



Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

County Development Plan
2009–2015



Effective from 3rd May 2009



County Development Plan 2009-2015

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Appendix 1 Housing Strategy

Appendix 2 Traveller Accommodation Programme

Appendix 3 Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement

Appendix 4 The Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House

1.1 Background

This *Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015* sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the administrative area of Galway County Council, in accordance with the *Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2006*. The Plan does not include the administrative area of Ballinasloe Urban District Council, as it is a separate Planning Authority, but has regard to the role and influence of the town on its hinterland. It builds on the review of the Development Plan for the County of Galway 2003-2009, taking into account recent key development trends and national, regional and local policy developments and the EU requirement to include the application of Strategic Environmental Assessment to certain plans and programmes. The Plan presents the Council's outlook for the future development of the County for the period up to 2015, but taking account of a longer, twenty-year perspective as well as building on the strategies set out in the previous *County Development Plan 2003-2009* and its variations during that period.

The Plan, whilst addressing the planning authority's specific areas of responsibility such as Roads and Sanitary Services, Housing, Environmental Protection, Community and Social Infrastructure, Culture and Heritage, also sets out a longer term vision for the manner in which the County can be developed and its environment protected and enhanced, employing the principles of sustainable development and social partnership.

The Plan comprises four separate parts: the main plan document, the Galway County Spatial Strategy, the Galway Housing Strategy, and the Record of Protected Structures. The Plan is accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Report, setting out the environmental implications of the policies and objectives in the plan and suggesting mitigation measures that can prevent, reduce and as fully as possible, offset any significant environmental impacts on the environment of implementing the County Development Plan.

Explanatory Note:

A Policy is a general aim to be achieved, a framework within which to work.

An Objective is an aim to be achieved in the short or medium term

1.2 Planning and Development Act 2000-2006

The legal basis for the preparation of the Development Plan is the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006. Under this legislation, the new plan is required to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. It must also be as consistent as possible with such national plans, policies or strategies that relate to proper planning and sustainable development. The Plan must also include a number of mandatory objectives for:

1. The zoning of land.
2. The provision of infrastructure.
3. The conservation and protection of the environment.
4. The protection of structures and preservation of Architectural Conservation Areas.
5. The integration of social, community and cultural requirements with planning and sustainable development of the area.
6. The preservation of the character of the landscape.
7. The renewal and development of areas in need of regeneration.
8. The provision of traveller accommodation.
9. The preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities.
10. Major Accidents Directive (Seveso sites).
11. The provision of community facilities.
12. The protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of Gaeltacht areas.

Sustainable development can be described as a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while respecting the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future. Sustainable development is founded on the three "interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars" of economic development, social development, and environmental protection.

Information, integration, and participation are key building blocks to help achieve development that recognises these interdependent pillars. Environmental and social concerns should be integrated into all development processes and broad public participation in decision making is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving sustainable development.



1.3 Galway Planning Issues

Since the last development plan for Galway County was prepared in 2003, policy developments and population growth, economic and other trends point to issues that the development plan must address. These issues include:

1. The requirements of EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive and the Water Framework Directive.
 2. National, regional and local policy developments.
 3. Unprecedented trends in relation to population.
 4. Accelerated yet unbalanced economic development.
 5. New and planned infrastructural development.
 6. Changing environmental conditions and regulations, including the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment of all Plans, Policies and Programmes.
- *At national level:* the National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP), National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS), Atlantic Corridor Initiative and various Planning Guidelines.
 - *At regional and sub-regional level:* the West Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2016 (i.e. Counties Galway, Mayo, Roscommon and Galway City) (RPGs), Western Development Commission's Strategic Statement 2004-2006, the Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Connaught Region 2006-2011; and the Atlantic Corridor Strategy. The adoption of the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS) and subsequent preparation of the joint Ardaun/Garraun study in conjunction with Galway City Council have also been considered in the preparation of the Development Plan for Galway County.
 - *At local level:* several Local Area Plans have been adopted, including the Bearna Local Area Plan which has introduced a new methodology to help achieve a balance of new development with community needs through the implementation of the Planning Process.
 - "Ar Scath a Cheile", Galway County Strategy for Economic, Social, and Cultural Development 2002-2012 addresses the future planning of all publicly funded services in the County, representing a partnership approach to issues concerning not alone the local authority, but also local development agencies, social partners, and state agencies. Of its eight key development themes, the provision of a strong economic base, management of our wealth of physical and natural resources, opportunities for learning and work, investment in communities, access to services, and celebrating cultural diversity are key elements to be considered and facilitated.

1.4 Galway County Context



The County is characterised by a varied natural landscape that includes the spectacular Connemara region in the west and the rich agricultural lands of the east. These topographical attributes combine to give Galway an outstanding and widely varied landscape setting.

1.4.1 Population

The 2002 Census recorded a population of 143,245 in County Galway, excluding Galway City. By 2006, this figure had jumped to 159,052 – an increase of 11%. This represents an increase of 27,439 or 20.8% compared with 1996. Rural population growth between 1996 and 2006 was reflected in significant growth within some electoral divisions (EDs) particularly in the area identified in the Galway Transportation and Planning Study boundaries.

More rural parts of County Galway, i.e. the county area outside the GTPS study area experienced mixed growth, with some EDs in the extreme west and uplands areas still experiencing population decline.

Key issues that emerge from a review of population trends include:

1. The population of the County, particularly those areas within the influence of Galway city, has grown at an unprecedented rate with consequences for the provision of public services and infrastructure. Uncertainty regarding future growth further complicates planning for the future provision of services.
2. The necessity to encourage and to manage population growth to reach a critical mass for Galway gateway as outlined in the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines (revised population projections).
3. Population growth projections suggest an estimated population of 190,433 in Galway County by 2015.
4. Household compositions will continue to see a move towards lower average household numbers. This has implications for the type, location and size of housing which will be required in the future.
5. Galway Gateway needs to continue growth in its critical mass and population, building on its strategic location in the West, its quality of life and its natural and cultural heritage attributes, in order to realise the vision for balanced regional development presented in the NSS.

6. To support national efforts towards balanced regional development and achieve important regional and local benefits, there is a need to focus on the Gateway region, by taking a strategic approach to the planning and development of Galway City and County and aiming to deliver, over the period to 2020.

1.4.2 Urban and Rural Development Roles

For balanced development to take place within County Galway, the role of the Gateway needs to be partnered with a focus on particular development roles for both key urban settlements and rural areas in the County, such as:

1. Metropolitan area of Galway Gateway.
2. The strategic zone between Galway City and Athenry, extending eastwards along the new N/M6 and including strong growth nodes.
3. The role of Tuam Hub town.
4. The emerging strategic zone between Galway City and Ennis (Atlantic Corridor).
5. The emerging transportation corridors being formed by the development of new road and rail connections.
6. The eastern and south eastern area rural zones.
7. The coastal and upland Connemara areas.

1.4.3 Transportation and Infrastructure

County Galway is benefiting from investment in critical enabling infrastructure, such as the National Roads Programme including the N6, N18 and N17, the re-opening of the Western rail line, planned improvements to Galway Regional Airport, extension of broadband services and upgrading of energy and telecommunication networks. This process will continue and intensify. However, to capture the maximum gain, there is a need for matching local public and private investment to, inter alia, build up the small towns and villages in the County as local engines of growth, to balance the accelerated development of the Gateway.

1.5 Strategic Aims of the Plan

Aim 1: Implement an overall development strategy for the County aimed at achieving the balanced and sustainable development of County Galway in a strategic and plan led manner.

Aim 2: Improve the quality of life for the people of Galway and maintain the County as a uniquely attractive place in which to live, work and visit.

Aim 3: Create a receptive development environment in response to national and regional policy, such as the National Spatial Strategy, the National Development Plan 2007-2013 and the West Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2016 (i.e. Counties Galway, Mayo, Roscommon and Galway City) (RPGs) and secure the development of the identified major infrastructural projects which will underpin sustainable development throughout the County and Region during the Plan period.

Aim 4: Conserve the natural, built and cultural uniqueness of the County whilst accepting that this uniqueness has the potential to generate economic well being, enhanced quality of life and create vibrant communities.

Aim 5: To drive forward the balanced economic and social development of Galway by facilitating new strategic developments at appropriate locations and enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Galway within an environment of outstanding quality.

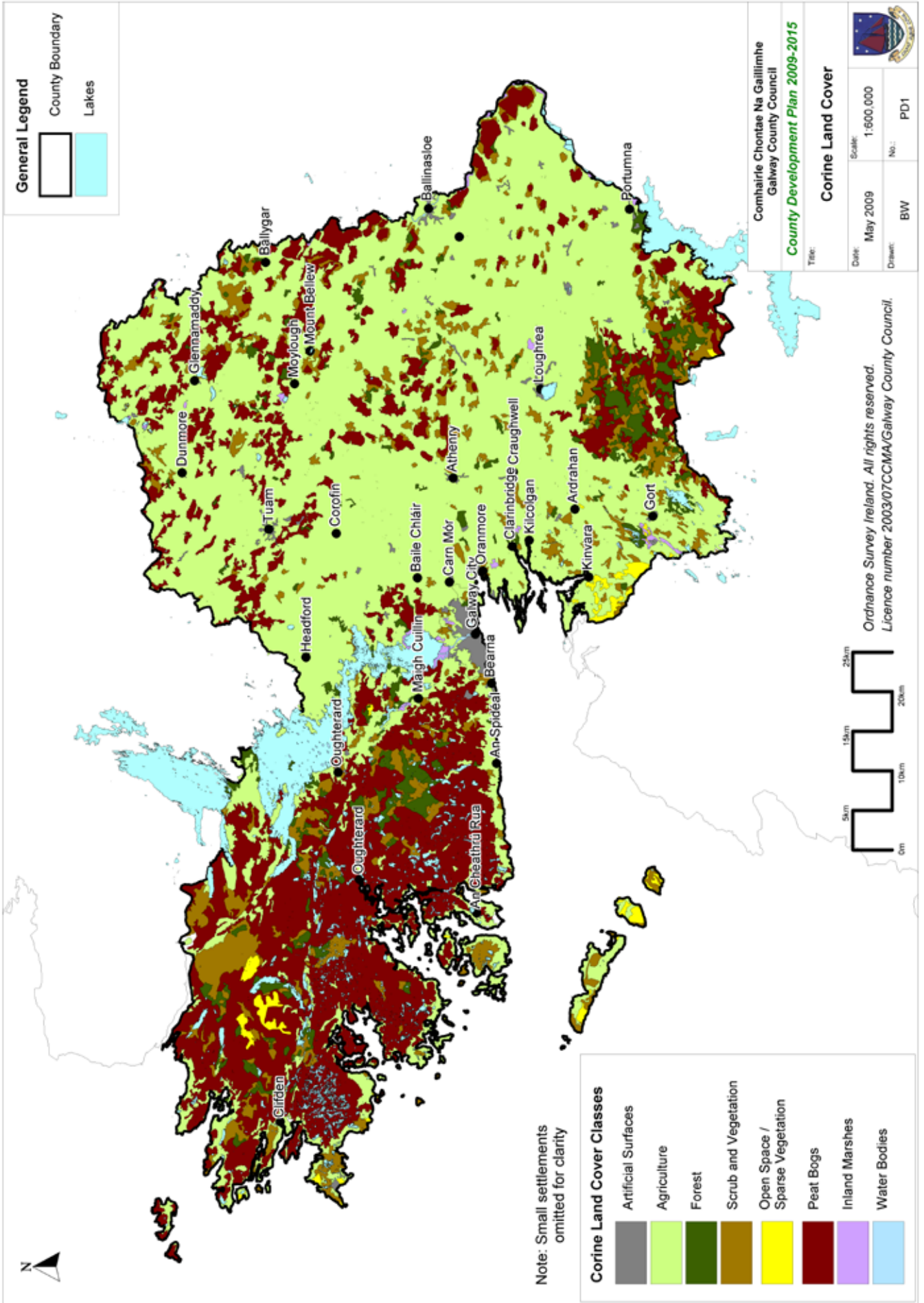
Aim 6: Develop the Gaeltacht as an Irish speaking community, in line with Government policy, recognising its importance locally, nationally and internationally.

Aim 7: Recognise the Galway Metropolitan Region as a location with the potential to attract investment both to the City and to the County, with mutually beneficial consequences, if managed and planned properly between the joint Authorities.

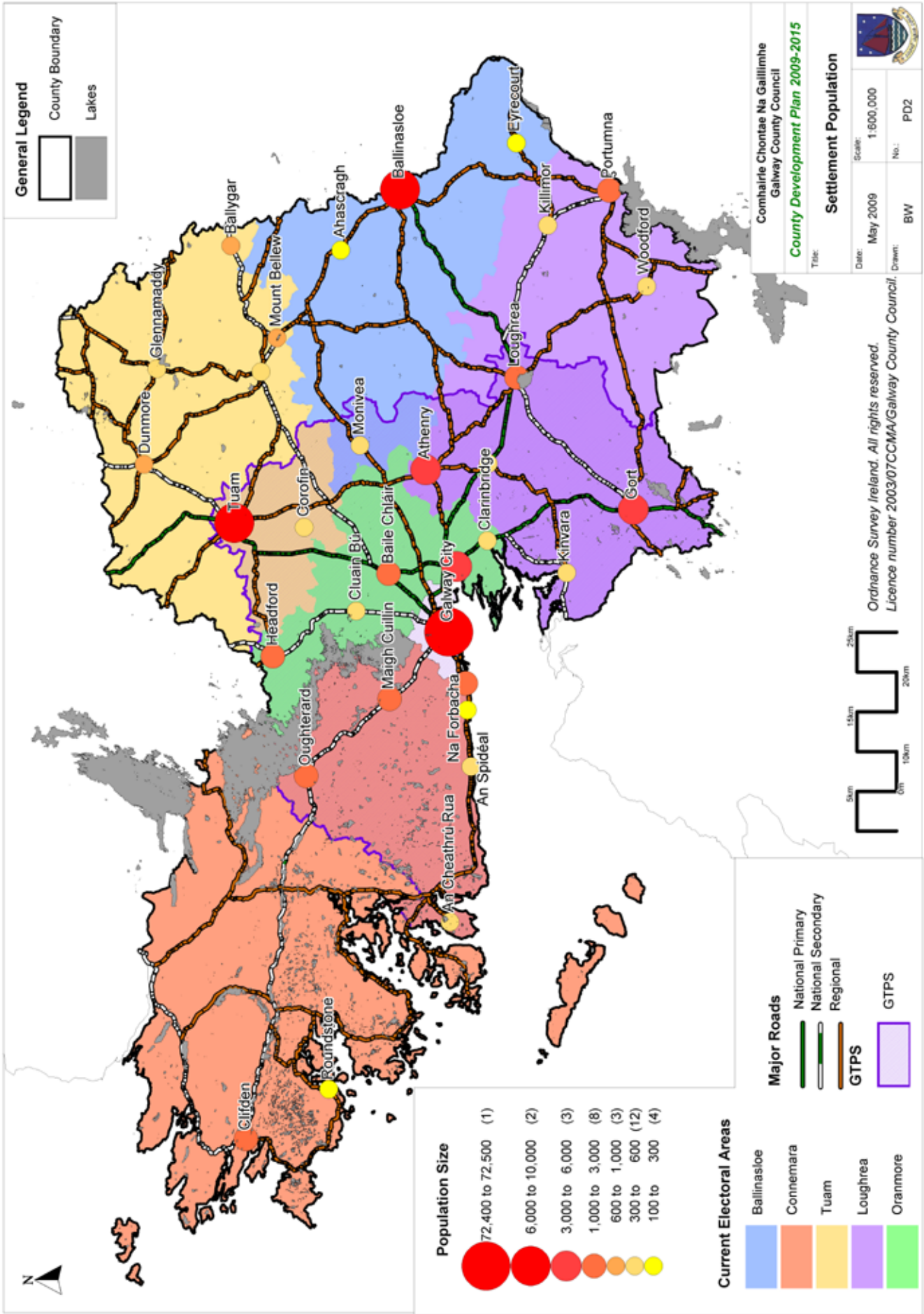
Aim 8: Facilitate and encourage greater public involvement in the planning process

Aim 9: To move towards a more sustainable and integrated concept of development with regard to land use, transportation, water services, energy supply and waste management over the lifetime of the Plan.

Maps PD1 and PD2 show the Corine Land Cover and Settlement Population for the County respectively.



Map PD1



Map PD2

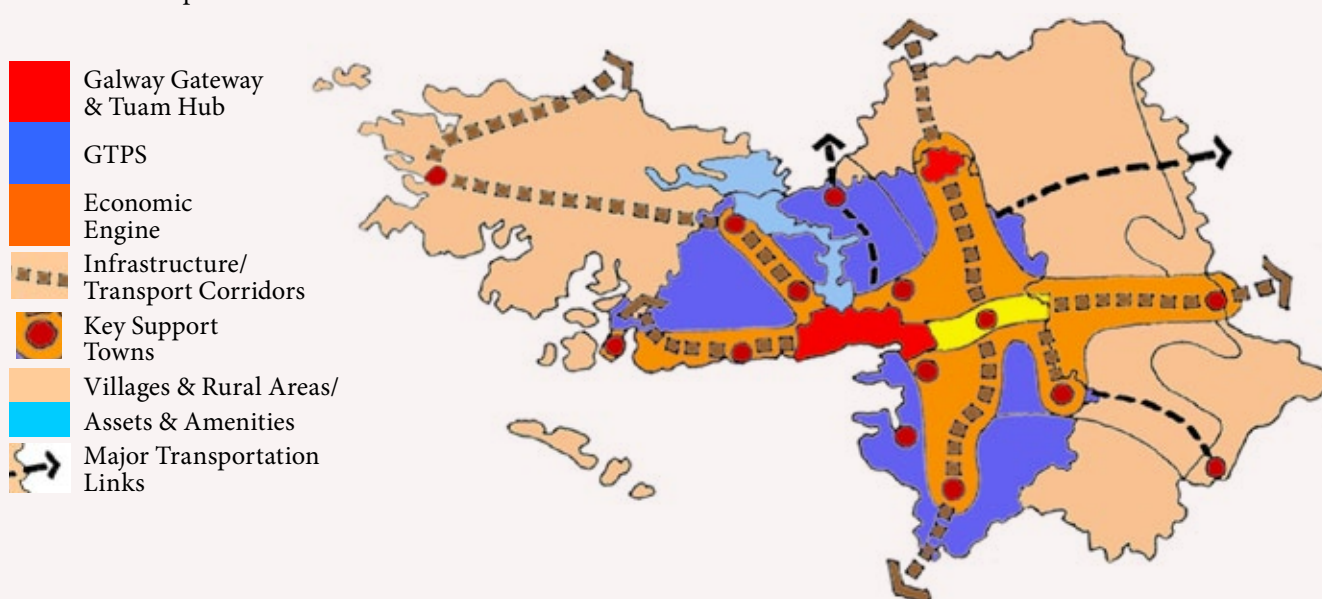
Section 2: Spatial Planning Strategy

2.1 Introduction

The overall spatial planning and settlement strategy for County Galway builds on the principles established in the previous *Galway County Development Plan 2003-2009* and the framework provided by the *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020* and the *Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2004-2016*. The strategy provides a strategic approach to the management of growth, investment and resources in the County in accordance with the aims outlined in the previous section. Map SP1 at the end of this section shows the Regional Context followed by a number of more detailed maps illustrating the spatial planning strategy for the County.

2.2 Overall Spatial Strategy

The Plan proposes a structured approach to spatial planning and the settlement strategy founded on a well-developed urban structure supporting diverse rural areas. The strategy follows a strong yet flexible approach to development, placing emphasis on building critical mass in the Hub Town (Tuam) and at key towns and villages along the strategic development corridors emerging along the new transportation infrastructure (road and rail). The existing settlement strategy has been rationalised based on existing and proposed service infrastructure whilst providing a focus for the continued support of the rural areas. Rural populations will continue to be supported through the settlement centres and through a sustainable, flexible approach to maintaining rural economy and population, balanced against responsible environmental protection.



The figure above provides an illustrative depiction of the spatial planning and settlement strategy for the County. The main strategic elements of the strategy are described and illustrated below followed by more detailed maps depicting the spatial planning and settlement strategy.

The Spatial Planning objectives and the settlement strategy and shown on Maps SP1 – SP5 inclusive were derived from a simple assessment of the likely impact of each of the alternatives considered in the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The alternative chosen and then expanded upon in the Spatial Strategy and Settlement Strategy policies and objectives is Alternative 2 – Structured Development Strategy – Well Developed Urban Structure supporting Diverse Rural Areas. This is reflected in the policies and objectives to build a strong urban gateway and hub with a network of smaller service centres throughout the county, directing growth to the emerging public transportation corridors but balanced against the strong culture of sustainable rural living in the county.

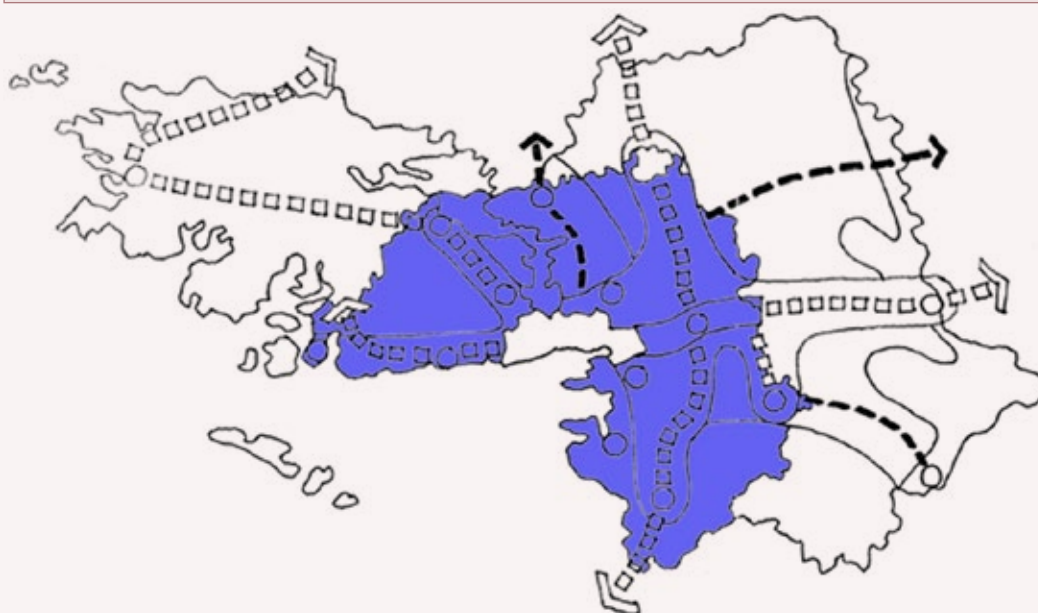
2.3 Strategic Spatial Planning Policies

The major strategic elements of the spatial planning and settlement strategy for the County are set out below:

Policy SP1: **The promotion and development of the Galway Metropolitan Area as a 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 and local level, together with improved connectivity between the gateway and hub to enhance their complementary status and development.

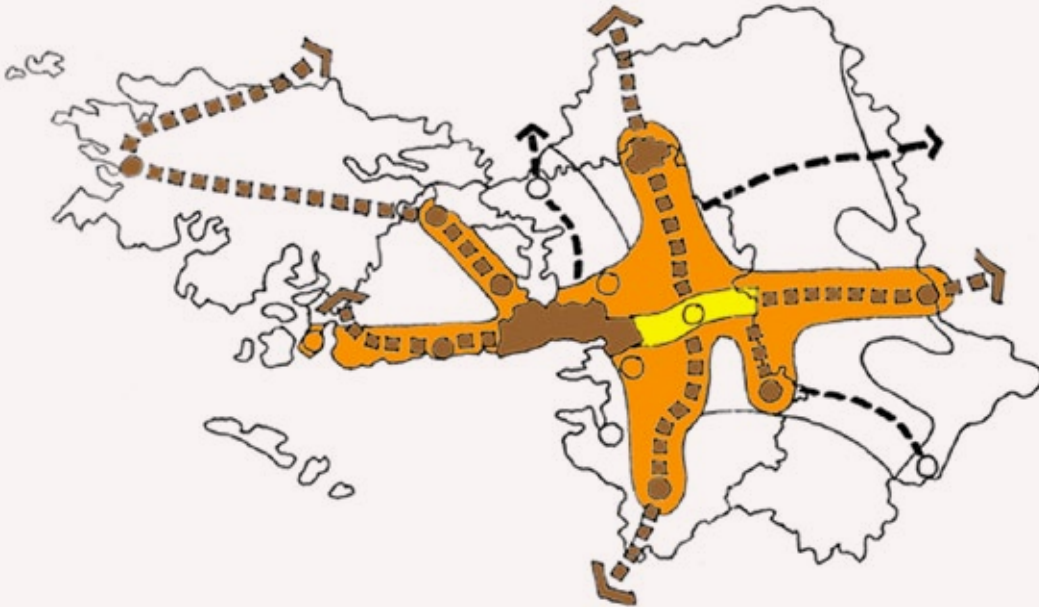


Policy SP2: **The careful management of growth in the Galway Transportation and Land Use Study Area**, in particular, the commuter zone of the greater Galway City area needs strong policies to shape and direct growth. This area corresponds with what the NSS describes as ‘rural areas under strong urban influences’.



Policy SP3:

The co-ordination of new growth within the emerging new transportation and economic corridors through the County and Region 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.



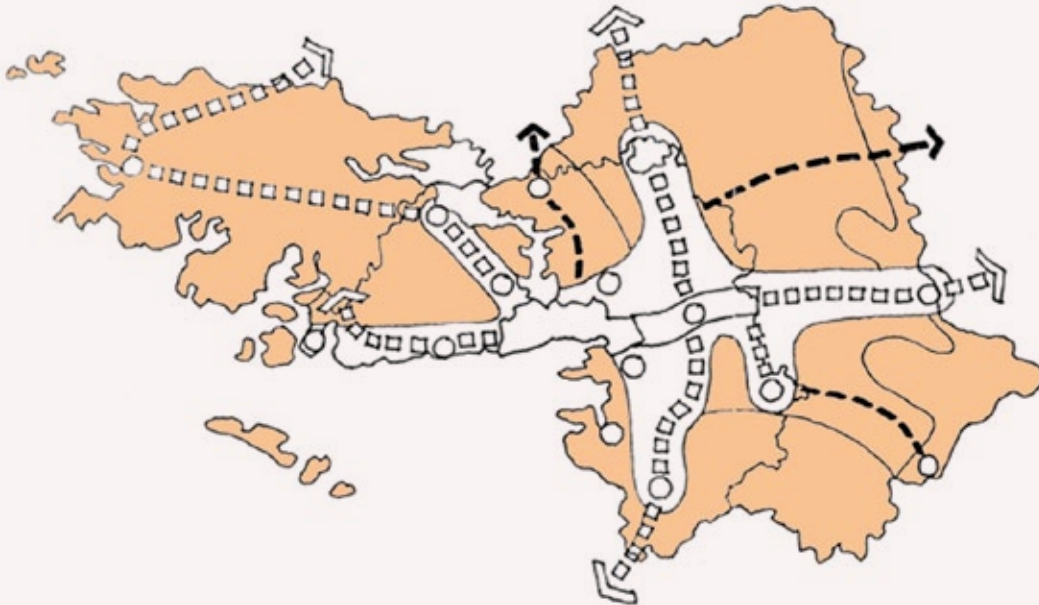
Policy SP4:

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.



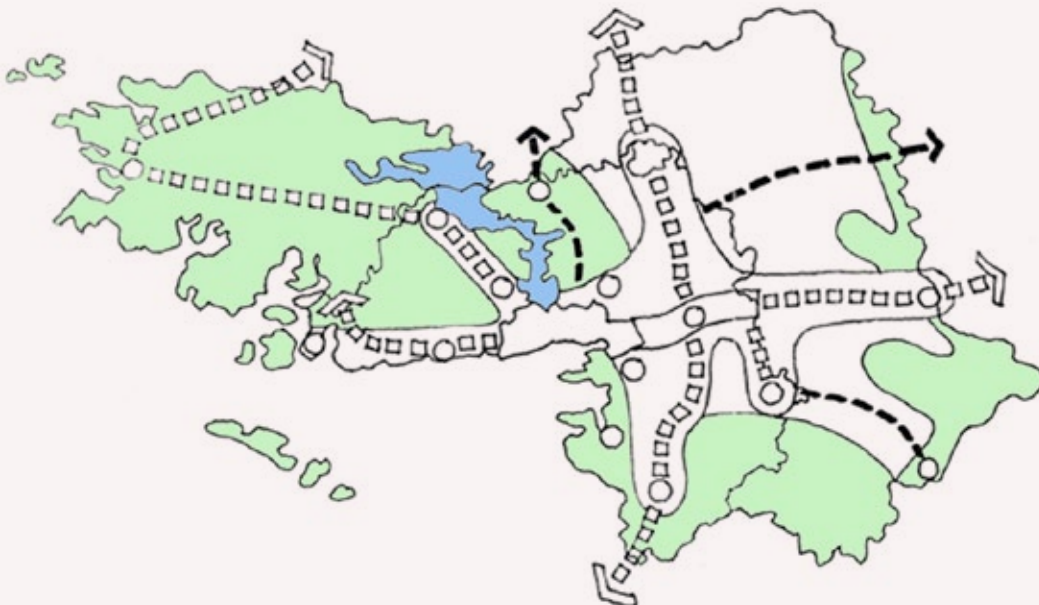
Policy SP5:

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.



Policy SP6:

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.



Policy SP7: While it is accepted that gateway boundaries have not been formally defined for any of the gateways, it is considered by Galway County Council, based on emerging patterns of development, settlement and economic and social ties that the gateway as defined by the West Regional Authority (Map SP5) is an acceptable definition.

This conceptual gateway is supported by the 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 as defined herein.

A key element in the development of the gateway will be the preparation of an overarching framework plan which should 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.

2.4 Strategic Spatial Planning Objectives

Strategic Spatial Planning Objectives

Objective SP1: The Council will seek to direct development in such a manner as is appropriate to the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the County, 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.

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 in Plan.

Objective SP3: The Council will support and seek to secure investment for the advancement of the East Galway Waste Water Treatment Plant and the Western Rail Corridor.

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.

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 development in the strategic economic corridor.

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.

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.

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.

The spatial planning and settlement strategy principles are highlighted in the following maps and details of the settlement strategy are outlined in Section 3.

2.5 Eastern Strategic Corridor and the Atlantic Corridor

The policies of the National Development Plan, the National Spatial Strategy and the West Regional Planning Guidelines promote balanced regional development. In order to implement these policies, Galway County Council in consultation with other relevant organisations, has identified a strategic corridor to the east of Galway City which is endowed with a high concentration of valuable infrastructure. The lands concerned are located approximately two kilometres to the north and the south of the Dublin – Galway rail line between Attymon station and the N18 level crossing at Oranmore (see Map SP3). The area as shown on the map is indicative only. The designation of the Strategic\Economic Corridor was based



on a framework plan which was commissioned to address the need to accommodate Regionally Strategic Industrial sites. This Framework Plan is indicative only and should not be relied upon as an indicator of land uses within the defined corridor.

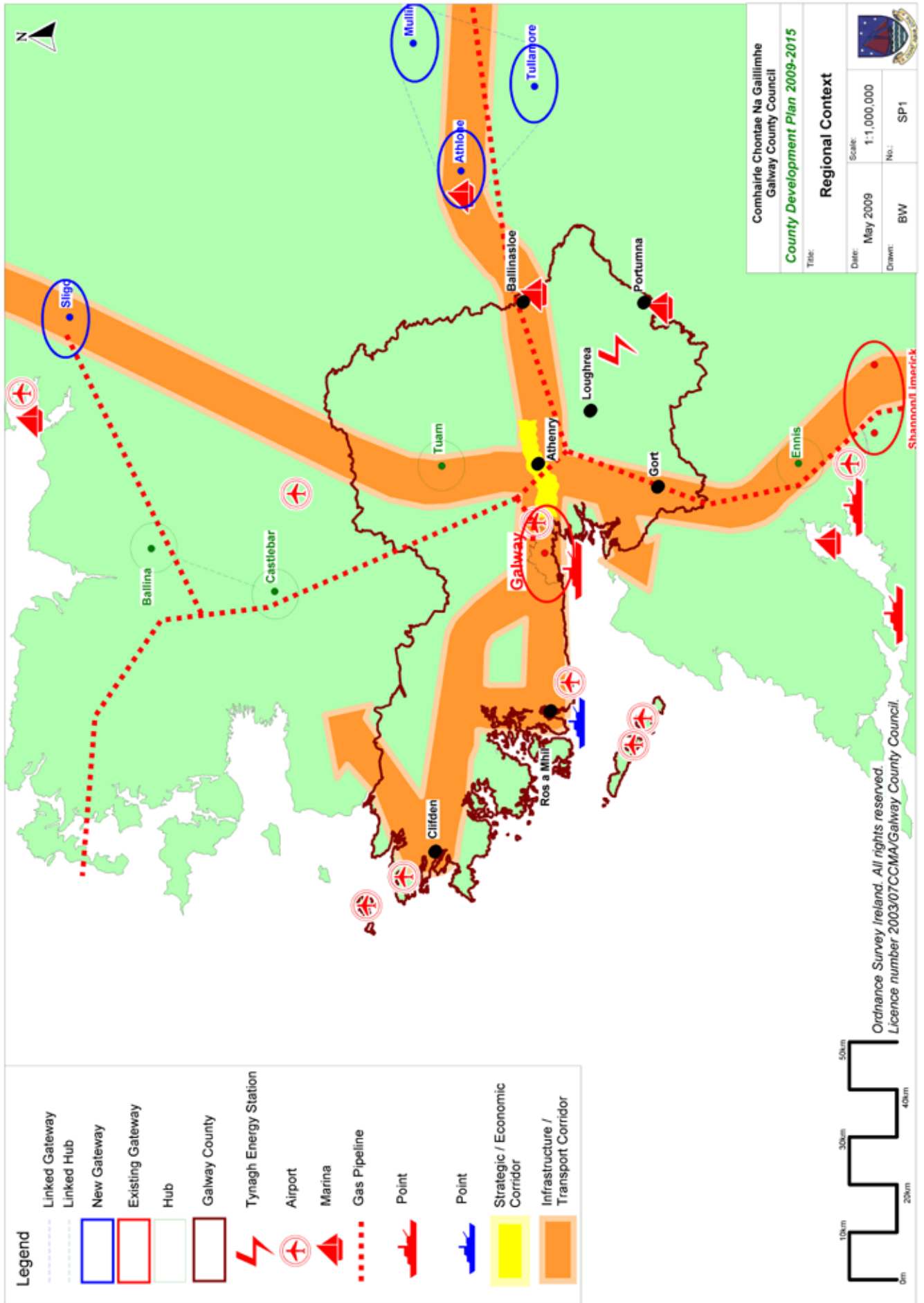
The Atlantic Corridor is promoted nationally, as a second strategic economic and transportation corridor to channel development to provide a counterbalance at national level to the Eastern corridor (Belfast – Dublin) and is a strong element of the National Spatial Strategy and National Development Plan (2007-2013). The Council is committed to enhancing, promoting and protecting the potential of both of these Strategic Corridors.

The objectives for the Eastern Strategic corridor include:

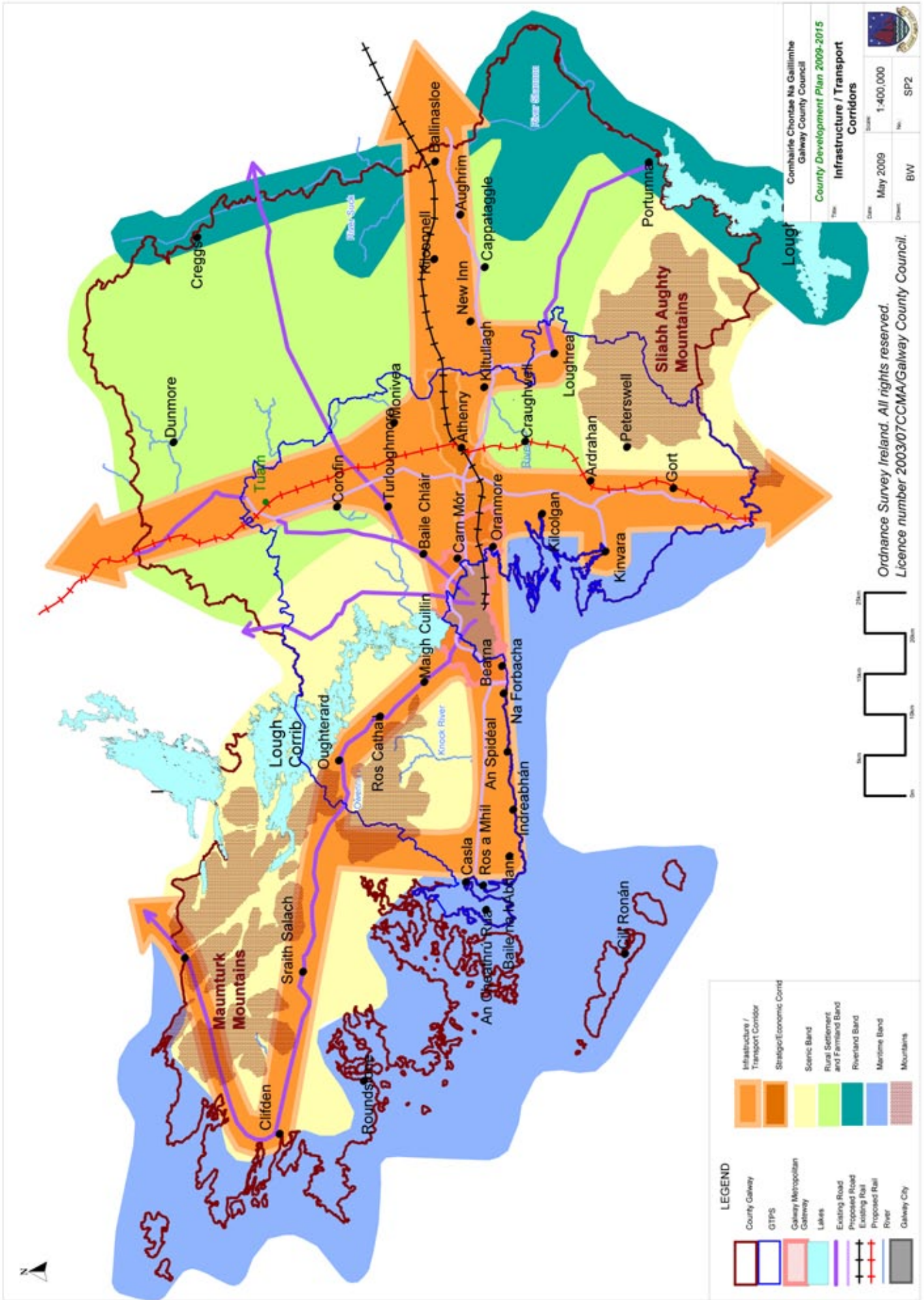
1. To upgrade, improve and maximise the infrastructural facilities available within the corridor.
2. To seek to reserve lands to support nationally and regionally significant activities and to attract specialist enterprise development that is large scale or high value.
3. To facilitate opportunities for science and technology based employment.
4. To ensure development is compatible with the enhancement, preservation and protection of the environment and cultural resources recognised within the corridor.
5. To identify sites of adequate size and location to accommodate necessary infrastructure or support activities which would not be appropriate in proximity to centres of population or sensitive environments or environmentally sensitive economic activities.
6. To inform and to aid the preparation of Local Area Plans for strategic areas and those surrounding immediate environs within the corridor.

Within the strategic corridor between the City and Athenry, it is proposed that uses such as electronic, biotechnological and pharmaceutical industries, power plants, integrated chemical installations, railway lines with associated services, waste treatment facilities, pipelines for the transport of steam, hot water or chemicals, over-head power lines, water storage and distribution works – including reservoirs, forestry, peat extraction, wind farms, knowledge based economic activity including laboratories, research and development facilities, appropriate, compatible and serviced recreational and amenity facilities, outreach industry based higher educational facilities and car parking will be considered.

