

## SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The Oughterard Local Area Plan is made in accordance with objectives of the Galway County Development Plan 2003-2009 and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act and the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002.

The Plan takes the form of a Written Statement, and accompanying maps. If any conflict or ambiguity arises between what is contained in the written statement and the supporting plans, the written statement will take precedence.

The purpose of the Oughterard Local Area Plan is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and broad land use proposals that will be used to guide development in Oughterard over the plan period 2006 – 2012.

The aim of the Plan is to set out a framework for the future development of the town, which will take place in a coordinated and orderly manner.

In preparing this Plan regard has been given to national and regional trends. In particular, consideration has been given to the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006, the National Spatial Strategy, the White Paper on Rural Development, the BMW Region Development Strategy 2000 – 2006, the Western Regional Guidelines and other DoEHLG publications and guidelines. Within the Regional Planning Guidelines Oughterard is located in zone G – Galway City. Oughterard is identified as having an important role as a satellite of Galway City and it is stressed that Oughterard must grow and continue to function as a service centre.

### 1.2 Strategic Aim of Local Area Plan

The strategic aim of the Plan is to set out a clear framework for the sustainable development of Oughterard. The overall vision is to develop Oughterard as a balanced settlement, promoting residential growth that can be supported by an adequate range of commercial, community and employment facilities. It is important that the character of Oughterard and its natural setting be maintained in order not to lose those very amenities which make it attractive to its inhabitants and regular visitors.

The Local Area Plan sets out policy statements and objectives that respond to specific development issues affecting Oughterard. The zoning provisions are indicated on the Zoning Plan, (See Appendix 4). It is the intention of the Planning Authority that the zoning of particular areas for a particular use shall not in itself exclude other uses in that area provided they are compatible with the dominant use.

The Local Area Plan addresses the existing quality of the central core of Oughterard and identifies opportunities for environmental enhancement of the commercial area.

In general the Local Area Plan is designed to stimulate development and direct it to appropriate locations. It is within the framework of the Plan that public services will be provided and investment decisions made. This Plan should be read in conjunction with relevant policies and objectives of the County Development Plan.



### 1.3 Location & Setting

Oughterard is situated approximately 26km from Galway on the shores of Lough Corrib. The town lies on the main Galway to Clifden Road (N59) and is located at the geographical intersection between green pastureland to the east and a more rugged landscape extending westwards from the town.

Oughterard has an extremely picturesque natural setting at the confluence of the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib with the backdrop of the higher ground to the south and west. The nearest point to the County Galway Gaeltacht is approximately 4 miles to the west of Oughterard.

Oughterard provides an important tourism, educational and service function for a catchment area, which extends into the Connemara region. The residential growth experienced within the town centre in recent years has further strengthened the economic base and made the town a more desirable location in which to live.

### 1.4 Historical Background

Oughterard which in Irish is known as *Úachtar Árd* (the upper high place) is also considered the 'Gateway to Connemara.'

The existence of archaeological sites and monuments such as ringforts, an enclosure, standing stone and Holy Well in Oughterard and its environs provide evidence of settlement in the area over a long period of time.

The castle at Aughnanure, two miles east of the town was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Burkes. By the end of the century the castle had fallen into the hands of the O'Flahertys. After the Cromwellian campaigns the O'Flaherty lands were, in turn, granted to the Martins, a Norman clan and one of the tribes of Galway.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the Martins' enjoyed a situation almost unique in Ireland. Richard Martin (known as Nimble Dick and who lived at Birchall on Lough Corrib) was the largest proprietor in fee simple in the whole of County Galway and his right to hold court and retain all fines meant that his estate (Claremount) was effectively an independent kingdom. The arrangement was all the more unusual in that Nimble Dick was Catholic. It was Dick's grandson Robert Martin (1719-1794) who built the house at Claremount (or Clareville as it is otherwise known).

The Oughterard that we are familiar with today was shaped by the road improvement scheme of the 1820's as designed by the nationally prominent engineer Alexander Nimmo. This strengthened the link between Galway city and Clifden. It would appear that most of the lots around Main Street were developed during this period. Many of the buildings would have been either one or two storey, thatched cottages built alongside the new road. Some of these thatches still remain. Others have had their roof finish replaced with slate but otherwise retain their walls and window openings. Development along Camp Street to the new army barracks took place at a slower pace to that of Main Street before 1840, but it is evident from the First Edition Ordnance Survey that an urban area (The Square) had already taken form by that time.

In 1862 the railway arrived in Oughterard from Galway. The further extension to Clifden did not occur until 1895. The railway station was located in the southern outskirts of Oughterard, directly adjacent to the workhouse and, perhaps unusually, failed to entice development along the Shannapheasteen Road from Main Street. While parts of the original Station building and platform structure still remain, the Galway/Clifden line fell into gradual disuse after the closing of the line in the 1930's.



Oughterard is a unique urban development that relies on a number of factors for its existence. The markets were without doubt important, but so too was the development of the infantry barracks.

There are many buildings in Oughterard which make an important contribution to the character of the town, including the Kilcummin Parish Church, the Courthouse and various other structures of local interest.

A significant historical aspect of the built fabric of Oughterard is not to be found in the town itself, but rather in the woods on the hill to the south of the town: the traditional village of Cregg. While large amounts of this important artefact have been removed, local people recall that significant amounts of the traditional fabric of Cregg village were in place up to twenty years ago. The original settlement pattern can still be determined and an entire stone cottage, including its thatched roof, remains in place. While an in-depth study of the history of this settlement is outside the scope of this review, it is important that the special character of this area be recognised in the making of this Plan.

## 1.5 Oughterard Today

The town of Oughterard is located at a distinctive location in the landscape and an intersection of rich pastureland to the east characterised by limestone bedrock, to the more open and rugged northern Connemara landscape to the west, with blanket bogs covering much of the ground there.

The town is located on the N59 Galway - Clifden Road and was the site of a Railway Station on the Galway - Clifden Railway line. Oughterard was also one of the principle stopping points when steamboats plied the Corrib from Galway City to Cong. Other roads leading into the town include the Glann Road to the northwest and the Shannapheasteen Road linking the town with south Connemara at Costello.

The town core has a linear form with the principle street extending east to west along the N59 and Camp Street extending northwards along the Glann Road to what was once the Ordnance Ground.

The town is situated on the shores of Lough Corrib and the Owenriff River. This Owenriff River which flows through the town, changes from a fast flowing spate river to a gently meandering, slow flowing river. The town's location on the banks of the Owenriff and the shores of Lough Corrib make Oughterard one of the most renowned fresh water angling centres in Ireland. Oughterard's hotels, guesthouses, and pubs cater for the many anglers who come for the Mayfly dapping season in the early summer.

Tourism represents an important economic growth area for the town. Tourist attractions include viewing The Hill of Doon, Aughnanure Castle, Playing golf in Oughterard's 18-hole golf course or cruising the Corrib to Cong or to Inchagoill Island.

Apart from the commercial sector (i.e. shops, restaurants, hotels, etc) which is of a significant scale for a town of its size, the most significant employers in the town are Electronic Concepts Europe Ltd. on the Galway Road, Joyce's carpet factory and Armon, Marketing Consultants off Camp Street.

There are four schools in Oughterard;

- Convent of Mercy, National School, which has approximately 156 students,



- Doire Glinne National School, which has approximately 31 students,
- Oughterard Boys National School, which has approximately 84 students,
- St. Pauls Secondary School, which has approximately 420 students,

Development is occurring in a dispersed fashion, particularly residential development which is taking place to a large extent on the periphery of the principle urban area. This is threatening the consolidation and consequently the sustainable development of Oughterard.

## 1.6 Population Profile of the Area

Oughterard is classified as a town for census purposes and in 2002 it had a population of 1,209 persons.

**Table 1.2: Population and Demographics**

	2002		
	Total	Male	Female
<b>Oughterard Town</b>	1,209	500	609
<b>Oughterard Rural District</b>	600	5984	5616

*Source: Census of Population 2002*

Survey work in November 2005 indicates that approximately 684 residential units are located within the Plan's town boundary. Given that the national average household size is 2.9 persons per household<sup>1</sup>, the 2005 population for Oughterard within the town boundary is estimated as 1984 persons.

This recent dramatic population increase indicates that Oughterard is increasingly taking on a role as a satellite town for Galway City. With the population growing more rapidly than employment sources in the town, alternative employment opportunities need to be explored to make the development of the town more sustainable. This is essential if Oughterard is to avoid taking on a dormitory role.

## 1.7 Galway County Development Plan 2003-2009 and Oughterard Local Area Plan

The County Development Plan 2003-2009 provides an overall strategy on how the county will develop over a six year period. It was prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts and was adopted by elected representatives on behalf of the people of the County.

The Oughterard Local Area Plan will cover the period from 2006 to 2012 from the date of adoption by Galway County Council. The Local Area Plan is a legal document. It provides a framework for the future development of Oughterard. The Planning and Development Acts require that the Local Area Plan for Oughterard is consistent with the County Development Plan. The Local Area Plan contains policies and objectives and all planning applications will be measured against the content of the Plan.

<sup>1</sup>Source : Census 2002: Volume 3 – Household Composition and Family Units (Pg 11)



### **Oughterard and the County Settlement Strategy**

One of the major policy initiatives contained in the County Development Plan 2003-2009 is *County Galway Settlement Strategy*. This aims to achieve balanced spatial development and provides a planning framework for the location of development and population over the six-year life span of the County Development Plan. The strategy identified a hierarchy of settlements for the area surrounding Galway city (the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (G.T.P.S.) Area), Galway West and Galway East. Oughterard has been identified as a settlement centre in the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier of the G.T.P.S. Area Settlement Hierarchy.

Within the period of the County Development Plan 2003-2009, 480 residential units have been allocated to Oughterard, Headford, Claregalway, Moycullen, Barna and Spiddal. Policy 18 in the County Development Plan 2003-2009 allows for a deviation of the allocated population between 30% and 50% and states that regard will also be had to the rate of growth for each settlement. Galway County Council are in the process of reviewing the Settlement Strategy, this Local Area Plan will have to be consistent with any amendments to the Settlement Strategy.

The Oughterard Local Area Plan Boundary provides approximately 93 hectares (230 acres) of undeveloped residential land that could accommodate an increase in population of 7038 persons.

### **1.8 The Oughterard Local Area Plan Boundary**

The Local Area Plan boundary was identified following an analysis of the following:

- Duration of the Local Area Plan for 6 years,
- Location of Oughterard on the 3rd tier of the County Development Plan Settlement Hierarchy,
- Historic settlement pattern and analysis of how the town has developed,
- Extent of developed land,
- Location of existing services,
- Existing public water supply,
- Existing and proposed sewerage network,
- Lands with development potential (within reason).

Development is promoted within the Local Area Plan boundary, notwithstanding where speed limits are outside this boundary. Any development outside the Local Area Plan boundary comes under the provisions set out in the County Development Plan 2003-2009.

## SECTION TWO – CONTEXT

### 2.1 Heritage

The character of Oughterard is defined by its strategic setting in the landscape and its rich build and natural heritage. Monuments such as the standing stone and holy wells in the area provide evidence of human settlement in the area over a long period of time. The stone walls, hedgerows and the river are significant features in the landscape of Oughterard.

The most important and valuable sites are afforded protection under European and National Legislation by way of designation as proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The Owenriff River and its margins, and Lough Corrib itself, are part of Lough Corrib cSAC (this is a fully legally protected site) and is an internationally important site for nature conservation in Ireland. Lough Corrib is also designated as a Special Protection Area and a Proposed Natural Heritage Area. Natural Heritage Areas are heritage sites that were designated for the protection of flora, fauna, habitats and geological sites of national importance. The pNHA site code 2082 (Scoil An Clochair) is a nursery roost for Leisler Bats and is probably the largest such roost in Ireland and indeed in Europe. The wooded areas and interconnecting hedgerows and treelines are important feeding and commuting routes for bats. Special Areas of Conservation are designated for the conservation flora, fauna and habitats of European importance and Special Protection Areas are designated for the conservation of bird species and habitats of European importance<sup>2</sup>.

The National Parks and Wildlife Services under the auspices of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government are 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 DoEHLG. It should be borne in mind that designated sites are continually reviewed by the N.P.W.S and that there may be variation to designated site boundaries during the lifetime of the Plan.

#### Trees and Hedgerows

Oughterard as already stated is located at a transition in terms of landscape and vegetation between the lime-stone based soils to the east and the more acidic peaty soils to the west. This transition is nowhere more marked than on the western end of the town where the Clifden Road exits a lush tree lined valley and emerges into an open rugged landscape which extends westwards to the north Connemara Mountains. The town is relatively low lying and therefore sheltered and this has encouraged the growth of extensive areas of trees and hedgerows. Good examples of tree stands exist particularly around Canrawer East, Lemonfield and Cregg: The latter having very good examples of mature hedgerows. The overall aim of the Plan is to protect existing trees and hedgerows and encourage the planting of additional trees and hedgerows.

#### Stone Walls

Oughterard is well endowed in terms of natural stone boundary walls. These are particularly evident on the Galway approach to the town, in the Cregg, Canrower and Carrowmanagh areas. There is obviously a strong tradition of dry stone wall building in the area which should be encouraged. While it may not be possible to protect the full extent of existing natural stone walls in the Plan area due to the need for road improvements and other developments, those which can be retained, particularly where they are combined with hedgerows, should be retained.

<sup>2</sup> The National Parks and Wildlife Services 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 DoEHLG.



Where boundaries are removed, they should be replaced by boundaries similar to that removed. The continuation of the local tradition of dry stone wall building should be encouraged in new developments including road improvement works.

Under the Landscape Sensitivity Rating in the County Development Plan, Oughterard and its hinterland are classified mostly as class 3 (High sensitivity) and class 4 (Special). Some areas of Oughterard, especially the areas around the Lough Corrib SAC fall into class 5 category (Unique).

### **River/Lake**

The Owenriff River as it flows through Oughterard is an important habitat for Salmon and Trout and is also an important fish migratory corridor. The River is a very dominant and attractive feature, particularly on the Clifden approach. The river supports internationally important population of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, a protected species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive and endangered in every part of its global range. The Owenriff is one of the small numbers of Irish rivers that supports a viable population of the Freshwater Pear Mussel, a long lived species that requires very high water quality and an absence of silt.

The Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), a protected species under EU Habitats Directive Annex II, is seriously endangered in every part of its range throughout the world. The remaining strongholds for the species in Europe are a limited number of rivers in Ireland and Scotland, including the Owenriff. The Owenriff is one of 3 or 4 rivers in Ireland that still has an actively breeding Freshwater Pearl Mussel population, and is one of the most important rivers for the mussel in this country. In most Irish rivers the numbers of adult mussels are too low to allow ongoing reproduction so the populations are functionally extinct.

Currently the town centre like many other towns and villages has to a large extent turned its back on the river. However, from the N59 bridge westwards to the edge of the town, the river banks have been opened up and provide a very attractive setting/backdrop in this area.

From the bridge to the Ordnance Ground, both the Main Street and Camp Street back onto the River. Here an opportunity exists to open up the river bank as well as opening up the undeveloped and underutilised lands to the rear of both streets for future development of the town centre. This would avoid the piecemeal approach which results from the development of individual properties. However it is essential to protect the river, its channel, its banks and water quality when opening up the river bank.

Erosion of the river bank west of the bridge has caused considerable undermining and subsidence in recent years. This has resulted in a loss of some of the attractive aspects of the river valley and associated vegetation and measures to prevent the serious effects of future erosion will have to be considered.

Lough Corrib, a part of the Country's largest and most interesting inland waterway systems, is on Oughterard's doorstep. The lake provides a basis for the development of a wealth of water-based activities, with angling being the biggest attraction.

There are a number of recorded monuments in Oughterard which provide evidence of early settlement in the area. They are afforded special protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment Act), 1994 and are identified in Table 2.1 and Map No. 4.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that in some instances structures & sites and monuments may be afforded dual protection. They may be afforded protection under the Planning Acts as a Protected Structure and also under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. Therefore, it is important to undertake a cross referencing of both the RPS and RMP.



**Table 2.1: Recorded Monuments in Oughterard (Map No. 4).**

Monument No.	Townland	Classification
GA054- 001	Ardvarna	Standing Stone
GA054- 006*	N/A	N/A
GA054- 009	Canrawer West	Enclosure
GA054- 015	Clare	Holy Well
GA054- 031	Fough West	Holy Well
GA054- 056	Ordance Ground	Barrack

Source: Recorded Monuments Archaeological Survey of Ireland

\*Awaiting details from DoEHLG

Table 2.2 below shows the structures that are included in the Record of Protected Structures for County Galway. This record was prepared in conjunction with the making of the County Development Plan 2003-2009 and replaces any previous listings. This record may be amended by the addition of entries as part of the making of the Oughterard Local Area Plan.

**Table 2.2: Buildings on the Record of Protected Structures in Oughterard (Map No.4)**

Reg. No.	Name	Townland	Description
662	Ardvarna	Ardvarna	Detached 3 bay 2 storey house over basement with hipped roof, ashlar limestone facade and wide round headed door case, c1835. Retains some original fittings. Outbuildings at rear. Set within its own grounds
663	Lemonfield	Lemonfield	Entrance gateway comprising of rusticated limestone gate piers and pair of wrought iron gates, c1840. Set facing onto road.
665	O'Fatharta Restaurant	Cregg/Moycul len by)	Terraced 3 bay 2 storey mid Victorian house with steeped roof rendered facade. Simple compo shop front with pilasters and brackets in 1930's style. Street frontage.
666	Kilcummin Parish Churchm Church of Ireland	Fough West	Board of First Fruits style 2 bay single cell church with rendered facade, stone dressings and crow-step battlemented tower, built in 1808. Transepts and chancel with coursed rubble facade and cut stone dressings added by Joseph Welland in 1852. The interior contains a coved plaster ceiling and in the addition an open truss roof. Pulpit and pews, late 19th cent. Various memorial plaques. Stained glass memorial East window dated 1891. Set within enclosed churchyard. Ashlar gate piers and cast iron gates.
667	The Courthouse	Fough West	Detached 7 bay double height courthouse with part basement and recessed entrance bays at both ends, designed by William Caldbeck, c1840. The exterior is rendered, ruled and lined and has limestone dressings including strings, pedimented door cases and entablatures to upper floor window opes. Eaves course altered. The interior altered c1960. Set behind cast iron railing on plinth.
669	Oughterard National School	Canrawer East	Detached 7 bay 2 Storey national school with hipped roof, gabled breakfront and rendered facade, dated 1888. Windows refitted. Set within church grounds.
670	Church of the Immaculate Conception		Large Gothic style cruciform plan church with flanking towers and bell tower, dating from 1829. The rough dash rendered façade has crenellations, finials and pointed opes. Modified internally and externally, stone porch and other extensions added. The interior has an open truss roof and a Harry Clarke 3 light stained glass window, dated 1933. Set strategically at end of street within its own grounds and adjoining national schools.
672	V'soske Carpets	Cregg/Moycullenby)	Railway station consisting 4 bay single storey building adjoining 3 bay 2 storey station masters house and a detached engine shed and water tower, built 1895. Built of rock faced ashlar limestone with brick banding. Remains of platforms. Converted into carpet factory.
673	Clareville	Claremount	Detached 5 bay 2 storey gable ended house with rendered facade, round headed tripartite door case and paired sash windows, built c 1820. The rear elevation has pair of gabled returns. The interior contains an oval open well staircase, early and late 19th cent. Panelled doors and shutters and run moulded cornices, etc. Range of 2 storey outbuildings. Set within gardens which are now divided by public road.



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. Details of Protected Structures are included by the Authority in its Record of Protected Structures. A Record of Protected Structures (RPS) was prepared for County Galway in conjunction with the making of the Galway County Development Plan (2003-2009). It may be amended by the addition or deletion of entries independently of the Plan review process. The inclusion of a structure in the Record of Protected Structures does not preclude appropriate use or development of the structure; however any proposal shall have to consider its impact on the structure and its setting. It is recommended that the bridge in Oughterard is proposed again for consideration in the record of protected structures.

### **Sustainable Development & Conservation**

In line with government policy on sustainable development as well as respecting the status of the Protected Structure, sustainable and traditional materials and finishes should be used for Protected Structures and in general within the town of Oughterard. Features that are part of the architectural heritage of the County testify to the social conditions of a past age. As such, they should be managed in a sustainable manner.

A strategy of minimum intervention should be adopted in relation to proposals to Protected Structures and those of local interest that contribute to local distinctiveness. Where removal of some existing fabric is inevitable, having exhausted all other means of intervention, a comprehensive record should be made in the form of drawings and photographs, and lodged in a nominated repository as a condition of planning permission.

Buildings of local interest should ideally be retained, as in the long term; it is the continued use and adaptation where necessary of such indigenous structures that confer local distinctiveness on the town. New uses should be sought for redundant buildings types, often with landmark qualities, that contribute to the streetscape and landscape of a town.

## **2.2 Oughterard Architectural Conservation Area**

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

In relation to architectural heritage, protection can be defined as a method of managing change in order to ensure that what is of special interest is retained and that its future is secured for the benefit of current and future generations. Protection in relation to a protected structure includes conservation, preservation and improvement compatible with maintaining the character and interest in the structure.

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 protected structures. This could include, for example, a terrace of houses, buildings surrounding a square, or any group of buildings which together give a special character to an area. An ACA may or may not include Protected Structures. ***Planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in an Architectural Conservation Area.***

### **Architectural History**

The earliest significant structure which survives in the area is the Burke family 15<sup>th</sup> century Aughanure Castle, situated to the east of the present town. Claremount (or Clareville) on the west



of the river, was the home of the Martin family who acquired immense lands following the Cromwellian upheavals. Road improvements between Galway and Clifden in the 1820s, directed by the famous Alexander Nimmo, included a triple arch masonry stone bridge.

The townland name of Ordnance Grounds reflects the presence of the British army in Oughterard in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as does the name of Camp Street leading northwards towards it from the core of the town. Main Street continues west from the square; Kilcummin Church of Ireland Church was built along its length on the south side, in 1808, with the Courthouse nearby, built c.1840. The vista to the west along the street was closed in 1829 with the erection of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. The school in its foreground dates from 1888.

The houses which were built along the north side of the street turn their back on the meandering river, which forms a boundary to the long plots. The railway station, built in 1862, failed to attract significant development towards it, situated as it was to the southwest of the town. Adjacent to it was the large area occupied by the Union Workhouse.

### **Description**

The town retains many significant buildings which reflect the circumstances and the period in which they were built, whilst others, such as the Workhouse have disappeared. Other significant buildings such as the railway station have been adapted to other uses.

The Main Street leads in a straight line, lying almost directly east-west, from the expanded junction with Camp Street on the east, to the river crossing to the west. Camp Street, leading to the north, is lined with a variety of single and two houses, dating from the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, with some recent insertions. Several buildings are today significantly below the present level of the road, indicating possibly predating its level.

Oughterard's location as a gateway to tourist based enterprises, dating from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, is reflected in the survival of significant three storey buildings, with rendered exterior decoration. Terraces of two storey houses (some with basement) reflect a coherent approach to development in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century along the north side of Main Street. Interspersed amongst these are single storey houses. The roof pitch of these indicates that they were formerly thatched, but have been slated in more recent years. These buildings do not address the street in a uniform manner. Away from the square, some have small front gardens.

### **Statement of Significance.**

Oughterard's significance lies in its development as a town on the intersection of the limestone based farmland to the south and east with the rugged Connemara landscape to the north and west. Its development was influenced by its location at a river crossing, on a road network which was significantly improved in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It retains buildings of architectural significance built for administrative purposes, such as the Courthouse and for religious needs, such as the two churches. Oughterard's special significance lies in its development in response to the early presence of a landlord's house, Claremount, on the west of the river, and the efforts during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to open up Connemara by the development of the road to Clifden, the bridge spanning the river, and the presence of the army barracks. The street pattern and architectural variety of buildings, both designed and vernacular creates a streetscape which reflects its history. Any development in the future should reflect and respect its established character in terms of plot size, scale, height, material and density.

**Height**

The variety of roof height in Oughterard contributes to its local distinctiveness. It ranges from three storey to predominantly two storey to single storey houses, with the churches providing landmark features.

**Roofs.**

The roof ridge and front facades of the buildings are parallel to the line of the street, and are varied in height around the square. The predominant roof material used is slate, sometimes replaced by less appropriate artificial substitutes. In some instances a visible roof is absent. There are no authentic thatch roofs retained. Steep double pitch roofs indicate a house which was probably thatched in the past. Dormer windows have been inserted into some roofs, to the disadvantage of the appearance of the roofscape of Oughterard. Chimneys are an important feature, which contribute to the character of the streetscape, mostly placed over gable walls and rendered.

**Windows**

In most houses in the town, the windows are vertically aligned. Many buildings have had their original timber sliding sash removed and replaced with outward opening uPVC or timber windows with glazing bars. However, in some mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings, arched or horizontally aligned windows do not contribute positively to the streetscape.

Some former residences have had retail outlets inserted on the ground floor. These date from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present, and are of varying quality, while on the most part, using the vocabulary of the traditional shop front in either timber or plaster.

**External finish**

The predominant external finish is of render on rubble stone construction. It comes in a variety of types, from wet dash renders to smooth renders, ruled and lined to imitate the ashlar stone used in landmark buildings, such as the Courthouse. In the past, these would have been lime based renders which helped the stone structures to evaporate water from the building. Today, the tendency is to replace the softer and subtler finishes with hard cement based renders with modern synthetic paint. The use of colour should be carefully considered to harmonise with the streetscape as a whole, and not attempt to draw attention to a particular building.

**Rear Access**

Access to the rear of buildings is between narrow breaks in terraces, with the rugged landscape visible in the distance. Some rear yards are in use for commercial enterprises.

**Public realm**

The footpaths are generally of mass concrete, with concrete sets used in the square as part of a program of Urban and Village Renewal.

**Maintaining the special interest.**

Recent developments have often failed to match the qualities which make Oughterard unique and special, in either traditional or contemporary architectural language. Consideration of what makes Oughterard unique should be adequately considered in order to ensure the character of Oughterard is not eroded.

The ACA boundary is derived from defining the core of the Town, and identifying its special interest.



## 2.3 Transportation

Oughterard situated on the Galway – Clifden N59 Road. The N59 brings a considerable volume of traffic through the town centre particularly during the peak tourist season. Traffic congestion on the N59 is probably the single biggest transport issue for Oughterard at present. There are no short term plans to provide a by-pass for the town on the N59. However, relief to the current situation could be provided by proposed relief roads to the north and south of Main Street respectively (map 3). These would assist in improving the quality of environment in the centre of the town and in improving traffic circulation and traffic management. It is envisaged that tourist and through traffic would continue to use the Main Street.

Car parking provisions in the town include on-street, the County Council car park at Corribdale and the community centre car park. Additional car parking is required and the proposed inner relief road will provide some capacity for parking in conjunction with the development of lands between Main Street, Camp Street and the river. This would support the extension of the commercial area westwards within the town and provide a more balanced town centre which would benefit the town overall. There are limited publicly owned lands suitably located along the western end of the Main Street to provide additional parking. The Plan recommends the provision of better car parking facilities convenient to the town centre as identified in the Oughterard Traffic Management Plan and on Map No. 3. It is recommended that such proposals are sensitively designed in order to integrate with the surrounding urban fabric. The possibility of underground car parking should also be examined.

Oughterard has a relatively well-developed network of pedestrian paths that service both day-to-day access functions as well as amenity functions. The network of pedestrian walking routes as set out in Map No 2&2a is extensive, linking residential, town centre and amenity areas and includes those pedestrian paths along trafficked routes as well as dedicated pedestrian pathways. The objective in this plan is to protect the existing pedestrian routes and expand the network, including a pedestrian bridge at the western end of the town to benefit the entire community. Protection of routes is particularly important to avoid having established rights of way compromised by new developments.

In terms of public transport there are five scheduled daily bus services (Monday – Friday) provided by Bus Eireann to and from Oughterard.

## 2.4 Water & Drainage

Oughterard is served by the Oughterard Regional Water Supply Scheme. This is a large modern scheme serving the town and environs and extending eastwards to Rosscahill and Moycullen areas. The source of the scheme is Lough Buffy in Rosscahill. The source and treatment works are adequate to serve the needs of Oughterard well beyond the period of this Plan and therefore, no substantial water supply improvements are necessary at this stage.

At present the town wastewater treatment system is at capacity. A Preliminary Report was prepared and this has been forwarded to the DOHELG for approval.

The preliminary report recommends upgrading of a large portion of the existing sewer network in phase 1 and some short extensions to the existing network in phase 2 works. It also recommends provision of a new Waste Water Treatment Works with a capacity of 4,745 P.E.). The proposed Waste Water Treatment Works is to be located on a new greenfield site to the east of the existing site. A 100 metre buffer zone will be required around the perimeter of the proposed WWTW. The new scheme will be in place by 2008.

## 2.5 Energy

The development of sustainable energy infrastructure is identified as a key factor for economic development. The Plan aims to seek a balance between the need to maintain and develop energy infrastructure while having regard to amenities, protected areas and sensitive landscape.

Energy conservation measures and innovative building design that promotes efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources is also promoted. Such proposals must be consistent with other policies and objectives.

## 2.6 Litter and Waste Management

Waste Management in the County is governed by the Connaught Waste Management Plan 2001. Best practice waste management recommends that as much waste as possible is dealt with by reduction, reuse and recycling and with as little as possible remaining to be disposed of.

A segregated waste collection service for dry recyclables and landfill waste is currently provided in the Oughterard Area by a private operator for domestic and commercial waste. Galway County Council is working with the private operators in County Galway to ensure that the segregated collection system is extended to include organic waste.

Oughterard currently has a bring bank which is located at the Corribdale car park. The Plan aims to support the provision of waste infrastructure such as bring banks at locations which will not adversely affect residential amenities. It is also an objective to put in place a system for the management of recycling facilities.

The Council also intends to provide the necessary information for reduction, reuse and recycling of waste from residential and commercial premises including details on waste segregation, waste management, packaging, construction and demolition waste.

Scoil an Chlochair and Scoil Chuimin are involved in the Green Schools programme, an International project designed to encourage and acknowledge whole school action for the environment. In 2005, the schools achieved a Green Flag Award for their achievements in this programme.

Galway County Council runs a Tidy Towns/ Environment Awards scheme on an annual basis. The scheme is independent from the National Tidy Towns Awards and is aimed at community groups throughout the county to further improve and enhance the local environment. Community groups in Oughterard participate in the scheme.

## 2.7 Communication Infrastructure

Oughterard is served by a number of mobile telecommunication operators. The development of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) is considered a key factor in facilitating social and economic progress. This Plan aims to facilitate the development of communication infrastructure in a manner that does not detract from residential amenities, environmental quality and public health.

## 2.8 Town Centre

Oughterard is a town with many appealing characteristics. The urban form of the town has evolved through many periods and contributes to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. This Plan promotes development that is integrated into the urban form and does not detract from the character of the area.

The town core has a linear form with the principle street extending east to west along the N59 and Camp Street extending northwards along the Glann Road to what was once the Ordnance Ground.

The town's character is defined by a combination of street patterns, plot sizes and architectural coherence. The majority of buildings are domestic in scale, predominantly two-storey with a few three-storey and one-storey buildings. Overall, there is a degree of consistency in buildings that line the principal streets. Well-proportioned stone or rendered façades, pitched roofs and painted timber sash windows are the predominant features. Surviving traditional shopfronts are important features and enhance local character. The church at the western end of the town provides a landmark feature.

There is a substantial amount of private open space in the town centre mainly in the form of gardens behind buildings. These backlands offer considerable potential for future development but this must take place in a planned and integrated manner so as to maintain the town's character.

The town centre is the dominant commercial area in the town which is borne out by the concentration of commercial uses in this area. Commercial uses outside of the town centre comprise of tourist accommodation for the most part. While some limited commercial uses may be appropriate to serve local housing/neighbourhood needs the Plan recommends that the town centre continues to function as the principle commercial area in Oughterard. Generally, new shopping proposals shall be located within the Town Centre zone availing of any infill opportunities which could further strengthen the town's economic base. Adequate neighbourhood shopping provision will also be facilitated in appropriate locations.

There is considerable scope for expansion of commercial uses in the town centre area as can be seen on by the Town Centre Mixed Development Zoning. The future commercial expansion of the town centre westwards along Main Street and to the rear of Main Street and Camp Street to serve the growing population is strongly recommended.

The development of secure and reliable electricity transmission infrastructure is recognised as a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment to the area. It is the aim of the planning authority to support the infrastructural renewal and development of electricity networks in the area, including the overhead lines necessary to provide the required networks.

In line with the development of additional commercial uses the upgrading of the streetscape is also recommended. This will be achieved by the provision of new public lighting and paving. Upgrading of key buildings and urban spaces such as the Courthouse and the square will be facilitated. There is also considerable scope for the upgrading of privately owned buildings fronting Main Street and Camp Street.

The transition from town into countryside is marked by a number of suburban housing estates and ribbon development. The town's entrance points need to be strengthened and this is to be achieved through a combination of policies, for example encouraging environmental improvements and facilitating new development which is well designed and consolidates the existing built environment.

The Plan aims to revitalise and enhance the town centre. This is to be achieved through a number of measures including encouraging the renewal of derelict sites, backland areas and street infill in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area. The Plan supports the role of the town centre as the principal commercial area within the town and encourages a mix of commercial and residential development in order to maintain a vibrant town centre. There is approximately 16 hectares (40 acres) zoned Town Centre (Mixed Development)

in the Local Area Plan. Of the total land proposed Town Centre (Mixed Development) approximately 10.5 hectares (26 acres) are undeveloped.

## 2.9 Residential Development

Over the period of the County Development Plan 2003-2009, 480 residential units have been allocated over six settlements. Policy 18 in the County Development Plan 2003-2009 allows for a deviation of the allocated population between 30% and 50% and states that regard will also be had to the rate of growth for each settlement.

Residential development is occurring in a dispersed fashion, which is taking place to a large extent on the periphery of the principle urban area. A number of suburban generated developments and one-off houses has occurred on local roads in recent years.

There are approximately 133 hectares (328 acres) zoned Residential in the plan. Of the total land zoned Residential approximately 93 hectares (230 acres) remain undeveloped.

New residential development will be considered in the context of the existing settlement pattern. The Plan promotes a higher density within the town centre (mixed development) zone, and clustered type housing in remaining residential areas. The Plan also promotes that all new residential developments make provision for managed open space, play space and other informal recreational facilities.

## 2.10 Industry and Enterprise.

A number of businesses operate in Oughterard town, however some of which are of a seasonal nature. The world renowned Dixon Carpet Company operates on the Station Road giving employment to 28 people. Even so Oughterard has a limited employment base and a significant amount of people in Oughterard commute daily to work in Galway City.

In the County Development Plan 2003-2009 Oughterard has been identified as a local service centre. It functions as a commuter satellite of Galway City but has the potential to have a strong local economic base and to develop a degree of self-sufficiency.

In order for Oughterard to become relatively self sustaining employment opportunities must be created within the plan boundary. The County Council recognises that the Plan cannot by itself create employment but that all aspects of the Plan can influence job creation. Hence it is imperative that industrial and enterprise development is accommodated within the plan boundary. Approximately 12 hectares (29 acres) of land have been designated for Enterprise and Industry in the Plan. Of the total Enterprise/ Industry zoning approximately 10 hectares (24.5 acres) are undeveloped.

## 2.11 Tourism

Oughterard is renowned for tourism and it ranks as the town's biggest industry. This can be attributed to the attractiveness of the town's location, setting and natural attributes such as the landscape, river and the lake. These natural features are complemented by the Golf Course, Aughnanure Castle and the many hotels, restaurants and pubs etc, in the town.

Recent tourism trends in Ireland indicate that tourism is becoming more specialised. In terms of tourist activities hill walking/hiking is the most popular with 31% of all visitors engaged in this

activity. This was followed by cycling, angling, equestrian, sailing and cruising. Oughterard is in a position to provide all of these activities virtually on its doorstep<sup>4</sup>.

Oughterard and its environs are noted for excellent salmon and trout angling on the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib. The Lough Corrib Development Plan compiled by the Western Regional Fisheries Board sets future direction for development of the lake as a predominantly salmonid (salmon and trout) fishery. Where this has been shown to conflict in part with other water based activities, river and lake based developments should take account of this.

Hill walking/hiking is also an important tourist attraction, particularly in the Maumturk Mountains and the Twelve Pins to the northwest of the town. A hillwalking guide service for groups based in the town would help in this regard. As a further walking route, it is proposed that section of the former Galway – Clifden railway line that lies within the town boundary be developed in the context of a future Galway-Clifden walking route.

The Plan encourages and facilitates the sustainable growth of the tourism industry in Oughterard. The importance of protecting environmental assets including built, natural and cultural heritage is recognised as these are the cornerstone of the tourism product. Accordingly the Plan aims to realise the tourism potential of Oughterard in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner. There is no land zoned specifically for tourism development within the plan boundary area.

## 2.12 Education and Community Facilities

There are four schools in Oughterard; the Oughterard boys primary school (at Carrowmanagh), the Oughterard girls primary school (beside the convent), Doire Glinne National School and St. Paul's Secondary School (at Carrowmanagh). In October 2005 the boy's primary school has 84 pupils. The girls Primary school has 156 pupils. The Irish school has 31 students. The Secondary School is co-educational and has approximately 420 students.

Currently there is a traffic congestion problem created by school related traffic in the Carrowmanagh area. The provision in this Plan is to construct a relief road which should alleviate the situation in the long term. At present traffic problems in Carrowmanagh are principally associated with inadequate road width, lack of parking facilities compounded by the fact that the majority of school traffic is approaching the school from the same direction and therefore has to leave by the same route.

The Corribdale GAA grounds are the only formal playing pitch outside of school grounds within the Plan area. This pitch is surrounded by a high quality natural environment including mature trees.

The provision of a children's playground in Corribdale is recommended. This is a high profile location for such playground facilities, centrally located and accessible to both residents and visitors. The provision of playgrounds within and close to residential areas is also recommended in conjunction with the development of open space areas.

The present community centre is well located in the town centre where it is accessible to the town's population. While this facility will continue to serve the towns needs in terms of indoor recreation, smaller scale community meeting rooms should be provided in conjunction with the development of new residential areas outside of the town centre. Meeting room facilities are

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<sup>4</sup> Oughterardtourism.com



particularly important to serve the local needs of those members of the community including the elderly whose needs are greatest and who do not have ready access to the town centre.

The town's library is provided in the Courthouse and while the building is centrally located its overall quality needs to be improved for reasons of heritage and conservation as well as function. Other community facilities include a gym, Post office, Tourism office, Garda station and a health centre. There are several community groups including Oughterard Community Council, Oughterard Show Committee, Clann-Family Resource Centre and many other Residents groups and organisations. A monthly community newsletter is made available locally providing an excellent community information service. Approximately 21 hectares (51 acres) of land have been designated for Education and Community Facilities in the Plan. Of the total land zoned Education and Community Facilities approximately 13 hectares (33 acres) are undeveloped.

### **2.13 Recreation and Amenity**

Oughterard is well located in terms of natural amenities. It is located beside the River Owenriff and Lough Corrib both of which provide recreational facilities for locals and tourists alike.

The many pedestrian routes within the town boundary and particularly in the Cregg area and along the banks of the river contribute to the town's recreational facilities as well as the use of the river and lake in their own right. The area adjoining the Clifden road west of the bridge known as the 'Shrubbery' provides an extremely pleasant approach to the town as well as a park for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

The Plan aims to improve the range of amenity pathways throughout Oughterard. The Urban Design Framework includes a specific objective to develop an amenity walk alongside the river banks. Approximately 18 hectares (44 acres) of land have been designated for Recreation and Amenity in the Plan. Of the total land zoned Recreation and Amenity zoning approximately 15 hectares (38 acres) are undeveloped.

### **2.14 Overview and Conclusions**

Oughterard is an attractive town and ideally placed for future growth and development. It provides a good range of services to its surrounding hinterland and should be planned and developed in a fashion to strengthen these assets and act as a focal point for the strengthening of the rural community in this area.

The Plan aims to enhance the built environment of the town through renovation and new development. The Main Street will remain the primary focus of economic activity. The town centre will be targeted as the prime commercial area. The area will provide for a mix of uses, including retail, residential and commercial thus creating an environment where people live and work. Further employment opportunities will have to be created through local/rural enterprise developments. The zoning of adequate lands and the allocation of appropriate densities should make it an attractive and viable alternative to the proliferation of one-off housing in the area. The policies and objectives outlined in this Plan are formulated to promote this.

In addition the Plan seeks to make the best possible use of its natural resources for the community and tourists alike.

## SECTION THREE – POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

### 3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the policies and objectives in relation to the future development of Oughterard. They support policies and objectives outlined in the County Development Plan 2003-2009. Policies and objectives are categorised, commencing with those relating to heritage then infrastructure and facilities to support development, it concludes with those related to the development of different land uses.

- 3.2 Natural Heritage
- 3.3 Architectural Heritage & Conservation
- 3.4 Archaeological Heritage
- 3.5 Transportation
- 3.6 Water & Drainage
- 3.7 Communication Infrastructure
- 3.8 Litter and Waste Management
- 3.9 Energy
- 3.10 Town Centre
- 3.11 Residential
- 3.12 Tourism
- 3.13 Education and Community Facilities
- 3.14 Recreation and Amenity

Section Three is to be read in conjunction with accompanying maps (Appendix 5), Section Four Urban Design Framework and Section Five Development Control Standards. Where policy is not provided the Planning Authority shall refer to the County Development Plan.

### 3.2 Natural Heritage

Oughterard's natural heritage is a unique and special resource. It is an aim of the council to facilitate the maintenance, preservation and protection of the natural heritage.

#### **Policies**

- 3.2.1 Manage, protect and enhance Oughterard's natural heritage where possible.
- 3.2.2 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 Plan area. The natural heritage of the area includes a variety of diverse habitats including wetlands, lakes, rivers, woodland, trees / groups of trees, stone walls, hedgerows and associated wildlife.
- 3.2.3 Protect and conserve the habitats and species that have been identified under Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive, and species that are listed under the Wildlife Acts, 1976-2000, and on Annex 11 and V of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive.
- 3.2.4 Protect the internationally important population of Freshwater Pearl Mussel and its habitat, including water quality, and seek to prevent siltation and pollution of the river.
- 3.2.5 Protect and conserve ecological networks and prevent loss and fragmentation of ecological corridors where possible. While at the same time recognising the importance of the wider ecological links outside of the plan area.

- 3.2.6 Protect and conserve geological and geomorphological systems, sites and features from inappropriate development that would detract from their heritage value and interpretation.
- 3.2.7 Promote greater habitat and species biodiversity through the appropriate planting of trees and shrubs native to the Oughterard area.
- 3.2.8 Retain and properly protect individual trees, groups of trees, hedgerows, stone walls and other associated features such as stream and wetlands, where possible.
- 3.2.9 Promote the sensitive management and maintenance of hedgerows and stonewalls.
- 3.2.10 Encourage the creation, development and maintenance of green corridors, green bridges, animal underpasses, eco-ducts and culverts where possible.
- 3.2.11 Encourage the creation, development and maintenance of green corridors where possible.
- 3.2.12 Support National Parks and Wildlife Service in the management, protection, conservation and enhancement of designated sites, natural heritage and biodiversity of the Plan area.
- 3.2.13 Encourage the appreciation and knowledge of the natural, built and cultural heritage of Oughterard and its environs.
- 3.2.14 Protect bats and their roosts, by maintaining woodland, hedgerows and treelines that serve as feeding areas, flight paths and commuting routes. Seek advice of bat experts in relation to conservation, restoration and demolition of buildings and other structures (eg. Bridges) that may be used as roost sites.
- 3.2.15 Seek to protect bats and their roosts<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.2.16 Consult with the NPWS of DoEHLG in relation to any proposed developments in or near designated sites’.
- 3.2.17 Require a landscaping plan which are produced for developments near water-bodies to be submitted to the Western Regional Fisheries Board and the National Parks and Wildlife Services and ensure that such landscaping plans do not include alien species.
- 3.2.18 Prevent the spread of invasive alien species.

### Objectives

- H1** Provide guidance to the community in the implementation of a heritage awareness programme.
- H2** Ensure there is greater habitat and species diversity through the appropriate planting of trees, shrubs and hedgerow indigenous to the Oughterard area in public and private places.
- H3** Protect designated sites (cSACs, SPAs, NHAs) on Map 4, and any future sites designated in the life of the plan, and other important biodiversity areas’.
- H4** Seek to retain individual trees and groups of trees, hedgerows and stone walls which add to the local character of the area and are important for wildlife, particularly bats.
- H5** Promote greater awareness of the natural heritage and natural heritage designations in Oughterard.
- H6** Seek to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes.
- H7** Require an in-depth ecological assessment to be carried out in or near areas designated as cSAC, SPA, pNHA.
- H8** Work with interested and local bodies in providing a riverside walk and associated ancillary development in the study area as indicated on Map 3.
- H9** Seek to undertake a habitat mapping project for the plan area and to take cognisance of any relevant findings from this project.
- H10** Tree felling, hedgerow maintenance and vegetation clearance will be restricted to 1<sup>st</sup> September to 28<sup>th</sup> February.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Protected under the Wildlife Acts, 1976 – 2000 and the Habitats Directive (Annex IV)

<sup>6</sup> Bird nesting season is from 1<sup>st</sup> March – 31<sup>st</sup> August. Under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 it is an offence for a person to cut, grub, burn or otherwise destroy, during the period beginning on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March and ending on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of August in any year, any vegetation growing on any land not then cultivated.



- H11** Facilitate the development of a biodiversity action plan for Oughterard to include the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib.

### 3.3 Architectural Heritage & Conservation

The Architectural Heritage of Oughterard is a unique resource. It is the Council's aim to conserve and enhance Oughterard's architectural heritage.

#### Policies

- 3.3.1 Protect structures included and proposed for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, together with the integrity of their character and setting.
- 3.3.2 Implement the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in relation to Architectural Heritage, having particular regard to the Architectural Conservation Area (See Map 4).
- 3.3.3 Prohibit developments which would destroy or damage, or cause inappropriate change to protected structures.
- 3.3.4 Consult with the Heritage Division of the DoEHLG in relation to proposed developments affecting Protected Structures.
- 3.3.5 Ensure that any interventions to Protected Structures are undertaken in accordance with best conservation practice and use sustainable and appropriate materials.
- 3.3.6 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.
- 3.3.7 Protect, conserve and enhance the essential character of the ACA through the control of the design, location and layout of new properties or the alteration or extension of existing ones.
- 3.3.8 Protect existing street patterns, spaces and relationships which contribute to the setting of the ACA.
- 3.3.9 Require planning applications for development in Oughterard's Architectural Conservation Area to submit drawings showing the proposed buildings/works in the context of their setting or otherwise demonstrate the impact of the development on the area.
- 3.3.10 Require proposals for development outside the ACA but which would affect its setting or views or both to have respect for its character and appearance.
- 3.3.11 Encourage new works that contribute to the architectural and historic character of the area, its present and future life.
- 3.3.12 Respect the character of existing buildings, important views and spaces and the historic settlement pattern in terms of scale, height, mass, grouping, form, siting, density, design, materials, colour and function.
- 3.3.13 All conservation work should be executed in accordance with accepted national and international conservation principles.
- 3.3.14 Ensure that the proposed use of the building remains fully compatible with the principles of conservation.
- 3.3.15 Ensure the conservation and retention of traditional features and building elements such as shop fronts, windows, doors and door cases. Where replacements are necessary, ensure that they respect the original character of the building or setting in which they are situated.
- 3.3.16 Avoid unnecessary building demolition, foster the development of conservation skills and maintain the contribution of old buildings to the character of the area.
- 3.3.17 Respect built environment features which add to the character of the town

### Objectives

- AH1** Protect the streetscape and setting of the Architectural Conservation Area by requiring any new development to have regard for the character of the area.
- AH2** Adopt a strategy of minimum intervention in relation to proposals concerning protected structures and those of local interest that contribute to local distinctiveness.
- AH3** Protect structures included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), identified in Table 2.2 and Map 4.
- AH4** 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.
- AH5** Proposals for intervention in relation to protected structures or proposed protected structures shall have regard to the following documents: Conservation Guidelines published by the DoEHLG, the Council's *Architectural Survey and Assessment: Best Practice Guide* and the *Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004)* and any subsequent Guidelines, Acts, Directives or Policies which may be issued during the lifetime of the Plan.
- AH6** 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.
- AH7** Require residential developments to reflect Oughterard's built, natural or cultural heritage by the use of local place names and to incorporate townland names from the locality as far as possible.
- AH8** Promote an understanding and appreciation of Oughterard's architectural heritage.
- AH9** Require any proposed development that may occur in Cregg Wood to undertake a full tree survey.

### 3.4 Archaeological Heritage

The Council will ensure the protection of Oughterard's archaeological sites and monuments through the following policies and objectives.

#### Policies

- 3.4.1 Support the conservation and maintenance of Archaeological sites and monuments, 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 discouraged.
- 3.4.2 Implement the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in relation to Archaeological Heritage and have regard to the publication 'Archaeology & Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers' and any subsequent support documents prepared in the lifetime of this Plan.
- 3.4.3 Protect and preserve archaeological sites which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
- 3.4.4 Prohibit developments which would destroy or damage, or cause inappropriate change to protected sites / monuments and structures.
- 3.4.5 Consult with the Heritage Division of the DoEHLG in relation to proposed developments that have the potential to affect Recorded Sites and Monuments.

#### Objectives

- AY1** Protect sites and monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) identified in Table 2.1 and Map 4.
- AY2** All planning applications for new development, redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment, restoration within close proximity to the recorded monuments shall take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological mitigation.

- AY3** Seek to increase a greater awareness and knowledge of the archaeological heritage of Oughterard.

### 3.5 Transportation

An efficient transport system is essential for the sustainable development of a town. The Council aims to provide a safe and efficient transport system and a quality road infrastructure.

#### Policies

- 3.5.1 Facilitate improved transport links serving Oughterard.
- 3.5.2 Facilitate greater ease of traffic movement through, within and around the town without compromising the consolidation of the town centre.
- 3.5.3 Facilitate movement of people and goods into, through and out of Oughterard at a safe pace.
- 3.5.4 Improve traffic management through:
- Improving traffic circulation,
  - Developing public parking facilities,
  - Providing loading and unloading facilities,
  - Improving road signage,
  - Other measures deemed necessary by safety audits will be considered.
- 3.5.5 Prohibit development on lands which are reserved for the proposed relief road's and there associated buffer's and where development would affect the route, line, level or layout of any proposed new roadway or the improvement, widening, realignment of an existing roadway. This policy does not prevent a developer from constructing a section of the road in agreement with Galway County Council and its specifications.
- 3.5.6 Require developers / landowners to provide for adequate access to back land areas, as indicated on Map 3, in order to facilitate the efficient development of these areas.
- 3.5.7 Improve entrance points to Oughterard through road improvements, appropriate landscaping, maintenance of stone walls, hedgerows and grass verges, where resources permit.
- 3.5.8 Carry out improvements on the existing road system to relieve congestion including road widening, improved road carrying capacity, and reduced traffic hazard, the provision and improvement of parking areas, provision of new footpaths, maintenance of existing footpaths, as well as traffic management measures, subject to available finances and resources.
- 3.5.9 Co-operate with transport providers and community groups in the improvement of the public transport system, the creation of an integrated transport network and the provision of a bus stop and bus shelter.
- 3.5.10 Expand the town core in a consolidated manner through the creation of a new street to the North of the existing Main Street.
- 3.5.11 Facilitate walking and cycling as an alternative to the car and as a more convenient, popular and safe method of transport, through the designation, where feasible, of walkways and cycle routes linking town centre, residential, community facility and transport nodes. See Urban Design Framework (Map 2&2a)
- 3.5.12 Ensure all new developments are properly located in terms of traffic safety.
- 3.5.13 Provide adequate facilities for people with special mobility needs to create a safe and accessible environment by providing parking facilities on ground floor level, tactile crossing points, audio facilities on traffic lights and ramped kerbs.
- 3.5.14 Ensure all new developments are adequately served by car parking, disabled parking and cycling facilities.
- 3.5.15 Provide for an expanded pedestrian network along acknowledged desire lines.
- 3.5.16 Link residential and amenity areas with the town centre by means of an integrated transport network.

- 3.5.17 Promote and facilitate greater ease of traffic movement and safe routes to schools in partnership with the local schools.
- 3.5.18 Ensure that schools have safe drop off / collection facilities for pedestrians, vehicles and cyclists and adequate and appropriately located staff parking.
- 3.5.19 Encourage new developments to use existing access junctions which enter onto major traffic routes, and indicative access objectives identified in the Urban Design Framework (Map 2&2a) rather than allowing a proliferation of new individual vehicular access points.
- 3.5.20 Monitor parking requirement in the town and introduce new or amended measures to effectively control parking in the town where required.
- 3.5.21 Ensure, where possible, that adequate off-street parking and adequate 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. Underground car parking will be considered in the town centre zone, where it would not conflict with residential amenity, geological or archaeological sensitivities or traffic safety. Where underground parking cannot be provided for site specific planning reasons, it shall be provided by payment of a levy to the County Council for such provision off site. Requirements for car parking are contained in Section 5.8.1 of this Plan.
- 3.5.22 Encourage new development to access land through existing avenues and roads where appropriate.
- 3.5.23 Encourage any new access road facilitating the proposed new sewage plan to be linked to the existing Pier Road if appropriate.
- 3.5.24 Encourage the provision of safe cycle ways and parking facilities for bicycles in Oughterard, where appropriate.

#### **Objectives**

- T1** Draft a Traffic Management Plan for Oughterard.
- T2** Improve the quality of life for residents of Glann Road and Camp Street in the context of the Draft Management Plan.
- T3** Improve road/pedestrian signage.
- T4** Improve car parking management within the town centre.
- T5** Facilitate and reserve lands for the development of public car-parking facilities to serve the town centre. (See Map 3)
- T6** Provide disabled car parking facilities at appropriate locations throughout the town and ensure that all new developments have adequate parking provision for the disabled.
- T7** Introduce parking restrictions along Bridge Street, Main Street, Station Road, Camp Street, Cregg Close, Porter Lane and the Pier Road.
- T8** Introduce residential parking permits and associated signage for the town.
- T9** Upgrade and enlarge parking facilities for the schools at Carrowmanagh.
- T10** Develop paving, soft landscaping and comprehensive signage for walking routes around the town, including the Owenriff Way, Old Bog Road, Anglers Walk and the Shrubbery.
- T11** Provide rear road access to the secondary school at Carrowmanagh subject to completion of an action area plan for undeveloped lands west of the school site (see Urban Design Framework).
- T12** Seek to provide loading/unloading bay in the town centre especially on Main Street at Market Square.
- T13** Reserve access points for the future development of back lands (See Urban Design Framework).
- T14** Reserve and construct a relief road linking Carrowmanagh to the Glann Road. Prohibit development which would encroach on this development and its associated buffer.
- T15** Reserve proposed route (inner relief road to the north of Main Street linking Camp Street to the Western Bridge) to facilitate the creation of a new street, car park and amenity area adjacent to the town centre. Prohibit development which would encroach on this development and its associated buffer.

- T16 Upgrade and improve bridge at western end of the town.
- T17 Reserve proposed outer relief road to the south of Main Street as indicated on Map No. 3 and prohibit development which would encroach on this development and its associated buffer.
- T18 Reserve proposed outer relief road from upper Camp Street eastwards to the N59 as indicated on Map No.3 and prohibit development which would encroach on this development and its associated buffer.
- T19 Facilitate a road network through potential development lands to allow for vehicle and public transport to access new development (see Urban Design Framework).
- T20 Facilitate the development of bus shelter in the town centre.
- T21 Improve culverts and all roadside drainage, maintain and renew pavements, widen and improve existing roads, improve road signage and facilitate the provision of new roads within Oughterard, as the need arises and as resources permit.
- T22 Improve and maintain existing footpaths. Options regarding the extension of footpaths will be investigated.
- T23 Require developers to bear the cost of improvement to junctions, road widening and the provision of footpaths in association with public lighting requirements.
- T24 Construct a pedestrian bridge, with cycle lane, across the Owenriff River to link Main St. with the Carrowmanagh Road.
- T25 Construct paving at identified crossing points to allow improved access for the mobility impaired.
- T26 Upgrade existing and develop new pedestrian facilities with particular regard to the needs of the mobility impaired.
- T27 Facilitate the provision of a bus shelter and bus drop off/pick up point.

### 3.6 Water & Drainage

In order to facilitate the sustainable growth of Oughterard, adequate sewerage and water networks need to be in place. It is an aim of the Council to ensure the water and wastewater infrastructure has sufficient capacity to cater for the growth of Oughterard.

#### Policies

- 3.6.1 Provide improvements to the water and wastewater facilities to assist the growth of development, and to ensure that this is undertaken in a sustainable manner in accordance with EU policies and directives.
- 3.6.2 Provide a surface water collection system to improve drainage and alleviate flooding.
- 3.6.3 Ensure the proper disposal of foul effluent from all future developments within the Plan area boundary through the development control process.
- 3.6.4 Ensure that grit traps are provided and properly maintained on all surface water outfalls to the Owen Riff River and ensure that appropriate silt control measures are put in place for all new developments, particularly at construction stage, so as to protect the natural habitat of the fresh water pearl mussel.
- 3.6.5 Protect and maintain the extent, quality and connectivity of surface waters and wetlands.
- 3.6.6 Encourage only as much development, both in terms of quantity and type of development as can be provided for, based on the utility services available.
- 3.6.7 Prohibit any proposed development which would pose an unacceptable threat to the capacity of water, wastewater and surface water infrastructure.
- 3.6.8 Ensure future developments within the plan boundary make provision for connection to the Municipal Wastewater Treatment System.
- 3.6.9 Restrict and discourage the proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants in order to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution and to ensure protection of the aquifer (in particular the areas with a rating of high vulnerability). Where these installations are permissible ensure compliance with the relevant EPA wastewater treatment manuals.



- 3.6.10 Ensure that all dwellings have an appropriate wastewater treatment system which is correctly installed and maintained.
- 3.6.10 Ensure that the provision of water and sewerage facilities is undertaken in accordance with EU policies and directives.
- 3.6.11 Maintain an adequate surface water drainage system throughout the Plan area.
- 3.6.12 Intensify public awareness of water quality issues and the measures required to protect natural water bodies and implement a monitoring programme to assess the impact of development on these areas.
- 3.6.13 Ensure that industrial facilities and commercial premises discharging waste water are operating within the parameters of a wastewater discharge licence.
- 3.6.14 Ensure the protection of the aquifer (with a rating of high vulnerability and medium vulnerability) from the risk of environmental pollution.
- 3.6.15 Ensure that development is not itself subject to inappropriate risk of flooding and ensure that it would not cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations.

**Objectives**

- W1** Ensure that proprietary treatment plants serving all future development accord with the Local Authority's requirements.
- W2** Provide a new/upgraded wastewater collection and treatment system with tertiary treatment facilities (nutrient removal).
- W3** Restrict development that does not connect to the public sewer in order to consolidate the town structure and to control further ribbon development along approach roads into Oughterard.
- W4** Require all relevant applications, which are located in close proximity to a watercourse, to submit measures to reduce and prevent pollution to a watercourse, both during construction and after completion for the scheme.
- W5** Protect a buffer zone around the perimeter of the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Works boundary from inappropriate development in the interest of public health (See Map 1).
- W6** Have regard to any flood plain details including maps and data that may be issued by the Office of Public Works during the lifetime of this Plan.

### 3.7 Communication Infrastructure

**Policies**

- 3.7.1 Facilitate Information Communication Technologies including the development of broadband infrastructure, for example through the County & Group Broadband Scheme.
- 3.7.2 Achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of telecommunications services in the interests of social and economic progress and sustaining residential amenities, environmental quality and public health.
- 3.7.3 Assist the County Broadband Forum in improving the availability of information on communication technologies.

**Objectives**

- CI 1** The location of masts close to schools and residential areas will be discouraged.

### 3.8 Litter & Waste Management

**Policies**

- 3.8.1 Develop Oughterard as a minimum waste community.

- 3.8.2 Inform and educate the community on new methods relating to waste disposal and management through reduction, re-use, recycling and composting.
- 3.8.3 Implement the Connaught Waste Management Plan 2001 and any subsequent revision, 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.
- 3.8.4 Ensure that new developments provide adequate storage facilities for segregated waste. Such facilities should be visually unobtrusive.
- 3.8.5 Provide infrastructure to manage solid waste in an environmentally sustainable manner.
- 3.8.6 Improve the range of waste segregation facilities such as bring banks at suitable locations.
- 3.8.7 Maintain Oughterard's image as a clean environmentally friendly town.
- 3.8.8 Support anti-litter and clean up activities including Tidy Town and National Spring Clean events.

#### **Objectives**

- LW1** Provide information on reduction, reuse, recycling and collection methods for all types of waste.
- LW2** Ensure that waste infrastructure is developed to serve the area.
- LW3** Facilitate the provision of waste facilities for the collection and recycling of waste including civic amenity, recycling centres and bring banks in locations, which will have adequate supervision but not adversely affect residential amenities.
- LW4** Facilitate the provisions of separate collection systems for segregated domestic waste.
- LW5** Continue to develop the Green Schools Program.

### **3.9 Energy**

The development of sustainable energy infrastructure is a key factor for economic development. The Plan aims to seek a balance between the need to maintain and develop energy infrastructure while having regard to amenities, protected areas and sensitive landscape.

#### **Policies**

- 3.9.1 Support the renewal and development of energy infrastructure, having regard to residential amenities and landscape sensitivities.
- 3.9.2 Promote energy conservation measures and facilitate innovative building design that promotes efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources.
- 3.9.3 Encourage the development of low energy buildings in Oughterard.

#### **Objectives**

- E1** Provide information on cost-effective energy conservation measures and renewable energy technologies, including the use of passive solar design principals, solar panels and geothermal heat pumps.

### **3.10 Town Centre**

It is an aim of the Council to enhance the town centre through the promotion of appropriate infill development and expansion of the centre having regard to the town vernacular, location and heritage.

#### **Policies**

- 3.10.1 Enhance the town centre through the promotion of appropriate infill development and expansion of the centre having regard to the town vernacular, location and heritage.

- 3.10.2 Re-orientate the town centre aspect to give greater emphasis to the river.
- 3.10.3 Improve the overall streetscape/physical environment in the town centre.
- 3.10.4 Provide for the expansion of commercial development westwards along Main Street.
- 3.10.5 Promote the revitalisation of the town centre in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of its surrounds through:
  - Promoting the redevelopment of derelict, obsolete and brownfield sites,
  - Encouraging the strengthening of the streetscape and continuity of the urban grain<sup>7</sup>,
  - Encouraging the development of backlands where proposals contribute to and enhance the character of the town. Only proposals that are part of an Action Plan for a specific area will be considered,
  - Exercising Council powers under the Derelict Sites Act.
- 3.10.6 Development of individual narrow back gardens will be discouraged. Only proposals for development on combined back gardens accompanied by an Area Action Plan will be considered.
- 3.10.7 Support the role of the town centre as the principle commercial area within the town.
- 3.10.8 Ensure that there is a sufficient mix of commercial and residential development within the Town Centre (Mixed Development) zone in the interest of commercial and residential vitality. Exclusively residential proposals will not normally be permitted.
- 3.10.9 Encourage a mix of uses in the town centre including living over the shop in order to maintain a vibrant town centre.
- 3.10.10 Facilitate and encourage the appropriate provision of retail facilities that service local needs and to ensure that these facilities are properly located in terms of accessibility and traffic safety as well as being in keeping with the character and scale of the area.
- 3.10.11 Ensure that existing buildings which contribute to the character of the area are appropriately refurbished rather than demolished. Consideration may only be given to demolition where it is demonstrated that a proposal is structurally unsound or there is an otherwise sustainable valid reason for its removal.
- 3.10.12 Protect and enhance the Architectural Conservation Area (See Map 4) and archaeological sites and monuments.
- 3.10.13 Ensure that new development and redevelopment respects and complements the existing character of an area in terms of scale, height, layout, grouping, function, design, materials and function.
- 3.10.14 Enhance the town centre through the creation of a new street to the north of the existing streetscape, linking Camp Street to the Western Bridge. (See urban design framework map 2&2a).
- 3.10.15 When considering courtyard or car park developments surrounded by buildings, require front and rear facades to be treated with equal prominence and design aesthetics.
- 3.10.16 Encourage strong frontages onto the main thoroughfares creating definite building lines and continuity of town structure.
- 3.10.17 Examine all applications for retail development in the context of the 'Retail Planning Guidelines' by the DoEHLG. This will be augmented by the County Retail Strategy which the Council is preparing.
- 3.10.18 Encourage new retail development to locate within the existing town core.
- 3.10.19 Facilitate the improvement of the overall streetscape / physical environment, for example through encouraging underground wiring; appropriate street furniture and environmental improvements.
- 3.10.20 Ensure that all new developments provide adequate parking facilities and encourage the provision of underground car parking where appropriate.
- 3.10.21 Ensure that new commercial development complements the existing town centre in terms of commercial viability and continued prosperity.

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<sup>7</sup> Urban grain is determined by the pattern of plot divisions, building form and building line.

- 3.10.22 Facilitate commercial development within the town centre or at appropriately zoned locations if it is demonstrated that there are no suitable town centre sites.
- 3.10.23 Encourage commercial development and services for tourists to locate within the town centre.

**Objectives**

- TC1** Promote in-fill development, while maintaining the building line, throughout the Plan area thereby consolidating the town structure and to create a sense of enclosure along Oughterard's main thoroughfare in order to strengthen the streetscape in the town.
- TC2** Take cognisance of the principles in the Urban Design Framework outlined in Section 4.
- TC3** Provide where funds permit, environmental improvements, improved accessibility and car parking provision.
- TC4** Require Action Plans for development of backlands and in the area to the north of Main Street.
- TC5** Require developers to take cognisance of the natural features that define the character of site in the context of its surrounding environment (including topography, aspect, foliage, geological features).
- TC6** Require developers to make appropriate provision for recreation and amenity infrastructure equal to the needs of the development and as an integral element of their proposals. A special development contribution may be required to enable the development of appropriate amenity areas off site under powers set out in the Development Contribution Scheme.
- TC7** Facilitate the redevelopment of buildings in a poor state of repair or derelict so as to contribute positively to the Oughterard streetscape.
- TC8** Provide new public lighting, pavement enhancement and under grounding of wires.

### 3.11 Residential

It is an aim of the Council to facilitate the development of housing to meet expected needs that will arise in the town while at the same time maintaining the character of the area.

**Policies**

- 3.11.1 Encourage development of an appropriate density, scale and population that reflects the status of Oughterard on the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier of the G.T.P.S. Area Settlement Hierarchy.
- 3.11.2 Support the development of a broad range of house types and social/affordable housing at appropriate locations.
- 3.11.3 Ensure that appropriate units are developed in the housing market for the elderly, people with disabilities and other special needs as close as practically possible to the town centre.
- 3.11.4 Encourage higher residential densities within the town centre and lower residential densities in the residential zones outside the town centre, in the interests of sustainable urban development.
- 3.11.5 Encourage strong frontages onto the main thoroughfares creating definite building lines and continuity of the town structure.
- 3.11.6 Maintain the character of the area outside the town centre by encouraging residential development to reflect Galway County Council's Housing Design Guidelines for Clustered Housing and any other such guidelines as may be published by the Council.
- 3.11.7 Require that the design of housing layouts include the use of clusters and over looked open spaces. Layouts should also consider play space, other informal recreational facilities as well as road access to ensure future linkage to backland development land where it exists.
- 3.11.8 Co-ordinate the provision of road, cycle and pedestrian networks and other services to new residential areas.

- 3.11.9 Ensure that new residential developments make provision for managed open space, play space and other informal recreational facilities.
- 3.11.10 Until such time as the new sewerage scheme becomes operational, developments incorporating the maximum density are unlikely to be considered except in exceptional circumstances and where the Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposal complies with current standards relating to the disposal of effluent.
- 3.11.11 Create where possible, linked natural corridors by planting, and retain natural heritage features such as hedgerows, un-plastered stone walls and bands of mature and semi-mature deciduous trees.
- 3.11.12 Require the naming of residential developments to reflect local place names, heritage, language or topographical features as appropriate and to incorporate town land names from the locality as far as possible.
- 3.11.13 Promote energy conservation and renewable energy technologies in developments, such measures to be consistent with other policies in the Plan.
- 3.11.14 Require contributions from developers to contribute towards the provision of footpaths, street lighting and amenities in the interests of public safety.

#### **Objectives**

- R1** Require developers to carry out a professional assessment of the natural features that define the character of site in the context of its surrounding environment (including topography, aspect, habitats, flora, fauna, foliage, geological features) and integrate these features into development proposals.
- R2** Require developers to make appropriate provision for recreation and amenity infrastructure equal to the needs of the development and as an integral element of their proposals. A special development contribution may be required to enable the development of appropriate amenity areas off site under powers set out in the Development Contribution Scheme.
- R3** Identify and acquire appropriate lands for social and affordable housing as necessary.
- R4** Provide social and affordable housing in accordance with substantiated eligible need.
- R5** Implement the provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts and Housing Strategy on lands designated for residential development and mixed development (town centre zoning). The County Housing Strategy forms part of and is to be read in conjunction with the Plan.
- R6** Encourage residential development in town centre zones and residential land having regard to the town ethos and without being unreasonably inconsistent with the County Development Plan.

### **3.12 Enterprise, Industry & Tourism**

In the County Development Plan Oughterard is recognised as having the potential to develop an increasing degree of self-sufficiency. This element of economic development is a major aspiration of the Plan.

Tourism is an important element of the local economy in Oughterard. However, the economic potential posed by tourism is not being fully realised. It is an aim of the Council to facilitate the sustainable expansion of the tourism industry and enhancement of the tourism product in Oughterard.

#### **Policies**

It is the policy of the Council to:

- 3.12.1 Continue to develop Oughterard as a tourist destination in the context of cultural and recreational tourism and its importance to the local economy.

- 3.12.2 Realise the tourist potential of Oughterard's rich heritage in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner.
- 3.12.3 Co-operate with Ireland West Tourism, the local community and other stakeholders in the development of sustainable tourism products.
- 3.12.4 Facilitate the development of good quality accommodation, services and activities for tourists in appropriate areas.
- 3.12.5 Ensure that tourism schemes are appropriately sited, landscaped and screened.
- 3.12.6 Support the recommendations of the report 'Water Based Tourism – A Strategic Vision for Galway', April 2002 and the aims and objectives of *City and County Tourism Strategy* and *County Development Board Strategy*.
- 3.12.7 Support the development of walkways embracing the heritage of Oughterard and its hinterland in an environmentally sensitive and appropriate manner.
- 3.12.8 Facilitate the development of water based tourism activities such as sailing while protecting, conserving and enhancing the unique angling resource of Lough Corrib.
- 3.12.9 Facilitate the development of tourism infrastructure that is beneficial to the local economy and complimentary to the local built and natural environment.
- 3.12.10 Encourage the development of appropriate light industry and enterprise developments including those traditional to the area.
- 3.12.11 Ensure that sufficient land is available for enterprise to encourage new enterprise to locate within the town.
- 3.12.12 Ensure that Industrial schemes are appropriately landscaped, sites and screened.
- 3.12.13 Facilitate the development of local enterprise centres.
- 3.12.14 Consider cottage industries in residential areas on their own merits through the development control process. Any proposal shall have minimum environmental impacts and have regard to the amenity of adjoining properties.
- 3.12.15 Co-operate with the IDA, State Agencies and other potential employers and promote Oughterard as a location for employment generating industries.

### Objectives

It is the objective of the Council to:

- EIT1** Encourage and assist the development of the tourist potential of Oughterard in a manner that respects its architectural, archaeological, heritage and cultural significance.
- EIT2** Service and assist, within the limits of available finance, land identified for local enterprise centres within Oughterard so as to facilitate affordable workspace for new business start-ups.
- EIT3** Support the development of water-based recreational facilities that will benefit the local community and visitors to the area and enhance the tourism infrastructure in an environmentally sustainable manner.
- EIT4** Seek to develop a strategy for information signage for Oughterard. The Strategy is to include appropriate information signage at the main Square and the approach roads.
- EIT5** Provide good, clearly defined walkways around the town including the section of the old Galway to Clifden Railway line (see Urban Design Framework), to be accompanied by clear signage and an accompanying booklet/guide.
- EIT6** Include an information centre in the tourist office that will explain the uniqueness of Oughterard's rich heritage.
- EIT7** Identify a site for enterprise/light industrial development along the main Galway (N59) approach road.

### 3.13 Education & Community Facilities

It is an aim of the Council to facilitate the expansion and development of resources likely to enhance the educational and community facilities within the town.

### **Policies**

- 3.13.1 Ensure that a sufficient amount land is designated for community facility and educational use.
- 3.13.2 Provide improved pedestrian and vehicular links between the schools in Carrowmanagh, the town centre and residential areas in the town.
- 3.13.3 Ensure that a provision is made for a new primary school development.
- 3.13.4 Facilitate greater ease of traffic movement in the vicinity of the schools.
- 3.13.5 Encourage any new school development to provide roundabout access, off street drop off facilities and pedestrian barriers from the school gate to the road boundary. The school gate shall be located at the drop off point.
- 3.13.6 Maintain existing community buildings, open spaces, sports facilities, refuse disposal and burial grounds within Oughterard and provide for improvements of same where required.
- 3.13.7 Co-operate with bodies including school authorities, religious orders, the Health Service Executive and community groups in the provision of education and community facilities at appropriate locations.
- 3.13.8 Facilitate the provision of adequate, affordable and registered childcare facilities in a sustainable manner that:
  - Is compatible with land use and transportation policies,
  - Promotes local economic development,
  - Recognises the role of such facilities in addressing disadvantage.
- 3.13.9 Have regard to the provisions of "Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities." (Published by the DoEHLG, June, 2001).
- 3.13.10 Promote the provision of out-reach third level education opportunities.
- 3.13.11 Support voluntary bodies and groups, in recognition of the vital role that they play within the town.
- 3.13.12 Seek the location of schools and other community facilities in a central location where the optimum community benefit can be gained.

### **Objectives**

- EC1** Reserve lands for the expansion and provision of additional community and education facilities.
- EC2** Allow for development of a new school through community facility zoning objectives in the plan.
- EC3** Allow for expansion of car park facilities at the Oughterard boys primary school.
- EC4** Provide for road widening/improvements on the Carrowmanagh Road in the vicinity of the schools.

## **3.14 Recreation & Amenity**

It is an aim of the Council to facilitate the provision of improved amenities within the town and to promote the renewal and environmental improvement of obsolete areas in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### **Policies**

- 3.14.1 Ensure sufficient lands are available for recreation and amenity.
- 3.14.2 Protect the amenity of scenic and environmentally sensitive areas and promote the knowledge and appreciation of natural amenities in the area.
- 3.14.3 Ensure sufficient lands are available for the recreational needs of all schools in the town.
- 3.14.4 Provide children's play facilities and ensure the development of a child friendly environment for children of all ages with reasonable accommodation for children of all abilities.

- 3.14.5 Improve riverside and lakeside access within the boundary in a sensitive manner.
- 3.14.6 Co-operate with agencies in promoting and developing the recreational potential of Oughterard.
- 3.14.7 Co-operate with developers, sports clubs, schools and the community in promoting and developing the recreational potential of Oughterard where resources permit, at appropriate locations which would not be detrimental to residential amenity or natural heritage of the area. For example, in the provision of new facilities, improvements to existing facilities, safe routes to recreation / amenity lands and facilities, the provision of picnic sites / viewing sites in special amenity area and the undertaking of environmental improvement schemes.
- 3.14.8 Seek to improve public access to and along the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib and promote the amenity value of the area in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- 3.14.9 Promote and facilitate safe routes to recreation facilities including GAA facilities.
- 3.14.10 Protect land zoned for recreation and amenity purposes from inappropriate development. Within such areas only very limited development, directly related to amenity and leisure uses will be permitted.
- 3.14.11 Require developers to include the provision of recreational spaces in grouped housing proposals.
- 3.14.12 Link open space and amenity areas creating a positive natural environment and to encourage the development of walking and cycling routes.
- 3.14.13 Encourage developers to take cognisance of the natural features that define the character of a site (including contours, foliage, views).
- 3.14.14 Encourage the provision of youth centres and appropriate facilities.
- 3.14.15 Resist the loss of existing public or private recreational open space unless alternative recreational facilities are provided in a suitable location, or it can be demonstrated that there is no longer sufficient demand to sustain the facility.
- 3.14.16 Confine games / recreational activity, which could give rise to loss of amenity including elevated levels of noise to areas zoned for recreation and amenity.
- 3.14.17 Improve and maintain existing walkways. Options regarding the extension of walkways will be investigated.

#### **Objectives**

- RA1** Seek to develop amenity walkways and cycle routes with links to the town centre (see Urban Design Framework).
- RA2** Reserve land along the Owenriff River for an amenity pathway or an ecological corridor in an environmentally sensitive manner that is safe and assimilated into the landscape in consultation with all stakeholders.
- RA3** Encourage and facilitate suitable facilities for teenagers at appropriate locations.
- RA4** Develop, where funds permit, recreation and tourism facilities such as footpaths, picnic sites, viewing sites in special amenity areas and amenity walks.
- RA5** Facilitate the development of recreation and amenity infrastructure, for example, playing pitches that are linked with educational facilities.
- RA7** Develop a children's playground at Corribdale.



## SECTION FOUR – URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

### 4.1 Introduction

An Urban Design Framework is an **indicative** and **flexible** plan to guide future development. The purpose of this Urban Design Framework is to:

- Provide an overall coordinated approach for future development in Oughterard,
- Ensure that historic patterns are respected, and
- Facilitate the creation of new places that add to Oughterard's character.

The Framework articulates the potential that new development has to offer. It illustrates how new development can be assimilated within Oughterard in a manner that reflects the scale and character of the existing town fabric while enhancing the public realm and achieving a sense of place.

Development that occurs in an ad-hoc manner may cause the character and unique identity of this historic town to be gradually eroded. The Framework also provides guidance for the development of back lands in Oughterard's town centre.

The Framework facilitates and upholds access to zoned lands to the rear of road frontages which would otherwise remain undeveloped and potentially become landlocked. Increased permeability is encouraged through the identification of additional pedestrian and vehicular routes. Permeability relates to pedestrians and vehicles and involves ease of movement between places.

The contribution of natural heritage and landscape features to the town's character and unique identity is recognised. The Framework advocates the retention of existing landscape features and encourages increased access to the area's natural amenities.

While guidelines are indicative, any development proposal shall take cognisance of the principles outlined. The Planning Authority recommends pre-planning meetings to examine development in the area; the principles shall be clearly defined at these stages.

The Framework is divided into five sub-sections:

- 4.2 Town Centre
- 4.3 Urban Design Objectives
- 4.4 Indicative Circulation Layout
- 4.5 Amenity
- 4.6 Landscape

This section is to be read in conjunction with Map 2 & 2a, Section 3 outlining Council Policy and Section 5 outlining Development Control Standards.

### 4.2 Town Centre

The Plan aims to consolidate the existing town centre by encouraging infill, redevelopment of derelict, obsolete and brownfield sites and developing backlands in a planned and integrated manner.

Section 3.10 outlines a policy to promote the revitalisation of the town centre in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of its surrounds. To support this, the Council shall facilitate the redevelopment of derelict, obsolete and brownfield sites that can positively contribute to the town.

The Plan also encourages the development of backlands where proposals contribute to and enhance the character of the town. Backland development can achieve impressive results if developed in a coordinated manner. These results may include increased permeability, improvements to the public realm, consolidation and revitalization of the town centre, efficient and sustainable use of space and increased densities that are of a scale and character similar to the existing streetscape. Good permeability will foster a strong sense of community by creating places where there is ease of interaction between residents.

**UD1** To encourage the integrated development of backlands within the town centre.

Only proposals that are part of an action plan will be considered. An action plan for this area should consider the following:

- Action Plan requirements outlined in Section 5 Development Control Standards.
- The provision of a local access route to facilitate future development with no through traffic.
- Regard to residential amenity and privacy of adjoining property.
- Cognisance of potential archaeology in the area.
- Facilitate access for pedestrians.
- The creation of clearly defined shared space / open space areas with vistas.

The Council shall also promote the use of shared surfaces on backland developments within the town centre. An example of this would be a courtyard style development. The aim is to create a living environment where use of space predominates over use for vehicular traffic.

The Plan aims to improve parking provisions within the town centre. Improvements to parking provisions will also contribute to public realm enhancement. The Plan includes objectives to develop car parks at various sites as outlined in the Specific Objectives Map 3. It is recommended that development be encouraged along the entrance to car parks to create a definite streetscape.

**UD2** To encourage development to locate along the entrance to the proposed car parks. Buildings should be of a high civic design quality.

### 4.3 Urban Design Objectives

New development should be designed to:

- Have regard to the character and provisions of the Architectural Conservation Area,
- Retain existing building lines and have continuous building edge to provide enclosure, continuity and street definition.
- Have regard to archaeological sites and monuments.
- Create new streetscape which exhibits traditional design principles.
- Be consistent with existing building heights.
- Use corner / marker buildings to define the urban structure and accentuate corners, increased heights at these locations may be considered where proposals contain a high standard of architectural quality.
- Continuation of streetscape shall exhibit traditional principles. These include pitched roofs with undulating heights, roof colours of neutral blue/grey/black tones, well proportioned fenestration, external materials local to the area as well as traditional fascias on ground floor commercial units (see Section 5.5.1 Shopfronts).
- Provide variation of character between different parts based on different types of space, building design and materials which are appropriate to the area.

- Encourage the design of courtyard and car park developments to be surrounded by buildings or proposals with dual road frontages. This will require front and rear facades to be treated with equal prominence and design aesthetics.
- Use a combination of built form and landscaping on the approach road to the town centre to create a gateway and accentuate the arrival point.
- Protect and enhance the natural heritage of the area.

### **UD3 Enclosure / Building Line Objectives:**

- Encourage the use of buildings to define space within the Town Centre and Residential zones. This is set out in the Urban Design Framework Map 2 & Map 2a.
- Encourage place making design principles: to achieve a scale, character, grain and identity associated with Irish rural towns and towns.
- Strong streetscape definition with dual aspect designed elevations, which encourage passive surveillance to open spaces.
- Private parking to be integrated within the courtyard enclosures.
- Sketch examples of these enclosure principles and indicative layouts are set out in pages 36 to 39 of this section.

### **Homezones**

A Homezone is a residential street in which the outdoor living environment clearly predominates over any provision for traffic. It is an environment where the design of the spaces between homes provides space for motor vehicles, but where the wider needs of residents are also fully accommodated.

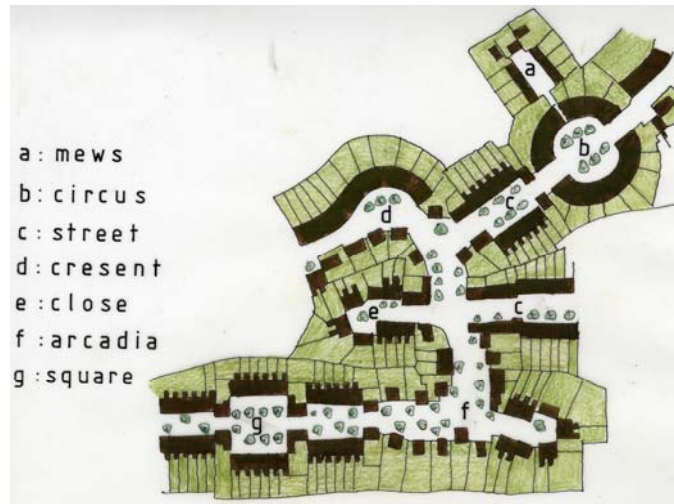
Standard residential layouts have few cars passing through them for long periods of the day, yet the spaces are shaped by the needs of cars and not the people who live within the residential zone.

A Homezone should fulfil a number of objectives:

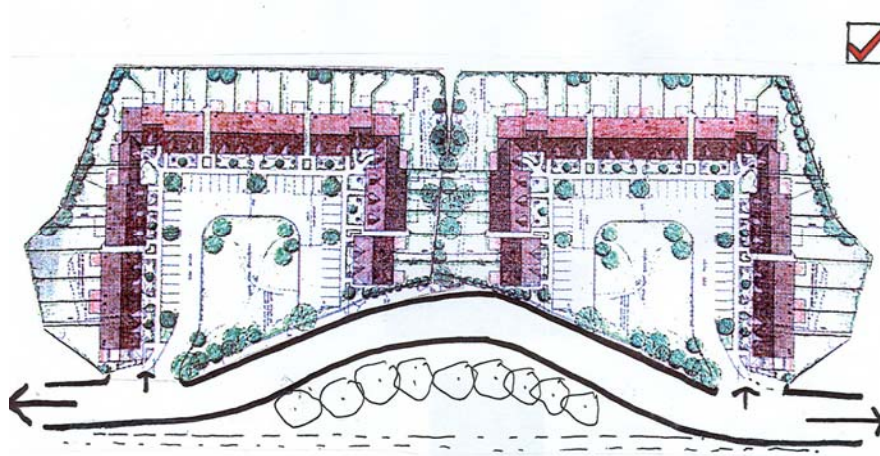
- It should improve feelings of safety in residential areas because traffic will have to go slowly and also because there should be more people out on the street.
- It should promote greater use of public spaces in residential areas and, through design, promote a greater diversity of activity within the street. In particular, this should benefit less mobile people such as children, older people or people with special mobility needs, enabling them to reclaim their local public spaces from exclusively car dominated activities.
- It should make the street more attractive visually by introducing new types of paving or encouraging more planting which provide shading to play and seating areas.
- As the threat of fast traffic is removed it should encourage people to walk and cycle within and through their local area.
- It should encourage greater care for the street from residents as they have a role in looking after their new environment.
- Ideally, it should also contribute to improving the quality and the attractiveness of residential living.

\*Copies of the following publications '*Homezones: A planning and design handbook*' – Mike Biddulph (2001) and '*Homezone: Design Guidelines*' – Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (June 2002) are available for consultation at the Planning Office.

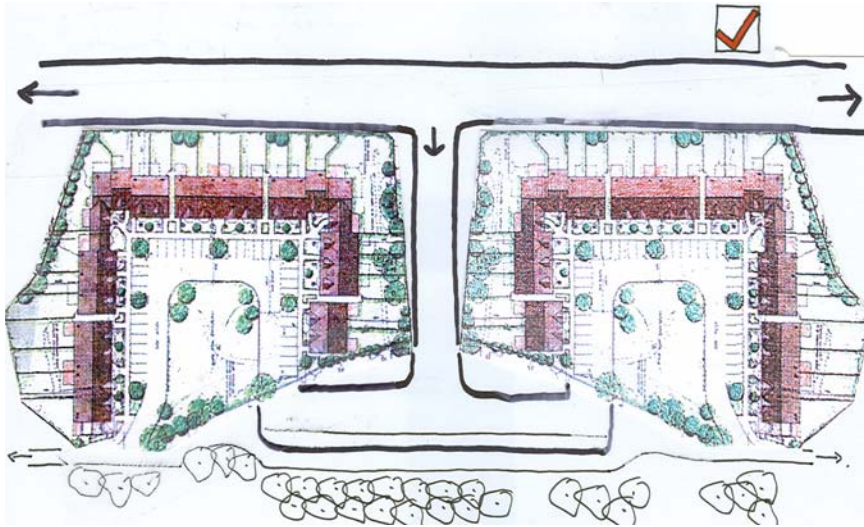
**Note:** These sketches are indicative only and are for the purposes of clarity in reading Section Four and Appendix 4: Maps 2 & 2a.



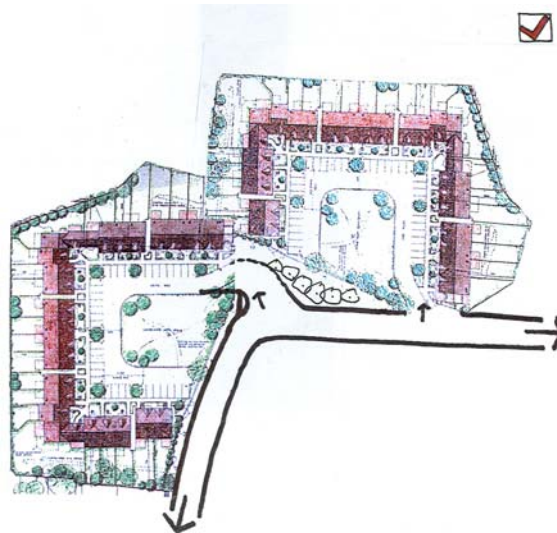
*Indicative layout on designing Homezones*



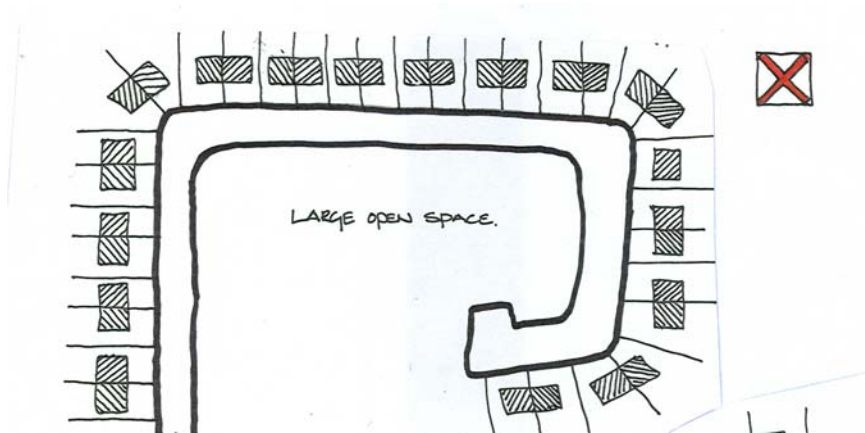
**Courtyard Clustering** - linear route, good permeability and residential safety maintained, good place making defined by specific corner residential units and integrated open amenity space to each courtyard offering high levels of passive surveillance.



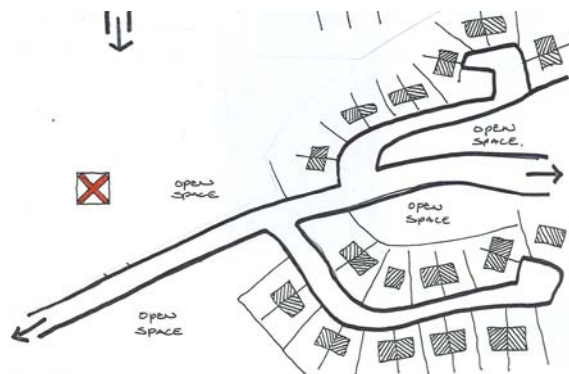
**Courtyard Clustering** - streetscape dual aspect, requires equal high standard of design to front and rear elevations and innovative boundary landscaping solutions.



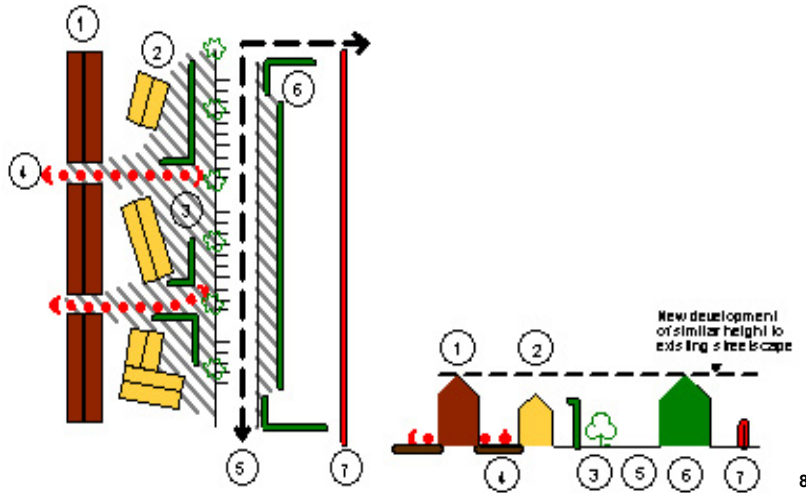
**Courtyard Clustering** - strong place making achieved when dealing with corner sites.



**Warp-around Development** - large expansive open space, poor definition of place making and integration of usable amenity open space.



**Cul-de-sac 'Cookie Cluster'** - residual open space, poor place making, erosion of street grain, 'dead-ends, have poor permeability and lack of sufficient passive surveillance to residual open spaces.



**Indicative Section Profile**

### Backland Sketch Plan

1. Existing Streetscape
2. Existing Outbuildings.
3. Civic Open Space /  
Hard & soft landscaping.
4. Pedestrian access through existing archways.
5. Restricted road access to serve new development & outbuildings.
6. New development to define strong streetscape edge and of scale, height and character of existing streetscape.
7. Retain existing stone boundary features.

## 4.4 Indicative Circulation Layout Objectives

The Plan aims to develop an integrated hierarchy of routes in order to create a safe and efficient transport network and to allow for ease of access into development lands.

The purpose of the Indicative Circulation Layout is to:

- Allow for ease of access into development lands and secure appropriate links to main routes and local services,
- Create a safe and convenient hierarchy of vehicular circulation to minimise conflict between various modes of transport,
- Facilitate an integrated public transport network,
- Reserve access points to facilitate efficient and economic use of suitably zoned lands,
- Promote and facilitate the principles of 'Homezone' residential designs\*.

### UD4 Primary Access Objective:

- To reserve and facilitate both inner and outer relief road's north of the town centre.

### UD5 Secondary Access Objective:

- To facilitate a road network through potential development lands to allow for vehicle and public transport to access new development. These lands may be identified in the specific objectives map as T18 and T20.

### UD6 Local Access Objective:

- To create local access routes to serve new development. (Regard shall be had to Homezone\* Design principles).

## 4.5 Amenity

### UD7 Amenity and Open Space Objectives

- Provide a looped network of pedestrian / cycle links between all zones, where appropriate, to allow for sustainable movement, permeability and accessibility.
- Investigate the possibility of creating an amenity pathway along the River bank for amenity/recreation and tourism purposes, which has regard to the natural and built heritage of the area.
- Integrate cycle network in conjunction with pedestrian network along main routes and existing landscaping features.
- Provide a network of attractive civic open spaces along key pedestrian routes to provide functional links within the pedestrian network.
- Encourage the provision of open space / small parks in all development parcels to allow for local amenity / recreational space for the community.
- Preserve and enhance wildlife corridors.

### UD8 Civic Open Spaces

- To provide an integrated network of civic open space along key pedestrian routes to enhance the amenity quality of both pedestrian walks and place making design principles.
- To require high design standards in relation to access, paving, street furniture and lighting are incorporated within development proposals.



## 4.6 Landscape

Oughterard has a number of strong features which enhance its natural and cultural heritage. These include hedgerows, mature trees, stone walls and green areas. The Plan recognises the importance of maintaining particular features which contribute to Oughterard's distinctive character.

It is important that high quality design and layout are reflected in all future proposals to the area. The Planning Authority shall therefore require that landscaping be appropriately incorporated into all future developments in Oughterard town.

### UD9 Landscape Objectives

- Preserve existing hedgerows and hedgerow networks as important wildlife habitats and corridors. Where it is necessary to remove part of these features, developer shall submit landscaping plans which show linked replacement hedgerows of similar native species.
- Where unplastered stone walls exist on site these should be preserved in situ. However, consideration will be given to safety audits where these stone walls exist along public road edges.
- Preserve existing mature trees as important landscape features to harmonise any proposed development with the natural surroundings, break down the scale of development, encourage wildlife and establish a continuity of natural habitats. Removal of existing healthy mature trees shall be strongly resisted. A tree survey shall normally be required and healthy specimens shall be preserved. Where other trees need to be removed these shall be replaced at a ratio of three semi-mature trees of similar species for each one removed.
- Residential development boundary treatments should assimilate natural boundary features within the area which will provide a long term visual coherence with the rural character of the landscape setting.

(See also Development Control Standards 5.3.18 Landscape & Landscaping Considerations).

### UD10 Screening Buffer

- Require a landscape buffer in the form of trees or hedging to be put in place between new development and existing development.

### UD11 Woodland Objectives

- Retain tree lines where possible in order to maintain visual amenity and woodland character.
- Retain other significant individual mature broadleaves or Scots Pine where possible.
- Maintain or design corridors between any stands of trees that are retained. For example planting hedgerows or tree lines between clumps of trees. It is important that a link to the larger woodland to the south be maintained.
- Existing streams should be incorporated into the design of development proposals.

### UD12 Development of Playground

It is an objective to develop a playground in Corribdale. It is envisaged that a playground would form part of a civic space area. Development will be encouraged to face on to this space. Any action plan must include a landscaped proposal for amenity / playground development, having regard to heritage policies and objectives.

A special development contribution may be required to contribute to the development of amenity space under powers set out in the Development Contribution Scheme.

## SECTION FIVE – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL STANDARDS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines standards which will be applied to development proposals in County Galway. They support development control standards already outlined in the County Development Plan 2003-2009. Applicants will also need to consider regulation and guideline publications when preparing a planning application. Development proposals may also be subject to other regulations and statutes that cover fire, building regulations etc.

Pre-planning meetings with Planning Officials prior to the submission of planning applications are useful to clarify policies and issues for the Council and the developer. Discussions that take place do so without prejudice to the decision of Galway County Council. Development proposals that are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Plan will not necessarily be permitted. Development control standards are set out under the following headings:

- 5.2 Residential
- 5.3 General Development
- 5.4 Commercial, Retail, Office & Tourism
- 5.5 Shopfronts, Advertising and Signage
- 5.6 Industry & Enterprise
- 5.7 Community Facilities
- 5.8 Parking, Loading and Storage
- 5.9 Development Contributions, Securities and Levies



## 5.2 RESIDENTIAL

### 5.2.1 Density

The Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities promote higher residential densities in appropriate locations in the interests of a more sustainable residential pattern. Higher residential density is encouraged on the basis that it makes optimal use of existing zoned and serviced land in preference to greenfield development which can be costly to service and not have adequate residential facilities in place. The benefits of increased residential densities can be briefly summarised as:

- More economic use of existing infrastructure and serviced land,
- Reduced need for the development of 'greenfield' sites, urban sprawl and ribbon development,
- Reduced need for investment in new infrastructure,
- Better access to existing services and facilities,
- More sustainable commuting patterns.

The main provisions of these guidelines have been incorporated into the Local Area Plan in a manner appropriate to circumstances for Oughterard.

Higher densities must not be achieved at an unacceptable amenity cost to the surrounding dwellings and the residents of the proposed development. Prescribed densities in isolation have limited control over the quality of the residential environment. Design, layout, dwelling mix, form, material and colour strongly influence the quality of the residential environment. The Planning Authority will therefore adjudicate residential development proposals on their merits having regard to overall density (plot ratio and site coverage) together with other standards including adequate daylight, privacy, general storage space, open space, landscaping, parking areas, provision for disabled people, life cycle adaptability and informal surveillance of external spaces.

### 5.2.2 Plot Ratio\*

#### • Town Centre (Mixed Development) Zone

In circumstances of residential development within these areas density will be applied using plot ratio. Plot ratio is the relationship between site area and the total floor area of the buildings erected on it and is calculated by dividing the gross floor area of the building by the site area. The gross floor area is the sum of all floor space within the external walls of the building(s), excluding plant, tank rooms, basement storage areas (where floor to ceiling height is less than 2.2m) and parking areas. In the case of a group of buildings within a common cartilage the floor area will be aggregated.

The purpose of plot ratio control is:

- To prevent the adverse effects of both over-development and under-development on the amenity and layout of buildings within the town centre.
- To achieve desirable massing of building height; to balance the capacity of the site and the capacity of street frontage.

A plot ratio of 1 - 1.25 shall apply within the Town Centre (Mixed Development). However the Local Authority may use its discretion in permitting varied plot ratios where it is considered appropriate and in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

*\*Minor extensions which infringe plot ratio limits may be permitted where the Planning Authority accepts that they are necessary for the satisfactory operation of the buildings.*

- **Inner Residential Areas**

The aim of the Planning Authority is to encourage medium to high densities within residential zones in close proximity to the town centre. It is at the discretion of the Planning Authority to permit higher residential densities at appropriate locations.

A plot ratio of 0.75 – 1 and a density of 34 – 61 units per hectare (14 - 25 units per acre) shall apply to inner residential areas. However the Local Authority may use its discretion in permitting varied plot ratios where it is considered appropriate and in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

As regards infill residential development a balance has to be struck between the reasonable protection of the amenities and privacy of adjoining dwellings, the protection of established character and the need to provide residential infill.

Building heights of 2/3 storey will be encouraged at appropriate locations, and heights in excess of three storey maximum or 9m from finished floor level to ridge level, will not be permitted. As a means of increasing the density the positioning of semi-detached and detached dwellings closer together, will not be considered appropriate.

- **Residential**

Residential development outside the town centre will, generally, be based on the cluster concept. Central to this concept is that housing and associated public open spaces are designed as an integrated whole. The creation of high quality housing, attractive public open spaces and a sense of community shall take priority in design considerations.

The density of residential development should be 20 – 30 units per hectare (8 -12 units per acre) (i.e plot ratio of 0.3 - 0.5 shall apply). This enables a range of house types to be constructed, i.e., a greater number of smaller dwelling units or a smaller number of larger dwelling units. Individual clusters should generally not exceed 25 dwellings to the hectare (12 dwellings to the acre). For guidance on design and layout see Section 5.2.4 Design and Layout of Residential Areas.

These density guidelines will not prevent favourable consideration of high quality schemes of higher densities in this zone where it is appropriately located, respectful of adjoining context / residential amenity and is considered to be in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

- **Outer Areas**

In development zones at the outer edges of the Plan boundary the Planning Authority will encourage energy efficient eco-clusters, with a high degree of integration with existing landscape features, at a density of 20 per hectare (8 to the acre) on appropriate sites. Again, it is at the discretion of the Planning Authority to permit lower residential densities at appropriate locations. The basic principles as outlined in Section 5.2.4 Design and Layout of Residential Areas above must be considered. Furthermore, regard shall be given to '*Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*' and the '*Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines*' available for consultation or any revised versions thereof published within the period of the plan.

### 5.2.3 Site Coverage\*

Site coverage is a control used to prevent over-development of the site thus safeguarding sunlight and daylight. This is expressed as a percentage, determined by dividing the ground floor area of the building by the total site area. Site coverage shall not normally exceed 80% in the Town Centre zone and 70% in the Inner Residential areas.

*\*Minor extensions which infringe site coverage limits may be permitted where the Planning Authority accepts that they are necessary for the satisfactory operation of the buildings.*

#### **5.2.4 Design and Layout of Residential Developments**

The construction of high quality residential developments is a key aim of the Local Area Plan. Central to this aim is that housing and associated public open spaces are designed as an integrated whole. The creation of high quality housing, attractive public open spaces and a sense of community shall take priority in design considerations. In order to achieve this, new residential development will be based on the following principles:

- Development shall take cognisance of the natural features that define the character of the site in the context of its surrounding environment (including topography, aspect, foliage, geological features).
- The form of new development should follow the natural contours of the ground and shall not appear regular or linear.
- Residential developments, particularly those with six or more units should encourage a variety of residential types and ensure a good social and design mix.
- Each group of houses should have its own visual identity, variations being achieved by layout, siting, form, mass, grouping, building lines, house design, external finishes, colour, hard and soft landscaping and house size.
- Dwellings should not be located on a ridgeline, the roof level should be sited below the ridgeline. These measures should allow the natural contours of the land to assimilate development.
- Regard shall be had to softening the visual impact of a building through design detailing. For example, attention to doors and windows to reduce the visual impact of development.
- The use of traditional design, local materials and techniques on all buildings is encouraged.
- Discourage suburban type walls, entrance gates and suburban type building.
- Discourage use of brightly coloured or multicoloured brick, panel paving or roof materials which is out of character with an area.
- Housing designs shall consider orientation and sun-path so as to maximise amenity, daylight and the benefits of passive solar gain to domestic heating. Creation of overshadowing should be avoided.
- Have regard to '*Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*' the '*Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines*' available for consultation or any revised versions thereof published within the period of the Plan.
- Consideration shall be given to the retention of trees, groups of trees, stonewalls and other landscape features where possible. Natural features or 'landmarks' such as mature trees or views or vistas should help to enrich the layout and orientation of housing. The retention of existing features on site is strongly encouraged.
- Where boundaries have to be removed and are to be replaced, they shall be replaced with boundary types similar to those removed, for example, masonry stone walls.
- Have regard to natural features or views or vistas to enrich the layout and orientation of housing.
- Consider landscaping at the initial planning stage in order to obtain the maximum benefit from existing features. This has scope to break up and soften the development's visual impact and assist in integrating the development into the topography.
- Encourage the planting of native species which have a high biodiversity value (see appendix 2).
- Ensure cycle ways and pedestrian pathways are laid out so that they contribute to linking the development to the rest of the locality, amenities, shopping, community facilities and other residential areas.
- In the interests of security, all areas used by the public such as open spaces, roads, and footpaths shall be overlooked by housing where possible.

- Residential layouts should be designed in such a way that heavy through traffic is discouraged.
- Road alignments should discourage speed and give priority to the safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with the 2003 'Traffic Management Guidelines' issued by the DoEHLG.
- Developments should contain shared surfaces, traffic calming measures and other pedestrian/ child friendly features to facilitate the use of the street for amenity.
- 'Homezone' design and layout principles will be encouraged<sup>9</sup>.

### 5.2.5 Dwelling Mix

Different types and sizes of housing units are needed to provide a choice within each development. In apartment developments, a mix of unit sizes is also required, including two and three bedroom apartments, with not more than 40% of apartments in any single development to be one-bedroom units. The desirable residential mix will be reviewed by the Planning Authority in relation to location and scale of development with regard to the specific circumstances of individual planning applications.

Developers are encouraged to examine the need to include the element of affordable housing in their plans or any need for special accommodation for elderly or disabled people. This should be examined with the Housing and Planning Sections of Galway County Council at the concept stages of the proposed development and have regard to Part V of the Planning and Development Acts and the County Housing Strategy.

Consideration should be given to a range of houses, suitable for a number of types of users including first time buyers, single people, couples, families and the elderly. Proposals for dwellings designed specifically to provide home working will be considered sympathetically by the Planning Authority provided they are an integral part of the design and will not be detrimental to the amenity of others and have minimum environmental impacts.

### 5.2.6 Apartments

Generally, the development of apartments will only be acceptable in the Town Centre zone. Apartment developments should make a positive contribution to streetscape design and provide ample level of amenity for their residents. The building design, height and site layout shall have due regard to the character of the amenities of the surrounding environment.

Where apartment blocks are proposed in existing residential areas, their height should generally reflect the height of contextual buildings. Blocks higher than surrounding properties will be considered on their merits, but uncharacteristically high structures will not be permitted where they are considered to interfere with the scale, amenity or visual quality of existing developments.

Apartment developments shall be of high quality design, incorporating satisfactory car parking standards and adequate functional space to accommodate bicycle parking and refuse storage areas for the use of all residents. Each apartment shall be "self-contained", i.e. there shall be only one door to each flat from communal passageway and shall be provided with its own W.C. and bathroom. Adequate internal storage areas will also be required within each unit.

Developments should incorporate common spaces, terraces, courtyards and incorporate spaces which are designed so as to provide a safe and pleasant environment. In a case where accommodation is being provided over a business which is in separate occupation, a separate access should be provided.

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<sup>9</sup> 'Homezone: Design Guidelines'- Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (June 2002)'



Where infill development is proposed, particularly apartments and flats, a reduction in the levels of communal or private open space provided per unit may be considered acceptable where developments are considered to include appropriate building designs and suitable landscaping of communal areas, or where a specified alternative open space exists in the area which can be identified as serving the needs of the residents. The Planning Authority may also permit the public and private open space requirement to be combined (partially or otherwise) to provide for communal amenity areas serving the development. Such developments may also be required to contribute, where appropriate, towards open space for active recreation being provided in the area in accordance with Local Area Plan Standards and the Development Contributions Scheme made by the Planning Authority. Car parking areas shall not be considered as part of private open space.

Consideration shall be given to people with special mobility needs in the location, layout and design of communal facilities and in the future adaptation of existing units to meet the needs of the disabled. A suitable passenger lift should be provided, in accordance with Technical Guidance Document M of the Building Regulations 2000.

The *Guidelines on Residential Developments in Urban Renewal Tax Designated Incentive Areas* DoEHLG 1995 sets out minimum internal space standards. Permission will not normally be granted where unit sizes are less than dimensions outlined. Each wall of each habitable room should be at least 2.4m long. The ceiling height should be at least 2.2m.

**Table 5.1 Internal Layout Standards**

Apartment/ Unit	Bedsit /Studio	One Bedroom (2 bedspaces)	Two Bedroom Apartment (3 bedspaces)	Three Bedroom Apartment (5 bedspaces)
Living Area	11m <sup>2</sup>	11m <sup>2</sup>	13m <sup>2</sup>	15m <sup>2</sup>
Kitchen Area	9m <sup>2</sup>	5m <sup>2</sup>	5m <sup>2</sup>	6m <sup>2</sup>
Dining Area	(included in Kitchen area)	4m <sup>2</sup>	6m <sup>2</sup>	8m <sup>2</sup>
Bathroom	3m <sup>2</sup> (Shower)	-	-	-
Bedroom Double	-	10.2m <sup>2</sup>	10.2m <sup>2</sup>	10.2m <sup>2</sup>
Bedroom Single	(included in living area)	N/A	6.5m <sup>2</sup>	6.5m <sup>2</sup>
Storage Area	1.5m <sup>2</sup>	1.5m <sup>2</sup>	2.5m <sup>2</sup>	3.5m <sup>2</sup>
Circulation Area	-	-	-	-
Total Floor Area	30m <sup>2</sup>	38m <sup>2</sup>	55m <sup>2</sup>	70m <sup>2</sup>

*Note: Where figures are not given, flexibility is given to architect / designer.*

All apartment blocks must make provision for the segregated storage of waste at the point where the waste is aggregated before collection from the block. At a minimum, space should be allowed for three containers (one each for compostable waste, dry segregated waste and residual waste) which are adequately sized to store the quantities of waste generated by the occupants of the apartment block. Storage provisions should make allowances for collection on fortnightly or monthly basis. These areas shall be well ventilated and adequately screened so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the overall development.

### 5.2.7 Granny Flats

The demand for self-contained residential units on the sites of, and attached to, existing dwellings is recognised by the Planning Authority as fulfilling a necessary housing need. In order to protect residential amenities, the following considerations will be taken into account in assessing such proposals:



- The existing capacity of the site is adequate to accommodate a second dwelling unit,
- The unit must be an integral part of the main dwelling and capable of assimilation into the dwelling.
- A requirement that the unit must not be leased, sold or otherwise disposed of other than as part of the main residential unit on the site.
- The unit must be an addition to the existing structure or a garage conversion and shall be located largely at the side as opposed to the rear garden of the existing house.
- The floor area of the unit shall not normally exceed the equivalent of 25% of the floor area of the existing house.

### 5.2.8 Action Area Plans / Master Plans

The Planning Authority shall require Action Area Plans with each large residential and mixed use development applications (in excess of a floor area of 1500m<sup>2</sup>), which has regard to the County Settlement Strategy and incorporates a phasing programme to ensure the provision of services and the proper completion of each stage of the scheme.

### 5.2.9 Public Open Space

Public open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. It provides passive and active amenity and is important for ecological and environmental reasons.

The Planning Authority is committed to the promotion and enhancement of a hierarchy of public open spaces throughout Oughterard ranging from the large park to small children's play area and passive recreation spaces close to peoples' homes.

Parks and playing fields will be provided at a rate of 1 hectare per 1000 population, the provision of which will be funded from the open space element of development contributions scheme.

The public open space requirement in residential areas is as follows:

- Town Centre (mixed development) - minimum of 10% of total site area.
- Town Centre (Residential) - minimum of 10-15% of total site area.
- Residential zones (greenfield) - minimum of 10-15% of total site area.

Developments over 10 residential units are to provide recreational facilities / play areas as an integral part of open space provision. In the provision of children's play areas emphasis will be on ensuring that spaces are generally overlooked so that some degree of supervision may take place.

Residential developments should include well designed open space that is visually pleasing as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the development. Regard shall be had to section 6.12 to 6.14 of the document 'Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines' in the development of open space. Details of the proposed landscaping, hard and soft of public open spaces should be provided with planning applications.

To promote the quality of the residential environment and help enhance security, it is always preferable that gardens should not back onto common open space, rear access footpaths or parking areas. To reduce risk of crime, open spaces should directly overlooked by the fronts of dwellings and should have informal surveillance provided by drivers and cyclists using the road network. Furthermore, open space between developments should compliment each other.

Children's play areas will be encouraged, where small spaces are incorporated into the design and layout, provided they are overlooked so that some degree of supervision may take place.



Open Spaces should be completed and made available for use in tandem with the completion of houses. In open spaces to be used as playing areas, sand based surfaces should be provided in order to facilitate all weather activities.

Where large open spaces are provided a suitable boundary treatment which is indigenous to the characteristics of the area shall be provided, including kerbing, low walls and/or landscaping. A boundary wall is required where open space is adjacent to a public road.

Where there is a difficulty in meeting the open space requirement, or where it is considered by the Planning Authority that the provision of open space requirement in a particular area is not in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the Planning Authority may choose one of the following options:

- That the developer makes a financial contribution towards the provision of an open space by the Local Authority elsewhere (as provided in Section 48 of the 2000 Act), or, the Planning Authority may consider arrangements whereby appropriate community facilities may be provided in lieu of the developers open space requirements.
- The Planning Authority may require that the open space provision of any development be located in a specific area in order to assemble open space quantities of satisfactory size, or to protect/ enhance the existing features of the area.

In calculating the area of open space, roads, roundabouts, footpaths, grass margins and other grass areas of incidental open space shall not qualify for open space assessment. In large developments, a range of public open space sizes and types should be provided to cater for active and passive recreational needs as well as creating variety in the development.

In the event of a site requiring a treatment plant, the percolation area will not be allowed in public open space areas.

#### **5.2.10 Private Open Space**

The provision of adequate private open space is essential to the quality of a residential environment. It is important that private open space is provided such that it is free from undue observation. In the Town Centre and Residential zones, site coverage and plot ratio shall primarily govern the development of the site. Proposals may also refer to the following guidelines that were set out in the document 'Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines':

- 3/4/5 bed houses minimum 60-70 square metres behind the building line.
- 1/2 bed houses minimum 50 square metres behind the building line.
- 2/3 bed apartment minimum 15-20 square metres when unit is in or close to town centre.
- 1 bed apartment minimum 10 square metres when unit is in or close to town centre.
- 2/3 bed apartment minimum 20-40 square metres when unit is located at town edge.
- 1 bed apartment minimum 20 square metres when unit is located at town edge.

The following points shall also be considered:

- In the Town Centre zone, private open space to the front of houses or apartments may only need to be a narrow buffer strip of hard / soft landscaping, a change in surface texture or colour or an area to accommodate climbing shrubs or window boxes.
- Private open space for apartment developments may be provided in the form of balconies or roof gardens, or in the case of ground floor apartments as small gardens. However, balconies which project from the main building facade onto the street will be discouraged.
- Consideration should be given to the orientation of balconies, which must be designed as an integral part of the building's composition, thereby maximising solar gain, and have respect for the townscape context and surrounding amenities.

- Roof gardens shall require a secure boundary, be properly landscaped and shall be designed and located so not to interfere with the privacy of adjoining residential properties.
- In cases where a high quality environment is provided in shared courtyards or gardens, a reduced minimum private area behind the building line can be considered.
- Terraces, balconies and courtyard spaces can supplement the standard front and rear garden.
- In the Residential zone, gardens should be designed to allow for the planting of trees and shrubs to enhance the visual character of the area.
- Low hedges, fences and walls may be needed to deter intruders or provide a safe environment for children.
- The Planning Authority will wish to agree details of enclosure design to ensure these contribute to the overall quality of design.

### 5.2.11 Privacy

The protection of privacy of the occupants of residential properties is an important element of the quality of a residential environment and is a key consideration where new development is proposed adjacent to existing properties.

- Layouts should seek to minimise overlooking between dwellings and provide adequate space for privacy.
- The amount of space considered appropriate will vary according to the location, context and characteristic of the site.
- Generally first floor windows shall not directly overlook adjoining lands from above ground floor level by less than 11 metres.
- If development is over two storeys, a greater distance may be required.
- Windows serving halls and landings do not impact to the same degree on privacy as balconies and living rooms.
- Where the development abuts the private garden areas of existing properties, a separation distance greater than 20 metres will generally be appropriate to minimise overlooking with a minimum of 10 metres between the rear of new houses and the common boundary. This may need to be altered in the case of a sloping site.
- Where balconies or living rooms are provided on upper floors of residential units, a minimum distance of approximately 15 metres should be provided between the rear of residential units and common boundaries. Flexibility may be afforded where a high degree of amenity and privacy has been illustrated.
- Sufficient space should be provided around dwellings to ensure adequate circulation of air about the buildings themselves and the inhabitants within.
- Generally, a minimum distance of 3 metres will be required to be maintained between the sidewalls of adjacent dwellings or dwelling blocks.
- Side elevation windows of any habitable room, excluding bathroom or toilet, shall not be permitted to overlook adjoining property from the first floor level.
- All side elevation ground floor windows must be screened by a 2 metre high fence.
- Where front boundary walls or fencing is provided, the design and materials shall add a pleasing design feature to the overall housing layout and shall be in accordance with the indigenous characteristics of the area.
- Rear boundary walls or fences shall be constructed to a height of not less than 1.8 metres and shall be of substantial construction and be in accordance with the indigenous characteristics of the area.
- Permanent screening of a similar height should also be provided between the gardens of adjoining houses for a minimum distance of 2.5 metres behind the house.

A reduced garden size may be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the majority of the houses / dwellings comply with the minimum garden sizes set out above and where a particular

house / dwelling performs a particular focal point; such as a key corner site, where due to its situation to the overall layout, it cannot be provided with a standard private garden.

Factors to be considered in determining reduced garden sizes, include:

- The size of the house – smaller, one and two bedroom dwellings may not require larger gardens.
- The provision of communal open space associated with the development – smaller garden sizes may be permitted where there are increases in communal open space, provided that the space is entirely private, situated on the non-entrance side of the house, is not overlooked and is screened with a durable, long lasting material (garden trellises or wooden garden screens will not be permitted).

#### **5.2.12 Courtyards**

The development of courtyards and new urban spaces within blocks will be considered, and innovative design of urban space encouraged within the town centre. Access to courtyards should be through arches in order to avoid breaking the existing street frontages. In the case of courtyard developments, open space provision should be in accordance with Local Area Plan standards.

#### **5.2.13 Building Lines**

The Planning Authority aims to maintain as far as possible the existing building lines within the town centre. The creation of a continuous building line along the street edge is encouraged in order to create a sense of continuity and define the urban edge.

In some developments, increased setbacks may be necessary to provide greater amenity and ensure safety for road users and residents. In the case of development in the residential zone, the boundary line shall normally not be less than 7 metres (25ft), except at junctions where the minimum line may have to be increased to create adequate sight distances.

Building lines may have to be relaxed to accommodate innovative design, create different urban form, enhance streetscape, incorporate key landscape features into the development layout, provide important areas of public open space or facilitate traditional building form with open courtyards. In the case of clustered type developments in the residential zone, the layout should not appear regular or linear and have regard to the recommendations outlined in section 5.2.4 (Design & Layout of Residential Developments).

#### **5.2.14 Residential Development Names**

Name plates shall be provided on all residential developments. Names shall reflect local characteristics and associations. Name plates shall be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The Planning Authority shall encourage the use of traditional lettering carved onto local materials such as indigenous rocks for such name plates. The developments name should convey a sense of place that is particular to Oughterard's cultural heritage by the use of local place names particularly townland names or topographical features as appropriate. In order to assist the public and the postal authorities all houses shall be provided with numbers which shall be visible from the adjoining roadway.

#### **5.2.15 Management Companies**

The procedure for the management and completion of housing developments should normally be in accordance with Local Authority's 'Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments' (February 1999) or any revised versions thereof published within the period of the Plan. However, when it is proposed that the residential development is not to be taken in charge by the Local Authority, then the developer must set up a management company. All residents of the development must become members of this management company. Details of the Management Company must be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to any development taking place.

#### **5.2.16 Traveller Halting Sites**

Halting sites may comprise of a hard-surfaced area, divided into bays, each bay accommodating not more than two caravans and incorporating a service block with bathroom, kitchen and toilet, and such other facilities as may be necessary for traveller needs. Only in exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to providing halting sites with more than seven bays. Provision may be made for caretaker's accommodation and other facilities for good management and control of site as deemed necessary.

#### **5.2.17 Temporary Dwellings, Caravans etc.**

Temporary dwellings are taken to include caravans, chalets, mobile homes and huts. The Planning Authority shall prohibit the use of temporary dwellings for permanent residential purposes on the grounds that such structures are generally unsuitable for permanent human habitation. Exceptions will, however, be made in dealing with acute housing emergencies. In this case, any permission granted will be for a limited period only and such temporary homes should not be obtrusively sited. The placing of caravans and temporary structures on isolated sites will not be allowed to proliferate.



## 5.3 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

This section relates to all residential, mixed development, retail, office, tourism, enterprise, industrial, and community and recreation development.

### 5.3.1 Building Height

Oughterard's skyline is defined by predominantly two and three story buildings. It is important that consideration is given to the height of any proposed new structures so that they are successfully integrated into the existing built fabric. The following factors will need to be taken into account in the determination of all proposals:

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- Height of the proposed development relative to surrounding structures.
- Successful integration of the proposed development into the character of surrounding environment, especially within the ACA.
- The degree to which the proposed development would overlook surrounding structures.
- The degree to which the proposed development would impact on natural daylight of surrounding properties.
- The degree to which the proposed development would impact on existing views whether protected or not.
- The degree to which a building would impact on recorded sites and monuments, Protected Structures, ACA's and other designations.
- The extent to which the building detracts from important landmarks.
- The degree of obtrusion on the skyline.
- The degree to which the building may impact on the overall townscape. In particular, care will be required in the treatment of rooftops and all machine/mechanical rooms will need to be adequately screened or designed as an integral part of the building.
- The effect of the building on the microclimate in the immediate vicinity.

### 5.3.2 Infrastructural Service Standards

In general, applications for housing development on lands not zoned or serviced within the Plan boundary will be regarded as premature.

Where water and/or sewerage infrastructure is privately provided, the type and design shall be in compliance with the standards set by the Planning Authority. All sewerage systems should conform to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and public health standards. Septic tanks, individual and/or group schemes will be required to connect to the public sewerage scheme when it is provided.

### 5.3.3 Treatment Systems & Minimum Distances

Development proposals which cannot connect to the existing wastewater network will be restricted and discouraged. Where it is not possible to connect to a public sewerage system, development proposals will be dependant on 'on site' treatment systems. Single houses will be required to comply with the 'EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Single Houses'. Larger development proposals shall have regard to the minimum distances and provisions required under the EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels' (see Table 5.2 below). Galway County Council will assess applications in Oughterard with proprietary treatment systems on a case by case basis. In all cases, it is a requirement of Galway County Council that treated effluent must pass through a percolation area / polishing filter after treatment.

Layout of development shall not be dictated in isolation by these minimum distances. They shall be read in conjunction with the objectives to encourage appropriate design, density, scale of development and respect the Built and Natural Heritage of Oughterard.



This is in order;

- To ensure the achievement of higher densities and more economical use of suitably zoned lands,
- To enable the achievement of higher quality layout & design standards, which is dictated by urban design principles and planning goals, rather than engineering requirements alone.

A requirement for larger sites may be necessary in the event that public sewerage is operating at capacity. Where the land is suitably zoned, this requirement will serve to phase development proposals. Once mains sewerage is made available, effluent disposal shall be connected to such mains and the proposed treatment works shall be fully decommissioned to the satisfaction of the County Council. Following satisfactory decommissioning the remainder of the suitably zoned lands on site may be considered for development purposes.

Having regard to the above, the Planning Authority will primarily encourage grouped treatment plant proposals to serve numerous developments rather than allowing individualised treatment plants to proliferate in a piecemeal manner.

**Table 5.2 Recommended Minimum Distances from Treatment Systems**

System Size Population Equivalent	Approx. Number of Houses served	Distance from existing development (m)
10-40	2-10	28
41-60	11-15	31
61-80	16-20	34
81-100	21-25	37
101-120	26-30	40
121-140	31-35	43
141-160	36-40	46
> 161	>41	50

**Note:** \*These recommended distances should be used as a guide to avoiding odour and noise nuisance from a wastewater treatment system. In addition, for a system size of > 81 p.e., at least 30 metres of the distance specified in Table 5.1 should be in the possession of the operator of the treatment system.

\*\* The design and installation of the percolation area must conform with the requirements set out in the 'EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Single Houses'. For larger developments the 'EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels' shall apply or any document which supersedes them.

For individual dwelling proposals, conventional septic tank systems (septic tank and percolation area) properly installed and maintained are satisfactory where suitable subsoil conditions exist. It shall be noted that even where a house already exists, the installation of a septic tank system or other on-site wastewater treatment system always requires planning permission. The design and installation of a septic tank and percolation area must conform with the requirements set out in the 'EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Single Houses'.

In all cases, trial hole and percolation tests must be assessed, designed and certified by a competent person and in accordance with EPA manuals. In all cases, it is a requirement of Galway County Council that treated effluent must pass through a percolation area / polishing filter after treatment.

Where suitable subsoil conditions do not initially exist, site development works may improve the subsoil conditions and make the subsoil suitable in certain circumstances. If the subsoil



conditions cannot be improved then other systems may be able to treat the wastewater to the required standard.

The Planning Authority will refuse permission for a septic tank / treatment system if there is a risk of water pollution or contamination of water supplies, or where there is evidence of undue proliferation or excessive concentration of septic tank / treatment systems.

The following will be requirements of Planning Permission:

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

Planning applicants can find out more about the requirements for percolation areas from the Environment Section of Galway County Council.

#### **5.3.4 Discharge Licence**

A discharge licence is not required for discharges of domestic effluent from a single house to a public sewer or to ground via a septic tank / treatment system and percolation area.

Section 16 of the WPA Act outlines that a licence is required to discharge trade effluent to the public sewer. If a business of any type is connected to the sewer it is likely that a licence is required.

All effluent discharges to water bodies (such as river, lakes drains or sea) or groundwater bodies, except for small domestic discharges to groundwater, require licensing under section 4 of the Acts. Galway County Council does not allow any point discharges to a water body.

The onus is on the person to apply to the Environment Section of the County Council for a licence. Failure to comply may result in prosecution. A licence application should be made prior to construction and a licence in place before any discharge occurs.

Where a development requires a discharge licence, the developer should contact the Environment Section of Galway County Council prior to the submission of a planning application.

#### **5.3.5 Surface Water Drainage**

Most residential developments on greenfield sites will result in a significant increase in the area of impervious surfaces, (roof and hard pavements). Surface water collected from these surfaces must be disposed of in a controlled and sustainable manner, so that the risk of flooding is minimised.

All surface water generated by a development shall normally be disposed of within the site and shall not be discharged onto the public road or the adjoining property. Full details of surface water collection and disposal shall be furnished to the Planning Authority with any application for planning permission.

Where soil conditions are suitable, developments may dispose of surface water via soakaways to groundwater, provided that soakaways are designed in accordance with BRE Digest 365 and are properly maintained. Surface water from roads and paths shall discharge to a soakaway via a suitable petrol/oil interceptor.

In accordance with the Development Contributions Scheme\* a Special Development Contribution may be imposed towards the provision of a surface water network to service the area, amount to be determined on a case by case basis in consultation with the Planning Authority and the Water Services Section.

\* See Development Contributions Scheme [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie)

### **5.3.6 Groundwater & Watercourse Protection**

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

Development which is proposed in close proximity to a water course shall be required to submit measures to reduce and prevent pollution to the watercourse, both during construction and after completion of the scheme.

### **5.3.7 Infill Development**

Infill development shall be encouraged within the town centre on appropriate sites where it makes good use of existing services and makes a positive contribution to streetscape quality without compromising the amenity of adjoining properties. Where this is demonstrated to be the case, the Planning Authority may consider the relaxation of standards otherwise applied to new developments (including car parking, open space). Each development will be considered individually on its merits. (See also 5.2.4 & 5.9.1)

### **5.3.8 Backland Development**

The development of backland sites<sup>10</sup> can in some cases conflict with the established pattern of development in the town centre resulting in uncoordinated piecemeal development. Piecemeal and uncoordinated development of lands, including the construction of extra dwellings in former back gardens, can result in inappropriate and disorderly development. This form of development is considered undesirable where there is an adverse effect on the residential amenity of adjoining properties, particularly where such intensification might overload infrastructure and the established use framework of an area. It can also result in missed opportunities for large scale renewal. It is an objective of this Plan to ensure that no development takes place that would compromise the overall development of backlands in any area. (See Urban Design Framework & Maps)

The Planning Authority will consider backland development where they are part of an Action Plan for a specific area and where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development assimilates with and complements the existing character of the town.

### **5.3.9 Redundant and Derelict buildings**

In the case of derelict/ semi-ruinous buildings generally, the Planning Authority shall encourage their appropriate redevelopment for commercial, residential, community or economic purposes. In practice the redevelopment of these buildings will be permitted where they:

- Can be adequately serviced,
- Have their original walls largely intact.

All development / redevelopment proposals / new uses shall be consistent with the permissible uses set out under the zoning matrix.

Where derelict or redundant buildings exist within the Plan boundary, the Planning Authority will develop a programme which will:

- Enforce the removal of derelict buildings,
- Encourage and facilitate the regeneration of viable uses,
- Acquire such derelict sites which are suited to the County Council's statutory requirements,
- Prepare design solutions and improvement schemes for key derelict sites.

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<sup>10</sup> Backland developments are generally described as lands with no existing road frontage.



### 5.3.10 Building Regulations

The Planning Authority will ensure that the construction of new buildings, extensions and material alterations to buildings comply with the Building Control Regulations, 1997 and the Building Regulations, 1997-2002. They require developers to:

- Comply with technical guidance documents issued by the DoEHLG on Building Regulations 1997 – 2002, and any amended version of these documents published in the lifetime of this Plan.
- Inform the Planning Authority of the date of commencement of development within a period of not less than fourteen days and not more than twenty-eight days before development commences.
- Obtain a fire safety certificate where applicable (a private dwelling house does not require a fire safety certificate).

### 5.3.11 Disabled Access

The Planning Authority will require that the layout and design of all proposed development and the refurbishment of existing development gives consideration to the needs of the disabled. Where buildings are intended for public use, the Planning Authority will require that the design is in accordance with:

- *'Access for the Disabled – Minimum Design Criteria'*, published by the National Rehabilitation Board, 1988,
- *'Building for Everyone 2002 – Inclusion, Access and Use'*, published by the National Disability Authority and,
- Part M of the Building Regulations 'Access for People with Disabilities' 2000.

In general, building design should allow full access to the building for all disabled persons, whether employees, visiting members of the public or otherwise. It should be noted that Part M of the building regulations requires that private dwellings are accessible and provide basic facilities for people with disabilities.

### 5.3.12 Ducting of Public Utilities

The Planning Authority will normally require that all wires, cables and pipes for the provision of public utility services shall be ducted underground to preserve the amenity and visual character of an area, and in the interests of public safety. Developers will be required to consult and co-ordinate with all relevant service providers to ascertain each of their infrastructural layouts, needs and plans for that area. This will serve to avoid uncoordinated disruption caused by the installation of cables by different stakeholders.

### 5.3.13 Illumination & spread of light

If external illumination is proposed, documentation shall be provided that clearly shows that light or glare from such illumination will not adversely affect pedestrian and vehicular traffic, natural heritage or adjacent properties.

### 5.3.14 Renewable Energy

The Planning Authority will encourage innovative building design which promotes energy efficiency and use of renewable energy resources. Building designs shall consider orientation and sun-path so as to maximise amenity, daylight and the benefits of passive solar gain to domestic heating. The long side of the building(s) on the site or the bulk of fenestration should aspire to be facing within 30 degrees of true south. Regard must be given to overlooking and rights of privacy. The layout design should allow sufficient spacing between buildings to avoid overshadowing of the southern aspect; this also opens up opportunities for geothermal energy production. There should be careful planting of vegetation around the building in order to provide adequate sheltering from northerly winds in the winter and appropriate cooling during the summer months.

### 5.3.15 Nature Designations

Where development lies within or adjacent to designated sites (Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Natural Heritage Area (NHA), Special Protected Area (SPA)), a developer shall contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG prior to the submission of an application. An environmental assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the conservation status of the designated site may be required.

### 5.3.16 Architectural Heritage & Architectural Conservation Area

Development in the ACA or works to any structure within the ACA must comply with the following standards:

- Proposals and decisions should be based on appropriate professional advice and works carried out using suitably qualified, experienced personnel.
- Demolition or partial demolition of any building or feature which contributes to the character of the ACA will not be permitted.
- With the exception of the major public or ecclesiastical buildings, new development should normally not significantly exceed or be significantly below the height of its immediate surroundings.
- New infill buildings should normally conform to the prevailing building line and should completely fill gaps.
- Carriage arches and lane entrances should normally be retained.
- Development proposals including front dormers, roof extensions and front facing gables will not normally be permitted.
- Rendering previously unrendered buildings will not normally be permitted.
- Stripping sound historic rendering will not normally be permitted.
- Painting of masonry will normally not be permitted.
- New and replacement pitched roof coverings should normally be in natural slate. Artificial materials will be considered on their merits.
- Replacement of sound or reasonably repairable original windows or doors will not normally be permitted.
- Facing materials in all new work should match or be compatible with traditional local materials in composition, texture and colour.
- Satellite dishes will not normally be permitted on front elevations, front roof slopes or above ridge lines.
- Demolition or partial demolition of original front boundaries will not normally be permitted.
- Alteration of original/historic shopfronts will not normally be permitted, irrespective of whether a single trader occupies more than one building or plot width.
- New shopfronts should normally be crafted in timber, in a manner compatible with the period and style of the parent building.
- Shop signs should use appropriate traditional materials and must not be internally illuminated. Projecting signs shall be limited to one per shop.
- Backland development, where permitted should be of a form, scale and appearance compatible with adjacent historic frontage development.

In relation to a protected structure (RPS), the term structure includes the entire fabric, including the interior, the land lying within the curtilage of the structure, 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 or structures. Works which would in the opinion of the Planning Authority, materially affect the character of the structure require planning permission. Not all alterations or works to a protected structure constitute material alterations. 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 interests.

As a minimum requirement, the Planning Authority shall require planning applications for works on Protected Structures or Proposed Protected Structures to have regard to the following:

- Galway County Council's 'Architectural Survey and Assessment Best Practice Guide'.
- The Conservation Guidelines issued by the DoEHLG.
- The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Local Authorities issued by the DoEHLG (2004).

*These documents are available for consultation at the Planning Office.*

### **5.3.17 Archaeological Heritage / Recorded Monuments**

Planning applications for new development, redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment, and restoration etc. within a 30m radius of a recorded site or monument must be accompanied by an archaeological report, which will be undertaken by a licensed archaeologist. The report must take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological mitigation. This archaeological report will be considered by the Planning Authority and the Development Application Section of the DoEHLG. It is also advisable that the developer contacts the Heritage Section of the DoEHLG in relation to any proposed development that falls within the 30m radius of a recorded site or monument.

All planning applications shall have regard to the '*Archaeology and Development: Guidelines for good practice for Developers*'. This document is available for consultation at the Planning Office.

### **5.3.18 Landscaping and Landscape Considerations**

Landscaping is an integral part of any development and there is a need to ensure that existing trees, especially along field boundaries and areas of high biodiversity value, are protected and integrated into the development, where appropriate. The potential of existing site features should be fully explored and the planning applications should include an accurate landscape survey plan. Wherever possible, existing healthy trees should be protected and retained. Where the trees are to be located in rear gardens of new dwellings, the building should normally be sited at least 11.5 metres beyond the spread of the tree. This distance may be reduced to 6m for front gardens and 2m in the case of flank walls.

Developments should include new trees within the site, the number to be agreed prior to development. Gardens areas should be adequately landscaped. Rear gardens should be treated with a 300 millimetre minimum cover of consolidated topsoil where shrub planting is proposed, 100 millimetres where grass areas are proposed. It may be a requirement in some cases that compacted areas be broken up and rubble/plastic/glass shall be removed as part of the site preparation.

The developer will be responsible for the grading, hard landscaping, planting and further development of any open space, including the provision of pedestrian paths and other facilities. The developer will be required to provide roadside trees, street planting and screen planting, where necessary. A careful balance is necessary between quick growing species for early maturity and longer lived trees which may reach their peak in up to 100 years time. Planting of native species including those listed in Appendix 2 will be encouraged. The landscape plan and the selection of plant species should consider low maintenance species. Generally single trees require more expert attention than those in composite groups, which are less vulnerable to damage. Formal, single tree lines have little effect as screen belts or buffers and for this reason groupings of young native trees will be encouraged. The Planning Authority require that suitable native tree species be planted as these are more valuable as wildlife habitat than introduced species and because they support a greater ecological diversity. Furthermore, it is important that the planting of trees or other landscaping should not replace existing habitats of ecological value in an area.

Security by means of a financial bond may be required to ensure that a landscaping plan is adequately implemented. Developers should consult with the Planning Authority at an early stage in relation to landscaping and planting proposals.

In terms of the general landscape itself, the Planning Authority will also be guided by the Draft 'Landscape and Landscape Assessment, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2000'.



## **5.4 COMMERCIAL, RETAIL, OFFICE & TOURISM.**

Many of the development standards, which are relevant to proposed commercial and retail development, have been dealt with in the previous sections. These standards include: plot ratio, site coverage, public open space, building lines, building heights, pedestrian/disabled access, infrastructural service standards, ground water protection, building regulations, discharge licence requirements, protected structures, sites and monuments of archaeological interest and landscaping considerations. Therefore, it is in the interests of the developer to consult these development standards in order to satisfy the requirements of the Local Area Plan.

### **5.4.1 Town Centre (Mixed Development) Zone**

A mix of retail, commercial, office, tourism and residential uses are encouraged in this area. Retail uses are encouraged at ground floor level on main shopping streets with office or residential uses over. The Planning Authority will consider proposals for developments where the proposal is not considered detrimental to the existing town core. Retail Impact Assessments may be required by the Planning Authority to substantiate such developments. The Planning Authority may insist on a residential content in proposed developments in the Town Centre zone. Exclusively residential units will not normally be permitted.

Site coverage shall not normally exceed 80 per cent within the Town Centre (mixed development), the standard plot ratio is 1.25. However, the Planning Authority may use its discretion in varying this where it is considered appropriate and in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Planning Authority will also be guided by the DoEHLG 'Retail Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' January 2005 and the County Development Plan 2003-2009. This will be augmented by the county retail strategy which the council are preparing.

### **5.4.2 Shopping Centres and Permitted Locations for Shopping**

The Planning Authority will consider proposals for shopping centres in terms of potential adverse impact on the viability of existing centres and in particular the viability of the town centre. Shopping Centres will be encouraged primarily to locate within the town centre (mixed development) zone. The Planning Authority will have regard to the DoEHLG 'Retail Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (January 2005) in making decisions on applications for retail development. The following issues are identified in the Guidelines and will be used in the assessment of applications:

- Adequacy of existing shopping outlets,
- Size and location of existing outlets,
- Quality and convenience of existing outlets,
- Effect on existing communities,
- Needs of the elderly, infirm or disabled or other persons, who may be dependant on the availability of local shopping outlets,
- Need to counter urban decline, to promote urban renewal and to promote the utilisation of unused infrastructural facilities in urban areas.
- The sequential approach described in the Retail Planning Guidelines (January 2005).

The Planning Authority will have regard to the recommendations of the County Development Plan which will be augmented by the Retail Strategy that the Council is preparing. A Retail Impact Assessment analysis may be required as part of a planning application for shopping centres or large food/grocery chain stores. Standard layout of designs proposed by some retail chains may be required to be reconfigured in order to meet local site circumstances and to ensure the achievement of the sequential approach.

### 5.4.3 Retail Warehousing

Retail warehousing activity relates to the sale of non-food, non-clothing goods. This includes the sale of large-scale goods and can include furniture/carpets, bulky electrical goods, gardening supplies and toys. The activity may include outdoor display areas and is likely to generate considerable car parking requirements.

A limit on the range of goods sold will normally be imposed and individual units will normally be subject to an upper floor area limit. The cumulative effect of proposed retail warehouses will also be taken into account.

Retail warehousing will only be permitted within commercial and industrial zones where the Planning Authority is satisfied that it does not detract from the existing businesses in the town centre. Any proposal should provide a compact development form, with continuous building lines. Shed type developments will be discouraged. A Retail Impact Assessment may be required for any proposed retail warehouse activity.

### 5.4.4 Petrol Filling Stations & Ancillary Uses

Where filling or service stations are proposed, adequate measures must be implemented to integrate them into their surroundings. No filling or service stations will be permitted in locations where by reason of appearance, traffic or fumes they would injure the amenities of an area.

The essential purpose of petrol stations is to provide facilities for the sale of fuels for vehicles. However, permission may be granted for ancillary retail uses involving goods related to the motor trade. In addition, in areas not already serviced by convenience shops, permission may be granted for small shops retailing confectionery, groceries and newspapers. The net area devoted to such sales shall not normally exceed 100 square metres.

Proposals shall be guided by the following design requirements;

- A minimum road/ street frontage of 30 metres shall be required.
- A low wall of approximately 0.6m in height shall be constructed along the frontage with allowance for two access points each 8 metres wide.
- The pump island shall not be less than 7 metres from the footpath / road boundary.
- No signage cluster shall be permitted.
- All external lighting should be directed away from the public road and a proliferation of large illuminated signs will not be permitted.
- Any car wash proposals will require a discharge licence.

### 5.4.5 Bars / Night-Clubs / Amusement Centres

In order to maintain an appropriate mix of uses and protect night time amenities in the town, an excessive concentration of any of the above uses in a particular area will not be permitted. This shall ensure that the intensity of any proposed use is in keeping with both the character of the area (i.e. residential, mixed use etc.) and with adjoining businesses, when development proposals are being considered. The following issues shall be taken into account in the assessment of application for the above uses:

- Noise at the boundaries will be carefully monitored and noise insulation measures will be required at the time of the submission of the planning application. Other effects of the development on the amenity of nearby residents must be assessed prior to the granting of planning permission (i.e. general disturbance, hours of operation and car parking).
- The importance of safeguarding the vitality and viability of the town centre and maintaining a vibrant mix of uses.

- The Planning Authority shall insist that proper litter control measures be in place prior to the opening of any premises.

Façade design will be carefully controlled by the Planning Authority and in particular the type and degree of advertising signage and lighting. The design shall respect and complement the character of the streets and the buildings.

#### **5.4.6 Hot Food Take-Aways**

A proliferation of hot food take-aways will not be permitted in any area. Regard will be had to the impact of hot-food take-aways on the amenities in the area, including noise, odour and litter. The Planning Authority may impose restrictions on opening hours of hot food take-aways as a condition of planning permission.

#### **5.4.7 Food Preparing Premises**

All food preparing premises will require a grease trap. Planning Applicants can find out more about this requirement from the Environment Section of Galway County Council.

#### **5.4.8 Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)**

The Planning Authority will strictly control the location of Automatic Teller Machines (ATM's) having regard to the following:

- The need to protect the character of the street, building or shop front into which they are to be incorporated, in particular in protected structures.
- The design and location must be such that they are safe and easily accessible to all.
- Canopies, signs and logos shall be discreetly incorporated into the overall design.
- Regard will be had to litter prevention.

In general, ATM's will not be permitted where customers queuing may cause obstruction or hazard.

#### **5.4.9 Taxi stands & Hackney bases**

The Local Authority will work with local taxi companies in the identification of suitable locations for the provision of taxi ranks.

The establishment of a taxi rank or hackney base will not be permitted where it is likely to interfere with traffic flows or parking. Satisfactory off-street parking should be provided for hackneys when the vehicles are not in use. Planning assessments will address issues of location, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, residential amenities and accessibility.

## 5.5 SHOPFRONTS, ADVERTISING, & SIGNAGE

This section relates to all residential, commercial, retail, office, enterprise, tourism and community developments.

### 5.5.1 Shopfronts

The following considerations will apply in relation to existing and new shop fronts:

- In general the need to change old shop fronts will be carefully considered, as it is the policy of the Planning Authority to preserve and retain traditional shop fronts of character.
- The repair, restoration and replacement of shop fronts must be sympathetically carried out to protect the architectural character of the town.
- Where existing shop fronts are of no special merit, total replacement is acceptable. The design of new shop fronts shall relate to the architectural characteristics of the building of which it forms part.
- New shop front designs must respect the scale and proportion of the streetscape by maintaining the existing grain of development along the street and respecting the appropriate plot width. Large expanses of undivided glass will generally not be permitted.
- National-chain shops, which have adopted a 'corporate image', will not necessarily be allowed to use their standardised shop front design, 'corporate colours' and materials. Compatibility with individual buildings and with the streetscape will be considered more important than uniformity among the branches of one company.
- The use of loud music to attract attention to a shop will not be permitted.
- Lettering should be either hand painted or individually mounted in proportion to the size of the fascia.
- Maintenance of upper floors of town centre buildings and highlighting of details will be encouraged.

### 5.5.2 Canopies and Awnings

The erection of canopies requires planning permission. The use of plastic canopies over windows will be discouraged. Where shading of a window display is required, the traditional retractable awning is considered suitable.

### 5.5.3 Security Screens

The use of metal security grills or shutters will be discouraged. Where it is essential to use such shutters, these should be open grilled, and should be affixed to the inside of the window, or preferably behind the display area. The installation of roller shutters requires planning permission. The use of the public footpath for security stanchions or roller shutter fixings is not acceptable.

### 5.5.4 Advertising and Signage

The Planning Authority accepts that advertising is an integral part of commercial and enterprise development. However, in considering applications for advertising structures, it remains the primary concern of the Planning Authority to protect the essential character of the town. Control will be exercised to prevent clutter in any location and to limit the number of signs on any building. The Planning Authority is opposed to advertisements in residential areas, on or near buildings of architectural or historical importance, adjacent to amenity and recreational areas or in open space areas.

Proposals for signs and advertising structures must:

- Be in scale and harmony with the surrounding environment, signage shall not be permitted to exceed 15% of the façade of the building, however, where the façade exceeds 250m<sup>2</sup>, then signage shall not exceed 10% of the façade,
- Not interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic,
- Not obscure traffic signs,



- Not impair the amenities of the area,
- Not interfere with windows or other features of a building façade, and
- Not project, in whole or part, above the eaves of the building or obtrude on the skyline.

Internally illuminated plastic signs will generally be discouraged. Any external illumination to an existing or a proposed development shall be directed away from the public road so as not to cause glare or a traffic hazard. Details of any such lighting shall be furnished to the Planning Authority as part of any planning application. Monument signs are to be favoured instead of free-standing signs. Free-standing advertising structures, such as sandwich boards, which require a license under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and Section 201 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, will not be allowed on footpaths or in pedestrian areas where they have the potential to cause an obstruction and may be a hindrance, particularly to disabled persons. Where locations are considered suitable, advertising panels may be permitted on builder's hoardings for a specified period.

The system for fingerpost signs, which relate to premises, and are located away from major routes, will operate on the following basis:

- A single pole will be allowed at the road junction apart from any County Council statutory directional sign,
- A maximum of 4 no. signs shall be allowed on the pole,
- No establishment may have more than one fingerpost sign.



## 5.6 Enterprise, Industry & Tourism Development

### 5.6.1 Enterprise, Industry & Tourism Development

Many of the development standards, which are relevant, have been dealt with in the previous sections. These standards include public open space, landscaping considerations, pedestrian/disabled access, ground water protection, building regulations, discharge licence requirements, infrastructural and conservation objectives. Therefore, it is in the interests of the developer to consult these development standards in order to satisfy the requirements of the Local Area Plan.

Small scale enterprise is primarily encouraged on land designated for Enterprise & Industrial Development. The standard plot ratio for enterprise and industrial development is 1.00, whilst the site coverage index is 80%.

Enterprise and industrial development should present a pleasant aspect helped by tree planting, the judicious placing of advertisement structures, screening of open storage areas and unobtrusive loading and parking space. Therefore, in terms of design and layout the following considerations will apply:

- Surfaces within the curtilage of industrial/commercial sites shall be of hard wearing, dust free and durable material.
- Adequate space must be available for on-site storage of materials and refuse, loading and unloading and on-site circulation and parking. (For car parking standards see section 5.8 Standards for Parking, Loading & Storage).
- Car parking spaces shall be clearly delineated. Parking spaces for vehicles for the disabled shall be located close to main entrances to premises.
- There will be ample room for delivery vehicles to circulate within the site boundaries without the need to reverse onto the public road. Loading and unloading areas shall be specifically delineated within the site boundaries.
- Adequate provision should be made for storage of goods and materials within the building or in a designated storage area.
- A detailed landscaping scheme for the site shall be required (See section 5.3.18 Landscaping and Landscape Considerations). There shall be a minimum landscaped/planting strip to a width of 5 metres on all principal road frontages.
- In the case of developments for two or more buildings, a uniform design for boundary fences, roof profiles and building lines is essential.
- A minimum open space requirement of 15% will be required and provided such that it may function as an effective amenity area. Where industrial proposals are located adjacent to existing and proposed residential areas, the open space provision considerations will be designed in such a way as to act as a buffer zone between the proposed industrial units and residential areas. Additional landscaping will also be required in these areas. In situations where effective open space cannot be provided on site, a contribution will be payable in lieu or other arrangement similar to that employed in the provision of open space in residential areas will be required. (See section 4.2.8. Public Open Space).
- The number of signs attached to a building in such areas should be limited and no sign should be excessively obtrusive or out of scale with the building façade.
- 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 to not cause glare to road users or intrusion to adjacent property owners.
- Where security fencing is required it shall not normally be forward of the front building line of the premises. Where in exceptional circumstances, security fencing is erected forward of the

front building line it shall be set behind a landscaped mound of at least 2m in width. Security fencing shall be palisade or chain link type and shall be plastic coated and have an appropriate colour.

- The hours of operation will be controlled where they are likely to result in harm to environmental amenities including residential amenity.
- Noise levels shall not exceed 55dB (a) Leq when measured at the boundary of the site.
- Provision shall be made on site in a screened compound for short term waste and segregation storage pending collection and disposal.

The layout, planning and design may be subject of a detailed Action Plan to be approved by the Planning Authority.

### **5.6.2 Tourism Development**

Tourism development is primarily encouraged within the areas zoned town centre (mixed development).

Pre-planning meetings to examine development proposals are recommended. Any development proposals shall examine the issues outlined above in order to maintain and enhance the unique character of the area.

### **5.6.3 Telecommunication Antennae & Support Structures**

In considering applications for these structures the Planning Authority will have regard to the 'Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoEHLG July 1996) and the following considerations;

- Telecommunications antennae should be located so as to minimise any negative visual intrusion on the surrounding area, especially on landscapes or streetscapes of a sensitive nature.
- The preferred location for telecommunications antennae is in industrial estates or areas zoned for industry or in areas already developed for utilities.
- The use of tall buildings or other existing structures is always preferable to the construction of an independent antennae support structure.
- Support structures should be kept to a minimum height consistent with effective operation and should be monopole (or poles) rather than latticed or square structure.
- Sharing of installations (antennae support structures) is encouraged, as it will normally reduce the visual impact on the landscape or townscape. All applications must satisfy the Planning Authority that a reasonable effort to share installations has been made. Where it is not possible to share a support structure the applicant should, where possible, share a site or site adjacently, so that antennae may be clustered.
- Masts and associated base stations should be located away from existing residences and schools.
- Mast compounds shall have security fencing and anti-climbing devices.
- In the event of discontinuance of any mast installation the mast and its equipment shall be removed from the site and the land shall be reinstated.

Permissions for telecommunications masts shall in general be permitted for a 5-year period so as to assess the state of the technology and decide whether the national interest requires a continuance of the permission.

## 5.7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Lands identified for community facilities provide for a range of uses including future educational, health and community facilities. It is important to note that all Community Use Facility developments must abide by many of the development standards requirements mentioned in previous sections. These standards include: site coverage, public open space, building lines, building heights, pedestrian/disabled access, infrastructural service standards, ground water protection, building regulations, discharge licence requirements, landscaping considerations, conservation objectives, segregated waste collection as well as the provisions on contributions and securities.

### 5.7.1 Schools

- For primary schools a minimum size of 0.6 hectares of school land must be provided for schools with up to three class units and increasing in line with an increase in class units.
- Provision must be made within the site for adequate car parking and informal hard surfaced play areas for organised sport activities.
- Provision should be made in secondary schools for a range of sports facilities.
- Where on site treatment facilities are proposed, provision must be made for on site treatment facilities in the site size.

### 5.7.2 Crèches / Playschools

The Western Health Board regulates childcare in the County. All crèche facilities must register with the health board and are then monitored by a pre-school officer. The Department of Justice and Law Reform provides the funding for the provision of a crèche facility but does not include funding for the purchase or rent of a site.

Crèches will be required in all housing developments at a rate of one for each 75 residential units in accordance with the DoEHLG 'Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities', June 2001.

Crèches and playschools will only be permitted on specific sites where it can be proven that they will not cause hazard due to traffic congestion or adversely affect the amenity of adjoining residences.

Applications for crèches and playschools within a new or existing place of work or in proximity thereof, such as an industrial estate, will be favourably considered. Applications for such proposals in terraced and semi-detached houses with adequate private and secure open space, on-site car parking and suitable screening from neighbouring properties may be acceptable.

Applications for crèches and playschools should include the following information as part of any planning application:

- Details of proposed opening times.
- Proposed number and age range of children.
- Proposed number of staff.
- Internal floor area devoted to such use, excluding areas such as kitchens, toilets, sleeping and other ancillary areas.
- Facilities for rest and play as recommended under the Pre-School Regulations 1996 (Amended 1997) published by the Department of Health and Children\*.
- Car parking arrangements, for both parents and staff members (see Section 5.8).

The Planning Authority may grant a temporary permission of between 1-5 years to assess the impact of crèche and playschool developments on their surroundings.

\* Copy of publication available from the Planning Office for inspection and at [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

### 5.7.3 Care Facilities

A change of use from residential to a care facility to care for more than six persons with an intellectual or physical disability will require planning permission and will be dealt with sympathetically with consideration for factors such as accessibility, traffic, safety and proximity to community and shopping facilities. Houses with adequate private and secure open space and on-site car parking are generally acceptable for such uses.

### 5.7.4 Nursing Homes

Privately run nursing homes provide an essential service for the elderly and the infirm. The Planning Authority will, subject to protecting residential amenity, consider the location of nursing homes in residential areas and on sites considered adequate in size to cater for all generated needs of the development. Where on site treatment facilities are proposed, provision must be made for on site treatment facilities within the site boundary. The development of nursing homes should not involve significant changes to the streetscape involving the loss of trees, hedges, walls etc.

Permission will normally only be granted for nursing home developments that are located in properties of adequate size, with six or more bedrooms. The premises should have adequate access and off-street parking in line with the following guidelines:

- 1 space for every resident member of staff,
- 1 space for every 2 non-resident members of staff on duty at the peak staffing period,
- 1 space for every 4 residents.

The Health Service Executive regulates nursing homes in the County. Part of this remit involves the issuing of licences for the treatment of waste. Consultation with the WHB and the Environment Section of Galway County Council is required prior to the making of a planning application.



## 5.8 PARKING, LOADING & STORAGE

### 5.8.1 Car Parking Standards

Car parking should not dominate the built environment. All parking facilities should be well lit, open to natural surveillance and have obvious pedestrian routes.

In addition to car parking standards sufficient space will be required within the curtilage of the site for all service vehicles involved in the operation of the business or building.

Where there is a difficulty in providing surface car parking spaces, the Planning Authority shall require the developer make a financial contribution towards the provision of car parking facilities under the provisions of the Development Contribution Scheme. This situation will apply in particular to town centre infill or redevelopment projects.

In dealing with planning applications for a change of use or for replacement buildings, an allowance will be given for the former site use in calculating the car parking requirements generated by new development. Furthermore, in relation to infill development a flexible application of the car parking standards will be considered. Section 16 of the Traffic Management Guidelines provides assistance in the design and standards for car parking areas. The basic dimensions required are summarised below.

- (i) Parking spaces parallel to the kerb should be 6m long and 2.4m wide (2.1m minimum),
- (ii) Perpendicular parking spaces should be 5.5m long and 2.4m wide (4.8m by 2.28m minimum).
- (iii) A minimum width of aisle for 60 degree parking – 4.9m.
- (iv) A minimum width of aisle for 45 degree parking – 3.6m.
- (v) A minimum width of aisle for less than 45 degree parking and for parallel parking – 3.6m.

**Note:** Angled parking should only be considered on wider roads.

The Local Authority will encourage the provision of parking spaces through grouped and dual use parking provision where peak demands do not coincide. In the case of mixed use developments where peak demands do not coincide it may not be necessary to meet the full car-parking requirement for all elements proposed where shared parking is provided.

<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Relevant car parking standards</b>
House and Flats	Grouped parking @ 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit otherwise 2 car spaces per dwelling unit except small one bedroom flats where one space per unit is required*
Shops	1 car space per 20 m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor space
Supermarkets and large stores	1 car space per 20 m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor space
Office	1 car space per 25 m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor space
Industry	3 car spaces per 100 m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor space
Warehousing (non retail)	1 car space per 50 m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor space
Theatres, Cinema and Stadia	1 car space per four seats
Hotels (Excluding restaurant, bars, conference centre, function rooms)	1 car space per bedroom
Lounge bars	1 car space per 8 m <sup>2</sup> of public floor space

Restaurants	1 car space for every 10 m <sup>2</sup> of public floor space
Ballroom, dance halls, clubs, function rooms.	1 car space per 10 m <sup>2</sup>
Conference Centre	1 car space per 20 m <sup>2</sup>
Guesthouse (excluding function rooms or bars)	1 car space per bedroom
Cash and Carry	1 car space per 100 m <sup>2</sup>
Banks	5 car spaces per 100 m <sup>2</sup>
Crèches	1 space per employee. 0.2 spaces per child or adequate set down collection area which can adequately service the facility to meet road safety requirements.
Take-Aways	3 spaces per unit
Cafes	1 space per 5 m <sup>2</sup> dining area
Playing Fields	15 car spaces per pitch
Schools	1 car space per classroom
Nursing homes	See section 4.9.5 above.

*\* In the case of small one bedroom units one (1) car parking space per unit may be acceptable and in the case of units with a floor area in excess of 250 square metres three (3) off-street car parking spaces per unit may be required. However, each individual planning application shall be assessed separately with regard to the specific circumstances.*

*Note: Large complex developments may be assessed separately with regard to the specific circumstances.*

### 5.8.2 Loading Bays and Service Vehicles

In addition to the general car parking standards required, dedicated service parking areas will be required for vehicles necessarily involved in the operation of business in such activities as the delivery and collection of goods, the carrying out of repair and maintenance services. Each new premises proposed for office, commercial or industrial use must include within the curtilage of the building one or more loading bays of an adequate size to cater for its specific needs and the requirements of the type of vehicle serving the premises. All such loading bays should be off carriageway or lay-byes where appropriate.

### 5.8.3 Design and Layout of Parking Areas

Parking and service spaces should be designed and located in such a manner as to ensure minimal injury to streetscape and the amenity of adjoining premises.

The design and layout of parking spaces shall have regard to the following considerations;

- Encourage grouped car parking which allows for a clear separation between the vehicular circulation areas and the circulation areas used by pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled.
- Parking and service spaces must be located so as to prevent street obstruction and should be located, where possible, in areas which are adequately supervised.
- Where parking is allowed in highly visible locations, adequate screening or landscaping must be provided to soften the impact of parked cars.

When considering car park developments surrounded by buildings, the Planning Authority shall require front and rear facades to be treated with equal prominence and design aesthetics.



#### 5.8.4 Multi-storey Car Parks

All planning applications for multi-storey car parks must be accompanied by a report, containing recent quantitative data which illustrates the need for parking spaces in the area proposed. The report should contain an assessment of this data by a competent traffic consultant on the likely impact the car park will have on parking and traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, in the area and on the town in general. Auto truck analysis for cars should be shown on drawings especially at entrances and ramp areas.

Any proposed elevations onto prominent streets shall be carefully designed to respect the creation of a streetscape. Developments which cause injury to the streetscape and/or skyline will be discouraged.

#### 5.8.5 Disabled Car Parking

Reasonable provision shall be made for parking facilities for the disabled. Special car parking bays for the disabled shall be provided as close as possible to the entrance of the premises to be served. Each parking bay shall have a minimum size of 5.0m by 3.3m. Where two bays for the disabled are provided side by side, the extra space of 0.9m width may be shared by two bays. Each disabled parking bay shall be clearly marked with the relevant international symbol.

#### 5.8.6 Bicycle Parking

Cycle facilities shall be provided in conjunction with any new development or change of use proposals. Stands should be in a secure location and should be located conveniently to the main entrance of the development or to employee entrances. Stands in residential areas should be located in close proximity to residential units.

<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Relevant car parking standards</b>
Residential	1 stand per residential unit
Industrial / Commercial Development	25% of the number of car parking spaces
Primary Schools	1 stand for every 5 students
Secondary Schools	1 stand for every 4 students
Third Level Institutions / Colleges	1 stand for every 3 students

The provision of cycle parking facilities will be encouraged where possible at existing transport nodes, public buildings, retail centres and leisure facilities. Where stands cannot be provided on-site, a contribution may be required towards the provision of public cycle stands.

#### 5.8.7 Storage

Suitable provision for general storage space should be planned in all developments. Externally accessible space should also be considered for storing garden equipment and tools, as well as play equipment and bicycles.

Refuse storage space should be externally accessible be large enough to allow for the separation of recyclable waste. In some schemes refuse storage space may be provided communally enclosed in a carefully designed building integrated within the overall development.

Apartment developments must make provision for the segregated storage of waste at the point where the waste is aggregated before collection from the block. At a minimum, space should be allowed for three containers (one each for compostable waste, dry segregated waste and residual waste) which are adequately sized to store the quantities of waste generated by the occupants of





the apartment block. Storage provisions should make allowances for collection on fortnightly or monthly basis. These areas shall be well ventilated and adequately screened so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the overall development.



## **5.9 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME & BONDS**

### **5.9.1 Development Contributions**

Galway County Council has prepared a Development Contribution Scheme under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. This came into effect on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004. The scheme provides that conditions on grants of planning permission may be included requiring the payment of contribution in respect to public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area, that is provided, or that it is intended will be provided, by or on behalf of Galway County Council. Copies of the scheme are available at the Planning office and on [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie). Regard shall be had to this scheme and any other such scheme as may be published by the Council.

### **5.9.2 Bonds and Securities**

The Planning Authority will require developers to provide a security or bond for the proper completions of proposals with particular emphasis on large residential developments. The security required will be linked to the amount of roads, footpaths, lighting services and open space proposed.



## **6. APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1 – Environmental Assessment of Plan**

**Appendix 2 – Native Trees & Shrubs in the Oughterard area**

**Appendix 3 – Land use Zoning Matrix**

**Appendix 4– Maps**



**APPENDIX 1:**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PLAN**



## Appendix 1 – Environmental Assessment of Local Area Plan

### Introduction

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I 436 of 2004) came into effect from 21<sup>st</sup> July 2004 and transpose the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC otherwise known as the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Directive. Under these regulations screening for SEA is required for the preparation of Local Area Plans. As the consultation process for the Oughterard Local Area Plan began in October 2003 this requirement does not apply in this instance. Submissions on the Oughterard Local Area plan were initially invited between the 16<sup>th</sup> October and the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2003. Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires Planning Authorities to include in their Plans information on ‘the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan’. In fulfilment of this requirement, the following information assesses the potential impact if the Policies and Objectives of the Plan are implemented. The benefit of this process is that it:

- Allows alternative policies to be assessed,
- Adverse effects to be minimised,
- Positive benefits to be identified,
- Monitoring measures to be identified.

This Environmental Assessment is addressed under the following headings:

- Oughterard Local Area Plan
- Environmental Factors likely to be Affected
- Assessment
- Alternative

### Oughterard Local Area Plan

The County Development Plan Settlement Strategy identifies Oughterard on the third tier of the G.T.P.S. Area Settlement Hierarchy. Sufficient lands are zoned to cater for the projected household/population growth allowing for a varying degree of density and choice. A scale of growth that reflects the status of Oughterard as a town on this tier is promoted.

The Plan aims to revitalise and enhance the town. A mix of residential densities has been identified and the Plan contains proposals to develop and expand the town in an integrated manner. Light industry / enterprise development and appropriate home based enterprise are encouraged. Proposals are provided to facilitate the development of community and recreational facilities at central locations and promote the amenity value of the Owenriff River and Lough Corrib in a sensitive manner. Residential areas must also make provision for managed open space, play space and other informal recreational facilities.

The Plan aims to facilitate future development in Oughterard in a sustainable manner while having regard to amenities, protected areas and landscape sensitivities. Public awareness on creating a minimum waste environment and energy conservation is promoted. The Plan also contains proposals to improve and further pedestrian routes linking residential areas to shops, schools and workplaces, thereby encouraging walking as an alternative to the car.

### Environmental Factors likely to be Affected

It is considered that the factors which are most likely to be affected by the implementation of the Oughterard Local Area Plan are:

1. Human Beings (including population, economic and social activity)

2. Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
3. Water
4. Sustainable Transportation
5. Waste Management and Sustainable Energy

The following sections provide an indication of the likely effects on each of the above factors. The measures to be taken to mitigate such effects are also identified.

## **Assessment**

### **1. Human Beings**

#### *Current status*

The 1996 census recorded a population of 751 for Oughterard. In 2002 a significant increase was recorded in the Census town boundary to 1,209 (61%). The town acts as a local service centre and has developed in more recent times as a tourist destination.

The local economy of Oughterard supports a number and variety of jobs; they are mainly retail, light industry/enterprise and community services related. Agriculture is the significant sector in the hinterland. Community facilities in the area are significant assets and contribute to its character and function of the town.

#### *Likely significant effects*

- An increase in population during the period of the plan,
- Increased demand for employment and social services,
- Significant increased traffic within the town and in commuting to outside employment sources and community facilities,
- Expansion of commercial, retail and enterprise services,
- Increased demand for infrastructure,
- Increased demand for open space, community, recreation and amenity facilities.

#### *Mitigation measures*

- Facilitate new development in a manner that is environmentally sensitive.
- Enhancement of town centre through environmental improvements,
- Improved architectural and eco-efficient design in buildings,
- Development of integrated transportation network,
- Provision of lands for community, recreation and amenity uses at central locations,
- Protection of natural and built heritage elements and nature designations,
- Facilitate local employment and small scale enterprise opportunities,
- Provision of infrastructure while having regard to amenities, protected areas and sensitive landscape,
- Provision of usable open space, walking and cycling routes within new residential areas.

### **2. Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage**

#### *Current status*

Oughterard's archaeological, architectural and natural heritage and setting contributes to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Under the Landscape Sensitivity Rating in the County Development Plan, Oughterard and its hinterland are classified mostly as class 3 (High sensitivity) and class 4 (special). Some areas of Oughterard, especially the areas around the Lough Corrib SAC fall into class 5 category (unique).

The Natural Heritage of the area includes a wide variety of diverse habitats, including Lough Corrib, the Owenriff River, woodland, trees / groups of trees, stonewalls, hedgerows and associated wildlife. Lough Corrib is designated as a Special Area of Conservation.

The town and its surrounding hinterland are also rich in terms of its built heritage. An Architectural Conservation Area has been identified in Oughterard town centre (Map 4). The built environment has evolved through time and contributes to the character and local distinctiveness of the area.

Within and directly abutting the Plan boundary there are six archaeological sites and monuments (RMPs) afforded protection under the National Monuments Act 1994 and nine structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

*Likely significant effects*

- Loss of habitat biodiversity,
- Loss of grassland flora,
- Some tree, hedgerow and stonewall removal,
- Disruption of field patterns and reduction of agricultural land,
- Some disturbance of protected areas,
- New development being out of harmony with setting of historic buildings and amenity spaces,
- Loss of character of older streetscape,
- Loss of local distinctiveness.
- Loss of protected areas.
- Loss of wildlife due to destruction of habitat.

*Mitigation measures*

- An Architectural Conservation Area is identified,
- Promotion of greater habitat and species biodiversity through the planting of trees and shrubs native to area,
- Promote retention of landscape features, significant trees and hedgerows to be retained by means of conditions to planning permissions,
- Professional assessment required prior to commencement of development in sensitive areas,
- Protection of recorded monuments and protected structures through assessing the implications of any developments in the town on their resource value,
- Provision of new recreation and amenity areas,
- Provision and encouragement of new green ways and landscape views,
- Require development to be of sensitive architectural design, respect and complement the existing character of an area,
- Ensure that existing buildings are rehabilitated rather than demolished and new ones constructed where possible to retain character of area,
- Removal of derelict and disused town centre sites,
- Enhancement of town through environmental improvements,
- Have residential developments names to reflect Oughterard's cultural heritage,
- Local Festivals and events supported in environmentally sensitive manner.
- A buffer varying from 10 metres to 30 metres and zoned Recreation and Amenity has been established both sides of the river.

**3. Water**

*Current status*

Oughterard is served by the Oughterard Regional Water Supply Scheme. This is a large modern scheme serving the town and environs and extending eastwards to Rosscahill and Moycullen areas. The source of the scheme is Lough Buffy in Rosscahill. The source and treatment works are adequate to serve the needs of Oughterard well beyond the period of this Plan and therefore, no substantial water supply improvements are necessary at this stage.

At present the town wastewater treatment system is at capacity. Upgrading a large portion of the existing sewer network is due to take place in phase 1 while phase 2 will incorporate short extensions to the existing network. The new proposed Waste Water Treatment Works will be



located on a new greenfield site to the east of the existing site. A 100 metre buffer zone will be required around the perimeter of the proposed Waste Water Treatment Works. It is envisaged that the new scheme will be in place by the end of 2007.

*Likely significant effects*

- Increased discharge of effluent to receiving water bodies,
- Increased discharge to groundwaters and major aquifer with high vulnerability,
- Reduced water quality in the adjoining Nature Designated areas,
- Works associated with renewal/repair of pipelines,
- Increased water abstraction.

*Mitigation measures*

- Implementation of a monitoring programme to assess the impact of development receiving bodies water quality,
- Consultation with Environment Section & National Parks & Wildlife Service on relevant planning applications,
- Control of development which would pose an unacceptable threat to water quality and infrastructure,
- Have regard to the recommendations of the forthcoming Western River Basin Catchment Management Plan that shall investigate sources of pollution and recommend measures to mitigate them,
- Public education programme on water management and measures to protect natural water bodies.

#### **4. Sustainable Transportation**

*Current status*

Oughterard is situated on the Galway – Clifden National Secondary Route. The N59 brings a considerable volume of traffic through the town centre particularly during the peak tourist season. Traffic congestion on the N59 is probably the single biggest transport issue for Oughterard at present.

Parking provision is inadequate at present. To facilitate the growth of Oughterard and improve accessibility for locals and visitors, there is a need for improved traffic management and circulation, environmental enhancements and the development parking facilities. The location for additional parking facilities are identified in the Plan. Bus Éireann provides five scheduled daily bus services (Monday – Friday) to and from Oughterard.

*Likely significant effects*

- Increased demand for transport and increased vehicular movements,
- Traffic congestion in town centre,
- Loss of natural heritage due to road construction,
- Alteration of historical street layout,
- Loss of local distinctiveness.
- Public car parking difficulties may arise in the town as there is no provision in the Plan for adequate public car parking facilities proximate to the town centre.

*Mitigation measures*

- Improvements in transportation network including development of an integrated transport network, traffic management and circulation improvements, environmental enhancements and safe routes to schools,
- Creation of relief routes north of town to relieve traffic congestion in town centre,
- Creation of more user-friendly environment for cyclists and pedestrians,
- Better access for people with disabilities,





- Improved parking management and provision of limited parking facilities.
- Have transportation proposals sensitively designed to integrate into the surrounding.
- The provision of relief roads will relieve local traffic.

#### **5. Waste Management & Sustainable Energy**

There is great awareness and community involvement in maintaining Oughterard and presenting a clean and attractive environment. A segregated waste collection service is operating in Oughterard. Properly segregated and managed waste is a potential material resource that can generate economic activity and employment. It can also protect the environment from the pollution caused by illegal dumping and backyard incineration. A bring bank facility is provided for the collection of glass.

##### *Likely significant effects*

- Increased waste produced,
- Litter pollution,
- Works associated with provision of infrastructure,
- Increased energy usage,
- Disturbance to heritage and character of area,
- Loss of local distinctiveness.

##### *Mitigation measures*

- Public awareness programme on waste management and energy conservation,
- Extension of segregated collection system to include organic waste,
- Provision of infrastructure while having regard to amenities, protected areas and sensitive landscape,
- Improved architectural and eco-efficient design in buildings.

#### **Alternative**

The implication of continuing as before has been examined. Decisions made without a Local Area Plan being in place would lead to individual applications being assessed on their own merits. A 'plan led' approach is recognised as the best option for a co-ordinated approach and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**APPENDIX 2:**  
**NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS IN THE OUGHTERARD AREA**



## Appendix 2 – Native Trees and Shrubs in the Oughterard Area.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Irish Name	Site suitability
Ash	Fraxinus excelsior	Fuinnseóg	Does not like waterlogged sites. Prefers well-drained neutral to alkaline soils
Irish Whitebeam	Sorbus hibernica		Does not like very wet sites. Prefers alkaline soils. Tolerates coastal exposure.
Elder	Sambucus nigra	Trom	Prefers nutrient rich soils. Hardy
Crab Apple	Malus sylvestris	Cran fia-úill	Prefers neutral to alkaline soils, but thrives in all fertile including heavy soils.
Blackthorn	Prunus spinosa	Draighean	Does not like very wet conditions. Prefers open, sunny conditions Tolerates a wide range of soils.
Hawthorn	Crataegus monogyna	Sceach geal	Does not thrive in wet or very acid soils. Among hardiest and most adaptable trees
Briar/Bramble	Rubus Fruticosus agg.	Dris	Tolerates a wide range of soils.
Hazel	Corylus avellana	Coll	Does not like acid soils. Will tolerate some shade. Prefers heavies fertile soil
Ivy	Hedera helix	Eidhneán	Tolerates a wide range of soils.
Yew	Taxus baccata	lúr	Prefers well drained alkaline soils and is tolerant of shade

**APPENDIX 3:**  
**ZONING MATRIX**



### Appendix 3 - Land Use Zoning Objectives and Zoning Matrix

Areas zoned within the Local Area Plan are for those uses in particular areas for particular purposes as defined in the Planning Acts. The matrix table outlines the zoning objective for each area of the town and indicates the uses which may or may not be considered under each objective identified in the plan. It is acknowledged that this is not an exhaustive list of potential land use zones which may be proposed. Those land uses not listed in the matrix in Schedule 1 will be considered on the merits of the individual planning application the general policies and zoning objectives for the area including the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Development proposals will be expected to be compatible with this land use zoning matrix. However, in certain circumstances further consideration may be given to particular uses which would provide benefit to the wider community of Oughterard which are in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. These uses will also be required to demonstrate that they are consistent with the Plans development standards and the Plans requirements on public health, traffic safety, residential amenity, Heritage, design and visual amenity.

#### **Permitted in Principle (I)**

Land uses designated under each zoning objective as "Permitted in Principle" are generally acceptable, subject to compliance with the relevant policies, standards and requirements set out in the Plan.

#### **Open for Consideration (O)**

Land uses shown as "Open for Consideration" are uses that are generally considered acceptable. However, each application will be assessed on its own merits and will take consideration of existing and adjoining land uses. The existing and adjoining land uses will be an important factor in the making of any decisions.

#### **Not Permitted (X)**

Land uses that are not indicated as "Permitted in Principle" or Open for Consideration" will not normally be permitted.

#### **Other Uses**

Proposed land uses not listed in the matrix in Schedule 1 will be considered on the merits of the individual planning application the general policies and zoning objectives for the area including the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

All zones should be considered as mixed development zones, within the context of the town. Zoning should be considered as primary use zones but not necessarily excluding other development that in the opinion of the Council are necessary for the vitality and proper development of the town.

**KEY**

/ Permitted in principle  
 O Open for consideration  
 X Not normally permitted

(R) Residential  
 (A) Agriculture  
 (TC) Town Centre  
 (RA) Recreation & Amenity  
 (CF) Community Facilities  
 (EI) Enterprise & Industry

USE CLASSES	(R)	(A)	(TC)	(RA)	(CF)	(EI)
Abattoir	X	O	X	X	X	X
Advertisement & Advertising Structures	X	X	/	X	O	/
Aerodrome/Airfield	X	X	X	X	X	X
Agricultural Buildings	X	/	X	X	X	O
Agri- Tourism	X	/	O	X	O	/
Agri-Business	X	/	O	X	O	/
Amusement Arcade	X	X	O	X	X	O
Anaerobic Digestion Plant	X	O	X	X	X	O
Apartments	O	X	/	X	X	X
ATM	X	X	/	X	O	O
Bank	X	X	/	X	X	X
Bed and Breakfast	O	O	O	X	X	X
Betting Office	X	X	/	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	O	O	X	X	O
Bring Banks	/	O	/	O	/	/
Buildings for the Health, Safety and Welfare of the public.	O	X	/	X	/	O
Building Society	X	X	/	X	X	X
Café	O	X	/	X	O	O
Caravan Park – Holiday	O	X	X	O	X	X
Caravan Park - Residential	O	X	X	X	X	X
Car Dismantling Facility	X	X	X	X	X	O
Car Park	O	X	/	O	O	O
Car Park Multi Storey	X	X	/	X	X	O
Cash and Carry/Wholesale Outlet	X	X	O	X	X	O
Casual Trading	X	X	O	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	O	X	X	O	X
Cinema	X	X	/	X	X	X
Chemist	O	X	O	X	O	X
Childcare Facilities (Creche/Nursery)	/	X	/	X	/	/
Childrens Playground	/	X	O	O	/	O
Civic /Recycling Centre	O	O	O	X	/	O
Club House and associated facilities	O	X	/	/	/	X
Commercial Garage	O	X	/	X	X	O
Composting Centre	X	/	X	O	O	X
Community Facility	/	X	/	O	/	/
Concrete, Asphalt etc. Plant	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conference Centre	O	X	/	X	X	O
Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Recycling Centre	X	O	X	X	X	X
Credit Union	X	X	/	X	X	X
Cultural use	O	X	/	O	O	/
DIY/ Garden Retail Centre	X	X	/	X	X	O
Dance Hall/Discotheque	X	X	/	X	O	X
Doctor/ Dentist	O	X	/	X	O	X
Drive-through Restaurant	X	X	O	X	X	X



USE CLASSES	(R)	(A)	(TC)	(RA)	(CF)	(EI)
Education	O	X	/	X	/	O
Enterprise Centre	X	X	O	X	O	/
Enterprise Unit/Campus Industry	X	X	O	X	X	/
Funeral Home	X	X	O	X	/	X
Garden Centre	X	O	/	X	X	O
Golf Course / Pitch & Putt	X	O	X	/	X	X
Gym	X	X	/	X	O	O
Hair Dressing Salon	X	X	/	X	X	O
Halting Sites/Group Housing	O	O	X	X	X	X
Hazardous Waste Depot	X	X	X	X	X	X
Health Centre	O	X	/	X	O	O
Heavy Vehicle Park	X	X	X	X	X	O
Holiday Homes	/	X	/	X	X	X
Home Based Economic Activities (Cottage Enterprises)	O	O	O	X	X	/
Hospital	X	X	O	X	/	O
Hostel	O	X	/	X	X	X
Hotel/Motel	O	X	/	X	X	O
Household Fuel Depot	X	X	X	X	X	O
Industry – Extractive	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry – General	X	X	X	X	X	O
Industry – Light	X	X	O	X	X	O
Industry – Special	X	X	X	X	X	O
Laundrette	O	X	/	X	X	O
Leisure Facility	O	X	/	X	X	O
Library	O	X	/	X	/	X
Mart/Co-op	X	O	X	X	X	O
Media Recording and general media associated uses	O	X	O	X	X	/
Medical and Related Consultants	O	X	/	X	O	X
Motor Sales Showroom	X	X	/	X	X	X
Municipal Waste Incinerator	X	X	X	X	X	X
Office Residential	O	O	/	X	X	/
Office based – industry	X	X	/	X	X	/
Offices less than 100m <sup>2</sup>	O	X	/	X	O	/
Offices 100m <sup>2</sup> to 1000m <sup>2</sup>	X	X	/	X	O	O
Offices over 1000m <sup>2</sup>	X	X	O	X	X	O
All other Offices	X	X	O	X	X	O
Open Space / Playing pitch/ Playground	/	/	/	/	/	/
Park and Ride Facility	O	O	O	X	X	O
Private Garage (Non Commercial)	/	/	O	O	O	X
Petrol Station	X	X	O	X	X	X
Place of Public Worship	O	X	/	X	/	X
Plant/Tool Hire	X	X	X	X	X	O
Playing pitch	/	O	X	/	/	X
Public House	O	X	/	X	X	X
Public Service Installation	O	X	/	X	X	/
Recycling Facility < 2000sqm	X	X	/	X	X	/
Recycling Facility > 2000sqm	X	X	/	X	X	O
Refuse landfill (Licenced)	X	O	X	X	X	X
Refuse Transfer Station	X	X	X	X	X	O
Residential	/	X**	/*	X	O*	X
Restaurant	O	X	/	X	X	O
Retail Warehouse	X	X	O	X	X	O
Retirement Home / Nursing Home	O	X	O	X	O	X
<b>USE CLASSES</b>	<b>(R)</b>	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(TC)</b>	<b>(RA)</b>	<b>(CF)</b>	<b>(EI)</b>



Reuse and Repair Centre	X	X	O	X	X	O
Rural Industry – Food	O	O	X	X	X	O
Science and Technology Based Enterprise.	X	X	X	X	X	O
Scrapyard	X	O	X	X	X	O
Shop (comparison)	X	X	/	X	X	O
Shop (convenience)	O	X	/	X	X	O
Shopping Centre	X	X	/	X	X	X
Shop (neighbourhood)	/	X	/	X	X	O
Small Scale Manufacturing	X	X	O	X	X	O
Take-away	O	X	/	X	X	O
Tele-Services	X	X	X	X	X	O
Third Level Institution	O	X	O	X	O	O
Training Centre	O	X	O	X	O	/
Transport Depot	X	X	O	X	X	O
Veterinary Surgery	O	O	O	X	X	O
Warehousing	X	X	O	X	X	O
Warehousing(retail/non-food,max. 5000m <sup>2</sup> )	X	X	O	X	X	O
Waterbased recreational/cultural activities	O	O	O	O	O	X
Wind Energy	O	O	X	X	X	O

**\* Exclusively residential proposals in Community Facility zones will not normally be permitted.**

**\*\* Residential development within the Agricultural zone will be restricted to a fully substantiated Housing need. Within this zone, housing need will be restricted to the sons and daughters of a farmholders who can demonstrate an intrinsic connection to the area.**

**\*\*\* A chemist may be permissible within a Community Facility zone if it forms part of an integrated medical service centre.**



## **APPENDIX 4 Maps**

- MAP 1      ZONING OBJECTIVES**
- MAP 2      URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES**
- MAP 2A     URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES**
- MAP 3      SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES MAP**
- MAP 4      HERITAGE MAP**

