soccer and GAA facilities are extremely heavily used. Current pressure could be relieved by improving existing facilities in adjoining areas e.g. Shantalla Community Park and Corrib Park. Use of the only publicly available rugby ground at Laurel Park is also very high.

Sub Area 5

Participation
Swimming is particularly popular in sub area 5 (more so than elsewhere in the city). There was an even spread of popularity amongst GAA, soccer and gym activity. Indoor hall use and rugby were not prominent activities.

Access
There is a single publicly accessible swimming pool and gym facility. There is one public indoor hall.

Use
Salthill / Knocknacarra GAA pitches in Salthill and in Cappagh Park are extensively used. Millers Lane is very well used at present for soccer as South Park is temporarily closed and this has put pressure on other facilities. Pearse Stadium has limited potential for increased local use given its status. Leisureland is a very popular public facility and serves a wide catchment area.

Future Sports Facility Needs

Future sports facility needs can be estimated from the current and future participation rates gathered in the household survey and applied to the population yields from development lands. Whilst it may take some time for all, if not most, of the residentially zoned land to come forward this is a relatively robust means of calculating future facility requirements.

Pitch Sports
In sub areas 1, 3 and 4, future likely participation in GAA is highest of the pitch sports, while in sub areas 2 and 5 five-a-side soccer is the most likely pitch sport to be taken up. There would appear to be increased demand in sub areas 3 and 5 for rugby. Future participation in five-a-side is higher than for eleven-a-side in all sub areas except sub area 1. These findings are clear from Figure 20.

Non Pitch Sports
Swimming is the most popular sport likely to be taken up according to the household survey. Gym rather than indoor sports is next likely most popular.
The above figure shows the projected population from the future development yield for each of the five sub-areas. The 6 Acre Standard has then been applied to the cumulative population in each of the 5 sub-areas, so that an allocation of land can be set aside for both pitch and non-pitch sports.

Figure 20 indicates which pitch and non-pitch sports are likely to be the most popular from the household survey so that lands for these uses can be prioritised.

According to the above, GAA full size pitch provision should be prioritised in sub areas 1, 3, 4 and 5, possibly as part of multi-purpose pitch use. A full sized natural turf soccer pitch would be most appropriate to meet eleven-a-side needs in sub areas 1 and 4 where such demand is likely to be greatest.

Gyms can be provided in each area to meet identified needs. An indoor sports hall should be prioritised in sub area 2 and potentially in the Ardaun area.

In considering future sports facilities needs it is important to bear in mind demographic and participatory changes in the city that will, over time, require facilities for individual pursuits such as running, jogging and cycling. Emerging activities such as cricket and basketball may cater for an increasingly multi-cultural society, and bowling in particular for an ageing population.
Further facilities in the locality.

The most frequently requested local sports facilities identified in the household survey were gyms and swimming pool facilities.

With reference to Map 19, householders surveyed identified the following local sport facilities on an area basis: In sub area 1, residents expressed a desire for more affordable gyms, skateboarding facilities, sports complexes, swimming pools, sports halls, soccer pitches and public tennis courts in that order. In sub area 2 residents expressed a desire for more sports complexes, swimming pools and affordable gyms in that order. With regard to sub area 3, those surveyed requested more swimming pools, sports complexes and soccer pitches in that order. Residents in sub area 4 expressed a desire for more sports complexes, swimming pools and affordable gyms, while in sub area 5 an increase in affordable gyms, swimming pools and sports complexes was requested.

8.5 Summary.

This chapter assesses the needs in terms of open space, ecological areas, water based amenities and sports facilities. In assessing future provision of open space and sports facilities, the 6 Acre Standard is used as a benchmark. It is clear from the above analysis that the City Development Plan’s requirement of 15% of the gross site area for residential open space compares very favourably to the requirements of the 6 Acre Standard.

It is also noteworthy that the 6 Acre Standard does not include coastal areas, walkways, waterways and woodlands, all of which make up a significant contribution to recreation in Galway city.

Both active passive and recreation are addressed separately under this standard. However it is desirable that future pitch requirements are met with a flexible approach resulting in a multi-purpose open space hierarchy to maximise the recreational potential of the city’s open space network.
Proposed Policies, Actions & Implementation
9.0 Proposed Policies, Actions and Implementation

A number of proposed policies and actions have been identified in the context of the amenities and open spaces in Galway City. These have been prepared taking into consideration that Galway, when compared to other Irish cities, is at an early stage in its development of passive and active recreation facilities and amenities and will evolve such infrastructure over time.

In light of its findings and in setting out a range of proposed policies and actions, this Study is the first of its kind for Galway and, as part of the implementation process, its proposed policies and actions will be regularly monitored for performance and updated.

This chapter is divided into two main sections as follows:

1. Proposed Policies and Actions; and  
2. Implementation, Monitoring and Funding.

9.1 Proposed Policies and Actions

Proposed policies are divided into those that are “strategic” covering all aspects of passive and active recreation and those that are “specific” to the categories identified for open space, ecological sites, water based resources and sports facilities contained in Chapters 6 and 8 in particular.

Strategic Policies
These contain policies that cover issues common to all aspects of active and passive recreation and are strategic in nature.

Specific Policies
These relate specifically to amenity open space, ecology, water based resources and sports facilities.

