

SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

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

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

The purpose of the Portumna Local Area Plan is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and broad land use proposals that will be used to guide development in Portumna over the plan period of the Plan 2005 – 2011.

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

In preparing this Plan regard has been given to national and regional trends. Documents consulted include the National Spatial Strategy, the White Paper on Rural Development, the Regional Planning Guidelines and other DoEHLG publications and guidelines. The Regional Planning Guidelines make specific reference to Portumna identifying it as a key town in south Galway and recognise that there is potential for development along the Shannon at Portumna. In addition they identify tourism, particularly the tourist potential of the Shannon as an area of opportunity.

1.2 Community Involvement

Development plans which are based on locally gathered data can draw attention to important needs and opportunities. A variety of community consultation opportunities were created to ensure that a wide range of local people participated in the development of the Draft Portumna Local Area Plan. The preparation of a Local Area Plan for Portumna was initially advertised in March 2004. Submissions were received between the 4th of March and the 16th of April 2004. In total 6 submissions were received during this display period.

A public workshop took place on the 20th October 2004 in the Shannon Oaks Hotel. Approximately 70 people attended. The purpose of the workshop was twofold:

- to provide information on the development plan process,
- to get the community's input regarding what the Plan should contain.

The Workshop consisted of a presentation by the Forward Planning Section of Galway County Council followed by group discussions. Those attending the workshop were divided into groups and each group was facilitated by a representative from the County Council. A report entitled 'Summary of the Issues Identified at the Public Workshop' was prepared in November 2004 and formed a submission for the drafting of the Plan. In addition to the workshop, a questionnaire was distributed and an invitation for submissions was advertised. Overall 46 submissions were

received consisting of 17 individual submissions and 29 completed questionnaires. Each submission/questionnaire was assessed individually.

Submissions and observations were also received from local community groups including Na Calai Community Development Project; South East Galway Integrated Rural Development and Friends of Portumna Forest Park. These identified a range of issues including provision within the Plan for community facilities, improving local amenities and increasing the range of facilities for young people. While the Local Area Plan is limited in its capacity to provide facilities it does play an important role in ensuring that adequate lands are available for community and recreational facilities.

1.3 Location & Setting

Portumna is located in South-East Galway. It is located in the Loughrea Electoral Area and in the District Electoral Division of Portumna.

Portumna is approximately 68km east of Galway City, 32 km southeast of Loughrea, 31km south of Ballinasloe, and 24km west of Birr. The town has developed alongside the Galway – Tipperary border. Portumna's town centre is situated along the National Secondary Road, the N65. A number of local roads also provide access to and from the town to the south and southwest of the town.

Portumna has developed amid a splendid natural setting. The town is bounded by the River Shannon to the East, Lough Derg to the South and Portumna Forest Park to the South-West. The Shannon, the longest river in the country is the natural boundary between County Galway and County Tipperary. Lough Derg is the largest lake on the river covering 32,000 acres, stretching approximately 32 miles in length and 3 miles in width. Portumna Forest Park spans approximately 600 hectares.



1.4 Historical Background

The name Portumna derives from the Gaelic '*Port Omna*' meaning the landing place of the oak tree. Portumna developed as a monastic settlement in the 13th Century. The variety of protected structures, sites and monuments located throughout the town demonstrate that Portumna is a long established settlement, steeped in historical importance. Buildings and monuments such as earthworks, the Dominican Friary, Portumna Castle, and Portumna Union Workhouse are testament to this.

An ecclesiastical presence was established in Portumna when the Cistercian Chapel was founded in 1254. The chapel now known as the Priory was taken over by the Dominicans in 1426 when a papal indulgence was granted for its completion. The Priory came into the ownership of the Earl of Clanricarde in 1577. Patrick Sarsfield and Honora de Burgo were married at the Priory in 1689. The Priory was abandoned by the Dominicans in 1712 when they moved to Boula. It was later used as the Church of Ireland until the completion of the existing Church in 1832.

Portumna Castle dates to 1617 when it was built by Richard Burke, fourth Earl of Clanricarde, of the famous de Burgo family of Norman extraction. The de Burgos came to Ireland with Prince John in 1155. The family had become Burkes as the Normans became gaelicised. The formal gardens of Portumna Castle were laid out in the 17th century and were the first Renaissance gardens to be introduced to Ireland. Portumna Castle belongs to an important group of seventeenth century intermediate buildings between the true 'castle' and the 'house'. It is better regarded as a fortified house than a castle as the requirements of space and light were beginning to overshadow the need for security and defence by this time period. The Castle was burned down accidentally in 1826. It was never rebuilt although the De Burgo family retained a presence in the second courtyard which Samuel Lewis described as having been "fitted up as a temporary residence for the Countess Dowager" in 1837. The Castle remained a ruin until 1968 when the Office of Public Works began restoration works.

The Portumna Estate was acquired by the Irish Government in 1948. Various parts of the demesne were sold off including Gurtnabragh to the east, south of Abbey Street and some houses along the Gort Road. The Castle was allocated to the Office of Public Works. Land was given for a Golf Course and a GAA pitch. The remainder of the demesne was given over to forestry and is now a Forest Park owned by Coillte.

The layout of Portumna town underwent large changes during the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Historically the town was structured around one street extending from the gates of the Castle towards the ferry point in the north-east. In the early nineteenth century a new main street was built north of the old main street. This street, now known as St. Brendan's Street and Clonfert Avenue was subsequently extended to the east to join the bridge thus allowing traffic through the town to bypass the former Main Street.

The River Shannon plays an important role in the evolution of Portumna. Portumna is one of the few bridging points on the River Shannon. According to an inquisition of 1333 William De Burgo "kept his courts, levied presage of beer and maintained a ferry" at Portumna. There is some uncertainty as to when the first bridge was erected here. Daniel Thomas, a London Architect and military engineer, may have built the wooded bridge he designed for Henry Cromwell in 1657, to replace an earlier structure. No record of the bridge's construction survives but local folklore mentions that it existed up to the 1690's. It appears to have been destroyed by the Jacobite army in order to prevent the Williamite forces from using it. Lemuel Cox, an American architect built a wooden bridge across the Shannon in 1795, making use of Hayes' Island in the middle of the river. The Galway section of the bridge was destroyed by a flood in 1814 but was rebuilt, and the entire bridge repaired, by Alexander Nimmo in 1818. In the 1840's the Shannon Commissioners replaced Cox's wooden bridge with another wooded one which used metal casing to carry the

road. The present bridge dates from 1911 but part of the older structure, a tollgate with a pedestrian turnstile, now serves as the entrance to the quay yard. The bridge has an opening section which was originally manually operated but is now automatic, opening at set times for river traffic. There are two man-made harbours on either side of the Shannon near the Bridge, dating from the early-nineteenth century, and named Connaught Harbour and Munster Harbour. There is berthing for pleasure boats to the south of Portumna Bridge.

Portumna was one of the new Poor Law Unions created in Ireland between 1848 and 1850. It was created from the southern parts of the Ballinasloe and Loughrea Poor Law Unions. The workhouse was erected on a nine-acre site half a mile north-east of Portumna. The building was designed by the Poor Law Commissioners' architect George Wilkinson and was intended to accommodate 600 inmates.

Sources:

Spellissy, Sean. (1999) *The History of Galway City & County* Celtic Bookshop, Limerick.

Warshaw, Jack. (2004) *Architectural Inventories: Portumna* Galway County Council.

Archaeological Consultancy Services www.acsltd.ie/cms/publish/article_10.shtml

Inland Waterways Association of Ireland www.iwai.ie

Wild Geese Heritage Museum & Library <http://indigo.ie/~wildgees>



1.5 Portumna Today

Portumna evolved from a monastic settlement to a market town serving the rural hinterland of south-east Galway and north-west Tipperary. Today, it functions as a service hub for South-East Galway providing a range of services including health, community, financial, employment and retail. In addition, Portumna functions as a service centre for north-west Tipperary as it is located immediately west of the Galway-Tipperary border. The local economy is based on a mixture of economic activities including agriculture, small-scale industry, tourism and a range of commercial activities. The abundance of built and natural amenities in Portumna means that tourism is an obvious opportunity for the local economy.

Portumna is located in a rural area where the predominant economic activity is agriculture. Portumna livestock mart is held every Wednesday serving livestock owners throughout South-East Galway and North-West Tipperary.

Portumna has a relatively small industrial base. Established industry/enterprise areas in the locality include the IDA Industrial Estate on the Scarrif/Ennis Road (R352). Green Isle Foods, located in the IDA Industrial Estate is the main industry and largest employer in the town with approximately 200 employees. There is also some industry located on the outskirts of the town along the N65. As Portumna is identified as a self-sufficient town, employment opportunities need to be created within the town for the local population. Accordingly, the Plan recommends that small-scale enterprise development be accommodated within Portumna.

Tourism represents an important economic growth area for the town. The town is well located in terms of natural, historical and recreational amenities. At present the tourism industry is based on boating and angling tourists and visitors to Portumna Castle, the Dominican Priory and Portumna Forest Park. The Shannon Oaks Hotel and Clonwyn House are important assets for the town providing employment for local people and quality accommodation for tourists.

1.6 Population Profile of the Area

The population of Portumna town increased from 984 in 1996 to 1,235 in 2002. This represents an increase of 25.5% between 1996 and 2002. Portumna DED has experienced a 4.5% increase in population from 1,837 in 1996 to 1,920 in 2002.

Table 1.1 Population Change in Portumna Census Town

Year	1996	2002
Population	984	1,235
Increase	-	251
% Change	-	25.5%

Source: Census of Population 2002

1.6.1 Galway County Development Plan 2003-2009 and Portumna Local Area Plan

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

The Portumna Local Area Plan will cover the period from 2005 to 2011 and will be valid for six years from the date of adoption by Galway County Council. The Local Area Plan is a legal document. It provides a framework for the future development of Portumna. The Planning and Development Acts require that the Local Area Plan for Portumna is consistent with the County Development Plan. The Local Area Plan contains policies and objectives and all planning applications will be measured against the content of the Plan.

Portumna and the County Settlement Strategy

One of the major policy initiatives contained in the County Development Plan 2003-2009 is *County Galway Settlement Strategy*. This aims to achieve balanced spatial development and provides a planning framework for the location of development and population over the six-year life span of the County Development Plan. The strategy identified a hierarchy of settlements for the area surrounding Galway city (the Galway Transportation and Planning Study (G.T.P.S.) Area), Galway West and Galway East. Portumna is identified on the first tier of the Loughrea Electoral Area (excluding GTPS Area) Settlement Hierarchy.



Within the period of the County Development Plan 2003-2009, 148 residential units have been allocated to Portumna. This amounts to a household growth rate of 32% in Portumna. Policy 18 in the County Development Plan 2003-2009 allows for a deviation of the allocated population between 30% and 50% and states that regard will also be had to the rate of growth for each settlement. Galway County Council are in the process of reviewing the Settlement Strategy, this Local Area Plan will have to be consistent with any amendments to the Settlement Strategy.

Portumna is identified in the County Development Plan as a self-sufficient town. Self-sufficient towns are defined as towns where a large proportion of the population living in the towns and the surrounding countryside are able to live, work, shop, go to school and enjoy their recreation without the need for constant travel.¹ This Local Area Plan for Portumna recognizes that sustained growth is required to achieve Portumna's full potential as a self-sufficient town.



¹ Section 2.3.3 of the County Development Plan 2003-2009

SECTION TWO – CONTEXT

2.1 Natural Heritage

Portumna has a rich and diverse natural heritage. Much of Portumna's character is drawn from the richness of this heritage. The most important and valuable habitats in the area are afforded protection under European and National Legislation by way of designation as proposed Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Natural Heritage Areas are heritage sites that were designated for the protection of flora, fauna, habitats and geological sites of national importance. Special Areas of Conservation are designated for the conservation flora, fauna and habitats of European importance and Special Protection Areas are designated for the conservation of bird species and habitats of European importance. Under the Landscape Sensitivity Rating in the County Development Plan, Portumna and its hinterland are classified as Class 1 (Low sensitivity), Class 2 (Moderate sensitivity) Class 3 (High Sensitivity) and Class 4 (Special Sensitivity).

The North East Shore of Lough Derg and the River Shannon Callows are designated as National Heritage Area's, Special Area's of Conservation and Special Protected Areas². The River Shannon and Lough Derg have a high biodiversity value and are home to the Corncrake, the only Irish bird species listed as 'rare' on a world-wide scale. The Corncrake is defined as an endangered Annex 1 species in the EU Birds Directive and a Red-listed species in the Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI) List. The Corncrakes have suffered drastic population decline this century, declining by over 50% in the last 25 years alone. The corncrakes are now restricted to three parts of Ireland, the Shannon Callows, North Donegal and Co. Mayo. The corncrake population in the Shannon Callows plummeted from 54 to 22 in the space of 2 years as a result of the summer floods in 2002 which wiped out first nesting attempts in 2002 and 2003. Survey results from August 2004 showed that the population has remained at 22 (www.birdwatchireland.ie).

Portumna has a very rich and high biodiversity value and has many important habitats and elements of natural heritage apart from designated sites. The Forest Park is located South-West of the town on the northern shores of Lough Derg. The forest is mainly coniferous but also contains a wide variety of broadleaved trees, both native and exotic. The main conifer species are Scots pine, larch and Norway spruce. In addition, there are knarred old oaks which have been there for centuries, beeches which dominate the skyline, giant evergreens, larches, blue atlas cedar, maples and practically all of the native tree species, including two native conifers yew and juniper. Sixteen species of wild mammals reside within the Forest Park, of which the smallest is the pigmy shrew. The largest and most conspicuous is the fallow deer of which there is a large herd within the Forest.

Portumna is located on the Beara Breifne Greenway Initiative which extends between Cork and Leitrim. The route follows the route taken by the famous Irish Chieftain O'Sullivan Beara in 1603 who undertook an epic march from the Beara Peninsula West Cork to Breifne in the Leitrim-Cavan area. Greenways are an important tool in raising awareness of heritage and offering people access to different aspects of heritage. They can play a valuable role in the creation of

² The National Parks and Wildlife Services under the auspices of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is responsible for the designation of the NHAs, SACs and SPAs. The designation of sites is a continuing process as boundaries are revised and adjusted and new sites are added. Galway County Council will take cognisance of any revisions and adjustments as furnished by the DoEHLG.

ecological networks and help preserve biodiversity, non designated sites and important landscape features such as hedgerows.

The community is very proactive in increasing awareness about Portumna's heritage. For example, Portumna Yew Walk was opened in May 2004 and was historically the link from the town to the castle. The walk is about 300 years old but fell into disuse after the fire in the Castle in 1826.



2.2 Architectural Heritage & Conservation

Architectural heritage consists not only of great artistic achievements, but also the everyday works of craftsmanship of the past. Structures and places acquire over time character and special interest through their continued existence and familiarity. Sympathetic reuse can allow architectural heritage to continue to be enjoyed and used into the future. Portumna has an impressive architectural heritage as is evident in the large number of structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures.

A Protected Structure is a structure that the Planning Authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. Details of Protected Structures are included by the Authority in its Record of Protected Structures. A Record of Protected Structures (RPS) was prepared for County Galway in conjunction with the making of the Galway County Development Plan (2003-2009). It may be amended by the addition or deletion of entries independently of the Plan review process. The inclusion of a structure in the Record of Protected Structures does not preclude appropriate use or development of the structure, however any proposal shall have to consider its impact on the structure and its setting.

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

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape taking account of building lines and heights which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value or contributes to the appreciation of a Protected Structure. An Architectural Conservation Area 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 which might alter the character of the structure or the ACA.

Portumna's principal significance lies in the combination of its street pattern, plot sizes and architectural coherence. The ACA boundary is derived from the perceived age, quality and continuity of buildings and sites within the simple historic street pattern. The vast majority of buildings span the late 18th to late 19th centuries. There is remarkable degree of consistency in the buildings that line the main streets. The predominant style is one developed by local craftsmen based on classical elements, and executed in endless variations. The character of Portumna is thus locally distinctive while sharing characteristic forms and styles unique to Ireland. Surviving shopfronts and the largely unbroken slate covered roof planes are among the town's strongest characteristics.

