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Foreword
The Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 sets out a co-ordinated and integrated spatial framework for the continued development of this attractive and vibrant City in a sustainable and inclusive manner. It is set within the overall national and regional planning contexts, taking into account in particular, the National Spatial Strategy, the West Regional Planning Guidelines and national guidelines such as Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future.

The development plan incorporates for the first time a Core Strategy as required under recent planning legislation. It summarises the key planning parameters and priorities underpinning the development plan including the level of population growth for the city as derived from population targets set by the DECLG and its distribution as part of the city’s settlement strategy.

The Core Strategy provides a clear evidence-based rationale for future development enabling the prioritisation and targeting of scarce public investment for the development of transportation, water and waste-water infrastructure, schools, community facilities, parks and other services. The Core Strategy strengthens further the role of the development plan as the fundamental link between national, regional and local policies.

The plan is detailed and comprehensive and is built around a number of strategic goals which represent the strategic priorities of the Council in respect of land use and development. These goals include the promotion of balanced and sustainable economic development to enable the city to fulfil its role as a Gateway City providing sufficient employment opportunities and appropriate services; provision of a high quality built and natural environment; provision of a good quality of life for residents and visitors and availability of sustainable transportation opportunities; promotion of social inclusion and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

In tandem with policies for a competitive and compact city, the plan addresses amenity and quality of life issues with a strategic and strong policy emphasis on the delivery of high quality development, sustainable neighbourhoods to support successful communities, social infrastructure provision and a city-wide green network.

This plan has undergone Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA). These processes were undertaken in tandem with the preparation of the plan and have ensured full integration and consideration of environmental issues throughout each stage of the development plan process.

This City Development Plan comes at a time of significant challenge economically. The framework to achieve economic renewal and sustainable development is to ensure alignment with national regional and local plans. This development plan is consistent with these plans and sets out policies to ensure that economic recovery takes place in a coherent, sustainable manner for the benefit of the city and complementing its role as a Gateway City and as a driver of growth within the region.

The plan has been subject to a significant public consultation process and we wish to acknowledge and thank all the contributors to this process. We would like to express our appreciation to the Elected Members of the Council for their detailed deliberations over the various drafts and final adoption of the plan. We would also like to thank the staff and in particular Mr. Thomas Connell, Director of Services and Ms. Caroline Phelan Senior Planner and their team for their expertise and commitment in producing the development plan.

Galway City Manager
Joe O’Neill

Galway City Mayor
Cllr. Michael Crowe
Introduction
Introduction

The Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010, the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 and Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. The Plan was adopted by the members of Galway City Council on the 25th January 2011.

Context

The development plan sets out a strategy for the city within the context of various national/regional strategies, plans and guidelines such as the National Development Plan, National Spatial Strategy, National Climate Change Strategy, Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West region.

Preparation of the plan was undertaken in tandem with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Directive Assessment (HDA) processes which has ensured full integration and consideration of environmental issues throughout each stage of the development plan process.

The development plan incorporates a Core Strategy, required under recent planning legislation, which sets out the key planning parameters and priorities underpinning the development plan including the level of population growth for the city as derived from population targets set by the DECLG.

Development Plan Consultation

The Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 has been prepared following intensive public consultation with the general public, statutory bodies and relevant stakeholders. In addition to the statutory requirements for consultation, public consultation meetings, presentations and clinics were organised at different locations throughout the city. The consultation period raised a wide range of issues relating to the sustainable development of the city. A total of 165 written submissions were received which, together with comments arising from meetings were taken into account in the preparation of this plan. A further 308 submissions were received following public display of the draft plan and were taken into account with 128 proposed material amendments to the draft plan arising. Following public display of these amendments, 38 written submission were made and taken into account in the adoption of the plan.

Structure and Format of Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017

The Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 consists of the written statement and two maps. The written statement is divided into eleven chapters and six appendices. Chapter one outlines the overall strategy and Core Strategy of the plan. Chapters two to eight address Housing; Transportation; Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity; Enterprise and Employment; Community and Culture; Built Heritage/Urban Design and Environment and Infrastructure. Chapter nine deals with area based policies, chapter ten deals with the Housing Strategy and chapter eleven deals with land use zoning and development standards and guidelines.

Each chapter sets out the overall aim, planning context and strategy. The strategy provides the framework for the related policies and specific objectives. Policies are the Council’s general objectives on a topic basis while specific objectives are more area/site specific relating to various land-use and/or project proposals.

Six appendices are included in the written statement of the development plan and comprise the list of structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS); details of the Housing Strategy; the SEA statement; the HDA Conclusion Statement; a glossary of legal and technical terms and list of abbreviations and a list of Figures/Tables.

The two accompanying maps are back to back on one sheet and are divided as follows:

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

The plan is accompanied by two separate associated documents, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA).
Chapter 1

Overall Strategy Including Core Strategy

1.1 Introduction
1.2 National and Regional Context
1.3 Development Plan Strategy
1.4 Settlement Strategy
1.5 Transportation Strategy
1.6 Development Strategy
1.7 Environment Strategy
1.8 Core Strategy
1.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the overall development strategy and core strategy for Galway City extending from 2011–2017. It is also intended that the strategy will have an influence on the longer-term growth of the city. The approach taken reflects the position of Galway in the wider national and regional spatial policy context. It builds on key aims that were established in the strategy for the 2005-2011 City Development Plan and brings these in line with current guidelines, policies and statutory requirements.

The chapter demonstrates that the baseline assumptions adopted for growth are in line with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. This core strategy broadens out in subsequent chapters to give definition to planned growth scenarios on both a topical and on an area basis. The Appendices are used to give supporting information to the Plan.

1.2 National and Regional Context

The Development Plan is influenced by strategic objectives from many national and regional level plans and guidelines, which are incorporated into local level policies and objectives. Those with most direct effect on the formulation of the core development strategy are summarised hereunder.

**National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)**

The NSS proposes a more balanced pattern of population, employment and physical development between regions. It advocates the continued support of development in the Greater Dublin Region but with a focused development in the nine Gateway Cities and nine Hub Towns. Galway has been identified as a Gateway having the characteristics and critical mass that can facilitate the national objectives and sustain and drive the wider regional economy of the west. This approach has been reaffirmed in the 2010 Update and Outlook NSS (October 2010).

The Atlantic Gateways Initiative is based on the NSS. It seeks to exploit the potential for a development corridor connected by the Gateway Cities of Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford. Critical mass and added value could be achieved through collaboration and co-ordination along this corridor, which could provide a competitive scale to balance that already enjoyed in the Greater Dublin Region.

**National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP)**

The NDP is the national program for investment and determines the delivery of key economic and social developments. The NDP identifies the Gateways as being the focus of significant investment in infrastructure and initiated the Gateway Innovation Fund as a mechanism for funding allocation. Galway City has sought funding for a number of key projects some of which are identified in the NDP as key investment projects such as a rail commuter service to Athenry and the acceleration of infrastructure investment to open up settlement lands at Ardaun.

**National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012**

The national target under the Kyoto Protocol is to limit greenhouse gas emissions to an agreed level as part of Ireland’s commitment to the overall EU target. In order to achieve these targets, programmes of action have been identified and spread across a number of sectors many of which fall within the realm of Local Authorities. These include measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and also measures that facilitate climate change adaptation, promote renewable energy sources and help conserve energy. As key measures include actions on transport, housing, waste and energy supply, it is important that the City Plan includes policies and objectives to promote and support this strategy.

**Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland, 1997**

This strategy provides a framework for the achievement of sustainable development at local level. With regard to spatial planning it is acknowledged that development plans are significant vehicles for shaping the environment and should be led by considerations of sustainability. This includes for efficient use of transport, land, energy and natural resources. It requires protection and enhancement of the natural and built heritage and the accommodation of new developments in a sustainable manner.

**Regional Planning Guidelines West Region (RPG’s), 2010-2022**

The RPG’s provide a broad planning framework at regional level and reflect the objectives of the NSS. With respect to Galway City this means that the guidelines support the role of the Gateway and acknowledge the role the city has as a key economic driver for the west region.

**Galway Transport and Planning Study (GTPS) 1999, Updated 2003**

The development strategy for Galway City has been influenced by the GTPS. The GTPS was initiated as a policy response to anticipated significant growth in the city and its environs — an area defined by a 30km radius out from the city into the surrounding area of the County. The key elements of the GTPS include to:
Overall Strategy Including Core Strategy

- Maintain and build on the critical mass of the city to strengthen economic growth and competitiveness.
- Focus new development in Ardaun on the east of the city and in the main centres of the county along existing and future strategic transportation corridors.
- Invest in supporting infrastructure in strategically placed small settlements.
- Promote a rationalised bus based public transportation network for the city extending to service Ardaun.
- Introduce bus priority initiatives to accelerate bus timing, improve convenience and comfort in order to offer real alternatives to car-based transport.
- Develop a number of park and ride facilities integrated with road, rail and bus networks.
- Focus development in the county along strategic corridors to create the necessary critical mass to support public transport.
- Promote on/off street carriageway options for cycling and pedestrian facilities.
- Complete strategic road links along the N6, the N17 and the N18.
- Separate through traffic from local traffic within the city.

The basic principles of the GTPS are still relevant and have been incorporated into subsequent policy documents such as the NSS, the RPG West Region, Gateway Innovation Fund Application, Ardaun Concept Study and Galway County and City Development Plans. Some of the transportation elements have come to design/build/delivery stage particularly the strategic roads and a number of improvements on inter urban rail routes and the re-opening of the Western Rail Corridor. Other elements of the recommendations of the GTPS have evolved both through the newly formed office of the Galway Transportation Unit (GTU), Transport 21 and other national strategies. The focus on public/sustainable transportation delivery in the city is being assessed through work to date which includes the Galway Strategic Bus Study (2007), Galway Public Transportation Feasibility Study (2010), the submission on Smarter Travel Application and the imminent Walking and Cycling Strategy.

The settlement strategy has remained valid with some aspects such as the strengthening of the settlements in the County having advanced. The development of Ardaun however has been delayed. As a consequence, development is being pushed into the city, other settlements within the GTPS area and rural locations within the GTPS.

With a more structured focus on hierarchical planning adopted from central government, reinforced by new planning legislation and a commitment to support planned targeted population with corresponding infrastructural investment, it is anticipated that the settlement strategy will be delivered during the currency of this Development Plan.

Policy 1.2 National and Regional Context

- Facilitate the future strategic and sustainable development of Galway City as a Gateway City having regard to National and Regional plans, policies and guidelines and having regard to the recommendations of the Galway Transportation and Planning Study.

1.3 Development Plan Strategy

The overall goals of the Development Plan have been arrived at following consideration of national, regional, local plans and policies. They build on previous development plans and assume a continuing link into the future beyond the life span of the current plan term. The goals represent the strategic priorities of the Council in respect of the future development and use of land and resources in the city. They also reflect both the outcome of the public consultation process and the vision aspired to in the Galway City Development Board Strategy (GCDB) Gaillimh Beo agus Briomhar 2002-2012. This GCDB vision is particularly important as it provides a strong link and direction with regard to policies and objectives that contribute to the concept of social inclusion, the facilitation of critical community infrastructure and the achievement of an accessible environment and economically buoyant city.

The strategic goals of the Development Plan are to:

- Promote balanced and sustainable economic development that will enable Galway City to fulfil its role as a National Gateway and a Regional Centre, providing sufficient employment opportunities and appropriate services.
- Use the role of the Gateway to harness the strengths and maximise the economic development of the region.
- Provide for a built and natural environment that is of high quality and that contributes to providing a good quality of life for residents and visitors and affords sustainable transportation opportunities.
- Promote social inclusion in accordance with the National Anti-Poverty Strategy 2007 and the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 and aim to reduce and ultimately eliminate poverty levels in accordance with national targets.
- Facilitate the achievement of the goals contained in the GCDB Strategy Gaillimh Beo agus Briomhar 2002-2012.
- Promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through proactive measures in line with EU commitments to tackle climate change.

1.3.1 Strategic Context

The NSS has defined the city as a Gateway, a city that has reached a strategic threshold, a ‘critical mass’ in terms of its concentration of population, education and job opportunities that is favorable to growth. This designation has also acknowledged the potential the city has for achieving the national objectives of balanced regional growth.

It is acknowledged that cities also enhance national competitiveness and act as economic engines for their regions. Research has shown that there is a clear link between growth rates achieved at city level and those experienced at regional level\(^1\). The goal now will be to ensure the long-term economic and social vibrancy of Galway as a Gateway through the provision of targeted support to sustain the competitive position the city currently holds.

In recent years Galway City has enjoyed spectacular economic and social progress, which reflected that enjoyed by the State. However since the latter half of 2007 the pace of economic growth nationally has decelerated largely due to a contraction in housing construction. This situation has been further complicated by difficulties in the international financial markets, which have compounded Ireland’s economic and financial challenges. This has heightened the need to make sure budgetary decisions are part of a focused public investment programme. Although this approach is in line with national policy as outlined in the NDP it is even more critical now to deliver best economic return and to maximise the potential of Gateways and Hubs to drive regional development.

The framework for delivering this economic renewal and sustainable development is to ensure alignment of national, regional and local plans. In this regard the Development Plan recognises the role of Galway as a Gateway as defined by the NSS and the position Galway City holds within the West Region having due regard to the RPG’s for the West Region. The strategy adopted therefore shows consistency with the National Spatial Strategy, regional population targets and the RPG’s for the West Region.

The NSS identifies Galway City as one of the nine Gateways. This suggests that the city has reached a strategic threshold, a critical mass in terms of its concentration of population, education and job opportunities that is favorable for future growth. The NSS sees a role for the Galway Gateway in tandem with its associated hinterland to promote a strong urban – rural structure. The NSS envisages that the combined development of Gateways and the complementary role of Hubs will over time establish a new spatial structure within the State, re-balancing the trend of a faster pace of growth in the east of the country.

1.3.2 Population and Household Targets

The significant population growth experienced in Galway since the early 90’s has been driven by a high rate of natural increase (births minus deaths) and by significant net migration. This has paralleled the national trend where the pace of economic growth was reflected in a 75% increase in the number of people at work between 1990 and 2007.

The 2006 Census showed an acceleration of these trends in Galway, with a 10% population increase in the period 2002 to 2006 - higher than the national average of 8.2% and by far the highest rate of growth of all cities in Ireland. The number of households grew by 20% over the same period – twice the rate of growth of population. This resulted in a significant reduction in the average size of households.

Population trends and projections are critical to the Development Plan process, in order to maintain a supply of land to meet development demands and to make efficient sustainable decisions regarding other resources such as transportation investment.

Table 1.1 Population and Households in Galway City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>47,104</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>50,853</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>57,095</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>65,832</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>72,414</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^1\) OECD, Competitive Cities in the Global Economy, Territorial Review, 2006
The anticipated future growth in population and households in the city is based on regional targets as set out by the DECLG (October 2009) and adopted in the RPG West Region 2010-2022. These targets are set within the context of the NSS and reflect the intended role of the Gateways. These targets are predicated on the implementation of the NSS. They are factored into the forecasting process, rather than simply extrapolating current trends into the future with some modifications for changed economic circumstances.

In adopting these minimum population targets as a likely growth scenario for the city, the development strategy is in line with both national and regional policy. However it is presumed that the desire to achieve these targets will be supported by focused implementation of both national and regional policy on which the targets are predicated. In addition, policy support will have to be matched with significant infrastructural investment to deliver the services that will be required to support the needs of an expanding population.

Although the Development Plan will only have a life span up to 2017, it is necessary to take a longer-term outlook. The DECLG suggest that the Plan should consider an additional three years of growth bringing the estimated demand requirements up to the year 2020.

The time span of the Plan includes for the six year review period of the RPG and will enable the monitoring of regional and national policies and the assessment of validity of the targets at that point namely 2016.

The regional population targets are expressed as a figure for the entire region. The figure for the Gateway is defined as the city and environs from the Census of Population. In the case of Galway, the defined census environs are small in terms of both area and population.

**Table 1.2 Galway Gateway Population Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>West Region</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>442,200</td>
<td></td>
<td>484,700</td>
<td></td>
<td>521,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>78,400</td>
<td></td>
<td>88,500</td>
<td></td>
<td>98,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DECLG October 2009

It is acknowledged that adopting the NSS population targets represents a high population projection scenario predicated on a continued expanding economy and driven by policy at national level and an investment strategy focused on the Galway Gateway. However, even if the targets are ambitious, the Plan must regard them as the desired future scale of the Gateway and ensure that future development needs are planned for in a strategic planned manner.

Using the targets for 2010, 2016 and 2022 set out by the DECLG, the population and household growth patterns set out in Table 1.3 are established. These factor in a continuing decline in household size, reflecting the historical pattern to date and trends elsewhere in Europe.

The projections in Table 1.3 set out the number of households that are likely to be formed in the Gateway area as a result of the increase in population - 6,850 households in the period 2009 to 2017.

**Table 1.3 Estimated Projected Household Growth in conjunction with DECLG Population Targets.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Household Numbers</th>
<th>Additional Households</th>
<th>Average Household Size*</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>23,995</td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>70,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>25,838</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>72,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>25,838</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>73,948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>26,634</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>75,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>27,447</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>77,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>28,275</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>78,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>29,121</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>80,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>29,951</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>81,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30,793</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>83,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>31,648</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>85,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>32,516</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>86,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>33,396</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>88,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>34,297</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>90,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total population divided by number of private households. This differs from the average size of private households.
There are a number of additional factors to consider, before the demand for housing land can be arrived at and a settlement strategy established. These are detailed in Appendix 2 of the Plan. As well as the issue of densities on residually zoned lands, these include the possible extent of housing development on lands zoned for mixed use, a reduction of the currently high level of vacancies, the extent of future development of second homes and investment properties left vacant and rates of obsolescence. In addition, the DECLG recommends that a further three years of household growth beyond the end of the Plan period be catered for in zoning housing lands. This adds a further 2,569 households.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, some 248ha of residually zoned land is required to accommodate housing requirements.

### 1.3.3 Employment Targets

Galway City has enjoyed a high rate of employment reflected in the participation rate in the workforce which at 62% in 2006 is similar to the national rate. Despite the current economic prospect, the long-term view must be to focus on building on the Gateway and the regions distinctive strengths, identification of future direction for growth and the required infrastructure and resources needed to attract investment in jobs.

The DECLG assumes a population target estimated to be 90,200 persons by 2017. This would suggest that to meet the needs of the future population and maintain a similar participation rate in the workforce to that currently enjoyed, there would be at a minimum a requirement for an additional 6,000 jobs by 2017 assuming that current rates of employment patterns hold. This is arrived at using the same participation rates in the workforce as currently enjoyed and also assuming that the potential labour force is similar to what it is currently, that is 70% of the overall population. It is considered also that this would be a minimum figure as the commuter pattern rate suggests that the city benefits from a significant amount of participation of workers residing outside of the city. It is assumed employment targets should consider an increase in participation rates from the greater labour catchment. Assuming that the commuter labour force remains at the same proportion as it is now of the overall workforce which is 40%, it would suggest a further demand for 2,400 jobs bringing the overall requirement to 8,400 jobs up to the year 2017.

The other factor that must be considered is that large scale employers will be drawn to the strategic industrial sites in the environs of the city in the future and although a targeted rate for job creation is stated it is assumed that the lands for some of these jobs will be located in the county.

It is difficult to make assumptions regarding job targets as the nature of employment is changing and subject to global influences and where retention of existing jobs in any estimation must also be a factor to consider. The assumption is also speculative as population targets themselves will be driven by employment opportunities and mobility in the labour force. However even though a crude measure, it is sufficient to give a general steer for development strategy requirements.

**Policy 1.3 Development Plan Strategy**

- Have regard to the targeted population growth of the city as a NSS Gateway as defined by the DECLG and ensure corresponding future development needs for such a population are planned for in particular in relation to settlement, housing, enterprise and infrastructure.

### 1.4 Settlement Strategy

The strategy for Galway is to continue to be the regional growth centre and to create the synergies for the wider prosperity of the West Region. The strengthening of the Gateway will be mutually beneficial to the region and providing for housing demands and employment opportunities will be a critical factor in achieving this role. In this regard it is essential to have a settlement strategy that will accommodate growth in a co-ordinated and sustainable fashion.

The focus for development will include the consolidation of the city growth it has achieved to date. The main direction for new settlement for the city will be the Ardaun area. This has been substantially defined by the GTPS as referenced earlier in this chapter. This study aimed to provide a development framework for land use and transportation for Galway City within a catchment of 30km into Galway County. This sub-regional study promotes a more structured dispersal of population that will spread development and prosperity over a wider area. This approach advocates the concentration of population in Galway City and the main settlements within the study area and also includes for some growth in rural areas. It includes in particular for the growth of the Hub Town Tuam and has an objective that the county settlements become more self-sufficient, attract a greater range of employment opportunities and services and widen their functional area.

The main impact of this settlement strategy for the city is the development of the Ardaun area to the east of the city. This area straddles the boundary with the county and thereby offers a sustainable solution to growth for both the city and county. This corridor of growth will develop as an urban extension to the city from Doughiska eastwards out of the city and into the county. The ultimate details of this area will be determined on the basis of a Local Area Plan. The fundamental issues associated with this plan were teased out in the Ardaun Concept Study 2007 which consequently provided the background for an application for funding under the Gateway Innovation Fund (all funding decisions deferred to date).
In the absence of adopting this structured approach the city will continue to grow at a low density pace with heavy dependency on car transport. There will be a lack of integration of living and working environments and a lack of critical mass to provide for local services and facilities. This would have significant negative environmental impacts and be contrary to sustainable planning and development.

In contrast, it is anticipated that Ardaun will build the necessary critical mass that will enable it to be a self-sustaining urban centre through the co-location of population, jobs and services. At this level it will also be able to support a dedicated public transportation system. It is anticipated that this will be accommodated in such a manner to offer viable alternatives to the car for local trips and for travel to the city centre.

The requirement for land is indicated as 248 hectares of zoned and serviced land that can accommodate housing in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Strategy. Within the city currently there is 158 hectares of residential zoned and serviceable land for housing purposes. These lands will not be able to meet the population targets for the Galway Gateway and therefore the strategy for settlement in Ardaun has to advance. The lands designated in the city for the preparation of a local area plan at this location consist of 158 hectares. It is acknowledged that not all lands will be available for development however a significant quantum will be, which will address the demand as identified in the population targets. This will be considered as the phase 1 of Ardaun. Phase 2 as provided for in the GTPS future growth scenarios, will require expansion into the county area of Ardaun as originally envisaged. Ardaun phase I will be required to take into consideration the strategic requirements of the overall city and county area.

The settlement strategy also includes for additional zoned land other than Ardaun. It includes for the consolidation of the existing residential neighbourhoods in Knocknacarra, Doughiska and Castlegar. It anticipates new communities evolving from the regeneration of brownfield sites in the city on the surplus lands at Ceannt Station, the Docks area and on the Headford Road south of the Bodkin Roundabout. The designated lands at Murroogh, although primarily designated for recreation and amenity purposes, will also sustain mixed uses including residential uses. In existing neighbourhoods, lands have been designated for local services in order to sustain the communities and to control unnecessary trip patterns.

In view of the time lag associated with the need to prepare a local area plan for the Ardaun area, and the time needed to secure appropriate infrastructure, it is necessary to ensure that the existing supply of zoned residential lands is retained and made available for the market. However in the longer term the more structured co-ordinated approach of the GTPS represents the NSS and RPG’s West Region approach to Gateway development. It is critical that essential investment in infrastructure is made available to support this option for development.

**Fig. 1.1: Galway City Settlement Strategy**

*Policy 1.4 Settlement Strategy*

- Facilitate the future sustainable development of the city within the strategic settlement framework as informed by DECLG population targets, the GTPS, transportation strategies and the need for regeneration of key sites and in keeping with the principles of sustainable development.*
1.5 Transportation Strategy

The transportation strategy for the city has evolved from the GTPS and has built on the original proposals which have been highlighted earlier in this chapter. Many of the initiatives are still relevant and have been incorporated into subsequent policy documents such as the NSS, the RPG West Region, Gateway Innovation Fund Application, Ardaun Concept Study and Galway County Development Plans. The Galway Transportation Unit (GTU) was established in 2008. The focus of the GTU is to develop an integrated transport solution for the city with an emphasis on increased use of non-car based transport services. In doing so it will be updating the inherited strategy of the GTPS and bringing it forward to an implementation stage. Particular policy direction on transport is being led by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport document Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020. A joint application from Galway City and County Councils for funding under the Smarter Travel Areas Competition has been made, reflecting the city’s commitment to deliver a high quality sustainable transport system.

The GTPS promoted a strategic settlement corridor at Ardaun. This is still the valid settlement scenario and consequently will create the critical mass to support sustainable public transport. As identified by the GTPS this will be a bus based solution. The initial focus of the GTU has expanded on delivering this service, initially looking at improving the existing services following the robust foundations assessment of bus transport undertaken in the Strategic Bus Study 2006. The subsequent study - Galway Public Transportation Feasibility Study 2010 similarly comes out in support of an improved bus network strengthened by an east—west proposed corridor serviced by a rapid transit option which will extend through a dedicated rapid transit route eastwards into Ardaun and with possible linkage to Galway Airport. Any proposal for improvements in bus networks and rapid transit routes will be linked with disincentives for car transport, possibly in the form of pricing mechanisms for car parking/reduction in car parking in the city centre, other than where there are reserved options in the City Plan.

To address the heavy volumes of commuter traffic the provision of park and ride facilities linked in with the bus network will be provided on the east and west of the city. There may also be opportunities for park and ride at the proposed rail station at Garraun near Oranmore, which has potential to be linked in with the emerging proposals for a public rapid transit network.

The proposals for a multi-modal transport interchange at Ceannt Station as part of a mixed—use urban quarter will radically improve and modernise the bus and rail services into the city. The development of this transport interchange will cater for the long-term projected transport needs of Galway City and the western region. This planned investment is in addition to the committed investment under Transport 21/NSS. The Development Plan has designated the site as a transport hub and will require that the station site be re-developed in a sustainable manner and to a strategic scale for the entire West Region in the anticipation that commuter services will also be part of the delivery. This would include for a double tracked link with Athenry and the expansion of the Western Rail Corridor services, expanding the opportunities for commuter rail routes. The first phase of the Western Rail Corridor is between Ennis and Athenry. It is important that services on this route provide choices for commuters who travel to and from the catchment areas of this rail line to Galway City. It is also important that the upgrade of the next phase of the Western Rail Corridor is progressed as soon as possible, particularly services to and from Tuam in view of the large commuter volumes to Galway City from Tuam.

With potential for regeneration of the surplus lands at Ceannt Station, the regeneration of the Docklands and the intensification of use on the Headford Road there will be significant opportunities for both employment and commercial services in the vicinity of a modern transportation hub, off-setting the reliance on car transport.
Overall Strategy Including Core Strategy

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

Re-development of the Galway Port facilities is proposed. This would include for the relocation of the port to a deepwater location and development of the existing facilities as a marina. This would increase the potential to improve linkage for both passengers and freight into the city. The integrated transportation study scheduled by the GTU will look at the strategic implications and opportunities this would afford the city and explore the tie-in with both the rail and road network.

In line with national policy on Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 initiatives with respect to walking and cycling are ongoing. These will have high priority in new settlement areas where opportunities can be designed into layouts. Retrospective fitting of these will be more difficult but the focus will be on areas such as large employers, educational facilities and where there is most potential for modal shift.

Fig. 1.2 Galway City Transportation Strategy

Policy 1.5 Transportation Strategy

- Support the implementation of the transportation strategy for Galway City in conjunction with all other transport providers and transport stakeholders in line with national and regional policy in particular Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009–2020.
1.6 Development Strategy

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

The direction for development is to focus a significant amount of the growth anticipated for the Gateway into the east side of the city at Ardaun. This will be the key greenfield development area for Galway City. It has been selected as it meets the sub-regional requirements for settlement for Galway City and the environs. It offers a significant bank of land capable of being extended in the longer term into the county. It provides a continuous link out from the city and is capable of benefiting from proposals for sustainable transport modes. It will provide opportunities for high density residential development structured and co-ordinated with other essential community services. It is well placed to develop good employment opportunities having close physical links with the existing technology parks at Mervue, Ballybrit / Parkmore and strategic IDA sites at Oranmore and Athenry. It is also well placed to link in with and take advantage of the proximity of higher level institutes – GMIT and NUIG.

Ardaun has potential for a high level of connectivity, both regionally and intra–regionally, located on the M6 and with proximity to the N18/N17. This is further enhanced by its location close to Galway Airport and close to the main rail line.

Ardaun has been factored into the Galway Main Drainage Scheme Stage 3 and it is a consideration of the Plan for strategic water requirements for the city. It is anticipated that the central financing of these projects will be a priority for Gateway development for Galway under the NSS. A local area plan will be prepared for these lands.

It is anticipated that other residential areas of the city will grow but at a more constrained rate and in character with the established nature of development. These areas include the newer suburbs of Knocknacarra, Castlebar and Dugganisha. It is anticipated, based on lands designated for district, neighbourhood and local uses, that opportunities for mixed uses to service these areas will be availed of increasing the range of local commercial and community facilities. In Knocknacarra, in particular, lands are set aside for employment opportunities which will focus on the technology /office based industries thereby providing potential employment opportunities close to this large bank of population and off setting travel journeys across the city.

The Plan considers that there is potential for significant further development within the city centre. It requires that such development should ensure that the character, cultural legacy and physical image of the city is enhanced by any additions. The city centre in particular enjoyed commercial growth from the early nineties coupled with repatriation of a residential population and improvements to the public realm. Until recently there was little / no commercial vacancies and no room for expansion.

The development strategy is to capitalise on the brownfield site opportunities offered by both Ceannt Station and Galway Harbour. These areas, owing to their proximity to the city centre, their combined scale and attractive location on Galway Bay, offer great potential for a sustainable mixed use quarter. They offer a sequential solution to the expansion of the city centre, linked with a transportation hub, reinforcing the prime role of the city centre in both Galway City and the Gateway region. Expanding the city in this direction does not only respond to floorspace demand it also enhances the image of the city physically, the tourism function and allows for an expansion to a scale commensurate with it's designated role under the NSS. The planning of both sites will be encompassed in framework plans/masterplans which will complement and have regard to the interdependence of the sites.

The Headford Road Area – south of the Bodkin Roundabout, represents a development form which is outdated and unsustainable in density and use terms. It also has unexplored potential for amenity use having direct links with the River Corrib and an expanse of parkland which suffers from lack of linkage and permeability. The development strategy is to re-develop this area to include for a mix of uses introducing a significant level of residential uses, providing for a densification of the commercial use, including office type employment opportunities and cultural and civic uses. It is anticipated that sustainable modes of transport will be key to improving access to the commercial facilities, amenity areas, services and that it will address current traffic congestion problems. The strategy for this area includes for better linkage into the city centre and linkages across the river to the university campus. Re-development plans for the Headford Road area will be brought forward as a local area plan.

Murroo is an extensive area of semi-natural environment on the east side of the city adjacent to the older suburbs of Renmore, Mervue and Ballybaan. The strategy for these lands is predominantly for recreational and amenity uses with emphasis on increasing access to the coast at this location for residents on the east of the city and future communities at Ardaun. In addition to the amenity element it is considered that this area is suitable as a development node which would support a mix of uses allied to the location in a high quality amenity area with tourism potential and close to future sustainable transport links. A local area plan will be prepared to guide the future development at this location.

With regard to high technology industries which provide large scale employment opportunities it is likely that future expansion will be predominantly located outside of the city boundaries. These are more than likely to be of the nature that are classified as ‘agency assisted employment’ and will be directed to IDA favourable locations. These types of employment which are very desirable are normally of the internationally traded variety. These sites include sites adjoining the city boundary at Parkmore and strategic sites at Oranmore and Athenry. These sites can be linked in with the strategy for the bus network serving the city and have potential for rail access also (Athenry). As stated previously they are in close proximity to the main
direction for development of the city, Ardaun. However this will not preclude development being directed to existing sites within the city that have a capacity for expansion such as lands at Mervue Technology and Business Park which will be connected to Ardaun along future public transport routes and to designated industrial lands at Rahoon.

The CSO statistics indicate that health and education are major employers in the city with a higher proportion of the population engaged in this type of employment than the national average. The sites that support these jobs are predominately located on the edge of the city centre – NUIG, GMIT, UCHG, with both Merlin Park Hospital and the Galway Clinic at more peripheral locations. The other significant fact is that these sectors have a major role to play in both training and innovation through research and collaborative links with industry. The strategy of the Plan regarding these sectors is to support the consolidation of activities on the main sites in line with the long term plans of both the hospitals and colleges and allow for sustainable expansion opportunities. In addition the Plan will continue to facilitate infrastructural investment and ensure that sustainable transport links to these areas are a consideration in all transport initiatives.

Although the objective of social inclusion is all pervasive throughout the Plan there are specific initiatives for geographical areas such as the RAPID Programme. These areas are the areas with the highest level of social and economic deprivation in the city. The RAPID Programme aims to tackle deprivation through a themed approach – health, family support, community safety, education and the physical environment. This includes for inter-agency involvement to deliver better services, access and improvements to the environment at RAPID locations as shown in Fig. 1.3 below. Encouraging an inclusive city will not only address deprivation it will also improve the image of Galway as an attractive competitive city where people will want to live and work and which attracts investment.

Fig. 1.3 Galway City Development Strategy

Policy 1.6 Development Strategy

- Initiate the Development Strategy during the currency of this Plan and carry forward this approach to future development plans, supported by key investments and plan led growth strategies.
1.7 Environment Strategy

Sustainable development is recognised as the key to managing economic and environmental interdependency. The City Development Plan plays a significant role in shaping the environment and is led by sustainable considerations. The overall goals of the City Plan reflect these concerns. Policies in particular relating to land use, transport, energy use and natural and built heritage are framed to ensure that sustainability is treated as a systematic concern and subject to constant review. This is in line with the national agenda on climate change.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out in parallel with the review of the City Development Plan. This is a new statutory requirement transposed from European law into Irish law. It provides for a formal evaluation of the likely significant environmental impacts of implementing the City Development Plan before a decision is made to adopt the Plan. The process ensures that any potential environmental impacts are identified and assessed and this allows for the development of sustainable policies and objectives. This has been carried out in tandem with the preparation of the City Development Plan and has been an informing process in ensuring sustainability is a central concern.

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

Policy 1.7 Environmental Strategy

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

The meaning given to core strategy is that every plan should include a development strategy, which is robust and realistic. This requires that the information on which both the development and the housing strategy are based can be supported by evidence. This information should also demonstrate that these strategies are consistent with RPG and the NSS. The core strategy should also be able to demonstrate that account has been taken of government population targets. This is particularly relevant to justify the quantum and location of land zoned for residential use, the settlement patterns anticipated and the supporting local area plans required. It is also necessary to support the policy and zoning approach to retail development.

Regardless of the requirement to mention a core strategy approach, it is considered that the strategy approach in Chapter 1, Chapter 3 Transportation, the Retail Strategy included in Chapter 5, Chapter 10 Housing Strategy and Appendix 2 already cover the areas of essential concern. These sections of the Plan give more elaboration on the survey, analysis and the consequential detailed policies and objectives.

1.8.1 Elements of the Core Strategy

The Development Plan embraces the definition of the city as a national Gateway as afforded in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). The strategies and policies promoted in the Plan acknowledge the potential the city has for achieving the national objectives of balanced regional growth. They also reflect the position Galway City holds within the region and reflect the role of the Gateway as a key economic driver within the West Region having due regard to the broad planning framework established by the RPG West Region.

The direction for development is to focus a significant amount of development into the east side of the city at Ardaun, to consolidate development in the newer suburbs of Knocknacarra, Castlegar and Doughiska and to capitalise on the brownfield sites at Ceannt Station and the Harbour area. In addition it is anticipated that the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin Roundabout) will be regenerated and that extensive lands at Murroogh will be developed, as with Ardaun, in conjunction with a local area plan. All of these areas will provide for employment opportunities as well as residential accommodation. In addition further consolidation of existing business and technology parks within the city and on the edge are considered to address economic needs in conjunction with city centre development/expansion. As the major education and health institutions contribute significantly to the city they economy are supported in the Plan.

As referenced in Chapter 1, 10 and Appendix 2, the Development Plan has based the anticipated future growth of population on the regional targets as set out by the RPG West Region 2010-2022 and the DECLG in October 2009. The relevant tables in these chapters in particular Table 1.3 highlight the projected growth on an annual basis. In adopting these targets the growth scenario for the city is in line with national and regional policy and it is anticipated that national investment and policy decisions will be made in this context as set out in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 Core Strategy Population Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projected Galway Growth based on DECLG Population Targets</th>
<th>Projected Additional Households 2011-2017</th>
<th>Projected Additional Households +3 years to 2020 for longer term</th>
<th>Housing Land Requirement</th>
<th>Residential Zoned Lands</th>
<th>Ardaun LAP Lands</th>
<th>Potential Housing Yield from Residential Zoned Lands @35unit/ha</th>
<th>Potential Housing Yield from Other Lands including Ardaun @35unit/ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 78,549</td>
<td>2016 88,500</td>
<td>2022 98,700</td>
<td>6,022</td>
<td>+2,569 = 8,591</td>
<td>248 ha</td>
<td>158 ha</td>
<td>158 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is estimated that there will be 6,022 new households formed between 2011 and the end of 2017, bringing the population of the city up to 90,200. In order to cater for this demand and the allowance for longer-term requirements (up to 2020) as recommended by the DECLG, an estimate of 9,414 households is catered for in land use zoning provisions. In addition to population demand, other factors such as potential for housing on mixed land uses, regeneration lands, low-density zoning and the uptake of vacant properties are all taken into consideration in estimating the amount of land required. Following these considerations it was not recommended to increase the undeveloped residential zoning in the city (that is city lands with the exception of Ardaun) significantly from that already provided for in the 2005–2011 Development Plan. The current total amounts to 158ha of residentially zoned undeveloped lands. When Ardaun, the predominant focus of the settlement strategy is included this brings the total undeveloped residentially zoned lands up to 316ha. It is also acknowledged that not all lands in Ardaun will be used exclusively for residential purposes. The logic of limiting the amount of new lands for zoning in the city is to allow for consolidation of the existing suburbs, to give momentum to the designated regeneration lands and to ultimately allow for sufficient critical mass to enable the successful development of Ardaun. In order to provide for orderly phased development Ardaun, Murroogh, Ceannt Station, Harbour lands and Headford Road lands will all be subject to the local area plans/masterplans.
As retailing is a significant contributor to the commercial life of the city, the core strategy has given specific consideration to future retail development. The city has a substantial catchment area and also enjoys commercial support from a strong tourist economy. This is outlined in detail in the retail strategy included in Chapter 5. The approach has had regard to the requirements of the DEHLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005.

In line with these guidelines there is a defined city centre core that is recognised as the prime retail area of the city and which is of regional importance. The strategy provides for expansion potential into both Ceannt Station and the Harbour area offering a sequential solution to city centre expansion, which is also conveniently linked to a designated transportation hub. The city centre area for the purposes of retailing also includes the Headford road area - south of the Bedkin Roundabout where regeneration of the existing development which is both outmoded and unsustainable will add to the range of goods available and to the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre. District and neighbourhood centres are accommodated in the main suburban areas where there is demand and where they are conveniently accessible to such communities. The main concentration of bulky goods are at Briarhill, Liosban and historic locations on the Headford and Tuam Roads. Additional provision has also been accommodated in Knocknacarra to balance geographical provision within the city.

It is considered following analysis of likely future spending on retailing that lands zoned for commercial purposes which is not significantly different than that of the previous Plan will be able to accommodate this demand which is estimated to be 27,067m² of floor areas space. It is also noted that a significant level of retail floorspace has been granted permission and has not yet been developed. This indicates that future demand can be easily accommodated, has sufficient geographical spread and will be linked into the main public transport routes.

The retail guidelines require that Galway City and County prepare a joint retail strategy. The previous joint strategy was prepared in 2002 and updated in 2005. It is an objective of this Plan to carry out a similar study within the period of this Plan. However the current analysis has already factored in a number of relevant aspects and no radical change to the current policy approach for the city is anticipated as a result of this review.

The core strategy has referenced the areas where it is anticipated there will be significant development and indicated where there will be a requirement for local area plans. The transportation strategy has been developed taking cognisance of this future direction of growth, and existing established patterns. The public transportation approach has included a legacy of past plans in particular the GTPS and aspires to expand these significantly under the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport Smarter Travel policies. This has been led by the recently established GTU. Significant focus and investment, following feasibility studies is being placed on an improved bus network, strengthened by an east - west proposed corridor served by a rapid transport option. This network will have a capacity to extend into the future settlement at Ardaun and will be able to serve and connect the main suburban areas, the main commercial nodes and link into the main concentration of workplaces. To complement this approach it is intended to provide for park and ride facilities along the main approaches to the city.

The requirement for a multi-modal transport interchange at Ceannt Station is a key objective of the City Plan. This is in line with the advanced proposals for such a development by the main transport providers. These developments will radically improve and modernise the regional and inter-city bus and rail services and cater for the long-term needs of the region and for future commuter rail services.

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

The main elements of the core strategy are illustrated in Fig. No.s 1, 2, and 3 of this Chapter where the strategic link between the various policy approaches is visually expressed. As indicated previously the core strategy highlights the baseline principles on which the Plan for the city is predicated and the following chapters give substance to this approach.
Chapter 2

Housing

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

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

**Context**
The growth in population in the city in recent years has been significant at 10% between 2002 to 2006, above the national average of 8.2%. This coupled with the increase in number of households has been a significant factor to date in the demand for housing within the city. This demand has also been exacerbated by the growing trend towards lower average household sizes.

During the period of the Development Plan 2005-2011 significant growth took place throughout the city with consolidation of the western suburbs, extension to Ballinfoile and areas within Castlegar to the north and new development to the east of the city. The city centre experienced significant population growth during the early nineties mainly through fiscal incentives under the urban renewal schemes. This level of population has been maintained and is supported through planning policy which requires new development to have a residential content.

Given Galway’s designation as a Gateway City, its growth is set to continue. Population growth figures from the DECLG suggest a population target of 90,200 in 2017 for the city. This growth will be accommodated in the designated growth area of Ardaun to the east of the city, through consolidation of existing growth that is achieved to date and through the development of brownfield sites. Ardaun was considered as the most optimal area for growth under the GTPS (2003). This settlement strategy is enshrined in policy at both national and regional level. As this area straddles the county boundary, it is also enshrined in the County Development Plan. This expansion of the city, in conjunction with existing growth areas, has the potential to accommodate the targeted population growth set by the DECLG. This population growth will be carried out in a planned sustainable manner, with the integration of land use and sustainable transportation being a key core principle.

The Development Plan 2005-2011 established the concept of sustainable neighbourhoods, creating communities within residential areas by incorporating the highest design standards and providing a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of essential infrastructure and a range of services. This concept is supported and reinforced by recent national guidelines which encourage the creation of sustainable residential communities and good quality urban design, promoting higher residential densities in co-ordination with improved transport systems. The protection of existing neighbourhoods and sustaining communities in the city centre is an important aspect of the neighbourhood concept and is essential to maintaining a vibrant city centre.

**Strategy**
- Implement the recommended settlement strategy for the city in particular through the development of Ardaun.
- Develop Ardaun in accordance with national guidelines which promote sustainable development and integration of landuse and transportation.
- Encourage sustainable neighbourhoods of high quality residential development, which will contribute to a sense of place and will provide a mix of housing types in an attractive setting.
- Promote sustainable neighbourhoods where community facilities and services of an appropriate nature are easily accessible.
- Protect, enhance and explore opportunities for environmental improvements to existing residential areas in particular in city centre residential areas.
- Accommodate through land use zoning the requirements of the Housing Strategy.
- Require local area plans, framework plans, design statements and site briefs for significant sites in advance of proposals.
- Secure the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013.

2.2 **Neighbourhood Concept**

An essential element of a sustainable city is the development of a compact city, which is characterised by the consolidation of existing neighbourhoods and the establishment of new neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods are areas where an efficient use of land, high quality design and effective integration in the provision of physical and social infrastructure are combined to create places where people wish to live. Sustainable neighbourhoods can contribute to fostering community spirit, to reducing traffic movements and to the provision of high quality residential environments. It is the policy of the Council to promote this neighbourhood concept in existing residential areas and in new developments. Table 2.1 and Fig. 2.1 sets out the framework of residential neighbourhoods in the city.
Table 2.1 Indicative Neighbourhood Areas in Galway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhoods</th>
<th>OUTER SUBURBS</th>
<th>ESTABLISHED SUBURBS</th>
<th>INNER RESIDENTIAL AREAS</th>
<th>CITY CENTRE RESIDENTIAL</th>
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<tr>
<td>East</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ardaun</td>
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<td>Renmore</td>
<td>Bohermore</td>
<td>Woodquay</td>
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<td>Doughiska</td>
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<td>Mervue</td>
<td>College Road</td>
<td>Long Walk</td>
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<td>Roscam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ballybaan</td>
<td>Lough Atalia</td>
<td>Henry Street Area</td>
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<td>West</td>
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<td>Claddagh</td>
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<td>Ballyburke</td>
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<td>Salthill</td>
<td>Shantalla</td>
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<td>Ballymoneen</td>
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<td>Taylor's Hill</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
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<td>Westside</td>
<td>Fr. Griffin Road</td>
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<td>North</td>
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<td>Castlegar</td>
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<td>Tirellan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuam Road</td>
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<td>Ballinfoile</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In general the Council will protect and enhance the character of existing residential neighbourhoods through development standards and through the implementation of environmental improvements.

In the creation of new sustainable neighbourhoods, the DEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) state that such places should meet a number of high level aims as follows:

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

A number of areas within the city will be subject to local area plans (LAPs). LAPs for Ardaun, Murroogh and the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin Roundabout) will provide for specific policies and objectives which will encourage high quality urban environments and new communities within sustainable neighbourhoods and integrated with sustainable transport systems.

The emphasis of the Murroogh Local Area Plan will be to provide for the provision of recreational facilities and coastal amenities. The Plan will also provide for a new residential community within a mixed use development. The Headford Road area LAP will also provide for a new residential community as part of the redevelopment for mixed uses.

The Council also recognise that there are a number of undeveloped residential zoned areas within the city which may benefit from more detailed design guidance within the context of the broader policy set out in this Plan. In these cases the Council may prepare supplementary guidance in the form of masterplans/framework plans or development briefs. In addition, the Council will require planning applications for large scale residential developments or planning applications on sensitive sites, to include a design statement which describes the proposed development in terms of its context, the movement within the site, the relationship to adjoining developments and the contribution to good urban design. This will include a character appraisal of the area indicating how the proposed development responds to and enhances the character of the area.
Fig. 2.1 Neighbourhood areas in Galway
Policy 2.2 Neighbourhood Concept

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

2.3 Neighbourhoods: Outer Suburbs

Successful residential development is reliant on the creation of neighbourhoods which have a distinct and special character, that are places which have recognisable features where people live and form an attachment.

In the outer suburbs of the city, the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods will include for local shopping, community, leisure infrastructure and local employment opportunities. Access to public transport, walking and cycling is also an integral part of a sustainable neighbourhood. New residential development will have regard to its surrounding context, provide for linkages with local facilities, a mix of house types and a layout that will provide for a high quality living environment. Infill development in the outer suburbs will also have regard to the context of the area and will not adversely affect the character of an area. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces.

The Council will require that all new developments take into consideration the following principles that contribute to the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods.

Residential Densities

The guidelines for Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) promote higher residential densities in appropriate locations, especially in conjunction with improved public transport facilities subject to ensuring that the highest quality of residential amenity is achieved. In the design and assessment of higher density residential development, regard shall be had to these guidelines and the accompanying design manual which sets out certain criteria including the following:

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

Future population growth targets can be met under the densities currently being achieved on existing zoned lands.

Context for New Neighbourhoods

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

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

- Local facilities and community infrastructure;
- The public transport network and network of walking and cycling routes;
- Greenways and parks.
New residential development should have regard to the layout of adjoining developments achieving good permeability with opportunities for connections between streets and open spaces, while maintaining its own character and legibility.

**Streets and Movement**

The tendency to adhere strictly to road standards has led to inflexible residential layouts with roads dominating and open spaces becoming secondary. The layout of residential development needs to create spaces where the car becomes secondary and where the street has an important public realm function beyond the movement of traffic. The Council will encourage new development to be based on a network of spaces rather than a road based layout, a development in which roads play their part but are not dominant.

The DEHLG Guidelines for Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) set out a number of design principles to consider in the layout and design of streets in residential areas, these include:

- **Connectivity and Permeability**: provide convenient access to places, particularly to services such as schools and places of work. Routes within the area should be accessible for everyone and as direct as possible.
- **Sustainability**: prioritise the needs of walking, cycling, public transport and the need for car-borne trips to be minimised.
- **Safety**: provide for safe access on streets, paths and cycle routes for users of all ages and degrees of personal mobility.
- **Legibility**: ensure residents and visitors can easily find their way around the area.
- **Sense of place**: ensure streets contribute to the creation of attractive and lively mixed-use places. Streets should not just serve a movement function, their design should include consideration of appropriate opportunities for resting and enjoyment. The use of street names with a connection to the area can also reinforce a sense of place and evocation of the past in new buildings.

**Homezones**

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

**Mix of House Types and Tenures**

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

**Sustainable Housing**

The creation of sustainable neighbourhoods can be enhanced through the integration of energy efficiency into the design and layout of development. This involves optimising the benefits of sunlight, daylight and solar gain through consideration of topography, building orientation and building layout. It may also involve consideration of sustainable heating systems and district level heating. New developments should aim to achieve high levels of natural daylight entering buildings to maximise solar gain including dual aspect design and orientation broadly to the south. Other measures include use of insulation and the provision of shelter through planting and walling.