Actions
A series of actions are identified to achieve the strategic and specific policy aims. Unlike the policies, which are ongoing, these are given a level of priority and timeframe for implementation. Lead agencies and key partners are also identified to progress implementation. Along with the partners identified, it is the intention of the Council to consult with the public, other interest parties and City Development Board groups in advancing relevant actions. These include the Sports and Recreation Forum, Natural Environment and Waterways Group and Health Forum.

Priority
All actions are prioritised according to need and availability of resources which may fluctuate from time to time. Actions may be brought forward following review of availability of resources both human and financial. This will be evident in the constant monitoring of implementation of policies and actions. Priorities are identified according to three time horizons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Timeframe / Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short-Term</td>
<td>3 years (up to 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-term</td>
<td>4-6 years (up to 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>7-9 years (up to 2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short term covers the mid term of the remaining period of the current Galway City Development Plan 2005-2011. The medium term runs up to 2013 or until just after the next City Development Plan is adopted. The third and longest term runs up to 2015 which is the mid term of the next City Development Plan 2011-2017.

Implementation

In order to implement proposed policies and actions there are three important mechanisms identified: the preparation of master plans, management plans and guidelines.

The role of master plans is emphasised with a number of examples prioritised. These master plans should be simple documents and would comprise strategic and specific policies as well as actions. Master plans should have regard to the need to reconcile strategic and local needs, identify implementation mechanisms and the phasing of development.

Management plans are suitable and appropriate mechanisms for delivering open spaces in particular. Issues to be addressed by management plans include operational best practice, maintenance, safety, dual ownership, consideration of policies and actions of the Study. These documents should be simple, flexible and updated in a regular manner.

Guidelines promote best practice and highlight the importance of involving expertise with an understanding of technical aspects associated with the development of passive and active recreational facilities, from the start to the end of a project.

9.1.1 Strategic Policies

The delivery of the strategic policies is largely the responsibility of Galway City Council. As a major stakeholder the City Council will seek the cooperation of stakeholders including Galway County Council, community groups, agencies, various government departments as well as the private sector. Galway City Council will continue to take a proactive and cooperative role in working with both the private sector / stakeholders and increasingly with the private sector. The Council will also actively seek to establish joint ventures for the development and maintenance of passive and active recreation.

9.1.2 Strategic Policies

The strategic policies identified below have been developed specifically for the Study and are derived from, and are compatible with, the policies set out in the Galway City Development Plan 2005-2011.

It is the Council policy to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC POLICY 1</th>
<th>Have a balanced and integrated approach to the sustainable use and management of the city’s natural heritage and recreation areas through the development of the ‘Green network’ set out in Policy 4.2 of the City Development Plan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGIC POLICY 2</td>
<td>Prioritise the Council’s carrying out of initiatives in relation to open space, recreation and sports facilities, which would provide maximum benefit to the city and its population, in a socially inclusive manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGIC POLICY 3</td>
<td>Develop a framework for implementation linked with a transparent monitoring system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STRATEGIC POLICY 4 Develop and participate in the implementation of management regimes for recreational facilities and amenities, varied to suit different circumstances.

STRATEGIC POLICY 5 Promote the multi-use of parks and multi-functionality of facilities and amenities taking into consideration the different purposes and function of each park and the requirements of the overall parks and open space hierarchy.

STRATEGIC POLICY 6 Continue to develop parks, with a particular emphasis on improving qualitative aspects, bringing unused facilities into use and making better use of existing facilities.

STRATEGIC POLICY 7 Address the underused potential of water bodies and the coastline in an integrated and sustainable manner focusing on improved access to such amenities.

STRATEGIC POLICY 8 Enhance linkages and connectivity within the green network (comprising open spaces including parks, natural heritage areas, walkways/greenways and other open space) as identified in the City Development Plan.

STRATEGIC POLICY 9 Creatively design open space, to facilitate and encourage wherever possible, appropriate resource management of natural resources and the use of sustainable materials and practices.

STRATEGIC POLICY 10 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.

STRATEGIC POLICY 11 Retain lands currently zoned for Recreation and Amenity, to meet current and future open space, recreational and amenity needs.

STRATEGIC POLICY 12 All passive and active recreational proposals are to be assessed against the strategy adopted in the Recreation and Amenity Needs Study.

STRATEGIC POLICY 13 Actively pursue the acquisition of lands for recreational purposes to assist in meeting identified recreational needs. Priority will be given to acquiring land identified in the City Development Plan within residential areas and RA zoned land.

STRATEGIC POLICY 14 Prioritise the acquisition of additional land where maximum benefit to the city and/or enhanced linkages within the green network can be best achieved.

STRATEGIC POLICY 15 Be open and receptive to the principle of joint ventures as an appropriate means to providing facilities for passive and active recreation, where benefit to the general public is demonstrated and where mechanisms are developed to maximise public access.

STRATEGIC POLICY 16 Explore the potential of grants for the development of passive and active recreation from appropriate heritage, tourism, sports grant bodies or funding agencies.

STRATEGIC POLICY 17 Develop and adopt a Special Contribution Scheme for funding and delivery of key recreational amenities.
STRATEGIC POLICY 18: Seek to provide a green network which maximises accessibility for all.

STRATEGIC POLICY 19: Develop a marketing strategy, to improve awareness of, and participation in, the city’s parks, ecological areas, water resources and sports facilities, at both city-wide and regional level.

