

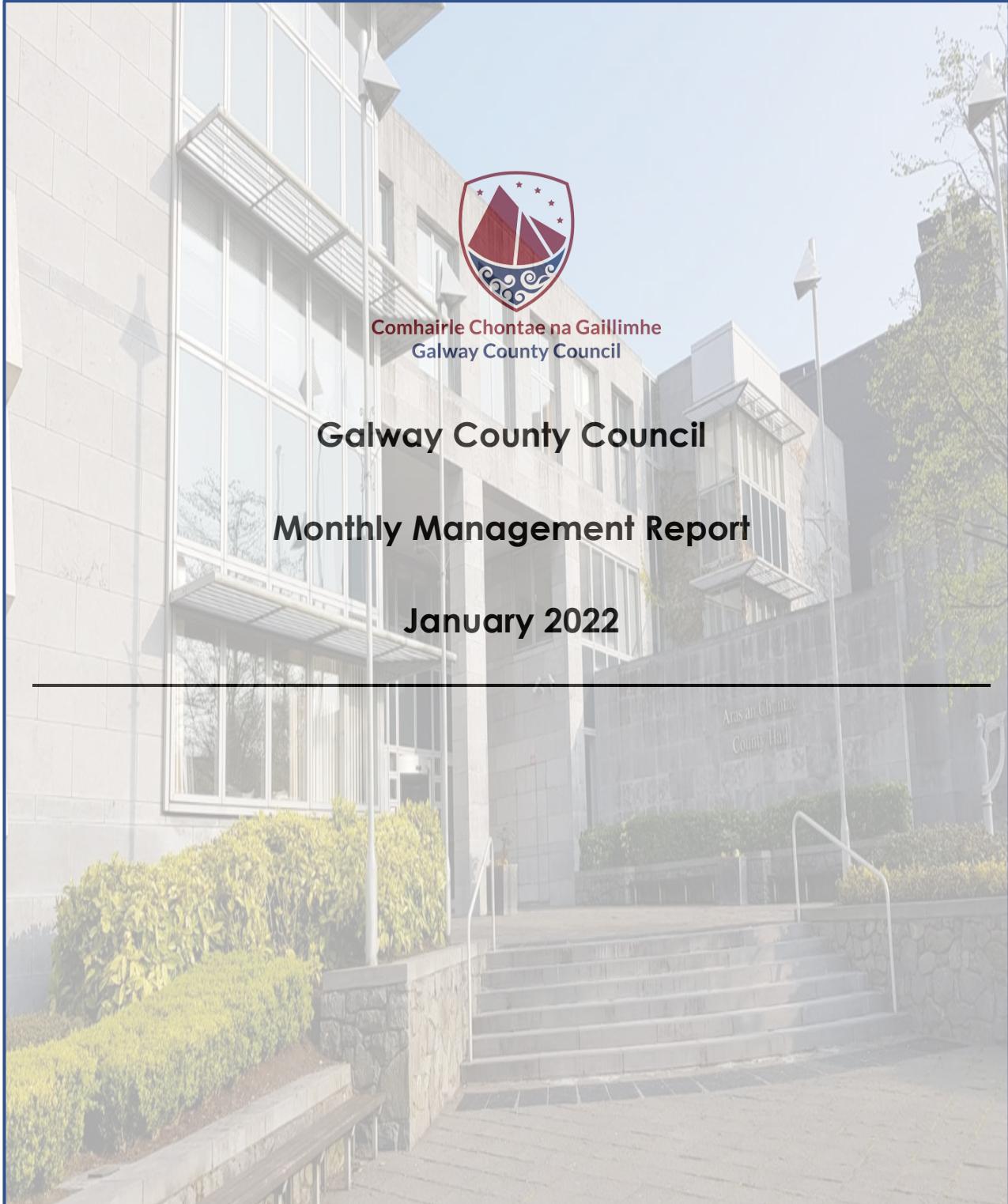


Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council

Monthly Management Report

January 2022



HOUSING & ECONOMIC, RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing Update

Galway County Council Housing Stock:

The key figures are 2824 stock in total, 2409 have tenants in situ.

