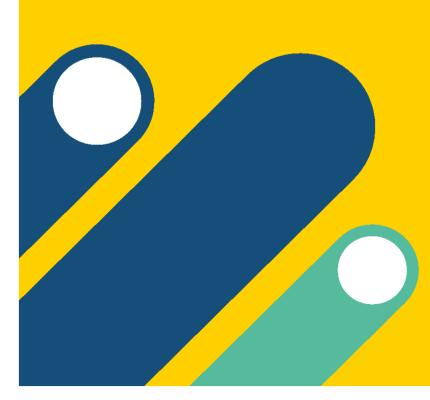
Appendix A2.1 Planning Report





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Acronym	Meaning
AA	Appropriate Assessment
CAP	Climate Action Plan
GCDP	Galway City Development Plan
СРО	Compulsory Purchase Order
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
EU	European Union
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GEP	Good Ecological Potential
GES	Good Ecological Status
GTS	Galway Transport Strategy
GCC	Galway City Council
GCoC	Galway County Council
GMATS	Galway Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy
HSE	Health Service Executive
LAP	Local Area Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPF	National Planning Framework
NPO	National Policy Objective
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSO	National Strategic Outcome
NTA	National Transport Authority
NWRA	Northern & Western Regional Assembly
OPW	Office of Public Work
PR	Planning Report
RPO	Regional Policy Objective
rBWD	Revised Bathing Water Directive
RSES	Regional Spatial Economic Strategy
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
WFD	Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, as amended)
UN	United Nations



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Report

This Planning Report (PR) has been prepared to set out the planning context for the development of the BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) as described in Chapter 4 of the accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). It identifies and considers the existing policy framework for the Proposed Development in the context of relevant legislative, international, national, regional and local planning strategy, plans and policy documents. The PR also assesses the planning aspects of the Proposed Development, in light of the predicted impacts identified in the EIAR for the Proposed Development and the planning history of the route and the surrounding area.

The PR is separate to the EIAR but forms part of the suite of planning application documents for the Proposed Development.

1.2 Summary Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development has an overall length of approximately 3.9km and includes areas such as Roscam, Doughiska, Murrough, Renmore, Merlin Park and Wellpark. The Proposed Development comprises the provision of public transport facilities and active travel facilities along a corridor beginning from the east of Moneenageisha Junction to the Doughiska Junction. This corridor is a main arterial route into Galway City Centre for both commuters and tourists. It also runs adjacent to the Atlantic Technological University, Merlin Park Hospital, Bon Secours Hospital and a number of schools and other amenity locations.

The Proposed Development includes a substantial increase in the level of bus priority and cycle facilities provided along the 3.9km corridor, including the provision of additional lengths of bus lanes resulting in improved journey time reliability. On completion of the Proposed Development, bus stops will be enhanced to improve the overall journey experience for bus passengers, and cycle facilities will be substantially improved with segregated cycle tracks provided along the links and protected junctions with enhanced signalling for cyclists provided at junctions. Permanent land acquisition and the demolition of two single-storey buildings within Brothers of Charity lands and boundary walls at various locations along the route is required to allow for the proposed cross-section widening and construction and operation of new bus lanes, footpaths and cycleways.

A full description of the Proposed Development is provided in Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR and the associated Proposed Development drawings are provided in Volume 3 Figures of the EIAR. In addition, Chapter 2 (Need for the Proposed Development) and Chapter 3 (Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives) in Volume 2 of the EIAR, outline the need for the Proposed Development and the alternatives considered, respectively. The extent of the Proposed Development is shown in Figure 1-1.







Figure 1-1 BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development

The Proposed Development will support integrated sustainable transport usage through infrastructure improvements for active travel (both walking and cycling), and the provision of enhanced bus priority measures for existing (both public and private) and all future services that will use the corridor. A Summary of the changes along the Proposed Development are included in Table 1-1.

Total length of Proposed Development	3.9km	
	Existing (km)	Proposed Development (km)
Bus Lanes		
Inbound	0.8km	3.9km
Outbound	2.7km	3.9km
Bus Priority through Traffic Management		
Inbound	0.79km	3.9km
Outbound	2.88	3.9km
Total Bus Priority (both directions)	49%	100%
Bus Measures		
Proportion of Route with Bus Priority Measures	49%	100%
Cycle Facilities - Segregated		
Inbound	0	3.9km

Table 1-1. Summar	v of Changes as	a Result of the Proposed	1 Dovelonment
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Total length of Proposed Development	3.9km	
	Existing (km)	Proposed Development (km)
Outbound	0	3.9km
Cycle Facilities – Non-segregated		
Inbound	0	0
Outbound	0	0
Cycle Facilities - Overall		
Total Cyclist Facilities (both directions)	0	3.9km
Other Features		
Number of Traffic Signal Controlled Junctions	6	9
Number of Signal Crossings	1	2

1.3 Strategic Overview

The BusConnects Galway Programme is part of a wider suite of transport projects identified in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) and informed by the National Transport Authority's (NTA's) programme to greatly improve bus services in Galway. It is a key part of the programme for Government to improve public transport, encourage active travel and address climate change in Galway.

The GTS was published by Galway City Council (GCC and Galway County Council (GCoC) in 2016. The GTS has informed the policies and objectives of both the Galway City Development Plan and the Galway County Development Plan. The strategy provides a framework for the development of the transport network over the next 20 to 30 years and was prepared in partnership with the NTA.

Traffic congestion in Galway has been an issue for decades. Congestion impacts on quality of life, the urban environment, safety of all road users and the economic performance of Galway City as the Gateway and economic driver of the West of Ireland Region. Its impact extends far beyond the city into the wider county and region, due to the large commuter population reliant on the city for employment, education and tourism. The GTS identified the Proposed Development, along with a number of other transport improvement projects, with the aim of addressing these transportation issues in the city and its environs.

The BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road is to form a central route for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians along the Dublin Road and tying in with the BusConnects Galway: 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 coalesce along this high-quality corridor, providing high-frequency services with journey time reliability and opportunities for interchange.

In March 2018, BusConnects Galway was launched as part of a major investment programme to help alleviate transportation issues in Galway, as part of Project Ireland 2040 - National Development Plan 2018 – 2027 (hereafter referred to as the NDP) (Government of Ireland 2018a).

It is envisaged that the Proposed Development, once completed, will deliver part of the radial Core Bus Corridors identified in the GTS (GCC 2016). The GTS sets out a series of actions and measures, covering infrastructural, operational and policy elements to be implemented in Galway over the next 20 years and sets out a framework to deliver the projects in a phased manner so an update is not anticipated until 2036.

The GTS has been adopted by both GCC and GCoC and is implemented through the policies of their Development Plans.





1.4 Need for the Proposed Development

Chapter 2 (Need for the Proposed Development) in Volume 2 of the EIAR sets out in detail the need for the Proposed Development. The following section provides an overview.

Our sustainable future relies on a built environment consisting of spaces and places that connects people and creates inclusive societies that are characterised by social cohesion. Sustainable transport infrastructure assists in creating more sustainable communities and healthier places while also stimulating our economic development. It contributes to enhanced health and well-being when delivered effectively.

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 making them attractive alternatives to car-based journeys.

The Proposed Development will address sustainable mode transport infrastructure deficits while contributing to an overall integrated sustainable transport system as proposed in the GTS. It will increase the effectiveness and attractiveness of bus services operating along the route and will result in more people availing of public transport due to the faster journey times and reliability improvements which the Proposed Development provides. This in turn will support the potential to increase the bus network capacity of services operating along the corridor and thereby further increase the attractiveness of public transport. In addition to this, the significant segregation and safety improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure that is a key feature of the Proposed Development will further maximize the movement of people travelling sustainably along the corridor and will therefore cater for higher levels of future population and employment growth.

In the absence of the Proposed Development, 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 walking and cycling measures to be introduced by the Proposed Development will allow these modes of transport to grow into the future. In addition to the public transport benefits the Proposed Development will also improve the existing streetscape / urban realm setting along the corridor. This will include the introduction of new and improved landscaping provisions along the corridor, and a complimentary planting regime and streetscape improvements at key locations will also enhance the character of the surrounding built environment along the corridor.

The delivery of the Proposed Development is supported by international, European, national, regional and local policies, planning strategies and plans. The key policy and planning documents are described in Section 2, including the manner in which the need for the Proposed Development is supported by the relevant policies and objectives.

Overall, the Proposed Development will make a significant contribution to the overall aims and objectives of BusConnects and the GTS allowing the city to grow sustainably into the future, which would not be possible in the absence of the Proposed Development.

1.5 Roads Act 1993, as amended & Planning Process

The Proposed Development is a '*proposed road development*' under the definitions provided by Part 1, Section 2 of the Roads Act, 1993 as amended (hereafter referred to as the "Roads Act").

The application for approval of the Proposed Development is being made under section 51 of the Roads Act.

The following relevant legislative provisions were considered in preparing the application for the Proposed Development:





- Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended (hereafter referred to as the "2000 Act").
- Article 80(1)(b)(i) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended.
- Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994, as amended.
- Section 95 of the Road Traffic Act 1961, as amended.
- Section 177AE of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended.
- Section 175 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended.
- Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993, as amended.
- Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994, as amended (the "Roads Regulations").

Considering the type of Proposed Development involved, the assessments required to accompany the application (EIAR and NIS) and the fact that GCC (the applicant) are designated as a Roads Authority under the Roads Act. It was determined that an application for approval from An Bord Pleanála (hereafter referred to as "the Board") under section 51 of the Roads Act was the appropriate planning process to follow. This was outlined to the Board in pre-application discussions, and the Board agreed with this approach.

1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The Roads Act defines 'proposed road development' as:

'any proposed road development which is subject to an environmental impact assessment under Section 50...'

Section 50 of the Roads Act is concerned with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA for 'road development'. Section 50(1)(a) provides as follows:

'(1)(a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:

- (i) the construction of a motorway;
- (ii) the construction of a busway;
- (iii) the construction of a service area;
- (iv) any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.'

Under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, the prescribed type of road development for the purposes of section 50(1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act are:

'(a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area;

(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length.'

The Proposed Development meets the threshold as set out in Article 8 of the Roads Regulations as it includes the realignment and / or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such realigned and / or widened road is more than 500 metres in length and it is in an urban area. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is mandatory in respect of the Proposed Development. Section 5.2 includes a summary of the EIAR assessment for the Proposed Development.

1.7 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Article 6(3) and 6(4) Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as amended (the "Habitats Directive") require an appropriate assessment ("AA") of the likely





significant effects of a proposed development on its own and in combination with other plans and projects which may have an effect on a European Site (SAC or SPA).

Consent for a project can only be given after determining that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site(s) concerned in view of the conservation objectives of that site.

In order to determine whether an AA is required, a screening process must be carried out which asks whether the project likely to have a significant effect, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, on European site(s) in view of the site's conservation objectives.

If there is no likelihood of significant effects, then an AA is not required, and the planning application can proceed as normal. Whereas where significant effects cannot be excluded, an AA is required before planning permission can be granted. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) will be required in order for the project to proceed.

As part of this application, an AA screening was carried out which determined that a NIS was required (the NIS is included as a standalone document in this planning application). Section 5.2 includes a summary of the AA for the Proposed Development.

1.8 List of Documents Accompanying the Application

A number of supporting documents are being submitted to the Board as part of the planning application process. These documents include the standard documents which normally accompany planning applications which are subject to environmental impact assessment, including:

- A Planning Report (this document)
- A cheque for the appropriate (minimum) Planning Fee (€60,000)
- EIA Portal Confirmation Notice (EIA Portal ID number 2025006)
- Drawings and drawing list
- Copy of the site notice
- Copy of the newspaper notice
- An Environmental Impact Assessment Report, including Non Technical Summary
- An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement
- Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (Stage 1)
- Traffic Modelling Report
- Preliminary Design Report
- Public Consultation Report
- Option Selection Report
- Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)
- Arboricultural Survey Report
- Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan

Four copies (2 hard copies and 2 electronic copies) of the documents and drawings are submitted to An Board Pleanála as well as an electronic copy of the EIAR and the AA Screening and NIS Report. An application is being submitted to the Board, in relation to a CPO of lands required to implement the Proposed Development, in tandem with this application.

1.9 Structure of the Report

This report will be structured as follows:

1. Introductory section providing a general overview of the Proposed Development and detailing preapplication developments.





- 2. Planning & Development policy background to the Proposed Development and an indicative level of compliance with international, national, regional, local and sectoral policy.
- 3. A brief description of the relevant planning history of the route of the Proposed Development and the surrounding area.
- 4. A detailed section by section description of the Proposed Development supplemented by Chapter 4 of the EIAR.
- 5. A brief outline of the environmental impacts as identified in the AA Screening, NIS and EIAR.
- 6. An assessment of the main planning issues pertaining to the Proposed Development.
- 7. A concluding summary of the Planning Report and promoting the permissibility of the Proposed Development.

1.10 Planning Fee

The Planning Fee is calculated in accordance with An Bord Pleanála's list of fees for Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) cases.

The fee accompanying this Application is the standard fee of €60,000 for applications by a road authority under section 51 of the Roads Act.

1.11 Consultation to Date

In addition to the extensive non-statutory public consultation on the Proposed Development, the BusConnects Infrastructure team undertook consultation on the EIAR with certain prescribed bodies and relevant non-statutory consultees.

Consultations were also conducted with bodies including National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), National Monument of Ireland (NMI) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and these are considered in the development of the relevant impact assessments chapters in Volume 2 of the EIAR.

In addition to consultation with the public, including affected landowners, consultations were also undertaken with GCC and with the prescribed bodies and interested parties outlined in Table 1-2 with regard to the approach to the EIAR.





