

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION STATEMENT

FOR THE GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

for: Galway County Council

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Galway



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Section 1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This is the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Conclusion Statement for the Galway County Development Plan. The obligation to undertake AA derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC as transposed into Irish legislation by, inter alia, the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action (such as a plan or programme) or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of any European Site in view of its conservation objectives. This AA Conclusion Statement should be read in conjunction with the Plan and associated documents including the AA Natura Impact Report (NIR).

1.2 Legislative Requirements in relation to AA

In carrying out the AA for the Plan, Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, requires, inter alia, that the Council considers the matters arrayed in the first column on Table 1.1 below. The second column identifies how these issues have been addressed.

Table 1.1 Matters taken into account by the AA

Matter specified by the Regulations	How addressed by AA
(a) the Natura Impact Report	An AA NIR accompanies this AA Conclusion Statement and the Plan.
(b) any supplemental information furnished in relation to any such report	This AA Conclusion Statement accompanies the NIR that provides additional detail on European Sites.
(c) if appropriate, any additional information sought by the authority and furnished by the applicant in relation to a Natura Impact Report	Submissions made during the Plan preparation/AA process that were relevant to the AA resulted in updates being made to the AA NIR.
(d) any information or advice obtained by the public authority	
(e) if appropriate, any written submissions or observations made to the public authority in relation to the application for consent for proposed plan or project	Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake Stage 2 AA (Stage 2 AA was undertaken on certain alterations).
(f) any other relevant information	

In addition to the above, the Regulations require that the Council makes available for inspection a determination regarding the outcome of the assessment with respect to whether or not the Plan would adversely affect the integrity of a European site (a copy of this determination is provided at Section 4).

1.3 AA Conclusion Statement

Non-Statutory AA guidance (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009) states that (Section 4.14) it *"is recommended that planning authorities include a clear and discrete AA Conclusion Statement as a distinct section in the written statement of the plan separate to the SEA statement."* This guidance recommends that the following issues are addressed by the AA Conclusion Statement:

- Summary of how the findings of the AA were factored into the Plan (see Section 2);
- Reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered as part of the AA process (see Section 3);
- A declaration that the Plan as adopted will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European Sites (provided at Section 4); and
- The NIR (the AA NIR is accompanied by this AA Conclusion Statement and has informed the AA Determination – see Section 4).

As recommended, this AA Conclusion Statement addresses the above issues.

Section 2 How the findings of the AA were factored into the Plan

The SEA and AA team worked with the Plan-preparation team at the Council in order to integrate requirements for environmental protection and management into the Plan.

The Plan was prepared in an iterative manner whereby the Plan and AA documents have informed subsequent versions of the other. The findings of the AA were integrated into the Plan through mitigation measures. These mitigation measures ensure that there will be no significant effects to the ecological integrity of any European site from implementation of the Plan. The mitigation measures most relevant to the protection of European sites are identified in Table 2.1 below.

Furthermore, the detailed Plan preparation process undertaken by the Planning Department combined with specialist input from the SEA and AA process facilitated zoning that avoids inappropriate development being permitted in areas of high ecological sensitivity.

Table 2.1 Mitigation relating to AA

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
<p>Various – see below</p>	<p>MM1 "Monitoring. The Council shall, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly and other sources as relevant, implement the monitoring programme as set out in the SEA Environmental Report and Statement. This will include the preparation of stand-alone SEA Monitoring Reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To accompany the report required of the manager under section 15(2) of the Act, including information in relation to progress on, and the results of, monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Development Plan 2. On the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in advance of the beginning of the review of the next Plan." <p>PRP 2 Corridor and Route Selection Process</p> <p>Policy objectives relating to new roads and other transport infrastructure projects that are not already provided for by existing plans/ programmes or are not already permitted, are subject to the undertaking of feasibility assessment, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the Plan relating to sustainable mobility. Where feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection; and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.</p> <p>WM 5 Construction and Environmental Management Plans</p> <p>Construction Environment Management Plans shall be prepared in advance of the construction of relevant projects and implemented throughout. Such plans shall incorporate relevant mitigation measures which have been integrated into the Plan and any lower tier Environmental Impact Statement or Appropriate Assessment. CEMPs typically provide details of intended construction practice for the proposed development, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. location of the sites and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse; b. location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities; c. details of site security fencing and hoardings; d. details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction; e. details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage; f. measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network; g. measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris; h. alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during the course of site development works; i. details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels; j. containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained (such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater); k. disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil, including compliance with 2006 Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government; l. a water and sediment management plan, providing for means to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains; <p>WM 6 Waste Management. To continue to meet the duties under the Waste Management (certification of historic unlicensed waste disposal and recovery activity) Regulations 2008, including those in relation to the identification and registration of closed landfills.</p> <p>WM 7 Recycling Infrastructure. To provide for the provision of recycling infrastructure throughout the county where it is considered necessary and support the provision of additional recycling infrastructure throughout the county.</p> <p>WM 8 Sustainable Waste Management Practices. Promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness activities and community based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.</p> <p>WM 9 Separate Collection of Waste. Encourage and support the provision of separate collection of waste in accordance with the requirements of the Waste Management (Food Waste) Regulations 2009, the Waste Framework Directive Regulations, 2011 and other relevant legislation.</p> <p>MAS 1 Separation Distances from SEVESO Sites</p> <p>To ensure that appropriate distances are maintained between any proposed development and any existing Seveso II establishment, in the interest of the health and safety of the occupiers of the proposed development.</p> <p>MAS 2 Soil Protection Measures</p> <p>To require that, the siting of new establishments, or modification of existing establishments classified under the Seveso II Directive, and new development in the vicinity of existing establishments shall take into account the need to prevent major accidents involving hazardous substances and safeguard both the public and the environment.</p>

