

APPENDIX II: NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

OF THE
**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

FOR
VARIATION No. 1

TO THE
**GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2009-2015**



for: Galway County Council

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Section 1 Introduction and Terms of Reference

This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Report on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Variation No. 1 to the Galway County Development Plan (CDP) 2009-2015. The purpose of this report is to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the making of the Variation.

What is an SEA?

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

Why is it needed?

The SEA was carried out in order to comply with the provisions of the SEA Regulations and in order to continue to facilitate proper planning and environmental management within County Galway. This report should be read in conjunction with the Development Plan as varied.

How does it work?

All of the main environmental issues in County Galway were assembled and presented to the team who prepared the Variation. This helped them to devise a Variation that continues to protect whatever is sensitive in the environment. It also helped to identify wherever there are environmental problems in the County so that these won't get any worse.

To decide how best to make a plan that protects the environment as much as possible the planners examined alternative versions of the Development Plan [Sections 6 and 7, Environmental Report of the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015, April 2009]. This helped to highlight the type of plans that are least likely to harm the environment.

What is included in the Environmental Report which accompanies the Variation?

The Environmental Report contains the following information:

- A description of the environment and the key environmental issues;
- A discussion with regard to alternatives;
- An assessment of the provisions of the Variation; and
- An identification of mitigation measures which will aid compliance with important environmental protection legislation - e.g. the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive - and which will avoid/reduce the environmental effects of implementing the Development Plan as varied.

What happens at the end of the process?

On making the Variation, a document referred to as the SEA Statement was prepared and made available to the public which summarises, inter alia, how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Development Plan as varied.

Section 2 The Variation

2.1 Content of the Variation

There are 2 components to the Variation.

The first is to replace Section 2 - *Spatial Planning Strategy* - of the County Development Plan 2009-2015 with a new Section 2 - *Core Strategy and Spatial Planning*.

This is necessary in order to give effect to the requirement under Section 7 of the Planning and Development Act 2010, to introduce a Core Strategy into the Galway County Development Plan 2009 to 2015. This is necessary to demonstrate that the County Development Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives as set out in the National Spatial Strategy and the West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 to 2022, especially as regards:

- The hierarchy and role of Galway metropolitan area, Tuam hub town, metropolitan satellites, lower tier towns and villages and rural areas; and
- Giving effect to the hierarchy by setting regional and national population targets and associated requirements for housing land across the overall functional area of the planning authority.

The second component is to amend various parts of Section 3 - *Settlement Strategy* - of the County Development Plan 2009 to 2015 to ensure that the County settlement strategy is consistent with the settlement hierarchy set out in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan 2009 to 2015, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010 to 2022 and the National Spatial Strategy.

2.2 Interactions with Relevant Policy, Plans or Programmes

2.2.1 National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP) is designed to underpin the development of a dynamic competitive economy over the period 2007 - 2013. It envisages a total investment of €184 billion over 7 years to 'secure the further transformation of our country socially and economically within an environmentally sustainable framework'.

It identifies investment funding for significant projects in sectors such as health services, social housing, education, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, and water and waste services. The NDP is designed to strengthen and improve the international competitiveness of the Country so as to support continued, but more balanced, economic and social development in line with the National Spatial Strategy.

2.2.2 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) is a 20-year planning framework for the entire Country to guide policies, programmes and investment. It seeks to promote a better balance of social, economic and physical development between the Regions.

The focus of the NSS is on fostering a closer match between where people live with where they work. The NSS established a detailed sustainable planning framework for strategic spatial planning to ensure development is targeted at the most appropriate locations. The NSS places emphasis on the creation of high quality living environments through urban design and the integration of social and community amenities.

2.2.3 Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1997

This Strategy provides a framework for the achievement of sustainable development at local level and calls on planning authorities to incorporate the principles of sustainability into Development Plans.

2.2.4 West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

Ireland is divided into eight regional forward planning regions, Dublin, Midlands, Mid East, Mid West, South East, South West, West and Border, each with its own regional planning authority composed of Elected Members selected by the constituent local government councils. Regional planning authorities are required, under the Planning and Development (Regional Planning Guidelines) Regulations 2003 (SI No. 175 of 2003), to draw up regional planning guidelines (RPGs), long term strategic planning frameworks for their respective regions.

Galway is located within the West Region. The West RPGs, prepared by the West Regional Authority, provide a broad canvas to steer the sustainable growth and prosperity of the Region in line with the key principles of the NSS. They set out a long-term strategy for the development of the Region and identify the strategic priorities in terms of policy and development. The overall aim of the RPGs is to ensure the successful implementation of the NSS at the regional, county and local level. Planning Authorities must take account of the RPGs in the discharge of their functions. The West Region comprises of the city of Galway and the counties of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.

2.2.5 Transport 21 & Smarter Travel, *A Sustainable Transport Future*

Transport 21 is the capital investment framework for the transport system over the period 2006-2015. It addresses the twin challenges of past investment backlogs and continuing growth in transport demand.

Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future is the new transport policy for Ireland for the period 2009-2020. The policy 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 ensure that people choose more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

2.2.6 Lower Tier Plans

Plans for settlements within the County may need to be changed in order to take account of the change made to the County Development Plan by the Core Strategy Variation after that has been made.

Section 3 Existing Environment

3.1 Introduction

The environmental baseline of County Galway is described in this section. This baseline is used to identify, describe and evaluate the likely effects of implementing the Variation and it includes sections on the following components – biodiversity, flora and fauna, population, human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape.

County Galway is the second largest county in Ireland with an area of 6,148 square kilometres and a population of 231,035 persons as of Census 2006¹, 159,052 of which live in the administrative area of Galway County Council and 71,983 of which live in Galway City. Located in the west of Ireland, the County shares borders with five other counties - Mayo, Roscommon, Offaly, Tipperary and Clare -, bordering the Atlantic Ocean to the West with a coastline of around 689 kilometres, excluding that of its many off shore islands. Human interaction with the land and sea is evident from the earliest of times up to the present, from archaeological remains to farmland to growing urban centres such as Galway City, Tuam, Ballinasloe, Athenry, Clifden, Gort, Headford, Loughrea, Oranmore, Oughterard and Portumna.

3.2 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

3.2.1 Overview

County Galway contains a variety of natural habitats including many of international nature importance such as blanket bogs, fens, heath, ancient oak woodland, turloughs, species-rich calcareous grassland and limestone pavement. The County also contains a large number of rare, threatened and uncommon species, including a large number of plants and animals that are protected under national and European Union legislation.

Land-cover within the County² is shown on the map overleaf. This mapping shows a distinct difference between land cover to the west of Lough Corrib and land cover to the east.

The western half of the County is primarily covered by the *peat bogs* category of land cover whereas the eastern half of the County is primarily covered by *pastures* as well as significant portions of *peat bogs* and *complex cultivation patterns*. *Water bodies* are spread across the western half of the County as are pockets of *transitional woodland scrub* and *coniferous forest*. *Agricultural lands with natural vegetation* are found near the banks of the Corrib system and other lakes as well as being spread across the north of the County - to the south of Headford and to the north west of Tuam - and across the south west corner of the County. A mosaic of *peat bogs*, *transitional woodland scrub* and *coniferous forests* is found over a wide area located between Gort and Portumna, in the vicinity of the Slieve Aughty Mountains.

¹ CSO (2007) *Census 2006 Volume 1 - Population Classified by Area* Cork: CSO

² European Environment Agency Coordination of Information on the Environment (2004) *Ireland's Corine Land Cover 2000 (CLC2000)* Copenhagen: EEA

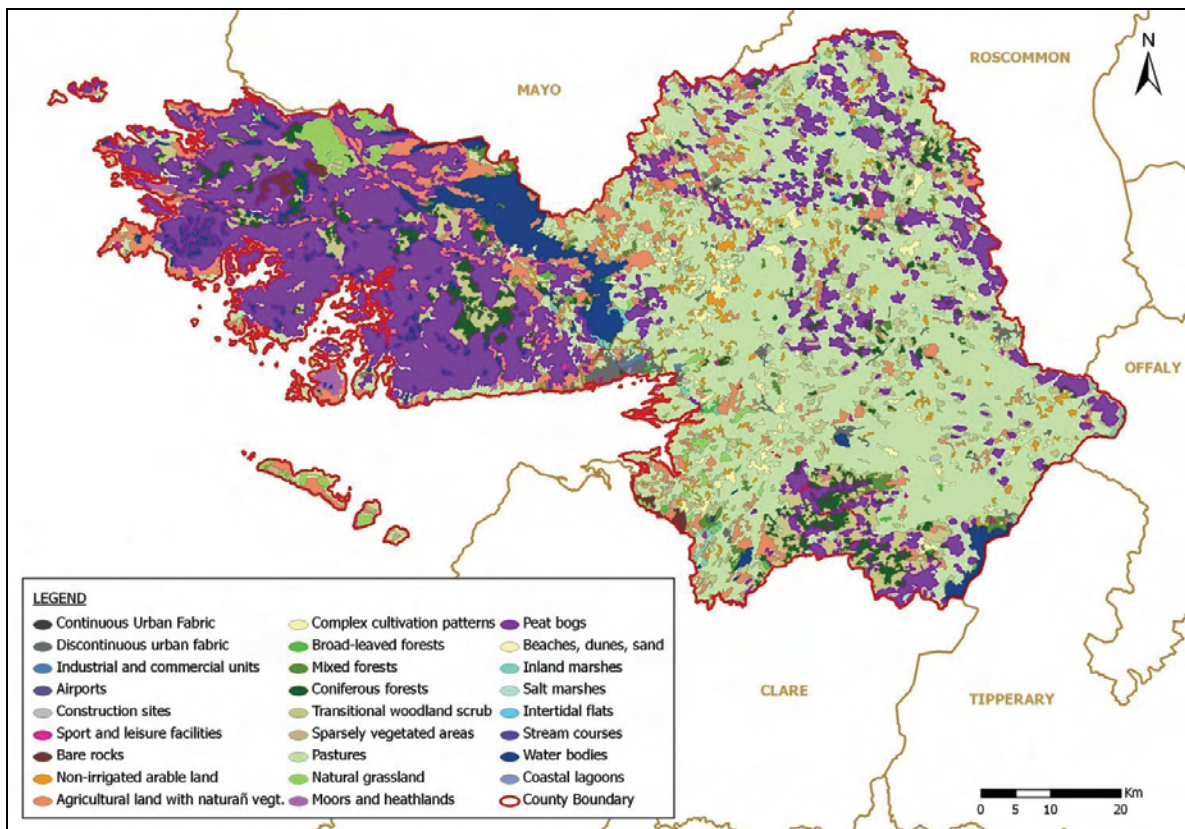


Figure 3.1 CORINE Land Cover Map 2006

Source: EPA (2009)

3.2.2 Designations

The international significance of Galway's natural heritage is reflected in the fact that a high proportion of the county is designated for nature conservation under European and National legislation.