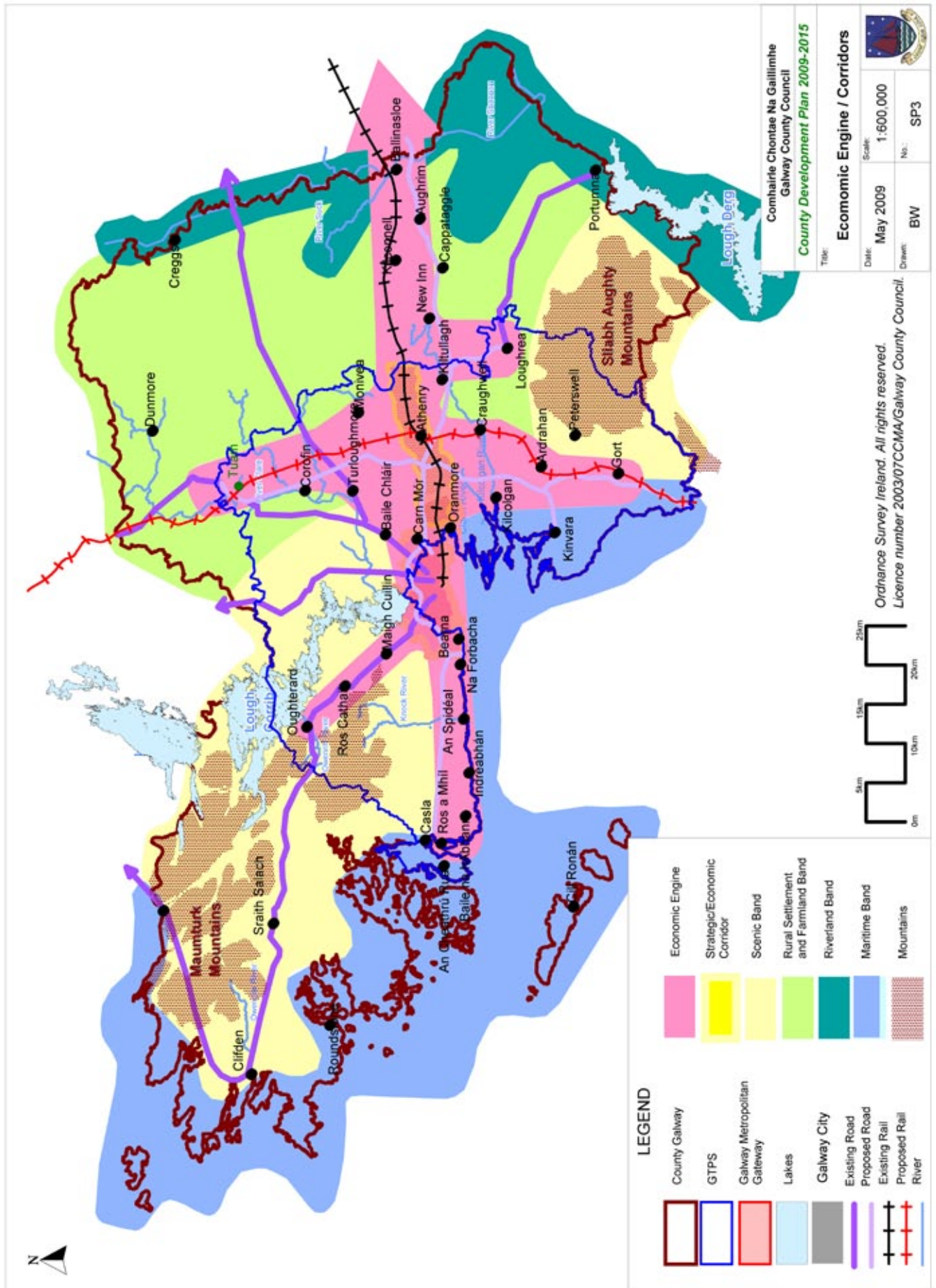
1. Each individual development may be sited within the corridor in isolation from other proposed or potential developments if it is considered expedient to do so.
2. Other uses which are considered ancillary to these primary uses will be open for consideration within the corridor and will include groundwater abstraction and recharge projects.
3. Consideration will be given to other compatible or ancillary land uses providing that their location, layout and use are not likely to significantly compromise the optimum utilisation of this area.
4. Development adjacent to and surrounding the strategic corridor will be assessed in the context of the permitted uses suggested above and the potential growth of the core strategic corridor.
5. The Planning Authority will endeavour to secure the infrastructure necessary to advance the development of the strategic corridor within the lifetime of the Plan.
6. The Planning Authority will actively encourage and facilitate development of the type identified as desirable in the Strategic Corridor within the lifetime of the Plan, having regard to but not restricted by the findings and recommendations of the Framework Plan on which the designation of Strategic Economic Corridor within the County Development Plan is based.



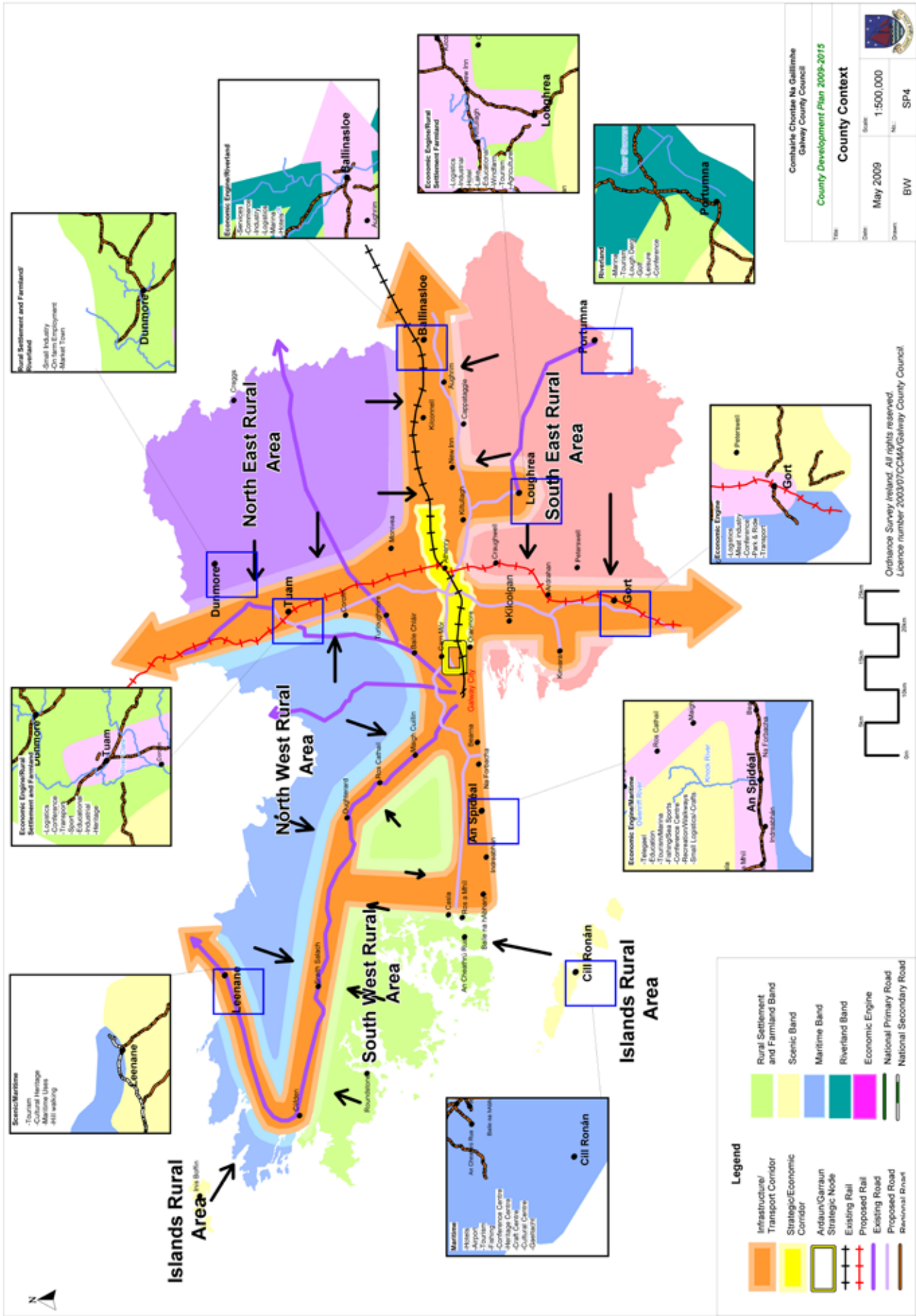
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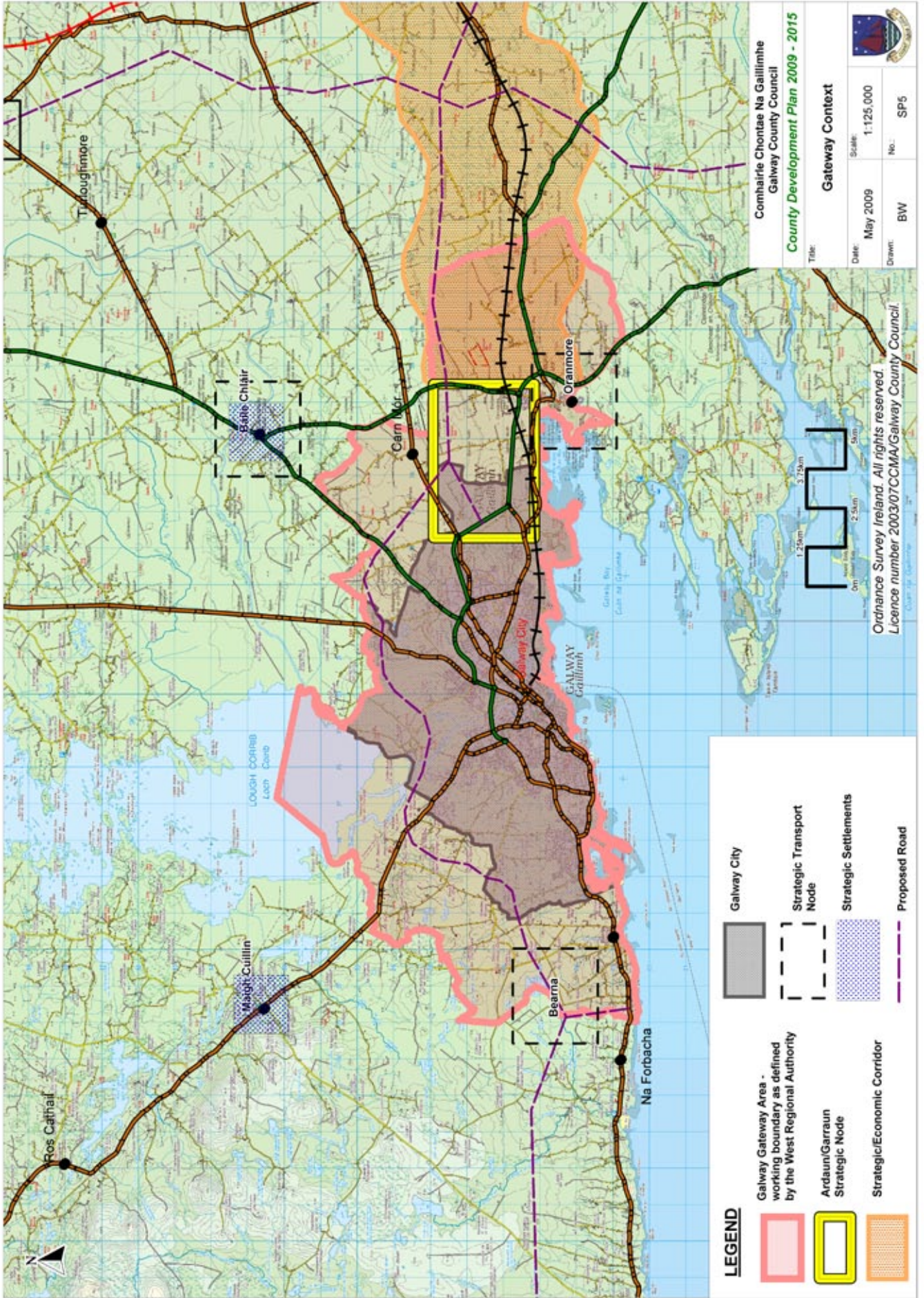
Map SP2



Map SP3



Map SP4



Map SP5

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Definition and Rationale

A settlement strategy is a spatial expression of population distribution, settlement size, settlement role, and settlement hierarchy. Together with the County Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Strategy will provide a planning framework for the location of development and population over the 6-year life span of the County Development Plan and will identify potential development patterns for different areas of the County. It will also form the basis of policies necessary to create conditions that will influence the location of development in the future.

The policies described in this Section dealing with the Settlement Strategy and the Spatial Strategy and as illustrated on Maps SP1 – SP5 inclusive were derived from a simple assessment of the likely impact of each of the alternatives considered in the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The alternative chosen and then expanded upon in these Spatial Strategy and Settlement Strategy policies and objectives is: Alternative 2 – Structured Development Strategy – Well Developed Urban Structure supporting Diverse Rural Areas. This is reflected in the policies and objectives to build a strong urban gateway and hub with a network of smaller service centres throughout the county, directing growth to the emerging public transportation corridors but balanced against the strong culture of sustainable rural living in the county.

3.1.2 Context of the Strategy

For the purpose of providing a context for the drafting of a Settlement Strategy, the following policies and policy documents have been reviewed and taken into account:

1. European Environmental Policy.
2. Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland.
3. The National Development Plan 2007-2013.
4. The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020.
5. The Atlantic Gateways Initiative – Achieving Critical Mass, 2006.
6. The West Regional Authority, Regional Planning Guidelines 2004-2016.
7. Ensuring the future – A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland
8. The State of the West – Recent Trends and Development Prospects.
9. Ministerial Guidelines.
10. Galway County Development Plan 2003-2009.
11. Other Development Plans and Local Area Plans within the County.
12. Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS).
13. Galway County Development Board Strategy.
14. Infrastructure investment programmes and tax incentive schemes in County Galway.
15. Sustainable Rural Housing: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2005.



3.2 Analysis

Recent population growth at national and regional level has been faster than was envisaged in either the *National Spatial Strategy* or the *West Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2004 – 2016*; projections of future population at national and regional level are, in consequence, revised. The incidence of houses constructed as second or holiday homes has been much greater than previously envisaged. Thus the ratio of houses constructed to population and household change has significantly altered.

The proposed development at Ardaun has been delayed with no development taking place during the previous plan period 2003 – 2009. This has had a consequent knock-on effect to population distribution throughout the remainder of the County. The lack of progress on enabling infrastructure to serve this area continues to create uncertainty. Major investments in communications infrastructure in the East of the County have been accelerated, as have IDA and other major industrial development plans within the identified Strategic Corridor.

The population of the State was recorded as 4.23 million in 2006 and the population of Connaught was recorded as 504,121, with the population of Galway County standing at 159,256 persons from a recorded figure of 131,613 in 1996 – a 21% increase in a 10 year period compared to the national figure for the same period of 16.7%. In comparison, Galway City grew from 57,241 in 1996 to 72,414 in 2006, an increase of 26.5% in the 10 year period. Estimates of migration since the last Census date in 2006 are as follows:

Population Element	Year Ending	
	April 2006	April 2007
Natural Increase/Annum	34,200	38,800
Net Migration/Annum	71,800	67,300
Population Change/Annum	106,000	106,100
Population in State/Annum	4,232,900	4,339,000

Table SS1: Population and Migration Estimates

Source: CSO Population and Migration estimates April 2007, published 18 December 2007.

This shows a marked increase in net migration in the state since the adoption of the County Development Plan (2003–2009). The Regional Population projections by the Central Statistics Office released in May 2005, assume an annual average increase in the Western Region of 1.6% per annum – the highest rate of increase in the state. The total Western Region population in 2021 is estimated at 513,000. This represents an increase of 11.5% since the publication of the West Regional Planning Guidelines in 2004.

A detailed examination of the dynamics and distribution of population and settlement within the Galway County area for the period 1991 to 2006 indicates the following facts and emerging trends:

1. Galway City has increased its primacy over the County with a strong clustering of jobs and population in and around the City.
2. In addition to a clustering of residential development around Galway City, there is also pressure along the radial road based transport routes to the West and Northwest of the City.
3. A considerable amount of the development pressure has arisen from demand for high numbers of single dwellings, particularly within the commuting zone around the City. This zone extends beyond the County boundary in places, but is most concentrated within 25 kilometres of the City. The towns and villages within this commuter zone have also demonstrated strong growth through the plan period.
4. Continued development of rural housing at current levels, cannot be maintained due to increased service costs, lack of transport provision and negative impacts on the environment especially to water resource quality, habitats and visual amenity.

The key lessons learned from the exercise are that development in County Galway is unevenly distributed and that the trends in rural housing development will inevitably slow or render uneconomic, improvements to infrastructure and services, due to increased unit costs. In order to strengthen the urban fabric of the settlements around Galway metropolitan region, attention should be given to encouraging high quality residential standards within the towns throughout the County. Investment in infrastructure should be focused on the locations that make most planning sense and provide the best economic return. An analysis of the capacity of towns and villages throughout the County to accommodate future growth has been carried out. A total of 103 settlements have been included, ranging from small villages to the large towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam. They are well distributed throughout the County. Settlements were assessed, not just individually, but as components in a local hierarchy with a view to identifying emerging linkages between settlements as well as clustering of settlements.

The capacity of each settlement was examined on the basis of a range of criteria including the following:

1. Existing settlement size in terms of population and households.
2. Recent trends in population and household growth.
3. Presence and capacity of water services (i.e. water supply and sewerage), including planned investments in water and waste water infrastructure.
4. Service functions (i.e. number of services, retail units, etc.).
5. Accessibility.
6. Zoned land.
7. Landscape.
8. Heritage (archaeology, architecture, culture).

3.3 Recommended Settlement Strategy

3.3.1 Introduction

Existing local, regional and national policy documents influence the recommended Settlement Strategy for County Galway. The principles of Proper Planning and Sustainable Development, which, along with a top-down, “plan led” approach, are cornerstones of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006. Proper planning and sustainable development means:

1. Efficient use of energy, transport and natural resources.
2. Effective use of serviced and servicable areas.
3. Best use of existing land and social and utility infrastructure.
4. A good quality of life for all sections of the community.
5. Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

The Council also recognise that sustainability is an all-embracing concept that must not only have regard to the physical use of resources, but also to the sustainable development and uses of community facilities, resources and social outcomes.

The Council recognise that the sustainable development of the County must also have regard to the fact that many rural settlements act as service centres for an established rural areas with an existing community that must be catered for.

In turn the Council recognise that the sustainable development of rural villages and centres (and the continued maintenance of local social infrastructure such as shops and schools) can be facilitated by development in hinterland areas, which contribute to a critical mass of population, sufficient to maintain local services in declining villages. Development will be permitted which allows for the sustainable continuation of rural communities.

3.3.2 Role of Galway and the Wider Metropolitan Gateway Area

The envisaged role, in the National Spatial Strategy, of Galway City and its Metropolitan area as a successful Regional Gateway, is crucial to the future of the County as a whole. The managed growth of the Gateway, designated in the National Plan, benefits the whole of the County and the wider region. The future prosperity of towns and villages near the City and the quality of life of people living in the commuting ring around Galway City depend on the Gateway retaining its dynamic growth character. As an attractor of inward investment and a provider of regional services and facilities it is essential that the settlement strategy provides for expansion of the Gateway.

3.3.3 Tuam Hub Town

The National Spatial Strategy designated Tuam as a Hub in Ireland’s future spatial structure. Its role as a Hub is to interact with and compliment the Gateway of Galway City, and drive development in rural north east Galway. The West Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2004 – 2016 underpin this role and describe the town as “an important industrial and agricultural centre for mid-Connacht”.

The Tuam Local Area Plan 2005-2011 makes provision in its land use objectives for the development needs of Tuam to reach a residential target of 15,000 people by 2020, and to cater for the commercial, industrial, social and leisure requirements of this growing population.

There is adequate spare capacity in the town’s water supply and effluent treatment systems, and its location on the Western Rail Corridor will, when this facility is restored, provide a sustainable transport link between the western gateways and hubs. There are opportunities to expand and consolidate the town centre and business/enterprise districts of Tuam to capture and encourage sustainable economic growth and accommodate new residents.

It is a key element of the spatial and settlement strategy of the County Development Plan to promote and facilitate the development of Tuam as a town in which people can live and work in a quality and distinctive environment, and which will serve as a dynamic for the social and economic progress of North and East Galway.

3.3.4 Athenry and Settlements along the Rail Corridors

The location of Athenry at the eastern end of the Strategic Corridor and adjacent to the confluence of the new inter-urban routes (M6 and M18) and the junction of the existing easterly rail line with the western rail corridor suggests that it is ideally located to act as a major new growth centre and a Goods Transportation Hub for the county and region. This potential for development is augmented by the convergence of other supporting infrastructure such as the natural gas network and the ease of access to the national power grid. Garraun is a potential site for a new integrated settlement and development node. This would need to be considered in the context of safeguarding the remainder of the county area and settlements and ensuring the funding and provision of infrastructure in these areas are not adversely affected.

3.3.5 Role of Self-Sufficient Towns

Towns, which have a high degree of self-sufficiency, reduce the demand for travel and provide a good quality of life. Outside of the Galway City commuting area there are attractive towns, which either already possess a high degree of self-sufficiency or have the capacity to develop in this manner. Self-sufficient towns are towns where a large proportion of the population living in the towns and the surrounding countryside are able to live, work, shop, go to school and enjoy their recreation, without the need for constant travel. Towns, which fall into this category, are Ballinasloe (not included in this plan), Clifden, Loughrea, Oughterard, Headford and Portumna. There are also towns which function as commuter satellites of Galway City, but which have a strong local service function and have strong or potentially strong local economic bases. .

3.3.6 Dormitory Settlements

There is an attractive and sustainable role for towns and villages close to Galway City as dormitory settlements. There is a sustainable role for towns and villages close to Galway City even though they function partly or wholly as dormitory settlements from which people commute to work and school. A sustainable role requires good transport connections to Galway and good provision of local services and facilities.

Subject to the provision of appropriate services, encouraging the location of residential development unrelated to essential rural needs in the towns and villages in the Galway Transportation and Planning Study area, identified in the strategy, will help to ensure an adequate provision of local services and to create the conditions for better provision of public transport connections in future.

3.3.7 Importance of a Network of Successful Villages and Small Towns

It is the intention of the Council to actively plan and manage the areas that surround many of these towns in association with the Town Councils as they are intrinsically linked to towns which they surround in both their land use and amenity use.

The Council is also committed to working in tandem with Government Departments and State Agencies in identifying suitable locations for new social infrastructure such as schools, recreational facilities, health and care facilities, etc in the towns and villages throughout the county, especially in those rapidly expanding settlements which have struggled to keep pace with population growth.

3.3.8 Planning for Public Transport Provision

Settlements can be planned to encourage public transport provision. Because of its highly dispersed nature the settlement structure of County Galway depends on travel by car. This will continue to be the case even though a high level of dependence is undesirable on social, environmental, and economic grounds. However, significant change, leading to an increase in public transport, can be achieved by adopting a 'plan-led' approach. The settlement strategy as a whole proposes the concentration of new residential development in designated settlements instead of a continuation of a general dispersal of growth. The general thrust of the settlement and spatial strategy will improve the conditions for the operation of public transport throughout the county.

3.3.9 Landscape and Environment: Resources to be Protected

The Spatial strategy must preserve the landscape and environmental resources of the County. Beautiful landscapes and clean, fresh water are part of the county's natural heritage. Where such resources are concerned, the policy imperative must be to avoid damage to the resource.

3.3.10 Houses Constructed

An examination of housing construction in Galway in recent years confirms that housing completions since 2003 are at record levels, the peak being recorded in 2006.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 (to Sept.)
Private	3,170	3,199	3,400 (est.)	4,396	2,518
Public		193	190	113	150

Table SS2: Housing Constructed

Source: Annual Housing Statistics Bulletins – DoEHLG

3.3.11 Hierarchy of Settlements

The reason for distinguishing settlement hierarchy is that it allows us visualise the relationships between different types of towns within a locality. The hierarchy takes into account more than the size of the town but rather aims to describe the role of the town within its neighbourhood and region. Towns and villages serve a number of roles or functions and a clear-cut,

single classification is not always possible. To represent this plurality this County Development Plan has adopted a five-tiered system where some towns and villages may be categorised into more than one category.

The hierarchy consists of:

Galway Metropolitan Gateway Area	Galway City is a vital economic driver for the entire West region. The types of services provided by the city reach beyond the county boundary. Significant employers include large public service and industrial organisations that draw employees from the network of satellite towns surrounding the city, including Oranmore, Bearna, Baile Chláir, Maigh Cuilinn, Briarhill and An Carn Mór.
Hub Town	Tuam is the only major hub town identified in the NSS. It is envisaged Tuam will develop as a strong hub town catering for a large catchment within the Region and County.
Service Hubs	They provide an extensive range of services including health, community, financial employment and retail. These towns have a strong historical identity as market towns and in most cases have relatively well-developed infrastructure. Sustained growth in these settlements is required to achieve their potential as self-sustaining towns in their own right. These service hubs have, or will have Local Area Plans prepared and implemented to guide development.
Local Service Centres	These settlements provide a more limited range of services to smaller hinterlands than service hubs. Service provision often includes a range of retail and educational services but limited financial, health and community services.
Small Settlements	These smaller settlements provide only basic services to their community, such as convenience goods and petrol. Education services normally extend to primary education only. Despite the small number of services, these settlement are distinguished from mere house clusters by the presence of such services which serve an important community purpose and provide the basis for further future development. (Figure 5: Principal Town & Villages Shows the distribution of towns and villages within Electoral Areas)

3.4 Settlement Strategy

Using the additional net household growth (approximated from the findings of the Housing Strategy), the required number of households to be accommodated during the plan period 2009 – 2015 is approximately 16,420. Factoring in a 25% additional demand arising for second homes, etc. and the possibility of demand increasing over the projected requirements, a total of 20,750 new residential units are proposed for the basis of the settlement strategy.

Based on this new household allocation of 20,600 units the following units of construction based on a sustainable settlement pattern as illustrated in the Spatial Strategy is proposed. The allocation to the overall tier shall, in general, be maintained.

3.4.1 Gateway Metropolitan Area

This encompasses settlements in both the Oranmore and Connemara electoral areas. The household growth projection for this area over the period 2009 to 2015 is for an increase of 6,150 households, representing a substantial element of the total number of new households anticipated over the plan period. This helps achieve the critical mass necessary for the success of the Galway Gateway as set out in the National Spatial Strategy.

Gateway Metropolitan Area	House Construction Allocation 2009-2015
Garraun/Ardaun	2,500
Oranmore	900
Maigh Cuilinn	400
Bearna	600
Baile Chláir	450

Small Settlements/Rural Areas	
Briarhill	850
An Carn Mór	400
Rural Area	50
Total (8)	6,150

3.4.2 Tuam Hub Town

Tuam Hub Town	House Construction Allocation 2009-2015
Tuam Hub	3,000
Total (1)	3,000

3.4.3 Service Hubs

Service Hubs	House Construction Allocation 2009 – 2015
Ballinasloe	450
Clifden	250
Loughrea	250
Oughterard	200
Athenry	500
Headford	250
Gort	450
Portumna	200
Total (8)	2,550

3.4.4 Local Service Centres

Local Service Centres	House Construction Allocation 2009 – 2015
Kinvara	150
Dunmore	200
Glenamaddy	200
Craughwell	500
Ardrahan	500
Corofin	150
Kilcolgan	200
Mountbellew	200
Moylough	200
Ballygar	200
An Cheathrú Rua	150
An Spidéal	150
Clarinbridge	150
Total (13)	2,950

3.4.5 Small Settlements and Rural Areas

Small Settlements/Rural Areas	House Construction Allocation 2009 – 2015
Lackagh, Turloughmore, Abbeyknockmoy	
Cluain Bu, Cor an Dola, Eanagh Dhuin	
Ahascragh, Attymon, Monivea, Eyrecourt	

Small Settlements/Rural Areas**House Construction Allocation 2009 – 2015**

Banagher, Kilconnell
Aughrim, Caltra, Clonfert
Kiltormer, Menlough, Woodlawn
Lawrencetown, Fohenagh, Killoran
Castleblakeney, Ballinamore Bridge
New Inn, Gorteen, Cappataggle
Williamstown, Kilkerrin, Barnaderg, Belcare
Kilbennan, Briarfield, Newbridge
Ballymoe, Milltown, Kilconly, Caherlistrane,
Brownsgrrove, Sylane, Lavally, Foxhall, Newbridge,
Cashla
Kiltevena, Glinsk, Ballyglunin, Laragh More
Woodford, Killimor, Ballymana, Esker
Carrabane, Kiltullagh, Derrydonnell Beg
Ballinderreen, Kilchreest, Ballinakill, Moyglass
Peterswell, Killeenadeema, Drim, Kilconieran
Labane, Tynagh, Kilreekil, Abbey, Bullaun, Castledaly,
Coose, Newcastle, Cooloo, Shanaglish
Na Forbacha, An Cnoc, Na Minna
An Tulaigh / Baile na hAbhann
Ros an Mhíl, Ros Cathail, Tullokyne
Leitir Mór, Cill Chiaráin, Cill Rónáin
Roundstone, Carna, Tully / Renvyle, Glinsk
Leitir Mealláin, Béal an Daingin
Tullycross, Rosmuc, An Fhairche
Leenane, Cleggan, Letterfrack, Casla
Corr na Móna, Ballyconneely
Sraith Salach, Claddaghduff
An Mám, Maam Cross, An Aird Mhóir, Maree,
Kilbeacanty, Cloghanover, Camus

Total (106)**5,950**

Over 14,650 households can be accommodated in towns and settlements for which Local Area Plans have been, or will be, prepared. This represents approximately 71% of all the estimated required new households in the County over the plan period.

The remaining households (5,950), including households to be provided in the small settlements as listed above, are considered rural. These households can be accommodated in the rural areas, subject to need arising and in compliance with the policies and objectives set out elsewhere in the Plan and in accordance with the normal principles of sustainable development and compliance with technical standards. The clustering of new residential development within or close to the named settlements will be encouraged.

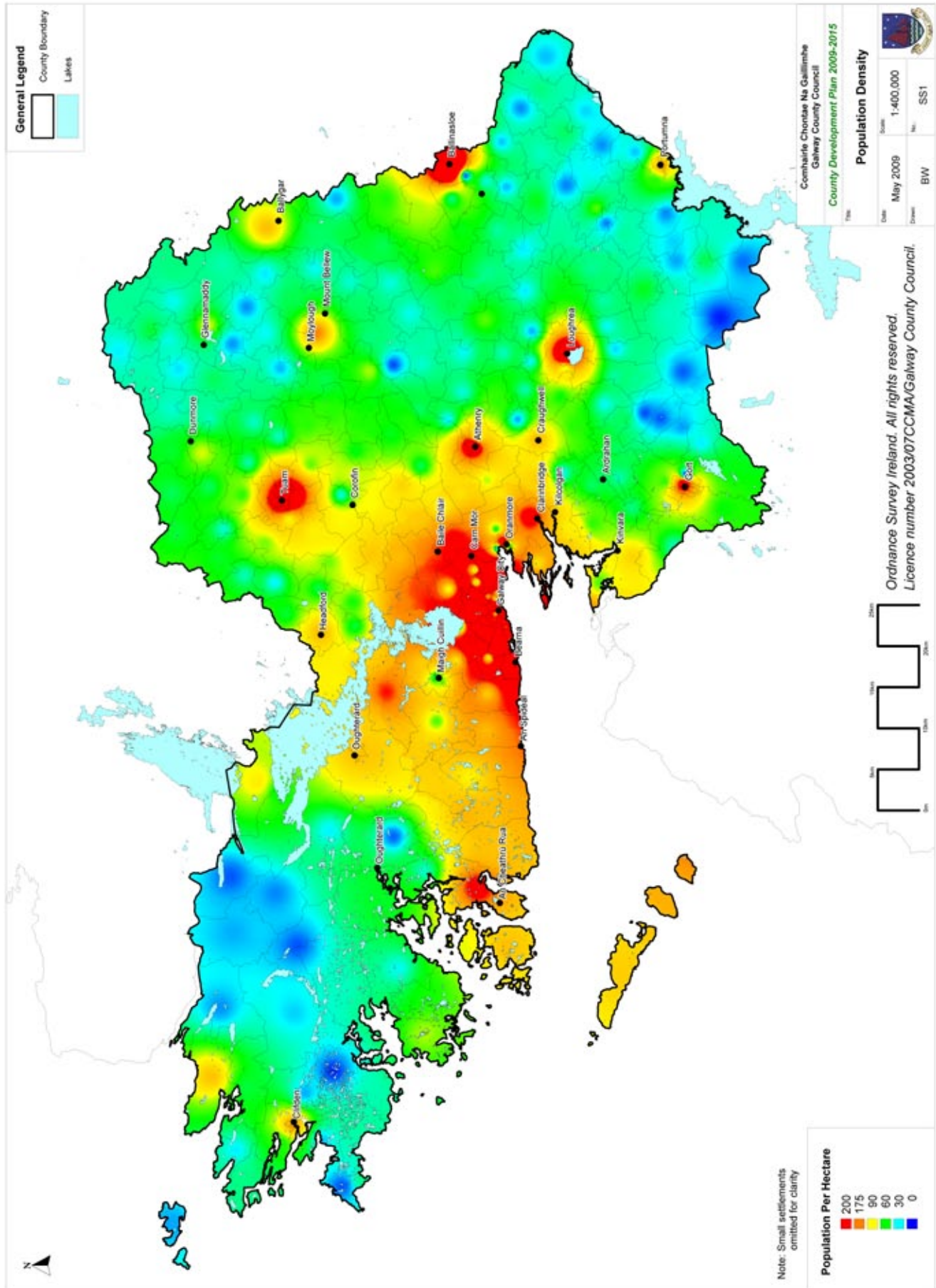


3.4.6 Strategic Settlement Policies

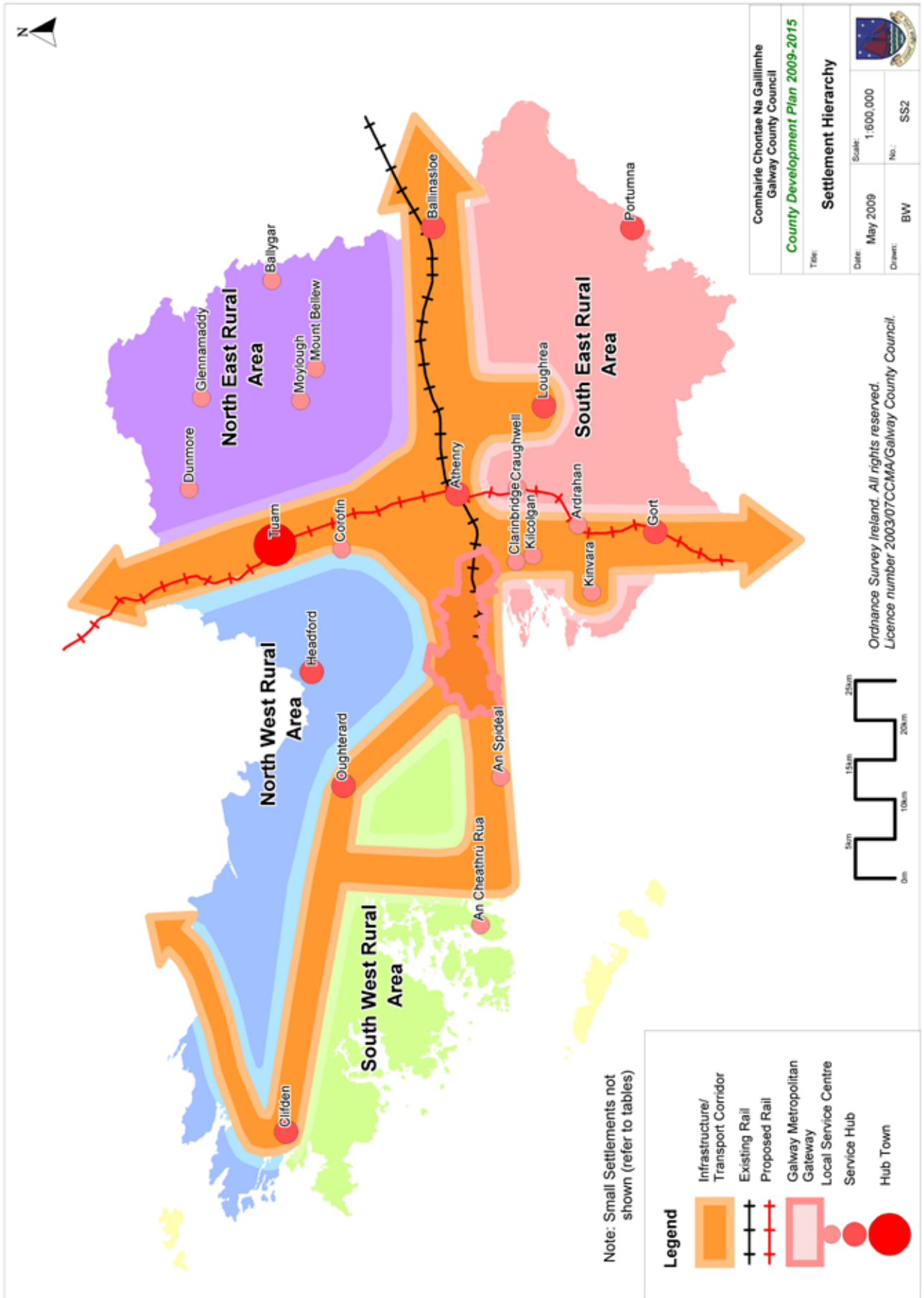
Strategic Settlement Policies	
Policy SS1:	It will be the policy of the Council to recognise the role of Galway city and the Gateway concept as key drivers of social and economic growth in the County and in the wider Western Region. The Council will support the growth of the strategic settlements within the Galway Metropolitan area.
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.
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
Policy SS4:	It will be the policy of Galway County Council to encourage and facilitate where possible, the sustainable, balanced development of existing settlements along the strategic emerging road and rail corridors as identified in the Spatial Strategy.
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.
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.
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.

3.4.7 Strategic Settlement Objectives

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.
Objective SS2:	Local Area Plans or Development Boundaries will be prepared for all Settlements designated as Local Service Centres.
Objective SS3:	A Local Area Plan for the North Connemara area will be prepared.
Objective SS4:	Settlement guidelines or Action Area Plans/Local Area Plans for other key settlements in the Gateway area and along strategic public transportation corridors will be prepared as needed during the lifetime of the Plan.
Objective SS5:	An Action Area Plan for the off-shore Islands will be prepared.
Objective SS6:	A Local Area Plan for Kilcolgan will be prepared based on the Bearna Local Area Plan template.
Objective SS7:	To prepare a Local Area Plan as a guidance document for the Carnmore/Galway Airport area to guide future development.



Map SS1



Map SS2

4.1 Introduction

Key Issues regarding the promotion of sustainable integrated economic development throughout the County include:

1. The integration of the County settlement strategy with strategic transportation changes occurring throughout the region as well as the county and ensuring compliance with the National and Regional policies as set out in the National Spatial Strategy, National Development Plan and the Western Regional Guidelines.
2. The need to encourage and foster alternative economic activity in the rural areas in the face of continuing decline in employment in agriculture is another challenge to be addressed.
3. The active promotion of balanced economic development and opportunities throughout the county to balance the huge economic draw that is Galway City area is another issue that requires active policies to shape and direct economic development.
4. According to the Economic and Social Research Institute's *Medium Term Review 2003-2010*, the move up the 'value-added chain' may see a movement away from labour-intensive manufacturing industry to the skilled service sector of the economy. Although growth in the manufacturing sector will continue to slow nationally, it will remain important to the success of Galway's economy, building on the strong, high tech industrial base developing in Galway City and the identified Strategic Corridor extending eastwards from the city.
5. Investment in transportation infrastructure and other infrastructure that supports industry and economic activity (waste water and water supply, power generation and supply, communications technology, etc.) is critical to the continuing development of the Region and the county. Policies and objectives which support the delivery of this necessary investment will be deemed to be priority policies and objectives for the purposes of this Plan.
6. The delivery of key strategic projects as identified in the National Development Plan, the National Spatial Strategy and West Regional Planning Guidelines and listed as specific objectives in this Plan, shall be a priority of Galway County Council. In this regard the policies and objectives of this Plan relating to the delivery of these projects are key primary objectives of the Development Plan taking precedence over other more general policies articulated throughout the Development Plan.
7. It is the policy of Galway County Council to continue to recognise and preserve the strategic social and economic importance of existing National Roads.



4.2 County Spatial Strategy

The Draft County Spatial Strategy has been prepared to identify the general spatial characteristics of the county and help shape development policies to encourage appropriate development in the areas. It has implications both for settlement and economic activity and seeks to provide a framework for investment and policy based on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and needs of the identified areas. It also identifies those areas where the Planning Authority will take a positive view of enterprises which may not be suitable for location in the traditional industrial zoned areas in towns and villages due to their nature or the practical considerations, including financial, of locating small indigenous or rural based business. The strategy also recognises the importance of guiding economic development into appropriate locations to strengthen the spatial strategy and settlement strategy for the county, including the promotion of strategic economic and employment-creation opportunities in the Galway Metropolitan Gateway, Tuam Hub and strategic economic corridor.

4.3 Rural Enterprise Centres

Rural Enterprise can be defined as business or small scale industrial projects or services which are related to normal rural activities and cater for the needs of a predominantly rural client base.