STRATEGIC POLICY 20: Support and work with existing operators of recreational and amenity facilities.

STRATEGIC POLICY 21: Ensure that all passive and active recreational proposals are considered in the context of potential impact on the environment, sites of ecological importance and general amenity.

STRATEGIC POLICY 22: Consider all public art forms, including sculpture, as an important part of public realm in the design of facilities and amenities.

9.1.3 Specific Policies and Actions

For each category of amenity a set of specific policies and actions have been identified. Some actions are inter-related insofar as some actions identified under amenity open space are also relevant to the development of sporting facilities. These specific policies and actions are:

- Meet the needs identified earlier in this Study.
- Take into consideration the assessment of amenities, consultation, surveys undertaken and review of all relevant documentation and policy.
- Be consistent with, and evolved from, the appropriate policies and objectives of the Galway City Development Plan 2005 – 2011.
- Protect the city’s environmental and ecological assets and heritage and, at the same time, assist in meeting the recreational needs of the city. Maximum balance between these two potentially competing aspirations will be achieved through an integrated policy approach between natural heritage and recreation.
- Maximise, through recreational provision, the city’s potential as a defined Gateway in the NSS and major tourism destination.
- Assist in moving Galway towards being a more “healthy city” and a “child friendly city”.
- Consider the role of the environs.

Amenity Open Space

Amenity open space policies and actions aim to strengthen the existing hierarchy of open spaces and the green network and to enhance the qualitative aspects of all parks. A key aim is to use parks for both active and passive recreation and to encourage the local community to become involved in park development.

Specific Amenity Open Space Policies

It is the Council’s policy to:

| POLICY AOS1 | Maximise and protect different stakeholders’ needs in the design and development of parks. |
| POLICY AOS2 | Seek to improve the qualitative standard of parks in all residential areas. |
| POLICY AOS3 | Ensure play facilities and recreational amenities for all age groups continue to be included in new developments (see development standard in Table 11.3 of City Development Plan). |
| POLICY AOS4 | Enhance public access to recreational areas through integrated transport proposals including improved public transport, the provision of footpaths, cycleways and linkages. |
| POLICY AOS5 | Explore funding opportunities through the carrying out of pilot projects such as multi-agency initiatives, income generating opportunities, use of shared facilities, trusts and voluntary sector involvement. |
| POLICY AOS6 | Seek tourism and heritage grants to facilitate the development of the green network. |
| POLICY AOS7 | Approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities. |
| POLICY AOS8 | Ensure that mechanisms are in place to control potential nuisance and prevent negative impacts on existing amenities and facilities. |

### Key Amenity Open Space Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Lead Agency / Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td><strong>Parks master plans</strong>&lt;br&gt;Produce master plans for the following parks in consultation with local and residents groups:</td>
<td>Commencement is short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council/ NPWS, Birdwatch Ireland, Galway Swan Sanctuary, PPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td><strong>City wide parks:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Extension of Barna /Lough Rusheen Park</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council/ HSE, PPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Merlin Woods City Park (Doughiska RA land)</td>
<td>Commencement is short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council/ Terryland Forest Park Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Terryland Forest Park (Review and update of existing plan)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Parks:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ballyloughha Amenity Area&lt;br&gt;Bohermore Neighbourhood Park&lt;br&gt;Castle Park&lt;br&gt;Cluain Mhuire Park&lt;br&gt;Clybaun Neighbourhood Park&lt;br&gt;Corrib Park&lt;br&gt;Crestwood Park&lt;br&gt;Kingston Neighbourhood Park&lt;br&gt;Lough Atalia&lt;br&gt;Mc Graths’s Field&lt;br&gt;Mervue Park&lt;br&gt;Roscam Neighbourhood Park&lt;br&gt;Renmore Neighbourhood Park&lt;br&gt;Shantalla Community Park&lt;br&gt;South Park&lt;br&gt;Thomas Hynes Park</td>
<td>Ongoing/Short term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Medium term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Short term&lt;br&gt;Long term</td>
<td>Galway City Council / DoEHLG, RAPID, PPP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Local Parks

The City Council aim to produce master plans for three local parks per year. The following are proposed for the next year:
- Red Lane Park
- Waterlane Park
- Quincentennial Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short term</th>
<th>Medium term</th>
<th>Ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Managed by:**
- Galway City Council
- RAPID
- Local stakeholders

## Civic Spaces

The following schemes are to be progressed:
- Small Crane Square
- Woodquay area

**Managed by:**
- Galway City Council
- Local stakeholders

## Enhancement Works

Carry out works on a phased basis as set out in master plans.
Continue to carry out smaller projects to upgrade amenity lands.

**Managed by:**
- Galway City Council
- Local stakeholders

## Management Plans

3 area management plans to be carried out for Parks Department operational areas within the city.
Prepare individual park management plans for the city parks, which will evolve from area management plans, in consultation with local and residents groups:
- Barna/Lough Rusheen Park
- Merlin Woods City Park
- Terryland Forest Park

**Managed by:**
- Galway City Council
- Lead agency and partners as per master plans

## Environns

Establish a joint working group with Galway County Council to arrange shared responsibilities for the development and management of Rinville Park.
Prepare an amenity environs plan in conjunction with Galway County Council to include greenway linkages to Barna, Oranmore and Tonabrocky.