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>MAS 3 SEVESO III Sites Take into account the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive, relating to the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances, and the recommendations of the Health and Safety Authority in the assessment of all planning applications located within the consultation distance of such sites.</p> <p>TI 4 Tourism and Infrastructure Capacity The potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals. Galway County Council will support Irish Water and Fáilte Ireland to ensure that tourism is serviced by adequate and appropriate water services infrastructure.</p> <p>MCH 2 Marine Based Environment. It is a Policy Objective of the Council to protect and enhance where appropriate marine biodiversity in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>MCC 1 Environmental Values of the Coast. Protect the amenity, character, visual, recreational, economic potential and environmental values of the coast. Ensure that natural coastal defences including sand dunes, beaches and coastal wetlands are not compromised by inappropriate development.</p> <p>MCC 2 "Protection of Coastal Habitats. To strictly control the nature and pattern of development within coastal areas and ensure that it is designed and landscaped to the highest standards and sited appropriately so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the area.</p> <p>a) Development shall be prohibited where the development poses a significant or potential threat to coastal habitats or features, and/or where the development is likely to result in altered patterns of erosion or deposition elsewhere along the coast.</p> <p>b) To prohibit development along the coast outside existing towns and villages where such development is not adequately safeguarded over the lifetime of the development without the need to construct additional coastal defences."</p> <p>MCC 3 "Protection of Coastal Area. It is a policy objective to protect the Coastal Area through the following measures:</p> <p>a) Ensure that conservation works undertaken in coastal areas are in accordance with best practice and measures to protect the coast, the coastal edge and coastal habitats are supported;</p> <p>b) Seek to prevent the unauthorised removal of sand and related beach material;</p> <p>c) Protect, enhance and conserve beaches in the County from inappropriate development and seek to maintain the current status of the designated Blue Flag beaches and Green Coasts and to increase the number of beaches and coasts holding this status in the future;</p> <p>d) Facilitate an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach to ensure the conservation, management and protection of man-made and natural resources of the coastal zone;"</p> <p>MCC 4 Integrated Framework Management Plan. Support the preparation of an Integrated Galway Bay Framework Management Plan by all relevant stakeholders to provide for the sustainable and integrated development of the Galway Bay Area in a co-ordinated manner.</p> <p>GICT 3 Tourism Development within An Gaeltacht and Islands. (a) Encourage and facilitate the development of the tourism potential of the Gaeltacht and Islands in a manner that respects, builds on, protects and enhances the cultural, built and natural heritage and local amenities of the area; (b) Provide where feasible, and support the provision of tourism infrastructure and services including, walking, cycling and water-based infrastructure and short-term guest accommodation facilities throughout the Gaeltacht area in appropriate locations. Such infrastructure and services shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance and ensuring that any new projects, such as greenways, are developed at suitable locations.</p> <p>AD1 Sustainable Agriculture Practices. To facilitate the development of sustainable agricultural practices and facilities within the county, subject to complying with best practice guidance, normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards in Chapter 15 Development Management and Standards.</p> <p>AD3 Modernisation of Agriculture Buildings. To facilitate the modernisation of agriculture and to encourage best practice in the design and construction of new agricultural buildings and installations to protect the environment, natural and built heritage and residential amenity.</p> <p>AT 2 Local Airstrips. (a) The Council shall liaise with the Irish Aviation Authority with regard to the effects of any development proposals in the vicinity of local airstrips. (b) Support that the Cleggan and Inishbofin airstrips be brought into use to support economic development¹.</p>
<p>Biodiversity and flora and fauna</p>	<p>Also refer to detailed measures for settlements contained in Volume 2 of the Plan.</p> <p>LP 1 Lighting Schemes. To require that all developments shall ensure lighting schemes are designed so that excessive light spillage is minimised to ensure light pollution in the surrounding environment including residential amenity, wildlife and near public roads is limited. Such lighting schemes shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority.</p> <p>LP 2 Lighting and Climate Action. To require the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting in support of Climate Action.</p> <p>LP 3 Dark Skies. To encourage the maintenance of dark skies in rural areas and to limit light pollution in urban and rural areas.</p> <p>F2 Sustainable Development. To encourage the development of a well-managed sustainable forestry sector, which is compatible with the protection of the environment including the avoidance of likely significant effects on European sites (SACs and SPAs) and is planted, managed and harvested in accordance with the Forest Service Guidelines for Landscape, Forest Harvesting and Environmental, Archaeology, Biodiversity and Water Quality.</p> <p>F3 Native Woodlands. To ensure that existing native woodlands are protected and enhanced and, where appropriate, encourage the conversion of coniferous forest to native woodlands with a focus on opportunities for habitat linkage and wider eco-services.</p> <p>F4 Forestry Development. To encourage forestry and forestry related development, as a means of diversifying from traditional agriculture activity with a preference for native species.</p> <p>F5 Deforestation. To promote the avoidance of deforestation or commercial afforestation within European sites unless directly relating to the management of the site for its qualifying interests.</p> <p>MEQ2 "Protection of the Environment. The Council shall require the following in relation to the management of authorised aggregate extraction</p> <p>(a) All quarries shall comply with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive, the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and by the guidance as contained within the DoEHLG Quarries and Ancillary Facilities</p>

¹ Bringing these airstrips into use would need to be subject to detailed studies and formal approval of any proposals by Galway County Council. Any proposal would need to demonstrate: a contribution towards the proper planning and sustainable development of the county; compliance with all environmental legislation and policies and objectives contained within the Plan and higher-level planning documents, including the National Planning Framework and the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy; and that no effect on the integrity of any European Site would occur.

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>Guidelines 2004, the EPA Guidelines 'Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry: Non Scheduled Minerals 2006 (including any updated/superseding documents) and to DM Standard 21 of this Development Plan;</p> <p>(b) Require development proposals on or in the proximity of quarry sites, to carry out appropriate investigations into the nature and extent of old quarries (where applicable). Such proposals shall also investigate the nature and extent of soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development works together with appropriate mitigation;</p> <p>(c) Require Development Proposals to assess the potential impact of extraction in areas where geo-morphological interest, groundwater and important aquifers, important archaeological features and Natural Heritage Areas are located;</p> <p>d) Have regard to the Landscape Character Assessment of the County and its recommendations;</p> <p>(e) Ensure that any quarry activity has minimal adverse impact on the road network and that the full cost of road improvements, including during operations and at time of closure, which are necessary to facilitate those industries are borne by the industry itself.</p> <p>(f) Ensure that the extraction of minerals or aggregates does not adversely impact on residential or environmental amenity;</p> <p>(g) Protect all known un-worked deposits from development that might limit their scope for extraction."</p> <p>NHB 1 "Natural Heritage and Biodiversity of Designated Sites, Habitats and Species. Protect and where possible enhance the natural heritage sites designated under EU Legislation and National Legislation (Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and Wildlife Acts) and extend to any additions or alterations to sites that may occur during the lifetime of this plan. Protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under European legislation (Habitats and Birds Directive) and protected under national Legislation (European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011), Wildlife Acts 1976-2010 and the Flora Protection Order (SI 94 of 1999). Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network, the protection of Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Wild Fowl Sanctuaries (and other designated sites including any future designations) and the promotion of the development of a green/ ecological network. "</p> <p>NHB 2 "European Sites and Appropriate Assessment. To implement Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and to ensure that Appropriate Assessment is carried out in relation to works, plans and projects likely to impact on European sites (SACs and SPAs), whether directly or indirectly or in combination with any other plan(s) or project(s). All assessments must be in compliance with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. All such projects and plans will also be required to comply with statutory Environmental Impact Assessment requirements where relevant; To have regard to 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009' or any updated version."</p> <p>NHB 3 Protection of European Sites. No plans, programmes, or projects etc. giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects?).</p> <p>NHB 4 Ecological Appraisal of Biodiversity. Ensure, where appropriate, the protection and conservation of areas, sites, species and ecological/networks of biodiversity value outside designated sites. Where appropriate require an ecological appraisal, for development not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Sites, or a proposed European Site and which are likely to have significant effects on that site either individually or cumulatively.</p> <p>NHB 5 Ecological Connectivity and Corridors. Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity in non-designated sites, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife areas where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>NHB 6 Implementation of Plans and Strategies. Support the implementation of any relevant recommendations contained in the National Heritage Plan 2030, the National Biodiversity Plan, the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and the National Peatlands Strategy and any such plans and strategies during the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>NHB 7 Mitigation Measures. Require mitigating measures in certain cases where it is evident that biodiversity is likely to be affected. These measures may, in association with other specified requirements, include establishment of wildlife areas/corridors/parks, hedgerow, tree planting, wildflower meadows/marshes and other areas. With regard to residential development, in certain cases, these measures may be carried out in conjunction with the provision of open space and/or play areas.</p> <p>NHB 8 Increased Awareness of the County's Biodiversity and Natural Heritage. Facilitate increased awareness of the County's biodiversity and natural heritage through the provision of information to landowners and the community generally, in cooperation with statutory and other partners.</p> <p>NHB 9 Protection of Bats and Bats Habitats. Seek to protect bats and their roosts, their feeding areas, flight paths and commuting routes. Ensure that development proposals in areas which are potentially important for bats, including areas of woodland, linear features such as hedgerows, stonewalls, watercourses and associated riparian vegetation which may provide migratory/foraging uses shall be subject to suitable assessment for potential impacts on bats. This will include an assessment of the cumulative loss of habitat or the impact on bat populations and activity in the area and may include a specific bat survey. Assessments shall be carried out by a suitably qualified professional and where development is likely to result in significant adverse effects on bat populations or activity in the area, development will be prohibited or require mitigation and/or compensatory measures, as appropriate. The impact of lighting on bats and their roosts and the lighting up of objects of cultural heritage must be adequately assessed in relation to new developments and the upgrading of existing lighting systems.</p> <p>NHB 10 Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for European sites involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done. Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared by the NPWS for European sites (or parts thereof), the NPWS shall be engaged with in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Plan and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations, including those of local communities.</p>

² Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>NHB 11 Increases in Visitor Numbers to Semi-Natural Areas Visitor and Habitat Management Seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that any new projects, such as greenways, are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones. Where relevant, the Council and those receiving permission for development under the Plan shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Management measures may include ensuring that new projects and activities are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor/Habitat Management Plans will be required for proposed projects as relevant and appropriate.</p> <p>WTWF 1 Wetland Sites. Protect and conserve the ecological and biodiversity heritage of the wetland sites in the County. Ensure that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats that are subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation that might destroy, fragment or degrade any wetland in the county. This includes lakes and ponds, turloughs, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, fens, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats. Protect Ramsar sites under The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (especially as Waterfowl Habitat).</p> <p>P1 Protection of Peatlands. Ensure that peatland areas which are designated (or proposed for designation) as NHAs, SACs or SPAs are conserved for their ecological, climate regulation, education and culture, archaeological potential including any ancient walkways (together) through bogs.</p> <p>P2 Best Practice in Peatland conservation and management. Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders on all suitable peatland sites to demonstrate best practice in sustainable peatland conservation, management and restoration techniques and to promote their heritage and educational value subject to Ecological Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening, as appropriate.</p> <p>P3 Framework Plans. Seek to support relevant agencies such as Bord na Mona in advancing rehabilitation works for the peatlands and related infrastructure, to provide for the future sustainable and environmentally sensitive use of peatlands sites including for amenity purposes.</p> <p>IS 1 Control of Invasive and Alien Invasive Species. It is a policy objective of the Council to support measures for the prevention and eradication of invasive species.</p> <p>IS 2 Invasive Species Management Plan. Ensure that proposals for development do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species. If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are currently or previously present, an invasive species management plan will be required. A landscaping plan will be required for developments near water bodies and such plans must not include alien invasive species.</p> <p>PO1 Delivery of All Ireland Pollinator Plan. To facilitate the delivery of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan where possible.</p> <p>TWHS 1 Trees, Hedgerows, Natural Boundaries and Stone Walls. Protect and seek to retain important trees, tree clusters and tree boundaries, ancient woodland, natural boundaries including stone walls, existing hedgerows particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows, where possible and replace with a boundary type similar to the existing boundary. Ensure that new development proposals take cognisance of significant trees/tree stands and that all planting schemes developed are suitable for the specific site and use suitable native variety of trees of Irish provenance and hedgerows of native species. Seek Tree Management Plans to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and incorporated into the design of new developments.</p> <p>TWHS 2 Planting of Trees and Woodlands. Encourage and promote in co-operation with Coillte and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and other organisations, the planting of trees and woodlands, as an important means of contributing to its objective of sustaining, protecting and enhancing the County's biodiversity, natural resources, amenity, landscape and developing tourism product. Encourage community woodlands in urban/urban fringe areas utilising funding available through schemes such as the NeighbourWood and Native Woodland Schemes.</p> <p>TWHS 3 Protection of Forestry. Protect all substantial areas of deciduous forest, other than areas of commercial forestry. Proposals for development in these areas should seek to interact with the landscape character of the forested areas and its limits while also enhancing the forested areas so as to increase biodiversity value.</p> <p>BMSP 8 Jetty/Marina Development. Support the preparation of a feasibility study for a jetty/marina development in the vicinity of Bearna Pier and any necessary marine/foreshore works to facilitate public access to and use of the area around the pier, such as breakwaters. This feasibility study shall take account of the requirements to comply with the European Habitats Directive</p> <p>CT 2 Water Sports. To encourage the development of coastal tourism in areas such as water-sports and water-related activities and events subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.</p> <p>CT 3 Tourism Development. To support proposals for tourism development in coastal areas where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the amenities of the area, the integrity of the natural environment or the economic value of the County's coastline and beaches.</p> <p>CT 5 Tourism Products. To support the protection and enhancement of our islands, coastline and waterways as tourism products and attractions, subject to community and environmental carrying capacity.</p> <p>HT 3 Sustainable Tourism Industry. To support the development of a more sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species; leaving them undiminished as a resource for future generations, while supporting social and economic prosperity.</p> <p>GICT 3 Tourism Development within An Gaeltacht and Islands. (a) Encourage and facilitate the development of the tourism potential of the Gaeltacht and Islands in a manner that respects, builds on, protects and enhances the cultural, built and natural heritage and local amenities of the area; (b) Provide where feasible, and support the provision of tourism infrastructure and services including, walking, cycling and water-based infrastructure and short-term guest accommodation facilities throughout the Gaeltacht area in appropriate locations. Such infrastructure and services shall seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance and ensuring that any new projects, such as greenways, are developed at suitable locations.</p> <p>RE4 Solar Energy Developments. Promote and facilitate solar farm developments in suitable locations, having regard to areas of the County designated for this purpose in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy. The Planning Authority will assess any planning application proposals for solar energy production having due regard to the Habitats Directive and to the detailed policy objectives and Development Standards set out in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy.</p>
Soil	<p>SQ 1 Soil Impact Assessments. Ensure good soil quality throughout the county by requiring developments of a certain nature (as specified in the relevant environmental legislation) to carry out assessments of the impact of the development on soil quality.</p> <p>SQ 2 Soil Protection Measures. To ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate.</p> <p>SQ 3 Soil Protection, Contamination and Remediation Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p>

