

# Athenry Local Area Plan 2012

Plan Adopted 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012



**Forward Planning**  
Galway County Council  
Áras an Chontae  
Prospect Hill  
Galway



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# 1. Introduction

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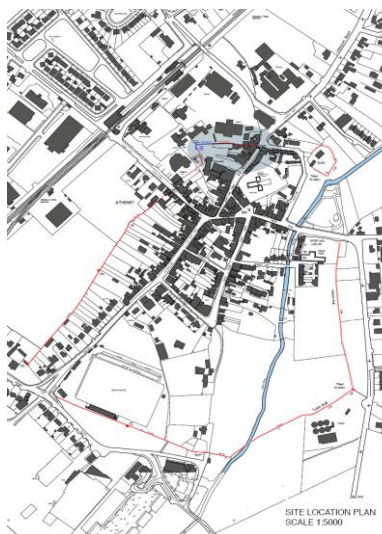
## 1.1 Preamble

This Local Area Plan (LAP) is a land use plan and overall strategy for the development of Athenry over the period 2012-2018. The successful implementation of the Plan will have a positive impact on Athenry ensuring that it develops in a sustainable manner, and will also complement the implementation of the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015.

## 1.2 Profile of Athenry

Athenry – Baile Átha an Ríogh (a fording point on the River Clarin), is strategically located 22km east of Galway Gateway within the Eastern Strategic Corridor and is accessible by rail and motorway networks. The town is also situated within the commuter belt of Galway. Athenry is on the Dublin-Galway rail route which has hourly connections, the Western Rail Corridor Phase I Ennis to Athenry line is now open and the Athenry-Tuam section is under consideration. CIE have recently provided a large parking facility adjoining the rail station which could provide the potential for development of an integrated transportation hub (Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015; Objective RT 49) and to focus future development around integrated land use & public transport.

Athenry benefits from broadband infrastructure (Metropolitan Area Networks) which is a key resource in attracting industry and the town has been identified as a Phase I Town for connection to the Mayo-Galway gas pipeline.



The significance of Athenry in *historical terms* arises from the intact nature of much of the medieval fabric and scale of the enclosed town itself which ranks as the most extant walled town in Ireland after Derry City. A number of important heritage features remain in the town including Athenry Castle, the historic walls, market cross, the ruins of St Mary's Collegiate Church and the Dominican Priory.

Galway County Council through the Athenry Local Area Plan 2005-2011 and other Council strategies has promoted the development and enhancement of Athenry as a 'Heritage Town' with a growing tourist, employment and residential base.

**Figure1: Line of Town Walls in red**

The landscape, topography, natural and manmade features of the area all have influenced the pattern and form of development of Athenry over the years including:

- The medieval town centre – the area within the town walls which contains the original street pattern of narrow streets that lead to market square;
- The open fields within the walled town and open areas on the town edge, most notably to the south east providing excellent views of the old town and are of special amenity value;
- The lack of development space within the town coupled with the physical constraints of the historic town walls and railway tracks, has resulted in much of the modern housing estates being located northwest and southwest of the town which contrasts significantly with the compact historic core;
- Community uses including schools, are focused in the urban core;
- The development of a new shopping area to the south of the town, in close proximity to the Mart, has resulted in increased trading within this area;
- The town has many tourist attractions and heritage attractions including the historic walls, Athenry Castle as well as the renowned Heritage Centre;

- The most significant amenity/public open space is located adjacent to the castle in the town centre;
- Playing fields, tennis courts and a clubhouse have been developed on the Raheen Road at Culliarbawn. The GAA pitch is located to the south-west of the town centre within the town walls, other playing pitches are located beside Knockaunglass Primary School and the Monivea Road.
- The edges of the town are defined by agricultural lands, although ribbon development has blurred the demarcation between urban/suburban and rural.
- The western edge of the Plan boundary (i.e. IDA lands and other landholding) has become the focus of the Eastern Economic Corridor including zoning potential for significant employment facilities.

In terms of the wider landscape, the River Clarin flows in a southerly direction through the town, providing a diverse '*ecological corridor*' and drains into a designated site – the Galway Bay Complex cSAC (Site Code: IE0000268) and NHA (Site Code 0000268) at Clarinbridge (located outside of the LAP Boundary and within the 15km zone).

Part of Esker Riada ('the Great Way' a strategic early route-way on a gravel esker that once stretched from Dublin to Galway) is located on the south eastern and northern fringes of the Plan boundary.

Athenry presently acts as market town and service centre for the surrounding agricultural hinterland, the main administrative focus is around Market Square and the commercial core is centred within Church Street, Old Church Street, Cross Street and North Gate Street. The town's location within commuting distance of Galway Gateway has resulted in an increase in population and a greater demand for housing and rail commuter services.

Preliminary information on the Census 2011 has indicated that the Population of County Galway increased by 10% in the period 2006 – 2011, the main population EDs also showed strong growth with Athenry growing by 19.6%. (Athenry ED 2006: 4,042; Athenry ED 2011: 4,834 persons).

Athenry has been identified as a '**Key Town**' within the Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy of the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015.

## **1.3 Local Area Plan**

### **1.3.1 Background to the Local Area Plan**

This Local Area Plan (LAP) has been prepared by Galway County Council (GCC) to provide a statutory framework for the future growth, development and improvement of Athenry that is consistent with the policies and objectives contained in *the Galway County Development Plan (GCDP) 2009-2015* including its *Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy* and which addresses the needs and requirements of the local community, service providers and other stakeholders. The purpose of the Local Area Plan is to guide future development within the town of Athenry, in a sustainable and equitable manner and to inform members of the public, the local community, stakeholders and developers regarding policies and objectives for the development of the town, including provisions in relation to land use management, community facilities and amenities, transport and infrastructure, urban design, heritage and the environment.

**This Plan shall have effect from the date of adoption by the Members of Galway County Council and shall cease to have effect at the expiration of 6 years from that date, unless the timeframe is extended by resolution in accordance with Section 12 (d) to (f) of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010.**

The Plan area for Athenry is comprised of the town and its immediate environs. The Plan area is considered to provide an appropriate development envelope for the anticipated growth of Athenry for the Plan period.

### 1.3.2 Statutory Process

A Local Area Plan is prepared under the provisions of Sections 18, 19 & 20 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended. A Local Area Plan is statutorily required to be consistent with the objectives of Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 and consists of a written statement and plans which may include objectives for the zoning of land in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The legislation also requires the provision of detail on community facilities, amenities and detail on standards for the design of developments and structures.

A SEA has been prepared in accordance with the *EU Directive on SEA (2001/42/EC)*, the national *SEA Regulations (SI No. 436 of 2004) and (SI 200 of 2011)* and the *2004 SEA Guidelines Implementation of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment* issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG). A Strategic Environmental Assessment is required to assess the likely significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Local Area Plan, before a decision is made to adopt it.

A Habitats Directive Assessment has been prepared in accordance with Article 6(3) of the *EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)*, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and the *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland-Guidance for Planning Authorities 2010* issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, (as amended). A Habitats Directive Assessment is an assessment of the implications of the plan or project, alone and/or in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site, in view of its conservation objectives.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has also been prepared to consider the flood risk issues relevant to the development of the Plan Area. The SFRA has been prepared in accordance with the *EU Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)*, the national *European Communities (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010 (SI No. 122 of 2010)* and the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* issued by the DoEHLG.

### 1.3.3 Plan Structure

This Local Area Plan has been structured into 4 main sections with separate supporting documents:

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Introduction</b> 1.1 Preamble 1.2 Profile of Athenry 1.3 Local Area Plan 1.4 Plan Informants, Key Issues and Considerations
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Strategic Vision and Development Strategy</b> 2.1 Strategic Vision 2.2 Development Strategy
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Development Policies, Objectives and Guidelines</b> 3.1 Land Use Management 3.2 Residential Development 3.3 Social and Community Development 3.4 Economic Development 3.5 Transportation Infrastructure 3.6 Utility and Environmental Infrastructure 3.7 Urban Design and Place-Making 3.8 Built Heritage and Cultural Heritage 3.9 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>LAP Maps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps 1A/1B – Land Use Zoning Framework</li> <li>• Maps 2A/2B - Specific Objectives</li> <li>• Maps 3A/3B - Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas</li> </ul>

## 1.4 Plan Informants and Considerations

### 1.4.1 Plan Informants

The preparation of the Athenry Local Area Plan has been informed by a wide range of inputs, including the following:

<b>Public Consultation</b>	Issues raised by the local community and other stakeholders through the publication of a background Issues Paper, draft public consultation and written submissions.
<b>Legislative Context</b>	Planning and environmental legislation, in particular: the <i>Planning and Development Act 2000 -2010</i> the <i>Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2011</i> ; and EU Directives, including the <i>Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)</i> , <i>Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)</i> , <i>Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</i> , <i>SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)</i> and <i>Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)</i> , together with associated national legislation.
<b>Strategic Planning Context</b>	National and regional policies and guidelines, in particular: the <i>Sustainable Development Strategy for Ireland 1997</i> ; the <i>National Development Plan 2007-2013</i> ; the <i>National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020</i> the <i>Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022</i> ; and a range of guidelines including the <i>SEA Guidelines 2004 &amp; 2011</i> , <i>Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009</i> , <i>Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009</i> , the <i>Appropriate Assessment Guidelines 2010</i> . Other documents include <i>Ireland National Climate Change 2007-2012</i> and <i>Smarter Travel–A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020</i> .
<b>Statutory Planning Context</b>	Statutory plans, in particular: the previous Local Area Plan for Athenry and the need for compliance and consistency with <i>Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015 as amended</i> and the <i>Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022</i> .
<b>Local Planning Context</b>	Local plans, strategies and studies, including: the <i>Biodiversity Action Plan for County Galway 2008-2013</i> ; the <i>Galway County Heritage Plan 2010-2016</i> ; <i>Galway Transportation and Planning Study 2002</i> ; <i>Developing Sustainable Tourism in Galway: A Framework for Action 2003-2012</i> ; <i>Water-Based Tourism – A Strategic Vision for Galway 2002</i> ; and <i>Working Together: Shaping Our Future: Galway County Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2002-2012</i>
<b>Environmental Assessment</b>	Assessment of potential environmental impacts of the Local Area Plan, including a <i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i> , <i>Habitats Directive Assessment</i> and <i>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</i> .

### 1.4.2 Plan Issues, Considerations & Challenges

This Plan seeks to provide a common vision and a range of strategies, policies, objectives and guidelines that will enable it to direct development in a manner that is sustainable, that improves the quality of life of the local community, that provides for an appropriate level, distribution and quality of development and that protects, conserves and enhances the character, amenity, heritage, environment and landscape of Athenry and its immediate environs. The proper planning and sustainable development of Athenry seeks to balance the wide ranging and sometimes competing needs of the local community, landowners and the environment along with promoting the role envisaged for Athenry as a ‘Key Town’ within the County Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy as contained within the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015.

Some of the Plan’s key issues, considerations and challenges are set out as follows:

- **Common Vision:** The need to develop a common vision that provides a positive framework for the future growth, consolidation and enhancement of Athenry in accordance with the principles of proper planning & sustainable development.

- **Adherence to the County Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy:** The Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy has identified a target population growth of up to 1,122 persons for Athenry up to 2016 with 32.36Ha required to accommodate residential units over the new Plan period (there is an excess of 99Ha of undeveloped zoned residential land currently within the development Plan boundary).
- **Population Growth:** Given the significant growth patterns experienced in Athenry over the last two Census periods, ensuring appropriate, sustainable settlement patterns including the provision of the necessary planning framework to accommodate educational, community, leisure and recreational facilities to satisfactorily match the level of population growth.
- **Existing Character & Growth of Athenry:** A key planning issue is to ensure that Athenry develops appropriately and sustainably while addressing the following issues:
  - Future growth will require careful consideration and balance if Athenry is to fulfill its role as a 'Key Town' while continuing to retain and enhance the historic core of the town;
  - The protection/conservation of the town's medieval walls, town centre and fabric, including the original narrow radial street pattern that converge on Market Square;
  - The substantial growth predominately residential, suburban developments to the north and north-west of the town;
  - Weak physical connections between the town and its environs have been made complicated by the presence of two railway lines that trisect the urban area;
- **Building on Athenry's Strategic Location:** The location of Athenry adjacent to the confluence of the new inter-urban routes (M6 & M18) and the junction of the existing easterly rail line with the Western Rail corridor and its closeness to Galway City with its air and sea transportation routes. .
- **Maintaining & Enhancing Economic Activity:** Ensuring the enhancement of Athenry's role as one of the primary growth centres within the Eastern Strategic Corridor to accommodate regionally strategic industrial sites as part of the government's 'Smart Economy'. This economic corridor could see the potential clustering of large multinational companies such as electronic, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies with Research & Development facilities. This also includes fostering and maintaining local and small scale business/enterprises (SME's) within Athenry and its local economy.
- **Infrastructure & Transportation:** Ensuring essential infrastructure is provided before or in parallel with future developments in order to accommodate planned population growth, while ensuring compliance with the statutory obligations to achieve good water quality status under the EU Water Framework Directive and associated national legislation is a priority. Deficiencies in the exiting pedestrian and cycling network and reducing car dependency are also key considerations in the Local Area Plan process.
- **Heritage & Environment:** Ensuring that the integrity of environmental designations of national and EU importance that are within 15km of the Plan area, including the various natural and heritage features (i.e. eskers) and amenities in the Plan area, are protected in accordance with applicable legislation and policy whilst still allowing for an appropriate level of development and the provision of adequate recreational amenities. The SEA & AA will examine the likely impact of implementing the Plan on the Natura 2000 network and other environmental receptors. Ensure compliance with National Monument Legislation 1930-2004.
- **Flooding:** Potential flood issues in the Plan area are an important consideration in the preparation the new Local Area Plan, particularly in zoning lands for various uses and as such the new Local Area Plan will be guided by the Galway County Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and by any required detailed specific flood risk assessment carried out for Athenry.

## 2. Strategic Vision and Development Strategy

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### 2.1 Strategic Vision

The Plan's strategic vision is informed by guiding principles that will enable the overall vision to be achieved, these include:

- Realising Athenry's potential as a "**Key Town**" as set out in the Galway County Development Plan and attracting the population target established in the Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy up to 2015 and beyond.
- Acknowledging that regional policies have identified Athenry as part of the **Strategic Economic Corridor** which will be developed/promoted and serviced to high international standards to attract Foreign Direct Investment, building on strategic location and infrastructure.
- Capitalising on the opportunity presented by the confluence of good road and rail links to pursue high quality sustainable development and greater modal choice for residents and employees in the area.
- Ensuring a sustainable town approach in maintaining a strong, compact and **vibrant town centre** which sustains existing business while attracting new businesses in order to fulfil the retailing and service needs of the town and its surrounding hinterland, in addition to offering a pleasant and attractive environment for shopping, business, recreation, living and attracting visitors.
- Ensuring that there is a range of facilities, amenities and supporting services including educational, recreational, religious, social, community and civic requirements for children, youths, adults and the elderly, to serve a growing community.
- Optimising the potential of Athenry in encouraging & fostering appropriate economic/tourism development while enhancing the town as a place of employment by setting a positive & flexible framework for the creation of new employment opportunities.
- Seeking the delivery of the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the future growth and sustainable development of Athenry and its immediate environs.
- Protecting the natural assets, environment, built heritage and public realm of the town including Athenry's unique medieval walled town character and amenity for the benefit of future generations to come.

#### Strategic Vision

Athenry will be a sustainable, self-sufficient, vibrant and socially inclusive key town, which protects and enhances its attractive medieval character while becoming an innovative growth centre within the Strategic Economic Corridor, supporting an educated workforce, providing a range of services/amenities and with a high quality of life for the local community. This will be delivered through a managed and phased development strategy on appropriately zoned and serviced lands in a manner that is balanced and sustainable for Athenry and the environs that it serves.



## **2.2 Development Strategy**

### **County Core Strategy**

A Core Strategy is required by The Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 to show that the development objectives of Development Plans/Local Area Plans are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020 and with the West Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's) 2010-2022 as adopted on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010. The RPG's prescribed that an additional 15,760 persons will be living in the County (not including Galway City) by 2016.

The **County Core Strategy** sets out the projected population growth for County Galway, Tuam Hub (Tier 2), Key Towns including Athenry, other towns, settlements and including rural areas up to 2016, having regard to the population growth targets as set out in the West Regional Planning Guidelines. Athenry is located within Tier 3 of the County Settlement Hierarchy, its role as a 'Key Town' is to sustain its growth in order to achieve Athenry's potential as a self-sustaining town.

### **Population Growth Trends & Service Land Availability**

The emphasis of this Plan is the alignment of the Athenry Local Area Plan 2012-2018 with the County Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy as proposed under Galway County Development Plan (GCDP) 2009-2015.

The County Core Strategy indicates that Athenry has been assigned a population growth target of 1,122 persons by 2016 with 32.36Ha Housing Land Requirement (includes 50% over-zoning) in order to accommodate residential units over the Plan period. Presently there is an excess of 99Ha approximately of undeveloped zoned residential land currently within the development boundary (LAP 2005-2011). The Plan applies a phased approach to the residential zoning objectives so as to comply with the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan and to ensure that suitable lands are brought forward for development during the Plan period.

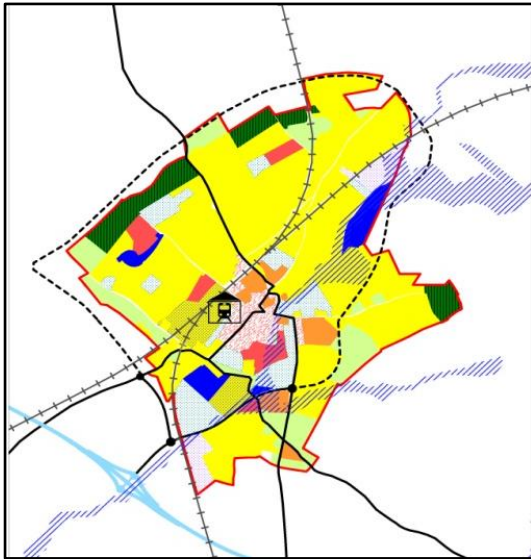
#### **2.2.1 Development Options**

In order to achieve the strategic vision for Athenry, it is important to examine a number of different Development Strategy Options to ascertain which option can deliver most effectively on the vision for the town. These options have been developed having regard to the Core Strategy, Settlement Hierarchy and Athenry's role envisaged in the County Development Plan, including population, growth trends and potential of the town, the existing development pattern and character of the town, existing amenities and environmental sensitivities and the lands and services available for future development. A number of potential development options are outlined below and have been assessed against the Strategic Environmental Objectives developed for the SEA Environmental Report.

Please note the strategy option maps as shown below are indicative for presentation purposes only and are not considered definitive. The option maps use a number of common features to aid clarity, including the Plan boundary (red outline), existing main roads (black lines), Athenry Relief Road (dashed black line, solid line/circle for completed sections) and flood risk areas (blue hatch), existing town centre (dark grey area) and built fabric (light grey areas), new development/growth areas (pink/purple areas) and residual plan areas (orange areas).