Existing gaps in street frontages provide ready access to and visibility of deep rear areas. If developed in an ad-hoc manner, the sense of openness important to the character of the town may be eroded by cul-de-sac type developments. Backland sites offer considerable potential to dovetail the fine grain, scale and architectural qualities of new development with the historic principal buildings on the frontages. The challenge for all new development in historic places is how to create architecture of our own time; reinforcing the qualities that have made the town worth conserving, and itself a fitting subject for future conservation.³

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



³ Warshaw, Jack. (2004) *Architectural Inventories: Portumna* Galway County Council.

The Local Area Plan recognises Portumna's significance as a historic town and aims to sustain, protect and improve Portumna's architectural heritage. It is intended that the special character of Portumna is passed on into the future by delivering an integrated approach to the management of the urban environment.

Table 2.1 Protected Structures in Portumna

RPS	Name	Townland	Description
463	Media & Electronics	Portumna	Terraced two-bay 2-storey house with rendered façade, c1870. Timber shopfront with brackets and pilasters, c1890.
464	House	Portumna	Terraced five-bay 2-storey gable ended house with steep pitched roof, rendered façade and square-headed block and start stone doorcase, c1810.
465	St. Brigid's Catholic Church	Portumna	Detached Gothic style cruciform plan church with cut-stone façade and detached four-storey belfry tower. Built on site of former market square.
466	Former Presbytery	Portumna	Semi-detached five-bay 2-storey L-plan building with rendered façade.
467	Former St. Brigid's Catholic Church	Portumna	Gothic style T-plan Roman Catholic church with rendered façade and crenellations, c.1825 Graveyard in grounds.
468	Presentation Convent	Portumna	Detached eight-bay 2-storey building
469	Galway Shannonside Schoolhouse	Portumna	Detached seven-bay 2-storey former schoolhouse c.1870
470	Former Workhouse Complex	Portumna	Mid-19 century Workhouse consisting of group of three- and two-storey buildings.
471	Portumna Courthouse	Portumna	Detached, double-fronted, four-bay 2-storey courthouse c.1847. former Bridewell at rear, now a 2-storey building accommodating community hall.
472	Christ Church, Church of Ireland.	Portumna Demesne	Detached T-plan three-bay church with random squared limestone façade, 2-storey tower surmounted by spire, c.1832
473	Portumna Castle	Portumna Demesne	Detached six-bay 3-storey over basement semi-fortified Jacobean house, built 1618.
474	Portumna Castle	Portumna Demesne	Detached Tudorbethan style three-bay single-storey gate lodge with cut stone façade, c.1860.
475	The Antique Shop	Portumna	End of terrace three-bay, 2-storey houses with end gable, c.1870, timber shopfronts c.1890.
476	House	Portumna	End of terrace five-bay 2-storey house with hipped roof, c.1830.
477	Portumna Harbour	Fairyhill	Harbour basin and short canal, c.1810

Source: Record of Protected Structures, Co. Galway.

2.3 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage is an integral part of the wider environment and is fundamentally important to the quality of life for the people, to their education, culture, enjoyment, amenity and to the economy and special identity of Portumna. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)



lists archaeological monuments and sites. There are a number of Recorded Monuments within or directly adjacent to Portumna which provide evidence of early settlement. They are afforded special protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment Act), 1994 and are identified in Table 2.2 and Map 4.⁴

The Local Area Plan aims to raise awareness, knowledge and understanding of Portumna's archaeological heritage and in so doing protect and conserve this irreplaceable resource.

Table 2.2 Recorded Sites and Monuments.

Monument Number	Sheet No.	Townland	Classification
GA 126-052	126	Portumna Demesne	Mansion
GA 126-053	126	Portumna Demesne	Earthwork Unclassified
GA 126-054	126	Portumna Demesne	Earthwork Unclassified
GA 126-055	126	Portumna Demesne	Earthwork Unclassified
GA 127-005	127	Fairyhill	Canal
GA 127-014	127	Portumna	Garden Feature
GA 127-018	127	Portumna Demesne	Fortified rural house
GA 127-019	127	Portumna Demesne	Friary
GA 127-020	127	Portumna Demesne	Castle
GA 127-021	127	Portumna Demesne	Icehouse
GA 127-023	127	Portumna Demesne	Folly
GA 127-026	127	Portumna Demesne	Settlement

Source: Recorded Monuments Archaeological Survey of Ireland

2.4 Transportation

Portumna is situated on the controlled National Secondary Route N65 which forms part of the main road artery from Galway to the Southeast of the country. Portumna is linked to Ballinasloe by the R355 and to Mountshannon and Scarriff in Co. Clare by the R352. Portumna is also linked to Tynagh by a local county road.

Given that Portumna is on the main road artery from Galway to the South-East, a quality road network is essential. Portumna's location on the National Secondary Route brings a significant amount of traffic through the town. To facilitate the growth of Portumna and improve accessibility for locals and visitors, there is a need for improved traffic management and circulation, environmental enhancements and the development parking facilities.

The Regional Planning Guidelines identify the upgrading of the R355 Portumna to Ballinasloe for better transport links into larger settlements and eventually connecting to the NSS Gateways. The Plan outlines policies and objectives to improve traffic management in the town. The identification of indicative access points for the proposed relief road north of the town is illustrated on Map 3. The access points need to be secured as part of the Plan. If not, an opportunity to provide a relief road which would relieve heavy traffic from the town's main street may be lost. This would remove heavy trucks from the town centre, make it safer for inhabitants, more attractive for people to do business and allow the town to expand.

⁴ It should be noted that in some instances structures & sites and monuments may be afforded dual protection. They may be afforded protection under the Planning Acts as a Protected Structure and also under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. Therefore, it is important to undertake a cross referencing of both the RPS and RMP.



Car parking provision is on street and at private developments. In addition there is a public car park beside St. Brigid's Church. The Plan aims to improve parking management and develop additional parking facilities convenient to the town centre. The Plan includes an objective to develop a car park on Clonfert Avenue. Improvements to parking provision in the town will also contribute to public realm enhancement. It is recommended that any parking proposals are sensitively designed to integrate into the surrounding.

Bus Éireann provides transport to and from Galway five times a week, Monday to Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. South East Galway Integrated Rural Development Ltd., a community-owned company, has secured funding for the implementation of pilot passenger transport services, under the auspices of the Rural Transport Initiative, which is funded by the Department of Transport under the National Development Plan 2000-2006. The South East IRD provides a door to door service every week in serving Portumna, Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Athlone.

2.5 Water & Drainage

Portumna is served by the Portumna Public Water Supply. The existing water plant is not adequate to serve the future needs of Portumna; however it is intended that water supply will be improved over the lifetime of the Plan.

Portumna Sewerage Scheme which was completed in January 2001 has a design capacity to treat sewage from a Population Equivalent (P.E.) of 3,047 persons. This is well in excess of the current population statistics which were recorded in the 2002 Census as 1,235 persons. This indicates that future residential development can be serviced by the Portumna Sewerage Scheme.

2.6 Communication Infrastructure

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

2.7 Litter and Waste Management

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

A segregated waste collection service for dry recyclables and landfill waste is currently provided in the Portumna Area by private operators. A bring bank recycling facility is provided for the collection of glass at Barrack Road, Castle Avenue. Galway County Council is working with the private operators in County Galway to ensure that the segregated collection system is extended to include organic waste.

The Plan aims to support the provision of waste infrastructure at locations which will not adversely affect residential amenities. The Council also intends to provide the necessary information for reduction, reuse and recycling of waste from residential and commercial premises including details on waste segregation, waste management, packaging, construction and demolition waste.

Portumna Community School and St. Brendan's National School are involved in the Green Schools programme, an International project designed to encourage and acknowledge whole school action for the environment. In 2004, the schools achieved a Green Flag Award for their achievements in this programme.

2.8 Energy

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

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

2.9 Town Centre

Portumna's urban form has evolved over time and contributes to the town's character and distinctiveness. The Plan promotes development that is integrated into the urban form and does not detract from the character of the area.

The street pattern is defined by two parallel streets; St. Brendan's Street/Clonfert Avenue and Abbey Street intersected by St. Brigid's Avenue/St. Patrick's Street. The N65 forms the Main Street (St. Brendan's Street). Portumna's streetscape and character owes much to its built heritage. Buildings lining the Main Street vary in size, style and age. The predominant use at ground floor level is commercial. Abbey Street which runs parallel to St. Brendan's Street is predominantly residential with some commercial activity.

Portumna's built environment primarily developed over a relatively short time span, the late 18th to late 19th centuries. The town's character is defined by the combination of street pattern, plot sizes and architectural coherence. The predominant building style is one developed by local craftsmen based on classical elements and executed in a multitude of variations. As a result Portumna is characterized as a typical Irish town yet its variety of architectural features make it locally distinctive.

The majority of buildings are domestic in scale, predominantly two-storey with a few three-storey buildings. Overall, there is a remarkable degree of consistency in buildings that line the principal streets. Well-proportioned stone or rendered façade, pitched roofs and painted timber sash windows are the predominant features. The survival of largely unbroken slate covered roof planes is one of the town's strongest characteristics. Surviving traditional shopfronts are important features and enhance local character. A number of buildings of grander proportions and wider frontages are to be found along Abbey Street.

The spire of St. Brigid's Church dominates the skyline and represents an important landmark for the town. The Church of Ireland, old Catholic Church, Convent, Courthouse and Bank of Ireland buildings are all of significant size and scale to represent additional landmarks within the town.

The principal open spaces in the town centre are located around the Church of Ireland, St. Brigid's Church, the burial ground beside the old Catholic Church and the area behind Castle Avenue including the playground. The open space east of the Church functions as a public car park. This area including St. Brigid's Church was the former Fair Green. There is a substantial amount of private open space in the town centre mainly in the form of yards and gardens behind buildings fronting onto St. Brendan's Street and Abbey Street. These backlands offer



considerable potential for future development but this must take place in a planned and integrated manner so as to maintain the town's character. Good conservation practice provides for change and growth consistent with that character, whose quality is such that future conservation will equally be sought. While this does not necessarily mean repeating patterns of building developed in a structure of society that would be unthinkable today, it does require shared values and sustained efforts to avoid development which diminishes existing character (Warshaw, Jack. 2004 *Architectural Inventories: Portumna* Galway County Council).

Portumna is included in the Town Renewal Scheme 2000. The scheme which operates until July 2006 was designed to improve the built fabric and revitalize Irish towns. A number of sites were designated for renewal in Portumna and some have been redeveloped.

In general the built environment has tended to face inwards, away from the River Shannon and Lough Derg. In recent times development has tended to locate at the edge of the town centre, along the R352 and east of the town along the N65. Development has consisted of a number of residential estates, hotel and self-catering holiday lodges.

The northern and western edges of the town gradually merge into the surrounding environment, while east and south of the town is clearly defined by the River Shannon, Lough Derg and Portumna Demesne. The town's entrance points need to be strengthened and this is to be achieved through a combination of policies, for example encouraging environmental improvements, maintaining the greenbelt around the town and facilitating new development which is well designed and consolidates the built environment.

The Plan aims to revitalize and enhance the town centre. This is to be achieved through a number of measures including encouraging the renewal of derelict sites, backland areas and street infill in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area. The Plan supports the role of the town centre as the principle commercial area within the town and encourages a mix of commercial and residential development in order to maintain a vibrant town centre.



2.10 Residential

Over the period of the County Development Plan 2003-2009, 148 residential units have been allocated to Portumna. This amounts to a household growth rate of 32% in Portumna. Policy 18 in the County Development Plan 2003-2009 allows for a deviation of the allocated population between 30% and 50% and states that regard will also be had to the rate of growth for each settlement.

Private sector house building activity has taken place in the form of estate developments east and west of Portumna. There has also been some infill development in the town centre consisting of apartment development and town houses. Some of this has been developed as part of the Town Renewal Scheme 2000. One-off houses have been constructed along some of the approach roads particularly on Bridge Road (N65) and St. Joseph's Road (R352). There are three Local Authority housing estate developments in Portumna.

At the public workshop the community was very positive about future residential development provided that all new development is of a high standard of design and of appropriate type and scale. It was also requested that a mix of residential density be promoted. It is an aim of the Council to facilitate the development of housing to meet expected housing needs that will arise in Portumna while at the same time maintaining the character of the area.

There are approximately 285 acres proposed to be zoned residential in the Plan. This comprises 5 acres for inner residential, 244 acres for Phase One and 36 acres for Phase Two. Of the total proposed residential zoning 131 acres remain undeveloped.

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



2.11 Industry & Enterprise

Portumna has a relatively small industrial base. Established industry/enterprise areas in the locality include the IDA Industrial Estate on the Scarrif Road (R352) and a small cluster of enterprise activities on the outskirts of the town along the N65. Green Isle Foods, located in the IDA Industrial Estate is the main industry and largest employer in the town with approximately 200 employees.

Portumna is identified as a self-sufficient town in the County Development Plan 2003-2009. This means that employment opportunities need to be created within the town for the local population in order for Portumna to maintain its status as a self sufficient town. Accordingly, the Plan recommends that light industry and enterprise development be accommodated within Portumna. The Regional Planning Guidelines identify as requirements for change and development the promotion of timber and craft industries and the promotion of enterprise centres in the key towns of south Galway, i.e. Portumna. The County Council recognise that the Plan cannot by itself create employment, but that all aspects of the Plan can influence job creation. Approximately 41 acres has been designated for industry. Of this 18 remains undeveloped.

2.12 Tourism

Tourism represents an important economic growth area for Portumna. The Regional Planning Guidelines make specific reference to the opportunities for developing tourism in Portumna. In particular they highlight the tourist potential for the River Shannon, the many archaeological, historical sites and geological phenomena and the clustering of rural tourism attractions to create a tourism trail such as Portumna Castle.

The town is well located in terms of natural heritage, built heritage, and recreational amenities. The Shannon Oaks Hotel is an important asset for the town providing employment for local people and quality accommodation for tourists. There is a broad range of activities available to the tourist including heritage, boating, fishing, equestrian, walking and golfing.

Portumna's location on the River Shannon means it is an obvious location for water-based tourism. The town has become an important centre for the Shannon cruising industry and the Emerald Star Line maintains a depot for cruiser hire there. Portumna is a recognised angling centre. It is renowned for its quality angling with specialist operators geared to cater for angling tourists. The town hosts a number of angling festivals. There is a range of accommodation for angling tourists including hotels and a host of B&B's that provide specialist angling facilities.



Despite the obvious economic opportunities posed by tourism, the local economy is not fully capitalising on this potential. According to *Faillte Ireland's Tourism Development Strategy 2000-2006* Portumna qualifies as a 'Special Interest Tourism Area'. Portumna is an obvious location for water based tourism and there is potential to promote it as an area for cruising, water sports, angling, walking, cycling and heritage activities. By focusing on activity based tourism, Portumna can be marketed as a location for domestic and overseas visitors. In order for Portumna to develop as a recognised tourism centre the tourism and recreational infrastructure needs to be improved. The report *Waterbased Tourism: A Strategic Vision for Galway* (April 2002) supports the development of Portumna as a centre for water-based tourism and recommends that the development of on-shore facilities in Portumna be prioritised.

Portumna Castle is an important asset for the local tourism industry. It is open to the public as 'a restoration in progress'. The Castle is open between April and October. There is an information centre, exhibition area, guided tours and audio visual display. The Dominican Friary located close to Portumna Castle is included in a new East Galway Ecclesiastical Heritage Trail. South East Galway Integrated Rural Development operates a seasonal tourism information centre at the Civic Buildings in Portumna.

The Plan encourages and facilitates the sustainable growth of the tourism industry in Portumna. The importance of protecting environmental assets including built, natural and cultural heritage is recognised as these are the cornerstone of the tourism product. Accordingly the Plan aims to realise the tourism potential of Portumna in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner.



2.13 Education and Community Facilities

Portumna town is served by one national school, St. Brendan's National School. The school currently has 210 pupils. Portumna is also served by one secondary school, Portumna Community School. In September 2004 there were approximately 470 pupils attending the school. Night classes covering a broad range of subjects including computers, art, dancing and golf are held in the Community School during the school year.