**Open Space and Amenities**

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

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

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

**Redevelopment**

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

**Policy 2.3 Outer Suburbs**

- Encourage higher residential densities at appropriate locations especially close to public transport routes.
- Ensure that sustainable neighbourhoods are places where housing, streets, open spaces and local facilities come together in a coherent, integrated and attractive form.
- Ensure the layout of residential developments has regard to adjoining developments.
- Encourage a mix of housing types and sizes within residential developments.
- Encourage the use of homezones within residential developments.
- Require residential developments of over 10 units to provide recreational facilities as an integral part of the proposed open space.
- Ensure a balance between the reasonable protection of the residential amenities of the outer suburbs and the protection of the established character and the need to provide for sustainable residential development.
- Encourage the integration of energy efficiency in the design and layout of residential development.

**2.4 Neighbourhoods: Established Suburbs**

Galway has a variety of established suburbs, all of which contribute to the diversity and character of the city. The character of the Taylor’s Hill area is very different to that of Renmore, but each area has an important function in the provision of housing in Galway City.

It is recognised that these areas are dynamic and that potential still exists for some additional residential development which can avail of existing public transport routes, social and physical infrastructure. It is the priority of the Council to ensure that new development will not adversely affect the character of the area. In this regard infill development should not be of such a scale that represents a major addition to, or redevelopment of, the existing urban fabric. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces. Infill development will also have regard to the scale and proportion of existing buildings, building lines, massing and height of buildings in relation to the street.

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

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

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

It is acknowledged that established suburbs may require additional community and local services. The Council will encourage such additional services along main roads and in existing mixed-use areas or where it is demonstrated that the proposed development will not adversely affect the character of the area.
Housing

Regeneration

There are neighbourhoods in the established suburbs which have extensive tracts of communal open space lands. The scale and layout of the communal open space in these areas has created pockets of open space lands which are under-utilised and which do not contribute to the urban structure. This can consequently lead to these areas becoming derelict and attracting uses that have no community value. Opportunities exist in these areas to improve this situation through enhancement in urban design. Through a high standard of infill development great improvements in environmental quality can be brought about. This infill development could be in the form of community facilities and/or residential development. This development can contribute to the quality of the neighbourhood and can enhance the built environment by providing effective linkages between residential areas, better informal supervision of open spaces and introduce a mix in size and type of housing units. One such project is the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled A Better Ballinfoile. It highlights a number of actions within the neighbourhood which if implemented would bring about significant improvements. Some of the actions involve development of private lands and may not be readily achievable. It is an objective of the Council to implement the actions of this plan where feasible and funds permitting (see Fig. 2.2).

It is the objective of the Council to investigate the potential for infill in Ballybaan (see Fig. 2.3) In this case a regeneration plan for the open space areas will be prepared with potential infill housing on lands zoned residential only. Extensive public consultation will be part of the process and the recreational requirements and residential amenity of the existing neighbourhood will not be prejudiced.

Environmental Improvement Schemes

Some of the established suburbs have experienced a reduction in residential amenity due to traffic and parking pressures. The Council will examine, in conjunction with local residents, the potential for environmental improvements for the Mervue area (see Fig.2.4). The aim will be to implement changes that increase the residential amenity of the area, reduce traffic and reorganise car parking.

Policy 2.4 Established Suburbs

- Ensure a balance between the reasonable protection of the residential amenities and the established character and the need to provide for sustainable residential development.
- Encourage additional community and local services and residential infill development in the established suburbs at appropriate locations.
- Enhance established suburbs, such as the Mervue residential area, through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes and the protection of all open spaces including existing green spaces.
- Finalise and implement the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled A Better Ballinfoile
- Carry out a regeneration plan for open space areas in Ballybaan.
2.5 Neighbourhoods: Inner Residential Areas

Galway has a variety of house types in the inner residential area, with a mix of private and public housing. Areas such as Claddagh, Shantalla and areas of Bohermore provide valuable housing in strong sustainable communities close to the city centre. These areas are under pressure for housing extensions and for limited infill development. They have also experienced considerable pressure from traffic and car parking which has reduced their residential amenity.

It is recognised that these areas are dynamic and that potential still exists for some additional residential development which can make efficient use of existing public transport routes and social and physical infrastructure. It is the priority of the Council to ensure that new development will not adversely affect the character of the area. In this regard infill development and housing extensions should not be of such a scale that represents a major addition to, or redevelopment of the existing urban fabric. In this respect, infill development will have regard to the existing pattern of development, plots, blocks, streets and spaces. Infill development will also have regard to the scale and proportion of existing buildings, building lines, massing and height of buildings in relation to the street.

**Redevelopment**

Demolition of existing dwellings for higher density development will not be acceptable in the inner residential areas except in cases where it is demonstrated that the proposed development would make a positive contribution to the area’s urban design and where it does not represent a major intervention into or redevelopment of the urban fabric. This assessment will be balanced with the contribution that any proposed replacement would make to enhancing the character of the area and will have regard to any sustainable benefits of such development. Where replacement is acceptable, new development will be required to comply with the Council’s development standards. Notwithstanding the above, the demolition of existing dwellings for higher density apartment development in the areas of Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore, as defined in Figs. 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7, will not be acceptable.

**Environmental Improvement Schemes**

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

**Policy 2.5 Inner Residential Areas**

- Protect the quality of inner residential areas by ensuring that new development does not adversely affect their character and has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.
- Enhance inner residential areas such as Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore, through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes and the protection of all open spaces, including existing green spaces.
2.6 Neighbourhoods: City Centre Residential

In the city centre there are areas which have retained their residential character. In addition new residential communities have developed through the encouragement of development plan policies. It is recognised that certain residential areas in the city have experienced a reduction in residential amenity due to the impacts of adjacent city centre development and traffic pressures. In this regard the Council will endeavor to address some of the negative impacts on amenity.

New residential development in particular has contributed to the vibrancy of the city centre. The Council will continue to encourage residential development by requiring a residential content of at least 20% of new development in the city centre. Exceptions may be made on small scale redevelopment sites. On certain key sites in the city centre namely the Ceannt Station lands, Inner Harbour lands and the Headford Road LAP area, a residential content of 30% will be required.

**Policy 2.6 City Centre Residential Areas**

- Protect and enhance city centre residential areas by discouraging encroachment from commercial development and unacceptable infill developments.
- Enhance city centre residential areas through implementation of environmental improvement schemes including, where appropriate, homezones and recreational facilities in conjunction with local residents.
- Encourage the expansion of the city centre residential community by requiring a residential content in new development proposals.
- Consider the redevelopment of the City Council car park at Bowling Green to meet social housing needs.

2.7 Low Density Residential Areas

Low Density Residential areas (LDR) are areas, which have been zoned for residential development at a lower density than other lands zoned residential. The prescribed residential densities in these areas are considered appropriate due to the established residential pattern, deficiency in service provision and/or significance of landscape. Such areas require specific development objectives, as outlined in Chapter 11.
Policy 2.7 Low Density Residential Areas

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

2.8 Mews Housing Development

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

Policy 2.8 Mews Housing Development

- Prepare a co-ordinated plan for areas of the city which have potential for mews housing development in consultation with local residents and the said plan and criteria to be approved by Elected Members.

2.9 Traveller Accommodation

The Planning and Development Act 2000 introduced a requirement for development plans to include objectives for the provision of accommodation for Travellers and for the use of particular areas for that purpose. In accordance with the provisions of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 the Council established a Local Traveller Accommodation Committee comprising of Elected Members of the Council, Travellers, Traveller organisations and officials of the Council. As part of the requirements of the Act, the Council prepared the Traveller Accommodation Programme which covers the period 2009-2013. This plan specifically deals with the accommodation needs of the travelling community. One of the policies as contained in this plan, which has a specific land use dimension, is to seek to provide, where appropriate, Traveller specific accommodation which has regard to Traveller culture.

The Development Plan can support and provide the land-use dimension, which will help achieve some of recommendations contained in the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013 and subsequently adopted recommendations.

Policy 2.9 Traveller Accommodation

- Encourage the provision of accommodation for Travellers having regard to the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013 and subsequent plans.
- Facilitate the specific accommodation needs of Travellers through land use zoning objectives.

2.10 Specific Objectives

- Prepare an environmental improvement scheme for the Mervue residential area.
- Prepare environmental improvement schemes for Claddagh, Shantalla and Bohermore residential areas.
- Prepare a regeneration plan for the open space areas of Ballybaan.
- Finalise the draft regeneration plan for Ballinfoile Park entitled ‘A Better Ballinfoile’ and implement actions where feasible and subject to funding.
- Develop best practice advice for the design of homezones.
- Prepare an environmental improvement scheme for the area known as ‘The West’ that incorporates submissions already made by residents.
- Prepare an enhancement scheme for Whitehall.
Chapter 3

Transportation

3.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
3.2 Integration of Land Use and Transportation
3.3 Promotion of Sustainable Transportation
3.4 The Galway Transportation Unit
3.5 Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan
3.6 Specific Objectives
3.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim

To integrate sustainable land use with an integrated transportation system that is based on smarter travel principles. Ensure the most efficient and sustainable use of land and a transportation system that eases movement to and within the city which facilitates access to a range of transport modes and accessible to all sections of the community.

Context

Galway City and the surrounding area has experienced strong economic and population growth, which has enhanced the prosperity of the city. The quality of life and the economic opportunities afforded by the city and the investment in services afforded to it as a Gateway city have attracted more people to live and work in Galway.

This growth has resulted in increased car use resulting in more travel and increased congestion. As growth has generated greater employment opportunities in the city, a significant travel to work pattern by car from an increasingly dispersed area has developed. The increase in car trips has resulted in traffic congestion on the main approach roads and within the city, impacting on the quality of the urban environment. The historical lack of co-ordination between land uses and transportation has reinforced car dependency, increased travel journeys and contributed to congestion in the city. A structured policy on settlement integrated with a high quality transportation system is required to reduce the reliance on the private car. The high level of car use is unsustainable from an economic, environmental and health perspective. This situation requires intervention with the provision of a choice of alternative modes of transport to encourage a modal change away from the private car and co-ordination of land use.

The previous plan highlighted the need to integrate land use and transportation and supported the settlement and transportation strategy as recommended in the Galway Transportation Planning Study GTPS (2003). The GTPS sets out a strategy for transportation and settlement within the study area which included the city and a hinterland area of approximately 30km radius. The recommended strategy for the city sought to maintain and build on its critical mass, to strengthen economic growth and competitiveness focusing on a preferred growth area in Ardaun to the east. It recommended a significantly improved public transportation system as a key element including the continued development of the bus network, development of park and ride facilities, commuter rail services and improvements to cycling and walking networks. It also supported the development of the GCOB recognising the need to separate through traffic from local traffic.

Fig 3.1: The Percentage of Persons Commuting to Galway City 2006

This GTPS is still valid and has been reinforced at national level through the NSS and NDP with the emphasis on maximising Galway’s status as a Gateway city and a regional capital. The recommendations of the study are in line with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport’s Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 and the National Cycle Policy Framework (2009). These documents reflect a change in transport policy at national level from a more roads based policy to a recognition of the need for a more sustainable integrated transport policy. This direction is reflected at local level. The Galway Transportation Unit (GTU), established in 2008, has as its remit the implementation of the transportation recommendations of the GTPS and subsequent studies, to further the development and implementation of a sustainable integrated transportation solution for the city. It is acknowledged that the Council are facilitators in the delivery of some of the public transport services and infrastructure as they are outside the jurisdiction of the Council. The Council will work with other agencies to facilitate and contribute to the provision of an integrated sustainable transportation system within and linking the city.
The NDP Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All, 2007-2013, sets out key national transport infrastructure development and investment priorities. *Transport 21* is the capital investment framework under the NDP for the development of transport infrastructure for the period 2006-2015. Projects identified for Galway include the M6 Dublin/Galway motorway, the enhancement of the Atlantic Road Corridor, thereby improving road links to other Gateway centres, with priority given to the completion of the Limerick/Galway section of the N18 to high quality dual carriageway; introduction of enhanced intercity rail services on the Galway/Dublin route; introduction of a commuter rail service between Athlone and Galway City; creation of an effective bus based public transport network, building on recent fleet investment through widespread bus prioritisation measures and continued support for the Regional Airport.

**Strategy**

- Support and facilitate the improvement and further development of a public transportation system and encourage the use of other sustainable modes of transport in accordance with national policy as set out in the smarter travel policy and the National Cycle Framework Plan.
- Co-ordinate an integrated sustainable transportation system for the city and environs in conjunction with service providers, Galway County Council and other relevant agencies.
- Support and facilitate the development of integrated land use and transportation proposals based on delivery of a high quality integrated sustainable transportation system in order to facilitate the overall economic well-being and competitiveness of the city and to ensure the movement of people and goods in a manner that improves ease of access for all, enhances quality of life and enhances the environment.
- Support the aims and objectives of the GTU and implementation of recommended actions.
- Support and facilitate in conjunction with other agencies a modal change from the private car to more sustainable modes of transport, namely public transport, walking and cycling.
- Support the construction of the GCOb as approved in addition to a revised western link to the R336.

### 3.2 Integration of Land Use and Transportation

An integrated approach between land use and transportation is essential in creating sustainable places to live, work and visit and it plays a major role in the reduction of traffic congestion. The integration of land use and transportation can reduce the length and number of journeys by private car, can provide opportunities for alternative means of travel including public transport, walking and cycling and can reduce adverse environmental effects of car transport by reducing the reliance on the private car.

The integration of land use and transportation is a strategic aim of the Development Plan. The Council aims to achieve this through a number of policies and objectives relating to transport, settlement, employment and recreation. The Development Plan supports a settlement strategy promoting the consolidation of existing residential areas and expansion of Ardaun to the east. Without a settlement strategy, in particular Ardaun, city growth would put additional pressures on roads, public transport, infrastructure and other key services. There would also be continued unacceptable pressures for development in the countryside which would reinforce the current unsustainable commuting patterns. To further ensure the integration of land use and transportation, local area plans will be prepared by the Council which will provide a framework for mixed-use development in conjunction with a transport strategy in particular for the area of Ardaan.

Through the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods, the Council encourages the creation of places where the reliance on private transport is reduced and where services are provided locally allowing access by sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling. In accordance with the retail strategy, the Council will encourage neighbourhood centres which will provide shopping facilities near the market it serves. This will contribute to the reduction in the need to travel for essential services. To generate a demand for public transport, the Council will promote the use of higher densities at locations adjacent to public transport routes, subject to high amenity standards being achieved.

**Policy 3.2 Land Use and Transportation**

- Promote closer co-ordination between land use and sustainable transportation through zoning objectives.
- Encourage higher residential densities in co-ordination with high quality sustainable transport systems, in conjunction with the provision of accessible bus routes.
- Develop residential neighbourhoods served by public transport.
- Provide for development of district centres and local centres to reduce traffic trips and encourage sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling.
- Prepare local area plans, which will give detailed direction to include for the integration of land use and sustainable transportation provision.
3.3 Promotion of Sustainable Transportation

Current transport and travel patterns are not sustainable with increased car dependency, increased traffic congestion, emissions and reduced average speed. Choosing sustainable travel options contributes to tackling climate change, improving health and quality of life, increasing accessibility and improving economic competitiveness. It requires a change in travel culture and transport behaviour. The promotion of sustainable travel involves a significant move from car travel to use of public transport, cycling and walking.

Advancing the development of an integrated and sustainable transportation system for Ireland is a major goal of transport policies as outlined in Smarter Travel A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020. This document adopts a multi-dimensional approach to transportation and recognises the need to achieve a significant move to sustainable transportation.

It recognises the vital importance of continued investment in transport to ensure an efficient economy and continued social development, but it also sets out the necessary steps to encourage people to change their travel behaviour and choose more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

The smarter travel policy seeks to:

- Improve quality of life and accessibility to transport for all and in particular for people with reduced mobility and those who may experience isolation due to lack of transport.
- Improve economic competitiveness through maximising the efficiency of the transportation system and alleviating congestion and infrastructural bottlenecks.
- Minimise the negative impacts of transport on the local and global environment through reducing localised air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Reduce overall travel demand and commuting distances travelled by the private car.
- Improve security of energy supply by reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels.

The document sets out a number of actions to reduce distance travelled by private car and encouraging smarter travel. It promotes population growth in close proximity to places of employment. It recommends the use of pricing mechanisms or fiscal measures to encourage behavioural change. It also recommends actions to ensure that alternatives to the car are more widely available, through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in walking and cycling. It also recognises the need to improve the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies.

The Council in implementing smarter travel must consider how significant modal shift to walking and cycling can be achieved. This will include the re-allocation of road space, the provision of appropriate infrastructure and altering supporting services such as priority, speeds and signalling. For journeys greater than 8km, it is recognised that a modal shift to cycling could be achievable only some but not all options such as public transport and car sharing should be considered. Journeys up to 8km could be undertaken by bicycle and journeys up to 3-4km could be undertaken by walking or cycling.

It is recognised that sustained investment is required to achieve a significant modal share for walking, cycling and public transport use. A modal shift will not only require the provision of infrastructure but also integration with land use and planning, community support and softer measures such as marketing and information provision, work place travel planning, car sharing/car club initiatives, cycle to work schemes and green routes to school.

As part of the smarter travel policy, the government have established a national Smarter Travel Areas Competition where funding will be awarded over 5 years, to deliver high quality sustainable transport systems, which contribute to healthier and more active populations and attractive local economies. A joint application for funding has been made by the City and County Council.

**Policy 3.3 Promotion of Sustainable Transportation**

- Promote, facilitate and co-operate with other agencies in securing the implementation of an integrated sustainable transportation strategy for the city in line with the Department of Transport’s Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020.
- Support and facilitate in conjunction with other agencies a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.
3.4 The Galway Transportation Unit

The GTU was established in March 2008 supported by the Department of Transport to ensure that Galway has the necessary transport infrastructure and services to support its continued growth and development as a Gateway and a regional centre. Its role is to develop and implement an integrated transport solution for the city to promote the increased use of public and non-car based transport services, overcome existing congestion and promote a sustainable transportation system for the city working in partnership with transport stakeholders.

The aim of the GTU is to effectively integrate different transport modes with particular emphasis on public transport, to improve availability and potential usage of all modes of public transport, to improve journey times both within the city and to and from the city for all modes of transport and to influence public behaviour in relation to travel choice, mode and encourage the increased use of an appropriate and efficient public transport system.

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

A number of studies have been carried out building on the transportation recommendations of the GTPS. The Galway Strategic Bus Study (2007) identified quality bus corridors and park and ride opportunities and recommended that these be complemented by integrated land use planning, traffic management, car restraint and marketing. The Gateways Innovation Fund application sought funding for double tracking of the railway line from Galway City to Athenry. The GTU have undertaken a Public Transport Feasibility Study (2010) for Galway City. The purpose of the study is to determine the types and extent of public transport intervention required to support the desired future development pattern of the city. This study indicates that the best viable option for public transportation for the city is the introduction of a Rapid Transit Route (RTR) along an west-east corridor via the city centre. There are a number of public transport options that could use the RTR. The Councils preferred mode of transport is light rail. The Council will seek funding to progress this mode.
Rapid transit is characterised by high frequency public transport services on dedicated routes or reserved road space. Rapid transit can provide a wide range of benefits including significant environmental benefits, through reduced reliance on the private car and reduced emissions, but also social and economic benefits by reducing congestion, delivering reliable journey times and providing easy access to work and services for those without a car. The introduction of a RTR has potential to substantially change travel patterns in the city and combined with an enhanced bus network will be likely to result in a significant modal change from car to public transport.

The existing road network has a limited capacity, the GTU recognise that with the increased utilisation of road space for different transport modes that the management of that road space becomes increasingly significant. The development of a traffic management centre will make best use of existing road networks. This centre will manage, monitor and optimise transport on the road network including signalisation, traffic flows, car parking, sustainable transport and dissemination of real-time information to the public. A Network Simulation Package (traffic model) for the city is also being developed and maintained through the GTU. It is a valuable transport analysis tool which informs and assists in the analysis and assessment of transport strategies through the testing of scenarios and options. The model will be maintained and updated to take account of current trends and advances in the network.

The GTU will work with major employers within the city in the preparation of mobility management plans and journey travel planning for existing and proposed developments that generate significant trip demand. Plans should seek to reduce reliance on car-based travel both during construction and operation. Realistic and implementable measures to encourage sustainable travel modes within a development, such as proposals to encourage cycling and walking, car sharing, car clubs and flexible working hours should be included.

**Policy 3.4 The Galway Transportation Unit**

- Promote measures recommended by the GTU based on recent transport studies.
- Co-ordinate with the service providers, other agencies and Galway County Council in the implementation of these measures.
- Support a Rapid Transit Route running along an east-west alignment from Ballyburke to Ardaun, via the city centre and linking major settlement and employment centres.
- Facilitate and implement an enhanced bus network throughout the city and continue to implement continuous bus priority measures at critical points along the enhanced bus network.
- Promote the development of mobility management plans with employers and travel generators in the city and promote the reduction in car based travel using such plans.
- Co-ordinate with service providers, schools and other agencies with an objective to reduce school generated traffic.

### 3.5 Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan

A key aim of the GTU is to carry out and implement an Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan for the city. It is anticipated that the Plan will be cognisant of current travel patterns, future growth areas and the existing transportation infrastructure and that measures to achieve an integrated transportation network for Galway City will be based on optimising the use of the existing infrastructure in conjunction with the introduction of measures which are both viable and likely to attract an adequate level of funding.

This plan will support the strategic planning framework of the GTPS and build on its recommendations. It will also draw together the findings and recommendations of other recent studies. The Integrated Transportation Plan will support the need to improve accessibility and reduce congestion, reduce growth in car dependency by improving the quality of public transport and promoting cycling and walking as a safe sustainable and healthy means of transport. The Plan will also include a freight management strategy which will assess issues of freight management within the city and the movement and delivery of goods.

The Plan will have the aim of achieving a more integrated and managed approach to transportation in the city. This will encourage modal change from car journeys to public transport, walking and cycling. A range of measures in support of the GTPS and the Strategic Bus Study have already been implemented and plans advanced and works commenced for some of the strategic roads projects including the Galway City Outer Bypass (GCOb).

**Public Transportation Hubs**

Ceannt Station is designated as a major transportation hub. The Development Plan requires the station site to be re-developed in a sustainable manner and to a strategic scale for the entire West Region. The redevelopment of the station affords the opportunity of providing an integrated public transportation hub and multi-modal interchange capable of accommodating enhanced inter urban, commuter and city rail and bus services linked to other sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling. Other facilities in the vicinity, such as the new coach station at Fairgreen and the existing bus terminal at Eyre Square will complement the designation of Ceannt Station as a major transport hub. Three lower tier public transportation
hubs are designated at strategic locations within the city at the Cathedral, within the Headford Road LAP area and at the Knocknacarra District Centre. These hubs will accommodate appropriate passenger facilities and will be important modal interchanges in the overall enhanced bus network of the city. A transportation hub is also proposed along the railway line at Garraun between the city and Oranmore by Galway County Council.

**Bus**

A significant contribution to improved and enhanced inter-city, regional and local bus services is anticipated in conjunction with the major redevelopment plans advanced for Ceannt Station.

Private coach services are also an important facet of transportation within the city. The coach station at Fairgreen, together with the existing bus terminals at Eyre Square will complement the redevelopment of Ceannt Station as a major transport hub. The Council recognise the valuable service that localised private bus services in the city provide for outer suburbs. The Council will support expansion of these services and will facilitate them where appropriate through infrastructural investment and policies relating to access in/near housing developments.

The Strategic Bus Study (2007) has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of bus transport in the city. Recommendations to upgrade the public transportation system include the provision of bus priority measures, additional bus facilities and bus termini for some city services. The Council has recently approved a number of bus shelters within the city and will support an ongoing programme for the provision of such shelters. The Public Transportation Study as outlined above also has significant proposals for the development of bus transport within the city.

**Rail**

Galway City is a significant rail destination and Ceannt Station is a major transport hub for the West Region. The anticipated redevelopment of Ceannt Station as a new major multi-modal transport interchange will involve significant rail service expansion. The integrated facility will enhance rail capacity, allowing for intercity and commuter service expansion. Additional dedicated bus bays will also be provided at this interchange. As well as enhanced public transport links to Ceannt Station, car parking and set down facilities dedicated for public transport users will also be provided.
In addition, under the Transport 21 investment programme, significant improvements are ongoing to the rail network including enhanced rolling stock and frequency of intercity routes. Improvements include the opening of the Western Rail Corridor from Ennis to Athenry providing direct Galway-Limerick rail services and the provision of Galway commuter rail services. Double tracking of the railway line from the city to Athenry is also proposed and the Council will facilitate rail stops within the city boundary, which will support commuter services and have potential for inter-modal links.

Roads

The ongoing development of the M/N6, N17 and N18 strategic routes is critical to the Gateway development and to ensure linkages between Gateways in line with the Atlantic Gateway Corridor. The construction of the GCOB is an important element in the transport strategy for the city, not only for relieving traffic but also for releasing road space that can be redeveloped for bus/RTR/cycle use. The GCOB was a strategic objective of the Development Plan 2005-2011, which reserved lands in the city for its construction. This development plan will continue to reserve lands for the approved element and for the likely western link with the R336. The Council will consider in conjunction with the NRA a possible link from the proposed Ballindooley interchange with the Eastern Approach Road between the Kirwan and Ffont Roundabouts. The Council will consider the ultimate line of this route and facilitate this road if required.

Within the city the Council will continue to carry out its programmes of road improvements. A number of new roads and road upgrades are proposed to provide key linkages and improvements in the network as listed in the specific objectives section of this chapter. In the context of smarter travel, to ensure the optimum safety for all modes of travel and to encourage increased use of public transport, the Council will investigate proposals to reduce speed limits in certain areas of the city.

Traffic Calming

The Development Plan 2005-2011 established the concept of sustainable neighbourhoods with the emphasis on developing a network of spaces rather than a hierarchy of roads. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas; Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) also promotes this concept. It is recognised that strict road standards have led to inflexible residential layouts with roads and traffic movements dominating with poor pedestrian linkage or permeability contributing to greater car dependency. Through design guidelines and development control standards the Council will seek to achieve a safer and more balanced approach to car movement within residential areas. To contribute to this, the Council will encourage the use of 'homezones' in new residential development (see Chapter 2).

The Council, having regard to the Traffic Management Guidelines (2003), will also carry out a series of traffic calming measures and parking controls in the city's established residential areas in order to create safer and more attractive residential areas and to reduce so called 'rat running'.

Parking

The need to reduce the number of trips by car particularly to the city centre by limiting car parking requirements is a critical element of an integrated transportation plan. To do this effectively requires that alternative options must be made available. The GTU as part of the integrated sustainable transportation plan will undertake a detailed assessment of car parking in the city and devise an overall strategy for car parking.

In order to encourage the transfer to public transport and to discourage commuter parking, the Council will restrict new car parking within the city centre area. Exceptions to this are the Ceannt Station site, where parking would serve a transportation hub and a substantial extension to the city centre and the Headford Road LAP area to serve potential additional commercial development.

A reduced standard may also be acceptable for new development located along strategic public transport corridors. Consideration will also be given to grouped and dual usage parking provision, where peak demands do not coincide and cognisance will be given to potential for multi-purpose trips. Each case will be considered on its merits, based on traffic management and modelling assessment and subject to an overriding presumption in favour of sustainable transport. Where a reduction in car parking standards is considered, the Council may attach a condition to any permission requiring a financial contribution towards the cost of providing transportation services in the locality.

Park and Ride Facilities

Park and ride facilities can reduce the amount of commuter traffic entering into the city and thus contribute to a reduction in traffic congestion. An opportunity exists for the provision of park and ride facilities generally on the periphery of the city and at public transport interchanges. It is considered that these can be linked in and co-ordinated with the main bus network and the location of major employment areas. The benefits of park and ride have been demonstrated during the Volvo Ocean Race and over the Christmas period.

Cycling and Walking

Making provision for walking and cycling within an overall integrated transportation strategy is critical to the success of the strategy providing for safe routes to school, places of employment, the city centre and key connections to public transport and local services. Given the compact urban form
of the city, there is huge potential for a modal change from the private car. The Council is currently undertaking a walking and cycling strategy for the city and its environs, which will recommend the provision of a range of interventions to make cycling and walking safer, more convenient and encourage greater use of these modes.

The number of cyclists using the city’s roads has not increased notwithstanding the provision of a number of cycle lanes and cycle parking facilities. Nationally cycling has been in steep decline. Acknowledging this, the National Cycle Policy Framework (2009) sets out a comprehensive range of measures from planning and infrastructural measures to education and communication measures to make cycling easier and safer. This framework seeks to create a strong culture of cycling in Ireland and Galway will take the lead in implementing this framework. The Council will base its cycling strategy on the hierarchy of solutions in the National Cycle Policy Framework.

In order to increase cycle usage, new development will be required to maximise permeability and connectivity for cyclists, to create direct safe links to road networks and greenways and where appropriate, to provide cycle parking facilities. The Council recognises the difficulties posed by roundabouts for cyclists and pedestrians and is committed to addressing this issue by taking whatever appropriate steps as are necessary.

The greenway network established under the last Development Plan has been a very important element in the development of alternative circulation routes for walking and cycling mainly as recreational routes but also as destination routes. This Development Plan will build on this network identifying key connections and linkages (See Chapter 4). In the city centre, pedestrianisation of a number of key streets has demonstrated the benefits of pedestrian movement and increased the vitality of the city centre. The GTU may identify further areas in the city that would be suitable for pedestrianisation. The improvement of pedestrian facilities, which include safe crossings and modification of pathways, is also a key objective. In the overall design of residential neighbourhoods and the public realm, primary consideration will be given to the needs of the pedestrian and the mobility impaired.

Other Transportation Facilities

The Council will consider in conjunction with Galway County Council, the preparation and implementation of Public Safety Zones, in the vicinity of Galway Regional Airport having regard to the requirements of the Department of Transport/DECLG. Galway Airport facilitates national, UK and European access. The Council will continue to support the operation of the airport and encourage the provision of public transport services from the city to the airport. Galway Harbour is also an important transport facility. The Council will support proposals for the development of new and extended harbour facilities and supporting infrastructure. The Council recognise the role of taxi services as part of the overall development of an integrated transportation system. They will be facilitated within the city and will be required to be accommodated within major developments.

Policy 3.5 Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan

- Formulate an Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan for the city taking account of national policy as set out in the Department of Transport’s Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 and the National Cycle Policy Framework (2009).
- Encourage the development of a viable public transportation system.
- Promote and facilitate rail transport in particular the development of commuter rail and improved inter-urban routes and make provision for the integration of rail with other transport modes.
- Reserve strategic transport corridors in the interest of long term transport plans.
- Support the long term plans for the re-development of Ceannt Station as a multi-modal transportation interchange in the context of Galway as a Gateway and a Regional Centre.
- Promote the provision of park and ride facilities in conjunction with Galway County Council, service providers, government departments and the NRA.
- Promote and facilitate safe and convenient walking and cycling routes through land use policy, specific objectives and guidelines and implement the recommendations of the imminent Walking and Cycling Strategy for Galway City and Environs.
- Support the provision of improved access to Galway Airport and Galway Harbour area including an extension of the rail line to the Harbour.
- Promote accessibility for the disabled/mobility impaired.
- Encourage the development of a universal school bus service in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills.
3.6 Specific Objectives

General

- Prepare an Integrated Sustainable Transportation Plan for the city in conjunction with public transport service providers, NRA, Galway City Development Board and Galway County Council.
- Reserve lands for the approved section of the Galway City Outer By-Pass including a new bridge crossing of the River Corrib and have regard to the emerging route selection for the revised western link of the GCOB to the R336.
- Investigate and develop road improvements, junction improvements and traffic management solutions in the context of overall traffic management, development of public transport and facilitating access to strategic developments, to maximise the operating efficiency and safety of the network having regard to the requirements of all categories of road users and road network capacity constraints. Such solutions or interventions will be developed in conjunction with the relevant agency, such as the NRA or the Department of Transport and will, where necessary, be subject to the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts and the Roads Acts.
- Facilitate the development of Ceannt Station as a multi-modal transportation interchange.
- Provide for park and ride schemes at strategic locations on approach roads to the city and at key modal change locations in particular to the east and west of the city.
- Establish an Urban Transport Management Centre for the city.
- Promote mobility management plans and other initiatives amongst employers, education facilities and institutions in conjunction with Galway County Council.
- Implement the recommendations of the Galway Smarter Travel Areas Action Plan, funds permitting.
- Prioritise provision of pedestrian routes throughout the city and extend cycle lane facilities within the city.

Public Transport

- Implement the recommendations of the Galway City Strategic Bus Study (2007) in conjunction with Bus Eireann, the Department of Transport, other agencies and other transport providers.
- Provide for a Rapid Transit Route (RTR) along a west-east alignment from Ballyburke to Ardaun via the city centre and linking major settlement and employment areas.
- Support the improvement of access for public transport, pedestrian and cyclists to and within major employment areas and institutions.
- Reserve lands for a sustainable transportation corridor parallel with the rail line from the city centre to the eastern city boundary.
- Provide a quality bus corridor through HSE/City Council lands at Merlin Park. Any alternative alignment considered, where there is an impact on Merlin Woods (existing habitat areas, trees etc.), shall be so designed to minimise impact and compensated with new planting. The QBC design process shall reflect the use and improvement of the woodlands in terms of recreation and amenity as set out under the Recreation and Amenity Needs Study (2008) and the Merlin Woods Habitat Management Plan (2009).
- Continue to implement bus priority measures and other transport initiatives as identified in the Galway City Strategic Bus Study (2007) and at critical points along the enhanced bus network.
- Complete the design of the Tuam Road quality bus corridor in conjunction with Galway County Council and reserve lands accordingly.
- Provide for bus termini and appropriate passenger facilities at Galway Cathedral, Knocknacarra District Centre and within the Headford Road LAP area.
- Provide bus shelters on all routes within the city capable of incorporating future integrated ticketing and future real-time scheduling.
- Provide for a possible commuter rail stop within the city boundary.
- Investigate measures to accommodate bus and pedestrian priority at the crossing of the River Corrib adjoining the Salmon Weir Bridge.
- Investigate measures to allow for the repair/replacement of Wolfe Tone Bridge having regard to public transport requirements and pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Promote the provision of taxi stands on the public road network and in new developments as appropriate.
- Facilitate the provision of public transport and sustainable transportation facilities.
Cycling

- Complete the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Galway City and Environs and implement its recommendations, where appropriate.
- Improve cycling infrastructure in the city through the shared use of bus lanes, increased provision of cycle lanes and rollout of cycle parking facilities.
- Provide a cycle way between Gceannt Station and Renmore having regard to the objective to dual track this section of rail line.
- Provide a cycle way beside the railway line from Renmore/Ballyloughan to Roscam Park and Curragrean having regard to the objective to dual track this section of rail line.
- Provide a cycle route/shared surface along the banks of the canal from NUIG to Dominick Street.
- Provide a cycle way along the Terryland River Valley from the Headford Road to Castlegar.
- Where appropriate, provide cycle ways in all road schemes where roads are being upgraded.
- Provide motorcycle parking facilities at appropriate locations throughout the city.
- Provide bicycle parking facilities at appropriate locations throughout the city such as city centre, district centres, neighbourhood centres, beaches, cemeteries and parks.
- Implement two-way access to cyclists on one-way streets where feasible.
- Where a road has been assessed having regard to the statutory and national guidance requirements (including the hierarchy of solutions in the National Cycle Policy Framework) and a need identified for such treatments as hard shoulders or on road cycle lanes, such treatments shall be a minimum width of 2 metres.
Pedestrian

- Construct a new pedestrian bridge from Gaol Road to Newtownsmyth, location on map shown indicatively.
- Construct a new pedestrian bridge on the piers of the Old Clifden Railway Line from Waterside to the lands of NUIG and allow cycle use if feasible.
- Construct a pedestrian bridge from Fisheries Field to NUIG.
- Implement a new traffic circulation route to improve the pedestrian environment at Raven Terrace.
- Prioritise improvements to pedestrian movements from Headford Road LAP area, Woodquay, and Bothar na mBan and ensure that satisfactory linkages are provided in the redevelopment of Ceannt Station and the Harbour area.

Road Proposals and Improvements

- Construct a link road from the Sean Mulvoy Road to the Galway Shopping Centre replacing the existing access off the Bodkin Roundabout to the Galway Shopping Centre.
- Provide for upgrading of the Tuam Road (N17) from the Ffont Roundabout with the eastern approach road to the city boundary and including the realignment and relocation of the junction of the Castlegar Road with the Tuam Road.
- Incorporate a through road on residential lands between the Ballymoneen Road and the Clybaun Road serving development proposals on those lands.
- Implement road improvement schemes including bus priority measures on Seamus Quirke Road from the Browne Roundabout to the Western Distributor Road.
- Continue widening and improvements on Coolagh Road, Quarry Road and Monument Road.
- Continue the programme of improvement works on roads throughout the city.
- Facilitate a new access to Merlin Park Hospital from the Dublin Road at Galway Crystal.
- Carry out road widening and improvements at Bothar na gCoiste.
Chapter 4

Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity

4.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
4.2 Parks and Green Network
4.3 Greenways and Public Rights of Way
4.4 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity
4.5 Coastal Areas, Canals and Waterways
4.6 Urban Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows
4.7 Child Friendly City
4.8 Views of Special Amenity Value and Interest
4.9 Agricultural Lands
4.10 Specific Objectives
4.1 **Aim, Context and Strategy**

**Aim**
To provide for a green network in the city that allows for sustainable use and management of natural heritage, recreation amenity areas, parks and open spaces in an integrated manner. The green network will ensure the protection of nature and provide for the enhancement and expansion of passive and active recreational opportunities. It will be accessible to everyone and by sustainable modes of transport, where feasible. Ensure better integration of environmental and natural resource considerations in the Development Plan through the SEA process and provide the highest level of protection for Natura 2000 sites, taking account of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

**Context**
Galway City is located within a unique landscape and in close proximity to the undulating hills of Connemara where the River Corrib meets Galway Bay. Its natural setting is an intrinsic part of the cultural image and sense of place of Galway. The city has a myriad of natural features with an extensive coastline, River Corrib, canal system and a diversity of open spaces within its boundaries, including seashore, woodlands and wetlands. The city has an extensive range of designated areas of international and national importance. The candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC), Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib Complex, are designated under the EU Habitats Directive and the Special Protection Areas (SPA) of Inner Galway Bay and Lough Corrib (SPA), are designated under the EU Birds Directive. Of National importance is the Moycullen Bog NHA, part of which lies within the Plan area.

The sites and areas covered by ecological designations form an important component of the city’s recreational assets. Green spaces provide the city’s population direct access to nature, while sports and leisure facilities in the city cater for active and passive recreation, providing environmental, recreational and economic benefits. A key development and investment priority of the NDP 2007-2013 for Galway City is the conservation and protection of the city’s natural heritage. The development of green infrastructure and the availability of recreation opportunities, facilities and natural amenities are important quality of life factors for the location of inward investment and for individuals choosing a place to live.

A substantial amount of the lands in the city are natural or semi-natural in character. Within the city over a fifth of the total land area is designated as areas of natural heritage importance and recreational amenity open space. There are also other areas in the city such as agricultural land, which can provide recreation opportunities, provide a natural setting for the urban area and are of amenity and biodiversity value.

The Development Plan 2005-2011 established a green network of areas of natural heritage importance, recreation and amenity open spaces, including parks. It was considered that these areas are intrinsically linked and should be addressed jointly. This approach has been reinforced by local and national policy documents including the National Heritage Plan 2002, National Biodiversity Plan 2002, Galway City Heritage Plan 2006-2011, and the imminent Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan. The green network approach enables effective protection and enhancement of natural habitats, open spaces, landscape features and greenways.

The **Galway City Recreation and Amenity Needs Study 2008 (RANS)** reflects current thinking in sustainable recreation planning. It advances the green network approach and provides a co-ordinated strategic framework for future decision making in the Planning and management of recreation facilities and activities within the city. The RANS targets areas for further improvement based on current and projected future needs. It also identifies opportunities for delivery.

**Strategy**
- Promote a green network for the city that allows for sustainable use and management of natural heritage, recreation and amenity areas and parks in an integrated manner where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.
- Support and advance the strategic and specific policies and actions of the **Galway City Recreation and Amenity Needs Study 2008 (RANS)**.
- Promote accessibility to areas of natural heritage importance, recreation and amenity open spaces and parks to the wider community and by sustainable modes of transport.
- Promote Galway as a Child Friendly City, Healthy City and an Age Friendly City.
- Conserve, protect and enhance the designated and non-designated sites and natural habitats, while enabling the sustainable development of the city.
- Monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Development Plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process in accordance with Article 10 of the EU SEA Directive.
4.2 Parks and Green Network

There is an extensive range of areas of natural heritage importance, recreation and amenity open spaces and parks in the city. These areas are strongly associated with each other and form a combined natural resource within the city. The green network provides a strategic integrated approach to the sustainable use and management of areas of natural heritage importance and recreational and amenity open spaces, endorsed in the RANS.

Fig. 4. 1 - Green Network within Galway City

The City Council has made significant progress in developing a parks hierarchy and has invested substantial financial resources in developing the city’s parks. The RANS recommends three mechanisms to advance the development of parks: the preparation of master plans, management plans and guidelines. It also notes that there is a significant water amenity resource in the city that is largely underused. The RANS recommends that existing facilities and amenities need to be marketed and promoted. The findings of the study have informed the policies and objectives of the Development Plan with regard to recreation and amenity and the strategic policies and key actions of the RANS which possess an integral land-use dimension, have been amalgamated into the policies and specific objectives of the Plan.

The green network approach supports the linkage and connection of areas of natural heritage importance creating wildlife corridors, preventing habitat fragmentation and increasing biodiversity. Galway is 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. While many open spaces are on publicly owned lands, privately owned open spaces are also a significant component of open space within the city, including institutional and agricultural lands. The ecological sensitivity of open spaces vary and the Council will continue to ensure the conservation and protection of sensitive areas in the development of green networks. Their character and primary function within the green network of the city are as follows:
## Table 4.1 Open Spaces within the Green Network

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

Public allotments and community gardens are an intrinsic element of the creation of a sustainable city, promoting self-sufficiency and healthy living. Cultivating an allotment is a healthy pastime, environmentally friendly, producing a local and sustainable food supply and supporting a variety of natural functions, such as green open spaces and habitats for wildlife, encouraging biodiversity. The Council supports the RAPID Ballybane Organic Garden developed and maintained by the community. The Council will carry out a feasibility study in order to examine the potential for allotments in the city. In support of this, allotments and community gardens will be acceptable on a range of land use zones.

**Policy 4.2 Parks and Green Network**

- Support sustainable use and management of areas of natural heritage importance, parks and recreation amenity areas and facilities through an integrated green network policy approach in line with RANS, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.
- Support the actions of the Galway City RANS.
- Provide adequate recreation and amenity open space for the future development of the city.
- Achieve a sustainable balance between meeting future recreational needs (both passive and active) and the preservation of the city’s ecological and cultural heritage.
- Continue to acquire and develop lands zoned for recreation and amenity use. These lands will be used predominately for public use, but opportunities for public/private partnerships will also be investigated where a high standard of recreation facility will be developed and where opportunities for public access is provided.
- Improve accessibility to the city parks, recreation and amenity areas and facilities and include for sustainable modes of transport, where appropriate.
- Retain, extend and enhance opportunities for recreation within the green network for all members of the community including people with disabilities.
- Retain where appropriate the grounds of schools, colleges, sports clubs and other institutional facilities for recreation and amenity use allowing for increases in the physical capacity of the institutions or clubs and for policies in relation to CF zoned lands.
- Impose development levies under the development contribution scheme, where appropriate, to assist in the provision of recreation and amenity facilities.
- Support the participation of the city in the World Health Organisation Healthy Cities project and its aim to enhance the health of the city, its environment and its people.
- Support the actions of the Galway City Heritage Plan and imminent Biodiversity Action Plan relating to promoting ecological awareness and biodiversity.
- Co-operate with the NPWS, landowners and stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of management plans for designated sites.
- Promote the multi-use of indoor and outdoor (both private and public) recreation and leisure facilities and amenities to accommodate a diverse range of recreational needs.
- Enhance linkages and connectivity within the green network identified in Table 4.1.
- Promote public art, cultural events and exhibitions, as an important part in the design of facilities and amenities
- Ensure that all passive and active recreational proposals are considered in the context of potential impact on the environment, sites of ecological and biodiversity importance and general amenity.
- Ensure that notwithstanding land use zoning objectives, significant change of use from existing recreational facilities will only be considered if it is clearly demonstrated that either the loss of such a facility would not have an unacceptable impact on recreation and amenity provision in the city, or if an alternative facility is provided of equal or preferably superior benefit to the local community or the city’s hierarchy of facilities and amenities.
- Support the actions of the Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2009-2011.
4.3 Greenways and Public Rights of Way

A comprehensive network of greenways within the city was established under the last Development Plan. Greenways are ‘circulation routes reserved exclusively for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner, which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area’ (Declaration towards a European Greenway Network, 2000). Greenways in the city are routes which are exclusively reserved for pedestrians and cyclists, established and proposed along rivers, canals, shorelines, abandoned rail, road corridors or other linear landscape features separated from road traffic. Greenways can also be linkages and wildlife corridors between natural habitats and green open spaces. Such routes can enhance outdoor recreational opportunities and promote healthy living. Within the city, existing and proposed greenways, such as the Riverside walk, form connections between urban areas and the natural hinterland linking habitats. They are also proposed as links, between residential and community services, in particular existing and future school sites. It is important that the city’s network of greenways continue to be developed and improved. The RANS specifies that an extensive citywide coastal greenway from east to west, linking with riverside walkways would provide maximum benefit to the city and should be a priority for development.

At national level, government policy documents including Smarter Travel - A Sustainable Transport Future (2009) and The National Cycle Policy Framework (2009) set out clear targets for significantly increasing walking and cycling. The GTU, working in conjunction with Galway County Council, aims to increase walking and cycling in the city and environs by adopting a walking and cycling strategy encompassing a broad range of initiatives and measures. While the ultimate aim is to increase modal shift from car use towards more sustainable methods of travel, it is acknowledged that there will be related benefits in health promotion, enhancement of the public realm, recreation and tourism opportunities and increased accessibility.

Some greenways are on private lands where public right of ways are established. It is the policy of the Council to preserve existing public rights of way for the common good. Where in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development, the extinguishment of an existing right of way becomes expedient, the Council may require the provision of a suitable alternative. The Council will seek to create new public rights of way where necessary for pedestrian convenience or amenity reasons and also to enhance existing public rights of ways, where appropriate. Work is currently ongoing on the compilation of a list of established public rights of ways in the city.

The Plan acknowledges that in order to conserve and protect sensitive ecological areas, access may need to be restricted or redirected to less sensitive areas. The routes of proposed greenways shown on accompanying Development Plan maps are indicative only. Proposed greenways will be subject to a route selection process, which will take cognisance of site-specific circumstances including consideration of ecological sensitivity. Routes will be developed within and adjacent to Natura 2000 sites where it can be shown that there will be no adverse impacts upon the integrity of the sites as defined by their conservation objectives.

**Policy 4.3 Greenways and Public Rights of Way**

- Continue to develop and improve the greenway network in the city, providing alternative accessible circulation routes for pedestrians and cyclists, for the enjoyment and recreational use by the entire community.
- Develop a strategic citywide coastal greenway from east to west linking with Riverside walkways having due regard to nature conservation considerations.
- Investigate the potential of linked greenways from the city into the county area in particular to Barna, Oranmore and Tonabrocky.
- Create, enhance and maintain accessible and safe public rights of way where appropriate for pedestrian convenience and usage.
- Provide controlled access and linkages into all parks/public open spaces, areas of natural heritage, including along waterways, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Ensure that paths and structures are constructed from suitable materials.
- Develop and implement a Walking and Cycling Strategy for Galway City and Environs.

4.4 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

The city, for an urban area of its size and in contrast to other large Irish cities, has a diverse range of natural habitats and wildlife, many of which are of international and national conservation importance. Natural and semi-natural habitats located in the city include the coastline, waterways, urban woodlands, wet meadows, lakes, grassland, limestone pavement and blanket bog. The city’s rich natural heritage adds to its distinctive identity and character. Areas of natural heritage importance are a major part of the city’s green network and are a non-renewable resource of economic and social benefit to the city. Other natural features such as views and prospects of amenity value, trees and features of geological interest also contribute to this resource. It is predicted if climate change occurs, resulting in increased high intensity precipitation events, that the role of green spaces and vegetation will become increasingly important to slow down water run-off contributing to flood avoidance. A biodiversity action plan is currently being prepared and will provide a framework for the conservation, management and enhancement of the biodiversity and natural heritage of the city.
As referenced previously the city has a rich legacy of natural heritage. A number of sites, habitats and wildlife species of international, national and local importance are to be found within the city, including Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib Complex candidate SACs and Inner Galway Bay and Lough Corrib SPAs for birds. These areas are designated under EU legislation and are part of the Natura 2000 network of ecologically important sites across the EU. These designations seek to protect environmentally sensitive habitats and wildlife and avoid habitat fragmentation while encouraging biodiversity. Their protection and sustainable management is crucial because of their ecological and biodiversity value and related educational importance. The designated international conservation areas in the city are as follows:

Table 4.2 Designated Sites of International Importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Geographical Extent</th>
<th>Other Designations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galway Bay Complex cSAC</td>
<td>Marine, intertidal and coastal areas from Silverstrand around the inner bay area to Oranmore Bay including some adjoining wetlands and woodland areas.</td>
<td>Proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Site (wetlands of international importance). Lough Rusheen is designated a Wildfowl Sanctuary under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000 and also contains species and habitats of national and local importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lough Corrib Complex cSAC</td>
<td>River Corrib and islands and bordering wetlands and terrestrial habitats of ecological merit.</td>
<td>Lough Corrib SPA, Proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Site. The River Corrib is designated a Salmonid River for importance for salmon and trout and also contains species and habitats of national and local importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Galway Bay SPA</td>
<td>Marine and intertidal area including Galway Bay, Lough Atalia and Lough Rusheen.</td>
<td>Lough Rusheen is designated a Wildfowl Sanctuary under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000. The sanctuary is designated to protect certain ducks, geese and waders from hunting and shooting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Habitats Directive indicates the need for plans and projects to be subject to Habitat Directive Assessment (HDA) where they are likely to have a significant effect either individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a Natura 2000 site. Policies and objectives of the City Development Plan have been drafted taking cognisance of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. All plans including lower tier plans and projects identified as having potential to adversely impact on Natura 2000 sites are required to adhere to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, to ensure no adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. They are also required to consider DEHLG guidance for Planning Authorities on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009) and potential impacts identified in the HDA of the City Development Plan relating to habitat loss and fragmentation, water quality, disturbance and in combination effects. The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance/protection, mitigation and compensatory measures and is based on a precautionary approach. The Directive provides an auditing tool to help deliver sustainable development, it provides a case-by-case mechanism for recording the implications for a Natura 2000 site and its conservation objectives and enables the decision making process.