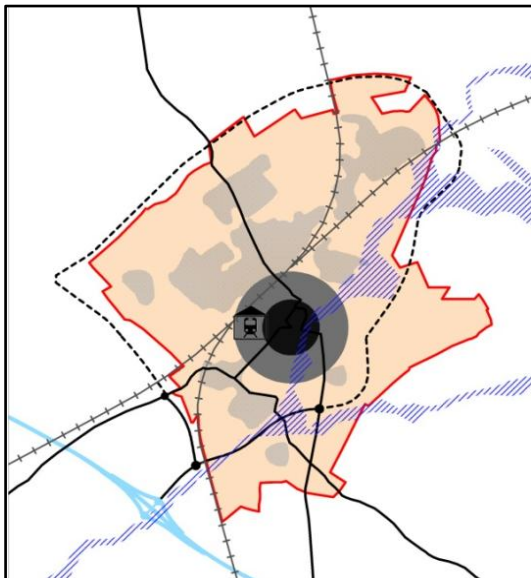
The map for Development Option 1 shows some of these features together with the land use zonings in the Athenry Local Area Plan 2005-2011.

The Council has examined four alternative development strategy options for the Plan area including the following:



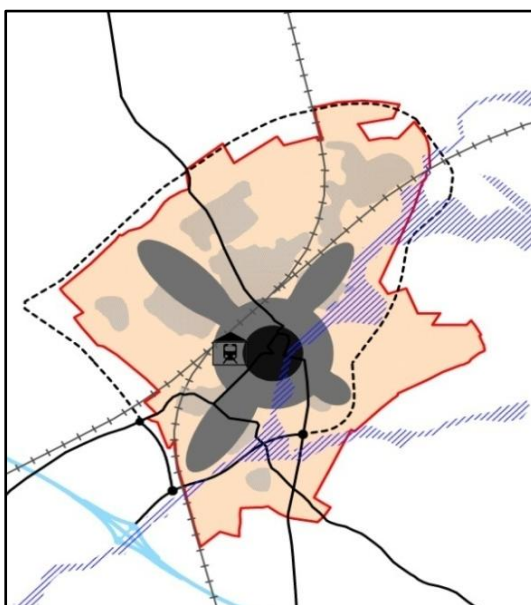
**Development Option 1 –Continuation of the Existing Plan 2005- 2011:** This option would see a continuation of the expansion of Athenry as per the previous Plan (2005-2011) with continued pressure in a number of areas, particularly in relation to undeveloped residential lands at peripheral/un-serviced locations.

This development option does not consider recent changes in national legislation/guidelines and EU Directives. In particular this option would conflict with the West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and with the County Development Plan 2009-2015. Given the current level of undeveloped residential zoning available (123.76Ha), this option would not comply with the County Core Strategy residential land allocation of 32.36Ha for Athenry and would result in the Plan being inconsistent with both the Regional Planning Guidelines and with the County Development Plan.



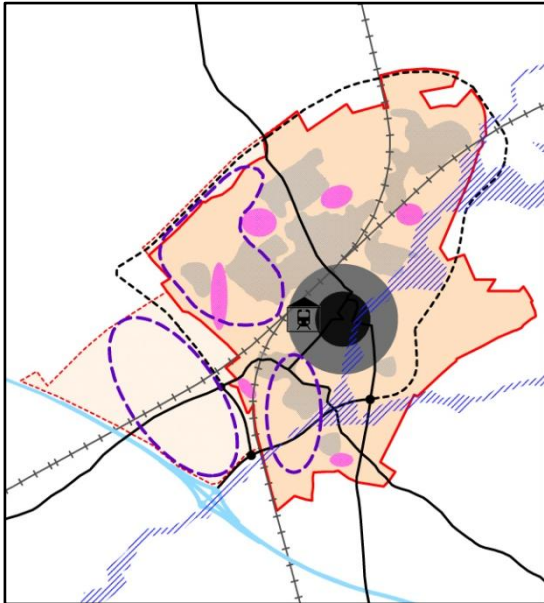
**Development Option 2 – Consolidation of Existing Urban Structure:** This option would seek to retain the existing town centre/ urban fabric and restrict all future residential development not contained within proposed Residential (Phase 1) zoning areas. The objective would be to permit development only at locations closest to the existing town centre and rail station.

No new zonings would be proposed and existing uses may not be consistent with the existing zoning objectives and Plan matrix, in particular industrial use on lands identified as a potential location for an integrated transportation hub. In addition this approach would see increased pressure for development within the medieval historic town core with a potential consequential loss of views and historic fabric.



**Development Option 3 – Sequential Development:** This option would promote development from the town centre outwards in order to ensure that higher order facilities and higher density development are located on the most central lands. The town centre focus remains.

Under this scenario all lands may not come forward for development in a sequential manner, while other serviced and non sequential lands may but under this option may not be considered during the lifetime of the Plan. Problems of land assembly pose a threat to town centre retail development. Frequently sites are held in multiple ownerships which may delay/hinder development proposals. In addition significant development potential within new zoning objectives particularly the new Business and Technology Park (BT) located on the western periphery of the Plan boundary (as amended) would be restricted and dependent on town centre expansion and service provision.



**Development Option 4 – Managed Phased Development:** This option would seek the consolidation and expansion of the town centre via changes to existing zoning objectives specifically regarding changes of Town Centre zoning to Town Centre/Commercial (C1) and Commercial/Mixed Use (C2) zoning objectives. These changes provide for a managed/phased approach for town centre development while retaining/enhancing the existing medieval fabric of the historic core of Athenry and providing flexibility for future proposals.

**Undeveloped Residential Lands** are also to be phased for development:

**Residential Phase 1** – phased for residential development within the lifetime of the Plan (32.17Ha);  
**Residential Phase 2** – generally, not developable during the lifetime of this Plan (91.59Ha).

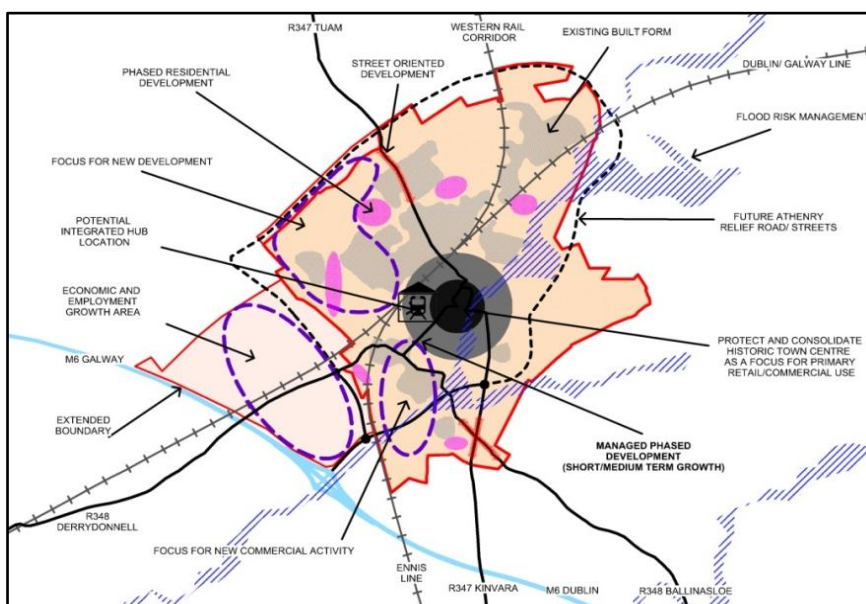
This development option would promote a managed and co-ordinated approach on a case by case basis to town centre & residential type developments from

the centre outwards, based on infrastructure/service provision but in a more flexible manner than Option 3. This scenario would also encourage managed and co-ordinated development within other proposed zoning objectives particularly Business & Technology (BT) zoning to the west. This approach appears to be the most sustainable for the long term development of Athenry.

### 2.2.2 Preferred Development Option – Managed Phased Development (Option 4)

Development Option 4 is considered the preferred Development Option. It supports the vitality and viability of the town centre as the main focus for the retail sector while allowing for managed town centre expansion under Commercial/Mixed Use (C2) zonings located to the south and south west of the existing town centre. Simultaneously, it maximises the potential for the development of an integrated transportation hub in the vicinity of Athenry railway station and its parking areas which are located immediately north of the town centre.

The preferred development strategy option is also informed by the statutorily required environmental /archaeological assessments and aligns with and aims to deliver on the Core Strategy allocations as set out for Athenry in the County Development Plan. It also supports the objectives of the Regional Planning Guidelines to provide for the sustainable, dynamic development of ‘Key Towns’ to a level that can deliver the conditions for critical mass and drive overall regional development.



In order to deliver on the preferred development option, a number of scenarios have been considered in relation to land use management and zoning:

1. Re-zoning of lands.
2. Specifying/introducing phased development on a number of zonings as appropriate.
3. De-zoning of lands.

The phasing of residential development and the re-zoning of certain lands for environmental/flood risk reasons is considered the most appropriate approach at this time. The phasing as applied allows for some flexibility, as detailed by the policies and objectives in the LAP. This preferred option promotes the development of vacant and under-utilised sites in the town centre and ensures that serviced lands close to the town centre and public transport options are the primary focus for development in the short to medium term.

To facilitate this and other development potential of the town a number of Zoning Objectives from the previous plan have been changed to reflect existing/proposed uses. Development and employment potential would be accommodated within new proposed zoning objectives such as Business & Enterprise (BE) and large scale employment uses will be focused within the proposed Business & Technology (BT) zoning located on the western periphery of the Plan boundary. The Land Use Zoning Matrix illustrates the type of development likely to be permitted within each zoning objective of the Plan. Refer to **Section 3.1.3: Land Use Zoning Matrix**. In general undeveloped lands have been appropriately zoned to avoid flood risk.

Having regard to the findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, overall this is considered to be the most appropriate option at this time for securing the managed growth of Athenry, while retaining its medieval fabric and taking account of environmental and other planning & sustainable development considerations.

### **2.2.3 Development Strategy Policies and Objectives**

#### **Development Strategy Policy**

##### **Policy DS1 – Development Strategy**

It is the overarching policy of the Council to support and facilitate the sustainable development of Athenry in line with the preferred Development Strategy **Option 4 – Managed Phased Development** which allows Athenry to develop in a manner that maintains and enhances the quality of life of local communities, promotes opportunities for economic development, sustainable transport options and social integration, protects the cultural, built and natural heritage and environment and complies with relevant statutory requirements.

#### **Development Strategy Objectives**

##### **Objective DS1 – Managed and Phased Development**

Support the managed and phased development of the Plan Area in a co-ordinated manner focussing on the consolidation and continued vitality and viability of the town centre, the protection and enhancement of the existing built heritage assets and landscape setting, character and unique identity of Athenry.

##### **Objective DS2 – Consistency with the Core Strategy**

In the event that the zoned land allocations under the Core Strategy in the Galway County Development are amended for the Plan Area, the Council will ensure that developments permitted within the Plan Area are consistent with the revised zoned land allocations in the Core Strategy and associated provisions in the Galway County Development Plan.

##### **Objective DS3 – Natura 2000 Network and Habitats Directive Assessment**

Protect European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation ) in accordance with the requirements in the EU *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC), EU *Birds Directive* (2009/147/EC), the *Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010*, the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011* (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (and any subsequent amendments or updated legislation) and having due regard to the guidance in the *Appropriate Assessment Guidelines 2010* (and any subsequent or

updated guidance)

A plan or project (e.g. proposed development) within the Plan Area will only be authorised after the competent authority (Galway County Council) has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and a Habitats Directive Assessment where necessary, that:

1. The plan or project will not give rise to significant-adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
2. The plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (that does not host a priority habitat and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or
3. The plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (that hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

#### **Objective DS4 – Development Management Standards and Guidelines**

The general development management standards and guidelines set out under the current Galway County Development Plan, or any subsequent variation/review, shall apply as appropriate in the Plan Area. In addition, the specific development management guidelines set out in Section 3 of this plan shall also be applied, as appropriate, to development proposals in the Plan Area.

#### **Objective DS5 – Service Led Development**

Development under the Plan shall be preceded by sufficient capacity in the public waste water treatment plant and appropriate extensions in the existing public wastewater infrastructure.

#### **Objective DS6 – Residential Development Phasing**

Direct residential development into appropriately zoned and serviced areas in accordance with the phased development framework as set out in S.3.1, S.3.2 and as outlined within **Maps 1A/1B – Land Use Zoning Framework**.

Wastewater treatment capacity will be carefully monitored and development will only be permitted where there is capacity and/or where adequate services can be made available.

#### **Objective DS7 – Flood Risk Management and Assessment**

Ensure that proposals for new developments located within identified or potential flood risk areas, or which may exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere, are assessed in accordance with the provisions of the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any updated/superseding document) and the relevant policies and objectives in this Plan.

## 3. Development Policies, Objectives and Guidelines

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### 3.1 Land Use Management

#### 3.1.1 Context

The Core Strategy in the current Galway County Development Plan sets the context and parameters for the development of Athenry as a 'Key Town' in the County. Based on population projections forecast by the West Regional Authority, the amount of zoned residential land required to meet this target is set at 32.36ha. Lands have also been zoned for other land uses, including town centre, commercial, industrial, business/enterprise, business/technology, community facilities, open space/recreation and amenity, based on the designation of Athenry in the Core Strategy and existing land use patterns and projected needs derived from medium and long term population targets. The optimum utilisation of existing and planned infrastructure is a key consideration in the development of this land use framework.

#### 3.1.2 Policies and Objectives

##### Land Use Management Policy

###### Policy LU1 – Land Use Management

It is the policy of Galway County Council to provide a land use zoning framework for the Plan Area to direct the type, density and location of development in a manner that contributes to the consolidation of the town centre, that allows for the orderly and sequential development of the town, that protects and enhances the existing landscape setting, character and unique identity of the town and that complies with the statutory requirements in the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended). The land use zoning framework is supported by a residential phasing framework to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy and to promote the orderly and sequential development of the town.

##### Land Use Zoning Objectives

###### Objective LU1 – Town Centre/Commercial (C1)

Promote the development of the Town Centre as an intensive, high quality, well-landscaped, human-scaled and accessible environment with an appropriate mix of uses, including residential, commercial, service, tourism, enterprise, public and community uses as appropriate, that provide a range of retail services, facilities and amenities to the local community and visitors to the town. The town centre and associated main streets will remain the primary focus for retail and service activity in the town.

###### Objective LU2 – Commercial and Mixed Use (C2)

Promote the development of commercial and complementary mixed uses on suitable lands that can provide focal points for the provision of services to surrounding neighbourhoods/areas and opportunities for commercial enterprises, retail developments and employment creation and which do not undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre.

###### Objective LU3 – Residential (R)

Promote the development of suitable, serviced lands to provide for high quality, well laid out and well landscaped sustainable residential communities with an appropriate mix of housing types and densities together with complementary land uses such as community facilities, local services and public transport facilities to serve the residential population of the area.

Protect existing residential amenities and facilitate new infill development and the development of complementary/compatible land uses on residential zoned land, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

A phasing scheme will apply to residential uses on Residential (R) zoned lands, as set out under Objective RD1 in Section 3.2.2.

#### **Objective LU4 – Industrial (I)**

Promote the development of industrial and industrial-related uses, including manufacturing, processing of materials, warehousing and distribution, on suitable lands with adequate services and facilities and a high level of access to the major road network and public transport facilities. Adequate edge treatments and/or screening will be required to ensure high quality interfaces with public spaces and any adjoining residential areas or other sensitive land uses, as appropriate. Proposals on Industrial lands will be subject to requirements in the Plan in relation to avoiding unacceptable transport, environmental and water quality impacts and where necessary shall be required to submit a Traffic Impact Assessment and/or a Transport Assessment.

#### **Objective LU5 – Business & Enterprise (BE)**

Promote the development of business and enterprise uses, light industry/warehousing and the facilitation of enterprise park/office park type uses, incubation/start-up units and Small, Medium Enterprises, on suitable lands with adequate services and facilities and with a high level of access to the major road/rail networks and to public transport facilities.

#### **Objective LU6 – Business & Technology Park (BT)**

Promote the development of high value business and technology uses to reinforce Athenry's role as a growth centre for large innovative companies in sectors including, science and technology based industry in life sciences, bio-pharma, the IT sector, internationally traded services and Research & Development. This zoning shall also provide for office park developments, storage facilities and logistics that are ancillary to the primary uses outlined above. Appropriate training facilities such as Third Level Outreach facilities may also be considered. The development of inappropriate or non-complementary uses, and which would be more appropriately located on lands zoned as Industry, Business and Enterprise and Town Centre/Commercial, Commercial/Mixed Use will not normally be permitted within this zoning.

#### **Objective LU7 – Community Facilities (CF)**

Promote the development of community facilities on suitable lands with a high level of access to the local community, including educational, community, civic, public, and institutional and other complementary uses as appropriate.

#### **Objective LU8 – Open Spaces/Recreation & Amenity (OS)**

Promote the development of open spaces and recreational activities in accordance with best practice and on suitable lands with adequate access to the local community and retain existing open space and recreational facilities unless it can be demonstrated by Galway County Council that these uses are no longer required by the community.

#### **Objective LU9 – Agriculture (A)**

Protect the rural character of the area from inappropriate development and provide for agricultural and appropriate non-urban uses.

#### **Objective LU10 – Transport Infrastructure (TI)**

Facilitate the provision and maintenance of essential transportation infrastructure. This shall include the reservation of lands to facilitate possible track dualing of the rail line between Galway and Athenry and other rail infrastructure improvements, public roads including the completion of the Athenry Relief Road, footpaths, cycle ways, and bus stops and landscaping, together with any necessary associated works, as appropriate.

#### **Objective LU11 – Flood Risk Areas and Land Use Zones**

Ensure that any proposed development that may be compatible with the land use zoning objectives/matrix but which includes a use that is not appropriate to the Flood Zone (as indicated on **Maps 3A/3B – Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas**) and/or that may be vulnerable to flooding is subject to flood risk assessment, in accordance with *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009* and the policies and objectives of this Plan.

#### **Land Use Density Objectives**

#### **Objective LU12 – Town Centre/Commercial (C1)**

Promote higher density development within the town centre, particularly adjacent to public transport facilities where such development is compatible with heritage and cultural objectives.

### Objective LU13 – Residential Densities

Promote a range of residential densities within the Plan Area appropriate to the prevailing development pattern, supporting infrastructure, urban character and heritage resources in accordance with the guidance in the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009* (or as updated within the lifetime of this LAP). Higher residential densities should be encouraged at locations where it is appropriate to the existing context and density of the Plan Area, for example around the town centre and within convenient walking distance of public transport facilities, and where it will not unduly impact on built or natural heritage. Wastewater Treatment capacity will be carefully monitored and development will only be permitted where there is capacity and/or adequate services can be made available.

### 3.1.3 Development Management Guidelines

#### Development Densities

##### DM Guideline LU1 – Development Densities

The development of higher densities will need to be appropriate to the context and will be assessed based on the merits of the proposal and subject to good design, compliance with both qualitative and quantitative standards, location, capacity of the site and infrastructure to absorb development, existing character of the area, established densities on adjoining sites, protection of residential amenities, proximity to public transport, etc. The Planning Authority may use its discretion in varying these density standards.

The development density guidance in the tables below indicate the range of densities generally considered appropriate in the various land use zones and in different residential locations within the Plan Area.

