

LOUGHREA LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Loughrea Local Area Plan
2024 – 2030



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council





Appendix A – Policy Report

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**APPENDIX A: GALWAY TRANSPORT MODELLING
ASSESSMENT, WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY AND
LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS**





IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Client/Project owner	Galway County Council
Project	Galway Transport Modelling Assessment, Walking and Cycling Strategy and Local Transport Plans
Title of Document	Policy Review
Type of Document	Technical Note
Date	30/01/2023
Reference number	300876
Number of pages	29

APPROVAL

Version	Name		Position	Date	Modifications
1	Author	Ronan Fallon	Consultant	19/09/2022	First draft for client review
	Checked by	Alison Pickett	Associate Director	26/09/2022	
	Approved by	Andrew Archer	Director	27/09/2022	
2	Author	Alison Pickett	Director	30/01/2023	Final draft incorporating CAP 23 updates
	Checked by	Andrew Archer	Director	30/01/2023	
	Approved by	Andrew Archer	Director	30/01/2023	



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	6
1.1	BACKGROUND	6
1.2	TECHNICAL NOTE CONTENTS	6
2.	POLICY & PLAN REVIEW	8
2.1	INTERNATIONAL	8
2.2	NATIONAL POLICIES & PLANS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS	9
2.3	REGIONAL POLICIES & PLANS	22
2.4	COUNTY POLICIES & PLANS	27



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 SYSTRA Ltd has been engaged by Galway County Council (GCC) to provide a range of Transport Support for the County. These include the following Workstreams:

- 1) County Level Transport Modelling Assessment.
- 2) County Galway Walking & Cycling Strategy.
- 3) Local Transport Plans (LTPs) for four settlements: Athenry; Gort; Loughrea; and Oranmore/Garraun.
- 4) Community Transport Studies (CTSs) for six settlements: Clifden; Headford; Kinvara; Oughterard; Portumna; and Maigh Cuilinn.
- 5) Cycling and Walking Sub-Plans for:
 - The four LTPs and six CTSs settlements listed above in items 3 and 4.
 - Twelve additional settlements:
 - Small Growth Settlements x six: An Spidéal; An Cheathrú Rua; Ballygar; Dunmore; Glenamaddy; and Moylough.
 - Rural Settlements x six: Carna; Clarinbridge; Clonbur; Craughwell; Miltown; and Mountbellow.

1.1.2 These Studies (known as the Galway Transport Support Programme) will guide future transport investment, setting out the County's Walking & Cycling Strategy as well as each settlement's transport strategy for the period to 2028, but also looking beyond to 2040.

1.2 Technical Note Contents

1.2.1 This Technical Note sets out a review of international, national, regional, and county level policies and plans relevant to the Studies outlined above. The development of the Galway Transport Modelling Assessment, Walking and Cycling Strategy and Local Transport Plans / Community Transport Plans will be shaped by and reflect these policies, along with relevant national guidance and current consultations.

1.2.2 This Technical Note summarises the review of policy and plans relevant to the Galway Transport Support Programme as follows:

- International level
- National level
- Regional level
- County level



- 1.2.3 This Technical Note will be supplemented by a review of Local Plans and Policies for each of the 22 settlements listed above. These Local Plan and Policy reviews will form part of the Local Transport Plan / Community Transport Plan / Cycling & Walking Sub-Plan reports developed for each of the settlements.



2. POLICY & PLAN REVIEW

2.1 International

Table 1. Policy & Plan Review – International

POLICY & PLANS	INTERNATIONAL
<p>European Union Green Deal (European Commission, 2020)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Fit For 55 Package (European Commission, 2021)</p>	<p>The European Union Green Deal calls for a 90% reduction in transport greenhouse gas emissions in order for the EU to become a climate-neutral economy by 2050.</p> <p>In 2021, the European Commission published its Fit for 55 Package to enable the EU to meet the Paris Agreement carbon targets and achieve net zero by 2050. The Fit for 55 Package encompasses a suite of legislative initiatives across various sectors including energy, transport and buildings. It is intended to fundamentally overhaul the EU’s climate policy framework and put the EU on track to deliver on its climate targets of a 55% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.</p> <p>Sustainable transport is one of the underscored ways to achieve this target through providing users with more affordable, accessible, healthier and cleaner mobility alternatives.</p>
<p>UN Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities (2019)</p>	<p>In March 2019, Ireland ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Article 9 of the ‘UNCRPD’ includes the right to transport and creating an accessible end to end journey. Its focus is:</p> <p><i>“To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.”</i></p> <p>Article 9 for the first time enshrines the right to transport within Irish legislation. The focus on Usability and Accessibility has implications and opportunities across transport planning and provision.</p>



2.2 National Policies & Plans, Guidance & Consultations

Table 2. Policy & Plan Review – National

POLICY & PLANS	NATIONAL
<p>Project Ireland 2040</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Planning Framework (NPF) • National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP) 	<p>Project Ireland 2040 sets out a framework for future national development and investment. It encompasses the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030. The NPF sets out Ireland’s planning policy up to 2040. The NPF sets the vision and strategy for shaping the future growth and development up to 2040 and is underpinned by National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compact Growth • Enhanced Regional Accessibility • Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities • Sustainable Mobility • A strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills • High-Quality International Connectivity • Enhanced Amenity and Heritage • Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society • Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources • Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services <p>The NDP sets out the enabling investment to implement the strategy set out in the NPF. The NPF combines with the National Development Plan to form Project Ireland 2040. Projects of relevance for Galway city and county include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galway – Dublin Greenway; scheduled for completion in 2026 • N6 Galway City Ring-Road • Feasibility study of a Galway City LRT (2022) • Upgrade works to Galway train stations • Continuing to replace diesel buses with hybrid-electric models
<p>Project Ireland 2040</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland 2021 (NIFTI) 	<p>The Department of Transport issued the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) in 2021. It sets out the prioritisation for future investment in the land transport network to support the delivery of the NPF and the NSOs.</p> <p>A key objective of NIFTI is to protect and renew our existing transport assets to safeguard the value of our past investment and ensure that the network is resilient to the impacts of climate change and adaptable to future transport behaviours. NIFTI sets out two hierarchies – travel modes and transport intervention – to enable the delivery of investments that address four investment priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decarbonisation • Protection and Renewal • Mobility of People and Goods in Urban Areas

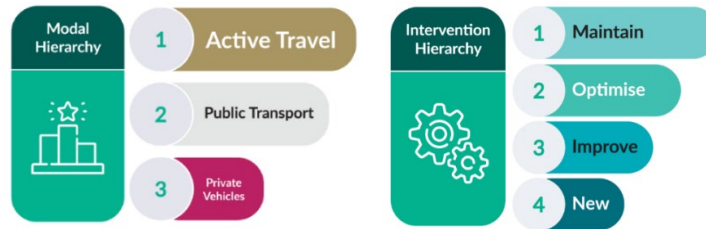


POLICY & PLANS

NATIONAL

● **Enhanced Regional and Rural Connectivity.**

The NIFTI Modal Hierarchy outlines which modes are to be accommodated and encouraged when investments and other interventions are made.



Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP)

In December 2022, the Government released Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23), which is the second annual update to Ireland’s Climate Action 2019. This plan is the first to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and follows the introduction in 2022, of economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The plan sets out a roadmap of action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050.

Decarbonising transport is a key tenet of the Plan, with a target of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. CAP23 outlines policies to reduce transport emissions by improving our towns, cities and rural planning and by adopting the Avoid-Shift-Improve approach (reducing or avoiding the need for travel, shifting to public transport, walking and cycling and improving the energy efficiency of vehicles).

Targeted actions include:

- Changing the way we use our road space.
- Reducing the total distance driven across all car journeys by 20%
- Walking, cycling and public transport to account for 50% of all journeys
- Nearly 1 in 3 private cars will be an Electric Vehicle
- Increasing walking and cycling networks
- 70% of people in rural Ireland will have buses that provide at least 3 trips to the nearby town daily by 2030.

National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)

The new **National Sustainable Mobility Policy** sets out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport journeys to help Ireland meet its climate obligations. It is accompanied by an Action Plan to 2025 which contains actions to improve and expand sustainable mobility options across the country by providing **safe, green, accessible and efficient alternatives to car journeys**. It also includes demand management and behavioural change measures to manage daily travel demand more efficiently and to reduce journeys taken by car.



POLICY & PLANS

NATIONAL

In line with the Climate Action Plan 2021, the policy targets 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in vehicle kilometres by fossil fuelled cars by 2030.

The policy aims to make it easier for people to choose walking, cycling and use public transport daily instead of having to use a petrol or diesel car under the following key themes:

Safe and Green mobility

- Expanding walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure across the country
- Moving the public transport fleet to low and zero emission vehicles
- Improving the safety of walking, cycling and public transport networks

People focused mobility

- Making walking, cycling and public transport more accessible for all users – including those with reduced mobility, disabilities and the elderly
- Introducing a more attractive fare structure
- Reallocating road space to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport

Better integrated mobility

- Adopting a transport-orientated approach to housing development to place new housing close to public transport
- Making it easier to switch between walking, bike, bus and rail

**Our Journey Towards
Vision Zero: Road Safety
Strategy 2021 – 2030**

This Road Safety Strategy, published in December 2021, has a new ambition at its core of a Vision Zero approach to Road Safety (delivered by the Safe System approach), which is a long-term goal aimed **at eradicating road traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2050**. This is international best practice and has been adopted by the European Commission in its Road Safety Strategy.

Some of the key interventions include **significant investment in the provision of safe, segregated infrastructure to protect those walking and cycling**, along with **initiatives to promote modal shift** from motor vehicle travel to support environmental, safety and health objectives. There are seven Safe System priority intervention areas aims.

- **Safe roads and roadsides.** To improve the **protective quality of our roads** and infrastructure.
- **Safe speeds. To reduce speeds to safe, appropriate levels for the roads being used, and the road users using them.**
- **Safe vehicles.** To enhance the safety features and roadworthiness of vehicles on our roads.
- **Safe road use. To improve road user standards and behaviours** in line with traffic legislation, supported by enforcement.



POLICY & PLANS

NATIONAL

- Post-crash response. To improve the treatment and rehabilitation of collision casualties.
- **Safe and healthy modes of travel. To promote and protect road users engaging in public or active transport.**
- Safe work-related road use. To improve safety management of work-related journeys.

Five Cities’ Demand Management Study (2021)

This Study, commissioned by the Climate Change Unit of the Dept of Transport as part of the 2019 Climate Action Plan (Action 81) to “Develop a regulatory framework on low emission zones and parking pricing policies, and provide local authorities with the power to restrict access to certain parts of a city or a town to zero emission vehicles only. Examine the **role of demand management measures in Irish cities**, including low emission zones and parking pricing policies.” The Study had four key objectives:

- **Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from road traffic**
- **Address air quality issues due to vehicular traffic emissions**
- **Manage vehicular traffic congestion**
- **Improve the quality of the urban environment**

While the study focused on the five cities, a number of the recommended Transport Demand Management measures are applicable across Galway County such as 1st = **15 Minute Neighbourhoods** and 2nd = **National Planning Framework Delivery Management** along with a range of Transport Demand Management (TDM) measures outlined in the Study’s City Toolkit.

National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2021

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy is a whole of Government approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities. The action plan contains a “Transport and Accessible Places” theme which includes a number of actions relevant to transport in Galway County:

- Action 100: Improve the **accessibility and availability of public transport**
- Action 107: Develop **access to outdoor recreation facilities**, in particular footpaths and trails
- Action 108: Implement the programme of **dishing of footpaths in urban areas**, in line with guidance from the National Disability Authority’s publication: *Building for Everyone*
- Action 109: Ensure further roll-out of **accessible inter-city coaches and accessible regional / rural coach and bus stops**

Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018 to 2022

The Rural Transport Programme provides both Scheduled Fixed Transport and Demand Responsive Transport services. The Strategic Plan aims to strengthen the Rural Transport Programme under the *Local Link* branding to fulfil local transport needs with sustainable and accessible transport services. The plan identifies nine Strategic Priorities for the plan period, including the **expansion of fixed routes that**



POLICY & PLANS

NATIONAL

provide linkages between rural towns and villages and to other public transport services.

Transport – Climate Change Sectoral Adaption Plan (2019)

A Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan was prepared for the Transport sector under the National Adaptation Framework. The plan seeks to ensure that the transport sector can continue to fulfil its objectives as the country reckons with ever increasing extreme weather events and rising sea levels due to climate change. The plan lays out a number of “soft” actions aimed at:

- Improving understanding of climate change on transport infrastructure
- Assisting stakeholders in identifying and prioritising climate risks to existing and planned infrastructural assets and enabling them to implement adaptation measures accordingly
- Ensuring that resilience to weather extremes and longer-term adaptation needs are considered in investment programmes for planned future transport infrastructure.

Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)

Guidelines for Spatial Planning affecting National Roads were developed to deliver on the National Spatial Strategy. The guidelines make it clear that **government policy no longer support unsustainable urban sprawl or dispersed and car dependent forms of development**, both of which have been accelerated by the location of employment and retail centres near national road junctions.

Moving major inter-urban and inter-regional traffic (i.e. strategic traffic) is the primary purpose of the national road network. Therefore, local authorities must limit development which promotes short trip making on the national road network. There are a number of key messages in the plan regarding development planning and roads:

- Development plans must include **measurable objectives for securing more compact development** that reduces overall demand for transport and encourages modal shift towards sustainable travel modes.
- Development plans must include policies which seek to **maintain and protect the safety, capacity and efficiency of national roads and associated junctions**, avoiding the creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to national roads where a speed limit greater than 50 kph applies. New accesses to these roads are prohibited bar very exceptional circumstances.
- Planning authorities and the NRA (now TII) must work together during the early stages of plan preparation to identify any areas where a less restrictive approach may apply.
- Development plans must include **clear policies and objectives with regard to planning and reservation of new routes and/or upgrades**.
- Planning authorities should consult at a very early stage with transport infrastructure providers (including the NRA) and, in the Greater Dublin area, with the National Transport Authority.



POLICY & PLANS

NATIONAL

Irish Rail Strategy 2027 (2021)

Galway will see improvements to its rail services and infrastructure, as set out in Iarnród Éireann’s 2027 Rail Strategy. These include improvements to both regional services and intercity services including:

- Service frequency improvements to/to/from Dublin
- An upgrade of Ceannt Station in Galway City
- Infrastructure upgrades at Oranmore. This includes a 1KM passing railway loop at the existing Oranmore Train Station, including additional platform and associated infrastructure.
- Double tracking of the Athenry – Oranmore – Galway Line.
- Additional platform at Woodlawn Station on the Galway Line.

Travelling in a Woman’s Shoes (2020)

Transport Infrastructure Ireland’s (TII) Travelling in a Woman’s Shoes 2020 study identifies that historically, transport has not been designed with the needs of women in mind. **Identifying and supporting the travel needs of women will help Ireland transition to a carbon-neutral transport system.** The Study explores the drivers of car dependency for women, including transport infrastructure, significant caregiving responsibilities, safety concerns and equality of access to quality services.

The study identifies a range of policy opportunities to address this car dependency and encourage the wider adoption of sustainable transport, including active travel.

Get Ireland Walking

Get Ireland Walking is an initiative by Sport Ireland. The core aim of the initiative is to **unify and enable the efforts of all agencies interested in promoting walking.** It is a nationwide initiative to deliver programmes in conjunction with All Sports Partnerships. The programme hopes to create a vibrant culture of walking throughout Ireland.

The initiative highlights how places need to be conducive to walking and that walking needs to be integrated into policies and plans at all scales. It highlights how, **in order to increase the numbers of people walking, infrastructure needs to be safe, attractive to walk in and it must cater for all users** including those in strollers, wheelchairs and the elderly.

Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2019 – 2025 (2019)

A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2019-2025’s is a national framework to improve health and wellbeing in Ireland. Its vision is for a healthier Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility.

The Framework identifies a number of broad intersectoral actions, one of which commits to the **development of a plan to promote increased physical activity levels.**



POLICY & PLANS

NATIONAL

Healthy Ireland: National Physical Activity Plan (2019)

The National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) recognises that physical inactivity is a demonstrated clear risk to health and wellbeing in Ireland, and aims to increase physical activity levels across the whole population. It aims to create a society which **facilitates people to lead an active way of life, setting targets to increase physical activity by 1% across all ages and decrease inactivity by 0.5%.**

Action Area Four of the NPAP focuses on the use of the natural and built environment as a way to build in daily physical activity. **It recognises that promoting active transport is the most practical and sustainable way to increase physical activity as part of people’s everyday routine.** It specifically identifies the role of walking or cycling for utility transport as a means to increase people’s physical activity levels.

Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021 – 2014 (2021)

This plan is the national framework with ideas and initiatives to increase physical activity in Ireland. It aims to increase physical activity levels across the whole population and to create a society which facilitates people to lead an active way of life, setting targets to increase physical activity by 1% across all ages and decrease inactivity by 0.5%.

Action Area Four of the NPAP focuses on the use of the natural and built environment as a way to build in daily physical activity. It recognises that **promoting active transport is the most practical and sustainable way to increase physical activity as part of people’s everyday routine.** It specifically identifies the role of walking or cycling for utility transport as a means to increase people’s physical activity levels.

Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)

Housing for All is the new housing plan for Ireland aims to improve the accessibility to affordable and high standard housing for everyone who wishes to purchase or rent a home. The Plan references Urban Development Zones which includes transport-led development, and the promotion of compact, sustainable and liveable settlements.

The document states that a well-functioning and sustainable housing system requires **strong integration between housing developments and the surrounding transport infrastructure.**

Table 3. Policy & Plan Review – National Guidance Documents

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019)

DMURS sets out the manner in which roads and streets in **urban areas should be designed to prioritise the needs of sustainable travel users in Ireland and reduce the dominance of the private car.** The focus of the guidance is the **balance between the**



NATIONAL GUIDANCE

different modes of transport to ensure that the urban realm is pleasant and safe for all users.

Similar to the NIFTI, the guidelines emphasise that **sustainable modes of transport should be prioritized in street designs**. Active travel is to be considered first, then public transport, and then cars. The guidance also **supports a network-based approach to designing streets**. The **connectivity of the active travel routes and permeability of neighbourhoods** are highlighted as important components of the design of Irish streets.

Permeability Best Practice Guide (2015)

The Permeability Best Practice Guide provides **recommendations on how best to facilitate demand for walking and cycling in existing built-up areas**.

Recommendations include the **retention and creation of linkages within the urban environment** for people to walk and cycle from their homes to shops, schools, local services, places of work and public transport stops and stations.

The Guide also includes recommended **metrics for measuring pedestrian and cycle link Quality of Service**. These key performance indicators (KPIs) include pedestrian route directness (PRD) and the width of the facility.

Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool for Roads and Streets

The Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool is used to capture existing conditions of walking routes in relation to its walkability. The Audit Tool supports the Government’s policy of transition to more sustainable forms of transport, with increased levels of walking contributing to a wide range of societal and health benefits including improved levels of fitness, cleaner air, safer environments and better social inclusion.

The aims of the audit tool are to **assess if neighbourhoods and streets are places where people of all ages and abilities can walk safely, conveniently and independently**.

National Cycle Manual

The National Cycle Manual provides **guidance on the design of cycling networks and on engineering design of cycling infrastructure**. The guidance is based on the Five Needs of a Cyclist:

- Safety
- Coherence
- Directness
- Attractiveness
- Comfort

The manual is currently being updated by the National Transport Authority (NTA).



NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Traffic Management Guidelines Manual (2019)

Prepared in line with current national transport strategy guidelines that promote sustainability and accessibility through improvement to and better management of the transport system, the purpose of the Traffic Management Guidelines Manual is to provide guidance on a variety of issues.

These include traffic planning, traffic calming and management, incorporation of speed restraint measures in new residential designs and the provision of suitably designed facilities for public transport users and for vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians (including those with mobility/ sensory impairments). It also focuses on how these issues must be examined and implemented in the context of overall transportation and land use policies.

Greenways Guidelines

Rural Cycleway Design (Offline and Greenways)

There are a number of documents which provide **specifications and guidelines for the construction of greenways and cycle routes**. These documents focus mainly on the primary route infrastructure such as the path itself, it’s design characteristics such as the width, the gradient, the surface finish etc.

One of these documents is the “Greenways and Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines” (2018) which provides suggestions and best practise examples for the construction of new greenways. TII also provides two documents with relevance to the construction of rural cycleways. These are “Rural Cycleway Design (Offline and Greenways)” (2022) and “Rural Road Link Design” (2017). The cycleway manual provides specifications for:

- Planning for Rural Cycleways
- Design considerations
- Road / Cycleway Junctions & Crossings
- Ancillary Infrastructure
- Pavement & Foundation Construction Details
- Monitoring and Evaluation

The road manual instructs Local Authorities as to how they can implement and integrate cycling infrastructure into the rural road network. Some of the major points in the document include:

- Designing for Speed
- Stopping Sight Distance
- Horizontal Alignment
- Edge Treatment
- Drainage

TII/NTA Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Guidance Notes (2018)

The intention of the ABTA process is to **ensure that sustainable transport is considered and planned for at the earliest stage**, at every level in the hierarchy of plans and investment programmes, and ultimately in the assessment of the



NATIONAL GUIDANCE

<p>AND</p> <p>ABTA How to Guide, Pilot Methodology (2021)</p>	<p>developments’ transport requirements and impacts at the local level. The key aims of the ABTA approach are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning by including the ABTA process as integral to the preparation of the Plan. ● Assess the existing traffic, transport and movement conditions within the Plan area and in its wider context. ● Plan for the efficient movement of people, goods and services within, to and from the Plan area. ● Identify the extent to which estimated transport demand associated with the emerging local development objectives can be supported and managed on the basis of existing transport assets. ● Identify the transport interventions required within the Plan area and in the wider context, to effectively accommodate the anticipated increase in demand. ● Inform Site Specific Transport Assessments for development management applications.
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<p>Safe to School: An Ideas Document for Safe Access to School (2020)</p>	<p>The Safe to School: An Ideas Document for Safe Access to School presents research conducted in the context of social distancing requirements since the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. It is designed to present ideas for school principals, boards of management, teachers, parents and students to consider implementing to address front of school vehicle congestion and enable more journeys by active travel.</p> <p>Eight measures are suggested, including widening footpaths, park ‘n’ stride, preventing illegal parking, informal car-free zone, school streets, visual interventions, cycle bus and separate access.</p>
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<p>NTA Safe Routes to School Design Guide (2022)</p>	<p>The Safe Routes to School programme aims to increase active travel choices to schools and to improve safety and access for students and their parents and carers on their journeys to/from school. The NTA Design Guide comprises key design principles to create safer, calmer, more attractive routes to school and improve front of school environments.</p>
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Table 4. National Consultations

NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

<p>Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan</p>	<p>The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan is a major national public initiative developed by NTA, with the aim of increasing connectivity around the country, particularly for people living outside major cities and towns. The plan aims to improve mobility in rural areas by providing better connections between villages and towns</p>
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NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

by linking these areas with an enhanced regional bus network connecting cities and regional centres nationwide. Connecting Ireland seeks to make public transport for rural communities more useful for more people, and it will do this by:

- Improving existing services
- Adding new services
- Enhancing the current Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) network which meets the transport needs of people who live in remote locations.

Proposals for Galway include:

- Enhanced interurban bus services between Galway City and Ennis, Limerick and Cork
- Enhanced interurban bus services between Galway City and Castlebar, Ballina and Sligo, and with Westport, Roscommon and Longford
- Improved interurban bus services from Tuam, Gort, Clifden, Ballinasloe and Loughrea to Galway
- Improved local bus services from Galway to Portumna to Nenagh and from Ballinasloe via Portumna to Ennis
- New local bus routes from Ballygar to Athlone and from Glenamaddy, Mountbellow and Ahascragh to Ballinasloe, coordinated with rail services at Ballinasloe to points east to Dublin
- New and enhanced connections along the west coast of the county, including between Carraroe and Maam Cross, between Roundstone and Clifden and between Clifden and Westport

Consultation took place in 2022 on the proposals, with more information here (including mapping and routes): <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/connecting-ireland>

<p>TII National Cycle Network</p>	<p>In May 2022, TII launched a consultation on their proposed National Cycle Network, which is a planned core cycle network of 3,500km that will criss-cross the country, connecting more than 200 villages, towns and cities. The network will include cycling links to transport hubs, education centres, employment centres, leisure and tourist destinations, and support “last mile” bicycle deliveries. The network will make it easier and safer for more people to cycle for commuting, leisure, and tourism, reducing reliance on the car.</p> <p>The NCN map incorporates many existing and planned Greenways as well as a range of proposed new cycle routes, as part of its proposed national cycle corridors. The NCN will also complement and integrate local cycling development projects and Greenways. It will enable people to easily cycle to the centre of villages, towns and cities being developed by the NTA’s Active Travel programme. It is envisaged the most of the NCN will be delivered by local authorities over the coming years.</p> <p>Further information can be found here: https://ncn.consultation.ai/</p>
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NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

TII National Roads Strategy

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is currently seeking views on its long term strategy for planning, operating, and maintaining the National Roads network. NR2040 has been developed to support National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), with the Strategy's investment priorities developed to align closely to the four NIFTI investment priorities:

- Decarbonisation
- Enhanced regional and rural connectivity
- Protection and renewal
- Mobility of people & goods in urban areas.

TII's vision is for the National Roads to be *"An evolving sustainable transport system focused on safety, innovation, accessibility and mobility of people, goods and services."*

Listed roles for TII includes the delivery of *"active travel infrastructure which contributes to compact growth, sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility and the transition to a low-carbon future"*; and *"encouraging modal shift from car transport to public and active travel modes."*

The draft Strategy states that:

"Where national roads are too dangerous for walkers or cyclists, meaningful alternatives must be provided through collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partner agencies.... TII is committed to delivering more on active travel modes in all its projects, such as improving the safety of National Roads for active travel users and reducing the severance caused by some National Roads in urban areas.

TII will collaborate with other stakeholders to implement the National Cycle Network plan to cater for more active trips and expand the Greenway network nationwide, on behalf of the Department of Transport. Provision of safe, high quality and active travel infrastructure will encourage modal shift and result in reductions in carbon emissions." (5.1.3 Active Travel)

And where there is urban congestion, "TII will support the provision of segregated or offline active travel infrastructure adjacent to national roads."

The strategy also defines TII investment portfolios for coming years and provides guidance to Sponsoring Agencies and Local Authorities. TII, through NR2040, will align with the NIFTI Intervention hierarchy and seek to address transport challenges through the use of existing infrastructure before considering the provision of new



NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

infrastructure. When developing a project on National Roads, the relevant Local Authority, third party and / or TII department will need to show that the proposed investment aligns with NIFTI and address how potential negative impacts, against one of more of the NIFTI Investment Priorities, will be mitigated.

“NR2040 is a policy led strategy, not a ‘predict and provide’ (demand-led) strategy.”

More information on the consultation can be found here, which is open until 7th October 2022: <https://nr2040.consultation.ai/>



2.3 Regional Policies & Plans

Table 5. Policy & Plan Review – Regional

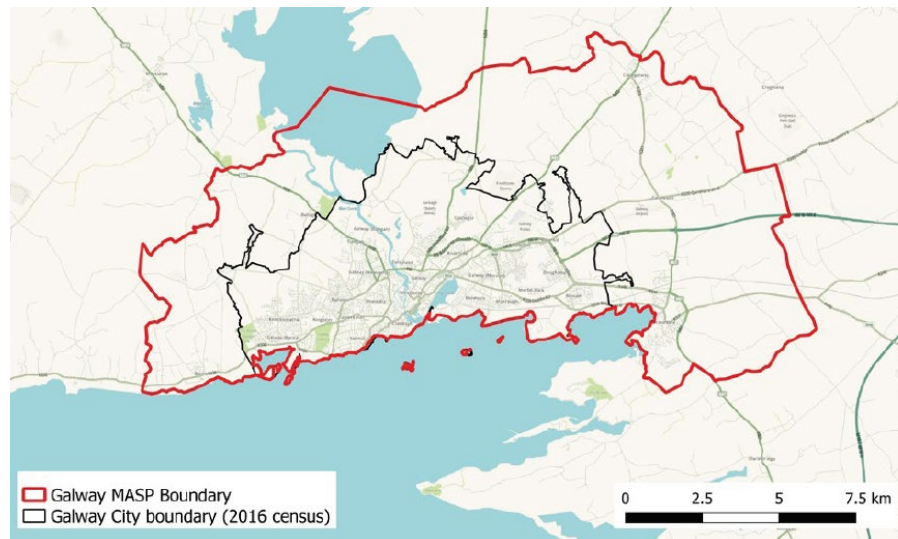
POLICY & PLANS	REGIONAL
<p>Northern & Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032 (2020)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Galway Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (GMASP)</p>	<p>At a regional level, the NPF 2040 recommends the development of Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies (RSEs) to ensure better co-ordination in planning and development across local authority boundaries, providing a link between the NPF, City and County Development Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans.</p> <p>Galway falls under the North and Western RSES, which was issued by the Regional Assembly in 2020. The RSES Vision is <i>‘To play a leading role in the transformation of this region into a vibrant, connected, natural, inclusive and smart place to work and live’</i>.</p> <p>The RSES’s strategic outcomes reflect those of the NPF, including a focus on Compact Growth, Sustainable Mobility, and a Low Carbon, Climate Resilient and Sustainable Society.</p> <p>The region is highly dependent on private car use, with 2016 Census data confirming 70% of commuter trips are made by private car. In response, whilst there are limited opportunities for use of sustainable transport modes in parts of the region, the RSES identifies four high-level transport principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improving strategic and local connectivity. ● Improving access to public transport facilities. ● Catering for the role of the car within the region. ● Ensuring sustainable development to cater for long-term growth through reducing levels of traffic congestion. <p>The priority Core Transport Outcomes to be delivered across the region include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting the achievement of compact, smart growth through the achievement of ‘mutual consistency’ between land use and transport planning/investment/service provision. ● Promotion of higher development densities in appropriate locations with an associated consideration being given to reduced constraints on building heights. ● Strengthening inter-regional connectivity through the improvement of inter-urban road and rail connectivity. ● Strengthening public transport connectivity between the Assembly Area’s city and large towns, and between the large towns, with improved services and reliable journey times. ● Providing public transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of smaller towns, villages and rural areas.



- Developing a **comprehensive network of safe cycling routes** in the three Regional Growth Centres and providing similar facilities in other towns and villages, where appropriate.

The RSES advises the preparation of Local Transport Plans (LTP) for identified key towns to support compact growth and sustainable mobility. LTPs should identify and prioritise objectives in relation to sustainable travel infrastructure and plan for the efficient movement of people within and outside of the area served by the LTP, which should deliver appropriate measures to promote walking, cycling and public transport use to create accessible spaces (RPO 6.29).

As part of the RSES, a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) has been prepared for Galway, providing an implementation strategy for development outcomes in the Galway Metropolitan Area, which encompasses Galway City and surrounding parts of the county.



The population of the Metropolitan Area is projected to grow by 27,500 to 2026 and by a further 14,500 to 2031, with the population of the city and suburbs accommodating 23,000 to 2026 and a further 12,000 to 2031. Within Galway County, residential growth areas are identified in Bearna to the west, Oranmore to the east and Baile Chláir to the northeast, with industrial / technology growth identified in Oranmore and around the former Galway Airport.

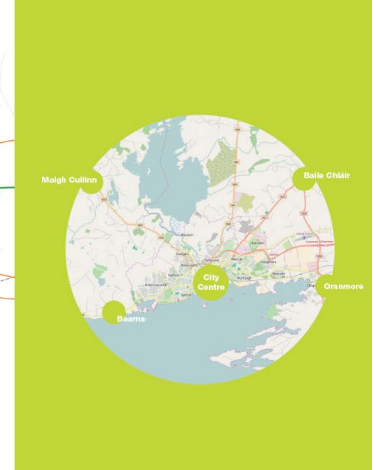
The MASP reaffirms projects developed under the Galway Transport Strategy, including the Galway City Ring Road, the Tuam Bus Corridor, the Dublin Road Bus Corridor and a high frequency cross-city bus network as well as provision of active travel infrastructure, Park and Ride sites and the double tracking of the rail line from Ceannt station to Athlone.



POLICY & PLANS **REGIONAL**

Galway Transport Strategy (2017)

The Galway Transport Strategy was developed by Galway City Council, in partnership with Galway County Council and the National Transport Authority, to address current and future identified transport issues and opportunities within Galway City and the surrounding metropolitan area.



In terms of impacts on the wider county, the suite of measures in the strategy includes the construction of the N6 Galway City Ring Road and a revamp of the city and commuter bus networks.

The strategy proposes upgrade of the existing main bus corridors to provide high frequency routes. The Brown bus route would extend to Bearnna to the west and Oranmore to the east, both located within Galway County. The strategy aspires for these routes to operate at a frequency of at least once every 15 minutes, with high frequency to be maintained across the daily period as opposed to just within peak hours.

To complement these services, Park and Ride sites along National Roads are proposed to cater for trips to Galway City originating outside of the metropolitan area.

N6 Galway City Ring Road Project

The N6 Galway City Ring Road (GCRR) is a key measure within the Galway Transport Strategy which realises Galway City and County Council’s vision of all elements of transport working together to achieve an integrated sustainable transport solution. Galway City currently experiences significant transport issues such as:

- Peak hour congestion and journey time unreliability
- Over reliance on private cars
- Lack of alternative transport modes
- Lack of road space for the development of Smarter Mobility and Public Transport



POLICY & PLANS

REGIONAL

The ring-road forms a vital part of the councils strategy to minimise these issues and free up the city centre of freight and private car traffic, as illustrated in the figure below.



**Western Rail Corridor
Financial and Economic
Appraisal (2020)**

A Financial and Economic Appraisal of the Western Rail Corridor was undertaken on foot of a commitment in the National Development Plan 2018 – 2027. The aim of this report is to assess whether the investment which would be required to reactivate these two phases can be justified in delivering value for money for the Irish Exchequer.

As part of the appraisal a public survey was undertaken which received over 6,000 responses. The survey showed overwhelming public preference for the alignment to be used as a railway rather than a greenway.

The outcome of the Economic Appraisal was a Benefit to Cost Ratio of 0.21, based on estimated construction costs of €264m excl. VAT. Despite the strong economic benefits that the line delivers, they were not found to be sufficient to justify the large capital costs which would be required to reactivate the line.

**JASPERS Project Screening
Note: Western Rail Corridor
Phase 2/3 (2020)**

In 2020, JASPERS undertook an independent review of the proposed investment for reconstruction of the Western Rail Corridor phases 2 and 3. The review examined all material available for the project, with specific reference to the Financial and Economic Appraisal prepared by EY.

The review concluded that the findings of the Financial and Economic Appraisal were not unreasonable, and that the project in its current form is likely to present a very weak justification for investment. Additionally, JASPERS found that to gain EU financing



POLICY & PLANS

REGIONAL

through the European Investment Bank or inclusion in the TEN-T networks would require a strong demonstration of the strategic need for the corridor which is not currently available.



2.4 County Policies & Plans

Table 6. Policy & Plan Review – County

POLICY AND PLANS	COUNTY
<p>Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028</p>	<p>The Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CPD) sets out the strategy and methods through which future planning and sustainable development of the county will be achieved for the period to 2028. Preparation of the CDP commenced in June 2020, and was adopted by the elected members of the Council in May 2022, coming into effect in June 2022.</p> <p>Chapter 6 (Transport & Movement) sets out the ways in which appropriate provision for the safeguarding and upgrading of existing transport infrastructure will be ensured. It seeks to build on the existing strengths within the county while also addressing deficiencies in a sustainable manner, including through taking account of climate change and creating more sustainable communities.</p> <p>The CDP looks to:</p> <p><i>‘Encourage investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport’.</i></p> <p>A number of strategic aims and associated policy objectives are identified to help achieve this, which are outlined below in more detail.</p>
<p>Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) (2021)</p>	<p>The Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) sits alongside and supports the Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028). The strategy supports the councils transport aims <i>‘To encourage investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport’.</i></p> <p>The development process for the GCTPS followed a thorough baseline establishment as well as identification of planned new development in the County Development Plan. The findings of that process were used in an option development process for defined movement corridors across the county. A longlist of options by mode was considered against key objectives for each corridor in order to develop preferred options by corridor. These preferred options were then combined to form county wide mode based strategies to meet relevant mode based policy objectives in the Development Plan.</p> <p>The GCTPS proposes a range of measures, including transport infrastructure upgrades, support for transport service enhancements, and supporting activities, which will collectively deliver enhancements and changes in travel behaviour within the County</p>



which are consistent with the policy objectives defined within Chapter 6 of the County Development Plan (CDP).

In summary, the GCTPS supports the CDP objectives relating to Transport as follows:

- **Integrated Transport Planning:** Support for transition toward active, sustainable and low-carbon modes of transportation, and preparation of Local Transport Plans for the towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam.
- **Walking & Cycling:** Provision of a modern walking and cycling network which gives such infrastructure high priority within street hierarchies, adheres to the design principles and requirements set out in the National Cycle Manual and DMURS, and which provides safe and secure cycle parking as part of new developments and public space regeneration projects.
- **Electric Vehicles:** Support for the roll-out of charging infrastructure and other facilities to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles.
- **Public Transport:** Support for enhanced public transport services, including provision of new and improved public transport infrastructure; advocacy for improvements to public transport services; engagement with the NTA, TII and others with regard to provision for Park and Ride services, and support for the Galway to Athlone rail link and Western Rail Corridor schemes.
- **National Roads:** Protection of the safe and efficient operation of the national road network, support for planned major upgrade schemes, and use of Traffic and Transport Assessments (TTAs) and Road Safety Audits (RSAs) to assess the impacts of proposed development upon the national road network.
- **Non-National Roads:** Safeguarding of capacity on restricted and non-restricted regional roads within the regional and local road networks; management of through-traffic within town and local centres.
- **Supporting Measures;** use of School Travel Plans and Mobility Management Plans to drive and encourage increased use of sustainable modes of travel to education and other significant development sites; and application of car parking standards and associated requirements as set out in Chapter 15 of the CDP.

Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy (2013)

The 2013 Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy examines and deals with primary walking and cycling aspects of commuting, tourism and community exercise and activities in Galway County. Tuam, Ballinasloe, Oranmore and Clifden are designated as major study towns.



POLICY AND PLANS COUNTY

The cycling network in 2013 is described as variable, with the better-quality cycling facilities usually provided as a result of road improvement schemes. The Strategy identifies the Council’s goals for walking and cycling as to:

- Encourage **modal shift** for students and workers from cars to walking and cycling.
- **Boost tourism** within the County through the creation of walking and cycling attractions and facilities.
- Develop local walking and cycling facilities to **encourage uptake in local sporting and physical exercise**.
- Raise **public awareness of the benefits** of walking and cycling.

The following targets are set out as part of the Strategy:

- Increase the proportion of people who walk to work within the County from 5% to 20%.
- Increase the mode share for cycling for journeys to work from 1% to 8%.
- Increase the number of children between ages five and twelve who walk to and from school from 13% to 21%.
- Increase the number of children between five and twelve years old who cycle to and from school from 1% to 6%.
- Increase the proportion of students aged 13 to 18 who walk to school / college to match the national average as a minimum.
- Increase the number of students between 13 and 18 years old who cycle to school / college from 1% to 8%.

A new County Wide Cycling and Walking Strategy is currently being prepared.

County Galway Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024 (2019)

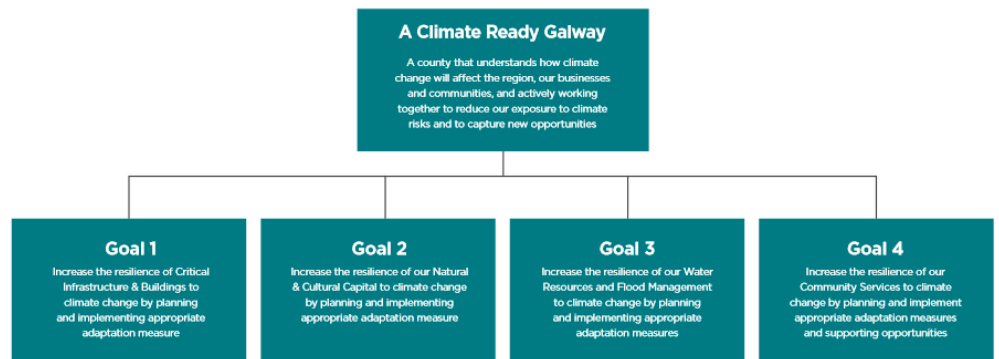
As part of the National Climate Change Action Plan 2019, County Galway produced and adopted its first Climate Adaptation Strategy in August 2019.

The plan takes stock of the policy context, the profile of the city and county area and the impact of climate change observed to date and projected into the future, first at a global level and then focussing on Ireland. A baseline assessment of climate risks for the county analysed a series of past extreme weather events and their effects on the county. Arising from this work, a Climate Risk & Opportunity Register was compiled.

The strategy has four goals towards developing a ‘Climate Ready Galway’:



POLICY AND PLANS COUNTY



Based on these goals, the strategy contains an action plan with four main headings: Infrastructure, Nature and Culture, Water and Flooding and Community Services. Under infrastructure, there is an action to undertake a risk assessment of critical public road infrastructure to identify relevant hazards arising from climate change and extreme weather events.

Galway City and County Age Friendly Programme 2014 – 2019

The strategy aims to make Galway a great place for older people to live, where they can continue to enjoy living within their communities with dignity and respect. Strategic goals are centred on 8 strategic priorities. Strategic Priority 2 is to ensure that “older people can get to where they need to go, when they need to do so”.

Galway County Integration & Diversity Strategy 2013-2017

The strategy was prepared to address “the significant demographic changes that have taken place throughout the County over the past decade or more”. The plan preparation involved detailed collaboration with stakeholders which resulted in the finding of many positives and challenges to be addressed. Based on these findings, the strategy includes an action plan based on four key areas:

- Education and Training
- Employment and Work
- Health and Public Services
- Community Participation.



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

SYSTRA



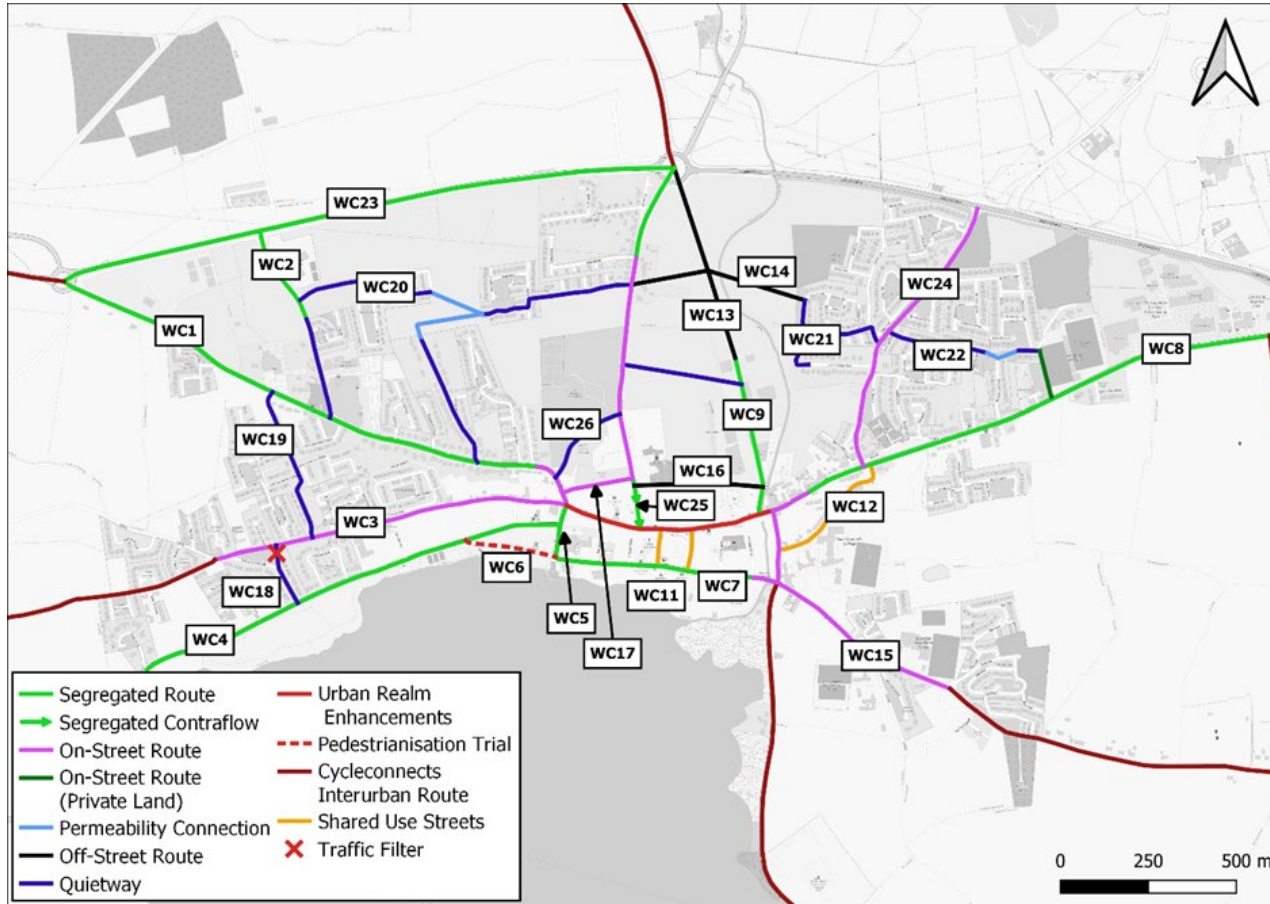
Appendix B – Stage 1: Options Screening

Options for improvements to the town’s local walking and cycling networks have been identified which have taken into account the NTA’s Cycle Connects plans for the area as referenced in the policy review section of this report.

The proposed options for the walking and cycling network and the measures longlist are shown below.



Figure 1. Loughrea Walking & Cycling Options Map



Galway Transport Support - Error! Reference source not found.

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Table 7. Walking & Cycling Measures Longlist

REFERENCE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
WC1	R446 Athenry Road - Town edge to Ardán Liam Maoilíosa	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC2	Athenry Road - Bypass to Ti Na Ri	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC3	Galway Road - Town edge to Dunkellin Street	Explore the opportunity of various measures/options at this location for Active Travel Measures cognizant of the retailers and residents in the area.
WC4	R380 Gort Road - Town edge to The Green	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC5	The Green - Whole length (N-S link)	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC6a		Make one way for vehicles
WC6b	The Green - Whole length (E-W link)	Explore the opportunity of various measures/options at this location for Active Travel Measures
WC7	Barrack Street - The Green to Pigotts Street	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC8	Bride Street - Town edge to The Crescent	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC9	Station Road - Main Street to northern extent	Segregated cycle tracks in both directions and footpath upgrades
WC10	Moore Street (contraflow) - Whole length	Segregated contraflow cycle track in southbound direction with footpath upgrades



REFERENCE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
WC11	Kelly's Street, King Street - Whole length	Designate links as shared space between vehicles and pedestrians
WC12	Bohercorn - Whole length	Designate link as shared space between vehicles and pedestrians
WC13	Route of former rail line - Station Road to N65/R350 roundabout	Convert alignment to an off-street active travel link connecting the town centre to the roundabout. Not Compatible with PT1.
WC14	Area between R350 & Dun An Oir - R350 opposite Hazelwood to Dun An Oir	Off-street active travel routes connecting to WC13
WC15a	Cross Street - Barrack Street to schools	Permeability filter preventing through vehicle traffic
WC15b		Implementation of traffic calming features and pedestrian enhancement measures
WC16	The Walks - Abbey Street to Station Road	Designation as an off-street active travel route
WC17	Dolphin Street - Abbey Street to R380	Designation as an on-street cycle route with footpath upgrades
WC18	Coscorrig Crescent - R380 to Galway Road	Explore the opportunity of various measures/options at this location for Active Travel Measures cognizant of the residents and local school children in the area.
WC19	St Laurence's Fields - Whole length	Designate as a "Quietway" route, improve cycle accessibility to footpath connecting to R446
WC20	Cois Furain/Donnellan Drive/Hazelwood - Whole length	Create a permeability connection between all roads listed



REFERENCE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
WC21	Dun An Oir - Whole length	Designate as a “Quietway” route
WC22	Drom Na Coille/Beechwood Close/ Danesfort Court/ Carraig Linn - Whole length	Create a permeability connection between all roads listed
WC23	Northern Bypass - Caherlavine Rbt to N65	Two-way segregated cycle track on southern edge.
WC24	Danesfort Road - whole length	Designation as an on-street cycle route with footpath upgrades
WC25	Abbey Street (contraflow) - Dolphin Street to Main Street	Segregated contraflow cycle track in southbound direction with footpath upgrades
WC26	Mount Carmel Crescent & unnamed lane connecting to Station Road	Explore the opportunity of various measures/options at this location for Active Travel Measures cognizant of the retailers and residents in the area.

Primary Cycle Network

A number of key radial links into the town centre such as Bride Street and Athenry Road have been designated as suitable for segregated cycle tracks, linking key areas of the town where pedestrian and cycle activity is anticipated to substantially increase with the appropriate infrastructure in place, such as the town centre and employment areas. It is anticipated that rapid build facilities such as separator wands could be utilised to initially deliver selected cycle routes.

Unsegregated on-street routes are marked where road widths do not allow for segregated infrastructure but which connect to key areas or facilities, such as the schools on Cross Street. These routes will be accompanied by appropriate traffic calming features and reduced speed limits in order to minimise conflict potential between vehicle drivers and cyclists.

It is noted that the existing disused railway corridor currently runs on a north to south alignment, terminating to the north of the town centre. In the event that this corridor is not reopened by Irish Rail, it is considered that it offers a unique opportunity for a high quality pedestrian and cycle route which would provide direct and easy connections between the town centre and northern parts of the town. A conversion to an active travel corridor would not prevent the corridor later being adapted as part of any future public transport scheme, such as a reopening of the railway. The potential benefits and costs of this opportunity are considered further as part of the options appraisal exercises describe later in this LTP document.



Where cycle measures are proposed alongside national roads (such as link WC23 on the R380 route and N65/R380 Caherlavine Roundabout), these will adhere to TII Publication (Standards) requirements as well as the Design Manual for Roads and Streets.

Secondary Cycle Connections

Permeability routes have been identified which supplement the network on the town's radial routes. These measures are focused on strengthening and improving existing links, providing connectivity to the wider network and key services such as schools, parks, shops etc. In combination with the strategic measures outlined above, these options will provide a comprehensive and integrated walk and cycle network supporting increased accessibility and permeability.

These connections consist of quiet residential streets such as St Laurence's Fields and Coscorrig Crescent, as well as short links between built up areas. Some of these connections may have obstacles needing to be removed, such as fences or walls. It is proposed that where minor modifications can be made to create or strengthen these local links, there is significant potential benefit for those undertaking local journeys on foot and by cycle.

Certain streets such as The Green and Coscorrig Crescent have been marked for closure to vehicles entirely or for vehicle access to properties only. These streets that have been selected are either narrow and unsuitable for through vehicle traffic and/or have alternative vehicle routes which do not require lengthy diversions. It is anticipated that rapid build facilities such as planters could be utilised to initially deliver road closure schemes.

Pedestrian Crossings

The implementation of additional high quality of pedestrian crossings within Loughrea will improve both the perception and experience of the walking environment. It is considered that such a review should form part of the LTP strategy and be integrated with the eventual preferred option(s) in terms of town centre and other improvements which are discussed below.

Additional Cycle Parking

Similarly to the consideration of pedestrian crossings, the provision of appropriate new local cycle parking, both within the town centre and at key locations elsewhere in the town, is considered to represent a "quick win" which can be progressed either alongside the development of other schemes identified within this LTP, or brought forward as a stand-alone action where opportunities arise. It is noted that the future implementation of the NTA's proposals for county-level cycle route infrastructure can be supported by this action and would encourage cyclists making longer journeys as well as shorter ones to stop and visit attractions and businesses in Loughrea.

Rapid Build Infrastructure

As outlined in Section 2, Rapid Build active travel facilities are schemes that utilise cost-effective measures to deliver walking and cycling infrastructure quicker than traditional (full build) construction methods. This approach can aid the deliverability of the proposed walking and cycling networks, including:

- Road markings/traffic restrictions;
- Narrowing/converting general traffic tracks to active travel facilities;
- Converting on-street parking to active travel facilities;
- Creating Traffic Free streets; and
- Redesigning junctions to provide greater capacity for walking, cycling and public transport.



Town Centre Improvements

The section of Main Street between the junctions with Athenry Road and Moore Street forms the town centre of Loughrea, with the majority of properties being retail or commercial focused. Both perpendicular and parallel on-street parking bays are provided along sections of the street. The street provides some areas of landscaping and seating, although footpath provision is varying in width, with a number of narrow sections limiting opportunities for pedestrian interaction.

Main Street has been identified as having the potential to accommodate improvements consistent with the aims of regional and local policies, characterised by one or more of the following:

- Retail land uses;
- Vehicle dominance in areas of high pedestrian activity;
- Narrow footways;
- Limited road space; and
- On-street parking constraints.

In part due to the radial nature of the road network, the town core under the current layout is deemed to favour the movement of vehicles at a detriment to pedestrians and cyclists, effectively forming a barrier to an increased uptake in these modes for short-distance local trips within the town.

Options which have been considered are therefore focused on reducing the dominance of vehicle traffic whilst retaining vehicular access to the town centre, in order to improve the connections for active modes through the town core, as well as providing an enhanced civic space for the town.

Options to enhance and improve the urban realm for pedestrians in the town centre have been considered. A degree of through vehicle access is deemed to still be required for cross town east-west trips and to access, deliver and service the businesses located on Main Street.

Interventions would therefore include rationalising the on-street parking by converting the perpendicular bays to parallel and removing excess provision, expanding the space available for bus stop infrastructure (as detailed in Section 4.2) and increasing the presence of landscaping and benches in order to make the Main Street thoroughfare a more welcoming and inviting place for pedestrians. It is anticipated that rapid build facilities such as separator wands and planters could be utilised to initially deliver the planned improvement schemes for Main Street.

Public Transport

Consideration of potential public transport infrastructure schemes is based on improvement works to bus stops in the town. This reflects the analysis and conclusions reached within the GCTPS in relation to Loughrea and the specific role of public transport for both local needs and travel to other key centres, most notably Galway City.

The public transport measures and longlist are shown below.



Figure 2. Public Transport Infrastructure Options

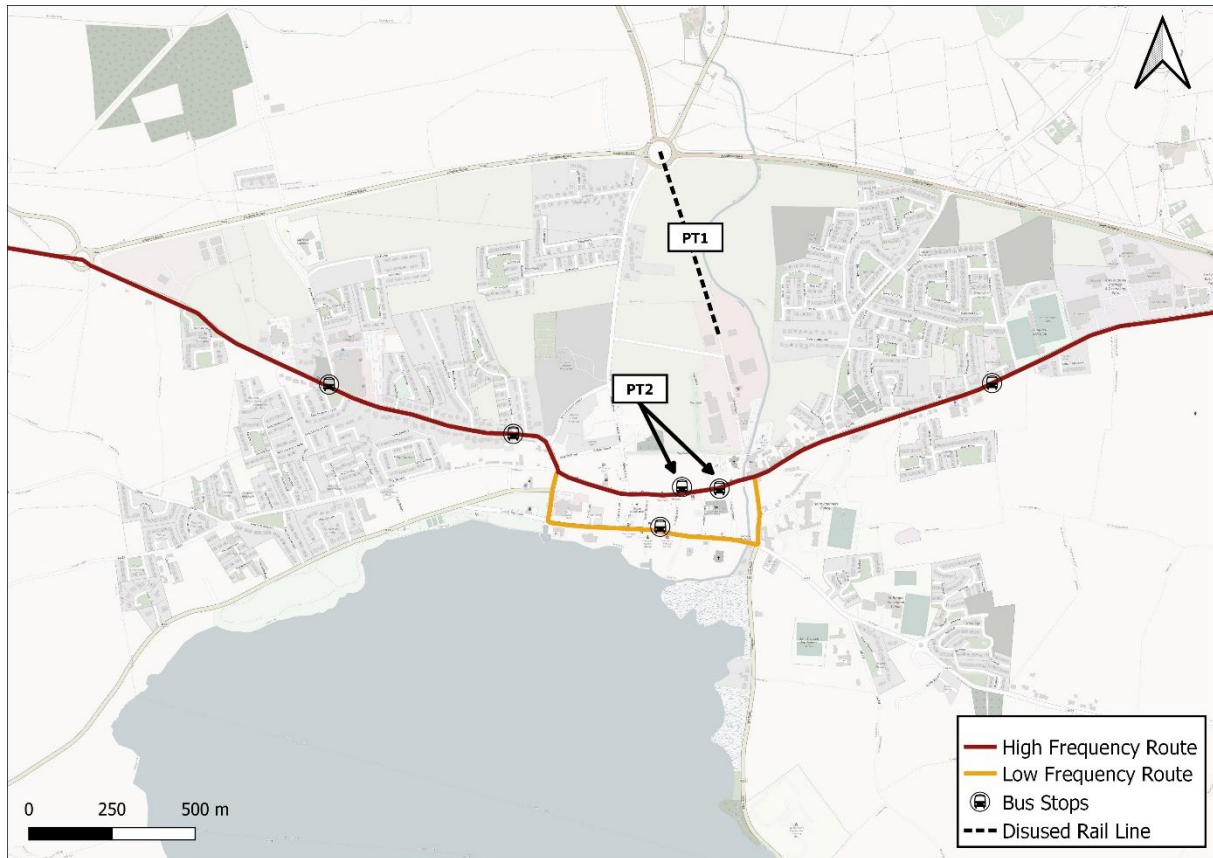


Table 8. Public Transport Measures Longlist

REFERENCE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
PT1	Route of former rail line - Station Road to N65/R350 roundabout	Restoration of railway services as part of wider railway improvements within Galway County. Not Compatible with WC13
PT2	Main Street/Bride Street/Station Road/Barrack Street/Athenry Road - Bus stops.	Improvements to passenger infrastructure, including marked bus stands, timetable info, shelters and seating

Bus Stop Infrastructure & Routes

A pair of bus stops with signs are provided on Main Street, which are served by the majority of the long-distance bus routes currently stopping in Loughrea. It is noted that some routes stop at additional locations on the key Bride Street and Athenry Road corridors, with all of these bus stops being unmarked.

The general distribution of bus stops within the town has been considered to be sensible and offers reasonable coverage for general access to bus services for residents, as well as providing a good level of access for those using bus services to reach Loughrea from outside of the town.



Possible improvement options include the provision of formal passenger infrastructure such as flagpoles, timetable information and shelters to the unmarked bus stops, prioritising those in the town centre.

In terms of service provision (routes and frequencies), the preferred public transport option is centred on dialogue with the NTA and local operators.

Reopening of Railway Line

The alignment of the former railway line is still in place between Station Road and the bypass roundabout junction.

A potential option is the opening of the former rail branch between Loughrea and Athenry/Attymon, thereby adding Loughry to the strategic Western Rail Corridor scheme, in line with the CDP objectives.

It should be noted that should this option come forward, it would likely be after the lifetime of this LTP. Pursuing this option would also exclude the use of this link as an active transport corridor.

Road Network

Road transport measures have been considered in the context of the NIFT1 modal hierarchy shown in Figure 26.

The proposed road transport measures and longlist are shown below.

Figure 3. Proposed Road Transport Options

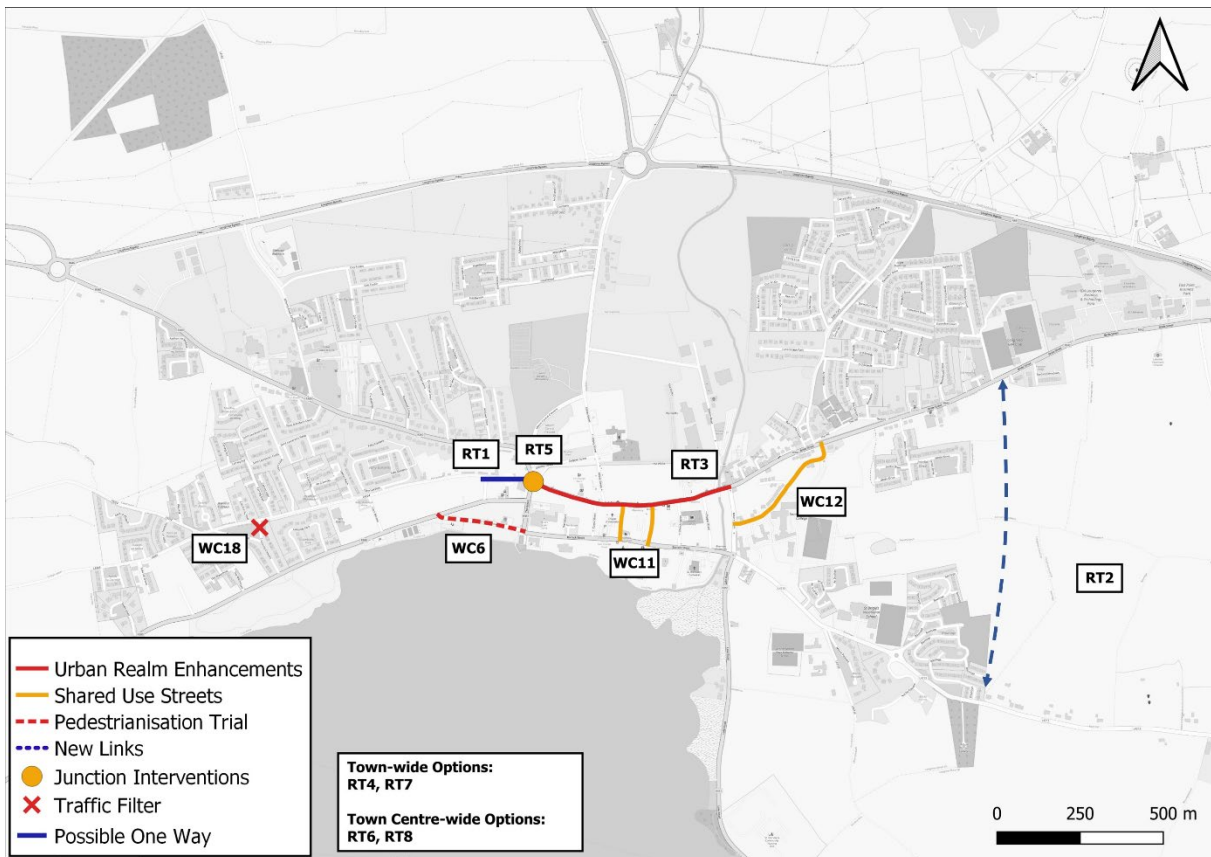




Table 9. Road Transport Measures Longlist

REFERENCE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
RT1a	Galway Road (between junction with Main Street & Waterview Drive)	Closure of Galway Road arm at junction with Main Street. Timed restrictions to allow delivery/servicing vehicles to access commercial properties, in westbound direction only.
RT1b		Explore the opportunity of various measures/options at this location for Active Travel Measures cognizant of the retailers and residents in the area.
RT2	East of town - Between Bride Street (opposite industrial park) and Cross Street, potentially via Baunoge	New eastern relief road, as mentioned in previous LAP. Would divert local through trips around the town instead of through.
RT3	Main Street - Between R351 Moore Street and R380 Gort Road	Rationalisation of on-street parking, removal of pedestrian pinch points, creation of space for expanded bus stop infrastructure, review of parking controls. Integration potential with PT2.
RT4	Study Area - All Local Streets	Vehicle speeds throughout the town (with the exception of "R" routes) to be restricted to 30kph
RT5	Main Street/Gort Road/Galway Road/Athenry Road signal junction - Junction footprint	Explore the opportunity of various measures/options at this location for Active Travel Measures cognizant of the retailers and residents in the area.
RT6	Study Area - Town Centre Streets (Main Street, Barrack Street and connections)	Develop an HGV management strategy which restricts access to HGVs on Main Street and Barrack Street at certain times, and/or applies higher weight restrictions to limit access for very large HGV vehicles.
RT7	Study Area - All Local Streets	Vehicle restrictions for streets adjacent to schools would initially be targeted at school pick-up and drop-off times to improve access and safety for pedestrians and cyclists



REFERENCE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
RT8	Study Area - Town Centre Streets (Main Street, Barrack Street and connections)	Active Kerbside Management potentially including: eCargo bike pilot for local businesses / deliveries; Adoption of kerbside hierarchy that prioritises certain vehicles/activities (e.g. cycle parking V on-street parking hierarchy; loading bays for servicing and deliveries in retail areas)

Main Street / The Green / Galway Road / Athenry Road Junction Upgrades

This junction currently forms the convergence point of the town’s main western radial corridors as well as acting as the western gateway to the town centre. It is characterised by pedestrian crossings on each of the five arms linked by narrow footways. This layout results in extended waiting times for pedestrians who must cross multiple arms in order to navigate the junction.

A potential option would be to reduce the footprint of the junction, enlarging the footways where possible at the extent of road space. It is proposed to close the section of road linking the junction to Dolphin Street to vehicles in order to reduce the number of crossings pedestrians must navigate.

An additional option to be considered is the closure of the Galway Road arm, with vehicles accessing the western residential areas directed via Gort Road and Waterview Drive. This would increase green time for the remaining arms as well as the pedestrian phase, ensuring improved pedestrian links and improving capacity for the remaining arms. Access to the properties on Galway Road between the junction and Waterview Drive would need to be via Waterview Drive and it is acknowledged this is a challenging arrangement.

An alternative option considered regarding Galway Road is converting the section between the junction and Waterview Drive to one way running in the westbound direction. This would allow servicing of the properties mentioned above to continue whilst retaining a degree of improvements in vehicle capacity.

It is anticipated that rapid build facilities such as separator wands and planters could be utilised to initially deliver footway expansion and road closure schemes.

The Green Pedestrianisation

It is proposed to close the section of The Green between the junctions with Gort Road and Barrack Street to vehicles, with the road converted into a shared pedestrian and cycle link. Complementary landscaping and seating would help provide a high quality traffic-free waterfront space for the town.

Removing vehicle access from this section of The Green would eliminate the safety concerns at the Gort Road/The Green junction.

It is anticipated that rapid build facilities such as planters could be utilised to initially deliver this road closure scheme.

Eastern Link

A new link route to the east of the town centre, connecting the Cross Street and Bride Street corridors, would enable a large proportion of through vehicle traffic to avoid the town centre and the one-way system entirely.



The new link would additionally be designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, expanding on the current networks available and delivering similar benefits to those modes in terms of faster and safer connections between the northern and eastern areas of the town. This would also provide a major alternative route for traffic which presently routes via the “schools quarter” and would enable a full “School Streets” scheme for restricted vehicle through-access to be brought forward.

It is noted that due to the width of much of Cross Street, it is not currently possible to introduce segregated cycle tracks without restricting traffic movement in one or both directions and thereby hinder vehicle access to multiple schools. With this link in place, two-way through vehicle movements on Cross Street would be restricted in favour of segregated cycle tracks, thereby providing an alternative solution for short distance journeys using this route.

It is considered that a bypass route scheme to the east of the town is effectively a longer-term aspiration and would need to be fully assessed in the future against national and regional policy and travel demand subsequent to the implementation of the LTP. However, if combined in future with other proposed improvements, the scheme has potential to improve access for all modes within the town.



Reference	Location	Description	Common Appraisal Framework Criteria					CAF Result	Feasibility Criteria				Summary Justification
			Economy	Safety	Environment	Access & Social Inclusion	Integration		Physical Activity	Engineering	Acceptability	Funding Potential	
Walking & Cycling Measures (WC)													
WC1	R446 Athenry Road - Town edge to Ardán Liam Maoilíosa	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions Would improve cycle connectivity between town centre and west/NW residential areas											Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC2	Athenry Road - Bypass to Ti Na Ri	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions Would improve cycle connectivity around the school, could connect to orbital route on Cois Furain											Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy



WC3	Galway Road - Town edge to Dunkellin Street	On-street route connecting other sections of orbital route Carriageway currently too narrow for segregated cycle tracks																		Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users, New links increase permeability between previously disconnected parts of the town. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC4	R380 Gort Road - Town edge to The Green	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions Would improve cycle connectivity between town centre and west residential areas																		Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC5	The Green - Whole length (N-S link)	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions Provide a connection between Gort Road/Galway Road/Barrack Street																		Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy



WC6a	The Green - Whole length (E-W link)	Make one way for vehicles (could be either direction) creating a cycle friendly route													Reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 2 Interim MCA
WC6b	The Green - Whole length (E-W link)	Remove through access for vehicles creating a cycle friendly route													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Provision of a car-free link on the town's waterfront provides wider economic opportunities Recommendation: Advance to Stage 2 Interim MCA
WC7	Barrack Street - The Green to Pigotts Street	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions May require removal of on-street parking spaces Provide a east-west link parallel to Main Street													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Provision of an active travel-friendly link on the town's waterfront provides wider economic opportunities. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy



WC8	Bride Street - Town edge to The Crescent	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions Would improve cycle connectivity between town centre and east/NE residential areas													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC9	Station Road - Main Street to northern extent	Road widths permit retro-fit cycle tracks in both directions Would improve cycle connectivity between town centre and northern residential areas. Could connect to the route of the former rail line and thereon to future development phases													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC10	Moore Street (contraflow) - Whole length	Would provide cycle link enabling bypass of town centre Multiple cars observed parking on footway													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Discontinue this option
WC11	Castle Street/Kelly's Street/King Street/Church Street/Pigott's Street - Whole length	Restrict access to residents only, enable two-way cycling with pedestrian and cyclist priority over vehicles May require removal of some parking spaces													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users, less vehicle trips through narrow town centre streets.



WC14	Area between R350 & Dun An Oir - R350 opposite Hazelwood to Dun An Oir	Would improve east-west orbital cycle connectivity, currently river causes severance. Would connect to the north-south link on the former rail route																	Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users, New links increase permeability between previously disconnected parts of the town Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC15a	Cross Street - Barrack Street to schools	Closure of road to through vehicle traffic, install segregated cycle tracks in both directions																	Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips especially to schools, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Vehicle access to schools from the rest of the town would be impeded. Will require eastern relief road link to be in place which will require funding beyond this LTP period. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 2 Interim MCA
WC15b	Cross Street - Barrack Street to schools	Implementation of traffic calming features and pedestrian enhancement measures																	Would form part of sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips especially to schools, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 2 Interim MCA



WC16	The Walks - Abbey Street to Station Road	Signage, minor works to facilitate cycle access Enables an E-W route bypassing town centre													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users, New links increase permeability between previously disconnected parts of the town Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC17	Dolphin Street - Abbey Street to R380	On-street route connecting other sections of orbital route													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users, New links increase permeability between previously disconnected parts of the town. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
WC18	Coscorrig Crescent - R380 to Galway Road	Remove through access for vehicles creating a cycle friendly route													Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy



WC26	Mount Carmel Crescent & unnamed lane connecting to Station Road	Signage, forms part of orbital cycle route																Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users, New links increase permeability between previously disconnected parts of the town. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy	
Public Transport Measures (PT)																			
PT1	Route of former rail line - Station Road to N65/R350 roundabout	Restoration of railway services as part of wider railway improvements within Galway County Not Compatible with WC13																	Enhances strategic PT connections btw Loughrea and other urban centres in the county, potential for modal shift from car to PT. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
PT2	Main Street/Bride Street/Station Road/Barrack Street/Athenry Road - Bus stops.	Bus stands, timetable info, shelters and seating for waiting passengers Main Street stops would likely require footway build out and loss of parking spaces to provide shelter. Recommend this pair is prioritised Integration potential with RT3																	Enhances strategic and local PT connections btw Loughrea town centre and other urban centres in the county, potential for modal shift from car to PT. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
Road Transport Measures (RT)																			



RT5	Main Street/Gort Road/Galway Road/Athenry Road signal junction - Junction footprint	Junction is the western gateway to the town centre, currently a challenging layout for pedestrians to negotiate - need to cross multiple arms Reduction in footprint, access restrictions, right turn bans would enable more efficient signal stages/more green time for pedestrians	Yellow	Green	Light Green	Green	Light Green	Light Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Improved accessibility at this junction for pedestrians will encourage active travel for short trips and improve safety. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
RT6	Study Area - Town Centre Streets (Main Street, Barrack Street and connections)	Develop an HGV management strategy which restricts access to HGVs on Main Street and Barrack Street at certain times, and/or applies higher weight restrictions to limit access for very large HGV vehicles.	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Light Green	Light Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Direct environmental benefit. Scheme indirectly benefits active travel by improving safety due to less HGVs on town's streets. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
RT7	Study Area - All Local Streets	Vehicle restrictions for streets adjacent to schools would initially be targeted at school pick-up and drop-off times to improve access and safety for pedestrians and cyclists	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Encourages mode shift for school trips, from car to active modes. Direct safety benefit. School zones would form part of integrated sustainable travel network for the town. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy



RT8	Study Area - Town Centre Streets (Main Street, Barrack Street and connections)	Active Kerbside Management potentially including: eCargo bike pilot for local businesses / deliveries; Adoption of kerbside hierarchy that prioritises certain vehicles/activities (e.g. cycle parking V on-street parking hierarchy; loading bays for servicing and deliveries in retail areas)		<p>Encourages mode shift for trips to/from town centre. Safety and environmental benefit due to less vehicles on Main St. Would form core of town's integrated sustainable travel network. Enhanced pedestrian experience would encourage tourism/economic activity.</p> <p>Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy</p>
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One measure was discontinued after the Stage 1 assessment, with a summary detailed in **Table 21**.

Table 10. Stage 1 Screening Discontinued Options

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTARY
WC10	Contraflow cycle track on Moore Street in southbound direction	Sections of road width too narrow for segregated contraflow track, therefore it is recommended to discontinue this option. Potential to include in cycle network as on-street route.

It is acknowledged that the eastern bypass link road (measure RT2) is unique in providing a new road link, when compared to the majority of the proposed measures which overwhelmingly focus on active travel and the re-prioritisation of road space in favour of walking and cycling.

It is considered that this link needs to be considered as part of an integrated suite of measures rather than on an individual basis. Implementing this link enables through trips to be directed away from Cross Street, allowing improved active travel schemes such as segregated cycle routes and wider footways. Enabling these types of schemes on Cross Street will result in a substantial benefit in walking and cycling connectivity for the multiple schools located on this key corridor.

The eastern bypass link road therefore was considered to offer substantial environmental benefits when considering the indirect possibilities enabled by its implementation and as a result passed the initial options screening process.





Table 11. Stage 2 Interim MCA

Reference	Description	Common Appraisal Framework Criteria						CAF Result	Feasibility Criteria				Summary Justification
		Economy	Safety	Environment	Access & Social Inclusion	Integration	Physical Activity		Engineering	Acceptability	Funding Potential	Affordability	
Cross Street													
WC15a	Closure of road to through vehicle traffic												Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips especially to schools, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Vehicle access to schools from the rest of the town would be impeded which is considered politically unacceptable. Recommendation: Discontinue Option
WC15b	Implementation of traffic calming features and pedestrian enhancement measures												Would form part of sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips especially to schools, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy
The Green													



WC6a	Make one way for vehicles (could be either direction) creating a cycle friendly route	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Higher benefits considered possible across all categories by additional traffic restrictions. Recommendation: Discontinue Option
WC6b	Remove through access for vehicles creating a cycle friendly route	Light Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Provision of a car-free link on the town's waterfront provides wider economic opportunities Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Strategy
Coscorríg Crescent													
WC18a	Make one way for vehicles (could be either direction) creating a cycle friendly route	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Higher benefits considered possible across all categories by additional traffic restrictions. Recommendation: Discontinue Option
WC18b	Remove through access for vehicles creating a cycle friendly route	Light Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Forms part of the town's sustainable transport network, encourages a healthy, sustainable mode of travel for shorter trips, reduced car use will result in a safer streetscape for all users. Provision of a car-free link on the town's waterfront provides wider economic opportunities Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Strategy
Galway Road (between junctions with Waterview Drive & Main Street)													



RT1a	Closure of Galway Road arm at junction with Main Street. Timed restrictions to allow delivery/servicing vehicles to access commercial properties, in westbound direction only.	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	<p>Although this measure would enhance local connections for active modes between west neighbourhoods and town centre and improve the capacity of Main Street/Athenry Road junction, it is considered to be unacceptable politically. Recommendation: Discontinue Option</p>
RT1b	Reroute traffic to one way in westbound direction	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	<p>Slight improvements to Main Street/Athenry Road junction capacity. Closure to through vehicle traffic deemed to provide increased benefits. Recommendation: Advance to Stage 3 Emerging Strategy</p>



The options development and appraisal process has sought to identify a wide range of potential improvements and interventions for different transport modes which would be capable of individually and collectively achieving the objectives which have been defined for the Loughrea LTP. In appraising the options, a significant number have been identified (particularly in relation to walking and cycling) which both contribute to more than one objective and are considered to be feasible to deliver in the short to medium term. These measures have been further appraised using the identified KPIs and found to perform strongly, without compromising the potential for further improvements or being associated with issues (in principle) of cost or deliverability. For avoidance of doubt, more detailed analysis of scheme designs and costs are expected to take place following adoption of the Loughrea LAP and LTP documents.

The town centre area (focused on Main Street and its links to Barrack Street) is one of the most intensely used parts of the existing street network and the option development process has identified that, rather than putting forward a series of individual measures, the most beneficial approach to addressing identified issues in this area will be a dedicated study of how existing constraints created by narrow footways, the location and extent of on-street parking (vs. on-street servicing) and the use of bollards and associated street furniture can be managed to enable a renewal of the street scene and make the area more attractive and safer for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst continuing to accommodate and improve infrastructure provision for public transport services. It is recognised that recent projects at other towns in Galway (including Ballinasloe) potentially offer further insights into how the town centre environment can be improved in a manner which puts active and sustainable travel to the fore, but recognises and continues to accommodate essential vehicle access, particularly the needs of businesses whose vitality is directly linked to the wider sustainability of the town.

Analysis of the wider street networks has confirmed that the general layout of streets largely functions in an effective manner; as such, only limited changes to circulation and access are proposed, and those which score positively in the option appraisal process (such as the proposed cycle contraflows) would have only limited impacts on general traffic. It is noted that any proposals which would involve re-routing or partial closure of streets or street sections will be subject to further analysis (including analysis of appropriate site-specific traffic data) prior to any implementation.

At the town-wide level, the initial option development process has considered potential new links to the east and west of the built-up areas; these have been initially identified from the previous LAP, but it is recognised that transport policy is moving away from the provision of general new road capacity, except in circumstances where it is required to address specific issues around safety or to enable the implementation of other sustainable transport measures where the overall benefits are considered to justify the road element. Within Loughrea, it has been identified that there is potential to create a new link between Bride Street and Cross Street which would enable traffic approaching Loughrea from the south-east to avoid travelling through part of the town centre, in particular the western end of Cross Street which accommodates a number of schools and where the nature of the road severely limits the improvements which can be made for sustainable mode access whilst the current traffic volumes are present. The creation of this link would require negotiations with relevant land owners and further work to identify a feasible preferred route, but it is considered that the benefits in terms of sustainable and safe access to this area would be significant and help to bring forward a “step change” in school travel and potentially wider walking and cycling uptake in the town.

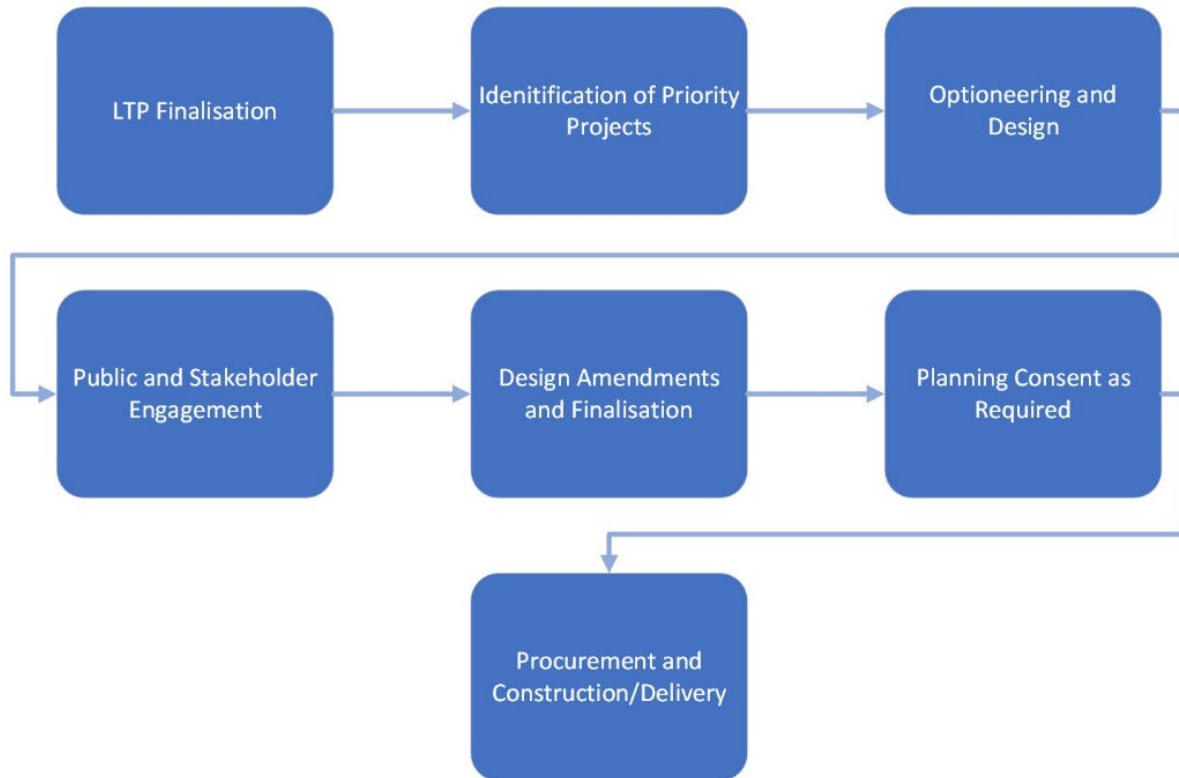
The current route of the former railway link to Loughrea has been identified as a potential new walking and cycling route which would connect to a number of the other on and off-street proposals developed as part of this LTP. It is recognised that some aspirations remain in terms of the re-use of this route for rail services; however, it is understood that this would be challenging based on developments which



have occurred elsewhere on the former route, and the costs associated with any re-opening are currently considered to be prohibitive in terms of any deliverability of such a scheme within the lifetime of the current emerging LAP and LTP documents.



Figure 4. Project Implementation Process Flow Chart



LTP Finalisation: Local Transport Plan is finalised, incorporating changes from the public consultation process and Material Alterations passed by elected members. The LTP now forms part of the statutory Local Area Plan.

Identification of Priority Projects: Galway County Council (GCC), collaborating with the elected members, the NTA, and other stakeholders and funding bodies, identifies priority projects with a focus on the town centre and schools arising from the measures within the LTP for which the implementation process should begin.

Optioneering and Design: Engineering consultants are engaged and commence a detailed optioneering and design process. In line with project management guidelines stipulated by funding bodies, most projects must complete an optioneering process from scratch, incorporating all options which could fulfil the project objectives. Key constraints that could affect the design are identified at this stage and environmental surveys will take place if required. This may see the chosen option for a given project take a different route than that indicated in the LTP. Following a decision on the Emerging Preferred Option, preliminary design is undertaken which can be presented for public and stakeholder engagement to give an idea of the shape and impact of the proposed scheme.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement: The elected members are taken through the options selection process and the preliminary design which will go to either full public consultation or more limited



stakeholder engagement depending on the scale of the project. as deemed appropriate depending on the scale of the project.

Design Amendments and Finalisation: Amendments required to the design arising from the engagement process are made.

Planning Consent as Required: The planning process and additional engagement on the final design required will depend on the scheme. Some schemes will require Part XIII approval including statutory consultation and formal vote by elected members. Some schemes may go to An Board Pleanála, some schemes may proceed via Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994. For schemes where the chosen options involves more limited intervention, additional statutory consultation on the scheme is not required.

Procurement and Construction/Delivery: Following grant of planning consent, detailed design drawings which will be issued to construction contractors are produced. Invitations to tender for construction contracts are issued. If construction traffic management plans are required, these will be decided in collaboration with GCC. Briefings and engagement with elected members will take place.

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