Rural Enterprise Centres Policies	
Policy ED1:	<p>Small scale enterprises, which applicants seek to establish in rural areas in which the applicant is resident which can be accommodated in existing farm buildings or can be established on brownfield sites and which are not suitable or would not be appropriate on industrial or commercially zoned lands in towns and villages will be considered on individual merit. Criteria that will be considered will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scale of development (number of employees, scale of buildings required) 2. Nature of the development 3. Compatibility of the development with the rural economic profile (supportive of part time farming families) 4. “Good Neighbour” principles (compatibility with agricultural land uses and impact on existing residences) 5. Impact on road network, road capacity and traffic levels. 6. General suitability in the unserved rural area. 7. Substantiate need to locate in rural area. 8. Consideration of social, economic and environmental impacts. 9. Re-use of existing buildings. 10. Compliance with the policies of the NRA and Galway County Council with regard to access onto National Roads.
Policy ED2:	<p>Re-use of brownfield sites. In general, new enterprises or industries which seek locate within or adjoining the settlement centres and can demonstrate connectivity and compliance with normal planning conditions and the development control standards as set out in this Plan shall be facilitated.</p> <p>The possibility of re-using old or disused rural buildings for new commercial enterprises shall be encouraged provided they are capable of conversion and their re-use does not contravene environmental, traffic or visual controls set out elsewhere in the Development Plan.</p>
Policy ED3:	<p>Where existing enterprise nodes have developed, the Planning Authority will take a positive view of proposals which consolidate the node as a place where new, similar development may be accommodated, subject to normal planning considerations. Where, due to changing economic or physical circumstances, an alternative or expanded enterprise is proposed at an established commercial location, the Planning Authority will be favourably disposed towards same, provided that the traffic, environmental or visual impacts of such a new development are acceptable and in accordance with other policies and objectives of the Development Plan</p>
Policy ED4:	<p>Identify Commercial Rural Enterprise Centres consistent with emerging identified demand.</p>
Policy ED5:	<p>Examine the possibility of introducing reduced development contribution levies and/or rates payable by businesses choosing to locate in Clar areas, subject to normal planning considerations and compliance with planning legislation and any permission granted.</p>
Policy ED6:	<p>Provide a flexible approach to start-up businesses and small-scale industrial/enterprise activities. Where a proposed development needs to locate near an existing natural resource, it will be necessary to demonstrate that it can be accommodated without damage to the visual, natural or heritage environment, or adverse impact on the character of the area.</p>
Policy ED7:	<p>Ensure that a high standard of design, layout and amenity is provided and maintained at locations developed for enterprise development.</p>

Rural Enterprise Centres Policies

Policy ED8: In general, existing commercial or industrial activities in towns and villages will not be permitted to re-locate to unserviced rural areas. However, certain resource industries and other industries more suitable to rural locations will be considered. These industries, along with their associated service industries should be considered in rural areas.

Policy ED9: Where established, authorised rural based enterprises seek to expand beyond their existing capacity, they will be accommodated by the Local Authority. In principle, existing unauthorised rural enterprises which are in existence for in excess of 7 years prior to the adoption of the plan, and which seek to regularise their unauthorised status, will be considered, subject to the normal planning considerations.

Policy ED10: Enterprises and businesses, which applicants seek to establish in rural areas will be considered on individual merit taking into account the dynamic and positive rural development policies of the EU and the Irish Government.

4.3.2 Rural Enterprise Centres Objectives

Rural Enterprise Centres Objectives

Objective ED1: Consider the preparation of Area Action Plan for Carrowbrowne.

4.4 Provisions for the Prevention of Major Accidents (Seveso II Directive)

The EU Seveso II Directive aims to prevent major industrial accidents and to limit their consequences. The Directive covers the presence of dangerous substances in industrial establishments, including industrial activities and the storage of dangerous chemicals. Article 12 of the Directive relates to land use planning and obliges all members to take cognizance of the need to prevent such major accidents and limit the consequences of any such accident in developing land use policies or objectives. Controls are obligatory on:

1. The siting of any such establishment.
2. Modifications to any such establishment.
3. New developments, including transport links or locations frequented by the public and residential areas in the vicinity of existing establishments where the siting of such developments are such as to increase the risk or consequences of a major accident.
4. Reduce the risk and limit the consequences of major industrial accidents, by seeking the advice of the Health and Safety Authority of Ireland in relation to development proposals affected by the Seveso II Directive.
5. Have regard to the following when assessing proposals for new development involving hazardous substances: the Major Accidents Directive; potential adverse impacts on public health and safety; the need to maintain safe distances between residential areas, areas of public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity.
6. Facilitate the implementation of the Seveso II major accidents directive and in doing so, the Council will have regard to major infrastructure projects including Carnmore Airport and its safety zone, other airstrips throughout the county, harbours, the gas distribution network, power generation facilities, rail links and major roads.

4.5 Retail Strategy

4.5.1 Retail Planning Guidelines

In January 2001 the Department of Environment and Local Government issued Retail Planning Guidelines (RPG) for Planning Authorities. The RPG's were published to provide a comprehensive framework for retail planning. They are designed to assist planning authorities in preparing plans and assessing planning applications. They also offer guidance to retailers/ developers in the planning of development projects.

The five key policy objectives of the Retail Planning Guidelines are to:

1. Ensure plans incorporate clear retail policies and proposals for retail development.
2. Facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the retail industry.
3. Promote forms of retailing that are easily accessible – particularly public transport in a location which encourages multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips on the same journey.

4. Support the continuing role of the town centre as a preferred location for retail development.
5. Establish a presumption against large retail centres located adjacent or close to existing new or planned national roads/motorways (Retail Planning Guidelines 2005).

Central to the guidelines is the principle of a hierarchy. The guidelines highlight the retail hierarchy within the state and promote this approach as being a sustainable basis for considering zoning requirements for retail developments. The guidelines stress the importance of town centres and indicate that the vitality and viability of such centres is critical to the retail element. They indicate that it will be appropriate for planning authorities to adopt a pro-active role in enhancing town centres so that they can achieve their full potential and continually improve as retail destinations.

The guidelines reiterate the floor space caps imposed by the Local Government (Planning and Development) General Policy Directive (Shopping) 1998: A capping of 3,500m² in the Greater Dublin Area and 3,000m² elsewhere within the state on food store development.

The RPG also outline general principles for assessing new developments and indicate types of development where more particular criteria may be used. These include:

1. Regional Shopping Centres
2. District Centres
3. Large Food stores
4. Discount Food Stores
5. Retail Parks and Retail Warehouses
6. Factory Outlet Centres
7. Retail Warehouse Clubs
8. Shops in Small Towns and Rural Areas
9. Village Shops
10. Local Shops
11. Petrol Filling Stations



4.5.2 Requirements for Development Plans

In order to accommodate retail development in an efficient, equitable and sustainable manner, the guidelines require Local Authorities to incorporate clear policies and proposals for retailing into development plans.

The RPG recognises that because retail planning requires the consideration of catchment areas, jointly prepared retail strategies may be appropriate for some local authorities. This is because catchments may extend beyond administrative boundaries.

4.5.3 Retail Development Policies

Retail Development Policies	
Policy ED11:	Recognise the principles established in the Retail Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, January 2005 as the primary basis for the control of future retail development.
Policy ED12:	The Planning Authority will prepare a Retail Strategy in conjunction with Galway City Council for adoption by both Authorities within the lifetime of this Plan.
Policy ED13	The Planning Authority will have regard to and implement the recommendations of the Retail Planning Guidelines in the discharge of its Development Management Functions with regard to retail developments.
Policy ED14	The Planning Authority will consider the possibility of a Regional Retail facility within the Galway Gateway area, subject to the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines, the locational requirements of such a facility, the transport assessment requirements and in accordance particularly with the provisions of Paragraph 26 of the Retail Planning Guidelines.

Policy ED15: The Planning Authority recognises the inefficient use of land that many marts located in prime town centre locations represents. Existing marts and livestock co-ops that seek to re-locate to edge of town locations thus allowing for the expansion of the town centre/core area will be considered positively, subject to normal planning requirements and development control standards. Where such marts or co-ops seek to consolidate their activities at appropriate edge of town locations, this will be given positive consideration.

4.5.4 Retail Development Objectives

Retail Development Objectives

Objective ED2: Encourage and promote the development of appropriate types and patterns of retail development that support the vitality and viability of existing town centres and main streets.

Objective ED3: Encourage and promote a high quality of retail development in accordance with the Development Management Standards set out in Section 11.4.

Objective ED4: The Planning Authority will engage with Galway City Council to produce a new joint Retail Strategy for Galway City and County within 2 years of the coming into force of this Development Plan

Objective ED5: The Planning Authority will prepare a policy document setting design standards for retail signage and fronts of retail/commercial developments.

4.6 Extractive Development

County Galway has extensive deposits of stone and mineral material, which is a fundamental resource for the building industry. There are multiple workings of stone quarries and gravel pits throughout the County with continual pressure for the development of new sources.

It is recognised that the winning and processing of these materials are key factors in the economic life of the County and that the Planning Authority will face a challenge in facilitating the gainful exploitation of the materials with minimum impact on the environment and least disturbance to residences.

4.6.1 Extractive Development Policies

Extractive Development Policies

Policy ED16: Facilitate the extraction of stone and mineral material from authorised sites having regard to its location in the landscape sensitivity rating.

Policy ED17: Restrict development in the neighbourhood of existing extractive sites or sites which have obvious resource potential, and so avoid conflict in development activities.

Policy ED18: Control all new operations and carefully evaluate all proposed developments to ensure that the visual or other environmental impacts of such works will not materially injure the amenities of the area.

Policy ED19: The Planning Authority shall be favourably disposed towards planning applications for the use of temporary borrow pits for aggregates or materials that are located adjacent to or adjoining major public roads or infrastructure projects serving the county where the need to haul along public roads is eliminated. All normal planning considerations shall apply.



4.6.2 Extractive Development Objectives

Extractive Development Objectives	
Objective ED6:	The Planning Authority shall have regard to the Quarries and Ancillary Facilities Guidelines published by the DoEHLG in 2004 and to DM Standard 36 of this Plan in the assessment of any applications for extractive developments.
Objective ED7:	Consider the preparation of an Extractive Industry Policy to provide greater clarity and guidance regarding extractive industry operations, planning application requirements and environmental and rehabilitation provisions.

4.7 Tourism

Tourism is one of the major growth sectors worldwide. It is a major contributor to this county's economy. The Operational Programme for Tourism recognises that Ireland's quality natural environment is one of the significant strengths of Irish tourism. County Galway possesses extensive areas of scenic beauty which when added to its distinctive heritage, culture and leisure facilities are a major indigenous resource.

The number of overseas visitors to Ireland has risen steadily for the last 5 years. Some 6.3 million tourists visited the country during 2000 of which over 1.3 million visited the West Region. Tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy of the County. The industry is a year round one but is particularly active during the summer months. The County has a wide range of recreational activities to offer the tourist including golfing, swimming, fishing and angling, cycling, pony trekking, walking or merely visiting one of the many attractions. There are over 14 golf courses, 5 blue flag beaches and 16 pony trekking centres in the county and a large number of walking and cycling routes.

Rural communities are in a period of rapid social and economic change. The need for farm diversification or alternative farm activity is recognised and consequently on-farm or farm related tourism ventures and its associated infrastructure will be considered having regard to the landscape classification policies and the primary purpose of family farms.

4.7.1 Tourism Policies

Tourism Policies	
Policy ED20:	Positively support and promote sustainable Tourism Infrastructure development related to the enhancement of the County's tourism profile, with facilities such as those related to sailing, boating, angling, walking and pony trekking routes, pier or marina development, golf courses, adventure centres, theme parks, interpretative centres and Gaelic Games and other sporting facilities; and ensure that all such developments are built to a high environmental standard to protect the County's most significant tourism asset – its natural environment and landscape.
Policy ED21:	Some tourism related developments involve the interaction of a number of the above listed activities with accommodation facilities. As not all can be located on one site, facilitate such proposals where integration and linkage between tourism facilities is promoted.
Policy ED22:	Support the provision of tourism related developments that promote the redevelopment of existing derelict sites and contribute to the economic wellbeing of the community. However, such development, as with all tourism proposals must be capable of being satisfactorily screened and assimilated into the landscape. It shall not be located in areas, or close to areas, where an unsatisfactory level of visually unsympathetic development has already taken place or has otherwise been permitted.
Policy ED23:	Key rural assets must be protected and the local potential of rural areas developed. This will be achieved through identifying, conserving and developing on a sustainable basis the various types and combinations of economic strengths of rural areas, with the support of appropriate levels of infrastructure provision. The potential for economic activity in rural areas such as natural resource, local enterprise and tourism related development, and the qualities that underpin such activity such as a clean and attractive environment, will be central to this process.

Tourism Policies

Policy ED24:	Encourage tourism related developments inside existing settlements to preserve the open countryside free of inappropriate development. Tourism related developments outside settlement centres will be considered only where there is proven sustainable need. The need to locate in a particular area must be balanced against environmental, social and cultural impact of the development and benefits to the local community. Alternative energy sources shall be developed and utilized where possible to service such development.
Policy ED25:	Assess existing tourism venues for the purpose of identifying any shortcomings that may exist and / or any over-provisions that may have been made.
Policy ED26:	Encourage eco-tourism projects or those tourism projects with a strong environmentally sustainable design and operational ethos.
Policy ED27:	Maintain and preserve the rural character, visual amenity and scenic views of the open countryside.
Policy ED28:	Protect and maintain water quality, both coastal and inland, in order to maintain and enhance the development of special interest tourism activities.
Policy ED29:	Facilitate the provision of tourism information centres and cultural venues at appropriate locations and in co-operation with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant tourism agencies.
Policy ED30:	<p>The clustering of appropriately scaled holiday home development will generally be limited to in or adjoining small towns and villages. The Council also recognises that certain other tourism infrastructure facilities listed in elsewhere in this section may be provided as stand alone developments and that ancillary facilities (e.g. club houses, hotel, residential accommodation/development) may be required to ensure long term viability. Where the provision of such facilities meet the other requirements of the County Development Plan as set out and the requirements of proper planning and sustainable development it is the policy of the Council to support the provision of same subject to the submission of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Comprehensive justification of need of the facility.2. Overall master plan of the facility.3. Documentary evidence of compliance with the other requirements of the development Plan here set out.
Policy ED31:	The Planning Authority shall have regard to the cumulative total of holiday homes contained within a Settlement Centre. Maintain this total at a level appropriate to the size and function of the Settlement Centre.
Policy ED32:	Support on-farm tourism accommodation and supplementary activities such as health farms, heritage and nature trails, pony trekking and boating.
Policy ED33:	Ensure that all built elements of agri-tourism are appropriately designed and satisfactorily assimilated into the landscape.
Policy ED34:	Give sympathetic consideration to the improvement of, and modest extension to, existing facilities.
Policy ED35:	Support the strategic recommendations of the “Water-based Tourism, A Strategic Vision for Galway” report.
Policy ED36:	Facilitate infrastructure for the leisure craft and marine tourist sector.

Tourism Policies	
Policy ED37:	Facilitate the development of an integrated tourism and recreational complex at Bearna Golf and Country Club, including the development of a hotel, leisure centre, conference centre, golf apartments, aparthotel and associated residential units.
Policy ED38:	Facilitate the development of the Gaeltacht area as a tourist destination in the context of cultural tourism and its importance to the local economy. Facilitate the development of sustainable and green tourism which draws on the cultural, linguistic, archaeological, marine and ecological wealth of the islands while protecting the social, cultural and environmental sensitivity of these areas and the Council's commitment to the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the County.
Policy ED39:	Facilitate the development of the sustainable, appropriately scaled integrated tourism and recreational facilities at locations where there is already authorised tourist and recreational infrastructure or facilities.
Policy ED40:	Facilitate the development of integrated tourism proposals at appropriate locations throughout the County inter alia, golfing and sporting complexes and including the development of associated accommodation and/or leisure facilities.
Policy ED41:	Encourage and facilitate the development of alternative, appropriately scaled rural tourism products, including agric-tourism projects in the rural areas of the county experiencing economic decline in the traditional agricultural sector having regard to proper planning and sustainable development.
Policy ED42:	Implement a strategy for the development of a sustainable tourism industry in consultation with Fáilte Ireland (West Region) and relevant tourism authorities which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species, while supporting social and economic prosperity.
Policy ED43:	Support a geographical spread and diversification of Tourism Product throughout the County through the provision of infrastructural development which complements the area's natural and built heritage. Ensure that the cultural and natural aspects of tourism, such as the ecclesiastical heritage of East Galway and the recognition of the Burren as a major tourist attraction for South Galway are developed and promoted in an appropriate fashion having regard to the County Settlement Strategy, proper planning and sustainable development.
Policy ED44:	Signage for tourism related products shall be limited, innovative, sensitive, and of the highest quality. It shall be minimally intrusive in all areas. Alternative means of tourism information provision shall be provided where at all possible, whether of a directional or informational content. Establish a Signage Policy committee to design, and investigate funding opportunities for integrated welcome, directional and interpretative signage with a timeframe for implementation in the county, and guidance for the appearance and location of these. Opportunities to create additional themed trails with appropriate sign posting will be explored with a view to creating overlapping trails throughout the county – e.g. a folklore trail, music trail, maritime trail, wildlife trail, etc. all of which follow different but overlapping routes through the county. There is a need to ensure joined up thinking in this area and to firstly ensure that developments are in tune with visitor demand and requirements, and secondly to ensure cohesion and integration
Policy ED45	Facilitate the improvement and development of the National Programme of Way- Marked Ways including the Beara Breifne-Hyman Way, The Western Way, The Suck Valley Way and traditional walking ways in Ballinasloe to Clontuskert Abbey and Poolboy within the County. Continue to support the Architectural Walking and Ecclesiastical Driving Tours within Galway County.

Refer to the Development Management Standards in Section 11.4 of the County Development Plan.

4.8 Lakes and Beaches

4.8.1 Lough Corrib

It is possibly the single most significant natural asset in the County. Its waters serve as a domestic supply for half the population of the County. It is one of the most important wild fisheries in Europe, making it a prime tourist asset and an important habitat. As the second largest inland waterbody on the island with free and frequent access to its largely unspoilt shoreline it is a vast leisure area for locals and visitors. Some of its islands contain the remains of monastic settlements.

Lough Corrib divides the County into two main landscape types. Conamara, an area west of the Lough Corrib, comprises the Roundstone bog complex, miles of rugged coastline, the Twelve Pins, Lough Inagh, as well as a large number of settlements including Clifden, Oughterard, Ballyconneely, Roundstone, Carraroe and Costelloe. Conamara National Park and Kylemore Abbey are two of the most popular tourist attractions west of Lough Corrib. The Aran Islands lie off the south Conamara coast and are a very popular tourist destination. To the east of Lough Corrib the land is generally flat and comprises fertile agricultural lands overlying limestone bedrock.



4.8.2 Lough Derg

There are a number of tourist attractions including Lough Derg with its extensive marina facilities, Portumna Castle and Forest Park, Coole Park, Thoorballylee, Battle of Aughrim sites, Rivers Suck, Dunkellin and Shannon and the Burren. The tourism potential of the lake on the Galway shores is under-developed. The completion of a joint Marina and Sustainable Recreation Study for Lough Derg with Clare County Council and Tipperary North County Council will form a guidance document towards the realisation of the potential of the lake for tourism in south east Galway

4.8.3 Blue Flag Beaches

The County Council, on an annual basis participates in the Blue Flag Beaches Competition. The County Council is conscious of the importance of providing beaches which meet the highest standards and in this regard it is policy to increase the number of blue flag beaches in the county and in so doing contribute to the tourist industry and to the enjoyment of the facilities within the County. The County Council will also cooperate to achieve a geographical spread with the **Green Coast Award** which acknowledges beaches which meet EC bathing water quality standards, but which are also prized for their natural, unspoilt environment. This Award is objective-led, and encourages 'best practice' in management of rural beaches. It also emphasises community involvement in coastal management. Green Coast Award beaches demonstrate clean water and sound environmental management.

4.8.4 Lakes and Beaches Policies

Lakes and Beaches Policies	
Policy ED46:	Restrict development, which would significantly diminish the amenity, landscape value and/or economic value of lakes or beaches or any of their assets or amenities.
Policy ED47:	Any additional berth facilities required by angling clubs or commercial berthing facility providers on inland waterways, including Lough Corrib shall be encouraged to locate close to established facilities in order to avoid further erosion of the shoreline.
Policy ED48:	The Planning Authority shall be generally positively disposed towards the provision of additional berthing and ancillary facilities on Lough Derg, where they are being provided in association with an integrated, sustainable recreational or tourist facility and compatible with the provisions of the Department of Finance's proposed Tax Relief Scheme for the area.
Policy ED49:	Seek to identify new beaches and coastline which could be suitable for Blue Flag or Green Coast status

4.9 Industry and Enterprise

4.9.1 Industry and Enterprise Policies

Industry and Enterprise Policies

Policy ED50: It is the policy of the Council to work with the County Development Board, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Udarás na Gaeltachta and other relevant agencies to promote industry and enterprise at appropriate locations in accordance with the County Spatial Strategy, Settlement Strategy and Local Area Plans for the County, and to support and facilitate the provision of the necessary infrastructure supports and linkages.

4.9.2 Industry and Enterprise Objectives

Industry and Enterprise Objectives

Objective ED8: Encourage and promote a high quality of industrial/enterprise development in accordance with the Development Management Standards set out in Section 11.4.

Objective ED9: Encourage and promote industrial and enterprise development on the lands zoned for this purpose within the various Local Area Plans in the County, subject to an adequate consideration of the policies and objectives of these plans and the need to protect the vitality and amenities of the town or settlement.

Objective ED10: Seek to ensure that sufficient serviced and suitably-located lands are identified and zoned for different types of industry and enterprise, in accordance with the hierarchical approach to location as set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines. As part of this objective, the Council will endeavour to ensure that an adequate level of start-up/incubation units is provided within industrial/enterprise parks.

5.1 Local Authority Housing

The Council is currently implementing an extension of the four-year multi-annual programme 2004 – 2008 (extended until 2011), which will guide in the provision of Social, Voluntary and Affordable houses throughout the county. Each programme element will seek to provide an appropriate housing mix. This programme will be updated taking into account national economic circumstances, local demand and affordability, and the outputs of the new Housing Strategy.

5.1.1 Local Authority Housing Policies

Local Authority Housing Policies	
Policy HP1:	Provide public sector housing in the existing towns, villages, settlement centres and rural area in accordance with substantiated eligible need and proper Planning and Sustainable Development.
Policy HP2:	Maintain land banks in towns and villages, which will be determined by the periodic assessment of housing needs.
Policy HP3:	Provide adequate accommodation facilities for travellers in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme.
Policy HP4:	Ensure that appropriate units are developed in the housing market for the elderly, people with disabilities and other special needs households.
Policy HP5:	Incorporate the Housing Authority's Traveller Accommodation policy into the County Development Plan (Appendix 2).
Policy HP6:	To implement the provisions of the Derelict Sites Acts to prevent or remove injury to amenity arising from dereliction.

5.1.2 Local Authority Housing Objectives

Local Authority Housing Objectives	
Objective HP1:	Provide 450 houses by way of the Social Housing Programme for the years 2008 to 2011.
Objective HP2:	Provide 450 houses by way of the Affordable Housing Programme for the years 2008-2011. It is intended that approximately half of this total number shall be delivered through the provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2006.
Objective HP3:	Adopt a new Housing Strategy for the period 2009 – 2015.

5.1.3 Housing Strategy

Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000-2006, places an onus on all Local Authorities to prepare a Housing Strategy for their areas. The first *County Galway Housing Strategy* was formally adopted and incorporated into the Galway County Development Plan during 2001. The duration of the initial strategy was for the period 2001-2006. It was revised to cover the period from 2006-2009 and a new Housing Strategy, when finalised in 2008, will replace the current strategy when it is adopted by the members. The Housing Strategy is included in this plan as Appendix 1: Housing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy provides for housing the existing and projected future populations of the development plan area in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The housing strategy aims to provide an equitable level of social and affordable housing. The strategy requires that up to 20% of zoned residential land be set aside for this purpose.



5.1.3.1 Housing Strategy Policies

Housing Strategy Policies

Policy HP7: The Planning Authority shall encourage the provision of appropriately designed and located residential units to meet the needs of the elderly or those in need of sheltered accommodation, either as stand alone developments or integrated into new residential development projects, in the exercise of Part 5 of the Planning and Development Act or in the discharge of the Development Management functions.

5.2 Traveller Accommodation

The Planning Authority recognises the long tradition of the traveller community within the County and has regard to the special needs arising from its indigenous culture. Galway County Council adopted a five-year Traveller Accommodation Programme, following a survey to determine existing and projected needs, and having consulted with representatives of the traveller community. The Councils stated policy is “to provide for the accommodation needs of travellers as far as is reasonable and practicable using the full range of housing options available to the Council. This will be done in consultation with the travelling community, the settled community, and with the various other statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with the needs of travellers”.

5.2.1 Traveller Accommodation Policies

Traveller Accommodation Policies

Policy HP8: Consult with travellers before the design of new accommodation is finalised.

Policy HP9: Seek to ensure full participation of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee in the preparation of the Traveller Accommodation programme and in the ongoing management of accommodation.

Policy HP10: Assist voluntary bodies in providing accommodation for travellers.

Policy HP11: The Planning Authority will support these policies and measures for the duration of the four-year programme and adopt any amended programme thereafter.

5.2.2 Traveller Accommodation Objectives

Traveller Accommodation Objectives

Objective HP4: Seek to support and implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme during the lifetime of the Development Plan.

5.3 Housing Outside of Urban Areas and Towns

Rural generated housing needs arise for people who are an intrinsic part of the rural community by way of background or the fact that they work full time or part time in rural areas. As a general principle, subject to good planning practice in matters of location, siting, design and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas of high landscape value, rural generated housing needs should be accommodated in areas where they arise. In addition, measures should be adopted to ensure that the provision of new housing in rural areas subject to conditions that such housing be occupied by established members of the rural community.

With regard to urban generated rural housing in the open countryside, development driven by urban areas should take place, as a general principle, within the built up areas and on lands identified, through the development plan process for integrated, serviced and sustainable development. However, it is acknowledged that some persons from urban areas seek a rural lifestyle with the option of working in and travelling to and from, nearby larger cities and towns. Small towns and villages have a key role in catering for these types of housing demand in a sustainable manner. A balance must be struck between encouraging appropriate residential development in villages and towns and ensuring that such development is of a design, layout, character and scale which fit well with the town or village involved and presents a high quality living environment. In addition, supporting public transport and reducing dependency on car based commuting should be a priority.

5.3.1 Rural Housing Policies

Rural Housing Policies

Policy HP12: Rural housing policies shall be interpreted in conjunction with the other policies of this plan.

Policy HP13: The Planning Authority will have regard to the Ministerial Guidelines for sustainable rural housing when considering the formulation of policies and in the discharge of its Development Management functions.

Policy HP14: Details of the “Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House” are set out in Appendix 4 and shall apply to all new developments.

Policy HP15: While it is necessary to control inappropriate residential development in the countryside (the rural areas of County Galway outside the development boundaries of towns and villages), the Planning Authority will consider “one-off” development for those who are

- functionally dependent on the land, or
- who have an essential rural housing need, or
- are involved in rural economic activities



Rural Housing Policies

Policy HP16: In determining whether an application within the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (GTPS) area is intended to meet a genuine rural generated housing need, the provisions of the “Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities” shall be considered.

Any area designated as a CLÁR Region 5 area within the GTPS area shall not be subject to the need to demonstrate compliance with policy HP16 unless that area coincides with Landscape designation 3, 4 or 5 as determined by the Landscape Sensitivity and Character Areas Map included in the Plan.

The following factors will also be considered on the documentary evidence presented on a case by case basis.

1.(a) Those applicants with links to the area through long standing existing close family ties seeking to develop their first home on existing family farm holdings.

or

1.(b) Those applicants who have no family lands but who wish to build their first home within the community in which they have long standing links and where they have spent a substantial, continuous part of their lives (i.e. have grown up in the area, schooled in the area and have existing close family connections in the area e.g. son or daughter of longstanding residents of the area). Having established a substantiated rural housing need, such persons making an application on a site within an 8km radius of their original family home will be considered favourably, subject to normal development control criteria and provided the site is not closer to Galway city than the original family home or encroaches within the urban fringe of the towns of Gort, Loughrea, Athenry or Tuam.

or

1.(c) Where applicants can supply land registry or folio details that demonstrate that lands on which they are seeking to build their first home in the area have been in family ownership for a period of 20 years, their eligibility will be considered. Where this has been established to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, additional intrinsic links will not have to be demonstrated.

or

1. Those applicants who are functionally dependant on a part time or full time basis on the immediate rural area in which they are seeking to develop (employment in neighbouring towns or villages will not in itself qualify an applicant as having a rural generated housing need).

or

2. Those applicants who lived for substantial periods of their lives in the rural area, then moved away and who now wish to return and build their first house, in this local area, to reside near other family members. Special consideration will be given to the immediate family of emigrants returning to this local area to live near their family.

or

3. Special consideration shall be given to cases of exceptional health circumstances – supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live close to family support, or requires a family member to live in close proximity to that person. In that instance a family member shall be defined as the brother, sister, son, daughter, niece, nephew or grandchild of the person with such exceptional health circumstances.

Rural Housing Policies

- Policy HP17:** In situations where an exception to the restriction on new rural dwellings has been made based on the circumstances outlined above, an enurement condition restricting the occupation of the house shall apply to all Grants of Planning Permission.
- Policy HP18:** The weaker agricultural base and weak urban structure outside the GTPS area in other parts of the County have led to a population and economic decline. These areas are generally distant from major urban areas and the associated pressure for residential development.
- In general, any demand for permanent residential housing in these areas should be accommodated as it arises, subject to good practise in matters such as design, location and the protection of landscape and environmentally sensitive areas. This shall apply to returning emigrants/migrants and their families who have not returned but who have a family member who may wish to locate will be given special consideration on a case by case basis. Housing need and its associated enurement clause will not apply outside the GTPS. However, language enurement, restrictive road enurement and Classes 3, 4 and 5 landscape sensitivity enurement will apply as appropriate in this area.
- Policy HP19:** Applicants, who require the demolition or replacement of an existing dwelling house shall be accommodated without the requirement to establish a Housing Need or proof of residence and will not be subject to an enurement clause. Where such existing dwellings are vacated they shall not be used for human habitation except to accommodate the bone fide housing need of a family member of the original owner who has been accommodated by the new permitted dwelling or for tourist or related economic activity.
- Policy HP20:** Where restrictions based on housing need apply all new Grants of Planning permission for rural houses shall be subject to an enurement condition which shall apply for a period of 7 years, after the date that the house is first occupied by the person or persons to whom the enurement clause applies.
- Policy HP21:** Within the commuter belt of Galway City (GTPS Area) in the interests of promoting more sustainable patterns of development and the use of infrastructure, urban generated residential development will be strictly controlled.
- Policy HP22:** The Council, subject to compliance with other policies, objectives and development management standards of this plan, shall require applicants seeking to locate in Landscape Class 3, 4 and 5 to provide a substantiated housing need to reside in such areas and may require to provide a visual impact assessment of their development, particularly where the proposal is located in an area identified as “Focal Points/Views” in the Landscape Character Assessment of the County or in Class 5 areas.

Rural Housing Policies

Policy HP23: Bone fide applicants who are not considered eligible under the preceding categories may be considered as qualifying to build a permanent home in the rural areas, which are not subject to strong urban influence, subject to being able to satisfy the planning authority of their commitment to operate a full-time business from their proposed home in a rural area, as part of their planning application, in order, for example, to discourage commuting to towns or cities. Applicants must be able to submit evidence that

- their business will contribute to and enhance the rural community in which they seek to live and
- that they can satisfy the planning authority that the nature of their employment or business is compatible with those specified in the local needs criteria for rural areas i.e. that they are serving a predominantly local rural business need.

Policy HP24: The planning Authority shall encourage the re-development of derelict/semi ruinous buildings for commercial, residential or economic purposes (including Tourism). The refurbishment of some derelict structures may not be possible due to conflict with building regulations. In such instances the Council will consider permitting development. It will be a requirement that the proposed development be designed to be externally similar to the original property using traditional materials. In practise the redevelopment of these buildings will be permitted where they;

- (1) Can be adequately serviced
- (2) Have their original external walls largely intact

An enurement will not be imposed where the property is in the ownership of a local farm holder on their holding.

Policy HP25: Building conversions in Gaeltacht areas will be considered for the purposes of advancing Gaeltacht Tourism and Gaeltacht Colleges provided they reach Environmental Protection Agency requirements for effluent.

Policy HP26: Where an applicant possesses a house which was built pre-1963 or where planning was granted under different requirements, of site area of less than 0.5 acres they shall be facilitated in planning, for renovation or extension subject to standard Environmental Protection Agency and road requirements.

Policy HP27: Lifetime enurement clauses will be considered to have expired after a period of seven years of full time occupancy by the applicant has elapsed. Actual removal of the enurement clause will have to be established by a Planning Application.

Refer to Policies ED₁ and Policy ED₁₄ in Section 4 and DM Standard 16 in Section 11 of the County Development Plan.

5.3.2 Rural Housing Objectives

Rural Housing Objectives

Objective HP5: To prepare design guidance for the Settlement Centres that will provide a graphical representation of design styles and layouts appropriate to the rural area. This design guidance will be additional to the provisions of the Development Plan and pending its adoption will not preclude any development taking place.

Objective HP6: The Planning Authority will have regard to the Sustainable Residential Guidelines for Urban Areas and the Urban Design Manual issued by the DoEHLG in 2008 and the Galway Clustered Housing Guidelines in the assessment of any proposals for multiple unit housing developments in settlement centres and rural areas.

5.4 Residential Development in Urban Areas, Towns and Villages

The National Spatial Strategy and West Regional Guidelines emphasise the key role of the larger and smaller town and village structure in achieving balanced regional development. The Galway Settlement Strategy recognises and supports the key role of urban areas, towns and villages in providing attractive living environments with convenient access to a higher level of services, facilities and amenities, in building critical mass to support the efficient provision of services, facilities and employment opportunities and in supporting and providing services for the surrounding rural areas.

Public and private investment will be required to realise the potential role of urban areas, towns and villages, in both physical and social infrastructure, including water services, roads connectivity, telecommunications, energy, development lands, business support infrastructure, social and recreational facilities. Appropriate guidance will also be necessary to ensure that new developments are in keeping with and contribute to the character and amenity of urban areas, towns and villages.

5.4.1 Residential Development Policies

Residential Development Policies	
Policy HP28:	Support the consolidation and appropriate development of the urban areas, towns and villages of the County as attractive living environments with a range of services, facilities, amenities and employment opportunities appropriate to its size, role and potential.
Policy HP29:	Promote high standards of design and quality environments for living, working and recreation in urban areas, towns and villages.
Policy HP30:	Support the development of infill sites in towns and villages and encourage the use of upper floors of retail premises as residential accommodation as a means of providing additional housing and revitalising settlements.
Policy HP31:	There shall be a general presumption in favour of the development of nursing homes and retirement facilities within or adjacent to established settlement centres or as suitable re-use for protected structures or other buildings which would have limited re-development potential given their size and architectural character, subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements.

5.4.2 Residential Development Objectives

Residential Development Objectives	
Objective HP7:	The Planning Authority will have regard to the Sustainable Residential Guidelines for Urban Areas and the Urban Design Manual issued by the DoEHLG in 2008 and the Galway Clustered Housing Guidelines, where appropriate, in the assessment of any proposals for multiple unit housing developments in urban areas, towns and villages.
Objective HP8:	Support the implementation of the residential development and design guidelines in any applicable Local Area Plans and seek to provide appropriate guidance in future plans prepared for urban areas, towns and villages in the County.

6.1 Sustainable Transport System

6.1.1 Sustainable Transport System Policies

Sustainable Transport System Policies

Policy RT1: Seek to promote the development of a sustainable transport system that provides a range of transport options for the County, including a safe road network, a range of bus services and rail services, adequate facilities for walking and cycling and opportunities for air and water-based travel. The Council will seek to ensure that improvements in transportation infrastructure and services support the strategic development and settlement strategy for the County and provide an appropriate level of accessibility to urban and rural facilities, services and opportunities. The Planning Authority shall have regard to any new guidance on the integration of roads planning, development planning and development management practices that may issue from the DOEHLG and/or Dept of Transport during the lifetime of this Plan.

6.1.2 Strategic Economic Infrastructure

Economic infrastructure encompasses roads, public transport, water services, wastewater, solid waste management, telecommunications and energy networks. Policies that restrict the availability, deliverability or diminish the effectiveness of economic infrastructure are not in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development and should be discouraged. Investment in infrastructure is a fundamental requirement in matching the quantity and quality of the various services to the growth of and the deployment of population as indicated in Section 3.3 of County Galway Settlement Strategy, and thus to provide for sustainable development.

6.1.2.1 Strategic Economic Infrastructure Policies

Strategic Economic Infrastructure Policies

Policy RT2: Seek to protect and safeguard the significant investment made in strategic economic infrastructure, in particular the network of national roads, the existing rail line, the Western Rail Corridor and major water and wastewater projects, through the promotion of appropriate development and settlement patterns and the integration of land use and transportation activities.

Policy RT3: As a general policy, the location of new means of access to the National Primary Road and National Secondary Road network, for residential, commercial, industrial or other development dependent on such means of access, shall not be permitted except in areas where a speed limit of 50-60 km/h applies, or in the case of infilling, in the existing built-up areas. The Planning Authority shall in the first instance, seek to channel traffic from new development onto existing local roads and in this way use established access points to gain entry onto national roads.

The only exemptions to this general restriction that may be considered would be developments of national or regional strategic importance which by their nature are most appropriately located outside urban centres and where the developments proposed have specific locational requirements or are dependent on fixed physical characteristics. In this regard, Galway County Council shall engage with relevant stakeholders including the NRA, Dept of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and, if appropriate, neighbouring Local Authorities to develop a strategy to identify such strategic activities or strategic locations and a set of criteria which would guide development in such circumstances.



Strategic Economic Infrastructure Policies

Relevant considerations may include;

- Relevance and appropriateness of the proposed development in supporting the aims and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines.
- The nature of the proposed development and the volume of traffic to be generated by it
- The implications for the safe and efficient operation of the national road as well as any proposed upgrades or routes for new roads
- Implications for the traffic carrying capacity and service life of the road
- Suitability of the location vis-à-vis other locations
- Existing development in the area
- The precedent that could be created for follow-on development of a similar nature and potential implications for national roads

Policy RT4: In general, any proposed development that may contribute to the premature obsolescence or would serve to undermine the strategic transport function of national roads, including interchanges and which would be more appropriately served by the local or regional road network, will not be permitted.

6.1.3 Transport Infrastructure

Galway, due to its peripheral location relies heavily on its public road network for transportation. Several strategic new national routes identified in the National Development Plan 2007-2013 traverse the county including the M6 (currently under construction), the M18 (due to commence construction in 2009) and the planned M17 and new Regional Route between Galway and Rossaveal. The existing National Routes N6, N17, N18, N59, N60, N63, N65, N66, N67 and N84 still act and will continue to act, as strategic economic traffic corridors.

An additional Strategic route from Bearna to Scriob via Ros a Mhil has been identified along Cois Fharrage which parallels the existing Regional Route R336. This new Road will be a “protected road” as identified under the Roads Acts.

The existing rail line between Galway and Ballinasloe/Dublin and the western Rail Corridor which is scheduled to re-open in 2011 have an increasingly important role in facilitating movement throughout the county and in building strategic linkages to other cities and towns outside the county.

A continuous programme of improvement of infrastructure is required to:

1. Improve the economic performance of the County.
2. Give effect to the settlement strategy.
3. Facilitate the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy.
4. Support the Principle of Sustainability.
5. Redress the imbalance in service quality both in the national context and between different areas of the County.
6. Protect the quality of the environment in the County.

The various infrastructure requirements are set out below.

6.2 Roads, Traffic and Parking

The ongoing roads improvement programme will deliver necessary improvements to National and non-National Routes. This programme will provide better connection from all parts of the County to the trans-national network, relieve areas of congestion and improve safety levels on all public roads.

Recent government guidance identifies the need to develop transportation based on the principles of sustainable development. To achieve this, Galway County Council aims to develop a better balance between the use of private vehicular transport and alternative modes of transport. In development of any Transport Policy, account will be taken of government policy, in particular Transport 21 and its impacts.

6.2.1 Roads

The road network can be classified into 2 strands: strategic routes which include National Primary and National Secondary routes and non-national roads including Regional Roads and Local Roads.

6.2.1.1 Strategic Routes: National Primary and National Secondary

National primary routes are major long distance through routes that link County Galway to surrounding counties. They provide links to major ports and airport facilities and provide links between cities and large towns.

Under the 2007-2013 National Development Plan, several key National Primary routes are to be developed as strategic route corridors. Their development in County Galway is being implemented under several schemes, which are at various stages of construction or planning. An additional strategic route has been identified along Cois Fharrage which parallels the existing regional route R336.

6.2.1.2 Non-National Routes

There are approximately 771kms of regional roads and 5,276kms of local roads in the County, Regional and local roads support the economy by providing links between national roads.

Regional Roads link towns and villages within the county and region and connect them to the National Routes. They are intended to provide traffic movement without the introduction of unnecessary traffic into residential or amenity areas. Development along these roads should not diminish their capacity to fulfil this role or prejudice their future development.