**Managed by:**
- Galway City Council
- Galway County Council

## Land Acquisitions

Progress the acquisition of lands for parks:
- Priority will be given to City Parks (Barna/Lough Rusheen Park, Merlin Woods City Park, Terryland Forest Park) Kingston Neighbourhood Park and Clybaun Neighbourhood Park

**Managed by:**
- Galway City Council
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Responsible Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Acquire and develop predominately for public use, lands zoned for recreation and amenity use in conjunction with new housing. - Priority will be given to lands which will enhance the extent of the green network and in particular key linkages, lands for active and passive recreation. Acquire and develop Galway city new cemetery site(s).</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council, Landowners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Greenways / Linkages</strong> Facilitate the extension of existing coastal green way to create a city-wide coastal path, as outlined in the Development Plan objectives relating to - The extension of the coastal walk from Blackrock to Silverstrand - Providing linkages into Murroogh LAP area from Ballyloughan - Proposals regarding right of way at Liam Mellows GAA lands which will enhance green way linkages to Lough Atalia - Silverstrand to Sailin Facilitate the extension of river walkway through progressing development plan objectives relating to the development of the Millennium Bridge at Waterside and the extension of the river walkway. Explore initiatives to link Merlin Woods City Park with coastal green way.</td>
<td>Short term / Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council, Department of Defence, Galway Harbour Company, Iarnród Éireann, DoEHLG, NPWS, Department of Communications, Marine &amp; Natural Resources, local stakeholders including Liam Mellows GAA Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carry out a report/study setting out proposals for the upgrade of the Promenade in Salthill.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>Play</strong> Develop play facilities where need is identified including at various locations.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council / RAPID, National Children’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Establish ‘Friends of the Parks’ fund to contribute to development of green network.</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Responsible Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Establish procedure for naming and designation of parks.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Develop a signage strategy for city parks and the green network.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Provide a composite park map at each park entrance.</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council/ local stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Investigate the potential of providing services e.g. kiosk or stalls, in or in close proximity to public parks and open spaces and along the coastal green way.</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Investigate the potential of South Park to host a multi-functional facility that can accommodate events, community uses and sports activities.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council/ local stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Explore the potential for developing Menlough Woods as a park in conjunction with the restoration of Menlough Castle.</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council/ DoEHLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Develop events programme for spaces within the green network.</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council, Fáilte Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Update inventory of existing Public Rights of Way in the city annually (phase 1 complete, phase 2 to commence).</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Carry out feasibility study for allotments.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 19  | Develop guidelines for recreational facilities for different sizes and types of development:  
- Best practice advice for design of homezones  
- Best practice advice for open space  
- Best practice advice for gardens (including roof gardens) | Short term, Medium term, Short term | Galway City Council                         |
| 20  | Improve community planting initiative by providing a more flexible service, including weekend service. | Short term      | Galway City Council                         |
| 21  | Investigate feasibility to extend service in parks to 7 days operation.             | Short term      | Galway City Council                         |
Ecology
The importance of careful management of the city’s areas of natural heritage has been emphasized in the Study. The specific policies and key actions below were formulated as a result of the Study’s findings. An important result of the Study is to outline mechanisms whereby the recreational value of these sites may be enhanced, while their natural heritage and biodiversity value is protected. The preparation of management plans is particularly important in sites of ecological value.

Specific Ecology Policies

It is the Council’s policy to:

| POLICY E1 | Work with heritage services and environmental interest groups to develop and promote natural heritage. |
| POLICY E2 | Co-operate with the NPWS and landowners as well as user groups in the preparation and implementation of management plans for designated areas. |
| POLICY E3 | Provide professional ecological input in the preparation of master and management plans and determine appropriate recreational uses. |
| POLICY E4 | Ensure that mechanisms are in place to control potential nuisance and prevent negative impacts on existing amenities. |
| POLICY E5 | Provide controlled access and linkages into all parks/public open spaces, areas of natural heritage, including along water bodies, with minimum disruption to habitats. Ensure that paths and structures are constructed from suitable materials. |
| POLICY E6 | Explore planting / management techniques in parks and open spaces to enhance biodiversity including planting of native trees, wildflowers and inclusion of waterbodies. |
| POLICY E7 | Support the actions of the Council’s adopted Heritage Plan relating to promoting ecological awareness and biodiversity. |
| POLICY E8 | Take into account Galway City Habitat Inventory findings in the development of the city’s green network. |

Key Ecology Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Lead agency / Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Initiate preparation of river conservation management plan in consultation with stakeholders.</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>Galway City Council / NPWS, OPW, Heritage Council, Corrib Navigation Trust, Galway County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Co-operate with NPWS in the implementation of management plans for designated areas.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council / NPWS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Water Based Amenities

The aim of policies and actions under this section is to improve access to beaches, lakes, the river and canal system for passive and active recreation. Greater access will facilitate greater use and this will inevitably result in the need for improved quality and greater number of water related amenities/facilities. The extension of amenities such as a coastal walk linking the Promenade to Silverstrand, which are popular recreational assets in the city for residents and visitors alike, will be subject to improved amenities for users. Formal boating and water sports activities will also be supported where the environment and natural heritage can be adequately protected. As with all passive and recreation proposals there is a careful balance that the Council will strike between protecting designated sites and adequately meeting future recreational needs.