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>All undeveloped, contaminated sites shall be remediated to internationally accepted standards prior to redevelopment. All applications shall be accompanied by a report from a qualified, expert consultant remediation incorporating international best practice and expertise on innovative ecological restoration techniques including specialist planting and green initiatives that create aesthetically improved sites, healthy environments and contribute to the provision of new green open spaces as integral parts of newly created areas.</p> <p>Treatment/management of any contaminated material shall comply as appropriate with the Waste Management Act 1996 (waste licence, waste facility permit), as amended, and under the EPA Act 1992 (Industrial Emissions licensing, in particular the First Schedule, Class 11 Waste), as amended. These measures will ensure that contaminated material will be managed in a manner that removes any risk to human health and ensures that the end use will be compatible with any risk.</p> <p>ESK1 Protection of Eskers Systems. Protect and conserve the landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity value of esker systems in the county. Assess applications for quarrying and other proposed developments with reference to their status or relative importance, for example, amenity, landscape and scientific value in the context of the overall esker system.</p> <p>ESK2 Esker Areas. Have regard to the Landscape Character Assessment of the County of Galway and its recommendations relating to the Esker areas and any other subsequent relevant reports/ data.</p>
Water	<p>RH 11 Waste Water Treatment provision. Where a connection to the public wastewater network is not available, provide for sustainable rural housing in the county in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment Systems for Single Houses (2009).</p> <p>AD4 Agriculture Waste. To ensure agricultural waste is managed and disposed of in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner having regard to the environment and in full compliance with the European Communities Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations (2014) and relevant best practice guidelines.</p> <p>WS 1 Enhancement of Water Supply Infrastructure. Liaise with Irish Water, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.</p> <p>WS 2 Protection of Water Supplies. Collaborate with Irish Water and the Group Water Federation Scheme to protect, conserve and enhance all existing and potential water resources in the County to ensure compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014 (as amended) and compliance of water supplies with the parameters identified in these Regulations.</p> <p>WS 3 River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021. Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>WS 4 Requirement to Liaise with Irish Water – Water Supply. Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with a suitable quantity and quality of drinking water supply and require that all new developments intending to connect to a public water supply liaise with Irish Water with regard to the water (and waste water) infrastructure required.</p> <p>WS 5 Private Water Supply. Support the provision of a private water supply in instances where there is no public water supply or where the existing supply does not have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development. This will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the proposed water supply meets the standards set out in the EU and national legislation and guidance including adherence to Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive, and would not be prejudicial to public health or would not significantly impact negatively on the source or yield of an existing supply.</p> <p>WS 6 Water Framework Directive. Support the preparation of Drinking Water Safety Plans and Source Protection Plans to protect sources of public water supply, in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>WS 7 Water Quality. Require that new development proposals would ensure that there would not be an unacceptable impact on water quality and quantity including surface water, ground water, designated source protection areas, river corridors and associated wetlands.</p> <p>WS 8 Proliferation of Septic Tanks. Encourage the use of high standard treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.</p> <p>CWS 1 Water Conservation with all Developments. To ensure all developments incorporate water conservation measures such as rain water harvesting to minimise wastage of water supply.</p> <p>CWS 2 Water Mains Rehabilitation. To assist Irish Water in their commitment to water conservation and support efforts to tackle leakage through find and fix (active leakage control) and water mains rehabilitation.</p> <p>CWS 3 Promotion of Water Conservation. To support Irish Water in promoting public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, business and industry.</p> <p>WW 1 Enhancement of Wastewater Supply Infrastructure. Work in conjunction with Irish Water to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the delivery of new wastewater services infrastructure, to facilitate future growth in the county. The Ballinasloe area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to Environmentally sensitive sites including Natura 2000, SPC, SACs under Habitat, Birds and Wildlife Directives, proximity to River Suck and Shannon, floodplain and groundwater risks/conflicts, unsatisfactory water status with regard to Water framework obligations and River Basin Management plans, interference with progressive sustainable development plans with regard to National Cycleway Spur, Suck Bathing and emerging Water recreation feasibility plans, and in keeping with Environmental Justice Principles of affording the population and environment of Ballinasloe the opportunity to evolve, flourish and regenerate after repeated chronic siting of waste facilities in the area in order to guarantee that those living in Ballinasloe have equal access to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment, as well as equal protection from environmental harm. The Tuam Area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to the SAC Lough Corrib and River Clare flood plain and the processing or associated treatment will not be permitted in the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>WW 2 Delivery of Wastewater Infrastructure. Liaise and co-operate with Irish Water in the implementation and delivery of the Water Services Strategic Plan (2015) and the Irish Water Investment Plan 2020-2024 and other relevant investment works programmes of Irish Water in the delivery of infrastructure within the county. The Ballinasloe area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to Environmentally sensitive sites including Natura 2000, SPC, SACs under Habitat, Birds and Wildlife Directives, proximity to River Suck and Shannon, floodplain and groundwater risks/conflicts, unsatisfactory water status with regard to Water framework obligations and River Basin Management plans, interference with progressive sustainable development plans with regard to National Cycleway Spur, Suck Bathing and emerging Water recreation feasibility plans, and in keeping with Environmental Justice Principles of affording the population and environment of Ballinasloe the opportunity to evolve, flourish and regenerate after repeated chronic siting of waste facilities in the area in order to guarantee that those living in Ballinasloe have equal access to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment, as well as equal protection from environmental harm. The Tuam Area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a</p>

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to the SAC Lough Corrib and River Clare flood plain and the processing or associated treatment will not be permitted in the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>WW 3 The Greater Galway Area Strategic Drainage Study. To seek to accelerate and support the delivery of the Greater Galway Area Strategic Drainage Study and the associated solutions as identified in the RSES as an essential infrastructure requirement, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, Irish Water and Galway City Council.</p> <p>WW 4 "Requirement to Liaise with Irish Water – Wastewater. Ensure that new developments will only be permitted which are adequately serviced with sufficient capacity for appropriate collection, treatment and disposal (in compliance with the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan) to the public sewer unless provided for otherwise by the plan. Developers shall liaise with Irish Water with regard to the waste water (and water)infrastructure to ensure sufficient capacity is available prior to the submission of a planning application. "</p> <p>WW 5 Serviced Sites. Support the servicing of small towns and villages including initiatives to provide an alternative to one-off housing in the countryside, in accordance with the National Planning Framework.</p> <p>WW 6 Private Wastewater Treatment Plants. Ensure that private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment System 2021 (Population Equivalent ≤10).</p> <p>WW 7 Sustainable Drainage Systems. To require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of SuDS measures be incorporated in all new development (including extensions to existing developments). All development proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.</p> <p>WW 8 Storm Water Infrastructure. To support the improvement of storm water infrastructure and to increase the use of sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in urban environments.</p> <p>WW10 Integrated Wetland Wastewater Treatment Systems. Galway County Council will encourage the use of integrated wetland wastewater treatment systems for both one off and multi unit housing developments that accord with the prevailing regulations and standards including the relevant EPA Code of Practice.</p> <p>WW11 Surface Water Drainage. To require all new developments to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system and to incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems where appropriate in new development and the public realm.</p> <p>WW12 Protection of Irish Water Collection Systems. To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.</p> <p>WR 1 Water resources. Protect the water resources in the plan area, including rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, springs, turloughs, surface water and groundwater quality, as well as surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and water dependant species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the River Basin District Management Plan 2018 – 2021 and other relevant EU Directives, including associated national legislation and policy guidance (including any superseding versions of same) and also have regard to the Freshwater Pearl Mussel Sub-Basin Management Plans.</p> <p>WR 2 River Basin Management Plans. It is a policy objective of the Council to implement the programme of measures developed by the River Basin District Projects under the Water Framework Directive in relation to: Surface and groundwater interaction, Dangerous substances, Hydro-morphology, Forestry, On site wastewater treatment systems, Municipal and industrial discharges, Urban pressures, Abstractions.</p> <p>WTWF 1 Wetland Sites. Protect and conserve the ecological and biodiversity heritage of the wetland sites in the County. Ensure that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats that are subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation that might destroy, fragment or degrade any wetland in the county. This includes lakes and ponds, turloughs, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, fens, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats. Protect Ramsar sites under The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (especially as Waterfowl Habitat).</p> <p>IW 1 Inland Waterways.</p> <p>(a) Protect and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways in accordance with best practice guidelines.</p> <p>(b) Preserve, protect and enhance Galway's inland lakes and waterways for their amenity and recreational resource amenity.</p> <p>(c) Protect the riparian zones of watercourse systems throughout the County, recognising the benefits they provide in relation to flood risk management and their protection of the ecological integrity of watercourse systems and ensure they are considered in the land use zoning in Local Area Plans.</p> <p>(d) The Council will support in principal the development and upgrading of the Inland Waterways and their associated facilities in accordance with legislation, best practice and relevant management strategies, key stakeholders and bodies including Waterways Ireland.</p> <p>(e) Ensure all abstractions of water will be subject to assessment for compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>(f) Seek to provide additional accesses to lake shores and rivers for public rights of way, parking and layby facilities, where appropriate.</p> <p>(g) Developments shall ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken, where appropriate, including investigations into the nature and extent of any soil/groundwater contamination"</p> <p>FL 1 Flood Risk Management Guidelines. It is the policy objective of Galway County Council to support, in co-operation with the OPW, the implementation of the EU Flood Risk Directive (2007/60/EC), the Flood Risk Regulations (SI No. 122 of 2010) and the DEHLG/OPW publication The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009) (and any updated/superseding legislation or policy guidance) and Department Circular PL2/2014 or any updated / superseding version.</p>
<p>Air and Climatic Factors</p>	<p>AQ 1 Ambient Air Quality. To promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011) (or any updated/superseding documents).</p> <p>AQ 2 Assessment of Air Quality. To require developments which would have the potential to have adverse impacts on air quality to carry out assessments of the impact of the development on air quality.</p> <p>AQ 3 Air Quality Mitigation Measures. To require the use of appropriate mitigation measures such as dust dampeners to minimise the potential impacts of developments on air quality.</p>