219 new units under construction in 2021/2022

Of the 136 units classified at Vacant

36 of these units are units that are new units being allocated at present

5 are ready for Housing First allocations (support plans being devised by SIMON/TUSLA/HSE etc)

9 are long term voids that are with Housing Liaison officers for allocation or Choice based letting

23 awaiting minor repairs are with contractors and the HLO's are allocating them as works progress.

25 derelicts and 21 major refurbishments are being funded by the Department on a phased basis for redevelopment.

Count of Total number of residential units owned by GCC by beds		Beds	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Row Labels									
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allocated									
Available For Letting			1	23	18	4			46
Awaiting Minor Repairs			2	7	4	1			14
Allocated Total			3	30	22	5			60
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied									
Available For Letting			136	566	1472	212	17	5	2408
Awaiting Minor Repairs						1			1
Occupied Total			136	567	1472	212	17	5	2409
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under Construction									
Other			12	109	95	3			219
Under Construction Total			12	109	95	3			219
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vacant									
Available For Letting			4	23	33	3	1		64
Awaiting Minor Repairs			5	8	8	2			23
Community Facility						3			3
Derelict					3	18	4		25
Major Refurbishment					4	12	5		21
Vacant Total			9	38	74	14	1		136
Total			160	744	1663	234	18	5	2824

New Local Authority Home Loan Scheme commenced:

<https://localauthorityhomeloan.ie/>

The Government have signed regulations giving effect to the new Local Authority Home Loan scheme.

The Statutory Instrument to enable the scheme to commence was signed on 14th December, the scheme is open to applicants from 4 January 2022.

The new regulations will assist single people to avail of a State backed mortgage for a new, second-hand or self-build home.

A ‘Fresh Start’ principle will also apply which means that people who are divorced or separated and have no interest in the family home, or who have undergone insolvency proceedings, will be eligible to apply.

The Scheme is open to all First Time Buyers and to Fresh Start applicants on low or modest incomes who cannot get sufficient funding from commercial lenders to purchase new or second-hand properties or to build your own home.

Houses purchased under the scheme cannot have a value in excess of €320,000 in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Meath, Kildare, Louth and Kildare and €250,000 elsewhere.

Income ceilings apply; single applicants cannot have income in excess of €65,000 if seeking to purchase a home in the €320,000 house price areas; the income ceiling is €50,000 otherwise. The income ceiling for joint applicants is €75,000 nationwide.

The Local Authority Home Loan, similarly, to previous local authority loan products, assists borrowers. Applicants for the Local Authority Home Loan must have been unable to obtain sufficient financing from a commercial lender.

Tenant Purchase scheme – new regulations Feb 2022

The *Housing (Sale of Local Authority Houses) (Amendment) Regulations 2021* give effect to these amendments which include changes to (a) minimum income criteria for applicants and (b) the period of time applicants must have been receiving social housing support to be eligible under the scheme. The amendments come into effect from 1st February 2022.

Specifically, the changes are as follows –

- i. **Minimum income requirements:** The minimum income required for an applicant to be eligible to apply under the scheme has been revised downward from €15,000 p.a. to €12,500 p.a.

This change will ensure persons whose pension is their primary source of income can now apply under the scheme. The change only applies to pensions – other social welfare payments may only be regarded as secondary income.

- ii. **Time receiving social housing supports:** The period of time tenants will be required to be in receipt of social housing support to be considered eligible under the scheme has been changed from one to 10 years.

In the case of joint tenancies, both tenants must be in receipt of social housing support for at least 10 years before being eligible to apply.

Any application submitted from 1st February 2022 should be assessed according to the revised eligibility requirements set out in the 2021 Regulations.

Galway County Council continues to support ongoing tenant purchases .

CAPITAL:

Kinvara:

10 units are progressing well on site with the connected road well established and roof level at nearly all units.



Tuam

Fana Bhui is progressing well with Phase 1 due at the end of March 2022

Weir rd – judicial review issues resolved and design team progressing to go to tender for construction.

Other:

Ahascragh – Contractor being appointed this month, no delays expected.

Dunlo Hill – Design team finalised.

Cosmona, Loughrea – Design team being progressed.

Claregalway – Design Team finalising drawings and a report is being discussed on NIS requirement. NIS will mean a Bord Pleanala process.