Specific Water Based Amenity Policies

It is the Council’s policy to:

| POLICY W1 | Increase accessibility to the city’s water resources. |
| POLICY W2 | Support proposals for a new marina in the harbour area. |
| POLICY W3 | Work with stakeholders including WRFB, OPW, WRBD and Corrib Navigation Trust in the management of the river and canal systems. |
| POLICY W4 | Ensure that mechanisms are in place to control potential nuisance and prevent negative impacts on existing amenities and facilities. |

Key Water Based Amenity Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Lead agency / Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Prepare an integrated master plan for Lough Atalia to include the upgrading of the amenity park, ecological areas and development of sailing activities.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council / NPWS, VEC, other landowners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>Galway City Council / NPWS, OPW, Heritage Council, Corrib Navigation Trust, Galway County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improve recreation and amenity facilities at Ballyloughnaun Beach.</td>
<td>Short term/ Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sports Facilities

Galway City Council are responsible for public parks and open spaces and as such license pitches to clubs and sporting organisations for sporting activities. The facilitation of sports activities should be considered in the context of enhancing passive recreation and special events in the Council public parks.

With regard to public parks the City Council will promote: flexibility of use; enhanced passive and active recreation taking account of the different aims of parks; the general multi-functionality of facilities to accommodate alternative activities and events; and address management, maintenance and public safety issues.

Specific Sport Facility Policies

It is the Council’s policy to:

| POLICY SF1 | Promote the multi-use of existing facilities through flexible design. |
| POLICY SF2 | Explore options for diversifying and broadening sporting opportunities/activities through the provision of a greater range of facilities and amenities within parks. |
| POLICY SF3 | Promote accessibility for all to recreational facilities. |
| POLICY SF4 | Promote social inclusion initiatives in consultation with leading sporting organisations. |
| POLICY SF5 | Support the development of dual use community and sports centres with management models in areas of expanding population. |
In considering proposals for new sports facilities, priority will be given to the development of sports facilities which contribute towards a balanced sports facility hierarchy and meet an identified need.

Ensure that mechanisms are in place to control potential nuisance elements and prevent negative impacts on existing amenities and facilities.

The City Council will encourage flexible opening hours of facilities to cater for a wider variety of user groups.

The City Council will investigate the re-use of existing buildings for activities such as indoor bowling and table tennis, where existing buildings can be modified with minimal adaption.

### Key Sport Facility Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Key Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Lead agency / Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Develop policy guidelines relating to the control of usage of public parks and pitches.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Address management and maintenance of pitches within public parks / open spaces in the preparation of area management plans.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council / local stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Review licensing procedures and other consensual agreements including fees and costs.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Undertake a feasibility assessment to identify the type and optimum locations for multi-purpose/synthetic/floodlit playing fields to include play facilities for the 0-6 age group.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Consider in the design of any new changing room facilities, accessibility to toilet facilities by members of the public.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Promote dual usage in indoor sport facilities / community centres and adequate storage to support a range of activities.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Facilitate the provision of a swimming pool with ancillary facilities on lands zoned RA adjoining the Cappagh Road, Doughiska and at a location in Westside.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Galway City Council / PPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Produce a sports and recreation events marketing and coaching needs assessment for the city in consultation with key stakeholders and sporting organisations.</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promotion

Marketing and promotion form an important part of the proposed policies and actions. The key marketing action which identifies the requirement for a marketing strategy, is set out below.

Marketing Strategy

Strategic Policy 19 seeks to increase awareness of facilities and amenities which would include providing easily accessible information through local media and the Galway City Council website. The provision of a dedicated means of communication (e.g. hotline or website) whereby the public can report concerns, is also recommended to be included under this marketing strategy. The promotion of Galway as part of the WHO Healthy Cities Project and a child friendly city is also proposed. The award schemes and achievements of public and private sector groups are also to be built upon, e.g. the tidy towns scheme, mayoral awards. To increase participation and awareness, it is proposed to develop an awareness and participation programme for parks, ecological areas, water resources and sports facilities to include all age groups and social backgrounds.

9.2 Implementation, monitoring and funding

Implementation

An important aspect of the Study is the implementation of the policies and actions. One of the major actions proposed is the preparation and implementation of master plans and management plans for open spaces. The master plans and management plans will provide a strategy for open space development that is easily measurable in terms of delivery. A framework, including appropriate resources, to facilitate the planning and design elements required by the master plans is therefore necessary.

On adoption of the study the council will prepare an implementation plan in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

Monitoring Mechanisms

In order to effectively monitor the progress of existing facilities, it is recommended that all facilities and amenities are subject to ongoing review which would be carried out at regular intervals. It is recommended...
that surveys be carried out on a regular basis to determine the levels of use and user satisfaction. These surveys should be varied to fit the usage type and patterns of each facility or amenity. Success from actions can be determined by comparing the satisfaction levels from surveys carried out for this Study with any similar follow on user survey results. In addition to these monitoring systems, the management plans will be in a flexible format to facilitate any changes in the operational plans. A review mechanism is to be developed for operational procedures and an annual review of actions will be carried out through the update of operational plans. The Study and its delivery may also be considered as part of the Galway City Development Plan 2005-2011 review, due to commence in 2009.

**Funding**

The city of Galway is a gateway of the West, a city that is experiencing significant growth in population. An important aspect to maintain this growth is to develop and enhance the amenities that enrich the quality of life for the people of the city. The provision of funding and staff resources to complement the development of a growing city and the policies and actions set out, reflect significant commitments in this area.