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>AQ 4 Air Purification. The Council shall encourage landscaping and deciduous tree planting in an environmentally sensitive manner within towns and villages as a means of air purification, the filtering of suspended particles and the improvement of their micro-climate.</p> <p>AQ 5 Radon. The Council shall have regard, to the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations (including any updated/superseding regulations that may be published within the lifetime of this Development Plan).</p> <p>NP 1 Galway County Council Noise Action Plan 2019-2023. To implement the Galway County Council Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure.</p> <p>NP 2 Developments within Noise Maps (Noise Action Plan 2019-2023). To require that where new developments are proposed within the noise limits of the noise maps for the designated sections of roads in the County, appropriate mitigation measures are undertaken so as to prevent harmful effects from environmental noise.</p> <p>NP 3 Noise Impact Assessments. To require an assessment of impact of the development on noise levels, having regard to the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency Acts 1992 and 2003 and the EPA Noise Regulations 1994 when assessing planning application.</p> <p>NP 4 Noise Pollution and Regulation. Restrict development proposals causing noise pollution in excess of best practice standards and Regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise, other than those activities which are regulated by the EPA</p> <p>NP 5 Noise Mitigation Measures. Require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures and monitors. The provision of a noise audit may be required where appropriate</p> <p>CC1 Climate Change. Support and facilitate the implementation of European, national and regional objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage) and having regard to the Climate mitigation and adaptation measures.</p> <p>CC2 Transition to a low carbon, climate-resilient society. It is the Council’s policy objective to support the transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency.</p> <p>CC3 County Galway Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024. To implement the County Galway Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 as appropriate</p> <p>CC4 Local Authority Climate Action Plan. Support the preparation of a Climate Action Plan for County Galway.</p> <p>CC5 Climate Adaptation and Mitigation. To promote, support and direct effective climate action policies and objectives that seek to improve climate outcomes across County Galway through the encouragement and integration of appropriate mitigation and adaptation considerations and measures into all development and decision making processes.</p> <p>CC6 Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy. To support the implementation of the Renewable Energy Strategy contained in Appendix 1 of the Galway County Development Plan to facilitate the transition to a low carbon county.</p> <p>CC7 Climate Action Fund. Support the delivery of sustainable development projects under the European Green Deal and utilise the Climate Action Fund/ Just Transition Fund established under the National Development Plan to encourage public and private climate mitigation and adaptation projects in line with criteria set out by the Fund at that time.</p> <p>CC8 Climate Action and Development Location. To implement, through the plan and future local areas plans, policies that support and encourage sustainable compact growth and settlement patterns, integrate land use and transportation, and maximise opportunities through development location, form, layout and design to secure climate resilience and reduce carbon dioxide and greenhouse emissions.</p> <p>CC9 Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation. Galway County Council shall incorporate climate change adaptation into land use planning, building layouts, energy, transport, natural resource management, forestry, agriculture and marine waters.</p> <p>CC10 Green Infrastructure. Galway County Council shall promote the benefit of open spaces and implement the integration of green infrastructure/networks (e.g. interconnected network of green spaces (including aquatic ecosystems) and other physical features on land) into new development and regeneration proposals in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change.</p>
Material Assets	<p>RH 11 Waste Water Treatment provision. Where a connection to the public wastewater network is not available, provide for sustainable rural housing in the county in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment Systems for Single Houses (2009).</p> <p>AD4 Agriculture Waste. To ensure agricultural waste is managed and disposed of in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner having regard to the environment and in full compliance with the European Communities Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations (2014) and relevant best practice guidelines.</p> <p>WS 1 Enhancement of Water Supply Infrastructure. Liaise with Irish Water, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.</p> <p>WS 2 Protection of Water Supplies. Collaborate with Irish Water and the Group Water Federation Scheme to protect, conserve and enhance all existing and potential water resources in the County to ensure compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended) and compliance of water supplies with the parameters identified in these Regulations.</p> <p>WS 3 River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021. Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>WS 4 Requirement to Liaise with Irish Water – Water Supply. Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with a suitable quantity and quality of drinking water supply and require that all new developments intending to connect to a public water supply liaise with Irish Water with regard to the water (and waste water) infrastructure required.</p> <p>WS 5 Private Water Supply. Support the provision of a private water supply in instances where there is no public water supply or where the existing supply does not have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development. This will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the proposed water supply meets the standards set out in the EU and national legislation and guidance including adherence to Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive, and would not be prejudicial to public health or would not significantly impact negatively on the source or yield of an existing supply.</p> <p>WS 6 Water Framework Directive. Support the preparation of Drinking Water Safety Plans and Source Protection Plans to protect sources of public water supply, in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>WS 7 Water Quality. Require that new development proposals would ensure that there would not be an unacceptable impact on water quality and quantity including surface water, ground water, designated source protection areas, river corridors and associated wetlands.</p>