Prescribed Bodies and	
Age Action	Galway City Fire Brigade
An Bord Pleanála	Galway City Local Enterprise Office
An Chomhairle Ealaíon (the Arts Council)	Galway Civic Trust
An Garda Síochána	Galway Commuter Coalition
An Post	Galway County Council
An Taisce	Galway Cycling Campaign
Association of Consulting Engineers	Galway Port Company
ATU Technological University	Geological Survey of Ireland
Badgerwatch Ireland	Health and Safety Authority
Bat Conservation Ireland	Health Service Executive
BirdWatch Ireland	Heritage Council
Bus Éireann	Housing Agency IBEC
CIÉ Group (Irish Rail, Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann)	Inland Fisheries Ireland
Climate Change Advisory Council	Irish Brent Goose Research Group
Coach and Tourism Council	Irish Deaf Society
Coillte	Irish Farmers Association
Commission for Regulation of Utilities	Irish Georgian Society
Construction Industry Federation	Irish Planning Institute
Cycling Ireland	Irish Rail
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Irish Raptor Study Group
Department of Education	Irish Road Haulage Association
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Irish Tourist Industry Confederation
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Irish Wheelchair Association
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Irish Wildlife Trust
Department of Justice	Local Authority Waters and Communities Office
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	Local Government Management Agency
Department of Rural and Community Development	National Council for the Blind Ireland
Department of the Taoiseach	National Disability Authority
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	National Museum of Ireland
Department of Transport	National Transport Authority
Development Applications Unit (DAU)	National Youth Council of Ireland
Eirgrid	Northern and Western Regional Assembly
Enterprise Ireland	Office of Public Works
Environmental Protection Agency	Rail Users Ireland
Ervia - Gas Networks Ireland	Retail Excellence Ireland
ESB	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
Fáilte Ireland	The Irish Cycling Advocacy Network
Friends of the Earth	The Irish Small and Medium Enterprise Association
Friends of the Irish Environment	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Galway Chamber	Tree Council of Ireland
Galway Chamber	Uisce Eireann
-	Waterways Ireland
Galway City Community Network	valerways helding

Table 1-2 List of Prescribed Bodies and Interested Parties



Where possible, the information and advice received from the consultation process was considered and subsequently incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development and addressed in the relevant chapters of the EIAR. Issues raised during the consultation process with the prescribed bodies and interested parties included the following:

- Development Applications Unit (DAU) Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage: Comments provided related to the assessment of the impacts of the Proposed Development on biodiversity and the Merlin Park Grasslands (Annex I Hay Meadow), the completion of ecological surveys (such as trees, hedgerows, bats, birds, etc.) alien invasive species, mitigation and monitoring measures and Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP).
- Geological Survey Ireland (GSI): Comments provided outlined the various databases available for consultation during the Environmental Impact assessment stage. It noted the presence of a County Geological Site located within the vicinity of the Proposed Development, namely Merlin Park Cave (GR 134492,225236). The submission also notes that the Proposed Development is underlain by a 'Regionally Important Aquifer Karstified (conduit)' and that there are a number of karst features in the vicinity of the route including springs, swallow holes and enclosed depressions.
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII): Comments included TII's concerns regarding the impact of the Proposed Development on the national road network (and junctions with national roads). TII noted that a Traffic and Transport Assessment should be carried out (subject to meeting appropriate thresholds and criteria). The developer is required to identify haul routes proposed and assess their impact on the network to be traversed.
- **National Museum of Ireland (NMI)**: Comments noted the various databases to be consulted during the EIA and also discussed mitigation and monitoring measures.

There has been ongoing engagement with landowners and / or anyone with an interest in potentially impacted properties or lands along the corridor of the Proposed Development, as the design development progressed. This engagement included Non-Statutory Public Consultations (NSPC), the first held between October 2020 to January 2021 and the second held in January 2023.

On the 1st July 2024 registered letters were issued to registered addresses of the properties likely to be the subject of the Proposed Development CPO process seeking to engage with them to outline the Proposed Development and CPO, to ascertain ownership details (or to confirm ownership details based on Property Registration Authority – Registry of Deeds referencing research), and to ascertain any other parties with an interest in the property / lands.

Since July 2024, a series of landowner meetings were scheduled with all identified parties who requested a meeting. Following this initial engagement, and where other parties were identified with an interest in any property/land, further registered letters were issued to these parties offering a meeting to discuss the proposed development and CPO. Follow-up conversations have been facilitated as a result of these letters on request.

A total of 32 Registered or Reputed landowners, 5 No. Occupiers and 6 No. Lessees were identified. Of these:

- 5 No. were not contactable as they relate to lands held by developers of housing estates which have ceased trading and are dissolved, Statutory notices associated with these properties will be issued to the Commissioner of Public Works in Ireland and a copy erected on site,
- I No. was not contactable which relates to lands held by a developer of a housing estate. No details are available as to the trading status of the developer's organisation and registered letters issued have been returned. Statutory notices associated with this property will be issued to the registered address and a copy erected on site, and
- 1 No. was not contactable as it related to a management company which had ceased trading. However, a meeting was held with a representative of the property owner's organisation. A copy of the statutory notice will be issued to the registered address and a copy erected on site,





Notwithstanding the above, statutory notices associated with the proposed development CPO will be erected at all impacted properties associated with the Proposed Development CPO.

Over the course of the engagements, affected property owners have had the opportunity to discuss and consult upon, among other things, the following aspects with the BusConnects Infrastructure team:

- Overall Proposed Development proposals and potential impacts;
- Timelines for the Proposed Development design development and associated EIAR assessment;
- Procedural matters such as planning and CPO process;
- Specific details of impact of Proposed Development on landowner property including approximate extent of encroachment; and
- General information around reinstatement and accommodation works.

Throughout the planning process any requests for meetings, phone conversations, or other requests for information have been accommodated where possible. Many of the submissions received during consultations have been from potentially impacted owners and as with all other submissions they have been considered in the design development.

This report does not summarise engagement or feedback of landowners, as these discussions are confidential with respect to potential land acquisition processes being undertaken as part of the statutory CPO consent process. Landowner meetings commenced in January 2023 and continued throughout 2024. Contact has been made with representatives of the majority of potentially impacted folios. There has been ongoing engagement with landowners whose properties are affected, as design development has progressed on the Proposed Development.

2 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

2.1 International

2.1.1 United Nations 2030 Agenda

In September 2015, Transforming Our World, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development(UN, 2015) was adopted by all 193 Members States of the United Nations (UN). The 2030 Agenda aims to deliver a more sustainable, prosperous, and peaceful future for the entire world, and sets out a framework for how to achieve this by 2030. This framework is made up of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which cover the social, economic, and environmental requirements for a sustainable future which are shown in Figure 2-1







Figure 2-1 The 17 SDG's (Source: United Nations)

The SDGs are integrated, recognising that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. SDGs 3, 8, 9, 11 and 13 and their associated targets are relevant to the Proposed Development as presented in Table 2-1.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	SDG Target
Goal 3 : Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.	Target 3.9 : By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.
Goal 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Target 8.9 : By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products
Goal 9 : Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.	Target 9.1 : Develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human wellbeing, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.
Goal 11 : Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.	Target 11.2 : By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.
Goal 13 : Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.	Target 13.2 : Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

Table 2-1 Sustainable Development Goals and Targets relevant to the Proposed Development

In Ireland, the SDGs are implemented through the National Implementation Plan 2022-2024 (DECC, 2022), which is in direct response to the UN's 2030 Agenda. More information on the National Implementation Plan is presented in Section 2.1.3.14.





Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is supported by the goals and targets set out in the relevant SDGs. It will provide for enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure, which will subsequently enable more efficient, safe and integrated sustainable transport movement in Galway City.

2.2 European Policy

2.2.1 Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy 2020

The Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (European Commission 2020) sets out a number of goals as to how people will move within and between cities in the future. It has identified 82 initiatives which have been categorised into 10 'flagships.'

The flagship relevant to the Proposed Development is 'Flagship 3 – *Making interurban and urban mobility more sustainable and healthier*'. It states that:

'Increasing the modal shares of collective transport, walking and cycling, as well as automated, connected and multimodal mobility will significantly lower pollution and congestion from transport, especially in cities and improve the health and well-being of people. Cities are and should therefore remain at the forefront of the transition towards greater sustainability.'

A target of the strategy relevant to the Proposed Development is to double cycling infrastructure in cities within the European Union to 5,000km in the next decade.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development supports the objectives of the EU's Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy through significant investment in cycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and bus priority, along the route of the Proposed Development, thereby supporting and encouraging growth in active travel and sustainable public transport usages.

2.2.2 European Green Deal 2019

The European Green Deal (EGD) (European Commission 2019) sets out ambitious policies aimed at cutting emissions and preserving the natural environment. Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021, establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999, the binding EU 2030 climate target shall be a domestic reduction of net greenhouse gas emissions (emissions after deduction of removals) by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. In addition to binding legislation and other initiatives adopted at EU level, all sectors of the economy – including transport – must play a role in contributing to the achievement of climate neutrality within the European Union by 2050.

As indicated in the European Green Deal, on 9 December 2020, the European Commission adopted a communication entitled 'Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – Putting European Transport on Track for the Future'. The strategy sets out a roadmap for a sustainable and smart future for European transport, with an action plan towards an objective to deliver a 90% reduction in emissions from the transport sector by 2050.

This Strategy has the objective of 'accelerating the shift to sustainable and smart mobility' and requires that 'The EU transport system and infrastructure will be made fit to support new sustainable mobility services that can reduce congestion and pollution, especially in urban areas'. It is noted that pollution is concentrated the most in cities and that a combination of measures is required such as 'improving public transport and promoting active modes of transport such as walking and cycling.'





Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is necessary, in conjunction with a range of other initiatives, to attain the objectives of the European Green Deal, through significant investment in cycle and pedestrian infrastructure, in addition to bus priority, thereby supporting and encouraging growth in active travel and sustainable public transport usage.

2.3 National Policy

2.3.1 Project Ireland 2040 – National Development Plan 2021- 2030 (NDP)

The Project Ireland 2040 is the Government's long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all its people. The NPF (Government of Ireland, 2018a) and the NDP (Government of Ireland, 2021b) combine to form Project Ireland 2040. The NDP and the NPF, were adopted in May 2018 and an update to the NDP was published in October 2021.

The NDP is the national capital investment strategy plan. It sets out the framework of expenditure commitments to secure the Strategic Investment Priorities to the year 2030 and support the delivery of the 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) identified in the NPF, see Figure 2-2 below. The NSOs directly related to the Proposed Development are described in Section 2.2.3.3 and Table 2-3.

The NDP sets out a programme of investment that includes indicative capital expenditure allocations to the year 2030. Although the NDP does not specifically allocate funding to the Proposed Development, there are a number of funding avenues within the NDP that are relevant to the Proposed Development, including:

- €360 million per annum national active travel budget up to 2025; and
- €35 billion allocated to transport-related requirements detailed in the NDP.

This is supplemented by the 2025 budget announcement allocating €360m to walking and cycling infrastructure for 2025. In addition, almost €50 million of provisional funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund has been specifically allocated to a Galway City Council Transport Connectivity Project and a Public Space and Street project in Galway City.

Under the heading 'Major investments in this NDP' the NDP sets out a selection of national infrastructure projects and 'BusConnects for Ireland's Cities' is highlighted under the heading 'NSO 4 - Sustainable Mobility'.

The NDP outlines under the heading 'Sustainable Mobility' that;

'The National Planning Framework (NPF) recognises the importance of significant investment in sustainable mobility (active travel and public transport) networks if the NPF population growth targets are to be achieved. Investing in high quality sustainable mobility will improve citizens' quality of life, support our transition to a low-carbon society and enhance our economic competitiveness.'

NSO4 'Sustainable Mobility' that:

'This NDP provides for significant investment in active travel, bus and rail infrastructure over the next ten years in terms of expanding sustainable mobility options in our cities, towns and villages, supporting our ambition for compact growth and seeking to develop our regional cities as centres of scale in line with the NPF targets. In the previous NDP, the Transport sector had an allocation of approximately €21 billion for the period 2018-2027. The revised NDP sets out further ambitious plans to enhance public transport, active travel options and the connectivity of communities throughout Ireland. Transport projects by their nature are delivered over a multi-year horizon. The scale of the Transport-related requirements under the revised NDP amounts to c. €35 billion in total over 2021- 2030.'

Under the heading 'Sectoral Strategies' it makes reference to the CAP and recognises:





".... that Ireland must achieve a significant modal shift from car to active travel and public transport if we are to achieve our target of a 51% reduction in Green House Gas emissions by 2030 and ultimately net zero by 2050."

It also highlights, with specific regard to BusConnects:

'Transformed active travel and bus infrastructure and services in all five of Ireland's major cities (including Galway City) is fundamental to achieving the overarching target of 500,000 additional active travel and public transport journeys by 2030.'

It continues:

'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. BusConnects will enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by increasing and replacing the bus fleets with low emission vehicles.'

It further states that:

'Increasing the attractiveness of the bus systems in the cities will encourage modal shift away from private car use, leading to a reduction in congestion and associated costs in the major urban areas'.

NSO8 'Transition to a Climate-Neutral and Climate Resilient Society' identifies BusConnects under the Strategic Investment Priorities (Transport) and the need to shift away from carbon intensive transport systems. The NDP identifies specific measures including:

- 'Delivering priority public transport programmes including BusConnects, DART+ Expansion Programme and Metrolink so that increased transport demand is met by greener public transport;
- Replacing existing diesel public buses with lower emitting alternatives under the BusConnects programme, while promoting commercial bus services and small public service vehicle industry to use low-emission fleet;
- Encouraging a significant modal shift through greater levels of investment and further development of meaningful alternatives to private car uses under the following three major environmentally sustainable mobility Proposed Developments:
 - additional cycling and walking infrastructure which will provide additional sustainable mobility options to complement increased capacity and faster, higher quality public transport in our main cities;
 - travel demand management measures in the five cities; and
 - pilot initiatives for low emitting technologies in the transport sector.'

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development, forming part of the overall BusConnects Programme, is identified as a 'Strategic Investment Priority' project, with an associated investment commitment, which has been determined as central to the delivery of the NPF vision.

The Proposed Development will facilitate continued planned and forecasted population growth in Galway City and along the route of the Proposed Development by meeting existing and future travel demand through investment in a sustainable transport network and services. As required in the NDP, the Proposed Development will provide the infrastructure needed to help facilitate a modal shift from private car to public transport, cycling and walking. It will also bring to fruition a 'Strategic Investment Priority' of the NDP to help deliver the full 'BusConnects Programme'.





2.3.2 Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (NPF)

The NPF is a 20-year planning framework which combines with the NDP to form Project Ireland 2040 which is the government's long-term overarching national planning strategy. It aims to guide population and jobs growth over the next 20 years across all parts of Ireland, supported by a flexible and sustainable planning framework. The NPF informs all other planning policy documents including the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (see Section 2.1.4.1) and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP), the Galway County Council Development Plan (see Section 2.1.5.2) and Galway City Development Plan (see Section 2.1.5.1).

The NPF's ambition is to create a single vision and a shared set of goals for each community to shape the growth and development of Ireland by providing a framework up to the year 2040. These goals are expressed as National Strategic Outcomes (NSO), shared benefits which the NPF will deliver if implemented according to the objectives of the NPF. The NPF NSO's relevant to the Proposed Development are set out in Table 2-2 with a corresponding statement on how the Proposed Development meets each respective NSO objective.