Maintenance:

Preventative Maintenance and retrofitting including energy efficiency works has been ongoing with:

The Glebe, Tuam – ongoing

Killimor & Eyrecourt – snagging

Portumna & Ballinasloe – complete

All units are achieving A rated BER certification.

Halting Site & Group Scheme upgrade works planned at:

Tuam – re-development

Clontuskert - renovation

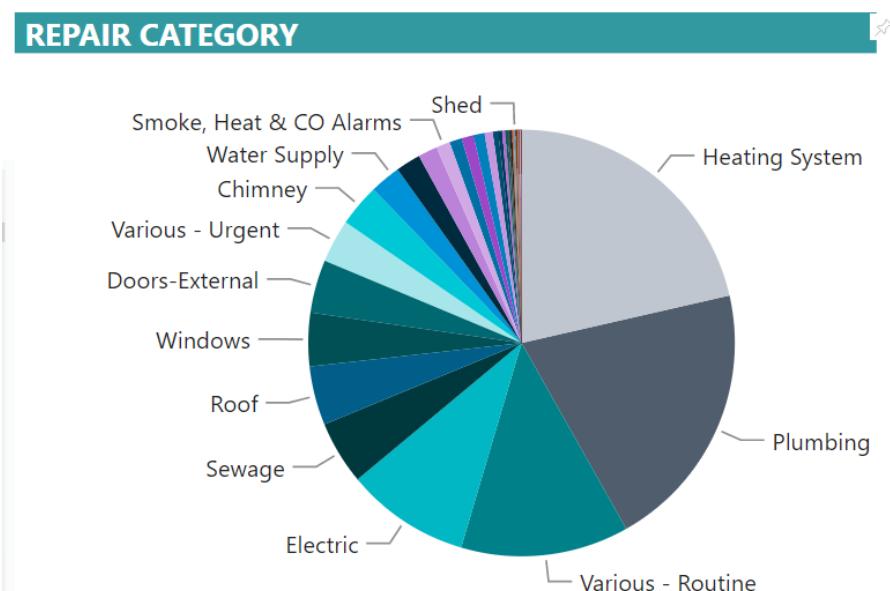
Athenry – renovation/energy retrofit

Ballygar – renovation & rebuild

Clegane – re-development

Loughrea – further discussion required with tenants

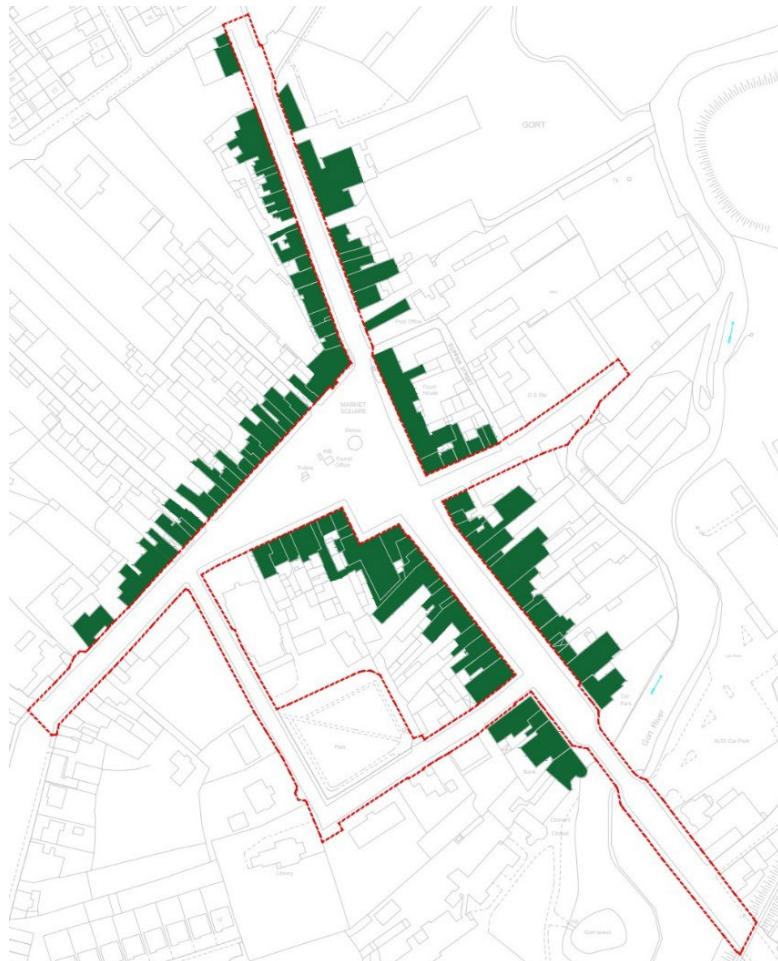
Work continues on over 400 active maintenance repairs logged and assigned to staff and contractors to progress. Over half the issues relate to Heating/Plumbing and Water/Sewage pipe issues:



ERCD Update

Regeneration

Gort : An grant of €798,584 under RRDF Category 2 Funding has been awarded for the design of the Public Realm and development of Canon Quinn Park.



Gort – RRDF Public Realm Zone for design and development.

Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP)

Following the publication of the guidelines towards the end of last year internal planning and work has commenced on the LECP which will set down a strategic framework for the economic and community development of the County over a 6-year period. The new guidelines set out the requirement for a high-level framework with action plans covering a 2-year period. Responsibility for the development of the Community elements rests with the LCDC while the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC are responsibility for the economic elements. An Advisory Steering Group will be established comprising representative from both committees and this group will work closely with the executive in the development of

the plan. The LECP will be brought to Council for adoption following the completion of the process and there will be stakeholder engagement throughout the process.

BIA Innovator Campus

Construction work continues on the BIA Innovator Campus. The team in ERCD and LEO continue to work with the campus team to deliver on the project and to support events. An event was held on Monday 17th January which involved an expert panel advising food businesses on how to grow their companies, improve their online presence and target business direct to consumers. The event which was very well received in part of the building a community network from BIA. There was attendance from local, regional, national and international participants.

Staff at BIA have also started onboarding tenants for their own door units and are providing excellent wrap around supports. A number of meetings and site visits have taken place with key stakeholders that will use the campus for training, education and development purposes and this will feed into the work programme.

Tourism

Tourism Strategy: The consultants – (CHL Consulting & Minogue Consulting) have begun work on the strategy. Project initiation between GCC project steering team and consultants will set out a GANT chart for progress in January 2022 with broad consultation with the executive team, elected representatives and tourism stakeholders in the County taking place in Q1 2022. It is envisaged to bring the draft strategy to the SPC in Sept and full council before end of year.

Burren Discovery Trail: This Fáilte Ireland *Wild Atlantic Way* team led project has been supported by Galway County Council with Loughrea MD managing installation of structures. Installations complete at Ardrahan; Thoor Ballylee; and at Coole Park. Kilmacduagh will progress shortly as Galway County Council have received approval from National Monument Service for the supervising Archaeologist in mid- January. Works will be completed in-house.

Galway Destination Brand: Galway County, Galway City and Fáilte Ireland are collaborating on a joint destination brand project that is now progressing.

Clifden Destination Town: Preliminary project scoping ongoing and tenders to be agreed in alignment with Clifden Regeneration project.

Communities Activity Fund

A webinar is being held on Thursday 20th January at 5pm to assist communities apply for funding under the Community Activities Fund 2021. The Fund is intended to support community groups, particularly those in disadvantaged areas, who have been impacted by

the pandemic by providing funding towards running costs (utility bills, insurance) and support to enable them carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities.

Galway Sports Partnership

Sport Ireland have allocated €49,000 to GSP for Covid 19 Small Grant Scheme to help small clubs in Galway get back up and running after the restrictions. They have also given GSP a further €49,000 under the Restarting Galway's Activity fund scheme.

The Walk on Wednesday program has started back for the second year in a row. This program is associated with Operation Transformation. People are asked to sign up to our program and take part in either a 60km/100km/140km walk within 6 weeks. So far over 400 people across Galway City and County have signed up to this program. Participants have also been offered the chance to try some online taster sessions, such as Yoga, Tai Chi among others.

Galway Sports Partnership are running an inclusive element to run alongside the main Operation Transformation program. Disability services including Brothers of Charity, Ability West, Rehab Care, Enable Ireland and Down Syndrome Galway have over 200 people involved.

INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE

Speed Limits Appeals Procedure

In December, Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan launched a Speed Limit Appeals Procedure which allows members of the public to object and appeal existing speed limits contained within a Local Authority's current Speed Limit Bye-laws. This new process will highlight certain speed limits which are considered inappropriate and require investigation. The procedure is available on www.speedlimits.ie



SPEEDLIMITS.IE

Ireland's Speed Limits

The Speed Limits Appeals Procedure is intended to facilitate a legitimate query a member of the public or interested party may have regarding a particular speed limit. It is also intended to speed up the process of reviewing speed limit queries raised between full Local Authority speed limit reviews which are normally carried out every five years.

The process includes an initial appeal application to the relevant Local Authority Panel who will review the application (at no cost) followed by an escalation of the appeal to an Independent Regional Panel (administration fee of €125), should the applicant not accept the decision of the Local Authority Panel.

All speed limit appeals will be reviewed in accordance with the Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland (Speed Limit Guidelines). If a speed limit is deemed to not be set in accordance with the Speed Limit Guidelines, the Local Authority will notify the applicant and begin the process of rectifying the speed limit. The statutory power to adopt speed limit bye-laws will remain with the Elected Members of Local Authorities on roads in their administrative area.

STAGE	PROCEDURE REFERENCE	ACTION WITH	TIMEFRAME
1	Acknowledgement of receipt of Appeal	Local Authority	2 weeks
2	Review of Initial Appeal	Local Authority	1 calendar month
3	Decision to Escalate appeal to Regional Panel	Appellant	1 calendar month
	Review of Escalated Appeal by Regional Panel and decision notified to Local Authority	Regional Panel	At next quarterly assessment meeting
	Decision of Regional Panel notified to Appellant	Local Authority	Within 2 weeks of Regional Panel decision (unless further investigation is required)
4	Local Authority to amend Special Speed Limit Bye-laws	Local Authority	Within 12 months

The document outlining the Procedure in full (including all letter templates) is available to download at <https://bit.ly/APPEALS-ALL>

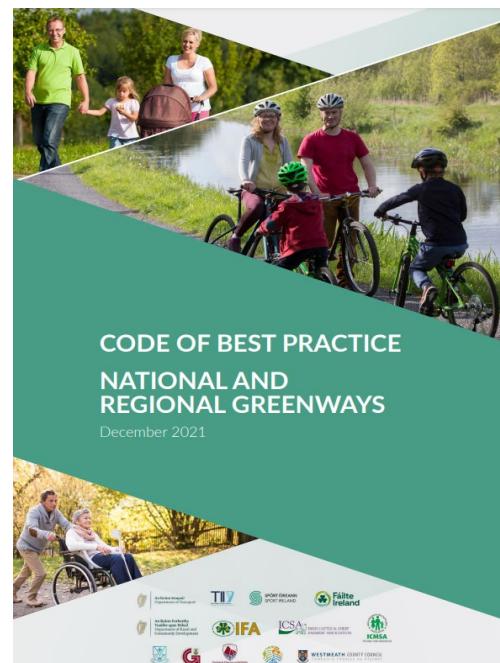
And download the Appeals Application form here <https://bit.ly/SL-APPEAL-Form>

Greenways – General. Agreement on the Code of Best Practice National and Regional Greenways

The Code provides comprehensive information in relation to the process involved in planning, designing and constructing National and Regional Greenways. It includes an overview of the public consultation processes, constraints study, route selection and statutory processes, as well as information about the use of State-owned lands and the acquisition of private lands for developing Greenways. The Code also outlines the relevant roles of the ‘project promoter’ which is comprised of the Department of Transport, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, local authorities and other specific stakeholders.

The Code acknowledges the important role of farmers / landowners in the process and outlines the procedures to ensure that they are treated fairly and equitably. The implementation and operation of the Code will be reviewed in conjunction with the farming organisations and updated, where required, on a bi-annual basis initially and on an annual basis thereafter.