Topic	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>WS 8 Proliferation of Septic Tanks. Encourage the use of high standard treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.</p> <p>WW10 Integrated Wetland Wastewater Treatment Systems. Galway County Council will encourage the use of integrated wetland wastewater treatment systems for both one off and multi unit housing developments that accord with the prevailing regulations and standards including the relevant EPA Code of Practice.</p> <p>WW11 Surface Water Drainage. To require all new developments to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system and to incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems where appropriate in new development and the public realm.</p> <p>WW12 Protection of Irish Water Collection Systems. To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.</p> <p>CWS 1 Water Conservation with all Developments. To ensure all developments incorporate water conservation measures such as rain water harvesting to minimise wastage of water supply.</p> <p>CWS 2 Water Mains Rehabilitation. To assist Irish Water in their commitment to water conservation and support efforts to tackle leakage through find and fix (active leakage control) and water mains rehabilitation.</p> <p>CWS 3 Promotion of Water Conservation. To support Irish Water in promoting public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, business and industry.</p> <p>WW 1 Enhancement of Wastewater Supply Infrastructure. Work in conjunction with Irish Water to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the delivery of new wastewater services infrastructure, to facilitate future growth in the county. The Ballinasloe area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to Environmentally sensitive sites including Natura 2000, SPC, SACs under Habitat, Birds and Wildlife Directives, proximity to River Suck and Shannon, floodplain and groundwater risks/conflicts, unsatisfactory water status with regard to Water framework obligations and River Basin Management plans, interference with progressive sustainable development plans with regard to National Cycleway Spur, Suck Bathing and emerging Water recreation feasibility plans , and in keeping with Environmental Justice Principles of affording the population and environment of Ballinasloe the opportunity to evolve, flourish and regenerate after repeated chronic siting of waste facilities in the area in order to guarantee that those living in Ballinasloe have equal access to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment, as well as equal protection from environmental harm. The Tuam Area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to the SAC Lough Corrib and River Clare flood plain and the processing or associated treatment will not be permitted in the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>WW 2 Delivery of Wastewater Infrastructure. Liaise and co-operate with Irish Water in the implementation and delivery of the Water Services Strategic Plan (2015) and the Irish Water Investment Plan 2020-2024 and other relevant investment works programmes of Irish Water in the delivery of infrastructure within the county. The Ballinasloe area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to Environmentally sensitive sites including Natura 2000, SPC, SACs under Habitat, Birds and Wildlife Directives, proximity to River Suck and Shannon, floodplain and groundwater risks/conflicts, unsatisfactory water status with regard to Water framework obligations and River Basin Management plans, interference with progressive sustainable development plans with regard to National Cycleway Spur, Suck Bathing and emerging Water recreation feasibility plans, and in keeping with Environmental Justice Principles of affording the population and environment of Ballinasloe the opportunity to evolve, flourish and regenerate after repeated chronic siting of waste facilities in the area in order to guarantee that those living in Ballinasloe have equal access to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment, as well as equal protection from environmental harm. The Tuam Area will not be suitable or considered appropriate siting for a regional Connaught/Ulster waste management facility and/or as a regional or county sludge hub given its proximity to the SAC Lough Corrib and River Clare flood plain and the processing or associated treatment will not be permitted in the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>WW 3 The Greater Galway Area Strategic Drainage Study. To seek to accelerate and support the delivery of the Greater Galway Area Strategic Drainage Study and the associated solutions as identified in the RSES as an essential infrastructure requirement, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, Irish Water and Galway City Council.</p> <p>WW 4 "Requirement to Liaise with Irish Water – Wastewater. Ensure that new developments will only be permitted which are adequately serviced with sufficient capacity for appropriate collection, treatment and disposal (in compliance with the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan) to the public sewer unless provided for otherwise by the plan. Developers shall liaise with Irish Water with regard to the waste water (and water)infrastructure to ensure sufficient capacity is available prior to the submission of a planning application. "</p> <p>WW 5 Serviced Sites. Support the servicing of small towns and villages including initiatives to provide an alternative to one-off housing in the countryside, in accordance with the National Planning Framework.</p> <p>WW 6 Private Wastewater Treatment Plants. Ensure that private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment System 2021 (Population Equivalent ≤10).</p> <p>WW 7 Sustainable Drainage Systems. To require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of SuDS measures be incorporated in all new development (including extensions to existing developments). All development proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.</p> <p>WW 8 Storm Water Infrastructure. To support the improvement of storm water infrastructure and to increase the use of sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in urban environments.</p> <p>WM 1 Connacht and Ulster Waste Management Plan 2015-2021. Support the implementation of the Connacht and Ulster Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 or any updated version of this document within the lifetime of the plan.</p> <p>WM 2 Requirements for Waste Management. Support and promote the circular economy principles, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, and to sustainably manage residual waste. New developments will be expected to take account of the provisions of the Waste Management Plan for the Region and observe those elements of it that relate to waste prevention and minimisation, waste recycling facilities, and the capacity for source segregation.</p> <p>WM 3 Waste Recovery and Disposal Facilities. Support and facilitate the provision of adequate waste recovery and disposal facilities for the county.</p> <p>WM 4 Waste Legalisation. To require that all waste disposal shall be undertaken in compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency and relevant Waste Management Legislation.</p>

Section 3 Consideration of Alternatives

This section summarises the alternatives considered for the Plan during the preparation process. These alternatives have been incorporated into the Plan having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects (including those related to ecology and European sites) which are identified by the SEA (informed by the AA) and are detailed above; and
2. Planning - including social and economic - effects that also were considered by the Council.

3.1 Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy

Type 1 (i) Alternatives for Gort and Loughrea

- **Alternative A:** Designate Gort and Loughrea as Self Sustaining Growth Towns
- **Alternative B:** Designate Loughrea only as a Self Sustaining Town

Both Gort and Loughrea are towns which display numerous attributes including a good level of jobs and services for both resident population but also a wider catchment area, a broad range of services and facilities and good transport links with motorways within proximity. They have the capacity for continued commensurate growth in terms of population and employment and to become more self-sustaining. Both towns have opportunities to accommodate compact growth within their development envelopes in accordance with national and regional policy.

By facilitating population and employment growth commensurate to the attributes of Gort and Loughrea, **Alternative A** would provide for a more sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and a greater level of sustainable development at a County level. Alternative A would help to facilitate a more compact form of development at these settlements that would help to maximise benefits from the infrastructural investment and to the wider network of villages surrounding these towns. Alternative A would not increase pressure in lower-level settlements, which are generally less well-serviced and less-well connected, and the open countryside – and would, as a result, avoid potential adverse significant effects on various environmental components.

By limiting population growth in the two towns, **Alternative B** would fail to provide viable alternatives to the large towns of Athenry and the Key Town of Ballinasloe as a place to live and work and would result in increased pressure in the lower-level settlements and the open countryside. It would also militate against the future compact growth of the settlements. As a result, Alternative B would be likely to result in a greater extent of significant effects on various environmental components and would not be as sustainable as Alternative A.

Type 1 (ii) Alternatives for Portumna and Headford

- **Alternative A:** Designate Headford and Portumna as a Small Growth Town
- **Alternative B:** Designate Portumna and Headford as Self-Sustaining Towns

Alternative A would focus on localised sustainable growth and employment related development that would strengthen and support the local base of Headford and Portumna. It would also provide a realistic and suitable alternative to one off housing in the countryside. By facilitating population and employment growth commensurate to its attributes, Alternative A would provide for a more sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and a greater level of sustainable development at a County level and at a town level in Headford and Portumna.

Alternative A would result in a lower number of car journeys, supporting efforts to improve sustainable mobility and meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. This alternative would help to facilitate a more compact form of development at these settlements that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. Alternative A would provide for higher levels of brownfield and infill development (and associated adverse environmental

effects) in better serviced, better connected and more sensitive locations. This type of development would result in less potential environmental impacts, including on water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations.

Alternative B would not be line with the two settlements of Gort and Loughrea identified as self-sustaining towns. The settlements of Headford and Portumna would not have the same level of services and employment base which would result in increased populations for these towns, but the employment opportunities would not be present.

A greater level of sprawl and higher dependence on outbound commuting for employment means that Alternative B would be likely to result in a greater extent of significant effects on various environmental components and would not be as sustainable as Alternative A. Alternative B would result in a higher number of car journeys, conflicting with efforts to improve sustainable mobility and meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The greater degree of sprawl would reduce efficiencies with regard to infrastructural investment. This alternative would provide for higher levels of greenfield development (and associated adverse environmental effects) in less well-serviced, less-well connected and more sensitive locations surrounding these settlements. This type of development would result in a higher adverse environmental impact, including effects on water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations.