National Strategic Outcome (NSO)	How the Proposed Development meets the NSO Objective
NSO1 Compact Growth: 'Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. All our urban settlements contain many potential development areas, centrally located and frequently publicly owned, that are suitable and capable of re-use to provide housing, jobs, amenities and services, but which need a streamlined and co-ordinated approach to their development, with investment in enabling infrastructure and supporting amenities, to realise their potential. Activating these strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority.'	The Proposed Development will facilitate the sustainable growth of Galway City through delivering transport infrastructure necessary to provide a bus network that works for a growing city. The Proposed Development is designed to provide a better, more reliable and more efficient bus service for everyone. The Proposed Development will bring greater accessibility to the city centre and improve connectivity between communities and locations along its route facilitating access to housing, jobs, amenities and services. The Proposed Development will enhance the capacity of the sustainable transport network, and as a consequence will help to achieve greater land use densities that will encourage compact growth in compliance with the objectives of NSO1.
NSO4 Sustainable Mobility: 'In line with Ireland's Climate Change mitigation plan, we need to progressively electrify our mobility systems moving away from polluting and carbon intensive propulsion systems to new technologies such as electric vehicles and introduction of electric and hybrid traction systems for public transport fleets, such that by 2040 our cities and towns will enjoy a cleaner, quieter environment free of combustion engine driven transport systems.'	The Proposed Development will provide infrastructure to support a sustainable transport network that will facilitate a modal shift from private car usage to sustainable transport. It will reduce journey times and increase journey time reliability and increase the attractiveness of active travel and public transport for travel, which will in turn reduce fossil fuel usage in private travel. The Proposed Development will support integrated sustainable transport usage through infrastructure improvements for active travel (both walking and cycling), and the provision of enhanced bus priority measures for existing (both public and private) and all future services who will use the Proposed Development.
NSO5 A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills: 'This will depend on creating places that can foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. It can be achieved by building regional economic drivers and by supporting opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places. Delivering this outcome will require the	The Proposed Development is a high-quality development that will provide the infrastructure required to facilitate sustainable transport options which will service the current and future transport needs of Galway City and surrounding areas. The Proposed Development represents a significant investment in transport infrastructure that will improve accessibility to Galway City, a city of regional

Table 2-2 Strategic Outcomes (NSO) of the NPF





National Strategic Outcome (NSO)	How the Proposed Development meets the NSO Objective
coordination of growth and place making with investment in world class infrastructure, including digital connectivity, and in skills and talent to support economic competitiveness and enterprise growth.'	significance, and land uses associated with the city, including economic, educational, amenity and social uses, for example.
NSO8 Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society: 'The National Climate Policy Position establishes the national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. This objective will shape investment choices over the coming decades in line with the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework. New energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave and solar and connecting the richest sources of	The Proposed Development comprises transport infrastructure that supports the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service. The primary objective of the Proposed Development therefore, through the provision of necessary bus, cycle, and walking infrastructure enhancements, is the facilitation of modal shift from car dependency, and thereby contributing to an efficient, integrated transport system and a low carbon and climate resilient City in compliance with NSO8. The Proposed Development will provide the advantage of segregated cycling facilities. These high-quality cycle tracks will be typically 2m in width offering a high level of service and help to reduce dependency on private car
that energy to the major sources of demand.'	use for short journeys in compliance with the objectives of NSO8. Furthermore, all drainage structures are designed with a minimum return period of no flooding in 1:30 years with a 20% climate change allowance.
NSO9 Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources: 'Ireland has abundant natural and environmental resources such as our water sources that are critical to our environmental and economic wellbeing into the future. Conserving and enhancing the quality of these resources will also become more important in a crowded and competitive world as well as our capacity to create beneficial uses from products previously considered as waste, creating circular economic benefits.'	The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise the amount and extent of major construction works required, and therefore minimise the quantities of construction materials required. The Proposed Development has taken into consideration the objectives of a circular economy and aims to re-use materials, where possible. Consideration has been given to the sustainability of material being sourced for the construction of the Proposed Development. Insofar as is reasonably practicable, materials required for the construction of the Proposed Development will be sourced locally in order to reduce the amount of travelling required to transfer the material to the site. Construction materials will be managed on-site in such a way as to prevent over-ordering and waste. A Construction and Demolition Resource and Waste Management Plan (CDRWMP) has been developed and will be implemented (and updated as necessary) by the appointed contractor. In regard to water during the Construction Phase, the EIAR includes details on guidance documents and control measures for site clearance, construction compound, silty water runoff, storage of materials, working in-stream or in close proximity to watercourses, fuel storage, use of concrete and monitoring. Mitigation for the Operational Phase has been built into the design of the Proposed Development.
NSO10 Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services: 'Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful and competitive places. Compact, smart growth in urban areas and strong and	The Proposed Development provides infrastructure to support the delivery of sustainable transport that will benefit the entire community in terms of greater accessibility, capacity and speed of service improvements. The infrastructure improvements is along a key route which include many of Galway City's



National Strategic Outcome (NSO)	How the Proposed Development meets the NSO Objective
stable rural communities will enable the enhanced and effective provision of a range of accessible services.'	educational and health care services in compliance with the objectives of NSO10.

Specifically, with regard to the Galway City and Metropolitan Area, the NPF states that:

'The Galway Metropolitan area shares many of the challenges arising from growth and economic success with much larger cities. In common with Dublin, Galway needs to accommodate a greater proportion of the growth it generates within its metropolitan boundaries. Challenges to be addressed include housing choice and affordability, transport/ mobility and urban quality, especially outside the core-city centre area.'

Under the heading 'Key future growth enablers for Galway include' it highlights that:

'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.'

NSO 4 notes that:

'Major urban areas are too heavily dependent on road and private, mainly car based, transport with the result that our roads are becoming more and more congested. The National Development Plan makes provision for investment in public transport and sustainable mobility solutions to progressively put in place a more sustainable alternative'.

BusConnects is referenced as a sustainable mobility solution, and the Proposed Development involves the implementation of this sustainable mobility solution through facilitating greater bus, cycle and pedestrian accessibility into, within and across Galway City.

At the core of the NPF is sustainability and more environmentally friendly development, which is implemented through the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs) and accompanying National Policy Objectives (NPOs). In addition to the NSOs referenced above, there are a number of NPOs pertaining to the Proposed Development such as:

- NPO 27 "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"
- NPO 52 "The planning system will be responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital"
- NPO 64 "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."
- NPO 75 "Ensure that all plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the National Planning Framework are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate".

On 5th November 2024, Government published a draft schedule of amendments to the First Revision to the NPF arising from the public consultation carried out between July and September 2024. The draft makes





references *BusConnects* and promotes the Department of Transport and NTA's ongoing work on Transport-Orientated Development (TOD).

A key strategy is supporting ambitious growth targets to enable Galway City to grow by at least 50% over 2016 levels to 2040 and to enhance their significant potential to become a city of scale. The draft NPF notes that at a metropolitan scale, Galway City will require a focus on the delivery of critical infrastructure required to meet the ambitious compact growth targets expressed in the NPF, including improved public transport and sustainable mobility options.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development supports the goals of the NPF by delivering infrastructure that will facilitate high quality sustainable active travel and public transport networks. In doing so, the Proposed Development will facilitate an accelerated shift, and the urgent transition needed towards a low carbon and climate resilient society.

The Proposed Development supports the outcome of the NPF related to Compact Growth. The NPF describes how the careful management and sustained growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. A key NPF priority involves achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development. One of the overall objectives of BusConnects is to enhance compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land, for present and future generation through the provision of safe and efficient sustainable transport networks. The Proposed Development supports this objective.

2.3.3 National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland

The Department of Transport (DoT) has finalised the transport framework, the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (hereafter referred to as NIFTI) (DoT 2021b) to ensure alignment with the policies of the NPF. NIFTI sets out the DoT's strategy for the development and management of Ireland's land transport network (roads, public transport, walking and cycling) over the next two decades. The NPF and its projections around population and settlement patterns are central to the development of NIFTI. The purpose of NIFTI is to enable the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 and the ten NSOs by guiding the appropriate investment in Ireland's roads, active travel and public transport infrastructure.

To invest sustainably, NIFTI establishes hierarchies which prioritise environmentally sustainable and proportional solutions to a given transport need or opportunity. In combination, it is intended that these hierarchies will ensure that we tackle the right problems with the right solutions. NIFTI sets out the types of positive outcomes transport investment can deliver, including:

- Delivering clean, low carbon and environmentally sustainable mobility;
- Supporting Successful Places and Vibrant Communities;
- Facilitating Safe, Accessible, Reliable and Efficient Travel on the Network; and
- Promoting a Strong and Balanced Economy.

NIFTI was published by the DoT on 21 December 2021 and includes investment hierarchies that ensure strategic alignment of future transport investment and to support the NPF. The investment priorities are based on two hierarchies, Modal and Intervention which are set out below:

Modal Hierarchy

The NIFTI Modal Hierarchy is:

- 1. Active Travel;
- 2. Public Transport; and
- 3. Private Vehicles.

The plan states that future transport planning will prioritise sustainable modes and



'.....sets out a hierarchy of travel modes to be accommodated and encouraged when investments and other interventions are made. Sustainable modes, starting with active travel and then public transport, will be encouraged over less sustainable modes such as the private car.

Active travel is the most sustainable mode of travel. Increasing the share of active travel can reduce the carbon footprint of the transport sector, improve air quality, reduce urban congestion, and bring about positive health impacts as a result of increased physical activity. The attractiveness of this mode is dependent on infrastructure — for example, dedicated footpaths, segregated cycle lanes and the quality and priority of road crossing points all impact upon the number of people engaging in active travel.'

Intervention Hierarchy

The NIFTI Intervention Hierarchy is:

- 1. Maintain;
- 2. Optimise;
- 3. Improve; and
- 4. New.

NIFTI states that:

'To support the delivery of the NPF, and to make best use of our existing assets, a hierarchy of these intervention types will be applied. Maintaining the existing transport network will be given first priority, followed by maximising the value of the network through optimising its use. Infrastructural investments will only be considered after these two categories have been assessed as inappropriate for the identified problem, with upgrades to existing infrastructure to be considered before new infrastructure.'

De-carbonising the transport sector is a key priority for reaching Ireland's climate change targets. NIFTI supports sustainable mobility and encourages active travel and public transport. It supports projects that will reduce urban congestion, particularly those that include new sustainable mobility infrastructure and optimises the existing infrastructure to prioritise sustainable transport modes.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is compliant with NIFTI as it will facilitate accessible and reliable public transport. It supports sustainable transport modes including active travel modes. The NIFTI recognises that active travel is the most sustainable mode of travel and acknowledges that the attractiveness of this mode is dependent on infrastructure for example, dedicated footpaths, segregated cycle lanes and the quality and priority of road crossing points all impact upon the number of people engaging in active travel.

The Proposed Development provides improved infrastructure for active travel modes, while optimising, improving and, where necessary, providing new infrastructure to improve bus network services for Galway.

2.3.4 Department of Transport: Statement of Strategy 2023 – 2025

The Statement of Strategy (DoT 2023) sets out goals and a strategic approach which are designed to support continuing economic recovery, fiscal consolidation, job creation and social development.

Strategic Goal 1: Connectivity states 'Maintaining and developing our transport system, linking households, communities and businesses, both rural and urban, on the island of Ireland, while also ensuring Ireland's international connectivity which is key to maintaining our global economic competitiveness..'

Strategic Goal 2: Sustainability: Economy, Environment and Society includes a commitment that ensures that 'our transport system is integrated, resilient and decarbonised in a manner that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.'





The Statement of Strategy's mission is - "To deliver an accessible, efficient, safe and sustainable transport system that supports communities, households and businesses".

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will provide the infrastructure necessary to support a high quality and sustainable road, public transport and active travel network along the route. It will contribute towards economic recovery through enhanced connectivity by improving both bus and cycle infrastructure allowing for greater modal choices in Galway City. This supports the need for the Proposed Development.

2.3.5 National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022

The National Sustainable Mobility Policy (Department of Transport 2022) sets a framework for active travel and public transport to support the 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The vision for the policy is: 'To connect people and places with sustainable mobility that is safe, green, accessible and efficient.'

The Policy includes three key principles, as follows:

- 1. Safe and Green Mobility;
- 2. People Focused Mobility; and
- 3. Better Integrated Mobility.

The principles are supported by 10 'high level goals' and those considered relevant to the Proposed Development are set out further below.

The foreword of the policy document comments, as follows:

'Increased funding under the National Development Plan will allow us to improve and expand walking, cycling and public transport options across the country to enable access to education, health care, work, cultural and public life by sustainable modes of travel. This will include commencing delivery of BusConnects programmes in our five cities, DART+ and Metrolink in Dublin along with increased investment in the interurban and regional rail network.'

In regard to walking and cycling infrastructure the Introduction section states:

'The design of walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as areas in the vicinity of public transport services, are important safety factors. Well-designed, well-maintained, appropriately-lit, continuous and better integrated infrastructure can help people feel safe and encourage them to choose these options over the private car.....Expanding walking and cycling options to promote greater use of active travel can support our climate targets to reduce emissions as well as improving fitness levels and public health, and reducing congestion and private car use. Diverting short car trips to active modes will have a particular benefit in reducing air pollution'

It further comments:

'There is a need to rebalance transport movement in metropolitan areas and other urban centres away from the private car and towards active travel and public transport. This will require a greater allocation of available road/street space to be given to sustainable mobility. In addition, a rebalancing of traffic light signalling at junctions to better facilitate walking, cycling and public transport is required. The overarching objective in urban centres should be to focus more on the movement of people rather than the movement of the private car.'

Under the heading 'Implementation, monitoring and review' it sets out that:

'The Leadership Group will report to the Minister for Transport on a quarterly basis and progress on implementation of the Policy will be overseen In order to measure progress'.





It further outlines that part of the reporting will include (inter alia):

- 'Kilometres of active travel infrastructure developed annually; and
- Kilometres of bus lanes/bus priority developed annually.'

The Policy supports 'Safe and Green Mobility' by (inter alia):

'Expanding 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.'

Under the heading 'Expand availability of sustainable mobility' it comments, as follows:

'Improving active travel infrastructure in both urban and rural areas together with improved and expanded public transport services across the country is needed to reduce car dependency. Increased investment in walking and cycling infrastructure will provide a safe and connected network to those who wish to travel by active means. Implementation of public transport projects such as (inter alia): BusConnects.'

Projects such as BusConnects are identified as key priorities to deliver an improved and expanded bus service. It sets out under Goal 3 'Expand availability of sustainable mobility in metropolitan areas' the following:

'BusConnects programmes comprise a number of different elements including the network redesign of bus services and the development of core bus corridors infrastructure, including segregated cycling facilities, on the busiest routes to make journeys.'

It also outlines that:

'Our bus system carries by far the greatest number of passengers across the public transport system and improvements to it are vital in the context of improving people's accessibility and increasing modal shift. Improved and expanded bus services and infrastructure are a key priority, and in the five metropolitan areas, these improvements and expansions will be delivered through BusConnects programmes in each.'

It further comments that:

'BusConnects will enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by increasing and replacing the bus fleets with low emission vehicles and introducing a new system of Next Generation Ticketing and cashless payments.'

Table 2-3 sets out how the Proposed Development meets the Principles and Goals of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy.

Principle	Goal	Goal	Proposed Development Response
Safe and Green Mobility	'Improve mobility safety.'	'Goal 1 aims to improve the safety of all mobility options including active travel, road and rail to prioritise the safety and security of those working on / travelling by sustainable mobility.'	Signage and road markings will be provided along the extents of the Proposed Development to clearly communicate information, regulatory and safety messages to the road users. The Proposed Development will also generally include segregated cycling and enhanced at grade junctions improving overall safety along the corridor.