Galway City Council will take a proactive role in obtaining funding for the actions proposed. This will involve multi-agency initiatives consistent with the integrated approach to recreation planning, including heritage, education and tourism funding. The Council will also identify income generating opportunities to progress the implementation of the Study’s strategies.
Appendix 1: List of Documents Consulted
List of Documents Consulted

There is a significant amount of information available and a considerable body of literature that exists and which informs and benefits this Study. There are a number of key documents that have been considered in the formulation of this Study and in particular recreation, ecological, sports and planning policy. These key documents are as follows:

International Level


Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) publications, including:


Start with the Park: Creating sustainable urban green spaces in areas of housing growth and renewal (2005).

National Level


Targeting Sporting Change in Ireland : Sport in Ireland 1997 to 2006 and beyond.


A Policy for the Provision and Maintenance of Parks, Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation Areas (1987)


The National Development Plan 2007-2013

National Biodiversity Plan (2002)

Ireland’s Landscape and the National Heritage (2002)


National Children’s Strategy “Our Children Their Lives” (2000)
Sports Participation and Health among adults in Ireland (ESRI 2004)
Census 2002 (CSO)
Census 2006 (CSO)

Regional level
The singularly significant regional planning guidance covering the City of Galway is identified below:
The Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region

Local level
There are a great many local documents that inform this Study. These include as follows:
Galway City Development Plan 2005 – 2011
BSM Waterways Study (1996)
Waterbased Tourism – A Strategic Vision for Galway (2000/20)
Developing Sustainable Tourism in Galway: A Programme for Action 2003 – 2012
Galway City Atlas (2004)
Galway City Heritage Plan 2006 – 2011
RAPID Strategic Plan, Galway City Rapid 2 (2003)
Galway City Development Board Strategy ‘Beo agus Bríomhar’ 2002-2012
Galway as a Child Friendly City (2000)
Galway City Habitats Inventory 2005
Draft Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan
Appendix 2: Groups and Organisations Consulted
Galway Lawn Tennis Club
Galway Rowing Club
Irish Girl Guides
13th Galway Scouting Ireland CSBI (Renmore Scout Unit)
14th Galway Scouts CSBI
16th Galway Scouts CSBI
20th Galway Unit CSBI Ballybane
Ballinfoyle Area Rosette Ladybird Guides
Cub, Scouts and Beavers, St. Francis 23rd
Forget-Me-Not Brownie Pack
Mervue Ladybirds IGG
Renmore Brownie Pack
Riverside Brownie Pack and Guide Company IGG
Riverside Ladybird IGG
Order of Malta
St. Nicholas 1st Galway Scout Association
St. Nicholas Collegiate Guides
St. Nicholas Parochial Brownie Pack
Tirellan Sycamore Brownie Pack
Ballybane Adventure Project
Ballybane Youth Development Project
Ballybane Basketball Club
Ballybane Indoor Soccer
Castlegar Athletic Club
Crescent United Football Club
East/West Karate Club
Galway & District Tabletennis
Galway and Olympic Boxing Club
Galway City Harriers (Junior Section)
Galway City Harriers (Senior Section)
Galway Motor Club Ltd
Galway Motorsport Marshalls Clubs
Galway Shotokan Karate Club
Hillside Swimming Club
Kit Kat Galway Tennis League
Mervue/Ballybane GAA Club
Liam Mellows Juvenile Hurling Club
Mervue United AFC,
Newcastle United AFC
Galway Olympic Boxing Club
Renmore Camogie Club
Renmore GAA Club
Knocknacarra FC
Special Olympics Families
Galway Swimming Group
Sharks Swimming Club
Foyle Rovers Soccer Club
Thermo King Cycling Club
Westside Community Games
Renmore Hockey Club
The Western Eagles Galway Orienteers
Galway Judo Club
Tribes Special Olympics Swimming Club
Irish Surfing Association
Irish Table Tennis Association
Tennis Ireland
Irish Water Polo Association
Irish Windsurfing Association
Irish Basketball Association
Irish Canoe Union
Equestrian Federation of Ireland
Bord Luthchleas na hEireann
Cumman Camagaiochta na nGael
National Community Games
Irish Cricket Union
Federation of Irish Cyclists
Galway County GAA Board
Golfing Union of Ireland
Irish Hockey Union
Irish Judo Association
Republic of Ireland Netball Association
Irish Orienteering Association
Pitch and Putt Union of Ireland
Irish Amateur Rowing Union
Swim Ireland
Racquetball Association of Ireland
Irish Rugby Football Union
Irish Sailing Association
Galway Ki - Akido
Oloe Ground Football Club
Renmore AFC
Bank of Ireland Football Club
Salthill Devon Football Club
Galway Hibernians Football Club
Galway Bohemians Football Club
Galway Bay Sailing Club
Rusheen Bay Windsurfing
Active Retirement Association
Galway Corinthians RFC
Galwegians RFC
Scuba Dive West
Loughrea Tennis Club
Taylor’s Hill Pitch ‘n’ Putt Club, c/o Pierce Connelly
Mellows Pitch ‘n’ Putt Club
Galway Kart Racing
Headford & Corrib Anglers Association
Galway Swimming Club
Salthill GAA Club
Salthill Squash Club
NUIG Squash Club
Galwegians Squash
Laser Swimming Club
NUIG Rowing Club
St. Josephs College Rowing Club
Tribesmen Rowing Club
Corrib Rowing and Yachting Club
Bow Waves Sailing & Windsurfing
NUIG Canoe Club