On a national level, natural heritage areas of national importance are designated and protected under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. A Natural Heritage Area (NHA) is an area considered important by reason of its flora, fauna, habitat type and geological or geomorphological interest. Moycullen Bog, an extensive lowland blanket bog, sections of which are located east of Tonabrocky, is a designated NHA. In addition, there are proposed NHAs (pNHAs), which were published in 1995, but have not yet been formally designated. These sites are of significance for wildlife and their habitats. Many of the pNHAs also have cSAC status. The Geological Survey of Ireland are in the process of identifying and selecting important geological and geomorphological sites for designation as NHA’s. In the interim the Council will recognise the importance of these sites and seek to protect these features pending their designation as NHAs.

Table 4.3 Possible Future Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)/Sites of Geological Importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Geographical Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mushroom Stones</td>
<td>Menlough</td>
<td>Three large rocks shaped by post-glacial fluvial processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarry</td>
<td>Merlin Park</td>
<td>Site of Merlin Park Marble Quarry. A quarry exposure of Galway Black Marble in the Upper Visean Limestone. Brachiopod fossils have been recorded in some shell beds. The quarry was once a main source of Galway Black Marble to the stone trade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barna Drumlins Swarm</td>
<td>Barna, Galway</td>
<td>A cluster of drumlins around Barna record ice flow southsouthwestwards into Galway Bay and show limestone carried onto granite bedrock. The internal structure shows till deposition over largely undeformed proglacial sediments and records an ice sheet readvance. The proglacial sediments record deposition in water from a range of closely related processes probably in a marine setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angliham and Menlough Quarries</td>
<td>Angliham, Menlough</td>
<td>Good example of Galway Black Marble.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Geographical Location

The peninsula of Roscam lies between Oranmore Bay to the east and the townland of Murroogh to the west, with the Woodlands containing mature broad-leaved trees, mixed broad-leaved conifer woodland and scrub. Located north and large open area of species-rich calcareous grassland.

### Blanket Bog

An area of blanket bog, fen, wet grassland and scrub located between Cappagh and Ballymoneen Roads.

### Table 4.4 Designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Geographical Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moycullen Bog</td>
<td>East of Tonabrocky</td>
<td>Blanket Bog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to SAC, SPA and NHA designations, there are other areas at a local level, which are of ecological and biodiversity importance to the city. The *Galway City Habitat Inventory (2005)* contains the identification and strategic audit of areas and habitats of high biodiversity and ecological value within the city boundaries. Key recommendations of the inventory include the establishment of a network of local biodiversity areas and listing these in the Development Plan (see Table 4.5). Many local biodiversity areas overlap to a greater or lesser extent with sites with nature conservation designations. These local biodiversity areas can be classified into a range of different habitats such as lakes, wetland, karst (exposed limestone pavement), peatland and woodland, all making an important contribution to biodiversity and amenity within the city. These habitats are mainly located on lands zoned for agriculture and recreation and amenity use, which contribute to their continued conservation and management. The Council will have due regard to the sensitivity and the biodiversity importance of these areas, where developments are proposed. The Council acknowledges that developments are likely within the vicinity of some of these areas. Local biodiversity areas shall be taken into account in the Planning, design and assessment of development applications and inform local area plans, where appropriate. Other practical measures for incorporating biodiversity at micro-level such as the continued provision of green open space, the retention of trees, hedges, stone walls, native species planting, the use of new technologies such as green roofs, green walls, permeable surfaces and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) shall be encouraged in all types of development.

### Table 4.5 Network of Local Biodiversity Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rusheen Bay – Barna Woods – Illaunafamona</td>
<td>This mosaic of habitats is located around the intertidal area of Rusheen Bay. The area has several types of shoreline including glacial cliffs, gravel banks, rocky shore, sandy shore, muddy sand and salt marsh. It also has several types of woodland in Barna Woods together with various semi-natural grassland types between Silverstrand and Gentian Hill. The entire area is designated as either a SAC and/or SPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cappagh – Ballymoneen</td>
<td>An area of blanket bog, fen, wet grassland and scrub located between Cappagh and Ballymoneen Roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballagh – Barnacranny Hill</td>
<td>Connemara peatlands, which includes blanket bog, fen, wet grassland, heathland and scrub, located east of Tonabrocky. This area is designated an NHA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton Island and nearby shoreline</td>
<td>The intertidal area around Mutton Island and the shoreline between the Grattan Road strand and Nimmo’s Pier hold the highest densities of wintering birds in the immediate vicinity of the city. The habitats are a mixture of rocky shore, sandy shore and shingle banks. The entire area is covered by SPA designation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lough Atalia and Renmore Lagoon</td>
<td>Lough Atalia is a land-locked inlet, holds tidal water at low tide and has the largest salt marsh within the city. Renmore Lagoon is a former outlet of Lough Atalia, is brackish and is surrounded by wet grassland, reed swamp and shingle banks. Lough Atalia and the intertidal area at Renmore except the Renmore Lagoon is designated an SPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Corrib and adjoining wetlands</td>
<td>The River Corrib and the associated wetlands at Illaunacorra, including Jordan’s Island, contain an important complex of habitats such as lowland river, limestone/marl lake, reed swamp, wet grassland and wet woodland. The area also includes reed swamp and meadows on either side of the Dyke Road between Quincentenary Bridge and Salmon Weir and wet woodland at Dangan to the south of Dangan Business and Technology Park on the west bank of the river and peatland areas north of Bushypark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menlough to Coolagh Hill</td>
<td>Area of high value habitats centred on the Menlough area to the north of the city. The area has thin calcareous soils overlying limestone, which is exposed on the surface in many places. The area includes oak-ash-hazel woodland at Menlough Woods. It includes a mosaic of exposed limestone rock, calcareous grassland and hazel scrub. A small turlough occurs at the centre of this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballindooley - Castlegar</td>
<td>This area is centred on Ballindooley Lough and includes fen, poor fen, reed swamp, wet grassland, scrub and exposed limestone rock. The Castlegar area contains smaller areas of wet grassland, scrub and exposed limestone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballybrit Racecourse</td>
<td>Large open area of species-rich calcareous grassland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merlin Park Woods</td>
<td>Woodlands containing mature broad-leaved trees, mixed broad-leaved conifer woodland and scrub. Located north and south of Merlin Park Hospital and Dublin Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doughiska</td>
<td>This area along the eastern boundary of the city, is centred on an area of exposed limestone rock with calcareous grassland and scrub. The grassland contains orchid species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roscam</td>
<td>The peninsula of Roscam lies between Oranmore Bay to the east and the townland of Murrug to the west, with the railway line dividing it from lands to the north. It contains some small but relatively undisturbed examples of salt marsh, shingle banks, brackish lagoon, sandy shore and muddy sand shore, with calcareous grassland and scrub.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity

Policy 4.4 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

- Protect, conserve and promote the enhancement of internationally (EU) and nationally designated sites of natural heritage importance, including Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib Complex cSACs, Galway Bay SPA and existing, proposed and possible future NHAs in the city.
- Support the actions of the Galway City Heritage Plan and imminent Biodiversity Action Plan relating to the promotion of ecological awareness and biodiversity, the protection of wildlife corridors and the prevention of wildlife habitat fragmentation.
- Co-operate with the NPWS, landowners and stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of management plans for designated sites.
- Have regard to the relevant aspects of the Galway City Habitat Inventory and to wildlife and biodiversity considerations in supporting the biodiversity of the city and in the Council’s role/responsibilities, works and operations, where appropriate.
- Protect and conserve rare and threatened habitats, including those listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.
- Ensure that plans and projects with the potential to have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites (cSACs or SPA) whether directly, indirectly or in combination with other plans or projects are subject to Habitats Directive Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and associated legislation and guidelines, to inform decision making.
- Achieve a sustainable balance between meeting future recreational needs (both passive and active) and the preservation of the city’s ecological heritage.

4.5 Coastal Areas, Canals and Waterways

The coast, Lough Corrib, rivers and canals are important natural resources in the city, providing long-term benefits for both people and wildlife. These assets are significant to the natural heritage of the city, shaping the unique urban structure of the city and are an intrinsic part of its identity.
Canals and Waterways

The city centre is encompassed by an important resource of inland waterways including the Eglinton Canal, the Corrib system, the lesser waterways of the Cathedral River, the West River and the many headraces, tailraces and minor canals. The original name of Galway was the 'town of the streams'. Waterways have always played a major role in the architectural and economic evolution of the city as displayed by the strong legacy of industrial archaeology in the city centre. The canal is an important wildlife corridor contributing to the biodiversity of the city. The river and its banks, canal system and the coastline, by virtue of their linear and continuous nature, are valuable wildlife corridors linking with the natural hinterland. Outside of the city centre the banks of the River Corrib are semi-natural in character and development is restricted in order to protect water quality and the semi-natural character of the river.

The canal system lies at the heart of the built-up area of the city centre and requires special consideration in order to respect its setting and to ensure any developments abutting the canal do not disproportionately affect its amenity and aesthetic quality. Public accessibility to the canal will be encouraged in the design of developments, where feasible.

Coastal Area

Galway's coastal area is an important tourist and recreational amenity. Galway is fortunate to have a number of beaches, suitable for bathing, close to the city centre. The significant economic value of the coast is apparent in Salthill, a traditional seaside resort and major tourist attraction. Silverstrand and Ballyloughan beaches are also significant assets for the city. Both Silverstrand and Salthill beaches have been awarded Blue Flag status. The Council will seek to retain the Blue Flag status of Silverstrand and Salthill beaches and extend this status to Ballyloughan and Grattan beaches in the future. Along the coastline, land use zoning reflects the international ecological importance of the bay, its high visual amenity and the dynamic nature of coastal flooding and erosion processes.

Policy 4.5 Coastal Area, Canals and Waterways

- Protect and maintain the integrity of the coastal environment and waterways by avoiding significant impacts and meeting the requirements of statutory bodies, national and european legislation and standards.
- Conserve and protect natural conservation areas within the coastal area and along waterways and ensure that the range and quality of associated habitats and the range and populations of species are maintained.
- Develop and enhance the recreational and amenity potential of the city's waterways and coastal area, while not compromising the ecological importance of these areas.
- Investigate the extensive water resource in the city with a view to exploring where public access and enjoyment can be improved and where potential sustainable uses can be developed to the benefit of the city and have regard to ecological conservation and safety considerations.
- Support the implementation of the recommendations of the The Western River Basin District Management Plan (WRBDMP) 2009-2015 in relation to the protection of water quality of surface waters, groundwater and coastal waters.
- Ensure development and uses adhere to the principles of sustainable development and prohibit any development or use, which negatively impact on water quality.
- Ensure the conservation of the canal corridor and insist that developments abutting the canal relate to the context of the adjacent environment and contribute to the overall amenity and explore the possibility of opportunities for public access.
- Work with stakeholders including OPW, WRBD and Corrib Navigation Trust in the management of the river and canal systems.
- Encourage uses which will facilitate conservation of the industrial archeology legacy of mill buildings, warehouses and associated features.
- Ensure developments located adjacent to the River Corrib do not adversely affect the safe and accessible navigation of the river.
- Ensure the protection of the River Corrib as a Salmonid River, where appropriate.
- Prohibit the location of structures other than structures with essential links to the waterway within 10 metres of the River Corrib in G agricultural zoned lands.
- Facilitate sustainable flood defence and coastal protection works in order to prevent flooding and coastal erosion, subject to environmental and visual considerations.
- Investigate the possibility of the development of a working millrace.
- Maintain and extend the achievement of the Blue Flag status.
- Ensure development within the aquatic environment shall be carried out in consultation with prescribed bodies and with adherence to their guidelines.
- Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.
- Ensure development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation, on protected species.
4.6 Urban Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

Trees contribute to the health, the wildlife and the everyday quality of life of the city. Trees are important natural assets in the urban environment. Trees enhance the aesthetic quality of the landscape, providing valuable habitats for wildlife and acting as carbon sinks and mitigating against the effects of air pollution and climate change. Mature trees and scenic settings can also add to the value of property. Trees, urban woodlands, and hedgerows provide ecological links within the wider landscape and need to be valued and protected. Other woodlands including parks such as, Merlin Park Woods, Terryland Forest Park and Barna Woods/Lough Rusheen Park, are important amenities in the city. The Council will, where possible, protect trees, groups of trees, woodlands and hedgerows of special amenity or environmental value. In addition the Council will continue its tree planting programme, in particular, within public amenity areas and will require tree planting within developments. To add to the city both aesthetically and environmentally, the City Council will create and implement a plan which identifies suitable parts of the road and street network for the Planting of trees.

**Policy 4.6 Urban Woodlands and Trees**

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

The vision of Galway as a ‘Child Friendly City’ is to create a physical environment that includes for diverse opportunities for play, characterised by safe and accessible recreational areas and provides for everyday activities such as community and educational facilities. This reflects the philosophy of the original establishment of the Child Friendly Initiative by UNICEF in 1996 and the National Play Policy Ready Steady Play! A National Play Strategy (2004) published by the National Children’s Office. The principal aim of the national play policy is to improve the quality of children’s lives through the provision of play opportunities. The importance of play for the development of a child is well recognised and outdoor play facilities are key contributors to the aesthetic and physical quality of neighbourhoods.

The Council’s Galway as a Child Friendly City (2000) report advocates a geographical and hierarchical approach to the provision of play areas for children, from informal play areas in residential areas to equipped play facilities provided at city and neighbourhood level. It highlights the importance of providing qualitative open space in residential estates for the recreational needs of residents including children, which facilitates a variety of different environments conducive to play. The report promotes the established concept of homezones, where the design emphasis is not only on traffic calming but creating a quality living environment for all. This report is incorporated into the policies of this Plan, in particular the policies regarding housing, transport and recreation amenity. To date, the City Council has provided playgrounds at various locations around the city. Two playgrounds have recently been completed at Merlin Woods City Park, (Doughiska RA zoned lands), and Roscam Neighbourhood Park. Future playground provision is proposed at Baile an Choiste/Ard an Choiste residential areas, Corrib Park Neighbourhood Park, Drom Chaoin Estate and Ballyloughaun Beach amenity lands. Other facilities will be developed through the requirements of the development management process.

**Policy 4.7 Child Friendly City**
- Enhance and promote Galway as a Child Friendly City that will help children understand and feel secure in their environment and will encourage them to experience and respect the natural heritage of the city.
- Maintain and enhance existing play areas and provide new, accessible and safe play areas in accordance with the Council’s RANS and housing policy requirements and any subsequent strategies.
- Continue the improvement and development of playground facilities as outlined in the Council’s RANS.
- Promote the provision of facilities for older children and teenagers within the city, including skateboarding areas, teenage shelters and ball courts.

4.8 Views of Special Amenity Value and Interest

There are views within the city, which require special protection due to their significant contribution to scenic amenity. Views of scenic amenity value and interest define the character of the city, engender a strong sense of place and significantly enhance local amenities. Many are important tourist viewing points of the city, such as along Salthill Promenade and from Circular Road. In general, these views are mainly of the coastal areas, River Corrib, Lough Corrib and panoramic views of the surrounding rural countryside and skyline. It is acknowledged however that views are not static and can be changed by both natural and human activity. Some changes in a view can be absorbed without jeopardising the integrity of the view, while other changes can have detrimental impacts on a view, which reduces the experience of that view irreparably. It is the objective of the Council to assess proposed developments, which are located in the line of a protected view and prevent developments, which by virtue of their scale, design or location would have a detrimental impact on these views. Protected views within the city can be classified into two types; panoramic views and linear views. The former allows expansive views over landscape while the latter are views towards a particular landscape, observed from a particular roadway.

**Policy 4.8 Views of Special Amenity Value and Interest**
- Protect views and prospects of special amenity value and interest, which contribute significantly to the visual amenity and character of the city through the control of inappropriate development.
- Require landscaping schemes as part of planning applications to have regard to such views and limit any planting which could have a detrimental impact on the value of protected views.
4.9 Agricultural Lands

The strategy of this Development Plan includes for expansion of the city into undeveloped agricultural lands on the east side of the city at Ardaun, with more contained incremental expansion in other areas. The balance of lands designated for agricultural use, approximately 30% of the total area, is still significant in the context of the city. Agricultural lands serve a number of purposes, they provide for agricultural uses, have an important natural, recreation and amenity value and can also facilitate strategic projects, such as roads. In the long term they are a major resource for the future expansion of the city.

There are two different land use zoning objectives for agricultural lands in the Plan – A zone and G zone. In addition to their agricultural function, these areas are a considerable resource for the city in terms of recreation and amenity. They also form part of the unique natural setting, which provides a backdrop to the built environment. The distinction of the G zoning objective is that these lands are predominately in agricultural use but also have an important landscape value, which distinguishes them from less visually sensitive and amenity rich agricultural lands. In addition some G zoned lands have future potential recreational and amenity purposes and can satisfy amenity needs generated by an expanding population. The policy of the Council for agricultural zones is to facilitate the continued use of these lands for agricultural purposes, subject to general environmental considerations and to control non-agricultural development.

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

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Table 4.7 Protected Views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panoramic Views</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 1</td>
<td>Panoramic views of the city and the River Corrib from Circular Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 2</td>
<td>Views from Dyke Road and Coolagh Road encompassing the River Corrib and Coolagh fen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 3</td>
<td>Seascapes views of Lough Atalia from Lough Atalia Road, College Road, Dublin Road and Lakeshore Drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 4</td>
<td>Seascapes views of Galway Bay from Grattan Road, Seapoint, the Salthill Promenade and the coast road to the western boundary of the golf course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 5</td>
<td>Seascapes views encompassing Lough Rusheen including section of Blakes Hill, sections of Knocknacarra Road, sections of Barna Road from Knocknacarra to city boundary and including the road to Silverstrand Beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 6</td>
<td>Panoramic views of the city and the Terryland Valley from parts of the Castlegar-Ballindooley Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 7</td>
<td>Views encompassing Lough Corrib from parts of the Quarry Road and Monument Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 8</td>
<td>Seascapes views of Galway Bay from the old Dublin Road to the City boundary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 9</td>
<td>Views toward the sea at Roscam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linear Views</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 10</td>
<td>Views from Galway-Moycullen Road (NS59) of the River Corrib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 11</td>
<td>Views from Waterside of the River Corrib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 12</td>
<td>Seascapes views of Galway Bay from Kingston Road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 13</td>
<td>Seascapes views of Galway Bay at Ballylooughan from south of the railway bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 14</td>
<td>Views northwards encompassing the River Corrib and adjoining lands from Quincentenary Bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 15</td>
<td>Views towards Galway Bay from Hawthorn Drive, Renmore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 16</td>
<td>Views from Quincentenary Bridge Road southwards over Terryland Forest Park and River Corrib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 17</td>
<td>Seascapes views from Military Walk, Renmore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 18</td>
<td>Views towards River Corrib from junction of St. Bridget’s Place with St. Bridget’s Terrace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. 19</td>
<td>Views encompassing Ballindooley Lough from parts of the Headford Road.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy 4.9 Agricultural Lands

- Encourage sustainable agricultural activities, protect the rural character of these lands and where appropriate provide for sustainable recreation/amenity opportunities.
- Prevent developments which could cause environmental pollution or injury to general amenities.
- Ensure agricultural development complies with the measures set out in the Western River Basin District Management Plan (WRBDMP) 2009-2015.
- Provide for limited residential development in A zoned agricultural lands.
- Prohibit the location of structures other than structures with essential links to the waterway within ten metres of the River Corrib, in G zoned lands.

4.10 Specific Objectives

The Council has a number of short term, medium term and long term specific objectives with regards to Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity as set out below. Many of the specific objectives have been informed by the RANS. Projects, plans and developments with potential to have an adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites will be subject to Habitats Directive Assessment.

Short Term

- Prepare master plans for parks in the city in accordance with RANS in consultation with local residents, including Barna/Lough Rusheen Park, Merlin Woods City Park (Doughiska RA zoned land) and Terryland Forest Park.
- Progress the acquisition of lands, for recreation and amenity purposes, and other lands which will enhance the extent of the green network, in particular key linkages and lands for active and passive recreation.
- Acquire and develop predominately for public use, lands zoned for recreation and amenity use in conjunction with new housing at Castlegar, Doughiska, Terryland Valley, Ballymoneen, Knocknacarra and Ardaun.
- Facilitate the extension of existing coastal greenway and linkages to create a city-wide coastal path from Silverstrand to Oranmore including the coastal walk extending from Silverstrand to Sallin in conjunction with approved coastal protection works.
- Investigate the further extension of the pedestrian access to Mutton Island subject to future review and a safe access protocol.
- Extend the riverside walk relating to the development of the Millennium Bridge at Waterside.
- Progress the enhancement of civic spaces at the Small Crane and Woodquay/Potato Market area.
- Acquire and develop new city cemetery site(s) in the city or city environs and approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities.
- Prepare and implement a masterplan for South Park.
- Prepare a strategy for the long-term improvement and enhancement of the Salthill Promenade.
- Develop equipped child play facilities in accordance with the Council’s annual playground programme.
- Continue with the inventory of trees of all suitable varieties including fruit trees and identify locations for new tree planting.
- Provide for allotments/community gardens in the city subject to Council approval.
- Continue the preparation of a list of existing public rights of way in the city and review annually.
- Develop the following guidelines in relation to new development:
  - Best practice advice for design of homezones.
  - Best practice advice for open space.
  - Best practice advice for roof gardens.
• Prepare a master plan for Lough Atalia to include the upgrading of the amenity park, ecological areas and development of sailing activities

• Undertake a feasibility assessment to identify the type and optimum locations for multipurpose synthetic/floodlit playing facilities to include play facilities for the 0-6 age group.

• Develop a community centre/sports hall, a swimming pool with associated ancillary facilities on a phased basis adjoining and linked with the existing changing rooms at Cappagh Park and Doughiska on RA zoned lands.

• Develop and upgrade Millars Lane for passive recreation.

• Prepare and implement a plan which identifies suitable parts of the road and street network for the planting of trees.

Medium/Long Term

• Prepare an amenity environs plan in conjunction with Galway County Council to include greenway linkages to Barna, Oranmore and Tornabrocy.

• Explore greenways to link Merlin Woods City Park, Murroogh LAP area from Ballyloughan and Liam Mellows GAA lands to Lough Atalia with the coastal greenway.

• Explore the potential for developing lands adjacent to Menlough Castle incorporating Menlough Woods as a park.

• Investigate the potential of providing public services for example kiosks or stalls, in or in close proximity to public parks and open spaces and along the coastal greenway.

• Explore the potential of Heritage Council grants and other funding opportunities for the development of greenways in the city.

• Develop a number of greenways within the city including:

  • Coastal walk extending from Galway Docks to Roscam Point.
  • Riverside walk along the western side of the River Corrib in conjunction with NUIG to terminate at the access road beside the running track which links Galway/Moycullen Road at Dangan to the River Corrib.
  • Riverside walk from the Dyke Road to NUIG lands on the opposite side of the River Corrib using the piers of the Old Galway - Clifden Railway Line.
  • Riverside walk along the eastern side of the River Corrib from the Dyke Road to the pier at Menlough. A deviation from the route indicated on the Development Plan map may be permitted, any alternative alignments shall maximise amenity benefits.
  • Riverside walk along the northern side of the Terryland River from the Dyke Road to the point where it disappears underground at Glenanail to the rear of Glenburren Park.
  • Pedestrian walk along the railway line from Eyre Square to Curragean.
  • Riverside walk along western side of the River Corrib from O’Briens Bridge to Wolfe Tone Bridge.
  • Develop and upgrade the two existing boreens at Cappagh and Ballyburke for passive recreation.
  • Develop pedestrian and cycle ways at Knocknacarra, Doughiska and Castlegar linking residential areas with existing and future services and amenities.
  • Retain car parking of approximately 30 car parking spaces for amenity purposes east of Merlin Park Woods at Doughiska.
  • 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.
  • Investigate possible locations for the provision of municipal water based recreation infrastructure along the River Corrib.
  • Undertake a feasibility study for an iconic facility to provide facilities for land or water based sporting activities.
  • Identify active recreation facilities for the elderly with particular reference to indoor/outdoor bowling.
  • Identify and provide active recreation facilities in the vicinity of Castlegar/Bothar an Coiste to serve existing and future populations.
  • Facilitate the development of a permanent ice-rink within the city subject to identification of a suitable site.
Chapter 5

Enterprise and Employment

5.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
5.2 Enterprise and Employment Strategy
5.3 Retail
5.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim
To facilitate and promote the balanced and sustainable economic development of the city as a National Gateway and provide for a diverse range of employment needs in order to maximise employment opportunities and provide for a high level of service provision and drive national and regional competitiveness.

Context
Galway has a regional economic role. The census records for 2006 confirm that after Dublin and Cork, the city has the third largest working population in the state. This reflects the significant labour catchment of the city which extends into the surrounding counties and draws in an additional 18,931 workers to add to a resident workforce of 20,961 employed in the city2. The city provides for a diverse range of economic activities, services and employment opportunities. In recent years, economic activities have grown with expansion notable within the public sector and construction. The commercial sector is the most important employer with education/health and manufacturing industries both reflecting higher than national average rates. This indicates the importance of the two third level institutes and the various hospitals in the city. It also highlights the niche manufacturing industries that have clustered in Galway which include the medical technologies sector and the internationally traded ICT services and software.

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) has designated the city as a Gateway, a regional centre of economic growth. The strategy emphasises that the attributes of a Gateway are such that they will create the critical mass that will help sustain job growth within the region. It indicates that the dynamism of gateways means that these are the areas where the clustering of economic activities occur. This is already in evidence in Galway particularly in the ICT and medical technologies fields of industry. The city still has considerable potential for further development and capacity for new enterprises. The third level institutions are particularly well placed to fulfill the role of sources and drivers of innovation. The NDP recognises these strengths of the city and indicates that it is important to have an agreed development strategy for the city and environs supported by investments in key pieces of infrastructure such as transport, water, wastewater and the maintenance of a high quality of life and environment.

The Atlantic Gateways Initiative which is being progressed currently is based on the NSS. It seeks to exploit the potential for a development corridor connected by the gateway cities of Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford. Critical mass and added value is considered to be achievable through collaboration and co-ordination along this corridor, which could provide a competitive scale to balance that already enjoyed in the Greater Dublin Region. Galway City can benefit from this alliance.

Although the city has been the driving force in economic development in the region, it is likely that large-scale employment opportunities will be located on the periphery and outside of the city boundary, in adjacent County Council lands. This will reflect historic patterns of location, accessibility and investment decisions by the IDA. However, the city as a Gateway will continue to be the catalyst for this growth through the provision of vital services, links with third level institutions, infrastructural investment, a good quality of life and environment and most importantly a highly motivated and educated labour force. These together will create the dynamic for job creation.

The recent pattern of economic growth however has slowed considerably as a result of economic changes that are taking place both nationally and globally. In addition the traditional drivers of the Irish economy are changing, reflecting global trends and emerging new business models where there is a shift to service activities. Competition has sharpened between cities where the mobility of people and capital has increased globally. In this context and acknowledging that these changes are all happening against the backdrop of an Irish recession, efficient investment choices and strategies must be adopted to ensure Galway retains the competitive edge it currently enjoys. Enhanced city performance will have positive spill over effects into the West Region and ultimately the country as a whole. Prioritising investment and initiatives that develop the competitiveness of cities in Ireland, including Galway, presents an effective use of government funds.

Within the city, it will be necessary to support and enhance existing sustainable employment, in particular those in enterprise, retail and service sectors. In addition, it will be necessary to provide opportunities for the expansion of employment within the city. The Development Plan can support this through land use zoning, infrastructural, energy and telecommunication investment and an integrated approach to transportation provision. In addition the health of the economy will benefit from support for educational resources to expand the skills base of the labour market which will be very important in the re-training of those recently made unemployed. Important also will be the creation of a favorable environment that will encourage and sustain innovation through research and collaborative ventures with the higher institutes of education- NUIG and GMIT. It is also acknowledged that there is a strong legacy of a cultural creative economy in the city which contributes greatly to the image of the city and the economy including tourism.

The GOB strategy Gaillimh Beo agus Bríomhar 2002 – 2012 recognises that there is a need to ensure that the city remains an attractive location for investment in order to further its future development as a Gateway. This quality of life in the city will be a key attraction for investment and for retaining a skilled workforce. In addition the cultural distinctiveness and the high quality natural and built environment coupled with entertainment opportunities will enhance Galway’s case for attracting inward investment.

The GOB strategy also endorses an integrated approach towards tourism in order to enable future sustainable tourism development of attractions and infrastructure within the city. The Galway City and County Tourism Committee’s Developing Sustainable Tourism in Galway, A Framework for Action 2003-2012, seeks a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to sustainable tourism development within the region to maximise the benefits of existing resources, including natural amenities and cultural identity. Tourism is a major economic activity within the local economy of the city and its continuing

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2 CSO: A Profile of Working Population of Large Towns (2009)
growth generates a range of associated economic activities and new employment opportunities. Fáilte Ireland indicates that in 2008 approximately 26% of the 3.5 million overseas holidaying visitors to Ireland visited the West Region. Fáilte Ireland also record a significant income of €274m generated by domestic tourism to the west with a recorded 1.29m visitors to the West Region. A high proportion of both domestic and overseas visitors would have visited and stayed in the city which is reflected by the high attendances at festivals and cultural events and the extensive range of tourist facilities in the city. In this regard tourism is a strong contributor to the local economy and also adds greatly to the atmosphere and ambiance in the city.

The role of the city as a second tier shopping centre in the national shopping hierarchy is borne out by the level of those engaged in commercial activities. There has been a significant expansion in retail floorspace in recent years. Initially this was concentrated in the city centre brought about through sustainable policies on city centre primacy. In more recent times, in line with the retail strategy, facilities in the suburbs have been developing and providing district, neighbourhood and local centre level services convenient to communities. The settlement strategy for Ardaun will also include for an appropriately sized district centre, more details of scale and location will be provided for at local area plan stage.

Comparison shopping facilities and high quality goods shopping is still concentrated in the city centre which retains its wide retail catchment which extends into the county. The original retail strategy prepared as a joint exercise noted the higher than desirable level of convenience shopping in the city patronised by residents in the county, this trend has reversed as facilities have improved in surrounding towns. Bulky goods shopping has also extended and trends indicate a concentration in business parks such as that at Briarhill, Galway Retail Park, Liosban, Wellpark and along the Tuam Road.

The policy for extending retail services in the city centre still remains. This includes extending into the Ceannt Station site with linkage to the regenerated Docks area. Increased provision is also anticipated at Headford Road following redevelopement of the unsustainable low density environment currently at this location. Following these strategies will allow for the required expansion of the city and also expansion of enterprise and employment opportunities in the city.

There is a commitment to prepare a revised joint retail strategy with the County Council, it is not envisaged that retail policies formulated in the Plan will be amended significantly but this exercise will provide an updated baseline status for the county and help better co-ordination of development on the periphery of the city in the interests of sustainability. The analysis carried out for the purposes of the Plan in conjunction with revised floorspace details has been sufficient for the purposes of estimating demand for future zoning designations.

The Plans for the re-location and extension of the Harbour area which include for deepwater port facilities has potential to contribute to both tourism and enterprise in the local economy. It is acknowledged that such a development could have strategic importance for the city and is supported subject to assessment on economic viability, environmental, visual and transport grounds.

**Strategy**

- Support and facilitate the sustainable economic development of Galway as a Gateway for the West Region.
- Ensure sufficient land is available within the city/ environs to facilitate inward investment, local economic development and expansion of existing enterprises and ensure that these are linked to sustainable opportunities for transportation.
- Provide for a diverse range of employment needs in order to maximise employment opportunities available for all sections of the community in the city.
- Ensure that there are sufficient lands zoned to deliver the demand for retail floor space in an efficient, equitable and sustainable manner.
- Preserve the role of the city centre as the prime retail area and provide for the extension of the city centre in a sequential manner.
- Strengthen the city’s position as a tourism destination by promoting and facilitating the further development of sustainable tourism infrastructure and attractions.

**5.2 Enterprise and Employment Strategy**

The significant population growth experienced in Galway since the early 90’s has been driven by the natural rate of increase and by significant net migration. This has paralleled the national trend where the pace of economic growth was reflected in a 75% increase in the number of people at work between 1990 and 2007. Those registering in the census to being at work increased by 20% between 2002 and 2006 which compares to a national increase of 10%, illustrating the buoyancy of the local economy up to 2006. The Census records also show that within the city there was a working population of 39,892, which includes a commuting population of 18,931 coming into the city for work while 5,056 persons leave the city for work purposes. Recent research shows that people are willing to travel lengthy distances to access employment in the city owing to the quality and range of job opportunities. The proportion at work in the various sectors of employment reflects those nationally though education and health/social work, much of which is in the state sector, are particularly important to the city economy (see Table 5.1). The commercial sector is the most important employer followed by manufacturing. The regional role of Galway as a retail and service centre reflects the participation in the general commercial area.

Manufacturing has grown substantially both in Galway and in the West Region. A key driver of this growth has been the presence of life science activities and medical technologies in particular. In parallel, research competencies have been growing in the life sciences area particularly in NUIG and also in the...
Table 5.1 Employment by Industrial Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Group</th>
<th>Total Galway City Resident Workers</th>
<th>Total Galway City Workers plus Commuters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>4,789</td>
<td>8,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>1,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and retail trade</td>
<td>3,646</td>
<td>5,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>2,966</td>
<td>3,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, storage and communications</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>1,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking and financial services</td>
<td>1,042</td>
<td>1,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate, renting and business activities</td>
<td>3,121</td>
<td>4,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration and defence</td>
<td>1,109</td>
<td>2,145</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2,539</td>
<td>3,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social work</td>
<td>3,419</td>
<td>6,238</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other community, social and personal service activities</td>
<td>1,239</td>
<td>1,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry not stated</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26,017</strong></td>
<td><strong>39,892</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSO, A Profile of the Working Population of Large Towns (April 2009)

medical technologies research group at GMIT. The internationally trading ICT services has also shown strong growth. The medical technologies industries are predominantly foreign owned. The ICT industries in contrast comprise of a more balanced mix of foreign and indigenous companies. Competencies in this area have also developed in research within the higher institutes.

Educational attainment has increased in the city, almost half of the labour force are educated to third level which reflects a higher standard of education than state average levels, giving Galway a strong economic competitive edge nationally as Ireland evolves to a knowledge based economy. This is further manifested when the socio-economic profile is viewed, showing a high proportion of people employed as professionals in Galway City. This correlates with the relatively high levels of employment in education and health. The number of semi-skilled workers is also higher than the state average, which reflects the type of manufacturing engaged in by workers living in Galway.

5.2.1 Employment Strategy

Specialist Industry

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

Galway City has all these characteristics including a strong entrepreneurial culture, track record of innovativeness and capacity for business networking. It is likely that locations for such industries will continue to gravitate towards the city environs. There is already a concentration of such uses at Mervue, Ballybrit/Parkmore Business and Technology Park with smaller research and innovative companies located at Newcastle/Dangan. In the future, demands can be met at the undeveloped IDA Business and Technology lands at Parkmore (38ha) the strategic IDA site at Omnaore (37ha), which has already a 10 year planning permission for a significant bio-pharmaceutical manufacturing campus and the strategic site at Athenry (97ha). This does not preclude additional industries being located within the city, in particular at Mervue on the IDA owned Business and Technology Park and on industrial zoned lands at Rahoon.

General Industry

The traditional manufacturing sector has been in decline for a number of years. This has not been a completely negative trend as there has been an increase in the skills base in the city and upward social mobility reflecting the broadening of higher quality employment opportunities. However there is a need to retain lands for industrial uses. These traditional industries are particularly concentrated at Mervue and along the Tuam Road and Monivea Road. These lands accommodate predominately light industry, small manufacturing and service units, corporate type offices, warehousing and some bulky goods including motor showrooms (classified as non-retail in the Retail Planning Guidelines). These industries are predominantly indigenous owned and operated. There is a need to protect these lands for industrial uses which are continuously under threat from higher value uses. These lands
will also accommodate businesses that do not fall into the categories supported by Enterprise Ireland or the IDA and will also provide opportunities for small starter businesses. This is important in the context of Forfás research, which highlights the fact that the role of indigenous firms and their contribution to Ireland’s future economic growth will become increasingly important.

The Harbour Enterprise Park currently supports a number of industries, some of a heavy industrial nature and some with direct links to the harbour facilities. The Council will continue to support these developments particularly in the context of the expansion plans envisaged by the Galway Harbour Board where they do not have an adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

Offices

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

Specialist offices which are usually of a significant scale of employment can have a high element of processing such as insurance companies or call centres. These can be located on Industrial (I) or Commercial/Industrial (CI) zones. Currently these office types are located at Rahoon, Ballybrit/Parkmore and the Tuam Road. Other general offices that are of a more administrative nature and have elements of public/retail offices are located in the city centre or edge of centre sites. There is capacity in both CI and I zones, to accommodate additional floorspace demands for specialist offices. There will also be considerable capacity on the regeneration lands at Ceannt Station, the Harbour and the Headford Road to cater for further new general office development. Although not designated as such, the lands at the Headford Road could accommodate any additional need for research and development type offices owing to the proximity of NUIG and the potential for new pedestrian links from the Headford Road to the campus. The regeneration lands will be favorably placed for large scale office type development and offices of a civic nature, having the benefit of adjoining bus and rail linkage and the status and attraction of being located in the city centre.

Small scale offices which provide local services such as doctor/dental surgeries are open to be considered in residential areas subject to amenity and traffic considerations.

Health and Education

The census statistics as shown in Table 5.1 indicate that health and education much of which is in the state sector are particularly important to the local economy. The service roles they play are at regional level and in addition to their primary function contribute also to research and innovation having significant links with industry. In addition a critical collaborative relationship exists between NUIG and UCHG with respect to medical training and research which is acknowledged. The Plan supports the continued operation and expansion of all health and education institutions and will examine best solutions for sustainable traffic management, in conjunction with the Galway Transportation Unit (GTU).

Specialist medical services can be accommodated within district, neighbourhood and local centres and the city centre. Primary health care centres are also uses that should be accommodated in these areas where they can be easily accessed by communities and can enhance the level of local service provision.

Tourism

Tourism makes a major contribution to the economy and the prosperity of Galway City. The city has a distinctive cultural heritage, vibrancy, intimate urban fabric and is a traditional seaside resort. It is a significant overseas tourist destination in the West Region. The city is also an important destination for domestic tourism highlighted by the number of annual festivals and cultural events. The substantial income generated by tourism is critical to the economy of the city and has been referenced earlier in this chapter.
The National Tourism Development Strategy 2007-2013 focuses on achieving value growth based on a quality natural environment, good accommodation and attractions (including cultural) to entice visitors and deliver an authentic experience. The Failte Ireland West Regional Tourism Plan 2008-2010 views Galway as an established tourism area, a major tourism city with a surrounding attractive region, where the intensity of tourism activities increases towards the city. Galway offers a high standard of urban type tourism and acts as an important commercial accommodation base for the established tourism area. The strategy states that the city has a significant role as a Gateway that has the ability to achieve continued sustainable growth. It is the policy of the Council to support this approach and encourage and facilitate sustainable tourism development, in particular, developments and activities that reflect the city’s unique culture and heritage. The Council can directly and indirectly promote the development of tourism within the city. It can facilitate the commercial residential developments such as hotels, B&Bs and self-catering accommodation. In addition the Council can support other tourism infrastructure such as the Town Hall, Galway City Museum and the Art House Cinema. There is also great potential for development for water-based tourism as evidenced by the momentum created in the city by the Volvo Ocean Race in 2009.

The Council can contribute to the tourism potential of the city through a variety of different synergistic measures including improved accessibility, environmental regeneration of specific areas, the provision of recreation and amenity areas, facilitation of the development of visitor attractions and protection of the natural and built heritage. Tourism covers a wide variety of different activities within the city. Many of the policies and objectives set out in this Plan will facilitate the development of tourism benefiting both visitor and citizen alike and contributing to vitality, local economy and ultimately job creation.

**Policy 5.2 Enterprise**

- Promote and facilitate sustainable employment creation and opportunities in the city by ensuring the availability of an adequate supply of serviced land at appropriate locations for industrial development.
- Promote facilities and foster the development of indigenous industry as a fundamental and integral part of the local economy and work with all relevant agencies in this regard.
- Co-operate with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Galway County Council, Higher Institutes of Education, FAS and other agencies in meeting the needs of industry, training and innovation, where appropriate.
- Co-operate with Galway County Council in the servicing of strategic employment opportunities at designated business and technology parks on lands outside of the city boundary, in particular with regard to strategic and sustainable transportation services.
- Allow the co-location of compatible employment opportunities adjacent to residential areas, having regard to traffic safety, residential amenity and environmental considerations.
- Allow employment opportunities of a scale appropriate to serve the community within district, neighbourhood and local centres.
- Promote the continued development of enterprise opportunities at Rahoon/Knocknacarra.
- Continue to support and facilitate the development of start-up enterprise units for local indigenous enterprises throughout the city.
- Support and promote the development of the arts, culture and film industry recognising the particular value of these activities in the city.
- Improve access, in particular sustainable modes of transport to major areas of employment.
- Promote and support the sustainable development of different office types at designated locations having regard to the prime role of the city centre.
- Allow the development of childcare facilities near/within developments, which provide employment opportunities throughout the city.
- Promote further sustainable development of the Harbour Enterprise Park and related harbour activities, subject to acceptability from the appropriate authorities.
- Support further sustainable development of Galway Harbour subject to environmental, visual, economic viability and transportation considerations.
- Maintain an adequate supply of land for industry of light and mixed industrial purposes in order to ensure a diverse range of employment opportunities in the city and to allow for start-up indigenous enterprises of this nature.
- Acknowledge and support the health and education institutions in the city and facilitate appropriate related developments and expansions.
- Facilitate and encourage sustainable tourism development, which is based on and reflects the city’s distinctive history, culture and environment.
- Support and review the aims of the Galway City and County Tourism Committee’s Developing Sustainable Tourism in Galway - A Framework for Action 2003–2012 and GCDB strategy Gaillimh Beo agus Bríomhar, where appropriate.
- Facilitate innovative work practices such as ‘live–work’ units where they do not negatively impact on residential amenity.
- Support the development of cruise line tourism acknowledging the significant contribution and diversity it could add to the local and regional tourist economy.
5.3 Retail

Retailing is a significant contributor to the commercial life of the city economy. It is being addressed separately to the general enterprise and employment strategy owing to the particular requirements to prepare a retail strategy but none the less is regarded as a key element in the economic development strategy for the city.

The retail policy in the Development Plan has had regard to the requirements of the DEHLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005 (RPG). The RPG identifies a number of issues, which should be included in all development plans. These include:

- Confirmation of a retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres,
- Definition in the Development Plan of the boundaries of the core shopping areas of town centres,
- A broad assessment of the requirements for additional retail floor space,
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development,
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres,
- Identification of criteria for assessment of retail development.

The RPG recognises that because retail planning requires the consideration of catchment areas, jointly prepared retail strategies are appropriate for some local authorities. This is the case for Galway City Council and Galway County Council. In response a joint retail study/strategy was prepared in 2002, updated in 2005 and reviewed for the purposes of this Plan in Autumn 2009. Although it is the intention of the City Council, in line with an objective in the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2016 to prepare a joint retail strategy, the current review has factored in a number of relevant issues. These include Galway Gateway population targets and Galway County Council's settlement strategy in the context of recognition of likely share of the target population for Gateway and Hub. It has been assumed that all the main settlements in the county itself will be self-sufficient in convenience goods and that there will be no leakage or inflows to the city. This is a fair assumption considering the quantum of convenience floorspace delivered in the county settlements in recent years. It has also assumed that the city, particularly in view of its scale and status, will retain the market share of comparison and bulky goods it enjoyed since 2002, that is 57% of all county spending on such goods. There is no need to assume otherwise as the scale of growth in this area has demonstrated that there is a significant retail catchment for comparison goods which includes the county.

The overall objective of the retail strategy is to provide strategic guidance on the location and scale of new retail developments in a way, which is in accordance with the RPG, that is, efficient, equitable and sustainable. In this regard a number of factors and circumstances set down by the RPG required examination and evaluation. These included the confirmation of the retail hierarchy, estimation of need for additional floor space, guidance on location and scale and the establishment of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

5.3.1 The Retail Hierarchy

A key requirement under the RPG is the need to confirm the retail hierarchy, which in turn informs the retail policy. The classification of the retail hierarchy reflects the retail functions of each centre.

Table 5.2 Galway City and County Retail Hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy</th>
<th>Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Town Centre</td>
<td>Galway City Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Towns</td>
<td>County Towns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-County Towns</td>
<td>Sub-County Towns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Centre</td>
<td>Knocknacarra (Rahoon), Doughiska, Ardaun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Centre/ Neighbourhood Centre</td>
<td>All other settlements in the county, Neighbourhood/Loc. Centre in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner Shop/Local Shop</td>
<td>Rural villages, all residential neighbourhoods in the city</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major Town Centre

Galway City is the only centre in this category, it has a substantial catchment area within the county and region. This reflects the city's role as a national gateway. A strong tourist market also supports the retail industry in the city. The area defined as city centre for the purposes of the retail strategy is that defined by the city centre zoning in addition to the Headford Road (south of the Bodkin Roundabout) lands which will be subject of an LAP. There is a wide range of comparison goods particularly of the high order variety. The city also has strong representation of both national and international multiples which further validates it's role in the hierarchy. In recent years vacancy rates have been negligible. However for the city in total, a rate of 14% of vacancy has been reported by the Experian Research Group in 2009 which reflects the uncertainty of future growth in private consumption.
**District Centre**

Doughiska and Knocknacarra complies with the characteristics of an area deserving of a district centre that is an area where there is major growth in population or a clear proven level of under-provision. Both descriptions apply to Knocknacarra and Doughiska. These suburbs are located in the east and west side of the city. Knocknacarra has an estimated population of 12,000 with a zoned capacity to reach a population of 18,000. As Knocknacarra and Doughiska constitute a sizeable proportion of the population of the city, it is reasonable that adequate provision is made to accommodate a range of goods and services within these areas. This would accord with the principles of the RPG regarding efficient, equitable, and sustainable provision. Having a district centre in Knocknacarra and Doughiska has reduced the need to travel into the inner suburbs/city centre for retailing purposes, for goods that can be located in the suburbs without having a negative impact on the functioning of the city centre. The quantum and type of floorspace developed in Knocknacarra would indicate that there is still a need for a mix of some comparison, convenient, specialist shops in addition to professional administrative service and community services. There is a greater mix in Doughiska but with a capacity for more comparison, convenience and community services. It is anticipated that Ardaun will have the characteristics of an area deserving of a district centre. This has been supported by the Gateway Innovation Fund application for a town centre.

**Neighbourhood Centre**

Typically the provision is primarily of a convenience goods type and serves a very immediate population. The neighbourhood centres designated in the city correspond with lands where there is likely to be large increases in population, again at Knocknacarra or where provision is limited. It is important that opportune sites within these areas are safeguarded for these purposes. There are also a number of developed pockets of commercial activity in the city that function as neighbourhood centres – Westside, Salthill and emerging sites at Mervue (former Crown Equipment site) and Ballinfoile (Tornóg).

**Corner/Local shops**

These are small retail units located usually near residential developments. They normally provide day-to-day food needs and provide a very important service to local communities. It is important to encourage these types of developments and retain existing ones in view of their contribution to sustainable neighbourhood development and potential for sustainable transportation options.

**Bulky/Other**

There are some retail formats which do not fit into this hierarchy. In the interests of encouraging competition, innovation and choice these should be accommodated where they comply with the requirements of the general policies in this Plan and the RPG. Bulky goods are an example, which by definition require access by car and when located in a grouped fashion with communal car parking are termed retail parks. In Galway City there are a number of areas where bulky goods retailing is accommodated such as Briarhill, on the Headford Road, some areas on the Tuam Road, some areas on the Seamus Quirke Road and at Wellpark.
The population of the city is estimated to grow to 90,200 by 2017. In contrast to previous time periods the future growth in private consumption is considered to be very constrained. The increase in population combined with the growth in consumer expenditure will not result in a significant increase of potential retail spend as was previously the case. This reflects the significant increase in delivery in floorspace since 2002 – 48% in pure comparison and 63% in retail warehousing/bulky goods. This has met a significant level of demand. The strategy takes the view, having reviewed current economic advice that the reduction in spending will continue up to 2010. Assuming that consumption rates will grow again at this point and taking account of the re-balancing and the increase in demand from the growth in population, there will be a modest requirement for additional floorspace.

However this new demand for retail floorspace can be easily met from schemes that have been granted and not constructed, together with the potential for delivery at Ceannt Station, Ardaun, Headford Road, the district, neighbourhood and local centres and the existing bulky goods sites already referenced. These areas all accord with the strategy for location and although it is acknowledged that more lands are zoned than could accommodate commercial development, these are the preferred locations in the interests of sustainability.