The majority of the western half of the County - including Lough Corrib, inner Galway Bay and most of the County's islands - is covered by designated sites while the eastern half of the County is covered to a significantly lesser extent by such designations; nevertheless a number of important areas are located in this half of the County.

Designated sites in the County include candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Natural Heritage Areas. These sites provide examples of bogs, callows, machair, limestone pavement, headlands, bays, loughs, turloughs, islands, woods and caves, bays, loughs, islands, marshes and eskers.

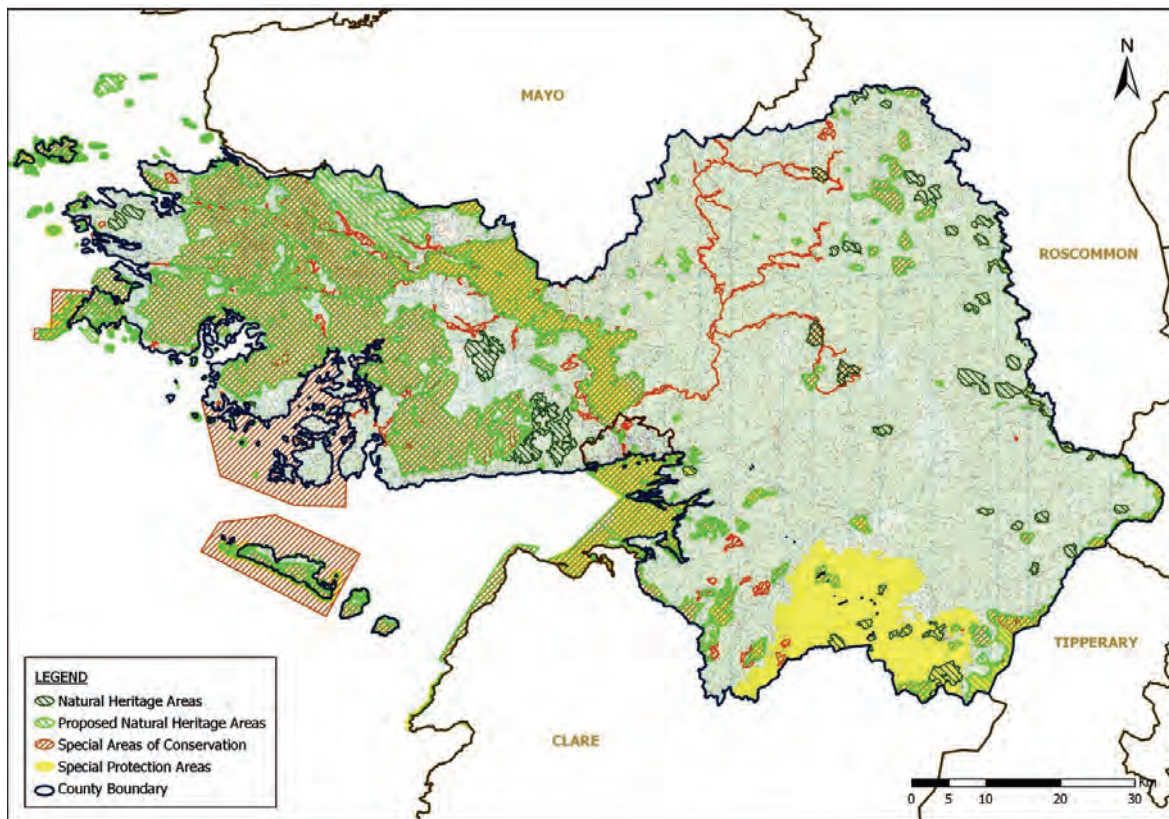


Figure 3.2 County Galway SPAs, candidate SACs and NHAs
 Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded July 2011)

3.2.3 Important Issues to Consider

Compliance with the objectives of the Habitats Directive will be a challenge in all areas but especially in coastal areas and along the banks of Lough Corrib as most of the pressure upon designated habitats as a result of development is likely to occur in these areas.

3.3 Population and Human Health

3.3.1 Human Health

With regard to human health, impacts relevant to the SEA are those which arise as a result of interactions with environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come into contact with human beings).

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors including water, soil and air. Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent landuses.

There existing problems relating to drinking water treatment in, among other water supplies, 35 public water supplies in the County. 10 of these water supplies are identified by the EPA as having inadequate treatment for cryptosporidium and a further 5 Water Supplies are included on the list due to a failure to meet the E.coli standard. Water which is not clean and wholesome would be likely to result in significant adverse impacts upon human health.

Two seawater bathing areas in the County - Clifden and Na Forbacha - exceeded EU mandatory values different types of coliforms. These values are set to protect human health and exceedences of them could lead to adverse impacts upon human health.

3.3.2 Population

The population of the county (all the areas outside of Galway City) was estimated at 159,052 during 2006. This is an increase of 11% on the 2002 Census figure of 143,245. In the same 2002 to 2006 period Galway City experienced a 9.3% increase in population, from 209,077 persons in 2002 to 231,035 persons in 2006. Galway County is predominantly rural with only around 15% of the population living in towns of more than 1,500 people. The largest towns are located in east Galway - namely Ballinasloe, Tuam, Athenry, Gort - followed by Clifden in Connemara, west Galway.

3.3.3 Important Issues to Consider

Certain environmental vectors within the County's area - such as air, water or soil - have the potential to transport and deposit contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm and adversely impact upon the health of the County's population. The most important of these issues relate to drinking water quality and bathing water quality as expanded upon above.

3.4 Soil

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. It performs many vital functions including: food and other biomass production, storage, filtration and transformation of many substances including water, carbon, and nitrogen. Soil has a role as a habitat and gene pool, serves as a platform for human activities, landscape and heritage and acts as a provider of raw materials. Such functions of soil are worthy of protection because of their socio-economic as well as environmental importance. Soil types in County Galway are mapped on Figure 3.3³.

The area of the County to the west of Lough Corrib is generally covered by blanket bog with upland areas in Connemara and areas close to the coast covered by acid mineral soils.

The area of the County to the east of Lough Corrib is generally covered with a mix of basic mineral soils and cutaway raised bog, with the latter increasing in occurrence in the north and west of the County. Grey brown podzolic basic mineral soils are deep, well drained soils which are derived from calcareous drift composed mainly of limestone with some coal shales and sandstone. These soils are relatively fertile, support grasslands and are facilitate the production of a wide range of vegetable crops. The Slieve Aughty foothills are covered by acid mineral soils while the Slieve Aughty uplands are by blanket bog. The County's river floodplains are covered with fertile alluvium.

³ Teagasc, GSI, Forest Service & EPA (2006) *Soils and Subsoils Class* Dublin: DEHLG

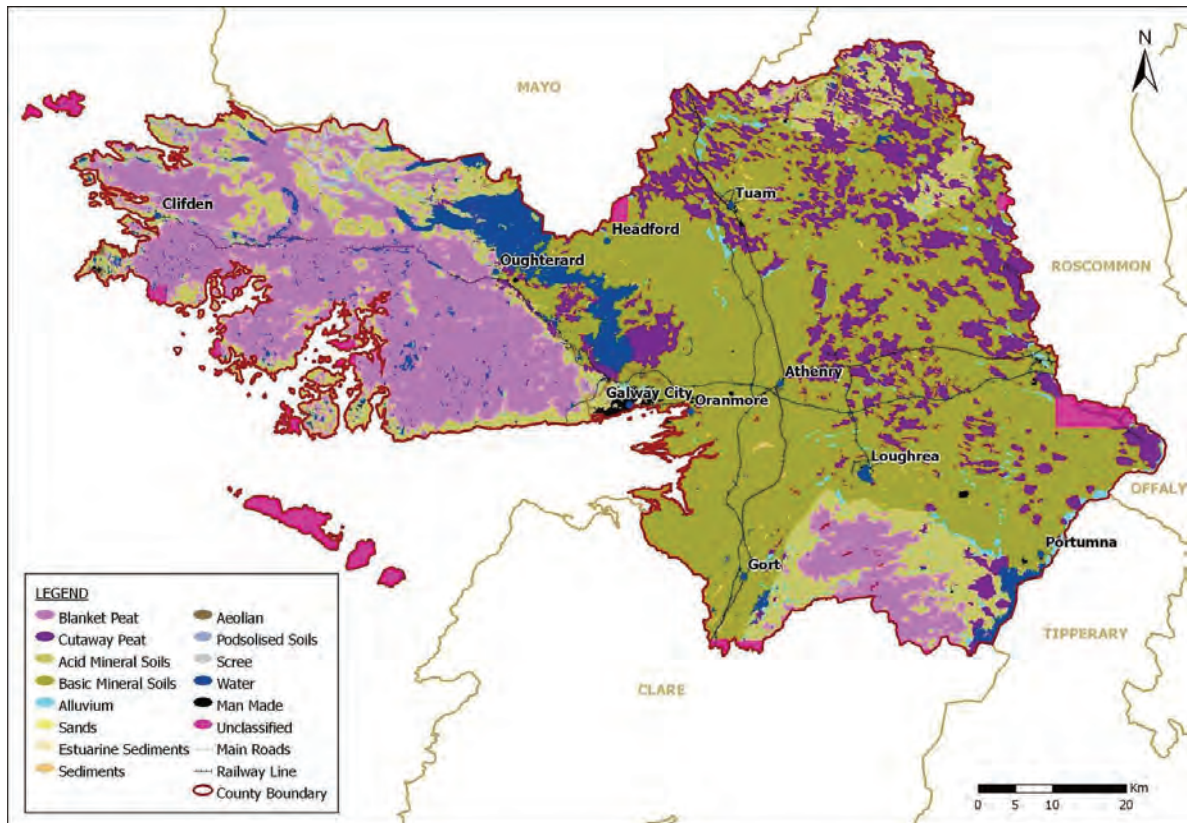


Figure 3.3 Soils

Source: Teagasc in co-operation with the Forest Service, EPA and GSI (2006)

3.4.1 Important Issues to Consider

The most extensive habitat of nature importance within county Galway is lowland blanket bog, found mainly in south Connemara. This and other areas of bog within the County are internationally important - supporting a large variety of rare flora and fauna - and large areas are protected by a number of ecological designations identified on Figure 3.2. Loss of quality rare bog habitats has resulted in the decline in numbers of vulnerable birds which live and breed on the bogs.

Extensive areas of limestone pavement occur to the south of Kinvarra with a number of small, isolated patches occurring along a corridor from Kilcolgan to Tuam and near Moycullen. These areas of limestone pavement often occur in close association with species-rich calcareous grassland and sometimes support the protected species.

In addition to being a valuable ecological resource, Galway's soils provide employment within the County through areas such as agriculture, forestry, harvesting of peat and tourism. Greenfield development involves the building upon and thereby sealing off of non-renewable subsoil as well as topsoil. Such sealing can prevent soils from performing certain functions such as drainage.