Table 2-3 National Sustainability Mobility Policy Principles and Goal





Principle	Goal	Goal	Proposed Development Response
	'Decarbonise public Transport.'	'Goal 2 aims to reduce emissions by transitioning the bus, rail and small public service vehicle (SPSV) fleet across the country to low/zero emission vehicles in line with available technology. The actions under this goal are aligned with the actions in the Climate Action Plan 2023 to reduce emissions in the sustainable mobility sector.'	The Proposed Development aligns with the goal as it will make public transport and active travel a key component to the solution. The Proposed Development will comprise transport infrastructure that supports the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service.
	'Expand availability of sustainable mobility in metropolitan areas.'	'Goal 3 aims to expand the capacity and availability of sustainable mobility in our five cities (Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Waterford). This will be done through improved walking, cycling, bus and rail infrastructure, improved transport interchange and expanded public transport services. Transformed active travel and bus infrastructure and services in all five cities is fundamental to achieving the targets of 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in kilometres driven by fossil fuelled cars by 2030.'	The Proposed Development aligns with the goal as BusConnects Galway Infrastructure works is the NTAs programme to greatly improve bus services in the Galway, of which the Proposed Development is part. The Proposed Development will provide the advantage of segregated cycling facilities along the preferred route in both directions. These high-quality cycle lanes will help to reduce dependency on private car use for short journeys. The design of each junction has given priority to pedestrian, cycle and bus movements, where possible. Junctions have been designed to ensure a high level of comfort and priority for sustainable modes of travel (e.g., walking, cycling and public transport) by prioritising the space and time allocated to these modes within the operation of a junction. Along the Proposed Development route, improvements and enhancements will be made to footpaths, walkways and pedestrian crossings.
	'Expand availability of sustainable mobility in regional and rural areas.'	'Goal 4 aims to expand the capacity and availability of sustainable mobility in a regional and rural context. This will be done through the delivery of improved active travel infrastructure, expansion of regional bus and rail services and local bus networks, and improved connectivity between different transport modes.'	The Proposed Development aligns with the goal as it will expand the capacity of the public transport network within Galway. The Proposed Development will also enhance interchanges between the various modes of public transport operating in Galway City and its wider metropolitan area. The design has been developed with this in mind and, in so far as possible, is seeking to provide for improved existing or new interchange opportunities with other transport services.





Principle	Goal	Goal	Proposed Development Response
	'Encourage people to choose sustainable mobility over the private car.'	'Goal 5 aims to encourage modal shift to more sustainable options across all ages through behavioural change and demand management measures.'	The Proposed Development will promote a modal shift from private car use to more sustainable forms of transport. It will enhance active travel networks and thus will encourage the use of these modes, reducing reliance on the private car.
People Focused Mobility	'Take a whole of journey approach to mobility, promoting inclusive access for all.'	'Goal 6 aims to support a whole of journey approach from planning a journey to arriving at the final destination and make sustainable mobility accessible and affordable to everyone. A whole of journey approach is also supported under Goals 7 and 10 through implementing a universal design approach to the design of new and retrofitted infrastructure; adherence to the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets; and promoting integrated mobility through innovative technologies.'	The Proposed Development aligns with the goal as it has considered Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DoT formerly known as Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) 2013)) and the National Cycle Design Manual (NTA 2023). In addition, a Road User Audit has been undertaken for the Proposed Development and has informed the design thereby promoting access for all including those with disabilities.
	'Design infrastructure according to Universal Design Principles and the Hierarchy of Road Users model.'	'Goal 7 aims to support enhanced permeability and ensure that the universal design principle and Hierarchy of Road Users model is used to inform future investment decisions to reduce inequalities, support a whole of journey approach, and prioritise sustainable mobility.'	The Proposed Development aligns with goal 7 as the design is based on the hierarchy of road users model with pedestrians improvements prioritised.
	'Promote sustainable mobility through research and citizen engagement.'	'Goal 8 aims to improve research and citizen engagement around sustainable mobility and collaboration with other government departments, agencies and stakeholders in delivering the Policy.'	A consultation exercise has been undertaken and has helped to inform the design and layout of the Proposed Development. GCC is also working in partnership with various government departments and third parties to deliver a high- quality sustainable transport Proposed Development for Galway.
Better Integrated Mobility	'Better integrate land use and transport planning at all levels.'	'Goal 9 aims to support compact growth and transport – oriented development through better integrated land use and transport planning.'	The Proposed Development will enhance the capacity of sustainable transport infrastructure as well as the efficiency of Galway's road network. The enhanced sustainable transport provision along the Proposed Development corridor can help to achieve greater land use densities that will promote compact sustainable growth.
	'Promote smart and integrated	'Goal 10 aims to make the use of sustainable mobility and the	The Proposed Development aligns with the goal as it will enhance





Principle	Goal	Goal	Proposed Development Response
	mobility through innovative technologies and development of appropriate regulation.'	interchange between different modes easier through investment in smart digital solutions. Alongside better integrated land use and transport planning, technological advances in transport can enable people to move seamlessly from one mode to another and support a whole of journey approach.'	interchanges between the various modes of public transport operating in Galway City and its wider metropolitan area, both now and in the future.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is supported by the National Sustainable Mobility Policy. The Proposed Development as part of the BusConnects Programme is identified as a key project to help deliver Ireland's climate commitments and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector. The implementation of the Proposed Development will contribute to modal shift towards sustainable transport options, it will expand, enhance and connect to pedestrian and cycle networks.

2.3.6 The National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF) 2009 - 2020

The National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020 (hereafter referred to as the NCPF) (DoT 2009) is Ireland's cycling policy framework. The vision is to create a strong cycling culture in Ireland, stating that 'Cycling will be a normal way to get about, especially for short trips'. The NCPF outlines 19 specific objectives, so that by the year 2020 10% of all journeys made were intended to be by bicycle. This policy framework outlines a number of interventions to make cycling easier and safer. The interventions specific to the Proposed Development are:

- 'We will pay special attention to integrating cycling and public transport. As commuting distances are lengthening, the importance of combining the bicycle with the bus, tram or train grows. We will provide state-of-the-art cycling parking at all appropriate PT interchanges and stops.'
- Objective 2: 'Ensure that the urban road infrastructure is designed/retrofitted so as to be cyclist-friendly and that traffic management measures are also cyclist friendly.'; and
- Objective 8: 'Ensure proper integration between cycling and public transport will assist in increasing the uptake in cycling across the region'.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will provide the infrastructure necessary to facilitate a public transport network which the Strategy acknowledges is a 'safer mode' of travel. The Proposed Development will contribute to improved road safety through improvement works at key junctions and upgrades to the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along the route. The Proposed Development provides for significant additional segregation between active travel users and the public road to help enhance safety.

2.3.7 Road Safety Strategy 2021 – 2030.

The Road Safety Strategy 2021 – 2030 (RSA 2021) works towards achieving 'Vision Zero' which is to achieve the long-term goal of eliminating deaths and serious injuries in road traffic collisions by 2050. The strategy 'involves the promotion of the safer modes (e.g., public transport, such as bus and rail travel), and the promotion and provision of safe road environments for otherwise healthy, active modes. This includes walking and cycling, where the risks of death and serious injury in the event of a collision are higher than for protected in-vehicle road users.'





The Strategy acknowledges that 'The promotion and increased uptake of public transport can greatly contribute to fatality and serious injury reductions over the course of the 2021-2023 strategy'. It continues 'The substantial societal benefits of increased active travel (i.e. walking or cycling) must also be acknowledged in light of Ireland's climate objectives, including reduced emissions, traffic congestion and noise pollution, and increased physical activity and its related health benefits.'

A key action of Phase 1 of the strategy, during the 2021 – 2025 period is to 'construct 1,000km of segregated walking and cycling facilities to provide safe cycling and walking arrangements for users of all ages'.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will provide the infrastructure necessary to facilitate a public transport network which the Strategy acknowledges is a 'safer mode' of travel. The Proposed Development will contribute to improved road safety through improvement works at junctions and upgrades to the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along the route. The Proposed Development provides for significant additional segregation between active travel users and the public road to help enhance safety.

2.3.8 Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 sets out the central objective relating to emission reductions. It legally binds Ireland to have net-zero emissions no later than 2050 and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of the decade (2030), against a base of 2018 emissions. The Act sets out the following:

'The first two carbon budgets proposed by the Advisory Council shall provide for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions such that the total amount of annual greenhouse gas emissions in the year ending on 31 December 2030 is 51 per cent less than the annual greenhouse gas emissions reported for the year ending on 31 December 2018, as set out in the national greenhouse gas emissions inventory prepared by the Agency.'

Proposed Development Response:

The implementation of the Proposed Development will deliver transport infrastructure required to support a significant shift towards sustainable transport options that will in turn support the targets set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

2.3.9 Climate Action Plan 2021

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2021 (Government of Ireland 2021c) sets out at a national level how Ireland is to halve its emissions by 2030 (51% reduction) and reach net zero no later than 2050. The CAP 2021 is a road map to delivering Ireland's climate ambition. There are 475 actions identified that extend to all sectors of the economy aiming to transform Ireland into a low carbon nation over the next three decades.

Regarding modal shift, the CAP 2021 sets out that:

'The proposed pathway in transport is focused on accelerating the electrification of road transport, the use of biofuels, and a **modal shift** to transport modes with lower energy consumption (e.g. public and active transport)' (emphasis added).

Promoting more sustainable travel modes is seen as critical for climate policy. It offers an opportunity to *'improve our health, boost the quality of our lives, meet the need of our growing urban centres and connects our rural, urban and suburban communities'.*

The key targets to meet the emissions reduction include:

• 'Provide for an additional 500,000 daily public transport and active travel journeys';





- 'Develop the required infrastructural, regulatory, engagement, planning, innovation and financial supports for improved system, travel, vehicle and demand efficiencies'; and
- 'Reduce ICE [Internal Combustion Engine] kilometres by c. 10% compared to present day levels'.

ICE reduction measures include:

- 'Reallocating road space from the private car to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport';
- 'Enhancing permeability for active travel'; and
- 'Delivering safer walking and cycling routes to encourage greater uptake of *active transport*.'

BusConnects is referenced as a major transport project that will help to deliver the 500,000 additional sustainable journeys. A key goal of the plan is to provide citizens with reliable and realistic sustainable transport options. The Climate Action Plan further states:

'The new approach to public transport will be based on a vision of an integrated public transport network, enabling short, medium and long-distance trips for people in every part of Ireland. This will mean increasing the frequency of existing rail and bus services and expanding the bus network through the Connecting Ireland approach.'

Proposed Development Response:

The delivery of the Proposed Development will provide the transport infrastructure required to provide sustainable transport options that will support the key actions set out in the CAP 2021. The Proposed Development will expand, enhance and connect to pedestrian and cycle networks and will assist in facilitating the delivery of modal shift.

BusConnects will support the delivery of an efficient low carbon and climate resilient public transport service, contributing to emission reduction target achievement. BusConnects will contribute to Ireland's journey to a low carbon / carbon neutral, energy efficient and reliable transport system which aligns with Government net zero policy commitments and enable customers to make sustainable choices.

Acknowledging that various policy initiatives are required to deliver national targets that are aligned to the Paris Agreement, BusConnects can facilitate services that are beneficial to communities. While mandated reductions are not required at an individual Proposed Development level, carbon must be invested wisely. Chapter 8 (Climate) in Volume 2 of the EIAR contains an assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the Proposed Development.

2.3.10 Climate Action Plan 2023

The CAP 2023 (Government of Ireland 2023a) is the second update to Ireland's CAP 2019 and was launched on the 21 December 2022. The CAP 2023 sets out the sectoral emissions ceilings and the implementation of carbon budgets. The CAP 2023 is a roadmap to deliver a halving of Ireland's emissions by 2030.

The transport sector has an aim of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. The 'Avoid' (reduce or avoid the need for travel – land use planning), 'Shift' (Shift to more environmentally friendly modes – public transport, active travel), 'Improve' (Improve the energy efficiency of vehicle technology- vehicle efficiency, clean fuels) approach has been adopted to help achieve these targets. CAP 2021 targets have been updated to include 'a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share'.

Section 15.2.2 'Recalibration of the Decarbonisation Pathway for Transport' states that the NTA Modelling team revalidated and recalibrated the decarbonisation pathway for CAP21. It goes on to say that this exercise 'identified additional measures to delivering 50% emissions abatement by 2030.' It further outlines that: 'The range of measures modelled includes known public transport Proposed Developments as set out





in the National Development Plan (NDP); (inter alia) further acceleration of road space reallocation towards public and active travel modes; car-free urban centres'.

Section 15.3.3 'Avoid and Shift' sets out the following:

'Greater prioritisation and reallocation of existing road space towards public transport and active travel will be a key supporting element for the new DMS. This already forms a crucial element of the BusConnects programme in each of our five cities. It is also a key recommendation from the OECD's Redesigning Ireland's Transport for Net Zero report.'

Section 15.3.3 'Shift' outlines the following in regard to 'Major Public Transport Infrastructure Programme':

'Key milestones have already been achieved on major infrastructural projects, including BusConnects in each of our 5 cities and the Greater Dublin Area's DART+ Programme and Metrolink, which will continue to be progressed through public consultations and the planning systems.'

Table 2-4 'Key Actions to Deliver Abatement in Transport for the Period 2023-2025' includes under the measure 'Major Public Transport Infrastructure Programme' and the heading 'Shift' (inter alia) 'Advance BusConnects programme in 5 cities' under the actions for 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Action Number	Action	How the Proposed Development Meets the Action
TR/23/27	Pedestrian enhancement plans developed for five metropolitan areas	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as it has ensured that the public realm is carefully considered in the design and development of the transport infrastructure. The Proposed Development seeks to enhance key urban focal points where appropriate and feasible.
TR/23/29	Advance roll-out of 1,000 km walking/cycling infrastructure	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as it will support sustainable transport modes through infrastructure improvements for active travel (both walking and cycling), and the provision of enhanced bus priority measures for existing (both public and private) and all future services who will use the corridor. The Proposed Development will be an attractive alternative to private car travel, encouraging more passenger travel by sustainable modes while providing a better quality of life for citizens.
TR/23/35	Advance BusConnects programme in 5 cities	BusConnects Galway Programme is the National Transport Authority's programme to greatly improve bus services in the Galway City and environs of which the Proposed Development is part.

Table 2-4 CAP 2023 Transport Actions

Proposed Development Response:

The delivery of the Proposed Development will provide the transport infrastructure required to deliver sustainable transport options that will support the key actions set out in the CAP 2023. The Proposed Development will expand, enhance and connect to pedestrian and cycle networks and will assist in facilitating modal shift. It is clear that the targets set out within CAP 2023 are closely linked to the delivery of key transport infrastructure projects, such as the BusConnects Programme and therefore the Proposed Development.

2.3.11 Climate Action Plan 2024

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2024 is the third annual update to Ireland's CAP. The purpose of the CAP 2024 is to lay out a roadmap of actions which will ultimately lead the country to meeting the national climate objective of pursuing and achieving, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate





resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. It aligns with the legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings that were agreed by Government in July 2022.

A draft of the CAP 2024 was agreed by Government in December 2023 and, following the completion of Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, and a six-week public consultation, the finalised version of the CAP24 was approved by Government on 21 May 2024.

The CAP 2024 builds upon the CAP 2023 by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The CAP 2024 provides a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

Regarding transport the expected outcomes of CAP 2024, as stated in the plan, is: 'CAP24 adheres to the framework set out in CAP23 but makes some necessary refinements to that approach while taking into account the progress made so far in 2023. The expected outcome is that CAP24 will build on CAP23 in enabling us to meet the first and second carbon budgets.'

Proposed Development Response:

The delivery of the Proposed Development will provide the transport infrastructure required to deliver sustainable transport options that will support the key actions set out in the CAP 2024. The Proposed Development will expand, enhance and connect to pedestrian and cycle networks and will assist in facilitating modal shift.

2.3.12 Programme for Government – Our Shared Future 2020

The Programme for Government – Our Shared Future 2020 (hereafter referred to as the Programme for Government) (Government of Ireland 2020) sets out the Government's plan for the next five years. It states that the Government will 'Develop and implement existing strategies for our cities such as 'the Galway Transport Strategy'.