An element of change in land use zoning has been allowed for on some sites including sites on the Seamus Quirke Road and at Renmore to reflect the particular circumstances at these locations. On the Seamus Quirke Road there are historical commercial uses and grants of outstanding permissions for additional floorspace at this location already. In addition the proposals to service this area by Rapid Transit Route will make these lands accessible by sustainable means. In Renmore the change in land use zoning reflects existing (although vacant) commercial use on this site, a hotel formerly trading as the Corrib Great Southern. This site has potential for a mixed scheme close to GMIT and at a critical node. It is not anticipated that retail use will be the predominant use on this site as the relevant specific objective provides for other uses including educational as defined in Chapter 11.

Following on from analysis of floorspace and future likely demands it can be concluded that lands zoned for commercial purposes will be sufficient to meet the needs of the city and fulfil its gateway and regional role.

Table 5.4 below shows likely retail demand assuming a 2% or 3% average growth in private consumption after 2011. These figures will not be used as the sole basis for making decisions on retail developments. The nature of the city as a gateway will also be a major factor as will other spatial factors, in particular with regard to city centre opportunities. In addition, equitable distribution of retailing opportunities and good and sustainable accessibility are also important factors to consider. As these figures are broad guidelines they will be required to be monitored and adjusted over the period up to 2017 in order to reflect changes in the retail market.

### Table 5.3 Retail Floorspace in the City 2002 and 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Net m² 2002</th>
<th>Additional Net m² 2011</th>
<th>Gross m² Granted Not Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>20,010</td>
<td>10,592</td>
<td>3,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>56,256</td>
<td>33,575</td>
<td>40,625 (Comparison and Bulky)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulky</td>
<td>24,822</td>
<td>19,551</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101,088</td>
<td>63,718</td>
<td>44,201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimated extent of total retail floor space in City 2011 = 164,806m²

The quantum of floorspace dedicated to pure retail (service retail excluded) is expressed in Table 5.3. The figures for 2002 were based on survey and desktop studies. The figures for 2011 are desktop compiled from documents submitted in conjunction with recent grants of permissions so therefore give a high degree of accuracy.

### Table 5.4 Retail Floorspace (m²) Requirements 2011 to 2017 Inclusive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Assumed Annual Increase % in Per Capita Consumption</th>
<th>Convenience m²</th>
<th>Comparison including Bulky m²</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galway City</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7,172</td>
<td>11,103</td>
<td>18,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7,972</td>
<td>19,095</td>
<td>27,067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 ESRI - Quarterly Economic Commentary (Winter 2010)
5.3.3 Core Shopping Area

The RPG recommends that the core shopping areas be defined in development plans. This definition allows for the endorsement of edge of centre sites that is, a site that is within 300m-400m from the edge of the prime shopping area for retail purposes. This Development Plan has a specific zoning objective for the city centre (CC zoning). It is considered that the existing CC zoning objectives in the Plan in addition to the Headford Road lands (south of the Bodkin Roundabout) are of sufficient definition of a core shopping area. These lands include the existing built up area of the city centre and the substantial brownfield site at Ceannt Station and the potential at the Harbour which can accommodate the expansion of retail and other land use requirements of the city. The Headford Road site in particular will have capacity to cater for large plate comparison goods stores which would have difficulty fitting into the grain of the city centre. The amount, type and phasing of floorspace will be determined at local area plan stage.

5.3.4 Joint Strategy Aspect

The City and County Councils in partnership will prepare a joint strategy within the period of the Plan and any required variation will be incorporated into the Plan in accordance with the Planning Acts.

5.3.5 Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Proposals

Developments of significance should be assessed in accordance with specific criteria. In Galway City the existing scale and context of retailing outlets would suggest that the following scale of developments is significant (net retail sales area): developments of convenience outlets above 2,000m²; developments of comparison (pure) outlets above 2,500m²; development of comparison (bulky goods) outlets above 4,500 m².

The criteria to be considered in the assessment of such development proposals will include the following (if relevant):

- The extent of compliance of the proposed development with existing policies and objectives in the City Development Plan.
- Identification of the catchment area of the development including the demonstrated need for the development.
- Estimation of the expenditure capacity within the defined catchment area.
- Estimation of the turnover of the existing centres within the catchment area, which are likely to be affected by a new development.
- Estimation of the turnover of the proposed development.
- Estimation of the likely quantum of expenditure, which will be diverted from the existing centres to the new retail developments to provide an estimate of trade diversion.
- The impact on the designated town centre, district centre, neighbourhood centres where relevant,
- The level of accessibility of the site by all modes of transport including by foot and bicycle.
- All significant development should satisfy the sequential test as defined in this strategy.

Policy 5.3 Retail

- Take into consideration the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) and the retail strategy for the city in conjunction with other policies in the Plan when assessing applications for retail proposals.
- Promote and protect the city centre as the prime retail area in the city and the western region.
- Adopt the retail hierarchy for the city as identified in the strategy and allow for retail development that is of a scale and nature with prescribed functions and roles.
- Allow for expansion of the city centre in accordance with the sequential test approach, in particular onto the Ceannt Station area, Harbour area and onto the Headford Road where appropriate.
- Protect existing district centres, neighbourhood centres and local centres.
- Encourage the provision of local shopping facilities in accordance with the neighbourhood concept and in compliance with policies for residential areas.
- Assess new major development in accordance with prescribed criteria and in the context of the retail strategy for the city.
- Have regard to the guidance in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) for specific retail formats.
- Ensure that the range of retail goods and services on retail park sites are restricted to sales of a bulky nature.
- Carry out a joint retail strategy review in conjunction with Galway County Council within the period of the City Development Plan and make variations to the City Development Plan if necessary as a result of such study.
Chapter 6

Community and Culture

6.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
6.2 Social Inclusion
6.3 Community and Cultural Facilities
6.4 Educational Facilities
6.5 Childcare Facilities
6.6 Burial Grounds
6.7 Institutional Lands
6.8 Arts and Cultural Heritage
6.9 Gaeltacht
6.10 Specific Objectives
6.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim

To promote an inclusive city which is accessible to all members of the community and facilitate the sustainable and viable development of necessary community, social and cultural infrastructure. To support the development of the arts and the unique Gaeltacht cultural and linguistic heritage of the city.

Context

The provision of community and cultural infrastructure is of central importance to the image of the city, in contributing to economic and social progress, enhancing the quality of life and attracting inward investment. The tourist industry, for example, benefits enormously from a thriving community, arts and culture sector, while access to community and cultural facilities benefits all members of the community, helps to integrate communities and makes a positive contribution to the local economy.

Galway City has a diverse range of community and cultural facilities, many of which serve the wider region. This contributes to the image of the city as the cultural capital of the West. The number of arts and culture groups, events and festivals and the city’s Gaeltacht status demonstrates the legacy of a unique and rich cultural and linguistic heritage. In view of this strong cultural heritage and the city’s role as a Gateway, it is apparent that the demand for a variety of different community, cultural and social facilities will continue to increase and diversify. In the development of these facilities there is a need to continue to reflect and preserve the uniqueness of Galway.

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 notes that key development and investment priorities for the Galway Gateway includes the provision of sport, social and community facilities to match fast developing residential areas. It is acknowledged that the delivery of many of these services is outside the jurisdiction of the Council. However, the Council can facilitate and co-ordinate the location and development of these facilities within appropriate areas, including residential areas, to service communities. Where community, cultural and social infrastructure is provided, it greatly improves the quality of life and encourages a more inclusive and self-sustaining society. The provision of these facilities has a wider societal benefit in promoting social inclusion in the city. The Council, as a signatory of the Barcelona Declaration and through the work of the Social Inclusion Unit, is committed to the promotion of social inclusion, particularly in relation to the continued improvement of accessibility within the public realm and built environment.

The GCBD Strategy, Gaillimh Beo agus Bríomhar 2002-2012 provides the socio-economic context for the Development Plan, while the Plan provides the land use dimension for the achievement of the goals of the strategy. In its vision for Galway City up to 2012, the strategy has set goals each supported by a number of key objectives. It is the aim of this Plan to incorporate the social, economic and cultural development goals outlined in the GCBD strategy with the sustainable physical development of the city. The various policies of this Plan will be informed by and reflect the socio-economic and cultural goals of the strategy. Annual reports outline the goals achieved.

Since the adoption of the City Development Plan, 2005-2011, the Council has facilitated a number of significant community, educational and cultural projects. These include the completion and opening of the Galway City Museum and the development of the Art House Cultural Cinema project in partnership with Solas at Lower Merchants Road and facilitation of the upgrading of the Town Hall Theatre and Druid Theatre. The City Council’s acquisition of additional properties on Lower Merchants Road for cultural use and the Planned refurbishment of Comerford House (the former museum), will provide for future cultural infrastructure at a strategic location adjacent to the City Museum and Art House Cinema. The City Council is also facilitating the development of workshop/rehearsal space for Macnas at Westside. The approved Ballinfoile Neighbourhood Centre, when built, will provide local community services to the Ballinfoile and Castlegar areas.

However, it is recognised, in view of the city’s gateway status, there still remains a deficit of cultural and arts facilities, for example a school of music and concert/performance arts venue. In view of this deficit, arts and cultural infrastructure are required to be integrated into large-scale redevelopment in the city centre such as Headford Road, Cannt Station and the Inner Harbour area. These developments will expand cultural infrastructure in the city.

Strategy

- Support the GCBD strategy Gaillimh Beo agus Bríomhar 2002-2012, Priority Actions 2009-2012 and any subsequent strategy, in particular the economic, social and cultural goals and where appropriate ensure that these are reflected in the land use policies of the Development Plan.
- Integrate the sustainable development of the city with the social, economic and cultural considerations of the GCBD strategy.
- Create a self-sustaining and integrated city community.
- Encourage a socially inclusive society and support the actions of the Social Inclusion Unit in promoting social inclusion in the city and the work of the RAPID programme.
- Promote an inclusive and accessible environment, in line with the Council’s commitment to the Barcelona Declaration.
- Facilitate and co-ordinate with the relevant service providers, the provision of sustainable community, cultural and social infrastructure.
- Promote and protect the city’s unique arts, cultural and linguistic heritage.
6.2 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is the term used to describe the process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone regardless of their background, experiences and circumstances can gain access to the services and facilities they need to achieve their own potential in life. Social inclusion seeks the creation of an inclusive and fair society, combating inequality, social exclusion and poverty. The City Council, through the actions of the Social Inclusion Unit and working with other stakeholders through the GCDB strategy and RAPID programme, have expanded its role in the promotion of social inclusion and community development. The role of the Social Inclusion Unit is to support and facilitate social inclusion activities and policies across the entire range of local authority activities.

The overall strategic goals of the Development Plan with respect to the future sustainable physical development of the city includes the promotion of social inclusion and the facilitation of the achievement of the goals in the GCDB strategy. The social needs of the community can be recognised and addressed in the Planning of the built environment, in order to create living and integrated communities. The policies of the Plan on housing, community and cultural facilities, childcare, employment opportunities, public realm and accessibility can encourage social inclusion and build sustainable communities.

The Council seeks to prevent the undue segregation between persons of different income levels. It encourages a variety of house types and sizes throughout the city to cater for a wide range of people including families, single households and people with special needs (travellers, older people, people with disabilities, homeless and minority/asylum seekers). With regards to community facilities, the Council requires childcare facilities in residential areas and other appropriate areas. The Council also supports the provision of specific facilities, including community centres, resource centres, library services and community crèches and in particular, support for the provision of a resource centre for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community in Galway subject to prior funding. With regards to employment the Council encourages sustainable opportunities by designating lands for employment, supporting services that will attract investment and encouraging accessibility by all modes of transport, in particular public transport.

The Council encourages an improved and inclusive built environment. This includes for safe and easy access for all, in the area of housing, transport, built environment and the public realm within the city. This approach reinforces the Council’s commitment as a signatory to the Barcelona Declaration which promotes universal access to urban spaces, public buildings and services and proactively encourages equal opportunities for people with a disability to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the city. The Barcelona Declaration aims to promote, along with other actions, accessibility and inclusion within the built environment and includes specific measures regarding this aim to be implemented on an on-going annual basis by the Council. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) promotes access for all and states that circulation within housing layouts, including access to individual buildings, should have regard to the varying needs of occupants over their lifetimes including needs associated with mobility difficulties. Innovative design, which facilitates life-time adaptability and accessibility, is encouraged in housing. These guidelines are taken into consideration with regard to housing policy. An established part of social inclusion is also continuing public consultation and community involvement in the Planning process.

Policy 6.2 Social Inclusion

- Proactively promote all forms of social inclusion, where feasible in land use planning particularly in the built environment and public realm, housing, community facilities, employment opportunities, public transport and accessibility.
- Support and promote the various aims of the Council to give effect to the Barcelona Declaration.
- Support the development, provision and improvement of essential facilities and amenities within communities in the city.
- Support the objectives of the action plan/work programme of the Social Inclusion Unit and RAPID.
- Continue to encourage active public participation in the Planning process.
- Promote the concept of ‘life-time adaptability’ and access for all in housing design.
- Facilitate the implementation of the Housing Strategy in particular with regard to reducing undue segregation and the provision of special needs accommodation.
- Co-operate with the Access for All Committee and other organisations representing people with disabilities to provide equal access for all citizens particularly in the area of housing, transport, built environment and the public realm within the city.

6.3 Community and Cultural Facilities

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) outlines that sustainable neighbourhoods and integrated communities require a range of community, social and cultural facilities and services at a local level or within the wider locality. These include schools, childcare, healthcare and district/neighbourhood centre uses. A wide range of different community, cultural facilities and social services exist within the city ranging from those of regional importance such as education, cultural and health facilities, to those of local and neighbourhood importance such as places of worship, schools, community centres and crèches. However, as outlined in the NDP’s strategy for the
6.4 Educational Facilities

Education has played a key role in the economic and social development of the country, contributing to the rise of national productivity and improvements in living standards and social cohesion. Educational achievement and economic and social progress are intertwined and is an attribute of a smart economy. Access to educational opportunities can be a significant social benefit promoting social inclusion and lifetime learning. The availability of life-long education opportunities facilitates the development of a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy. The NDP notes that there are strong linkages between the availability and quality of human capital and the competitiveness of Irish regions and states that investment in human capital will have an important role in promoting the development and competitiveness of the regions over the next few years. In this period of economic uncertainty, the availability of a well-skilled and flexible workforce is a must if the city’s economy is to continue to sustain significant improvements in living standards and social cohesion. Educational achievement and economic and social progress are intertwined and is an attribute of a smart economy. Access to educational opportunities can be a significant social benefit promoting social inclusion and lifetime learning. The availability of life-long education opportunities facilitates the development of a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy. The NDP notes that there are strong linkages between the availability and quality of human capital and the competitiveness of Irish regions and states that investment in human capital will have an important role in promoting the development and competitiveness of the regions over the next few years. In this period of economic uncertainty, the availability of a well-skilled and flexible workforce is a must if the city’s economy is to continue to sustain significant growth and retain its competitiveness as a regional gateway. The NSS, when identifying Galway as a Gateway acknowledged the capacity the city has for innovation in education, research and development. The city has potential for further economic development and a capacity for new enterprises, in particular with the support and innovation capability of its third level institutions. The third level institutions are a major asset in developing business, technology and knowledge based skills.

The city has two major third level institutions, the National University of Galway (NUIG) and Galway and Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). A large full time student population exists in the city with just over 16,000 attending both NUIG and GMIT. The further development of the city as a gateway is linked to continuing investment and innovation in education through its third level institutions and the effective linkages these institutions have with enterprise and research and development. The city has a significant role in the provision of education facilities, with 28 primary schools, 11 second level schools and a number of colleges located within the city.

The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, (2008) sets out the best practice approach that should be followed by planning authorities to ensure the timely, cost-effective and sustainable provision of schools, particularly primary schools, and school-related infrastructure. The guidelines note that the pace of development in new urbanising parts of the gateways and changing demographic patterns with migration of young families creates a demand for additional school spaces. The guidelines state that there is a need to identify and make available suitable sites for new schools, in a timely manner, integrated with new residential development and at a reasonable cost. The objectives of the guidelines...
are that school provision is an integral part of compact urban development and the development of sustainable communities. The provision of any new school should be driven and emerge from an integrated approach between the Council and the Department of Education and Skills.

With regard to future school provision, the Council will adhere to the recommendations outlined in the guidelines and will support and assist the Department of Education and Skills, in ensuring the timely provision of school sites. Sites are reserved at Ballyburke and Doughiska for anticipated demand for schools in Knocknacarra and Doughiska.

In order to ensure that schools provision is an integral part of the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods, the Council will encourage the location of schools adjacent to residential areas, public transport routes and community, cultural and recreation facilities. This approach will encourage sustainable mobility including walking, cycling and public transport, promote ‘safe routes to school’ in the vicinity and maximise the possibility of sharing community and recreational facilities. The Council will consider multi-campus arrangements, where appropriate. The provision of education, childcare and other community services and facilities shall be an integral part of local area plans for new settlement areas within the city, Ardaun and Murroogh.

**Policy 6.4 Educational Facilities**

- Ensure that sufficient lands are designated and reserved for the establishment, improvement or expansion of education facilities within the city adhering to the recommendations outlined in *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008).*
- Support the future improvement and sustainable expansion of NUIG and GMIT, recognising their contribution to the continued development of Galway as a Gateway.
- Safeguard lands within residential areas for educational purposes in order to serve existing and future need.
- Ensure that the design of all educational establishments incorporate facilities for sustainable transport measures and public transport.
- Ensure that safe and easy access for people with disabilities is incorporated in the design of all educational developments.
- Support the further development and diversification of third level education institutions in the city, including the promotion of knowledge based industry-linked research and development facilities.
6.5 Childcare Facilities

The Council recognises the importance of childcare provision in the social life and economy of the city. Childcare facilitates the opportunity to participate in the workforce. Access to good quality pre-school and after-school facilities benefits children's educational and social development. It is anticipated that the demand for childcare will continue during the Development Plan period in order to support a flexible and adaptable workforce and expand participation by different groups in the workforce and in accessing education and training opportunities. The planning system can facilitate the sustainable development of childcare facilities in line with the DEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001).

It is the policy of the Council in all new housing areas over 75 units, to require the provision of one childcare facility with a minimum of 20 childcare spaces. Exceptions to this will only be allowed, where there are substantiated reasons not to provide such a facility, for example if there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments or the immediate area. The onus is on the applicant to substantiate such exceptional cases. The Council will be open to consider alternative arrangements where the overall objectives of providing childcare facilities within new housing areas can be otherwise achieved, such as provision of one purpose-built facility with more than minimum capacity shared between housing developments.

In addition to the above, childcare facilities will be considered in residential areas through conversion of existing dwellings, where they do not have an undue negative effect on the residential environment. However, a residential content may be required to be retained in accordance with the provisions outlined under Chapter 11. In order to safeguard residential amenities, the Council may limit the scale of development.

In major industrial estates, business and technology parks and any other developments that generate major employment opportunities, the Council will encourage the provision of on-site childcare facilities as part of these developments. In large-scale retail, leisure or tourism developments, in particular, shopping centres, the provision of a drop-in childcare facility for shoppers will be encouraged.

Policy 6.5 Childcare Facilities

- Facilitate the development of childcare facilities, including after school services, at a number of suitable locations, such as, within residential areas, places of employment, city centre, district and neighbourhood centres, in the vicinity of educational and community establishments and adjacent to public transport nodes.
- Contribute to the provision of childcare facilities by requiring that such facilities be provided in conjunction with residential developments over 75 dwelling units.
- Consider alternative arrangements where it can be clearly established that adequate childcare facilities exist.
6.6 Burial Grounds

There are a number of graveyards in the city, with two cemeteries in use, New Cemetery and Mount Saint Joseph Cemetery. An extension to Mount Saint Joseph Cemetery was completed in 2008. Burial grounds form part of the city’s green network (see Chapter 4), providing passive green space within the heart of the community. Given the projected population of the city over the period of this Plan, the Council will need in the near future to source appropriate sites for burial grounds and associated services such as a crematorium.

**Policy 6.6 Burial Grounds**

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

6.7 Institutional Lands

A considerable amount of land in the city is in institutional use of an educational, health, residential or other character. These lands vary in size, layout and function. Some institutional lands with substantial open grounds may be accessible to the wider community. The open character of these sites and any associated buildings of merit are valuable assets to their surrounding environments.

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

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

**Policy 6.7 Institutional Lands**

- Facilitate and promote the development of institutional land within the city.
- Where it is demonstrated that certain institutional lands are surplus to requirements, the Council will consider residential use or uses compatible with that of adjoining zones or specifically require that the lands be retained for alternative institutional uses.
- Retain the existing open character of institutional lands where residential development is permitted and reserve a minimum 20% of the total site area for communal open space.
- Promote the retention of public access to these lands where this has been traditionally enjoyed or where there is a significant amenity associated with the lands.

6.8 Arts and Cultural Heritage

Galway has a vibrant arts scene, strong cultural tradition and well-established local arts community, all contributing to the positive image and experience of the city. Arts and cultural heritage is pivotal to the city’s status as an important regional tourist destination as highlighted by the several events, street theatre and festivals of national and international distinction. Galway is unique in being the only city located in a Gaeltacht area. The Irish language forms an integral part of the cultural identity and social experience of the city. The Irish language continues to be promoted through the naming of new residential developments and public roads and encouraged through the use of bi-lingual signs on commercial development and in the public realm.
6.9 Gaeltacht

Galway is a unique city, with almost half of the area having Gaeltacht status. The city is a service centre for the Connemara Gaeltacht. Over the past ten years there has been a growth in the amount of Irish speakers living and working in the city due mainly to the growth of the communications industry as lead by TG4, the development of the Irish Department of NUIG, Aras na Gaeilge and gaeilgseola. The Irish language and linguistic heritage is an intrinsic part of the cultural experience and life of the city for many years with cultural and social institutions such as Gaillimh le Gaeilge, Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe, Aras na Gaeilge and Arus na nGael playing a lead role in the cultural promotion of the language in the city. It is recognised that this heritage makes an important contribution to the uniqueness and identity of the city and makes it a more enriched place to live and visit.

The Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010 requires development plans to include objectives for the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht. It is acknowledged that development plans are not the principal mechanism for the protection of the Gaeltacht but they can contribute to the promotion of the special culture and Irish language associated with Gaeltacht areas. In this context the Council will have regard in particular to the GCDG strategy which sets out goals relating to the fostering of Gaeltacht traditions in the city. The Development Plan can support and provide the land-use dimension, which will help achieve some of these goals.

In contrast to other Irish cities, Galway City has the highest number of Irish speakers in proportion to population at 45.9% of the total population. Just over 31,000 people within the city stated that they have the ability to speak Irish with approximately 25.9% of these stating that they speak Irish daily (Census 2006). In this regard, the Council supports ‘Gaillimhe le Gaeilge’ to achieve official status for the city as ‘Bilingual Capital of Ireland’. The Galway City Council Scéim Teanga 2009-2012 and Irish Officer actively promote Irish language development and are proactive in the delivery of services through the medium of Irish. The Council recognises the importance of the language and the distinctive associated culture and therefore aims to protect and promote the Gaeltacht heritage where possible. The Council will continue to promote the Irish language in particular with regard to the naming of new roads, residential place names and signage on shopfronts and commercial development.

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Policy 6.8 Arts and Cultural Heritage

- Facilitate and encourage the provision of new and improved arts and culture facilities in the city including in district or neighbourhood centres where appropriate.
- Support and facilitate the aims of the Galway City Arts Strategy 2010-2013 and the actions of the annual City Council arts programme.
- Ensure that all construction projects undertaken by the Council which are supported by government funding be considered for the 'Per cent for Art' Scheme.
- Require large-scale developments throughout the city to incorporate works of public art.
- Require arts and culture infrastructure to be integrated into large scale development on key sites in the city centre area which include lands at Headford Road, Ceannt Station, and the Inner Harbour.
- Support the development of a municipal arts gallery, concert hall, science museum and school of performing arts in the city.
- Support the establishment of a school of music within the city, in conjunction with all interested bodies.
- Develop and facilitate the development of cultural facilities in Lower Merchants Road.
- Facilitate the reopening of Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe at its current location on Middle Street.
- Facilitate the refurbishment and re-opening of Comerford House.
- Support the provision of a site/building for a Western Writers’ Centre.
- Support the provision of a dedicated dance space within the city.
Policy 6.9 Gaeltacht

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

6.10 Specific Objectives

- Facilitate the development of community and educational facilities at Castlegar, Doughiska, Knocknacarra and Ballinfoile.
- Establish and develop new cemetery sites to serve the city, which will accommodate associated services such as a crematorium and approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities.
- Reserve lands at Knocknacarra, Ballinfoile and Doughiska for the purposes of neighbourhood centre uses, which will accommodate a mix of uses primarily of a public/community nature. In the event that these lands become unnecessary, they can be used for uses compatible with the R residential land use zoning.
- Identify and provide a site/building for the establishment of a school of music within the city, in conjunction with the VEC and all interested bodies.
Chapter 7

Built Heritage and Urban Design

7.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
7.2 Built Heritage
7.3 Archaeological Heritage
7.4 Urban Design
7.1  Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim

To create a high quality, sustainable built environment in Galway City and enhance the distinctiveness and character of the city, through the protection and enhancement of the built and archaeological heritage and through the use of quality urban design.

Context

The rapid growth and development of the city in the past 15 years has led to significant redevelopment in the city centre and expansion in the residential suburbs. This growth has demonstrated the importance of the protection of the built and archaeological heritage of Galway and the need for high quality urban design which contributes to the identity and economic vitality of the city.

Galway has exceptionally strong links with its past. This is evident in the built form and archaeology of the city. The city has a distinct physical character, with narrow streets, contrasting buildings, canals, millraces and a relationship with the river and sea creating a unique urban setting. Most of the significant built heritage, archaeology and industrial archaeology are located in the city centre. The heritage of the city is also enhanced by a number of village settlements, such as Menlough and Coolagh. This heritage is a significant element in defining the character of the urban environment, in creating the distinctiveness of the city. It is also a valuable cultural and tourism asset. The GCDB Gaillimh Beo agus Briomhar 2002-2012, recognises the need to protect and revitalise the built heritage of the city, while embracing change.

Good urban design contributes to the character and distinctiveness of the city. Opportunities exist in the city for the regeneration of areas where high quality urban design can contribute to creating new vibrant areas which can provide sustainable residential neighbourhoods and attract new investment and uses. Increased growth and development in residential neighbourhoods outside the city centre represents opportunities for high quality urban design, both of buildings and of the public realm. This can make a contribution to creating vibrant, viable and sustainable neighbourhoods with a distinct urban character, good legibility and a strong sense of place.

Strategy

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

7.2  Built Heritage

Architectural Heritage

Galway City, especially the city centre is unique in terms of its architectural and built heritage. The city has a varied cityscape with a strong legacy of medieval streets and 19th century industrial buildings contrasting with the more planned form of Eyre Square. The city centre derives its character from the combination of buildings of significant architectural and historical value and simple vernacular architecture. The city also contains a valuable built heritage outside the city core including a diversity of historical and architecturally significant buildings. The growth of development in the city has resulted in increased pressure on the built heritage. The Council recognises the value of the built heritage to the vitality of the city and is committed to the protection and enhancement of this heritage through measures contained in planning legislation.

The Planning and Development Acts, 2000 – 2010, provides a range of measures for the protection of the architectural heritage, these include the Record of Protected Structures and the preservation of the character of Architectural Conservation Areas. This legislation is complemented by the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004).

Notwithstanding the historical legacy, the city has a number of fine examples of contemporary architecture such as the City Museum and the GMIT library. The new arthouse cinema and the new engineering building at NUIG when completed, will also contribute to the quality of the built environment of the city.
Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

A protected structure is defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000. A significant number of buildings and structures, within the city are deemed worthy of protection and 586 are listed in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The RPS list is included in Appendix 1 and the detailed RPS is available in the Council offices and on the Council’s website. The RPS is not a static document and additions or deletions, where appropriate, can be made to this record at anytime by the Council. It is Council policy to encourage the protection and enhancement of these protected structures. It is recognised that in order to prolong the life of the building, it may be necessary for protected structures to accommodate change or new uses. Any alterations to protected structures should enhance the character or setting of the structure and should be carried out to best conservation practice having regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004).

To encourage the appropriate restoration of protected structures, the Council will not apply development contributions that might normally apply to the development if the proposal involves conservation works. The Council will also consider a change of use of a protected structure to a use appropriate to the conservation of the building notwithstanding the zoning of the area. Conservation works to protected structures will be facilitated through conservation grants from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Heritage Council Grants. Under section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, a declaration can be sought from the Council in relation to a protected structure. It sets out the extent of works that do not affect the character of the structure and therefore can be exempted from the need for planning permission.

The Council will consider the inclusion in the RPS of additional structures of special interest where appropriate.

Architectural Conservation Areas

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscapes which is either of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in its own right or which contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. The designation of an ACA requires that the carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure be exempted development only if those works would not normally materially effect the character of the area. ACA status also allows for the preparation and implementation of a management plan for the streetscape. Such plans can include a strategy for local authority works, improvements to the public realm (including street furniture, materials, signage), which can enhance the character of the area. The protection and enhancement of the townscape quality of an ACA can contribute to increased vitality and act as a catalyst for economic investment in the area.

Galway has a number of distinctive areas of special interest and value or historical merit, which in terms of streetscape, arrangement of streets and spaces, composition of buildings and structures and architectural styles creates a character worthy of protection. These areas of special character require management, protection and enhancement. Eight areas have been designated as ACAs. Each of these areas represents different periods in, and functions of, the development of the city. The next stage after designation is the preparation of management plans for the streetscapes which will involve extensive public consultation. Critical to the success of ACAs is that the Council provide information and advice to property owners/occupiers, utility and infrastructural providers on good conservation practice. Guidance leaflets have been prepared by the Council on Architectural Conservation Areas in the city. Eyre Square is an additional ACA designated since 2005. The City Core ACA has been extended to include the area adjoining Fishmarket Square. The Council will consider the designation of additional areas of special interest as ACAs within the period of the Plan. The eight areas designated as ACAs are as follows:
Fig. 7.1 The City Core

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

Fig. 7.2 Lower Dominick Street

Lower Dominick Street contains some of the best 18th and 19th century buildings, facades, shop-fronts and contemporary features to survive in long uninterrupted stretches in the city. This is a street which would benefit, both visually and economically, from a management plan resulting from ACA status.

Fig. 7.3 The Crescent/Sea Road

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

Fig. 7.4 The Long Walk

The Long Walk has a particularly attractive setting, with views towards the sea and the Claddagh. The area characterises a distinct urban form, which reflects Galway's historic relationship with the sea and is a landmark area for the city. The area is worthy of ACA status.
St Nicholas Street is a terrace of 19th century artisan’s dwellings and is one of the few such groups of this extent and completeness, which survive in the city, and therefore merits preservation from a social and architectural interest.

St. Mary’s Terrace consists of two 19th century uniform terraces of attractive, well maintained, rendered, tudor-style houses flanking St. Mary’s Avenue. This group of buildings is architecturally worthy of ACA status.

1-6 Dock Road consists of a terrace of Victorian Buildings on a prominent position overlooking the commercial dock and form part of a terrace of the few remaining 19th century buildings on the street. No.1 Dock Road has historical significance as it was the birthplace of Padraic O’Conaire. The designation of these buildings as an ACA is beneficial in ensuring the area’s protection and enhancement.

Eyre Square is a significant historical civic space within the city, the green area itself dates back to the mid 17th century. The square comprises both historic and modern buildings with varying styles ranging from late Georgian to Victorian and modern. While significant intervention has taken place, it still retains the original form with a unified streetscape worthy of ACA status.
In addition to the ACA, there are other mechanisms for protection of areas of particular importance such as a Special Planning Control scheme. A scheme can be prepared for all or part of an ACA and gives powers to the Council not only to conserve and enhance the character of the area but also to restore it and to require owners and occupiers to conform to planning schemes. The City Council may consider the use of this/other mechanisms over the period of the Plan.

In addition to structures of special interest included in the RPS and designated ACAs, the city contains a wide variety of structures, that while not deemed to be of special architectural heritage merit, contribute in a particular way to the distinctive character of the city. That character can be significantly diminished by their loss through demolition and replacement. The Council will encourage the retention and reuse of such structures. The conservation of original windows, doors, roof coverings and other significant features that contribute to the character of structures and the overall area will also be encouraged.

**Policy No. 7.2 Built Heritage**

- Encourage the protection and enhancement of structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures.
- Ensure new development enhances the character or setting of a protected structure.
- Avoid protected structures becoming endangered by neglect or otherwise by taking appropriate action in good time.
- Consider the inclusion in the Record of Protected Structure buildings of special interest.
- Consult with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht regarding any planning applications relating to protected structures and national monuments.
- Implement proactive measures to encourage the conservation of protected structures.
- Prepare and implement management plans for the conservation and enhancement of the city’s Architectural Conservation Areas.
- Encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and re-use of existing structures that contribute to the character of the city.
- Facilitate the use of Mutton Island Lighthouse as a heritage attraction with public access.
- Facilitate the restoration and conservation of the waterworks building at Terryland Plant, including the Crossley engine.

**7.3 Archaeological Heritage**

Galway has a rich archaeological heritage, which extends from the mesolithic, medieval and post-medieval periods and includes considerable industrial archaeology. The archaeological heritage includes a legacy of deposits, features, structures, samples, artefacts and their context. The medieval legacy of the city is apparent from the form and character of the central area of the city which has a large group of multi-period buildings containing medieval and late medieval fabric. The historic relationship between the city and waterways is evident in the industrial archaeology of the city, such as the canals, millraces and mill wheels. The city has many significant archaeological sites outside the city centre, such as the ringfort in Ballybaan and the standing stone in Roscam. This archaeology creates an important historical resource, unique to Galway City. Through archaeology, the current and future generations can achieve an understanding of the factors which shaped the city. The growth of development in the city has resulted in increased pressures on the archaeological heritage. However, it has also provided opportunities for revealing archaeological legacies through excavation. While archaeological sites are legally protected under the National Monuments Act, 1930-2004, the Council also has a role in the protection of archaeological heritage.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory of sites and areas of archaeological significance. An archaeological exclusion zone is shown around each monument. This zone is an area around known archaeological sites where there is the possibility of further archaeological remains. The RMP is available in the Council offices and on the website. Given the medieval legacy of Galway, most of the city centre is designated a Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP) - see Fig 7.9. In advance of any new development on a site of archaeological
significance or within the ZAP there is a requirement for consultation with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. It is the policy of the Council to ensure that development within an area of archaeological significance/potential does not adversely impact on the archaeological heritage. The Council will have regard to any archaeological advice received from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht when considering proposed development.

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

**Medieval Walls**

The legacy of medieval town walls, qualify Galway City to be a member of the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN). This network was established by the Heritage Council to ensure that Ireland’s unique cultural and archaeological heritage in relation to its walled and fortified towns and cities is protected and managed in a sustainable and appropriate manner in the long-term. The Heritage Plan recommends a management plan for the medieval walls of the city. The National Policy on Town Defences (2008) requires that medieval walling and associated features be considered as a single national monument and be treated as a unit for policy and management purposes. This policy requires a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of archaeological remains both upstanding and below ground and preservation of the character, setting and amenity of town walls. The Council will support the preservation and enhancement of the medieval wall when considering development proposals which may have an impact. The Council will also seek to improve public awareness and increase knowledge and appreciation of the medieval city walls. National monuments legislation requires that all works which impact on the fabric of the city defences, or any ground disturbance in proximity to the defences in local authority or the Minister’s ownership or guardianship, or that have been the subject of a preservation order, are subject to a requirement for Ministerial Consent.

**Policy 7.3 Archeology**

- Protect the archaeological heritage of the city.
- Ensure that proposed development within the designated city centre Zone of Archaeological Potential is not detrimental to the character of an archaeological site or its setting.
- Have regard to the archaeological recommendations of the DAHG on any planning applications.
- Endorse the sustainable use of archaeological heritage as an educational and cultural resource and promote public awareness of the archaeological heritage of the city.
- Require the surveying, recording or excavation of archaeological heritage during the development process where appropriate.
- Secure preservation in-situ of the historic medieval city walls.
- Seek the preservation in-situ or, at a minimum, preservation by record of archaeological sites/monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places.
- Ensure all developments, including those with the potential to impact on riverine, inter-tidal and sub-tidal environments require an archaeological assessment prior to works being carried out.
- Promote the protection of the varied industrial heritage of the city and encourage greater appreciation and public awareness of this heritage.
7.4 Urban Design

While urban design standards within the city have improved, opportunities exist for higher qualitative standards for the living and commercial environment. Good urban design is essential in the creation of attractive living environments facilitating communities to grow. High quality, innovative urban design can create vibrant regeneration areas for the city which contribute to economic vitality. Good urban design can enhance the character of Galway and convey a sense of what is unique about the city. In order to promote successful and sustainable built environments, urban design should be considered from the start of the development process.

A range of national policy documents sets out a framework for achieving good urban design. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2008) sets out the key urban design principles for residential development in urban areas. These guidelines are accompanied by a companion document, the Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide setting out criteria to cover the range of design considerations for residential development. Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality Within The Built Environment seeks to promote the awareness and understanding of the contribution of good design to the general well being of the city. It places emphasis on urban design and sustainable placemaking supporting high quality modern architecture and incorporating architectural heritage in a holistic integrated manner.

The following principles are critical in the consideration of good urban design:

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

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

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

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

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

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

The aspects of development which are a critical consideration of good urban design include the urban structure which is the framework of streets and spaces and how they relate to each other, how they connect locally and within the wider area. Consideration of the urban grain which relates to the layout and intensity of blocks, plots and buildings is particularly important in the city centre. The density of development and the mix, type and location of uses are also key considerations which impact on the vitality of a place and its viability. The scale of development in terms of height and massing can have a significant impact on other buildings and spaces as well as views and skylines. The design of a building, use of materials and how attractive it is within the context of the area and its character is also an important consideration.

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

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

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

Shopfronts form an important element in the streetscape and define the character of a street. The sensitive conservation of original traditional shopfronts and the requirement for a high standard in new contemporary shopfront design, enhances the appearance of buildings and the streetscape,
providing a strong sense of place. Good quality sustainable shopfront design contributes to the character of the public realm, encourages investment and promotes a positive image of the city. In order to encourage good shopfront design, the Council will prepare shopfront design guidelines for the city. The main aim of the guidelines will be to provide design guidance which will include advice on the conservation and restoration of shopfronts and advice regarding sensitive solutions for contemporary design in an historic context.

The urban design quality of the public realm is important in contributing to a strong sense of identity to the area and the city. The Council will prepare environmental improvement schemes for a number of residential areas (see Chapter 2). The objectives of these schemes are to implement measures which enhance the residential amenity of these areas, reduce traffic and reorganise car parking. The Council will prepare civic improvements schemes to enhance the public realm for a number of public spaces (see Chapter 9) and will seek to implement the regeneration of the Small Crane Square, which will contribute to the urban quality and vibrancy of the city.

**Local Area Plans and Masterplans/Framework Plans**

The Council through the preparation of local area plans for Ardaun, Murroogh and the Headford Road area, will provide an urban design framework that will contribute to the development of sustainable and vibrant living environments with a distinct local urban character. Local area plans will outline the guiding principles for the sustainable development of the area in relation to design, layout, density, diversity of uses, access and physical and social infrastructural provision. A local area plan is a statutory document and will guide development from the start of the development process and encourage high standards of design quality in all areas, including the public realm. Masterplans/framework plans will be prepared for major redevelopment/brownfield sites, such as the Ceannt Station site and the Inner Harbour site. These should provide illustrative material including three dimensional (3D) layout proposals where appropriate.

**Other Mechanisms To Achieve Principles of Good Urban Design**

Planning applications on sensitive sites such as large infill sites in the city centre will be required to be accompanied by a ‘design statement’ which has regard to best principles of urban design. The design statement will include a range of graphic material which shall include a 3D element where appropriate. The Council will investigate the potential for acquiring a model of the city to facilitate assessment of development. This model could be a simple 3D block model of existing buildings which would enable preliminary assessment of proposals on sensitive sites. This would provide for an early stage of assessment of development and would facilitate efficient use of the pre-consultation process.

**Building Heights**

In the interests of urban design a study on building height is required. The objective of this study will be to set out a strategy for the height of new buildings that both protects the city’s identity, derived from its built and natural heritage and acknowledges the need for the city to evolve and enhance its attractiveness and remain an international focus for culture, trade and business.

Tall buildings can usefully mark points of major activity such as business districts, civic functions and transport interchanges. Tall buildings can be fine elegant landmarks but they can be harmful in the context of historic buildings, conservation areas, areas of natural heritage importance and detract from a city’s skyline and impinge upon strategic views. In this regard it will be necessary to examine the capacity of the city for height but with a knowledge that the city is predominantly low rise and has a sensitive historic core and a unique natural amenity setting.

However building height is only one element in the assessment of tall buildings. When dealing with development proposals, height issues can be easily focused on and often attract most attention at the expense of considering other aspects of urban design such as accessibility, continuity of enclosure, permeability, adaptability and character. While it is considered that there may be some scope for increasing heights in the right places, it is not anticipated that the study will recommend dramatic increases over prevailing benchmark heights. However, it is recognised that modest increases in height can help use land efficiently and provide for sustainable high densities.
The sustainable development principles that need to be considered when assessing capacity for height include the following:

- Protection of existing built heritage and areas of natural beauty,
- Protection of the residential amenity of the city,
- Creation of landmarks that enhance the city’s legibility without eroding its innate character,
- Promotion of higher density at centres/nodes of activity,
- Promotion of higher density along high quality public transport corridors,
- Promotion of higher density at large scale infill sites.

The study will indicate a building height framework plan for the city. It will make recommendations taking these into consideration. In addition the study will be required to make the recommendations having considered issues of particular relevance to Galway City. These include using a baseline knowledge of existing background heights and zones of common height, looking at key existing built and natural features, noting strategic views into and out of the city. This will capture the key height qualities of the city and can be used as an assessment tool to recommend maximum height restrictions and also ultimately assess the impact of height in any future development proposals. There will also be a presumption to protect heritage and natural amenities also enforcing existing benchmark heights so as to retain the strategic views and to protect and enhance the general character of these sensitive locations.

Areas have been identified for growth and intensification, these include major re-development sites, transport nodes and corridors and planned settlement areas. The intention is to integrate infrastructure planning with higher densities so as to achieve sustainable development. It is assumed that, after allowing for the protection of neighbouring residential amenity and existing historic and natural heritage, there may be potential for additional height over the general background heights in these areas. This is to be examined in the study. Potential landmark locations could also be identified, although it is acknowledged that landmarks can be created with strong built or landscape forms, such as public squares or striking individual buildings, rather than just by height.

Areas where major change is anticipated have been identified and are requested to be reviewed individually with recommendations on appropriate heights. These are major development areas and as such are capable of establishing their own distinct character. These include Ardaun, Murroogh, Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour.

In addition, areas that may demonstrate a capacity for some increase in height, given their proximity to public transport routes/function as a significant settlement node, are also required to be examined. Ultimately the study is anticipated to recommend benchmark heights for these selected areas and present a case for restricting or suggesting height changes from that which prevails.

In this regard, the Council will carry out a Building Height Study for the city and the recommendations will be used as a guidance tool. The Council will incorporate the recommendations into the Development Plan in the form of a variation if necessary.

**Policy 7.4 Urban Design**

- Encourage high quality urban design in all developments.
- Improve qualitative design standards through the application of design guidelines and standards of the Development Plan.
- Ensure that high quality urban design contributes to the creation of urban regeneration in the city.
- Encourage innovation in architecture.
- Prepare local area plans for Ardaun, Murroogh and the selected Headford Road area which provide an urban design framework to contribute to the development of sustainable and vibrant living environments.
- Encourage the use of design statements and masterplans/framework plans for large-scale development where appropriate.
- Enhance residential areas such as Claddagh, Shantalla, Bohermore and Mervue through the implementation of environmental improvement schemes.
- Improve the public realm and residential amenities of Woodquay, Bowling Green, Raven Terrace, Whitehall and Seapoint by the implementation of civic improvement schemes.
- Progress the implementation of the civic improvement scheme for the Small Crane.
- Prepare Shopfront Design Guidelines which adhere to good principles of urban design, subject to adoption by the Council.
- Revise policy in relation to tables and chairs as defined under Section 254 of the Planning Act 2000 and include for approach to associated features including canopies. The provision of canopies shall be part of an overall plan which shall take into account standard design, heritage, streetscape and amenity value and traffic management, subject to adoption by the Council.
- Prepare a Building Heights Study for the city subject to adoption by the Council.
Chapter 8

Environment and Infrastructure

8.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
8.2 Environmental Quality
8.3 Energy and Building
8.4 Renewable Energy Sources
8.5 Flood Risk
8.6 Control of Major Accident Hazards - (Seveso II Directive)
8.7 Air Quality and Noise
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8.9 Waste Management
8.10 Drainage
8.11 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)
8.12 Water Supply and Water Quality
8.13 Telecommunications
8.14 Energy and Associated Infrastructure
8.15 Specific Objectives
8.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

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

Context
Galway has experienced significant economic and physical growth and population increases over the past decade. This unprecedented growth, economic activity and consumption patterns have put pressures on the environment with increased traffic flows, congestion and pressure on infrastructure. The EPA's State of the Environment Report (2008) notes that the environment is a key strategic resource and should be protected and managed to ensure it continues as the basis for a healthy society and a strong economy into the future. The protection of the environment and the future socio-economic and developmental growth of Galway are intrinsically linked. A balance between conservation, mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and efficient sustainable use of resources is required. In order to ensure a clean and high quality environment and the future sustainable growth and well being of the city, there must be continued enhancement of the provision and management of water and drainage infrastructure, waste management and support of the provision of efficient energy and telecommunications infrastructure.

There is compelling scientific consensus that climate change is happening and that the production of greenhouse gases, through the burning of fossil fuels, is linked to climate change and changing weather patterns. Changes in the frequency of extreme weather events are predicted to accompany climate change. Longer heat waves, a substantial reduction in the number of frost days, longer rainfall events in winter and more intense downpours in summer are projected. Ongoing precipitation changes in Ireland are currently showing increases in winter. Future impacts of climate change are likely to be felt in every sector of the economy. Possible impacts of climate change are unpredictable, diverse and subject to continued scientific study. A ‘precautionary’ approach should be adopted in this regard. The National Strategy on Climate Change 2007-2012 sets out the cross-sectoral measures necessary to achieve the country's Kyoto Protocol commitment. The national target under the Kyoto Protocol is to limit greenhouse gas emissions for 2008-2012 to 13% above the 1990 level as part of its commitment to the overall EU target. At a local level the Council must contribute to the stabilisation and reduction of national greenhouse gas emissions and include climate change adaptation through the promotion of renewable energy sources and energy conservation in policies and objectives regarding the environment and infrastructure. The Council can have a positive influence over emissions through the exercise of its planning, housing, transport and other statutory functions and contribute to the growth of a 'green economy'. The policies and objectives of this Development Plan will contribute to the national commitment to limit the impact of climate change and reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Strategy
- Protect and enhance the environment of the city, while facilitating its sustainable development and growth.
- Have a waste management system in the city in line with EU and national policies, which prioritises waste minimisation, recycling and reuse.
- Protect and manage water resources effectively and improve coastal and fresh water quality.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging energy conservation, energy efficiency and energy generation from renewable sources and support the National Climate Change Strategy.
- Provide efficient and sustainable water and wastewater infrastructure in the city.
8.2 Environmental Quality

The Council seeks to maintain and enhance the quality of the city’s environment and eliminate potential environmental risks and reduce greenhouse emissions, while also facilitating sustainable economic and physical development. The protection of the natural and built environment and the delivery of essential infrastructure and services are of major importance to the future social and economic development of the city. The sustainable development approach of this Development Plan makes a contribution to delivering on national climate change and energy strategies. This Plan includes delivery of sustainable patterns of urban growth, sustainable transport initiatives, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, waste minimisation, maintenance of air and water quality and the promotion of energy conservation, energy efficiency and support of renewable energy generation sources. The Plan will have particular regard to the following in the protection of environmental quality, climate change limitation and climate adaptation:

Environmental Issues:
- Energy and Building,
- Renewable Energy Sources,
- Flood Risk,
- Control of Major Accident Hazards, (Seveso II Directive),
- Air Quality and Noise,
- Light Pollution.

Environmental Infrastructure:
- Waste Management,
- Drainage,
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS),
- Water Supply and Water Quality,
- Telecommunications,
- Energy and Associated Infrastructure,

Other co-ordinated sustainable land use and transportation policies are detailed in Chapters 2 and 3. These include the creation of self-sustaining residential neighbourhoods and sustainable travel patterns, which will also have a beneficial impact on the quality of the environment, particularly in terms of emission levels, air quality and noise. The protection and retention of areas of natural heritage importance, water bodies, parks, local biodiversity areas and green space provide vital carbon sinks for the built-up city area and are outlined in Chapter 4. Sustainability appraisal and climate change considerations are fully integrated into the Strategic Environmental Assessment of this Plan.

8.3 Energy and Building

The energy performance of new build and existing building stock must be addressed in order to achieve national energy and climate change targets. The National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020 sets out a commitment to achieving a 20% energy efficiency saving across the economy in 2020 and a 33% reduction in public sector energy use. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) encourages more energy efficient housing layouts. This includes for more quantifiable sustainable development standards, maximising access to sunlight and daylight, facilitating greater movement by pedestrians and cyclists, facilitating the use of public transport and the use of efficient energy supply. The building regulations have steadily enhanced the thermal performance of new and refurbished buildings. The implementation of the Building Energy Rating Certification (BER) for public buildings, dwellings and non-domestic buildings will make existing and future buildings more energy efficient. Since 1997, the Galway Energy Agency Ltd. (GEAL) has promoted energy efficiency and public energy awareness, provided training and professional services in energy management and facilitated alternative energy resources. GEAL assists the Council and other local stakeholders in delivering energy efficiency solutions, stimulates the increased uptake of renewable energy sources and promotes clean and sustainable transport. GEAL is engaged by the Council to provide energy advice in the areas of housing, transport, renewable energy technologies and the environment.