Land Use Zone	Plot Area Ratio	Maximum Site Coverage	Minimum Public Open Space
Zone C1	1.00 to 1.25 PAR	80%	N/A
Zone C2	0.40 to 1.00 PAR	70%	Site Specific
Zone R	0.10 to 0.50 PAR	50%	15%
Zone I	0.40 to 1.00 PAR	60%	15%
Zone BT	0.40 to 1.00 PAR	60%	15%
Zone BE	0.40 to 1.00 PAR	60%	15%
Zone CF	Site Specific	Site Specific	15%
Zone OS	Site Specific	Site Specific	Site Specific
Zone A	Site Specific	Site Specific	Site Specific
Zone TI	N/A	N/A	N/A

#### Notes:

- Plot Area Ratio** – Plot area ratio (PAR) refers to the gross floor area of buildings on a site divided by the gross site area, where the gross floor area is expressed as a fraction of the gross site area.
- Site Coverage** – Site coverage refers to the percentage of gross floor area of the building/s footprint on the site. Increased site coverage may be considered on sites where underground or part-basement parking is provided, subject to high standards of design, adequate natural lighting and the protection of the amenity of adjacent developments.
- Public Open Space** – Public open space (POS) generally refers to usable, well-located green areas but in certain cases may also include paved areas that can be used for recreation, that are well-landscaped and that form an integral part of the development. POS would generally only be required in non-residential and multiple unit residential developments.



Residential Density	Dwelling Units/Ha	Dwelling Units/Acre	Possible Appropriate Locations
Medium to High	35-50	14-20	Town centre or immediately adjacent to public transport hubs
Low to Medium	15-35	6-14	Neighbourhood centres (typically within 400m walking distance of centre point), inner urban suburbs
Low	5-15	2-6	Urban periphery, outlying lands, areas with capacity/environmental constraints

## Land Use Zoning Matrix

### DM Guideline LU2 – Land Use Zoning Matrix

The land use zoning matrix indicates the types of land uses that are Permitted in Principle (P), Open for Consideration (O) and Not Normally Permitted (N), for the land use zones designated in Section 3.1.2 above. Whilst the matrix does not provide an exhaustive list of potential uses, the uses listed in the matrix should be considered by applicants to provide a clear indication of the overall acceptability of a particular land use within a specific zoning category. Where a use is proposed that is not listed in the matrix, development proposals will be assessed on their individual merits in accordance with the general guidance provided by the matrix and having regard to the nature of existing and proposed uses, to the general policies and zoning objective/s for the area in the Local Area Plan and to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Where there is no perceived conflict between existing and proposed uses, favourable consideration will be given to the proposed development, subject to all other normal requirements and to the principles of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Land Uses	C1	C2	R	I	BT	BE	CF	OS	A	TI
Abattoir	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	O	N
Advertisements – Freestanding	O	O	N	O	O	O	O	N	N	O
Agricultural Building	N	N	O	O	N	N	N	N	P	N
Amusement	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Apartments	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
ATM	P	P	O	O	O	O	O	N	N	N
Bank	P	P	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Bar/Restaurant	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
B&B (Bed & Breakfast)**	O	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	O**	N
Betting Office	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Boarding Kennel	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N
Building Society	P	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Buildings for the health, safety & welfare of the Public	P	P	O	N	O	O	P	O	N	N
Café	P	P	O	O	O	O	O	N	N	N
Car Park	P	O	O	P	O	O	O	N	N	O
Car Park – Multi-storey	P	P	N	O	O	O	N	N	N	N
Caravan Park – Holiday	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N
Cash & Carry	N	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Casual Trading	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Cemetery	N	N	N	N	N	N	P	O	P	N
Childcare Facilities (Crèche/Nursery)	P	O	O	O	O	P	P	N	N	N
Cinema	P	O	N	N	N	O	O	N	N	N
Club House & associated facilities	O	O	O	N	N	N	P	O	O	N
Community Facility	P	O	O	N	N	O	P	O	O	N
Conference Centre	P	P	N	N	O	O	O	N	N	N
Crematorium	N	N	O	O	N	O	O	N	O	N
Cultural/Recreational Building	P	O	O	N	N	O	O	O	N	N
Data-Centres/Web-Hosting Centres	P	P	N	O	P	P	N	N	N	N
Drive-through Restaurant	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Education – Primary/Secondary	O	O	O	O	O	O	P	O	O	N
Education – Other Education/Training	P	P	O	O	O	O	P	N	O	N
Enterprise Centre	O	O	N	O	O	P	N	N	N	N
Extractive Industry	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N

Land Uses	C1	C2	R	I	BT	BE	CF	OS	A	TI
Funeral Home	O	O	O	N	N	O	O	N	N	N
Garden Centre	O	P	N	N	N	O	N	O	O	N
Golf Course	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	O	N
GP & Medical related Services	P	P	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N
Guesthouse**	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	O**	N
Hair Dressing Salon/Personal/Grooming	P	P	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Halting Site	N	N	O	N	N	N	O	N	O	N
Home-based Economic Activity**	O	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	O**	N
Hostel	P	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N
Hotel	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Household Fuel Depot	N	P	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
Industrial	N	O	N	P	N	P	N	N	N	N
Leisure	P	P	O	N	N	O	P	O	O	N
Library	P	O	O	N	N	N	P	N	N	N
Logistic, Storage & Distribution Units	N	O	N	P	O	P	N	N	N	N
Mart/Co-op	N	O	N	P	N	N	N	N	P	N
Media Recording & general media associated uses	O	O	O	O	O	O	N	N	N	N
Motor Sales Showroom	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Night-club	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Office (<100m <sup>2</sup> )	P	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	O	N
Office (100m <sup>2</sup> to 1000m <sup>2</sup> )	O	P	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Office Park (>1000m <sup>2</sup> )	N	O	N	O	P	P	N	N	N	N
Park & Ride Facility	O	O	O	P	O	P	P	O	O	O
Petrol Station	O	O	N	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
Place of Public Worship	O	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N
Professional /Other Services	P	P	O	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Public Service Installation	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	N
Recreational/Cultural Activities	O	O	O	O	N	O	O	O	O	N
Refuse Landfill/Tip	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O	N
Residential	O	O	P**	N	N	N	N	N	O**	N
Restaurant	P	P	O	O	N	O	N	N	N	N
Retirement Home	O	O	P	N	N	N	O	N	N	N
Science & Technology based Business	O	O	N	P	P	P	N	N	N	N
Scrap Yard	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N	N	N
Service Garage	N	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Shop – Comparison	P	P	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Shop – Convenience	P	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Shops – Large Scale Convenience/ Comparison Centre	P	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Small Scale Manufacturing	N	O	N	P	N	O	N	N	N	N
Storage Depot	N	N	N	P	O	O	N	N	N	N
Take-away	O	O	O	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Transport Depot	N	O	N	O	N	P	N	N	O	O
Veterinary Surgery	O	O	O	O	N	O	N	N	O	N
Warehousing (incl. Wholesale)	N	N	N	P	N	O	N	N	N	N
Warehousing (retail/non-food <700m <sup>2</sup> )*	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Warehousing (retail/non-food/bulky household goods 700m <sup>2</sup> – 5,000m <sup>2</sup> )*	N	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Wind Energy	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	N

**Notes on Land Use Zoning Matrix:**

- Data Centre** – may be defined as a facility, which has information technology equipment installed and operated, as well as storing and distributing electronic data.
- Zone R: Residential** – Phase 1 is phased for residential development within the lifetime of this Plan (total undeveloped area: 32.36ha); and Phase 2 is generally not developable during the lifetime of this LAP, subject to the provisions and exceptions set out under Section 3.2.2.
- Areas** – All areas noted in the above matrix are gross floor areas.

4. **Warehousing (\*)** – The development or subdivision of stores into less than 700m<sup>2</sup> shall not normally be permitted in edge-of centre and out-of-centre locations, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005/2011 (or any updated/superseding document).
5. **General (\*\*)** – These uses will be considered subject to Policy RD1 as appropriate, normal planning, access and servicing requirements and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, and will only be permitted in the case of single house developments for family members on family owned lands and acceptable cases will be subject to an enurement clause.

**Notes on Land Use Classes in Land Use Zoning Matrix:**

The land use classes referred to in the land use zoning matrix have been defined as follows:

1. **Permitted in Principle (P)** – A use that is classified as *Permitted in Principle* is one that the local authority accepts in theory in the relevant zone, subject to compliance with the relevant policies, objectives, standards and requirements set out in the Plan and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.
2. **Open for Consideration (O)** – A use that is classified as *Open for Consideration* is one that the local authority may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with permitted uses and conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, including the policies and objectives set out in the Plan.
3. **Not Normally Permitted (N)** – A use that is classified as *Not Normally Permitted* is one that, except in exceptional circumstances, will not be permitted by the local authority. This may be due to its perceived effect on existing and permitted uses, its incompatibility with the policies, objectives, standards and requirements contained in this Plan or the fact that it may be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Notes on Land Use Zones in Land Use Zoning Matrix:**

The land use zones referred to in the land use zoning matrix are comprised of the following:

<b>Zone C1</b>	Town Centre/Commercial
<b>Zone C2</b>	Commercial/Mixed Use
<b>Zone R</b>	Residential
<b>Zone I</b>	Industrial
<b>Zone BT</b>	Business/Enterprise & Technology Park
<b>Zone BE</b>	Business & Enterprise
<b>Zone CF</b>	Community Facilities
<b>Zone OS</b>	Open Space/ Recreation & Amenity
<b>Zone A</b>	Agriculture
<b>Zone TI</b>	Transport Infrastructure

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

**Table1: Capacity of Zoned Lands within the Athenry Local Area Plan 2012 (as adopted 25/06/2012)**

Plan Zonings	Total Area Zoned in Ha	Undeveloped Zoned in Ha
Town Centre/Commercial (C1)	12.11Ha	7.2Ha
Commercial/Mixed Use (C2)	16.62Ha	9.28Ha
Residential R:	123.76Ha	9.64Ha
> R Phase 1	32.17Ha	32.17Ha
> R Phase 2	91.59Ha	91.59Ha*
Business & Enterprise (BE)	13.43Ha	9.2Ha
Business & Technology (BT)	87.01Ha	83.77Ha
Industrial (I)	42.90Ha	41.64Ha
Community Facilities (CF)	14.78Ha	3.6Ha
Agriculture (A)	85.08Ha	82.28Ha
Open Space/Recreation & Amenity (OS)	53.94Ha	50.88Ha
Public Utilities (PU)	0.68Ha	0.4Ha
<b>Totals</b>	<b>450.31Ha</b>	<b>412.01Ha</b>

**Note:**

1. **Transport Infrastructure (TI)** provides for the provision/maintenance of all roads and rail transportation infrastructure and appears as white land on the Land Use Zoning Maps 1A/1B (areas not estimated).
2. \* Assuming all Residential Phase 2 are undeveloped.

## 3.2 Residential Development

### 3.2.1 Context

#### Residential Development

The principles of quality and sustainability must be foremost in all future residential development in the Plan Area, including private, social, affordable and voluntary housing proposals. The Local Area Plan provides guidance in relation to the location, types and design of new residential development, together with a phasing framework for residentially zoned lands, to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy in the current Galway County Development Plan and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Residential lands have generally been phased in a sequential manner and Phase 1 residential lands have been identified based on a number of criteria, including access to existing and planned services, pedestrian connectivity to the town centre, etc. Priority has been given to infill sites and logical extensions to the existing residential fabric of the town. This approach will also inform any decision where Phase 2 lands are to develop ahead of Phase 1 lands.

### 3.2.2 Policies and Objectives

#### Residential Development Policy

##### Policy RD1 – Residential Development

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support the creation of sustainable communities and high quality residential areas at appropriate locations with a range of housing options and adequate support services, facilities and amenities, having regard to the guidance contained in the following policy documents or any updated versions:

- *Joint Galway County Council and Ballinasloe Town Council Housing Strategy 2009-2015.*
- *Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009* and the accompanying guidance document *Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide – A Companion Document to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2009.*
- *Galway Clustered Housing Guidelines*, where appropriate, in the assessment of any proposals for new multiple unit housing developments within the Plan Area.
- *Galway County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme.*
- *Smart Travel “A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020”*, including the *National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2022*, and any other related national policy documents.
- *Water Framework Directive* and the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines to Planning Authorities 2009.*

##### Policy RD2 – Phased Development on Residential Zoned Lands

It is the policy of Galway County Council to encourage managed, orderly and phased residential development in accordance with the Preferred Development Strategy and the land use management and zoning provisions set out in this Local Area Plan. This shall include a positive presumption in favour of the managed development of suitably serviced Residential (Phase 1) lands in order to align the LAP with the Core Strategy/Settlement Strategy in the current Galway County Development Plan, subject to compliance with the policies and objectives in this LAP and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. There will be a general presumption against residential development on lands zoned Residential (Phase 2) within the lifetime of the LAP, subject to the exceptions provided for under Objective RD1 and subject to meeting wastewater capacity requirements.

## **Residential Development Objectives**

### **Objective RD1- Phased Residential Development**

Support the development of lands designated as Residential (Phase 1) within the lifetime of the LAP and reserve the lands designated as Residential (Phase 2) for the longer term growth needs of the town. Residential (Phase 2) lands are generally not developable within the lifetime of this Plan, with the exception of the following developments, which may be considered by the Planning Authority within the lifetime of this LAP subject to a suitable case being made for the proposal:

1. Single house developments for family members on family owned lands.
2. Non-residential developments that are appropriate to the site context, any existing residential amenity and the existing pattern of development in the area.
3. Where it is apparent that Residential (Phase 1) lands cannot or will not be developed within the Plan period, residential development may be considered in a phased manner on some Residential (Phase 2) lands.

The above exceptions will be subject to compliance with the Core Strategy in the current Galway County Development Plan, the policies and objectives in this LAP, conforms to EPA standards and guidelines (e.g. EPA Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e ≤10). Developments will only be permitted where a substantiated case has been made to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and the development will not prejudice the future use of the lands for the longer term growth needs of the town.

### **Objective RD2 – Quality Housing Environments**

Encourage the development of sustainable residential communities through the promotion of innovative, high quality building design and appropriate layouts, that prioritise walking, cycling and public transport options and provide for a high level of permeability, accessibility and connectivity to the existing built environment, services and facilities. In this regard, future residential development proposals will be in accordance with the principles set out in the DoEHLG document '*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009*' and its companion document '*Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide for Planning Authorities 2009*', or any updated version of these documents published during the lifetime of this Plan.

### **Objective RD3 – Housing Options**

Require that a suitable variety and mix of dwelling types and sizes are provided in developments to meet different needs, having regard to demographics and social changes, social inclusion, life time changes, smaller household sizes, lower formation age, immigration, etc.

### **Objective RD4 – Open Space in Residential Areas**

Ensure the provision of adequate areas of high quality, safe and overlooked open space within residential developments and support the provision of play and recreational areas (e.g. playgrounds/multipurpose courts) in all new large residential developments.

### **Objective RD5 – Social and Affordable Housing**

Require that 20% of all new eligible residential sites are set aside for the development of new social and affordable units, unless addressed through suitable alternative arrangements by agreement with the Planning Authority, in accordance with Galway County Council's *Housing Strategy 2009-2015* and *Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended).

### **Objective RD6 – Traveller Accommodation**

Provide adequate accommodation facilities for the traveller community in accordance with the *Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013*, or any updated version of this document.

### **Objective RD7 – Compatible Development**

Facilitate the development of appropriate, compatible uses within residential areas, subject to ensuring that adequate Residential zoned lands are retained and can be developed for residential uses to meet the growth needs of the town within the Plan period.

Non-compatible uses include those uses that may generate large amounts of traffic, emissions, pollution, noise, odour, etc., or uses that can impact negatively on residential amenity.

### **Objective RD8 – Other Residential Development**

There shall be a general presumption in favour of the development of nursing homes and retirement facilities and community/day care centres on residential zoned lands or adjacent to the established

town centre or as suitable re-use for protected structures or other buildings (e.g. institutional or educational buildings) that would have a limited re-development potential given their size and architectural character, subject to normal planning, access and servicing requirements.

### 3.2.3 Development Management Guidelines

#### Open Access Fibre Ducting

##### DM Guideline RD1 – Open Access Fibre Ducting

Request that all new build residential developments have open access fibre connections installed for high speed technologies, where practicable, in accordance with the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources document *Recommendations for Open Access Fibre Ducting and Interior Cabling for New Residential Buildings 'Making Homes Fibre Ready', 2011*.

All proposals for new non-residential developments with a floor area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more and residential developments comprised of 10 or more units may be required to submit an Energy Statement.

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

## 3.3 Social and Community Development

### 3.3.1 Context

#### Social Inclusion

Social inclusion refers to a series of positive actions to achieve equality of access to services and goods, to assist all individuals to participate in their community and society, to encourage the contribution of all persons to social and cultural life and to be aware of and to challenge all forms of discrimination. Social inclusion seeks the creation of an inclusive and fair society, combating inequality, social exclusion and poverty.

### 3.3.2 Policies and Objectives

#### Social Inclusion and Universal Access Policies

##### Policy SI 1 – Social Inclusion and Universal Access

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support the principles of social inclusion and universal access, to ensure that all individuals have access to goods, services and buildings in order to assist them to participate in and contribute to social and cultural life within Athenry.

#### Social Inclusion and Universal Access Objectives

##### Objective SI 1 – Social Inclusion

Support the implementation of the provisions of the *Galway County Council Social Inclusion Action Plan 2010* and *Social Inclusion Work Programme 2011* and any subsequent updates to these documents.

##### Objective SI 2 – Universal Access

Ensure that housing developments, community facilities, public spaces, public roads, public footpaths and transport services give due consideration to the needs of disabled or mobility impaired people and the requirements of the *Disability Act 2005* and the Council's *Disability Action Plan 2007-2015* and the *Traffic Management Guidelines 2003* (and any subsequent reviews/updates to these documents).

### Community Facilities

A growing population, such as that in Athenry, generates increased demand for the provision of services, school places, community facilities, and amenities. It is desirable that these essential facilities are provided in tandem with new development and as new communities emerge. The

Council's aim is to provide adequate appropriately zoned areas, to meet future demands for community facilities within the Plan Area, while providing a framework for the development of such uses through the policies and objectives contained within the Local Area Plan.

With regard to post-primary educational provision within Athenry, the Presentation College and Gairmscoil Mhuire both have applications with the Department of Education and Skills for additional accommodation, while Gaelcholáiste an Eachreidh is in temporary accommodation. A post primary site of 10-12 acres (4.046Ha – 4.85Ha) will also be required to provide for future development in addition to the existing site which is being acquired by the Presentation College.

The Plan identifies a range of general suitable areas for new school development and these indicative locations are illustrated within the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

## **Community Facilities and Amenities Policies**

### **Policy CF1 – Community Facilities and Amenities**

It is the policy of the Council to support the provision of an adequate level and distribution of community facilities and amenities in the Plan Area that:

- Meets the needs of the local community as they arise and resources permit.
- Are located in appropriate, accessible locations to serve the residential population in the Plan Area;
- Are clustered or linked together wherever facilities and amenities are complementary and it is practicable to do so, to allow for shared and multi-purpose use of facilities.

Community facilities and amenities projects will be facilitated in appropriate locations following an assessment of each proposal and subject to co-operation and consultation, as appropriate, with the local community and other relevant stakeholders, including the Department of Education & Skills, and available resources.

## **Community Facilities and Amenities Objectives**

### **Objective CF1 – Lands for Community/Recreation & Amenity Facilities.**

Ensure that there are adequate lands zoned and services to cater for the establishment, improvement or expansion of educational, community, recreation and amenity facilities within the Plan boundary.

### **Objective CF2 – Educational Facilities**

Support the provision of adequate educational facilities for the local community including primary, post primary, third level outreach programmes, R&D facilities, and other training facilities in order to meet the needs of the widest range of residents within Athenry and its environs.

The Council are positively disposed towards new school facilities and have identified a range of general suitable areas for new school provision. Their indicative locations are illustrated within the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

### **Objective CF3 - Childcare Facilities.**

Facilitate and promote the development of childcare facilities in suitable locations and in accordance with national policy and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government 'Childcare Facilities-Guidelines for Planning Authorities' or any updated/amended version of this document.

### **Objective CF4 - Open Spaces**

Facilitate the development of open spaces and civic spaces at suitable locations within the Plan Area and protect existing open spaces from inappropriate development, so as to maintain their attractiveness and role in enhancing the residential and overall medieval character of Athenry.

Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

### **Objective CF5 – Sports, Play and Recreation Facilities**

Support the provision of new sports, play and recreational facilities to service the needs of the local community and require the provision of play/recreation facilities in new large residential developments, and facilitate the development of same in other appropriate locations in the town,

including supporting public/community initiatives to provide same.

#### **Objective CF6 – Existing Community, Recreation and Amenity Facilities**

Retain existing community and recreation and amenity facilities and lands zoned for such uses, and prevent their change of use or redevelopment, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the facility/lands are no longer required and that the new use or development contributes to the overall community needs and recreation and amenity needs of the Athenry area.

### **3.3.3 Development Management Guidelines**

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

## **3.4 Economic Development**

### **3.4.1 Context**

In the current Galway County Development Plan 2009 – 2015, Athenry is identified as a ‘Key Town’. This means that it serves as a commuter town with regard to the Galway Gateway but It also has the ability to become increasingly self-sufficient by the creation of new large scale employment opportunities while still accommodating small scale and start up businesses including the retail sector.

#### **Enterprise, Retail & Services**

Athenry is a key settlement and forms the eastern focus point of the **Strategic Economic Corridor** as defined in the County Development Plan. It is intended that this corridor be developed, promoted and serviced to high international standards to attract Foreign Direct Investment and indigenous businesses, building on its strategic location and availability of infrastructure.

In order to help realise this economic vision for Athenry, the Plan identifies ample lands zoned for industrial, business and enterprise, business and technology zoned uses to facilitate and cater for a variety of enterprises. Notably a 96 hectare site that is located on the western edge of Athenry, and within the Strategic Economic Corridor. It is owned by the IDA and zoned for Business and Technology uses. It is envisaged that these lands could facilitate major national and international enterprises for the County and Region.

The Town Centre/Commercial (C1) and Commercial/Mixed Use (C2) zoned lands also provide for a range of suitable retail and service facilities throughout the town, which protect the vitality and viability of the town centre, while providing a strong base for employment opportunities.

#### **Tourism**

Tourism is an important sector in the local area as a driver of the local economy as well as a mechanism for the preservation and enhancement of the local heritage. Athenry has a significant number of tourist attractions focussing on its archaeological, architectural and natural heritage.

### **3.4.2 Policies and Objectives**

#### **Economic Development Policy**

##### **Policy ED1 – Economic Development**

It is the policy of the Council to support economic development and employment creation in Athenry through the identification of appropriately located and adequately serviced lands for business and enterprise, business and technology, retail, industrial, commercial and tourism developments, the promotion of investment in transportation and other support infrastructure and the creation of a high quality environment to encourage economic investment. The promotion of economic development and employment creation will be appropriately guided to ensure the protection of residential amenities, built and natural heritage, landscape/townscape/streetscape character and the vitality and viability of the town centre.



## **Economic Development Objectives**

### **Objective ED1 – Employment & Economic Development**

Support the Economic Development Strategy of the West Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and the economic development and tourism policies and objectives as set out in the current County Development Plan.

### **Objective ED2 – Business & Technology Park Development**

Promote and encourage the establishment of Business and Technology activities, which can be developed in a campus style park, on Business and Technology zoned lands in tandem with the delivery of essential infrastructural requirements. The development of these lands will be in accordance with Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of the County Development Plan 2009-2015. The Council shall also require an overarching Master Plan and Transport Assessment to integrate with transport and mobility plans and to identify and co-ordinate essential infrastructure requirements, and may require Design Statements/Development Briefs for all large scale or sensitively located development proposals within BT zoned lands. The overarching Master Plan for this zoning will be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and EU Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA). The Master Plan shall be undertaken in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

### **Objective ED3 – Business/Enterprise & Industrial Development**

Facilitate and encourage the establishment of industry/business/enterprise which are considered compatible with surrounding uses on suitably zoned sites. Where such uses are developed adjacent to residential areas and community facilities, buffer zones shall be provided as well as adequate screening in the form of planting, landscaping as appropriate.

### **Objective ED4 – Retail Development**

Support the development of appropriate types, scales and patterns of retail development in suitable locations within the town and with high quality designs that, support the vitality and viability of the existing town centre and associated main streets, that are easily accessible particularly in terms of public transport, that protect investment in strategic roads and infrastructure and that contribute to the creation of a high quality retail environment, in accordance with the *Retail Planning Guidelines* 2012 (and any subsequent review or update), and will require Retail Impact Assessments, including details of the application of a 'sequential approach' and Design Statements, where appropriate, for retail development in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines and Development Management (DM) Guidelines ED1 and ED2 as contained within this Plan.

The town centre (C1) zoning shall remain the primary focus for the location of new retail development and on Commercial/Mixed Use (C2) zoning where appropriate.

### **Objective ED5 – Tourism Development**

Encourage and assist the development of the tourist potential within Athenry in a manner that protects the architectural, archaeological and cultural significance of the town and its environs in a sustainable manner.

### **Objective ED6 – Quality Working Environments**

Encourage the provision of high quality designs (including variations in design and scale), layout, boundary treatment and arrival views of development within Industrial (I), Business and Enterprise (BE) Business and Technology (BT) and Commercial/Mixed Use (C2) zones in order to positively contribute to the character and visual amenity of the area.

### **Objective ED7 - Non Conforming Use**

Where existing uses do not conform with the land use zoning objectives or the matrix of the Plan, the Planning Authority shall facilitate their relocation to more sustainable and appropriately zoned lands.

### 3.4.3 Development Management Guidelines

#### Retail Impact Assessments and Design Statements

##### DM Guideline ED1 – Retail Impact Assessments

Retail Impact Assessments will be required with planning applications for large retail developments (such as shopping centres or large food/grocery chain stores), mixed use developments with a large retail component, developments that may have a significant effect on the vitality and viability of the town centre or as otherwise considered appropriate by the Planning Authority. Retail Impact Assessments will be in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines, including details of the sequential test.

##### DM Guideline ED2 – Design Statements

Design Statements may be required with planning applications for major retail proposals, retail proposals that are located within a sensitive area or as otherwise considered appropriate by the Planning Authority. Design Statements should address the issues raised in Section 6.4 of the *Draft Retail Planning Guidelines 2011* (and any updated/superseding document), including an appraisal of the character of the area adjoining the site and proposals for high quality design that integrates successfully with the context. Design Statements should also take account of the design and layout guidance set out in the forthcoming *Best Practice Design Manual*.

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

## 3.5 Transportation Infrastructure

### 3.5.1 Context

Major transportation projects such as the opening of the M6 and the Limerick – Galway Rail link have dramatically changed the patterns of movement in the Plan Area and its hinterland. The further development of new commuter rail facilities and the opportunities for new land uses that this and the opening of the new M6 motorway and the Athenry Relief Road presents will have further positive impacts for the town. In this regard, it is important that the focus remains on sustainable public transport options and facilitating the continued improvement of same.

#### Public Transport

It remains an objective of the current County Development Plan to investigate the potential of an integrated transport hub at Athenry and to support dual tracking of the rail line between Galway City and the town, which would improve public transport options and shorten travel times.

Bus links to and through Athenry remain strong and are predominantly interregional with some specific local services continuing to play a vital role in connecting Athenry and its environs to Galway City, as well as to other important national and local destinations.

#### Park & Ride

Park and Ride facilities can intercept commuter traffic entering into Athenry and induce a modal shift from the private motor vehicle to public transport, thus reducing traffic congestion and through traffic in the town. Current parking facilities are in operation within the proposed Business & Enterprise zoning located to the south west of the railway station and which potentially complement the delivery of an integrated transportation hub in this area.

#### Walking & Cycling

Given the relatively compact urban form of Athenry there is great potential for a modal shift from the private car towards walking and cycling as a mode of transport, particularly if improved linkages between the town centre, rail station and residential areas are realised and new developments focus on connectivity, legibility and permeability.

#### Roads, Traffic Management & Parking

The aim of the Council is to promote efficiency of traffic circulation and management around Athenry and to encourage and facilitate the provision of parking convenient to the town centre.

Athenry is located at the junction of the R348 & R347 linking Ballinasloe and Galway City via the M6 and Tuam and Kinvara (via Craughwell and Ardrahan) respectively. The new M6 motorway greatly impacts on the future development of the Town and can hasten the development of new higher quality spur roads servicing Athenry on the road reservation corridors shown throughout the Plan.

A Traffic Management Plan & a Pay and Display System are presently operating in the town centre. Future proposals include the completion of long stay parking facilities at Backlawn and Knockaunglass.

### 3.5.2 Policies and Objectives

#### Sustainable Transportation Policy

##### Policy TI 1 – Sustainable Transport, Walking and Cycling

It is the policy of the Council to promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling as safe, convenient and environmentally sustainable alternatives to private transport and to implement the key goals, policy guidance and relevant actions set out in the Department of Transport's policy document *Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020* (and any subsequent amendments or updates) and including any Smart Travel Plan(s) as adopted by Galway County Council.

#### Sustainable Transportation Objectives

##### Objective TI 1 – Integrated Land Use and Transport

Ensure that land use planning is integrated with transportation planning and reduce the need to travel, particularly by private transport, by:

- Promoting the consolidation of development;
- Encouraging intensification and mixed use development along public transport corridors and at public transport hubs and nodes;
- Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport within new development proposals, as appropriate;
- Ensuring that land use and zoning are fully integrated with the provision and development of a comprehensive, sustainable, efficient, high quality transportation network that accommodates the movement needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

##### Objective TI 2 – Sustainable Transportation

Facilitate any Smarter Travel initiatives that will improve sustainable transportation within the Plan Area and facilitate sustainable transportation options including public transportation, rail freight, electric vehicles rentals, car clubs, public bike schemes, as appropriate.

##### Objective TI 3 – Public Transport

Promote Athenry as an integrated transportation location which supports the provision of improved and enhanced public transport services and facilities, including rail, bus services, the Rural Transport Initiative, park and ride facilities and all associated ancillary requirements.

- Support the provision of an integrated public transportation facility/hub (with all the required ancillary services) which is located in proximity to the railway station in consultation with public transport providers and local landowners.
- Seek to provide enhanced public access between the Railway Station and its existing parking facilities.
- Support the provision of parking facilities in proximity to public transportation nodes to facilitate sustainable patterns of commuting to/from Athenry.

Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

#### **Objective TI 4 – Walking**

Facilitate the improvement of the pedestrian environment and network so that it is safe and accessible to all, through the provision of the necessary infrastructure such as footpaths, lighting, pedestrian crossings etc.

New development shall promote and prioritise walking, shall be permeable, adequately linked and connected to neighbouring areas, the town centre, recreational, educational, residential and employment destinations and shall adhere to the principles contained within the national policy document *Smart Travel A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020*, or as updated or with any associated guidance document.

#### **Objective TI 5 – Cycling**

Facilitate the improvement of the cycling environment/network so that it is safe and accessible, through the provision of the necessary infrastructure, such as surface treatment, junction treatment, cycle track(s), cycle lane(s), lighting, road crossings etc.

New development shall promote and prioritise cycling, shall be permeable, adequately linked and connected to neighbouring areas, the town centre, recreational, educational, residential and employment destinations and shall adhere to the principles contained within the national policy document *Smart Travel A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020*, and the National Cycle Policy Framework document or updated/amended guidance documents.

#### **Objective TI 6 – Bicycle Parking**

Seek to provide adequate levels of bicycle parking throughout the Plan Area, in accordance with the standards as set out in the current County Development Plan, or as varied/updated, and ensure that new private developments provide safe, secure and sheltered bicycle parking facilities.

#### **Objective TI 7 Walking & Cycling Strategy**

Support the preparation of a County Walking & Cycling Strategy and the implementation of any specified objectives for the town of Athenry and its environs, as resources permit.

#### **Objective TI 8– Pedestrian Crossings**

Facilitate the provision of pedestrian crossings adjacent to schools and at other appropriate locations within the Plan Area, as required, and specifically a pedestrian/cycle crossing from Athenry Rail Station and its existing parking facilities.

Refer to the ***Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)***.

#### **Objective TI 9 – Mobility Management Plans**

Require Mobility Management Plans for all medium to large scale residential, commercial, mixed use or business/enterprise/industrial/business and technology park developments as appropriate.

#### **Objective TI 10 – Charging Points for Electric Vehicles**

Facilitate the provision and delivery of recharging points for electric powered vehicles within public car parks and at other appropriate locations in Athenry for domestic, transition and end of journey type travel.

### **Roads, Streets and Parking Policies**

#### **Policy TI 2 – Roads, Streets and Parking**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to ensure that the road and street network is safe and convenient, that it has adequate capacity to accommodate motorised traffic and non-motorised movements, that it has a high environmental quality with appropriate adjacent development and built form, particularly in the case of urban streets and streetscapes, and that adequate parking facilities are provided to serve the needs of the town. This policy and its associated objectives will be guided by relevant national policy, including the *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines*, the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines* and accompanying *Urban Design Manual*, the *Traffic Management Guidelines*, the *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines* and any forthcoming guidelines in relation to street design and cycling facilities.

### **Policy TI 3 – County Development Plan Policies, Objectives & Development Management Standards.**

New developments including developments proposed onto and in proximity to National and Class II Controlled roads shall be assessed, as appropriate, in relation to details including the provision of a safe means of access/egress, provision of sightlines, car and bicycle parking, loading bay provision, building setbacks from routes/roads etc., in accordance with the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards set out in the current County Development Plan or any varied or updated version.

## **Roads, Streets and Parking Objectives**

### **Objective TI 11 – National Road/Motorway Network**

Protect the national road/motorway network and safeguard the efficiency, safety, capacity and strategic investment in the M6 motorway. Proposals for large scale developments will be required, where appropriate, to submit Traffic and Transport Assessments to assess the impact of the proposed development and associated traffic movements on the efficiency, safety and capacity of the national road/motorway network.

### **Objective TI 12 - Goods Transportation Hub**

Engage with relevant stakeholders to identify demand and identify potential locations for a Goods Transportation Hub within the Plan area in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development including the provision of appropriate and adequate critical service infrastructure.

### **Objective TI 13 – Transport Network Improvements**

Facilitate the timely delivery of any improvements of the existing transportation network, including the completion of the Athenry Relief Road and the implementation of traffic management measures subject to normal planning and environmental considerations.

Where possible, there will be minimal hedgerow/stone wall removal and beneficial landscaping and planting to maintain wildlife corridors.

### **Objective TI 14 – Road Safety Audits, Traffic Impact Assessment**

Require all proposed new commercial, industrial and retail developments and residential development greater than 4 units, or where significant changes are proposed to existing commercial, industrial or larger retail developments, to submit Road Safety Audits and Traffic Impact Assessments as part of their planning application documentation.

### **Objective TI 15 – Schools**

Promote and facilitate greater ease of traffic movement and safe routes to schools in partnership with local schools and ensure that schools have safe drop off/collection facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and adequate and appropriately located staff parking.

### **Objective TI 16 – Noise**

All new proposed development, within 300m of roadways with traffic volumes greater than 8220AADT, major railways which have more than 60,000 passengers per year, shall include a noise assessment and mitigation measures if necessary with the planning application documentation.

### **Objective TI 17– Road Schemes/Road Improvements**

Support the development of road schemes/improvements including road bridges and road/rail crossings in and around the Plan Area as shown on the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

### **Objective TI 18 - M6 Ballinasloe to Galway Motorway:**

Protect from future development the route of the M6 Ballinasloe to Galway Motorway which is located within the area covered by the Athenry LAP.

In this regard the following shall apply:

- A building setback of 90m minimum shall be required on each side of the route edge for the M6 Ballinasloe to Galway route in areas where a speed limit greater than 50kph applies.

Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

**Objective TI 19 - Athenry Relief Road/ Relief Streets Scheme: (So named for the purpose of this Plan)**

Protect from future development the Athenry Relief Roads/Relief Streets scheme, which are located within the area covered by the Athenry LAP.

In this regard the following shall apply:

- A building set back of 25m minimum shall be required on each side of the route edge for the Relief Roads/Relief Streets in areas where a speed limit greater than 50kph applies

No minimum specified building set back shall be required on the Relief Road/Relief Streets in areas of 50kph or less, in order to allow for a more flexible, context sensitive approach that will enable the development of urban streetscapes at appropriate locations.

A **3m wide cycleway/pedestrian way** shall be provided as part of the provision of the Athenry Relief Road.

Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

**Objective TI 20 – New Road and over- bridge**

Provide a new road and over-bridge from the M6 link road to the Cashla Road, as provided for in the proposed Athenry Relief Road. Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)** regarding location.

**Objective TI 21 – Amenity Cycleway/Pathway**

Reserve an amenity cycleway/pathway from the new Business and Technology Park (BT) zoning objective, along the Cashla Road, IDA ring road to the Railway Station as indicated on the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**. Support the development of other pedestrian and cycling linkages where appropriate within the Plan area.

**Objective TI 22 – Urban Street Network and Approach Routes**

Support the treatment of the route network within the built areas of the town as urban streets that accommodate the needs of pedestrians, that facilitate cyclists wherever possible and that support public and private transport movements, stopping and parking, as appropriate. Where appropriate, new developments will be required to facilitate the extension of the urban street network and/or the provision of improved connectivity and permeability, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Objective TI 23 – Bridges over railway lines**

Improve the bridges over the railway lines by making better provision for pedestrian access in an environmentally sensitive manner. Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

**Objective TI 24 – Parking Facilities**

It is an objective of the Council to provide long stay parking facilities at Backlawn & Knockaunglass. Ensure that adequate parking facilities are provided in other suitable locations within the Plan Area to serve the needs of Athenry in accordance with applicable standards and guidelines. Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)** regarding locations.

**Objective TI 25– Walkways**

Provide a walkway along the River Clarin, where possible. Continue to provide a walkway around the Town Walls. Refer to the **Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)** regarding locations.

**3.5.3 Development Management Guidelines**

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

**3.6 Utility and Environmental Infrastructure**

**3.6.1 Context**

The sustainable growth of Athenry is dependent on the satisfactory provision of service infrastructure, utilities, energy, and communication networks, requiring a need to plan for all of these elements so as to ensure that there is adequate availability to support future development, in a manner that is environmentally appropriate, cost effective, efficient and protects public health.

## **Water Services**

Athenry receives its water supply from the Tuam Regional Water Supply Scheme. Water supply is, therefore, not a limiting factor to development.

The Athenry sewerage Scheme is on the current Water Services Investment Programme under 'Contracts to Start' and is with the Department for approval. There is no spare capacity at present within the system - the current loading is estimated to be 5,617 P.E. and includes for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional loading. A design P.E of 9,000 has been prepared under Stage1 of the WWTP upgrade (expected operational date 2014) and a design P.E. of 16,000 under Stage 2 (estimated for 2021). Network upgrade and extensions are also proposed.

## **Surface Water Drainage**

In order to ensure that surface water is disposed of in a controlled and sustainable manner, future developments will be required to address surface water disposal through on-site systems, (depending on site characteristics), discharge to adjacent surface water (where available) or discharge to an existing surface water sewer if available. The Local Area Plan will facilitate the upgrading of surface water infrastructure where necessary and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) in developments, such as permeable surfaces, retention ponds and rainwater harvesting, to restrict surface water runoff in new developments to Greenfield levels and to minimise flood risks and potential impacts. Proposals for SuDS will be in accordance with the recommendations as contained within the EPA document entitled *Guidance on Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater 2011* (or any updated version of this document).

## **Water Quality**

The E.U. Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC adopted in 2000 requires member states to ensure that all their waters (including surface and groundwater) achieve at least 'good status' by 2015 and to ensure that the current status does not deteriorate in any waters. The Western River Basin Management Plan has recently been prepared and recognises the need to integrate water protection measures with land use planning at regional and local level, as responsibility for taking measures within the plan lies with all public bodies whose activities impact on water quality or who regulate such activities. Athenry is underlain by limestone and a regionally important karst aquifer, and the Groundwater Protection Scheme identifies approximately 10% of the area within the LAP area is rated as having groundwater vulnerability of Extreme 80% is rated as High with only 10% rated at Moderate. Therefore it is essential that this resource is sufficiently protected in line with the Groundwater Directive & the Water Framework Directive.

## **Climate Change**

Climate change refers to changes in climatic conditions whether through natural variations or as a result of anthropogenic influences. Climate change has the potential to impact habitats and impact on species distribution. The loss of biodiversity will impact on human health. Sea level rises will impact on coastal erosion and increase the likelihood of flooding incidences. It will also impact on water resources.

The National Strategy on Climate Change 2007-2012 sets out the cross-sectoral measures necessary to achieve Ireland's Kyoto Protocol commitments. The national target under the Kyoto Protocol is to limit greenhouse gas emissions for 2008-2012 to 13% above the 1990 level as part of its commitment to the overall EU target.

At a local level, Galway County Council must contribute to the stabilisation and reduction of national greenhouse gas emissions and including climate change adaptation through the promotion of renewable energy sources and energy conservation in policies and objectives regarding the environment, housing and infrastructure. The policies and objectives within the Athenry Plan will contribute to the national commitment to limit the impact of climate change and reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

## Air Quality

The *EU CAFE Directive* was transposed into Irish legislation by the *Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 180 of 2011)*. It replaces the *Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (S.I. No. 271 of 2002)*, the *Ozone in Ambient Air Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 53 of 2004)* and *S.I. No. 33 of 1999*.

The air quality within the Athenry area is generally good. The Plan contains a number of policies and objectives that focuses on enhanced public transport, alternative transport methods and energy efficiency buildings.

## Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils. It has no smell, colour or taste and can only be detected using special detectors.

The Radon Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII) have identified that Athenry is a high radon area and that an estimated 'greater than 20% of homes are above the Reference Level'. Their website provides details with regard to assessing homes for the risk of radon ([www.rpii.ie](http://www.rpii.ie)).

## Flood Risk Management and Assessment

The Department of the Environment and the OPW published national flood risk management guidelines in 2009 entitled *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009*. The *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* require Planning Authorities to ensure that, where relevant, flood risk is a key consideration in preparing development plans, local area plans and the assessment of planning applications. The aim of the Guidelines is to avoid flood risk where possible, substitute less vulnerable uses when avoidance is not possible and mitigate and manage the risk where avoidance and substitution are not possible.

The Guidelines provide guidance on identifying areas where the probability of flood risk is high (Flood Zone A), moderate (Flood Zone B) and low (Flood Zone C) and identifies the types of land use that are appropriate within each Flood Zone. The Guidelines also highlight the need to assess the potential impacts of climate change as part of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for a plan. The Guidelines suggest that where mathematical models are not available, climate change flood extents can be assessed by using Flood Zone B outline as a surrogate for Flood Zone A with allowance for the possible impacts of climate change.

The OPW has produced flood maps as part of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) that identify areas at risk of flooding, including fluvial, coastal, pluvial and groundwater flooding, for the entire country. Galway County Council has also carried out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for County Galway, including a specific assessment for the Athenry Plan Area. As part of the SFRA, the historic flood risk areas have been identified and a number of local level assessments have also been carried out, including local knowledge of flood events and site walkovers. The SFRA generally confirms the flood extents identified in the OPW PFRA mapping.

The LAP takes due consideration of the national *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* and the recommendations emanating from the SFRA. The LAP identifies Flood Zones in accordance with the Guidelines (shown on **Map 3A/3B – Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas**), designates land use zones (see **Map 1A/1B – Land Use Zoning**) considered appropriate to each Flood Zone and includes policies and objectives dealing with flood risk assessment and management (see also **Map 2A/2B – Specific Objectives**). The Flood Zones identified are:

Flood Zone	Probability of Flooding	Flood Risk Areas Included
Flood Zone A	High	> 1:100 for river flooding > 1:200 for coastal flooding
Flood Zone B	Moderate	1:100 to 1:1000 for river flooding 1:200 to 1:1000 for coastal flooding
Flood Zone C	Low	< 1:1000 for river flooding < 1:1000 for coastal flooding

The LAP also promotes the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in developments, which can contribute to surface water retention and help reduce and prevent flooding. Proposals for SuDS will be in accordance with the recommendations as contained within the EPA document entitled *Guidance on Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater 2011* (or any updated version of this document).



### **Waste Management**

The Connaught Waste Management Plan provides policy guidance on waste management in County Galway. Best practice in terms of waste management recommends that as much waste as possible is dealt with through reduction, reuse and recycling, with as little as possible remaining to be disposed of. The Council promotes environmental awareness measures, initiatives and campaigns in the local communities through involvement with various groups and organisations and through the implementation of the Green Schools programme - an international programme designed to encourage and acknowledge whole school action for the environment.

### **Energy Supply & Associated Infrastructure**

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

Galway County Council will continue to implement the Council's Energy Action Plan regarding energy efficiency and conservation in existing and future residential, commercial and industrial buildings within Athenry.

### **ICT Telecommunications**

High speed broadband is an important asset in order to attract inward investment. The Athenry Metropolitan Area Broadband Network (MANS) is fully constructed and is managed on concession by E-Net Ltd on behalf of the Government. The Council will support the development of a high quality communications and energy networks including the provision of local services within the Plan area.

### **Gas**

Galway County Council will promote Athenry as a Phase 1 Town for connection to the Mayo-Galway pipeline.

## **3.6.2 Policies and Objectives**

### **Water Supply, Wastewater and Surface Water Policies**

#### **Policy UI 1 – Water Supply, Wastewater and Surface Water Infrastructure**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support the provision and maintenance of adequate wastewater disposal, water supply and surface water drainage infrastructure, in accordance with EU Directives, to service the development of Athenry. This will include adequate capacity for public wastewater and storm-water sewers as appropriate, an adequate quantity and quality of water supply and the promotion of Sustainable Drainage System approaches and techniques within the town. Continue to improve and upgrade water supply within the Plan Area and implement as appropriate the relevant recommendations set out in *The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland – A Report for the Years 2008-2009* (Office of Environment Enforcement – EPA, 2011).

The Council will support any works to achieve an improvement in overall surface water quality and help meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive Water Management Unit Action Plan.

### **Water Supply, Wastewater, Surface Water Objectives**

#### **Objective UI 1 – Water Supply & Water Conservation**

Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with a suitable quantity and quality of drinking water supply, promote water conservation to reduce the overall level of water loss in the public supply and require that new domestic developments provide for water supply metering.

### **Objective UI 2 – Wastewater Disposal**

New developments shall only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that they can be serviced and that there is adequate capacity in the wastewater disposal infrastructure in accordance with applicable requirements and standards, including urban wastewater treatment disposal standards, in order to protect the River Clarin, the Galway Bay Complex and its qualifying interests. Any developments for single dwellings will be required to adhere to the EPA Code of Practice and will be subject to monitoring in order to assess impacts on water quality. Continue to support the delivery of the Galway Main Drainage scheme in relation to the Athenry Local Area Plan area. Any development will be required to adhere to the relevant EPA Code of Practice and will be subject to monitoring in order to assess impacts on water quality.

### **Objective UI 3 Wastewater Treatment Plant Buffer**

Provide and protect a 100m buffer around the wastewater treatment plant (Public Utilities Zoning Objective) site and protect buffer zones around any other treatment plant in the town as appropriate. Refer to the *Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)*.

### **Objective UI 4 – Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems**

Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing surface water drainage system in the Plan Area, ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in all new developments. Surface water runoff from development sites will be limited to pre-development levels and planning applications for new developments will be required to provide details of surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems proposals.

### **Objective UI 5 – Maintenance and Improvement of Water Services Infrastructure**

Support the maintenance, improvement and monitoring of public water supply, wastewater disposal/discharges including storm water discharges and surface water drainage infrastructure, as necessary to address deficiencies and/or service the development needs of the town. This will include the following and any other projects approved during the period of the Plan:

- Ensure that trade effluent from new development is managed properly and discharged to sewer in accordance with relevant discharge licenses, where appropriate.
- Continue to carry out improvements to the existing infrastructure and quality of the town's water supply system.
- Improve and maintain an adequate surface water drainage system throughout the Plan area.

## **Water Quality Policy**

### **Policy UI 2 – Water Quality**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to protect and improve water quality, in conjunction with other agencies and stakeholders in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive (2006/60/EC) and to support the implementation of the Western River Basin District Management Plan and consider both when considering new development proposals.

## **Water Quality Objectives**

### **Objective UI 6 – Western River Basin District Management Plan and Protection of Waters**

Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the Western River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015 or any other plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this Local Area Plan. Development shall only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface water, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated wetlands.

Galway County Council is statutorily obliged to prevent any further deterioration in the quality status of the waters in Athenry (Clarin River and the Clare River Drainage Area) and to ensure good quality status by 2021.

#### **Objective UI 7 – Groundwater & Aquifer**

Support the protection of groundwater resources and dependent wildlife/habitats in accordance with the *Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC* and the *European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010)* or any updates. Protect the regionally important aquifer that under lays the Plan area from risk of environmental pollution and have regard to any groundwater protection schemes and groundwater source protection zones where data has been made available by the Geological Survey of Ireland.

### **Climate Change and Air Quality Policy**

#### **Policy UI 3 – Climate Change & Air Quality**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support and promote, in conjunction with other agencies, local, national and international initiatives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases and encouraging the development of renewable energy sources in accordance with The *'National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012'* (or any superseding document).

### **Climate Change and Air Quality Objectives**

#### **Objective UI 8 – Climate Change & Air Quality**

Continue to implement Galway County Council's *Energy Action Plan* regarding energy efficiency and conservation in existing and future buildings, in energy use and procurement activities and in raising awareness and stimulating action within local communities. Promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development throughout the Plan Area by seeking to protect and maintain the regulatory standards contained with the EPA's *Air Quality in Ireland 2009 Key Indicators of Ambient Air Quality* (Environmental Protection Agency 2010, or any superseding document).

#### **Objective UI 9 – Air Purification**

Encourage landscaping and deciduous tree planting in an environmentally sensitive manner within the Plan Area as a means of air purification, the filtering of suspended particles and the improvement of Atheny's micro- climate.

#### **Objective UI 10 – Radon**

Galway County Council in its statutory role under the *Building Control Act 2007* will have regard to the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the Building Regulations.

### **Flood Risk Management Policy**

#### **Policy UI 4 – Flood Risk Management and Assessment**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the *EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC)*, the *Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010)* and the DoEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance). Galway County Council will also take account of the *Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans (CFRAMs)*, *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)* and *County Galway Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2012* and any recommendations and outputs arising from same that relate to or impact on the Plan Area.

## Flood Risk Management Objectives

### Objective UI 11– Flood Risk Management and Assessment

Ensure the implementation of the DoEHLG/OPW publication *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any superseding document) in relation to flood risk management within the Plan Area. This will include the following:

1. Avoid, reduce and/or mitigate, as appropriate in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*, the risk of flooding within the flood risk areas indicated on **Maps 3A/3B – Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas**, including fluvial, coastal/tidal, pluvial and groundwater flooding, and any other flood risk areas that may be identified during the period of the Plan or in relation to a planning application.
2. Development proposals in areas where there is an identified or potential risk of flooding, or that could give rise to a risk of flooding elsewhere, may be required to carry out a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment and Development Management Justification Test where appropriate, in accordance with the provisions of the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any superseding document). Any flood risk assessment also should include an assessment of the potential impacts of climate change, such as an increase in the extent or probability of flooding, and any associated measures necessary to address these impacts.
3. Development that would be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding or that would cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations shall not normally be permitted.
4. Where certain measures proposed to mitigate or manage the risk of flooding associated with new developments are likely to result in significant effects to the environment or Natura 2000 Sites downstream, such measures will undergo appropriate environmental and Habitats Directive Assessments.

### Objective UI 12 – Flood Zones and Appropriate Land Uses

Protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate Flood Zone in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* (or any superseding document) and guidance contained in DM Guideline UI1- Flood Zones and Appropriate Land Uses. Where a development/land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, then the development proposal will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*.

### Objective UI 13 – Waterbodies and Watercourses

Protect waterbodies and watercourses within the Plan Area from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips and natural floodplains. This will include a 10m environmental management buffer on either side of the River Clarin and its tributary, measured from the near river bank. Promote the sustainable management and use of watercourses and avoid the culverting or realignment of these features. Refer to **the Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)**.

### Objective UI 14 - Flooding & Surface Water

This Local Area Plan takes due consideration of the national guidelines issued by the DoEHLG entitled '*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' 2009. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out for County Galway and the relevant flood risk issues for the Athenry area have been considered. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in developments can contribute to surface water retention and help reduce and prevent flooding. Proposals for SuDS shall be in accordance with the recommendations as contained within the EPA document entitled '*Guidance on Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater 2011*' (or any updated version of this document).

## Waste Management Policy

### Policy UI 5 – Waste Management

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support waste reduction and sustainable waste management through prevention, reduction and recycling.

## Waste Management Objectives

### Objective UI 14 – Waste Prevention, Reduction & Recycling

Promote the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments. Applicants will be required to submit proposals demonstrating how this is to be achieved with planning applications.

### Objective UI 15 – Bring Bank Facility

Facilitate the installation of bring banks at suitable locations within the Plan Area.

## Energy and Communications Infrastructure Policy

### Policy UI 6 – Energy and Communications

It is the policy of the Council to support the provision of adequate energy and communications infrastructure to service developments, including gas, electricity, broadband and telephone services. In particular, the Council supports the increased use of renewable energy and the aims of sustainable energy use and conservation in building design and construction.

## Energy and Communications Infrastructure Objectives

### Objective UI 16 – Broadband & Telecommunications

Facilitate the provision of adequate telecommunication infrastructure within the Plan Area, including telephone and broadband service, to the requirements of the relevant service providers and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

### Objective UI 17 – Electricity Supply

Facilitate the provision of an adequate supply of electricity and gas to developments in the Plan Area, to the requirements of the relevant service provider.

Promote Athenry as a Phase 1 Town that has been approved by the Commission for Energy Regulation for connection to the gas network subject to making the connection viable.

### Objective UI 18 – Energy Conservation & Efficiency

New buildings should be sustainable in their siting, orientation, design and construction. Passive solar design techniques, high energy efficiency, low impact construction methods and the use of local /sustainable building materials and/or recycled aggregates shall be encouraged to ensure that new developments minimise their environmental impacts and long term costs.

### Objective UI 19 Renewable Energy

Promote and facilitate the development of renewable sources of energy and associated infrastructure within the LAP area and encourage the integration of micro-renewable energy sources into the design and construction of new developments as appropriate.

## 3.6.3 Development Management Guidelines

### Flood Risk Management

#### DM Guideline UI1 – Flood Zones and Appropriate Land Uses

The table below indicates the types of land uses that are appropriate in each of the Flood Zones identified within the Plan Area, in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*. Where developments/land uses are proposed that are considered inappropriate to the Flood Zone, then a Development Management Justification Test and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required in accordance with the *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*.

Land Uses	Flood Zone A	Flood Zone B	Flood Zone C
<b>HVD – Highly Vulnerable Development</b>	Inappropriate (if proposed then Justification Test & detailed FRA required)	Inappropriate (if proposed then Justification Test & detailed FRA required)	Appropriate (screen for flood risk)
<b>LVD – Less Vulnerable Development</b>	Inappropriate (if proposed then Justification Test & detailed FRA required)	Inappropriate due to climate change (if proposed then Justification Test & detailed FRA required)	Appropriate (screen for flood risk)
<b>WCD – Water-Compatible Development</b>	Appropriate (detailed FRA may be required)	Appropriate (detailed FRA may be required)	Appropriate (screen for flood risk)

**Notes** (refer to *Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009* for additional detail):

1. **HVD** – Houses, schools, hospitals, residential institutions, emergency services, essential infrastructure, etc.
2. **LVD** – Economic uses (retail, leisure, warehousing, commercial, industrial, non-residential institutions, etc.), land and buildings used for agriculture or forestry, local transport infrastructure, etc.
3. **WCD** – Docks, marinas, wharves, water-based recreation and tourism (excluding sleeping accommodation), amenity open space, sports and recreation, flood control infrastructure, etc.

Refer to the separate supporting document *Conclusions for Athenry Indicative Flood Risk Zones*, which forms part of the *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Galway 2012*.

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

### 3.7 Urban Design & Place-making

#### 3.7.1 Context

Urban design refers to the theory and practice of creating urban places and involves buildings but focuses particularly on the spaces between buildings, including the streets, frontages, civic spaces and overall place-making, such as building types and arrangements, urban block types and patterns, mix of uses and activities, etc. Successful urban design is essential in the creation of attractive and sustainable living and working environments and the establishment of a unique identity and sense of place for the town.

The Athenry ACA Appraisal and Management Plan and recommendations of the Draft Public Realm Plan will seek to strengthen the visual character of the town and its historic built environment, to reinforce the urban character while ensuring that traditional features and sites are protected, retained and, where desirable, enhanced. Such improvements are crucial to the vitality and success of the town centre.

#### 3.7.2 Policies and Objectives

##### Urban Design and Place-making Policy

##### Policy UD1 – Urban Design and Place-making

It is the policy of Galway County Council to promote the use of sustainable urban design principles and approaches that will help to create high quality built and natural environments appropriate to the context and landscape setting of the town, having regard to the guidance contained in the *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines 2009* and the accompanying *Urban Design Manual 2009* (or any updated version). This will focus on the development of a high quality, well landscaped and appropriately scaled built environment with a strong civic and commercial core, responsive building frontages, appropriate building forms, heights, designs and materials and high quality civic, community, recreational and amenity facilities. The creation of a high quality natural environment will also be supported through the protection of the landscape sensitivities, views and prospects in the town and the promotion of the development of a green network and high quality landscaping.

## Urban Design and Place-making Objectives

### Objective UD1 – High Quality, Sensitive Design

Ensure that new developments are responsive to their site context and in keeping with the character, amenity, heritage, environment and landscape of the area. New development proposals will be required to complement the existing character of the town centre/area in terms of scale, height, massing, building line, urban grain and definition and through high quality design proposals for buildings/structures/shop fronts, the use of high quality, appropriate materials and the provision of appropriate signage, lighting, landscaping proposals and other such details.

### Objective UD2 – Public Spaces and Streets

Promote the development of high quality public spaces consisting of streets, squares, parks and amenities connected by a network of pedestrian and cycling routes. Public spaces should have a high standard of design and street furniture that will create a coherent character for the area. This would include appropriately designed and located park benches, bus shelters, bicycle storage facilities, refuse bins, signage, street sculpture, etc. but should avoid the over-proliferation of different elements and/or cluttering of public spaces.

### Objective UD3– Spatial Definition and Animation

Ensure that new developments are designed to provide spatial definition and animation to public spaces and streets through the use of appropriate building lines and built forms, responsive building frontages and passive surveillance and high quality streetscapes and/or landscaping edges to enclose and address public spaces. Perimeter block typologies provide a useful approach in generating good spatial definition, adequate enclosure and a high quality public realm and the creation of focal points, such as landmark buildings and gateways, also help to improve spatial definition and legibility and will be encouraged in appropriate locations.

### Objective UD4 – Green Network and the Landscape

Support the development of a network of amenities, open spaces and natural areas that support biodiversity, that incorporate existing landscape features such as local rivers, streams, trees, stone walls and hedgerows, that provide pedestrian and cycling linkages and active and passive recreation opportunities, that help to structure and provide relief from the built environment and that can provide areas for surface water attenuation and flood risk management.

### Objective UD5 – Street-Oriented Development and Responsive Frontages

Promote street-oriented development along the urban street network within the built areas of the town and along the approach routes to the town. This will include improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport as appropriate and the promotion of high quality building or landscaping edges to these routes. Buildings and spaces should be designed to provide a human scale along street frontages with the use of appropriate building heights and responsive ground floor treatments. Intensive, fine-grained developments will generally be encouraged to provide a diversity of building forms and public spaces.

### Objective UD6 – Views and Prospects

Protect all views and prospects of significance, particularly those of the Town Walls (including views of the North-West Tower and wall walk, views of the North Gate and Castle, views of the South-East Tower to the Dominican Priory and to the Castle in the background, views of the highest and longest surviving length of the Town Walls and view through the west gateway), St. Mary's Collegiate Church, the Dominican Priory.

Prohibit development which will block or interfere with a significant view or prospect. Where it is considered that a development may impact on views and prospects, to have regard to the significance of any such impact and any appropriate mitigation measures that should be incorporated.

Refer to the *Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)* and to the *'Athenry Town Walls Conservation Management Plan' (S 5.5 Key Views p. 48)*.

### Objective UD7 – Design Statements

Require design statements with all large scale or sensitively located development proposals, such as in close proximity to an ACA, protected structure, natural heritage designation, significant public amenity, elevated position or visually vulnerable area, and in the case of any other development proposals where this is considered necessary by the planning authority. Design statements should

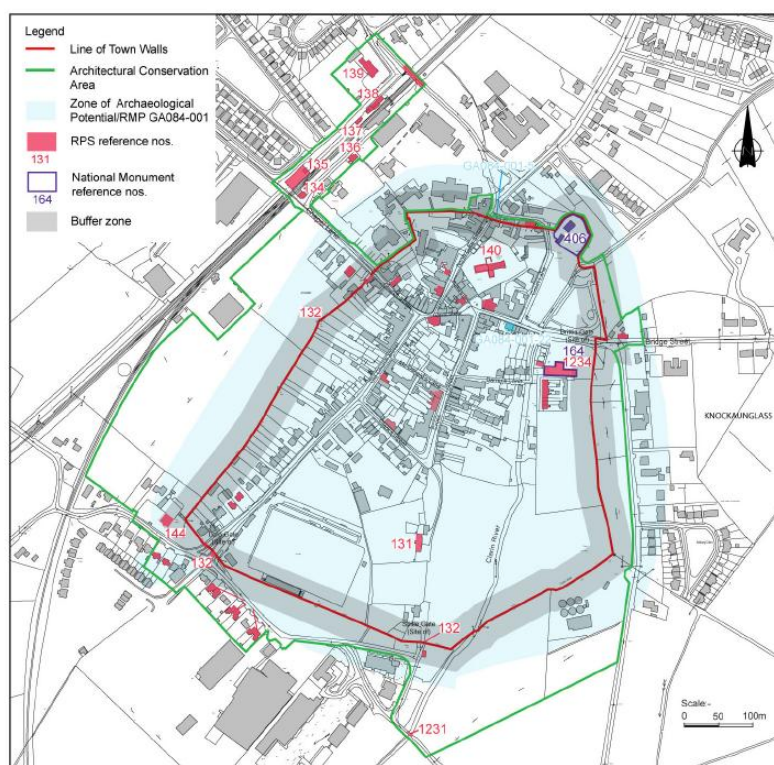
include a site appraisal examining the location, context, landscape/townscape setting, accessibility, features and characteristics of the development site, which should be used to inform the selection of appropriate development forms and design responses and the incorporation and provision of any important landscape features in the layout and design of the development. Design statements should be succinct documents that include both text and supporting graphics demonstrating how the site context and characteristics and design principles, policies and objectives have been addressed in the design and layout of the development proposal.

### 3.7.3 Development Management Guidelines

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

## 3.8 Built Heritage & Cultural Heritage

### 3.8.1 Context



The archaeological, architectural and natural heritage assets within Athenry contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. The town of Athenry is considered a significant heritage asset on account of the numerous sites and monuments which are identified for preservation. Of particular importance are the town walls and flanking towers which are of international importance. A Conservation Management Plan in relation to the historic walls has been developed and is being implemented to conserve and manage this rich heritage resource. The Castle, Dominican Priory and St Mary's Collegiate Church also add significantly to the heritage asset of Athenry.

### Architectural Heritage

The compact old town of Athenry, which lies inside the historic town walls is characterised by narrow radial streets which converge on Market Square and have a unique character that is derived from the combination of buildings of significant architectural and historic value and simple vernacular architecture.

Galway County Council recognises the value of the built heritage to the character of Athenry. The Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of this heritage through the measures contained in planning legislation, through the implementation of appropriate conservation led policies as well as sensitive land use objectives, good urban design principles and development management standards, which will significantly enhance the architectural setting within Athenry.

### Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

The current Galway County Development Plan incorporates the Record of Protected Structures, which protects structures which are considered to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical interest or value. A statutory framework for protecting, managing and enhancing historic towns is set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000. The inclusion of a structure on the RPS does not preclude appropriate use or development.



The historic walls of Athenry in their entirety are designated as Protected Structures and the Planning Authority have the power to be able to safeguard against development that may impact upon the walls. There are a number of protected structures located within the Athenry Plan Area. Planning permission must be obtained before significant works which would materially alter the character of a protected structure can be carried out.

Refer to ***the Record of Protected Structures*** which forms part of the current County Development Plan 2009-2015.

### **Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)**

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. The ACA can also include areas which contribute to the appreciation of a Protected Structure. An Architectural Conservation Area (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 ACA. The designation of the historic town centre core as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and the associated management of both individual buildings and the public realm in that area will significantly enhance the quality of the local environment within Athenry.

### **Statement of significance for ACA**

'Athenry's principle significance lies in its degree of survival as a medieval fortified town, embracing a number of fine monuments and archaeological remains. The street pattern, plot sizes, buildings and architectural coherence visibly emerge directly from this historic role. The majority of buildings span the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and share many characteristics. Surviving traditional shop fronts are important features. The open fields and pastures within the walls are of the utmost significance. The form, attractiveness and uniqueness of the town, as a whole, are of international significance and a potentially greater cultural attraction'.

The ACA boundary is derived from the perceived age, quality and continuity of buildings and sites within the historic core area and is set out in the ***Land Use Zoning Framework Maps 1A/1B*** and within the ***Specific Objectives Maps 2A/2B***.

### **Archaeological Heritage**

Athenry's archaeological heritage includes structures, constructions, group of buildings, developed sites, all recorded monuments, National Monuments as well as their contexts. It also includes movable objects, situated both on land and underwater.

### **Archaeological Protection**

The National Monuments Acts 1930-2004 provides for the protection of the archaeological heritage of an area. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) were established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and is an inventory of archaeological sites and monuments. Structures, features, objects or sites listed in the RMP are known as Recorded Monuments. The Monument Service of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht may add to this list of Recorded Monuments. An Archaeological Exclusion Zone is shown around each monument. This zone is indicated as 30m in the current Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015.

The Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht (DAHG) is responsible for the protection of our archaeological heritage, including the licensing of archaeological excavations under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. When the owner or occupier of a property, or any other person proposes to carry out, or to cause, or to permit the carrying out of any work at or in relation to a Recorded Monument they are required to give notice in writing to the Minister 2 months before commencing that work. Monuments may be further protected by being in the ownership or guardianship of the State or are subject to temporary Preservation Orders and Registration Orders. Impacts on National Monuments in State ownership or that are subject to Preservation Orders will require the consent of the relevant Minister under the National Monuments Acts.

It is important to note that archaeological sites and monuments may in some circumstances be considered to be of architectural heritage importance and may be afforded dual protection both under the National Monuments Acts and the Planning and Development Acts and be a recorded site or monument and also be a protected structure. The historic walls of Athenry have been designated as a Protected Structure, a National Monument and are also a Recorded Monument as designated in the Record of Monuments and Places.

Refer to **the Record of Monuments and Places** which forms part of the current County Development Plan 2009-2015.

**Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP)**

Given the important archaeological legacy of Athenry, most of the town centre is designated a Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP). In advance of any new development on a site of archaeological significance or within a ZAP there is a requirement for consultation with the Monument Service of the DAHG. Developments that are normally exempt under planning law are not exempt if they fall within a Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP). Refer to the **Land Use Zoning Framework Maps 1A/1B** and to the **Specific Objectives Maps 2A/2B**.

**Burial Grounds** often contain the standing remains or sites of earlier structures and they also can contain a great diversity of natural heritage. Burial Grounds, which are included in the Records of Monuments and Places, are afforded protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. St Mary’s Collegiate Church and the Dominican Priory burial grounds are afforded this protection.

**Cultural Heritage**

The cultural heritage of the town is a general term that includes cultural services, such as public buildings (e.g. public libraries and museums) and also encompasses a range of characteristics that help define an area and its population, including local customs, traditions, language and literature. It is important to acknowledge the unique cultural identity that a town like Athenry displays and ensure that new development supports and complements same.

**3.8.2 Policies and Objectives**

**Built Heritage & Cultural Heritage Policies**

**Policy HC1 – Built Heritage**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to support the protection and conservation of the architectural and archaeological heritage in the Plan Area, in particular by implementing the relevant legislative provisions of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) and the *National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994*, and to have regard to the policy/guidance contained within the *Government Policy on Architecture 2009 – 2015*, *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004*, and the *Archaeology and Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers* (or any updated/superseding documents).

**Policy HC2 – Cultural Heritage**

It is the policy of Galway County Council to generally support high quality developments that relate to local heritage and to acknowledge the local cultural heritage of Athenry by ensuring that new development respects and is responsive to same.

**Built Heritage & Cultural Heritage Objectives**

**Objective HC1 – Architectural Heritage**

Ensure the protection and conservation of architectural heritage in the Plan Area, in particular by implementing the legislative provisions of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage and the policy guidance contained in the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004* (or any superseding document).

**Objective HC2 – Protected Structures**

Ensure the protection of 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.

**Objective HC3 – Architectural Conservation Area**

Protect, conserve and enhance the essential character of the Architectural Conservation Area, through the appropriate management and control of the design, location and layout of new development, alterations or extensions to existing structures, and/or modifications to the setting of

the structure and the character of the Architectural Conservation Area. Refer to the **Land Use Zoning Framework Maps 1A/1B and to the Specific Objectives Maps 2A/2B.**

#### **Objective HC4 - Development/Works relating to Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Area**

Ensure that any development, modifications, alterations, or extensions materially affecting the character a Protected Structure, or a structure adjoining a Protected Structure or structure within or adjacent to an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), is sited and designed appropriately and is not detrimental to the character or setting of the Protected Structure or the ACA. This will include the following:

- a) Works materially affecting the character of a Protected Structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an ACA will require planning permission.
- b) Any works/development carried out to a Protected Structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an ACA shall be in accordance with best conservation practice and use sustainable and appropriate materials.
- c) Prohibit development proposals, either in whole or in part, for the demolition of Protected Structures or structures within an Architectural Conservation Area, which contribute to the special character of the area, save in exceptional circumstances.

#### **Objective HC5 – Demolition**

Prohibit development proposals, either in whole or in part, for the demolition of protected structures or structures within an Architectural Conservation Area, save in exceptional circumstances.

#### **Objective HC6 – Vernacular Architecture**

Recognise the importance that vernacular architecture contributes to the character of Athenry and encourage the protection, retention, appreciation and appropriate revitalisation and use of vernacular heritage including structures of local interest in the town and resist the demolition of same.

#### **Objective HC7 - Architectural Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan**

Prepare and publish an ACA Appraisal and Management Plan for Athenry over the lifetime of the Plan, to preserve, protect and enhance the character of this area, including the public realm and implement any recommendations arising from same.

#### **Objective HC8 – Archaeological Heritage**

Ensure the protection and sympathetic enhancement of archaeological heritage in the Plan Area, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended), the *National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994*, National Policy on Town Defences.

#### **Objective HC9 – Monuments and Places**

Ensure the protection and sympathetic enhancement of the monuments and places included and proposed for inclusion in the Record of Monuments and Places, as well as any monument that may be designated as a National Monument including the Athenry town walls, together with the integrity of their character and setting, by implementing the relevant provisions of the *Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)* and the *National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1930 (as amended)* and the *Archaeology and Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers*. This will include the protection of all Monuments on the list provided by the National Monument Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, which has statutory responsibility in this area.

Ensure that all planning applications for development (including proposed service schemes such as electricity, sewerage, telecommunications and water schemes) within or in close proximity (30m) of the Zone of Archaeological Potential as defined in **Maps 1A/1B, 2A/2B** and within 30m of other recorded monuments (RMPs) and in close proximity of any national monuments including the historic walls, shall take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological assessments and possible mitigation measures.

#### **Objective HC10 – Conservation Management Plan for the Town Walls**

Continue to implement the Conservation and Management Plan for the town walls and flanking towers including the preparation of a detailed programme of conservation and repair works, and the implementation of that programme in line with good conservation practice.

#### **Objective HC11 – Local Place Names**

Protect local place names as an important part of the cultural heritage and unique character of the Plan Area, and support the use of appropriate names for new developments that reflect the character/heritage of the area and that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the town. New developments will be required to consult with **Coiste Logainmneacha Chontae na Gaillimhe**, Galway County Council 'Placename Committee', and to identify an appropriate name for new developments that reflect the local character and heritage of the area.

#### **Objective HC12 - Athenry Walled Town**

Promote and support Athenry as a member town of the Irish Walled Town Network of Ireland in a sustainable manner, in co-operation with other agencies and organisations in order to assist its heritage development, local tourism, and the local economy.

### **3.8.3 Development Management Guidelines**

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

## **3.9 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity**

### **3.9.1 Context**

Natural heritage includes the variety of life we see around us every day and this also includes the landscape and its geological foundation. The variety of life is often referred to as biological diversity or biodiversity. Biodiversity is a word used to describe the natural world that includes people, animals, plants, microbes as well as the places in which they live, called habitats.

#### **European Directives, the Natura 2000 Network and Environmental Assessments**

At European level, the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) mandate the identification and protection of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which together create a network of protected wildlife areas, known as Natura 2000 network, across the European Union. The designation of these sites forms part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species.

There is a legal requirement that all land use plans comply with the Birds and Habitats Directives, in particular through the preparation of a Habitats Directive Assessment. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) also requires that all land-use plans legally comply with the SEA Directive, including the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Further details regarding the Habitats Directive Assessment and the Strategic Environmental Assessment are available separately as supporting documents to this Plan.

#### **Natural Heritage Areas and Associated Legislation**

The national designation for wildlife are the Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), and designated Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) which are protected under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. These areas are considered important for the habitats present or contain species of plants and animals whose habitats need protection under national legislation

There are no designated (SAC's/SPA's) or protected areas such as NHA's in the Athenry Plan Area.

#### **Ecological Networks**

Ecological networks are supported at EU level through the *European Spatial Development Perspective* and *Natura 2000* and underpin the *Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy* (PEBLDS), which has been ratified by Ireland. The various habitats within Athenry and surrounding areas form part of an "ecological network" that facilitates the movement of species between areas and ensures the effective functioning and survival of the diverse range of habitats and species. Ecological networks provide 'corridors' or 'stepping stones' that support species migration, dispersal and daily movements between the 'core areas' and thereby contribute to a more integrated and functional ecological system.

Inland waterways, which include lakes, rivers, and streams, are living systems of high local biodiversity value due to the habitats associated with them, and function as ecological corridors that

connect related habitats/designated sites, enabling species to move between them. The River Clarin and other tributaries and streams in the Plan Area perform such an ecological network function before they drain into a designated site – the Galway Bay Complex SAC, pNHA & SPA. Established trees and hedgerows are also of high local biodiversity value and contribute to ecological connectivity. Features that contribute to the creation of an ecological network should be retained and included in the design plans for development proposals.

### **3.9.2. Policies and Objectives**

#### **Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Policies.**

##### **Policy NH1 – Natural Heritage, Landscape and Environment**

It is the policy of Galway County Council, to support the conservation and enhancement of the natural heritage and biodiversity within the Plan Area, to ensure the protection of the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas and an ecological network within the Plan Area. In conserving the natural heritage, Galway County Council will have regard to the following:

- *'Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016 Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan'*,
- The *'Biodiversity Action Plan for County Galway 2008-2013'* and,
- The *'Biodiversity Guidelines'* produced by Galway County Council, (or any updated version of these documents).

Promote the development of an ecological network within the Plan Area, which supports ecological connectivity and functioning, creates opportunities for active and passive recreation and provides visual relief from the built environment.

## Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Objectives

### Objective NH1 – Natura 2000 Network and Habitats Directive Assessment

Protect European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network (including Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation ) in accordance with the requirements in the EU *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC), EU *Birds Directive* 2009/147/EC, the *Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010*, the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011* (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) (and any subsequent amendments or updated legislation) and having due regard to the guidance in the *Appropriate Assessment Guidelines 2010* (and any subsequent or updated guidance)

A plan or project (e.g. proposed development) within the Plan Area will only be authorised after the competent authority (Galway County Council) has ascertained, based on scientific evidence and a Habitats Directive Assessment where necessary, that:

1. The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or
2. The plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (that does not host a priority habitat and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or
3. The plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site (that hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

### Objective NH2 – Protected Habitats and Species

Support the protection of protected habitats and species listed in the annexes to the EU *Habitats Directive* 1992 (92/43/EEC) and the *Birds Directive* (2009/147/EC), and in particular bats and their roosts.

### Objective NH3 – Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Protect Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas in accordance with the requirements of the *Wildlife Act 1976*, the *Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000* and the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended). Where a proposed development within the Plan Area may give rise to likely significant effects on any Natural Heritage Area or proposed Natural Heritage Area an Ecological Impact Assessment may be required.

### Objective NH4 – Impact Assessment

Ensure full compliance with the requirements of the EU *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC), *SEA Directive* (2001/42/EC) and *EIA Directive* 2011/92/EU, and associated legislation/regulations, including the associated *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011* (SI No. 477 of 2011), *European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004-2011*, *Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2011* and the *European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989-2011* (or any updated/superseding legislation).

Planning applications for proposed developments within the Plan Area that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment may need to be accompanied by one or more of the following: an Environmental Impact Statement, an Ecological Impact Assessment Report, a Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Report or a Natura Impact Statement, as appropriate. Ensure that Natura Impact Statements and any other environmental or ecological impact assessments submitted in support of proposals for development are carried out according to best practice methodologies and contain all necessary baseline assessments.

#### **Objective NH5 – Biodiversity & Ecological Networks**

Support the protection of biodiversity and ecological connectivity within the Plan Area including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, other landscape features such as Esker Riada, where these form part of the ecological network. Seek to retain and/or incorporate these natural features into developments, in order to avoid ecological fragmentation and maintain ecological corridors.

Refer to the ***Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)***.

#### **Objective NH6 – Water Resources**

Protect all water resources in the Plan Area, including the River Clarin, its tributaries, other streams, springs, surface waters, and groundwater quality, in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU *Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC)*, the *European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended)* and the *Western River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same)*. Support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques for new development in the Plan Area.

#### **Objective NH7 – Environmental Management Buffer**

Protect and seek to improve the water quality in the River Clarin. Limit development within the environmental management buffer so as to protect the qualifying interests of the Galway Bay SAC and Inner Galway Bay SPA which are linked directly to the Athenry Local Area Plan area via the River Clarin. Seek to ensure that a minimum setback of 10 metres is maintained on either side of the River Clarin, save for exceptional circumstances where it can be reasonably demonstrated that this setback is not feasible. Refer to the ***Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)***.

#### **Objective NH8 – Trees, Parkland/Woodland and Hedgerows**

Protect important tree clusters and hedgerow in the Plan Area and ensure that development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands. Seek to retain natural boundaries including stonewall, hedgerow and tree boundaries, where possible. Refer to the ***Specific Objectives Maps (2A/2B)***.

#### **Objective NH9 – Control of Invasive and Alien Invasive Species**

Seek to prevent and promote measures to prevent the spread of invasive and alien invasive species. Require a landscaping plan to be produced for developments near water bodies and ensure that such plans do not include alien invasive species.

#### **Objective NH10 – Visual Impact Assessment**

Require Visual Impact Assessment for developments with potential to impact on areas of significant landscape character and should include urban and natural features and historic buildings as appropriate.

#### **Objective NH11 – Consultation with Environmental Authorities**

Ensure that all development proposals are screened to determine whether they are likely to have a significant direct, indirect or cumulative effect on the integrity or conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and, where significant effects are likely or uncertain, there will be a requirement for consultation with the relevant environmental authorities as part of any Habitats Directive Assessment that may be required.

### **3.9.3 Development Management Guidelines**

Refer to the Development Management Standards and Guidelines in the Galway County Development Plan.

## **4. Local Area Plan Maps**

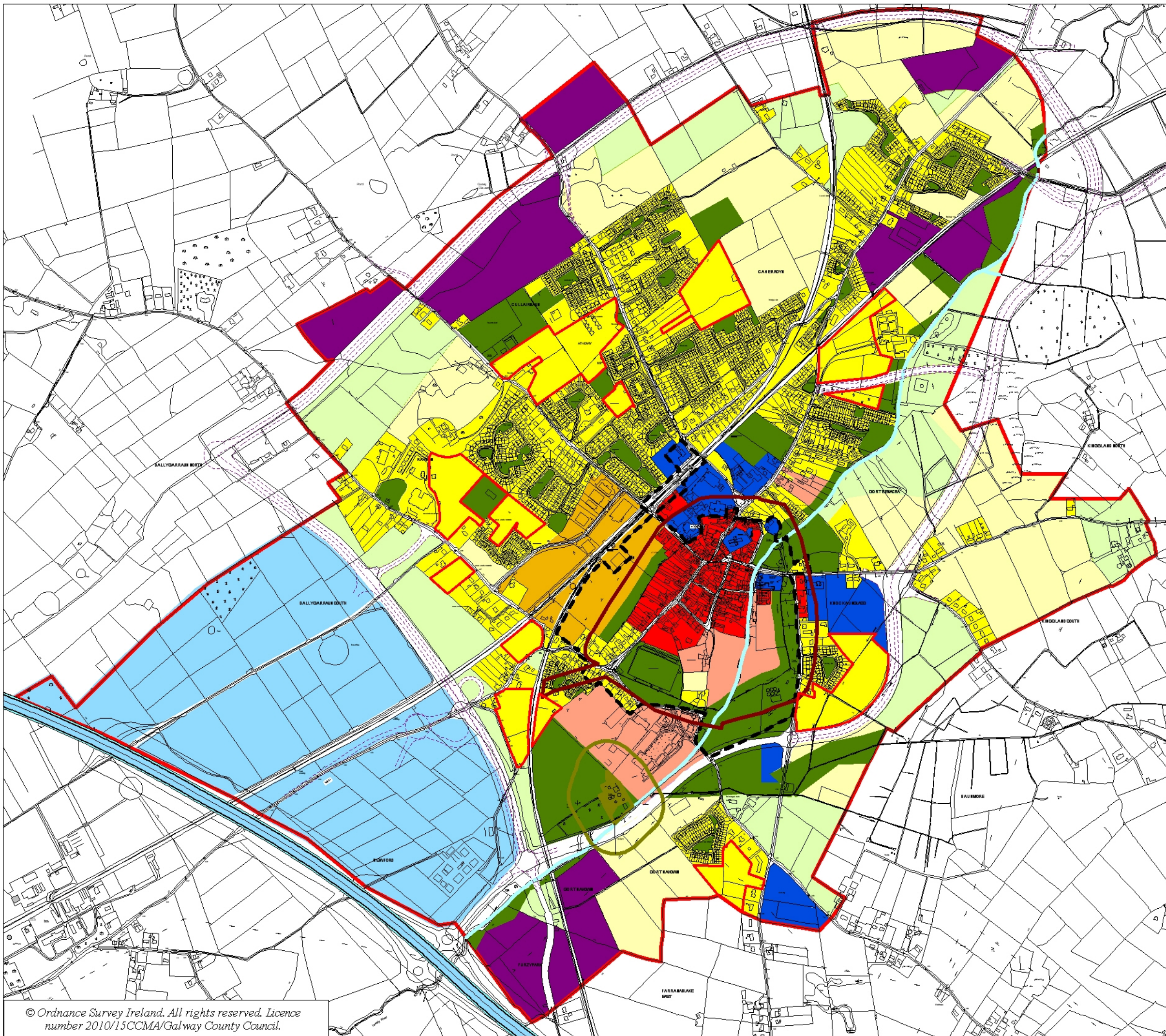
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The following maps form part of the Local Area Plan:

- Map 1A – Land Use Zoning
- Map 1B – Land Use Zoning (Town Centre)
- Map 2A – Specific Objectives
- Map 2B – Specific Objectives (Town Centre)
- Map 3A – Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas
- Map 3B – Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas (Town Centre)



**4.1 Map 1A – Land Use Zoning**

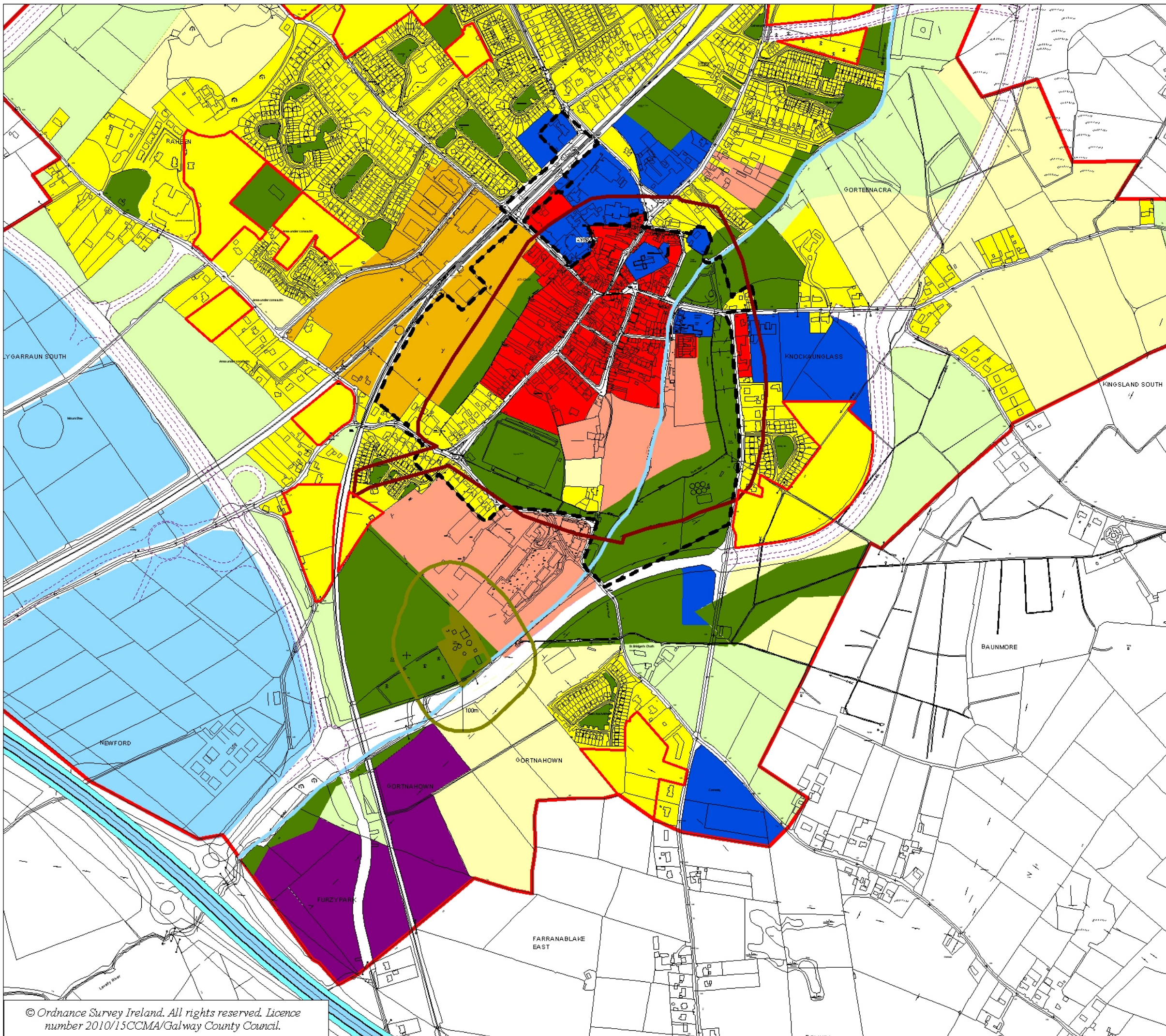


- Local Area Plan Boundary
- R - Residential.
- R - Residential.(Phase 1)
- R - Residential.(Phase 2)
- C1 - Town Centre / Commercial.
- C2 - Commercial / Mixed Use.
- BE - Business and Enterprise.
- BT - Business and Technology
- I - Industrial
- CF - Community Facilities
- OS - Open Space / Recreation & Amenity
- A - Agriculture
- PU - Public Utilities
- Buffer Zone
- TI - Transport Infrastructure

- [ZAPS] - Zone of Archaeological Potential
- [ACA] - Architectural Conservation Area
- M6 Motorway
- Proposed Athery Relief Road / Relief Streets
- River Clarin

**NOTE:**  
 This Map should be read in conjunction with Maps 2A/2B Specific Objectives, Maps 3A/3B Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas and the policies, objectives and guidelines outlined with Section 2 and Section 3 of the plan, including those in relation to land use management and zoning.





- Local Area Plan Boundary
- R - Residential.
- R - Residential (Phase 1)
- R - Residential (Phase 2)
- C1 - Town Centre / Commercial.
- C2 - Commercial / Mixed Use.
- BE - Business and Enterprise.
- BT - Business and Technology
- I - Industrial
- CF - Community Facilities
- OS - Open Space / Recreation & Amenity
- A - Agriculture
- PU - Public Utilities
- Buffer Zone
- TI - Transport Infrastructure

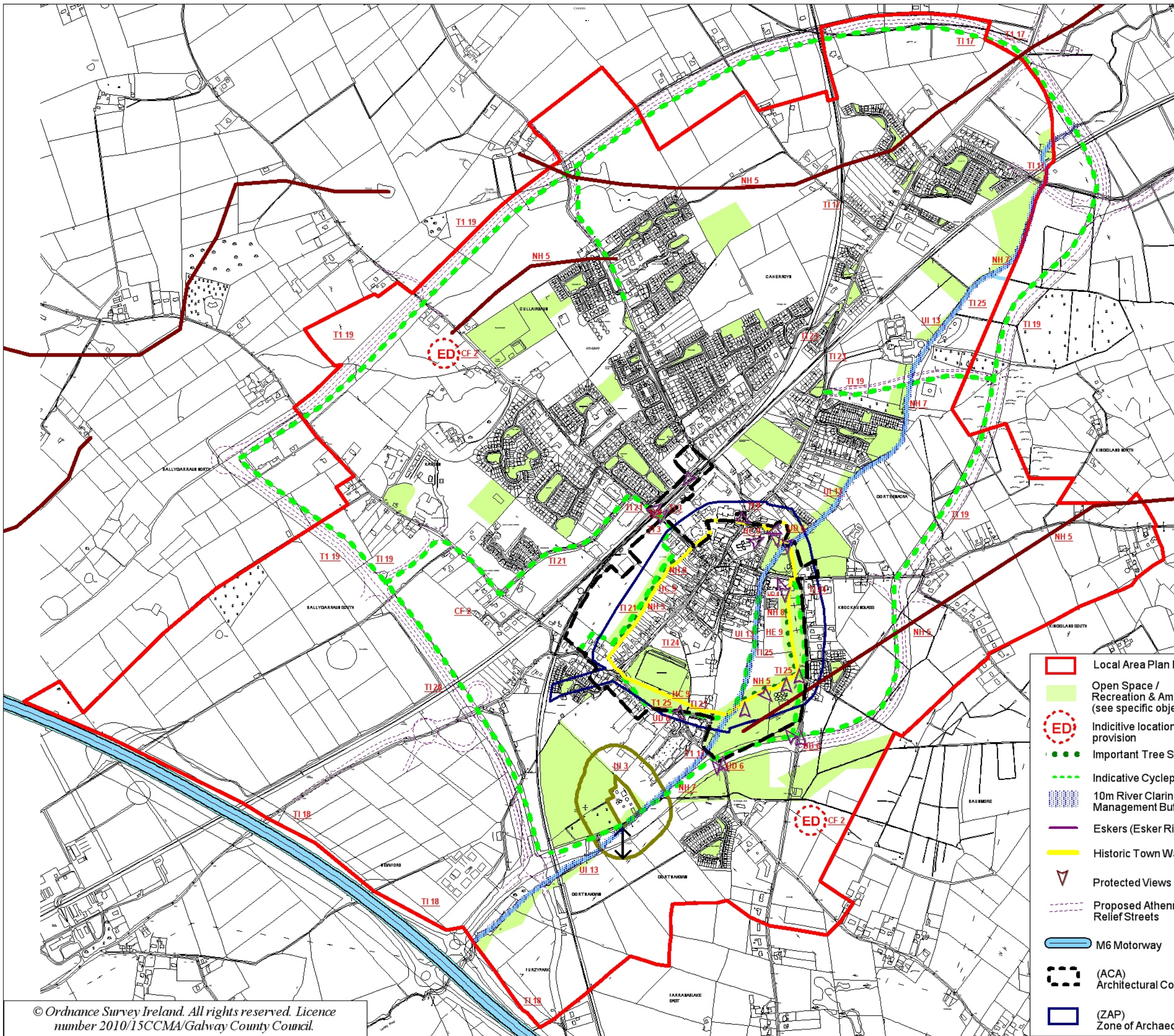
- [ZAPS] - Zone of Archaeological Potential
- [ACA] - Architectural Conservation Area
- M6 Motorway
- Proposed Athery Relief Road / Relief Streets
- River Clarin

**NOTE:**  
 This Map should be read in conjunction with Maps 2A/2B Specific Objectives, Maps 3A/3B Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas and the policies, objectives and guidelines outlined with Section 2 and Section 3 of the plan, including those in relation to land use management and zoning.



**ATHENRY LAP 2012  
 PLAN ADOPTED 25/6/2012  
 MAP 1B LAND USE ZONING  
 (TOWN CENTRE)**

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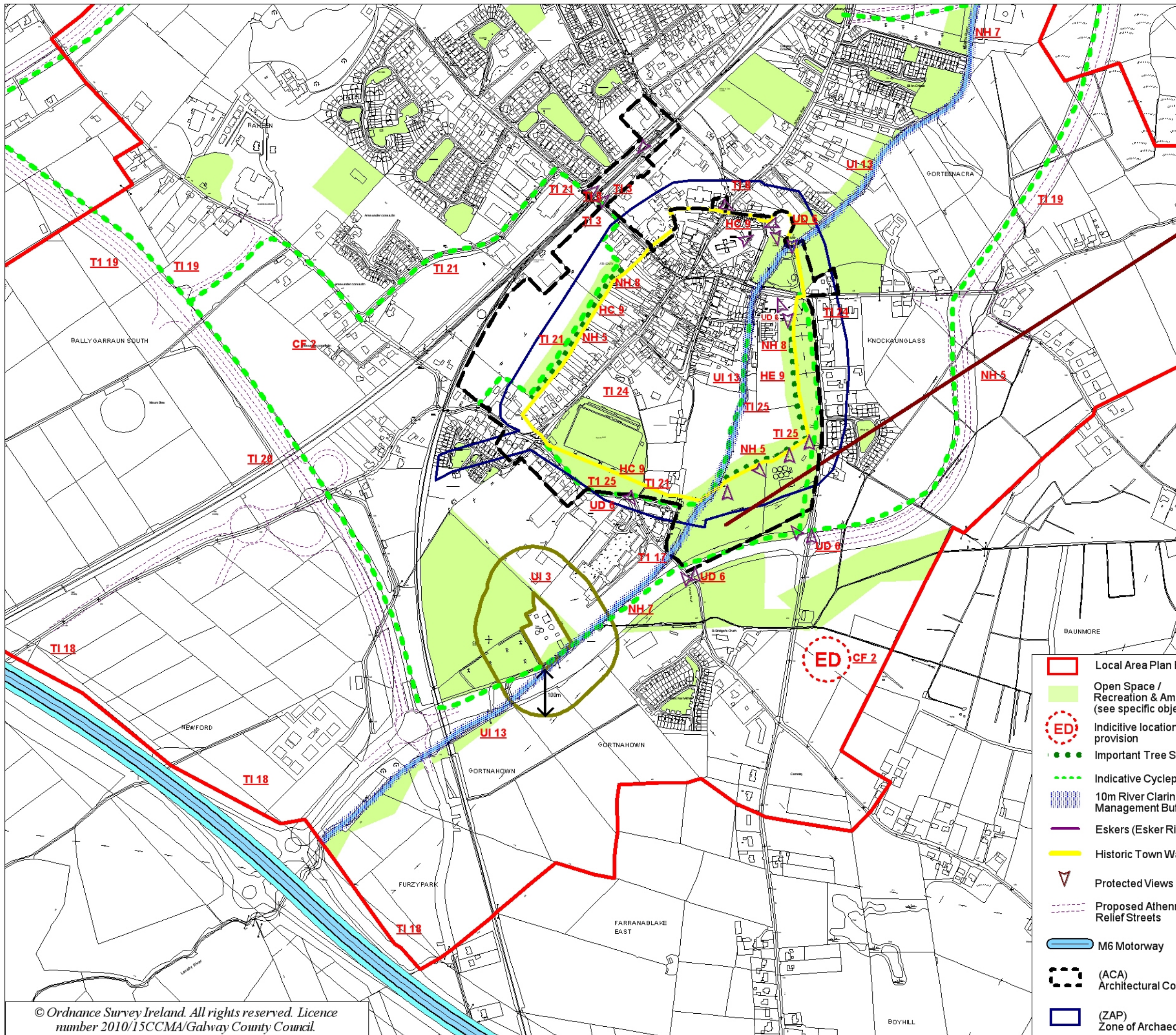
Objective Key	Objective Description
S.3.3.2 Community Facilities & Amenity Objectives	Indicative locations for new school provision
CF2	S.3.6.2 Sustainable Transportation
TI 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the provision of an integrated public transportation facility/hub &amp; ancillary services.</li> <li>Enhance public access between the Railway Station &amp; its existing parking facilities.</li> <li>Support the provision of parking facilities in proximity to public transportation nodes</li> </ul>
TI 8	Facilitate provision of pedestrian crossings adjacent to schools, at other appropriate locations e.g. Athlery Rail Station to its existing parking facilities.
TI 17	S.3.6.2 Roads, Streets & Parking
TI 18	Support the development of - road schemes/improvements, road bridges, road/rail crossings within the Plan Area.
TI 19	M6 Ballinasloe - Galway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Min 90m building setback in areas where a speed limit greater than 50kph applies (&gt;50kph).</li> </ul>
TI 19	Athlery Relief Road/Relief Streets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Min 25m setback in areas where a speed limit greater than 50kph applies (&gt;50kph).</li> <li>No minimum building setback in areas of 50kph or less.</li> <li>Provide a 3m wide cycleway/pedestrian way as part of the provision of the Athlery Relief Road.</li> </ul>
TI 20	Provide a new road and over-bridge from the M6 link road to the Cashla Road as part of the Athlery Relief Road/Relief Streets.
TI 21	Reserve a cycleway/pathway from Business and Technology Park (BT) zoning, Cashla Road, IDA ring road to the Railway Station. Support the development of other pedestrian and cycling linkages where appropriate.
TI 23	Improve the bridges over the railway lines by making better provision for pedestrian access.
TI 24	Provide long stay parking facilities at Backlawn & Knockaunglass.
TI 25	Provide a walkway along River Clarin. Continue to provide a walkway around the historic Town Walls.
UI 3	S.3.6.2 Water Supply, Wastewater & Surface Water
UI 13	Provide and protect a 100m buffer around the wastewater treatment plant site. Protect buffer zones around any other treatment plant in the town as appropriate.
UI 13	Protect waterbodies and watercourses within the Plan Area from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips and natural floodplains. This will include a 10m environmental management buffer on either side of the River Clarin and its tributary, measured from the near river bank. Prevent culverting/realignment, where possible.
UD 8	3.7.2 Urban Design & Place-making
UD 8	Protect all views/prospects of significance - the Town Walls, the Castle, St. Mary's Collegiate Church, Dominican Priory or others that will block or interfere with a significant view or prospect.
HC 8	3.8.2 Built Heritage & Cultural Heritage
HC 8	Require archaeological assessment for development within or in close proximity (30m) of the Zone of Archaeological Potential, within 30m of other recorded monuments (RMPs) and in close proximity of any national monuments including Athlery's historic walls.
NH 5	3.9.2 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity
NH 5	Support the protection of biodiversity and ecological connectivity including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, wetlands, stone walls, other landscape features such as Esker Riada, where these form part of the ecological network. Seek to retain and/or incorporate these natural features into developments, in order to avoid ecological fragmentation and maintain ecological corridors.
NH 7	Limit development within the environmental management buffer. Seek to ensure that a minimum setback of 10 metres is maintained on either side of the River Clarin, save for exceptional circumstances & where this setback is not feasible.
NH 8	Protect important tree clusters and hedgerow in the Plan Area and ensure that development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands. Seek to retain natural boundaries including stone wall, hedgerow and tree boundaries, where possible.

- Local Area Plan Boundary
- Open Space / Recreation & Amenity (see specific objective CF 4)
- Indicative locations for school provision
- Important Tree Stands
- Indicative Cyclepath / Walkways
- 10m River Clarin Environmental Management Buffer
- Eskers (Esker Riada)
- Historic Town Walls
- ▼ Protected Views
- Proposed Athlery Relief Road / Relief Streets
- M6 Motorway
- (ACA) Architectural Conservation Area
- (ZAP) Zone of Archaeological Potential

**Note:**  
This map should be read in conjunction with Maps 1A/1B Land Use Zoning; Maps 3A/3B Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas and the policies, objectives and guidelines outlined with Section 2 and Section 3 of the plan, including those in relation to land use management and zoning.



**ATHLERY LAP 2012  
PLAN ADOPTED 25/6/2012  
MAP 2A SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**



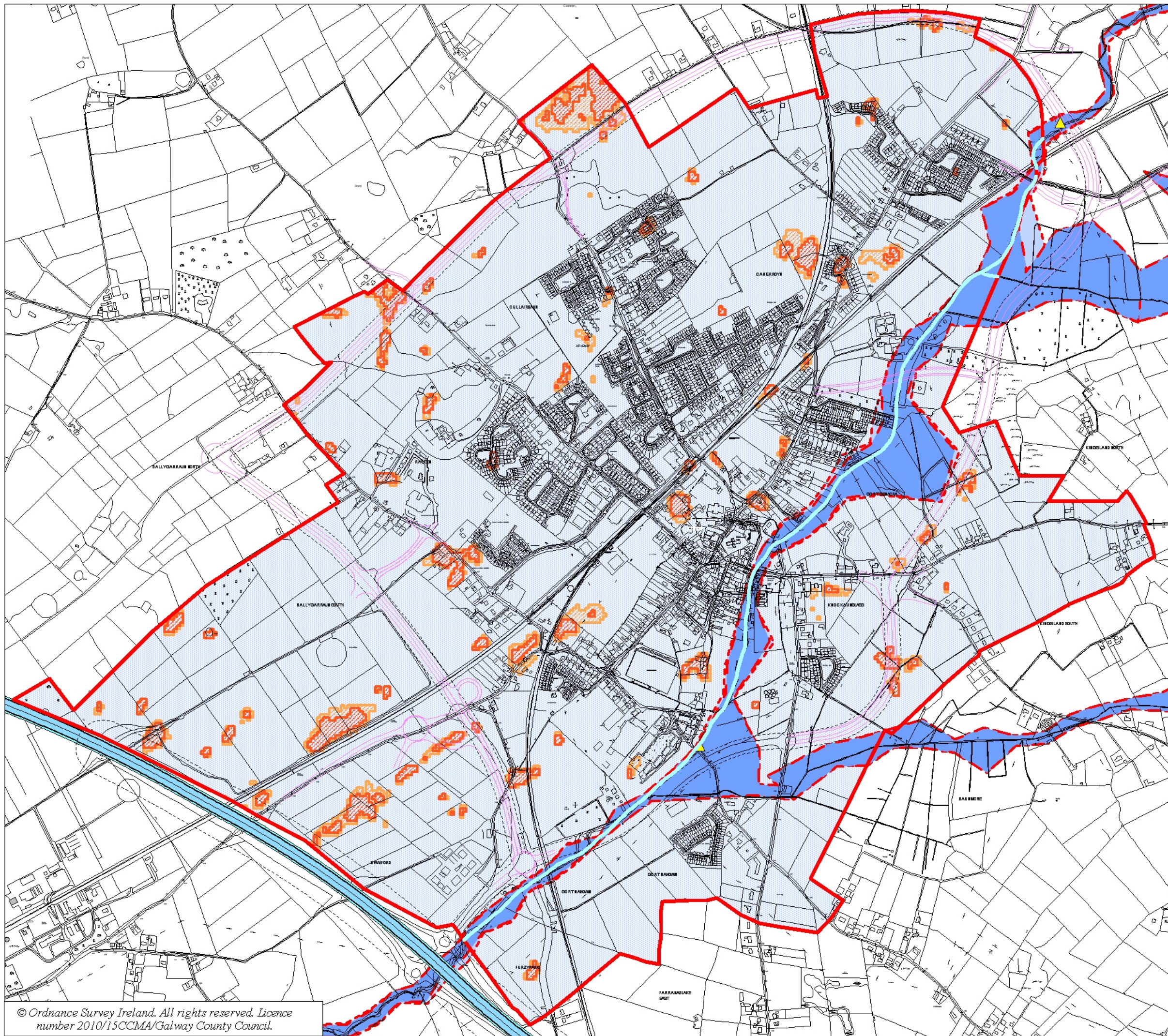
Objective Key	Objective Description
CF 2	S.3.3.2 Community Facilities & Amenity Objectives Indicative locations for new school provision
TI 3	S.3.6.2 Sustainable Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the provision of an integrated public transportation facility/hub &amp; ancillary services.</li> <li>Enhance public access between the Railway Station &amp; its existing parking facilities.</li> <li>Support the provision of parking facilities in proximity to public transportation nodes</li> </ul>
TI 8	Facilitate provision of pedestrian crossings adjacent to schools, at other appropriate locations e.g. Atherry Rail Station to its existing parking facilities.
TI 17	S.3.6.2 Roads, Streets & Parking Support the development of - road schemes/improvements, road bridges, road/rail crossings within the Plan Area.
TI 18	M6 Ballinasloe - Galway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Min 90m building setback in areas where a speed limit greater than 50kph applies (&gt;50kph).</li> </ul>
TI 19	Atherry Relief Road/Relief Streets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Min 25m setback in areas where a speed limit greater than 50kph applies (&gt;50kph).</li> <li>No minimum building setback in areas of 50kph or less.</li> <li>Provide a 3m wide cycleway/pedestrian way as part of the provision of the Atherry Relief Road.</li> </ul>
TI 20	Provide a new road and over-bridge from the M6 link road to the Cashla Road as part of the Atherry Relief Road/Relief Streets.
TI 21	Reserve a cycleway/pathway from Business and Technology Park (BT) zoning, Cashla Road, IDA ring road to the Railway Station. Support the development of other pedestrian and cycling linkages where appropriate
TI 23	Improve the bridges over the railway lines by making better provision for pedestrian access.
TI 24	Provide long stay parking facilities at Backlawn & Knockaunglass.
TI 25	Provide a walkway along River Clarin. Continue to provide a walkway around the historic Town Walls.
UI 3	S.3.6.2 Water Supply, Wastewater & Surface Water Provide and protect a 100m buffer around the wastewater treatment plant site. Protect buffer zones around any other treatment plant in the town as appropriate.
UI 13	Protect waterbodies and watercourses within the Plan Area from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips and natural floodplains. This will include a 10m environmental management buffer on either side of the River Clarin and its tributary, measured from the near river bank. Prevent culverting/realignment, where possible.
UD 8	3.7.2 Urban Design & Place-making Protect all views/prospects of significance - the Town Walls, the Castle, St. Mary's Collegiate Church, Dominican Priory or others that will block or interfere with a significant view or prospect.
HC 9	3.8.2 Built Heritage & Cultural Heritage Require archaeological assessment for development within or in close proximity (30m) of the Zone of Archaeological Potential, within 30m of other recorded monuments (RMPs) and in close proximity of any national monuments including Atherry's historic walls.
NH 5	3.9.2 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Support the protection of biodiversity and ecological connectivity including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, rivers, streams, wetlands, stone walls, other landscape features such as Esker Riada, where these form part of the ecological network. Seek to retain and/or incorporate these natural features into developments, in order to avoid ecological fragmentation and maintain ecological corridors
NH 7	Limit development within the environmental management buffer. Seek to ensure that a minimum setback of 10 metres is maintained on either side of the River Clarin, save for exceptional circumstances & where this setback is not feasible.
NH 8	Protect important tree clusters and hedgerow in the Plan Area and ensure that development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands. Seek to retain natural boundaries including stone wall, hedgerow and tree boundaries, where possible.

- Local Area Plan Boundary
- Open Space / Recreation & Amenity (see specific objective CF 4)
- ED Indicative locations for school provision
- Important Tree Stands
- - - Indicative Cyclepath / Walkways
- 10m River Clarin Environmental Management Buffer
- Eskers (Esker Riada)
- Historic Town Walls
- ▽ Protected Views
- Proposed Atherry Relief Road / Relief Streets
- M6 Motorway
- (ACA) Architectural Conservation Area
- (ZAP) Zone of Archaeological Potential

**Note:**  
This map should be read in conjunction with Maps 1A/1B Land Use Zoning; Maps 3A/3B Indicative Flood Risk Management Areas and the policies, objectives and guidelines outlined with Section 2 and Section 3 of the plan, including those in relation to land use management and zoning.



**ATHERRY LAP 2012  
PLAN ADOPTED 25/6/2012  
MAP 2B SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES  
TOWN CENTRE**



- Proposed Plan Boundary
- Indicative Flood Zone A (PFRA Fluvial 100)
- Indicative Flood Zone B (PFRA Fluvial 1000)
- Pluvial Indicative (PFRA)
- Pluvial Extreme (PFRA)
- Indicative Flood Zone C (Areas not covered by A or B)
- ▲ Recorded / Historical Flood Events
- M6 Motorway
- Proposed Athlery Relief Road / Relief Streets
- River Clarin

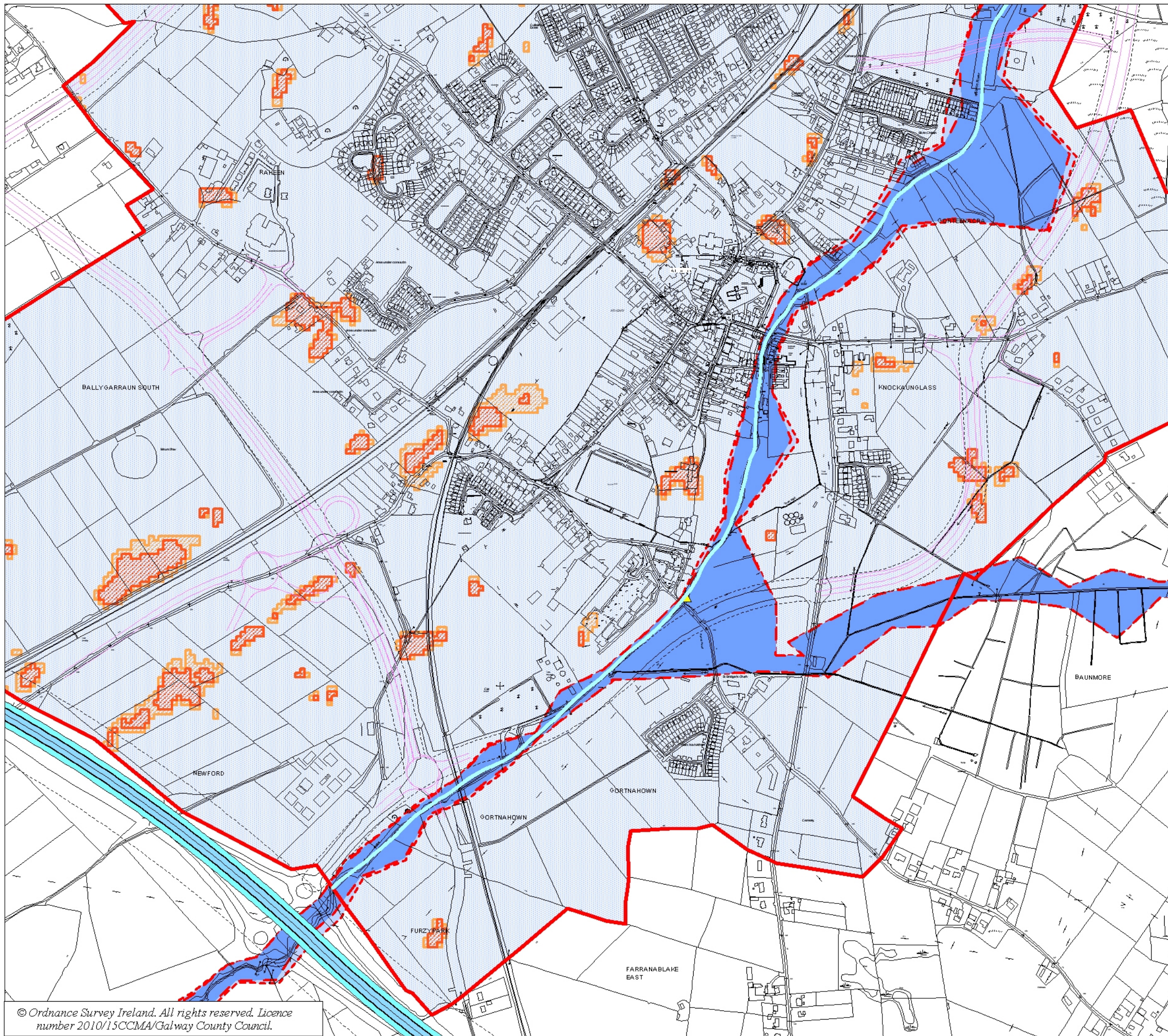
**Important User Note:**  
 The flood information presented in these Maps (Maps 3A/3B) have been compiled based on OPW Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), research carried out on behalf of Galway County Council (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; SFRA) and tested against knowledge of flood events in the area. They indicate broadly areas that may be prone to flooding, and form part of the flood risk assessment and considerations for the Plan.  
 The flood extents on the OPW PFRA Maps are based on broad-scale simple analysis and may not be accurate for a specific location/use. Information on the purpose, development and limitations of the OPW PFRA Maps are available in the relevant report (see [www.cfram.ie](http://www.cfram.ie)). Users should seek professional advice if they intend to rely on the OPW PFRA Maps in any way.

**Note:**  
 This map should be read in conjunction with Maps 1A/1B Land Use Zoning; Maps 2A/2B Specific Objectives and the policies, objectives and guidelines outlined with Section 2 and Section 3 of the plan, including those in relation to flood risk management and assessment.



**ATHLERY LAP 2012  
 PLAN ADOPTED 25/6/2012  
 MAP 3A INDICATIVE FLOOD RISK  
 MANAGEMENT AREAS**

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- Local Area Plan Boundary
- Indicative Flood Zone A (PFRA Fluvial 100)
- Indicative Flood Zone B (PFRA Fluvial 1000)
- Pluvial Indicative (PFRA)
- Pluvial Extreme (PFRA)
- Indicative Flood Zone C (Areas not covered by A or B)
- Recorded / Historical Flood Events
- M6 Motorway
- Proposed Athery Relief Road / Relief Streets
- River Clarin

**Important User Note:**  
 The flood information presented in these Maps (Maps 3A/3B) have been compiled based on OPW Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA), research carried out on behalf of Galway County Council (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; SFRA) and tested against knowledge of flood events in the area. They indicate broadly areas that may be prone to flooding, and form part of the flood risk assessment and considerations for the Plan.  
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**Note:**  
 This map should be read in conjunction with Maps 1A/1B Land Use Zoning; Maps 2A/2B Specific Objectives and the policies, objectives and guidelines outlined with Section 2 and Section 3 of the plan, including those in relation to flood risk management and assessment.



**ATHERY LAP 2012  
 PLAN ADOPTED 25/6/2012  
 MAP 3B INDICATIVE FLOOD RISK  
 MANAGEMENT AREAS  
 TOWN CENTRE**

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