3.5 Water and Waste Water

3.5.1 Introduction

Human activities, if not properly managed, can cause deterioration in water quality. Pressures exerted by human activities include the following:

- sewage and other effluents discharged to waters from point sources, e.g. pipes from treatment plants;
- discharges arising from diffuse or dispersed activities on land;
- abstractions from waters; and
- structural alterations to water bodies.

3.5.2 The Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires that all member states implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving good status by 2015. All public bodies, including Galway County Council, are required to: coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted; and improve polluted water bodies to good status by 2015.

For the purpose of implementing the WFD, Ireland has been divided into eight river basin districts (RBDs) or areas of land that are drained by a large river or number of rivers and the adjacent estuarine / coastal areas. The management of water resources will be based upon these river basin districts. The west and centre of County Galway is located within the Western RBD while the east of the County is located within the Shannon RBD.

Within each river basin district water has been divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters which are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined *water bodies*. This is for the purpose of assessment, reporting and management.

Local Authorities located in the Western and Shannon RBDs, including Galway County Council, have prepared River Basin Management Plans which are implemented in order to help protect and improve waters in the RBDs. The Management Plans provide specific policies for individual river basins in order to implement the requirements of the WFD.

3.5.2.1 Rivers and Lakes

The WFD defines "surface water status" as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorer of its ecological status and its chemical status. Thus, to achieve "good surface water status" both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least "good".

Figure 3.4 maps the WFD Surface Water Status for the County. The map illustrates that surface water status in the west of the County is mainly of "high" and "good" status with areas of "moderate" and "poor" status interspersed. WFD status in the east of the County is mostly "moderate" or "poor" in its status. Large areas of "good" status occur followed by smaller areas of "high" and "bad" status.

River and lake water quality in County Galway is monitored by both Galway County Council and the EPA. Figure 3.5 shows the most recent water quality data for various rivers throughout the County.

Water quality within the County is monitored by the EPA at a number of locations along rivers as mapped on Figure 3.5. The most recent water quality data⁴ identifies varying Q-values in the County

⁴ EPA (various) *Water Quality in Ireland* Wexford: EPA

from Bad Status (Q1) to High Status (Q5)⁵. The majority of rivers sampled are Q4 followed by Q3. Only two points have been identified as Q2/Q1-2/Q1.

The EPA classifies lakes according to their trophic status⁶. All lakes in the County monitored by the EPA are identified as being of oligotrophic status. Oligotrophic lakes have low algal growth, high dissolved oxygen, very low levels of pollution and generally no impairment of use, supporting diverse biological communities.

Good status as defined by the Water Framework Directive equates to mesotrophic in the trophic classification of lakes, as set out by the EPA. Therefore the data suggests that the water quality of all lakes in the County is in line with that which is required by the WFD. WFD status for lakes is mapped on Figure 3.6.

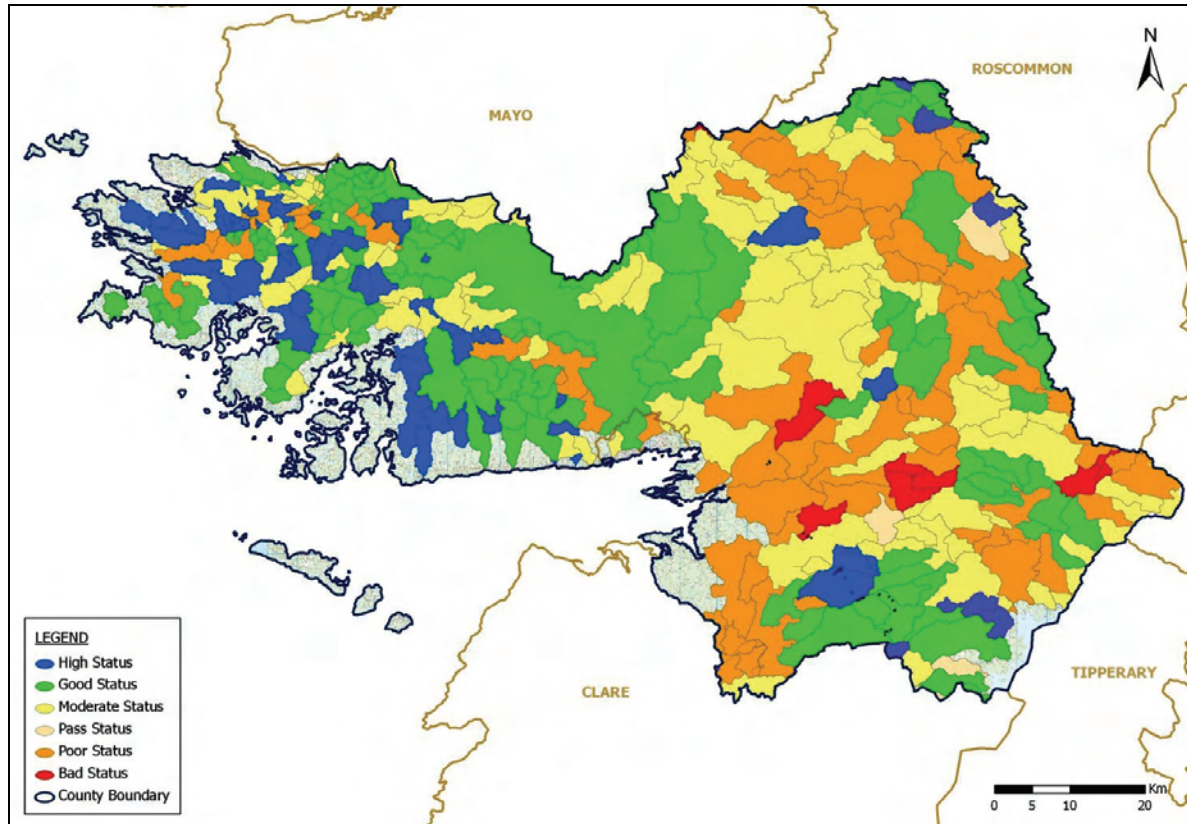


Figure 3.4 WFD Surface Water Status

Source: WRBD (2010)

⁵ The Biotic Index Values, or Q values, are assigned to rivers in accordance with biological monitoring of surface waters - low Q ratings, as low as Q1, are indicative of low biodiversity and polluted waters, and high Q ratings, as high as Q5, are indicative of high biodiversity and unpolluted waters. Good status as defined by the Water Framework Directive equates to approximately Q4 in the national scheme of biological classification of rivers as set out by the EPA. Waters of Moderate Status (Q3-4) support reduced or much reduced biological community diversity, have water quality which is fair or doubtful, and may be of a satisfactory or unsatisfactory condition, referring to the likelihood of interference with beneficial or potential beneficial uses. Waters of Poor Status (Q2-3 or Q3) support much reduced or low biological community diversity, have water quality which is doubtful or poor, and are of unsatisfactory condition.

⁶ Nutrient enrichment, resulting in eutrophication, is the principal pressure on lake quality in Ireland. Nutrient inputs result in plant growth in lakes whose presence is quantified by a measure of the algal pigment chlorophyll. Lake trophic status, or the extent to which a lake is nutrient enriched, is determined by a consideration of the annual maximum chlorophyll values. Trophic Status ranges from Oligotrophic/Mesotrophic to Moderately Eutrophic to Highly/Strongly Eutrophic to Hypertrophic.

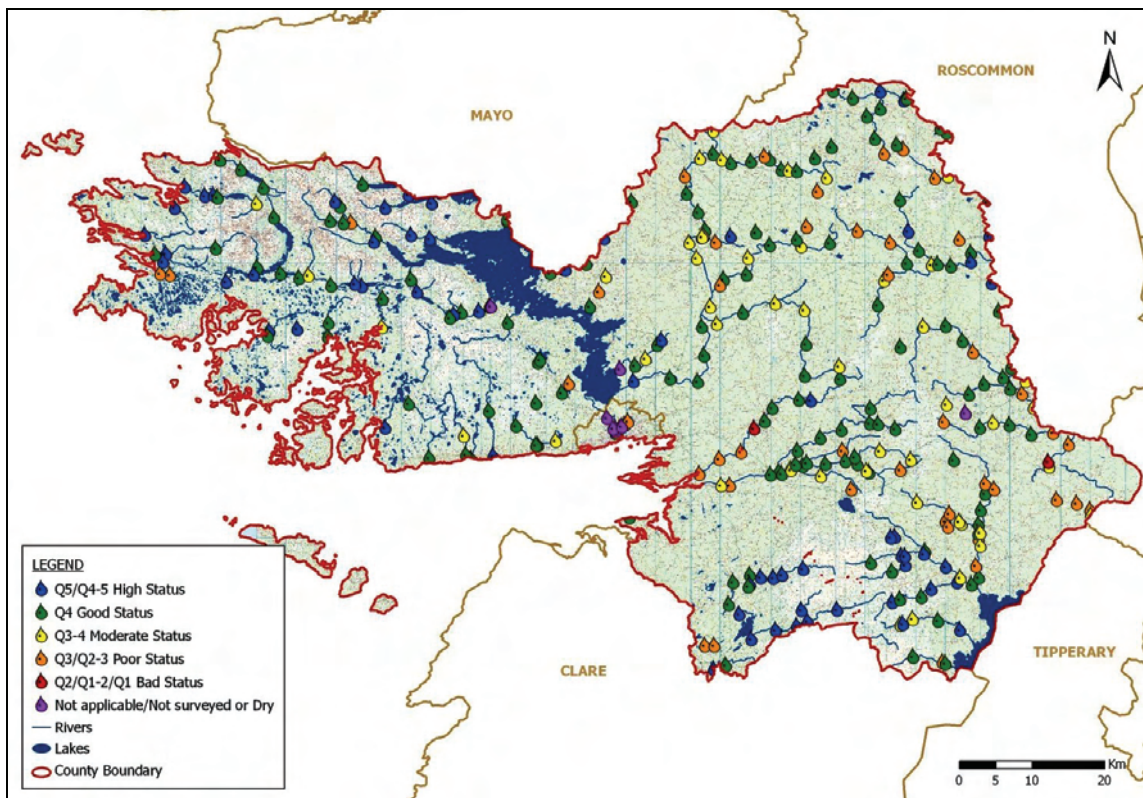


Figure 3.5 Q-Values (Biotic Index Ratings) at Points on Rivers
Source: EPA (Various)