Portumna Castle Crafts and Garden provide a FÁS Training Scheme in organic horticulture. St Mary's Youth Centre in Portumna operates a Community Arts Programme. South East Galway Integrated Rural Development Ltd. was set up in 1997 by individuals from the local community and voluntary workers. This community owned company now has a full-time operated centre providing a range of services for the people of South-East Galway.

Portumna has a range of community facilities including a Library, Post Office, FÁS office, Town Hall, Garda Station, Fire Station and Health Centre. There are also a number of community groups within the area including Na Calai Community Development Project and Friends of Portumna Forest Park who made a number of submissions to the Plan.



2.14 Recreation and Amenity

Portumna is well located in terms of natural amenities. It is located beside the River Shannon, Lough Derg and Portumna Forest Park all of which provide recreational facilities for locals and tourists alike.

The Forest Park is situated on the northern shores of Lough Derg. The Park contains a lake walk, picnic area, nature trail and a number of forest walks. There is a viewing tower along the nature trail where it is possible to get a bird's eye view of the forest, lake and lakeshore. There is also a car park and toilet facilities. The Forest Park provides an important setting for Portumna and creates a strong entrance point to the town by reinforcing the distinction between the countryside and built up area. The Plan includes a policy to ensure the protection of this important natural amenity.

The River Shannon and Lough Derg are very popular with boating and angling enthusiasts. Berthing facilities are available at the marina located beside Portumna Castle. Portumna Quay which is accessed by Church Road is a popular bathing area during the summer months. At the public workshop it was noted that while Portumna is rich in natural amenities, these amenities are not being exploited for their full recreational value. The local community is particularly eager that Portumna Quay be redeveloped as a safe bathing area with appropriate changing facilities, toilets and lifeguard. Lough Derg possesses much potential for the development of recreational facilities

in Portumna. The Plan seeks to improve public access where possible to the lake shore and River Shannon and promote the area's amenity value in an environmentally sensitive manner.



The Plan aims to improve the range of amenity pathways throughout Portumna. The Urban Design Framework includes a specific objective to develop an amenity walk alongside the lake shore and Shannon banks thereby improving links between the town and River Shannon. Portumna is located on the walking and cycling route which extends from Cork to Leitrim as identified in the Beara Breifne Greenway Initiative.

There are a number of playing pitches located in the town. These include the GAA pitch and soccer pitch located on Church Road and the rugby pitch located in Portumna Demesne. The town also has a golf course located on the outskirts of the town off the R352. The Town Hall serves as a location for indoor activities.



SECTION THREE – POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

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

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

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

3.2 Natural Heritage

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

Policies

- 3.2.1 Manage, protect and enhance Portumna's natural heritage where possible.
- 3.2.2 Recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes and to conserve the biological diversity of the Plan area. The natural heritage of the area includes a variety of diverse habitats including wetlands, lakes, rivers, woodland, trees / groups of trees, stone walls, hedgerows and associated wildlife.
- 3.2.3 Protect and conserve the habitats and species that have been identified in the Habitat Directive, Birds Directive Wildlife Act 2000 or which may be issued during the lifetime of this Plan in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- 3.2.4 Protect and conserve ecological networks and prevent loss and fragmentation of ecological corridors where possible.
- 3.2.5 Protect and conserve geological and geomorphological systems, sites and features from inappropriate development that would detract from their heritage value and interpretation.

- 3.2.6 Promote greater habitat and species biodiversity through the appropriate planting of trees and shrubs native to the Portumna area.
- 3.2.7 Promote the retention of individual trees and groups of trees, hedgerows, stonewalls and other associated landscape features where possible.
- 3.2.8 Take cognisance of significant trees and tree stands identified on Map 3.
- 3.2.9 Where boundaries have to be removed and are to be replaced, replace with boundary types similar to those removed, for example, masonry stone walls.
- 3.2.10 Encourage the creation, development and maintenance of green corridors where possible.
- 3.2.11 Support National Parks and Wildlife Service in the management, protection, conservation and enhancement of designated sites, natural heritage and biodiversity of the Plan area.
- 3.2.12 Encourage the appreciation and knowledge of the natural, built and cultural heritage of Portumna and its environs.
- 3.2.13 Take cognisance of any policies and guidelines that may be issued by Galway County Council or the National Parks and Wildlife Service during the lifetime of this Plan.
- 3.2.14 Seek to protect bats and their roosts⁵.
- 3.2.15 Consult with the NPWS of DoEHLG in relation to any proposed developments in or near designated sites⁷.
- 3.2.16 Have regard to the recommendations and actions in the forthcoming All-Ireland Species Action Plan for Corncrake (*Crex Crex*).

Objectives

- H1** Ensure there is greater habitat and species diversity through the appropriate planting of trees, shrubs and hedgerow indigenous to the Portumna area in public and private places.
- H2** Protect designated sites (cSACs, SPAs, NHAs) on Map 3, and any future sites designated in the life of the plan, and other important biodiversity areas⁷.
- H3** Seek to retain individual and groups of trees, hedgerows and stonewalls which add to the local character of the area.
- H4** Protect Portumna Forest Park from insensitive development which would be detrimental to its scenic setting and natural heritage value.
- H5** Promote greater awareness of the natural heritage and natural heritage designations in Portumna.
- H6** Seek to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes.
- H7** Seek to work with relevant organisations and agencies to undertake a study of Lough Derg.
- H8** Proposals for development shall have regard to the significant trees and tree stands identified on Map 3.
- H9** Require an in-depth ecological assessment to be carried out for all proposed developments in areas designated as SAC, SPA or NHA.

3.3 Architectural Heritage & Conservation

Portumna has a distinctive and impressive cultural heritage as expressed in the quality and variety of its built environment and architectural heritage. It is the Council's aim to conserve and enhance Portumna's architectural heritage.

Policies

- 3.3.1 Implement the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in relation to Architectural Heritage, having particular regard to the Architectural Conservation Area (See Map 4).

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

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

Objectives

- AH1** Require residential developments to reflect Portumna's built, natural or cultural heritage by the use of local place names and to incorporate townland names from the locality as far as possible.
- AH2** Proposals for development within the Architectural Conservation Area shall have regard to the Council's Architectural Heritage Inventory for Portumna.
- AH3** Adopt a strategy of minimum intervention in relation to proposals concerning protected structures and those of local interest that contribute to local distinctiveness.
- AH4** Protect structures included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), identified in Table 2.1 and Map 4.
- AH5** Require that the design of any proposed building adjoining or in the same setting as a Protected Structure shall have regard to the architectural context of the building.
- AH6** Proposals for intervention in relation to protected structures or proposed protected structures shall have regard to the following documents: Conservation Guidelines



published by the DoEHLG, the Council's *Architectural Survey and Assessment: Best Practice Guide* and the *Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005)* and any subsequent Guidelines, Acts, Directives or Policies which may be issued during the lifetime of the Plan.

- AH7** Respect the character of existing buildings, important views and spaces and the historic settlement pattern in terms of scale, height, grouping, density, design and materials.
- AH8** Promote an understanding and appreciation of Portumna's architectural heritage.
- AH9** The Council will take a proactive and flexible approach to the implementation of conservation and planning led Masterplans for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of historic sites – such as the Workhouse site.

3.4 Archaeological Heritage

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

Policies

- 3.4.1 Support the conservation and maintenance of Archaeological sites and monuments, together with the integrity of the setting of these monuments and sites. Development which would destroy, alter or damage Monuments or Archaeological sites, or cause inappropriate change to their settings and character will be discouraged.
- 3.4.2 Implement the legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in relation to Archaeological Heritage and have regard to the publication 'Archaeology & Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers' and any subsequent support documents prepared in the lifetime of this Plan.
- 3.4.3 Protect and preserve archaeological sites which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
- 3.4.4 Prohibit developments which would destroy or damage, or cause inappropriate change to protected sites / monuments and structures.
- 3.4.5 Consult with the Heritage Division of the DoEHLG in relation to proposed developments that have the potential to affect Recorded Sites and Monuments.
- 3.4.6 Facilitate public access to the National Monuments, which are in the Council's ownership or in the care of the Heritage Division of the DoEHLG where possible.

Objectives

- AY1** Protect sites and monuments included in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) identified in Table 2.2 and Map 4.
- AY2** All planning applications for new development, redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment, restoration within close proximity to the recorded monuments shall take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and the need for archaeological mitigation.
- AY3** Seek to increase a greater awareness and knowledge of the archaeological heritage of Portumna.

3.5 Transport & Road Infrastructure

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

Policies

- 3.5.1 Facilitate improved transport links serving Portumna.
- 3.5.2 Facilitate greater ease of traffic movement through, within and around the town without compromising the consolidation of the town centre
- 3.5.3 To consider the objectives of the forthcoming Traffic Management Plan for Portumna.



- 3.5.4 Improve traffic management through:
- Improving traffic circulation,
 - Developing public parking facilities,
 - Providing loading and unloading facilities,
 - Improving road signage,
 - Other measures deemed necessary by safety audits will be considered.
- 3.5.5 Prohibit development on lands which are reserved for the proposed relief road and its associated buffer and where development would affect the route, line, level or layout of any proposed new roadway or the improvement, widening, realignment of an existing roadway. This policy does not prevent a developer from constructing a section of the road in agreement with Galway County Council and its specifications.
- 3.5.6 Improve the existing road system to relieve congestion and provide parking areas subject to available resources.
- 3.5.7 Improve entrance points to Portumna through road improvements, appropriate landscaping, maintenance of stone walls, hedgerows and grass verges, where resources permit.
- 3.5.8 Carry out improvements on the existing road system to relieve congestion including road widening, improved road carrying capacity, and reduced traffic hazard, the provision and improvement of parking areas, provision of new footpaths, maintenance of existing footpaths, as well as traffic management measures, subject to available finances and resources.
- 3.5.9 Co-operate with transport providers and community groups in the improvement of the public transport system, the creation of an integrated transport network and the provision of a bus stop.
- 3.5.10 Facilitate movement of people and goods into, through and out of Portumna at a safe pace.
- 3.5.11 Expand the town core in a consolidated manner through the creation of new streets to the rear of existing streets.
- 3.5.12 Facilitate walking and cycling as an alternative to the car and as a more convenient, popular and safe method of transport, through the designation, where feasible, of walkways and cycle routes linking town centre, residential, community facility and transport nodes. See Urban Design Framework (Map 2).
- 3.5.13 Ensure all new developments are properly located in terms of traffic safety.
- 3.5.14 Provide adequate facilities for people with special mobility needs to create a safe and accessible environment by providing parking facilities on ground floor level, tactile crossing points, audio facilities on traffic lights and ramped kerbs.
- 3.5.15 Ensure all new developments are adequately served by car parking, disabled parking and cycling facilities.
- 3.5.16 Promote and facilitate greater ease of traffic movement and safe routes to schools in partnership with the local schools.
- 3.5.17 Ensure that schools have safe drop off / collection facilities for pedestrians, vehicles and cyclists and adequate and appropriately located staff parking.
- 3.5.18 To encourage new developments to use existing access junctions which enter onto major traffic routes, and indicative access objectives identified in the Urban Design Framework (Map 2) rather than allowing a proliferation of new individual vehicular access points.
- 3.5.19 To ensure, where possible, that adequate off-street parking and adequate loading/unloading facilities are provided as part of each development, to ensure that parked vehicles do not cause a traffic hazard, obstruct vehicle or pedestrian movement or create a negative visual impact. Underground car parking will be considered in the town centre zone, where it would not conflict with residential amenity, geological or archaeological sensitivities or traffic safety. Where underground parking cannot be provided for site specific planning reasons, it shall be provided by payment of a levy to the County Council for such provision off site. Requirements for car parking are contained in Section 5.8.1 of this Plan.

Objectives

- T1 Improve road signage.
- T2 Improve car parking management within the town centre.
- T3 Reserve lands on Clonfert Avenue and Church Road for the development of car parking facilities.
- T4 Provide disabled car parking facilities at appropriate locations throughout the town and ensure that all new developments have adequate parking provision for the disabled.
- T5 Reserve routes to facilitate the creation of new streets near the town centre.
- T6 Reserve access points for the future development of backlands (See Urban Design Framework).
- T7 Reserve the route indicated on the Specific Objectives Map for the future relief road north of the town and prohibit development which would encroach on this corridor and its associated buffer.
- T8 Provide for junction arrangements between the proposed bypass and existing roads.
- T9 Seek to provide loading/unloading bay in the town centre.
- T10 Facilitate the development of bus shelter in the town centre.
- T11 Improve culverts and all roadside drainage, maintain and renew pavements, widen and improve existing roads, improve road signage and facilitate the provision of new roads within Portumna, as the need arises and as resources permit.
- T11 Require developers to bear the cost of improvement to junctions, road widening and the provision of footpaths in association with public lighting requirements.

3.6 Water & Drainage

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

Policies

- 3.6.1 Provide improvements to the water and wastewater facilities to assist the growth of development, and to ensure that this is undertaken in a sustainable manner in accordance with EU policies and directives.
- 3.6.2 Encourage only as much development, both in terms of quantity and type of development as can be provided for, based on the utility services available.
- 3.6.3 Prohibit any proposed development which would pose an unacceptable threat to the capacity of water, wastewater and surface water infrastructure.
- 3.6.4 Ensure future developments within the plan boundary make provision for connection to the Municipal Wastewater Treatment System.
- 3.6.5 Restrict and discourage the proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants in order to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution and to ensure protection of the aquifer (in particular the areas with a rating of high vulnerability). Where these installations are permissible ensure compliance with the relevant EPA wastewater treatment manuals.
- 3.6.6 Maintain an adequate surface water drainage system throughout the Plan area.
- 3.6.7 Intensify public awareness of water quality issues and the measures required to protect natural water bodies and implement a monitoring programme to assess the impact of development on these areas.
- 3.6.8 Ensure that industrial facilities and commercial premises discharging waste water are operating within the parameters of a wastewater discharge licence.
- 3.6.9 Ensure the protection of the aquifer (with a rating of high vulnerability and medium vulnerability) from the risk of environmental pollution.
- 3.6.10 Ensure that development is not itself subject to inappropriate risk of flooding and ensure that it would not cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations.

Objectives

- W1** Develop and improve the provision of potable water supply to all new and existing developments within the Plan boundary during the lifetime of this Plan.
- W2** Require all relevant applications, which are located in close proximity to a watercourse, to submit measures to reduce and prevent pollution to a watercourse, both during construction and after completion for the scheme.
- W3** Discourage development proposals located within or directly adjacent to the Indicative Flood Plain Area (Map 3) which is sensitive to the effects of flooding.
- W4** Have regard to any flood plain details including maps and data that may be issued by the Office of Public Works during the lifetime of this Plan.
- W5** Protect a buffer zone around the perimeter of the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Works boundary from inappropriate development in the interest of public health (See Map 1).

3.7 Communication Infrastructure

Policies

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

Objectives

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

3.8 Litter & Waste Management

Policies

- 3.8.1 Develop Portumna as a minimum waste community.
- 3.8.2 Promote waste reduction and new methods relating to waste management through reduction, re-use, recycling and composting.
- 3.8.3 Implement the Connaught Waste Management Plan 199-2004, and any subsequent plans with particular emphasis on the reduction of waste and the development of infrastructure for reuse, recycling and disposal of residual waste in the most appropriate manner.
- 3.8.4 Ensure that new developments provide adequate storage facilities for segregated waste. Such facilities should be visually unobtrusive.
- 3.8.5 Improve the range of waste segregation facilities such as bring banks at suitable locations.
- 3.8.6 Maintain Portumna's image as a clean environmentally friendly town.
- 3.8.7 Support anti-litter and clean up activities including Tidy Town and National Spring Clean events.

Objectives

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



Policies

- 3.8.8 Support the renewal and development of energy infrastructure, having regard to residential amenities and landscape sensitivities.
- 3.8.9 Promote energy conservation measures and facilitate innovative building design that promotes efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources.