Local Roads are primarily service roads of greatest benefit to the immediate community served. They serve as distribution and service roads but their primary purpose is as service roads.

6.2.1.3 Traffic Management

Traffic management seeks to achieve an efficient, effective usage of the transportation infrastructure so that people can travel safely by various means, which minimise environmental impact and reduce traffic congestion. The main policy tools used are traffic calming, parking Byelaws, improved public transport and pedestrian/cyclist priority measures.

6.2.1.4 Parking Facilities and Loading/Unloading Facilities

Proposals for Parking Bye-Laws are at an advanced stage for the entire County. These proposals will reduce traffic congestion and enhance business opportunities in the various towns.

6.2.1.5 Roads and Transportation Policies

Roads and Transportation Policies	
Policy RT5:	Support the National Roads Authority programme of works for National Routes through out the County, including the completion of the M6/N6, the M18/N18 and M17 and other planned new routes over the lifetime of the Plan.
Policy RT6:	Support the provision of the R336 along a new alignment between Galway and Scriob, via Ros a Mhil.
Policy RT7:	Facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in the interests of the economy.
Policy RT8:	Seek to preserve the visual amenity and rural character of the roadside environment where possible.
Policy RT9:	Endeavour to ensure all footpaths, public roads and crossing points are designed and provided so that they are available to all users, including those with reduced visibility or mobility.
Policy RT10:	Encourage a better environment for pedestrians and cyclists in towns and villages and ensure that new developments comply with the provisions of the Disability Acts.
Policy RT11:	Facilitate the up-grading of air transportation services, including the air services between the mainland and the islands.
Policy RT12:	Provide a safe road system throughout the County through Road Safety Schemes, which will include the continuation of the Low Cost Safety Measure Programme, Signage and Delineation, Traffic Calming, and liaison with the school authorities to ensure that the schools provide safety features as required.

Roads and Transportation Policies

Policy RT 13:	Require all commercial, industrial, retail and residential developments greater than 4 units to submit a Traffic Impact Statement (TIA).
Policy RT14:	Provide adequate access for people with disabilities such as through the provision of parking facilities, and disability access facilities, which are incorporated into existing/new development.
Policy RT15:	Ensure, where possible, that adequate off-street parking and loading/ unloading facilities are provided as part of each development, to ensure that parked vehicles do not cause a traffic hazard, obstruct vehicle or pedestrian movement or create a negative visual impact. Where this cannot be provided on site consideration may be given to the payment of a levy to the county council for such a provision off-site.
Policy RT16:	Provide/improve parking facilities in towns and villages as development and traffic demand.
Policy RT17:	Ensure that annual co-ordination between public utility providers and the Roads Authority takes place in relation to work programmes to avoid duplication of excavations and unnecessary nuisance and obstruction of road users and pedestrians.
Policy RT18:	The Planning authority shall comply with the requirements of the EU Transportation Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and the proposed Galway County Council Transportation Noise Plan in the exercise of its Development Management Functions and in the planning and development of its own projects.
Policy RT19:	It shall be the policy of the planning authority to protect the strategic role of the national roads through the county, including the route corridors of planned national roads, and particularly the motorway network to ensure that they continue to function as conduits of traffic in a safe and efficient manner. There shall be a general presumption against direct access to national routes from new housing developments in compliance with the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and against inappropriate retail development adjacent to existing/planned national routes and interchanges as set out in the DOEHLG Retail Planning Guidelines. . In exceptional circumstances, direct access may be considered, in consultation with the NRA on a case by case basis, onto national routes (non-motorways) to accommodate strategic infrastructure or regional significant development.
Policy RT20:	National roads and strategic regional roads shall be protected from inappropriate development to ensure that they are not overloaded with local traffic more appropriately served by the local road network.
Policy RT21:	The planning authority shall have regard to any future statutory guidance that may issue from the DoEHLG, Department of Transport and the National Roads Authority on road planning, development planning and development management processes.
Policy RT22:	Special attention shall be given to any development that will attract many trips and the guidance provided in the Retail Guidelines for the location of such developments within established towns and district centres shall apply.
Policy RT23:	In general, any proposed development that may contribute to the premature obsolescence or would serve to undermine the strategic transport function of national roads, including interchanges and which would be more appropriately served by the local or regional road network, will not be permitted.

Roads and Transportation Policies

- Policy RT24:** The local authority recognises the importance of protecting lands which will be needed for the construction of national routes from development is needed. Proposed development in areas identified as study corridors for the route selection of national primary routes generally will not be permitted until such time as a particular route had been identified and approved.
- Policy RT25:** Reserve lands to provide for the option of “free flow” interchanges at 1) Glenascaul at the M6/N18 junction, 2) Parkmore at the GCOB/N17 overbridge, 3) Ballindooley at the GCOB/N84 junction and 4) Killeen at the GCOB/N59 junction.

6.2.1.6 Roads and Transportation Objectives

Roads and Transportation Objectives

- Objective RT1:** Secure the timely completion of the N6 / M6 Galway to Athlone scheme. This includes the construction of the dual carriageway/motorway for the Galway City Outer Bypass along a new alignment, the construction of dual carriageway/motorways under the Galway to Ballinasloe scheme with a new single carriageway link to the Loughrea By pass and the Ballinasloe to Athlone scheme.
- Objective RT2:** Secure the timely completion of the N18 / M18 as part of the Atlantic Corridor. This involves the construction of a dual carriageway / motorway under the Oranmore to Gort scheme along a new alignment and the construction of a dual carriageway / motorway under the Gort to Crusheen Co. Clare scheme along a new alignment.
- Objective RT3:** Facilitate the development of the N17/M17 Scheme from Galway to Claremorris.
- Objective RT4:** Facilitate the development of a new strategic route along the Cois Fharraige corridor from Galway to Scriob via Ros an Mhíl.
- Objective RT5:** Secure the timely completion of the Tuam bypass.
- Objective RT6:** Retain the existing National Routes N6, N18 and N17 as Class II Controlled roads upon commissioning and opening of the new National Routes through the county.
- Objective RT7:** Retain the National Secondary status of the N63 National Secondary Route.
- Objective RT8:** Secure the timely completion of inner relief roads for the towns of Tuam, Loughrea, Gort, Athenry, Bearna, Baile an Chláir, Clarinbridge, Craughwell, Headford, Maigh Cuilinn, An Spidéal Portumna, and Oughterard all subject to funding.
- Objective RT9:** Design and construct new Oughterard and Kinvara inner relief roads.
- Objective RT10:** Construct the new Station Road link road in Athenry.
- Objective RT11:** Improve the Regional Route R333 between Headford to Tuam Hub & M17 as a Class II controlled road as this facilitates access from North West Galway to the M17. Improve the Regional Routes R355 and R358 and include these routes as Class II controlled roads in recognition of their function as strategic links between the peripheral areas of the county and the new National Route Network.
- Objective RT12:** Continue with the strengthening and improvements of the Local Road network and to improve strategic sections on those roads servicing aquaculture/forestry/agriculture/ industry and tourism. Provide additional maintenance as necessary to those local roads that are under pressure due to high traffic volumes.

Roads and Transportation Objectives

Objective RT13:	Continue with the strengthening and improvements of the Regional Road network.
Objective RT14:	Develop strategic service and link roads within towns and village areas to open up lands within settlements and reduce the pressure for ribbon development.
Objective RT15:	Continue to develop and implement Parking Byelaws for the County.
Objective RT16:	Provide car parks for the control of on street and off-street car parking, adequate to meet short-term shopping and business requirements and for the needs of local residents.
Objective RT17:	Carry out Traffic Management Plans in Ballinasloe, Craughwell, Headford, Portumna, Kinvara, Gort, Athenry, Bearna & Baile Chláir. Review existing Plans every 5 years prior to review of Local Area Plan.
Objective RT18:	Construct a Bypass at Baile Chláir on the existing N17.
Objective RT19:	Continue with the strengthening and improvements of the N59, N60, N63, N65, N66, N67, N83, and N84.
Objective RT20:	Construct an N59 bypass for Maigh Cuillinn as well as the Inner Relief Road.
Objective RT21:	Evaluate controlled pelican pedestrian facilities and traffic lights to ensure that an audible signal is installed to assist the visually impaired in crossing the street.
Objective RT22:	Provide designated car parking spaces for the disabled driver in all public car parks in every town as well as at specific priority locations on street.
Objective RT23:	Improve bridges, culverts and all roadside drainage as necessary in accordance with best engineering practices and having regard to the protected status, if applicable of any such structures that may be include in the Record of Protected Structures.
Objective RT24:	Investigate the potential for the development of integrated transportation hubs at Tuam and at Garraun to maximise the strategic integration of transport and rational landuses.
Objective RT25:	The local authority recognises the importance of protecting lands which will be needed for the construction of national routes from development. Proposed development in areas identified as study corridors for the route selection of national primary routes generally will not be permitted until such time as a particular route has been identified and approved.
Objective RT26:	Require all new proposed commercial, industrial and retail developments and all significant proposed residential developments, or where significant changes are proposed to existing commercial, industrial or retail developments, to submit Road Safety Audits and Traffic Impact Assessments as part of their planning application documentation. For large scale developments, a Transport Assessment will also be required. These assessments shall comply with the requirements as set out under DM Standard 22.
Objective RT27:	Develop a pilot scheme to improve the N59 from Galway to the Mayo Boundary via Leenane and the N67 from Ballinderreen to the Clare Boundary.
Objective RT28:	To complete the Oranhill link roads and Bealnabradan roundabout.
Objective RT29:	Facilitate the NRA, OPW & Shannon Navigation to improve the N65 Shannon River crossing in Portumna.

Roads and Transportation Objectives	
Objective RT30:	Reserve the lands required for improvements on the Tubber Road in Gort and a link between a possible future Tubber Road M18 Interchange and the N18 south of Gort.
Objective RT31:	Provide a pedestrian gateway overbridge on the N6 at Carrowmoneash to link Oranmore Town to the Industrial area on the N18.
Objective RT32:	To facilitate a link road from the proposed N18 Deerpark roundabout to Garraun with extensions to the Airport and Ardaun.
Objective RT33:	To complete the N6 Loughrea Bypass to the N66.
Objective RT34:	To complete the N6 Aughrim-Cappataggle Realignment.
Objective RT35:	To complete the N17 Castletown Realignment.
Objective RT36:	To complete the N84 Luimnagh Realignment.
Objective RT37:	To ensure that the Ballyglunin Railway Overbridge on the N63 is raised with associated road realignment to ensure adequacy of access to the M17 Interchange at Annagh Hill.
Objective RT38:	All new proposed developments within 300 metres of roadways with traffic volumes greater than 8220 AADT, major railways which have more than 60,000 train passages per year and major airports shall include a noise assessment and mitigation measures, if necessary with the planning application documentation.”

6.3 Public Transportation, Walking and Cycling

The Local Authority has but a very limited function in the provision or regulation of public transportation. The establishment of the Rural Transport Initiative has been supported by the Council in conjunction with the Department of Transportation and the extension of this scheme would be welcomed and encouraged by Galway County Council.

Galway County Council also has an important role in promoting and encouraging development patterns and densities that support the provision and improvement of public transport services.

6.3.1 Public Transport Policies

Public Transport Policies	
Policy RT26:	Seek to extend the public transportation options available to the travelling public throughout the County through the pursuit of a variety of options, including new Quality Bus corridors, to improve the level of commuter rail services between Ballinasloe and Galway including Woodlawn, Attymon and Athenry and appropriately located park and ride facilities. Consideration should also be given, where appropriate, to the creation of additional lanes or alteration to existing lanes for Quality Bus Corridors on the N6, N17, N59, N84 and the Galway City Outer By-Pass and linkage to the Western Rail Corridor.
Policy RT27:	Promote and encourage appropriate development patterns and densities that will support the provision and improvement of public transport services. In this regard, it is the policy of the Council to promote development on serviced land in towns and villages, particularly those located along public transport corridors, in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines, having regard to existing settlement patterns and form, adequacy of existing/planned facilities and services to facilitate the development of viable and effective public transport networks.
Policy RT28:	Encourage the high quality design and layout of residential development that reduces reliance on the motor car, supports movement by pedestrians and cyclists, provides adequate and convenient access to public transport and connects well with the wider locality.

Policy RT29: The planning authority and roads authority will seek to consult with and co-ordinate with the City Council with regard to traffic management into, out of and circulating within the metropolitan Gateway area, particularly with regard to the provision of bus priority lanes and park and ride facilities at strategic, suitable locations.

Policy RT30: To consider the development of a strategy for the provision of Park & Ride sites at appropriate locations on the major approaches to Galway City area in consultation and cooperation with Galway City Council and the relevant statutory and other relevant stakeholders, including the National Roads Authority.

6.3.2 Public Transport Objectives

Public Transport Objectives

Objective RT39: Support the Rural Transport Initiative and seek to have it extended through the county during the lifetime of the plan.

Objective RT40: Support the proposals for the laying of dual track between Galway and Athenry and the development of new commuter stations along the new Western Rail Corridor as appropriate.

Objective RT41: Reduce the congestion on public roads caused by the existing commuting movements to and from the City, by consolidating existing towns and villages and thus facilitating a more rational and better quality public transport system.

Objective RT42: Investigate suitable locations for new park and ride facilities at the “gateways” to Galway City

Objective RT43: Facilitate the development of appropriate settlement patterns and densities that support the existing and proposed rail corridors, including intensification of development around rail stations where appropriate in accordance with the DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Guidelines for Urban Areas, subject to the necessary services and facilities being provided and potential impacts fully assessed.

Objective RT44: Promote the development of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling facilities in towns and villages to minimise the dependence on private motor vehicles and to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle.

Objective RT45: The Planning Authority will seek to enhance the facilitation of new bus shelters at appropriate locations in settlement centres and at key rural locations to facilitate and complement the rural transport initiative and other such initiatives and programmes in conjunction with service providers.

Objective RT46: To facilitate the dualing of the N17 from Parkmore junction to the City Boundary to provide interchanges and appropriate junctions and Quality Bus Corridor.

Objective RT47: To provide a Parkway Railway Station in Garraun in consultation with Iarnród Éireann.

Objective RT48: To work towards the provision of a coastal walkway/cycleway from Bearna to Oranmore in conjunction with Galway City Council.

Objective RT49: The Council will investigate the potential for development of integrated transportation hubs at Tuam, Garraun and Athenry to maximize the strategic integration of transport and rational land uses. Support the development of an Integrated Public Transport Facility in the Tuam Hub Town.

6.3.3 Air Transport

The Local Authority recognises the strategic importance of Galway Regional Airport as an amenity and important transportation link to facilitate the growth and connectivity of the Galway region.

6.3.3.1 Air Transport Policies

Air Transport Policies	
Policy RT31:	The Local Authority will support the expansion of Galway Regional Airport and associated facilities and ancillary and complementary activities, subject to normal planning requirements. The Planning Authority, together with Galway City Council shall consider the preparation and implementation of Public Safety Zones in the vicinity of the Galway Regional Airport in the event of same being recommended by the Department of Transport and/or the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
Policy RT32:	The Local Authority will have regard to the recommendations of the Irish Aviation Authority and will control inappropriate development in the vicinity of the Airport which may have technical or other implications for safety or the normal operation of the airport.

6.3.4 Galway Ports and Harbours

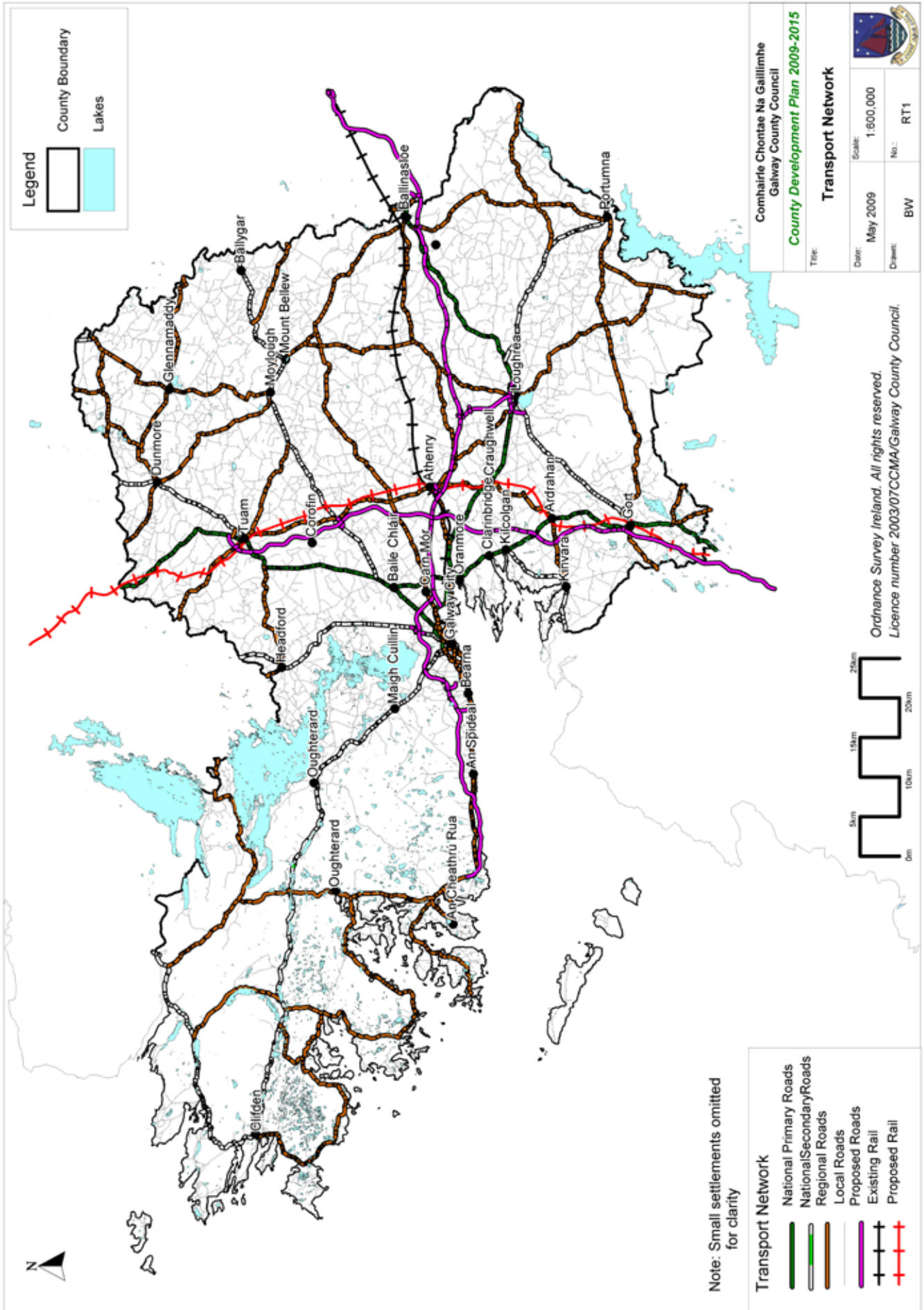
Galway County Council recognizes the strategic importance of Galway Sea Port and Ros a Mhíl as amenity and important transportation links to facilitate the growth and connectivity of the Galway Region.

6.3.4.1 Galway Ports and Harbours Policies

Galway Ports and Harbours Policies	
Policy RT33:	The Council will support the expansion of Galway Sea Port and Ros a Mhíl and potential benefits that can be delivered to the County through the development of rail distribution facilities at appropriate locations in the County.

Refer to Section 10.3.2 Piers and Harbours Policies.





Map RT1

7.1 Introduction

The Local Authority has a dual role with regard to water services through the county. It is the authority charged with responsibility to protect the natural heritage and ecosystems and to achieve a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment.

It also has an equally important role to provide, improve and extend the water services infrastructure thus enabling the development of the County from a social, environmental and economic perspective.

Principal Activities include:

- Protection of natural waters.
- Provision and operation of water and wastewater services.
- Implementation of Government water pricing policy.
- Waste management planning.
- Provision and maintenance of burial grounds
- Provision of environmental awareness education.
- Implementation of litter control measures.
- Environmental protection.



7.2 Water Services

The European Union Water Framework Directive and the body of national Legislation sets the overarching policy guidance in the preparation of the Water Services Assessment of Needs document and the Water Services Investment Programme which are reviewed from time to time.

The development of water schemes and policies and the priorities given to each has implications and consequences for public health, environmental quality and economic development. The achievement of a balance on these priorities is a constant aim in the provision of water services and from time to time, may result in the re-prioritisation of certain schemes or the introduction of new schemes or investment where they represent necessary infrastructure.

A high standard of water and sewerage infrastructure is fundamental to achieving orderly sustainable development compatible with the recommendations of the County Galway Settlement Strategy and achieving the longer term economic growth of the kind envisaged in the National Development Plan 2007 - 2013 and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Western Region.

Available resources and priority will determine the scheduling of construction works. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Galway County Council will decide the relative priority as part of the Water Services "Assessment of Needs" which was updated in June 2006. From time to time, other schemes may arise which have not been included on these priority lists but which represent necessary infrastructure depending on changing environmental conditions or capacity issues. These schemes will be pursued where expedient. A Water Services Strategic Plan will be prepared in accordance with the Water Services Act 2007.

7.2.1 Group Water Schemes

Responsibility for group water schemes was devolved from the Department of the Environment and Local Government to Local Authorities in 1997. Group water schemes are generally permitted in areas, where the Local Authority do not propose to carry out a public scheme which can be served by the extension of the existing Local Authority watermains, or where the Local Authority intend at a later stage to provide a public water supply.

7.2.2 Water Supply Policies

Water Supply Policies	
Policy IS1:	Pursue the augmentation of the Tuam Regional Water Supply Scheme and extend the public water supply network served by this scheme.
Policy IS2:	Consider additional abstraction from the Lough Corrib to service an extended water supply network.
Policy IS3:	Adopt the provisions of the strategic rural water plan and Implement Stage 2 of the Rural Water Strategic Plan.
Policy IS4:	Provide and maintain quality water and wastewater services necessary for environmental purposes, and for economic, regional and rural development purposes.
Policy IS5:	Ensure that the provision of water and sewerage facilities is undertaken in accordance with EU policies and directives and national legislation.
Policy IS6:	Work to eliminate existing deficiencies in water supply and drainage facilities.
Policy IS7:	Use a mixture of public and private partnerships together with funding under the Serviced Land Initiative to deliver the necessary services.
Policy IS8:	Identify, prioritise and progress the implementation of the water investment programme.
Policy IS9:	Develop and augment the supply of water through the Regional Water Supply networks including the interlinking of networks to ensure continuity and security of supply throughout the expanded network.
Policy IS10:	Ensure that the water provided through the Galway Regional Water Supply Scheme meets EU Drinking Water standards.
Policy IS11:	Introduce new Licensing requirements for Group Water Schemes in accordance with the timeframes set out in the Water Services Act 2007.
Policy IS12:	Plan to provide services in unserviced towns, villages and countryside, so that all citizens have access to high quality services.
Policy IS13:	To promote an ecosystem approach to water and wastewater management through the integrated management of land, water and living resources, a water safety plan approach for the protection of drinking water supplies in County Galway and consideration for hydrological and natural processes, where appropriate.
Policy IS14:	The local authority shall seek to establish 'source management and protection zones' around drinking water supply (ground and surface) sources and develop appropriate management and maintenance for same.

7.2.3 Water Supply Objectives

Water Supply Objectives	
Objective IS1:	Implement Water Conservation measures in the County and seek to prepare a Water Conservation Strategy for County Galway.

7.3 Wastewater Treatment

The majority of smaller towns and villages have no public sewerage schemes and are dependent on septic tank treatment systems, many of which are outdated and inadequate.

The pursuit of the East Galway Main Drainage Scheme, Phase 3 is one of the strategic priorities of this Plan. It is considered a key piece of infrastructure to unlock the development potential of the strategic development corridors identified in the county spatial strategy and County Settlement Strategy. Furthermore, when operational, they would allow for the expansion of the western and eastern satellite settlements such as Bearna, Ardaun, Oranmore, Athenry, Clarinbridge and Kilcolgan to meet their development potential and contribute to the achievement of critical mass in the greater Galway Gateway.

The introduction of new licensing regulations in 2007 will require the up-grading of existing waste water treatment schemes which may currently not be included in the Water Services Investment Programme. All waste water schemes will have to be licenced by 2010.

7.3.1 Wastewater Treatment Policies

Wastewater Treatment Policies	
Policy IS15:	Development under the Plan shall be preceded by sufficient capacity in the public waste water treatment plants and appropriate extensions in the existing public waste water treatment catchments.
Policy IS16:	Galway County Council shall implement the relevant recommendations set out in Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland for Population Equivalents Greater than 500 Persons – A Report for the Years 2004 and 2005 Office of Environment Enforcement- EPA, 2007.
Policy IS17:	Galway County Council shall provide a waste water treatment plant to meet current water quality standards, with adequate capacity to treat foul drainage arising from the drainage network associated with the WWTP Clifden area. Temporary waste water treatment facilities will be considered in the interim and provided in the event of any new development that would add to the waste loading being permitted. No new development that would add to the existing waste water treatment facility will be permitted.
Policy IS18:	Galway County Council shall examine the feasibility of connecting of unsewered, areas including individual properties/ premises, serviced by septic tanks to existing and planned sewer networks.

7.3.2 Wastewater Treatment Objectives

Wastewater Treatment Objectives	
Objective IS2:	Seek to accelerate progress on the delivery of the East Galway Main Drainage Scheme, in particular Phase 3 as a key piece of strategic infrastructure, in conjunction with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Galway City Council.
Objective IS3:	Identify, prioritise and progress the implementation of the waste water elements of the Water Services Investment programme.
Objective IS4:	Plan to provide services in unserved towns and villages particularly those targeted for strategic expansion in the County Galway settlement strategy.
Objective IS5:	Seek to secure the development of the priority waste water treatment schemes in the programme within the lifetime of the Plan.

7.4 Waste Management

Waste management policies and objectives are set out in the Connacht Regional Waste Management Plan 2006-2011. Waste management services are provided by the private sector (landfill, sorting and baling stations, recycling centre, central composting, waste collection) and by the County Council (bring banks, civic recycling centres, special collections, waste prevention programme, recycling and environmental awareness programme, and regulation).

7.4.1 Waste Management Policies

Waste Management Policies	
Policy IS19:	Implement the Replacement Connacht Waste Management Plan 2006, with particular emphasis on the reduction of waste and the development of infrastructure for reuse, recycling and disposal of residual waste in the most appropriate manner.
Policy IS20:	Increase environmental awareness in relation to waste management.
Policy IS21:	Provide this infrastructure through different arrangements such as public private partnerships, non-profit companies, direct provision and any other arrangement that can deliver the required infrastructure. All such facilities are subject to the requirements of waste management licensing or waste management permit regulations.
Policy IS22:	Facilitate the provision of transfer stations, civic amenity and bring sites in locations, which will not adversely affect residential amenities.
Policy IS23:	To assess known historical waste disposal sites and to develop appropriate remediation plans as may be necessary to reduce the environmental risk associated with such sites.

7.4.2 Waste Management Objectives

Waste Management Objectives	
Objective IS6:	Implement the National Waste Prevention Programme at local authority level.
Objective IS7:	Provide as a matter of priority organic waste separation as a requirement for waste management in the County.
Objective IS8:	Support the provision of facilities for the proper recovery and disposal of household hazardous waste.
Objective IS9:	Support the implementation of an integrated waste management system for the household sector through segregated waste collection and the provision of bring banks and recycling centres.
Objective IS10:	Encourage the private sector to provide appropriately sited and designed facilities for the transfer, sorting and recovery of waste streams.
Objective IS11:	a) Support the provision of an integrated Waste Management system on the Aran Islands and Inishbofin Island.
Objective IS12:	Prepare and implement a Sludge Management Plan before 2010.
Objective IS13:	Implement the Construction and Demolition Waste planning requirements in the carrying out of Development Management functions.
Objective IS14:	Support the provision of infrastructure for composting and other forms of recycling for bio waste.
Objective IS15:	Support the provision of bottle banks and bring facilities at appropriate locations in selected towns and villages in cooperation with local communities.
Objective IS16:	Have regard to the provisions of both the EPA's National Hazardous Waste Management Plan and the Connaught Waste Management plan.
Objective IS17:	Support and encourage the private sector in the provision of appropriately sited and designed facilities for end of life car recycling facilities to comply with the European Parliament and Council Directive 2000/53/EC, within each electoral division.

7.5 Information and Communication Technology

A key factor in the determination of social and economic progress in the County is the development of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) network. This is particularly important if the locations remote from the City are to attract investment and jobs and give local people quality access to information, education and entertainment. Telecommunications masts are an essential element in providing a communication network for the county. As with most technology they provide benefits, which must be balanced against associated dis-amenities.

7.5.1 Information and Communication Technology Policies

Information and Communication Technology Policies	
Policy IS24:	Facilitate the delivery of a high capacity ICT infrastructure and broadband network and digital broadcasting throughout the County.
Policy IS25:	Support the Department of the Environment and Local Government publication “Telecommunications Antennae and support structures – Guidelines for Planning Authorities”.
Policy IS26:	Avoid the location of further masts in the highly scenic areas and biodiversity rich areas of the County or within significant views of national monuments or listed buildings.
Policy IS27:	Discourage the location of masts close to schools and residential areas.
Policy IS28:	Assist the County Broadband Forum in the roll-out of information and communication technologies though out the county.
Policy IS29:	It shall be the policy of Galway County Council to promote the co-location of telecommunications masts and facilities where practicable and technically feasible. It shall be the responsibility of the developer of such facilities to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority why co-location is not possible.
Policy IS30:	Galway County Council shall strive to provide high quality Information and communications systems to all the Area Offices throughout the county.
Policy IS31:	Galway County Council shall discourage the development of individual telecommunications support structures and antennae for private use.

7.6 Energy

The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is also recognised as a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment to the County. The impacts and predicted future impacts of over dependence on non-renewable energy sources are disruptive and costly. They are likely to include significant increases in winter rainfall resulting in increased risk of flooding, rising sea levels, an increase in storm events especially in the West of Ireland, high levels of air pollutants and pressure on the economy as fossil fuel reserves are depleted.

Climate change is now recognised as the most significant and threatening global environmental problem. In response to this the Kyoto Protocol has imposed targets on Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions. The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 highlights the need for a radical strategy to meet the climate change commitments made in the Kyoto Protocol. Galway County Council recognizes that it can make an important and positive contribution towards initiating climate change action in land use planning, transport, services planning, housing provision, energy planning and awareness raising.

The County has, in terms of alternative energy, huge potential for the development of wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro and wave energy. The wave and wind resources are among the richest in Europe. Although some wind projects are in production in the County, an objective to maximise the sustainable alternative resources shall be a priority.

Energy Policies	
Policy IS32:	Support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks in the County, including the overhead infrastructure required to provide the networks.
Policy IS33:	Facilitate the strategic goal of effective balanced regional development through the implementation of policies that will deliver a reliable and effective electricity network for the West Region including County Galway.
Policy IS34:	Support the infrastructure development of energy networks in the County so as to provide for the energy needs of the Community while avoiding environmental damage and the location of other developments along strategic routes.
Policy IS35:	Promote more sustainable development through energy end use efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy, and improved energy performance of all new building developments throughout the County. Galway County Council shall investigate the potential of LED and Solar technology as a more cost effective and energy efficient alternative to traditional public lighting.
Policy IS36:	Facilitate the continual development of renewable energy sources having regard to residential amenities, biodiversity and landscape sensitivities.
Policy IS37:	Facilitate the development of alternative energy sources where such proposals are consistent with landscape preservation, the protection of natural habitats, and comply with County Development Plan policy and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.
Policy IS38:	Facilitate the extension of a natural gas distribution network to serve both the County and the Western Region.
Policy IS39:	Support the National Climate Change Strategy by facilitating measures to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases over the committed timeframe 2007-2012.
Policy IS40:	Promote the implementation of the Government's White Paper Document "Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland, Energy Policy Framework 2007-2012."
Policy IS41:	Encourage planning applications for developments which maximize energy efficiency through their location, layout or design or which make appropriate use of energy conservation techniques, provided the development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties, or the amenities of the area.
Policy IS42:	Require a performance based Building Energy Rating (BER) target for all new building developments greater than 10 dwellings or greater than 1,000m ² floor area for non residential and mixed developments.
Policy IS43:	Ensure that new developments consider the implications of climatic and sea level changes for natural systems, human settlements and infrastructural elements.



7.6.2 Energy Objectives

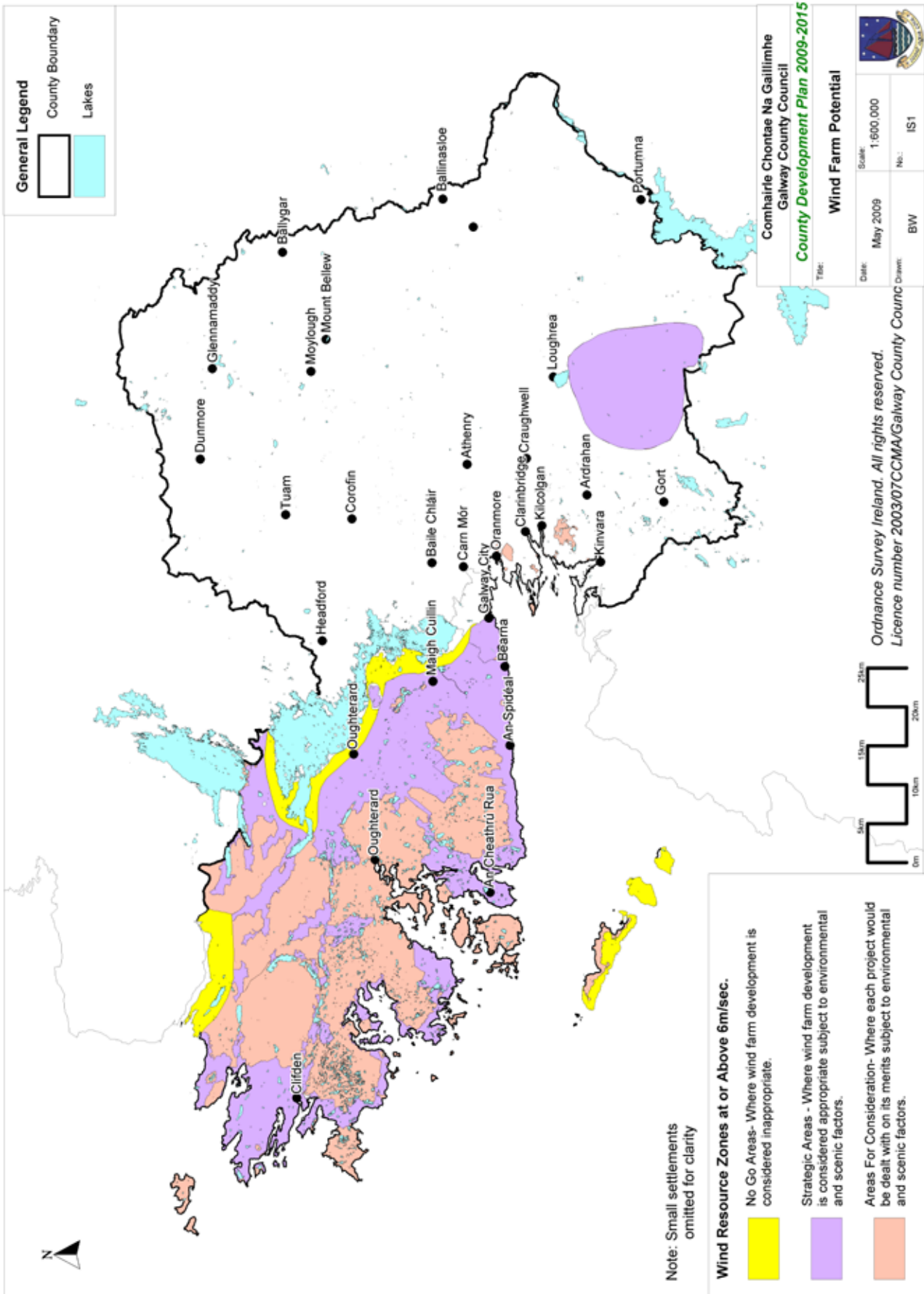
Energy Objectives	
Objective IS18:	Facilitate wind farm developments in suitable locations, having regard to any designations of areas of the County for this purpose, government guidelines and the need to protect, inter alia, designated heritage sites, designated sensitive rural landscapes, visually vulnerable areas, scenic routes and scenic views. The Planning Authority will have regard to DoEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development, 2006 in the assessment of any proposals for wind energy production.
Objective IS19:	Undertake a review of the areas of Wind Farm potential in the County, having regard to the designation of lands as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas or as habitats capable of supporting Annex I species.
Objective IS20:	Encourage and actively promote innovative housing design and layout solutions that address concerns of environmental sustainability with regard to matters such as energy efficiency and use of materials.
Objective IS21:	Actively encourage the integration of micro renewable energy sources into the design and construction of single and multiple housing developments throughout the County.
Objective IS22:	The Planning Authority will have regard to the DoEHLG Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008 in the assessment of any proposals for residential development, including inter alia those in respect of energy efficiency, passive solar design and renewable energy sources.
Objective IS23:	Give favourable consideration to small scale renewable energy schemes, such as wind, hydro and biomass, of less than 5MW where grid connection is possible without large scale infrastructural investment in line with national guidelines for sustainable development.
Objective IS24:	The Planning Authority shall seek to reserve a strategic corridor free from conflicting or inappropriate development as shown on Map IS2 for the purposes of providing necessary overhead electrical supply and distribution infrastructure between Galway and Screeb and other strategic infrastructure elements of the Grid Development Strategy.

7.6.3 Renewable Energy

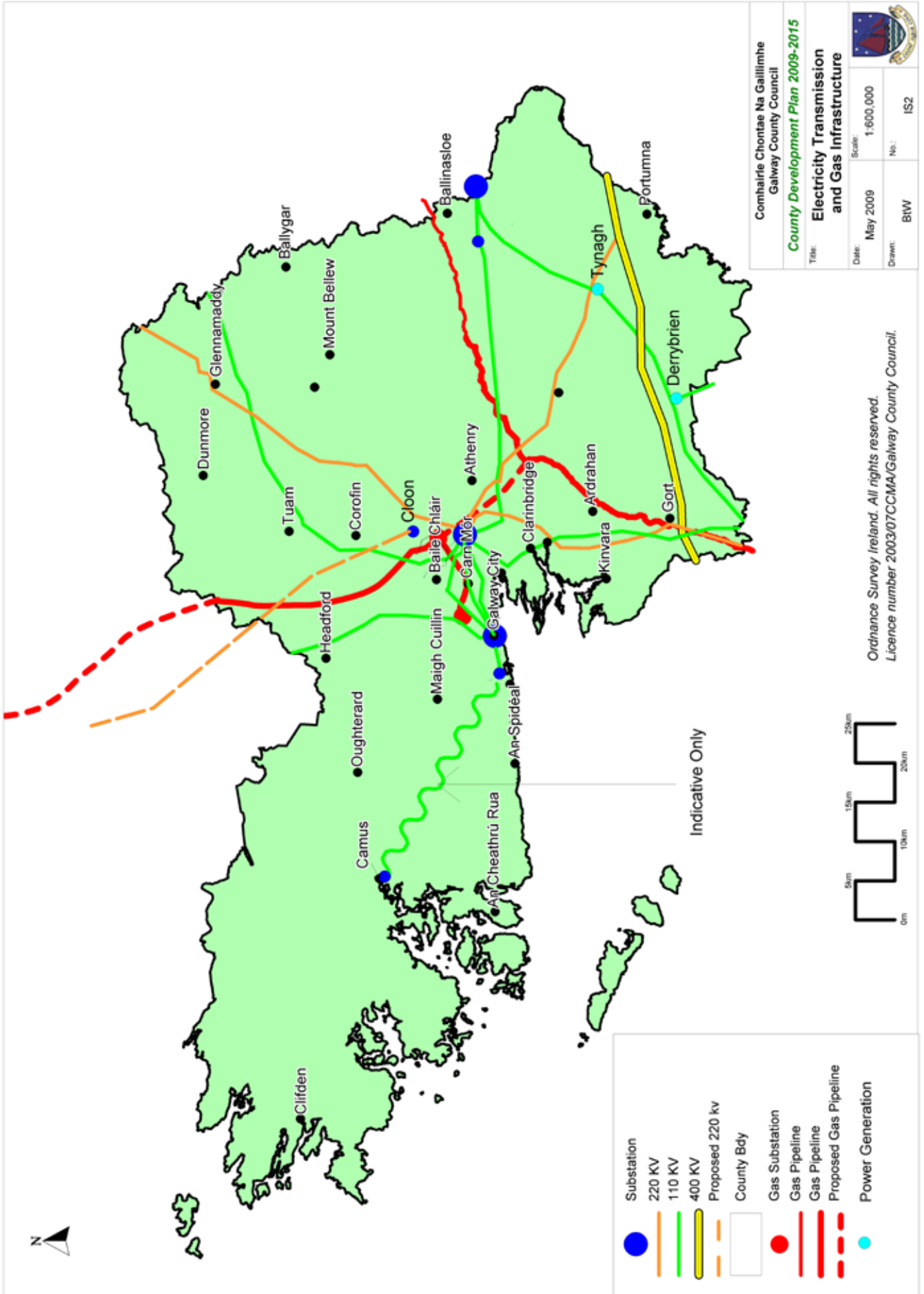
New Planning Exemptions for Solar Panels and other Micro Renewable Technology were published in 2007 by the DoEHLG. The new Planning and Development Regulations 2008 provides exemptions from planning permission for solar panels, heat pumps, wind turbines and wood pellet burners subject to certain conditions. It should be noted that where an individual wishes to install any class of micro-renewable technology that does not fall within exemptions they are required to apply for planning permission. Small scale hydroelectricity and its potential impact on water sources is not considered exempt development and such developments will require planning permission. Also the existing restrictions on exempted development as set out in Article 9 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 still apply. The carrying out of particular development, notably, where there is an impact on sites or objects of archaeological, geological or historical interest shall not be exempted development. Particular attention should be given to the condition limiting the application of the exemption in an Architectural Conservation Area. In these circumstances, where an individual wishes to install any of the renewable technologies that are otherwise exempt, they must apply for planning permission.