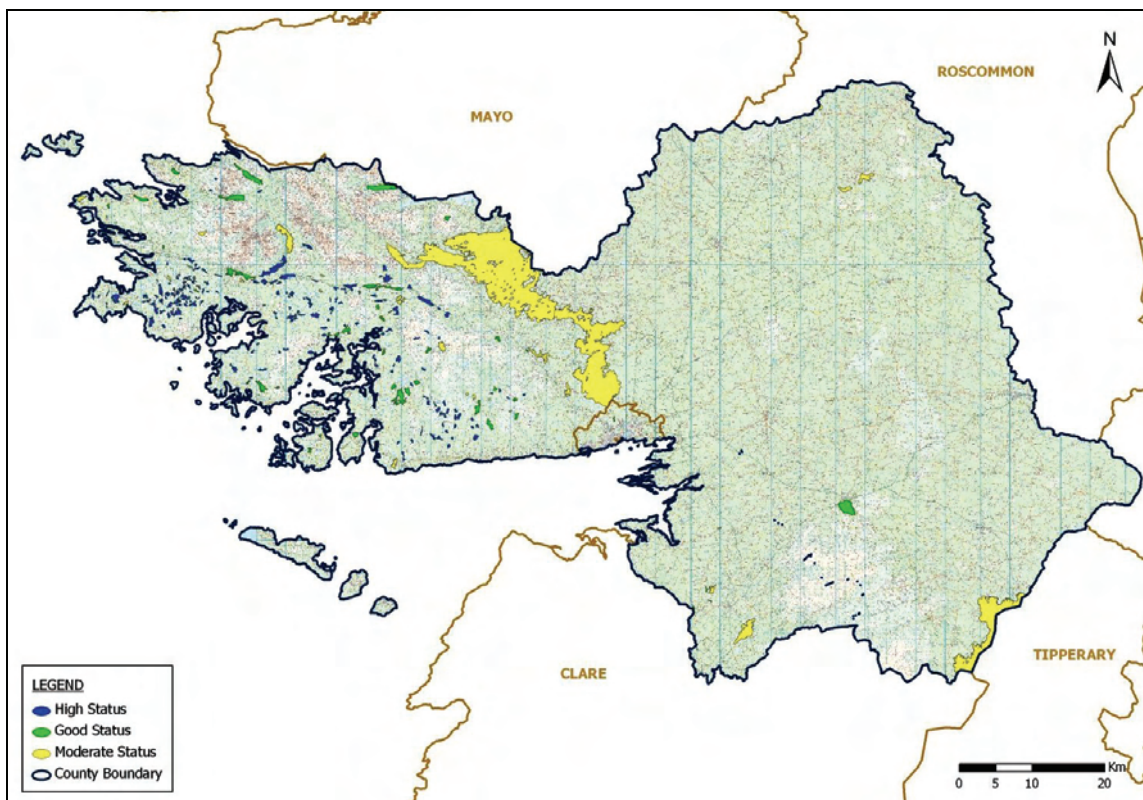


Figure 3.6 WFD Lake Status
Source: WRBD (2010)

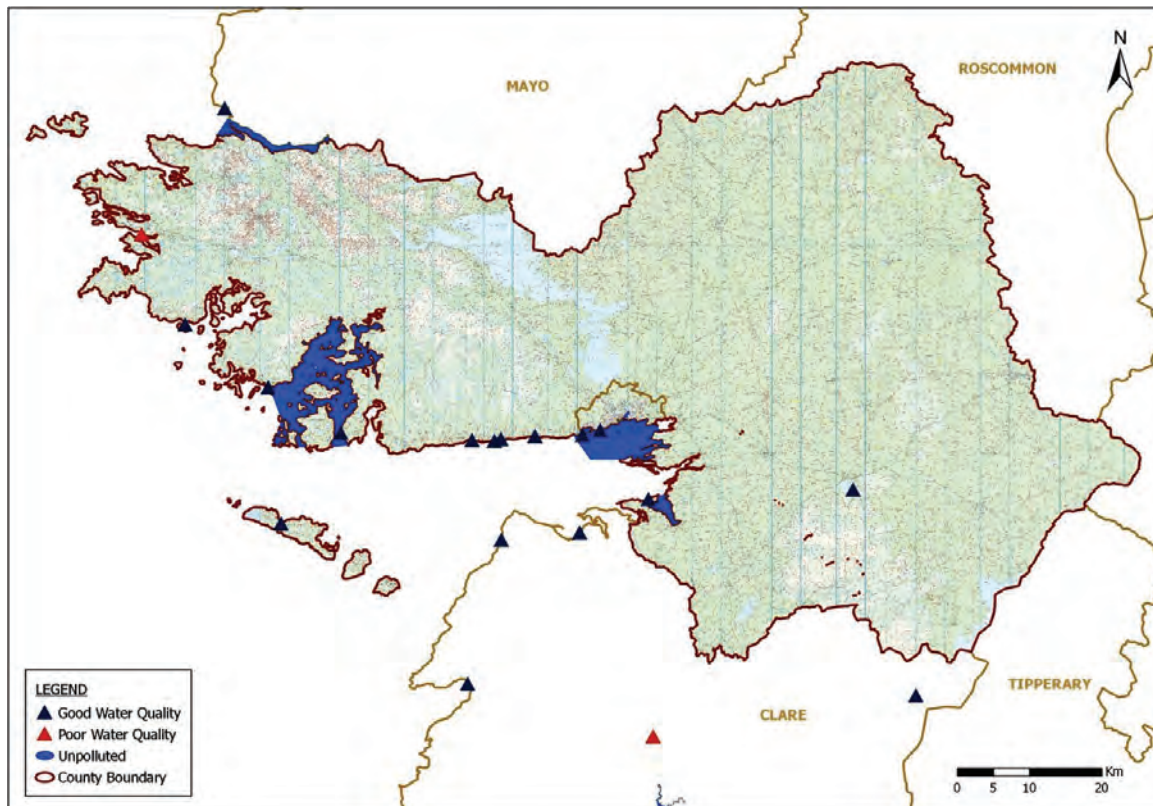


Figure 3.7 Coastal and Bathing Water Quality

Source: EPA (2009)

3.5.2.2 Transitional, Estuarine and Coastal Waters

Coastal waters are important for tourism, for use as bathing locations and for supporting marine wildlife. Transitional waters are bodies of surface water in the vicinity of river mouths which are partly saline in character as a result of their proximity to coastal waters but which are substantially influenced by freshwater flows. These areas are important for the shell fish industry for which unpolluted water is essential.

It is noted that good status as defined by the Water Framework Directive can be attained by estuarine and coastal waters through the achievement of “unpolluted” status. All seven bays, harbours and estuaries which have been classified under the ATSEBI system in Galway are “unpolluted.” Coastal water quality is mapped on Figure 3.7.

3.5.2.3 Bathing Water

The EPA monitors nine seawater bathing locations around the coast of Galway County Council's administrative area (An Cnoc in Inverin, Beach at Spiddal Pier, Cill Muirbhte in Inis Mór, Clifden, Gortin in Cloch Na Rón, Na Forbacha, Main Beach in Spiddal, Trá An Dóilín in Ceathrú Rua, Trá Chaladh bhFuinnse and Traught in Kinvara), two seawater bathing locations along the coast of Galway City Council's administrative area (Salthill and Silver Strand) and two freshwater bathing locations inland in the County (Bathing Place Lake at Loughrea and Bathing Place at Portumna).

The most recently published figures (EPA, 2011⁷) show that the seawater bathing area of Clifden exceeded EU Mandatory and Guide Values for the fifth year running. Clifden exceeded these values due to levels of faecal coliforms. The EPA identified the existing wastewater treatment plant in Clifden as the most significant source of contamination of bathing waters as it does not currently have secondary treatment. Bathing water quality is mapped on Figure 3.7.

⁷ EPA (2011) *Water Quality in Ireland 2007-2009*, Wexford: Environmental Protection Agency

3.5.2.4 Ground Waters

Groundwater is stored in the void spaces in underground layers of rock, or aquifers. These aquifers are permeable, allowing both the infiltration of water from the soils above them and the yielding of water to surface and coastal waters. Groundwater is the part of the subsurface water that is in the saturated zone - the zone below the water table, the uppermost level of saturation in an aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric, in which all pores and fissures are full of water. Groundwater bodies within County Galway follow the pattern of the underlying geology, the empty spaces of which they are contained in. Ground water is important for drinking water supply together as well as the source of some surface waters across County Galway.

3.5.2.5 Aquifer Vulnerability

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates aquifers according to their vulnerability to pollution.

The most productive, regionally important aquifers in the County - labelled Major Aquifers - underlie the majority of the area to the east of Lough Corrib as well as areas surrounding Lough Corrib and the Aran Islands. These aquifers are those which are most vulnerable to pollution in the County - most of them are either of high or medium vulnerability - and are those over which most existing development occurs and most new development is likely to occur. Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water.

The less productive aquifers - labelled Poor aquifers - underlie the western half of the County and the south eastern, more upland area of the County. These aquifers have the potential to be productive in local zones. These aquifers are generally of low vulnerability although a number in the east are of medium vulnerability.

3.5.2.6 Aquifer Productivity

The GSI rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource. Ireland's entire land surface is divided into nine aquifer categories, four of which are recorded in the County.

Galway is underlain by the most productive all of the aquifers, *Regionally Important Karstified Aquifers*.

Locally Important Sand/Gravel Aquifers occur in small areas throughout the County. These types of aquifers are capable of yielding enough water for boreholes or springs to supply domestic, commercial and industrial uses, depending on the nature and scale of the development.

Poor Bedrock Aquifers - which are generally unproductive - are found in the south east of the County and in the west.

3.5.3 Flooding

Flooding is a long-established environmental phenomenon in County Galway that gives rise to significant economic and social effects. The magnitude and occurrence of these effects have been increased by development within the County's flood plains and may be increased in the future should changes in climate occur and should new development be located in flood plains. County Galway is vulnerable to adverse effects from changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events and associated flooding of the County's rivers combined with small changes in sea level.

Seasonal flooding can be caused by turloughs, seasonal lakes that are a feature of the limestone lowlands of the County. The turloughs drain slowly via underground routes. This tends to cause a backing-up of water over the winter months, causing turloughs to expand. Extensive areas can become inundated if the accumulation of rainfall is greater than average over the autumn and winter months as was the case in the winter of 1994–1995 when severe flooding occurred in the Gort–Ardrahan area in the south of the County.

The water bodies within the County which are among those most at risk from flooding include the streams and rivers which drain the north of the County east of Lough Corrib into the Lough and those

which drain the south east of the County - the catchments of the Cappagh, Kilcrow, Killadullisk and Killoran Rivers - into Lough Derg.

3.5.4 Waste Water

Figures provided by Galway County Council, as included in the environmental report, detail capacity and demand at nineteen settlements, however, six of the settlements have no waste water treatment facilities.

Three of the plants are currently overloaded and one has no spare capacity, as a result, they are not compliant with the provisions of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. Waste water from two of the plants is pumped to Mutton Island WWTP which is the responsibility of Galway City Council. The remaining seven plants have spare capacity.