Improved energy efficiency and enhanced thermal and energy performance in existing and new buildings are key measures in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The construction or refurbishment of buildings can demonstrate the practical application of such sustainable measures, which include reduction of heat loss by various methods of insulation, solar orientation and passive solar heating. Improved thermal efficiency can contribute to reduced energy consumption and is environmentally beneficial. The Council will encourage increased energy efficiency and conservation in existing and future residential, commercial and industrial buildings in the city and will lead initiatives in social housing.
Policy 8.3 Energy and Building
- Increase the energy performance of future buildings in the city by encouraging energy efficiency and energy conservation in the design and construction of development.
- Encourage new development to limit greenhouse gas emissions and make use of opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy including through design, layout, orientation and use of materials.
- Encourage high standards of energy conservation and improved energy performance in all existing and planned local authority housing.
- Liaise with the GEAL to develop standards, procedures and targets for energy conservation in the Council's housing stock.
- Encourage consideration of orientation in the siting, topography and aspect in the design of future housing developments, in order to avail of passive solar gain.
- Continue to support the installation of improved energy conservation measures.
- Ensure that the development of renewable energy and its associated infrastructure avoids negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites and adheres to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

8.4 Renewable Energy Sources
Renewable energy sources include wind, hydro, wave/ocean, solar power, geothermal/CHP and biomass. National policy recognises the need to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse emissions by encouraging alternative renewable energy sources and the associated economic benefits of manufacturing and energy exports. Good energy conservation and use of renewable technologies such as wind power and solar gain can reduce the energy needs of buildings and operating costs, whilst improving their sustainability. The national target commits 40% of electricity from renewable resources by 2020 under the Government's publication Building Ireland's Smart Economy – A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal (2008).

The Planning and Development Regulations 2007 and 2008 introduced exemptions from planning requirements to encourage the development of micro renewable energy sources in domestic dwellings, business premises and industrial buildings for example solar panels, heat pumps, biomass and wind turbines subject to certain conditions. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) notes that residential developments offer the potential to benefit from renewable energy sources within a district/site. Suitable technologies may include small-scale wind energy plants and combined heat and power schemes. There is potential for relatively small-scale wind energy development within the urban and industrial areas of the city, where visual and residential amenities are safeguarded and there are no adverse environmental impacts. In the assessment of such proposals the Council will have regard to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006).

It is Council policy to support and promote, in conjunction with GEAL and other agencies, renewable energy initiatives, including wind and wave, where such initiatives are consistent with proper planning and sustainable development of the city. The Council in the assessment of the development of alternative energy sources will have consideration of the likely impacts of such development in conjunction with the potential strategic environmental benefits, including greenhouse gas emission reduction.

Policy 8.4 Renewable Energy Sources
- Promote and facilitate the development of renewable sources of energy within the city, and support national initiatives, in conjunction with GEAL and other agencies, which offer sustainable alternatives to dependency on fossil fuels and a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, subject to the avoidance of unduly negative visual and environmental impacts.

8.5 Flood Risk
A consequence of climate change for Ireland is likely to be more extreme weather events which may be experienced in altered rainfall patterns with increased occurrences of long duration and high-intensity rainfall events affecting water flow in watercourses and surface water drainage systems increasing flood risk. Possible sea level rise and more severe coastal storms could negatively impact on the coastal area due to inundation and erosion. It is noted that flooding similar to coastal erosion, is a natural process within the environment, which cannot be completely eliminated. The Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010 empowers the Planning Authority to consider changes including climate adaptation in the Development Plan and allows development in areas at risk of inland and coastal flooding to be regulated, restricted or controlled. Flood risk is a measure of probability of flooding occurring in an area taking into consideration both current and potential future circumstances, such as climate change, land use, development and flood risk management and flood and coastal defences. In this regard, a balanced view of flood risk while facilitating necessary development of the city shall be taken in the interests of the public, economy, environment and property in general.
The city, due to its landscape setting, is vulnerable to three key sources of flooding – fluvial, groundwater, and coastal. In this regard the Council will carry out as a priority a city wide detailed Flood Risk Assessment. In the city, some areas have been traditionally and seasonally liable to flooding. A combination of high tides, high winds, and surges can lead to localised flooding within areas adjoining the coast and in the city centre, for example the aptly named Flood Street. To date large sections of the natural flood plains of the River Corrib and coastline have been protected from development through the sensitive application of land use zoning objectives. As part of the city’s defence infrastructure, a Flood Emergency Plan, a sub-plan of the Major Emergency Plan (2008), has been prepared. The purpose of this plan is to aid the Council in its response to and recovery from flooding events. It identified that the area most likely to be affected by flooding is the Spanish Arch area, Quay Street, Flood Street, Lower Salthill and the Docks area. The OPW, who have a role in flood defence, have recently upgraded existing flood defence works on Dyke Road.

The shoreline is a complex and dynamic system of physical and natural environmental processes, interacting with human activities and where the stability/instability is the result of continued movements of winds, waves, tide, and sediment. Coastal erosion of both the foreshore and the shoreline itself can contribute to coastal flooding. The OPW are nearing completion of the Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study for the West Coast, which will produce flood and erosion risk maps for the western coastline. The study will define in greater detail the extent of coastal erosion and flood risk using modern survey and analysis methods and through the production of strategic coastal erosion and flood risk maps. The findings and recommendations of this future study, in relation to the coastline of the city, will be integrated into the Development Plan, where appropriate. Where necessary, the Council will facilitate environmentally and economically sustainable coastal protection works in order to prevent coastal erosion and flooding in most vulnerable areas. The City Council received approval in 2007 from An Bord Pleanála for the Sailín to Silverstrand Coastal Protection Scheme and Walkway from Blackrock to Silverstrand. Any future defence works within the shoreline shall take account of the long-term inter-relationships between defences and coastal processes in the wider area, the need to protect the environment and natural habitats and include opportunities for maintaining and enhancing the natural coastal environment, where appropriate.

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) emphasises the importance of considering flood risk assessment in the Development Plan. The guidelines state that a strategic flood risk catchment based view and the related impacts of/on development throughout a catchment, rather than on an individual location basis makes a positive contribution to the avoidance and management of flood risk. The Development Plan will be informed by a strategic Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study, being produced by the OPW in conjunction with other stakeholders, including the City Council, under the EU Floods Directive. The CFRAM Study will establish a long-term strategy and measures for the management of flood risk for the river basin district which includes the city. Its recommendations will be integrated into Council policy.

With regard to flood risk, a precautionary and sequential approach shall be applied of:

- Avoidance of inappropriate development in flood risk areas and avoidance of new development increasing flood risk elsewhere,
- Substitution of less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible and
- Mitigation and management of flood risk through location, layout and detailed design of development, where avoidance and substitution are not possible.

Planning applications for proposed developments in flood risk locations will be required to be accompanied by a flood risk assessment including an examination of the effect of development on flood risk to adjoining lands and flood management and mitigation proposals. Following the publication of the CFRAM, the Council will review flood risk in the city and carry out more detailed FRA, where determined necessary. Local area plans will also address flood risk and any zoning and development issues prior to any development. The use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) will be encouraged wherever practical in the design of development to reduce the rate and quantity of surface water run-off.
Policy 8.5 Flood Risk

- Have regard to the findings and relevant identified actions of the future Corrib CFRAM Study when available and incorporate into the Development Plan, where appropriate.
- Review flood risk in the city and carry out detailed site-specific FRA for locations of potential flood risk, where necessary.
- Require development applications in the locations of potential flood risk, to provide flood impact assessment and flood risk minimisation and mitigation measures, to facilitate assessment, in the interest of reducing the risk of flooding.
- Prohibit the location of structures other than structures with essential links to the waterway within 10 metres of the River Corrib in G agricultural zoned lands.
- Ensure flood risk is addressed in any future local area plans, framework plans and masterplans in the city.
- Facilitate sustainable flood defense and coastal protection works in order to prevent flooding and coastal erosion, subject to environmental and visual considerations.
- Ensure the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) wherever practical, in the design of development to reduce the rate and quantity of surface water run-off.
- Ensure new developments, where appropriate, are designed and constructed to meet the flood design standards outlined under Section 11.27 Flood Risk.
- Have regard to the findings and recommendations of the imminent Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study of the West Coast, when available and incorporate into the Development Plan, where appropriate.
- Continue to protect the coastal area and foreshore and avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of coastal erosion and/or would cause and escalate coastal erosion in adjoining areas.
- Protect and maintain, where feasible, undeveloped riparian zones and natural floodplains along the River Corrib and its tributaries.

8.6 Control of Major Accident Hazards (Seveso II Directive)

The EU Directive on the control of major accident hazards, known as the Seveso II Directive, was adopted in February 1999. It was introduced into Irish law through the EC (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2000. The Directive aims to prevent major accident hazards involving dangerous substances and chemicals and limit their consequences for people and the environment. The Directive covers both industrial activities and the storage of dangerous substances. The Planning and Development Act 2000 makes it a mandatory objective for development plans to have consideration of the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive and Regulations, regarding the siting of new establishments, modification of existing establishments and development in the vicinity of such establishments. It requires that objectives regarding the prevention of major accident hazards and the limitation of their consequences to the environment and community is taken into account in land use policies and planning controls.

There are two Seveso II sites within the city:

- Topaz (formally Enwest) Galway Terminal, Galway Harbour Board Enterprise Park.
- Leeside/Fareplay Terminal, Lough Atalia Road.

The Health and Safety Authority, also known as the National Authority for Occupational and Health Standards, provides technical advice, where appropriate, in respect of planning applications within a certain distance of a Seveso II site. This technical advice will be taken into account in the overall assessment of the development, in addition to standard planning criteria. Where a development proposal is in the vicinity of a Seveso II site, a consultation zone in each establishment is applied. Any relevant proposals for development within these zones or any future amended zones will be referred to the Health and Safety Authority for guidance. A Major Emergency Plan has been prepared for the city’s administrative area which addresses potential emergencies which may arise from these sites.
8.7 Air Quality and Noise

The existing legislative framework for air quality protection is based on the EU Air Framework Directive, which sets out a European wide approach to monitoring, assessment and management of air quality. Air quality management is a matter for local authorities informed by the national air quality monitoring network. The Council assesses the air quality in the city by monitoring the concentration levels of various pollutants at different monitoring stations located within the city and the results are forwarded to the EPA. Monitoring checks whether air quality in the city meets standards that are considered adequate for the protection of human health and the environment. Monitored pollutants include particulate matter (PM10), sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, ground-level ozone and black smoke. The current air quality in the city is good and it complies with air quality standards, due largely to the prevailing westerly air-flow and the absence of heavy industry. The greatest future challenge for national air quality will be emissions from road traffic. The Council must ensure that air quality protection is an integral part of traffic management and planning. The integrated transport solution being developed and implemented by the GTU promotes the modal shift from private vehicle and as a result will help maintain the good air quality in the city. The continued conservation of the city’s parks, urban woodlands, trees and green spaces (see Chapter 4) has a significant role in improving air quality and cleansing the air of many pollutants.

Environmental noise is described as unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities. Noise can have a significant effect on the environment and quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. The Planning system can minimise the adverse impact of noise and vibration while enabling sustainable development. National guidelines including the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for Apartments (2007), Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) and accompanying Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide (2009) draws attention to noise conflict issues and the need for noise attenuation in residential design and layout.

A Noise Action Plan 2008-2013 has been adopted by the City Council, to manage, prevent and reduce environmental noise and preserve environmental noise quality where it is good within the city. The mitigation and protection measures of the Noise Action Plan have informed noise policies of this Plan. The strategic noise mapping of the city in the Noise Action Plan will be taken into consideration in the assessment of relevant development proposals.

Wherever possible, the siting of new development should have regard to noise sensitive locations and site design techniques can be used to minimise noise impact. These include setbacks, landscaping, noise barriers and management controls.

Policy 8.7 Air Quality and Noise

- Maintain air quality to a satisfactory standard by regulating and monitoring atmospheric emissions in accordance with EU directives on air quality, by promoting and supporting initiatives to reduce air pollution, by increasing the use of public transport, developing urban woodland, encouraging tree planting and conserving green open space.
- Ensure the design of development incorporates measures to minimise noise levels in their design and reduce the emission and intrusion of any noise or vibration which might give reasonable cause for annoyance, where appropriate.
- Consider the land use planning mitigation and protection measures and the strategic noise mapping of the city in the Galway City Noise Action Plan 2008-2013 in the assessment of relevant development applications, where appropriate.
- Implement noise reduction measures as outlined in Galway City Noise Action Plan 2008-2013, with priority to those areas designated as worst affected, namely along the N6 (including Ros Caoim).

8.8 Light Pollution

Light pollution refers to the effect of light trespass, spillage, glare and over-lighting resulting from excessive levels of light and poorly designed lighting schemes. While artificial lighting is part of the everyday urban experience and is vital for a safe and secure environment, excessive or poorly designed lighting can diminish the quality of life, cause glare hazards to drivers and disturb the tranquillity of the night time environment. There is a need to strike a balance between the desire for security and illumination and the control of light pollution, in the interests of amenity, avoidance of nuisance...
to adjacent residential properties and limitation of the possible disturbance to wildlife. Careful consideration will be given to the location and design of lighting fittings and columns, including security lighting, decorative lighting and floodlighting, to ensure that such installations and fixtures do not detract from the visual appearance and character of a building, protected structure, streetscape, protected view or surrounding area.

Luminaries and lighting fixtures should ideally be designed, installed and maintained to ensure that there is full horizontal plane cut-off, with glare, light spill and energy use kept to a minimum. Lighting should always be designed to fulfill a specific purpose. Efficient and effective lighting installations should provide sufficient light for the task in hand without impinging on the amenity of the surrounding areas. The timing, frequency of use and management of lighting installations may be controlled to minimise any environmental impact. Lighting schemes for new developments may have conditions imposed, as part of their planning permission.

### Policy 8.8 Light Pollution

- Ensure the design of external lighting minimises the incidence of light pollution, glare and spillage into the surrounding environment and has due regard to the visual and residential amenities of surrounding areas.

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### 8.9 Waste Management

The Connacht Waste Management Replacement Plan 2006-2011 was adopted by six local authorities, Galway City, Galway County, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo and covers the period 2006 to 2011 and follows on from an earlier Waste Management Plan 1999-2004. The long-term policy is to achieve a unified co-ordinated regional approach to the sustainable management of waste, by developing an integrated system of waste treatment solutions, based on the waste hierarchy and the 'polluter pays' principle established in the EU Framework Directive on Waste and national waste policy. The plan aims to achieve the maximum landfill diversion through the sustained promotion of waste minimisation and prevention, expansion of recycling, development of biological and thermal treatment capacity options and energy recovery. The emphasis within the region to date has been on the provision of waste recycling facilities so as to increase diversion from landfill and to both extend existing landfills and identify new regional landfill facilities. The plan, includes commitments regarding the expansion of home composting to 10% of urban households, introduction of a separate bio-waste collection to extend to a minimum of 90% urban households by 2009 and the provision of civic amenity facilities to include reception of green (garden) waste and additional biological treatment capacity for bio-waste.

The City Council provides a domestic refuse service to over three quarters of the households in the city, the remainder is served by private operators. It is one of the few local authorities in the country currently operating a kerb-side separated three-way bin collection service of organic material, dry recyclable and residual landfill waste. The Council, through the efforts of householders separating their waste at source and support from REPAK and REHAB, has achieved excellent recycling rates, since the introduction of a segregated waste collection system in 2001. The Council has one of the highest recycling rates in the country, 60.5%, (significantly higher than the national average of 26.1%), which contributes significantly to Ireland reaching its national target of diversion of overall household waste away from landfill. In January 2007 the Pay by Weight System was introduced for the refuse collection in Galway and benefits of savings in household refuse costs. The Household Bulky Goods Collection is a further development by the Council in assisting the public to dispose of unwanted waste. The implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations has been addressed by the Council. Table 8.1 indicates the significant increases in landfill diversion and recycling of household waste, coupled with increases in organic bio-waste (brown bin waste) since 2001. A composting biological treatment facility has been developed at Carrowbrowne, which turns the city's organic household bio-waste and garden waste stream (brown bin waste) into good quality and useable compost. The process, which is licensed to take 9,500 tonnes per annum, improves landfill diversion.
The Connacht Waste Management Replacement Plan seeks to maximise the reuse and recycling of construction and demolition waste (C&D). The Council will continue to ensure the sustainable management of C&D waste generated by development through the use of planning conditions and obligations. With regard to litter management, recent positive results from Irish Business Against Litter League (IBAL) surveys, demonstrates a steady improvement in litter levels and management within the city. Nevertheless, the Council, with help from businesses and communities, must continue to endeavor to keep the city litter free, in order to maintain the City’s status as an attractive tourism and investment destination and a good place to work and live. The Council will continue to implement the objectives of the City Council Litter Management Plan and other initiatives such as the Spring Clean Campaign, Glan Suas Gaillimh, the Chewing Gum Litter Campaign and the Green Schools Campaign in tackling litter.

**Policy 8.9 Waste Management Policy**

- Secure the provision of waste management facilities and infrastructure with appropriate provision for minimisation, recovery and recycling of waste and to regulate waste operations in a manner which reflects the ‘polluter pays’ and ‘proximity’ principles with particular emphasis on large waste producers, in accordance with the objectives of the Connacht Waste Management Replacement Plan 2006-2011, except in relation to incineration.
- Support the objectives and targets of the Connacht Waste Management Replacement Plan 2006-2011 relating to Galway City and any subsequent Regional Waste Management Plans thereafter, except in relation to incineration.
- Ensure the sustainable siting of waste facilities in relation to existing and potential surrounding landuses, transportation and environmental considerations.
- Encourage the development of a C&D waste recycling facility and other measures in the city for the sorting and grinding of C&D waste for reuse, subject to appropriate environmental and planning considerations.
- Ensure that planning proposals for new medium and large-scale developments, such as housing estates, retail and industrial developments include C&D waste management plans.
- Ensure that adequate recycling facilities are provided within the city, including where those are required in association with the layouts of new residential, industrial and commercial developments where appropriate and comply with the requirements of the Environment Section of the Council.
- Consider redundant quarry sites as suitable locations for the undertaking of C&D waste recovery, subject to appropriate environmental and planning considerations.
- Promote the implementation of the City Council Litter Management Plan and other litter management initiatives in order to minimise and control the extent of litter pollution in the city.
- Ensure that planning proposals on contaminated lands include appropriate remediation measures.
- Continue to promote waste prevention and minimisation.
- During the lifetime of this Plan the City Council will provide, where feasible and subject to resources, a resource recovery park within the city boundary.
8.10 Drainage
The continued development and improvement of wastewater drainage infrastructure within the city is imperative to its future growth as a Gateway. Good sanitary infrastructure allows the achievement of critical mass and protects the city’s unique environment. The Galway Main Drainage – Stage 3 project consists of three major elements:

- Maximising the treatment potential of the existing Mutton Island Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW).
- Study of the existing drainage network within the city area.
- Long term strategy for Galway City and adjacent Galway County Council area including Oranmore, Clarinbridge and Barna.

Part of this study will include an examination and assessment of existing foul and surface water and storm drainage infrastructure of the area. It will identify future drainage and treatment needs with particular reference to areas being considered for zoning as development lands and long term strategic planning for the region. Funding has been provided for the Galway Main Drainage Stage 3 project under the Capital Water Services Investment Programme 2007–2009. The project will provide an integrated approach to the long term development and improvement of the city drainage system in a sustainable and efficient manner. Some elements of this project have been completed, including the connection of foul discharges to the main sewer network.

The Mutton Island WWTW has a modern wastewater collection and treatment system in place for the city and its environs and complies with the standards of the EU Urban Waste Water Directive. It facilitates the efficient treatment of wastewater and has improved water quality in the bay. In 2007 An Bord Pleanala permitted an upgrade of the Mutton Island plant to accommodate increased capacity. When the upgrade is completed, Mutton Island will have the capacity to deal with a population equivalent (p.e.) of 170,000. A wastewater discharge license for this increase in capacity was issued by the EPA in April 2010.

As detailed above, one element of the long term strategy for Galway City and adjacent Galway County Council area is the provision of a new Galway East WWTW located in the general Oranmore/Athlone area. This facility will service undeveloped lands to the east including Ardaun and alleviate future capacity constraints on the existing network by allowing flows, which are currently treated at Mutton Island WWTW, to be diverted to the Galway East WWTW. This project is being carried out in collaboration with Galway County Council.

**Policy 8.10 Drainage**

- Provide, in a sustainable manner, a drainage collection/treatment system capable of meeting the needs of domestic, commercial and industrial users in the city. This shall include the long term operation, maintenance and upgrading of the Mutton Island WWTW and investigations and implementation of optimum long-term drainage solutions and the progression of the Galway East WWTW.
- Implement the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive with regard to a sustainable approach to water services management by fully internalising the costs of water usage and wastewater generation in respect of the non-domestic sector.
- Preserve and improve the effectiveness and performance of wastewater drainage infrastructure within the city.

8.11 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

The urban environment with its associated impermeable surfaces, such as roofs, driveways, car parks and roads has had a significant adverse effect on the natural hydrological regime. Urban development can prevent the natural percolation of rainfall into the ground resulting in excessive volumes and flows of surface water run off, which can lead to an increase in flooding, exceed the capacity of the drainage system and reduce the water quality in receiving waters. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), is a form of surface water drainage that aims to minimise surface water run off associated with urban development on site, using a sequence of management practices and control structures, designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable manner.

The use of SUDS has many benefits and can be an effective means of reducing the risk of flooding by reflecting natural drainage processes. It reduces the amount and rate of surface water flow by a combination of measures including infiltration into the ground, attenuation of surface water in storage areas and slowing down the movement of water. The implementation of SUDS can improve water quality by removing pollutants from urban run off at source, by the natural treatment processes of sedimentation, filtration, adsorption and biological degradation. SUDS also alleviates the risk of flooding from blocked or over-flowing urban storm water drainage systems, by preserving the existing capacity of the drainage sewerage network. SUDS may also include surface water retention ponds and basins, wetlands, vegetated/planted filter strips and swales, the use of green facades and green roofs, which increase biodiversity within the urban environment, providing amenity benefits. The use of SUDS is currently being promoted within all new development in the city. Permeable surfaces, rainwater harvesting, green roofs, filter drains, retention ponds and other surface water control and management practices are being sought in new developments. Generally the SUDS proposal for any greenfield development site should be such that the volumes and peak flow rates of surface water leaving a developed site are no greater than the rates prior to the proposed development.
Environment and Infrastructure

Policy 8.11 SUDS

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

8.12 Water Supply and Water Quality

A high-quality clean drinking water supply and good bathing water quality is important for the future economic, physical growth and public health of the city. While water quality is normally good in the city, the outbreak of cryptosporidium and E. coli (Knocknacarra) in 2007 and elevated lead levels in 2008 within areas of the city has served to reveal the importance of having adequate infrastructure in place to prevent contamination of water supply. It is recognised that water is a precious resource, the demand for which must be met in a sustainable manner. The City Council does not possess sole stewardship of the sources of potable water for the city but is one of a number of agencies tasked with water source protection.

Population increases in the city have been coupled by increases in water demand and the volume of water use per head of population. The total demand for water in the city is 49,000 m$^3$ per day with the demand being met by the Terryland Water Treatment Plant (33,000 m$^3$) and the Galway County Council Luimnagh Plant (16,000 m$^3$), on a temporary basis pending the completion of the Terryland upgrade. The supply from Luimnagh in 2007 facilitated the closure of the Old Terryland Water Treatment Plant. The completion of the Luimnagh upgrade and interconnection to the Galway water distribution network coupled with the commissioning of the ultra-violet disinfection system at Terryland contributed to the delivery of the short-term solution for the city’s water supply following the contamination in 2007. Approval was given in 2008 to upgrade the Terryland Plant as the medium-term solution to address water quality in the city. This upgrade in the treatment process, will increase water supply production from 35,000 m$^3$ to 55,000 m$^3$. When complete, the City Council will be self sufficient regarding water supply in meeting the needs of the city without reliance on an external supply. The interconnection with Luimnagh will be maintained in order to provide future security of water supply for City and County Council areas. In order to provide a long-term solution for future water supply provision, consulting engineers were appointed in 2009 to prepare a strategic report on the long-term water requirements of the city and its environs over the next twenty years. The long-term solution will provide for a new water intake location and will cater for the anticipated water demand over the period.

Water conservation is a cost-effective and sustainable way to reduce our demand for water and using less water places less pressure on the city’s sewage treatment facilities. To minimise water wastage, the Council has been encouraging conservation and best practice in the use of water in the city.
A range of water conservation measures have been sought in new development including dual-use toilets, rainwater harvesting and reuse of grey water. The ‘Slow the Flow’ water conservation initiative, pilot rain harvesting programmes, and the on-going leak eradication under the Water Services Investment Programme, have been successful in increasing the efficiency and capacity of the water distribution network to meet existing and increased demand. In line with government policy, the Council is ensuring that the ‘polluter pays principle’ in regard to water supply services is implemented in the case of non-domestic users in a clear and structured manner, through the non-domestic water metering consolidated charge.

In addition to achieving a sustainable and good potable water supply, maintaining a high standard of water quality in the diverse array of natural water assets in the city, including lakes, rivers, canals, groundwater and coastal area, is crucial. Water quality is a key environmental condition supporting the integrity of all Natura 2000 sites within the city. It is vital that these water bodies are protected against pollution and that the quality of water is maintained at acceptable levels. The EU Water Framework Directive establishes an integrated approach and framework for the protection, improvement and sustainable use of inland surface waters, rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters, with the aim of improving the quality of our water environment. The objectives of the Directive require that the water environment is managed on natural river basins. The Western River Basin District Project, set up under the Water Framework Directive, involves the preparation and implementation of a cross-border water management plan and long-term programme of water improvement. The Western River Basin District Management Plan (WRBDMP) 2009-2015 sets out the water quality objectives to be achieved for individual water bodies and also a programme of actions, which must be implemented in order to achieve these objectives. The Development Plan will support and implement the various water protection measures of the WRBDMP, where appropriate. Also in the interest of water protection, the Council will require developments, which are adjacent to watercourses and coastal areas, and include the storage and/or run-off of potentially polluting substances, such as oil and chemicals, to use best available practices to reduce the risk of environmental pollution.

Groundwater is an important natural resource and is vulnerable to pollution. The city is divided into two different aquifer classifications. To the east of the River Corrib is a regionally important aquifer, which is hosted by the Lower Carboniferous Burren Karst Limestone, the most important aquifer in County Galway. To the west of the river is what is classified by the GSI as poor aquifer bedrock, which is moderately productive only in local zones. It is important that the city’s groundwater is protected from future contamination to ensure water quality.

The EU Bathing Water Directive adopted in 2006 and transposed into Irish law under the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 sets new standards for bathing waters by reference to bacteria levels in the water. The strong focus is on greater protection of bather’s health and a proactive approach to the management of bathing water quality. The Council will pursue the objectives of the regulations in the monitoring and assessing of bathing water quality, providing bathing information, taking action to prevent the exposure of bathers to pollution and taking action to reduce the risk of pollution. The Mutton Island WWTW has led to major improvements in bathing water quality in Galway Bay, highlighted by the award of Blue Flag status for Silverstrand and Salthill over the past number of years. The Council seeks to maintain and improve bathing water quality and advance the achievement of Blue Flag status for other beaches within the city including Ballyloughan beach and Grattan beach.

**Policy 8.12 Water Supply and Water Quality**

- Provide in a sustainable manner a water supply system capable of meeting the needs of domestic, commercial and industrial users in the city.
- Achieve and maintain high standards for drinking water and water quality in the city, in compliance with EU Directives.
- Prepare a strategic long-term report on the water requirements of the city and its environs over the next twenty years and implement the measures arising in order to provide a sustainable long-term solution to address future water supply needs.
- Have regard to the actions of the Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015 in order to promote and achieve a restoration of good status, reduce chemical pollution and prevent deterioration of surface, coastal and groundwater quality, where appropriate.
- Implement the monitoring and management actions of the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 in securing and retaining good quality bathing water.
- Maintain and extend the Blue Flag status in regard to water quality, infrastructure and amenity provision with regard to the beaches in the city.
- Minimise and control discharges to inland surface water bodies, groundwater and coastal waters to prevent water pollution.
- Continue to implement the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive with regard to a sustainable approach to water services management by fully internalising the costs of water usage and wastewater generation in respect of the non-domestic sector.
- Encourage all significant water users to use best practices in water conservation and continue to promote water conservation measures in all new development in the city.
- Ensure any development within the aquatic environment shall be carried out in consultation with prescribed bodies and with adherence to their guidelines.
- Protect the city’s groundwater resource and ensure that any development, which threatens the quality of the city’s groundwater, will not be permitted.
8.13 Telecommunications

Telecommunication infrastructure is a necessary prerequisite for the social and economic development of the city as a Gateway. Telecommunications infrastructure and services promote industrial and commercial development and also enhance social exchange and mobility. The provision of the Metropolitan Area Broadband Network has been a success, enabling efficient communication and strengthening the city’s role as a business hub and as a competitive location for inward investment.

With regard to other telecommunication installations, the Council will ensure that development for mobile phone installations take cognisance of the DEHLG Planning Guidelines for Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, (1996), so that any potential environmental impacts associated with installations are minimised. The need for a high quality telecommunications network will be balanced against the need to protect the visual and residential amenities of the city.

Policy 8.13 Telecommunications

- Support the development and expansion of telecommunication infrastructure (including the broadband network) within the city where appropriate, subject to environmental and visual considerations.
- Ensure that development for mobile phone installations take cognisance of the DEHLG Planning Guidelines for Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, 1996, so that any potential environmental impacts associated with installations are minimised.
- Encourage the siting of new mobile phone installations to follow the hierarchy of suitable locations proposed in the DEHLG guidelines. When a number of other possibilities have been exhausted, masts may be erected within or in the immediate vicinity of residential areas.
- Ensure that developers of masts facilitate the co-location of antennae with other operators in order to avoid an unnecessary proliferation of masts. Where this is not possible, operators will be encouraged to co-locate so that masts and antennae may be clustered.

8.14 Energy and Associated Infrastructure

The provision of reliable and efficient energy transmission infrastructure and supply is fundamental for the future social, economic and physical development of the city. Competitive, diverse and secure power supplies support economic and social development. Although the Council is not a direct provider of services, it facilitates the provision of many services such as the gas and electricity networks. Grid 25 – A Strategy for the Development of Ireland’s Electricity Grid for a Sustainable and Competitive Future (2009) provides a long term view of transmission infrastructure requirements and provides a guide to the scale of grid development required to correctly match the anticipated long term needs. The strategy is a critical element in future proofing the electricity needs of the city, helping to attract future high technical industry and supports renewable energy deployment in order to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. The Council will continue to support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity and gas networks. A balanced progressive approach will be adopted to minimise the impact on the environment while providing for the city’s energy needs.
**Policy 8.14 Energy and Associated Infrastructure**

- Support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity and gas networks in the city, underground where at all possible, including the overhead high voltage lines necessary to provide the required networks.
- Support the implementation of *Grid 25 – A Strategy for the Development of Ireland’s Electricity Grid for a Sustainable and Competitive Future* (Eirgrid 2009) to deliver a sustainable electricity system and ensure transition to a low-carbon economy.
- Ensure that the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks and natural gas works avoid negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites and adhere to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

### 8.15 Specific Objectives

**Drainage Infrastructure**
- Implement and complete on a phased basis the Galway Main Drainage Stage 3 for Galway City and Environs in conjunction with Galway County Council.

**Water Infrastructure and Quality**
- Prepare a strategic report on the long-term water requirements of the city and its environs over the next twenty years and commence its implementation on a phased basis, including for improvements in water supply and water infrastructure within the city and surrounding areas.

**Waste Management**
- Facilitate the objectives of the *Connacht Waste Management Replacement Plan 2006-2011* relative to Galway City, excluding incineration.

**Village Envelopes**
- Investigate and respond to required improvements in the drainage and water infrastructure in the village envelopes as part of the review of the infrastructural investment programme.

**Flood Risk Management**
- Prepare a detailed site-specific FRA for any identified potential flood risk areas, taking into consideration findings of the CFRAM Study when completed.
Chapter 9

City Centre/
Areas Based Plans

9.1  Aim, Context and Strategy
9.2  City Centre
9.3  Salthill
9.4  Village Envelopes/Areas
9.5  Ardaun
9.6  Murroogh
9.7  Specific Objectives
9.1  Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim

To ensure the protection and enhancement of the specific roles and characteristics of areas, which contribute to the overall vitality and diversity of Galway City and enhances the status of the city as a Gateway. To ensure the delivery of integrated sustainable development in new development and regeneration areas within the city through the implementation of plans.

Context

Within Galway City, there are distinctive areas, which have definite functions or characteristics that contribute to the diversity, economic well being and character of the overall city. These areas warrant specific area based policies in order to protect and enhance their distinctive quality. The city centre is one of these areas. It has a medieval townscape and a strong arts and cultural function and is a major tourist attraction. In spite of this, there are still areas within the city centre that would benefit from economic and environmental improvements. It is recognised that in order to enhance and strengthen the city centre’s role as the prime commercial and tourist hub, specific policies and development objectives are required.

Salthill is another distinctive area, it has a major role as a leisure area and seaside resort for the city. In recent years Salthill has experienced increased growth, it has re-established itself as an urban village with an increased range of local services, its character has been altered, with the replacement of older hotels by apartment development. It is recognised that in order to protect and strengthen the area’s role, area based policies and development objectives are required.

The city also contains a number of small village clusters, which contribute to its diverse character. Opportunities exist for enhancement of these villages through the provision of facilities and appropriate development, which would benefit each village and the overall city.

It is anticipated that the designated settlement area of Ardaun will become a self sufficient area served by sustainable transportation. It is recognised that in order to create a sustainable living environment with integrated services and transportation that a local area plan is required to avoid the area being developed in a piecemeal and incoherent manner over a long period of time. This approach is also adopted for Murroogh where there is an opportunity for the provision of recreational facilities, mixed use development and a new residential neighbourhood. It is also considered appropriate to prepare a local area plan for the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin roundabout), where there is considerable opportunity for sustainable redevelopment adjacent to the city centre for the provision of mixed uses, new residential communities, improved transportation services and improved linkages to the city centre.

Strategy

- Protect and enhance areas in the city with specific functions or characteristics through area-based policies, specific guidelines and standards.
- Ensure the integrated and sustainable development of Ardaun and Murroogh by the implementation of local area plans.
- Ensure the integrated and sustainable development of regeneration areas at Ceannt Station, Inner Harbour and Headford Road (south of the Bodkin roundabout).

9.2  City Centre

The city centre in the last fifteen years has experienced increased economic activity, coupled with improvements in the quality of the public realm. Much of this is due to the implementation of strong planning policies, which preserved the primacy of the city centre. These changes have contributed to giving the city centre a positive image as a place to live, carry out business and visit. They have also maintained its role as the primary area for high order shopping, tourist and cultural facilities. The Council will seek to maintain and reinforce the role of the city centre as the dominant commercial area of the city.

The diversity of uses including tourist related uses and the increase in the number of restaurants in areas such as Quay Street and Cross Street has contributed to the vitality and atmosphere of the city centre. A mix of uses is an important element in maintaining the city's vitality and diversity. The Council will ensure therefore that this diversity is maintained and that no single use dominates.

Previous development plan policies have encouraged an increase in residential population in the city centre. This has resulted in a range of innovative residential units and has contributed to the increase in vitality. In order to ensure the city centre maintains and increases its role as a living environment, the Council will require new development in the city centre to provide a minimum residential content.

With pressure for development, there is a need to ensure that the urban form and design of the city is respected. The city centre core derives a strong urban design context from its medieval legacy. High quality design, which has regard to this context, is essential to protect and enhance the character of the city centre. Where appropriate the following specific design elements when adhered to in new infill developments can contribute to visually strengthening the city core and maintaining its character:
• Continuous unbroken buildings lines,
• Narrow plot sizes,
• Stone/painted plaster finishes,
• Varying building heights with no regular pattern,
• Steeply pitched roofs,
• Strong corners and sharp gables,
• Diversity of building styles,
• Timber windows,
• Shopfronts reflecting the character and plot size of the building.

While varying building heights and diversity of new and old building styles are a characteristic of the city centre streetscape, the overall scale of buildings in the city centre core is relatively consistent. Previous development plans have adopted policies in relation to density, which have contributed to the protection of the character of the city centre. In order to maintain this character the Council will require that new developments will retain similar density standards in this Development Plan. On certain key sites within the city it is recognised that a higher plot ratio may contribute to a higher quality of urban design or urban regeneration.

The increase in development in the city centre has led to pressure on the archaeological heritage, protected structures and historic streetscape. Policies for the protection of the city’s archaeological heritage and protected structures are contained in Chapter 7. Eight areas in the city are designated Architectural Conservation Areas. This designation requires a management plan to be implemented for these eight areas. These plans will include for a management approach to the public realm, which will be required to be implemented by the Council. They will lead not only to the protection of the area’s character but also to the enhancement of its visual amenity and economic value. These plans will further detail the design requirements for new developments and for the refurbishment of properties in these eight areas.

While previous planning policies have been very successful in enhancing the role of the city, there are further opportunities for the expansion, improvement and regeneration of the city centre.

9.2.1 Ceannt Station Area

A rich medieval period has left a strong legacy that gives definition to the city centre. However this tight network of streets has also served to constrain the direction of growth in recent years and limited the ability of the city centre to respond to demand for an increase in commercial floor area space. In the past Galway also had a rich mercantile trading function where the harbour and seafront were part of the town centre activities in contrast to today where the gravity of attraction is the main shopping streets. This has lamentably resulted in a separation of the town centre from the sea with all the consequential loss of opportunities. The emerging brownfield sites at both Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour are experiencing economic and functional changes and now present scope for a significant extension of the city centre and a re-engagement with the seafront.

With respect to Ceannt Station, a site of approximately 5.8 hectares, there are proposals to retain, modernise and expand the public transportation function while releasing surplus lands for a mixed use development. In principle, this represents a solution to the need for a sequential expansion of the city centre onto a site with the advantage of an improved bus and train interchange. In this regard the Council will consider the redevelopment of these lands where it can be demonstrated that a number of requirements can be satisfied.

In advance of detailed proposals a masterplan/framework plan shall be prepared for the overall site which will address critical issues including transport requirements, urban design context, maximum building heights, appropriate use mixes, high quality public realm, architectural heritage and likely phasing of construction. The preparation of this plan shall be the responsibility of the applicant in consultation with the local authority, adjoining landowners and other stakeholders. This will build on the acknowledged co-operation existing between Ceannt Station landowners and harbour landowners which includes for a common objective to have a co-ordinated and integrated approach embedded into future proposals.

There will be a requirement for any redevelopment to accommodate and front-load a significantly upgraded transportation interchange with associated underground car parking. A full analysis of future likely and desirable needs for transport facilities including for commuter rail services will be necessary in the context of Galway as a gateway and a regional centre. This should demonstrate how the dedication of land on the site for commercial development will not inhibit future demand for intensification of rail/bus or any other likely forms of public transport.

Regarding urban design, it should be demonstrated that the proposal can knit seamlessly into the fabric of the medieval core in the city centre. There will be requirements to connect and integrate with the existing street network, reflect the existing urban grain, structure and link public spaces. The design will be required to maximise public access and permeability throughout the site, give linkage and views to the seafront and Lough Atalia. It should also...
look at the challenge of transition areas bounding the site and anticipate opportunities for linkage and continuity in the design and layout of these sites. This will be particularly important with regard to the adjoining Inner Harbour area where regeneration is also planned and where maximum advantage of the seafront location can be delivered.

Where taller buildings are part of the composition, it shall be demonstrated how existing important views, vistas and landmarks are respected and how such buildings contribute to aspects of urban design such as accessibility, enclosure, character, permeability and adaptability.

The public realm should be designed in a manner that achieves a strong sense of place, achieves permeability and reflects a defined functionality and strong landscape impact. This element too should demonstrate how linkage with existing spaces can be achieved and where continuity with likely scenarios on the adjoining site can be made.

The use mix shall provide for a minimum residential content on the site equivalent to 30% of the proposed gross floor area, in order to achieve a significant level of residential presence and a critical mass to create a new community. The commercial use mix shall include for both retail and office use.

The rich historical and architectural heritage of the site should be a major consideration in any proposal and opportunities for the re-use and the re-establishment of relationships between these structures explored in any design and layout. Cognisance should also be taken of the proximity of Seveso II sites.

In view of the scale of the site and the location, it will be a requirement of any redevelopment to provide for an arts/cultural facility at the developer’s expense and with a management regime incorporated into the development delivery that enables the long term sustainable use of such a facility.

The significant location and size of the site and the requirement to deliver an integrated transport hub justifies consideration of a higher density standard on this site than the prevailing plot ratio of 2:1. In the CC zone increased plot ratio will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would make a significant architectural contribution to the character of the city.

Any scheme for redevelopment should have a phasing programme that demonstrates delivery of public benefits corresponding with each stage of construction such as a public square/cultural facility. The phasing program should also be so designed that it is sensitive to market changes and that development for each phase can be, as far as is feasible, completed to a level that is self-contained and will not result in a negative visual impact on any publicly exposed area for a prolonged period.

9.2.2 Inner Harbour Area

The need to modernise Galway Harbour facilities will require the docks’ functions to be relocated to an alternative site. Galway Harbour Company currently has plans for such a development to the east of the existing Inner Harbour which will free up the existing site for redevelopment. This represents a welcome challenge to re-establish links with the sea and open up new opportunities for a range of uses including water-related leisure uses. These lands, in addition to other adjoining brownfield lands as defined in Figure 9.3, represent the definition of the Inner Harbour Area and the lands required to be the subject of a master plan/framework plan.

The regeneration plans for Ceannt Station on the adjoining site will have to be a parallel consideration in any redevelopment of the Inner Harbour in order to maximise the benefits to the city in both land use amenity and urban design terms.

In principle the proposals for a mix of uses on these lands complemented by a unique waterfront setting linked to the city centre is acceptable and welcome. It represents a chance to enhance the experience of this area for both visitors and locals. It has potential to reveal the past trading history of the city and celebrate a high quality coastal edge linked to the city centre.

In view of this the Council will consider the redevelopment of these lands where it can be demonstrated that a number of requirements can be satisfied.

In advance of detailed proposals a masterplan/framework plan will be required to be further developed for the overall site as defined in Figure 9.3. This plan will address critical issues including sustainability, protection of adjoining Natura 2000 sites, access, urban design context, maximum building heights, appropriate use mixes, high quality public realm, industrial heritage and likely phasing of construction. The preparation of this plan shall be the responsibility of the applicant in consultation with the local authority, adjoining landowners and stakeholders. This will build on the acknowledged co-operation existing between the harbour landowners and Ceannt Station landowners, which includes for a common objective to have a co-ordinated and integrated approach embedded into future proposals.
There will be a requirement for any redevelopment to ensure that opportunities for water-based recreational facilities are maximised and that public access is secured throughout the area and along the seafront.

Regarding urban design, it should be demonstrated that the proposal can connect into and extend the historic street pattern of the city centre. Any scheme will show a good relationship with the existing urban grain/structure and link public spaces. The design will be required to maximise public access and permeability throughout the site, give linkage and views to the seafront and key coastal vistas. It should also look at the challenge of transition areas bounding the site and anticipate opportunities for linkage and continuity in the design and layout of these sites. This will be particularly important with regard to the adjoining Ceannt Station site where regeneration is also planned and where maximum advantage of the seafront location can be delivered. In addition, in order to achieve the maximum advantage of this site, any redevelopment should also show how a favourable amenity can be secured in the transition area edging the adjoining industrial lands at the Harbour Enterprise Park. Where taller buildings and/or landmark buildings are part of the composition, it shall be demonstrated how existing important views, vistas and landmarks are respected and show how such buildings contribute to aspects of urban design such as accessibility, enclosure, character, permeability and adaptability. Opportunities for innovative architecture or architecture by design competition should be a consideration in any scheme.

The public realm should be designed in a manner that it maximises the benefits of the seafront location, achieves a strong sense of place, achieves permeability and reflects a defined functionality and strong landscape impact. This element too should demonstrate how linkage with existing spaces can be achieved and where continuity with likely scenarios on the adjoining Ceannt Station site can be made.

The use mix should provide for a minimum residential content on the site equivalent to 30% of the proposed gross floor area in order to achieve a significant level of residential presence and a critical mass to create a new community. The balance of use mix should include for commercial, office, recreational and cultural uses. Potential for an iconic building should be explored in view of the significance of the site location and the proven record of such buildings for attracting tourist interest internationally.
The industrial heritage of the site should be reflected in proposals for redevelopment. Due to the sensitivity of the natural environment, which adjoins Natura 2000 sites, proposals for redevelopment shall adhere to the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Cognisance should also be taken of the proximity of Seveso II sites.

In view of the scale of the site and its location, it will be a requirement of any redevelopment to provide for an arts/cultural facility at the developer's expense and with a management regime incorporated into the development delivery that enables the long term sustainability of such a facility.

The significant location and size of the site and the requirement to deliver a high quality public realm in conjunction with a location in close proximity to a transport hub, justifies consideration of a higher density standard on this site than the prevailing plot ratio of 2:1. In the CC zone increased plot ratio will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would make a significant architectural contribution to the character of the city.

Any scheme for redevelopment should have a phasing programme that demonstrates delivery of public benefits corresponding with each stage of construction such as a public square/cultural facility. The phasing program should also be so designed that it is sensitive to market changes and that development for each phase can be as far as is feasible completed to a level that is self contained and will not result in a negative visual impact on any publicly exposed area for a prolonged period.

9.2.3 Site Assembly

In the event of a site of significant scale emerging within the city centre as a result of site assembly or otherwise, there will be similar requirements to be met particularly with regard to an overall masterplan/framework plan, urban design context, built and natural heritage constraints, arts/cultural facility, in addition to the standard development management requirements for city centre sites.

9.2.4 Headford Road Area

The Headford Road area located south of the Bodkin Roundabout and the N6 and adjoining the River Corrib is a busy commercial area adjacent to the city centre incorporating the Galway Retail Park and Galway Shopping Centre, two major retail destinations. There are significant natural heritage and amenity assets within the area with the River Corrib and Terryland River Valley and Forest Park, Bohermore Neighbourhood Park and the Plots Local Park. The current environment comprises low density development with extensive surface car parking areas. The area lacks cohesion, a sense of place and identity. It suffers from traffic congestion and has poor linkages and connections. The existing parks are underutilised and lack adequate passive surveillance. This area is currently in a state of transition with significant redevelopment of the shopping centre currently proposed.

The area, which extends to approximately 30 hectares, has great potential for redevelopment given its proximity to the city centre, the existing infrastructure available and the extent of its natural heritage and amenity resources. The successful development/redevelopment of the area is best realised within the structure of a local area plan. Substantial work has been carried out to date by a multi-disciplinary team who have done extensive analysis and developed an integrated framework for the area, drawing together the principal aspects of place-making, planning, transportation policy, architecture, engineering, landscape design, ecology, access, passive surveillance and development economics. Consultation with the public and stakeholders was an element of this process.

A local area plan will build on this framework giving direction on the potential for the future sustainable development of the area. The Plan will take an integrated approach to the comprehensive development of this area, creating a vibrant mixed-use commercial and residential district with cultural, civic and amenity facilities. The use mix shall provide for a significant residential content enabling the creation of a sustainable community. The Plan will encourage a diversity of uses to sustain an animated and vibrant public realm of streets and urban spaces promoting sustainable transportation options. It will seek to maximise the opportunities that exist to integrate and protect the natural heritage assets of the area, create improvements to the existing parks and provide high quality linkages to the city centre, NUIG and outer residential areas. The Plan will reflect the unique character and culture of Galway and acknowledge the dynamism of this urban area.

9.2.5 Other City Centre Areas

Woodquay

Woodquay has a strong historical legacy, which includes use as a potato market. Planning policies have contributed to the area retaining a strong residential content and traditional townscape. There are opportunities for improvement in the civic quality and residential amenity of the area. This would also improve linkages between the city centre core and the Headford Road commercial area. The Council proposes to carry out a civic improvement
scheme for Woodquay, in consultation with the public. The aim of the scheme will be to improve the civic quality and residential amenity of the area through improvements in traffic management, parking regime and public realm.

Small Crane
The Small Crane is part of a network of civic spaces within the city. The Council, in consultation with the local residents and local businesses, propose to carry out civic improvements to the square as part of the ongoing city-wide initiative to improve and enhance public spaces. Civic improvements may include the pedestrianisation of the square, removal of car parking, undergounding of services and provision of high quality public space and an enhanced setting for the Small Crane weighing scales, a protected structure. It is envisaged that the space could be used to re-establish the market and to facilitate community events.

Raven Terrace
Raven Terrace is a one way trafficked street, it is a key link between ‘The West’ and the main commercial streets east of the river. Located adjacent to the canal and directly connected to Wolfe Tone Bridge and its pedestrian walkway, there are opportunities available to enhance this street, thereby improving permeability to ‘The West’ and encouraging greater footfall to this area. Adjacent to Raven Terrace is a car parking area and a recently placed public art sculpture. The Council will investigate opportunities to pedestrianise Raven Terrace through the implementation of an alternative traffic circulation route and to carry out public realm improvements to the adjacent public space.

Bowling Green
Bowling Green is adjacent to the St. Nicholas Church area and Abbeygate Street. It contains attractive turn of the century two storey terraced housing including the Nora Barnacle House. Due to increased traffic pressure, the lack of footpaths and irregular boundaries the area has a low quality pedestrian environment. There are opportunities for improved movement for pedestrians through Bowling Green which will facilitate linkages with the St. Nicholas Church area and Woodquay. This will improve the residential amenity of the area. The Council will carry out an improvement scheme in conjunction with the public which will include traffic calming measures and improvement in the public realm.