Powerboat, Waterskiing and Jet Ski
Galway Sub - Aqua Club
Scubadive West
Galway Boxing Club
Galway Kayak Club
Corrib Celtic FC
Corrib Rangers FC
Galway Rovers FC
Galway United
Kinvara United
Nortel Networks FC
NUI Galway FC
O.L.B.C
Riverside Celtic FC
Thermo King FC
West United
Galway School of ITF Taekwon Do
The Kingfisher Club
Salthill/Knocknacarra Ladies Gaelic Football Club
Anach Cuain GAA Club
Athair O’ Griofa GAA Club
Ath an Ri GAA Club
Baile an Doirin GAA Club
Bearna GAA Club
Bearna/ Na Forbacha GAA Club
Bothar na Tra - Cnoc na Cathrach GAA Club
Bothar na Tra GAA Club

Caislean Gearr GAA Club
Cill Ainin GAA Club,
Cill Iomair Dalaigh GAA Club
Cinn Mhara GAA Club
Eire Og GAA Club
Emitigh Mhionlaigh GAA Club
Maigh Cuilinn GAA Club
Mainistir Cnoc Maigh GAA Club
Naomh Columbas GAA Club
Naomh Micheal GAA Club
Naomh Sheamus GAA Club
Naomh Thomais GAA Club
Oran Mor Mearai GAA Club
Rathuin - Caislean Nua GAA Club
Sceachana GAA Club
Uachtar Ard GAA Club
Corrib Karate Club
Feeney’s Equestrian Centre
Rusheen Riding Centre
Glenlo Abbey Golf Course
Barna Golf and Country Club
Galway Bay Golf & Country Club
Galway Golf Club
Rosshill Par 3 Golf Club
Galway Golf Centre
The following is a list of the Stakeholders consulted:

- Galway County Council
- Galway Harbour Company
- Fáilte Ireland - Ireland West
- National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Western Regional Fisheries Board
- Corrib Navigation Trust
- Údarás Na Gaeltachta
- Galway County and City Enterprise Board
- Galway City Partnership
- West Regional Authority
- Office of Public Works
- City of Galway V.E.C.
- NUI Galway
- GMIT
- Department of Education and Science
- HSE - Health Promotion Services
- An Garda Síochána
- Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government
- Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources
- An Taisce – Galway Association
The following Community & Enterprise Groups were notified:

RAPID AIT
Arts & Culture Forum
Community Development Group
Economic Development Group
Galway City & County Childcare Committee
Galway Tourism Forum
Galway City Development Board
Regional Group
Integrated Transportation Group
Social Inclusion Group
Strategic Learning Network
Spatial Planning Group
Natural Environment and Waterways Group

The draft document has been circulated to the following:

Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
Department of Health and Children
Department of Agriculture and Food (Forest Service)
Heritage Council
Inland Waterways Association of Ireland
Appendix 3: List of Submissions Received
PRE-DRAFT SUBMISSIONS GALWAY CITY RECREATION AND AMENITY NEEDS STUDY
(Submission Period Thursday 22nd June to Friday 28th July 2006)

Name

Michael Hughes
Ms. Stack
Paul Rush
Zara Brady
On behalf of Corrib Rowing and Yachting Club
Ms. Sheila Mangan
On behalf of Ballinfoyle RAPID Committee
Comhairle na nÓg
Submitted by Gary McMahon
Pat Fahy
Donal Lyons
On behalf of Sports and Recreation Forum
RAPID Area Implementation Team
Submitted by Liam Hanrahan, RAPID Co-ordinator
Dolores Stankard
Maurice & Evelyn McDonald
Margaret O’Rourke, Teresa Clarke, Fionuala Leathy.
Captain Brian Sheridan
Galway Harbour Company
Geraldine Glynn
Sinead Gillard
Roisín Healy & Liam Ó Móráin
Western Bowls Association
Jim McGovern,
The West Regional Authority
Natural Environment and Waterways Group
C/o Cathy Joyce
Máire Ni Chionna
Maeve Murray
On behalf of Galway City Partnership
Elaine Harvey
Galway Peoples Resource Centre
Breandán O Calláráin, C.E.O.
On behalf of City of Galway VEC
Danny Goldrick
On behalf of Galway City Community Golf Group
Cllr. Catherine Connolly
Pierce Connolly
Evelyn Fanning
Health Promotion Services, HSE West
Keith Warnock
NUI Galway
Dr. Henrike Rau,
NUI Galway
Cllr Niall Ó Brolcháin
Galway City Community Forum
Gregory Forde,
Western Regional Fisheries Board
Jason Craughwell, Sports Development Office, Community & Enterprise, Galway City Council
Liam Kavanagh
Galway County Council
Club House & Grounds Committee - Liam Mellows GAA Club, C/o Keville & O’Sullivan Associates
Mr. Stephen Francis, C/o A.P. McCarthy Planning Consultants,
Galway Sea Sports Association
Lough Atalia Development Association
Fiona Donavan, Health Promotion Services, HSE West
Derrick Hambleton, Chairman of An Taisce – Galway Association
Ogra Fianna Fail
C/o Cllr. John Connolly
RECEIVED AFTER PUBLIC DISPLAY PERIOD
Unsigned – feedback from SPC member
Dr. Sarah Gatley
Geological Survey of Ireland
RECEIVED AFTER PUBLIC DISPLAY PERIOD
Brian Cahill
RECEIVED AFTER PUBLIC DISPLAY PERIOD
Joanna Modzelewska
DoEHLG
RECEIVED AFTER PUBLIC DISPLAY PERIOD
Colm Mac Gabhann,
Cumann Iománaíochta Naomh Columba
RECEIVED AFTER PUBLIC DISPLAY PERIOD
### SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON DRAFT GALWAY CITY RECREATION AND AMENITY NEEDS STUDY (Submission period 28th June to August 3 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation/Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Fanning</td>
<td>Health Promotion Officer, HSE West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olga Zywicka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maire Kelly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Roe</td>
<td>Galway Sea Sport Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Lambert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Stephen Francis</td>
<td>c/o A.P. McCarthy Planning Consultants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Heneghan</td>
<td>Western Regional Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Kavanagh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Joyce</td>
<td>Natural Environment and Waterways Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan Smith</td>
<td>Galway City Community Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Carr</td>
<td>Forest Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryan Egan</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruairí McKiernan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deirdre Adamson/Dave Walsh</td>
<td>Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Donovan</td>
<td>Health Promotion Services, HSE West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce Kennedy</td>
<td>Chairperson, Galway Kayak Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Curley</td>
<td>Sports Development Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Glossary
Active recreation
Active recreation includes organised sport such as pre-arranged and organised sporting activities e.g. athletics, soccer, GAA and informal sports such as unstructured spontaneously occurring sporting activities e.g. street sports, kick abouts etc.