Objectives

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

3.9 Town Centre

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

Policies

- 3.9.1 Promote the revitalisation of the town centre in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of its surrounds through:
- Promoting the redevelopment of derelict, obsolete and brownfield sites,
 - Encouraging the strengthening of the streetscape and continuity of the urban grain⁶,
 - Encouraging the development of backlands where proposals contribute to and enhance the character of the town. Only proposals that are part of an Action Plan for a specific area will be considered,
 - Exercising Council powers under the Derelict Sites Act.
- 3.9.2 Development of individual narrow back gardens will be discouraged. Only proposals for development on combined back gardens accompanied by an Area Action Plan will be considered.
- 3.9.3 Support the role of the town centre as the principle commercial area within the town.
- 3.9.4 Ensure that there is an effective mix of commercial and residential development along the streetscape in the town centre (mixed development) zone in the interest of commercial vitality.
- 3.9.5 Encourage a mix of uses in the town centre including living over the shop in order to maintain a vibrant town centre.
- 3.9.6 Facilitate and encourage the appropriate provision of retail facilities that service local needs and to ensure that these facilities are properly located in terms of accessibility and traffic safety as well as being in keeping with the character and scale of the area.
- 3.9.7 Ensure that existing buildings which contribute to the character of the area are appropriately refurbished rather than demolished. Consideration may only be given to demolition where it is demonstrated that a proposal is structurally unsound or there is an otherwise sustainable valid reason for its removal.
- 3.9.8 Protect and enhance the Architectural Conservation Area (See Map 4) and archaeological sites and monuments.
- 3.9.9 Ensure that new development and redevelopment respects and complements the existing character of an area in terms of scale, height, layout, grouping, function, design, materials and function.
- 3.9.10 Expand the town centre through the creation of new streets connecting St. Brendan's Street and Abbey Street in a sensitive manner (See Urban Design Framework Map 2).

⁶ Urban grain is determined by the pattern of plot divisions, building form and building line.

- 3.9.11 When considering courtyard or car park developments surrounded by buildings, require front and rear facades to be treated with equal prominence and design aesthetics.
- 3.9.12 Encourage strong frontages onto the main thoroughfares creating definite building lines and continuity of town structure.
- 3.9.13 Examine all applications for retail development in the context of the 'Retail Planning Guidelines' by the DoEHLG. This will be augmented by the County Retail Strategy which the Council is preparing.
- 3.9.14 Encourage new retail development to locate within the existing town core.
- 3.9.15 Discourage predominately residential development in the mixed use town centre zone in the interest of commercial vitality.
- 3.9.16 Facilitate the improvement of the overall streetscape / physical environment, for example through encouraging underground wiring; appropriate street furniture and environmental improvements.
- 3.9.17 Maintain and enhance Portumna's function as a service hub for south-east Galway.
- 3.9.18 Ensure that new commercial development complements the existing town centre in terms of commercial viability and continued prosperity.
- 3.9.19 Facilitate commercial development within the town centre or at appropriately zoned locations if it is demonstrated that there are no suitable town centre sites.

Objectives

- TC1** Take cognisance of the principles in the Urban Design Framework outlined in Section 4.
- TC2** Provide where funds permit environmental improvements within the town.
- TC3** Require Action Plans for development of backlands, in the area between St. Brendan's Street / Clonfert Avenue and Abbey Street / Dominic Street.

3.10 Residential

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

Policies

- 3.10.1 Encourage development of an appropriate density, scale and population that reflects the status of Portumna on the first tier of the Loughrea Electoral Area (excluding GTPS Area) Settlement Hierarchy.
- 3.10.2 Support the development of a broad range of house types and social/affordable housing at appropriate locations.
- 3.10.3 Encourage higher residential densities within the town centre and inner residential zones and lower residential densities in the residential and outer residential zones, in the interests of sustainable urban development.
- 3.10.4 Encourage strong frontages onto the main thoroughfares creating definite building lines and continuity of the town structure.
- 3.10.5 Maintain the character of the area outside the town centre by encouraging residential development to reflect Galway County Council's Housing Design Guidelines for Single and Clustered Housing and any other such guidelines as may be published by the Council.
- 3.10.6 Require that the design of housing layouts include the use of clusters and over looked open spaces. Layouts should also consider play space, other informal recreational facilities as well as road access to ensure future linkage to backland development land where it exists.
- 3.10.7 Co-ordinate the provision of road, cycle and pedestrian networks and other services to new residential areas.
- 3.10.8 Ensure that new residential developments make provision for managed open space, play space and other informal recreational facilities.



- 3.10.9 Create where possible, linked natural corridors by planting, and retain natural heritage features such as hedgerows, unplastered stone walls and bands of mature and semi-mature deciduous trees.
- 3.10.10 Require the naming of residential developments to reflect local place names, heritage, language or topographical features as appropriate and to incorporate townland names from the locality as far as possible.
- 3.10.11 Promote energy conservation and renewable energy technologies in developments, such measures to be consistent with other policies in the Plan.

Objectives

- R1** Require developers to carry out a professional assessment of the natural features that define the character of site in the context of its surrounding environment (including topography, aspect, habitats, flora, fauna, foliage, geological features) and integrate these features into development proposals.
- R2** Require developers to make appropriate provision for recreation and amenity infrastructure equal to the needs of the development and as an integral element of their proposals. A special levy may be required to enable the development of appropriate amenity areas off site under powers set out in the Development Contribution Scheme.
- R3** Identify and acquire appropriate lands for social and affordable housing as necessary.
- R4** Provide social and affordable housing in accordance with substantiated eligible need.
- R5** Implement the provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts and Housing Strategy on lands designated for residential development and mixed development (town centre zoning). The County Housing Strategy forms part of and is to be read in conjunction with the Plan.
- R6** Designate lands as residential (phase 2) to remain undeveloped until such time as the lands can be accommodated by an amendment to the County Development Plan Settlement Strategy.

3.11 Industry & Enterprise

Portumna is identified as a self-sufficient town thereby requiring a large proportion of the population living in the town and the surrounding countryside to be able to live, work, shop, go to school and enjoy their recreation without the need for constant travel. The development of employment related activities is fundamental if Portumna is to continue as a self-sufficient town. The council aim to develop Portumna as an employment centre for South-east Galway.

Policies

- 3.11.1 Ensure that sufficient land is available to encourage new enterprise / light industry to locate within the town boundary.
- 3.11.2 Co-operate with state agencies, employers and promote Portumna as a location for employment generating industries
- 3.11.3 Facilitate the expansion of the existing enterprises having regard to the protection of the amenity neighbouring properties.
- 3.11.4 Ensure that industrial schemes are appropriately landscaped, sited and screened.
- 3.11.5 Facilitate the development of local enterprise centres.
- 3.11.6 Consider cottage industries in residential areas on their own merits through the development control process. Any proposal shall have minimum environmental impacts and have regard to the amenity of adjoining properties.

Objectives

- IE1** Service and assist within the limits of available finance, suitable sites as identified for local enterprise development so as to facilitate industry and affordable workspace for new business start-ups.

- IE2** Facilitate the development of an industrial/enterprise park in Portumna on the edge of the town centre.
- IE3** Facilitate the development of enterprise related activities at the workhouse complex. These must have regard to the protected status of the workhouse complex.

3.12 Tourism

Tourism is an important element of Portumna's local economy. However, the economic potential posed by tourism is not being fully realised. The Council aims to harness tourism potential while at the same time endeavouring to ensure appropriate management and greater protection for vulnerable features through increased awareness and knowledge in Portumna's natural, cultural and built heritage.

Policies

- 3.12.1 Continue to develop Portumna as a tourist destination in the context of cultural and recreational tourism and its importance to the local economy.
- 3.12.2 Realise the tourist potential of Portumna's rich heritage in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner.
- 3.12.3 Co-operate with Ireland West Tourism, the local community and other stakeholders in the development of sustainable tourism products.
- 3.12.4 Facilitate the development of good quality accommodation, services and activities for tourists in appropriate areas.
- 3.12.5 Ensure that tourism schemes are appropriately sited, landscaped and screened.
- 3.12.6 Support the recommendations of the report 'Water Based Tourism – A Strategic Vision for Galway', April 2002 and the aims and objectives of *City and County Tourism Strategy* and *County Development Board Strategy*.
- 3.12.7 Support the development of walkways embracing focal buildings and the heritage of Portumna and its hinterland in an environmentally sensitive and appropriate manner.
- 3.12.8 Facilitate the development of cultural heritage and tourism facilities.
- 3.12.9 Facilitate the development of tourism infrastructure that is beneficial to the local economy and complimentary to the local built and natural environment where possible.
- 3.12.10 Protect the natural amenity and heritage of the River Shannon, Lough Derg and the Forest Park.

Objectives

- TO1** Support the development of water-based recreational facilities that will benefit the local community and visitors to the area and enhance the tourism infrastructure in an environmentally sustainable manner.
- TO2** Seek to develop a strategy for information signage for Portumna. Strategy is to include guidance on appropriate information signage at the entrance to Portumna Castle, at the marina and on the approach roads to the town.
- TO3** Seek to liaise with stakeholders in preparing and marketing a Tourism Action Plan aimed at the promotion and development of sustainable tourism.
- TO4** Encourage improvements at the Quay / swimming area.
- TO5** Facilitate the development of cultural heritage facilities in Portumna where possible.
- TO6** Encourage and assist the development of the tourism potential of Portumna Castle in a manner that respects its architectural, archaeological and cultural significance.
- TO7** Seek to facilitate the development of a tourist office in Portumna.



3.14 Education & Community Facilities

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

Policies

- 3.14.1 Seek the development of community facilities that will meet the needs of all its population.
- 3.14.2 Maintain existing community buildings, open spaces, sports facilities, refusal disposal and burial grounds within Portumna and provide for improvements of same where required.
- 3.14.3 Co-operate with bodies including school authorities, religious orders, the Western Health Board and community groups in the provision of education and community facilities at appropriate locations.
- 3.14.4 Ensure there is sufficient land available to cater for future educational requirements.
- 3.14.5 Facilitate the provision of adequate, affordable and registered childcare facilities in a sustainable manner that:
 - Is compatible with land use and transportation policies,
 - Promotes local economic development,
 - Recognises the role of such facilities in addressing disadvantage.
- 3.14.6 Promote the provision of out-reach third level education opportunities.
- 3.14.7 Have regard to the provisions of "Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities." (Published by the DoEHLG, June, 2001).
- 3.14.8 Support voluntary bodies and groups, in recognition of the vital role that they play within the town.

Objectives

- EC1** Reserve lands for the expansion and provision of additional community facilities adjacent to existing community facility lands.
- EC2** Facilitate the development of a community centre.

3.15 Recreation & Amenity

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

Policies

- 3.15.1 Ensure sufficient lands are available for recreation and amenity.
- 3.15.2 Co-operate with developers, sports clubs, schools and the community in promoting and developing the recreational potential of Portumna where resources permit, at appropriate locations which would not be detrimental to residential amenity or natural heritage of the area. For example, in the provision of new facilities, improvements to existing facilities, safe routes to recreation / amenity lands and facilities, the provision of picnic sites / viewing sites in special amenity area and the undertaking of environmental improvement schemes.
- 3.15.3 Promote the development of a child friendly environment for children of all ages.
- 3.15.4 Seek to improve public access to and along the River Shannon and Lough Derg and promote the amenity value of the area in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- 3.15.5 Promote and facilitate safe routes to recreation facilities including GAA facilities.
- 3.15.6 Protect land zoned for recreation and amenity purposes from inappropriate development. Within such areas only very limited development, directly related to amenity and leisure uses will be permitted.



- 3.15.7 Protect land zoned for amenity and environment purposes from inappropriate development, which respect the nature designation value of these lands.
- 3.15.8 Resist the loss of existing public or private recreational open space unless alternative recreational facilities are provided in a suitable location, or it can be demonstrated that there is no longer sufficient demand to sustain the facility.
- 3.15.9 Confine games / recreational activity, which could give rise to loss of amenity including elevated levels of noise to areas zoned for recreation and amenity.
- 3.15.10 Cooperate with stakeholders including the Portumna First Responder Group in the provision of emergency equipment at the lake shore.

Objectives

- RA1** Seek to develop amenity walkways and cycle routes in Portumna including the Beara Breifne Greenways Initiative.
- RA2** Investigate the possibility of creating an amenity pathway alongside the lake shore and Shannon banks in an environmentally sensitive manner that is safe and assimilated into the landscape in consultation with all stakeholders.
- RA3** Encourage and facilitate suitable facilities for teenagers at appropriate locations.
- RA4** Seek to develop Portumna Quay as a designated bathing place with modern visitor facilities.
- RA5** Develop, where funds permit, recreation and tourism facilities such as footpaths, picnic sites, viewing sites in special amenity areas and amenity walks.
- RA6** Facilitate the development of recreation and amenity infrastructure, for example, playing pitches that are linked with educational facilities.
- RA7** Facilitate the development of a structure to accommodate emergency equipment at the lake shore.



SECTION FOUR - URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

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

- provide an overall coordinated approach for future development in Portumna,
- ensure that historic patterns are respected, and
- facilitate the creation of new places that add to Portumna's character.

The alternative and present norm is ad-hoc development which is piecemeal in fashion and if left to continue will erode the existing townscape which is at the heart of Portumna's character.

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

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

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

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

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

The Framework is divided into four sub-sections:

- 4.2 Town Centre
- 4.3 Urban Design Objectives
- 4.4 Amenity
- 4.5 Landscape

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

4.2 Town Centre

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

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



The Plan also encourages the development of backlands where proposals contribute to and enhance the character of the town. Backland development can achieve impressive results if developed in a coordinated manner. These results may include increased permeability, improvements to the public realm, consolidation and revitalization of the town centre, efficient and sustainable use of space and increased densities that are of a scale and character similar to the existing streetscape. Good permeability will foster a strong sense of community by creating places where there is ease of interaction between residents. Opportunities exist to utilise in a sustainable manner existing stone outbuildings which give an added architectural dimension to the town. These outbuildings have the potential to be exploited for commercial purposes while retaining their unique character.

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

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

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

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

The Plan aims to improve parking provision within the town centre. Improvements to parking provision will also contribute to public realm enhancement. The Plan includes an objective to develop a car park on Clonfert Avenue. It is recommended that development be encouraged along the entrance to the car park to create a definite streetscape.

UD2 To encourage development to locate along the entrance to the proposed car park on Clonfert Avenue.

4.3 Urban Design Objectives

New development should be designed to:

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



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

UD3 Enclosure / Building Line Objectives:

- Encourage the use of buildings to define space within the Town Centre and Residential zones. This is set out in the Urban Design Framework Map 2 & Map 2a.
- Encourage place making design principles: to achieve a scale, character, grain and identity associated with Irish rural towns and towns.
- Strong streetscape definition with dual aspect designed elevations, which encourage passive surveillance to open spaces.
- Private parking to be integrated within the courtyard enclosures.
- Sketch examples of these enclosure principles and indicative layouts are set out in pages 32 to 34 of this section.

Homezones

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

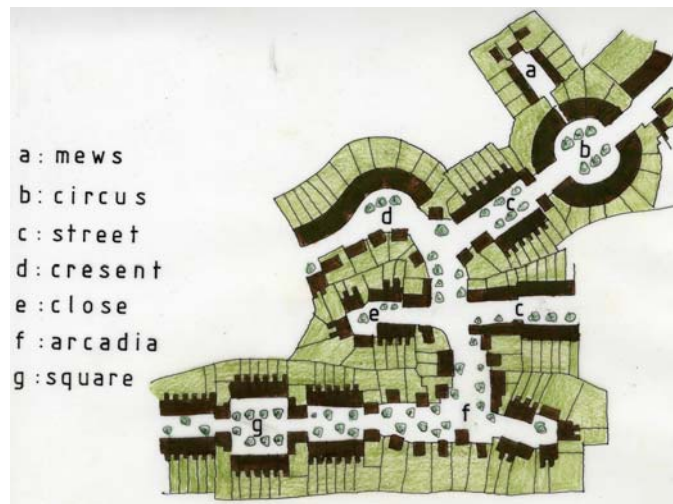
Standard residential layouts have few cars passing through them for long periods of the day, yet the spaces are shaped by the needs of cars and not the people who live within the residential zone.