Policy 9.2 City Centre
• Maintain and enhance the role of the city centre as the dominant commercial area of the city.
• Encourage the expansion of the city centre into lands at Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour.
• Control the proliferation of uses which could lead to the deterioration of retailing on the principal shopping streets.
• Control the negative impact caused by dominance, due to proliferation or scale, of particular uses.
• Encourage a living city by requiring a residential content in new developments.
• Maintain and enhance the environmental quality of the city centre with the overall aim of ensuring an attractive user-friendly environment.
• Ensure new developments complement the character of the city centre by the use of specific design elements.
• Facilitate the redevelopment of the Inner Harbour for mixed use development.
• Improve the public realm and residential amenities of Woodquay, Bowling Green and Raven Terrace by the implementation of improvement schemes.
• Progress the implementation of a civic improvement scheme for the Small Crane.
9.3 Salthill

Salthill is an established urban village within the city, a strong service node for the surrounding residential area and an important tourist attraction and coastal and leisure amenity. It is the policy of the Council to enhance the role of Salthill as a recreation and coastal amenity area by encouraging high quality tourist and mixed-use development. Salthill beach has Blue Flag status for a succession of years. The Council will discourage the spread of uses, which would lead to the deterioration of the attractiveness and amenity value of the area. The Council will continue to further enhance its amenity value and public realm. In this regard it is an objective of the Council to carry out a strategy for the long-term development and enhancement of the Salthill Promenade. In addition the Council will examine the potential for environmental improvements in the vicinity of Seapoint which could include the rationalisation of car parking and greater pedestrian and cycle facilities.

In order to reflect the urban village status, urban form and streetscape of Salthill and to strengthen its service role, a reduction in car parking standards will be considered. Where appropriate a sustainable transportation contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking spaces, where it is deemed appropriate on grounds of urban design or sustainability.

Policy 9.3 Salthill

- Enhance Salthill’s role as a leisure, recreation and coastal amenity area for the city and service centre for the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.
- Continue to improve the recreational quality of the area by the implementation of environmental and coastal improvement schemes and the preparation of a strategy for the long term development and enhancement of the promenade.
- Ensure high quality in the design of new developments which has regard to its context.
- Enhance the public realm of Salthill including the implementation of an environmental improvement scheme in the vicinity of Seapoint and Salthill Promenade.

9.4 Village Envelopes/Areas

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

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

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

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

Policy 9.4 Village Envelopes/Areas

- Strengthen the character of specified villages through encouraging appropriate development.
- Protect and enhance the character and amenity of Menlough and prepare a plan for the area, together with flood protection measures.
- Reinforce the identity of Castlegar through protection and enhancement of existing amenities and through provision of additional community facilities.

9.5 Ardaun

The proposed Ardaun settlement area is located to the east of the city. It is a significant bank of land capable of being extended in the longer term into the county. It is anticipated that this area will accommodate most of the targeted population growth for the gateway as identified by the DECLG in October 2009 and the RPG West Region 2010-2022.

Progress has already been made in the Planning of this major settlement area. The Ardaun Concept Study, (2007) a joint study between the City Council and County Council reinforced the broader concepts for the area, while the application for funding under the Gateway Innovation Fund in 2008 gave detail to the servicing of a town centre at Ardaun.

Building on works to date, the Council consider that the preparation of a local area plan (LAP) is the best way forward to achieve the successful integrated development of the area. A LAP will provide a development strategy which will contribute to the integration of land uses, urban form and structure, transportation and the natural environment to create a sustainable living and working environment. It will promote opportunities for high-density residential development structured and co-ordinated with other essential community services. It will facilitate the development of Ardaun as an urban extension to the city, creating the necessary critical mass that will enable it to be a self-sustaining urban centre through the co-location of population, jobs and services. At this level it will also be able to support a dedicated public transportation system offering a viable alternative to the car for local trips, travel to the city centre and travel to major employment areas.

The lands designated in the city for the purposes of a LAP consist of approximately 158ha. It is acknowledged that not all of these lands will be deemed suitable for development taking into account issues such as ecological constraints, however a significant quantum of development land will be available to sustain the elements required to create a successful living and working environment.

It is envisaged that the development of Ardaun will be carried out on a phased basis to ensure an integrated approach between the phasing of development and availability of services and infrastructure. All development within Ardaun will be subject to this schedule of phasing which shall be specifically provided for in the LAP to ensure that development, in particular residential development, occurs at a pace whereby it is supported by all the necessary infrastructure, services, amenities and facilities. The number of dwelling units that may be permitted as part of each phase of development will be dependant on a certain amount of infrastructure, services, facilities and amenities having been completed. These will be listed in the LAP and will include for facilities such as good transport networks, educational facilities, community facilities, and recreational amenities and will correspond in type and design with the likely needs of the scale of population provided for in each phase. It shall be demonstrated how the development of these facilities will be funded as part of the preparation of the LAP. In view of the requirements to accommodate targeted growth, the Council will undertake the LAP for Ardaun Phase 1, which consists of the designated lands within the city boundary. Ardaun Phase 2 will accommodate the longer term population requirements post 2017 in accordance with RPG West Region 2010-2022. The preparation of the LAP for Ardaun Phase 1 will be required to take the strategic needs of both phases into consideration and shall be undertaken in consultation with Galway County Council. On lands designated within Ardaun and sited adjacent to Lynch Roundabout on the Monivea Road, the City Council will be open to consideration of mixed uses development, namely food store, subject to compliance with specific planning requirements.
**Policy 9.5 Ardaun**

- Develop the overall area of Ardaun, in conjunction with Galway County Council, in a strategic and co-ordinated manner, that will contribute to the integration of land use, urban form and structure, transportation and natural heritage to create a sustainable living environment.

- Advance the development of Ardaun in consultation with Galway County Council through the preparation of a Local Area Plan Phase 1, which consists of designated lands within the city boundary taking the strategic needs of the overall city and county area into consideration.

- Support the development of Ardaun Phase 2 which consists of the balance of lands within the county area, ensuring co-ordination of key elements such as land use, infrastructure and sustainable transportation and the timely co-ordination of development phasing.

**9.6 Murroogh**

Murroogh is an extensive area of semi-natural environment adjacent to developed areas east of the city, including Renmore, Ballybaan and Doughiska. The lands at Murroogh have the distinction of being of substantial size (approximately 34 hectares) and located adjacent to the coastline, which is defined by a variety of features including cliffs, beach and rocky shoreline. The area has direct pedestrian links to Ballyloughaun beach to the west and possibilities exist for coastal walks to Oranmore, to the east. The railway line and land reserved for a possible public transportation corridor forms the northern demarcation of the lands. There is also road and pedestrian access from Ballyloughaun Road and Murroogh Road.

Given the rapid expansion of residential development in the east of the city and having regard to the future development of Ardaun, there is now a demand for coastal and recreation facilities on the east side of the city. This demand is further increased by the current imbalance of coastal amenity/recreational facilities in the city with the bulk of these facilities, Salthill and Silverstrand being located on the west side of the city. The Murroogh area offers potential for the provision of coastal and recreation facilities. These will complement the improved facilities at Ballyloughaun beach. Given the possibility of good public transport links, there is also the opportunity for mixed use development for a portion of the area. Mixed-use development would contribute to the vitality of the area and provide a new residential neighbourhood.

In recognition of this, the Council will prepare a local area plan for the Murroogh area. The aim of the Plan is to ensure the reservation of a substantial bank of land for recreational purposes. The Plan will allow for mixed-use development, which will maximize the development of recreation facilities and will create a vibrant area with efficient public transport links to the rest of the city. It will integrate with the amenity facilities at Ballyloughaun beach. The Plan will take account of the sensitive ecological environment at this location. In order to achieve the necessary recreational facilities, two thirds of the area will be reserved for this purpose.

**Policy 9.6 Murroogh**

- Develop the Murroogh area in accordance with a local area plan which will reserve a substantial bank of land for recreational purposes, allow for public access and allow for mixed-use development which will create a sustainable neighbourhood and maximise the sustainable development of appropriate recreation facilities.
9.7 **Specific Objectives**

**City Centre**
- Require the preparation of a masterplan/framework plan for the Ceannt Station site.
- Require the preparation of a masterplan/framework plan for the Inner Harbour.
- Prepare environmental improvement schemes for Woodquay, Bowling Green and Raven Terrace areas.
- Progress the implementation of the Small Crane Square Civic Improvement scheme in conjunction with the environmental improvement scheme for 'The West' area.

**Headford Road**
- Prepare a local area plan for the Headford Road area (south of the Bodkin Roundabout).

**Salthill**
- Prepare a strategy for the long-term development and enhancement of Salthill Promenade.
- Continue to develop and enhance the coastal walkway from South Park to Silverstrand including the coastal walk extending from Silverstrand to Salthill in conjunction with approved coastal protection works.
- Carry out an environmental improvement scheme in the vicinity of Seapoint.
- Upgrade public facilities including provision of outdoor/indoor showers, changing facilities and baby changing facilities.

**Village Envelopes/Areas**
- Prepare a plan for the Menlough area. This will include guidance on new design and conservation and will explore the amenity potential of the area.
- Facilitate the restoration of Menlough Castle, for public usage, excluding private residential use, to allow for new uses, in particular cultural/recreation uses, compatible with the restoration of the building to best conservation practice where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.
- Explore the potential for the development of a park on lands adjacent to Menlough Castle.

**Castlegar**
- Prepare a plan for the Castlegar area in consultation with local residents within 3 years following adoption of the Development Plan.

**Ardaun**
- Prepare a local area plan for Ardaun Phase 1.

**Murroogh**
- Prepare a local area plan for Murroogh.
Chapter 10

Housing Strategy

10.1 Aim, Context and Strategy
10.2 Review of the Housing Strategy 2005-2011
10.3 Key Conclusions from Housing Demand and Supply Analysis
10.4 Housing Policy and Implementation
10.1 Aim, Context and Strategy

Aim
To set out in the Development Plan a strategy for the purposes of ensuring that the housing needs of the existing and future population of the city area are met.

Context
The Planning and Development Acts, 2000 –2010 in particular Part V requires that planning authorities must prepare housing strategies and integrate them into their development plans. In addition, the Act makes communities need for social and affordable housing a material planning consideration which must be taken into account when formulating development plan policies, preparing a Housing Strategy and deciding on planning applications or appeals. The current Housing Strategy represents a review of the strategy for the city which was prepared for the period of 2005-2011.

It is acknowledged that many aspects in determining the future issues related to housing are based on estimates and assumptions. This is a particularly difficult task when attempting to determine the estimation of house prices and hence affordability for such a long period ahead. This is very difficult in the current climate where house prices are unstable, unemployment levels are rising and income levels are changing for a large proportion of the workforce. However this aspect has been addressed as best as possible in this strategy using the DEHLG guidelines in A Model Housing Strategy and a Step by Step Guide 2000. In addition, sensitivity tests have been carried out on the model to ensure robustness.

In order to monitor and ensure relevance of the strategy, within two years after the adoption of the Development Plan incorporating the Housing Strategy, the Manager will prepare a report for the Council which shall include a review of the progress in implementing the Housing Strategy. In addition a report will also be prepared if there has been a change in the housing market or in the regulations made by the Minister under the Act, which significantly affect the Housing Strategy.

More details regarding the legislative basis and policy context for preparing housing strategies are contained in Appendix 3. In addition the details of demand and supply of housing are also contained in Appendix 3. The key conclusions derived from this research are outlined in this chapter. These have consequently informed the policy statements which will be used in the development management process to secure the goals of the Housing Strategy.

10.2 Review of the Housing Strategy 2005-2011

The Act requires that a development plan set out the Housing Strategy for the purposes of ensuring that the housing needs of the existing and future population of the area are provided for. The strategy for 2011-2017 will supersede this previous strategy.

Noting that there is great instability in the housing market and that changes are likely in population growth patterns, the principles on which the current strategy is based are likely to be required to be re-visited. In this regard the legal requirement to review the Housing Strategy two years after adoption will afford opportunities to address any significant inconsistencies and also to react to major changes that might occur in the housing market.

A number of points can be made with respect to the implementation of the 2005-2011 Housing Strategy to date. The population projections proved inaccurate in that the population grew much faster than was estimated. In 2006 the population was recorded at 72,414 much higher than the anticipated level of 69,722 and obviously had a bearing on the estimates given up to 2011. The number of households however predicted for 2006 was 24,732 and the actual records in the census was 25,353. This proved more accurate as household size did not fall as fast as predicted.

Again it is noted that the number of house completions outstripped the new household formations by a substantial amount. When this is viewed for the intercensal period 2002 -2006 it shows that there was a 49% overhead of new house completions above household change. Additional demand for housing over and above household formation has been an established pattern. This can arise from a number of factors such as demand for holiday lettings, obsolescence and the timing of delivery of housing onto the housing market. On analysis, a significant amount of these properties can be accounted for as holiday/second homes and investment properties that may remain unoccupied. The high vacancy rate of 13% recorded in 2006 may support this interpretation. Subsequent years record a changing trend. House completions peaked in 2003 and dropped significantly from 2007 onwards.

Construction rates and figures for grants of planning permissions indicate that sufficient lands were zoned and permissions granted to meet the demands of the housing market regardless of underestimation in population projections and the significant demand over and above household formations.

The house types in recent years have become much more mixed with a significant increase in apartment construction. This reflected and matches the increasing trend towards smaller household sizes.

The changes in planning legislation to Part V which included the reduction in the size threshold of exempted development from 0.2 hectares to 0.1 hectares and the removal of the withering clause enabled more housing to be constructed. It also broadened the number of options, which could be invoked to satisfy the Housing Strategy requirements. It has been the experience of the Council that the introduction of these broader options has been to the benefit of the delivery of social and affordable housing.

The delivery of social and affordable housing from Part V between 2005 and 2011 included two land transfers involving a total of 2.4 hectares (5.9 acres.) In addition, the Planning Authority has concluded final agreements in relation to the transfer of 163 units for this period, 59 of which were for social housing.
and 104 for affordable. Financial contributions of €4,736,879 were received where this was the option deemed acceptable. As can be seen therefore, the momentum in terms of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010 did increase from the previous Housing Strategy period. However although there are commitments on future housing which has the benefit of planning permission, it is difficult to estimate when these might be delivered.

The delivery of units under Part V was lower than anticipated, however the significant financial contributions in addition to other funding streams allowed for 148 units to be purchased on the open market for social housing purposes.

Despite this, the housing waiting lists are still high with 4,500 persons recorded on the social list in January 2011. This reflects the rapid rise in house prices rendering their purchase outside the capacity of 95% of those on the housing waiting list even where high employment records have been the norm for the last number of years.

Although the Council had a stock of affordable housing there was little demand from those on the affordable list to purchase these properties which reflects the fact that the differential between the open market prices and affordable house prices has been drastically reduced. These were offered for sale on the open market to first time buyers and the balance has now been leased to voluntary housing associations under the Social Housing Leasing Initiative. The scheme enables the City Council to lease the unsold affordable units to voluntary bodies for an initial 5 year period, with the voluntary body housing persons from the social housing waiting list therein. The Council will take into account any additional government initiatives to provide access to home ownership.

10.3 Key Conclusions from Housing Demand and Supply Analysis

Detailed analysis and issues associated with the Housing Strategy are in Appendix 3 and key conclusions are listed hereunder.

10.3.1 Housing Demand

Assumptions regarding population and affordability are elaborated on in Appendix 3. In the current economic climate forecasting population, house prices and incomes up to 2017 is considered a very speculative exercise however with the opportunity to review the strategy in 2013 these can be re-visited to check robustness. The population targets used were those issued by the DECLG (2009) and included in the RPG West Region 2010-2022 in line with the NSS.

Key Conclusion 1

- In accordance with the anticipated demand for housing in Galway City as outlined in the Regional Population Targets, there is potential for an increase in 6,022 new households forming in the years 2011 to 2017.
- Approximately 248 hectares of suitably zoned and serviced land will be required to accommodate the development of these houses in addition to the demand for housing in the interim years (2009-2010), using a density of 35 units per hectares.

Key Conclusion 2

- For new household formations in the years 2011- 2017 a total of up 2,026 will be unable to purchase housing on the open market. This would constitute approximately 30% of new households.

Key Conclusion 3

- The affordable housing market has collapsed owing to the fact that the differential between the open market prices and affordable house prices has been drastically reduced. It is not considered that this will change in the near future however the Council will respond to any new initiatives that may emerge to increase the level of home ownership in the city.
- The demand for social housing in the city has remained high with the more commonly stated reason for applying for Council housing being 'not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation they are occupying or to obtain suitable accommodation'. The number of applicants in this category remains the same as for the previous strategy that is approximately 90% of the housing waiting list in 2011.
- Of those assessed for housing need approximately 60% are Irish citizens. Analysis of housing need shows a significant demand for units for single persons (37%).

10.3.2 Housing Supply

Key Conclusion 1

- There is sufficient zoned land to facilitate the development of 6,022 accommodation units that provides for both existing demand and the estimated new households in the period 2011-2017. This factors in the potential for house building exceeding new households formations as past trends...
have shown but has considered that if it happens it would be at a slower rate. It also factors in a continuing declining household size. It will require Ardaun to be developed and this area of land is factored into the category of 'zoned lands'.

- Investment in infrastructure will be critical to ensure the provision of sufficient zoned and serviced lands for residential development particularly in the Ardaun area.

**Key Conclusion 2**
- Based on the construction rates in recent years, the construction industry has the capacity to meet the demands of new households that is 6,022 new household formations in the years 2011-2017.

**Key Conclusion 3**
- Planning permission for the development of 1,471 residential units exists (September 2009). There are currently 242 units also on appeal to an Bord Pleanala. It is considered that these will contribute significantly to meeting the estimated demand between the years 2011-2017 (6,022).

**Key Conclusion 4**
- It is anticipated that Part V housing could, depending on house construction rates, yield a maximum of 200 housing units annually or the equivalent in land or money.
- There has been a significant change in social housing policy in Ireland over the last number of years. While local authorities have traditionally built on lands in public ownership and engaged in Tenant Purchase Schemes, this pattern is to change to one of local authorities now leasing properties from the private market over a long-term period, and using these houses to accommodate those waiting on social housing. Local authorities all around the country have been informed in early 2011 that capital budgets have been decreased to a minimum and the majority of funding available now and into the longer term will be for the Rental Accommodation Scheme, and Long Term Leasing.
- However, the Council has plans for 347 units on Council owned land, the development of these units will be linked to any availability of funding that may arise from central government.

**Key Conclusion 5**
- The maximum of 20%, as provided for in Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 -2010, of land zoned for residential purposes or for a mix of residential and other purposes, will be required for the provision of social and affordable housing units in Galway City in the period 2011-2017.

**Key Conclusion 6**
- A baseline ratio of 4:1 for the provision of social and affordable housing will be desirable to reflect the relative demand for social:affordable housing.

**10.3.3 Housing Need**
Based on the clear imbalance between forecasted social housing need outlined in 10.3.1 and forecasted supply in 10.3.2, this Development Plan cannot ensure that the housing needs of the existing and future population of the city area can be met. The City Council will inform the DECLG of this projection and request that serious and urgent steps be taken to redress the imbalance.
10.4 Housing Policy and Implementation

The following policies are derived from the foregoing conclusions. These policy statements will be used in the development control process to secure the goals of the Housing Strategy.

**Policy 10.1 Land Requirements for the Provision of Social and Affordable Housing**

- Require as provided for under Section 95 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, that 20% of land zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses shall be reserved for the provision of social/affordable housing.

This policy will apply to all applications for the development of more than 4 residential units or residential development on land of more than 0.1 hectares on lands zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses. This includes land zoning where the objectives are not specifically for residential use but where housing can be accommodated for example CC and some CI/CF zonings. Where an application relates to the development of houses on part of a ‘mixed use’ development, this requirement shall relate to all of the residential element of the proposed development.

This policy will be implemented following consultation with the applicant and having regard to their proposals for meeting the requirements of the strategy and by the attachment of conditions to planning permissions for residential developments on lands zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential development and other uses.

**Policy 10.2 The Ratio of Social and Affordable Required**

- Apply a ratio of 4:1 for the provision of social (4) and affordable (1) housing. In this regard, the development of shared ownership units are considered as social housing where they are being provided for applicants on the local authority housing waiting list or existing local authority tenants.
- Allocate the 20% provision in such a way as to encourage home ownership in the designated IAP areas. This is in accordance with the provisions of the IAP for Westside, Ballinfoile, and Ballybane, where the Council aims to increase the proportion of the housing stock that is in owner occupation in these areas and encourage greater social balance.
- Where developments solely provide for the accommodation of special needs groups, there may be no requirement for the provision of land/other for social and affordable housing.

**Policy 10.3 Consultation with Developers**

- Ensure the development of social and affordable housing units is carried out in consultation with the applicant/developer.
- Where applicable and possible, the Council will retain the services of the contractor working on a subject site to develop units of social and affordable housing on their behalf, subject to price and quality.

The Planning and Development Act 2002 provided for a number of alternative options to satisfy the requirements to reserve lands under section 94(4)(A) of the main Act for social and affordable housing. In consideration of these options it will be the preference of the Council in general and subject to agreement, to require the developer to build units of accommodation and transfer them into the ownership of the Council or persons nominated by the Council, at an agreed cost. It is considered that this is the best option to effectively and efficiently achieve the objectives of the Housing Strategy and would constitute the best use of resources and will counteract undue social segregation.

The range of other options available under the amending legislation, including the transfer of fully or partially serviced residential sites, the transfer of suitable alternative land, the payment of an amount to the Council or a combination of some or all of the foregoing will be of a lesser priority. These additional options may be examined where the attributes of the site render it impractical to pursue the preference of the Council. These may arise in cases where the unit cost is excessive owing to existing land value cost, because of the type of units proposed, or where the units proposed do not meet the housing needs of persons on the housing (social/affordable) waiting lists or voluntary group housing needs. Where a financial contribution is the accepted option this will be ring-fenced and used only by the Council in its functions under Part V and/or functions in the provision of housing under the Housing Acts. The transfer to the Planning Authority of the ownership of the land shall be the default option if no agreement is reached between the Council and the applicant/developer. In this instance the applicant/developer will be required to transfer 20% of the land, which is the subject of the application for permission, into the ownership of the Council for an agreed cost.
Policy 10.4 House Types and Sizes
- Ensure that an appropriate mixture of house types and sizes are provided in residential development to cater for different sectors of the housing market, in particular discourage excessive amounts of small one bedroom units in housing schemes.

Policy 10.5 Special Needs Accommodation
- Ensure the provision of accommodation for the elderly. These units will be a mix of single, two-bedroom and where appropriate three-bedroom units to cater for a variety of elderly households and provide space for the accommodation of a carer where necessary.
- In the location of such facilities, the Council is aware of the importance of social mix and accommodation of the elderly in communities and areas with which they are familiar. The provision of elderly housing in close proximity to shops, churches, public transport and community facilities will be encouraged.
- Liaise, encourage and facilitate the voluntary and co-operative housing sector in the provision of dwelling units for the elderly.

Policy 10.6 Alternative Accommodation for small sized households
- Ensure that the Council’s housing stock is not under-utilised. In this regard the Council will encourage and facilitate Council tenants where feasible to relinquish their tenancy in larger units in return for more appropriate accommodation.

Policy 10.7 Accommodation for Persons with Special Needs
- Require the reservation of units for the disabled in consultation with the voluntary sector, where there exists a clear need for such accommodation.

Policy 10.8 Homeless/Crisis Accommodation
- Continue to work with the voluntary and public sector in the provision of emergency and crisis accommodation for the homeless at suitable locations throughout the city. In this regard, the Council will have regard to the deliberations and actions of the Homeless Forum and the provisions of the Homeless Strategy.

Policy 10.9 Travelling Community
- Implement and monitor the operation of the Traveller Accommodation Plan 2009-2013 and subsequent plans. The Council will meet its obligations regarding the provision of adequate and suitable accommodation for the Travelling community through consultation with Travellers, the general public, and the local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. The Council will continue to meet its targets for the completion of Traveller specific accommodation as outlined in the programme and subsequent plans.

Policy 10.10 Ministerial Guidelines on Housing
- Take into consideration the following policies and guidelines when considering housing developments both public and private:
  - Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development In Urban Areas (2008)
  - Sustainable Urban Housing : Design Standards for Apartments (2007)
  - Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities Statement on Housing Policy (2007)
Chapter 11

Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards and Guidelines

11.1 Introduction

Part A - Land Use Zoning Policies and Objectives

Part B - Development Standards and Guidelines
11.1 Introduction

The Council is required to manage development to ensure that permissions granted under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Development Plan. This part of the Plan is concerned with the standards and guidelines, which will be applied to development proposals. Provision is made for a flexible application of standards and guidelines, in particular circumstances where proposed development is otherwise consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and achieves high urban design quality. The achievement of the policies and the objectives of the Plan and the encouragement of good design, rather than the mechanistic application of development standards, will be the aim of development management.

Matters other than the specific provisions of the Development Plan may be considered in dealing with applications for permission to carry out development, or in deciding to serve enforcement notices against unauthorised development. While the provisions of the Plan are the main basis of assessment of development proposals, compliance with the standards and guidelines of the Plan does not in itself ensure that a development proposal will be considered acceptable in its entirety.

Many legally established uses exist in locations where they do not conform to the designated land use zoning objective set out in the Plan. Extensions to or improvements of premises accommodating these non conforming uses may be granted, where the proposed development would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and would not prejudice the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Part A – Land Use Zoning Policies and Objectives

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11.2.0 Land Use Zoning General

The Development Plan sets out the land use zoning objectives for different areas within the city and indicates examples of uses that may or may not be acceptable within each use zone. Zoning seeks to promote the development of uses that achieve the objectives for the area concerned and to prevent the development of incompatible uses. Land use zonings are utilised in the Plan to indicate the various objectives for these areas (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1 Land Use Zones and Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Zoning Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>To provide for and facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural and institutional uses and development of infrastructure for the benefit of the citizens of the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>To provide for and protect recreational uses, open space, amenity uses and natural heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>To provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the rural character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>To provide for the development of agriculture and protect areas of visual importance and/or areas of high amenity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>To provide for enterprise, industry and related uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>To provide for enterprise, light industry and commercial uses other than those reserved to the CC zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>To provide for city centre activities and particularly those, which preserve the city centre as the dominant commercial area of the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>To provide for residential development and for associated support development, which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity and will contribute to sustainable residential neighbourhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDR</td>
<td>To provide for low-density residential development which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAP</td>
<td>Local Area Plan for Ardaun and Murroogh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The land use zoning objectives in the chapters of this Development Plan give an indication of the acceptability of new uses in each zone. They are intended as a guideline and are not exhaustive. Under each land use zoning examples of uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective are specified. Examples of uses shown as ‘Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the location and scale and the proposed development’, are uses which may not be considered acceptable in principle in all parts of the relevant land use zoning objective and will only be accepted where the Council is satisfied that the use would not have undesirable consequences for prevailing uses. A use that is not compatible or does not contribute to the specific land use zoning objective will not be permitted in that land use zone. Uses not cited as examples of uses but which fulfill the land use objective shall be considered in relation to general policy and to the zoning objectives for the area in question.

Uses, which are temporary in nature, may be considered by the Council as uses that are compatible and contribute to the zoning objective.

In the boundary areas of adjoining zones it is necessary to avoid developments which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zones. For instance, in areas abutting residential zones a particular proposal may not be acceptable which could be acceptable in other parts of the zone. Where a site for a proposed development straddles the boundary of different land use zones the permitted density on the overall site will be an average between the different zones subject to residential amenity.

In advance of the adoption of the local area plans for Ardaun and Murroogh minor developments in the LAP zoning which will not prejudice the aims of the local area plans will be considered. These uses shall be compatible with and contribute to the G zoning objective.
11.2.1 Institutional and Community CF Land Use Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective CF:</th>
<th>To provide for and facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural and institutional uses and development of infrastructure for the benefit of the citizens of the city.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example: | - Buildings for the care of the health, safety or welfare of the public  
- Residential institutions  
- Educational establishments  
- Places of public worship  
- Community and cultural buildings  
- Burial grounds and associated services  
- Outdoor recreational use  
- Accommodation for Travellers  
- Childcare facilities  
- Public utilities |
| Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the CF location and scale of proposed development, for example: | - Residential uses on surplus institutional lands where some of the original open character of institutional lands is retained and a minimum 20% of the total site area is reserved for communal open space.  
  Note: This will not apply to similar development granted and built under previous development plan policies where a higher open space standard was required pre-2005  
- Additional uses, which are allied to or have established supporting relationship with the primary use on lands in the NUIG and GMIT campus such as collaborative activities with industry |

The following are specific development objectives for a number of CF zones throughout the city:

- CF zoned lands at Merlin Park comprising approximately 34 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional or community facilities use either by the Health Services Executive or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.

- CF zoned lands south of the Old Dublin Road opposite the GMIT comprising approximately 3.30 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional or community facilities use either by GMIT or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.

- CF zoned lands at Ballybane to the south of Castlepark Road comprising approximately 6.27 hectares occupied by the Brothers of Charity Services. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional, amenity or community facilities use either by the Brothers of Charity Services or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.

- CF zoned lands south of the railway line at Renmore occupied by the Defence Forces comprising approximately 9 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for institutional, amenity or community facilities use either by the Defence Forces or another institution and will not permit residential, commercial or industrial development.

- CF zoned lands at Fisheries Field (Earls Island). The Council will consider the development of part of these lands for residential and/or commercial use of a residential nature, where a significant cultural facility is proposed as part of the development, subject to other planning considerations in particular design standards, traffic safety, environmental suitability and where public access is secured.

- CF zoned lands north of the Western Distributor Road. The Council will reserve for use primarily as a school those lands located between Barna Stream and Ballymoneen Road.

- CF zoned lands on Doughiska Road. The Council will consider the development of a portion of these lands for community based enterprise units. Any development of these lands will be subject to an overall layout.
## 11.2.2 Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity RA Land Use Zoning Objectives

### Zoning Objective RA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:</th>
<th>Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the RA location and scale of development, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Outdoor recreation</td>
<td>- Development of buildings of a recreational, cultural or educational nature or car parking areas related to and secondary to the primary use of land/water body for outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Public utilities</td>
<td>- Burial grounds and associated services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are specific development objectives for a number of RA zones throughout the city:

- **RA zoned lands in the areas of Ballybaan and Ballinfoile.** The Council will consider regeneration plans which will include for the provision of community services and infill residential developments on existing open space, where it is shown that the open space is obsolete and where recreational requirements and residential amenity are not prejudiced.
- **RA zoned lands privately owned by NUI Galway, comprising of 36.98 hectares, but not including the strip of land zoned RA located between the River Corrib and university (CF) lands.** The Council will consider the development of these lands for university and related uses, which are compatible with and contribute to the CF zoning objective.
- **RA zoned lands located at Ballybrit Racecourse.** The Council will consider the use of existing catering facilities for suitable commercial purposes including conferences, exhibitions, agricultural or similar shows and park and ride facilities.
- **RA zoned lands north of Dublin Road and south of CF zoned lands at Merlin Park Hospital.** The Council will consider the use of the lands occupied by the existing dwelling and a small portion of adjoining lands for an elderly care facility where removal of trees will be kept to a minimum.
- **RA zoned lands at Doughiska North of Túr Úisce.** The Council will consider the development of part of these lands for a swimming pool/leisure centre with concessory public use and a childcare facility, where a multi-purpose community centre is proposed as part of the development. This development shall not compromise the provision of a quality bus corridor in this area.
- **RA zoned lands at Cappagh Park.** The Council will provide a community centre/sports hall, a swimming pool with associated ancillary facilities on a phased basis adjoining and linked with the existing changing rooms at Cappagh Park, subject to consideration and approval of the Council.
- **RA zoned lands at NUIG in the vicinity of the Quincentenary Bridge.** The Council will consider the strategic requirements to link the northern and southern campus. This will be subject to examination of all potential options, transport, visual and environmental considerations and where it can be demonstrated that the preferred option will have sustainable benefits.
- **RA zoned lands between the River Corrib and the Dyke Road and south of Quincentenary Bridge Road in Council ownership.** The Council will consider the development of these lands to accommodate the relocation of the Galway Rowing Club. Development of these lands shall include criteria for a high standard of design and shall not proceed if significant or indeterminate impact on the SAC were likely.
- **RA zoned lands at Liam Mellows GAA Club Ballyloughan.** The provision of structures (including additional pitches, lighting, flood lighting and ball stop nets) to improve the playing pitches, operations and facilities will be considered by the City Council at this location with due regard to the protected views from Hawthorn Drive.
Fig. 11.1 Site at Barna Woods
- RA zoned lands located adjacent to Barna Woods. The Council will consider the granting of permission for dwellings on a minimum 0.4 hectare site to immediate members of families of persons who are landowners, where the sylvan character of the area is maintained. An exception to the site size will be allowed on site demarcated A where a minimum density of 0.3 hectares will be considered.

Fig. 11.2 Menlo Park Hotel
- RA zoned lands in front of the Menlo Park Hotel adjacent to the Kirwan Roundabout. The Council will consider the development of a leisure centre and swimming pool, both located underground with minimal effect over ground, as part of the overall hotel development.

Fig. 11.3 Site at Huntsman Pub
- RA zoned lands at Lough Atalia adjacent to the Huntsman Pub. The Council will consider the development of these lands for indoor and outdoor recreational uses which are complementary to the use of Lough Atalia as an amenity area and which do not have a negative impact on the sensitivity of the environment and where existing pedestrian access from the Dublin Road to the Lough Atalia Road is safeguarded.
11.2.3 Agricultural Areas A Land Use Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective A:</th>
<th>To provide for the development of agriculture and to protect the rural character.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example: | - Agriculture and related developments  
- Accommodation for Travellers |
| Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the A location and scale of development, for example: | - Uses as set out in Section 4.9 Agricultural Lands and Section 11.3.1 (j) Conversion and subdivision of dwellings  
- Waste management facility  
- Public Utilities  
- Public transportation facility  
- Burial grounds and associated services  
- Outdoor recreation with small scale associated facilities |

- A zoned lands located to the north of the Martin Roundabout and south of the Galway Clinic, consisting of 0.73 hectares. The Council will consider the use of these lands for commercial residential purposes which can be demonstrated to be directly linked to the services provided at the Galway Clinic, but shall not include services of a medical nature. Use of these lands can include for services of a stepdown nature.
- A zoned lands located at Keeraun (adjoining city boundary) consisting of 0.23 hectares. Any residential development shall be limited to one house only for uses as set out in Section 4.9 Agricultural Lands.
- A zoned lands located to the north and adjoining the Menlough village envelope consisting of 0.42 hectares. Any residential development shall be limited to one house only for uses as set out in Section 4.9 Agricultural Lands.
- A zoned lands located at the junction of Ballindooley Cross, east of the Headford Road and south of Castlebar Road consisting of 0.22 hectares and currently supporting one house. An additional family dwellinghouse on these lands will be open for consideration.

11.2.4 Agricultural Areas G Land Use Zoning Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective G:</th>
<th>To provide for the development of agriculture and protect areas of visual importance and/or high amenity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:</td>
<td>- Agricultural development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the G location and scale of development, for example: | - Burial grounds and associated services  
- Public utilities  
- Outdoor recreation with small scale associated facilities |
### 11.2.5 Industrial I Land Use Zoning Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective I:</th>
<th>To provide for enterprise, industrial and related uses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:</td>
<td>- Light industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- General industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Warehousing, storage and wholesale trade (except where a significant purpose of the development is the provision of on-site servicing to the public and where such provision is more appropriately located within C1 zones/other zonings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Carparking (including heavy vehicle parking)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Large-scale specialist offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Accommodation for Travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Childcare facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Specialist industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the location and scale of development, for example:</td>
<td>- Shop, office, restaurant or recreational buildings, all of which are ancillary to the use of land for industrial and related uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Large-scale indoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Public utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Specialist offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Waste management facility</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Public transportation facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are specific development objectives for a number of I zones throughout the city:

- I zoned lands at Rahoon, comprising approximately 29 hectares. The Council will consider the development of these lands for a technology/business park. Development proposals in line with this objective must achieve a parkland setting compatible with the residential amenity of existing and future adjoining housing areas.

- I zoned lands at Lough Atalia between the railway line and the seashore comprising of approximately 16.2 hectares. Development on this site will be limited to activities relating to harbour expansion and industries which must be located adjacent to the harbour for a viable existence, provided however, that the processes involved are environmentally acceptable and do not interfere with the residential amenity of nearby housing developments.

- I zoned lands at Royal Tara China, Connolly Avenue. The Council will consider the development of this site for residential purposes, subject to an acceptable design, layout and architectural conservation requirements in the context of Tara Hall.

- I zoned lands at Ballybrit Business Park (north of the dual carriageway, blocks 1-7) and at Rahoon. On these lands, within existing constructed office space (completed pre-2004), change of use to general office space that is non-technology or processing based office use, will be open to consideration subject to the following:
  a) Where such office space will not be dedicated to grouped professional practices/services
  b) Where it can be demonstrated that there is adequate car parking spaces provided for such office use that is one space per 50 m² of gross floor area.

- I zoned lands located north of the dual carriageway and N6 access road (0.47 hectares) and the subject of planning reference number 08/596. The Council will consider the use of these lands for general office use with a maximum car parking standard of one space per 25sqm of gross floor area.

- I zoned lands at Ballybrit Business Park north of the dual carriageway and south of the N6 access road (0.21 hectares) and the subject of planning reference number 08/639. The Council will consider the use of these lands for general office use with a maximum car parking standard of one space per 25sqm of gross floor area.
11.2.6 Commercial/Industrial CI Land Use Zoning Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective CI</th>
<th>To provide for enterprise, light industry and commercial uses other than those reserved to the CC zone.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example: | - Warehousing/Storage  
- Retail of a type and of a scale appropriate to the function and character of the area  
- Specialist offices  
- Offices of a type and of a scale appropriate to the function and character of the area  
- Light Industry  
- Accommodation for Travellers  
- Childcare facilities  
- Community and cultural facilities |
| Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the CI location and scale of development, for example: | - General industry (small scale)  
- General retail and service retailing  
- Residential content of a scale that would not unduly interfere with the primary use of the land for CI purposes and would accord with the principles of sustainable neighbourhoods outlined in Chapter 2  
- Offices  
- Car parks (including heavy vehicle parks)  
- Waste management facility  
- Public transportation facility  
- Public utilities  
- Outdoor recreation  
- Commercial leisure/indoor recreation |

The following are specific development objectives for a number of CI zones throughout the city:

- Bulky goods retailing and local retailing needs, will be the only retail types considered on non-designated CI zoned land at/adjoining: Briarhill, Doughiska Road (West of), Team Road, Dublin Road, Wellpark Road, Sean Mulvoy Road, Sandy Road, Headford Road/Bothar na Treabh (north of the Bodkin Roundabout) and Seamus Quirke Road. An exception for the consideration of foodstore and restaurant use will apply to a portion of CI lands at Briarhill, namely the site of Western Motors and the adjoining site to the east, bounded by the Monivea Road and Parkmore Road.

- Former Crown Equipment Site zoned CI. The majority of retail floor space to be dedicated for bulky goods retailing and the balance for local retailing needs. The existing Monivea Road entrance to these lands shall be closed and no entrance or exit, either vehicular or pedestrian, shall be opened onto the Monivea Road. Retail buildings shall only be developed along Monivea Road. Parking shall be kept back from Monivea Road and separated from the Monivea Road by buildings. The design of frontage facing Monivea Road shall be of a high architectural standard. All buildings shall be set back a minimum of 10m from the fence line. Buildings on the Monivea Road side of the site should not exceed two levels overground. The highest buildings developed on the site shall be located on those parts of the site furthest from the Monivea Road. The highest buildings should not exceed four levels overground in height. Any residential component, either houses or apartments, shall comprise no more than 20% of the overall floor area of the development.

- Retail development of a nature appropriate to the city centre will be considered on the Headford Road (south of the Bodkin roundabout). An arts/cultural facility to be delivered in conjunction with any major redevelopment of these lands. It is intended to carry out a local area plan as specified under Section 9.2.4 for these lands termed the Headford Road LAP.

- CI zoned lands at Rahoon (both North and South of the Western Distributor Road) will operate as a District Centre as defined in the DEHLG Retail Planning Guidelines (2005), as well as providing for the other uses permissible in the CI zone.
Regarding the Northern Portion

- The site shall include for a minimum of residential/residential commercial development of a scale equivalent to 20% of the proportion of all likely future floorspace proposals. This residential development shall be integrated within the overall scheme.

- Development of these lands will only be considered where it can be shown to be linked in with existing development and shall show how it relates to an overall layout for the area which will include for landscaping, boundary treatment and linkages with the adjoining residential development and transport services. This shall include for adherence with the requirements for high quality urban design as referenced in Chapter 7.

- The provision of a civic open space will be a requirement on this site and lands shall be reserved for this purpose.

- Any additional phase of development shall include for the front loaded delivery of a public/community facility which can be in the form of a community facility, a community health facility, a transport facility, a park and play area over and above normal open space requirements.

- Any future development shall include for a number of small retail/service retail units which can be demonstrated to deliver a broad range of district centre uses, this shall be assessed in the light of the scale and nature of uses delivered on the site at that period noting the outstanding permissions on the overall lands to date.

- Uses such as commercial leisure uses, educational uses which, would by virtue of their use and scale serve the needs of the surrounding residential area are encouraged.

- Industry and enterprise of an appropriate type and scale may be permissible on these lands where it is suitably located with reference to the adjoining residential and industrial lands.

- Retail uses on these lands are acceptable where they are of a type and scale appropriate to a district centre. Comparison goods sales are restricted to a maximum net retail sales area of 10,000m² other than those accommodated on small retail units of less than 100m² net floor area. In addition consideration will be given for a limited amount of retail warehousing/bulky goods as part of an overall development, over and above what has been granted planning permission, but only where delivery has already been provided for small retail/service retail units.

Regarding the Southern Portion

- Development on these lands will only be considered following agreement on an overall layout for the area. This shall include for adherence with the requirements for high quality urban design as referenced in Chapter 7. In particular it shall ensure an appropriate mix of uses including for smaller scale retail/service retail units. In particular the development shall address the Western Distributor Road with the avoidance of dead frontages. Quality pedestrian connections with the adjacent residentially zoned lands and open space lands shall be achieved. A structured hierarchy of spaces should be a consideration within the layout maximizing the opportunities for linkage with adjacent developments/future developments. Pedestrian priority shall be required in any access network which should also accommodate public transport access. The overall scheme should demonstrate divisible viable phases of development and should not exceed the maximum standards for car parking and may make a case for a reduction in standards owing to the designated location being a multi-purpose trip destination.

- The site shall include for a minimum of residential/residential commercial development of a scale equivalent to 20% of the proportion of all likely future floorspace proposals. This residential development shall be incorporated into the overall scheme.

- Retail uses on these lands are acceptable where they are of a type and scale appropriate to a district centre. Comparison goods sales are restricted to a maximum net retail sales area of 6,000m² other than those accommodated on small retail units of less than 100m² net floor area. In addition consideration will be given for a limited amount of retail warehousing/bulky goods as part of an overall development but of a much lesser scale than that permitted for general comparison.

- The site shall include for a civic open space/park which shall be reserved on any layout for this purpose and should be of a size and function to reflect the scale of the overall development and shall be over and above the requirement for open space on these lands.

- Each phase of the development shall include for the front loaded delivery of a public/community facility which can be in the form of a community facility, an educational establishment, a community health facility, a transport facility, a park and play area over and above normal open space requirements.

- Any future development shall include for a number of small retail/service retail units which can be demonstrated to deliver a broad range of district centre uses. This shall be assessed in the light of the scale and nature of uses delivered on the site at that period noting the outstanding permissions on the overall lands to date.
Land Use Zoning Objectives and Development Standards and Guidelines

- A good balance of use mixes shall be uses provided for including uses such as commercial leisure uses, educational uses, which would by virtue of their use and scale serve the needs of the surrounding residential area.

- Industry and enterprise of an appropriate type and scale may be permissible on these lands where it is suitably located with reference to the adjoining residential lands.

- CI zoned lands on the Headford Road (south of the Bodkin Roundabout), Sean Mulvoy Road, Tuam Road (south of Eastern By-pass Road), Moneenageisha Road and lands abutting Seamus Quirke Road. Offices appropriate to the CC zoning will only be considered on these lands.

- CI zoned lands on Shantalla Road, Nun’s Island Street and on the former Connaught Laundry site. Residential development on the full extent of these CI zoned sites will be considered. The density of any residential development on these sites will have regard to the surrounding context.

- CI zoned lands at Heneghans Nurseries, Monivea Road comprising of approximately 2 hectares. Use of the lands shall be such that 75% of any future development shall be dedicated to residential use and the remaining 25% shall be dedicated to uses compatible with CI land use zoning.

- CI zoned lands at Wellpark Road adjacent to the Mervue Business and Technology Park. A Residential content of up to 75% will be considered on these lands. Any new development shall not project forward of the established building line (shop).

- CI zoned lands at Leaders, Tuam Road, comprising of approximately 1.2 hectares. Residential uses will be excluded from this site.

- CI zoned lands on the Dublin Road, formally Corrib Great Southern Hotel site. A minimum of one third of the site shall be reserved for higher educational use, and/or research/collaborative ventures between higher education institutes and industry. Student housing will be open for consideration on the remainder of the lands. Retail shall be restricted to bulky goods retailing and local retailing needs. Given the significant scale of the site and obligation to deliver certain uses, an overall plan will be required in advance of any redevelopment, which shall incorporate retention of the green linear space running parallel with the Dublin Road. The Plan may include the setting back of the green space to facilitate space required by the Council to accommodate sustainable transportation measures.

- Facilitate the provision of a community centre as part of the overall development of the shopping centre (Joyces) on lands located between and adjoining Kingston Road and Shangort Road.

- CI zoned lands south of Seamus Quirke Road and north of Rahoon Road. These lands are designated as a District Centre. Any proposed development shall maintain the existing Rahoon Road building line and include appropriate landscaping.

- CI zoned lands at Barna Road petrol-filling station. The current setback of the building, excluding forecourt, shall be maintained.
11.2.7 City Centre CC Land Use Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective CC:</th>
<th>To provide for city centre activities and particularly those which preserve the city centre as the dominant commercial area of the city.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example: | - Retail  
- Residential  
- Offices, banks and professional services  
- Tourist related uses  
- Cultural and community uses  
- Buildings for education  
- Recreation  
- Childcare facilities |
| Uses which may contribute to the zoning objectives, dependent on the area and the proposed development for example: | - Light industry  
- Public utilities |

The following are specific development objectives for a number of CC zones throughout the city:

- CC zoned lands at Ceannt Station. The Council will consider the development of these lands for mixed use commercial development, including for retail, residential (equivalent to 30% of the total proposed likely potential floor area) and transportation interchange in accordance with the requirements set out under Section 9.2.1.

- CC zoned lands at Inner Harbour. The Council will consider the development of these lands for mixed use commercial development, including for recreation, retail and residential (equivalent to 30% of the total likely proposed floor area) in accordance with the requirements set out under Section 9.2.2.

- CC zoned lands at 6,8,10,12 and 14 St. Augustine Street. Any required development on these sites to facilitate change of use shall not materially alter the elevation of the existing buildings or interfere with the integrity of the terrace.
11.2.8 Residential R and LDR Land Use Zoning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Objective R:</th>
<th>To provide for residential development and for associated support development, which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity and will contribute to sustainable residential neighbourhoods.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Objective LDR:</td>
<td>To provide for low-density residential development which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uses which are compatible with and contribute to the zoning objective, for example:
- Residential
- Residential institution
- Outdoor recreational use
- Accommodation for Travellers
- Local shops, local offices, licensed premises, banks and other local services
- Buildings for education
- Childcare facilities
- Buildings for the care of the health, safety or welfare of the public
- Buildings for the community, cultural or recreational use

Uses which may contribute to the zoning objective, dependent on the R and LDR location and scale of development for example:
- Hotel, Guesthouses and B&B’s
- Part conversion or extension of private residence to studio, office, childcare facility or small enterprises by the occupier of the dwelling, at a scale as would not unduly interfere with the primary use of the dwelling
- Places of worship
- Public utilities

The following are specific development objectives for a number of R zones throughout the city:
- Development of lands at Doughiska adjoining the Eastern Approach Road shall incorporate the provision of an 18 metres wide strip of landscaped open space abutting this road.
- The Council will consider the granting of permission for a fire station on residential zoned lands adjacent to the Morris Roundabout.
- The Council will consider the granting of permission for small-scale commercial use on the ground floor of the Dun Aengus development on Dock Street subject to protecting residential amenity.
- The development of residential zoned lands in Council ownership adjacent to the proposed school site at Ballyburke will include for the provision of an appropriate level of community facilities to serve the area.
- R zoned lands in the areas of Ballybaan and Ballinfoile. The Council will consider regeneration plans for community services and infill residential developments on existing open space, where it is shown that the open space is obsolete and where the recreation requirements and residential amenity is not prejudiced.
- Provide for additional local centres to facilitate local convenience shopping and services. These facilities will be accommodated at Clybaun, Ballymoneen and Ballyburke as indicated on Development Plan maps.
- R zoned lands at Nun’s Island Street (St. Joseph’s school site). The design of residential development shall have regard to the streetscape context and shall also contribute to the protection and enhancement of the adjacent waterways.
- R zoned lands south of the Dublin Road, Castlebar hurling pitch. The strip of land adjoining the road boundary shall be reserved free from development and the existing trees retained and additional trees planted along the road to ensure that the visual impact of any development is minimised.
- R zoned lands at Cappagh. Development on these lands shall be limited to one house only.
- R zoned lands at Crowley Park (Galwegians RFC). Any redevelopment of the site shall include a conservation record of Glenina House, if proposed for demolition, and shall incorporate any important and appropriate architectural features in the new development. The green strip of land at the front of the site shall be retained in RA zoning with adequate access to service the site.
- R zoned lands at Salthill, the Salthill Hotel. The Council will consider the development of a spa facility in association with the Salthill Hotel.
The following lands zoned R have specific development objectives, subject to design, environmental requirements and traffic safety.

