



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-321882-25

Development	Busconnects Galway: Dublin Road Development, Compulsory Purchase Order No BCGDR-CPO-001-2025
Location	R338 Dublin Road, Galway City
Planning Authority	Galway City Council
Applicant	Galway City Council
Objectors	Brothers of Charity Services West region Connacht Hospitality Ltd Duggans Supermarkets Ltd Flannery's Motor Inn DAC HSE HSE- Merlin Park
Date of Site Inspection	24 th June 2025 and 24 th August 2025
Inspector	Donogh O'Donoghue

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. Overview

- 1.1.1. This is an application by Galway City Council for confirmation by the Commission of a Compulsory Purchase Order ('CPO'), entitled 'BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road Development, Compulsory Purchase Order'.
- 1.1.2. The Compulsory Purchase Order relates to the compulsory acquisition of rights over various lands along the Dublin Road and it is made pursuant to the powers conferred on Galway City Council which is a designated road authority under Section 2(1) of the Roads Act 1993, as amended.
- 1.1.3. 6 no. submissions were received. None of the submissions requested an Oral Hearing and no Oral Hearing was held to consider these objections as per the Commissions Direction dated 07th July 2025

1.2. Purpose of CPO

- 1.2.1. The purpose of the CPO is to facilitate the undertaking of the development referred to as the BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road development. The construction of the proposed scheme has an overall length of approximately 3.9km commencing at the Moneenageisha Junction in the west and tying into the Doughiska Junction in the east with junctions at Renmore Park, Renmore Road, Michael Collins Road, Ballyloughane Road, Skerritt Junction, Merlin Park Hospital, Lios an Uisce (Galway Crystal), Rosshill Road, Coast Road and Doughiska Road.
- 1.2.2. As outlined by the applicant the overall need for the proposed scheme is to respond to current deficiencies in the transport system. It is expected that the proposed development will increase the effectiveness and attractiveness of bus services operating along the corridor and will result in more people availing of public transport due to the faster journey times and reliability improvements which the proposed scheme would provide. The applicant stated that the scheme will also support the potential to increase the bus network capacity of services operating along the corridor, therefore attracting more public transport patrons onto the service.
- 1.2.3. Without such interventions traffic congestion will lead to longer and less reliable bus journeys throughout the city and will affect the quality of people's lives. It is stated that

the proposed scheme is needed because it will provide enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure on this key access corridor into and out of the city, which will enable and deliver efficient, safe, and integrated sustainable transport movement along the corridor. The proposed scheme will also deliver improved public realm along the corridor.

- 1.2.4. Galway City Council sent 48 notices to Landowners and Lessee Occupiers along the proposed route. Landowners include Atlantic Technological University, the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, HSE and private landowners. Some landowners are joint owners of a singular parcel of land, some are singular owners of multiple parcels of lands, and some are joint/multiple owners of multiple parcels. All owners and associated parcels to be acquired are detailed in the document titled 'Galway BusConnects - Dublin Road, Compulsory Purchase Order'.

1.3. Accompanying Documents

- 1.3.1. The application was accompanied by the following:
- Compulsory Purchase Order and Schedule thereto, dated 16th January 2025.
 - Application cover letter.
 - CPO Maps.
 - Newspaper notices, published in the Galway City Tribune and the Irish Independent both dated the 14th February 2025.
 - Copy of site notices erected and details of specific locations erected along the route.
 - Copy of notice sent to landowners.
 - Copy of registered postal receipt for service of each CPO notice.

1.4. Format of CPO and Schedule

- 1.4.1. The CPO states that the lands are required for the purposes of facilitating public transport, and together with all ancillary and consequential works associated therewith.

- The lands described in Part I of the Schedule is land being permanently acquired,
- Lands described in Part II of the Schedule is land being temporarily acquired,
- Lands described in Part III (A) describe public rights of way to be extinguished,
- Lands described in Part III (B) describe public rights of way to be restricted or otherwise interfered with.
- Land described in Part IV (A) provide a description of private rights to be acquired.
- Land described in Part IV (B) provides a description of private rights to be restricted or otherwise interfered with,
- Land described in Part IV (C) describe private rights to be temporarily restricted or otherwise interfered with.

1.4.2. Temporary land takes are required to facilitate construction of the proposed scheme and will be returned to the landowner on completion of the scheme.

1.4.3. Part I of the Schedule hereto and coloured grey on the said deposited map (including lands coloured grey and cross hatched) is land being permanently acquired other than land consisting of a house or houses unfit for human habitation and not capable of being rendered fit for human habitation at reasonable expense.

1.4.4. The land described in Part II of the Schedule hereto and coloured grey on the said deposited map (including lands coloured grey and cross hatched) is land being temporarily acquired other than land consisting of a house or houses unfit for human habitation and not capable of being rendered fit for human habitation at reasonable expense.

1.4.5. The Schedule and all relevant Parts as aforementioned assigns an identification number to each plot of land and describes the quantity, type, townland, owner or reputed owner, lessee or reputed lessee and occupier of each plot, as relevant.

1.4.6. The Commission should note that no houses are proposed to be acquired as part of the proposed scheme.

1.4.7. The Commission should also note that following concerns raised in the submission received from Flannery's Inn DAC in relation to the location of a bus stop, Galway City

Council suggest an alteration to the CPO, details of which are set within the planning application report ref: ABP321776-25 and in Section 6 of this report below.

2.0 Site Location and Description

2.1. The proposed development has an overall length of approximately 3.9km commencing at the Moneenageisha Junction in the west and tying into the Doughiska Junction in the east with junctions at Renmore Park, Renmore Road, Michael Collins Road, Ballyloughane Road, Skerritt Junction, Merlin Park Hospital, Lios an Uisce (Galway Crystal), Rosshill Road, Coast Road and Doughiska Road. The proposed development will tie in with the permitted Galway BusConnects: Cross City Link scheme at the western extremity. The route is a main arterial route into Galway City Centre for both commuters and tourists and runs adjacent to the Atlantic Technological University, Merlin Park Hospital, Bon Secours Hospital and a number of schools and other amenity locations.