The overloading of the plants and the low level of treatment provided in some of the plants has significant potential to harm human health - through contamination and pollution of bathing water and drinking water - and biodiversity and contribute to failing Water Framework Directive objectives if unmitigated. Five of the plants are in compliance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

Information on predicted future waste water treatment capacity and demand was provided by the Council. Potential upgrades may occur at four of the settlements which would bring these settlements into compliance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. It is foreseen that the waste water treatment plants at Gort and Mountbellew will be overloaded by 2016, there are currently no plans to upgrade these plants.

3.5.5 Other Important Issues to Consider

A seawater bathing areas in the County at Clifden exceeded EU mandatory values different types of coliforms for the fifth year running.

The most productive aquifers in the County are those which are most vulnerable to pollution and are those over which most existing development occurs and most new development is likely to occur.

3.6 Air and Climatic Factors

An air quality monitoring site at Mace Head monitors concentrations of ground level Ozone (O₃). The site's data identifies that ozone target values are currently being achieved. However the long term objectives for ozone are not currently being achieved - this is due to weather fluctuations and fluctuations of ozone being transported across the Atlantic Ocean, rather than local, county or national causes.

Although EPA air quality monitoring data apart from that generated at Mace Head does not exist for Galway County Council's area, it is likely that, given the rural nature of much of the County, that the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 are generally complied with and air quality is good relative to other European urban areas, despite the occurrence of traffic congestion and new development. It is noted however that *traffic hotspots* within some of the County's towns are likely to have elevated levels of air pollution and noise due to traffic congestion. Traffic hotspots are located along the main road routes - especially at intersections - and provide for a harsh sensory environment which may impact upon human health.

Localised air pollution incidences with regard to PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} and noise pollution are both likely to occur when demolition/construction takes place - especially in relation to PM₁₀ if suppression techniques are not introduced - and when traffic is queuing for long periods of time.

Ireland's current emissions are exceeding targets agreed in the peer review of Ireland's 2006 submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is unlikely that Ireland will meet

these targets and it is likely therefore that financial penalties will be incurred. Transport related emissions continue to be the dominant growth sector.

Changes in sea level and/or changes in the occurrence of severe rainfall events as a result of climate change could adversely impact upon the County's human beings, its biodiversity and its economy, including its designated shellfish areas.

3.7 Cultural Heritage

Heritage, by definition, means inherited properties, inherited characteristics and anything transmitted by past ages and ancestors. It covers everything, from objects and buildings to the environment. Cultural heritage includes physical buildings, structures and objects, complete or in part, which have been left on the landscape by previous and indeed current generations.

The heritage of County Galway is a unique resource which is fundamental to the cultural identity of the County and the quality of life of its citizens - it is central to how we see ourselves and to our identity as individuals and communities. Historic buildings can define localities and communities within the County and can become a focus of community identity and pride. An historic church or park, for example, can help define a neighbourhood and create a sense of local cohesion.

Human interaction with the land and sea is evident from the earliest of times up to the present in County Galway, from agricultural landscapes to archaeological remains to growing urban centres.

3.7.1 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological heritage consists of such material remains (whether in the form of sites and monuments or artefacts in the sense of moveable objects) and environmental evidence. As archaeological heritage can be used to gain knowledge and understanding of the past it is of great cultural and scientific importance. Archaeological sites and monuments vary greatly in form and date; examples include earthworks of different types and periods, (e.g. early historic ringforts and prehistoric burial mounds), megalithic tombs from the Prehistoric period, medieval buildings, urban archaeological deposits and underwater features such as wrecks.

The map below shows the spatial distribution of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places in County Galway.

The majority of the monuments are located to the east of Lough Corrib, in the eastern half of the County, along the coastline, along river and lake banks and within and surrounding settlements such as Galway City, Headford, Tuam, Oranmore, Athenry, Loughrea and Gort - showing that most people have always lived in the same parts of Galway as they do today.

In the western half of the County clusters of monuments are found near the banks of Lough Corrib, within and surrounding Oughterard and in coastal areas to the east of Connemara. A high proportion of monuments are to be found on the Aran Islands.

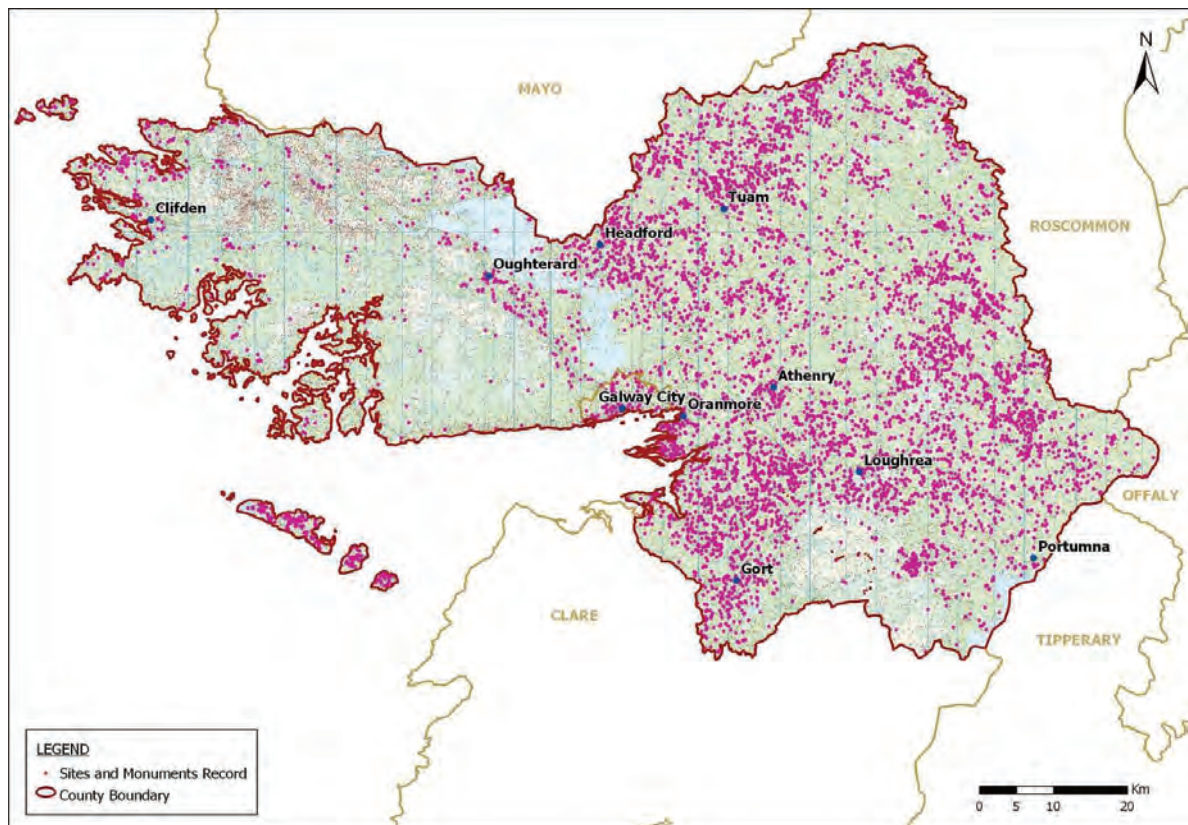


Figure 3.8 Archaeological Heritage

Source: Galway County Council (Unknown)

3.7.2 Architectural Heritage

The term architectural heritage is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments Act 1999 as meaning all: structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings; groups of structures and buildings; and sites which are of technical, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.

The physical form of the individual structures in the countryside and in the towns and villages of County Galway has evolved through many periods. The built heritage which has developed has attained a character that contributes to varied, locally distinctive areas in the County. County Galway's rich architectural heritage is reflected in the Record of Protected Structures for the County which currently lists 821 structures.

As is the case with archaeological monuments, the majority of Protected Structures are located to the east of Lough Corrib, in the eastern half of the County. Large clusters of the structures are found within the County's settlements while smaller clusters or individual structures are found in more rural areas. The majority of structures are located in areas where most of the County's existing development exists and where most new development is likely to occur.

In addition to these Protected Structures, there are nine Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) adopted in the current County Development Plan. These ACAs are found in the settlements of Oughterard, Headford, Tuam, Oranmore, Athenry, Clarinbridge, Loughrea, Gort, and Portumna as mapped below. An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in a development plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA which might alter the character of the structure or the ACA.

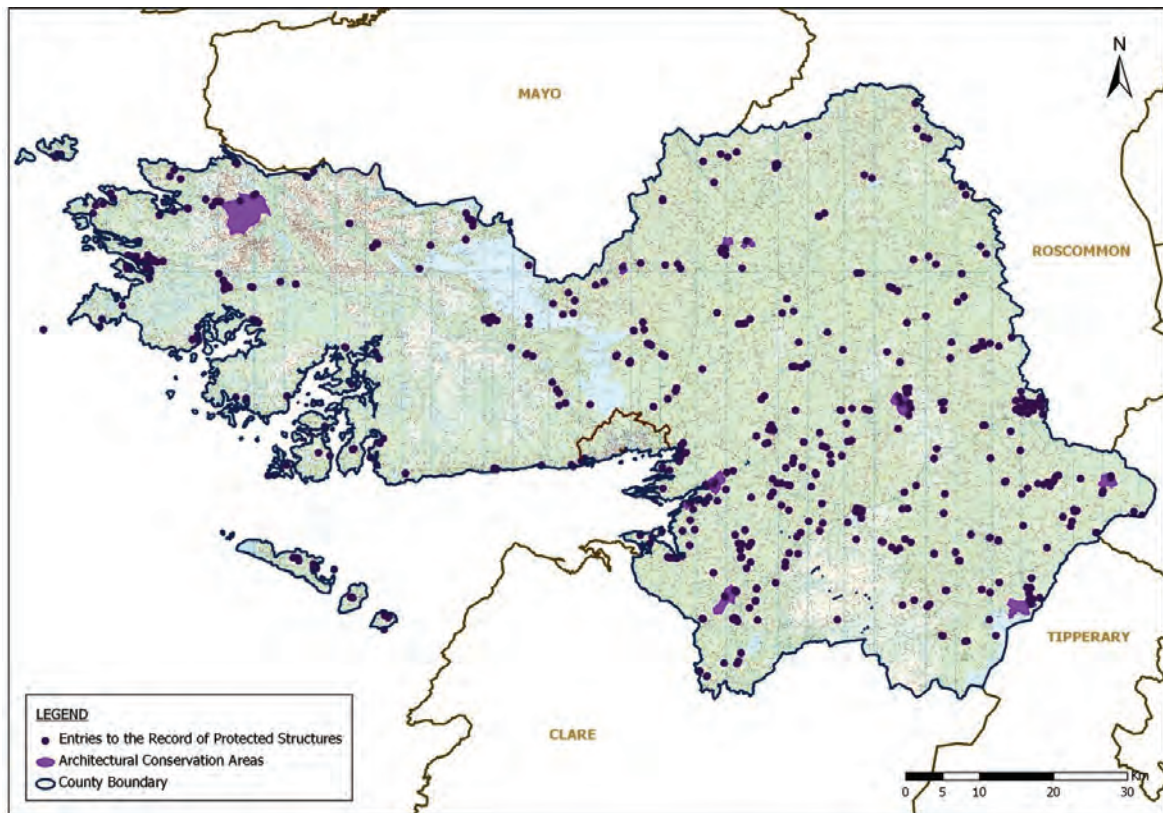


Figure 3.9 Record of Protected Structures and ACAs

Source: Galway County Council (Unknown)

3.8 Landscape

Landscapes are areas which are perceived by people and are made up of a number of layers: landform, which results from geological and geomorphological history; landcover, which includes vegetation, water, human settlements, and; human values which are a result of historical, cultural, religious and other understandings and interactions with landform and landcover.