Type 1 (iii) Alternatives for Rural Settlements and Rural Area

- **Alternative A:** Designate the Rural Settlements within this level (7) dispersed throughout the county to meet rural generated housing needs.
- **Alternative B:** Do not designate the Rural Settlements, settlements to remain in Open Countryside

The settlements are primarily residential in nature. Some of the villages in the rural settlements are served by public mains water and/or wastewater supply, whilst there are others that are unserved. The purpose of these settlements is to provide an alternative to rural housing within a low-density environment.

Alternative A, by providing focus to and targeted policy objectives for the Rural Villages, would facilitate a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within these settlements would be more likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and more likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape. Development would be required to be subject to siting, design, protection of residential amenities and normal development management criteria, subject to the satisfactory provision of infrastructure and services and in keeping with the character of the settlement.

Alternative B, by not providing a focus to and targeted policy objectives for Rural Villages would be less likely to provide a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within the open countryside would be less likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and less likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape. Alternative B would be the least sustainable of these two alternatives and would be most harmful to the environment.

3.2 Assessment of Type 2: Alternatives for Population Allocations

- **Type 2 – Alternative A:** Allocate significant population allocation to the settlements in Level 1, 2 and 3 of the settlement hierarchy, with limited growth in Level 4, 5 and 6 and minimal growth identified in Level 7
- **Type 2 – Alternative B:** Continued Growth of the MASP and Key Towns and dispersed pattern of growth across the other settlements and open countryside

The concentration of growth in the larger settlements in the County (i.e. MASP, Ballinasloe, Tuam and Athenry) under **Alternative A** will ensure there are settlements suitably located in the County with the capacity to grow at a sustainable level where there are opportunities to consolidate development in the existing urban footprint through infill and brownfield development. These settlements have a number of positive attributes including a broad range of services, transport links, a strong employment base, and capacity to facilitate population and economic growth. By providing for a concentration in the larger settlements in the County, Alternative A would result in lower levels of commuting, benefiting efforts to improve sustainable mobility and meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the most. Development in these centres would be better serviced and there would be a reduced need for greenfield development (and associated adverse environmental effects, including effects on water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations) in less well-served, less-well connected and more sensitive locations in the County, including the open countryside and smaller settlements as identified in Levels 4-6.

A more dispersed pattern of development as identified in **Alternative B** that would result in the expansion of the smaller towns and villages in the County. Development is more likely to be on greenfield lands as there are few infill and brownfield sites available. Services and public transport are more limited and there would be a greater dependence on commuting for employment. Development would be more likely to occur on greenfield lands as there are less infill and brownfield sites available in Rural Settlements and the Open Countryside. Greenfield development (and associated adverse environmental effects, including effects on water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations) would be in less well-served, less-well connected and more sensitive locations in the County, including the open countryside and smaller settlements. The more dispersed population approach has the potential to undermine the role of the larger settlements and make it more difficult to deliver key infrastructure and placemaking projects.

3.3 Assessment of Type 3: Alternatives for Rural Areas

- **Type 3 (i) Alternative A:** Designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Pressure that require various criteria to be demonstrated in advance of planning permission being granted for a single dwelling for permanent occupation.
- **Type 3 (i) Alternative B:** Do not designate Rural Areas under Strong Urban Pressure and assess each planning application on its merits.

Alternative A provides for a robust and transparent policy approach to manage rural housing.

Restricting the development of single dwellings in rural areas that are under strong urban influence/pressure would positively impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The restrictions would help to both reduce levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and encourage brownfield development within existing centres.

Single dwellings in rural areas would be facilitated as appropriate and urban development would be directed towards established settlements. This alternative would help to prevent low density

urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

Alternative B Provides a vague and unclear policy approach to rural housing and risks facilitating a significant increase in urban-generated one-off housing in the open countryside which will undermine the role of small towns and villages and have consequences for the environment.

Not restricting the development of single dwellings in rural areas that are under strong urban influence/pressure would adversely impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The absence of restrictions would result in increased levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and less demand for brownfield development within existing centres.

Urban generated housing development would occur within rural areas outside of established settlements. This alternative would result in low density urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

3.4 Assessment of Type 4: Alternatives for Land Use Zoning

Alternatives for Land Use Zoning are assessed on Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Assessment of Type 4 Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Commentary
Bearna	A New Residential Zoning: South of R336 lands (outside Flood Zone A) zoned as TC/Infill Residential	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
	B New Residential Zoning: South of R336 zoned, all lands (within Flood Zone A) zoned as TC/Infill Residential	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
Oranmore Set 1	A Lands (within Flood Zone A) zoned Open Space/Recreation and Amenity	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
	B Lands (within Flood Zone A) zoned Residential Phase 1	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
Oranmore Set 2	A Lands to the south of the Plan area zoned Residential Phase 2	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	B Lands to the south of the Plan area removed from Plan boundary	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Commentary
Baile Chláir	A Lands to the West of the Plan boundary zoned Residential Phase 2	There are various other alternative lands for residential development that would contribute more to the proper planning of the town. Residential zoning on these lands would be unnecessary and there would be a need to provide for tourism zoning elsewhere. This alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary Residential zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	B Lands to the West of the Plan boundary zoned Community Facilities	There is an identified planning need for community facilities development in Baile Chláir. Providing for this use within the settlement boundary would help to minimise the occurrence of this type of development outside of the town, potentially on less well-connected, less well-served lands – with associated potential adverse environmental effects on environmental components such as water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations. This alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment and it would contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health).
Briarhill	A. To prepare a Framework Plan for Briarhill for integration into the County Development Plan that is centred around the principles of good placemaking and provides for phased development at this key strategic growth area.	The preparation of a Framework Plan for Briarhill for integration into the County Development Plan that is centred around the principles of good placemaking and provides for phased development at this key strategic growth area would benefit proper planning, sustainable development and environmental protection and management. Such a Framework Plan would make development at this location, which has proximity to services, jobs and infrastructure and is well-served and well-connected, more likely. Development at Briarhill would reduce the need to develop lands that are less well-served and connected and potentially more sensitive. A focus on placemaking would make Briarhill a more desirable location to live and work. Phasing would help to both maximise benefits from infrastructural investment and ensure that new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and services.
	B. Not preparing any focused Plan or land use zoning for Briarhill.	Not preparing any focused Plan or land use zoning for Briarhill would stymie proper planning, sustainable development and environmental protection and management. The absence of a co-ordinated Plan for Briarhill would make development at this location, which has proximity to services, jobs and infrastructure and is well-served and well-connected, less likely. In the absence of a Framework Plan, there would be a greater need to develop lands elsewhere that are less well-served and connected and potentially more sensitive. The absence of phasing would make both maximising benefits from infrastructural investment and ensuring that new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and services more difficult.
Garraun	A. To prepare a Framework Plan for Garraun for integration into the County Development Plan that is centred around the principles of good placemaking and provides for phased development at this key strategic growth area.	The preparation of a Framework Plan for Garraun for integration into the County Development Plan that is centred around the principles of good placemaking and provides for phased development at this key strategic growth area would benefit proper planning, sustainable development and environmental protection and management. Such a Framework Plan would make development at this location, which has proximity to services, jobs and infrastructure and is well-served and well-connected, more likely. Development at Garraun would reduce the need to develop lands that are less well-served and connected and potentially more sensitive. A focus on placemaking would make Garraun a more desirable location to live and work. Phasing would help to both maximise benefits from infrastructural investment and ensure that new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and services.
	B. Zoning Garraun generally as a reserve area, potentially to be developed under future Plan periods, post 2028.	Not preparing any focused Plan or land use zoning for Garraun would stymie proper planning, sustainable development and environmental protection and management. The zoning of Garraun generally as a reserve area, potentially to be developed under future Plan periods, post 2028, would make development at this location, which has proximity to services, jobs and infrastructure and is well-served and well-connected, less likely. In the absence of a Framework Plan, there would be a greater need to develop lands elsewhere that are less well-served and connected and potentially more sensitive. The absence of phasing would make both maximising benefits from infrastructural investment and ensuring that new development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and services more difficult.