The key objectives of the programme include:

- 'Address pinch points for buses and expand priority signalling for buses and real time information'; and
- 'Give greater priority to bus services by expanding quality bus corridors and consider the introduction of Bus Rapid Transport services.'

Proposed Development Response:

The BusConnects Programme, with the Proposed Development forming an important part, continues to be identified as a key project to help deliver Ireland's long-term growth aspirations and climate commitments. The need for the Proposed Development supports the delivery as part of the Programme for Government (Government of Ireland 2020) and fully complies with the key objectives of same.

2.3.13 Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016 – 2021

The Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform 2015) (hereafter referred to as the "Capital Plan") was published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in September 2015. It presented the findings of a Government-wide review of infrastructure and capital investment policy and outlined the Government's commitment to ensuring that the country's stock of infrastructure is capable of facilitating economic growth.

This Capital Plan identifies the need to improve public transport facilities noting:

'It is therefore essential that road, rail and public transport networks are developed and maintained to the standard required to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and freight. In addition, getting people





out of cars and onto public transport has a key role to play in reducing Ireland's carbon emissions, by providing a viable, less polluting alternative to car and road transport for many journeys.'

The transport capital allocation in this Capital Plan is largely framed by the recommendations and priorities set out in the 2015 DTTAS Strategic Investment Framework for Land Transport (DTTAS 2015), which centre on:

- Maintaining and renewing the strategically important elements of the existing land transport system;
- Addressing urban congestion; and
- Maximise the contribution of land transport networks to our national development.

The Capital Plan incorporates the following key objectives relevant to this Proposed Development:

• €3.6 billion of Public Transport Investment including further upgrading of Quality Bus Corridors.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is supported by these recommendations, priorities and objectives as set out in the Strategic Investment Framework for Land Transport (DTTAS 2015), and the Capital Plan. The Proposed Development is a significant investment in the improvement of public transport facilities including bus, cycle and pedestrian network enhancements and extensions.

2.3.14 National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024

The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2022 – 2024 (DECC 2022) is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ireland's Second National SDG National Implementation Plan also sets out five strategic objectives to further develop SDG implementation over the duration of the second SDG National Implementation Plan. Goals 9 and 11 are particularly relevant to the Proposed Development. These are set out in Table 2-5.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation		
Target 9.1	Develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human wellbeing, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all	
Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable		
Target 11.2	By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.	

Table 2-5 Sustainable Development Goals and Targets aligned with the Proposed Development

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development supports the goals and targets set out in the National Implementation Plan as it provides infrastructure that will support sustainable transport and will improve the safety of road users through the further segregation of road vehicles and active travel modes.



2.3.15 Five Cities Demand Management Study 2021

This study focusses on the five main cities across Ireland, namely Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford. The study was undertaken by Systra on behalf of the Department of Transport *'to identify and review the drivers for, and potential management measures of, vehicle movements'* in the five cities.

These measures are known as Transport Demand Management (TDM) measures and 'aim to influence and change travel demand patterns and encourage more efficient and sustainable use of transport resources'. One of the mission areas includes the prioritisation of the BusConnects Galway plans.

The following TDM measures of relevance to the Proposed Development and to Galway City are proposed as part of the study:

- FM11: Congestion Charging it is considered that this may be delivered in Galway City subject to the delivery of improved public transport facilities.
- PTM04: Public Parking Controls reduction of on street parking is included in the Proposed Development in line with the delivery of sustainable mobility infrastructure.
- PP04: Enhance Delivery of the National Planning Framework the Proposed Development represents enhanced delivery of the NPF (see section 2.2.3.3).
- PTM17: Car Free Zones & Streets it is noted that this is already in place in Galway through implementation of the 'City Centre Access Network', which will be supplemented by the Proposed Development.
- TC07: Urban Traffic Management Centres the Proposed Development includes a bus gate, and it is stated in the study that Galway has been operating an Urban Traffic Management Centre since 2011.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is supported by the measure set out in the Five Cities Demand Management Study as the infrastructure will support the improvement and expansion of public transport capacity and provide significantly improved facilities for active travel. The Proposed Development will improve the efficiency of public transport and encourage mode shift through delivering journey time savings and reliability on the corridor.

2.3.16 National Demand Management Strategy (2024)

The draft National Demand Management Strategy: Generators of Demand, published in March 2024, sets out a number of core objects such as reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, and maximising the sustainability of people's travel to generators of demand.

- Reduce transport carbon emissions To contribute to the national target of halving of emissions in the transport sector, and a reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled (private and commercial) by 20%, by 2030:
- Enhance the efficiency of the transport system To improve the efficiency of the existing transport system, by reducing demand for less sustainable journeys, where possible;
- Promote health, safety, and wellbeing To support the health, safety, and wellbeing of people, and minimise the social, and environmental costs of transport including those related to congestion and air & noise pollution; and
- Deliver compact, mixed use, transport orientated developments To encourage compact, mixed use, and transport-oriented development, reinforcing the role of city, town, and village centres as attractive, walkable, accessible destinations.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is supported by the measure set out in the National Demand Management Strategy as the infrastructure will support the improvement and expansion of public transport capacity and provide significantly improved facilities for active travel. The Proposed Development will improve the





efficiency of public transport and encourage mode shift through delivering journey time savings and reliability on the corridor.

2.3.17 National Physical Activity Plan (2016)

The National Physical Activity Plan published in 2016 and reviewed by Government in 2022 set out eight areas for action which are distinct and yet complementary building blocks for encouraging greater participation in physical activity. The National Physical Activity Plan identifies amenities such as greenways, blueways, cycle paths and parks as opportunities to support and encourage physically active.

- Action Area Four Environment
 - Ref No. 32 Develop and promote walking and cycling strategies in each Local Authority area;
 - Ref No. 36 Prioritise the planning and development of walking and cycling and general recreational /physical activity infrastructure.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will deliver the infrastructure necessary to enhance walking and cycling networks along the route corridor. It will facilitate a modal shift towards active travel modes which is are key objectives of the National Physical Activity Plan.

2.4 Regional Policy

2.4.1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly 2020-2032

The principal purpose of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) Regional Spatial Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (hereafter referred to as RSES) (NWRA, 2020a) is to support the implementation of Project Ireland 2040 by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the region. A SEA, NIS and AA were produced as part of the RSES.

The RSES represents the regional tier for planning policy and provides a vision; a spatial plan and investment framework to shape future development of the Northern and Western Region to the year 2032. The RSES was formally adopted in January 2020 by NWRA and replaces the previous Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2010 – 2022 (Regional Planning Guidelines Office 2010).

The RSES is centred on five key growth ambitions:

- 1. Economy and Employment A Vibrant Region;
- 2. Environment Natural Region;
- 3. Connectivity Connected Region;
- 4. Quality of Life Inclusive Region; and
- 5. Infrastructure Enabling our Region.

Under Key Growth Ambition – 3. Connectivity – the benefits of sustainable travel are recognised and highlighted 'Sustainable travel can have significant benefits for individuals, workplaces and educational facilities in terms of health and wellbeing, costs and time associated with travel. It has the potential to reduce congestion and emissions and to exploit investment in sustainable transport'.

In this respect, the GTS is referenced as a best practice example of *'where the integration of transport, spatial and economic planning is to be delivered',* as it is incorporated and adopted into both the Galway County Council Development Plan and the Galway City Development Plan.





The RSES includes a number of high-level transport principles to support the delivery of integrated transport, spatial and economic planning:

- Support improved strategic and local connectivity';
- 'Expand attractive public transport and other alternatives to car transport; 'Recognise the role of the car and cater appropriately for it'; and
- 'Reduce congestion; and cater to the demands associated with longer-term population and employment growth, in a sustainable manner'.

On the basis of these principles, a number of core priority outcomes are identified, including:

- 'Supporting the achievement of 'compact, smart growth' through the achievement of 'mutual consistency' between land use and transport planning/investment/service provision';
- 'Strengthening public transport, walking and cycling accessibility/connectivity within Galway City and environs';

With regard to investment in the bus network in Galway City, it is recognised in the RSES that *'investment in bus infrastructure and services will be delivered through Bus Connects and the relevant parts of the GTS'*.

Included within the Proposed Development is provision for walking and cycling. The RSES recognises the importance of walking and cycling in facilitating modal shift - '*Facilitating modal shift to more sustainable transport options, including walking and cycling is a key element in promoting healthier lifestyles, better traffic management and assisting in mitigating climate change'.*

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development supports a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling in a densely populated regionally significant area, therefore, facilitating improved strategic and local connectivity across the city.

The RSES develops Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) that are aligned to the key growth ambitions above. These are aligned to the UN's 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015), EU thematic objectives¹ and the NPF (Government of Ireland 2018b).

Those RPOs that relate to the Proposed Development are as follows:

RPO 6.19: Reduce dependency on fossil-fuel power vehicles.

RPO 6.22: Provide new interchange facilities and enhanced bus waiting facilities together with enhanced passenger information, utilising smart technology in appropriate circumstances.

RPO6.26: 'The walking and cycling offer within the region shall be improved to encourage more people to walk and cycle, through:

b) Safe walking and cycle infrastructure shall be provided in urban and rural areas, the design shall be informed by published design manuals, included the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and the NTA Cycle Design Manual'.



¹ European Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013



RPO6.29: 'The management of space in town and village centres should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life'.

RPO 6.30: 'Planning at the local level should promote walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services and other services at the local level such as schools'.

RPO 6.32: 'Invest in transport networks and services in the region that are socially inclusive and provide a quality of service, connectivity and facilities to meet all societal needs, disabilities (including mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments) and meet the needs and opportunities of an ageing population'.

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'.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development improves the walking and cycling infrastructure of Galway City and aligns with the relevant infrastructural standards. A number of junctions will be reconfigured, as part of the Proposed Development, to prioritise sustainable transport modes to enhance the accessibility of Galway City.

As the only city in the Northern and Western Region, Galway is recognised as the principal driver of the region, with a commensurate challenge to accommodate an increased proportion of its' envisaged growth within the existing metropolitan area. A specific Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) (hereafter referred to as the "Galway MASP") (NWRA 2020b) is contained within the RSES for Galway City, with the following vision:

'The Vision of this MASP is that Galway will be a leading global city, renowned as a successful, sustainable, competitive, compact and accessible city of scale that supports a high quality of life, maintains its distinctive identity and supports its rich heritage, language and cultural experience. A Metropolitan area that is environmentally responsible, resilient to change and that attracts and retains talent and skills and fosters innovation and creativity. An Area that offers sustainable choices in housing, work, transport and lifestyle opportunities for its communities, while supporting the health and wellbeing of its people.'

The Galway MASP affirms the support for the implementation of the GTS and its constituent interventions. The Galway MASP is contained within the RSES and identifies the strategic planning and investment framework to enable growth. The Galway MASP is aligned with the RPOs in the RSES to allow integrated transport and land use. The vision for the MASP is as follows:

'The MASP provides a strategic focus on the City and environs and sets out how it is envisaged the NPF will be implemented in the regional context of the RSES. The vision for Galway is that it will be a leading European city renowned for its quality of life, its history, its culture and its people.

It is and will be a place that embraces modern technologies, high standards of education, competitive and sustainable enterprises.

The challenges to the city's development will be met by the integrated and timely provision of infrastructure much of which is included in this strategy'.

To achieve the vision, the Galway MASP sets out RPOs. Those most relevant to the Proposed Development are set out below.

RPO 3.6.7: 'The Assembly supports the delivery of the infrastructure projects outlined below to develop the MASP:





- Galway City Ring Road; and
- Galway Transport Strategy.'

In addition to the above RPOs, the Galway MASP also identifies '*Key Transportation Components*', of which the following are of most relevance to the Proposed Development:

- 'Development of a cross-city network of bus services which can serve the major trip attractors with five core bus routes to provide a minimum 15-minute frequency service during the peak periods and sustain a high-frequency service throughout the day';
- 'Provision of a core, secondary and feeder cycle network which includes segregated cycle routes, onroad cycle lanes and /or wide bus lanes to cater for both buses and cyclists along the same route';
- 'Provision of measures to reduce traffic volumes in the city centre core, additional pedestrianisation and pedestrian priority, improvement of pedestrian facilities, in particular safe crossings, improvements to the public realm and use of universal design'.

Proposed Development Response:

The above Key Transportation Components represent key characteristics of the Proposed Development, in that, they promote improved pedestrian, cycle and bus transport infrastructure. The Proposed Development is therefore supported by, and specifically identified as, a keen enabler of the RSES.

BusConnects is identified as a key infrastructure project to deliver on the principles of Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity, which will support the regional growth strategy for the Northern and Western Region including the Galway MASP.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will support continued improved integration of transport with land use planning. The delivery of improved high-capacity Core Bus Corridors will enable and support the delivery of both residential and economic development opportunities, facilitating the sustainable growth of Galway MASP. The dedicated bus lanes proposed will improve bus journey times and reliability while the cycle lane and pedestrian infrastructure will promote modal shift from private car to active travel. The RSES not only seeks an improved and enhanced bus network but also places sustainable travel at the core of its transport objectives.

2.5 Local Policy

2.5.1 Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

The Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 (GCPD) sets out Galway City Council's policies and objectives to guide the sustainable development of the City over the lifetime of the GCPD to 2029. It provides an integrated, coherent spatial framework which has been prepared following extensive consultation with members of the public, statutory bodies and relevant stakeholders. The lands of the Proposed Development are within the functional area of GCC and are zoned in the GCDP.

The application boundary that incorporates the proposed works potentially includes lands within the following zoning objectives outlined in Table 2-6.

GCC Development Zones	Objectives
RA – Recreation and Amenity	To provide for and protect recreational uses, open space, amenity uses, natural heritage and biodiversity.

Table 2-6 Zoning Objectives Potentially Affected by the Proposed Development





GCC Development Zones	Objectives
R - Residential	To provide for residential development and for associated support development, which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity and will contribute to sustainable residential neighbourhoods.
CF - Community Culture and Institutional	To provide for and facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural and institutional uses and development of infrastructure for the benefit of the citizens of the city.
CI - Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial	To provide for enterprise, light industry and commercial uses other than those reserved to the CC (City Centre) zone.

The Proposed Development is largely within the existing public road / pavement area and where required, in general, only small portions of those zoning objectives listed above are necessary to facilitate the Proposed Development. However, the main use associated with the zoning objective will remain.

This plan includes a Core Strategy which identifies the quantum, location and phasing of development in County Galway for the plan period which reflects the nationally and regionally defined population targets, settlement hierarchy while being cognisant of the availability of existing services, planned investment, sequential development and environmental requirements.

The Core Strategy has been prepared based on analysis of spatial pattern and quantity of housing delivery in the plan and also, taking in consideration of the key policy areas.

The GCDP includes specific transport objectives for cycling, public transport, and traffic and road network. These objectives are:

Policy 4.3 Public Transport

- Support the implementation of BusConnects 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;
- Promote the availability of the city bus network including the priority measures for use by the national, regional and tour bus services;
- Promote access to public transport services for those attending primary and post primary schools in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills; and
- Support the modal change to public transport under the GTS through modal change targets for walking, cycling, and public transport within the lifetime of the GCDP.