Map IS1 shows the areas with Wind Farm Potential in the County.





Map IS1



Map IS2

8.1 Introduction

Irish society has undergone significant social change during the past generation. The reasons for this are multifaceted but derive from a combination of economic growth, international communications, membership of the European Union, increased multi-culturalism and better access to formal Higher Educational facilities. The resultant changes in family and community relations pose new challenges for Local Authorities in providing, guiding and facilitating the provision of facilities, which will enhance the quality of life in County communities.

The Community and Enterprise Unit of the County Council have assisted the County Development Board in preparing a comprehensive economic, social and cultural strategy which forms the core of the Council's community policy in the coming years.

8.2 Cultural Heritage and Community Identity

County Galway possesses a strong community identity and has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. This identity is expressed in many ways: in the language that people speak, the arts and crafts they practice, the festivals they celebrate, the games they play, the jobs and occupations that provide their livelihood, the buildings they create and the location in which they live. The County's sense of place and the many strands of its cultural inheritance have been substantially maintained despite the social changes of recent times and an increasingly multi-ethnic society.

8.3 An Gaeltacht

The County contains the largest and most populous Gaeltacht in the Country. It is located for the most part in the Conamara area but includes the Aran Islands, some of the suburbs of Galway City and the eastern hinterland of the Corrib (Map CS1 shows the County Galway Gaeltacht).

The language and culture of the Gaeltacht is a unique and precious inheritance, which it is a National aim to preserve and protect. This aim is now enshrined in the Planning and Development Act, 2000-2006.

The Planning Authority's role in achieving this aim is to protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht by granting planning permission with special consideration to Irish speaking applicants or those who qualify under the rural housing policy and by imposing conditions in granting such permissions which will ensure the stabilisation and the promotion of Irish as a community language. The 2006 Census indicates a total of 29,447 people over the age of 3 living in the Gaeltacht, with a total of 22,377 or 76.8% recorded as Irish speakers. This is the most populous gaeltacht with the 3rd highest percentage of Irish speakers of all the counties with official gaeltacht designated areas. This is an increase in overall population over the age of 3 in the Gaeltacht area since the 2002 census (27,281) but displays a small decrease in the percentage of Irish speakers over the period from 21,171 or 78.3%. However, the overall number of Irish speakers over the age of 3 has increased in actual numbers to 22,377.

The County Galway Gaeltacht is outlined on Map CS1. Its extent was defined by the Government in 1956 and was based at that time on a region within which 80% or more of the population spoke Irish as an everyday language.

The 1996 Census of population indicated a total of approximately 36,000 people living in the area including 1,303 people living on the Aran Islands. In 2001 there were approximately 4,500 people from the Gaeltacht in paid employment, approximately 37% of them in part-time or seasonal jobs.

It is a fundamental policy of the state to preserve the Irish language. The strongest Irish speaking community in the country is located in County Galway, mainly in the area from Bearna to Carna and including the Aran Islands. This linguistic community is under severe pressure for many reasons, one being the pressure of people with no Irish moving in, as well as other external influences and a lack of service provision in their own language. The official Gaeltacht consists of a number of different communities and the Council recognises that the Irish language is stronger in some communities than in others.

8.3.1 Preserving and Promoting the Gaeltacht in the Planning Process

The Planning Authority must face those aspects that damage the Irish language and the Gaeltacht in the planning process. A very small part of the Country is designated as being in the Gaeltacht and it must be preserved and promoted linguistically. The Planning Authority will assess the impact on the Irish language of every area in the Gaeltacht. Galway County Council recognises that there has been population decline in some parts of the Gaeltacht. Any development, which in the opinion of the Planning Authority would have a significant negative impact on the Irish language and the Gaeltacht, will not be permitted.

The Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008 will be the principal document for the purposes of guiding and controlling development within the Local Area Plan for Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe. The land use objectives as set out in the Local Area Plan for Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe shall be deemed to be land use objectives of the County Development Plan.

Developments which will be considered favourably include:

- Houses for native speakers.
- Houses for native speakers by voluntary organisations.
- Low cost houses for young Irish speaking couples.
- Community centres that support Irish.
- Educational facilities – e.g. third level, etc.
- Tourism projects which are language centred.
- Gaeltacht offices for the purpose of providing services through Irish for the Gaeltacht community.
- Irish speaking families who wish to settle in Gaeltacht areas.
- Business that is language centred e.g. translation/communication services.
- Signage to be in Irish only with internationally recognised symbols. The Planning Authority will consider the potential impact on the language of any development close to the Gaeltacht boundaries.

8.3.1.1 Preserving and Promoting the Gaeltacht in the Planning Process Policies

Preserving and Promoting the Gaeltacht in the Planning Process Policies

Policy CS1: The Council is committed to the provisions, policies and objectives as set out in the Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008 and to the full implementation of the measures contained therein to protect and encourage the social, cultural and linguistic heritage of the Gaeltacht whilst seeking to realise the economic and development potential of the Gaeltacht in a balanced and sustainable manner over the lifetime of the Plan.

8.3.2 People from the Gaeltacht working outside the Gaeltacht

The Planning Authority accepts that some people who work outside the Gaeltacht, wish to reside in a community where Irish is the dominant language. The Planning Authority will be favourably disposed to planning applications from fluent Irish speakers who are raising their children through Irish.

8.3.3 Economic Development in the Gaeltacht

The Council supports Údarás na Gaeltachta in fulfilling its role as a development agency. Development which falls within the categories mentioned above or which will provide new sustainable employment and which can demonstrate a commitment to the preservation and promotion of the Irish language will be considered favourably, subject to all normal planning considerations.

8.3.3.1 Economic Development in the Gaeltacht Policies

Economic Development in the Gaeltacht Policies

Policy CS2: Galway County Council is committed to working closely with all the statutory development agencies, especially Údarás na Gaeltachta, to achieve sustainable development in the Galway Gaeltacht while protecting and promoting the Irish language as the first community language of the area.

8.3.4 Language Impact Statement

Language Impact Statements will be required where an application is made for two or more houses, or where an applicant applied for more than one house in an area. The purpose of a Language Impact Statement will be to assess the likely impact of the proposed development on the usage of Irish within the Gaeltacht area. Permission will only be granted where the Authority is satisfied that the effect of the development will be beneficial to the usage of the language in the area, if permitted.



Language Impact Statement Policies	
Policy CS3:	The Council accepts that the language is an asset in the Gaeltacht and in order to support the language, the Council shall endeavour to provide services through Irish. The Council shall ensure that Irish is the language medium of the Carraroe office.
Policy CS4:	Implement the policies and objectives, including the land use zoning objectives, of the Local Area Plan for Gaeltacht na Gaillimhe.
Policy CS5:	Recognise the economic, social and cultural importance of Irish in the Gaeltacht and throughout the county.
Policy CS6:	Put in place an effective system through which the various aspects of the Gaeltacht ethos can be assessed and protected as part of the planning process.
Policy CS7:	Ensure that all contractors employed by Galway County Council in the Gaeltacht will have regard to the culture in which they work.

8.4 Community Facilities and Services

It is generally accepted that fair and equitable access to infrastructure services is a key factor in providing for sustainable and balanced communities. The settlement strategy proposed in this Plan is designed to consolidate the level of service that exists in rural communities and to pro-actively encourage population growth, local leadership and initiative, and the consequent improvement of facilities and amenities throughout the county. The quality of life in a community depends not only on the provision of housing, employment and infrastructure support but also on access to social, community and cultural facilities which are fundamental to social cohesion and personal enhancement.

The concentration of population and services in and around Galway City in recent years has caused a serious imbalance in service provision, resulting in towns and villages, which are close to the City being near a wide range of services while the peripheral areas are losing population and in danger of losing further services. In contrast, other rapidly expanding towns and villages have to cope with overcrowded schools, lack of childcare facilities and health services.

In order to be sustainable, communities require access to these essential social services such as health care, public transport, leisure, recreation, social and educational opportunities. The challenge for the County Council and the County Development Board will be to act with the various communities in identifying their needs, obtaining resources and supporting programmes to sustain community life. The co-operation of State Agencies and Government Departments in the delivery of certain services such as education, childcare, day facilities for our elderly, etc is essential.

8.4.1 Community Services Policies

Community Services Policies	
Policy CS8:	Support the County Development Board in its key objectives of strengthening the Community and Voluntary sector throughout the County and developing a long-term strategy of social investment at Community level.
Policy CS9:	Continue the Planning Authority's programme of infrastructure improvements in line with available funding.
Policy CS10:	Promote the improvement of health services throughout the County and in particular pursue the establishment of comprehensive hospital and healthcare facilities and the location of an ambulance base in Tuam Hub Town. In this regard, the Council shall work closely with the Health Service Executive to identify locations where primary healthcare facilities should and can be provided.
Policy CS11:	The Planning Authority shall work closely with the Department of Education and the Office of Public Works to identify and protect suitable sites for new educational facilities. Promote the provision of day care and childcare facilities by both the public and private sectors in settlements and communities throughout the county.

Community Services Policies

- Policy CS12:** Promote the provision of out-reach third level education opportunities.
- Policy CS13:** To continue to promote the use of the library service and further develop each library as a community gathering place.
- Policy CS14:** To advance the projects identified in the Library Development Programme during the lifetime of the Plan.
- Policy CS15:** To recognise the community and cultural needs of new communities in the county and facilitate the development of diverse cultural, religious and social facilities in our towns and villages.
- Policy CS16:** Favourable consideration should be given to projects throughout the county and particularly on the county's offshore islands that integrate services for elderly and children. Capital funding should be provided, where available, for the development of high quality, multi-purpose centres which support a range of services, including childcare services. To promote, within the framework of diversification, where vital services presently exist or will be installed, the further development of community services under the particular headings of health and medical care. To promote the continued improvement and expansion of health and medical care facilities within the county in a planned and co-ordinated way, by accommodating projects that assist in providing such medical care facilities, together with their necessary support services and developments, as well as their infrastructural requirements.
- Policy CS17:** The planning authority will seek the provision of crèche facilities in mixed use/residential developments in accordance with the ministerial guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities published in 2001". The Planning Authority shall encourage the development of a broad range of childcare facilities, i.e. part-time, full daycare, after-school care, etc., including those based in residential areas, in employment areas and in areas close to where users of such facilities live. In general, childcare facilities outside of established settlements shall only be permitted adjacent to or in close proximity to existing educational or social facilities (national schools, rural shops/post offices, etc).
- Policy CS18:** Site reservations for primary and post primary schools shall be implemented in consultation and in accordance with the Department of Education and Science guidelines and recommendations proposed during the Local Area Plan process, and ensuring that an appropriate site is reserved for a new stand alone post primary school in Tuam Hub. The Planning Authority shall consult with the Department of Education with regard to specific sites identified at Local Area Plan stage.
- Regard shall be had to the guidance document "The Provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government".
- Policy CS19:** Facilitate where possible, the development in future proposals of site reservations as close as possible to community facilities such as sports facilities, libraries etc. so that these can be shared between the school and the community. The Planning Authority shall also consider multi-campus school arrangements e.g. 2/3 primaries side by side or a primary and a post primary school sharing a site, subject to appropriate assessment of specific sites, in order to reduce the land take requirements for school development.
- Policy CS20:** Co-operate with Ballinasloe Town Council in facilitating the development and expansion of educational facilities to serve the town, particularly in relation to any proposals at the interface areas between the Town and County areas.

Burial Ground Policies

Policy CS21: The planning authority will seek to acquire lands where the extension of public burial grounds in the ownership or charge of the Council are likely to be necessary during the Plan period. Archaeologically significant medieval burial grounds will not be considered for extension if such an extension would constitute a proven risk to the archaeological heritage.

8.5 Recreation and Amenity

Recreation ranges from competitive sports to the passive appreciation of the natural environment and the expression of the artistic spirit through painting or craftwork. County Galway has a wide diversity of recreational activities some of which derive from local customs and traditions.

Many of the competitive sports demand ever increasing standards of facilities and accommodation, and participants in the County will require access to such facilities in order to compete equally with fellow competitors at National and International level. On the other hand, there will be an equal imperative to preserve the unspoilt amenities such as beaches, dunes, bogs and mountainside for their recreational qualities. Settlement centres also possess buildings and locations of local significance, which give a sense of place and provide a useful role for local people as congregational points or play areas.

8.5.1 Recreation and Amenity Policies**Recreation and Amenity Policies**

Policy CS22: Where possible, combine with developers and local communities in the provision and improvement of recreational facilities.

Policy CS23: Support cycling and walking groups in promoting their disciplines and developing routes and facilities.

Policy CS24: Co-operate with all agencies in promoting and developing the recreational potential of the county and carry out appropriate development as and when resources permit.

Policy CS25: Protect the amenity of scenic and environmentally sensitive areas and promote the knowledge and appreciation of the natural amenities of the County.

Policy CS26: Prohibit the intrusion of development along public walking routes and public rights of way, particularly those in scenic areas, the sea coast and along inland waterways.

Policy CS27: Loss of existing recreational space or facilities will be resisted.

Policy CS28: The Council will seek to protect the alignment of the Clifden Railway Line as a cycle and walk way.

Policy CS29: Support cycling and walking groups and local community groups in promoting their disciplines and developing routes throughout the county, including the islands.

Policy CS30: Support and help promote national programmes to develop walking and cycle routes including the Irish Trails Strategy and the Cycle Strategy for the Western Region

8.5.2 Recreation and Amenity Objectives

Recreation and Amenity Objectives	
Objective CS1:	A systematic survey of the various settlements will be carried out to determine local aspirations and assess their viability.
Objective CS2:	Enhance the provision of swimming facilities throughout the county and ensure the quality of bathing water.
Objective CS3:	To provide an increased number of recreation outlets, including public parks, play areas and walkways.
Objective CS4:	To develop and implement a sports, recreation, amenity and play policy for the County within the lifetime of the Plan based on the recommendations of the Recreational Needs Study being undertaken by Galway County Council. The policy will have regard to the needs and aspirations of local communities, the potential for mutual benefits between the County and City areas and the Galway City Recreation and Amenity Needs Study 2008.
Objective CS5:	Develop sport, recreation and amenity facilities in appropriate locations consistent with proper planning and sustainable development in the County in partnership with local community and sports groups and/or private parties and maximise revenue from the Sports Capital Programme for investment in local facilities.
Objective CS6:	To consider and pursue the provision of a municipal golf course in proximity to the metropolitan area to cater for demand arising from the city and county.
Objective CS7:	To carry out a feasibility study in relation to the potential of Tonabrocky Hill being developed as a civic amenity area.
Objective CS8:	Galway County Council will have regard to the importance of the Battlefield site in Aughrim and will be cognisant of any new national guidelines on the management of such heritage sites while balancing these against the development needs of local communities and families.
Objective CS9:	The Planning Authority shall ensure that all new placenames and estate names shall be referred to the Placenames Committee of Galway County Council to ensure appropriate placenames that reflect the social, cultural and physical characteristics of the area.
Objective CS10:	Support and plan for the provision of a coastal path from Oranmore to Bearna. All development along this route shall be encouraged to facilitate this amenity path.
Objective CS11:	Support the provision of an inter-county coastal path, linking Mayo, Galway and Sligo.
Objective CS12:	Consider the provision of a playground or play area on Inis Mór at or close to Cill Rónain.
Objective CS13:	To consider positively the provision of, or permission for, the development of allotments within rural and agricultural areas where they are accessible from the built-up area of the County, to be available to the community. The demand and feasibility of allotments should be considered in the Recreation Needs Study being undertaken by Galway County Council.

8.6 Social Inclusion and Universal Access

8.6.1 Social Inclusion and Universal Access Policies

Social Inclusion and Universal Access Policies

Policy CS31: Support the principles of social inclusion and universal access to ensure that all individuals have access to goods and services and to assist them to participate in and contribute to social and cultural life.

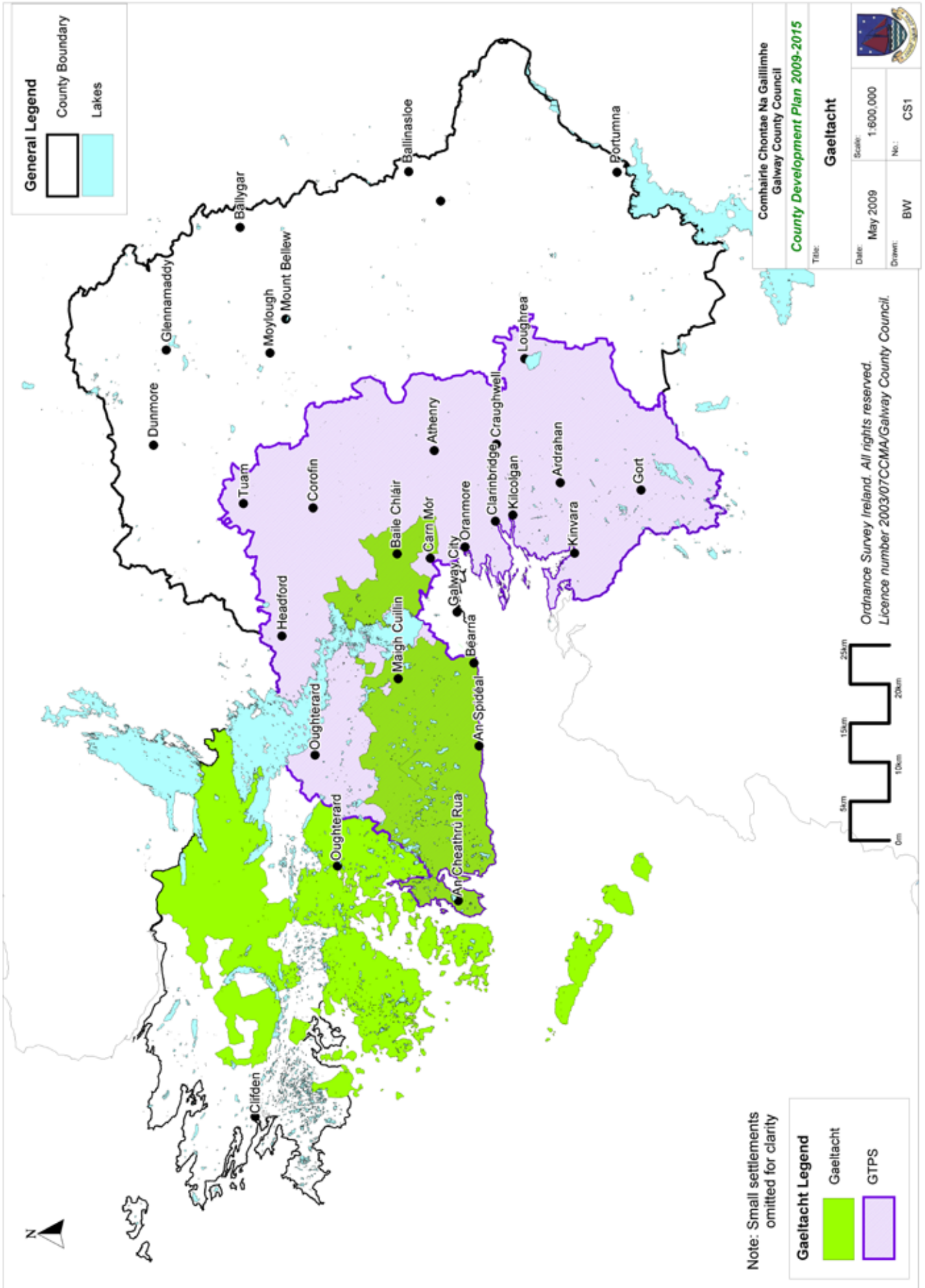
8.6.2 Social Inclusion and Universal Access Objectives

Social Inclusion and Universal Access Objectives

Objective CS14: Support the implementation of the requirements and provisions of the Disability Act 2005 and the Council's Disability Action Plan 2007-2015.

Objective CS15: Support the implementation of the provisions of the County Galway Local Authorities Social Inclusion Strategy 2006-2009 and any subsequent strategy adopted during the lifetime of the Plan.

Objective CS16: Consideration should be given to the needs of disabled people in the location, layout and design of housing developments, communal facilities, public spaces and transport services.



Map CS1

9.1 Introduction

Our social heritage, environment and landscape are very valuable resources and it is important that we recognise their value to our quality of life and to all our daily activities. County Galway is undergoing rapid change and this has the potential to have major effects on the natural and built heritage.

Every day we make decisions about what aspects of our social heritage to keep and what to discard. The decisions are often unconscious and are usually informed by our values and understanding of the social heritage. It is important that we take responsibility for our actions and understand the implications for the social heritage. It is essential that all stakeholders see themselves as having a shared responsibility for the heritage.

We also need to be mindful that we are also creating the physical and social heritage of tomorrow. We must ensure that future generations will be proud of the natural, urban and rural heritage, which we have left as a legacy. Therefore it is essential that clear policies and objectives are in place to properly utilise, conserve, manage and protect our physical and social heritage.

Heritage can be defined to include built, natural and cultural elements of the past and the skills used in its creation and maintenance.

9.1.1 General Heritage Policies

Heritage Policies	
Policy HL1:	Conserve, protect and enhance the special character of the County as defined by its natural heritage and biodiversity, its built environment, landscape and cultural, social and sporting heritage.
Policy HL2:	Ensure that heritage protection is an integral part of coherent policies of economic and social development and of urban and rural planning.
Policy HL3:	Take cognisance, in assessing planning applications and preparing development plans, of the policies and data collected in the “Galway County Heritage Plan 2004-2008” and the Draft ‘Galway County Heritage Plan 2009 – 2015’ when adopted, and to the ‘Galway County Biodiversity Action Plan’.
Policy HL4:	The plan shall support achieving the objectives and actions contained in the County Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 - 2013 (Galway County Council, 2008).
Policy HL5:	Protect and enhance the built, natural and cultural heritage of the islands.
Policy HL6:	Implement the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006, which offers protection to the architectural heritage, and implement the various legislative provisions relating to the archaeological and natural heritage Map HL5 shows the Preliminary EcoNet Map.
Policy HL7:	Engage with all relevant stakeholders (and in particular local communities) in matters relating to the protection of natural and built heritage.

9.2 Built Heritage

9.2.1 Architectural Heritage

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 environment developed over the years has attained a character that contributes to varied, locally distinctive areas in County Galway.

The architectural heritage of Galway is a unique and special resource. Our architectural heritage consists not only of great artistic achievements of the past, but also the everyday works of craftsmanship of the past.

Structures and places have over time acquired character and special interest through their continued existence and familiarity. In a changing world they provide an anchor. All of their parts have been tested by our climate, and those that have survived the ravages of time and of constant use, have acquired value.

If we enjoy the fruits of this inheritance, we have a duty to ensure that it is conserved and passed on to our successors. Sympathetic reuse can allow the architectural heritage to be enjoyed and used into the future.

9.2.1.1 Architectural Heritage Policies

Architectural Heritage Policies	
Policy HL8:	Protect and conserve the architectural heritage of County Galway, which is a unique and special resource.
Policy HL9:	Encourage proposals, which preserve or enhance the intrinsic character, scale and visual amenity of the architectural heritage.
Policy HL10:	Respect the character of existing buildings, important views and spaces and the historic settlement pattern in terms of scale, height, grouping, density, design and materials.
Policy HL11:	Encourage the retention of original windows, doors, renders, roof coverings and other significant features of historic buildings, whether protected or not.
Policy HL12:	Encourage the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns in the villages and towns of County Galway and record evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts, etc. in the course of development.
Policy HL13:	Continue to develop the Council's advisory/educational role with regard to architectural conservation matters and promote awareness and understanding of the architectural heritage.
Policy HL14:	Recognise the unique cultural significance of Clonmacnoise as a heritage site and support the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's bid for UNESCO World Heritage Site Status for Clonmacnoise.

9.2.1.2 Architectural Heritage Objectives

Architectural Heritage Objectives	
Objective HL1:	Undertake architectural heritage inventories of historic towns, villages and settlements, which shall have regard to guidelines and recommendations of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.
Objective HL2:	Include an inventory of the architectural heritage in all Local Area Plans and Integrated Area Plans undertaken, in order to assist in its protection.
Objective HL3:	Encourage the consideration of the rehabilitation of an existing building as a more sustainable option than demolition and construction of a new one. This avoids the generation of unnecessary building demolition waste, helps to foster the development of specialised conservation skills and allows a building to continue to contribute to the character of the area in which it is situated.
Objective HL4:	Demonstrate best practice with regard to the custodianship of Protected Structures, Recorded Monuments and elements of architectural heritage in the Council's ownership and care.
Objective HL5:	Seek, where possible, to protect the historic bridges, harbours, railway and roadside features, and street furniture in towns and villages.
Objective HL6:	Co-operate with neighbouring Local Authorities in establishing a common protection strategy for important heritage sites at Clonmacnoise and the Burren.

9.2.2 Protected Structures

A protected structure is a structure that the Planning Authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. The authority in its Record of Protected Structures (RPS) includes details of protected structures. A Record of Protected Structures is the record included in a Development Plan correct at the time of publication. It may be amended by the addition or deletion of entries independently of the development plan review process.

The inclusion of a structure in the RPS does not preclude appropriate use or development. The word protection is defined in the Planning and Development Act (2000-2006) as including, in relation to a structure, or part of a structure, conservation, preservation and improvement compatible with maintaining the character and interest of the structure. Protection is offered to:

1. The interior of the structure.
2. The land lying within the curtilage of the structure.
3. Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure.



For a protected structure or a proposed protected structure, normal planning exemptions do not apply. No works, which would adversely affect the character of the structure, or any element of it, which contributes to its special interest, may be carried out to a protected structure without planning permission.

An owner or occupier of a protected structure may make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a Declaration as to the type of works, which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest.

Not all alterations of works to a Protected Structure will constitute material alterations. Owners, and prospective owners, of protected structures are encouraged to consult with the planning authority in good time as to the appropriateness of proposed works and, as necessary, to seek competent advice on the best practice for carrying out such works.

By regulation, applications for outline planning permission for works involving protected structures cannot be entertained. Section 57(10) (b) of the Planning and Development Act (2000-2002) states that a Planning Authority shall not grant permission for the demolition of a protected structure save in exceptional circumstances.

The local authority has special powers in relation to Protected Structures:

1. It may require an owner or an occupier of a protected structure to carry out works if it considers that a structure is or may become endangered.
2. It may require an owner or an occupier of a protected structure to carry out works if it considers that the character of the structure ought to be restored.
3. It may acquire, by agreement or compulsorily, a protected structure, if it considers that this is desirable or necessary in relation to the protection of the structure.



9.2.2.1 Protected Structures Policies

Protected Structures Policies	
Policy HL15:	Adopt a strategy of minimum intervention in relation to proposals concerning Protected Structures and those of local interest that contribute to local distinctiveness.
Policy HL16:	Resist the demolition of any building or item of architectural significance, which is included in the Record of Protected Structures unless a conclusive case based on technical evidence is made for its alteration or removal.
Policy HL17:	Ensure that any interventions to Protected Structures or Proposed Protected Structures are undertaken in accordance with best conservation practice and use sustainable and appropriate materials.

9.2.2.2 Protected Structures Objectives

Protected Structures Objectives	
Objective HL7:	Protect structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.
Objective HL8:	Require that the design of any proposed building adjoining or in the same setting as a Protected Structure shall have regard to the architectural context of the building.
Objective HL9:	Proposals for intervention in relation to protected structures or proposed protected structures shall have regard to the Council's Architectural Survey and Assessment Best Practice Guide and the DoEHLG's Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2004 and any subsequent Guidelines, Acts, Directives or Policies which may be issued during the lifetime of this Plan.
Objective HL10:	Carry out an audit and assessment of the condition of all Protected Structures in the ownership of the Council and devise a management/maintenance plan for these structures.
Objective HL11:	Carry out periodic reviews of the Record of Protected Structures.

The Record of Protected Structures is contained in the Appendices.

9.2.3 Architectural Conservation Areas

Investment in the county's historic building fabric shall be encouraged and promoted in its buildings and civic spaces, in order to help secure physical, cultural and economic regeneration for the benefit of those living, working and visiting in the county.

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or contributes to the appreciation of a Protected Structure. An Architectural Conservation Area may or may not include Protected Structures. In an ACA, protection is placed on the external appearance of such areas or structures. Planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in an ACA, which might alter the character of the structure, or the ACA.

9.2.3.1 Architectural Conservation Areas Policies

Architectural Conservation Areas Policies	
Policy HL18:	Protect Architectural Conservation Areas as important elements of the architectural heritage of the County and ensure that new developments or works respect the external character, form, materials and setting of the ACA.
Policy HL19:	Establish where it is considered appropriate, Areas of Special Planning Control if it is considered that all or part of an Architectural Conservation Area is of special importance to, or as respects, the civic life or the architectural, historical, cultural or social character of a town or village in which it is situated.

9.2.3.2 Architectural Conservation Areas Objectives

Architectural Conservation Areas Objectives	
Objective HL12:	Investigate and, where deemed appropriate, designate historic demesnes in both urban and rural settings throughout the County as Architectural Conservation Areas.
Objective HL13:	Prepare a survey, character appraisal and set of policies and objectives for each ACA as part of the Local Area Plan process where applicable or through the provisions of the County Development Plan.
Objective HL14:	Prohibit the demolition of a Protected Structure, or a structure that contributes positively to the character of an ACA, except in very exceptional circumstances. Where demolition is granted within an ACA, an assessment of the impact of the replacement building on the character of the ACA will be required.

9.2.4 Vernacular Architecture

Vernacular architecture refers to the local regional traditional building forms and types built using local materials, skills and building techniques. This would primarily include traditional domestic buildings such as thatched cottages but could also include other traditional structures such as shops, outbuildings, mills, farmsteads, forges, gates and gate piers.

These buildings and structures reflect the local heritage and contribute to the local distinctiveness of a place. The loss of vernacular architecture may not only result from the removal of whole buildings but also the gradual attrition of details such as the replacement of roof coverings and openings with modern materials. Any changes proposed to vernacular buildings or structures should be sympathetic to the special features and character of the building or structure.

9.2.4.1 Vernacular Architecture Policies

Vernacular Architecture Policies

Policy HL20:	Encourage the protection, retention, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation and use of the vernacular heritage in both the towns and rural areas of the County.
Policy HL21:	Encourage the identification, retention and development of traditionally skilled crafts in the county.

9.2.4.2 Vernacular Architecture Objectives

Vernacular Architecture Objectives

Objective HL15:	Establish a register of thatched cottages within the County and provide measures to support their retention, maintenance and appropriate use.
Objective HL16:	Establish a register of traditional skills, in co-operation with other bodies with an interest in the area.

9.2.5 Archaeological Heritage

The archaeological heritage of Co. Galway includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, all recorded monuments as well as their contexts, and moveable objects, situated both on land and underwater. It is comprised of:

- Recorded sites and features of historical and archaeological importance included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendments) Act 1994.
- Major sites of archaeological importance in State Ownership or Guardianship.
- National Monuments which are the subject of preservation orders in Co. Galway.
- Previously unknown archaeology that is brought to the attention of the authorities (e.g. through ground disturbance, fieldwork or the discovery of sites underwater).



The National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) was established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and structures, features, objects or sites listed in the RMP are known as Recorded Monuments.

Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). These structures are accordingly protected by both the National Monuments Acts and the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006.

Burial Grounds are an important part of local heritage and often contain the standing remains or sites of earlier structures and also contain a great diversity of animal and plant life. Burial Grounds, which are included in Records of Monuments and Places, are afforded protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

9.2.5.1 Archaeological Heritage Policies

Archaeological Heritage Policies	
Policy HL22:	Encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the County's archaeological heritage.
Policy HL23:	Support the preservation, conservation and maintenance of archaeological sites, together with the integrity of the setting of these monuments and sites. Development, which would destroy, alter or damage monuments or archaeological sites, or cause inappropriate change to their settings and character will be prohibited.
Policy HL24:	Encourage the appreciation and knowledge of the County's rich archaeological heritage.
Policy HL25:	Protect and preserve archaeological sites, which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
Policy HL26:	Facilitate public access to the National Monuments, which are in the Council's ownership or in the care of The Heritage Service, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
Policy HL27:	Consult the Heritage Service, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to proposed developments adjoining archaeological sites.
Policy HL28:	All planning applications for new development, redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment, and restoration, etc. within areas of archaeological potential and within close proximity to the recorded monuments will take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological mitigation.
Policy HL29:	Protect the burial grounds, identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, in co-operation with the Heritage Service, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the local community and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.
Policy HL30:	<p>It will be the general policy of Galway County Council to apply the following principles to the archaeological heritage of the county:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect and enhance archaeological monuments and their settings. • To facilitate appropriate guidance in relation to the protection of the archaeological heritage of the area. • To provide guidance to developers and property owners regarding the archaeological implications of proposed developments through the development management pre-planning process and through the heritage forum and various publications and projects as set out in the Heritage Plan 2004-2008. • To promote public awareness of the rich archaeological heritage of the area.



9.2.5.2 Archaeological Heritage Objectives

Archaeological Heritage Objectives

- Objective HL17:** The planning authority will, within the lifetime of this Plan, seek to identify important archaeological landscapes as part of any landscape character assessment of the plan area or part thereof, and protect these archaeological landscapes from inappropriate development, in consultation with the appropriate Government Agencies and state bodies.
- Objective HL18:** Seek archaeological impact assessments as part of the planning submission when proposed development could affect a Recorded Monument, a Zone of Archaeological Potential, or their settings.
- Objective HL19:** Establish in-house training programmes for Council staff carrying out repair and maintenance works to historic burial grounds and produce a guidance note on this subject for contractors and local community groups.
- Objective HL20:** It shall be an objective of the planning authority to seek to conserve the integrity of existing archaeological monuments and their settings.
- Objective HL21:** It shall be an objective of the planning authority to seek to ensure that development in the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting by reason of its location, scale, bulk or detailing.

9.3 Natural Heritage

9.3.1 Designated Sites, Habitats and Species

The most important and valuable habitats are afforded protection under European and National Legislation by way of designation as proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Various species of flora and fauna are also protected under European and National Legislation. Other important designations include: Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites and Wildfowl Sanctuaries. Conamara National Park is another important heritage site, which encompasses some 2,957 hectares.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service under the auspices of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local



Government is responsible for the designation of the NHAs, SACs and SPAs. The designation of sites is a continuing process as boundaries are revised and adjusted and new sites are added. Galway County Council will take cognisance of any revisions and adjustments as furnished by The National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Candidate Special Areas of Conservation

The Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) have been selected because they support habitats and plant and animal species that are rare or threatened in Europe and require particular measures, including the designation of protected sites, to conserve them.

Together with the SPAs they form part of the 'Natura 2000' network of sites throughout Europe.



Special Protection Areas

The Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and proposed Special Protection Areas have been selected because they support populations of birds of particular species that are rare or threatened in Europe and require particular measures, including the designation of protected areas to conserve them.

Natural Heritage Areas

The Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wild plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes.

9.3.1.1 Designated Sites, Habitats and Species Policies

Designated Sites, Habitats and Species Policies	
Policy HL31:	It is the policy of the Council to implement Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive, and to subject any plan (including County Development Plan, Local Area Plans) or projects likely to impact Natura 2000 or European Sites (SACs, SPAs), whether directly (in situ), indirectly (ex-situ) or in combination with other plans or projects, to an Appropriate Assessment in order to inform decision making. A plan or project may only be authorised after the competent authority has made certain, based on scientific knowledge, that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site; in the case of derogations, authorisation must be pursued under Article 6(4). Refer to Section 9.3 Mitigation Measures of the Environmental Report of the SEA and DM Standard 37.
Policy HL32:	It shall be the policy of Galway County Council to ensure that development in Galway and the provision of services take into account the relevant Management Plans (if any) for SACs and SPAs in the county.
Policy HL33:	Have regard to any impacts developments may have on or near existing and proposed, Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Conamara National Park and any other designated sites including any future designations.
Policy HL34:	Consult the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to proposed developments adjoining designated conservation sites.
Policy HL35:	Protect and conserve habitats and Species designated under the Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, Wildlife Act, Flora Protection Order, National Nature Reserves, Conamara National Park, Ramsar Sites and any other Directives, Acts or Policies which may be issued during the lifetime of this Plan.

Map HL1 shows the Designated Environmental Sites in County Galway.

9.3.1.2 Designated Sites, Habitats and Species Objectives

Designated Sites, Habitats and Species Objectives	
Objective HL22:	Promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas, while allowing for appropriate development, access and recreational activity.
Objective HL23:	It is an objective of the Council to conduct a study to see if any areas would be suitable for designation as Local Nature Reserves.
Objective HL24:	It is an objective to provide protection to all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in accordance with National and European legislation. This includes Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves and Ramsar sites.

9.3.2 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

The great diversity of landscape and seascape, coupled with location and climate, has resulted in a great diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats in County Galway. These include woodland, grassland, wetland, marine, coastal, upland, river and lake habitats. This biodiversity is under pressure for development and human activity. A sustainable approach is needed to protect and conserve the natural heritage.

The various habitats in the County form part of an “ecological network” that facilitates the movement of species between areas and ensures the effective functioning and survival of the diverse range of habitats and species in the County (See Map HL5). Ecological networks provide a spatial, network-based approach to the conservation of biodiversity, which differs from the site-based approach of environmental designations, by using ‘corridors’ or ‘stepping stones’ that support species migration, dispersal and daily movements between the ‘core areas’ and thereby contribute to a more integrated and functional ecological system.

Ecological networks are supported at EU level through the *European Spatial Development Perspective* and *Natura 2000* and underpin the *Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy* (PEBLDS), which has been ratified by Ireland. Research has been carried out into a National Ecological Network for Ireland as part of the preparation of the *National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020* in a report entitled the *Preliminary Study of the Needs Associated with a National Ecological Network 2001*. This study proposes the classification of open space areas according to their ecological functioning or ‘naturalness’ ranging from Class 1 (predominantly natural areas of high biodiversity) to Class 5 (low biodiversity areas such as continuous urban fabric). These classifications have been used to identify the major elements of an ecological network for the County. The concept of Ecological networks should be considered for inclusion in all future Development Plans and Local Area Plans.



Galway County Council have prepared a Tree and Hedgerow Survey as part of a number of actions (1.36, 3.15, and 3.22) outlined in the Galway County Heritage Plan 2004 – 2008. The primary purpose of this survey was to raise awareness on the significance of hedgerows in Galway and to identify ways to conserve Galway’s hedgerow heritage.

International Conventions & Agreements:

Ireland has ratified a range of International Agreements in relation to our archaeological and built heritage. Such agreements place legal obligations on the State in relation to the conservation and management of our archaeological and built heritage, which are given effect through the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004) and the Planning and Development Act (2000-2006).

9.3.2.1 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Policies

Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Policies	
Policy HL36:	Promote education, knowledge and pride in the natural heritage of the County.
Policy HL37:	Facilitate the identification and protection of the main elements of the ecological network in the County and provide for its appropriate and sustainable use.
Policy HL38:	Seek to maintain and enhance, as far as it is practical and prudent, the natural heritage and amenity of the County by seeking to encourage the preservation and retention of woodlands, hedgerows, stonewalls and wetlands. Where their removal or interference with same cannot be avoided, appropriate measures to replace like with like should be considered, subject to considerations of safety and practicality.
Policy HL39:	Protect and conserve in so far as is practicable, and in consideration of the strategic aims of this Plan, sites from inappropriate development where those sites demonstrate geological and geomorphological features of heritage value.
Policy HL40:	Encourage and support the protection, enhancement of, and access to, the geological and geomorphological features of heritage value.
Policy HL41:	Support national agencies, local and community groups in protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and wildlife habitats.
Policy HL42:	Recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity of the County.
Policy HL43:	The Local Authority shall seek to comply with the Habitats Directive and Natura 2000 recommendations, including the protection of fisheries habitats.

Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Policies

- Policy HL44:** The local authority shall seek to protect fisheries habitats, in particular those listed in the Annexes of the Habitats Directive and specifically for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel and the White Clawed Crayfish. The avoidance of development in areas where flood risk has been identified shall be the primary response of the Planning Authority. Development proposals which include proposals for mitigation and management of flood risk will only be considered where avoidance is not possible and where development can be clearly justified with the Guidelines Justification Test.
- Policy HL45:** No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).
- Policy HL46:** All subsequent plan-making and adoption of plans under the control of Galway County Council arising from this plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive.
- Policy HL47:** Galway County Council will set up procedures to ensure that any plan, project, etc would take cognisance of the existing impacts on Natura 2000 sites and assess the cumulative and “in combination” effects that said plans and projects may have on any Natura 2000 site and to ensure compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive.
- Policy HL48:** No ecological networks or parts thereof which provide significant connectivity between areas of local biodiversity are to be lost without remediation as a result of implementation of the County Development Plan.
- Policy HL49:** Galway County Council shall protect wetlands, and associated surface and groundwater systems within the Plan area.
- Policy HL50:** Galway County Council shall ensure that, in the supply of services and in zoning of lands and authorisation of development, the threatened habitats and species* which occur within and adjoining the Plan area are not placed under further risk of deterioration (habitats) or reduction in population size (species). *As identified in the National Parks and Wildlife “The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland”, (NPWS, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2008). Galway County Council shall ensure that plan formulation and development control shall take into account the relevant “Major Pressures reported in the assessment of Habitats and Species” and the “Main Objectives Over The Coming Five Years and Beyond” contained in the above publication.

9.3.2.2 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Objectives

Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Objectives

- Objective HL25:** Prepare an inventory of the geological geo-morphological heritage sites in County Galway and protect them from inappropriate development.
- Objective HL26:** No ecological networks or parts thereof which provide significant connectivity between areas of local biodiversity are to be lost as a result of implementation of the County Development Plan without appropriate and reasonable remediation and/or compensatory measures.
- Objective HL27:** The Council will avail of opportunities that may arise to create or promote new features of biodiversity in the context of new developments.
- Objective HL28:** Discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development and encourage tree surgery rather than felling. All works to be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Forestry Act 1946.

Objective HL29:	The Planning Authority will promote the planting of broadleaf woodlands where such planting is environmentally acceptable
Objective HL30:	Consider the contents of the Tree and Hedgerow Surveys in planning applications in conjunction with Development Management Standard 38.
Objective HL31:	It is the policy of the Council to support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan.

9.3.3 Eskers

Eskers are glacial features composed of narrow ridges of sand and gravel. Eskers are important because of their cultural, geological and natural heritage qualities. The glacial soil of eskers provide a habitat for many rare plants and for species-rich dry calcareous grassland of a type listed, with priority status, on Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive. In ancient times they were used as roadways. In more recent times they have been excavated as a source of sand or gravel.

Galway County Council recognises that there is a need to balance the requirements of aggregate extraction with the requirement of conservation of these important landscape features.

9.3.3.1 Esker Objectives

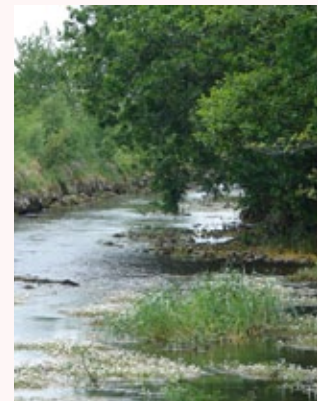
Esker Objectives

Objective HL32:	Assess applications for quarrying activity in proximity to eskers, with respect to the importance of the esker to the landscape, scientific value or amenity value of the esker.
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9.3.4 Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways

The coastal zone and inland waterways, which includes lakes, rivers and streams, are living systems that are home to a wide variety of habitats and species and which also contribute significantly to the character and amenity of the County and support tourism, recreation and quality of life for those living in and visiting the County. These elements also function as ecological “corridors” or “stepping stones” that connect related habitats and designated sites which enable species to move from place to place.

Much of the coastline of Galway County is home to a variety of natural habitats and there are several important/rare/interesting species of flora and fauna. Much of the coastline is designated candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA). The interface between land and sea is a significant resource in the County and is multi-faceted in that it contains towns, villages, harbours, piers and slipways which cater for development needs of the County, and also an irreplaceable amenity resource of beaches, sand dunes and cliff faces which are a significant tourism asset and add to the quality of life of local people.



Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is about the planning and management of coastal resources and coastal space. It is envisaged that this will be an ongoing process, which will evolve over time. Integrated Coastal Zone Management will address issues such as coastal tourism development, the fishing industry, coastal settlement patterns, transport, coastal erosion, habitat destruction, protection of coastal zone cSACs and SPA’s and prevention of pollution. In the context of County Galway, it is acknowledged that there are coastal zone assets which are under constant threat and therefore in need of protection. These include leisure beaches, piers and harbours, eco-systems and cliffs.

9.3.4.1 Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways Policies

Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways Policies

Policy HL51:	Seek to have protected and preserve in so far as is practicable the quality of the coastline, while balancing against the economic and social needs of coastal communities.
Policy HL52:	Seek to have protected in so far as is practicable, the flora and fauna and natural habitats along the coastline.
Policy HL53:	Seek to have protected any views of special amenity value along the coastline. (Map HL2)
Policy HL54:	Seek to have protected rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitat for fauna and flora.

Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways Policies

Policy HL55:	Seek to have protected and to enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of river and stream corridors (together with immediate floodplains and valleys of streams and smaller rivers) to maintain them free from inappropriate development, and to provide for public access where feasible and appropriate.
Policy HL56:	Seek to have protected and conserve their quality character and features by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways.
Policy HL57:	Seek to have protected and seek to provide access to inland waterways.
Policy HL58:	Have due regard to the aims, objectives and policies of the Waterways Corridor Study 2002 and the Sustainable Marina and Recreation Strategy for Lough Derg in the consideration of development proposals for this waterway and recreation amenity.
Policy HL59:	Ensure the adequate protection and sustainable use of the coastal zone as an area of natural heritage, amenity value, recreational use, economic potential and, where appropriate, quality living environment.
Policy HL60:	Incorporate the issue of provision/protection/enhancement of access into an integrated coastal management plan.
Policy HL61:	Conserve the character, quality and distinctiveness of seascapes.
Policy HL62:	Ensure the protection of the biodiversity of the islands off the Galway coast and the islands within the network of lakes in the County.
Policy HL63:	Address the issue of bathing water quality in County Galway and put in place appropriate policies and objectives with associated commitment and timescales to ensure the provision of adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment in the county.
Policy HL64:	Support the implementation of appropriate measures to manage surface water drainage and prevent/minimise flooding impacts on natural systems, human settlements and infrastructural elements.
Policy HL65:	The Local Authority shall seek to comply with the requirements of the Bathing Water Directive

9.3.4.2 Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways Objectives

Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways Objectives

Objective HL33:	Consider the preparation of integrated coastal zone management plans for specific areas of the county's coastline and off-shore islands as the need arises, based on identified zones of vulnerability such as shellfish farming areas or expanding harbours.
Objective HL34:	Where possible, the landward migration of coastal features, such as dunes and marshes, shall be facilitated as these features form an integral part of the coastal system – both physically and ecologically – and provide protection against wave energy through dissipation.
Objective HL35:	Comply with the provisions of the Bathing Water Regulations to ensure that where any bathing water fails the mandatory bathing standards that the public are made aware of this fact by means of information notices posted at the bathing area.
Objective HL36:	Promote and support the development of an inter-county Coastal Path (with the consent of local landowners) linking Galway, Mayo and Sligo.
Objective HL37:	Seek the protection of the biodiversity of the islands off the coast and including the islands within the inland waterways.

Refer to S. 10.3.2 Marine Policies

9.3.5 Flood Risk Management and Assessment

Flooding is generally a natural process and can happen at any time in a wide variety of locations. It constitutes a temporary covering of land by water and presents a risk only when people and human assets are present in the area which floods. Different types of flooding include river flooding, coastal flooding, poor surface water drainage, and malfunctioning infrastructure. Rivers with a low gradient are very susceptible to flooding at any time of the year.

Galway has many sources of surface water and ground water. The protection of surface water and in particular groundwater, as it is generally a non-renewable resource, is of strategic importance. Flooding can pollute water and cause significant damage to the local economy, local biodiversity and local public health.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Water Policy Regulations allocate the responsibility for implementation of the WFD to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Local Authorities and relevant Public Authorities. The Local Authorities acting jointly within each river basin district are given the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the statutory River Basin Management Plans. The Western River Basin Management Plan and the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan will be adopted in 2009. The Strategic aim of the Directive is to protect and restore all waters to good status by 2015.

The Council shall also implement the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Draft Guidelines 2008 in the carrying out of their development management functions.

Flood Management Strategy

The Council shall adopt a comprehensive risk-based planning approach to flood management to prevent or minimise future flood events. In accordance with the Draft Ministerial Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management, the avoidance of development in areas where flood risk has been identified shall be the primary response. Proposals for mitigation and management of flood risk will only be considered where avoidance is not possible and where development can be clearly justified with the Guidelines Justification Test. Flood management should have regard to surface water, groundwater, drinking water supply, flood plains and water and wastewater infrastructure. It is the strategy of the council to manage flood risk at source with appropriate consideration to the catchment area of the water source.

The Flood Management Strategy shall have regard to the Western River Basin Management Plan and the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan when adopted. The Council, in consultation with the Office of Public Works, will identify those areas of the county susceptible to flooding which must be reserved for flood protection. The Western River Basin Management Plan will be completed and adopted in 2009 and GCC will work with other authorities to best manage the water bodies in the Western River District.

The Council shall seek to prepare flood zone maps for all zoned lands within the county, all future Local Area Plans shall prepare Flood Risk Zone Areas.

In addition the CDP has prepared a number of Flood Maps including Map HL6 Record of Flood Events, Map HL7 Flood Risk Elevation Map.

9.3.5.1 Flood Risk Management and Assessment Policies

Flood Risk Management and Assessment Policies

Policy HL66:	It is the policy of the Council to restrict inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding (whether inland or coastal), erosion and other natural hazards (Refer to Development Management Standard DM 23).
Policy HL67:	It is the policy of the Council to require all significant developments proposed in the settlements identified in the County Settlement Strategy to incorporate SuDS as part of the development proposals where appropriate.
Policy HL68:	It is the policy of the Council to seek to prevent inappropriate risks of flooding. Development will not normally be permitted in flood risk areas unless appropriate flood protection and mitigation measures can be put in place to ensure that the site can be safely developed and occupied and flood risk as a result of the development is not increased elsewhere.

Policy HL69: It is a policy of the council to require flood studies with all planning applications proposed in flood risk areas to ensure that the development does not increase the flood risk in the relevant catchment. Generally a Flood Impact Assessment will be required with all significant developments and a certificate (from a competent person stating that the development will not contribute to flooding within the relevant catchment) will be required with all small developments of areas of one hectare or less (see Development Management Standards).

9.3.5.2 Flood Risk Management and Assessment Objectives

Flood Risk Management and Assessment Objectives

Objective HL38: Carry out Flood Risk Management in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Draft Guidelines 2008 and with the approach as adopted by the OPW where there is potential risk of flooding within the County.

Objective HL39: Adopt appropriate zoning of lands and restriction of use in areas liable to flooding to avoid increased risk of flooding of the lands either within or adjoining the zoned areas.

Objective HL40: The Council shall implement the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Draft Guidelines 2008 in the carrying out of their development management functions. The avoidance of development in areas where flood risk has been identified shall be the primary response of the Planning Authority. Development proposals which include proposals for mitigation and management of flood risk will only be considered where avoidance is not possible and where development can be clearly justified with the Guidelines Justification Test”.

Objective HL41: Seek to carry out Flood Risk Assessments in a timely fashion within the lifetime of this County Development Plan, subject to the availability of information from the OPW on flood risk areas in the county.

Objective HL42: Incorporate the recommendations and measures in the Western River Basin Management Plan and Shannon International River Basin Management Plan once adopted into the Development Plan, as necessary and appropriate. In the interim, seek to ensure that all developments and activities that flow from the Development Plan contribute to the requirement under the EU Water Framework Directive to bring water up to a good standard by 2015 and are guided, where appropriate, by the information and guidance contained in the Draft Western River Basin Management Plan and Draft Shannon International River Basin Management Plan.

9.3.6 Natural Water Systems

The increase in population, development pressures and intensification of agriculture over recent decades has led to increased risk of environmental pollution, particularly of our natural water systems. These include groundwater and surface water systems (rivers and lakes, estuarine and coastal waters.) The Corrib catchment area, which includes all the land that drains to Loughs Corrib, Mask and Conn together with the associated rivers Clare, Blackwater, Robe, and Owenbreac are part of a complex interlinking system of groundwater and surface water, vulnerable to pollution. Also in the east of the county, the Rivers Suck and Shannon as well as a network of lakes and turloughs are vital wildlife habitats and fishing and leisure areas and particularly sensitive to groundwater pollution. These must be protected from any further degradation and maintained as high quality water bodies.

Although there has been a substantial investment in wastewater treatment plants in the last decade, many smaller plants still need upgrading and many smaller towns and villages await the provision of facilities. Until the development of such facilities the Councils draft settlement strategy cannot be implemented fully and the need to provide for local demands will be addressed where development proposals can be satisfactorily assimilated into the landscape. There is evidence to suggest that a considerable proportion of single house septic tank systems are not functioning correctly.

The EU Water Framework Directive, 2000, provides the legal framework for managing the protection of natural waters. The Directive sets out a comprehensive and integrated approach to management and protection of natural waters, with an objective of achieving ‘good status’ by 2015. Natural waters include ground water, rivers, lakes, estuarine and coastal waters. The Local Authorities acting jointly within each river basin district are given the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the statutory River Basin Management Plans. The Western River Basin Management Plan and the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan will be adopted in 2009.

Natural Water Systems Policies	
Policy HL70:	Implement water protection measures to prevent any deterioration of ‘good status’ waters, and to restore substandard waters to ‘good status’.
Policy HL71:	Adopt and implement the provisions of the Western River Basin Management Plan and Shannon International River Basin Management Plan. Have regard to recommendations that may result from the applicable River Basin Management Plan.
Policy HL72:	Introduce a comprehensive and integrated approach to the management of our natural water resources.
Policy HL73:	Intensify public awareness of water quality issues and the measures required to protect natural water bodies.
Policy HL74:	Ensure that substandard public wastewater treatment plans are upgraded. In the interim prevent an increase in the nutrient load discharged from these plants and the urgent provision of modern sewerage treatment systems in those towns and villages that have insufficient capacity to meet current demands, do not meet modern standards or currently represent a pollution risk to local water courses.
Policy HL75:	Ensure that industrial facilities and commercial premises discharging wastewater are operating within the parameters of an IPC license or a wastewater discharge license.
Policy HL76:	Ensure that all dwellings outside town sewerage systems have an appropriate wastewater treatment system, correctly installed and maintained.
Policy HL77:	Ensure that agricultural waste is returned to the land in accordance with the provisions of scientifically prepared nutrient management plans.
Policy HL78:	Ensure that all new treatment systems, including single house systems, comply with the relevant EPA wastewater manuals.
Policy HL79:	Protect and maintain the quality of bathing waters and bring back to good status any substandard bathing waters.
Policy HL80:	The Local Authority will investigate other “quality mark” schemes for beaches and work to achieve such awards such as the Green Coast award which will increase the number of recognised beaches with a high standard of environmental quality and tourism potential.
Policy HL81:	Support the relevant agencies and statutory bodies in the control and elimination of invasive species in water bodies.
Policy HL82:	Ensure that all new development which is reliant on private waste water treatment and disposal systems is assessed with regard to the impact on ground waters, having regard to the relevant EPA wastewater treatment manuals.
Policy HL83:	Adopt the Galway Groundwater Protection Scheme and have regard to the need to protect water sources through the identification of source protection zones in the scheme.
Policy HL84:	Have regard to the programme of measures set out in the Western River Basin Management Plan and Shannon International River Basin Management Plan to bring water up to a good standard, as defined in the EU Water Framework Directive, by 2015.
Policy HL85:	Ensure that the ongoing development of Towns and their Environs are undertaken in such a way so as not to compromise the quality of surface water (and associated habitats and species) and groundwater within the zone of influence of the Development Plan or Local Area Plan area.

Natural Water Systems Policies

Policy HL86:	The Planning Authority shall consider the use of temporary proprietary effluent treatment units to service new developments as an interim measure until such time as the planned infrastructural investment as set out in the Water Services Investment programme is delivered and commissioned.
Policy HL87:	Galway County Council shall address the significant water management issues identified in the Water Matters Consultation publications for the relevant River Basin Districts.
Policy HL88:	When published, the relevant policies and objectives of the Western and Shannon River Basin Management Plans and associated Programmes of Measures shall be integrated into the Plan through amendment or otherwise.
Policy HL89:	Galway County Council shall ensure that the ongoing development of Towns and their Environs are undertaken in such a way so as not to compromise the quality of surface water (and associated habitats and species) and groundwater within the zone of influence of the Development Plan area.
Policy HL90:	Landuses shall not give rise to the pollution of ground or surface waters during the construction or operation of developments. This shall be achieved through the adherence to best practice in the design, installation and management of systems for the interception, collection and appropriate disposal or treatment of all surface waters and effluents.

9.3.7 Invasive Species

Non-native invasive species, both invertebrate and plants, can represent a major threat to local, regional, national and global biodiversity. Terrestrial and aquatic habitats can be negatively affected, resulting in significant damage to conservation and economic interests, such as agriculture, forestry and civil infrastructure. Occasionally public, animal and plant health may also be threatened.

9.3.7.1 Invasive Species Policies

Invasive Species Policies

Policy HL91:	The local authority will have regard to best practice with respect to minimising the spread of invasive species in the carrying out of its own development in the county and shall encourage private developers to have regard to same.
Policy HL92:	It is a policy of the Council to support measures for the prevention and eradication of invasive species. This will include the dissemination of information to raise public awareness, consultation with relevant stakeholders, the promotion of the use of native species in amenity planting and landscaping and the recording of invasive/native species as the need arises and resources permit.

9.3.7.2 Invasive Species Objectives

Invasive Species Objectives

Objective HL43:	Support initiatives that reduce the risks of invasions, by non-native species, help control and manage new and established invasive species, monitor impacts, raise public awareness, improve legislations and address international obligations.
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9.4 Landscape Conservation and Management

9.4.1 Landscape Character

Landscape is a precious national asset. 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.

Human interaction with the natural heritage has produced a great 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, stone walls, hedgerows, woodlands, field patterns, settlements and buildings has given the County its distinctive character.

The increasing development pressure of recent years has caused changes in the national landscape, which are unprecedented in scale and nature, and has led to the Government setting out guidelines for landscape appraisal. This assessment of the landscape is to ensure that “the environment and heritage generally are maintained in a sustainable manner, while at the same time enabling a proactive approach to development”.

The ribbonisation of houses impacts on the rural landscape. However, this must be balanced against the need to allow rural housing for essential local needs.

There are a number of protected areas in County Galway; examples include proposed National Heritage Areas and ‘European Sites’, designated as Special Protection Areas (wild bird inhabitants) and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC). These require protection as both environmental resources and economic assets.

The Planning and Development Acts require the inclusion of a development plan objective for:

“The preservation of the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest”.

9.4.2 Landscape Assessment

The Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines (2000), although not yet finalised in statutory form propose that Planning Authorities will establish a policy response in relation to the varying degrees of landscape sensitivity within the County.

An assessment of the landscape of County Galway was undertaken in 2003 under the CDP process and indicated the landscape character rating, landscape value rating and landscape sensitivity rating. These are described in detail in Section 2.2 of the Landscape Character Assessment Report 2003. The findings of this report have been incorporated into the County Development Plan 2009-2015.

Planning legislation and national guidelines, such as the Draft Guidelines on Landscape and Landscape Assessment (DoEHLG) 2000, indicate that conservation of the landscape in all its contexts must now be integrated into all aspects of planning policy. Galway County Council will comply with the provisions of the European Landscape Convention as ratified in 2002.

The Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment guidelines (2000) require a classification of landscapes as to:

- (1) Character
- (2) Values
- (3) Sensitivity

9.4.2.1 Landscape Character

This is a combination of landform, land cover and visual units, which are attractive in the landscape. A total of 25 character areas have been identified in the County.

9.4.2.2 Landscape Values

These are responses of the perceptions that communities have of the landscape they inhabit. The perceptions arise from intrinsic attributes such as visual beauty, ecology, archaeology, social history, religious sites, mythology and traditional settlement patterns and community values.

9.4.2.3 Landscape Sensitivity

This is a measure of the ability of the landscape to accommodate change or intervention without suffering unacceptable effects to its character and values. Sensitivity ratings are derived from a combination of landscape values and landscape character. (Map HL4)

An assessment of the landscape of County Galway has been carried out indicating landscape character rating, landscape value rating and landscape sensitivity rating. (Map HL3 and HL4)

In this assessment consideration was given to areas within the County, which are deemed suitable for forestry and wind farms. (Map AM1 and Map IS1)



Five landscape sensitivity classes have been established:

- Class 1 – Low sensitivity
- Class 2 – Moderate sensitivity
- Class 3 – High sensitivity
- Class 4 – Special
- Class 5 – Unique

Based on the assessment of the landscape and the establishment of Sensitivity Ratings for various areas of the County, the Planning Authority shall implement the following policies:

9.4.2.4 Landscape Conservation and Management Policies

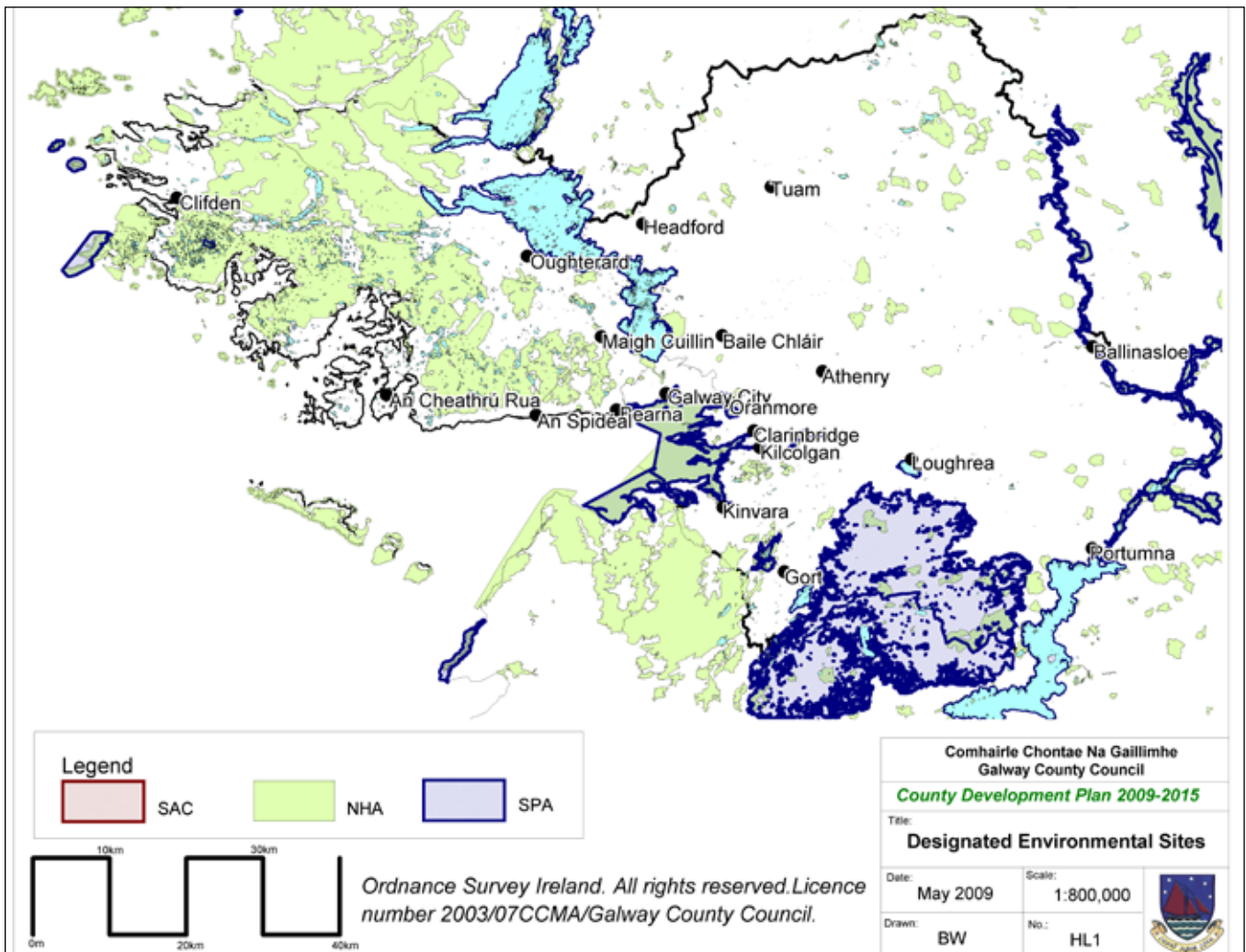
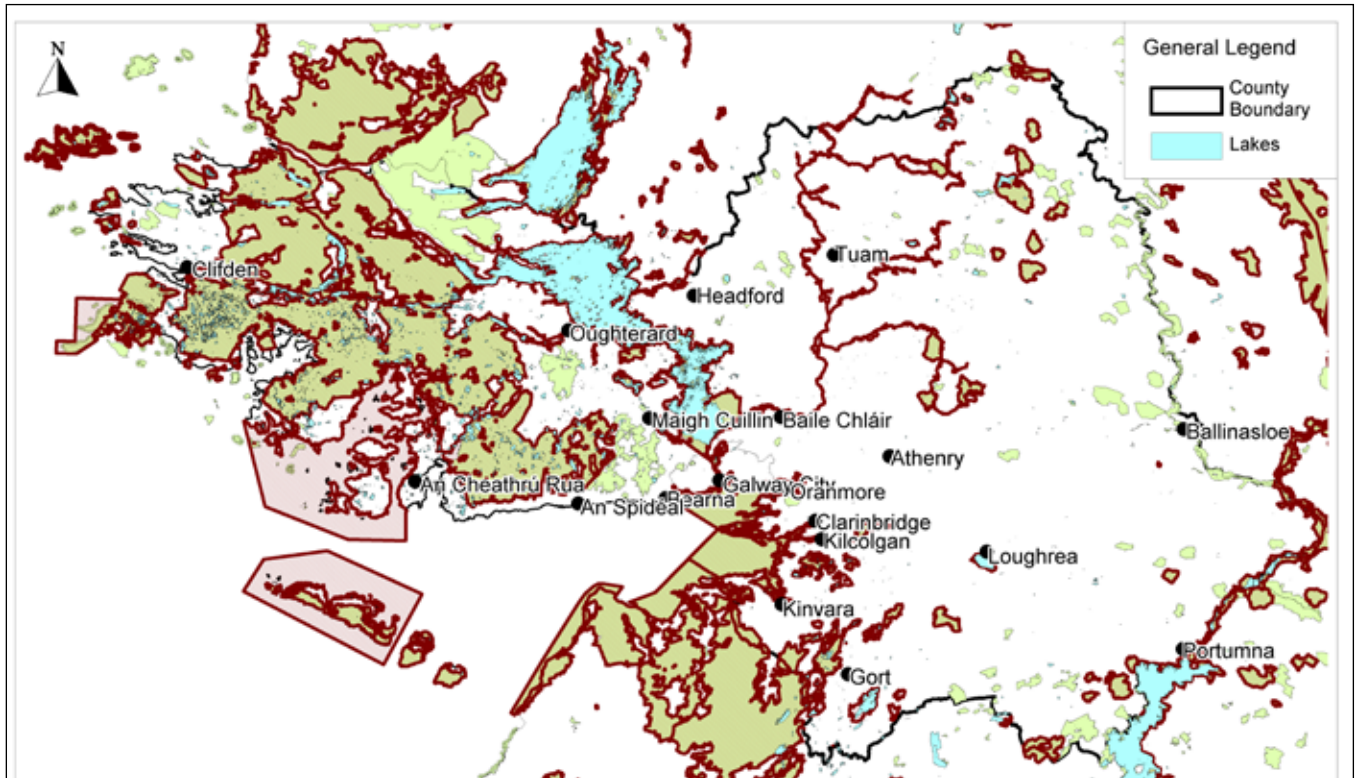
Landscape Conservation and Management Policies	
Policy HL93:	The consideration of Landscape Sensitivity Ratings shall be an important factor in determining development uses in areas of the County. In areas of high Landscape sensitivity, the design and the choice of location of proposed development in the landscape will also be critical considerations.
Policy HL94:	Preserve and enhance the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation and enhancement, where possible of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest. This shall be balanced against the need to develop key strategic infrastructure to meet the strategic aims of the Plan.
Policy HL95:	Preserve the status of traditionally open/unfenced landscape. The merits of each case will be considered in light of landscape Sensitivity Ratings and views of amenity importance.
Policy HL96:	The Planning Authority shall prepare a detailed scheme of listed views for protection in addition to the views and prospects included in Map HL2 within 2 years of adoption of the Plan.
Policy HL97:	Review the views and prospects set out on Map HL2 to provide greater clarity and guidance with respect to important views and prospects to be retained.

9.4.2.5 Landscape Conservation and Management Objectives

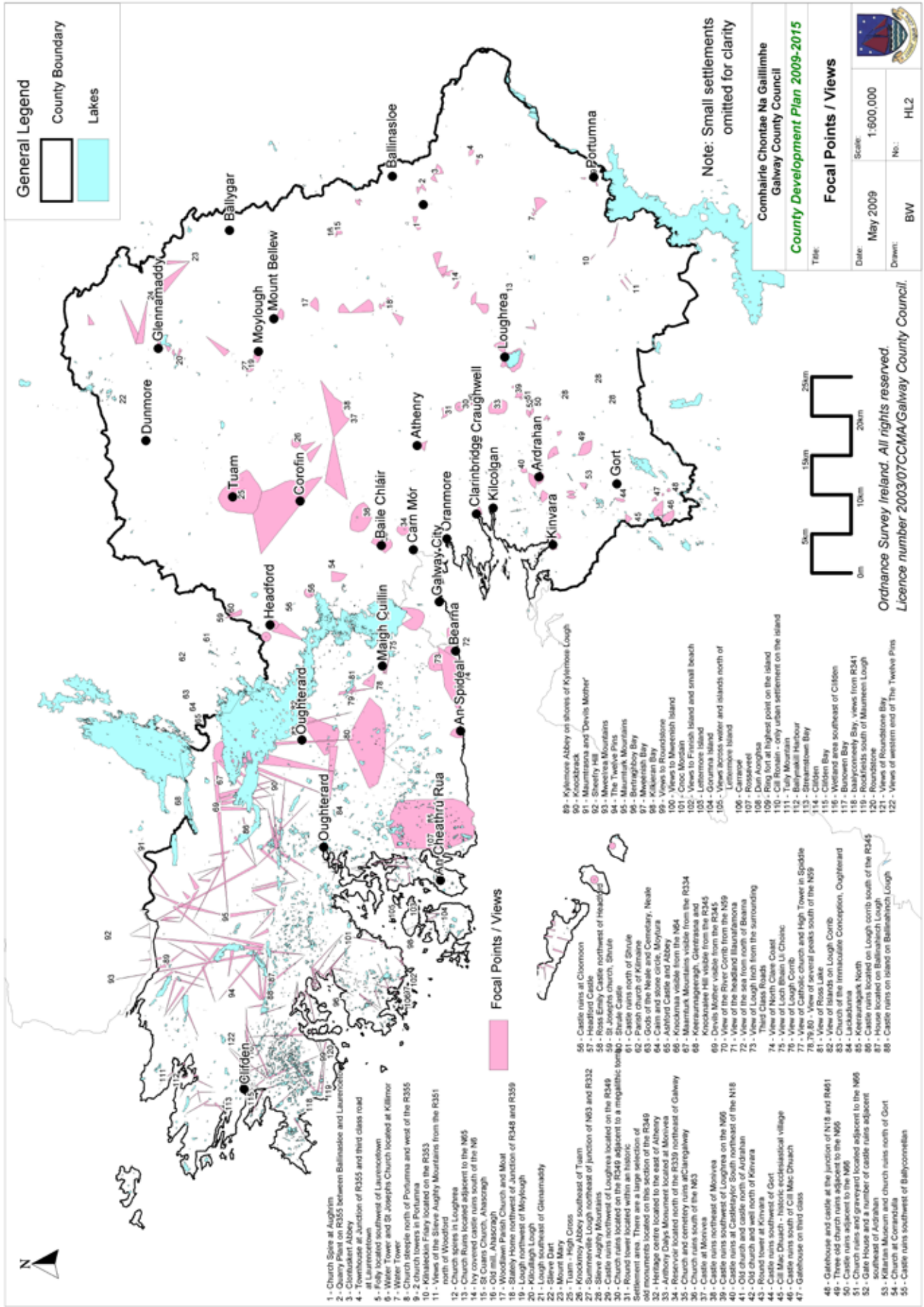
Landscape Conservation and Management Objectives	
Objective HL44:	The Planning Authority shall have regard to the Landscape Sensitivity Classification of sites in the consideration of any significant development proposals and, where necessary, require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany such significant proposals.
Objective HL45:	Development that would have a detrimental effect on listed views and prospects will generally not be permitted.

Map HL2 shows the Focal Points/Views, Map HL3 shows the Landscape Value Rating, Map HL4 shows the Landscape Sensitivity and Character Areas, Map HL5 shows the Preliminary EcoNet Map, Map HL6 shows the Recorded Flood Events and Map HL7 show the Flood Risk Elevation Map.

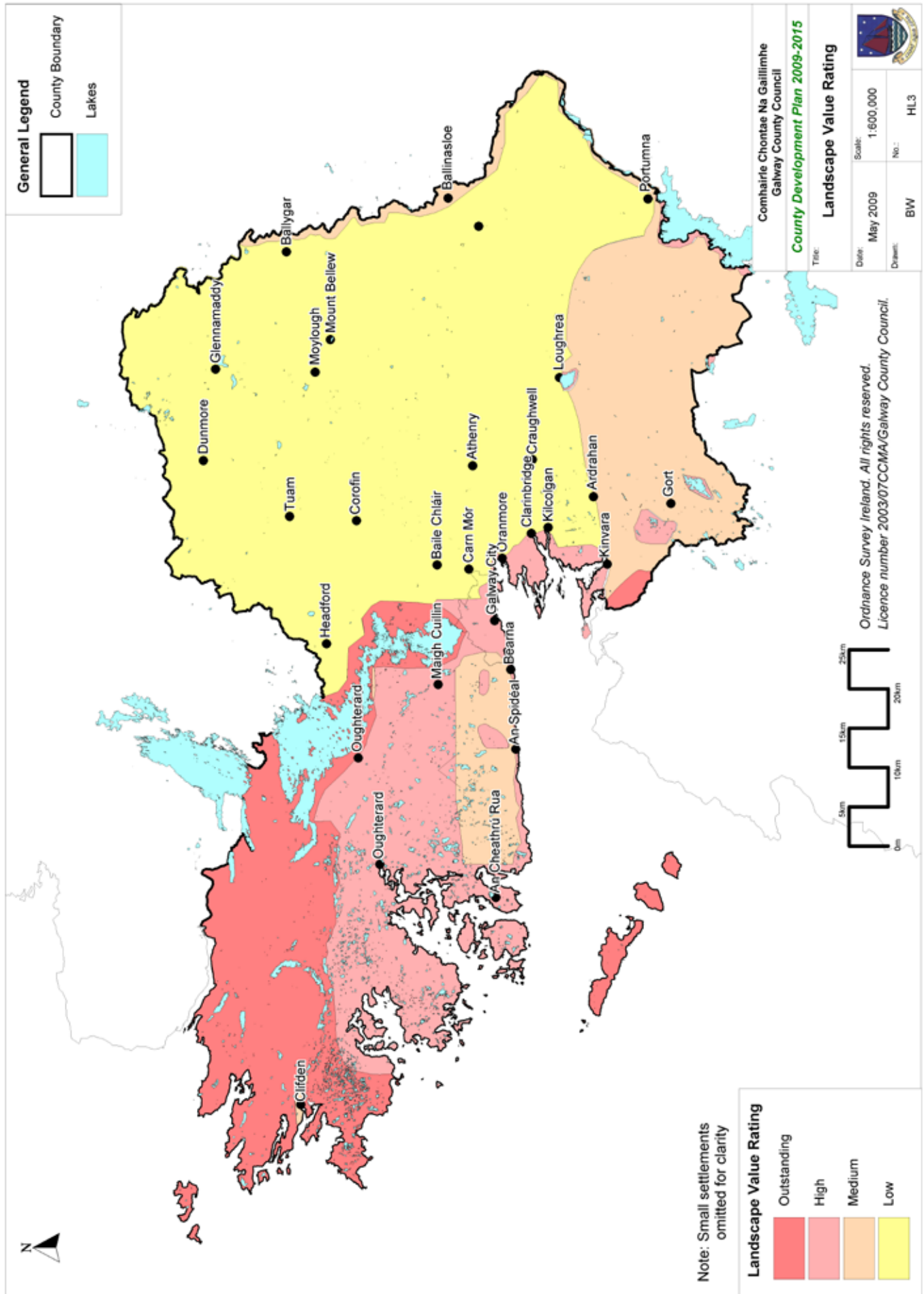
Refer to Section 11 Landscape Conservation & Management Standards and Guidelines with Mitigation Measures with DM Standards 3, 27 and 28.