A Homezone should fulfil a number of objectives:

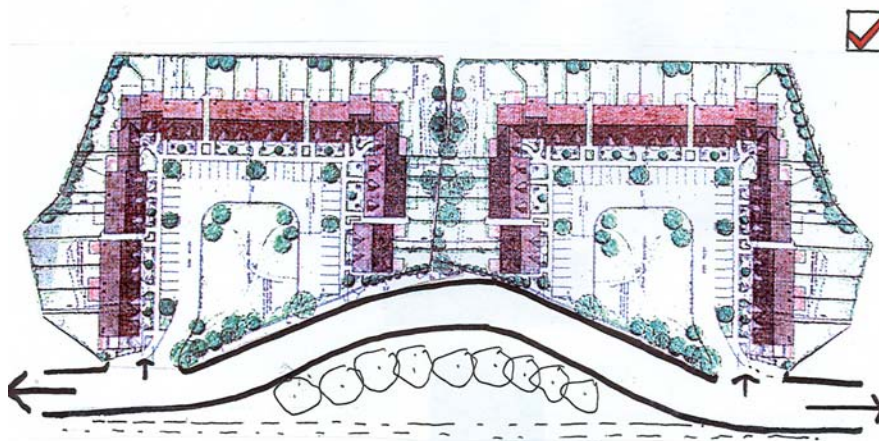
- It should improve feelings of safety in residential areas because traffic will have to go slowly and also because there should be more people out on the street.
- It should promote greater use of public spaces in residential areas and, through design, promote a greater diversity of activity within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

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

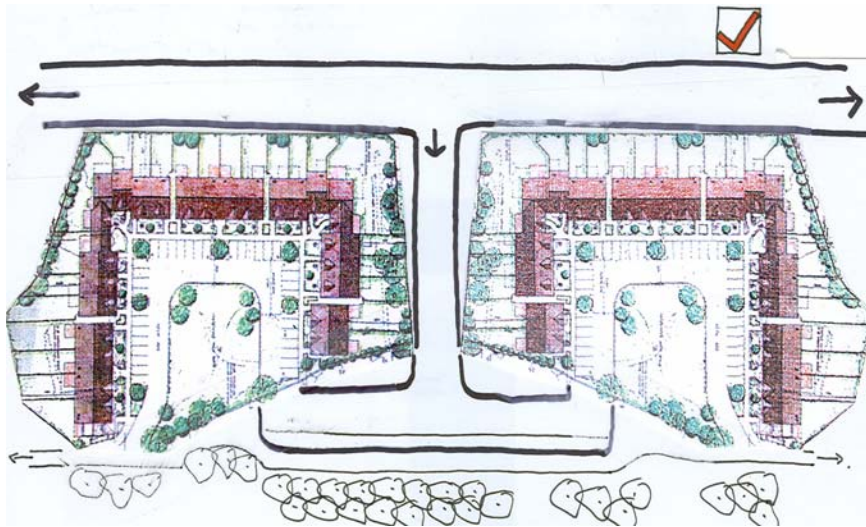
Note: These sketches are indicative only and are for the purposes of clarity in reading Section Four and Appendix 5 : Maps 2 & 2a.



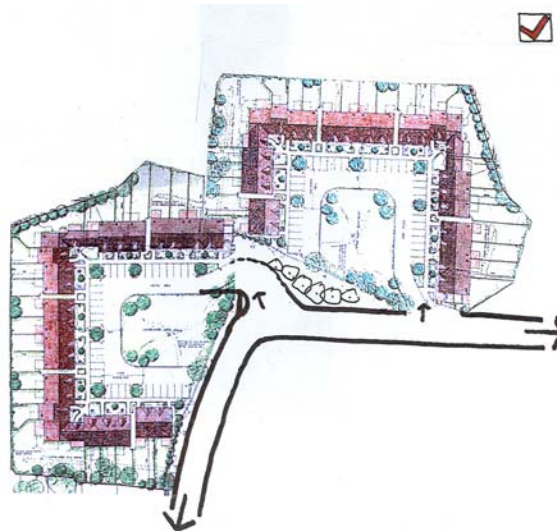
Indicative layout on designing Homezones



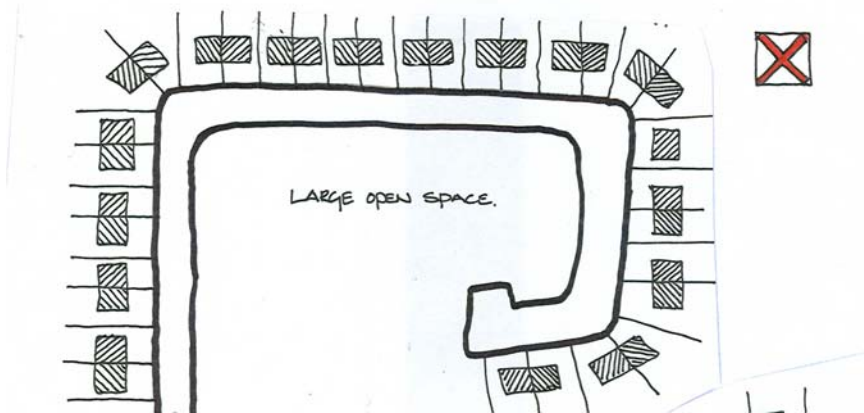
Courtyard Clustering - linear route, good permeability and residential safety maintained, good place making defined by specific corner residential units and integrated open amenity space to each courtyard offering high levels of passive surveillance



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



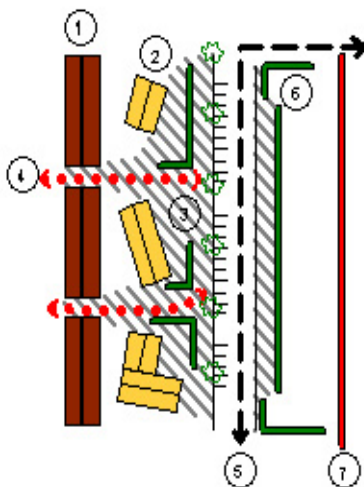
Courtyard Clustering - strong place making achieved when dealing with corner sites.



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

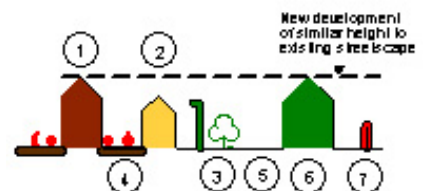


Cul-de-sac 'Cookie Cluster' - residual open space, poor place making, erosion of street grain, 'dead-ends, have poor permeability and lack of sufficient passive surveillance to residual open spaces.



Backland Sketch Plan

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



Indicative Section Profile



4.4 Indicative Circulation Layout Objectives

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

The purpose of the Indicative Circulation Layout is to:

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

UD4 Primary Access Objective:

- To reserve and facilitate a relief road north of the town centre.

UD5 Secondary Access Objective:

- To ensure the creation of an additional street linking St. Brendan's Street / Clonfert Avenue and Abbey Street / Dominic Street.
- To facilitate a road network through potential development lands to allow for vehicle and public transport to access new development.

UD6 Local Access Objective:

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

4.5 Amenity Objectives

Given the broad range of natural amenities in and around Portumna it is considered important that links between these amenities and the town centre be improved. The Plan seeks to create a circular route beginning in the town centre at the castle gates and around by the northern shores of Lough Derg, along the Shannon Banks and linking up with the footpath on Bridge Road.

UD7 Amenity and Open Space Objectives

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



UD8 Civic Open Spaces

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

4.6 Landscape

Portumna has a number of strong features which enhance its natural and cultural heritage. These include hedgerows, mature trees, stone walls, green areas and designated sites. The Plan recognises the importance of maintaining particular features which contribute to Portumna's distinctive character. The following objectives are designed to protect these natural and cultural features.

UD9 Woodland Objectives

- Retain tree line buffer along St. Joseph's Road in order to maintain visual amenity and woodland character.
- Retain stand of mature birch trees.
- Retain other significant individual mature broadleaves or Scots Pine where possible.
- Maintain or design corridors between any stands of trees that are retained. For example planting hedgerows or tree lines between clumps of trees. It is important that a link to the larger woodland to the south be maintained.
- Existing streams should be incorporated into the design of development proposals.
- Ensure that a buffer zone of trees between the park entrance and any development east of this is provided.

UD10 Screening Buffer

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

Landscape Objectives

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

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



SECTION FIVE – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL STANDARDS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This section outlines standards which will be applied to development proposals in Portumna. Applicants will also need to consider regulation and guideline publications when preparing a planning application. Development proposals may also be subject to other regulations and statutes that cover fire, building regulations etc.

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

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

Where standards are not provided the Planning Authority shall refer to the County Development Plan.

5.2 RESIDENTIAL

5.2.1 Density

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

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

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



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

In Portumna, four layers of residential density have been identified. The Planning Authority is encouraging higher densities in central areas (town centre and inner residential zones), grading down to lower densities in the outer residential zones.

5.2.2 Plot Ratio*

• Town Centre (Mixed Development) Zone

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

The purpose of plot ratio control is:

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

A plot ratio of 1.25 shall apply within the town centre (mixed development). However the Local Authority may use its discretion in permitting varied plot ratios where it is considered appropriate and in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

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

• Inner Residential Zone

The aim of the Planning Authority is to encourage medium to high densities within the area zoned Inner Residential. Densities lower than 30-35 to the Hectare (12-14 to the acre) will normally be discouraged in these zones.

A plot ratio of 1 shall apply in the area zoned town centre (residential). However the Local Authority may use its discretion in permitting varied plot ratios where it is considered appropriate and in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

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

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



Residential Zone

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

The density of residential development shall not normally exceed 15,000 square feet per acre (i.e. plot ratio of 0.34). This enables a range of house types to be constructed, i.e., a greater number of smaller dwelling units or a smaller number of larger dwelling units. Individual clusters should generally not exceed 25 dwellings to the hectare (10 dwellings to the acre). For guidance on design and layout see Section 5.2.4 Design and Layout of Residential Areas.

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

5.2.3 Site Coverage*

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

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

5.2.4 Design and Layout of Residential Developments

The creation of high quality residential developments is a key aim of the Portumna Local Area Plan. In order to achieve this, new residential development will be based on the following principles:

- Development shall take cognisance of the natural features that define the character of the site in the context of its surrounding environment (including topography, habitats, flora, fauna, aspect, foliage, geological features).
- The form of new development should follow the natural contours of the ground and shall not appear regular or linear.
- Large residential areas shall generally be broken into small functional and visual groups of approximately 15 houses or less thereby ensuring safety for young children, facilitating social interaction and introducing variety into the visual environment, avoiding repetitive types of development.
- Residential developments, particularly those with six or more units, should encourage a variety of residential unit types and ensure a good social and design mix.
- Each group of houses should have its own visual identity, variations being achieved by layout, siting, form, mass, grouping, building lines, house design, external finishes, colour, hard and soft landscaping and house size.
- Dwellings should not be located on a ridgeline; the roof level should be sited below the ridgeline. These measures should allow the natural contours of the land to assimilate development.
- Regard shall be had to softening the visual impact of a building through design detailing. For example, attention to doors and windows to reduce the visual impact of development.
- The use of traditional design, local materials and techniques on all buildings is encouraged.



- Discourage suburban type walls, entrance gates and suburban type building.
- Discourage use of brightly coloured or multicoloured brick, panel paving or roof materials which is out of character with an area.
- Housing designs shall consider orientation and sun-path so as to maximise amenity, daylight and the benefits of passive solar gain to domestic heating.
- Creation of overshadowing should be avoided.
- Have regard to '*Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*' and the '*Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines*' available for consultation or any revised versions thereof published within the period of the Plan.
- Consideration shall be given to the retention of trees, groups of trees, hedgerows, stone walls and other landscape features where possible. Natural features or 'landmarks' such as mature trees or views or vistas should help to enrich the layout and orientation of housing. The retention of existing features on site is strongly encouraged.
- Where boundaries have to be removed and are to be replaced, they shall be replaced with boundary types similar to those removed, for example, masonry stone walls.
- Have regard to natural features or views or vistas to enrich the layout and orientation of housing.
- Consider landscaping at the initial planning stage in order to obtain the maximum benefit from existing features. This has scope to break up and soften the development's visual impact and assist in integrating the development into the topography.
- Encourage the planting of native species which have a high biodiversity value (see Appendix 2).
- Ensure cycle ways and pedestrian pathways are laid out so that they contribute to linking the development to the rest of the locality, amenities, shopping, community facilities and other residential areas.
- In the interests of security, all areas used by the public such as open spaces, roads, and footpaths shall be overlooked by housing where possible.

Residential layouts should be designed in such a way that heavy through traffic is discouraged. Road alignments should discourage speed and give priority to the safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with the 2003 'Traffic Management Guidelines' issued by the DoEHLG. Circulatory routes and linkage between proposed developments and future development lands must be upheld. 'Homezone' design and layout principles will be encouraged⁷. Developments should contain shared surfaces, traffic calming measures and other pedestrian/ child friendly features to facilitate the use of the street for amenity.

The following documents may be used for the purposes of design guidance to assist in layout of residential areas:

- '*Planning Issues Relating to Residential Density in Urban and Suburban Locations*'- McCabe, McCrossan, O' Rourke, Jones Lang Wooten (1999).
- '*Building for Everyone 2002*' Published by the National Disability Authority,
- '*Places, Streets and Movement*'-DoELG, Transport and the Regions (1998)'.⁷
- '*Homezones: A planning and design handbook*'- Mike Biddulph (2001)'.⁷
- '*Homezone: Design Guidelines*'- Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (June 2002)'.⁷

The design standards required for carriageways, gradients, footpaths, roads and services vary according to the scale, intensity, layout, design and location of the proposed developments. The Planning Authority's Roads Requirements will be based on;

- '*DMRB – Road Geometry Handbook*' (NRA December, 2000) and,
- '*Traffic Management Guidelines 2003*' from the DoEHLG as well as the

⁷ '*Homezone: Design Guidelines*'- Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (June 2002)'.⁷



- *Local Authority's 'Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments (February 1999)' or any revised versions thereof published within the period of the Plan.*

Services shall be installed in accordance with:

- *The 'Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas' – DoEHLG (1998) and in accordance with;*
- *Any revised version of the outdated 'Taking in Charge Policy for Private Housing Developments (February 1999)' Published by the Local Authority during the lifetime of the Plan.*

Copies of the above documents will be available for consultation at the Planning Office.

5.2.5 Dwelling Mix

Different types and sizes of housing units are needed to provide a choice within each development. Large residential areas shall generally be broken into small functional and visual groups of approximately 15 houses or less, which fulfil a social and aesthetic need for identity. New development particularly those with six or more units should include a range of housing types. They should be arranged so as to compliment each other, the site and surrounding environment and provide some contrast in form and scale. Varying height, frontages, colour and materials, a degree of distinctiveness and local identity should also be incorporated into designs. In apartment developments, a mix of unit sizes is also required, including two and three bedroom apartments, with not more than 40% of apartments in any single development to be one-bedroom units. A proliferation of holiday home developments within the Plan boundary will not be permitted.

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

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

5.2.6 Apartments

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Table 5.1 Internal Layout Standards

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

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

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



5.2.7 Public Open Space

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- That the developer makes a financial contribution towards the provision of an open space by the Local Authority elsewhere (as provided in Section 48 of the 2000 Act), or, the Planning Authority may consider arrangements whereby appropriate community facilities may be provided in lieu of the developers open space requirements.



- The Planning Authority may require that the open space provision of any development be located in a specific area in order to assemble open space quantities of satisfactory size, or to protect/ enhance the existing features of the area.

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

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

5.2.8 Private Open Space

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

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

In the Town Centre (mixed development) zone and Inner Residential zone, private open space to the front of houses or apartments may only need to be a narrow buffer strip of hard / soft landscaping, a change in surface texture or colour or an area to accommodate climbing shrubs or window boxes. Private open space for apartment developments may be provided in the form of balconies or roof gardens, or in the case of ground floor apartments as small gardens. However, balconies which project from the main building facade onto the street will be discouraged. Consideration should be given to the orientation of balconies, which must be designed as an integral part of the building's composition, thereby maximising solar gain, and have respect for the townscape context and surrounding amenities. Roof gardens shall require a secure boundary, be properly landscaped and shall be designed and located so not to interfere with the privacy of adjoining residential properties. In cases where a high quality environment is provided in shared courtyards or gardens, a reduced minimum private area behind the building line can be considered. Terraces, balconies and courtyard spaces can supplement the standard front and rear garden.

In the residential zone, gardens should be designed to allow for the planting of trees and shrubs to enhance the visual character of the area. Low hedges, fences and walls may be needed to deter intruders or provide a safe environment for children. The Planning Authority will wish to agree details of enclosure design to ensure these contribute to the overall quality of design.

5.2.9 Privacy

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



Layouts should seek to minimise overlooking between dwellings and provide adequate space for privacy. The amount of space considered appropriate will vary according to the location, context and characteristic of the site. Generally first floor windows shall not directly overlook adjoining lands from above ground floor level by less than 11 metres. If development is over two storeys, a greater distance may be required. Windows serving halls and landings do not impact to the same degree on privacy as balconies and living rooms. Where the development abuts the private garden areas of existing properties, a separation distance greater than 20 metres will generally be appropriate to minimise overlooking with a minimum of 10 metres between the rear of new houses and the common boundary. This may need to be altered in the case of a sloping site. Where balconies or living rooms are provided on upper floors of residential units, a minimum distance of approximately 15 metres should be provided between the rear of residential units and common boundaries. Flexibility may be afforded where a high degree of amenity and privacy has been illustrated.

A reduced garden size may be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the majority of the houses / dwellings comply with the minimum garden sizes set out above and where a particular house / dwelling performs a particular focal point; such as a key corner site, where due to its situation to the overall layout, it cannot be provided with a standard private garden.

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

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

In addition, sufficient space should be provided around dwellings to ensure adequate circulation of air about the buildings themselves and the inhabitants within. Generally, a minimum distance of 3 metres will be required to be maintained between the sidewalls of adjacent dwellings or dwelling blocks. Side elevation windows of any habitable room, excluding bathroom or toilet, shall not be permitted to overlook adjoining property from the first floor level. All side elevation ground floor windows must be screened by a 2m high fence.

Where front boundary walls or fencing is provided, the design and materials shall add a pleasing design feature to the overall housing layout and shall be in accordance with the indigenous characteristics of the area.

Rear boundary walls or fences shall be constructed to a height of not less than 1.8 metres and shall be of substantial construction and be in accordance with the indigenous characteristics of the area. Permanent screening of a similar height should also be provided between the gardens of adjoining houses for a minimum distance of 2.5 metres behind the house.

5.2.10 Action Area Plans / Master Plans

The Planning Authority shall require Action Area Plans with each large residential and mixed use development application (in excess of a floor area of 1500m²), which has regard to the County Settlement Strategy, the urban Design Framework and incorporates a phasing programme to ensure the provision of services and the proper completion of each stage of the scheme. Action Plans can be used to support development proposals under multiple land ownership.



5.2.11 Courtyards

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

5.2.12 Building Lines

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

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

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

5.2.13 Granny Flats

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

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

5.2.14 Residential Development Names

Name plates shall be provided on all residential developments. Names shall reflect local characteristics and associations. Name plates shall be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The Planning Authority shall encourage the use of traditional lettering carved onto local materials such as indigenous rocks for such name plates. The developments name should convey a sense of place that is particular to Portumna's cultural heritage by the use of local place names particularly townland names or topographical features



as appropriate. In order to assist the public and the postal authorities all houses shall be provided with numbers which shall be visible from the adjoining roadway.

5.2.15 Management Companies

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

5.2.16 Traveller Halting Sites

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

5.2.17 Temporary Dwellings, Caravans etc.

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

5.3 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

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

5.3.1 Building Height

Portumna's skyline is defined by predominantly two and three story buildings. The churches are the only buildings that exceed three storeys. The spires of the Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland dominate the skyline and act as significant landmarks in the town. Within the town centre zones consideration may be given to development in which an increase in roof height is proposed, especially where this provides added definition to the streetscape. It is important that consideration is given to the height of any proposed new structures so that they are successfully integrated into the existing built fabric. New development should not diminish the landmark status of the Church spires.

The following factors will need to be taken into account in the determination of all proposals:

- Height of the proposed development relative to surrounding structures.



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

5.3.2 Infrastructural Service Standards

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

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

5.3.3 Treatment Systems & Minimum Distances

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

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

This is in order;

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

A requirement for larger sites may be necessary in the event that public sewerage is operating at capacity. Where the land is suitably zoned, this requirement will serve to phase development proposals. Once mains sewerage is made available, effluent disposal shall be connected to such



mains and the proposed treatment works shall be fully decommissioned to the satisfaction of the County Council. Following satisfactory decommissioning the remainder of the suitably zoned lands on site may be considered for development purposes.

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

Table 5.2 Recommended Minimum Distances from Treatment Systems

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

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

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

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

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

Where suitable subsoil conditions do not initially exist, site development works may improve the subsoil conditions and make the subsoil suitable in certain circumstances. If the subsoil conditions cannot be improved then other systems may be able to treat the wastewater to the required standard.

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

The following will be requirements of Planning Permission:

- Maintenance contracts for proprietary treatment systems.
- Design calculations supporting the selection of a particular size and type of plant.



- Certification that septic tanks have been desludged in accordance with EPA guidelines. Planning applicants can find out more about the requirements for percolation areas from the Environment Section of Galway County Council.

5.3.4 Discharge Licence

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

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

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

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

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

5.3.5 Surface Water Drainage

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

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

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

5.3.6 Groundwater & Watercourse Protection

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

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

5.3.7 Infill Development

Infill development shall be encouraged within the town centre on appropriate sites where it makes good use of existing services and makes a positive contribution to streetscape quality without



compromising the amenity of adjoining properties. Where this is demonstrated to be the case, the Planning Authority may consider the relaxation of standards otherwise applied to new developments (inc car parking, open space). Each development will be considered individually on its merits. (See also 5.2.4 & 5.9.1)

5.3.8 Backland Development

The development of backland sites⁸ can in some cases conflict with the established pattern of development in the town centre resulting in uncoordinated piecemeal development. Piecemeal and uncoordinated development of lands, including the construction of extra dwellings in former back gardens, can result in inappropriate and disorderly development. This form of development is considered undesirable where there is an adverse effect on the residential amenity of adjoining properties, particularly where such intensification might overload infrastructure and the established use framework of an area. It can also result in missed opportunities for large scale renewal. It is an objective of this Plan to ensure that no development takes place that would compromise the overall development of backlands in any area. (See Urban Design Framework & Maps)

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

5.3.9 Redundant and Derelict buildings

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

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

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

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

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

5.3.10 Building Regulations

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

- Comply with technical guidance documents issued by the DoEHLG on Building Regulations 1997 – 2002, and any amended version of these documents published in the lifetime of this Plan.

⁸ Backland developments is generally described as lands with no existing road frontage.



- Inform the Planning Authority of the date of commencement of development within a period of not less than fourteen days and not more than twenty-eight days before development commences.
- Obtain a fire safety certificate where applicable (a private dwelling house does not require a fire safety certificate).

5.3.11 Disabled Access

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

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

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

5.3.12 Ducting of Public Utilities

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

5.3.13 Illumination & spread of light

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

5.3.14 Renewable Energy

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



5.3.15 Nature Designations

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

5.3.16 Architectural Heritage & Architectural Conservation Area

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

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

In relation to a protected structure (RPS), the term structure includes the entire fabric, including the interior, the land lying within the curtilage of the structure, any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures. Works which would in the opinion of the Planning Authority, materially affect the character of the structure require planning permission. Not all alterations or works to a protected structure constitute material alterations. An owner or occupier of a Protected Structure may make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a Declaration as to the



type of works, which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interests.

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

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

These documents are available for consultation at the Planning Office.

5.3.17 Archaeological Heritage / Recorded Monuments

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

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

5.3.18 Landscaping and Landscape Considerations

Landscaping is an integral part of any development and there is a need to ensure that existing trees, especially along field boundaries and areas of high biodiversity value, are protected and integrated into the development, where appropriate. The potential of existing site features should be fully explored and the planning applications should include an accurate landscape survey plan (See Appendix 1 & Urban Design Framework). Wherever possible, existing healthy trees should be protected and retained. Where the trees are to be located in rear gardens of new dwellings, the building should normally be sited at least 11.5 metres beyond the spread of the tree. This distance may be reduced to 6m for front gardens and 2m in the case of flank walls.

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

The developer will be responsible for the grading, hard landscaping, planting and further development of any open space, including the provision of pedestrian paths and other facilities. The developer will be required to provide roadside trees, street planting and screen planting, where necessary. A careful balance is necessary between quick growing species for early maturity and longer lived trees which may reach their peak in up to 100 years time. Planting of native species including those listed in Appendix 1 will be encouraged. The landscape plan and the selection of plant species should consider low maintenance species. Generally single trees require more expert attention than those in composite groups, which are less vulnerable to



damage. Formal, single tree lines have little effect as screen belts or buffers and for this reason groupings of young native trees will be encouraged. The Planning Authority require that suitable native tree species be planted as these are more valuable as wildlife habitat than introduced species and because they support a greater ecological diversity. Furthermore, it is important that the planting of trees or other landscaping should not replace existing habitats of ecological value in an area.

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

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

5.4 COMMERCIAL, RETAIL, OFFICE & TOURISM.

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

5.4.1 Town Centre (Mixed Development) Zone

Mixed development may include retail, commercial and/or residential uses. Site coverage shall not normally exceed 80 per cent within the town centre (mixed development) zone. The standard plot ratio for the town centre (mixed development) zone is 1.25. However, the Planning Authority may use its discretion in permitting varied plot ratios where it is considered appropriate and in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Retail uses are encouraged at ground floor level on main shopping streets with office or residential uses overhead. The Planning Authority may insist on a residential content in proposed developments in town centre use zones.

5.4.2 Shopping Centres and Permitted Locations for Shopping

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

- Adequacy of existing shopping outlets,
- Size and location of existing outlets,
- Quality and convenience of existing outlets,
- Effect on existing communities,



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

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

5.4.3 Retail Warehousing

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

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

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

5.4.4 Petrol Filling Stations & Ancillary Uses

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

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

Proposals shall be guided by the following design requirements;

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



5.4.5 Bars / Night-Clubs / Amusement Centres

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

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

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

5.4.6 Hot Food Take-Aways

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

5.4.7 Food Preparing Premises

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

5.4.8 Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)

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

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

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

5.4.9 Taxi stands & Hackney bases

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



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

5.5 SHOPFRONTS, ADVERTISING, & SIGNAGE

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

5.5.1 Shopfronts

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

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

5.5.2 Canopies and Awnings

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

5.5.3 Security Screens

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

5.5.4 Advertising and Signage

The Planning Authority accepts that advertising is an integral part of commercial and enterprise development. However, in considering applications for advertising structures, it remains the primary concern of the Planning Authority to protect the essential character of the town. Control will be exercised to prevent clutter in any location and to limit the number of signs on any building.



The Planning Authority is opposed to advertisements in residential areas, on or near buildings of architectural or historical importance, adjacent to amenity and recreational areas or in open space areas.

Proposals for signs and advertising structures must:

- Be in scale and harmony with the surrounding environment, signage shall not be permitted to exceed 15% of the façade of the building, however, where the façade exceeds 250m², then signage shall not exceed 10% of the façade,
- Not interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic,
- Not obscure traffic signs,
- Not impair the amenities of the area,
- Not interfere with windows or other features of a building façade, and
- Not project, in whole or part, above the eaves of the building or obtrude on the skyline.

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

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

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

5.6 INDUSTRIAL, & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

5.6.1 Industry, Enterprise, Wholesale and Warehousing Development

There shall be a presumption that only dry industrial process of modest size and whose nature will not cause nuisance or injury to the predominant residential environment of the town, will be permitted. Therefore, Light Industry and Enterprise development will be primarily encouraged.

The standard plot ratio for industrial, wholesale, enterprise and warehousing developments is 1.00, whilst the site coverage index is 80%.

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

- Surfaces within the curtilage of industrial/commercial sites shall be of hard wearing, dust free and durable material.



- Adequate space must be available for on-site storage of materials and refuse, loading and unloading and on-site circulation and parking. (For car parking standards see section 5.8 Parking, Loading & Storage).
- Car parking spaces shall be clearly delineated. Parking spaces for vehicles for the disabled shall be located close to main entrances to premises.
- Adequate provision will be made for delivery vehicles to circulate within the site boundaries without the need to reverse onto the public road. Loading and unloading areas shall be specifically delineated within the site boundaries.
- Adequate provision should be made for storage of goods and materials within the building or in a designated storage area.
- A detailed landscaping scheme for the site shall be required (See section 5.3.19 Landscaping and Landscape Considerations). There shall be a minimum landscaped/planting strip to a width of 5 metres on all principal road frontages.
- In the case of developments for two or more buildings, a uniform design for boundary fences, roof profiles and building lines is essential.
- A minimum open space requirement of 15% will be required and provided such that it may function as an effective amenity area. Where industrial proposals are located adjacent to existing and proposed residential areas, the open space provision considerations will be designed in such a way as to act as a buffer zone between the proposed industrial units and residential areas. Additional landscaping will also be required in these areas. In situations where effective open space cannot be provided on site, a contribution will be payable in lieu or other arrangement similar to that employed in the provision of open space in residential areas will be required. (See section 5.2.8. Public Open Space).
- The number of signs attached to a building in such areas should be limited and no sign should be excessively obtrusive or out of scale with the building façade.
- Advertising signs shall be confined to the name of the establishment being painted on or affixed to the façade of the building and illuminated, if required, from an external light source so arranged as to not cause glare to road users or intrusion to adjacent property owners.
- Where security fencing is required it shall not normally be forward of the front building line of the premises. Where in exceptional circumstances, security fencing is erected forward of the front building line it shall be set behind a landscaped mound of at least 2m in width. Security fencing shall be palisade or chain link type and shall be plastic coated and have an appropriate colour.
- The hours of industrial operation will be controlled where they are likely to result in harm to environmental amenities including residential amenity.
- Noise levels shall not exceed 55dB (a) Leq when measured at the boundary of the site.
- Provision shall be made on site for the short term storage of waste in a screened compound pending collection by a permitted collector. The compound shall be of sufficient size to enable the storage of segregated waste.

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

5.6.2 Tourism Development

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

Portumna Castle and the Dominican Friary are important assets for the local tourism industry. Any future development proposals within the Castle and the Dominican Friary and attendant grounds shall be subject to an action plan to be approved by the Planning Authority. This shall take into account the:



- Protected status of Portumna Castle and Environs and Dominican Friary,
- Be of an appropriate scale so that it does not detract from the commercial role of the town centre,
- Car and bus parking requirements.

Portumna Quay located on the northern shores of Lough Derg is an important for its natural heritage importance and recreational activities and has the potential to be developed as a water activity centre. Any developments shall have to take cognisance of the nature designations in this area.

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

5.6.3 Telecommunication Antennae & Support Structures

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

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

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

5.7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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



conservation objectives, segregated waste collection as well as the provisions on contributions and securities.

5.7.1 Schools

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

5.7.2 Crèches / Playschools

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

* *Copy of publication available from the Planning Office for inspection and at www.environ.ie.*



5.7.3 Care Facilities

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

5.7.4 Nursing Homes

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

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

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

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

5.8 PARKING, LOADING & STORAGE

5.8.1 Car Parking Standards

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Table 5.3 Car Parking Standards	
Type of Development	Relevant car parking standards
House and Flats	Grouped parking @ 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit otherwise 2 car spaces per dwelling unit except small one bedroom flats where one space per unit is required*
Shops	1 car space per 20 m ² of gross floor space
Supermarkets and large stores	1 car space per 20 m ² of gross floor space
Office	1 car space per 25 m ² of gross floor space
Industry	3 car spaces per 100 m ² of gross floor space
Warehousing (non retail)	1 car space per 50 m ² of gross floor space
Theatres, Cinema and Stadia	1 car space per four seats
Hotels (Excluding restaurant, bars, conference centre, function rooms)	1 car space per bedroom
Lounge bars	1 car space per 8 m ² of public floor space
Restaurants	1 car space for every 10 m ² of public floor space
Ballroom, dance halls, clubs, function rooms.	1 car space per 10 m ²
Conference Centre	1 car space per 20 m ²
Guesthouse (excluding function rooms or bars)	1 car space per bedroom
Cash and Carry	1 car space per 100 m ²
Banks	5 car spaces per 100 m ²
Crèches	1 space per employee. 0.2 spaces per child or adequate set down collection area which can adequately service the facility to meet road safety requirements.
Take-Aways	3 spaces per unit
Cafes	1 space per 5 m ² dining area
Playing Fields	15 car spaces per pitch
Schools	1 car space per classroom
Nursing homes	See section 4.9.5 above.



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

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

5.8.2 Loading Bays and Service Vehicles

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

5.8.3 Design and Layout of Parking Areas

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

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

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

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

5.8.4 Multi-storey Car Parks.

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

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

5.8.5 Disabled Car Parking

Reasonable provision shall be made for parking facilities for the disabled. Special car parking bays for the disabled shall be provided as close as possible to the entrance of the premises to be served. Each parking bay shall have a minimum size of 5.0m by 3.3m. Where two bays for the



disabled are provided side by side, the extra space of 0.9m width may be shared by two bays. Each disabled parking bay shall be clearly marked with the relevant international symbol.

5.8.6 Bicycle Parking

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

Table 5.4 Bicycle Parking Standards	
Type of Development	Relevant car parking standards
Residential	1 stand per residential unit
Industrial / Commercial Development	25% of the number of car parking spaces
Primary Schools	1 stand for every 5 students
Secondary Schools	1 stand for every 4 students
Third Level Institutions / Colleges	1 stand for every 3 students

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

5.8.7 Storage

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

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

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

5.9 DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME & BONDS

5.9.1 Development Contributions

Galway County Council has prepared a Development Contribution Scheme under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. This came into effect on the 8th March 2004. The scheme provides that conditions on grants of planning permission may be included requiring the payment of contribution in respect to public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in



the area, that is provided, or that it is intended will be provided, by or on behalf of Galway County Council. Copies of the scheme are available at the Planning office and on www.galway.ie. Regard shall be had to this scheme and any other such scheme as may be published by the Council.

5.9.2 Bonds and Securities

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



APPENDIX 1:
NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS IN THE PORTUMNA AREA



Native Trees and Shrubs in the Portumna Area

This is an indicative listing of trees and shrubs. Further advice should be sought in relation to specific site suitability. Please consult the booklet *Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Towns: A guide for local community groups*, produced by the Local Authority Heritage Officers and available on www.galway.ie. This booklet provides information regarding choosing the right species of native tree and shrub. This is an indicative list which may be amended during the lifetime of the Plan.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Site suitability
Ash	Fraxinus excelsior	Does not like waterlogged sites. Prefers well-drained neutral to alkaline soils
Gorse	Ulex Europaeus	Prefers dry and neutral soils.
Elder	Sambucus nigra	Prefers nutrient rich soils. Hardy
Crab Apple	Malus sylvestris	Prefers neutral to alkaline soils, but thrives in all fertile including heavy soils.
Blackthorn	Prunus spinosa	Does not like very wet conditions. Prefers open, sunny conditions Tolerates a wide range of soils.
Hawthorn	Crataegus monogyna	Does not thrive in wet or very acid soils. Among hardiest and most adaptable trees
Briar/Bramble	Rubus Fruticosus agg.	Tolerates a wide range of soils.
Hazel	Corylus avellana	Does not like acid soils. Will tolerate some shade. Prefers heavies fertile soil
Ivy	Hedera helix	Tolerates a wide range of soils.
Yew	Taxus baccata	Prefers well drained alkaline soils and is tolerant of shade
Dog Rose	Rosa canina	Does not like wet soils or exposed sites. Prefers calcareous to neutral soils.
Holly	Ilex aquifolium	A very hardy species. Does not like wet, poorly drained soils. Tolerant or exposed sites and shade.
Alder	Alnus glutinosa	Prefers wet ground & stream banks. Will tolerate some winter flooding. Useful for very wet sites.
Birch	Betula pubescens / Betula pendula	Prefers light infertile soils. Tolerant of more acid sandy soils.



Honeysuckle	Lonicera periclymenum	Prefers neutral to light acid soils
Willow		Prefer damp/wet soils. Ideal for stream banks.
Goat/Pussy Willow	Salix caprea	Tolerates a wide range of sites, even grows in dry places.
Guelder Rose	Viburnum opulus	Prefers alkaline fertile clay soils. Also likes neutral wet soils.
Juniper	Juniperus communis	Grows in rocky areas. Also on mountain heaths. Very tolerant of exposure.
Spindle	Euonymus europaeus	Prefers alkaline soils but tolerates a wide range of non-acid soils. Good on chalk but grows almost anywhere.
Strawberry Tree	Arbutus unedo	Nutrient rich, well drained soil in sun or semi-shade.
Broom	Cytisus scoparius	Grows best on light, dry, acid soils.
Elm (Wych)	Ulmus glabra	No particular preference but thrives in fertile free draining soils.
Oak (Sessile)	Quecus petraea	Tolerates poorer, lighter, more acid soils than robur. More shade tolerant than robur, also more tolerant of frost.
Oak (Pendunculate)	Quecus robur	Prefers clay soils and damp lowlands but generally tolerant.



APPENDIX 2:
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PLAN



Environmental Assessment of Plan

Introduction

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I 436 of 2004) came into effect from 21st July 2004 and transpose the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC otherwise known as the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Directive. Under these regulations screening for SEA is required for the preparation of Local Area Plans. As the consultation process for the Portumna Local Area Plan began in March 2004 this requirement does not apply in this instance. Submissions on the Portumna Local Area plan were initially invited between the 4th March and the 16th April 2004. Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires Planning Authorities to include in their Plans information on 'the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan'. In fulfilment of this requirement, the following information assesses the potential impact if the Policies and Objectives of the Plan are implemented. The benefit of this process is that it:

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

This Environmental Assessment is addressed under the following headings:

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

Portumna Local Area Plan

The County Development Plan Settlement Strategy has identified Portumna on the first tier of the Loughrea Electoral Area (excluding GTPS Area) Settlement Hierarchy. Sufficient lands are zoned to cater for the projected household/population growth allowing for a varying degree of density and choice. A scale of growth that reflects the status of Portumna as a town on this tier is promoted.

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

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



Environmental Factors likely to be Affected

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

1. Human Beings (including population, economic and social activity)
2. Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
3. Water
4. Sustainable Transportation
5. Waste Management and Sustainable Energy

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

Assessment

1. Human Beings

Current status

The 1996 census recorded a population of 984 for Portumna. In 2002 a significant increase was recorded in the Census town boundary to 1,235 (25.5%). The town acts as a local service centre and has developed in more recent times as a tourist destination.

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

Likely significant effects

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

Mitigation measures

- Facilitate new development in a manner that is environmentally sensitive and that reflects the status of Portumna on the first tier of the Loughrea Electoral Area (excluding GTPS Area) Settlement Hierarchy.
- Enhancement of town centre through environmental improvements,
- Provision of guidelines to revitalise and expand the town in an integrated manner,
- Improved architectural and eco-efficient design in buildings,
- Development of integrated transportation network,
- Provision of lands for community, recreation and amenity uses at central locations,
- Protection of natural and built heritage elements and nature designations,
- Facilitate local employment and small scale enterprise opportunities,
- Provision of infrastructure while having regard to amenities, protected areas and sensitive landscape,
- Provision of usable open space, walking and cycling routes within new residential areas.



2. Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage

Current status

Portumna's archaeological, architectural and natural heritage and setting contributes to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. The town is bounded by the River Shannon to the East, Lough Derg to the South and the Forest Park to the South-West. The Shannon, the longest river in the country is the natural boundary between County Galway and County Tipperary. Lough Derg is the largest lake on the river covering 32,000 acres, stretching approximately 32 miles in length and 3 miles in width. Portumna Forest Park spans for approximately 600 hectares. Under the Landscape Sensitivity Rating in the County Development Plan, Portumna and its hinterland are classified as Class 1 (Low sensitivity), Class 2 (Moderate sensitivity) Class 3 (High Sensitivity) and Class 4 (Special Sensitivity).

The Natural Heritage of the area includes a wide variety of diverse habitats, including lakes, rivers, woodland, trees / groups of trees, stonewalls, hedgerows and associated wildlife. Lough Derg North East Shore and the River Shannon Callows are designated as National Heritage Area, Special Area of Conservation and Special Protected Area. The River Shannon and Lough Derg have a high biodiversity value and are home to the Corncrake, the only Irish breeding bird which is threatened with global extinction.

The town and its surrounding hinterland are also rich in terms of its built heritage. A proposed Architectural Conservation Area has been identified in Portumna town centre (Map 4). The built environment has evolved through time and contributes to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Within and directly abutting the Plan boundary there are 18 archaeological sites and monuments (RMPs) afforded protection under the National Monuments Act 1994 and 16 structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

Likely significant effects

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

Mitigation measures

- Proposed Architectural Conservation Area identified,
- Features which contribute to the local character of area identified,
- Promotion of greater habitat and species biodiversity through the planting of trees and shrubs native to area,
- Promote retention of landscape features, significant trees and hedgerows to be retained by means of conditions to planning permissions,
- Professional assessment required prior to commencement of development in sensitive areas,
- Protection of nature designations, recorded monuments and protected structures through assessing the implications of any developments in the town on their resource value,
- Provision of new recreation and amenity areas,
- Provision and encouragement of new green ways and landscape views,
- Promotion of amenity value of River Shannon and Lough Derg in a environmentally sensitive manner,
- Require development to be of sensitive architectural design, respect and complement the existing character of an area,



- Ensure that existing buildings are rehabilitated rather than demolished and new ones constructed where possible to retain character of area,
- Removal of derelict and disused town centre sites,
- Enhancement of town through environmental improvements,
- Have residential developments names to reflect Portumna's cultural heritage,
- Local Festivals and events supported in environmentally sensitive manner.

3. Water

Current status

Portumna is served by the Portumna Public Water Supply. The existing water plant is not adequate to serve the needs of Portumna within the period of the Local Area Plan; however it is intended that water supply will be improved over the lifetime of the Plan. Water quality standards have improved. This may be related to the Portumna Sewerage Scheme which was completed in January 2001. This scheme has a design capacity to treat sewage from a Population Equivalent (P.E.) of 3,047 persons. This is well in excess of the current population statistics which were recorded in the 2002 Census as 1,235 persons. This indicates that future residential development can be serviced by the Portumna Sewerage Scheme.

Likely significant effects

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

Mitigation measures

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

4. Sustainable Transportation

Current status

Portumna is situated on the controlled National Secondary Route N65 which forms part of the main road artery from Galway to the Southeast of the country. Portumna is linked to Ballinasloe by the R355 and to Mountshannon and Scarriff in Co. Clare by the R352. It is anticipated that commuter bound traffic and seasonal tourism traffic will increase during the period of the Plan. It is expected that the proposed future relief route to the north of the town centre will help alleviate traffic congestion through the town. Parking provision is inadequate at present. To facilitate the growth of Portumna and improve accessibility for locals and visitors, there is a need for improved traffic management and circulation, environmental enhancements and the development parking facilities. The location for additional parking facilities are identified in the Plan. Bus Éireann provides transport to and from Galway five times a week, Monday to Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. South East Galway Integrated Rural Development Ltd operates a community bus that



provides a door to door service every week in serving Portumna, Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Athlone.

Likely significant effects

- Increased demand for transport and increased vehicular movements,
- Traffic congestion in town centre,
- Loss of natural heritage due to road construction,
- Alteration of historical street layout,
- Loss of local distinctiveness.

Mitigation measures

- Improvements in transportation network including development of an integrated transport network, traffic management and circulation improvements, environmental enhancements and safe routes to schools,
- Creation of relief route north of town to relieve traffic congestion in town centre,
- Creation of more user-friendly environment for cyclists and pedestrians,
- Better access for people with disabilities,
- Improved parking management and provision of parking facilities convenient to the town centre,
- Have transportation proposals sensitively designed to integrate into the surrounding.

5. Waste Management & Sustainable Energy

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

Likely significant effects

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

Mitigation measures

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



Alternative

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



APPENDIX 3:
REFERENCES & GLOSSARY OF TERMS



References

Access for the Disabled – Minimum Design Criteria 1988

This Document provides guidance on minimum design criteria for the welfare of the disabled. Contact the National Rehabilitation Board at 01-668-181 or visit their website at www.nrb.ie

Archaeology Guidelines

This Guideline sets out objectives for the conservation and protection of the environment including, in particular, the archaeological and natural heritage and the conservation and protection of European sites and any other sites. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005

These Guidelines advise Planning Authorities with regard to Ireland's built heritage. Contact the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government at 01-661-3111 or visit their website at www.environ.ie/.

Architectural Survey and Assessment: Best Practice Guide

This guide makes recommendations on the legal protection status of Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Area, Recorded Monuments and Places, Zones of Archaeological Protection, Preservation Orders and State Guardianship or Ownership. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 to request the guide.

Building for Everyone 2002

This document includes text, checklists, drawings and illustrations, incorporating a comprehensive section on all aspects of accessibility in the landscape. It is an essential source book and guide for architects, designers, building developers and managers, building control and planning personnel, local authorities, environmental activists and everyone concerned with inclusion and access in Ireland today. Contact the National Disability Authority at their website at www.nda.ie

Building Regulations

These regulations establish design and construction standards for buildings to assure the health and safety of those who use them. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111.

Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities June 2001

This document establishes standards for the location and development of childcare facilities in residential and non-residential areas. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government website at www.environ.ie/press/minister.html.

Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 1996 and Child Care (Pre-School Services) (Amendment) Regulation, 1997 and Explanatory Guide to Requirements and Procedures for Notification and Registration.

These Regulations establish requirements for childcare facilities in housing estates and other Areas. Contact the Department of Health and Children at 01-635-4000 or visit their website at www.doh.ie.



Conservation Guidelines

This source of booklets has been produced by the DoEHLG to increase awareness of the value of our architectural heritage and provide information on the basic principles and methods of conservation and restoration. Contact the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government at the following website: www.environ.ie or Galway County Council at www.galway.ie/planning

Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) – Road Geometry Handbook 2000

This manual provides technical guidance on the design of roads. Contact the National Roads Authority at 01-660-2511 or visit their website at www.nra.ie and Galway County Council Roads Section at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Economic, Social and Cultural Development of Galway - 10 Year Strategy

This Strategy establishes community and enterprise goals for Galway County. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Ensuring the Future - A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland - A White Paper on Rural Development

This Strategy sets out a vision and a framework for the development of rural communities in Ireland. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the website at www.irlgov.ie/daff/publicat/wpaper/contents.htm.

EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals 1996-2000

These manuals provide technical guidance on the design, operation and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment. Contact the Environmental Protection Agency at 53-60-600 or visit the website at www.epa.ie.

Galway Clustered Housing Design Guidelines 2002

This document provides guidance on a range of issues which influence the successful design and construction of new development. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Galway County Development Contribution Scheme 2004

For the purposes of the Development Contribution Scheme the County has been divided into three sub-areas and a separate charge derived for each area. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Galway County Development Plan (2003-2009)

The County Development Plan outlines the policy framework for future development in Galway County pertaining to objectives in rural and town development, economic development, natural resources, physical infrastructure, social infrastructure, environmental services, heritage and conservation and culture. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Galway County Housing Strategy 2001-2006

This Strategy was created in response to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, which required all Planning Authorities to prepare housing strategies by August 2000. The document assesses housing supply and demand trends in Galway County and sets out objectives for output of - private, affordable and social housing. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit the website at www.galway.ie.



Galway Transportation and Planning Study

This Study focuses on developing a sustainable settlement structure for Galway County that uses land and energy more efficiently while protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Guidelines on Residential Developments in Urban Renewal Designated Tax Incentives Areas 1995

These Guidelines set forth standards for the design of residential development in Urban Renewal Tax Incentive Areas. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the Dept of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government website at www.environ.ie

Homezones: A planning and design handbook'- Mike Biddulph (2001)

Homezone: Design Guidelines'- Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (June 2002)

Housing Need Guidelines (especially Urban Fringe Guidelines)

Galway County Council has produced guidelines to assist applicants to interpret the provisions of the County Development Plan 2003-2009. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Layout of Housing Road Design Guide 1988

This document provides technical guidance on the layout of housing road design. Contact Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland at 048-9054-0540 or visit their website at www.doeni.gov.uk

Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines (Draft)

These Guidelines provide guidance to planners and others as to how landscape considerations should be dealt with and indicate specific requirements for Development Plans and for development control. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government website at www.environ.ie/plan/landscape.html.

National Spatial Strategy 2003

This strategy aims to guide balanced economic and spatial growth in Ireland. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the website www.irishspatialstrategy.ie.

Places, Street and Movement 1988

This document provides technical guidance on new approaches to street design. Contact the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions at their website at www.netlondon.com/government/departments

Planning and Development Act 2000

This act provides legislative requirements for planning and development in Ireland. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government website at www.environ.ie

Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Estates 1998

This document provides technical guidance for road construction in residential areas. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government website at www.environ.ie/devindex.html



Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines 2004

These guidelines aim to achieve a balanced economic and spatial development within the Western Region. Contact the Western Regional Authority at 091-563842 or visit the following websites: www.galway.ie, www.mayococo.ie, www.roscommoncoco.ie, www.galwaycity.ie.

Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1999

These Guidelines aim to achieve more sustainable development by identifying locations where increased densities should be encouraged and establishing criteria for higher density development. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government website at www.environ.ie/press/finaldengl.html.

Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, 1997

This Strategy provides a comprehensive analysis and framework to allow all aspects of sustainable development to be taken forward systematically. Contact the Government Publications Sale Office at 01-661-3111 or visit the website at www.environ.ie/environ/env.html#sd.

TD 41/95 Vehicular Access to All-purpose National Roads

This National Roads Authority document establishes regulatory dimensional requirements for entrances to and exits from National Roads.

Taking in charge Policy for Private Housing Developments 1999

This document outlines Galway County Council's policy in relation to taking in charge of private housing developments. Contact Galway County Council at 091-50-90-00 or visit their website at www.galway.ie.

Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures 1996

These guidelines provide guidance to Planning Authorities on telecommunications and support structures. Contact the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government at the following website: www.environ.ie

Traffic Management Guidelines 2003

These guidelines provide guidance on traffic planning, traffic calming and management and incorporation of speed measures. Contact the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Department of Transport or the Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) at the following websites: www.environ.ie, www.transport.ie or www.dto.ie.



Glossary of Terms

Many of these terms are either mentioned in the text of the Plan or are contained within the Zoning Matrix (See Appendix 5).

Accessibility

The ability of people to move around an area and to reach places and facilities, of particular importance for elderly and disabled people and those with young children.

Action Area Plan / Master Plan

A non-statutory plan, prepared by or on behalf of the Local Authority, for a specific area providing detail on the desirable framework for the layout of future development.

Adaptability

The flexibility of a building to change to suit the changing needs of the occupant over their lifetime.

Amenity

Pleasant feature of a place.

Anaerobic Digestion Plant

A plant designed for the anaerobic conversion of organic waste (including food and garden waste) to biogas and compost.

Arrival Point

The reach of a destination or other point on a journey.

Backland Development

Development which takes place to the rear of existing structures fronting a street or a roadway.

Bring Banks

Individual stand alone units at which certain recyclable wastes (including brown, green and clear glass) can be deposited by members of the public.

Brownfield Site

A site within an urban area which has become derelict due to obsolescence or vacant due to the demolition of a structure or building.

Building form

The shape, scale and appearance of a structure.

Building Line

A development line along a street or a roadway behind or in front of which development is discouraged.

Built environment

The function, design and form of structures in an area.

Car Dismantling Facility

A facility for the storage and segregation of end-of-life vehicles and parts. A waste permit is required from the local authority for such a facility.

Circulation routes

The area in a residential cluster where pedestrian, vehicular and cycle movement takes place.



Civic Recycling Centre

A facility at which waste may be deposited by members of the public. It is generally restricted to segregated recyclable or hazardous waste including household recyclables, household hazardous waste, waste electronic and electrical goods and garden waste. Recyclable waste is sent for recovery or recycling and hazardous waste is sent for recovery, recycling or appropriate disposal.

Community

Body of people living in one district or having common interests or origins.

Comparison Goods

Those goods which are required on an infrequent basis by individuals and households.

Composting Facility

A facility designed for the aerobic conversion of organic waste (including food and garden waste) to compost.

Construction and Demolition Waste Recycling Facility

A facility for the storage and segregation of construction and demolition waste (predominantly soil, stone, block, brick, timber and metal) prior to removal off site for recovery, recycling or disposal.

Continuity

The consistency between adjacent buildings and new developments.

Convenience Goods

Those goods which are required on a daily or weekly basis by individuals and households.

Courtyard

Space enclosed by walls or buildings.

Curtilage

The parcel of land immediately associated with a structure or in use for the purposes of the structure.

Cul-de-sac

Street closed at one end.

Cut and fill

Modification or excavation of the landscape using the excavated material to 'fill' other parts of the site to level the land.

Density

The number of residential units per hectare, plot ratio or site coverage of a site.

Enclosure

The use of buildings to create a sense of defined space.

Energy rating

The evaluation of the energy efficiency of a building.

Focal Point/Space

The centre of activity of interest.



Habitat

Animal's or plant's natural environment.

Grain / Urban Grain

This is determined by the pattern of plot divisions, building form and building line.

Hazardous Waste Depot

A facility at which hazardous waste may be deposited by members of the public. The waste is sent for recovery, recycling or appropriate disposal.

Industry (General)

Any manufacturing process which is carried on in the course of trade or business other than agriculture and which is for or incidental to the making of any article.

Infrastructure

Services that are necessary in order for development to occur, including roads and transportation, water and wastewater facilities, waste disposal, recycling services and electricity.

Landscaping Plan

A detailed Plan, prepared as part of a planning application, illustrating the steps the developer will take to provide hard landscaping (e.g. Seating, stonework, paving, railing), soft landscaping (eg. use of water and natural indigenous vegetation) and the preservation of Natural Features on site. It is desirable that such plans be prepared by a suitably qualified person and should address the long term maintenance of the landscaping.

Light Industry

A manufacturing process where a plant or machinery installed is such as could be carried on or installed adjacent to a residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, fumes etc.

Linear Park

A park which is linear in form, located alongside a waterway, railway line or coastal area, which is used for or functions as an area of amenity.

Links

Connecting people and things to others.

Local Area Plan

A document that provides development policies, strategies and objectives for towns and towns, made in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000.

Local resources and services

Facilities that provide services for the residents of a particular area, including schools, shops, recreational facilities and religious and community centres.

Massing

The combined effect of the height, bulk and silhouette of a building or group of buildings.

Mix of uses

The variety of activities that occur in a particular area.

Natural environment

The topography, vegetation, water bodies, geological formations and climate in an area.



Neighbourhood/ District

Part of a town with a particular feature or regarded as a unit.

Overlooking

Where the private and public places are subjected to observation by others.

Overshadowing

Where undue loss of light is caused to places by structures or features that block the sun.

Plot ratio

The total amount of floor space in relation (proportionally) to the site area.

Private open space

The provision of an adequate sized external space which is free from undue observation (usually a back garden) is a fundamental part of residential amenity.

Public open space

Places that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks.

Public Transport Network

System of transport concerning the people as a whole.

Recreation

A past time for relaxation purposes.

Refuse Landfill

A facility at which waste is deposited onto or under land. A licence is required from the Environmental Protection Agency for such a facility.

Retail Impact Assessment

A study carried out as part of a planning application for a large retail development, to examine the likely impact of such a development on the shopping habits of local people and on competing retail facilities and urban centres.

Retail Warehouses

Large individual retail stores catering for large bulky household items such as DIY, furniture/ carpets, electrical goods, gardening goods, toys etc.

Reuse and Repair Centre

A facility for the recovery and storage of waste items (including furniture and waste electrical and electronic goods).

Safety Audits

Official examination of safety measures.

Scale

The impression of or size a building in relation to its surroundings.

Shelter belt

Planting that helps to protect areas from the effects of severe climatic conditions.

Shopping Parade

An extended succession of retail and shopping facilities in an enclosed area.



Site arrangement

The particular placement of buildings, open spaces and circulation routes on a site.

Site coverage

A calculation made by dividing the total area of ground covered by buildings, by the ground area within the curtilage of the buildings.

Species

A classification unit for a group of similar organisms that are capable of breeding and producing offspring.

Streetscape

The scale, proportion and character of buildings and features along a street.

Sustainable Development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Topography

A description or representation of natural or man-made features on or of the ground.

Town core

The centre of a settlement where local resources are concentrated.



APPENDIX 4:
LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES & ZONING MATRIX



Land Use Zoning Objectives and Zoning Matrix

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

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

Permitted in Principle (I)

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

Open for Consideration (O)

Land uses shown as "Open for Consideration" are uses that are to be considered acceptable in principle in all parts of the relevant use zone. However, such uses may be acceptable in circumstances where the general objectives for the zone and the permitted or existing uses as well as being in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Not Permitted (X)

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

Other Uses

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

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



KEY

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

R Residential (Phase 1 & 2)
IR Inner Residential
TC Town Centre (Mixed Dev.)
TE Tourism & Enterprise
E Enterprise
IE Industry
RA Recreation & Amenity
AE Amenity (Environment)
CF Community Facility

USE	R	IR	TC	TE	E	I	RA	AE	CF
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Advertisements & Advertising Structures	X	O	/	/	/	/	X	X	O
Aerodrome/Airfield	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Agricultural Buildings	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Agri-Tourism	X	O	O	/	O	X	X	X	O
Agri-Business	X	O	O	/	/	/	X	X	O
Amusement Arcade	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Anaerobic Digestion Plant	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Apartments	O	/	/	O	X	X	X	X	X
ATM	X	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	O
Bank	X	O	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bed and Breakfast	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Betting Office	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	O
Bring Banks	/	/	/	/	/	O	O	O	/
Buildings for the health, Safety and welfare of the public	O	O	/	O	O	X	X	X	/
Building Society	X	O	/	O	X	X	X	X	X
Café	O	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	O
Caravan Park-Holiday	O	O	X	O	X	X	O	X	X
Caravan Park- Residential	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Car Dismantling Facility	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Car Park	O	O	/	O	/	O	O	X	O
Car Park Multi Storey	X	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	X
Cash and Carry/ Wholesale Outlet	X	X	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Casual trading	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Cinema	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X	X
Community Facility	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	/
Concrete, Asphalt etc. plant	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Chemist	O	O	/	X	X	X	X	X	O
Childcare Facilities (Crèche/ Nursery)	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	X	/
Cultural Use	O	O	/	/	X	X	O	O	O
Childrens Playgrounds	/	/	O	O	O	O	O	O	/
Civic Recycling centre	O	O	O	O	O	/	X	O	/
Club House and Associated Facilities	O	/	/	O	O	X	/	X	/



USE	R	IR	TC	TE	E	I	RA	AE	CF
Commercial Garage	O	O	/	O	O	/	X	X	X
Composting Centre	X	X	X	O	O	/	O	X	O
Conference Centre	O	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	X
Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Recycling Centre	X	X	X	O	X	/	X	X	X
Credit Union	X	O	/	O	X	O	X	X	X
DIY/ Garden Retail Centre	X	O	/	O	/	/	X	X	X
Dance Hall/ Discotheque	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	O
Doctor/ Dentist	O	O	/	X	X	X	X	X	O
Drive-through Restaurant	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X
Education	O	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	/
Enterprise Centre	X	O	O	/	/	/	X	X	O
Enterprise Unit/ Campus Industry	X	O	O	/	/	/	X	X	X
Funeral Home	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X	/
Garden Centre	X	O	/	O	/	O	X	X	X
Golf Course/ Pitch & Putt	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	O	X
Gym	X	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	O
Hair Dressing Salon	X	O	/	X	X	O	X	X	X
Halting Sites/Group Housing	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hazardous Waste Depot	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Health Centre	O	O	/	O	X	X	X	X	O
Heavy Vehicle Park	X	X	X	O	O	/	X	X	X
Holiday Homes	/	/	/	O	X	X	X	X	X
Home Based Economic Activities (Cottage Enterprise)	O	O	O	/	/	X	X	X	X
Hospital	X	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	/
Hostel	O	O	/	O	X	X	X	X	X
Hotel/Motel	O	O	/	/	X	X	X	X	X
Household Fuel Depot	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Industry-Extractive	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Industry-General	X	X	X	X	O	/	X	X	X
Industry-Light	X	X	O	O	O	/	X	X	X
Industry-Special	X	X	X	X	O	/	X	X	X
Laundrette	O	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	X
Leisure Facility	O	O	/	O	X	O	X	O	O
Library	O	O	/	O	X	X	X	X	/
Marina	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	/	X
Mart /Co-op	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Media Recording and general media associated uses	O	O	O	/	/	O	X	X	X
Medical and Related Consultants	O	O	/	O	O	X	X	X	O
Motor Sales Showroom	X	X	/	X	O	/	X	X	X
Municipal Waste Incinerator	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Office Residential	O	O	/	/	O	X	X	X	X
Office based-Industry	X	X	/	/	/	/	X	X	X



USE	R	IR	TC	TE	E	I	RA	AE	CF
Offices less than 100m ²	O	O	/	/	/	O	X	X	O
Offices 100m ² to 1000m ²	X	X	/	O	/	O	X	X	O
Offices over 1000m ²	X	X	O	X	/	O	X	X	X
All Other Offices	X	X	O	O	O	/	X	X	X
Open Space	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Park and Ride Facility	O	O	O	O	O	/	X	X	X
Private Garage (non commercial)	/	/	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Petrol Station	X	X	O	X	O	/	X	X	X
Place of Public Worship	O	O	/	X	O	X	X	X	/
Plant/ tool hire	X	X	X	X	O	/	X	X	X
Playing Pitch	/	O	X	X	X	O	/	O	/
Public House	O	O	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
Public Service Installation	O	O	/	/	/	/	X	X	X
Recycling Facility < 2000sqm	X	O	/	/	O	/	X	X	X
Recycling Facility > 2000sqm	X	X	O	O	/	/	X	X	X
Refuse landfill/tip	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Refuse Transfer Station	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Residential	/	/	/*	O	X	X	X	X	O
Residential Institution	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	O
Restaurant	O	O	/	O	O	O	X	X	X
Retail Warehouse	X	X	O	O	/	O	X	X	X
Retirement Home/ Nursing Home	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	/
Reuse and Repair centre	X	X	O	O	O	/	X	X	X
Rural Industry-Food	O	O	X	O	/	O	X	X	X
Science and Technology Based Enterprise	X	X	X	O	/	/	X	X	X
Scrapyard/ Car Dismantler	X	X	X	X	O	/	X	X	X
Shop (comparison)	X	O	/	O**	/	O	X	X	X
Shop (convenience)	O	O	/	O	O	X	X	X	X
Shopping Centre	X	O	/	X	O	X	X	X	X
Shop (neighbourhood)	/	O	/	O	O	X	X	X	X
Small Scale Manufacturing	X	X	O	O	/	/	X	X	X
Take-away	O	O	/	X	O	O	X	X	X
Tele-services	X	X	O	O	/	O	X	X	X
Third Level Institution	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	O
Training Centre	O	O	O	/	/	/	X	X	O
Transport Depot	X	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Veterinary Surgery (ancillary to established residences only)	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Warehousing	X	X	O	O	O	/	X	X	X
Warehousing (retail/non-food, max. 5000m ²)	X	X	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Wind Energy	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X

- * Exclusively residential proposals in the town centre (Mixed. Dev) zone will not normally be permitted.
- ** Small scale shop only.



APPENDIX 5:

MAPS



- MAP 1 ZONING OBJECTIVES**
- MAP 2 RBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES**
- MAP 2A URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES**
- MAP 3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES & NATURAL HERITAGE**
- MAP 4 BUILT HERITAGE & ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION
 AREA**