Policy 4.4 Sustainable Mobility

- Facilitate cycling on the proposed BusConnects Routes where appropriate including on the proposed Cross-City Link;
- Introduce segregated cycle lanes across the city, where possible;
- Prioritise improvements to pedestrian movements and safety within the city centre including extension of pedestrianisation, provision of wider footpaths and shared streets; and
- Promote, facilitate and maintain maximum connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the design and management of new public and private projects and in upgrading and retrofitting existing developments.





Policy 4.6 Road and Street Network and Accessibility

- Support the proposals in the GTS for design interventions, revised traffic management arrangements and priority arrangements for walking, cycling and public transport on the road network.
- Implement improvements on the general road network, including new links and junction revisions where needed in the interest of safety and convenience.
- Implement best practice in road and street design as set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) as updated (2019).

The GCDP includes specific transport objectives for Green Networks and Biodiversity including:

- Support the retention and enrichment of biodiversity throughout the city in recognition of the need to
 protect and restore biodiversity to increase the resilience of natural and human systems to climate
 change;
- Support climate action through implementation of nature-based solutions that enhance biodiversity in the green network, including measures such as tree planting, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and the use of green infrastructure. Such measures will be informed by the Green Space Strategy.
- Protect and conserve rare and threatened habitats and their key habitats, (wherever they occur) listed on Annex I and Annex IV of the Habitats Directive and listed for protection under the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended, and plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2022 SI 235/2022;

Galway City Council climate strategy is addressed in Section 2.5.7 Galway City Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024 and Galway City Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is directly in keeping with each of the strategic and specific objectives of the existing GCDP. The primary aim of the Proposed Development is to improve accessibility to and across the city centre, to enhance the cycling, walking and public transport infrastructure, and to encourage a modal shift towards more sustainable transport modes. The route of the Proposed Development will allow increased accessibility to and across the city centre which will facilitate greater footfall and employment growth.

The Proposed Development integrates key measures to protect and enhance biodiversity and designated site through the incorporation SuDS which will protect and enhance water quality through treatment at source while enhancing biodiversity and amenity. The Proposed Development landscape design has included proposed trees, hedgerows, native planting, ornamental planting, amenity grass areas and species rich grasslands, to enhance ecological value along the route. In general, new plant species will match that of those removed. Species selected shall be appropriate to the urban street environment and to the characteristics of the specific location.

The Proposed Development will include the introduction of new and improved landscaping provisions along the corridor, and a complimentary planting regime and streetscape improvements at key locations will also enhance the character of the surrounding built environment along the corridor.

2.5.2 The Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028)

The Galway County Development Plan adopted in May 2022, makes provision for the following objectives of relevance to the Proposed Development:

GCTPS 1 Galway County Transport & Planning Study and Galway Transportation Strategy

It is a policy objective of Galway County Council to support and facilitate the implementation of the Galway County Transport & Planning Study and Galway Transport & Planning Study across all modes of transport.





GCTPS 3 Sustainable Transport

County will seek to support a variety of measures which will reduce car dependency for residents and will specifically seek to improve access to sustainable transport choices (including responsive and "flexible" modes) for those residents in rural areas of the County. GCTPS 4 Walking and Cycling Support for, and enhancement of, existing and new walking and cycling networks as the "first choice" for shorter local journeys and to link settlements within the County and to Galway City.

GCTPS 9 Collaboration with Galway City

Galway County Council will collaborate with Galway City Council as appropriate to bring forward transport proposals and measures which will enhance travel to and from Galway City in a manner which is compatible with the GTS and GCTPS, and where possible maximises the benefits to both areas from this approach.

PT 1 Sustainable Modes of Transport

To encourage a modal shift from use of the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport.

P2 Development of Public Transport Infrastructure

To engage and work closely with the National Transport Authority and other relevant transport authorities and both public and private operators, in facilitating and securing improvements to footpaths, pedestrian crossing points and permeability to facilitate access and encourage use of public transport and to secure the implementation of recommendations of the GTS bus network and the expansion of public transport infrastructure in areas such as spaces for parking of local link buses and services in the County.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development is directly in keeping with each of the strategic and specific objectives of the existing. Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028).

2.5.3 Galway Transport Strategy 2016

The Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) (Galway City Council 2016) is a comprehensive transport strategy for Galway City and its environs (including areas within the jurisdiction of Galway County Council), intended to establish a framework for the development of the transport network over the next 20 to 30 years. The GTS sets out proposals for the road network, public transport network, walking network and cycling network, and contains a number of significant proposals which will allow the city to continue to grow in a sustainable manner. The GTS has been adopted by both GCC and GCoC and is implemented through the policies of their Development Plans.

The following principles are set out in the GTS:

- 1. To promote and encourage sustainable transport, and in particular to make it convenient and attractive to walk, cycle or use public transport.
- 2. To improve accessibility and permeability to, and within the city centre for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. While also maintaining an appropriate level of access for vehicular traffic for commercial and retail purposes.
- 3. To maximise the safety and security of pedestrians, cyclists and other transport users, particularly within the core city centre.
- 4. To manage and increase transport capacity (where necessary), for the efficient movement of people and goods into and within the city.
- 5. To provide opportunities to enhance the city centre public realm through traffic management and transport interventions.
- 6. To maintain and develop transport infrastructure and services to a high degree of quality and resilience.
- 7. To adopt a 'smarter technology' approach to all transport interventions, whereby transport infrastructure and services are future-proofed.





The GTS contains a number of comprehensive proposals across a number of transport modes, including the following significant measures:

- Establishment of a new cross-city bus network to serve Galway City;
- Establishment of primary, secondary and feeder cycle networks;
- Provision of a safe and efficient plan for general traffic to access key destinations in Galway City Centre, while discouraging through traffic;
- Creation of a high-quality public transport corridor through the city from east to west, which will be utilised to some extent by all proposed bus services;
- Transformation of Galway City Centre into a new space where walking, cycling and public transport are all prioritised over private car traffic;
- Establishment of an orbital two-way traffic route around Galway City Centre;
- Establishment of an inner-city two-way traffic route in the environs of Galway City Centre;
- Implementation of the N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6GCRR) Proposed Development to provide an additional crossing of River Corrib to the north of Quincentenary Bridge; and
- Localised route and junction improvement works at a number of locations to improve junction efficiency, to improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities and to incorporate priority for public transport services.

The GTS is underpinned by an extensive volume of supporting material, including Environmental Screening Assessments, Technical Feasibility Reports and Proposed Development Appraisal Reports using the Western Regional Multi-Modal Model, to ensure that a robust, evidence-based strategy can be put in place. The GTS was completed in September 2016 and has subsequently been incorporated and adopted into the Galway County Council Development Plan (Section 2.2.5.2) and GCC Development Plan (Section 2.2.5.3).

The GTS examined several options for each project identified and undertook a Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) of each option utilising the Common Appraisal Framework (CAF) for Transport Projects and Programmes appraisal categories.

Utilising the assessment criteria above, the GTS identified proposed improvements to the city transport network including the Proposed Development, 'Cross City Link', 'City Centre Access Network', and 'Inner City Access Route'.

Proposed Development Response:

The BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road is to form a central route for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians along the Dublin Road and tying with the 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 coalesce along this high-quality corridor, providing high-frequency services with journey time reliability and opportunities for interchange.

The BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road will ensure that public transport services can access key areas such as the retail & recreational centre of the city, public transport hubs at the rail & bus stations, City & County Halls along with the city centre hotels and bed & breakfasts along the route, key facilities such as Bon Secours Hospital and Merlin Park Hospital, Atlantic Technology University (ATU), and Sportsgrounds.

The Proposed Development satisfies the transportation infrastructure requirements above by providing improvements to the public transport, cycling and walking networks in Galway City. This will help to alleviate congestion, improve the reliability of journey times and the safety of all road users.

2.5.4 GMATS

The NTA has commenced the development of a transport strategy (Transport Strategy) for the Galway Metropolitan Area (GMA) covering a twenty-year period and addressing all land transport modes. The Transport Strategy will provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the delivery of transport and the integrated development of transport infrastructure and services in the GMA and will replace the existing 'Galway Transport Strategy' 2016.





Proposed Development Response:

The Bus Connects Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development is a key transport infrastructure element of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) which was completed in 2016 and facilitated the design of the Galway BusConnects Network Redesign Project. The Galway BusConnects Network was adopted in December 2023 and will be included in the draft GMATS. In this regard, the Bus Connects Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development will be incorporated into the GMATS as an essential transport infrastructure project, required to deliver the Galway Bus Connects Network.

2.5.5 CycleConnects – Galway Cycle Network

This draft plan sets out Ireland's Cycle Network aims to improve sustainable travel by providing the potential for more trips on a safe, accessible and convenient cycling network, connecting more people to more places. Proposals for cycling links in key cities, towns and villages in each county are included in the plan, in addition to connections between the larger towns, villages and settlements. This draft plan also incorporates existing and planned cycle routes such as greenways and blueways.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will deliver the infrastructure necessary to enhance cycling networks along the route corridor. It will facilitate a modal shift towards active travel modes which is are key objectives of strategy.

2.5.6 BusConnects Galway New Network Report 2023

The NTA has published its final new bus network for Galway. The redesign of the bus network is one of the nine key elements of BusConnects Galway that aims to fundamentally transform the city's bus system, making public transport more accessible. Last year, the NTA carried out an extensive review of the bus network in Galway, in collaboration with GCC, GCoC, local bus operators, and with the specialised expertise of transport designers Jarrett Walker and Associates. In April 2023, a draft new network was published, and the feedback and submissions received have informed the final new bus network.

The new bus network will enable more people to avail of public transport resulting in increased access to a greater number of schools and workplaces across Galway City, Bearna and Oranmore.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will deliver the infrastructure necessary to enhance public transport along the route corridor. It will facilitate a modal shift towards public transport which is key objective of the strategy.

2.5.7 Galway City Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

As part of the Climate Change Action Plan 2019, GCC produced and adopted its own Climate Adaptation Strategy in 2019 (Galway City Council, 2019). The Galway City Council Climate Adaptation Strategy considers actions to be implemented by GCC, in order to tackle the significant issues of climate change within Galway City.

The strategy identifies transport infrastructure as critical infrastructure and highlights smarter travel as a way of reducing the demand on the infrastructure and subsequently reducing transport emissions. To achieve effective climate adaptation, the strategy includes several actions which the Proposed Development supports.

Climate Adaptation Strategy Action 8-2 is of particular relevance to the Proposed Development:

'Develop policies to reduce air pollution from road vehicles, which promote a modal shift to cycling, public transport and support the decarbonisation of road vehicles.'





Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development through the provision of enhanced public transport infrastructure will help to achieve GCC's targets as set out in the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.

2.5.8 Galway City Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

GCC has prepared this Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) 2024-2029 (Galway City Council 2024), to create a low carbon and climate resilient City, by delivering and promoting best practice in climate action, at the local level. This is aligned to the Government's overall National Climate Objective set out in the Climate Action and Low-Carbon Development National Policy Position Ireland, which seeks to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

To ensure the vision of this plan is fulfilled the following strategic goals has been identified:

- Reduce climate impacts within the decarbonisation zone by lowering greenhouse gas emissions in line with policy targets without delay;
- Empower the local community to engage with climate action through education, support, and ongoing collaboration;
- Maximise climate and environmental co-benefits using targeted and complementary interventions; and
- Enable socio-economic growth, placemaking and community development aligned to decarbonisation and a just transition.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development through the provision of enhanced public transport infrastructure will facilitate sustainable transport options that will help to achieve GCC's targets as set out in the CAP.

2.5.9 Galway Public Realm Strategy 2019

GTS seeks to redress the balance in favour of pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and the Public Realm Strategy seeks to capitalise on this by creating a high-quality public realm, made possible by reducing the dominance and upgrading the quality of the physical fabric, hard and soft.

The Strategy aims to 'promote universal design to help open up the city centre to all and make getting into and moving around the centre much easier'.

Key measures set out in the plan include:

- Enabling easy access into the city centre by sustainable modes;
- Easing pedestrian movement through dropped kerbs and pedestrian crossings;
- Giving more priority and space to pedestrians; and
- Giving more priority to cyclists through strengthened routes, cycle lanes, cycle-friendly junctions and cycle parking.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development includes localised public realm enhancements which were developed in line with the Public Realm Strategy and with pedestrian and cyclist prioritisation in mind.

2.5.10 Local Area Plans within the Galway City Council Area Relevant to the Proposed Development

The Ardaun LAP was adopted by GCC and came into effect in 2018. The relevant objectives to the Proposed Development are outlined below. The LAP sets out a framework to guide the proper planning and sustainable development of the lands at Ardaun from 2018-2024, a central tenet of the City Development





Plan. The LAP seeks to create a people and business friendly urban village well connected with the greater city and environs, where a sustainable framework for private and public investment is available.

The Plan includes specific transport objectives for cycling, public transport, and traffic and road network. These key objectives are set out in Strategic Goal 4:

- Facilitate the development of an urban village that is well connected, walkable and accessible and that is so designed to encourage the use of sustainable transport mode;
- Support and facilitate the provision of an integrated public transport network to service Ardaun through the implementation of the GTS and in conjunction with relevant transport providers, NTA and other stakeholders;
- Prioritise the servicing of Ardaun by public transport in the implementation programme of the GTS; and
- Prioritise walking and cycling in Ardaun, that will be supported by a network of walking and cycling routes to promote sustainable transport and permeability to and within Ardaun.

Proposed Development Response:

The Proposed Development will deliver the infrastructure necessary to enhance public transport, walking and cycling networks along the route corridor adjoining the Ardaun area. It will facilitate a modal shift towards public transport and active travel modes which are key objectives of the Ardaun LAP (2018).

3 PLANNING HISTORY OF THE PROPOSED ROUTE & SURROUNDING AREA

The proposed route itself, as described in Section 4, is located within the general boundaries of the Dublin roadway with the exception of road widening at certain points along the route of the Proposed Development. Taking into account road widening, no relevant planning history exists for the route of the Proposed Development.

There are a number of permissions within the vicinity of the Proposed Development that are of strategic importance. The most recent of which is the BusConnects Galway Cross-City Link ("Cross City Link") (ABP-314597), an Order of An Bord Pleanála approving development dated 27th September 2024. This project will provide critical alleviation of traffic within Galway City and its environs, which is widely recognised as a hinderance to the sustainable development of Galway City. The Cross-City Link Proposed Development which ties directly into the Proposed Development at Moneenagisha, will provide improved walking, cycling and bus infrastructure on this key access corridor in Galway City, which will enable and deliver efficient, safe, and integrated sustainable transport movement along the corridor.

Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road Cycle Network Scheme (GCC Part 8 LA3/2023) is another strategic project within the vicinity of the Proposed Development which will deliver a cycle network on the east side of the city which will provide safe and attractive cycle routes, catering for all cycle users including commuters, leisure and family cycling groups.

The N6 Galway Ring Road (ABP-318220 (previous application no.MA07/302885)) project which was approved by the Board in December 2021 was the subject of Judicial Review and in January 2023 the High Court made final orders quashing the decisions of the Board and remitting the applications for approval of the Proposed Development to the Board. A decision is pending. The Galway Ring Road proposed road development comprises approximately 18km of road infrastructure from a new junction with the R336 at the western side of Bearna to tie-in to the existing N6 to the east of Galway City at Coolagh, Briarhill. This project will provide critical alleviation of traffic within Galway City and its environs, which is widely recognised as a hinderance to the sustainable development of Galway City.