It contains an innovative approach to land acquisition involving early engagement with landowners/property owners to facilitate the acquisition of land by Voluntary Land Acquisition Agreements enabling the landowner/property owners to avail of a greenway sustainability payment for their early engagement and cooperation. Securing cooperation of Landowner/Property owners and acquiring lands by voluntary agreements was inherent throughout the development of the code. The agreed Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenways outlines the procedures and processes for landowner/property owners to be treated fairly throughout the development of Greenways.



CODE OF BEST PRACTICE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GREENWAYS – GREENWAY SUSTAINABILITY PAYMENT

Private Landowner Band(s)	Greenway Band Length (Metres)	Total Greenway Sustainability Payment (GSP) Available (A & B)	Greenway Sustainability Payment (GSP) (Per Private Landowner)		Land Acquisition Compensation Land Acquisition Compensation (Excl. GSP)
			A Early Sign On Payment (where VLAA is agreed Pre-Planning Decision)	B Co-operation Payment (payable when greenway opens)	
Band 1	1 to 100 metres	€6,750	€3,375	€3,375	To be negotiated (case by case basis)
Band 2	101 to 250 metres	€12,000	€6,000	€6,000	To be negotiated (case by case basis)
Band 3	251 to 400 metres	€17,250	€8,625	€8,625	To be negotiated (case by case basis)
Band 4	401 to 550 metres	€22,500	€11,250	€11,250	To be negotiated (case by case basis)
Band 5	550 metres + additional metres	€22,500+	€11,250+	€11,250+	To be negotiated (case by case basis)

*The above arrangement will be in place for a period of five years and will be deemed to have commenced on 1st January 2022.

*This document should be read in conjunction with the Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenway Projects.

*GSP applies where a private landowner's land is going to be directly impacted by a national or regional greenway project.

*GSP not deducted from separate land acquisition compensation (to be negotiated on a case by case basis).

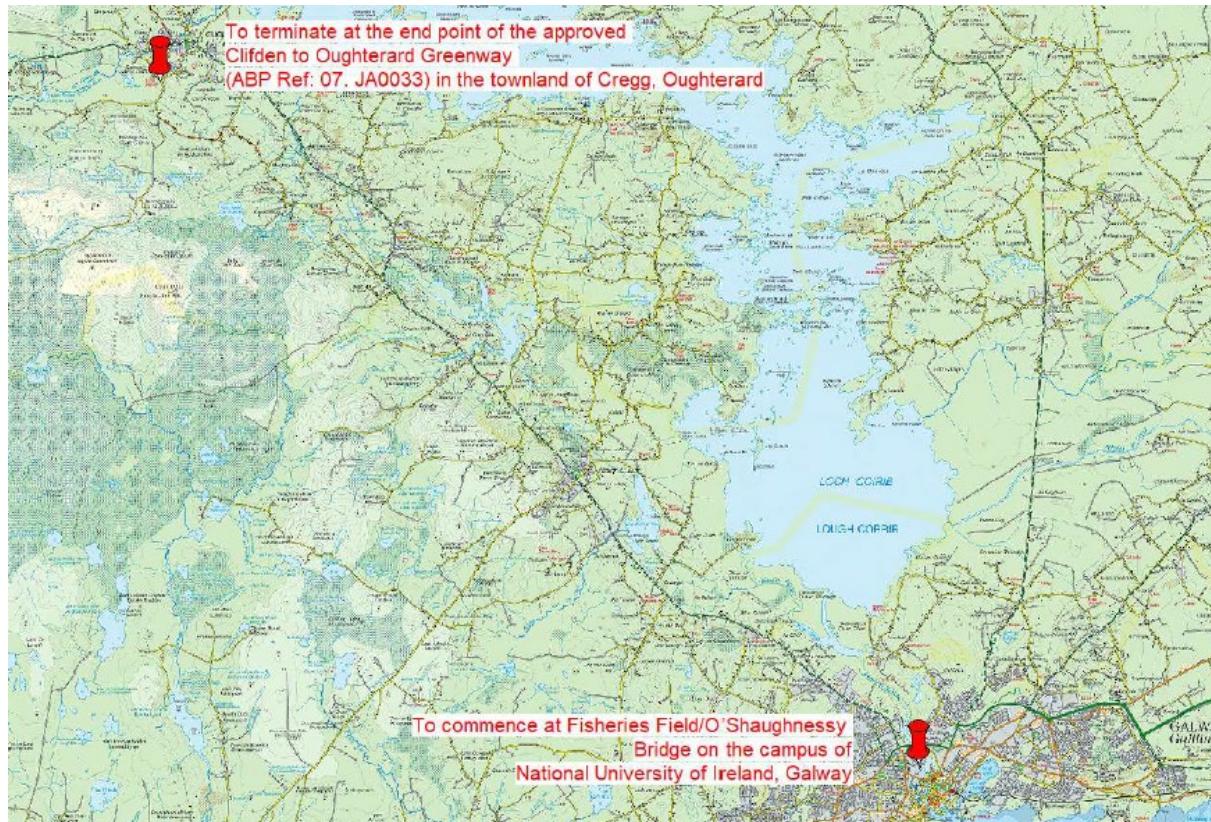
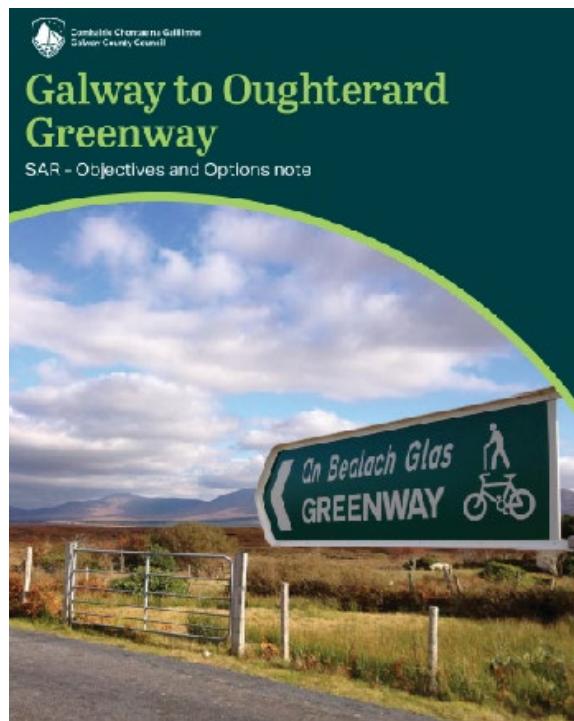
*Early Sign on Payment applies where a Voluntary Land Acquisition Agreement (VLAA) is agreed before the planning authority makes its decision and payable following execution of the VLAA.