Map HL1



Map HL2



General Legend



Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council
County Development Plan 2009-2015

Landscape Value Rating

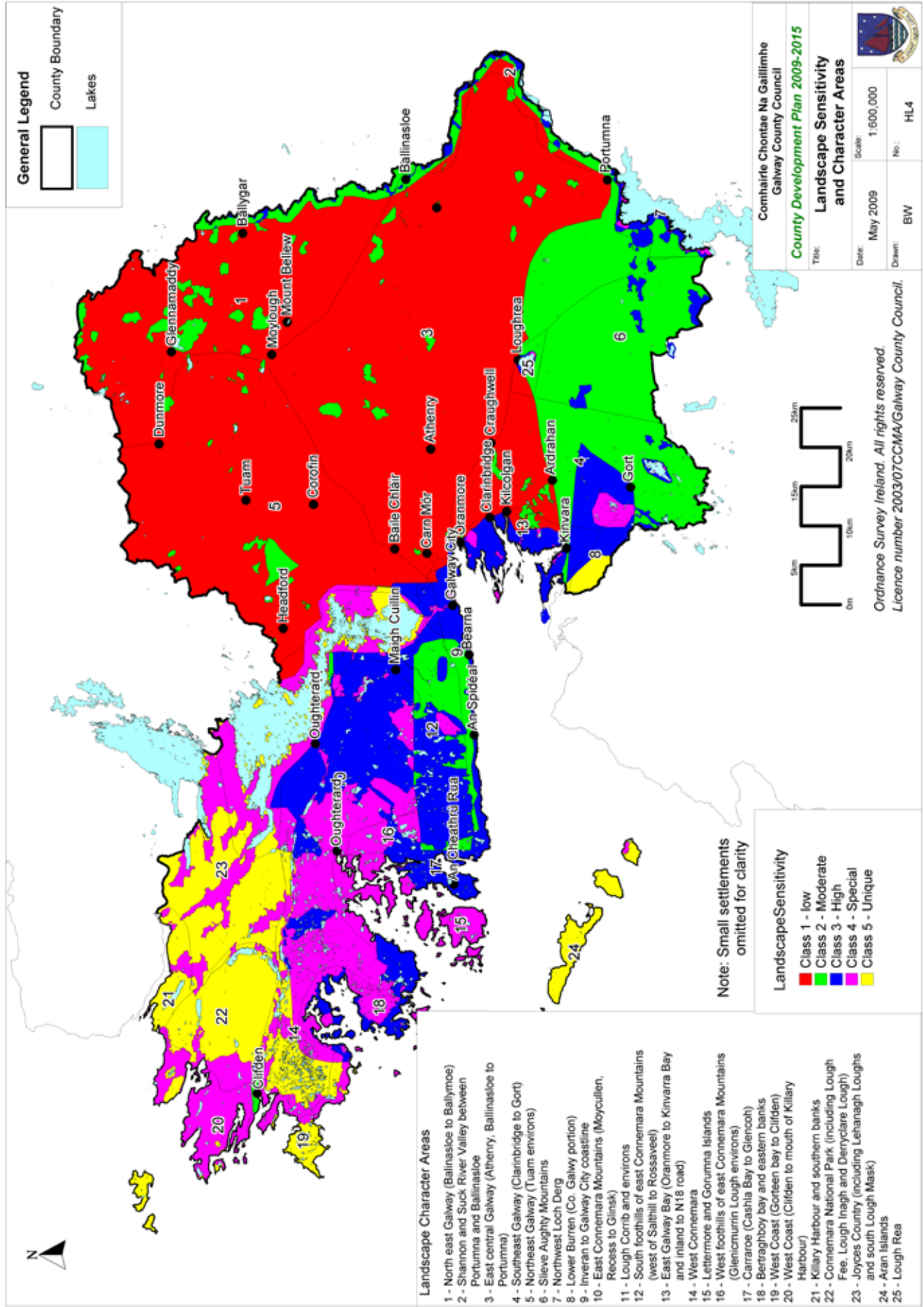
Date:	May 2009	Scale:	1:600,000
Drawn:	BW	No.:	HL3

Landscape Value Rating

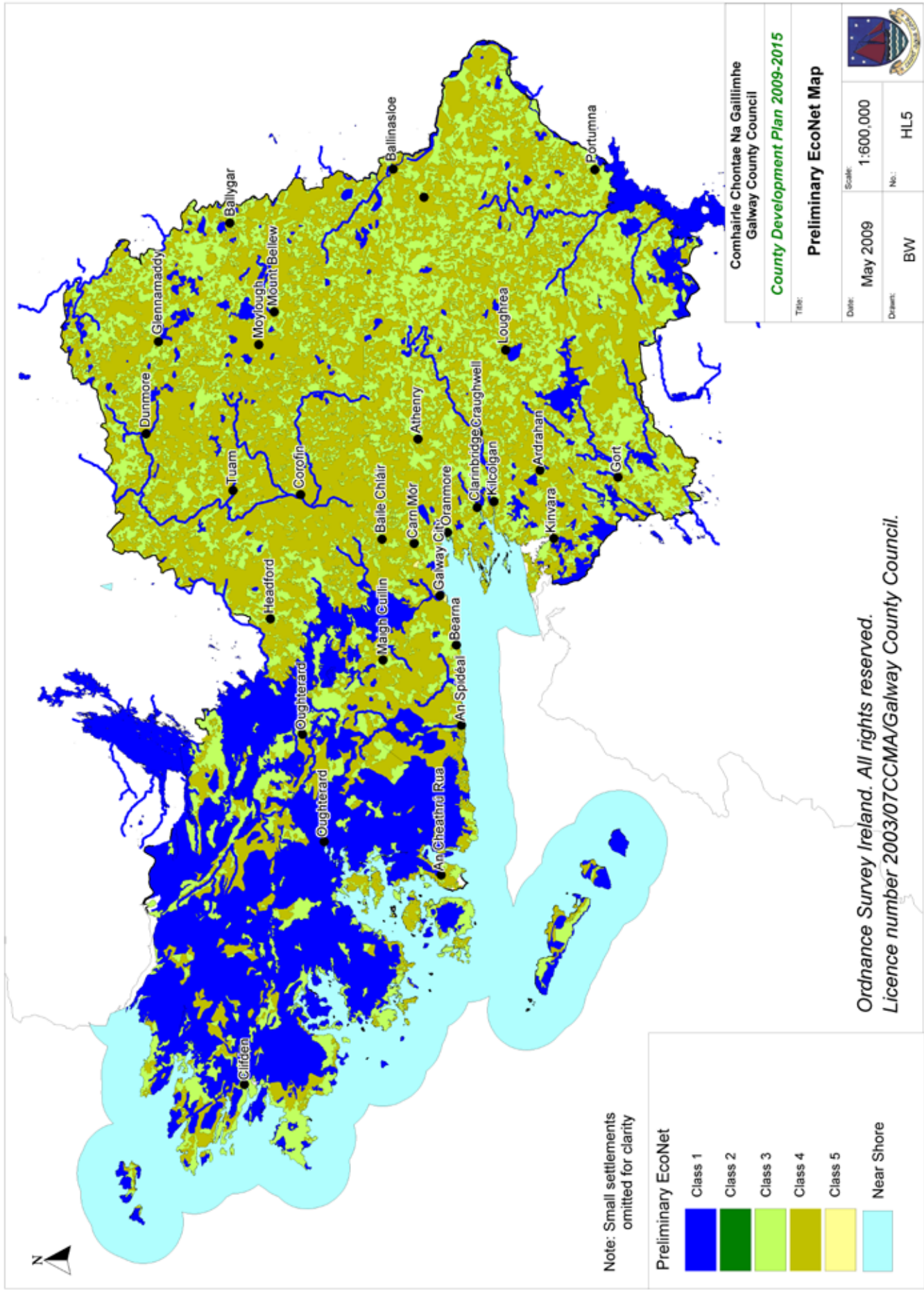
Outstanding	High	Medium	Low

Note: Small settlements omitted for clarity

Map HL3



Map HL4

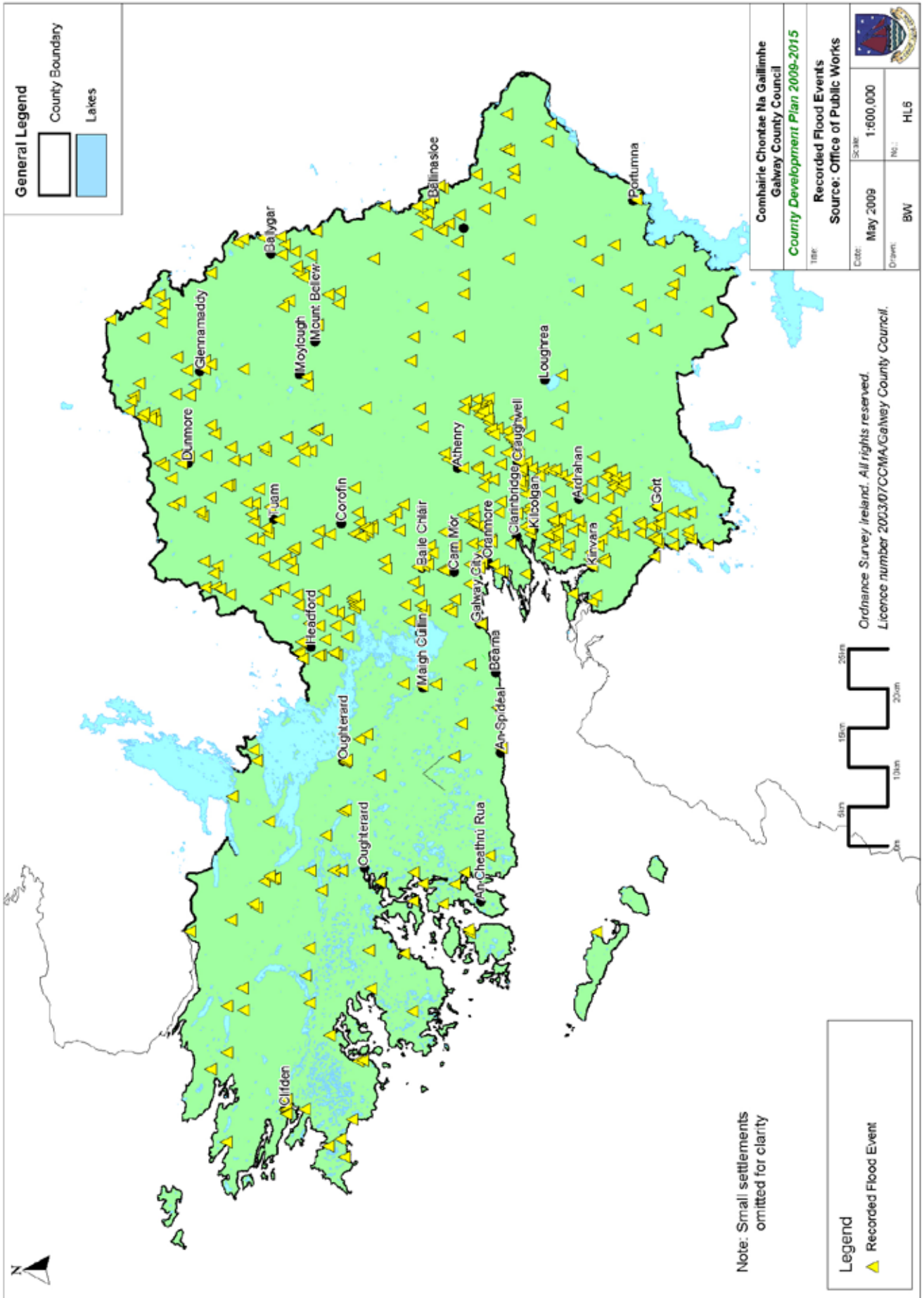


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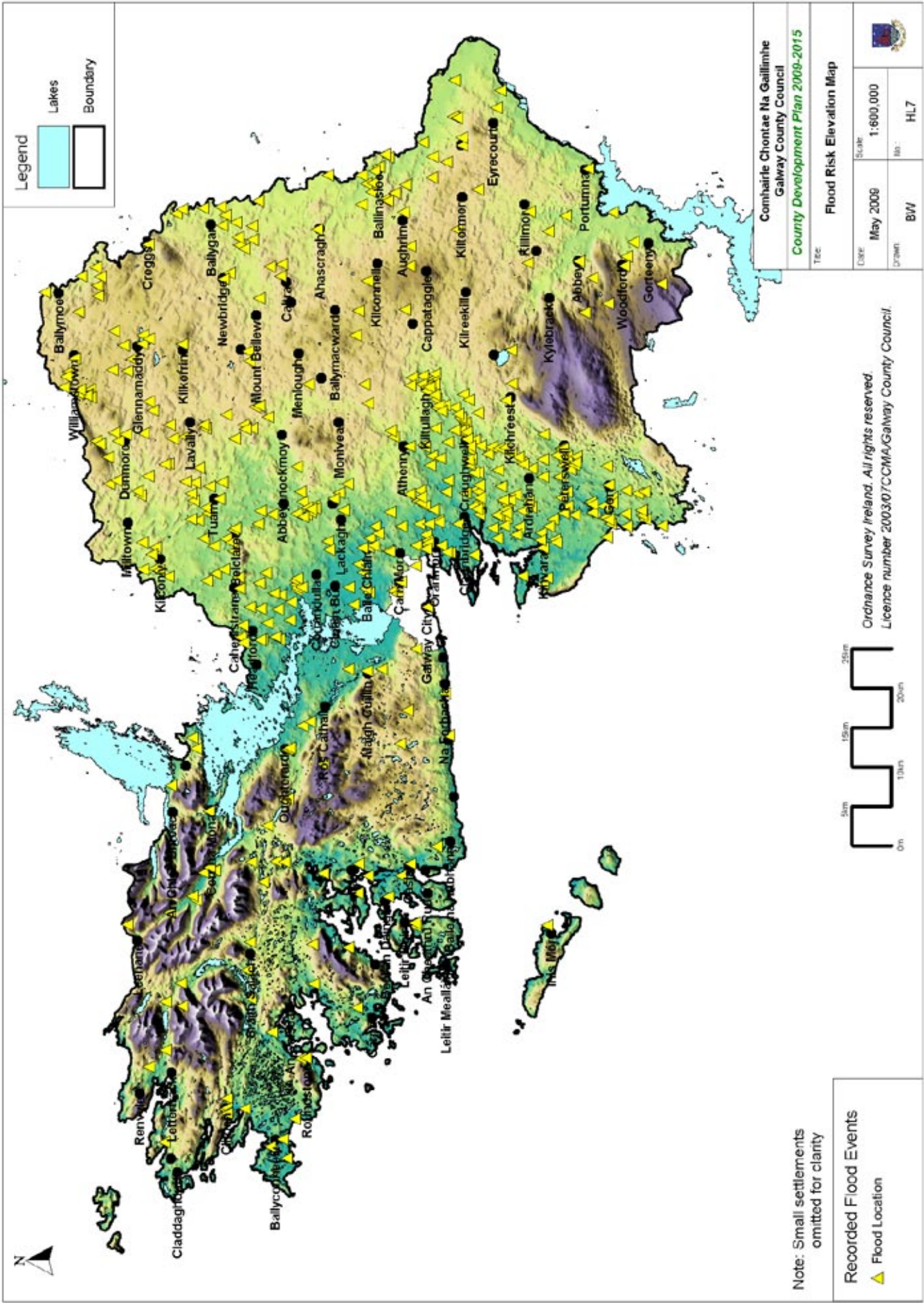
Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe Galway County Council	
County Development Plan 2009-2015	
Title: Preliminary EcoNet Map	
Date: May 2009	Scale: 1:600,000
Drawing: BW	No.: HL5



Map HL5



Map HL6



Legend

Lakes

Boundary

Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council
County Development Plan 2009-2015

TCC Flood Risk Elevation Map

DATE	Scale
May 2008	1:600,000
DRAWN	HL7
BW	

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Note: Small settlements omitted for clarity

Recorded Flood Events
▲ Flood Location

Map HL7

Section 10: Agriculture, Mariculture and Silviculture

10.1 Agriculture

The downward decline in numbers of people employed in agriculture, forestry and fisheries is apparent on a national basis.

Period	Total Employed in County	Total Employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sector	% Employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
2002	65,543	6,553	9.96%
2006	70,617	5,749	8.14%

Table AM1: Employment by Category

This figure for 2006 still represents a significantly higher percentage involved in these industries in Galway compared to the national average of 4.62%. Within the Western Regional Authority area, the proportion of the working population involved in this sector falls to 7.3% of the total population in employment.

Agriculture is the predominant land-use in the county with 54% of the total land area, or 330,000 hectares, classed as agricultural land. Of these 330,000 hectares, 275,600 hectares is classed as crops and pasture, while 54,400 hectares is classed as rough grazing in use.

Cattle and sheep farming is the main type of farming in the county. Dairy farming is also important. Forestry and Horticulture are also practised but to a lesser degree. Equine activities are also carried out in the County.

1991 is the most recent Census of Agriculture for which figures are available and this shows some 16,213 farms in the county. Much has obviously changed since and the present number of registered herd owners gives a better picture.

Area	Number
Islands (Aran Islands and InisBoffin)	263
Conamara (West of Corrib)	2,966
East Galway	10,255
Total	13,484

Table AM2: Number of Registered Herd Owners

10.1.1 Viability Status of Farms in County Galway

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Herd Owners			13,484	13,400	13,300	13,100
Dairy Farmers	950	857	771	694	624	562
Sheep Farmers		5,175	4,916	4,670	4,437	4,215
Cattle Farmers with Suckler Cows	9,900	9,900	9,800	9,700	9,600	9,500
Farmers with Tillage	495	430	390	364	338	300
Farm Forestry	1,000	1,050	1,100	1,150	1,200	1,250
Sport Horses	262	270	278	286	294	300
Mushroom Producers	20	20	20	20	20	20
Vegetable Production	10	10	10	10	10	10

Table AM3: County Profile of Farming and Projected Trends

The average farm size is 20ha. Dry stock farming of cattle and sheep is the pre-dominant type of farming. The number of dairy farmers has declined from 2,500 in the mid 80's to 857 today and tillage farming has declined from 30,000ha to 5,000ha.

10.1.2 Viable Farmers (1,000) – 8%

Consists mainly of Dairy farmers and larger efficient cattle and sheep farmers.

10.1.3 Part Time Farmers (7,000) – 52%

The majority of farm families have an off farm income – either farmer/spouse. They are mainly involved in cattle and sheep farming.

10.1.4 Non-Viable – “Young” (650) – 5%

This category is mainly engaged in Dry stock.

10.1.5 Non viable – “Older Farmers” (4,700) – 35%

In general this group are over 65 years, many single and living alone.

10.1.6 Organic Farming

There is a big increase in the demand for organic and speciality foods. This has presented an opportunity for farmers to obtain an attractive premium for organic beet, lamb, milk and locally produced food. There are about 1,000 organic farmers in the country. The number in Co. Galway is estimated at 50.

There is undoubtedly potential for more farmers to switch to organic farming in Co. Galway. The growing demand for locally supplied markets is evidence of same.

Source: Department of Agriculture – April 2002.



10.1.7 Agriculture Policies

Agriculture Policies	
Policy AM1:	Provide for farm enterprises such as processing, co-ops farm supply stores and agri-business in accordance with the development management policies of the Plan.
Policy AM2:	Facilitate the sustainable development of the countryside. The Council recognises the fact that the most effective means of ensuring the protection of the rural landscape is to encourage the continued use of agricultural farm holdings. However, the Council acknowledges that the diversification of uses on rural landholdings may be necessary in order to ensure the continued viability of agricultural ways of life and that cross subsidisation between uses and activities may be necessary in order to make rural farm holdings viable.
Policy AM3:	Provide infrastructural services to facilitate the production and sale of local organic and local foods and crafts to meet the increase in demand for such products.
Policy AM4:	Facilitate agricultural development whilst ensuring that development does not have a negative impact on the scenic amenity of the countryside, in particular to ensure that it does not infringe on any views an objective of which it is to preserve in the County Development Plan.
Policy AM5:	Investigate suitable locations for the establishment or facilitation of local farmers markets within the towns and villages of the county in accordance with best practice and in a manner that is complimentary to the existing market and retail activities of those towns and villages.
Policy AM6:	Have regard to Section 256 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 when assessing intensive agricultural developments.



10.2 Forestry

Ireland has one of the lowest proportions of land devoted to forestry of all the EU nations. The national target as set out in the government document “*Growing for the Future: A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector in Ireland*” 1996 is to have a forestry cover of 17% by 2030. The actual forest cover of Co. Galway is c. 9.5% of the total land area of the county or 56,933 hectares. Of this c.38,926 is state sector and c.18,007 hectares is privately owned. In order to assist in achieving the national target, the current area of forestry cover in Galway will need to be doubled by 2030.

10.2.1 Forestry Policies

Forestry Policies	
Policy AM7:	Facilitate afforestation in appropriate locations, in co-operation with Coillte and the Forest Service and in line with national policy, while ensuring that no pollution or injury is caused to natural waters, wildlife habitats or conservation areas.
Policy AM8:	Consider the likely impact of forestry on landscape quality and visual amenity in any afforestation proposals brought before the Local Authority for comment.
Policy AM9:	Galway County Council will seek to identify areas of forestry that could be developed or protected as amenity areas.

Map AM1 shows the suitability of areas within the County for forestry.

10.2.2 Forestry Objectives

Forestry Objectives	
Objective AM1:	Encourage sustainable forestry development and related management activities, including the promotion of mixed species forestry and selective rather than clear felling.

10.2 Marine Resources

The Foreshore Acts 1933 to 1998, require that a lease or licence must be obtained from the Minister for the Marine and Natural Resources for undertaking any works or placing structures or material on, or for the occupation of or removal of material from, State-owned foreshore which represents the greater part of the foreshore. The foreshore is the seabed and shore below the line of high water of ordinary or medium tides and extends outwards to the low water mark.

Leases are granted under the Acts for the erection of long-term structures (e.g. piers, marinas, bridges, roads, car parks) and licences are granted for other works (e.g. laying of submarine pipelines and cables) and purposes (e.g. aquaculture). Leases and licenses are granted subject to the payment of fees.

The marine resource is very important to the county. It supports a significant number of water-based activities, both work and pleasure related. These include trips to islands, both inhabited and uninhabited, boat hire, adventure sports, pier/shore angling, sea angling, and festivals. The Aran Islands and Inishbofin are very popular tourist destinations and a number of ferries service the islands on a daily basis. Fishing, fish processing, transport, seaweed harvesting and processing, aquaculture and related activities generate significant employment in the county. There are a number of strategic ports, the most important being Ros an Mhíl. It is the largest and busiest port in the county and is a major fishing port and fish processing plant. Further development is planned for the port. It is the main base for the Galway and Aran Deep-Sea fishing fleet and is a major ferry port for passengers and goods for the three Aran Islands. Four other piers have recently been recommended as strategic Gaeltacht piers. These are Cill Chiaráin, Caladh Thaidhg (An Ceathrú Rua), Eanach Mheain and Glinsk.



10.3.1 Marine Policies

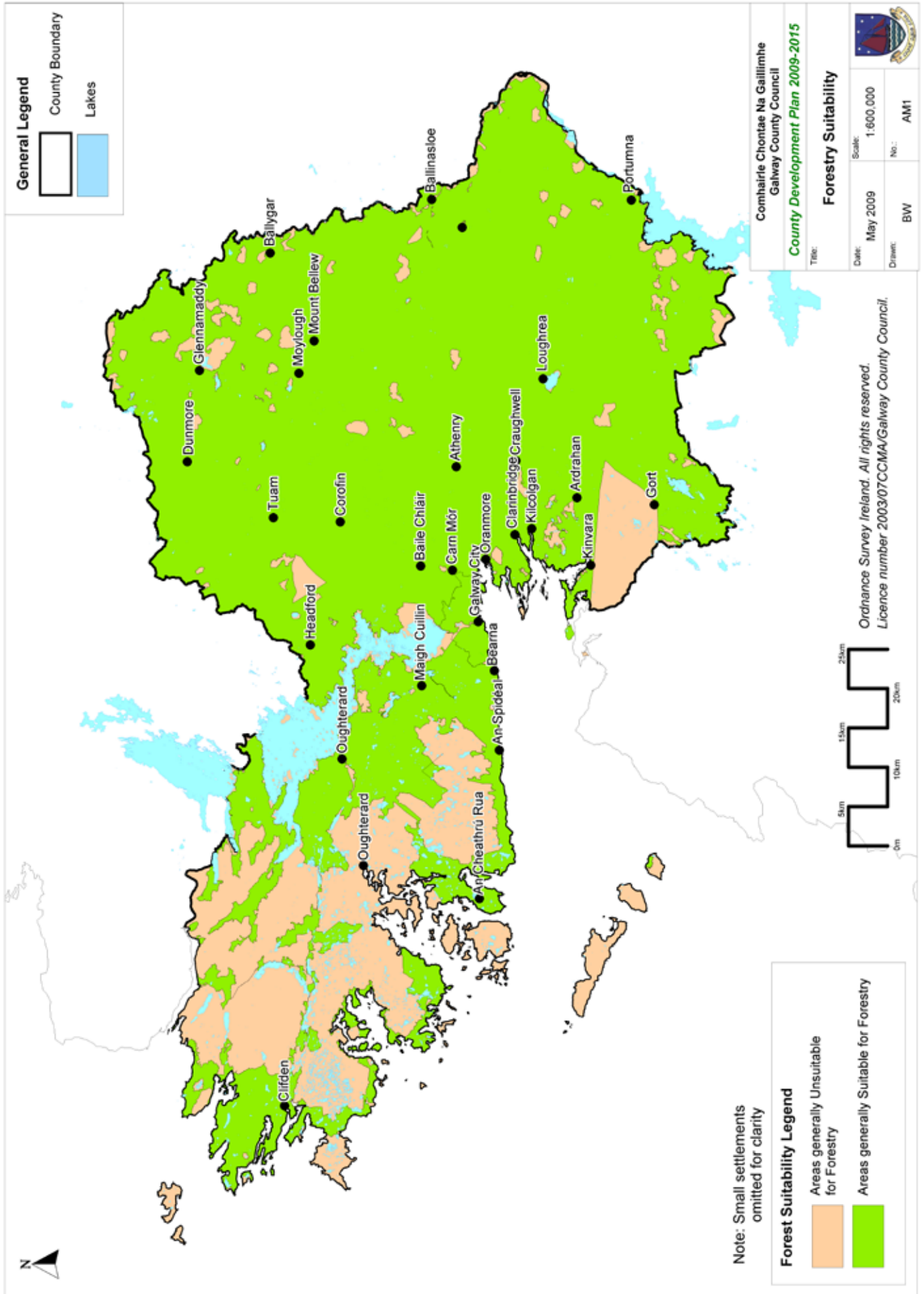
Marine Policies	
Policy AM10:	Facilitate the provision of infrastructure, which is necessary for the development of the fishing, seaweed and Mari-culture industry. The provision of infrastructure, which is necessary for the development of the fishing and Mari-culture industry, should be located in proximity to established landing facilities.
Policy AM11:	Require the design of buildings in marine locations to reflect their exposed locations and respect local traditional styles.
Policy AM12:	Protect the amenity of the coastal zone by restricting development, which would overlook or intrude on unspoilt coastline or alter the character of boreens, which lead to the foreshore.
Policy AM13:	Support the further development of the N.U.I.G. marine research station at Mweenish having regard to its long established land use on the site and its importance to the aquaculture industry to the local community and to the development of scientific knowledge.
Policy AM14:	Support the sustainable development of the marine aquaculture industry, consistent with other policies of this plan, so as to maximise its contribution to jobs and growth in the coastal communities of the County and to the growth of the National economy.

10.3.2 Piers and Harbours Policies

Piers and Harbours Policies	
Policy AM15:	Facilitate the development of Ros an Mhíl Harbour as the main harbour for County Galway.
Policy AM16:	Promote the development of those strategic piers and piers serving islands, identified in the report “Assessment of Piers, Harbours and Landing Places in County Galway”.
Policy AM17:	Continue improvement works to other piers, including Kinvara, harbours and landing places under the Fisheries Harbours Programme in conjunction with the relevant government Departments.
Policy AM18:	Consider the delivery of services/facilities in collaboration with Galway City Council and the Galway Harbour Company that will promote interconnectivity between Ros an Mhíl and Galway Port
Policy AM19:	Seek enhancement of existing electricity network at Ros An Mhíl and at other appropriate coastal areas for the promotion of tidal and wave energy and their research and development into the National Grid.
Policy AM20:	Improvement to piers and harbours should be carried out in such a way as to avoid or minimise disturbance to wildlife, damage to habitats or other adverse effects on the land and seascapes.

Refer to S. 9.3.4 Coastal Zone and Inland Waterways and to S. 6.3.4 Galway Ports and Harbours.





Map AM1

11.1 Introduction

Development management is the process that regulates development in accordance with established planning principles and best practice guidelines in the interests of the common good. Applicants are advised that pre-planning meetings with officials of GCC prior to the submission of planning applications can assist in the identification and clarification of relevant policy objectives, applicable development standards and guidelines and other issues at an early stage in the development management process. Such discussions take place without prejudice to the final decision of GCC.

11.2 General Development Guidelines

DM Standard 1: Local Area Plans and Zoning Provisions

Developments in towns and villages that have adopted Local Area Plans in place shall be in accordance with the policies, objectives and standards set out in the applicable Local Area Plan. This shall include the land use zoning, density and design provisions that apply within the Plan Boundary of the respective town or village. As set out under the DoEHLG *Development Plan Guidelines 2007* and *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Draft Guidelines 2008*, zoned lands shall be developed in a sequential and co-ordinated manner so as to avoid a haphazard, uncoordinated and costly approach to the provision of social and physical infrastructure.

DM Standard 2: Design Quality, Guidelines and Statements

The requirements with respect to design quality, guidelines and standards are as follows:

1. **Design Quality** The Council will seek to achieve high quality design and layouts for all new developments to ensure that they integrate with, and make a positive contribution to, their urban, rural or landscape settings. This will be guided through the provisions of the applicable statutory plans, national guidelines and design guidelines and will be a requirement of the development management process.
2. **Design Guidelines** New development shall generally be guided by the following design guidelines, where applicable:
 - DoEHLG *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2008*
 - DoEHLG *Urban Design Manual – Best Practice Guide 2008*
 - GCC *Galway Clustered Housing Guidelines*
 - GCC *Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*
 - GCC *Local Area Plan* provisions

The extract below summarises the main urban design criteria set out in the Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines and Urban Design Manual that must be considered in new developments:

1. **Context:** How does the development respond to its surroundings?
2. **Connections:** How well is the new neighbourhood/site connected?
3. **Inclusivity:** How easily can people use and access the development?
4. **Variety:** How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
5. **Efficiency:** How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
6. **Distinctiveness:** How do the proposals create a sense of place?
7. **Layout:** How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces?
8. **Public realm:** How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
9. **Adaptability:** How will the buildings cope with change?
10. **Privacy/amenity:** How do the buildings provide a decent standard of amenity?
11. **Parking:** How will the parking be secure and attractive?
12. **Detailed design:** How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

3. **Design Statements** Significant development proposals will be required to submit Design Statements as part of their planning applications to demonstrate the suitability of the proposed design solution to the site context in accordance with the relevant urban design criteria. These Design Statements should include an appraisal of the distinctive site character, setting and context together with concise explanations and illustrations of the suitability and main elements of the design solution proposed for the site.

11.3 Guidelines for Residential Development

DM Standard 3: Quality Housing Environments

It is imperative that a high standard of design and quality of environment are created in new residential developments in towns, villages and settlements. This in turn will help create a sense of place and pride. All applications for new developments will be assessed having regard to standards set out in this chapter and applicable government policies and Council guidelines, in particular the following:

- *DoEHLG Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1999*
- *DoEHLG Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities 2007*
- *DoEHLG Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2007*
- *DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2008*
- *DoEHLG Urban Design Manual – Best Practice Guide 2008*
- *GCC Clustered Housing Design Guidelines*
- *GCC Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*

Refer to Section 9.4.2.3 Landscape Sensitivity

To encourage sustainable residential communities, consideration must be given to the following elements and requirements:

1. **Quality of Proposed Layout and Elevations** The quality of the residential environment will be paramount in the acceptability of planning applications. Layouts, elevations and design must be designed to create a strong sense of identity, place and community. The Council will seek to achieve a high standard of design through the provisions of the statutory plans and the development management process. However, as set out in the *DoEHLG Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines*, where the design is of such poor quality as to result in a sub-standard housing environment, permission will be refused.
2. **Context Sensitive** New developments should take full account of the characteristics of the natural and built environment of the site, the views and vistas to and from the site, and the surrounding areas.
3. **Design Innovation** Innovation in layout is of key importance. New types of layout, for example the creation of homezones, will be encouraged.
4. **Density** High densities should be provided in appropriate locations. Site configuration and area, together with any Local Area Plan provisions, will have an impact on the density levels achievable. In the case of infill street locations, reference will be had to the plot ratio of immediately adjoining property or to the existing plot ratio on the site in determining the appropriate plot ratio.

All development proposals shall be of an appropriate scale and density that reflects the character, setting and context of the site and that is in keeping with, and complements, the existing amenity, environment and heritage of the area.
5. **Permeability** Permeability is a key factor and all new housing developments should show links for pedestrians and cyclists with other housing and community facilities in the area. In the interests of security, it is necessary that all pedestrian and cycle links be designed in such a way so as to be overlooked.

6. **Natural Features** The layout of the development should be designed around the retention of existing natural features. This would include any existing trees, hedgerows, watercourses and landform features, amongst others.
7. **Landscaping** A high standard of landscaping is an essential part of high quality new developments. Plans for landscaping, including hard and soft landscaping, should be submitted at planning application stage. In general, indigenous planting suitable to the local site and soil conditions should be used.
8. **Safety and Security** The layout and design of new developments should consider appropriate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to ensure the safety and security of residents and other users. Opportunities for vandalism and anti-social behaviour should be reduced to the greatest possible extent by ensuring that: areas used by the public (such as open spaces, footpaths, roads and parking areas) are overlooked by housing; there is adequate accessibility, visibility and lighting, particularly for pedestrians; a clear demarcation of public, semi-public and private areas is created; etc.
9. **Traffic Safety and Management** The quality of the layout and the manner in which it addresses traffic management and safety is vital. Long straight roads will generally be discouraged and a layout with good provision for pedestrian safety and traffic calming will be required. Developments should have regard to the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003 published by the DoT, DTO & DoEHLG.
10. **Refuse/Waste Storage** Easily managed communal waste and recyclables collection points should be provided for terraced housing. These should be conveniently located, well ventilated and comply with all public health and fire safety requirements. There must be adequate provision for storage of segregated waste (biowaste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection.
11. **Cycling Facilities** Developments should consider the provision of adequate cycling facilities in accordance with the DTO *Provision of Cycling Facilities: National manual for Urban Areas 1998*. Well-designed and secure bicycle parking areas should be provided for terraced housing.
12. **Building Control and Fire Prevention** In addition to planning requirements, building control and fire prevention requirements must be met in all circumstances.
13. **Clustered Housing** Cluster-type housing shall have regard to the GCC publication *Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines*.
14. **Single Houses** Single houses shall have regard to the GCC publication *Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*. Single houses, which are serviced by septic tanks or proprietary treatment plants, shall comply with DM Standard 24.
15. **Large Schemes** Proposals for large residential schemes (75 units or more) should be presented in the context of a Masterplan Scheme where access for residents to public transport, schools and child-care facilities, shops and recreational facilities are all clearly indicated. The proposed management and on-going maintenance of public space within the scheme should also be included.
16. **Side Boundaries** In general, it is desirable that all new single storey houses shall have a minimum clear distance of 5 metres to the side boundaries of the site. In general, all new two storey houses shall have a minimum clear distance of 5 metres to the side boundaries of the site and shall not have a first floor side window living room oriented in such a manner so as to cause overlooking and loss of privacy to other residential properties.

The minimum distances specified above shall not apply to infill houses in settlements or village street locations or in new multiple residential unit developments within settlements so long as privacy standards can be maintained and that new development is designed and constructed in harmony with adjacent design characteristics.
17. **Private Open Space** Private Open Space shall be designed for maximum privacy and oriented for maximum sunshine and shelter. In general, a minimum back to back distance between dwellings of 22 metres shall apply in order to protect privacy, sunlight and avoid undue overlooking. Reductions will be considered in the case of single storey developments and/or innovative schemes where it can be demonstrated that adequate levels of privacy, natural lighting and sunlight can be achieved.

- 18. Public Open Space** Public Open Space shall be integrated into the overall development and shall be appropriately located where it can be overlooked and all play areas supervised by surrounding residential development. Areas with high gradients or otherwise impractical to function effectively as open space will not be acceptable for consideration as useable open space. Narrow tracts of land (less than 10 metres in width) or other “incidental” or left over pieces of land shall not be considered as part of the useable open space provision in a residential development.
- The retention of key features such as streams, groups of trees, stone walls, etc. as well as any recorded monuments or features is of key importance and shall be encouraged at all times. On larger sites, areas should be identified for a hierarchy of uses – e.g. more casual play areas, playgrounds and passive amenity areas (seating, ponds, etc.).
- On greenfield sites, the minimum area of useable open space that is acceptable is 15% of the total site area (not including incidental lands). On brownfield, infill sites or all other sites, a minimum of 10% public open space will be required.
- 19. Estate Names and Numbering** Residences in housing estates shall be numbered in accordance with a naming and numbering scheme to be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The numbers shall be prominently and clearly displayed.
- 20. Housing Layout Assessment** Where land is being developed for housing, the following considerations will be taken into account in the assessment of the proposal:
1. The need for land and public services to be used economically.
 2. Appropriate density.
 3. The adequacy of present and future community facilities.
 4. Adequate privacy for individual dwelling units.
 5. The safety of proposed layouts and the capacity of existing roads to absorb future development.
 6. Adequate provision for car parking, open space, landscaping and planting.
 7. Integration with existing development and the preservation of features on site.
- 21. Taking in Charge Policies** Developers intending on having residential developments taken in Charge by the Local Authority shall engage with the relevant personnel in the Planning Authority with regard to the requirements of same to ensure compliance with appropriate standards and the Grant of Permission and ensure a orderly handover of services, roads, etc on completion of the development.
- 22. Crèche & Childcare Facilities** For new housing areas, an average of one childcare facility for each 75 dwellings would is considered appropriate. The threshold for provision shall be established on a case by case basis having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area in which the development is proposed. The provision of larger units catering for up to 30/40 children in areas of major residential development on the basis that such a large facility might be able to offer a variety of services – sessional/drop in/after-school, etc may also be considered. The provisions and recommendations of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001) shall apply.
- 23. Visual Impact** The requirement for appropriate “visual impact assessment” will be requested for proposed development with the potential to impact adversely, in particular, on landscapes categorised as Highly Sensitive, Unique or Special or Protected focal points or views. The requirement will apply to all significant and/or visually obtrusive developments or as considered necessary by the local authority and will, include telecommunications structures.

Refer to Section 9.4.2.3 Landscape Sensitivity

DM Standard 4: Residential Development in Settlement Centres, Towns and Villages

The rate of increase of development shall be monitored and where necessary, regulated in accordance with the spatial planning and settlement strategy set out elsewhere in this Plan so that its scale accords with the allocation indicated for the various locations in Section 2.13, subject to a facility for those with an essential housing need to develop in their locality. The Council recognises this rate of settlement increase will only be possible where appropriate infrastructure is available. Where infrastructure to allow for the scale and rate of development envisaged in the settlement strategy

is not, or is unlikely to be, provided over the plan period, the Council will consider meeting identified housing need in the rural areas or in local areas where sufficient services capacity exists or can be provided.

DM Standard 5: Part V Social and Affordable Housing

The provisions of the *County Galway Housing Strategy* shall be applied with respect to the provision of social and affordable housing and as required under Part V of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*. An equitable level of social and affordable housing will be provided with up to 20% of land zoned for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses set aside for this purpose. This shall be applied in the case of developments of more than 4 houses or for housing on land more than 0.2ha, as per Section 97 (1) (3) of the PDA 2000. The requirements of Part 5 shall not normally apply in the case of developments that fall under the category of genuine rural generated housing need, as defined in the *County Development Plan*.

DM Standard 6: Permissible Rural Housing

Subject to development management provisions and the policies of this Plan, it will be permitted to develop in rural areas and lands described under the Class 1 to Class 5 (inclusive) of the Landscape Sensitivity areas. In areas Class 3, 4 and 5 the Council shall require applicants to provide a substantiated housing need to reside in such areas and may require the applicant to provide a visual impact assessment of their development where the proposal is located in an area identified as “Focal Points/Views” in the Landscape Character Assessment of the County. In Class 5 areas, subject to development management provisions and the policies of this Plan, rural housing will be only be permitted to accommodate local housing needs in accordance with the terms of the Rural Housing Policy specified in Sections 5.3 and 5.3.1.

On the Islands, Islanders working on the mainland, who live on the Island when not on the mainland for work purposes and who are an intrinsic part of the rural community shall be included in the permissible Rural Housing Category defined in this DM Standard.

DM Standard 7: Assimilation of Development into Landscape

All permissible buildings should avoid locally obtrusive elevated locations and should be located on mid slopes or lower slopes of rising ground. Development should seek to preserve traditional field patterns and established hedgerow and woodland. Any permissible housing development shall have regard to the *Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*.

DM Standard 8: Development Within Settlement Centres

Developments in settlement centres, which are located in landscape classification Class 3, 4 and 5, shall have regard to views of particular amenity value.

DM Standard 9: Site Size for Single Houses using Individual On-Site Waste Water Treatment Systems

A minimum site size of 2000m² (½ acre) will be required for a single house so as to provide for adequate effluent treatment, parking, landscaping, open space and maintenance of rural amenity. In the case of site sizes less than 2000m² metres will be considered depending on the history, context, location and capacity of the site. For house sizes greater than 200m² site size shall be increased by 10m² for each m² of house area over 200m². The requirements for site size for houses greater than 200m² will not apply to existing houses. Where derelict or semi-ruinous buildings are proposed to be developed these requirements will be relaxed subject to appropriate environmental and traffic standards being met.

11.4 Guidelines for Commercial, Retail, Office, Tourism, Enterprise and Industrial Developments

DM Standard 10: Commercial Developments

Commercial developments shall be subject to the following requirements:

- 1. Streetscapes** Infill development on town and village streets shall be designed to harmonise with the existing streetscape.
- 2. Parking Provision** In the case of infill development, where possible, on-site parking to the rear of the premises shall be provided at the rate of 3 spaces per 100m².
In the case of green field development, parking shall be provided on site at the rate of 3 spaces per 100m².
- 3. Disabled Access** Access shall be provided for people with disability.

4. **Advertising Signs** Advertising signs shall be confined to the name of the establishment being painted on or affixed to the façade of the building and illuminated, if required, from an external light source so arranged as not to cause glare to road users or intrusion to adjacent property owners.
No signs shall be permitted on forecourts or the public footpath.
5. **Waste Storage and Recycling** On site provision shall be made for waste storage and segregation including pending collection and disposal. There must be adequate provision for storage of segregated waste (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection.
6. **Operating Times** In the case of permitted hot food “take aways” closing time shall be 12.30am.
7. **Security Screens** Roll down shutters placed externally on the front façade shall not be permitted. Any necessary security screens shall be inside the shop windows.
8. **Site Coverage** The standards for site coverage in commercial developments are as follows:
 1. For single storey or 6m high, shall not normally exceed 75%.
 2. For two storey or 9m high, shall not normally exceed 60%.
 3. For three storey or 12m high, shall not normally exceed 50%.

DM Standard 11: Petrol Filling Stations

Petrol filling stations will be subject to the following requirements:

1. **Location** The preferred location for petrol filling stations is within the 80kph speed limit of all settlements.
2. **Road Frontage and Access** In general a minimum road/street frontage of 30 metres shall be required. This may be reduced where the development can demonstrate compliance with the required sight distances for various road categories at the entrances/exits of the proposed development.
A low wall of approximately height 0.6 metres shall be constructed along the frontage with allowance for two access points each 8 metres wide.
The pump island shall generally be not less than 7 metres from the footpath/road boundary.
3. **Lighting and Signage** All external lighting should be directed away from the public road and a proliferation of large illuminated signs will not be permitted.
No signage cluster shall be permitted.
4. **Car Wash** Any car wash proposals will require a discharge licence.
5. **Permissions** All Petrol Filling Station applications including improvement or extension will require Autotrack analysis, TIA & Safety Audit & compliance with DM Standard 18.