Human interaction with the natural heritage has produced a variety of characteristic landscapes and landscape features. The natural diversity of the landscapes of the County coupled with cultural features such as the archaeological monuments, stonewalls, hedgerows, woodlands, field patterns, settlements and buildings has given the County its distinctive character.

County Galway is richly endowed with a variety of landscape types ranging from the quartzite mountain ranges and blanket bogs of Conamara to the fertile patchwork of farmland in east Galway and the bare karst pavements of the Aran Islands and South Galway.

West Galway is a rugged landscape with mountains, bogs, rivers and lakes. Galway is bounded to the west by an extensive and varied Atlantic coastline, which ranges from cliffs to sand dunes and rocky shores to salt marshes.

East Galway is characterised by a low-lying rolling topography of a fertile limestone plain, rich pasturelands, bog, and the Shannon system with its Callows and Lough Derg.

The County is dissected by many rivers and lakes with Lough Corrib, Ireland's second largest lake at its centre.

A multitude of dry stone walls typifies the landscape of the Aran Islands. Seascapes vary from the steep cliffs of the Aran Islands to sandy beaches and the famous Coral Strand, west of Carraroe, to the long fjord-like inlet of Killary harbour.

3.8.1 Important Issues to Consider

The most valuable and sensitive landscapes in the County are found to the west of Lough Corrib - especially in the uplands of Connemara and in coastal areas.

Landscapes of lesser value and sensitivity - with the exception of areas including the coast of the County from Clarinbridge to Gort, the Lower Burren, water bodies and their banks and some upland areas in the Slieve Aughty Mountains - generally occur in the eastern half of the County.

As most new development is likely to occur in the eastern half of the County it will be possible to generally largely avoid the majority of the most sensitive landscapes in the County. However, housing development has the potential to threaten valuable and sensitive landscapes in coastal areas throughout the County; and wind energy development in the west of the County potentially poses the greatest threat to valuable and sensitive landscapes in the west of the County, where wind energy potential is at its greatest.

Section 4 Alternative Plan Scenarios

SEA Environmental Reports are required to provide an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information.

In this case it refers to the range of alternative population projections - all of which envisage reducing populations - considered for the settlements identified in the previous plan. This was the subject of an SEA and a full consideration of alternatives [Sections 6 and 7, Environmental Report of the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015, April 2009]. The downward population allocations mean that the intensity of potential adverse environmental effects will be reduced.

The distribution of population allocations is consistent with the strategic alternative scenario assessed and selected for the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 [Sections 6 and 7, Environmental Report of the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015, April 2009]. This scenario was *Alternative Scenario 3: Centred Development Strategy (Strong Urban Centres and Rural Protection)* and focused on building strong urban centres and generating critical mass in the Galway Gateway, the Tuam Hub and a restricted number of towns to support enhanced infrastructure and services. These settlements would act as focal points for their rural catchments. Rural Settlements would be planned under the scenario in order to evolve into small mixed use urban centres, providing a range of services and employment to their local population. Scenario 3 was assessed as having the least amount of potential environmental conflicts.

Decisions relating to the overall downward revision of population projections which is provided for by the Variation, took account of a number of considerations - economic, technical, social and environmental. The environmental factors were those specifically and exhaustively assessed as the basis for the previous plan and SEA already referred to.

These considerations had particular regard to both the capacity of the settlement to contribute towards achieving the objectives of the new Core Spatial Strategy - these objectives are consistent with the objectives of the existing Spatial Planning Strategy - as well as opportunities for public or sustainable travel and the availability of existing and planned critical water and waste water infrastructure.

A difficulty arises due the objectives and scope of this phase of plan making. It is not feasible to provide more detailed 'stand alone' documentation of how environmental factors influenced the selection of alternatives because of the integrated and iterative nature of the process of considering alternatives. As such this level of consideration of alternatives is all that is feasible or reasonable for this phase of plan making.

Section 5 Evaluation of Variation Provisions

5.1 Methodology

This section evaluates the relevant parts⁸ of the Variation's provisions. Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are used for this purpose as outlined below. Use has also been made of the environmental baseline descriptions and the maps of the individual components provided in Section 3 of the Environmental Report.

The interactions between the SEOs and the policies and objectives of the Variation determine the likely significant effects [if any] of implementing the various provisions of the Variation. These effects include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

In order to comply with the SEA Directive, SEOs have been grouped under relevant parent components such as *water* and *landscape*. Based on an understanding of the existing and emerging environmental conditions in County Galway a series of SEOs were identified and developed in order to assess the likely significant environmental effects. The provisions of the Variation are evaluated using compatibility criteria (see Table 5.1) in order to determine how the provisions are likely to affect the status of these SEOs. Table 5.2 brings together all the SEOs which have been developed from international, national, regional and county policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives.

The SEOs and the provisions of the Variation are arrayed against each other to identify which interactions - if any - would cause impacts on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies a likely conflict with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the conflict column - e.g. B1 which stands for SEO likely to be affected - in this instance 'To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species⁹'. The evaluation also draws attention to the potential improvements to the protection of the environment outside of the urban centres which would be likely to occur as a result of providing for development within these centres.

Potential adverse effects of implementing the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 as varied will be mitigated by other provisions which have already been integrated into the County Development Plan and which are already in force.

The provisions of the Development Plan as varied will combine with the provisions of other planning and sectoral policies and objectives including those which are included in the following documents to provide for the development of County Galway and the wider Region and contribute towards the need for developments such as those relating to transport, water services or power infrastructure. Such planning and sectoral policies and objectives which have been used in the assessment when considering potential cumulative and indirect conflicts and effects include:

- National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020;
- National Development Plan 2007-2013;
- West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022;
- Shannon International River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015;
- Higher level Environmental Protection Objectives and related Plans which have been identified in Sections 3 and 4 of this report; and,
- Strategic Actions and related Plans and Programmes which have been identified within Plan provisions.

⁸ Certain content of the Variation which does not comprise policies or objectives has been screened out of the SEA and therefore is not evaluated in this report.

⁹ 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

Other planning and sectoral policies and objectives - and projects arising - are subject to their own planning and environmental assessment processes. Potential cumulative and indirect conflicts and effects will be mitigated by measures which have already been integrated into the Development Plan (see Section 6) and they will be addressed by lower tier environmental assessment, as appropriate.

5.1.1 Note on Appropriate Assessment

Note that an Appropriate Assessment (AA) - which derives from the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC - has been carried out for the Variation. The AA concludes that the Variation will not give rise to effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites¹⁰.

5.1.2 Note on Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 as varied contains policies and objectives regarding flood risk and flood management. A separate Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the entire county is being undertaken.

¹⁰ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- (a) no alternative solution available,
- (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and
- (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Likely to Improve status of SEOs | Probable Conflict with status of SEOs- unlikely to be mitigated | Potential Conflict with status of SEOs- likely to be mitigated | No Likely interaction with status of SEOs |
|---|--|---|--|

Table 5.1 Criteria for appraising the effect of Alternatives & Variation Provisions on SEOs

| SEO Code | SEO |
|------------|---|
| B1 | To ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annexed habitats and species ¹¹ |
| B2 | To ensure compliance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the management of environmental features which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones - are important at the County level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species |
| B3 | To avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites |
| HH1 | To protect human health from hazards or nuisances arising from exposure to incompatible landuses |
| S1 | Maximise the sustainable re-use of brownfield lands, and maximise the use of the existing built environment rather than developing greenfield lands |
| W1 | To maintain and improve, where possible, the status of surface waters |
| W2 | To prevent pollution and contamination of ground water |
| W3 | To manage areas that are currently at risk of flooding or are likely to pose a significant flood risk in the future |
| M1 | To serve new development with appropriate waste water treatment |
| M2 | To serve new development with drinking water that is both wholesome and clean |
| C1 | To reduce travel related greenhouse emissions to air |
| C2 | To encourage modal change from car to more sustainable forms of transport |
| CH1 | To protect the archaeological heritage of the County including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places and/or their context |
| CH2 | To preserve and protect the special interest and character of the architectural heritage of the County |
| L1 | To avoid significant adverse impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to the County's landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected focal points and views. |

Table 5.2 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs)¹²

¹¹ 'Annexed habitats and species' refers to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

¹² Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures which are developed from international, national and regional policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives and against which the environmental effects of the Variation can be tested. The SEOs are used as standards against which the provisions of the Variation can be evaluated in order to help identify areas in which significant adverse impacts are likely to occur, if unmitigated against.

5.2 Component 1 of the Variation: Introduction of Core Strategy

The first of two components comprising the Variation is to replace Section 2 - *Spatial Planning Strategy* - of the County Development Plan 2009 to 2015 with a new Section 2 - *Core Strategy and Spatial Planning*. The provisions in this replacement chapter comprise Core Aims, Strategic Spatial Planning Policies and amended Strategic Spatial Planning Objectives.