*Maximum band length applies per private landowner impacted within Bands 1, 2, 3 & 4.

*Band 5 GSP maintains Band 4-unit rate and is adjusted upwards based on actual length to be acquired over 550 metres.

Galway to Oughterard Greenway

Public Consultation No. 01 for the Galway to Oughterard Greenway is to commence on 28th February 2022. The main purpose of this first public consultation is to present the study area and obtain feedback on it. The project team will explain that the project is starting again from a “clean slate” with no routes proposed at this stage. The project team will place a strong emphasis on consultation with landowners throughout the project development and that a key aim will be to progress the project in collaboration with any affected landowner.



Ahascragh Wastewater Treatment Plant

Coffey Construction has commenced the upgrade to the Ahascragh WWTP. The works involve an upgrade of the terminal pumping station and WWTP to a capacity of 470 PE. There will be storm water storage provided at the pumping station with a screened overflow, which will eliminate spills to the Bunowen River during heavy rainfall. The upgraded treatment plant will fit within the extents of the existing site. Completion is expected in Q1, 2023.

The benefits of the scheme can be summarised as follows.

- Removal of the existing unscreened storm overflow and replacement with a new screened overflow and storm storage tank.
- Compliance with national and EU regulations relating to the treatment of urban wastewater.
- Provision for future development within the Ahascragh area.

N17 Milltown to Gortnagunnad Upgrade

The Council is pleased to confirm that the Milltown to Gortnagunnad Scheme CPO and planning application has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála for approval.

The scheme is located between the village of Milltown, Co Galway and Ballindine, Co Mayo. The scheme runs for 3km, from the outskirts at the northern end of Milltown village and finishes in the townland of Gortnagunnad which ties in with a recently completed road realignment scheme of the N17 Carrownurlaur to Ballindine.



**ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE, FIRE & MAJOR
EMERGENCY SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES &
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
DIRECTORATE**

Environment

Environmental Awareness

Christmas Tree Recycling:

Galway County Council accepted Christmas Trees for recycling during normal working hours at the following sites for the period Friday 7th January – Saturday 15th January 2022.

Athenry: Public Car Park beside Kenny Park

Ballinasloe: Canal Drive, Ballinasloe

Clifden: Beach Road

An Cheathrú Rua: Halla Éinne

Gort: Lough Cutra Quarry, Bunnasrah, Gort

Loughrea: Fairgreen, Courthouse Road

Mountbellew: Black Quarry, Mountbellew

Oughterard: Car Park, Oughterard

Maigh Cuilinn: Behind the bringbanks on Mountain Road

Portumna: Beside bringbanks, Castle Avenue

Tuam: Civic Amenity Site, Athenry Road

Headford: Council Yard beside Mart

Oranmore: Oranmore Community Centre beside GAA Pitch



This service is provided free of charge for the domestic sector only.

Young Environmentalist Awards-- ECO-UNESCO

Galway County Council is supporting the Young Environmentalist Awards. There are 14 projects registered to date from schools in County Galway. The Environmental Award programme recognises and awards young people who raise awareness environmental awareness and improve the Environment.

Environmental Protection Agency Competition - Safeguarding our Environment

Galway County is working in partnership with the EPA to promote the competition with all schools in the County.

The poster features a hand-drawn style illustration of a brick wall background. In the center is a logo with the words "THE Story OF YOUR STUFF" in various colors (green, red, blue, orange). The word "STUFF" is in large, bold, orange letters. Above the "T" in "Story" is a pair of headphones. Below the "y" in "Story" is a smartphone. Below the "f" in "of" is a small battery icon. To the left of the logo are two small, simple line-drawn candies. To the right is a small line-drawn smartphone. Below the logo, the text "EXPLORE. CREATE. MAKE A DIFFERENCE." is written in a black, sans-serif font. Underneath this, in large red letters, is the main call to action: "WIN €500 FOR YOURSELF, €500 FOR YOUR SCHOOL + A CHANCE TO WIN THE CLIMATE TOPIC PRIZE + IRISH LANGUAGE PRIZE!". Below this, in a smaller black font, is the instruction: "USE YOUR CREATIVE TALENTS TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE TO EVERYONE OF SAFEGUARDING IRELAND'S ENVIRONMENT.". To the right of this text is another pair of headphones. At the bottom left, there is a section with the text "ACT NOW AND ENTER!* COMPETITION DEADLINE: MONDAY 07.03.2022". Below this, a small note says: "*Your entry must be submitted by your teacher on your behalf via www.thestoryofyourstuff.ie". At the very bottom, there is a dark footer bar containing links to the EPA website and other environmental resources.

VISIT WWW.THESTORYOFYOURSTUFF.IE
WWW.EPA.IE/IRELANDSENVIRONMENT
WWW.EPA.IE/IRELANDSENVIRONMENT/STATEOFTHEENVIRONMENTREPORT
AND WWW.EPA.IE FOR MORE RESOURCES.

ePA Environmental Protection Agency
IRELAND'S environment
Ríocht na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Biodiversity Report:

Hedgerow Cutting Guidance Document

A bi-lingual hedgerow cutting guidance document entitled “Mechanical hedgerow-cutting guidance for County Galway” will be available in February 2022. This short guidance document deals with the values of hedgerows, hedgerow management including timing of cutting, the shape, level of cut, dealing with trees in hedgerows, machinery, frequency of hedge cutting, record keeping and additional sources of information.

World Wetlands Day 2022

World Wetlands Day is on Wed 2nd Feb 2022. An event is currently being planned to highlight aspects of some of the wetlands in County Galway.

Fire and Major Emergency Services

Loughrea Fire Station: The tender has been accepted for the design of the station and contracts are expected to be finalised in the coming week to appoint the design team. It is anticipated that the Part 8 application will be lodged in March 2022.

Athenry Fire Station: Following the approval of the Athenry/Oranmore Municipal District members of the Part 8 planning permission for the station in Athenry approval has been sought from the Department to proceed to the construction stage.

Mise, Le Meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

21st January 2022