All weather facilities
Outdoor facilities such as courts and pitches capable of being used all year round. These may also include synthetic surfaced facilities (see below).

Amenity areas
Areas of open spaces capable of hosting primarily passive recreational activity and / or is of visual benefit.

Bio diversity
A measure of the diversity of species of plants and animals.

Catchment areas
The area usually served by a recreation or sports amenity or facility.

Ecological sites
Sites of wildlife value.

Future population yield
Population projected from “new” development using areas of zoned land and deriving a population from this new development using appropriate housing densities and household size.

Green network
A linked network of green areas ensuring strategic provision across the city and environs.

Habitats
The natural environment of plants and animals.

Integrated transport
Providing for a range of access and mobility including linked transport options for those walking, cycling, and using all forms of public transport (both bus and rail).

Invasive species
Species which do not naturally occur in Ireland which have been introduced and pose a threat to native species.

Multi-agency
This refers to actions or policies being the responsibility of more than one body or organisation.

Multi-purpose areas
A facility capable of accommodating a range of recreation and sports activities.

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)
An area designated or proposed (pNHA) for wildlife conservation under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

Open Space
Open Space constitutes land that is used for outdoor recreation or sport including private land or land with limited public access.
**Parks Hierarchy**
The parks hierarchy is a collection of parks of different sizes and functions meeting different needs across the city and environs.

**Passive Recreation**
Passive recreation includes exercise, play, music and dance, walking and cycling as leisure pursuits and amenity open space enjoyment.

**Pilot Projects**
Those projects that initiate an approach, methodology or deliverable that will be copied if successful.

**Playing Pitches**
A delineated area which, together with any run off area, is a minimum 0.4 hectares for soccer, gaelic football, hurling, camogie, rugby, rounders, baseball, softball, hockey, Australian rules and American football, swimming, polo and cycle polo. This definition excludes golf courses, tennis courts and bowling greens. Playing pitches may have a grass surface or may be synthetic in nature (see synthetic surface below).

**RAPID**
Revitalising Areas Through Planning, Investment and Development. A Government initiative set up by the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to target disadvantaged areas.

**Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**
Special Areas of Conservation are important wildlife conservation areas considered to be so in national and European terms. They are selected or proposed as candidates (cSACs) under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

**Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**
Special Protection Areas or Candidate Areas (cSPAs) are intended to protect habitats and the sites that comprise the migratory paths of bird species under EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

**Semi-Natural Habitats**
Habitats (see above) that have in some way been altered or modified by humans.

**Social Inclusion**
Social inclusion has been defined as the process through which people are empowered to participate fully in life from an economic, social, cultural or political perspective.

**Sport**
Sport is defined by the Council of Europe as “all forms of physical activity which through causal or organised participation aims at improving social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels”.

**Sports Facilities**
Facilities and amenities that are designed for or are regularly used for sports activities (see “sport” above).

**Synthetic surface**
Referred to in the context of pitches usually of a plastic / rubber compound that is rubber, sand or more recently water based.

**Water based amenities**
All those facilities and elements of infrastructure that enable participation of recreation and sport both within and on the water.
Appendix 5: Maps

A4 Version of Map 4 - Proposed Natural Heritage Areas
A4 Version of Map 5 - Candidate Areas of Conservation
A4 Version of Map 6 - Special Protection Areas
A4 Version of Map 7 - Areas of Local Ecological Importance
A3 Version of Map 20 - Catchment Areas of Local Neighbourhood and City Parks Map
Map 4. Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Refer to DoEHLG website for recent updates in national and international designations.
Map 6: Special Protection Areas

Refer to DoEHLG website for recent updates in national and international designations.