5.3 Component 1 of the Variation: Introduction of Core Strategy

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| | Likely to Improve status of SEOs | Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated | Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated | No Likely interaction with status of SEOs |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Core Aims | | | | |
| 1. To provide for the growth of County Galway towards a long term target population of up to 198,500 by 2022 and to distribute that part of the population growth anticipated up to 2016 in line with the settlement strategy as indicated in the West Regional planning guidelines, focusing a greater rate of growth in the Galway Gateway and the Hub town of Tuam. The continuing support for appropriately scaled development in key service towns, local service towns and villages in a sequential manner will remain a priority while recognising the role that new infrastructure and public transportation links will play in their future and in maintaining the viability of rural communities in the hinterlands of these towns and villages. Comment: By focusing a greater rate of growth within the 2 main settlement centers and supporting appropriately scaled development elsewhere, this Aim would be likely to contribute towards environmental protection and sustainable mobility patterns. Potential conflicts with environmental components would include those relating to the provision of appropriate waste water capacity and associated effects. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | |
| 2. To build on the regional-level linkages between County Galway, the Galway Gateway and other parts of the West Region by supporting the implementation of regional spatial strategies as set out in the West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and co-operating on areas of mutual planning interest; Comment: See comments under Aim 1 above. Note also the spatial strategies contained in the West RPGs have been subject to SEA and AA. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | |

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| <p>3. To ensure a high level of environmental protection in the implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the plan through the observance of all legal requirements with regard to Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Directive Assessment, Water Framework Directive Assessment and Flood Directive as appropriate.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | | |
| <p>Comment: This aim would improve the status of all environmental components.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Strategic Spatial Planning Policies</p> | | | | |
| <p>Policy SP1: The promotion and development of the Galway Gateway and Tuam as a Hub Town – a nationally significant urban centre, whose location and scale support the desired critical mass necessary to sustain strong levels of economic growth and prosperity in the West and a strong, independent hub to support the spatial strategy at national, regional and local level, together with improved connectivity between the gateway and hub to enhance their complementary status and development.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | |
| <p>Comment: The development of the Galway Gateway and Tuam would be likely to contribute towards environmental protection and sustainable mobility patterns. Potential conflicts with environmental components would include those relating to the provision of appropriate waste water capacity and associated effects. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Policy SP2: Support the role of Ardaun, Garraun and the Galway Metropolitan Area as key elements in the future strategic growth of the Galway Gateway and Galway County in a plan led, sustainable manner focussed on integrated land uses and transportation opportunities.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | |
| <p>Comment: Supporting the role of Ardaun, Garraun, and the Galway Metropolitan Area as key elements in the future strategic growth of the Galway Gateway and Galway County in a plan led, sustainable manner focused on integrated land uses and transportation opportunities would be likely to contribute towards environmental protection (including that of biodiversity, flora and fauna, human health, soil, water, cultural heritage and the landscape) and sustainable mobility patterns. Potential conflicts with environmental components would include those relating to the provision of appropriate waste water capacity and associated effects. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Policy SP3: The careful management of growth in the Galway Transportation and Land Use Study Area, in particular, the commuter zone of the greater Galway City area needs strong policies to shape and direct growth. This area corresponds with what the NSS describes as 'rural areas under strong urban influences'.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | | |
| <p>Comment: The careful management of growth in this area would prevent sprawl and associated environmental effects and contribute towards sustainable mobility patterns.</p> | | | | |

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| <p>Policy SP4: The co-ordination of new growth within the emerging new transportation and economic corridors in the key towns identified in the Core Strategy throughout the County in order to create more sustainable development patterns and to optimise public and private investment. The development of the Western Rail Corridor and new commuter services, together with significant road network improvement during the plan period will have a major impact on development and settlement patterns.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 C2</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: Potential conflicts with environmental components would occur as a result of the development within these corridors. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives. The development of the corridors would facilitate the provision of appropriate water services infrastructure and would improve sustainable mobility patterns.</p> | | | |
| <p>Policy SP5: The development of Key Support Towns to serve rural areas. Throughout much of County Galway, there is a need to address the imbalance at County level and build on the strengths and scale of existing settlements and to assist in promoting, sustaining and diversifying the rural economy.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 C2</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: The development of Key Support Towns would contribute towards the sustenance of rural populations and land management practices that are essential for certain habitats. The development of Key support towns could also benefit the provision of appropriate water services - and associated effects - and sustainable mobility patterns. Potential conflicts arising from development would be mitigated by Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | |
| <p>Policy SP6: The protection and strengthening of vulnerable rural communities and the promotion of diverse and sustainable rural areas and villages. Significant residential growth has taken place in the form of ribbonised development on rural roads, in the hinterland of the City. The more peripheral areas of the County have continued to experience depopulation and economic decline, which has resulted in continuing rural decline and the loss of community services in small towns and villages. Further residential growth must be deployed in a manner consistent with sustainable principles and the balanced development of the County.</p> | <p>B2 S1 C1 C2</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: The protection and strengthening of vulnerable rural communities and the promotion of diverse and sustainable rural areas and villages would contribute towards the sustenance of rural populations and land management practices that are essential for certain habitats. Provision of local services could benefit local sustainable mobility patterns. Potential conflicts arising from development would be mitigated by Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | |
| <p>Policy SP7: The protection and management of the areas and assets of the County that contribute to the unique visual and environmental character and sense of identity of the County and which underpin tourism, heritage and quality of life.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>S1 C1 C2</p> |
| <p>Comment: This policy would contribute towards environmental protection.</p> | | | |

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| <p>Policy SP8: While it is accepted that gateway boundaries have been formally established, it is considered by Galway County Council, based on emerging patterns of development, settlement and economic and social ties, that the Galway Metropolitan Area associated with the Galway gateway is an important, spatially definable area which is supported by ongoing investment in critical infrastructure, e.g., road, rail, water, waste water, electricity and gas investment which has and is taking place and which has provided the economic infrastructure to support the gateway. A key element in the development of the Galway gateway and associated Galway Metropolitan Area will be the preparation of an overarching framework plan which will be integrated into the County and City settlement strategies and should incorporate plans for emerging development such as Ardaun, Briarhill and Garraun and the implementation of an integrated land use and transportation strategy (based on the Galway Transportation and Planning Study) and to incorporate balanced County development.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: Such a framework plan would provide an opportunity to improve the protection of the environment and sustainable mobility however the content of a such a plan is uncertain.</p> | | | |
| <p>Strategic Spatial Planning Objectives</p> | | | |
| <p>Objective SP1 The Council will seek to direct development in such a manner as is appropriate to achieve the overall aims of the Core Strategy in line with the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the County and building on the strengths and attributes of the existing settlements, emerging transport patterns and communications and the distinctive characteristics of the identified rural areas of the County.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: This objective provides for the achievement of the overall aims of the Core Strategy. See commentary under Core Aims on previous page.</p> | | | |
| <p>Objective SP2 The Council will support and seek to secure investment in the necessary infrastructure to pursue the spatial and settlement strategies as set out herewith in this Plan.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: This objective would contribute towards the achievement of infrastructure which could enable the protection of the environment. However it could also support infrastructure which would potentially conflict with certain environmental components. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | |
| <p>Objective SP3 The Council will support and seek to secure investment for the advancement of the East Galway Waste Water Treatment Plant and the completion of the Western Rail Corridor and other critical enabling infrastructure identified as necessary to achieve the objectives of the Core Strategy during the plan period.</p> | <p>B1 B2 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: See commentary under Objective SP2.</p> | | | |

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| <p>Objective SP4: The Council will investigate the potential for development of integrated transportation hubs at Tuam, Garraun and at Athenry to maximise the strategic integration of transport and rational land uses.</p> | <p>C1 C2 S1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | <p>M1 M2</p> |
| <p>Comment: This Objective would contribute towards sustainable mobility patterns however the development of such hubs and indirect development arising could potentially conflict with environmental components. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Objective SP5: The Council will seek to manage development and interact with the relevant state bodies and private investors, in order to achieve key strategic objectives, particularly those that relate to the development of the strategic economic corridor. The Council will seek to control inappropriate development or development which may be incompatible with the achievement of key strategic objectives, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Core Strategy and development in the strategic economic corridor.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 M1 M2 C1 C2</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | |
| <p>Comment: Potential conflicts with environmental components would occur as a result of the development of this corridor. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives. The development of the strategic economic corridor would facilitate the provision of appropriate water services infrastructure and would improve sustainable mobility patterns.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Objective SP6 The Council will have regard at all times to the environmental and ecological designations, characteristics and sensitivities in the pursuit of the proposed strategy.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 W1 W2</p> | | | <p>HH1 S1 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> |
| <p>Comment: This would improve the protection of ecology and ecological sustaining resources.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Objective SP7 Consider the preparation of sub-county local area plans for geographically cohesive areas such as the coastal belt, the City/County interface areas, south-eastern uplands, etc to bring about greater social, economic and environmental connectivity between settlements and their rural hinterlands.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | |
| <p>Comment: The preparation of such plans would provide an opportunity to improve the protection of the environment and sustainable mobility however the content such plans is uncertain. Local Area Plans are required to be screened for the need to undertake SEA and AA.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Objective SP8 The Council shall seek to review the Galway Transportation and Land Use Study within the lifetime of the County Development Plan 2009-2015 subject to funding and in cooperation with Galway City Council.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | |
| <p>Comment: The review of the Galway TLUPS would provide an opportunity to improve the protection of the environment and sustainable mobility however the content of a reviewed TLUPS is uncertain.</p> | | | | |

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|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Objective SP9 The council shall establish a monitoring and review mechanism to track the implementation of the Core Strategy through the various Local Area Plans and through key indicators for transportation, environmental monitoring and other factors relevant to the wider County Area.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | | |
| <p>Comment: Monitoring enables the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. In addition to this, monitoring can also play an important role in assessing whether the Development Plan is achieving environmental objectives and targets and whether these need to be re-examined.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Objective SP10 The Council shall undertake a review of all statutorily required Local Area Plans within a year from the date of adoption of the Variation of the County Development Plan to ratify the Core Strategy and ensure that such Local Area Plans are adopted in line with the broad principles of the Core Strategy and the County Development Plan. Other Local Area Plans shall be reviewed in keeping with legislative requirements.</p> | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | | <p>B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1</p> | |
| <p>Comment: See comment under Objective SP7.</p> | | | | |

5.4 Component 2 of the Variation: Introduction of Core Strategy

The second component is to amend various parts of Section 3 - *Settlement Strategy* - of the County Development Plan 2009 to 2015 to ensure that the County settlement strategy is consistent with the settlement hierarchy set out in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan 2009 to 2015, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010 to 2022 and the National Spatial Strategy.