**Fig. 11.4 West of Headford Road**
- Vehicular access points will be limited and residential layouts should demonstrate where connections between developments are feasible, safe and contribute to residential amenity.
- Residential development on these lands shall, by means of density, distribution, layout and design, assimilate into the topography of the site and shall not break the ridgeline.

**Fig. 11.5 North of Bothar na Coiste**
- Layout of residential development and boundary treatment shall have regard to the protected views from Headford Road.
- Any development on these lands shall include for retention of the waterbody and incorporation of this feature into the development as an ecological amenity in addition to any open space requirements.
- Requirements for road improvements capable of accommodating future developments shall be incorporated into any development proposals.

**Fig. 11.6 North West of Tuam Road, Castlegar**
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.
- Limited access will be allowed onto the Tuam Road.
- No major access will be allowed onto the Castlegar Road.
- Layout of residential development shall protect the existing cemetery site.
- Development on these lands shall have regard to road improvements and junction realignments.
- Development in the northeast section of these lands shall be subject to a detailed flood risk assessment and shall include for flood mitigation measures if appropriate, in accordance with the DEHLG Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).

**Fig. 11.7 Undeveloped Residually Zoned Land North West of Western Distributor Road**
- In this general area, residential development on the higher slopes shall, by means of density distribution, layout and design, assimilate into the topography of the site and protect the ridge view and provide for linkage and address to the adjoining RA zoned lands.
- Development on lands within the Ballyburke Framework Plan 2007 area shall comply with the core principles of the framework plan.
The following are specific development objectives for a number of LDR zones throughout the city:

- LDR zoned lands at Coolagh road, opposite Crestwood. Development shall be limited to one house only.
- LDR zoned lands at the junction of Gentian Hill. Development on these lands shall not exceed a density of 13 houses per hectare and shall be restricted to single storey dwellings.
- LDR zoned lands at Ballagh. Development on these lands shall be limited to one house only.
- LDR zoned lands comprising approximately 0.47 hectares at Quarry Road, north of Menlough village. Development shall be limited to one house only.
- LDR zoned lands comprising approximately 0.2 hectares at Monument Road, Menlough. The development of a pre-school will be open for consideration on this site.

The following LDR zoned lands have specific development objectives, subject to design, environmental requirements, drainage and traffic safety. Communal open space and recreational facilities may be a requirement in certain circumstances:

Fig 11.8 LDR Curragreen
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained and supplemented by appropriate landscaping.

Fig. 11.9 LDR Old Dublin Road
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- House design shall be single storey, dormer or have a low profile ridge line.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained

Fig. 11.10 LDR Rosshill House and adjacent lands
- The maximum plot ratio density of 0.21 shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area. This layout will have regard to the areas zoned RA, the tree coverage, the existing pillars and stone walls.
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.
Fig. 11.11 LDR Roscam Pitch and Putt and adjacent lands
- The maximum plot ratio density of 0.2:1 shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area.
- This layout will have regard to the sylvan character of the site, and where appropriate the protection of existing trees and the Roscam folly.
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.

Fig. 11.12 LDR Roscam Village
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stonewalls shall be retained.
- Protected views shall be preserved and shall have regard to the protected status of existing archaeological structures.

Fig. 11.13 LDR Merlin Park Lane, Doughiska Road
- Development shall generally have a maximum plot ratio of 0.2:1.
- A maximum density shall only be achieved subject to the provision of adequate screening by use of existing trees and hedgerows, the retention of which shall form an integral part of an overall layout of the area.
- Development shall have regard to possible future NHA/site of geological importance and protected structure Quarry House RPS reference 5903.
- Notwithstanding the LDR zoning, the Council will consider, subject to proper planning and development considerations, the expansion of existing businesses, infill development and the redevelopment of existing premises for small scale commercial uses where it is demonstrated that no adverse impact to existing residential amenities will occur. A maximum plot ratio of up to 0.5:1 will be considered for commercial development in this area. All developments will be required to be suitably landscaped.

Fig. 11.14 LDR Doughiska
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible existing hedgerows, trees and stonewalls shall be retained.
Fig. 11.15 LDR Briarhill
- Development in A and C: A maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area.
- Development shall be low profile single storey with a maximum ridge height of 5.5m above existing ground floor level, except for the sites fronting onto the Doughiska Road and the Old Ballybrit Road.
- Development in B: Development shall not exceed a plot ratio of 0.2:1.

Fig. 11.16 LDR Parkmore
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.

Fig. 11.17 LDR Tuam Road
- Development shall have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare and shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout of the area.
- Residential development on the higher slopes shall, by means of layout and design, assimilate into the topography of the site and protect the ridge view.
- Development will only be considered where it accords with strategic main drainage proposals.

Fig. 11.18 LDR Carraig Ban
- Any infill development or extensions shall have regard to the existing pattern of development.
In order to maintain the established character of the area, development shall generally not exceed a density of 5 houses to the hectare. Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained. All development shall take cognisance of the road/junction reservations for GCOB. The site outlined in black (0.29 hectares) shall be reserved for a cultural facility.

Development shall generally have a maximum density of 2.5 houses to the hectare. Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.

Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare. Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained. Development on site A (0.5 hectares). A maximum of 3 dwelling houses shall be open for consideration on this site. Any new dwellings shall be reserved for the use of immediate family members of the landowner.

Development shall generally have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare. Where possible hedgerows and stone walls shall be retained.
Fig. 11.23 LDR Roscam
- Development shall be restricted to two houses only, reserved for the use of immediate family members.
- Development shall have regard to the existing pattern of development and the visual and environmental sensitivity of the site.

Fig. 11.24 LDR Murrogh
- Development shall have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare.
- Development shall have regard to the existing pattern of development and shall be subject to amenity and environmental considerations.

Fig. 11.25 LDR Rosshill
- Development shall have a maximum density of 5 houses to the hectare and shall only be considered following agreement on an overall layout which includes for an acceptable standard of access.

Fig. 11.26 LDR Coolagh
- Development shall generally have a maximum density of 2.5 houses to the hectare.
Part B – Development Standards and Guidelines

General Development Standards and Guidelines

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General Development Standards and Guidelines

11.3 Residential Development


Planning applications for residential development will have to have regard to aforementioned government guidelines and the following standards and policies of the development plan. Given the different character of residential neighbourhoods in the city, the standards are divided into Outer Suburbs, Established Suburbs, Inner Residential Areas and City Centre Residential Areas. Where residential development is permitted on lands other than residentially zoned lands, the neighbourhood policies as defined in Chapter 2, shall generally apply.

11.3.1 Outer Suburbs

11.3.1 (a) General

- All relevant residential development shall comply with the requirements of the Housing Strategy.
- Planning applications for residential developments on sites over one hectare in area shall include a design statement that demonstrates the relationship between the proposed development to the site context, adjoining developments, the achievement of safe and convenient movement within the site, and how existing features are to be integrated into the development.
- Residential development shall be laid out in such a way so as to maximise accessibility to local services, public transport and to encourage walking and cycling.
- Pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movement shall be convenient, safe and integrated into the overall layout of the development.
- The layout of all new residential development shall have regard to adjoining developments and undeveloped zoned land. Where appropriate, linkages and complementary open spaces shall be provided between adjoining developments. In this regard gated residential developments will be discouraged.
- Innovative layouts, including courtyard developments, shared open spaces and the clustering of dwellings shall be used, where appropriate, to achieve high standards of amenity.
- Existing hedgerow, trees, watercourses and stone walls shall be retained where feasible. A landscaping scheme including hard and soft landscaping, where appropriate, shall be designed as an integral part of the development.
- A plot ratio (see glossary) of 0.46:1 for new residential development shall not normally be exceeded.
- Residential developments of 10 units and over shall normally provide a mix in type of residential units.
- Non residential development shall be considered at appropriate locations on residentially zoned lands where it is of a scale that serves the local need and where requirements are satisfied. Plot ratio for such commercial, leisure, community and mixed developments on residentially zoned lands shall not normally exceed 1:1. On distributor roads or other major access roads where commercial development will contribute to the quality of urban design and is otherwise acceptable, a higher plot ratio may be considered.
- Where commercial developments are acceptable on residentially zoned land, 10% of the area of a site, shall normally be provided as open space. Where the development includes residential uses, communal and private open space standards in 11.3.1(c) shall apply.
- Childcare facilities shall be provided within residential development as indicated in 11.13 and Chapter 6.
- All construction associated with footpaths, sewers, drains and water supply in residential developments, shall comply with DEHLG Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (1998) and/or any additional specification required by the Council.
- Planning applications for new large-scale residential developments shall be accompanied by assessments of the capacity of local schools to accommodate the proposed development.
- Cognisance shall be taken of the requirements associated with Traffic Management Guidelines 2003.

11.3.1 (b) Standards for Roads and Streets in New Residential Development

Local Collector Roads: These roads form the link between distributor roads and residential areas. Any road, which serves more than 400 units or forms part of a scheduled bus route, must be of Local Collector Road standard. These roads may have residential and commercial frontage and there may be significant movements of pedestrians and cyclists. The following apply:
Measures for pedestrians and cyclists will be included for in the design.

Direct access to individual dwellings and parking spaces will be open for consideration.

Buildings that face onto these roads shall be of a scale appropriate to the width of the road and associated open areas.

Designs should not provide unnecessarily wide roads since these encourage higher speeds.

The use of landscaping measures in verges will be required.

Roads shall meet requirements of the *Traffic Management Guidelines (2003)* with respect to geometric and visibility standards.

The design of streets and roads shall have regard to the DOT UK Manual for Streets (2007) or similar DECLG imminent publication.

**Major Access Roads:** These roads are the main links within housing areas serving between 100-400 units. These roads may have direct access and may have some parking. They should allow for ease of pedestrian movement and crossing. The following apply:

- Measures for pedestrian and cyclists will be included for in the design.
- Individual access from dwellings within 20m from a junction of a major access road with a Local Collector Road will generally not be permitted.
- A 1.8m footpath is generally required on each side of the carriageway.
- Where verges are required, the minimum width is 1.0m rising to 1.8m where services are to be laid.
- The use of landscaping measures in verges will be required.
- Buildings, which face onto these roads, shall be of a scale appropriate to the width of the road, parking and associated open spaces.
- Roads shall meet requirements of the DEHLG *Traffic Management Guidelines (2003)* with respect to geometric and visibility standards.
- The design of streets and roads shall have regard to the DOT UK Manual for Streets (2007) or similar DECLG imminent publication.

**Minor Access Road/Street:** These generally serve small groups of houses up to fifty dwellings, with direct dwelling access and parking. These can take the form of ‘homezones’ or have shared surfaces. These surfaces can be shared between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. For these roads/streets the following apply:

- Where a carriageway is provided the width shall be 5.0 – 5.5m.
- Generally 1.8m footpaths are required.
- Where shared surfaces are provided a road/street shall have varying width, with a minimum width of 4.8m and a maximum of 6m.
- Design of a road/street should encourage the use of the shared space for amenity purposes and ensure the safety of other people using the shared space.
- Roads shall meet requirements of the DEHLG Traffic Management Guidelines (2003) with respect to geometric and visibility standards.
- The design of streets and roads shall have regard to the DOT UK Manual for Streets (2007) as recommended by Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government or similar DECLG imminent publication.

**11.3.1 (c) Amenity Open Space Provision in Residential Developments**

All residential developments shall provide for amenity open space areas made up of the following ratios:

**Communal Open Space**

- Communal recreation and amenity space is required at a rate of 15% of the gross site area.
- Where acceptable ‘homezones’ are proposed, in accordance with Council guidelines, the shared spaces shall be regarded as communal open space but shall not exceed one third of the total communal open space requirement.
- Lands zoned for Recreation and Amenity use (RA) shall not be included as part of the open space requirements or used for density calculation for housing developments.

Communal open space in all types of residential development should:

- Be visually as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the residential area.
- Be adequately overlooked by residential units.
- Integrate natural features (for example natural contours, outcrops of rock), where appropriate, as part of the open space.
- Be viable spaces, linked together where possible, designed as an integral part of the overall layout and adjoining neighbouring communal open spaces.
- Not include narrow pedestrian walkways, which are not overlooked by house frontages.
- Create safe, convenient and accessible amenity areas for all sections of the community.
- Generally no rear boundaries should face onto public open space. Blank gables shall not, generally face onto roads or streets. Side boundary walls, which face onto public open space, should be minimised.

In all proposed residential development over ten units a recreational facility shall be provided as part of the communal open space and funded by the developer. The recreational facility should be provided to serve the needs of the residents and should reflect the profile of future residents, the scale and type of development. Indicative examples of recreational facilities for different sizes of developments are shown in Table 11.2. The Parks Department will give further guidance in relation to any proposed recreation facility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Residential Units</th>
<th>Examples of Recreational Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>No requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>Seating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barbecue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Picnic Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-50</td>
<td>Play Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kick About Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>Skateboard Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bowling Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basketball Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+</td>
<td>Play Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playing Pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Private Open Space
- Private open space (areas generally not overlooked from a public road) exclusive of car spaces shall be provided at a rate of not less than 50% of the gross floor area of the residential unit.

This open space should where practicable relate directly to the residential unit, which it serves. Some sites will not have the facility to accommodate all of the required provision of the total private amenity space directly and satisfactorily adjoining each individual unit. Therefore, in certain site conditions and development types, provision of private open space may be made up of areas of communal open space. For example, in apartment developments provision of private open space may be made up of areas of communal open space, balconies or terraces.

The scale of proposed extensions shall ensure that an adequate level of private open space is retained on site.

11.3.1 (d) Overlooking
- Residential units shall not directly overlook private open space or land with development potential from above ground floor level by less than 11 metres minimum.
- In the case of developments exceeding 2 storeys in height a greater distance than 11 metres may be required, depending on the specific site characteristics.

11.3.1 (e) Daylight
- All buildings should receive adequate daylight and sunlight. All habitable rooms must be naturally ventilated and lit and living rooms and bedrooms shall not be lit solely by roof lights.
11.3.1 (f) Distance between Dwellings for New Residential Development.

- The distance between side gables and side boundaries of dwellings with a gross floor area of 200m² or less, shall normally be a minimum of 1.5m. A reduced distance will be acceptable only where it can be demonstrated that a good layout and development context can be achieved and where a rear access is provided, it is functionally adequate.
- Within all other large residential developments, including apartment buildings and dwellings with a gross floor area in excess of 200m², the distance between the buildings and boundaries shall be greater. The distance proposed shall demonstrate that a good layout and development context can be achieved.

11.3.1 (g) Car Parking Standards

In order to provide for flexibility in residential layouts the following are the options for car parking requirements:

- 2 on-site spaces per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings or,
- 1 on-site space per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per dwelling or,
- 1.5 grouped spaces per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings,
- 3 spaces for houses over 200m² and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings
- 1 space for one bedroom residential dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings

These standards should not be exceeded unless acceptable additional need can be demonstrated.

Where on site car-parking space is to be provided in the front garden the following standards shall apply:

- The front garden depth shall be minimum of 8m.
- For on site car parking accommodation for existing dwellings a lesser depth may be acceptable.
- The car parking space shall be 2.5m x 5m minimum.
- The vehicular entrance shall not normally exceed 3m in width and where feasible the maximum extent of boundary wall/hedging shall be retained.
- Where gates are provided they shall not open outwards.
- Front gardens shall not be completely dedicated to car parking.

To prevent the area to the front of small apartment developments being completely dedicated to car parking, the parking area shall be visually broken up.

Car parking rows shall be broken up with trees, planters or some other feature which shall soften the visual impact of the car parking areas at a minimum interval of 6 car parking spaces.

Where grouped parking is provided, the parking shall be dispersed throughout a residential development. Grouped car-parking spaces shall not be allocated to individual residential units. Where possible the grouped car parking shall be surfaced in a different material treatment or colour to the road surface.

11.3.1 (h) Cycle Parking Standards

- In residential developments, where appropriate, a minimum of one cycle stand per 20 car spaces or over shall be provided. For every additional 50 car parking spaces, an additional cycle stand should be provided. Each cycle stand should accommodate a minimum of five bicycles. Cycle parking must be sheltered where appropriate. Where compliance with this standard is not deemed appropriate a transportation contribution will be levied accordingly

11.3.1 (i) Bin Storage Standards

- Each residential unit shall have adequate storage for three wheeled bins to facilitate the recycling policy of the City Council. Residential units with no rear access shall provide adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units.
- For residential units without suitable private open space a set of three x 240 litre bins shall be provided for each pair of apartments or a set of three 1,100 litre bins shall be provided for a block of ten apartments.
- Bin storage shall generally be on the ground floor of developments, be screened from public view and adjacent to the block it serves.
11.3.1 (j) Conversion and Subdivision of Dwellings

- Small extensions or conversions for use as a studio, office, childcare facility or small enterprises by the occupier of the dwelling, at a scale as would not unduly interfere with the primary use of the dwelling as a private residence or adversely affect the general residential amenity will be considered. This may also apply with the exception of childcare facilities to existing dwellings in agricultural zoned areas.

- Conversion or subdivision of exceptionally large residential units on relatively large sites to multiple units, without a dramatic alteration in the prevailing character of the area will be considered. Part conversion will only be considered when the building is adjacent to commercial premises, adjoining major traffic routes or located on particularly large sites, where the character of the area is not adversely affected. The assessment of such proposals would have to take into consideration the established character of the area, residential amenity, recreation and amenity space, parking, traffic considerations, etc. Part conversion to commercial units will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use serves a local need and/or is located with an established commercial area.

11.3.1 (k) Self Contained Residential Units

Self-contained residential units will be considered when:

- The unit is an integral part of the main dwelling capable of re-assimilation into the dwelling. Specific prior grant of planning permission is required for consequent subdivision of the site. This will generally be discouraged on amenity grounds.

- The unit is an addition to the existing structure or a garage conversion and shall generally be located at the side as opposed to the rear garden of the existing house.

- The floor area of the unit does not normally exceed the equivalent of 25% of the floor area of the existing house.

- Self contained units will only be considered so long as the owner of the premises lives in the unit or the remainder of the premises as their main residence.

11.3.2 Established Suburbs

As per standards for Outer Suburbs except:

11.3.2 (a) General

- In the interests of sustainability and urban design, higher densities may be appropriate when new residential development or commercial/community development has regard to the prevailing pattern, form and density of these areas.

11.3.2 (b) Amenity Standards

- Shall be as per Outer Suburbs except in certain circumstances where the established form and layout would deem a reduction in these standards appropriate, in the interests of sustainability and urban design.

11.3.2 (c) Car Parking Standards

- 1 on-site space per dwelling and 1 grouped visitor space per 3 dwellings or,
- 1 space per dwelling if grouped.

Reduction in these standards for ACAs may be considered appropriate where the provision of car parking would adversely effect the architectural character of the area. In this case a transportation contribution will be required. Generally, these standards should not be exceeded.

11.3.3 Inner Residential Areas

As per standards for Established Suburbs except:

11.3.3 (a) Car Parking Standard

- Maximum 1 space per dwelling.

For new developments in the inner residential areas where a reduction in car parking standards is considered acceptable by the Council on grounds of urban design or sustainability, a transport contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking.
11.3.4 City Centre Residential Areas

As per standards for Outer Suburbs except:

11.3.4 (a) General

- New commercial development will not normally be permitted in residentially zoned land in the city centre.

11.3.4 (b) Open Space

- When residential content is proposed in commercial developments in the city centre an area the equivalent of 30% of the gross floor area of residential content shall be provided as open space, except in certain circumstances where the established form and layout would deem compliance with this standard inappropriate.

11.3.4 (c) Bin Storage

- Adequate storage for waste disposal shall be provided on site.

11.3.4 (d) Car Parking Standard

- Maximum 1 space per dwelling.

For new developments in the city centre residential areas where a reduction in car parking standards is considered acceptable by the Council on grounds of urban design or sustainability, a transport contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking.

11.4 City Centre Area

11.4.1 General

The Council shall take into account the following standards and guidelines when considering the design and layout of development in the CC zone in so far as they relate to a particular development proposal in the city centre.

- Maximum densities shall only be attainable under optimum site conditions having regard to criteria such as height, open space and protection of amenities.

- Adequate space must be available for on site storage of materials and waste, loading and unloading, on site circulation of vehicles and parking for motor vehicles and bicycles, where appropriate.

- Adequate provision should be made for storage of goods and materials within the building. Where such space is not provided such goods and materials, if they are to be stored outside, shall be stored in a designated storage area.

- Potential noise and air nuisances and lighting arrangements shall be addressed at the design stage and relative mitigation measures included for in the proposed development.

- Plant shall be integrated into the overall design of the building and shall be shown on relevant planning drawings.

11.4.2 Plot Ratio

The plot ratio density standard is designed so as to help prevent adverse effects of over-development on the amenities of the area.

- In general for new development, the maximum plot ratio permitted will be 2:1.

- In the Dominick Street Upper/William Street West/Sea Road/Raven Terrace CC zone and in the CC zone adjoining Father Burke Park the maximum plot ratio permitted will be 1.60:1.

- In the CC zone consideration will be given to development proposals in excess of the normally permissible plot ratio where such proposals would contribute to urban regeneration or make a significant contribution to urban character. This excess will be interpreted as a proportional increase only.

- In the case of infill development in an existing terrace or street, it may be necessary to have a higher plot ratio in order to maintain a uniform fenestration and parapet alignment or to obtain greater height for important urban design reasons. In such circumstances, an increased plot ratio may be permitted.

- Where a site has an established plot ratio in excess of the general maximum for its zone, redevelopment may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted in line with its existing plot ratio if this conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- Minor extensions, which infringe plot ratio, may be permitted where they are necessary to the satisfactory operation of the buildings.
11.4.3 Residential Content

- Where appropriate, a residential content of at least 20% of the proposed gross floor area will be required for all new development. Change of use of recently constructed purpose built residential accommodation above floor level in areas zoned CC will not normally be permitted.

- Where appropriate on certain sites, including Ceannt Station and the Inner Harbour area, a residential content of at least 30% of the proposed gross floor area will be required for any redevelopment.

11.4.4 Open Space Requirement

- An equivalent to 30% of gross floor area of residential content where proposed will be required. In situations where effective open space cannot be provided on site due to the location of existing buildings, inappropriate aspect, small scale or for other reasons a relaxation in this standard may be considered. Innovative ways of providing open space will be open for consideration including roof gardens, winter gardens and balconies, having considered the characteristics of the site and the capacity for the delivery of sustainable open space.

11.4.5 Uses

- The conversion of the ground floors of premises on the principal shopping streets from retail to non-retail uses, including retail services shall not be permitted. For these purposes the principal shopping streets are Williamsgate Street, William Street, Shop Street, Mainguard Street, High Street, Quay Street and Eyre Square (north western side). Consideration will be given to allow for retail services on Eyre Square (North Western side) and for exceptionally small existing units of total retail gross floorspace of less than 20m².

- In High Street, Quay Street and Woodquay the Council will prevent the enlargement of existing licensed premises and night-clubs (except within the confines of the site) and prevent change of use to licensed premises of existing premises.

- Where development for and/or extensions to licensed premises including off-licences, night-clubs and takeaways are being considered in the City Centre Area, the Council will take into account the following:
  - effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area,
  - effect of the proposed development on the mix of uses in the area,
  - size, number and location of existing licensed premises in the area.

- Notwithstanding the exemption provisions for change of use of shops in the Planning Acts/Regulations, there is a presumption against the establishment of specific retail operators in the city centre. These uses may have a negative impact on the image of the city centre and may discourage the establishment of other retail developments. In particular this will relate to adult shops and lap dancing clubs.

11.4.6 City Centre/Other Areas

- There is also a presumption against adult shops and lap dancing clubs in the area known as 'The West' including Dominick Street and in other areas of the city for similar reasoning, as stated in 11.4.5, and in particular where they could have an adverse impact on residential amenity and/or be located near sensitive land uses such as schools.

- Where development for off-licences are being considered in areas outside of the city centre, the Council will take into account the following:
  - effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area,
  - effect of the proposed development on the mix of uses in the area,
  - size, number and location of existing off-license premises in the area.

11.5 Shopfronts

- Original traditional shopfronts and pubfronts shall be retained or restored. Any proposal for shopfront design should take account of the heritage of Galway where feasible.

- Contemporary shop/ pub fronts will be considered when:
  - materials and proportions are appropriate to the scale and fabric of the building and/or street.
  - the design complements the design of the upper floors of the building.
  - the shopfront does not extend into the floor above concealing first floor window cills.
  - existing elevations are not straddled.

- Generally the use of external roller shutters/security screens shall not be permitted on the front of shops. If required they should be placed behind the shop front display.
In general canopies shall not be permitted except when they are necessary to protect goods on display or where they are deemed acceptable under the prevailing tables and chairs policy.

Particular consideration will be given to the protection and enhancement of the character of shopfronts in ACAs.

Shopfronts should have regard to any proposed or adopted standards and guidelines for shopfront design, as adopted by the Council.

11.6 Advertisements

- New signage or advertisements shall respect the scale, character and setting of the building to which it is attached and have regard to the extent of existing signage on the site.
- No large scale internally illuminated signs or projecting spotlights shall be permitted.
- Lettering shall only be permitted when it is in proportion to the size of the fascia.
- In general signage or advertisements shall not be permitted on upper floors.
- In general no projecting signs shall be permitted, consideration will only be given to small scale projecting signs that are integral to the shopfront.

11.7 Salthill

11.7.1 Plot Ratio

- In the Salthill CI Zone the maximum plot ratio for new development permitted will be 1.75:1. In the lands zoned R and directly adjoining Toft Park a relaxation of the maximum plot ratio figure of 0.46:1 may be considered, only where the other residential amenity standards have been complied with and where the development is of a scale and height appropriate to its high profile setting.

11.7.2 Uses

- Where development for and/or extensions to licensed premises, nightclubs and take-aways are being considered in the Salthill area, the Council will take into account the following:
  - effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area,
  - effect of the proposed development on the mix of uses in the area,
  - size, number and location of existing licensed premises in the area.

11.7.3 Car Parking

- For new developments in the Salthill area where a reduction in car parking standards is considered acceptable by the Council on grounds of urban design or sustainability, a transport contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking.

11.8 Village Envelopes/Areas

- Development proposals for housing in village envelopes/areas will be assessed on the design, layout, impact on Natura 2000 sites and on compliance with the requirements for wastewater treatment units.
- Commercial development will only be considered in village envelopes when it is of a scale appropriate to the village requirements.

11.9 Commercial and Industry

11.9.1 General

The Council shall take into account the following when considering the design and layout of development in CI and I zones in so far as they relate to a particular development proposal:

- Maximum densities shall only be attainable under optimum site conditions having regard to criteria such as height, open space and protection of amenities.
- Adequate space must be available for on site storage of materials and refuse, loading and unloading, on site circulation of vehicles and parking for motor vehicles and bicycles. In this regard adequate on site waste management facilities must be provided.
Adequate provision shall be made for storage of goods and materials within the building. Where such space is not provided such goods and materials, if they are to be stored outside, shall be stored in a designated storage area.

Developments shall be required to provide an element of open space which would include a landscaping scheme for the site having regard to screening of boundaries and vehicle parking areas and to the visual appearance of the site, in particular the area between the front building line and the front boundaries.

Open space shall be provided in a manner in which it can function as an effective amenity area taking into account its location on the site, physical size, aspect to avail of sunlight and accessibility. In this regard open space inappropriately sited or sized or open space incidental to roads, boundaries or pathways, shall not be accepted by the Council as fulfilling this requirement. Such landscaping schemes shall encourage habitat biodiversity.

Surfaces within the curtilage of industrial/commercial sites shall be of hard wearing, dust free and durable material.

Parking spaces shall be clearly marked out and delineated. Parking spaces for vehicles of disabled persons shall be provided and clearly marked and located close to main entrances to premises.

Potential nuisance/polluter sources shall be addressed at the design stage and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the development.

All plant equipment shall be addressed at design stage and generally shall not be visible from public areas.

Where security fencing is required it shall not normally be forward of the front building line of the premises. Where in exceptional circumstances, security fencing is permitted forward of the front building line it shall be set behind landscaping. Security fencing of a high visual standard and where palisade or chainlink type fencing is used it shall be plastic coated, coloured or of similar acceptable specification.

Advertising structures, where required, shall be sized and placed in a manner, which is unobtrusive. Advertising structures and signage shall be minimised, of a high standard, co-ordinated in design and appropriately scaled and located.

Buildings or structures intended for use by the general public shall be designed to allow access and internal circulation for disabled persons.

11.9.2 Site Coverage and Plot Ratios for CI and I Land Use Zones

The development intensity standards of site coverage and plot ratio are designed so as to help prevent the adverse effects of over-development. Site coverage and plot ratios are given in Table 11.3. The figures are maximum, attainable only under optimum site conditions. The site coverage is determined by dividing the total area of ground covered by the building by the total area of the site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>CI</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Site Coverage</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Plot Ratio</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In the case of infill development in an existing terrace or street, it may be necessary to have a higher plot ratio in order to maintain a uniform fenestration and parapet alignment or to obtain greater height for important urban design reasons. In such circumstances, the Council may allow an increased plot ratio.

- Where a site has an established plot ratio in excess of the general maximum for its zone, redevelopment may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted in line with its existing plot ratio if this conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- Minor extensions, which infringe plot ratio or site coverage limits may be permitted where the Council accept that they are necessary to the satisfactory operation of the buildings.

- On CI zoned lands, where it is proposed to provide, above ground level, an amenity open space area in association with residential accommodation, this space may be accepted as open space for site coverage purposes.

11.9.3 Open Space Requirements

The minimum open space requirements, which will apply in CI and I zones, are set out in Table 11.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>5% of the total area of the site and 50% of the gross floor area of residential content where a residential content is proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>15% of total site area in the case of the development of two or more industrial units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lands zoned RA or G shall not be included as part of the open space requirement for development on commercial or industrial lands.

In situations where effective open space cannot be provided on sites due to the location of existing buildings, inappropriate aspect, small scale or for other reasons, the Council may consider a lesser standard.

11.9.4 Residential Content

The Council will require a minimum residential content of 30% of the proposed gross floor area of all new large-scale developments in areas zoned CI adjoining the Headford Road, south of the Bodkin roundabout.

11.10 Transportation

11.10.1 Parking Space Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Type</th>
<th>Parking Requirement</th>
<th>City Centre Area Parking Requirements as shown in Fig. 9.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Dwellings</td>
<td>See Section 11.3</td>
<td>See Section 11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets and Shops</td>
<td>1 space per 15m² gross floor area</td>
<td>1 space per 30m² gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices and Banks</td>
<td>1 space per 25m² gross floor area</td>
<td>1 space per 50m² gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>1 space per 15m² gross floor area</td>
<td>1 space per 30m² gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars and Lounges (including hotel bars)</td>
<td>1 space per 8m² gross floor area</td>
<td>1 space per 15m² gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function Rooms (including hotel function rooms)</td>
<td>1 space per 10 m²</td>
<td>1 space per 20 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels (in addition to the above)</td>
<td>1 space per bedroom</td>
<td>1 space per 2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guesthouses/B&amp;B</td>
<td>1 space per bedroom</td>
<td>1 space per 2 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinemas, Theatres, Places of Worship</td>
<td>1 space per 10 seats</td>
<td>1 space per 20 seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Centres, Community Centres/Halls</td>
<td>1 space per 30m² gross floor area</td>
<td>1 space per 60m² gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Halls, Night Clubs</td>
<td>1 space per 10m² gross floor area</td>
<td>1 space per 20m² gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals/Nursing Homes</td>
<td>1 space per bed</td>
<td>1 space per 2 beds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgeries, Clinics, Group Medical Practices</td>
<td>2 spaces per consulting room</td>
<td>1 space per consulting room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>1 space per classroom plus 4 additional spaces</td>
<td>1 space per classroom plus 2 additional spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Level Institutions</td>
<td>1 space per classroom plus 1 space per 10 students</td>
<td>1 space per classroom plus 1 space per 20 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Centres</td>
<td>1 space per 50m²</td>
<td>1 space per 100m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare Facilities</td>
<td>1 space per 20m² of operational space</td>
<td>1 space per 40m² of operational space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry, Warehousing (general)</td>
<td>1 space per 100m²</td>
<td>1 space per 200m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehousing (retail/bulky goods)</td>
<td>1 space per 70 m²</td>
<td>1 space per 150m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Offices</td>
<td>1 space per 75m²</td>
<td>1 space per 150m²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parking spaces for people with disabilities shall be provided in accordance with best practice as promoted by the National Disability Authority (www.nda.ie), and in particular their publication Building for Everybody (2002).

In the case of any use not specified above, the Council will determine the parking requirement, having regard to the traffic levels likely to be generated as a result of the development. In case of developments with significant car trip generation potential, a Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment shall be carried out in accordance with NRAs Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment Guidelines (2007).

Consideration will also be given to grouped and dual use parking provision where peak demands do not coincide and cognisance will be given to the potential for multi purpose trips, subject to assessment.

In the City Centre area and in the area defined by Inner Residential areas (see Fig 2.1, Chapter 2) parking requirements shall not be exceeded. In all other areas these figures shall not be exceeded by more than 10% unless an acceptable case demonstrates a need for additional car parking spaces.
A reduction in these carparking standards may be acceptable when an application for development includes a Transport Mobility Plan, which demonstrates alternative methods of dealing with traffic generation associated with the proposed development.

In the City Centre area, Inner Residential area and Salthill area (see sections 9.3 and 11.7) as defined in Fig 2.1, where developments do not provide car parking, a transportation contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site parking spaces.

11.10.2 Cycle Parking

In developments, where appropriate, a minimum of one cycle stand per 20 car spaces or over shall be provided. For every additional 50 car parking spaces, an additional cycle stand should be provided. Each cycle stand should accommodate a minimum of five bicycles. Cycle parking must be sheltered where appropriate. Where compliance with this standard is not deemed appropriate a transportation contribution will be levied accordingly.

11.10.3 Hackney Offices

Hackney offices will only be acceptable when they can demonstrate adequate waiting areas for on-duty cars and where there will not be undue disruption to traffic flow.

11.11 Waste Management

11.11.1 Commercial Developments

Recycling facilities shall be provided at all retail development which exceed a gross floor area of 1,500m² either as one unit or as a development of a number of units and at other retail developments, where the Council consider it appropriate.

11.11.2 Residential Developments

Recycling facilities, for example bring banks, may be required in residential developments depending on scale, location and general access. Recycling facilities shall be of high specification and screened from public view. In addition where provided within residential areas they shall be so located and controlled to ensure traffic safety and avoid nuisance.

11.11.3 Industrial Developments

Recycling facilities shall be provided in industrial estates, where appropriate. The option for communal facilities in individual estates can satisfy this requirement.

11.11.4 Waste Management Facilities

Waste management facilities shall comply in general with the policy considerations outlined under Policy 8.9 Waste Management Policy.

11.11.5 Construction and Demolition (C&D)

Proposed medium and large-scale developments shall be accompanied by a satisfactory construction and demolition waste management plan.

11.12 Agricultural Areas

11.12.1 Agricultural Development in Agricultural Areas zoned A and G

- Waste management and storage associated with agricultural buildings shall comply with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food best practice guidelines on good farming practice, protection of water from nitrate pollution and farm pollution control.
- Where possible new buildings shall be located within or adjoining the existing farmyard complex.
- Buildings shall be of minimum scale and external finishes shall be dark green, dark brown or grey in colour.
- Screening and landscaping proposals shall be required where buildings will be exposed to public view.

11.12.2 Residential Development in Agricultural Areas zoned A

- Dwellings shall normally be required to be sited as unobtrusively as possible from a landscape point of view and located close to existing farm dwellings and buildings on sites of not less than 0.2 hectares.
- Access shall be so designed to avoid traffic hazard and shall not be located directly onto national or regional routes.
- Site suitability shall have regard to proximity to the family home, prominence in the landscape, impact on waterline, safety and adequacy of access, water supply and suitability for a wastewater treatment system.

- Where wastewater treatment systems are required, they shall comply with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency: Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single House (EPA 2009) any subsequent revisions and any new legislative requirements.

- On high grounds, houses shall generally be single storey set into the landscape so as not to be visually prominent. In particular these developments shall not interfere with views or break skylines.

- Original stone boundary walls shall be retained where possible or if necessary set back to a new line. Hedgerows and trees shall be retained where possible and appropriate landscaping provided.

- Conversion of dwellings shall be permitted subject to the criteria outlined, under Section 11.3.1 (j) Conversion and Subdivision of Dwellings.

### Specific Development Standards

#### 11.13 Childcare Facilities

In general childcare facilities will be assessed on the following:

- The suitability of the site/premises for the type and size of facility proposed, taking into consideration the effects on the existing amenities of the area.

- Adequacy of vehicular/pedestrian access and parking provisions, which may be required to include satisfactory and safe collection/drop-off areas where appropriate, for both customers and staff where it is merited by the scale of the development and the resultant intensity of vehicular movements.

- Availability of public transport facilities within the area.

- Provision of an adequate outdoor play area within the curtilage of all full day-care facilities. This outdoor play area shall be so located to have minimum impact on the amenity of surrounding properties, particularly in residential areas and should also be separate from car parking and service areas.

- The design of the structure and capability of it being assimilated satisfactorily into the built environment/site. In this regard appropriate purpose built facilities are encouraged.

- Where new facilities are proposed, these should comply with all relevant legislation and regulations, in particular the Child Care (Preschool Services) Regulations 2006.

Applicants are also advised to consult with the Health Services Executive, Galway City and County Childcare Committee and the Chief Fire Officer.

The following car parking and outdoor play area standards shall apply to new childcare facilities in all land use zones:

- For car parking requirements refer to Table 11.5.

- The provision of an outdoor play area for full day services at a rate of 55% of the gross floor area of the childcare facility will normally be required. However in residential zones a higher than minimum standard may be required where appropriate in order to protect residential amenity.

- Consideration will be given to development proposals less than this rate of outdoor play area provision, where such proposals would represent sustainable development (or adhere to sustainable development principles), contribute significantly to the amenities of the area or where satisfactory alternatives can be provided.

- For sessional services, after school care/facilities and drop-in facilities, the provision of open space is desirable but not an essential requirement.

#### 11.14 Community/Educational facilities

- Buildings should be designed to high architectural standards and reflect their civic function. Adequate provision within the curtilage of the site should be made for safe and convenient access for different transport modes.

- The Council will have regard to recommendations and site development standards specified by Department of Education and Science in *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008)* and relevant technical guidance documents in assessing applications for schools.

- Planning applications for new large-scale residential developments shall be accompanied by assessments of the capacity of local schools to accommodate the proposed development.
11.15 Built Heritage
Notwithstanding the zoning of the area, the Council will encourage the return to use of protected structures for community, cultural or any other purpose compatible with the restoration of the building to best conservation practice and proper planning, where the original or current use is no longer viable.

In accordance with Section 57 of the 2000 Planning and Development Act, works which materially affect the character of a protected structure will require planning permission. Therefore, works to a protected structure which might constitute exempted development in other structures may require planning permission. This could include proposals for replacement windows/fenestration, plastering, painting, removal of architectural detailing, doors, railings, brickwork, stonework, downpipes, roofing slates or other alterations. It should be noted that in general replacing original windows with those of a different material, e.g. aluminium or PVC, is not normally acceptable in protected structures.

Planning permission will be required for the erection of a satellite dish, mobile phone, telecommunications equipment and other equipment on a protected structure.

11.16 Petrol Filling Stations
Proposals for petrol filling stations will be considered with reference to amenity and traffic safety. An undue concentration of filling stations shall not be permitted along any route.

Where shops are being provided they shall be ancillary to the principal use of the premises as a petrol filling station. In this regard the shopping element will be assessed with reference to the impact that it may have on the existing retail structure of the city including established neighbourhood and local shops in the vicinity. Where such shops are permitted the total floor area devoted to retail sales shall not generally exceed 100m². Where retail space exceeds net retail sales, the sequential approach to retail development as specified in the DEHLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) will apply.

Access to filling stations will not be permitted within 35m of a road junction.

Frontage onto primary, secondary and regional roads shall be at least 50m in length with all pumps and installations set back a minimum 5m from the road edge and a wall (minimum 0.5m in height) shall separate the forecourt from the public road.

All external lighting should be directed away from the public road and a proliferation of large illuminated signs will not be permitted. In this regard lighting and signs in the canopy will also be taken into consideration.

Signs shall relate only to the business being carried out on the site and shall not be used for general advertising purposes.

11.17 Telecommunication Infrastructure and Installations
In considering applications for proposed telecommunication infrastructure and installations the Council will have regard to the DEHLG Planning Guidelines for Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, (1996). Proposed installations shall have cognisance of any existing aircraft flight paths, where appropriate.

11.18 Renewable Energy Sources
Both a technical and an environmental statement must support any proposal for the development of a renewable energy scheme. Consultation is advisable with the appropriate bodies, such as Galway Energy Agency Ltd., Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Irish Energy Centre and ESB/Eirgrid.

In the event of any application for a wind turbine, the proposal shall comply with the DEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006).

With regard to micro renewable energy sources the Planning and Development Regulations 2007 and 2008 has introduced exemptions from planning requirements for micro renewable energy sources in domestic dwellings, business premises and industrial buildings for example solar panels, heat pumps, biomass and wind turbines subject to certain conditions.

11.19 Green Design
New development shall consider the use of innovative design features in buildings including green roofs, walls and roof gardens. These are important measures in the control of surface water run off, providing thermal insulation, enhancing biodiversity and promoting a varied cityscape. Development proposals which include any of the above elements shall be accompanied by details of construction techniques, long-term viability, maintenance and management prepared by a suitably qualified landscape designer.
11.20 Outdoor Events
Applications for licenses of outdoor events shall be considered under Part 16 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 and proper planning and sustainable development.

11.21 Street Furniture, Signs and Structures
Application for licenses for street furniture, signs and structures shall be considered under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and Part 17 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. Further guidance is available in the Planning Section Policy Document 2011.

11.22 Water Quality
Proposed developments, which include the storage and/or run-off of potential polluting substances, such as oil and chemicals shall be accompanied with details and specifications, which indicate how risk of pollution will be minimised by using best available practices. This shall also apply to the construction stage.

11.23 Development Contribution Scheme
Developments of a residential, commercial and industrial nature will have to pay a development contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of Galway City that is provided, or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the Council.

11.24 Access for All
Part M of the Building Regulations (2000) and the Technical Guidance Documents Part M sets out standards to ensure that buildings are accessible and usable by everyone, including the aged, people with disabilities and people with children. Further information is available on the website of the National Disability Authority at www.nda.ie.

11.25 Recreation and Sports Facilities
- Recreation and sport facilities should be designed to high architectural standards and have regard to safety and accessibility considerations.
- Developments of a passive and active recreational and sports nature will be assessed against the strategy adopted in the Galway City Recreation and Amenity Needs Study (2008).
- Developments of a passive and active recreational and sports nature will be considered/assessed in the context of potential impact on the environment, sites of ecological and biodiversity importance and general amenity, where appropriate.

11.26 Art/Cultural Amenity
Large-scale development shall include provision for a professional piece of artwork, agreed in conjunction with the Council, which shall be located within an agreed area, accessible to the public and sponsored by the developer.

11.27 Flood Risk
Development shall have regard to the recommendations and best practice guidelines addressing flood risk management set out in Appendix B of the DEHLG of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009). Consideration should be given in the design of new development to the incorporation of SUDS, sustainable urban drainage systems and flood minimisation and mitigation measures.

11.28 Extractive Industries/Quarries
The operation of quarries can give rise to land use and environmental issues which require to be mitigated and controlled in the Planning process. The protection of residential dwellings, residential amenities, natural amenities, the prevention of pollution, noise/vibration, traffic and the safeguarding of groundwater will be given serious consideration. The Council will have regard to the DEHLG Quarries and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2004) when assessing all quarry related proposals, in order to achieve more sustainable aggregates development and to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on the environment. Particular constraint will be exercised for sites in the vicinity of/in areas of residential settlements, areas of archaeological importance, recorded monuments, European areas of ecological importance and other environmentally sensitive (designated) areas, unless it can clearly be demonstrated that such quarries would not have significant adverse impacts on residential dwellings, amenities or the environment. All developments should have regard to and comply with the EPA Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non-Scheduled Minerals) (2006).
Appendices

1 List of Protected Structures in the RPS
2 Housing Strategy Details
3 SEA Statement
4 HDA Conclusion Statement
5 Glossary, Including List of Abbreviations
6 List of Figures/List of Tables
Appendix 1

List of Protected Structures in the RPS

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dev_report2011_inside_Layout 1  19/12/2011  17:01  Page 152
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- 9501: No. 1
- 9502: No. 2
- 9503: No. 3
- 9504: No. 4
- 9505: No. 5
- 9506: No. 6

### St. Francis Street
- 9601: Franciscan Abbey Church
- 9602: Church Grounds with Cemetery
- 9603: Convent of Mercy Grounds & Graves
- 9604: D’Arcy Doorcase in Mercy Grounds
- 9605: No. 2
- 9606: No. 10

### St. Helen’s Street
- 9701: No. 14
- 9702: No. 23

### St. Mary’s Road
- 9801: St. Mary’s College Educational Buildings & Chapel

### St. Nicholas Street
- 9901: No. 1
- 9902: No. 2
- 9903: No. 3
- 9904: No. 4
- 9905: No. 5
- 9906: No. 6
- 9907: No. 7
- 9908: No. 8
- 9909: No. 9
- 9910: No. 10

### Station Road
- 10001: Ceannt Railway Station
- 10002: Railway & Ancillary Buildings - Including Stone Sheds, Stone Stables, Turntable, Bridges & Tracks
- 10003: Water Tower

### Taylor’s Hill Road
- 10101: Gate Lodge to Lenaboy Castle
- 10102: Lenaboy Castle, St. Anne’s
- 10103: Former Dominican Convent
- 10105: Stones from St. Nicholas’ Church
- 10106: Cluain Mhuire
- 10107: Port Box
- 10108: Gate Lodge - Ardaillan Hotel
- 10109: Bishop’s Palace, Mount St. Mary’s
- 10110: Covered Well - Lenaboy Castle
- 10111: Site of Standing Stones
- 10112: No. 1, St. Mary’s Terrace

### The Crescent
- 10201: No. 1 Palmyra Crescent
- 10202: No. 2 Palmyra Crescent
- 10203: No. 3 Palmyra Crescent
- 10204: No. 4 Palmyra Crescent
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- 10212: No. 12 Palmyra Crescent
- 10213: No. 13 Palmyra Crescent
- 10214: No. 14 Palmyra Crescent
- 10215: No. 8 Palmyra Crescent
- 10216: No. 9 Palmyra Terrace
- 10217: No. 10 Palmyra Terrace

### University Road
- 10301: Remains of Stone Mullioned Window
- 10302: Group of Heraldic Carvings
- 10303: The Quadrangle, NUIG
- 10304: Gate Lodge
- 10305: No. 19
- 10306: No. 20
- 10307: Martin Ryan Institute
- 10308: Former IMI Building
- 10309: Civil Engineering Block
- 10310: Dept. of Education Block

### Victoria Place
- 10401: 3-bay building (Roonneys)

### Waterside
- 10501: No. 7
- 10502: No. 8
- 10503: No. 9

### William Street
- 10801: No. 16 & 18 & 18A
- 10802: No. 19
- 10803: No. 20
- 10804: No. 21
- 10805: No. 22
- 10806: No. 24
- 10807: No. 23 & 25
- 10808: No. 26
- 10809: No. 27 & 29
- 10810: No. 28
- 10811: No. 38 & 40
- 10812: No. 42
- 10813: No. 44
- 10814: No. 49
- 10815: No. 45
- 10816: No. 46
- 10817: No. 47
- 10818: No. 48
- 10820: No. 51 & 53

### William Street West
- 10901: Small Crane, Weighing Scales
- 10902: No. 3
- 10903: No. 5
- 10904: No. 6
- 10905: No. 7 & 8

### Williamsgate Street
- 11001: No. 1
- 11002: No. 5 & 7
- 11003: No. 8
- 11004: No. 9
- 11005: No. 10 & 12
- 11006: No. 15 St. Mary’s Terrace

### Wolfe Tone Bridge
- 13001: Fisheries Tower
Appendix 2
Housing Strategy Details

A 2.1 Legislative Background / Policy Context

Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended requires all Planning Authorities to prepare housing strategies and to incorporate them into their development plans. This Housing Strategy has been prepared for the period 2011 to 2017 coinciding with the period of this Development Plan.

The Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended specifies the requirements of the Housing Strategy. It specifies that the strategy shall:

1) Estimate the present and likely future demand for housing in the area and thus, ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land is available within the authority’s development plan to meet such existing and future needs.

2) Provide that as a general policy, a specified percentage, of not more than 20% of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for social and/or affordable housing. The original Planning Act 2000 as amended in 2002 has given provision for a greater number of alternative arrangements other than the transfer of land to satisfy the objectives of the Housing Strategy. The options to transfer land, units or sites within the overall development site is still available. In addition there are the options of transferring land, units or sites on other lands within the functional area of the local authority or the payment of a sum of money in lieu of land, sites or units which must be used for the provision of social and affordable housing. A combination of options is also available.

3) Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is provided to satisfy the requirements of various categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

4) Counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. In achieving this aim, the Planning Authority can indicate in respect of any residential area that there is no requirement for social/affordable housing in respect of that area or that a lower percentage than that specified in the Housing Strategy may instead be required.

The Act also establishes the community’s needs for social and affordable housing as a material planning consideration which must be taken into account when preparing development plan policies, preparing a Housing Strategy and deciding on planning application or appeals.

Objectives must be included in development plans to secure the implementation of the strategy and also provide that a percentage of the residentially zoned lands or lands zoned for residential and a mix of other uses, specified in the strategy, will be made available for social and affordable housing.

Upon incorporation of the Housing Strategy into the Development Plan the Planning authority, or An Bord Pleanála on appeal, may require a developer, as a condition of a grant of permission, to reserve the specified percentage of the housing lands or whatever other option is considered to be the appropriate option as provided for in the legislation.

A 2.2 Policy Background

In preparing the strategy a review of national, regional and local policy statements was undertaken. The national and regional policies are very important and will have an impact on settlement strategy for the city. The effect of this will be long-term in particular with regard to the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the RPG West Region. Other guidelines and policy documents already referenced in the previous chapters relating to housing, sustainability and the environment and also relating to DECLG population targets are relevant and have impacts on the provision of housing and influence planning policies more directly. In addition the Council policies, including the policies in this Development Plan, the policies of the Council’s Housing Section and the City Development Board Strategy are, and will be, crucial for the implementation of this strategy and are therefore the context from which the strategy is being prepared.

Estimating Housing Demand

In order to estimate the number of houses that are likely to be required in Galway in the period 2011-2017, it is essential to examine two key characteristics of the city’s population. Initially the likely changes in the actual population must be estimated. Secondly, the household formation levels, that is the number of people in each household is estimated. Thus, the number of new households can be calculated.

Housing demand will consist of households who can afford to buy houses on the open market and also households who will have difficulty doing so. The latter households fall into two categories – those that could buy housing if it were provided at a reduced cost, known as affordable and those who will require publicly provided housing - social housing. The current market conditions have had an effect on the viability of the affordable household market where the differential between the open market prices and affordable prices have been drastically reduced. As a result the affordable housing market has no sustainability but will be kept under review.

Irrespective of market conditions there is a requirement in the Planning Acts to look at the area of affordability. The standard method of looking at the ‘affordability’ of housing in the city requires looking at household incomes and the cost of houses. From this data the number of households who will
have difficulty purchasing houses can be quantified. This then establishes the overall demand for affordable housing. In theory this exercise appears straightforward but in current conditions, where there is enormous change in both the housing and employment market, in addition to difficulties predicting banking conditions, only a best estimate can be made. The methodology used to assess affordability introduced sensitivity testing using different parameter ranges for mortgage lending rates, house prices and average increase in disposable income. This was used to ensure the maximum robustness in the analysis.

The existing demand for social and affordable housing in the city is reflected in the Council’s social housing list and affordable housing list. To note however is that the list for affordability currently reflects a desire for affordable housing as such, but no desire to purchase the affordable housing currently on the market as explained above.

These lists do however give a qualification of the actual ‘outstanding need’ and some conclusions about the accommodation needs of these households are provided.

Household Numbers Projections: It is estimated that the number of households in Galway City will increase by 6,022 in the period between 2011 and the end of 2017. The increase in the total number of households in the city is outlined in Table A2.1. The targets are predicated on the DECLG population targets in line with RPG West Region 2010-2022 and the NSS rather than the simple extrapolation of current population trends which would have been the traditional method.

For clarity as this review process commenced in 2009 the need for housing land from 2009 is also factored into the demand for land and would bring the household numbers up to 6,850. The DECLG guidelines add to this land bank requirement as they indicate that the longer term housing needs should be taken into consideration, that is an additional three years. This would bring the number of households estimated to be formed from 2009-2020 up to 9,419 by 2020. This figure is used for land requirements only. The years 2011-2017 are the main focus of the Housing Strategy.

There are a number of factors that need to be considered before the demand for housing land can be translated into residential zoning requirements. This includes for a quotient of housing being provided on lands other than high density residentially zoned lands such as on mixed use lands, regeneration lands, low density zoned lands. There are also assumptions made regarding the steady release of vacant properties (vacancy rate recorded at 13% in Census 2006) onto the market. Although there has been an increasing divergence between net housing completions and gross household increases it is not considered that this will be sustained into the future. However a very limited amount has been factored into the estimation of future household growth to cater for this trend.

### Table A2.1 Estimated Household Growth in conjunction with DECLG population targets

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<td>2011</td>
<td>29,121</td>
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</table>

At an estimated development density of 35 residential units per hectare, which is the density standard reflecting the average density development in the city in recent times, the development of these additional households will require approximately 248 hectares of high density residually zoned and serviced land to meet the demands from 2009 up to 2020.

**Estimating Future Social and Affordable Housing Demand:** The calculation of the affordability thresholds for houses in the city requires an examination of household formation, future household incomes and future house prices for the period 2011 to 2017. This is in accordance with the methodology recommended by the DECLG. As referenced previously this is a difficult calculation in current economic conditions. However the exercise indicates that an estimate of the number of new households who will experience difficulties in purchasing a house on the open market can be made. From the outcome of this calculation it can be determined that a total of 2,026 households in the period 2011-2017 will not be in a position to purchase housing on the open market. When averaged, approximately 30% of the new households formed every year in this period will experience affordability problems.

It should be noted that an average 30% requirement for social and affordable housing is based on household income for new household formations in 2011 and future years. It does not take existing demand, as identified by Galway City Council and represented on the social and affordable housing lists into account.

Although there is continued reference to affordable housing this is more from the definition from the DECLG guidelines and the planning legislation as opposed to a defined demand for affordable housing from the public.
Analysis of Existing Social and Affordable Housing Demand: The Galway City Council social housing list as at January 2011 indicates that a total of 4,500 households are awaiting social housing.

A detailed statutory Assessment of Need Study was carried out in 2008 the next assessment will be in 2011.

The conclusions for 2008 indicated the following:

- 71% of eligible households state financial hardship as their primary reason for seeking social housing in 2008 climbing from 58.9% recorded in 2002
- Medical and compassionate reasons constitute 8%
- Homelessness constituted 3%
- The unsuitability of existing accommodation (due to unfit or overcrowded accommodation) represents 0.5% of all eligible household.

Of those assessed —

- Single person households, constitutes 36%, the next largest category a single adult with one child was recorded at 23%.
- Of those being assessed 63% registered as Irish nationals, 15% as EU citizens and 22% as Non-EU citizens.

Table A2.2 provides details of the increase in the social housing waiting list since 2003. While the demand increased significantly between 2003 and 2006 it remained relatively stable up to 2009. The significant increases can be estimated to be due to:

Ongoing affordability issues, changes in the supplementary welfare allowance scheme, increased incidence of marital breakdown, significant increase of single applicants, increased application in anticipation of future housing needs, natural population increase and the significant increase in household formations and more recently turbulent changes in the economy.

Table A2.2 Social Housing Demand 2003–2010 (Households Numbers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Waiting List</td>
<td>1,397</td>
<td>1,639</td>
<td>1,574</td>
<td>2,325</td>
<td>2,858</td>
<td>2,023</td>
<td>2,530</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A 2.3 Estimation of Housing Supply

The following presents a review of factors that indicate and influence the level of overall housing supply in the city. The projected household growth as defined by the DECLG and the RPG West Region 2010-2022 population targets have been used as a basis for determining the likely future demand for housing in Galway City. The examination of those factors influencing supply is presented in the context of recent trends in residential development.

Key characteristics of housing supply discussed here are:

- Availability of residential development lands,
- Outstanding residential planning permissions in key areas of the city,
- House completions in recent years,
- House types developed in recent years,
- Trends in public and private sector output.

This section also comments on the current and future supply of social housing units. As the Council and a number of housing associations have traditionally been the sole providers of social housing in the city, this element of housing supply is dealt with in isolation to the overall supply issues outlined above.

Key summaries of those issues associated with the supply of housing in the city are presented here under:

- Availability of undeveloped housing lands — the Development Plan has 158 hectares of lands zoned and serviced for residential use. (Note: only land blocks above 0.2ha were taken into consideration in estimating residentially zoned land). There is also 158ha designated for settlement at Ardaun, of which a significant amount will be available for residential purposes as will be defined under the local area plan. In addition there is approximately 11.3 hectares at Murroogh designated for development including residential and this will also be subject to a local area plan. These local area plan areas will be required to be serviced. It is anticipated that issues regarding the servicing of the main bulk of these lands located mainly in Ardaun (158 ha) will be addressed under the Galway Main Drainage Stage 3 scheme (Volume E).
- Account has already been taken of likely housing units that could be provided through the development of brownfield sites, mixed use zonings and through an uptake of currently vacant properties (rate of 13% was recorded in the 2006 Census).
House completions: As indicated in Table A2.3 the number of house completions in Galway City has changed radically in the period 2003 to 2009. While 2003 represented a gradual climbing peak there has been a decline since then, most notable from 2007 onwards. This reflects the national trend in house completions. The statistics also reflect the substantial increase in apartment development from 2003 which in recent years constituted almost half of the units completed. The levels of construction employment recorded in the Census 2006 and the current low rates of activity in house building all indicate that the city has no shortage of labour or skills which could hinder demand for an increase in output levels.

### Table A2.3 House Completions in Galway City 2003-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House completions Galway City</td>
<td>2,305</td>
<td>1,549</td>
<td>1,126</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Housing Statistics DECLG

House Type Provision: There is a high level of apartment development and other higher density developments throughout the city. In recent years particularly since 2003 almost half of the residential units constructed were mixed sized apartments, while the majority of the balance was semi-detached houses. This reflects the tendency towards a greater mix in housing developments in urban areas throughout the State, a reaction to the gradual decline in household size which is currently estimated to be 2.75 persons per household (2011) in Galway City.

Outstanding residential planning permissions: There have been a significant number of applications in recent years for large-scale residential developments in the suburbs in particular in Doughiska, Knocknacarra and Castlegar. In addition there have been large schemes granted permission nearer the city centre in Mervue and Rahoon. Some of these developments are completed while others have stalled or have not commenced to date. It is estimated that there are outstanding grants of planning permission for the development of 1,417 residential units (February 2010). There are also a number of units on appeal to An Bord Pleanala totaling approximately 242 units.

### Trends in Public and Private Sector Output:

While the private sector has been the dominating force in the residential development sector, the Council and the voluntary sector have played an important and central role as providers of housing in the city, as depicted in Table A2.4. The house building programme since the last development plan (post 2005) yielded 623 units of which 267 were social, 334 affordable and 22 voluntary. In addition 148 units were purchased under a secondhand acquisition programme between 2006-2009 for use as social housing.

### Table A2.4 Social/Affordable Housing Building and Acquisition Program in Galway City 2003-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing unit numbers</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Private Rented Sector: The private rented sector continues to be vibrant in the city. It has served as an important element of interim housing provision to applicants on the housing waiting list, with the majority of applicants residing in private rented accommodation.

Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS): In 2004 the rental accommodation scheme was introduced. This scheme involves local authorities progressively assuming responsibility for accommodating certain rent supplement recipients who have a defined long-term housing need, through direct arrangements between the local authority and the private rented sector.

The key objectives of this initiative are to:

- Eliminate long term dependency on the supplementary welfare allowance for rental accommodation which was always intended as a short term income maintenance measure.
- Enhance the response of local authorities to meeting long term housing need.

The scheme ensures an accommodation based approach, rather than a welfare approach to persons who have been defined as having a long term housing need. There are currently 516 registered RAS units on hand with the Council (117 taken by voluntary agencies).

Land Banks of Galway City Council: The Council currently owns approx. 18.48ha of undeveloped land zoned for housing purposes at various locations throughout the city. It is anticipated that these lands will be used for the development of social housing by the end of the strategy period. In order to avoid the Council’s land bank becoming exhausted, suitable land will be acquired on an ongoing basis, where the opportunity presents itself to continue to plan ahead for social housing need. Land acquired by the Council, either by agreement or acquisition will be supplemented by any land that becomes available to the Local Authority under the Part V provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. It is anticipated that there could be up to a maximum of 200 housing units delivered under Part V. This is assuming that population targets are met in full with an improvement in economic prospects. However this number of units may also translate into other options such as land, sites or financial contribution, in lieu of housing.

City Council Housing Stock: There are 2,149 social housing units in the Council area, consisting of a mixture of house types and sizes developed from before the 1960’s to the present day. Current stock is predominantly two and three bedroom with a small number of single bedroom units and houses with four bedrooms. The Council will continue to monitor the size and needs of households on the social housing list to ensure the housing stock...
reflects existing needs. This is particularly important where the size of households on the social housing waiting list are reducing, (single adult 37%, single adult with one child 23%). This trend will require a shift in future house types.

**Additions to the Existing Housing Stock:** The low levels of new social housing starts in the 1990s contrasts with an intensive programme of building in more recent years. However with economic changes the house building programme has slowed in the last two years. There are difficulties associated with the building programme – unpredictability regarding acquisition of land, uncertainty regarding central government funding and the short term nature of the housing programme which is only for a four year period. These factors make it difficult to predict ahead to the extent of the Housing Strategy up to 2017. The Council will give further consideration to the progress of the building programme in the context of the two-year review of the Housing Strategy in 2013, the imminent Housing Service Plan or if there is a change in the housing market or to the regulations made by the department, which significantly affects the current strategy.

Notwithstanding the above the Council has plans for the construction of 347 units on Council lands and in the event of funding forthcoming from central government, will bring these units forward to planning/construction stage as soon as possible. It is hoped also that the housing output of the private sector will deliver units or the equivalent for mainly social, but also some affordable housing, through the Part V process over the strategy period.

Other mechanisms such as long term leasing and rent to buy schemes and any other government initiatives will be used to increase housing opportunities for those on the housing waiting lists.

**Voluntary Sector Housing:** There is an active voluntary sector in Galway City working closely with the Council's in-house provision. In excess of 75% of the housing recipients accommodated by these organisations are registered on the Council's social housing list.

These include the following organisations:

- Cope (Crisis Housing, Caring Support) Ltd.
- Galway Mental Health Association
- Galway Simon Community
- Active Retirement Renmore Association
- The National Association of Building Co-operatives (NABCO) Society Ltd.
- The Irish Wheelchair Association
- Respond
- Brothers of Charity Services
- Ability West

**Affordable Housing in Galway City:** In the past the Council did extend its role in the provision of affordable housing including through the development of a number of ‘turnkey’ developments. In addition affordable housing was delivered through the Part V process. However, as referenced earlier, the demand for affordable properties has declined owing to downward trends in the price of private housing and current bank lending arrangements. Until the market changes favorably there will be no/limited acquisitions or construction of this type of housing. However there may be some opportunities for acquisition through the Part V process. In view of the increasing changes in the demand for social housing and the decline for affordable housing the ratio of 1:1 in the previous development plan has been recently varied to 4:1 in favour of social housing.

**Social and Affordable Housing Requirements:** The following presents a view of factors that indicate and influence the level of overall social housing and affordable housing demand and supply in the city.

**Table A2.5 Elements of Housing Need**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand/Need</th>
<th>Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accumulated Need</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social Housing Supply</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Existing social housing demand</td>
<td>- Local Authority Housing Construction Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Affordable housing need</td>
<td>- Voluntary housing association projected completions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prospective Need</strong></td>
<td>- Casual vacancies (returns to stock) in voluntary and social housing stock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Total number of new households to be formed over the period</td>
<td>- Vacant dwellings brought into use (social housing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Number of households requiring affordable or social housing based on projected income profiles</td>
<td>- Housing delivered through Part V (20% requirement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Supply – Open Market</strong></td>
<td>- Construction industry output of residential units.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall Housing Requirements: Table A2.5 itemises the elements of housing need and demand, including those elements that relate to open market demand. These are further examined below.

Existing (Accumulated) Social Housing Need: The Council’s social housing list reflects the existing accumulated demand for social housing. Only households on that list are provided with social housing by the Council.

The voluntary sector also uses this as a source of information, due to the requirement that they must take a minimum of 75% of the households they are providing with accommodation from the Council list.

Having regard to these factors, it is considered that the social housing list is the best proxy for actual demand. In June 2009 there were a total of 2,530 households on the Council’s waiting list. Through the Council’s house construction programme, casual vacancies (5% p.a.) and by the utilisation of the provisions of this Housing Strategy, the Council aims to house these households as soon as is feasible. It is aspired to house within a reasonable period of being placed on the waiting list. In this regard, a period of 7 to 9 years is the average waiting time for housing on the west side of the city and a period of 4 to 6 years on east side (depending on unit type). It is hoped to shorten these waiting periods.

New households will continue to join the waiting list from a variety of sources. Newly forming households on low incomes are considered in the section on new households below. However existing households also fall into hardship due to loss of income or family breakdown and they too may require social housing in that period.

Projected Affordable Demand: The affordability analysis indicates that there is an estimate of 2,026 households who will be unable to purchase housing on the open market. This shows that approximately 30% of households will not be able to afford accommodation on the open market in accordance with the terms of affordability defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000. This calculation is very sensitive to variations in house prices and incomes.

Supply of Social and Affordable Housing: Some supply of housing will come through the return of housing to the existing social housing stock. This arises from re-lets of the existing social stock due to death, emigration and households leaving the social housing sector to move to alternative accommodation, such as owner occupation or the private rented sector. On average this amounts to approximately 108 per annum (5% of stock). The rate of casual vacancy in voluntary housing is minimal and would not add significantly to the overall housing supply.

The affordable housing market has collapsed owing to the fact that the differential between the open market prices and affordable house prices has been drastically reduced. It is not considered that this will change in the near future however the Council will respond to any new initiatives that may emerge to increase the level of home ownership in the city.

Additions to Private Rented Sector Stock: It is difficult to provide an assessment of the extent of the private rented sector due to the current volatile nature of the market. Although fairly buoyant in Galway the slow down in house construction may place additional demands on this sector. However the high level of vacancy rates recorded for the city may result in some of these vacant properties being released onto the rental market (Census record 13% of total households in 2006) which would be beneficial.

Provision by private landlords has been making a contribution to meeting affordable and social housing need under the Rental Accommodation Scheme. The introduction of the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) also means an alternative supply of long term housing to those currently in receipt of rent supplement for periods in excess of 18 months.

The private rented sector also provides interim accommodation for a proportion of low-income households whose housing costs are met in full or in part by income support, which will continue to be the case for those households in need of short term income support for housing purposes. In the City Council area in 2008, 1,622 households on the housing waiting list were housed in the private rented sector on this basis.

The Residential Tenancies Act 2004 provided for the legislative reforms of the private rented sector. It provided for the establishment of a Private Residential Tenancies Board to resolve disputes arising in the sector, it operates a system of tenancy registration and provides information and policy advice. The figures relating to this form of registration gives numbers of tenancy agreements only and are not an indication of the number of properties available for rent. 11,315 properties are registered under this Act (January 2009). It is not known what is the full extent of rented properties in the city however it can be assumed from the lease agreements that private rental is a significant element of the housing market.

All the aforementioned factors contribute to the assessment of the percentage requirements for social and affordable housing as provided for in Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. These factors regarding housing demand/need calculations are built around four main elements:

1. Prospective Need/Demand: The total number of new households likely to be formed over the lifetime of the housing strategy (2011-2017) is 6,022. The number of these households who will require an affordable or social housing solution is approximately 30% of total households formed in that period, that is 2,026.

2. Accumulated Need: The accumulated housing need has been assessed by examination of: The social and affordable housing register and the assessment of need made by the Housing Authority in 2008. A further statutory assessment will be completed in 2011.
3. **Social Housing Supply:** This may be divided into two main elements. Firstly, additions to the stock and secondly casual vacancies and vacant dwellings brought back into use.

   - The first of these two elements may in turn be sub-divided into local authority social housing completions under the multi-annual programme and secondly, voluntary and co-operative housing association completions, three-quarters of which will house persons from the Council housing waiting list. To reiterate there are plans for up to 347 units on Council owned lands which will require funding from central government.
   
   - The second element is vacancies arising from within existing social housing for example tenants vacating the dwelling to find housing on the open market.

4. **Open Market Housing Supply:** This is the element of supply aimed at households which are able to purchase on the open market. It is assumed that this demand calls forth its own supply and that this supply is not constrained by the capacity of the construction sector to deliver the required number of dwellings. The methodology employed in arriving at the numeric target for social and affordable housing is in accordance with that advocated by the DECLG.

The result of the assessment regarding affordability indicated the likely requirement for social and affordable housing in the life of the Housing Strategy. This shows an average annual demand of 30% will require subsidised housing or publicly funded housing. This exceeds the statutory maximum of 20% which can be required to be included as the Part V obligation on schemes brought forward by private developers.

There is a substantial accumulated need and an increasing social but declining affordable need. It is not possible to predict what portion of need will be addressed through the multi-annual housing programme. This programme is currently under review and will possibly have to reflect the current economic circumstances. As the future need indicated an affordability issue for approximately 30% of future households, the requirement under Part V will therefore be the maximum of 20% as provided for in the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, for the provision of social and affordable housing.

The Council will give further consideration to this issue of waiting time for housing which currently ranges from 4 – 9 years in the context of the two-year review of the Housing Strategy, or if there are more major changes in the housing market or in the regulations made by the department, which significantly affects the strategy.

**Social and Affordable Split:** The ratio of social to affordable units provided on lands made available through Part V has been a crucial mechanism for the Council to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. Since 2006 the Part V process has delivered 104 affordable units. The Council has enhanced this through the delivery of 334 affordable housing units since 2006. The current lack of demand for affordable housing however and the scale and increase of the social housing list warrants retention of the recently varied policy of having a 4:1 split, that is four social units to one affordable unit. This reflects the circumstances that currently prevail and can be reviewed again in 2013 – the two year review period. However, owing to the fact that the differential between the open market prices and affordable house prices has been drastically reduced, it is not considered that there will be any demand for affordable housing in the near future.

**Variance Between Areas:** A principal objective of the Housing Strategy is the issue of social balance and inclusion. The legislation does allow a planning authority to specify variations from the requirements of the Housing Strategy in areas where the additional development of social or affordable units would not be in the interests of creating a social balance.

There are certain areas in the city which already provide a high proportion of social housing. These areas are within the RAPID programme and include Westside, Ballinfoile, and Ballybaan. Plans for these areas are designed to reduce deprivation and increase social inclusion. It will be necessary to encourage private, voluntary and shared ownership housing to counteract undue social segregation. In these areas, the Housing Strategy will further encourage home ownership and owner occupation in these areas.
Appendix 3

SEA Statement

A 3.1 Introduction

Galway City Council was required to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the City Development Plan 2011-2017. SEA is the formal evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Development Plan, and is undertaken before a decision is made to adopt the Plan. An Environmental Report detailing the process accompanied the Development Plan on public display. An SEA Statement is the final aspect of the SEA process. The DEHLG Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines, Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (2004), requires that the SEA Statement summarises the following information:

- How environmental considerations and the Environmental Report were factored into the Plan,
- How submissions/consultations were taken into account,
- Reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in light of other reasonable alternatives considered,
- Monitoring Measures.

The Development Plan and Policy Unit of Galway City Council carried out the SEA and it was undertaken in parallel with each stage of the Plan making process. The Habitat Directive Assessment (HDA) of the Development Plan also informed the SEA process. This was prepared with expert ecological advice provided by Natura Environmental Consultants Ltd.

A 3.2 How Environmental Considerations, the Environmental Report and Submissions/Consultations were factored into the Plan

The SEA process guided the preparation of policies, objectives and development scenarios for the Development Plan, with the overall aim of achieving the sustainable development of the city. It was carried out having regard to international and national legislation, strategies, plans and guidelines on environmental protection and sustainable development. Submissions received and consultations with environmental authorities were also taken into account. The specific steps taken were as follows:

Pre-draft Consultation: Galway City Council formally consulted with the designated environmental authorities during the ‘scoping’ stage of the SEA process - the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) and Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR). This consultation identified the range of environmental issues and the level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report. Submissions received from the DEHLG and the EPA were considered in the drafting of the Report.

A pre-draft consultation on the Development Plan and associated SEA process was also carried out in early 2009, where the public and interested parties had the opportunity to make written submissions/observations. Environmental considerations were summarised and considered in the Managers Report on the Pre-Draft Development Plan Consultation (June 2009) and were taken into account.

Preparation of Draft Development Plan: As part of the Environmental Report, baseline data was provided on the current state of the environment in Galway City. It related to indicators set out in the SEA Directive regarding biodiversity, flora and fauna; population and human health; soil; water; air and climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage and landscape. This provided background data on key environmental issues and informed policy formulation.

Strategic Environmental (Protection) Objectives (SEO) were identified based on a current understanding of the key environmental issues. Targets, along with a preferred development strategy scenario, also provided strategic environmental goals for the Plan. Policies and objectives of the Development Plan were assessed in respect of sustainability and specifically against the SEO. A matrix was used to rate the impact of the policies and objectives, as having potential positive, indirectly positive, neutral, uncertain, negative, or indirectly negative impacts on the SEO.

This process highlighted that sustainable policies to protect the environment and maintain and enhance its quality were carried over from the City Development Plan 2005-2011. The cross-checking of policies and objectives also enabled an overview of where potential environmental impacts may arise from implementation of the Plan. This influenced policy formulation to factor in environmental considerations and ensured that where potential uncertain or negative impacts arose, they would be balanced by mitigation and monitoring measures.

Mitigation measures incorporated into the Draft Development Plan are set out in Chapter 9 of the Environmental Report. They included recommendations relating to the following policy areas: housing; transportation; enterprise; natural heritage; recreation and amenity; community and culture; built heritage; urban design and environment and infrastructure. Policy recommendations also informed specific objectives and development management standards of the Plan.
Alternative Plan Scenario 1 – Market-led Growth

An evaluation of the likely environmental impacts of alternative development strategies for the city was carried out in order to achieve the best sustainable development option. Three alternatives were considered:

- Alternative Plan Scenario 1 – Market-led Growth
- Alternative Plan Scenario 2 – Protectionist Approach
- Alternative Plan Scenario 3 – Sustainable and Strategic Planned Growth

The ‘Sustainable and Strategic Planned Growth’ scenario was considered to be the preferred development option. This approach is to develop the city in a planned and sustainable manner in order to ensure a balance between development and environmental protection. The scenario seeks to: identify and promote key strategic areas for growth and infrastructure development and enhancement; focus higher density development into suitable strategic locations in the city; identify key areas for development/redevelopment to accommodate new urban development and deliver the maximum quantitative efficiency of new population density and floorspace in line with the city’s gateway designation; safeguard the character and amenity of residential neighbourhood areas and protect the built heritage of the city. Restrictive policies controlling development in designated environmentally sensitive areas in particular cSACs, SPA and pNHAs apply, ensuring safeguards for the city’s most vulnerable and unique habitats, species and landscapes while allowing the needs of the city’s population to be accommodated. The approach also enables the building of critical mass for infrastructural provision, in particular public transport and social infrastructure at key locations.

The ‘Sustainable and Strategic Planned Growth’ scenario is consistent with the Development Plan 2005-2011, with its supporting policies and objectives, has been developed to implement this preferred plan scenario.

A 3.4 Monitoring Measures

Chapter 4 of the Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 includes in its strategy to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Development Plan through the SEA process, in accordance with Article 10 of the EU SEA Directive. This is carried out by examining whether or not the Development Plan is achieving Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEO) and targets.

Table A 3.1 describes measures for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the Development Plan, which have been updated to take into consideration submissions received during the Plan-making process. SEO and targets are linked to indicators, which measure changes in environmental quality and which can facilitate the monitoring of the Plan’s implementation. Stakeholders responsible for monitoring of indicators are also identified. In this regard Galway City Council and state agencies, such as the EPA, are responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of noise, air and water environmental standards under Air Pollution, Water Pollution and Waste Management Acts. The Council will continue to work and liaise with government departments, agencies and other stakeholders whose remit is to protect the environment (and different aspects thereof) including the NPWS, EPA, and GCDB.

Monitoring will be carried out on an ongoing basis through the assessment of planning applications and environmental monitoring programmes. Within two years of the making of the Plan a report on SEA monitoring will be prepared to coincide with the Manager’s Report to Elected Members on progress reached in achieving the Development Plan’s objectives and targets.
## Table A 3.1 SEA Monitoring Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEO</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biodiversity Flora and Fauna</strong></td>
<td>Conserve, protect and enhance habitats, species and their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites and prevent adverse impacts (direct, cumulative and indirect) from development within or adjacent to these sites</td>
<td>No significant adverse impacts (direct, cumulative and indirect impacts) to relevant habitats, species or their sustaining resources in designated ecological sites and networks</td>
<td>Galway City Council and National Parks and Wildlife Service, DAHG.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conserve and protect the marine environment and promote the appropriate sustainable management of the coastal zone taking cognisance of potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on Natura 2000 sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population and Human Health</strong></td>
<td>Improve quality of life based on high-quality residential, working and recreational environments and on sustainable travel patterns</td>
<td>Improve quality of life, the provision of improved physical and social infrastructure, and to reduce travel times and traffic congestion and allow for an integrated sustainable transport and land use system that eases movement to and within the city and promotes sustainable transport modes</td>
<td>GTU, Galway City Council and Galway County Council, public transportation operators and other transport stakeholders</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance social inclusion and well being in the city</td>
<td>Improve quality of life by the provision of improved physical and social infrastructure, promotion of high quality residential and urban environments, provision of a sustainable transport system, and to maintain and improve recreation and amenity opportunities in the city</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soils</strong></td>
<td>Maintain the quality of soils</td>
<td>Reduce contamination, degradation and safeguard soil quality and quantity and to ensure that soils remain healthy and capable of supporting human activities and ecosystems</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, encouraging more compact urban development, rather than developing greenfield lands</td>
<td>Reduce the availability of brownfield lands to be redeveloped at the end of the Plan lifespan (subject to availability on the open market, the demand for such land and the ability of such lands to be sustainably re-used within the provisions of the Plan)</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimise the consumption of non-renewable sand, gravel and rock deposits</td>
<td>Reuse and recycle C&amp;D waste at source and encourage use of appropriate materials from local sources which will have less ‘embodied energy’</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEO</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water</strong></td>
<td>Maintain and improve, where possible, the quality of surface water, rivers, lakes and groundwater to meet the requirements of the Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015</td>
<td>Maintain and improve status and quality rating of surface water and groundwater to achieve good water status under the Water Framework Directive, by 2015</td>
<td>EPA, Galway City Council, WRBD</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain and improve, where possible, the quality of transitional and coastal waters, and to prevent the contamination of bathing water</td>
<td>Maintain and improve status and quality rating of transitional and coastal waters, in compliance with the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008</td>
<td>EPA and Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain and improve the quality of drinking water supplies</td>
<td>Maintain and improve drinking water quality to comply with the requirements of the EU (Drinking Water) Regulations 2000</td>
<td>Galway City Council, EPA and Galway County Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote water conservation, based on long-term protection of available water resources</td>
<td>Provide, maintain and improve capacity of water supply in a sustainable manner, and to encourage water conservation</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progressively reduce discharges of polluting substances to waters</td>
<td>Maintain and improve status and quality rating of surface water, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters, to achieve good water status under the Water Framework directive, by 2015</td>
<td>EPA, Galway City Council and WRBD</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigate the effects of flood risk</td>
<td>Minimise development of lands susceptible to significant flood risk</td>
<td>Flood Risk Assessment incorporated into development proposals in flood risk areas</td>
<td>Galway City Council and OPW</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air and Climatic Factors</strong></td>
<td>Reduce all forms of air pollution</td>
<td>Maintain and, wherever possible, improve air quality levels</td>
<td>Galway City Council and EPA</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimise emissions of greenhouse gases to contribute to a reduction and avoidance of human-induced global climate change</td>
<td>Increase the percentage of population travelling by public transport including cycling and walking, and to reduce private vehicle dependency</td>
<td>GTU, Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage new development s which limit greenhouse gas emissions and which make use of renewable and low carbon energy and energy conservation and efficiency measures</td>
<td>Traffic volumes and % modal shift from car to sustainable transport modes Number and type of renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency and conservation measures employed in new developments</td>
<td>Galway City Council and GEAL</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce energy wastage, encourage energy efficiency and conservation and maximise use of renewable energy sources</td>
<td>Encourage use of renewable energy, increased energy efficiency and conservation for domestic, community, commercial and industrial developments</td>
<td>Galway City Council and GEAL</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEO</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimise noise, vibration and emissions from traffic and minimise impact on residential amenities</td>
<td>Minimise noise, vibration and emissions from traffic and minimise impact on residential amenities</td>
<td>Implementation of recommendations of Noise Action Plan</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess, plan and manage adaptation to climate change impacts</td>
<td>Have no spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors</td>
<td>Implementing recommendations of Noise Action Plan</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid flood risk and/or coastal erosion in selecting sites for development</td>
<td>To ensure the use of SUDS and sustainable surface water drainage management, wherever practical, in the design of development</td>
<td>Number and type of renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency and conservation measures employed in new developments</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Assets</td>
<td>To minimise development on land susceptible to significant flood and/or coastal erosion risk</td>
<td>Flood Risk Assessment incorporated into development proposals in flood risk areas</td>
<td>Galway City Council and OPW</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximise use of the built environment in a sustainable and efficient manner</td>
<td>To maintain and improve the image of the city by promoting a high quality built environment.</td>
<td>Improvements in the public realm</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage sustainable modes of transport</td>
<td>To have an integrated, sustainable transport and land use system that eases movement to and within the city and promotes sustainable transport modes</td>
<td>Increase in use of sustainable transport modes, increase in sustainable transport facilities and infrastructure</td>
<td>GTU, Galway City Council and Galway County Council, public transportation operators and other transport stakeholders</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Heritage</td>
<td>To increase uptake of grants available for protected structures and to promote good conservation practice</td>
<td>Number of protected structures rehabilitated, renovated or reused</td>
<td>Galway City Council, DAHG</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To expand the RPS and designate additional ACAs, where appropriate</td>
<td>Number of grants administered for protected structures and cultural heritage projects/activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To promote cultural, built and linguistic heritage</td>
<td>Number of ACA management plans prepared, number of additions to the RPS and any additional ACAs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased use of Irish in signage, place names etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>To protect and enhance built heritage, designated ACAs, protected views/prospects and G and RA zoned lands</td>
<td>Delivery of environmental improvement schemes, ACA management plans and urban design framework plans</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To protect and enhance the green network in a sustainable manner</td>
<td>Improvements to the green network</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4
HDA Conclusion Statement

A 4.1 Introduction

A Habitat Directive Assessment (HDA) is an assessment of the potential effects of a plan, on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, on one or more Natura 2000 sites. The process provides an auditing tool to help deliver sustainable development, it is a mechanism for recording the implications on a Natura 2000 site and its conservation objectives and enables decision making. The HDA of the Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 was carried out with expert ecological advice from Natura Environmental Consultants Ltd.

The final aspect of the HDA process is the preparation of a Conclusion Statement summarising how ecological considerations in relation to Natura 2000 sites have been integrated into the Plan. It is noted that the process of HDA is in its infancy in Ireland and the HDA is the first to be undertaken by Galway City Council for the purpose of the Development Plan. The DEHLG recently issued guidance for Planning Authorities on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009). The Planning and Development Amendment Act 2010 will introduce new appropriate assessment provisions.

A 4.2 Habitat Directive Assessment of Plan

Pre-draft Consultation: As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process, a scoping letter was sent to designated Environmental Authorities: Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Agency. Submissions received were considered in the drafting of the HDA report.

Preparation of Draft Development Plan: The HDA of the Draft Development Plan addressed Stage 1 Screening and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the HDA process.

HDA screening identified seventeen Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the Galway city plan boundary. Four sites are within or immediately adjacent to the plan boundary (See fig. A 4.1). These are Galway Bay Complex cSAC, Inner Galway Bay SPA, pSPA, Lough Corrib cSAC and Lough Corrib SPA. The results of the screening showed that these sites are potentially at risk of significant impacts relating to habitat loss and fragmentation, water quality and disturbance as a result of development within the plan boundary. Seven other sites, located at a small distance to the plan boundary, were identified as potentially at risk of significant impact from contamination of groundwater though underground pathways within the karst landscape to the east of Galway City. HDA assessment identified that the key areas of policy, objectives and zoning within the Plan in terms of potential impacts related to the geographical areas of Galway Bay, the River Corrib and Lough Corrib where it bounds the city limits. Habitats and species within these areas are vulnerable to impacts arising from developments such as housing, transport, coastal and infrastructural developments. Mitigation measures were required to ensure no adverse impacts on the integrity of the sites or their conservation objectives.

Recommendations from the HDA informed the preparation of the SEA Environmental Report and the City Development Plan. HDA recommendations relating to the protection of Natura 2000 sites informed the preparation of the following policy areas: natural heritage; coastal area and waterways; housing; land use and transportation; environment and infrastructure. The HDA process identified that the Draft Plan was not likely to have a significant adverse effect on Natura 2000 sites provided that where needed suitable mitigation measures are incorporated into development to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects. The assessment also considered potential for cumulative impacts of the Development Plan with other plans and projects from outside the Galway plan boundary, that may impact on Natura 2000 sites. Recommendations were incorporated to support cross-compliance with other relevant plans, such as the Western River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015, where such plans facilitated the protection of Natura 2000 sites. The HDA (February 2010) then accompanied the Draft Plan on public display.

Amendments to Draft Development Plan: Following a review of submissions, additional recommendations were developed and these were set out in the HDA Addendum. These recommendations informed the proposed amendments to the Draft Plan and expanded on existing policy highlighting that all plans including lower tier plans and projects identified as having potential to adversely impact on Natura 2000 sites are required to adhere to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, to ensure no adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The lower tier plans and projects are also required to consider DEHLG Guidance for Planning Authorities on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009) and potential impacts identified in the HDA relating to habitat loss and fragmentation, water quality, disturbance and in combination effects. Amendments to the Plan were also made relating to natural heritage; recreation and amenity; enterprise and employment; environment and infrastructure and city centre/area based plans.
HDA screening of proposed amendments to the Draft Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017 was carried out to identify whether the changes to the Plan were likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites. The HDA on the Draft Development Plan and HDA Addendum were considered in this screening exercise. The assessment demonstrated no likely significant impacts and that additional recommendations set out in the HDA Addendum would enhance the protection of Natura 2000 sites. It also demonstrated that the Plan included mitigation measures so that the impact of a plan or specific project on a Natura 2000 site would be assessed where appropriate.

As part of the consultation process, the HDA Addendum (October 2010) accompanied the Proposed Amendments to the Draft Development Plan on public display. Submissions were received from the DEHLG regarding HDA and incorporated into the Managers Report (December 2010). Having considered the Managers Report and associated SEA and HDA reports, the Development Plan was then adopted by the Elected Members of Galway City Council.

A 4.3 Monitoring

Details on Natura 2000 sites are set out in Chapter 4 of the City Development Plan 2011-2017 and in the HDA and SEA Reports. Monitoring is integrated into the SEA monitoring process. This is through a review of environmental objectives, targets and indicators set out in the SEA monitoring programme. A review of the monitoring programme will be integrated into the Development Plan review process.
Appendix 5
Glossary Including List of Abbreviations

**Affordable Housing** - Owner-occupied or shared ownership housing provided at a price below the market value.


**Barcelona Declaration** - In March 1995, the European Congress *The City and the Disabled* was held in Barcelona, Spain. Following this congress a manifesto on accessibility, known as the Barcelona Declaration was ratified by many European cities and their associated local authorities. The aims of the Declaration include the promotion of universal access to urban spaces, buildings and services, and improvement of mobility of disabled persons. Galway City Council formally signed the declaration in 2002.

**Biodiversity** - A measure of the diversity of species of plants and animals.

**Blue Flag** - The Blue Flag scheme is operated by the Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE), a non-Government organisation. The criteria for the award of Blue Flag relate to water quality, facilities for visitors, beach management (including litter control) and information display. At EU member state level the FEE operates through national bodies for example An Taisce, which are responsible for the administration of the Blue Flag scheme in Ireland. A national jury conducts the initial assessment of applications for Blue Flags. Recommendations from the national jury are then assessed by the FEE international jury, who then award the final Blue Flag.

**Brownfield Sites** - Disused land or buildings available for re-use/redevelopment.

**Bulky Retail Goods** - Goods generally sold from retail warehouses where DIY goods or goods such as flat-pack furniture are of such a size that they would normally be taken away by car and not manageable by customers travelling by foot, bicycle or bus or that large floor areas would be required to display them, e.g. furniture in room sets, or goods not large individually, but part of a collective purchase which would be bulky e.g. wallpaper, paint.

**Child Friendly City** - Following the 1996 Istanbul City Summit, UNICEF launched the Child Friendly Cities Initiative to reach urban children, particularly the poor and marginalised with basic services and protection to guarantee their fundamental rights. Many cities world-wide are working to become more child-friendly and a number of local networks have been created like the European Network of Child Friendly Cities. The network was established under the Wurzburg Declaration (June 1999). There is no single definition of what a child friendly city is or ought to be. In developing nations the focus is more frequently found on increasing access to basic services while in developed countries the emphasis seems to be on environmental and physical issues such as improving recreational areas, developing parks and green spaces or controlling traffic in order to make streets safer for children.

**Convenience Retail Goods** - Food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods.

**Comparison Retail Goods** - Clothing, footwear, furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods), medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment, education and recreational equipment and accessories, books, newspapers and magazines and goods for personal care and goods not elsewhere classified.

**Development Contributions Scheme** - Scheme which allows a Planning Authority to levy financial contributions for the provision of public infrastructure, facilities, projects or services as a condition of planning.

**Ecological sites** - Sites of wildlife value.

**EU Water Framework Directive** - This Directive 2000/60/EC is aimed at improving water quality in rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters. The Directive requires achieving 'good' status to all waters, maintaining existing 'high' status waters and preventing any deterioration of waters, by 2015. The following are key aims of the Directive:

- expanding the scope of water protection to all waters, surface waters, coastal and groundwater
- achieving 'good status' for all waters by 2015
- water management based on river basins
- 'combined approach' of emission limit values and quality standards
- getting the prices right
- getting the citizen involved more closely
- streamlining legislation.

**EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive** - The aim of Directive 91/271/EEC (as amended 98/15/EEC) is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of discharges of urban wastewater, by the provision of urban wastewater collection systems (sewerage) and treatment plants for urban centres. The Directive also provides general rules for the sustainable disposal of sludge arising from wastewater treatment.
Galway City Development Plan 2011-2017

Appendices

Galway City Development Board (GCDB) - The Galway City Development Board was established in March 2002, with statutory recognition of the board under the Local Government Act 2001. The board is made up of representatives from state agencies, local government, social partners and local development. The primary objective of the board is to produce and oversee the implementation of a ten year economic, social and cultural strategy for Galway City, ‘Gaillimh Beo agus Briomhrá’ 2002 - 2012. Within this strategy the GCDB has set out 14 separate goals for the next 10 years. Under each of these goals there are more than 120 different strategic actions to be carried out over the life of the strategy to make Galway a better place.

Galway City and County Tourism Committee - The committee was established under the auspices of the Galway City and County Development Boards respectively. The ultimate aim of this committee is to increase the level of interaction and integration between various organisations involved in tourism development within Galway.

Gateway City - The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) identifies five Gateway Cities, including Galway City. A Gateway City is a regional centre of socio-economic growth and critical mass supporting more balanced patterns of national level development.

Green Network - A linked network of green areas, parks and open spaces ensuring a strategic integrated policy approach to the sustainable use and management of these areas.

Greenways - Greenway is an EU term established in a ‘Declaration towards a European Greenway Network’, (Lille, September 2000) for circulation routes reserved exclusively for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner, which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area.

Habitats Directive Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) - An ecological assessment of the likely impact of any plan, programme, or project on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites, (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). This is a requirement of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

Homezones - Homezones are residential streets in which the road space is shared between drivers of vehicles and other road users, with the wider needs of residents, (including people who walk and cycle and children), in mind. The aim is to change the way streets are used and to improve the quality of life in residential streets by making them places for people, not just for traffic.

Labour Force - The labour force comprises persons who are actually engaged or desirous of engaging themselves in the production of economic goods and services. Therefore, the labour force includes those who are currently employed as well as unemployed people who are seeking employment. This excludes other groups such as students and housewives.

Local Agenda 21 - The UN Conference on Environment and Development took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This has become known as the Earth Summit. The summit produced a blueprint for sustainability policies towards the 21st century, known as Agenda 21. Agenda 21 indicates how countries can work towards sustainable development. The Irish Government endorsed Agenda 21 at the summit.

National Water Services Investment Programme - The objectives of the Water Services Investment Programme are being achieved through sustained State and EU investment in capital works. The largest component of the Programme relates to water and sewerage schemes, which are primarily provided to meet the requirements of both the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and the EU Drinking Water Directive.

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) - These designated areas form a network of sites of national importance by reason of their flora, fauna, habitat type and/or geomorphological interest. Most NHA areas in the city are incorporated into the two cSAC designations. The Wildlife Act 2000 provides the legal basis for designation and for a level of protection broadly comparable to that provided for cSACs in the 1997 Habitats Regulations.

Plot Ratio - The plot ratio for a development is the gross floor area of buildings on a site divided by the gross site area. The gross floor area is the sum of all floor space within the external walls of the building(s), excluding plant, tank rooms, basement storage areas (where floor to ceiling height is less than 2.1 m) and parking areas. In the case of a group of buildings with a common curtilage the floor area will be aggregated. The gross site area includes only such land as lies within the curtilage of the related buildings and in particular does not include adjoining public road area. Plot ratios are written as the ratio of gross floor area to the gross site area, e.g. 2:1.

Polluter Pays Principle - Polluter Pays Principle means that the polluter should bear the expenses of carrying out the measures required to ensure that the environment is in an acceptable state. This environmental liability aims both to prevent and restore environmental damage. On the side of prevention, the principle highlights that if a situation is caused that could lead to environmental damage, preventive measures should be taken to avoid that. When environmental damage nevertheless occurs, it is required by the principle that environmental damage is restored.

Precautionary Principle - The Precautionary Principle is an approach where there is a presumption against any action whose environmental impact is uncertain and there is a strong bias towards avoiding potential environmental risks.

Proximity Principle - The proximity principle is the concept that waste should generally be managed as near as possible to its place of production, because transporting waste itself has an environmental impact.

Ramsar Site - These are wetlands of international importance listed in the Ramsar Convention. The Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. Ireland ratified the convention in 1984 and it obliges the State to recognise and conserve any internationally important wetlands. The convention notes the presence of rare, vulnerable, endemic or endangered plants or animals as a factor in determining international importance. The Inner Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib cSACs are both designated Ramsar sites.
RAPID – Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development, is a government initiative set up by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to target disadvantaged areas.

Strategic Environmental Assessment - The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires that an environmental assessment is carried out on certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. A SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making.

SEVESO II Sites - Sites involved in the storage and/or production of dangerous substances that present a major accident hazard. These sites are subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Directive (or Seveso II Directive) 96/82/EC, which seeks to reduce the risk and limit the consequences of accidents.

Site Coverage - Site coverage is determined by dividing the total area of ground covered by buildings by the total site area excluding the public road.

Social Housing - Rented housing provided either by the Council or a voluntary or co-operative housing body.

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

Special Areas of Conservation (Candidate) (cSAC) – The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) was transposed into Irish law by S.I. 94 of 1997, the EC (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997. cSACs are marine and terrestrial areas of international importance that have been designated for the protection of wildlife habitats and species (other than birds), which form part of EU Natura 2000 network of ecologically significant sites throughout Europe. Special protection measures should be applied regarding these habitats of specified wildlife species. Two significant cSACs exist in the city, the Galway Bay Complex and Lough Corrib Complex. The boundaries of cSACs can overlap with Special Protection Areas for protection of birds or they can contain pNHAs.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) - SPAs are sites designated to protect internationally important and rare bird species and their associated habitats. The Inner Galway Bay SPA encircles the coastal and offshore area including the bay and islands. The designated protection area provides for a wide range of seabirds and waterfowl and their associated breeding colonies and habitats including Annex 1 bird species. Annex 1 is a catalogue of species and subspecies that, in the EU, are threatened with extinction, or vulnerable in certain changes of their habitats, or scarce due to small populations or restricted regional distribution, or demand special caution due to the special nature of their habitats.

Salmonid River - The River Corrib is designated a Salmonid River under the EC Freshwater Fish Directive 1978 and the EC (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988. This designation aims to protect and improve the quality of fresh waters that support certain species of fish. Specific water quality standards must be maintained and pollution controlled. Ireland is legally required to maintain and improve the water quality of rivers for Salmonid fisheries.

Sustainable Development - Sustainable Development is usually defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) - Tree Preservation Order is used to protect selected trees and woodlands, if their removal would have a significant impact on the environment or amenity. Section 205 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (amended), states that if it appears to the Planning authority that it is expedient, in the interests of amenity or the environment, to make provision for the protection of any tree, trees, groups of trees or woodlands, it may for that purpose and for stated reasons, make an order with respect to any such tree, trees, group of trees or woodlands as may be specified in the order. Trees, which are the subject of a TPO, cannot be felled, unless the owner applies for planning permission to the local authority.

Waste Hierarchy - This is a theoretical framework, which acts as a guide to waste management options. The internationally recognised waste hierarchy, espoused by the EU and nationally, gives priority respectively to:

- Prevention
- Minimisation
- Reuse and Recycling (including biological treatment)
- Energy Recovery and
- Environmentally sustainable disposal of waste, which cannot be prevented or recovered.
List of Abbreviations

ACA Architectural Conservation Area
BER Building Energy Rating
CFRAM Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study
C&D Construction and Demolition Waste
CHP Combined Heat and Power
COMAH Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances (Seveso II Directive)
CRWMP Connaught Regional Waste Management Plan
CSO Central Statistics Office
DAHG Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DECLG Department of Communities and Local Government
DEHLG Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government
DOT Department of Transport
EC Europe Communities
EPA Environmental Protection Agency
ESRI Economic and Social Research Unit
EU European Union
GCDP Galway City Development Board
GCOB Galway City Outer Bypass
GEAL Galway Energy Agency Ltd.
GMIT Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
GTPS Galway Transport and Planning Study
GTU Galway Transportation Unit
HDA Habitat Directive Assessment
ICT Information and Communication Technology
IDA Industrial Development Authority
IAP Integrated Area Plan
LAP Local Area Plan
LGBT Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender
NDP National Development Plan
NHA Natural Heritage Area
NPWS National Parks and Wildlife Service
NRA National Roads Authority
NSS National Spatial Strategy
NUIG National University of Ireland Galway
OPW Office of Public Works
OS Ordnance Survey
PE Population Equivalent
QBC Quality Bus Corridor
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