2.2. Key improvements include:

- The proportion of the route having bus priority measures will increase from 49% on the existing corridor to 100% on the proposed scheme.
- The proportion of segregated cycle facilities will increase from zero on the existing corridor to 100% on the proposed scheme.
- The provision of 9 junction upgrades.
- The number of pedestrian signal crossings will increase from 1 to 2 as a result of the proposed scheme.

2.3. Specific works proposed within the development include the following:

- 3.9 km (two-way) of bus priority infrastructure and traffic management.
- 3.9km (both directions) of cycling infrastructure and facilities.
- Provision of new / refurbished pedestrian facilities and footpaths along the scheme and associated ancillary works.
- Provision of 9 junction upgrades including the construction of a new “cyclops” (Cycle Optimised Protected Signals) junction at Skerritt junction.

- Bus stops will be enhanced to include shelters and information displays.
- Public Realm works including landscaping, planting, street furniture, street lighting, retaining walls, boundary walls, and sustainable urban drainage measures.
- Provision of road pavement reconstruction, road markings and ancillary works.
- Provision of boundary treatment works.
- Construction of accommodation works including boundary treatment and landscaping works.

2.4. The construction phase for the proposed scheme is anticipated to take approximately 24 months to complete. It will be constructed based on individual sectional completions that will individually have shorter durations typically ranging between 6 to 13 months.

3.0 Planning History

3.1. There are a number of planning applications along the route which include residential, domestic residential such as alterations to existing houses and commercial development etc. Of relevance to this scheme is the following:

- ABP 320955-24 - Permission was granted for a development consisting of the demolition of 3 no. existing dwellings and the construction of a four-storey apartment building containing 24 no. residential units at 47, 49 & 51 Dublin Road, Galway

4.0 Overview of Submissions

4.1. 6 no. third party submissions have been received in relation to the CPO of lands and are summarised hereunder. None of the submissions have requested an Oral Hearing. In relation to the content of the submissions it is of note that many issues raised are common to all of the submissions. These include interruption to operations as a result

of the development and during the construction phase, removal of right turning lane, boundary treatment details, bus stop location and loss of green space.

- 4.2. All such matters have been examined in detail within the planning application report ref: ABP321776-25 and I refer the Commission to this report. I will examine the relevant concerns raised in relation to the assessment of the CPO in terms of community need, compliance with the development plan, proportionality and necessity of level of acquisition proposed, alternatives and suitability of lands.
- 4.3. The Commission should note that Galway City Council responded to the issues raised and such responses will be examined in the context of submissions within the assessment section of this report hereunder. A further 4 submissions were received in relation to the Council's response to submissions. No new issues are raised within these submissions, with one submission welcoming the proposed accommodation made by the Council.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. European

5.1.1. Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy 2020 (EU Commission 2020)

The Smart and Mobility Strategy is part of the EU Green Deal and aims to reduce transport emissions by 90% until 2050. The Commission intends to adopt a comprehensive strategy to meet this target and ensure that the EU transport sector is fit for a clean, digital and modern economy. Objectives include:

- increasing the uptake of zero-emission vehicles
- making sustainable alternative solutions available to the public & businesses
- supporting digitalisation & automation
- improving connectivity & access.

5.1.2. European Green Deal (EDG) 2019

The European Commission has adopted a set of proposals such as making transport sustainable for all, to make the EU's climate, energy, transport and taxation policies fit

for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

5.1.3. Towards a fair and sustainable Europe 2050: Social and Economic choices in sustainability transitions, 2023.

This foresight study looks at sustainability from a holistic perspective but emphasises the changes that European economic and social systems should make to address sustainability transitions. The EU has committed to sustainability and sustainable development, covering the three dimensions (environmental, social and economic) of sustainability. Transport is identified as an area of opportunity to increase the speed of a cultural shift towards sustainability. The provision of well planned, affordable or free public transport system and bicycle lanes are encouraged.

5.2. National Policy

5.2.1. National Planning Framework, First Revision of NPF, April 2025

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. The NPF - First Revision is the revised and updated NPF taking account of changes that have occurred since it was published in 2018.

The NPF recognised Galway city as the fastest growing city in Ireland over the last 50 years. The NPF seeks to support city and city region functions with relevant policies and investment but with a strong emphasis on securing a compact-growth development approach. The NPF also seeks to develop Galway City in a transformational and urban rejuvenation focused manner. Transport within the city is identified within the NPF as a challenge in relation to the accommodation of future population growth within the metropolitan boundary of the city.

The National Policy Objective 4 of the National Planning Framework - First Revision seeks to deliver 50% of national population and employment growth within the four cities of Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway and to improve the collective offer in terms of quality of life. Challenges facing the development of Galway City identified within the NPF include transport.

Section 3.3 of the NPF - First Revision recognises the strategic importance of Galway to drive growth in the west, identified future growth enablers include:

- Improving access and sustainable transport links to and integration with the existing employment areas to the east of the City at Parkmore, Ballybrit and Mervue.
- Provision of a Citywide public transport network, with enhanced accessibility between existing and proposed residential areas and the City Centre, third level institutions and the employment areas to the east of the city.
- Public realm and urban amenity projects focused on streets and public spaces, particularly in support of an extended city centre area and where residential and employment areas can be linked to pedestrian routes.
- Development of a strategic cycleway network with a number of high-capacity flagship routes.

The NPF - First Revision also sets out a number of national policy objectives focused on sustainable transportation, greater accessibility and improved air quality arising from increased use of alternatives to the car which include the following:

- NPO 37 - Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.
- NPO 38 - Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.
- NPO 93 - Improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport to the private car, the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions.

5.2.2. National Development Plan 2021-2030

The NDP Review contains a range of investments and measures which will be implemented over the coming years to facilitate the transition to sustainable mobility. These measures include significant expansions to public transport options, including capacity enhancements on current assets and the creation of new public transport links.

The NDP recognises Busconnects as a Strategic Investment Priority within all five cities.

Over the next 10 years approximately €360 million per annum will be invested in walking and cycling infrastructure in cities, towns and villages across the country. Transformed active travel and bus infrastructure and services in all five of Ireland's major cities is fundamental to achieving the overarching target of 500,000 additional active travel and public transport journeys by 2030. BusConnects will overhaul the current bus system in all five cities by implementing a network of 'next generation' bus corridors including segregated cycling facilities on the busiest routes to make journeys faster, predictable and reliable.

Over the lifetime of this NDP, there will be significant progress made on delivering BusConnects with the construction of Core Bus Corridors expected to be substantially complete in all five cities by 2030.

5.2.3. National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland, 2021

One of the key challenges identified within this document relates to transport and the ability to maintain existing transport infrastructure whilst ensuring resilience of the most strategically important parts of the network. Population projections are expected to increase into the future and a consistent issue identified within the five cities of Ireland is congestion. Given space constraints, urban congestion will primarily have to be addressed by encouraging modal shift to sustainable modes.

Within the cities, frequent and reliable public transport of sufficient capacity and high-quality active travel infrastructure can incentivise people to travel using sustainable modes rather than by car.

Bus Connects is identified as a project which will alleviate congestion and inefficiencies in the bus service. The revised NDP 2021- 2030 sets out details of a new

National Active Travel Programme with funding of €360 million annually for the period from 2021 to 2025. A new National Cycling Strategy is to be developed by the end of 2022 and will map existing cycling infrastructure in both urban and rural areas to inform future planning and project delivery decisions in relation to active travel.

5.2.4. Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020

This is a government document that was prepared in the context of unsustainable transport and travel trends in Ireland. The overall vision set out in this policy document is to achieve a sustainable transport system in Ireland by 2020. To achieve this the government set out 5 key goals:

- (i) to reduce overall travel demand,
- (ii) to maximise the efficiency of the transport network,
- (iii) to reduce reliance on fossil fuels,
- (iv) to reduce transport emissions, and
- (v) to improve accessibility to transport. To achieve these goals and to ensure that we have sustainable travel and transport by 2020, the Government sets targets, which include the following:
 - 500,000 more people will take alternative means to commute to work to the extent that the total share of car commuting will drop from 65% to 45%
 - Alternatives such as walking, cycling and public transport will be supported and provided to the extent that these will rise to 55% of total commuter journeys to work.

5.2.5. National Sustainable Mobility Policy, 2022

The purpose of this document is to set out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel and public transport to support Ireland's overall requirement to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by the end of this decade. A key objective of the document is to expand the bus capacity and services through the BusConnects Programmes in the five cities of Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Waterford, improved town bus services and the connecting Ireland programme in rural areas.

5.2.6. Permeability in Existing Urban Areas Best Practice Guide 2015

Among the priorities of the National Transport Authority (NTA) are to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport and to ensure that transport considerations are fully addressed as part of land use planning. This guidance demonstrates how best to facilitate demand for walking and cycling in existing built-up areas.

5.2.7. Department of Transport National Sustainable Mobility Policy on 7th April 2022.

The plan, prepared by the Department of Transport, includes actions to improve and expand sustainable mobility options across the country by providing safe, green, accessible and efficient alternatives to car journeys.

5.2.8. Climate Action Plan 2024 (“CAP24”) and 2025 (“CAP25”)

The Climate Action Plan sets out a roadmap to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. CAP24 and CAP25 will also continue with the implementation of carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings that were introduced under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021. BusConnects is identified as a key action to deliver abatement in transport in 2025 and is specifically supported within the plan.

5.3. Regional

5.3.1. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy - Northern and Western Regional Assembly.

- Section 3.3 of the RSES seeks to achieve better integration between land use and transportation planning.
- Section 5.1 Investing in transport infrastructure
 - Prioritising future investment for the delivery of a strategic cycling and walking network,
- Section 6.2 Transport - A best practice example of where the integration of transport, spatial and economic planning is to be delivered, is the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS). The GTS should be used as a template elsewhere.
- The Regional Planning Objectives (RPOs) include RPO 6.50 - Continue to encourage Active Travel initiatives and where possible leverage technology

and digital platforms to enhance the delivery of cycleway and walking infrastructure, particularly in our urban centres.

5.4. Local policy

5.4.1. Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

The BusConnects Programme is seen within the plan as a key part of Government policy to improve public transport and address climate change. Within the Galway City area, investment in bus infrastructure and services will be delivered through BusConnects and the relevant parts of the GTS.

- Section 2.4 Integrating Climate Action into the City Development Plan
 - 4. Sustainable Mobility and Transportation - Supports the delivery of public transport and sustainable mobility projects in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) such as Cross City Link, Bus Connects and the National Greenway Network in the city.
- Policy 4.3 Public Transport - Support the implementation of Bus Connects Galway and the overall bus transport network which will include for a high frequency cross-city network of services and all associated infrastructural requirements, traffic management and priority arrangements.
- Policy 4.4 Sustainable Mobility - Walk and Cycle - Facilitate cycling on the proposed Bus Connects Galway Routes where appropriate including on the proposed Cross-City Link.
- Policy 4.6 Road and Street Network and Accessibility - Support the proposals in the Galway Transport Strategy for design interventions, revised traffic management arrangements and priority arrangements for walking, cycling and public transport on the road network.
- Section 4.8 Specific Objectives Modal Change: Public Transport - Facilitate the delivery of the Bus Connects Programme serving the City and the MASP area by securing and maintaining any required route reservations.

5.4.2. Galway Transport Strategy 2016

The GTS sets out the actions and policy position for the development of sustainable transport infrastructure in Galway over a 20 year period and sets out a framework to

deliver the projects in a phased manner. One of the key proposals in the GTS is the proposed BusConnects Dublin Road, a corridor linking the western and eastern suburbs of the city, connecting with the Cross-City Link Scheme. The R338, Dublin Road, which forms part of the BusConnects routes are supported within this document.

- F4.10 – Renmore & Dublin Road

Proposal to extend the existing bus lanes which may also be used by cyclists, along the full length of the Dublin Road. Skerrett Roundabout will be converted to signalised junction. An off-road two-way cycle path is also proposed along the Dublin Road to connect to the current entrance to Merlin Park Hospital. This will be located primarily on the north side but will switch to southside toward the western end of the road. Cycle track will transition to on-road for crossing facilities at junctions

- Section 4 Traffic Network

- Table 4.1 – On the east side of the city centre, establishing a bus priority route along College Road is identified as the most appropriate and feasible means of ensuring that buses and coaches can travel directly to and from the city centre via both the Old Dublin Road and Wellpark Road.

5.4.3. **Galway City Council Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024-2029**

The Galway City Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) 2024-2029 sets out a strategy to mitigate and adapt to climate change within the Local Authority. It considers factors such as reducing emissions, creating a circular economy, adapting to more frequent severe weather, and creating more sustainable land use patterns. Action 27 of the LACAP commits GCC to working in partnership with key stakeholders across the city to support climate action initiatives, including active travel.

5.5. **Legislative Context**

- 5.5.1. Section 213 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, sets out the legal status of the compulsory purchase process in relation to Local Authorities, as follows:

(1) The power conferred on a local authority under any enactment to acquire land shall be construed in accordance with this section.

(2) (a) A local authority may, for the purposes of performing any of its functions (whether conferred by or under this Act, or any other enactment passed before or after the passing of this Act), including giving effect to or facilitating the implementation of its development plan or its housing strategy under section 94, do all or any of the following:

(i) acquire land, permanently or temporarily, by agreement or compulsorily,

(ii) acquire, permanently or temporarily, by agreement or compulsorily, any easement, way-leave, water-right or other right over or in respect of any land or water or any substratum of land,

(iii) restrict or otherwise interfere with, permanently or temporarily, by agreement or compulsorily, any easement, way-leave, water-right or other right over or in respect of any land or water or any substratum of land, and the performance of all or any of the functions referred to in subparagraphs (i), (ii) and (iii) are referred to in this Act as an “acquisition of land”.

(b) A reference in paragraph (a) to acquisition by agreement shall include acquisition by way of purchase, lease, exchange or otherwise.

(c) The functions conferred on a local authority by paragraph (a) may be performed in relation to— (i) land, or (ii) any easement, way-leave, water-right or other right to which that paragraph applies, whether situated or exercisable, as the case may be, inside or outside the functional area of the local authority concerned.

(3) (a) The acquisition may be effected by agreement or compulsorily in respect of land not immediately required for a particular purpose if, in the opinion of the local authority, the land will be required by the authority for that purpose in the future.

(b) The acquisition may be effected by agreement in respect of any land which, in the opinion of the local authority, it will require in the future for the purposes of any of its functions notwithstanding that the authority has not determined the manner in which or the purpose for which it will use the land.

(c) Paragraphs (a) and (b) shall apply and have effect in relation to any power to acquire land conferred on a local authority by virtue of this Act or any other enactment whether enacted before or after this Act.

(4) A local authority may be authorised by compulsory purchase order to acquire land for any of the purposes referred to in subsection (2) of this section and section 10 (as amended by section 86 of the Housing Act, 1966) of the Local Government (No. 2) Act, 1960, shall be construed so as to apply accordingly and the reference to “purposes” in section 10(1)(a) of that Act shall be construed as including purposes referred to in subsection (2) of this section.

6.0 Assessment

6.1. Overview

6.1.1. For the Commission to confirm the subject CPO, it must be satisfied that Galway City Council has demonstrated that the CPO “is clearly justified by the common good.” This requires the following minimum criteria to be satisfied:

- There is a community need that is to be met by the acquisition of the site in question,
- The particular site is suitable to meet that community need,
- Any alternative methods of meeting the community needs have been considered but are not demonstrably preferable,
- The works to be carried out should accord with or at least not be in material contravention of the provisions of the statutory development plan, and
- The extent of land-take should have due regard to the issue of proportionality.

6.1.2. I will therefore address each of the five criteria outlined above in turn below, together with the issue of proportionality and other issues arising from the submissions.

6.2. Community Need

6.2.1. The proposed development has been designed to facilitate improved efficiency of the transport network through the improvement of the infrastructure for active (walking and cycling) and public transport modes along the Dublin Road making them attractive

alternatives to car-based journeys. Sustainable transport infrastructure is known to assist in creating more sustainable communities and healthier places to live and work while also stimulating economic development and contributing to enhanced health and well-being when delivered effectively.

- 6.2.2. According to the First revision of the National Planning Framework, 2025, the population of the Galway City is forecast to increase by 50% over 2016 level by 2040 and this growth will have associated travel demands, placing added pressure on the transport system. Traffic congestion in Galway has been an issue for decades and intervention is therefore required to optimise road space and prioritise the movement of people over the movement of vehicles.
- 6.2.3. At present, the reliability and effectiveness of existing bus and cycle infrastructure within the city is compromised by a lack of bus lanes and segregated cycle tracks.
- 6.2.4. As noted above, the overriding motivation for BusConnects is to reduce CO2 emissions and this is critical from a global climatic perspective. The proposed scheme is specifically identified and supported within the Climate Action Plan 2024 (“CAP24”) and 2025 (“CAP25”) and is seen as a key action under the major public transport infrastructure programme to deliver abatement in transport emissions. The scheme is also identified within the National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 document and the accompanying action plan as a key piece of infrastructure to be delivered to achieve reductions in emissions and provide for more efficient cities in terms of accessibility for all. The scheme is also seen as an economic driver within our cities which currently experience significant congestion and impediments to movement and accessibility.
- 6.2.5. At the local and shorter-term level, the issue of congestion on the Dublin Road is more obvious, and both congestion and CO2 emissions are continuing to rise. Any further increases in traffic levels will see an exacerbation of congestion, CO2 emissions and all of the associated issues highlighted above. Private car dependence will worsen unless there is intervention to optimise road space and prioritise the movement of people over the movement of vehicles. When examining the functionality and capacity of road space to facilitate the movement of people it is important to consider the capacity of the space and how to optimise it. It is estimated that approximately 80% of road/ street space is dedicated to the car. A car travelling at 50kph requires 70 times more space than a pedestrian or cyclist.

- 6.2.6. The prioritisation of buses over cars and the creation of more space for pedestrians and cyclists will therefore allow for increased people movement capacity along the core bus corridor. This is vital given the existing congestion and the forecasted growth in population, jobs and goods vehicle numbers by 2040. In the absence of the proposed scheme, bus services will be operating in a more congested environment, leading to higher journey times for bus users and lower reliability which will lead to reduced levels of public transport use, making the bus system far less attractive and less resilient to higher levels of growth. The proposed scheme is expected to see a reduction in car use along the route and an increase in cycling and walking in addition to bus use.
- 6.2.7. Having regard to the above, the proposed scheme is of critical importance to the transport network in Galway to facilitate the actual movement of people and this can only be achieved through a realistic modal shift from the private car to sustainable modes. It will address sustainable mode transport infrastructure deficits while contributing to an overall integrated sustainable transport system as proposed in the Galway Transport Strategy. The proposed scheme which will tie into the recently permitted BusConnects Cross-City Link scheme will therefore make a significant contribution to carbon reduction, the easing of congestion and the creation of more sustainable travel patterns for the growing population.
- 6.2.8. In terms of local transport need the proposed development is to form a central route for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians along the Dublin Road and tying in with the permitted BusConnects Cross City Link project. It will complement the proposed new city bus network routes approaching from the east and west of the city centre, which merge along this high-quality corridor, providing high-frequency services with journey time reliability and opportunities for interchange. It is outlined by the applicant that bus priority infrastructure is currently provided along approximately 49% of the length of the route. The proposed scheme will facilitate 100% bus priority. This will improve journey times for buses, enhance its reliability and provide resilience to congestion.
- 6.2.9. With regard to cycling, it is stated that cycling facilities are not currently provided along the route of the proposed scheme. The proposed scheme will provide inbound and out bound segregated cycling facilities along the entire 3.9km route. This improvement to

cycle infrastructure will greatly improve the current offer to cyclists and by doing so will significantly increase the modal share.

6.2.10. In terms of pedestrian infrastructure improvements, I note that pedestrian signal crossings will increase from 1 to 2 and the number of traffic signal-controlled junctions will increase from 6 to 9 as a result of the proposed scheme. This will lead to significant improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

6.2.11. The proposed scheme will therefore deliver the physical infrastructure necessary to sustain the projected population growth along and within the area of the route. It will also provide a more accessible public transport facility to users in a safe, well-lit and protected environment.

6.2.12. In overall conclusion, there is a clear community need and justification for the proposed scheme which has been clearly demonstrated from a population growth and congestion perspective and in the interests of land use and transport planning integration.

6.3. Suitability of Lands

6.3.1. At the outset, the Commission will note that Galway City Council are seeking to both permanently and temporarily acquire lands.

6.3.2. The lands that are the subject of this CPO are currently used for a number of uses including public open space (recreational) at the edge of housing developments, greenspace associated with commercial premises, agricultural land (zoned Recreation and Amenity) along the Dublin Road, and various residential and commercial boundaries. The Commission should note that the scheme for the most part will comprise lands within the existing public road and pedestrian area. Where there are zoning objectives, they comprise the following:

- R – Residential
- CF – Community Culture and Institutional
- CI – Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial
- RA – Recreation and Amenity

- 6.3.3. Having regard to the provisions of the City Development Plan and the specific objective to provide for a bus route along the proposed scheme route, I am satisfied that the proposed reallocation of road space and the provision of active travel infrastructure are compatible with the zoning objectives of the development plan.
- 6.3.4. The scheme due to the restricted width of some sections of the existing carriageway encroaches on a number of third-party lands to allow for the proposed improvements which include bus lanes, segregated cycle lanes and bus stops. The sports pitch zoned Recreation and Amenity, located beside the Connacht Hotel will be temporality acquired to accommodate the construction compound and will be returned to their original use once construction is complete. Other lands will be acquired on a permanent basis to facilitate road widening and new bus lanes, cycle lanes and improved pedestrian facilities.
- 6.3.5. The deposit map booklet identifies all lands that are being acquired on both a permanent and temporary basis and identifies lands on which public and private rights of ways will be altered or interfered with.
- 6.3.6. Overall given the current use of lands and the minimal additional lands to be acquired which lie directly adjacent to the existing carriageway and footpath I am satisfied that the lands to be acquired are suitable for such use.

6.4. Compliance with Development Plan

- 6.4.1. BusConnects is identified within the Galway City Development Plan as being a key transport infrastructure project that will improve the viability, accessibility and economic competitiveness of Galway City and suburbs. The project is specifically identified and supported at all levels of government policy as outlined above within the policy section of this report and is acknowledged within the City Development Plan as being a key strategic transport project for the city specifically supported by Galway City Council under Section 4.8 Specific Objectives Modal Change.
- 6.4.2. The scheme is also identified as a component of Strategic Investment Priority which has been determined as central to the delivery of the National Planning Framework. Given the abundance of policy documents and plans at both an EU, national and local level that support both specifically the proposed scheme and the type of scheme being

a sustainable and active travel scheme, I am satisfied that the proposal is justified and in accordance with the overriding policy position set out within the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 and other national and regional policy documents as set out within the policy section of this report above.

6.5. Use of Alternative Methods

- 6.5.1. The consideration of Alternatives is documented within Chapter 3 of the EIAR submitted with the planning application ABP 321776-25. I note that alternatives were considered at three levels, strategic alternatives, route alternatives and design alternatives.
- 6.5.2. In order to identify solutions, an analysis of the current situation was undertaken. The applicant sets out that bus network is currently characterised by discontinuity, whereby buses on routes have very limited dedicated bus lanes and / or supporting priority measures. This means that for most of the journey, buses and cyclists are competing for space with general traffic and are negatively affected by the increasing levels of congestion. This results in delayed buses, unreliable journey times and safety risk for cyclist.

Light Rail Alternative

- 6.5.3. It is stated that the appropriate type of public transport provision in any particular case is predominately determined by the likely quantum of passenger demand along the particular public transport route. With this in mind the applicant considered the option of constructing a light rail service which would cater for a passenger demand of between 3,500 and 7,000 per hour per direction (inbound and outbound journeys). Based on the number of passengers predicted to use the new service, it was considered that there would be insufficient demand to justify the provision of a light rail alternative, particularly given the low to medium density nature of development along, and from existing corridors feeding into city centre.

Demand Management Alternative

- 6.5.4. Demand management in the form of restricting car movement or car access through regulatory signage and access prohibitions, to parking restrictions and fiscal measures (such as tolls, road pricing, congestion charging, fuel/vehicle surcharges and similar)

were all considered as alternatives to the proposed scheme. A key success factor of demand management is greater use of alternative travel modes, in particular reliable public transport. This assumes of course that alternative reliable public transport services exist. In the context of Galway City and environs, there is a balance to be struck in terms of retaining accessibility to the city centre area for cars, while increasing accessibility by public transport. Overall whilst this approach would not be sufficient in isolation it will form part of the solution to the city congestion.

Technological Alternatives

- 6.5.5. In terms of technological alternatives such as advancements in electric bike technology and the evolution of bike-share schemes, it is however recognised that there is no evidence that such developments will displace the need for mass transit, which is essential to the operation of a modern city.

Route Alternatives

- 6.5.6. The applicant sets out that alternative route options have been extensively considered during the design development of the proposed development. Following completion of the Stage 1 high level assessment, the remaining reasonable alternatives options were progressed to Stage 2 and taken forward to a more detailed qualitative and quantitative assessment. These route sections were then considered against the following criterion: economy, integration, accessibility and social inclusion, safety, and environment. Under each headline criterion, a set of sub-criteria were used to comparatively evaluate the options which included cultural heritage, biodiversity, soils and geology, hydrology, landscape and visual, air quality, climate and carbon, noise and vibration and land use and built environment.
- 6.5.7. The options were also considered in the context of submissions received from the public consultation and various amendments made in response to the consultation.
- 6.5.8. Thus, having regard to the information provided by Galway City Council in relation to the alternatives considered I am satisfied that a significant number of options have been considered in detail and that the process undertaken by the applicant has been a robust assessment of alternative options having regard to environmental considerations and the stated Project Objectives, which are considered to be reasonable. I agree that the route chosen is the one which best meet these objectives. I also accept that the consideration of options within the selected route corridor and

the strategy for key infrastructure provisions was a rigorous process, which had regard to environmental considerations and to the Project Objectives. I therefore generally concur with the reasons for choosing the preferred alternative as presented in the EIAR.

6.6. Proportionality and Necessity of Level of Acquisition Proposed in relation to submissions received.

- 6.6.1. A number of submissions raised concerns in relation to the impact the proposed development will have in relation to property access and boundary treatment which I will address hereunder. It is important for the Commission to note, as mentioned above, concerns relating to planning matters such as noise, air and visual and residential amenity impacts are dealt with within the EIAR and have been examined within the planning application report for this scheme, ref: ABP-321776-25, and as such this report should be read in conjunction with the aforementioned planning application report for the proposed scheme.

Impact on accessing property

- 6.6.2. A number of the third parties raised concerns about the impact that the proposed scheme will have on them accessing their properties both during the construction and operational phases of the scheme.
- 6.6.3. Connacht Hospitality Ltd raise significant issue with the removal of the existing right-turn lane that currently facilitates direct entry to their hotel from the eastbound (Oranmore) direction. They assert that with this movement eliminated, visitors approaching from the Oranmore direction will be forced to make a circuitous and potentially congested detour to get to the hotel. They contend that the current scheme design does not reflect the operational realities of their business.
- 6.6.4. In response the applicant asserts that the DMURS framework supports the removal of right-turn lanes where appropriate as a means to reduce carriageway width, enhance pedestrian facilities, and improve the quality of the public realm. This reflects its core objective of creating safe, attractive, and accessible streets that support a shift towards sustainable travel and more liveable urban environments. The applicant also states that vehicles will still be able to turn right to access the hotel but will be required to wait

for a gap in oncoming traffic. This would also be the case in the situation where a right turn lane was provided. In addition, the provision of a yellow box is provided to allow access and egress for hotel guests, suppliers, coaches and emergency vehicles in situations where there is traffic congestion. I am in agreement that the removal of the right turning lane will not significantly impact traffic accessing or egressing the hotel and vehicles will still be able to turn right to access the property.

- 6.6.5. With regard to the submission from HSE Merlin Park they recommend that the design of the Dublin Road/Galway Crystal junction should provide a fourth arm to serve their campus. They note that by not acknowledging this planned future access the scheme is inconsistent with the Galway City Development Plan and Galway Transport Strategy. In addition, they consider the land take at the interface between MPUH and the Dublin Road/Galway Crystal junction is insufficient to accommodate the extent of the works and recommend that the applicant make provision for the acquisition of the requisite lands as part of this current process.
- 6.6.6. In response the applicants notes that the proposed development does not preclude a future access to the MPUH campus at the Dublin Road/Galway Crystal junction and this can be future proofed as part of the proposed junction design, by ensuring that services and utilities are laid to sufficient depth, and that the footway and cycle track are constructed to facilitate a fourth arm in the future. This future proofing of the junction for fourth arm is a practical response at this stage and I also note that any new access road to serve the MPUH campus would be subject to separate planning permission.
- 6.6.7. Temporary disruption to accesses to properties during the construction phase have also been raised in a number of submissions. In this regard the applicant references Chapter 5 (Construction) of the EIAR, which sets out that details regarding temporary access provisions will be discussed with residents and business owners prior to construction starting in the area and access and egress will be maintained at all times except for short durations to facilitate tie ins of services and road alignments.

Boundary Treatment

- 6.6.8. The submission from the HSE who own the Woodlands Campus and is home to the Brothers of Charity Services and the submission from the HSE-Merlin Park acknowledge the boundary treatment proposals but recommend that Method

Statements for the rebuilding of existing boundary walls be agreed prior to the commencement of development. In response the applicant refers to Section 14, Landscape and Urban Realm in the Preliminary Design Report which sets out that where private or commercial property boundaries are realigned, boundary walls and railings will be reinstated to match the existing and may be extended to other properties along the same street to enhance streetscape character. In addition, the applicant sets out that detailed method statements will be prepared by the appointed Contractor for all work elements prior to the commencement of the works and the HSE/Brothers of Charity will be provided an opportunity to review and comment on these Method Statements prior to any works commencing.

Bus Stop relocation from Flannery Motor Inn DAC to Galwegians Rugby Football Club

- 6.6.9. The submission from Flannery Motor Inn DAC raised concerns in relation to the location of the proposed bus stop at the front of the hotel. They are of the view that the main driver behind the works area at the front of the hotel appears to be the proposed bus stop. They recommend its relocation in line with international best practice spacing guidelines of 400m between bus stops.
- 6.6.10. In response Galway City Council who, having considered the submission from Flannery's Motor Inn DAC, have no objection to the bus stop being relocated. They have provided details and revised relevant deposit map and server maps to alter the proposed development whereby the bus stop is moved from the land by entrance of Flannery's Hotel to the land on the Dublin Road adjacent to the Galwegians Rugby Football Club. They have also engaged with the relevant landowners, Atlantic Technological University ("ATU") who are agreeable to the proposal to relocate the bus stop and who are agreeable to GCC acquiring the necessary additional land. The alteration has the effect of reducing the land acquisition from Flannery's and increasing the land acquisition from ATU on the Compulsory Purchase Order. I have no objection to this alteration and agree that there are no issues from a traffic safety and environment point of view. As per the planning application report for this scheme, ref: ABP-321776-25 a condition recommending this alteration was included. In response Flannery's Hotel have welcomed the proposed accommodation made by the Council.
- 6.6.11. Therefore, I recommend that the Commission accepts the alteration to the scheme proposed by Galway City Council. This alteration in design would result in alterations

to the proposed land take from Flannery's (Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201) and ATU (Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201) as described in the amended relevant extracts from the CPO schedule set out in Table 2-4 Proposed Revised Compulsory Purchase Order No. BCGDR-CPO-0001-2025 Schedule Part I Page 27 set out in Galway City Council Response to Submission and CPO Objections dated June 2025. Revised deposit map and server maps addressing this amendment are included in Appendix A of Galway City Councils Response to Submissions and Objections dated June 2025.

- 6.6.12. Overall, having regard to the issues raised within the submissions received and the responses received from Galway City Council I am satisfied that the proposed extent of land acquisition is reasonable and proportional to the stated purpose of the Proposed Scheme.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1. I have examined all of the issues raised within the submissions received and the responses received from Galway City Council. I am satisfied that the proposed extent of land acquisition is reasonable and proportional to the stated purpose of the Proposed Scheme. I am satisfied that the process and procedures undertaken by Galway City Council have been fair and reasonable, that the Council has demonstrated the need for the lands and that all the lands being acquired, including the alteration to Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201 and Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201, are both necessary and suitable to facilitate the provision of the BusConnects Scheme.
- 7.2. Having regard to the constitutional and Convention protection afforded to property rights, I consider that the acquisition of lands as set out in the compulsory purchase order and on the deposited maps as follows, including the alteration to Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201 and Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201, pursues and is rationally connected to, a legitimate objective in the public interest, namely the provision of a sustainable public transport bus service and active travel facility:
- The lands described in Part I of the Schedule is land being permanently acquired,
 - Lands described in Part II of the Schedule is land being temporarily acquired,
 - Lands described in Part III (A) describe public rights of way to be extinguished,

- Lands described in Part III (B) describe public rights of way to be restricted or otherwise interfered with.
- Land described in Part IV (A) provide a description of private rights to be acquired.
- Land described in Part IV (B) provides a description of private rights to be restricted or otherwise interfered with,
- Land described in Part IV (C) describe private rights to be temporarily restricted or otherwise interfered with.

7.3. I am also satisfied that the acquiring authority has demonstrated that the means chosen to achieve that objective impairs the property rights of affected landowners as little as possible. In this respect, I have considered alternative means of achieving the objective referred to in submissions to the Commission, and am satisfied that the acquiring authority has established that none of the alternatives are such as to render the means chosen and the CPO made by the acquiring authority unreasonable or disproportionate including the alteration to Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201 and Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201.

7.4. The effects of the CPO on the rights of affected landowners are proportionate to the objective being pursued. I am further satisfied that the proposed acquisition of these lands on a permanent and temporary basis, restriction, acquisition and interference of rights of way would be consistent with the policies and objectives of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2039 in which supporting the delivery of the proposed BusConnects scheme is an objective of the plan. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the confirmation of the CPO is clearly justified by the exigencies of the common good including the alteration to Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201 and Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201.

8.0 Recommendation

8.1. I recommend that the Commission confirm the Compulsory Purchase Order submitted to the Commission on the 17th of January 2025, based on the reasons and considerations set out below including the alteration to Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201 and Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

9.1. Having considered the objections made to the compulsory purchase order, the report of the Inspector who considered the objections, the purpose of the compulsory purchase order to facilitate the delivery of BusConnects; sustainable public transport and active travel infrastructure, and also having regard to:

- a. the constitutional and convention protection afforded to property rights,
- b. the substandard infrastructure provided for along the existing route.
- c. the strategic nature of the scheme in the context of reducing carbon emission and climate change.
- d. the community need, and public interest served and overall benefits, including benefits to a range of road users to be achieved from use of the acquired lands, and
- e. the proportionate design response to the identified need,
- f. the suitability of the lands and the necessity of their acquisition to facilitate the provision of the BusConnects Sustainable Public Transport and Active travel Scheme.
- g. the policies and objectives of the Galway City Development Plan 2023- 2029.
- h. the submissions made at to the Commission.
- i. the report and recommendation of the Inspector.

it is considered that the acquisition of these lands on a permanent and temporary basis, restriction, acquisition and interference of rights of way, by Galway City Council, as set out in the compulsory purchase order and on the deposited maps, is necessary for the purpose stated, which is a legitimate objective being pursued in the public interest, and that the CPO and its effects on the property rights of affected landowners are proportionate to that objective and justified by the exigencies of the common good.

In reaching this conclusion, the Commission agrees with and adopts the analysis contained in the report of the person who conducted the assessment of the objections and agrees to confirm the Compulsory Order including the alteration to Plot No. 214.a.101, 214.b.201 and Plot No. 220.a.101, 220.c.201 to take account of updated information.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Donogh O' Donoghue
Planning Inspector

12th September 2025

Appendix 1 – Summary of Third-Party Objections

1. Brothers of Charity

- Requests that a detailed review take place to ensure no interruption to operation of their service which includes two special needs schools and a variety of support services during the proposed works.
- During the early phase of the project, review of the effect of school traffic was considered and reviewed with the City Council but now with the development of a new school on the campus they would like to ensure all consideration is given to the bus vehicles entering the east campus entrance and turning left towards the new school access road.

2. Connacht Hospitality Ltd

- The proposals will result in significant changes along the hotel's entire frontage, with intensified road use, construction-related disruption, and permanent alterations to access and movement patterns.
- They recognise the need for enhanced infrastructure and support the broad objectives of Bus Connects Galway, however the current scheme design fails to address their specific needs and undermine basic functional access requirements for staff, guests, and service providers.
- The scheme, in its current form, does not provide sufficient safeguards to protect essential operations during construction or thereafter. It does not adequately reflect the realities of their business that it depends on private vehicle and coach access. In addition, the hotel relies on a single-entry point.
- A particularly problematic feature of the proposed scheme is the removal of the existing right-turn lane that currently facilitates direct entry to the hotel from the eastbound (Oranmore) direction. With this movement eliminated, vehicles approaching from Oranmore and the eastern corridor would be forced to make circuitous and potentially congested detours. The current scheme design does not reflect the operational realities and places a disproportionate burden on them as an established and successful business.

- In the absence of a right turning lane there will be significant obstruction to traffic coming from the east. They strongly recommend that it should be retained in final design.
- In addition, the hotel's sole access point, located directly off Dublin Road, is included within the boundaries of the proposed Compulsory Purchase Order and is expected to be occupied during construction works. As there is no secondary entrance to the site, any disruption to this entry, even on a temporary basis, poses a serious operational risk.
- The entire entrance area falls within the CPO boundary and is proposed to be occupied during construction. This represents a critical threat to the hotel's operations. The construction timeline has not been clearly defined.
- The majority of hotel users arrive by private vehicle or coach. The potential for loss or restriction of on-site car parking is a significant concern due to the hotel's dependence on high levels of vehicle access and parking all year round. The CPO boundary may stop short of marked spaces, but this remains unclear as the mapping is tight and ambiguous. This as well as hotel roadside needs to be resolved through formal clarification.
- The scheme will restrict the hotel's ability to expand in the future as well as accommodating future buses/coaches parking.
- Proposed location of temporary access point during construction is wholly unacceptable from a hotel operations point of views.
- They were not consulted prior to publication of the scheme. They remain open and committed to further engagement with the Council, NTA and ABP to explore revised design solutions.
- A technical report prepared by Gerard Hannify, Chartered Engineer and transportation consultant accompanies this submission and provides a detailed engineering review of the likely short term and long-term impacts of the proposed scheme on the operations of the Hotel. The short-term impacts include impaired access to the hotel and the loss of car parking and signage with the loss of the turning lane identified as a long-term impact.

3. Duggans Supermarket Ltd

- The submission sets out that in the past, planning permission was granted for a retail development and that in lieu of suitable car parking a contribution was paid to the City Council.
- The next two adjoining properties fronting the Old Dublin Road have been purchased with the intent of redeveloping.
- The proposed development as initially instigated in 2020 showed that the Duggan property was not required. No explanation for this change has been provided.
- They object to the proposed acquisition as it is possible that the development would mitigate against their plans for further development of this immediate area.
- They stress that in the event the applicant wishes to resume discussions they require details prepared by accountants showing proposed alternative planning proposals that might be permissible on site in the event the intended purchase might proceed.
- They also require details on the proposed management of the property post-acquisition in the event the ground was to be acquired.

4. Flannery's Motor Inns DAC

- The hotel has 134 bedrooms and one of its major selling point, is the parking adjacent to the hotel.
- At present there are 97 car park spaces, 2 of these will be lost to the CPO.
- In addition, as a result of the proposed area for works, 26 spaces will be lost and there will be no facility for coaches to enter and park at the premises for the duration of the works.
- The main driver behind the works area appears to be the proposed bus stop at the front of the hotel. They recommend its relocation in line with international best practice spacing guidelines of 400m between bus stops.
- The CPO will remove the green area and trees to the front of the hotel and therefore additional noise and fumes will be an issue.
- The impact particularly during the work period could lead to the closure of the hotel and job losses.

- No indication provided of duration of works.
- Report attached from Candor Chartered Accountants Ltd providing an assessment of losses from proposed CPO of Road Frontage and Car Parking Spaces. The report concludes that the CPO as proposed currently will lead to significant additional losses for the duration of the works.
- Engineering Assessment report by Gerard Hanniffy, Consultant Civil Engineer detailing both the short-term and long-term impacts on the hotel.

5. HSE

- Submission on behalf of the HSE, who own the Woodlands Campus, situated along the proposed public transport route.
- The Woodlands campus is home to the Brothers of Charity Services, Galway who operate the Rosedale school at this location.
- The HSE is fully supportive of the project.
- They acknowledge the boundary treatment proposals, but requests that consultation will be made with the HSE, and that Method Statements are reviewed and approved prior to commencement of development.
- Clarification is requested regarding the management of the interface with the Woodlands Campus during the construction phase and the intended mitigation measures to protect the daily operations of the campus.
- A review of the CPO maps have identified discrepancies regarding the designation of land take – temporary versus compulsory within the Woodlands campus. They request clarification on the exact status of the land take in these locations and further details regarding the full reinstatement /replacement of these buildings.

6. HSE – Merlin Park University Hospital

- They fully support the proposed development.
- However, the scheme is inconsistent with the Galway City Development Plan and Galway Transport Strategy by not acknowledging the planned future access to the Merlin Park University Hospital (MPUH) campus.
- They recommend that the design of the Dublin Road/Galway Crystal junction should provide a fourth arm (to serve MPUH) and the overarching junction

design in respect of signals, crossings, bus and cycle lane provision, should reflect this.

- These upgrades could assist with resolving the existing junction capacity issue identified in the GTS and that are an integral part of long established plans to facilitate improved accessibility to MPUH.
- In regard to the CPO Submission, concerns are raised that the land take at the interface between MPUH and the Dublin Road/Galway Crystal junction is considered to be insufficient to accommodate the extent of the works required for completion of the scheme, including the link into MPUH. To avoid delays and complications later in the process, the HSE requests that the Bus Connects Project thoroughly assess and make provision for the acquisition of the requisite lands as part of this current process.
- They acknowledge the boundary treatment proposals, but requests reassurance that consultation will be made with the HSE, and that Method Statements for the rebuilding of the existing wall are reviewed and approved prior to the commencement of development.
- Feasibility report prepared by Rhatigan Architects for the proposed new entrance and access road to MPUH campus included. It confirms that the development of a proposed new entrance and access road to MPUH campus is feasible to improve the functionality and accessibility to the campus as service demand necessitates in the fullness of time.