The Galway Harbour extension is another strategic project located approx. 1.2km southwest of the Proposed Development, involving extensive land reclamation, which has yet to be permitted and is currently being





considered by the Ministers for Housing and for Culture with regard to the suitability of implementing the Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) process. If permitted, this project would allow for the development of Galway Harbour to an extent that it would be reflective of Galway City's strategic importance in the wider regional area. Another strategic project in the vicinity of the Proposed Development is the Ceannt Station Masterplan development, approved by the Board in June 2023 (ABP 310568) with works currently progressing on site. This development totals approximately 128,000sq.m and seeks to provide a mix of residential and retail uses in a centrally located area within the city on lands that have historically been linked with the functioning of Ceannt Train station.

4 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY SECTION

4.1 Site Location & Context

The Proposed Development is a public transport priority corridor, encompassing the provision of dedicated bus lanes, segregated cycle lanes and footpaths on both sides of the Dublin Road. 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 Proposed Development at the western extremity.

This route is a main arterial route into Galway City Centre for both commuters and tourists. It also runs adjacent to the Atlantic Technological University, Merlin Park Hospital, Bon Secours Hospital and a number of schools and other amenity locations.

The Proposed Development is located in close proximity to the following Nature 2000 sites:

- Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) 0.055km;
- Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268) 0.063km
- Lough Corrib SAC (000297) 1.5km.

The closest Natural Heritage Areas to the Proposed Development are the Creggana Marsh NHA (ca. 3.7km south-eat) and the Moycullen Bog NHA (ca. 4.7 km north-west).

4.2 Development Description

The Proposed Development is described in the following two sections (refer to *Figure 1-1*):

- Section 1: East of Moneenageisha to Skerrit Junction; and
- Section 2: Skerrit Junction to Doughiska Junction.

Proposed Development drawings are contained in Volume 3 of this EIAR.

For each of these sections the physical context and the zoning status of the adjacent lands are described below. It should be noted that the road network itself, where the majority of the BusConnects works are proposed, do not have a zoning objective in the GCDP.

The following legend applies to the preceding figures in this section:





KEY

LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVE	ZONE	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES			
City Centre	сс	Regeneration and Opportunity Sites		New Road	_
Residential	R	Ardaun LAP Boundary		Local Centre	*
Residential R2	R2	N6 Galway City Ring Road (N6 GCRR)		Car Parking	P
Community Culture and Institutional	CF	Bus Routes		Village Envelope	
Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial	CI	Primary Cycle Network		Traveller Accommodation	TA
Enterprise, Industry and Related Uses	1	Indicative Greenway Cycle Network	•••••	Existing Woodland	*
Recreation and Amenity	RA	RA Greenway		Proposed Woodland	4
Urban Village Centre	UVC	Public Transportation Corridor		Views and Prospects	MM
Local Area Plan for Murrough	LAP	Multi-Modal Corridor		City Boundary Land	
Agriculture	А	New Bridge	*****	City Boundary Coast	
Agriculture and High Amenity	G	Road Improvements			

Figure 4-1 Galway City Council Development Plan 2023-2029 Zoning Map Legend

4.2.1 Section 1: Moneenageisha to Skerritt Junction

The Proposed Development commences east of Moneenageisha Junction where it will tie into the BusConnects Cross-City Link project. Section 1 of the Proposed Development is approximately 1500m in length. It is proposed to maintain the two-way general traffic lanes and introduce continuous bus lanes in both directions in this section. The existing footpaths will be upgraded and extended and segregated cycle tracks provided on both sides along the entire length of the route.

This section of the route is characterised by mixed-use institutional, residential, office, commercial, retail use and green space this is reflected in the zoning designations of Residential (R), Community Cultural, and Institutional (CF) and Recreational and Amenity (RA) zoning, refer to Figure 4-2 below. There are a number of residential developments along the route including Wellpark Grove, Renmore Park, Glenina Heights and Belmont. There are also a number of medical facilities on the route predominantly on the south side including the Bon Secures Hospital, Galway Hospice Foundation and Renmore Dental. The routes pass three hotels located on the north side including the G Hotel, Flannerys Hotel and the Connacht Hotel. To the northwest of Skerritt Junction is the Atlantic Technological University. There is considerable landscaping on this route in the form of trees and shrubs which define the boundaries behind stone walls for a significant section of this road



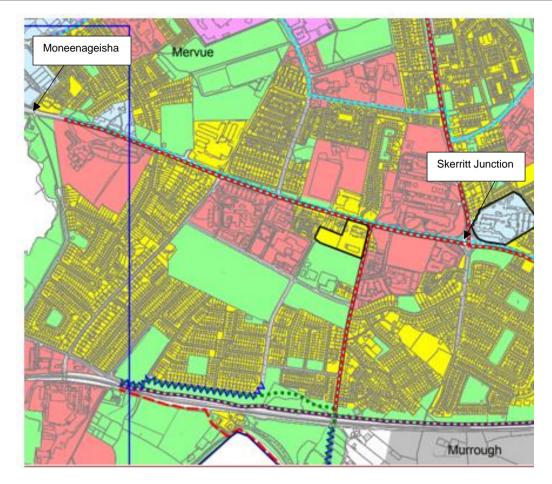


Figure 4-2 Section 1 of the Proposed Development– Galway City Council Development Plan 2023-2029 Zoning Map

The construction activities at Section 1 will comprise pavement reconstruction and resurfacing of the roads, footpaths, and cycle tracks, and new kerbs. Construction activities will also consist of relocation and reconstruction of boundary walls and boundary fences, additional signage, new road markings, new and amended traffic signal infrastructure, new street furniture (rubbish bins, seats, lighting, benches, planters, bollards, bus stop (including shelters and information displays etc.)) and landscaping works. Drainage gullies will be relocated to the new kerb edge and will connect back to existing drainage or a new drainage network. A heritage monument will be restored at the front of the Brothers of Charity site. Various utility diversions and/or protections will be required; including electricity overhead lines and underground cables, water distribution, gas mains and telecommunications infrastructure.

The existing junctions at Renmore Road and Ballyloughnane Road will be modified to a fully signalised junction with dedicated pedestrian and cyclist facilities. A new "cyclops" (Cycle Optimised Protected Signals) junction is proposed to replace the Skerritt roundabout which is designed to separate pedestrians and cyclists from traffic at the junction, reducing the possibility of collisions or conflict.

New access arrangements are proposed at the following locations:

- Kia dealership;
- Cloch Mhile building;
- Woodlands Campus Brother of Charity Services (both entrances);
- DPL / Bathroom World;
- Renmore Park;
- The Connacht Hotel;
- Glenia Heights/Michael Collins Road;
- Galway Hospice Foundation;





- Galwegians Rugby Football Club;
- Flannery's Hotel;
- Belmont Estate;
- ATU Galway Campus.

Temporary land acquisition is required at various locations to facilitate works, including drainage connections and reconfiguration of access, footpaths, and cycle tracks. All temporary land acquisition is to be reinstated once works are completed.

Permanent land acquisition is required within this section to allow for the proposed cross-section widening and construction of new footpaths and cycleways. The following locations will be impacted by the additional land take for the Proposed Development:

- Greenspace and paved area outside of Brothers of Charity Services Galway
- Greenspace by Wellpark Grove Park
- Greenspace west of Connacht Hotel
- Greenspace in The Connacht Hotel Car Park
- Garden and driveway of 18 Dublin Road
- Approximately 34 private car parking spaces (26 temporarily lost, and 8 permanently lost)
- Public Greenspace south of Glenina Heights
- Greenspace in the western corner of Galway Hospice Foundation
- Greenspace by Bon Secours Hospital
- TFI bike station Glenina
- Greenspace by Galwegians Rugby Football Club
- Greenspace and paved area in Flannery's Hotel Car Park
- Industrial area to the west of Ballyloughane Road
- Greenspace in Belmont
- Gaelscoil Dara sports field
- Greenspace outside of ATU Galway Campus

The works in the Brothers of Charity lands will include demolition of two single-story buildings located just inside the existing boundary wall. Boundary walls at the Brothers of Charity, Wellpark Grove Park, greenspace west of Connacht Hotel, the Connacht Hotel, 18 Dublin Road site, Duggan's Spar, Bon Secours Hospital, Galwegians Rugby Football Club, Flannery's Hotel, Industrial area at the corner of Ballyloughane, Belmont Estate, ATU Galway Campus and Gaelscoil will be demolished and will be rebuilt at the new boundary location.

Skerritt Junction is proposed to be replaced with the construction of a new "cyclops" (Cycle Optimised Protected Signals) junction. The new junction is designed to separate pedestrians and cyclists from traffic, reducing the possibility of collisions or conflict. The works at Skerritt Junction will involve breaking up the existing roundabout and providing full depth construction for the new junction arrangement.

Construction activities will also consist of additional signage, new road markings, new and amended traffic signal infrastructure, drainage works, utility diversions and/or protections and landscaping works.

Land acquisition is detailed in Section 6.3 of this report and in Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR.

4.2.2 Section 2: Skerritt Junction to Doughiska Road Junction

Section 2 is approximately 2360m in length and runs from Skerrit Junction to Doughiska Junction where the Proposed Development ties in with west of Martin junction at Doughiska Junction. It is proposed to maintain the two-way general traffic lanes and introduce continuous bus lanes in both directions in this section. The existing footpaths will be upgraded and extended and segregated cycle tracks provided on both sides from Skerritt Junction to the Coast Road then changing to a two-way segregated cycle track on the northern side of the route from the Coast Road to Doughiska Junction.





This section of the route is more rural in nature and is characterised by residential, HSE Merlin Park Hospital and green space including the Merlin Park Meadows and Rosshil Park Woods, which is reflected in the zoning designations of Residential (R), Community Cultural, and Institutional (CF) and Recreational and Amenity (RA) zoning, refer to Figure 4-3 below. Housing developments along the route include Lurgan Park, Woodhaven and Lois an Usice on the south.

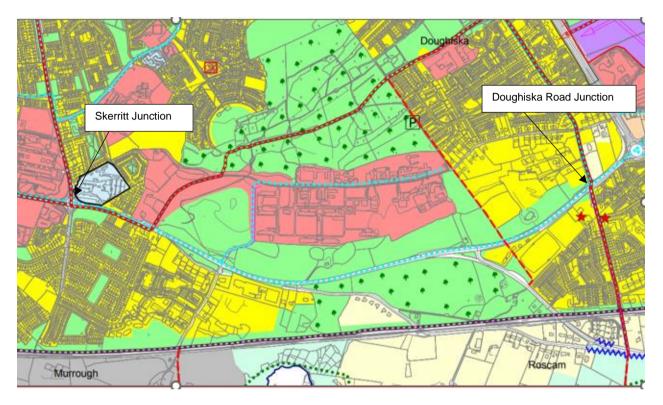


Figure 4-3 Section 2 of the Proposed Development – GCDP Zoning Map

Section 2 construction activities will comprise pavement reconstruction and resurfacing of the roads, footpaths, and cycle tracks, new kerbs, the relocation and reconstruction of boundary walls and boundary fences, additional signage, new road markings, new and amended traffic signal infrastructure, new street furniture, landscaping works and utility diversions. Drainage gullies will be relocated to the new kerb edge and will connect back to existing drainage or a new drainage network. Signal-controlled crossings will be provided at all junctions through a combination of dedicated cycle crossings and shared toucan crossings.

Between the Skerritt Junction and the eastern extremity of the Proposed Development the additional required land is primarily to the north of the existing R338.

The land take impacts include:

- The entrance to the former Corrib Great Southern Hotel site (now derelict)
- Greenspace outside the Woodhaven Estate
- HSE lands at Merlin Park Hospital
- Agricultural land located adjacent to the Dublin Road to the east of Merlin Park

A retaining wall will be constructed along part of the boundary with the former Corrib Great Southern Hotel site to reduce impact on the site. Raised tables will be provided to the access at Woodhaven estate and the access to the Merlin Gate estate.

Two number attenuation storage tanks and pumping stations will be provided in this section on drainage networks 7 and 8.





The junction of Dublin Road with Rosshill Road will be signalised. At the junction of Coast Road and Dublin Road, a new cycle link will be provided along the old Dublin Road alignment. Between the Coast Road junction and Doughiska Road junction a segregated two-way cycle lane will be provided on the northern side of Dublin Road.

The drainage works for Section 2 includes construction of trenches for short sections of attenuation pipes and surface water chambers. Combined kerbs and drainage systems will also be constructed at discrete locations. The construction works will also involve excavation for stone filled drainage infiltration trenches outside of Merlin Park University Hospital.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.1 EIA Screening

Barry Transportation undertook an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening on behalf of Galway City Council given the requirement to do so under the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU3 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Public and Private Projects on the Environment, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU4 (the "EIA Directive").

Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations sets out certain "road developments", which automatically require an EIA. The Proposed Development falls within a category of "road development" set out in section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act as prescribed by Article 8(a) of the Roads Regulations.

Section 50(1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act provides that a road development that is proposed that comprises of the following shall be subject to an EIA:

"Any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road".

The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purposes of Section 50 (1)(a)(iv) are prescribed by Article 8 of the Roads Regulations which includes:

"(a) The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area

The Proposed Development is a linear road development consisting of permanent works along 3.9 kilometres of road involving the realignment and widening of existing road so as to provide four or more lanes in an urban area. The Proposed Development exceeds the mandatory threshold detailed in the Roads Regulation and in accordance with Section 50 (1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act is required to undergo EIA.

5.2 EIAR

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is about examining the anticipated environmental effects of a proposed development - from consideration of environmental effects at design stage, through consultation and preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report ("EIAR"), evaluation of the EIAR by a competent authority and the subsequent decision as to whether the project should be granted planning permission.

An EIAR is a report of the effects, if any, which the proposed project, if carried out, would have on the environment. This includes characteristics such as the likely effects on people, flora and fauna, soil, water, air, landscape, and cultural heritage. The EIAR also sets out how the developer proposes to deal with any negative effects that may arise as a result of the Proposed Development. An EIAR must be prepared by, or





on behalf of the developer, by qualified and competent experts, and decision-makers must ensure they have sufficient expertise to examine the EIAR.

The EIAR is available for public inspection along with the other planning application documents from the competent authority.

All assessments have been carried out in accordance with best practice and applicable guidelines. Some chapters of the EIAR use specific guidelines related purely to that particular discipline.

The EIAR documents have been divided into the following Volumes for ease of use:

- Volume 1 Non-Technical Summary (NTS);
- Volume 2 Main Report;
- Volume 3 Figures; and
- Volume 4 Appendices.