The provisions in this chapter comprise Strategic Settlement Policies and Strategic Settlement Objectives both of which relate to downward revised population allocations. The downward population allocations mean that the intensity of potential adverse environmental effects will be reduced.

| | Likely to Improve status of SEOs | Probable Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated | Potential Conflict with status of SEOs - likely to be mitigated | No Likely interaction with status of SEOs |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Strategic Settlement Policies | | | | |
| Policy SS1: It will be the policy of the Council to recognise the role of Galway city and the Gateway as key drivers of social and economic growth in the County and in the wider Western Region. The Council will support the growth of the strategic settlements, including Ardaun and Garraun, within the Galway Metropolitan Area. Comment: By supporting the growth of the strategic settlements within the Galway Metropolitan area, this Aim would be likely to contribute towards environmental protection and sustainable mobility patterns. Potential conflicts with environmental components would include those relating to the provision of appropriate waste water capacity and associated effects. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | |
| Policy SS2: It will be a key policy of the Council to secure the development of Tuam to fulfil its potential as a hub town, catering for the residential, employment, educational, social and retail needs of its target population and for the population of its wider hinterland in north and east Galway. Comment: See Commentary under Policy SS1. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | |
| Policy SS3: It will be the policy of Galway County Council to secure the sustainable growth of the key service towns of the county to become self-sufficient settlements and act as service centres for the inhabitants of their rural hinterlands Comment: By providing for sustainable growth this Policy would improve the status of all environmental components. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | | |
| | Likely to | Probable | Potential | No Likely |

| | Improve status of SEOs | Conflict with status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated | Conflict with status of SEO s- likely to be mitigated | interaction with status of SEOs |
|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------|
| <p>Policy SS4: It will be the policy of Galway County Council to encourage and facilitate where possible, the sustainable, sequential and balanced development of existing settlements along the strategic emerging road and rail corridors as identified in the Core Spatial Strategy.</p> <p>Comment: See Commentary under Policy SS3.</p> | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | | |
| <p>Policy SS5: It will be the policy of Galway County Council to support the development of rural areas in a balanced, sustainable manner, having regard to the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area and its residents and in accordance with the relevant policies and objectives set out elsewhere in the Plan.</p> <p>Comment: See Commentary under Policy SS3.</p> | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | | |
| <p>Policy SS6: In the case of smaller settlements for which no specific plans are available, development shall be considered on the basis of its connectivity, capacity (social, cultural and economic) and compliance with the settlement strategy, good design, community gain (this requirement shall not apply to single houses) and proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>Comment: See Commentary under Policy SS3.</p> | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | | |
| <p>Policy SS7: In order to control the scale of development, a deviation in the allocated population of up to 20% will generally be acceptable, between 20% and 30% will be assessed in the context of the group of settlements and the growth experienced by each, over 30% generally will not be accepted. Regard will also be had to the rate of growth in each settlement.</p> <p>Comment: Providing for new increases in populations would potentially conflict with environmental components. These conflicts would be mitigated by existing Plan policies and objectives.</p> | | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | |

| | Likely to Improve status | Probable Conflict with | Potential Conflict with | No Likely interaction with |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | |

| of SEOs | status of SEOs - unlikely to be mitigated | status of SEO s- likely to be mitigated | status of SEOs |
|--|--|---|--|
| Strategic Settlement Objectives | | | |
| Objective SS1: Masterplans and/or Local Area Plans for Briarhill, Ardaun and Garraun will be developed as a priority and brought forward for adoption by the Council at the earliest opportunity within the lifetime of the Plan. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | status of SEOs |
| <p>Comment: The preparation of such plans would provide an opportunity to improve the protection of the environment and sustainable mobility however the content such plans is uncertain. Local Area Plans are required to be screened for the need to undertake SEA and AA.</p> | | | |
| Objective SS2: Local Area Plans or Development Boundaries will be prepared for all Settlements designated as Lower Tier Towns. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | status of SEOs |
| <p>Comment: See comment under Objective SS1.</p> | | | |
| Objective SS3: A Local Area Plan for the North Connemara area will be prepared. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | status of SEOs |
| <p>Comment: See comment under Objective SS1.</p> | | | |
| Objective SS4: Settlement guidelines or Action Area Plans/Local Area Plans for other key settlements in the Galway Metropolitan Area and along strategic public transportation corridors will be prepared as needed during the lifetime of the Plan. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | status of SEOs |
| <p>Comment: See comment under Objective SS1.</p> | | | |
| Objective SS5: An Action Area Plan for the off-shore Islands will be prepared. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 | status of SEOs |
| <p>Comment: The preparation of such a plan would provide an opportunity to improve the protection of the environment and sustainable mobility however the content such plans is uncertain.</p> | | | |
| | Likely to Improve status of SEOs | Potential Conflict with status of SEO s- | No Likely interaction with status of SEOs |

| | | - unlikely to be mitigated | likely to be mitigated |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| Objective SS6: A Local Area Plan for Kilcolgan will be prepared based on the Bearna Local Area Plan template. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 |
| Comment: See comment under Objective SS1. | | | |
| Objective SS7: To prepare a Local Area Plan as a guidance document for the Carrmore/Galway Airport area to guide future development. | B1 B2 B3 HH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 C1 C2 CH1 CH2 L1 | | B1 B2 B3 HH1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 CH1 CH2 L1 |
| Comment: See comment under Objective SS1. | | | |

Section 6 Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

6.1 Mitigation

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment. Potential adverse effects of implementing the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 as varied will be mitigated by other provisions which have already been integrated into the County Development Plan and which are already in force.

Likely significant beneficial effects of implementing the Development Plan to which the Variation relates have been and will be maximised and potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset through:

- The consideration of alternatives for the Plan;
- Mitigation through communication of environmental considerations throughout the Plan preparation process; and
- Adherence to measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

6.2 Mitigation Measure Topics

Mitigation measures are recommended for the following topics:

- Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna
- Water Protection
- Bathing Water
- Waste Water
- Drinking Water
- Flooding
- Soil and Contamination
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape
- Air and Climatic Factors
- Transportation
- Waste Management
- Energy/ Energy Conservation

6.3 Monitoring

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. The Environmental Report puts forward proposals for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan as varied.

Monitoring enables, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action. In addition to this, monitoring can also play an important role in assessing whether the Plan is achieving its environmental objectives and targets - measures which the Plan can help work towards - whether these need to be re-examined and whether the proposed mitigation measures are being implemented.

The Environmental Report identifies indicators - which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress in the environment over time. Measurements for indicators should come from existing monitoring sources and no new monitoring should be required to take place.

A monitoring evaluation report on the effects of implementing the Plan is to be prepared in advance of the beginning of the review of the Plan.

Galway County Council are responsible for collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of a monitoring report, the publication of this report and if necessary, the carrying out of corrective action.

| Environmental Component | Selected Indicator(s) | Selected Target(s) | Source | Monitoring Frequency |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna | B1: Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive | B1: Maintenance of favourable conservation status for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation to be unaffected by implementation of the Plan as varied ¹³ | a) DEHLG report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive; and, b) Consultations with the NPWS. | a) Every 6 years b) At monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| | B2: Percentage loss of functional connectivity to environmental features which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones - are important at the County level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species without remediation as a result of implementation of the Variation | B2: No significant environmental features which - by virtue of their linear and continuous structure or their function act as stepping stones - are important at the County level for wild fauna and flora and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species to be lost without remediation as a result of implementation of Variation | a) CORINE mapping resurvey b) Development Management Process in the Council | a) Unknown b) Per granted permission; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| | B3: Number of significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from implementation of the Variation | B3: Avoid significant impacts on relevant habitats, species, environmental features or other sustaining resources in Wildlife Sites resulting from implementation of the Variation | a) CORINE mapping resurvey b) Development Management Process in the Council c) Consultations with the NPWS. | a) Unknown b) Per granted permission; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report c) At monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |

¹³ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:

- (a) no alternative solution available;
- (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and,
- (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

| Environmental Component | Selected Indicator(s) | Selected Target(s) | Source | Monitoring Frequency |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Population and Human Health | HH1: Occurrence (any) of a spatially concentrated deterioration in human health arising from environmental factors as identified by the Health Service Executive and Environmental Protection Agency | HH1: No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Variation | Consultations with EPA and Health Service Executive | At monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| Soil | S1: Area of brownfield lands developed in the County over the lifespan of the Development Plan | S1: Arising from increased levels of brownfield development, a reduced availability of brownfield land in the County (subject to availability on the open market, the demand for such land and the ability for such lands to be sustainably re-used) at the end of the Plan's lifespan | Development Management Process in the Council | Per granted permission; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| Water | <p>W1: Classification of Overall Status (comprised of ecological and chemical status) under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009)</p> <p>W2: Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC</p> <p>W3: Number of incompatible developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk</p> | <p>W1: To achieve 'good status' in all bodies of surface waters by 2015 and to not knowingly allow deterioration in the status of any surface water</p> <p>W2: Compliance with Groundwater Quality Standards and Threshold Values under Directive 2006/118/EC</p> <p>W3: Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk in compliance with <i>The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i></p> | <p>Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (EPA, 2006)</p> <p>Data issued under the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme for Ireland (EPA, 2006)</p> <p>Development Management Process in the Council</p> | <p>Unknown</p> <p>Unknown</p> <p>Per granted permission; compile at preliminary monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report</p> |

| Environmental Component | Selected Indicator(s) | Selected Target(s) | Source | Monitoring Frequency |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Material Assets | M1i: Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan | M1i: All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan | Development Management Process in the Council | Per granted permission; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| | M1ii: Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council | M1ii: For the Council to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act | Galway County Council | Detail status of Plan preparation at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| | M2i: Number of non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health | M2i: No non-compliances with the 48 parameters identified in the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2) 2007 which present a potential danger to human health as a result of implementing the Plan | a) EPA The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland reports (EPA); b) EPA Remedial Action List; and, c) Galway County Council | a) Annual/biannual; b) Annual/biannual; c) Council's Water and Waste Services Department to confirm - as appropriate - status of supplies listed on Remedial Action List. |
| | M2ii ¹⁴ : Preparation of a Water Services Strategic Plan - in compliance with the Water Services Act - for the functional area of the Council | M2ii: For the Council to prepare a Water Services Strategic Plan in compliance with the Water Services Act | Galway County Council | Detail status of Plan preparation at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| Air and Climatic Factors | C1: Percentage of population working within the County travelling to work by public transport or non-mechanical means | C1: An increase in the percentage of the population travelling to work by public transport or non-mechanical means | Central Statistics Office | Next Census Figures 2011 |

¹⁴ Indicator and Target M2i are the same as Indicator and Target M1

| Environmental Component | Selected Indicator(s) | Selected Target(s) | Source | Monitoring Frequency |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Cultural Heritage | CH1: Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected | CH1: Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places - including Zones of Archaeological Potential - (and their context of the above within the surrounding landscape where relevant) | a) Development Management/ Enforcement Processes in the Council; and, b) Consultation with DEHLG. | a) Per granted permission/ enforcement action; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report b) Compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| | CH2i: Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) protected | CH2i: Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures (and/or their context within the surrounding landscape where relevant) | a) Development Management/ Enforcement Processes in the Council; and, b) Consultation with DEHLG. | a) Per granted permission/ enforcement action; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report b) Compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| | CH2ii: Number of additions to the Record of Protected Structures and the number of additional ACAs | CH2ii: Make Additions to the Record of Protected Structures and make additional ACAs, where appropriate | Galway County Council | Compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |
| Landscape | L1: Number of complaints received from statutory consultees regarding avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to the County's landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected focal points and views - resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan | L1: No developments permitted which result in avoidable impacts on the landscape - especially with regard to the County's landscapes which are most valuable and most sensitive to change and protected focal points and views - resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan | a) Development Management Process in the Council; and, b) Consultation with DEHLG. | a) Per granted permission; compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report b) Compile at monitoring evaluation - see Section 9.4 of the Environmental Report |

Table 6.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources