

15th of July 2025

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An Chomhairle Ealaíon
The Arts Council
70 Merrion Square
Dublin 2, D02 NY52

Re: Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, Notice of Direct Planning Application to An Bord Pleanála. In accordance with Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, Galway County Council are seeking approval from An Bord Pleanála for the proposed development of a public realm scheme in Gort, Co. Galway.

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of our client, Galway County Council, of Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, H91 H6KX, please find enclosed a copy of a planning application for the provision of public realm enhancement works at Gort Town Centre, Co. Galway. The planning application constitutes Local Authority Own Development Requiring Appropriate Assessment (also known as a Part 10 application) due to the necessity of a providing Natura Impact Statement (NIS) assessing potential effects on nearby designated sites as part of the application. As a result, the application has been made directly to An Bord Pleanála. You have received a copy of the application as a noted Prescribed Body.

The Development Description as set out in the public notices is as follows,

"Pursuant to the requirements of Section 177AE(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), notice is hereby given that Galway County Council proposes to seek approval from An Bord Pleanála to carry out the following development at Gort Town Centre, Co. Galway.

The development will consist of the following:

Gort Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Project on Market Square, Bridge Street, George Street, Crowe Street, Barrack Street, Queen Street, Church Street, and Canon Quinn Park to include:

1. Redesigned paved areas along Market Square, Bridge Street, George Street, Crowe Street, Barrack Street, Queen Street and Church Street including new surface materials, installation of a new lighting scheme, hard and soft landscaping and street furniture (The proposed works are located within the Architectural Conservation Area, and in the vicinity of Recorded Protected Structures RPS No 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 3445, 3451, 3452, 3453, 3459, 3464, 3467, 3468, 3469, 3471, 3472.

2. Provision of an upgraded and expanded pedestrianised civic/public space in the Market Square.
3. Provision of new pedestrian crossings.
4. Installation of new road alignments including reduction in carriageway widths and traffic calming measures.
5. Installation of new street furniture and cycle parking.
6. Rationalised on-street car parking throughout the application area including the provision of new disabled and age friendly parking provision.
7. The provision of 2No. new public off-street parking facilities at Crowe Street and Barrack Street.
8. Installation of new landscaping including street trees and planting.
9. Upgrade works to the existing Canon Quinn Park including the installation of play equipment, seating, lighting and ancillary infrastructure.
10. Installation of a new signage and way-finding scheme.
11. Undergrounding of overhead cables and the removal of redundant overhead cabling.
12. Installation of upgraded surface water drainage infrastructure including provision of nature-based, sustainable urban drainage solutions.
13. The relocating of existing public bus-stop to Bridge Street/George Street and provision 1No. new coach drop off area on Market Square.
14. All other associated site and ancillary works at Market Square, Bridge Street, George Street, Crowe Street, Barrack Street, Queen Street, Church Street, and Canon Quinn Park.

A Natura Impact Statement has been prepared in respect of the proposed development.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken in respect of the proposed development and concluded that Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

An Bord Pleanála may give approval for the development with or without conditions or may refuse the application for development.

Plans, particulars and the Natura Impact Statement of the proposed development will be available for inspection or for purchase for a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, for a period of 6 weeks from **Tuesday 15th of July 2025 to Friday 29th of August 2025** at the following locations:

- The offices of the Planning Department of Galway County Council (Public Counter), Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway during its public open hours and Galway County Councils Consultation Portal at <https://consult.galway.ie/>
- The offices of Galway County Council, Gort Area Office, Crowe Street, Gort, County Galway, H91 W7W5 during its public open hours
- The Offices of An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough St Dublin 1, D01V902, between the hours of 9.15 am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

An electronic copy of the Natura Impact Statement and the plans and particulars of the proposed development are available for free download on the consultation portal at <https://consult.galway.ie/> from **Tuesday 15th of July 2025 to Friday 29th of August 2025**.

Submissions or observations may be made in writing during such period to **The Secretary, An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 D01 V902** relating to the following:

- The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the area concerned,
- The likely effects on the Environment of the proposed development, and
- The likely significant effects of the proposed development on European Site if carried out.

Such submissions/observations must also include the following information:

- The name of the person making the submission or observation, the name of the person acting on his or her behalf, if any, and the address to which any correspondence relating to the application should be sent,
- The subject matter of the submission or observation, and
- The reasons, consideration and arguments on which the submission or observation is based in full (Article 217 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, refers)

Any submissions or observations which do not comply with the above requirements cannot be considered by the Board.

The Board may at its absolute discretion hold an oral hearing on the application. The Board may, in respect of an application for permission, decide to:

- i. Grant the permission, or
- ii. Make such modifications to the proposed development as it specifies in its decision and grant permission in respect of the proposed development as so modified, or
- iii. Grant permission in respect of part of the proposed development (with or without specified modifications of the foregoing kind), and any of the above decisions may be subject to or without conditions, or
- iv. Refuse to grant the permission.

Any enquiries relating to the application process should be directed to the Local Authority Projects Section of An Bord Pleanála (Tel: 01-8588100, Email: laps@pleanala.ie).

A person may question the validity of a decision by An Bord Pleanála by way of an application for judicial review, under Order 84 of the rules of the Superior Courts (S.I. no 15 of 1986) in accordance with section 50 of the planning and development act 2000 (as amended). Practical Information in respect of the judicial review process can be assessed on the Boards website www.pleanala.ie or on Citizens Information's Website www.citizensinformation.ie

The deadline for receipt of submissions or observations to An Bord Pleanála is **Friday 29th of August 2025 at 5.30pm.**

The following documents are included in the application pack:

- Planning Application Documentation
 - **Site Notice** (copy, as erected on site on the 14th of July 2025);
 - **Newspaper Notices**: The Connacht Tribune
 - Copies of **Cover Letters Issued to Prescribed Bodies**
 - **ESRI Shapefile** of the Application Boundary
 - **Letters of Consent**
- Planning Application Drawings (Full drawing schedule included with drawings);
 - **Architectural and landscape Drawing Pack** including road layouts and lighting design prepared by BDP
- Technical Reports
 - **Archaeological Assessment** prepared by IAC Archaeology
 - **Bat Survey Report** prepared by Eire Ecology
 - **Built Heritage Audit & Impact Assessment** prepared by Dedalus Architecture
 - **Construction and Environmental Management Plan** prepared by BDP
 - **Design and Planning Statement** prepared by BDP
 - **EIA Screening Report** prepared by Minogue Environmental Consultancy
 - **Natura Impact Statement** prepared by Minogue Environmental Consultancy
 - **Public Lighting Report** prepared by Schreder
 - **Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment** prepared by Minogue Environmental Consultancy
 - **Stage 1 Road Safety Audit** prepared by CST Engineers
 - **Quality Audit** prepared by CST Group Consulting Engineers
 - **Exception Report: Road Safety Audit Stage 1** prepared by BDP and GCC
 - **Flood Risk Assessment** prepared by McCloy Consulting
 - **SuDs Assessment** prepared by McCloy Consulting
 - **Gort Wayfinding Strategy** prepared by BDP
 - **Mobility Management Plan** prepared by Momentum Transport Consultancy

Yours sincerely



Kevin McGann

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BDP

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