DM Standard 12: Camping and Caravan Sites

Any proposed caravan or camping sites within settlements shall have regard, in scale and layout design, to the existing character of the village and its residential amenity. An operational management plan shall be submitted with the necessary planning application. The Planning Authority will consider appropriate extensions to existing facilities.

DM Standard 13: Tourism Infrastructure Development and Holiday Villages

The clustering of appropriately scaled holiday home development in or adjoining small towns and villages is preferred and appropriate tourism infrastructure developments (deemed suitable under the provisions of Policies ED21 and ED31 of the County Development Plan) is preferred.

1. **Tourism Infrastructure Development** The Council recognises that golf courses and certain other tourism infrastructure facilities listed in Policies ED21 and ED31 may require ancillary facilities (e.g. club houses, hotel, holiday or short term letting residential accommodation/ development) to ensure long term viability. Where the provision of such facilities meet the other requirements of the County Development Plan as set out and the requirements of proper planning and sustainable development, the Council will consider the provision of same subject to the submission of the following:
 1. Comprehensive justification of need for the facility.
 2. Overall master plan of the facility.
 3. Documentary evidence of compliance with the other requirements of the Development Plan here set out.
2. **Holiday Villages** Holiday Villages shall have regard to the following:
 1. The scale of the development should be of modest proportions and should relate to the size of the settlement.
 2. The design of the scheme should be to a high standard and should include the preservation of boundary characteristics and significant site features as well as car parking provision, waste storage area, public lighting.
 3. In general, stand alone holiday villages or new tourism facilities which cannot be demonstrated to be connected to existing settlements shall not be permitted in the open countryside. In exceptional cases, where it can be demonstrated that the facility is dependent on physical or locational constraints which are site specific, consideration may be given to such facilities.
 4. All new developments must have regard to the Galway Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House, which form part of this Plan

DM Standard 14: Industrial Development

There shall be a presumption that only industrial processes of appropriate size and whose nature will not cause nuisance or injury to the predominant residential environment of towns and villages, shall be permitted:

1. **Hours of Operation** The hours of industrial operation will be controlled where they are likely to result in harm to environmental amenities including residential amenity.
2. **Noise Levels** Noise levels shall not exceed 55 dB (a) Leq when measured at the boundary of the site.
3. **Waste Management/Storage** Provision shall be made on site in a screened compound for short-term waste and segregation storage pending collection and disposal. There must be adequate provision for storage of segregated waste (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection.
4. **Advertising Signs** Advertising signs shall be confined to the name of the establishment being painted on or affixed to the façade of the building and illuminated, if required, from an external light source so arranged as not to cause glare to road users or intrusion to adjacent property owners.
5. **Density** Site coverage shall not normally exceed 75% nor shall plot ratio exceed 1.20.
6. **Landscaping** A comprehensive professionally prepared planting scheme for the site shall be necessary.
7. **Parking** On site parking shall be provided at the rate of 3 car spaces per 100m² of floor area and additional space shall be provided for the parking and loading of large vehicles.

DM Standard 15: Rural Enterprise

The Council will, subject to considerations of proper planning and sustainable development, consider the following:

1. **Existing Buildings** The conversion of existing buildings in rural areas for small-scale employment purposes will be allowed subject to policy.
2. **Agriculturally Related Industry** Agriculturally related industry, involving processing of farm produce where it is unsuited to an urban situation and is environmentally sustainable.
3. **Farm-Related Business** Business directly related to farming, such as the servicing and repair of farm machinery, land reclamation, drainage work, agricultural contracting, etc., where it will not give rise to adverse environmental effects, have safe access and not be prejudicial to residential amenity.
4. **Teleworking** Teleworking and telecottages will be encouraged in rural areas.

11.5 Standards for Transportation, Roads, Parking, Loading and Storage

DM Standard 16: Access to National and Other Restricted Roads for Residential Developments

The provision of residential access to National and other Restricted Roads will have regard to the following:

- Section 6 of the GCDP 2009 (and any other applicable policies, objectives, standards or guidelines in the Plan)
- Part 4, article 28 (j)(i) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001
- NRA Policy Statement on Development Control and Access to National Roads
- DoEHLG Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005 (in particular, Section 3.3.4 on pages 28-29)

The following requirements shall apply to the provision of residential access to National and other Restricted Roads:

- 1. Housing Need Eligibility** Residential development along National Roads and other Restricted Roads will be restricted outside the defined settlement centres or the town plan boundary to the need of farm families to live on the family holding. Eligibility shall only extend to the provision of a house for sons and daughters, on the farm of their parents, where suitable sites are not available on their parents' farm holding on non-National Roads.
- 2. Multiple Housing Needs** In the case of multiple housing needs within the family a housing layout which avoids a ribbon formation along the road and which provides for a single access to the national route will be necessary. This may require an upgrading and/or relocation of the existing entrance to serve the combined development. The Planning Authority shall be informed of the anticipated housing need of the farm family in the first instance to help determine optimum location of the family cluster and location of access points.
- 3. Enurement Condition** An enurement condition will be attached to grants of planning permission for the above.
- 4. Replacement Dwelling** The replacement of an existing substandard farmhouse or dwelling house, which is to be demolished, or where its use as a residence is to be discontinued. Where existing dwellings are vacated they shall not be used for human habitation.

DM Standard 17: Access to National and Other Restricted Roads for Commercial and Other Developments

Commercial development along National Roads and other Restricted Roads will be restricted outside the defined settlement centres or the town plan boundary as follows:

- 1. Class I Control Roads** In general, Commercial and Industrial development shall be prohibited outside the 60kph speed limits of National Routes. Consideration will be given to substantiated cases for extension and intensification of existing establishments and to the provision of park and ride facilities. All existing and proposed National Roads are included under the Class 1 Control Roads designation.
- 2. Class II Control Roads** Commercial, Industrial and Community Facilities development and land use shall be restricted to essential needs, in the particular locality, of Agriculture, Tourism Infrastructure, Fisheries, Forestry, Park and Ride facilities or existing extractive industries, and where these needs cannot in the opinion of the Planning Authority, be reasonably located along other non-listed Regional or Local Roads. All restricted Regional Roads are included under the Class 2 Control Roads designation. Restricted Regional Roads are listed hereunder:

	Road Description	Route No.
1	Tuam-Bearnaderg-Horseleap	R332
2	Galway-An Spidéal-Ballinahown Cross	R336
3	Galway-Carnmore-Monivea	R339
4	Derrydonnell-Athenry	R348

Table 11-1: Restricted Regional Roads

DM Standard 18: Sight Distances required for Access onto National, Regional and Local Roads

The Sight Distances required for accesses onto National, Regional and Local Roads are set out below:

1. National and Regional Roads

New access points onto National and Regional Roads shall be subject to the *NRA Vehicular Access To All-Purpose National Roads Standards TD 41/95*. Some of the main distances are summarised below:

Design Speed and Sight Distance	Sight Distances required for the following Design Speed on the Major Road in kph (mph)						
Design Speed	100	85	70	60	50	40	30
	(62)	(53)	(44)	(37)	(31)	(25)	(19)
Y Distance on National Primary and Secondary Roads	215	160	120	90	70	---	---
Y Distance on Regional Roads	160	120	90	70	60	45	33

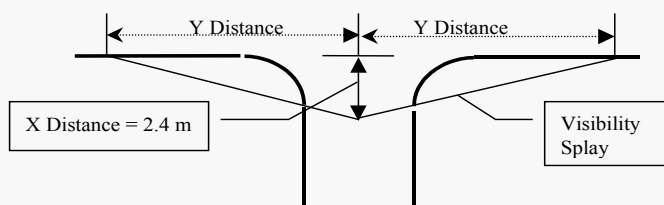


Table 11-2: Forward Sight Distance and Y Distance (in metres)

2. Local Roads

Visibility splays for Local Roads will be determined on a site-specific basis subject to traffic safety. In general, only the minimum interference with existing roadside boundaries and hedges shall be permitted.

Visibility splays to be stipulated at 70 metres unless a safety audit is submitted to justify a reduced sight distance (y value).

To include with planning applications 3rd Party consent letters and accompanying Land Registry Maps for Sight Distance Triangle overlooking to be included with application, if applicable.

DM Standard 19: Building Lines

A setback of buildings is required in the interests of residential amenity, rural amenity, public safety and to allow for any future road widening or realignment. In general, the following minimum building lines are necessary for the various routes:

- 1. **Motorways** 90 metres from the existing or proposed realigned carriageway surface edge.
- 2. **National Primary and Secondary Routes** 35 metres from the existing or proposed realigned carriageway surface edge.
- 3. **Regional Routes** 25 metres from the existing or proposed realigned carriageway surface edge.
- 4. **Local Roads** 15 metres from the existing or proposed realigned carriageway surface edge.
- 5. **Urban Roads and Streets** Building lines will be related to the location of the building in the town or village i.e. village streets, housing estate, cluster development.
- 6. **General** In general, where the capacity, width, surface condition or alignment of the road is deemed inadequate, development will not be favoured.

DM Standard 20: Parking Standards

In assessing applications for change of use or for replacement buildings within towns and villages, an allowance will be given for former site use in calculating the carparking requirements generated by the new development. In relation to infill sites and sites adjacent to public transport corridors or civic parking facility, a flexible application of standards will be considered. In addition to car parking, sufficient space will be required within a development site for all service vehicles necessary for the operation of the business or building, including drop-off areas, loading/unloading areas, etc.

The following parking requirements will be applied for different types of development:

- 1. Dual Use Parking and Mixed Use Developments** The Council will encourage the provision of dual use parking areas where the peak times of users do not coincide. In mixed use developments it may therefore not be necessary to meet full parking standards where it can be shown that shared parking is viable.
- 2. School Parking** All applications for new schools and where possible extensions to schools will be required to prioritise access safety and will indicate safe access & egress to the school for pupils, parents and students. A Road Safety Audit will be required in all cases. Drop off facilities will be required in accordance with Department of Education & Science Guidelines. Off road parking for teachers and bus/car collection will be indicated in all cases as well as secure bicycle parking facilities.
- 3. Parking in Residential Areas** In general, residential layouts should not be dominated by car parking along access roads. New residential development should take account of the following criteria:
 1. Car parking for detached and semi-detached housing should be within the curtilage of the individual house site.
 2. Car parking for apartments and terraced housing should be in informal groups overlooked by housing units. Screen planting, low walls and the use of different textured or coloured paving for car parking areas should be used to minimize the visual impact of large areas of car parking.

4. Car Parking Standards

The table below shows the car parking standards for different types of development:

Development	Car Parking Standard
Dwellings/Apartments (1-3 bedrooms)	1.5 spaces per dwelling
Dwellings/Apartments (4+ bedrooms)	2.0 spaces per dwelling
Shops (< 250 sq. m. gross)	1 car space per 24m ² of gross floorspace
Shops (250 - 1,000 sq. m. gross)	1 car space per 18m ² of gross floorspace
Large Stores (> 1,000 sq. m. gross)	1 car space per 12m ² of gross floorspace
Banks, Financial Institutions	1 car space per 14m ² of gross floorspace
Offices (Town Centre)	1 car space per 25m ² of gross floorspace
Office Park	1 car space per 20m ² of gross floorspace
Industry/Manufacturing	1 car space per 33m ² of gross floorspace
Warehousing	1 car space per 100m ² of gross floorspace
Theatre, Cinema, Church, Stadium	1 car space per 3 seats
Hotels, Guest Houses (excluding Function Rooms)	1 car space per bedroom
Lounge/Bar	1 car space per 4.5m ² of public floorspace
Restaurants	1 car space per 4.5m ² of public floorspace
Takeaways	1 car parking space per 18m ² gross floor area
Function Room, Dance Halls, Clubs	1 car space per 3m ²
Playing Fields	15 car spaces per pitch
Primary Schools	1.2 car spaces per classroom

Secondary Schools	2 car spaces per classroom
Nursing Homes	1 car space per 2 bedrooms
Hospitals	To be agreed with the Council
Childcare Facilities	1 car parking space per staff member + 1 car parking space per 4 children
Clinics and Group Medical Practices	2 car spaces per consultant

Note: Large complex developments may be assessed separately with regard to the circumstances. Table 11-3: Car Parking Standards

5. Disabled Parking Requirements

Parking spaces for the disabled should be provided in developments relative to the above table as follows:

- 1 space per 5 – 25 spaces
- 3 spaces per 25 – 50 spaces
- 4 spaces per 50 – 75 spaces
- 5 spaces per 75 – 100 spaces
- 3 spaces per 100 spaces thereafter

Parking bays for disabled persons shall be 3m wide and 4.75m long, clearly signed and marked with the relevant symbol and placed nearest to the entrance to the facility for which the parking space is being provided.

6. Bicycle Parking Standards

The bicycle parking shall be located in a prominent position within 30m of the facility served. A Bicycle Parking Bay shall be 0.8m wide and 1.8m long. The bicycle park should have a shelter and be signposted. Provision must be made in the development for bicycle parking spaces in accordance with the following categories.

- 0.25 spaces/unit for Residential Apartments
- 1 space/unit for Dwellings
- 0.1 space/bedroom for Hotels/Motels
- 1 space/250m² for Industrial Manufacturing
- 1 space/300m² for Warehouses
- 1 space/10m² for Transport Rail/Bus Stations
- 1 space/100m² for Commercial Shops
- 1 space/100m² for Offices
- 1 space/50m² for Community Churches
- 1 space/100m² for Museums
- 1 space/10 seats for Cinemas/Theatres
- 1 space/consulting room for Health Surgeries
- 1 space/1500m² for Hospitals
- 0.2 spaces/pupil for Education Primary
- 0.3 spaces/pupil for Second & Third Level
- 1 space/250m² for Sport All

In the case of any use not specified, the Council will determine the bicycle parking requirements.

DM Standard 21: Controls for Signage along Public Roads

The following requirements will be applied in respect of signage along public roads:

1. **Licensing System** The Planning Authority will operate a licensing system for all signs and structures on public roads.
2. **Rural Areas** Advertising signs will not be permitted along roads in rural areas outside the boundaries of towns and villages save for a limited number, which relate to heritage or tourist attractions, which are of national interest.

3. **Towns, Villages and Settlement Areas** Within towns, villages and settlement areas, no signage will be permitted where it may constitute a hazard or obstacle for pedestrians or road users or where the location of such signage may obscure sight distances at junctions or cause undue or unnecessary distraction to road users.
4. **Fingerpost Signs** The system for fingerpost signs, which relate to premises, and are located away from major routes, will operate on the following basis:
 1. A single pole will be allowed at the road junction apart from any County Council statutory directional sign.
 2. A maximum of 4 no. signs shall be allowed on the pole.
 3. No establishment may have more than one fingerpost sign.
 4. The establishment shall be within 8km of the location of the sign.
 5. Signage in the Gaeltacht area shall be in the Irish Language only.

DM Standard 22: Road Safety and Transport and Traffic Impact Assessments

All significant development proposals, or those that the Planning Authority consider would pose a safety risk or traffic impact, shall be accompanied by road safety audits and transport and traffic assessments. These shall include a consideration of the cumulative impact of developments on the road network.

This shall be guided by the following:

1. **Road Safety Audits** All new proposed commercial, industrial and retail developments, and all proposed residential developments of 4 or more units, will be required to submit Road Safety Audits. All significant changes to existing commercial, industrial or retail developments will be required to submit Road Safety Audits. Road Safety Audits shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and independent person.
2. **Traffic Impact Assessments** All new proposed commercial, industrial and retail developments, and all proposed residential developments of more than 20 units, will be required to submit Traffic Impact Assessments. All significant changes to existing commercial, industrial or retail developments will be required to submit Traffic Impact Assessments.
3. **Transport Assessments** All large scale commercial, industrial, retail or residential developments will be required to submit Transport Assessments where considered necessary by the Planning Authority. This shall be guided by the provisions set out in the DTO Traffic Management Guidelines 2003 and the NRA Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2007.

11.6 Standards for Infrastructure and Services

DM Standard 23: Surface Water Drainage and Flooding

Developments will be subject to the following requirements with regard to surface water drainage and flood prevention and management:

1. **Surface Water Drainage** Drainage from paved surfaces may, after suitable treatment, be discharged to available watercourses or to adequate soakage areas on site. In any event, surface water shall not be permitted to flow on to the public road from any proposed development.
For rural houses, existing roadside drainage shall be maintained by the incorporation of a suitably sized drainage pipe. Each application shall be accompanied by design calculations or appropriate evidence to support the size of pipe selected.
2. **Surface Water Run-Off** Land uses shall not give rise to increases in the run-off characteristics above those that currently exist.
3. **Sustainable Drainage Systems** The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) shall be encouraged in new developments to minimise the risk of flooding and contamination and to protect environmental and water resources. The Council will seek to ensure applicants incorporate sustainable drainage systems for significant developments in both urban and rural areas and will encourage them for all other developments.

SuDS is an approach that seeks to manage the water as close as possible to its origin by various engineering solutions that replicate natural drainage processes, before it enters the watercourse. The incorporation of SuDS techniques allows surface water to be either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to water courses using porous surface treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations. SuDS should be designed to be cost-effective and require minimum maintenance.

4. Flooding

Development should not itself be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor should it cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations. Development must so far as is reasonably practicable incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff. In particular, where appropriate:

1. Hard surface areas (car parks, etc.) should be constructed in permeable or semi-permeable materials.
2. On site storm water ponds to store and/or attenuate additional runoff from the development should be provided.
3. Soak-aways or French drains should be provided to increase infiltration and minimise additional runoff.

5. Flood Risk Assessment

Where flood risk may be an issue for any proposed development, a flood risk assessment should be carried out that is appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising. This shall be undertaken in accordance with the DoEHLG Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines. This shall include proposals for the storage or attenuation of runoff/discharges (including foul drains) to ensure the development does not increase the flood risk in the relevant catchment. Applicants are requested to refer to the OPW National Flood Hazard Mapping Website prior to submitting proposals for development

6. Floodplains

Appropriately designed development that is not sensitive to the effects of flooding may be permissible in flood plains, provided it does not reduce the flood plain area or otherwise restrict flow across floodplains. Examples of such development might include park areas, sports pitches, certain types of industry, warehousing, etc., designed to be flood resistant and/or insensitive. Such development should only be permitted provided it incorporates adequate measures to cope with the ever-existent flood risk, for example, adequate drainage systems, safety measures, emergency response facilities and/or warning and response systems, and where it is considered that flooding would not result in significant hardship/financial loss or cost.

7. Watercourses

For developments adjacent to all watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity or where it is necessary to maintain the ecological or environmental quality of the watercourse, any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/maintenance/vegetation. A minimum setback of 5-10m is required either side depending on the width of the watercourse.

Development consisting of the construction of embankments, wide bridge piers or similar structures will not normally be permitted in or across flood plains or river channels, as these structures restrict/obstruct flow and increase the risk of flooding to property and land upstream. If it is considered necessary in exceptional cases to permit such structures, they should be designed to minimise and/or compensate for any potential negative effects.

8. Flood Design Standards

All new development must be designed and constructed to meet the following minimum flood design standards:

1. For urban/built up areas or where developments (existing, proposed or anticipated) are involved – the 100 year flood.
2. For rural areas or where further developments (existing, proposed or anticipated) are not involved – the 25 year flood.
3. Along the coast and estuaries – the 200 year tide level.
4. Where streams open drains or other watercourses are being culverted – the minimum permissible culvert diameter is 900mm (access should be provided for maintenance as appropriate).

DM Standard 24: Effluent Treatment Plants

The suitability of a site for the treatment of wastewater shall be determined, in accordance with the criteria set down in the EPA Waste Water Treatment Manuals (1999, 2000) or any revision or replacement of these manuals or any guidelines issued by the EPA concerning the content of these manuals For single houses the “EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Single Houses” shall apply.

- For larger developments the “EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels” shall apply.

The following requirements shall apply with respect to effluent treatment facilities:

- 1. Single Houses** Each dwelling house shall be serviced by its own septic tank or treatment plant and shall not share this facility with any other dwelling other than in exceptional circumstances.
- 2. Clustered Housing** In the case of clustered housing schemes, wastewater treatment plants shall be permitted provided that they are designed and built in accordance with EPA Treatment Manuals.
- 3. Certification** Certification will be required that septic tanks have been desludged in accordance with EPA Guidelines.

The following will be a requirement of Planning Permission:

- 1. Maintenance** Maintenance contracts for proprietary treatment systems
- 2. Design Details** Design calculations supporting the selection of a particular type and size of plant.
- 3. Certification** Certification that septic tanks have been desludged in accordance with EPA Guidelines.

DM Standard 25: Wind Farm Development

Wind farm development will generally be considered favourably in the areas designated as suitable, subject to acceptable visual and environmental impact assessment and availability of connections to the National Grid (Map IS1). The provision of electricity generation from wind energy shall be subject to the following:

- 1. Guidelines** Compliance with the DoEHLG *Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006* and having regard to the *Best Practice Guidelines for Wind Energy Development* published by the European Wind Energy Association and the *Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry 2008* published by the Irish Wind Energy Association.
- 2. Landscape Areas** Be located in the landscape areas shown suitable for such development (Map IS1), subject to visual and environmental impact assessment, including consideration of designated environmental sites.
- 3. Residential Amenity** Be so located as to avoid injury to existing residential amenity due to noise or flicker effect.
- 4. Landscape Sensitivity** Avoid where possible interconnecting with the electricity grid either overground or underground across the landscape where sensitivity rating is Class 5 – Unique.
- 5. Public Roads** Shall provide appropriate securities towards the strengthening and maintenance of public road that serve the development.
- 6. Redundancy** Shall be decommissioned, on it becoming redundant and the plant removed from the site and restoration works put in place.

DM Standard 26: Electricity Transmission Lines

Electricity Transmission lines are an essential and inevitable element in providing the necessary energy for economic and social progress. The development of electricity transmission lines shall be subject to the following:

- 1. Landscape Sensitivity** Transmission lines should where possible avoid landscapes, which have sensitivity ratings Class 5 – Unique or Class 4 – Special where they do not already traverse such areas
- 2. Amenity Impacts** New transmission lines should have regard to existing residential amenity and environmental designations and should mitigate against any significant diminution of views of special amenity value.
- 3. Applications** Applications for new transmission lines shall be accompanied by a demand schedule.

Refer to Section 9.4.2.3 Landscape Sensitivity

DM Standard 27: Telecommunications Masts

While the current state of technology requires the construction of masts and antennae in the countryside the following standards will apply:

- 1. Landscape Sensitivity** In general, masts shall not be permitted in landscape sensitivity Class 5 – Unique.
- 2. Amenity Impacts** Masts and associated base station facilities should be located away from existing residences and schools.
- 3. Landscape Impacts** Masts should be designed and located so as to cause minimum impact on the landscape. If possible, sites should be located within forest plantations. Access roads shall be permitted only where essential. Where provided, they should not scar the landscape on which they are located. Roads should follow the natural contours of the site in order to minimise their visual intrusion, and should be bordered with shrubs after construction.
- 4. Co-Location** Licensees should seek to co-locate their services by sharing a single mast or, if necessary, locating additional masts in cluster form.
- 5. Security** Mast compounds should have security fencing and anti-climbing devices.
- 6. Redundancy** In the event of the discontinuance of any mast installation the mast and its equipment shall be removed from the site and the land shall be reinstated.
- 7. Permissions** Permissions for telecommunications masts shall in general be permitted for a 5-year period so as to assess the state of technology and decide whether the national interest requires a continuance of the permission.

Refer to Section 9.4.2.3 Landscape Sensitivity

11.7 Guidelines for Agriculture, Mariculture, Forestry and Extractive Development

DM Standard 28: Agricultural Buildings

Buildings, which are connected with traditional farm activity, will be permitted in suitable locations on the farm. In dealing with planning applications for such buildings the Planning Authority will have regard to:

- 1. Design and Layout** The quality of design and layout of the farm complex.
- 2. Residential Amenity** The proximity of any existing dwelling house.
- 3. Public Road Access** The safe access to public roads.
- 4. Rural Landscape** The assimilation of the buildings into the rural landscape by means of appropriate siting, external colouring, screening and shelterbelting.

DM Standard 29: Agricultural Effluent

All soiled liquid waste shall be collected and stored in tanks, which are designed to Department of Agriculture and Food standards before being further treated or spread on land in suitable weather conditions. The following will be a requirement of Planning Permission:

- 1. Design Calculations** Design calculations supporting the selection of a particular volume of storage and details of the spread area.

DM Standard 30: Agri-Business Storage Buildings

It shall be a presumption that agri-business storage buildings, which are not directly linked with local farm activity, will be situated in settlement centres or in towns with commercial/industrial zoned lands unless a specific compelling case is made for a rural location. In any event, such buildings will not be permitted in landscapes, which are rated Class 5 – Unique or Class 4 – Special.

DM Standard 31: Agri-Tourism

The development of agri-tourism shall be subject to the following:

- 1. Ownership** Accommodation and supplementary businesses shall remain in the ownership of the farm family.
- 2. Location** In general, new buildings shall be proximate to the existing farmhouse.
- 3. Effluent Treatment** Adequate effluent treatment facilities shall be installed.
- 4. Access and Parking** Adequate on-site parking shall be provided and safe access shall be available to the public road.

DM Standard 32: Restriction On Agricultural Development

Developments that are not connected with agriculture or related to the provision of infrastructure services for the common good shall be restricted except where they provide for essential rural housing needs in accordance with the provisions of Section 5 of the Plan and associated policies and Development Management Standards in particular DM Standard 6: Permissible Rural Housing and DM Standard 16: Access to National and Other Restricted Roads for Residential Developments, of the Development Plan.

DM Standard 33: Forestry Development

The provision and maintenance of the trees shall comply with the requirements of Irish *National Forestry Standard 2000* and any proposals for forestry development should have regard to the following guidelines published by the Forest Service:

- *Forestry and Landscape Guidelines*
- *Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines*
- *Forestry and Archaeology Guidelines*
- *Forestry Bio-diversity Guidelines*
- *Forestry Harvesting and Environmental Guidelines*

The introduction of large-scale forestry areas can have significant negative impacts on an area if they are not in context with the surrounding environment. Forestry activities must be appropriate in terms of nature and scale with the surrounding area, so they are not visually intrusive on the landscape or cause damage to important habitats or the ecology of the area...

Forestry development shall be subject to the following requirements:

- 1. Thresholds** Applications for afforestation and deforestation, which exceed the thresholds set out in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, require planning permission and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 2. Afforestation** Afforestation will only be considered in the areas identified as suitable for such development in the Landscape Character Assessment (AM1). Detailed recommendations for forestry development in the various parts of the County are set out in this document and any proposal should be in accordance with these recommendations.
- 3. Diversity of Species** In order to avoid acidification of our soils and water course from coniferous plantations and to promote bio-diversity in so far as it is possible, the Council shall encourage a diversity of species in afforestation proposals. This shall require a proportion of all new forestry development to consist of native hardwood species in order to extend the range of potential end uses and to reduce the potential for adverse impact on the landscape and biodiversity resulting from monoculture

DM Standard 34: Fencing

It is a requirement of the Planning Regulations 2001–2006 (9(I)(x)) that the fencing of hitherto open land used by the public during the 10 years preceding such fencing, requires planning permission. Traditional hill sheep farming rarely required fencing but, since the introduction of REPS, sheep farmers are required to stock-proof their lands. The challenge is to ensure that such fencing will be done in a manner that will meet the requirements of REPS without impinging on access for hill walkers.

Taking account of (a) the needs of farmers and (b) the desirability of maintaining access for hill walkers, the Council will use the following criteria when considering applications for new fencing on hitherto open land:

1. **Amenity Areas** Fencing in upland or amenity areas will not normally be permitted unless such fencing is essential to the viability of the farm and that it conforms to best agricultural practice.
2. **Materials** The nature of material to be used, the height of the fence and, in the case of a wire fence, the type of wire to be used will be taken into account. Barbed wire will not be used for the top line of wire.
3. **Access** Stiles or gates at appropriate places will be required.

DM Standard 35: Extractive Development

The extraction of sand, gravel, stone, etc. is fundamental to the continuing economic and physical development of the county. It is desirable that such materials would be sourced close to the location of new development to minimise the need for long haul routes and potential interference with traffic flows and amenity. The following details shall be considered central to the determination of any application for planning permission for extractive development:

1. **Guidelines** Compliance with the provisions and guidance, as appropriate, contained within Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the DoEHLG *Quarries and Ancillary Facilities Guidelines 2004* and the EPA *Guidelines for Environmental Management in the Extractive Sector 2006*. Where extractive developments may impact on archaeological or architectural heritage, regard shall be had to the DoEHLG *Architectural Conservation Guidelines 2004* and the *Archaeological Code of Practice 2002* in the assessment of planning applications. Reference should also be made to the *Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry 2008*.
2. **Land Ownership** The extent of land ownership. Details should be submitted showing the proposed site in relation to all lands in the vicinity in which the applicant has an interest.
3. **Deposits** The nature of all deposits. Details to be submitted to include: depths of topsoil, subsoil, over-burden and material, at various points on the site; an indication of the type of minerals, which it is intended to extract; a statement as to whether the parent rock from which the mineral is extracted is suitable for other uses; and the estimated total quantity of rock and mineral, which can be extracted commercially on the site.
4. **Methods** The methods of excavation and machinery to be used. Details to be submitted to include all proposed site development works, including: the proposed method of working; any existing or proposed areas of excavation; stages of work proposed; locations of any settling ponds, waste material and/or stockpiling of materials; methods for removing and storing topsoil, subsoil and overburden; etc.
5. **Production** The quantification of production in a given time. Details to be submitted to include the proposed production process to be employed, all requirements for water, electricity and/or other inputs to the production process and any proposals for chemical or other treatments.
6. **Mitigation** Methods to reduce environmental impact. Details to be submitted to include an assessment of potential impacts on water resources, residential and visual amenity (including noise, dust and vibration impacts), biodiversity and any other relevant considerations together with appropriate proposals for their mitigation.
7. **Access** Vehicle routes from site to major traffic routes and the impact on the adjoining road networks. Details should be included on the mode, number and weight of trucks or other vehicles being used to transport materials and any truck sheeting or washing proposals.
8. **Rehabilitation** A scheme of rehabilitation and after care. Details to be submitted should include a report with plans and sections detailing: the anticipated finished landform and surface/landscape treatments, both of each phase and the whole excavation; quality and condition of topsoil and overburden; rehabilitation works proposed; the type and location of any vegetation proposed; proposed method of funding and delivery of restoration/reinstatement works; etc.
9. **EIS** Any Environmental Impact Study required by statute. An EIS should ensure that all impacts in relation to heritage, environment, biodiversity, groundwater protection, etc. are clearly addressed and appropriate mitigation measures are included.

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| 10. Proximity | Proximity to other developments. Details to be submitted to include location of all existing developments in the vicinity of the site that might be affected by site development works, extractive operations and/or traffic movements generated. |
| 11. Landscaping & Screening | Landscaping and screening proposals. Details to be submitted to include an indication of existing trees or other screening to be retained or removed and any proposed screening, grassing or planting of trees or shrubs and proposals for their maintenance. |
| 12. Heritage and Biodiversity | Proposals in relation to heritage and biodiversity. This would include any recommendations for the site to be considered as part of the geological heritage of the County and any proposed measures with regard to the protection and promotion of the environment and biodiversity, including any proposals for rehabilitation. |

11.8 Guidelines for Heritage, Landscape and Environmental Management

DM Standard 36: Compliance with Landscape Sensitivity Designations

Subject to the provisions of the Plan but in particular the settlement policies of Section 2 and 3 and the consequent restriction on development in rural areas, the control of permissible development shall be in accordance with the policies as they relate to the five sensitivity classes of landscape in Section 9.4. It will deem the following types of development generally to be acceptable in the various areas of sensitivity as follows:

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|--|---|
| 1. Class 1 – Low Sensitivity | All developments consistent with settlement policies. |
| 2. Class 2 – Moderate Sensitivity | Various developments, which are of appropriate scale and design and are in compliance with settlement policies. |
| 3. Class 3 – High Sensitivity | Few developments, including those with substantiated cases for such a specific location and which are in compliance with settlement policies. |
| 4. Class 4 – Special | Restricted to essential residential needs of local households and family farm business. |
| 5. Class 5 – Unique | Negligible alteration will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances. |

It is accepted that the Islands around our coastline are special and require protection while at the same time accommodating local needs. Currently the landscape sensitivity rating for all of the Islands is Class 5 – Unique. However, consideration will be given to accommodating local housing needs, where the development would be in conformity with the provisions of the plan.

Agri-business buildings will not be permitted in landscapes rated Class 5 – Unique or Class 4 – Special. Telecommunications masts shall not be permitted in landscape sensitivity Class 5 – Unique.

DM Standard 37: Sites with Nature Conservation Designations

The following measures shall be applied in respect of designated environmental sites:

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Appropriate Assessment: | Screening for appropriate assessment and / or appropriate assessment will be required with all applications where it is considered that the proposed development may impact (directly or indirectly), or in combination with other projects, on a Natura 2000 designated site i.e. a <u>Special Area of Conservation</u> (SAC) or a <u>Special Protection Area</u> (SPA), to inform decision making. The need for an appropriate assessment should be discussed with the Planning Section prior to the submission of an application. The appropriate assessment shall be carried out in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and Section 18 of the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 and shall identify and evaluate the direct and indirect effects, which the development would be likely to have upon the designated site. |
| 2. Ecological Assessment: | Ecological assessment will be required with all significant planning applications, where it is considered that the proposed development may impact (directly or indirectly), or in conjunction with other projects, on a National designated site or a proposed National designated site i.e. <u>Natural Heritage Area</u> (NHA) or a <u>proposed Natural Heritage Area</u> (pNHA), to inform decision making. The need for an ecological assessment should be discussed with the Planning Section prior to the submission of an application. The assessment should include consideration of impacts in relation to biodiversity, ecological linkages, water quality and drainage. GCC will generally require ecological assessments for developments proposed within a notional zone between the boundary of a national designated site to the next field boundary or to a distance of 50 metres, whichever is greater. |

Refer to Section 9.3 Mitigation Measures of the Environmental Report on the SEA of the County Development Plan 2009-2015.

DM Standard 38: Field Patterns, Stone Walls, Trees and Hedgerows

Field patterns and associated stone walls, trees and hedgerows are an important part of the visual and environmental quality of rural areas and their removal and replacement with block walls and fencing leads to urban features in a rural environment. It can also have an effect on wildlife and lead to the removal of valuable hedgerows upon which wildlife depends. New developments will accordingly be subject to the following requirements in this regard:

- 1. Existing Features** Retain and incorporate existing field patterns and associated stone walls, trees and hedgerows into new development layouts wherever feasible.
- 2. Intervention** In general, only the minimum interference with existing field patterns, stone walls, trees and hedges shall be permitted.
- 3. Planting** The Council will also encourage the planting of native trees and hedgerows along all boundaries.
- 4. Hedgerows** Include consideration of native hedgerow with post and rail fencing along roadside frontages where existing hedgerow is being removed. Employ the appropriate management methods for the maintenance of roadside habitats to minimize damage (in particular to hedges) and observe the hedge cutting closed season.

DM Standard 39: Coastal Management and Protection

The following requirements shall be considered and applied where appropriate with respect to coastal management and protection:

- 1. Natural Processes** Where possible, developments shall ensure that the landward migration of coastal features, such as dunes and marshes, shall be facilitated as these features form an integral part of the coastal system – both physically and ecologically – and provide protection against wave energy through dissipation.
- 2. Sea Level Change and Flooding** New developments shall generally comply with the following approach to coastal management for sea level change:
 1. No new building or new development within 100m of ‘soft’ shoreline.
 2. No further reclamation of estuary land.
 3. No removal of sand dunes, beach sand or gravel.
 4. All coastal defence measures to be assessed for environmental impact.
- 3. Coastal Edge** In addition to the above, a general minimum horizontal setback of 30m from the foreshore field boundary line, for new development, or along the 3m natural contour line, whichever is the greatest, is to be created. Any planning applications within this setback must demonstrate that any development would not be subject to potential rising sea levels as a result of global warming, and must address any issues with regard to rising sea levels, with regard to the siting of any development. New developments should not restrict opportunities for providing public access to the foreshore.

The coastal edge and coastal habitats shall be protected from destruction and degradation to ensure that their roles as ecological corridors, coastal flooding and storm surge buffers are retained and enhanced, and developers proposing developments in the vicinity of this area will be requested to carry out an ecological survey and submit an ecological plan that incorporates the natural vegetation and topography of the area.

DM Standard 40: Water Resource Management and Protection

New developments shall be required to ensure that water resources are adequately managed and protected. In particular, new development will have regard to the following:

- *GCC Groundwater Protection Scheme for County Galway*
- *EU Water Framework Directive* and the provisions of any relevant associated *River Basin District Management Plans* produced during the lifetime of the County Development Plan.

- 1. Water Resource Protection** Landuses shall not give rise to the pollution of ground or surface waters during the construction or operation of developments. This shall be achieved through the adherence to best practice in the design, installation and management of systems for the interception, collection and appropriate disposal or treatment of all surface waters and effluents.

DM Standard 41: Prevention of Groundwater Pollution

Development works shall have particular regard to the preservation of groundwater and surface water quality during all stages of construction.

DM Standard 42: Soil Protection

Developments shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.

DM Standard 43: Protected or Proposed Protected Structures

As a minimum requirement, the Planning Authority will require Planning Applications for works to Protected Structures or proposed Protected Structures to have regard to the following:

- *GCC Architectural Survey and Assessment Best Practice Guide*
- *DoEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2004*

The following requirements shall be applied with respect to Protected or Proposed Protected Structures, as appropriate:

- 1. Conservation Measures** Proposals for development, which include a protected structure, will be required to incorporate measures to protect, conserve and enhance the character and the appearance of the structure.
- 2. Development Works** Proposals for development involving material alteration or additions to a protected structure require planning permission and will be required to show that:
1. It is compatible with and will not detract from the special character of the structure and its setting.
 2. It complements and reflects the design and character of surrounding buildings and area.
 3. Features of architectural or historic interest and the historic form and structural integrity of the structure are retained.
 4. Architectural features shall match those or be in keeping with the traditional detailing of the structure.
- Proposals for development that compromise the setting of protected structures or which will result in material alteration or demolition of structure(s) will only be permitted where:
5. The structure is not capable of repair.
 6. There is no compatible or viable alternative use for the structure.
- 3. Adjoining Development** Development on sites adjoining a protected structure will be required to demonstrate that:
1. It will have no adverse impacts on the character or integrity of the protected structure or views to and from it.
 2. Owners and prospective owners of protected structures or proposed protected structures or structures located in Architectural Conservation Areas should consult with the Planning Authority in good time as to the appropriateness of proposed works or other developments, and seek competent advice on best practice for carrying out such works.

DM Standard 44: Architectural Conservation Areas

The following requirements shall apply with respect to Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs):

1. Development Works Proposals for development in an ACA that involves a new building, reuse or change of use and extensions will be required to:
 1. Conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the ACA.
 2. Respect the scale, massing, proportions, design and materials of existing structures.
 3. Retain important exterior architectural features that contribute to the character and appearance of the ACA.
2. Demolition The demolition of a building within an ACA will be restricted unless the Council is satisfied that the structure or building does not contribute positively to the character or appearance of the ACA, or the building or structure is beyond viable repair or reuse.

DM Standard 45: Archaeological Conservation and Preservation

All planning applications for new development, redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment, restoration works etc. within the areas of archaeological potential and within close proximity to the recorded sites will take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological mitigation. Proposals will be submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Archaeological Advisory Services. Developers should give due consideration to the following:

- *Archaeology & Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers*

DM Standard 46: Development Affecting the Gaeltacht

The potential impact of any development on the boundary of the Gaeltacht will be taken into consideration in assessing development applications. Within An Gaeltacht, the provisions of the *Gaeltacht Local Area Plan 2008* shall apply.

DM Standard 47: Energy

Proposals for residential and commercial development to specify at planning application stage, proposals for a target percentage of electricity usage in new developments to be derived from renewable energy resources.

Require a performance based Building Energy Rating (BER) target for all new building developments greater than 10 dwellings or greater than 1,000m² floor area for non residential and mixed developments.

In accordance with the European communities (Energy Performance of Buildings) regulations 2006, the Building Energy Rating target shall require a collective (per m²) average BER rating of at least A₃, effective from 1st January 2009, for all new building developments greater than 10 dwellings or greater than 1,000 m² floor area for non-residential and mixed developments.

Accordingly it will be a requirement that all planning applications submitted to the planning authority shall include a statement from a competent and qualified person certifying that the proposed development conforms to the energy rating outlined above.

DM Standard 48: Mariculture

The following details shall be required as part of a planning application where appropriate with respect to coastal management and protection:

- The capacity of the shoreline to absorb its onshore facilities
- Access roads
- Car parking
- scale of traffic and size of vehicles using facility
- Turning space required,
- Impact of traffic on public road
- Waste disposal i.e. reject produce
- Slipways
- Moorings
- Lighting
- Cranes
- Amenities in the area
- Any visual aids necessary to measure the impact.



Comhairle Chontae Na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council