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Commentary
Clifden Set 1	A New Residential Zoning: Residential Phase 2 lands removed to the north of the Galway Clifden Road, boundary reduced	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B New Residential Zoning: Residential Lands Phase 2 lands zoned north of the Clifden Galway Road	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Clifden Set 2	A To the north of Clifden Glen Lands zoned to Tourism from Residential Phase 2.	There is an identified planning need for tourism development in Clifden. Providing for this use within the settlement boundary would help to minimise the occurrence of this type of development outside of the town, potentially on less well-connected, less well-served lands – with associated potential adverse environmental effects on environmental components such as water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations. This alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment and it would contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health).
	B To the north of Clifden Glen Lands zoned to Residential Phase 2.	There are various other alternative lands for residential development that would contribute more to the proper planning of the town. Residential zoning on these lands would be unnecessary and there would be a need to provide for tourism zoning elsewhere. This alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary Residential zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Maigh Cuilinn	A Lands to the east of the N59 approach into Maigh Cuilinn zoned Agriculture	Agricultural zoning would be compatible with the topography of these lands. Residential zoning allocated to the town could be provided for elsewhere within the town, contributing towards a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. This alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing the need to develop lands elsewhere, outside of the settlement, for residential uses would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands to the east of the N59 approach into Maigh Cuilinn zoned Residential Phase 2	Land topography is a physical constraint to the development of these lands. Allocating some of Maigh Cuilinn's allotted residential zoning to these lands would be likely to place greater pressure on lands outside of the settlement for residential development, potentially on less well-connected, less well-served lands – with associated potential adverse environmental effects on environmental components such as water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations. Lands developed outside of the settlement would be likely to result in inefficiencies infrastructural investment and higher emissions from transport (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health).
Headford	A Lands to the north of Headford Village removed from Plan boundary	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands to the north of Headford village zoned Residential Phase 2	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Oughterard	A Lands zoned with excess Residential Lands(2005 2011) Plan to the West of Plan boundary	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	B More compact residential zoning	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Commentary
Portumna Set 1	A Lands to the west of the N65 zoned Residential Phase 2	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands to the west of the N65 town zoned Phase 1	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Portumna Set 2	A Lands to the west of Portumna town on the R352 zoned Tourism	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
	B Lands to the west of Portumna town on the R352 removed from Plan boundary	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
An Cheathrú Rua	A Consolidation of Plan boundary- Residential Phase 2 lands removed west of the village	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Residential Phase 2 lands zoned to the west of the village	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
An Spidéal	A Consolidation of Plan boundary- Residential Phase 2 lands removed north of the village	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Residential Phase 2 lands zoned to the north of the village	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Ballygar	A Lands to the East of Ballygar Village zoned Residential Phase 1	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands to the East of Ballygar village zoned Residential Phase 1 and 2	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Commentary
Dunmore	A Lands to the east of R328 (with flood zone A) zoned Open Space	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
	B Lands to the east of R328 (within flood zone A) zoned Residential	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
Glenamaddy	A Lands to the east of the R362 on the village zoned TC with limited development potential beyond these lands	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands to the east of the R362 on the approach into the village and beyond the TC lands zoned Residential Phase 2	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Kinvara	A More compact residential zoning to the south of the N67 in the village zoned Residential Phase 2	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands zoned to the south of the N67 in the village zoned Residential Phase 2 (2005 2011)	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.
Moylough	A Lands to the west of the N63, on the approach to the village Zoned Residential Phase 1, more compact development	By consolidating land use zoning and reducing unnecessary land use zoning this alternative would provide for a more compact form of development that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By consolidating the zoning and helping to avoid unnecessary sprawl of the settlement, this alternative would increase the likelihood of brownfield development and contribute towards efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Reducing unnecessary zoning would help to minimise sprawl and would avoid potential adverse environmental effects that would otherwise occur - this would benefit the protection of multiple environmental components.
	B Lands to the west of the N63 on the approach to the village Zoned Residential Phase 1 and 2 more sprawl	By not consolidating land use zoning and including unnecessary land use zoning, this alternative would provide for a less compact form of development that would fail to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. By facilitating the unnecessary sprawl of the settlement and failing to consolidate zoning, this alternative would decrease the likelihood of brownfield development and conflict with efforts to improve sustainable mobility (with associated effects on energy, air, noise and human health). Providing for unnecessary zoning would be likely to result in higher levels of sprawl and associated avoidable potential adverse environmental effects.

Section 4 AA Determination

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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

Appropriate Assessment Determination

under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
for the

Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and pursuant to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as to whether or not a plan or project would adversely affect the integrity of any European site(s), this Appropriate Assessment determination is being made by Galway County Council relating to the potential for the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 that is being adopted to have effects on the integrity of European sites.

In carrying out this Appropriate Assessment (AA), the Council is taking into account the matters specified under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including the following:

- The consolidated Natura Impact Report;
- The Natura Impact Report for the Proposed Material Alterations;
- The Natura Impact Report prepared for the Draft Plan;
- Written submissions made during the Plan preparation process; and
- Ongoing advice on AA from the Council's agents.

As part of the AA, it was identified that the Plan may, if unmitigated, have significant effects on 126 (no.) European sites. Factors that could potentially affect the integrity of European sites include:

- Provisions (such as those relating to: settlement; housing; placemaking, regeneration and urban living; rural living and development; economic, enterprise and retail; transport and movement; infrastructure and utilities; tourism and landscape; marine and coastal management; green infrastructure; community development and social infrastructure; Gaeltacht and islands; and climate change, energy and renewable resources) that introduce sources for effects through construction phase such as habitat destruction, light pollution, hydrological interactions and disturbance effects;
- Loading pressures from the operational phase of developments – these sources could result in habitat loss, disturbance effects, interactions with water quality and habitat fragmentation; and
- Increasing visitors to sensitive areas during the operational phase of, for example, recreational and tourism developments.

The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusions presented and determines that:

- Implementation of the Plan would have had the potential to result in effects to the integrity of European sites, if unmitigated.
- The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives of the European sites have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and reliably mitigate effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition, any lower-level plans and projects arising through the implementation of the Plan will themselves be subject to AA when further details of design and location are known.
- In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects have been considered in this assessment and the mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Plan – these measures are

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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

robust and will ensure there will be no effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the implementation of the Plan either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.

- Having incorporated mitigation measures, the Plan is not foreseen to give rise to any effect on the integrity of European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects¹. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species, for which these sites have been designated.

Signed: Michael Owens

Name: _____

Date: 9 Mar 2022

¹ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

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