The EIAR contains an assessment for each environmental topic listed below and sets out the likely significant residual effects as a result of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. The following environmental topics are assessed, and a summary of the assessment is included for each topic:

- Traffic and Transport The Proposed Development will provide a higher level of protection to bus journey time consistency and reliability and will allow the service pattern and frequency of bus services to be increased into the future to accommodate additional demand without having a significant negative impact on bus journey time reliability. The Proposed Development will deliver safer walking and cycling facilities in the Operational Phase, improving people movement in line with the development's objectives. These improvements will help to provide attractive alternatives to the private car and promote modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport, allowing for greater capacity along the corridor to facilitate the sustainable movement of people as population and employment levels grow in the future..
- Air Quality In accordance with the EPA Guidelines (EPA 2022) the impacts associated with the operational phase traffic emissions are overall neutral and long-term.
- Climate No significant residual negative effects on climate are predicted during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.
- Noise & Vibration Once the various mitigation measures are put in place, noise impacts associated with the Construction Phase will be negative and are predicted to range from not significant to significant, and temporary. These will occur within 10 to 15 m from the works during daytime construction periods of all construction phases. Once operational, there will be a positive to neutral direct impact along the Proposed Development due to a reduction in traffic volumes during both the year of opening and the design year.
- Population The improved connection provided across the city will have a positive impact on the potential for economic development and continued growth in tourism numbers.
- Human Health The Proposed Development is likely to have very significant positive long-term effects on numbers of people using sustainable transport and on bus journey times. It is also likely to have significant positive long- term effects on levels of physical activity due to improved opportunities and convenience for walking and cycling, combined with increased safety and perception of safety.
- Biodiversity A range of mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid or reduce negative impacts on biodiversity during the Construction Phase, including retaining trees identified as containing potential roost features for bats (insofar as is possible), and planting new street trees, hedgerows and speciesrich grasslands. Invasive species management will be implemented to mitigate any risk of the Proposed Development contributing to the spread of invasive species during the Construction Phase. Following implementation of these mitigation measures – especially for air and water pathways which will form part of Contractor's Construction and Environmental Management Plan and those embedded in the design, no significant impacts are anticipated on flora or fauna (including those requiring strict protection under Article 12 of the Habitats Directive (Regs 51 and 52 of SI 477/2011)). The assessment concluded that there will be no significant impacts on habitats, rare and protected plant species, mammals, amphibians and reptiles during the Operational Phase. In addition, potential impacts on designated European sites are specifically assessed in the Natura Impact Statement (NIS), which also forms part





of this application. The conclusion of the NIS is that the Proposed Development will not have any adverse effect on the integrity of any European site.

- Water Following implementation of the mitigation measures, which will form part of Contractor's Construction and Environmental Management Plan and those embedded in the design, no significant residual impacts are anticipated on any of the receptors in this study area during construction or operation of the Proposed Development.
- Land, Soils, Geology & Hydrogeology Appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid or reduce negative impacts on land, soils, geology and hydrogeology during the Construction Phase. It is expected that there will be no residual construction impacts on land, soils, geology and hydrogeology. It is predicted that there will be no residual operational impacts on land, soils, geology and hydrogeology.
- Archaeological Cultural Heritage & Architectural Heritage Overall, the majority of the Proposed Development will have a relatively low to moderate impact in terms of the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage resource and this is due to the primary fact that the majority of works will be within existing carriageways associated works being carried out in areas that have already been disturbed or subject to development. There is, however, the potential for previously unknown features of archaeological significance to survive beneath ground level. The mitigation measures proposed to avoid or reduce negative impacts on archaeological and cultural heritage during the Construction Phase include the provision for archaeological monitoring, inspection and excavation works that will be required prior to and during construction. There will be no Operational Phase impacts as a result of the Proposed Development.
- Landscape & Visual Appropriate measures to avoid or reduce negative landscape and visual impacts during the Construction Phase will be implemented, including ensuring that trees and vegetation to be retained within and adjoining the works area will be protected. Works required within the root protection area (RPA) of trees to be retained will follow a project specific arboricultural methodology for such works. While mitigation for the Construction Phase is focused on protecting any landscape features that are to be kept and providing as much visual screening from construction works as possible, it will not be possible or practical to mitigate against impacts on landscape and visual characteristics resulting from the removal of mature trees to facilitate construction. In terms of Landscape and Visual, the Proposed Development construction will give rise a localised moderate, negative, temporary to short-term effect on townscape.
- Waste and Resources With the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, it is expected that there will be no residual significant impacts on waste and resources.
- Material Assets The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise the impact on utility infrastructure. This includes avoiding interactions with major utility infrastructure, wherever possible. Where there will be an overlap with existing utility infrastructure, these will be protected in place or diverted as necessary to prevent long-term disruption to services. Diversions and changes to the location or layout of any utility infrastructure has been included in the overall design of the Proposed Development.
- Risk of Major Accidents and / or Disasters Appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented during the Construction Phase including the implementation of a Construction Environmental Response Plan and an Environmental Incident Response Plan. With the application of these mitigation measures, there are no remaining identified incidents or major accidents and / or disasters risk events that present a level of risk that would lead to significant impacts or environmental effects. No significant risks were identified as likely to occur during the Operational Phase.
- Cumulative Impacts and Environmental Interactions No significant adverse impacts have been identified during construction or operation that could arise due to cumulative and interacting effects.

5.3 Appropriate Assessment Screening

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been prepared by APEM Ireland to support a Planning Application for the Proposed Development and to inform the AA of the Proposed Development by the Competent Authority. AA Screening examines the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective





information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

The AA Screening determined that there is a possibility for significant effects on the following European Sites, and as such, an AA and NIS is required for the Proposed Development:

- Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031); and
- Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268).

5.4 Natura Impact Statement

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was prepared by APEM Ireland on foot of the findings of the AA Screening process. This stage 2 of the AA process considers whether the proposed project, alone or in combination withother projects or plans, will have adverse effects on the integrity of a European site, and includes any mitigation measures necessary to avoid, reduce or offset negative effects. The NIS report contains information to assist the Competent Authority in carrying out an Appropriate Assessment (AA) for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, (the "Planning Acts") in respect of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

The NIS describes the designated European Sites that could potentially be affected by the Proposed Development, describes the existing receiving environment, considers the potential impacts associated with the Proposed Development on the Qualifying Interests of the European Sites and sets down mitigation measures to address potential adverse impacts. An assessment of in-combination affects is alsoconsidered by the NIS.

Avoidance, design requirements and mitigation measures are set out within the NIS and they ensure that any impacts on the conservation objectives of European sites will be avoided during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development such that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of these European sites.

The NIS concluded that:

"It has been objectively concluded on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of the predicted impacts from the Proposed Development and the effective implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, that the Proposed Development will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects."

It is however the role of the Competent Authority to carry out screening for AAif required and the NIS provides information to assist GCC in undertaking this process.

5.5 Other Requirements

5.5.1 Water Framework Directive Assessment

A Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment was carried out on the Proposed Development (Appendix 13.1 in Volume 4 of the EIAR).

Taking into consideration the anticipated impacts of the Proposed Development on the biological, physicochemical and hydromorphological quality elements, following the implementation of design and mitigation measures, it is concluded that it will not compromise progress towards achieving Good Ecological Status (GES) or cause a deterioration of the overall Good Ecological Potential (GEP) of any of the water bodies that are in scope (Table 5-1).





Environmental Objective	Proposed Development	Compliance with the WFD Directive
No changes affecting high status sites	No waterbodies identified as a high status.	Yes
No changes that will cause failure to meet surface water GES or GEP or result in a deterioration of surface water GED or GEP	After consideration as part of the detailed compliance assessment, the Proposed Development will not cause deterioration in the status of the water bodies during construction following the implementation of mitigation measures; during operation, no significant impacts are predicted.	Yes
No changes which will permanently prevent or compromise the Environmental Objectives being met in other water bodies	The Proposed Development will not cause a permanent exclusion or compromise achieving the WFD objectives in any other bodies of water within the River Basin District.	Yes
No changes that will cause failure to meet good groundwater status or result in a deterioration groundwater status.	The Proposed Development will not cause deterioration in the status of the of the groundwater bodies.	Yes

Table 5-1 Compliance of the Proposed Development with the Environmental Objectives of the WFD

The WFD also requires consideration of how a new Proposed Development might impact on other water bodies and other EU legislation. This is contained in Articles 4.8 and 4.9 of the WFD.

Article 4.8 states:

'a Member State shall ensure that the application does not permanently exclude or compromise the achievement of the objectives of this Directive in other bodies of water within the same river basin district and is consistent with the implementation of other Community environmental legislation'.

All water bodies within the study area have been assessed for direct impacts; indirect impacts have also been assessed. The Proposed Development will not compromise the achievement of the objectives of the WFD for any water body. This concludes that in combination with other Proposed Developments the Proposed Development will not compromise the achievement of the objectives of the WFD for any water body. Therefore, the Proposed Development complies with Article 4.8 of the WFD.

Article 4.9 of the WFD requires that:

'Member States shall ensure that the application of the new provisions guarantees at least the same level of protection as the existing Community legislation'.

The Habitats Directive promotes the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring Member States to take measures to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species listed on the Annexes to the Directive at a favourable conservation status, introducing robust protection for those habitats and species of European importance. There are European designated sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Development which have been assessed and mitigation measures to reduce the potential risk are presented in the NIS.

Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, as amended (the "Nitrates Directive") aims to protect water quality by preventing nitrates from agricultural sources polluting ground and surface waters and by promoting the use of good farming practices. The Proposed Development will not influence or moderate agricultural land use or land management.





The revised Bathing Water Directive (rBWD) Directive 2006/7/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 February 2006 concerning the management of bathing water quality and repealing Directive 76/160/EEC, as amended was adopted in 2006, updating the microbiological and physico-chemical standards set by the original Bathing Water Directive (BWD) (76/160/EEC) and the process used to measure/monitor water quality at identified bathing waters. The rBWD focuses on fewer microbiological indicators, whilst setting higher standards, compared to those of the BWD. Bathing waters under the rBWD are classified as excellent, good, sufficient or poor according to the levels of certain types of bacteria (intestinal enterococci and Escherichia coli) in samples obtained during the bathing season (May to September). The potential impacts of the Proposed Development will not impact any designated bathing waters. It is therefore compliant with the Bathing Water Directive.

5.5.1.1 Conclusion

Considering all requirements for compliance with the WFD, the Proposed Development will not cause a deterioration in status in any water body, will not prevent any water body from achieving GES or GEP; there are no cumulative impacts with other Proposed Developments.

It can be concluded that the Proposed Development complies with all requirements of the WFD and other relevant environmental legislation.

5.5.2 Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

The Proposed Development has been assessed for existing and future sources of flood risk. The Flood Risk Assessment Report forms part of this application and is included in Appendix A13.2 in Volume 4 of the EIAR.

The various sources of flooding were assessed and was determined that the site is at low risk of fluvial and coastal flooding (Flood Zone C) but there is a moderate risk of pluvial and groundwater flooding. There is also a risk of flooding from failure of the pumping stations that is assessed as a moderate/high risk.

The assessment undertaken as part of this FRA indicates that the Proposed Development will result in the creation of additional impermeable surface for local sections of road widening. Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) will be provided, where appropriate, to manage runoff quantity and quality.

The scope of the Proposed Development is in keeping with the existing road profile and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Mitigation measures have been included for the proposed drainage works which has reduced the flood risk to acceptable levels. Surface water management measures including upgraded surface water drainage system, additional green area and SuDS features, oversized pipes and attenuation tanks with flow control are incorporated in the design.

In conclusion, there is still some residual risk, but these can be managed during the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development. This FRA has demonstrated that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the core principles of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

6 ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING ISSUES

6.1 Traffic

The Proposed Development will address sustainable mode transport infrastructure constraints while contributing to an overall integrated sustainable transport system as proposed in the GTS. It will increase the effectiveness and attractiveness of bus services operating along the corridor and will result in more people benefiting from faster journey times and improved journey time reliability. The Proposed Development will enhance the potential for waling and cycling along the route.





The Proposed Development will maximise and prioritise the movement of people travelling sustainably along the route and will therefore cater for higher levels of future sustainable population and employment growth.

The proposed N6 Galway Ring Road will help to divert traffic away from the city centre. Furthermore, the GTS, NPF and GCDP have identified that the BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development in combination with the BusConnects Galway: Cross-City Link will be key to releasing the congested streets of Galway City as it provides for a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling.

6.2 Climate Impact

The residual impacts of the Proposed Development on climate due to GHG emissions in both the Construction and Operational Phases, after the inclusion of mitigation measures set out in the EIAR, is predicted to be positive, long-term and not significant. The proposed infrastructural works will support the delivery of government strategies, outlined in Section 2 above by enabling sustainable mobility and delivering a sustainable transport system. Its aim is to provide enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure on key access corridors in Galway City and its environs. This will subsequently enable and deliver integrated sustainable transport movement along these corridors. The proposed infrastructural works will provide connectivity and integration with other public transport services leading to more people availing of public transport.

By creating a resilient, accessible public transport network, the proposed infrastructural works will provide an attractive alternative to private car travel, encouraging more passenger travel by more sustainable modes.

The Proposed Development achieves the project objectives in supporting the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service, which supports the achievement of Ireland's emission reduction targets. This has the effect of a reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, and increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share in accordance with Ireland's CAP 2024.

6.3 Land Take (CPO)

Considering the length of the Proposed Development (circa 3.9km), the land take required for the implementation of the Proposed Development is minor. The Proposed Development involves the realignment and widening of the existing road. The most significant road widening will occur along the northern side of the route, impacting HSE lands, green space, residences and businesses.

The requirement for land take was first assessed during the Route Options Selection stage ensuring that any land take proposed comprised the minimum land take possible which allowed feasibility of the Proposed Development (refer to the Option Selection Report contained in this application).

The impact of landtake has been assessed in Chapter 10 (Population) within the EIAR, which determined that no significant residual impacts on population will occur. In addition to this, landowners and other interested parties affected by land take have been closely engaged throughout the design and development of the Proposed Development, as evidenced in the Public Consultation Report accompanying this application.

During the Construction Phase of the Proposed Development, a total of 11.20 hectares of land lies within the Proposed Development site extents boundary, including public roads and footpaths. A total of 1.85 hectares is to be acquired temporarily to accommodate construction activities and the construction compound. A total of 4.764 hectares is to be acquired permanently to accommodate the Proposed Development.

6.3.1 Permanent Land Take

There is a total of 4.764 hectares of permanent land take required for the Proposed Development (this includes roadbed and footpaths). All permanent land take is shown on the CPO drawings that accompany





the planning application. The permanent acquisition of lands and the demolition of buildings has been addressed under construction impacts as these land areas are required to construct the Proposed Development.

A summary of the main demolition requirements for the Proposed Development is provided in Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) Volume 2 of the EIAR. There will be other more minor demolition requirements associated with utility structures and boundary walls.

6.3.2 Temporary Land Take

The construction works for the Proposed Development will involve a total temporary land take of 1.85 hectares. The lands will comprise a wide range of types including residential, industrial / commercial, development sites, car parking, community and amenity lands, agricultural and non-agricultural greenfield / parkland areas. Some temporary land take will be used for the construction compound. All temporary land take areas will be reinstated to "as was" condition.

Refer to Sub-Appendix 2 for the Proposed Development CPO drawings.

7 OVERALL CONCLUSION

This Planning Report has demonstrated that the BusConnects Galway: Dublin Road is supported by and is consistent with national and regional policies and objectives. It identifies the need for the development of reliable, sustainable, and integrated public transport network at national level and particularly in Galway City where population and public transport demand is set to continue to increase. The Proposed Development will facilitate the realisation of several of the National Planning Framework national strategic objectives including: NSO 4: Sustainable Mobility and NSO 8: Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society which is required to be achieved by 2050. The Proposed Development, forming part of the overall BusConnects Programme, is identified as a 'Strategic Investment Priority' project, with an associated investment commitment, which has been determined as central to the delivery of the NPF vision.

The RSES for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly 2020-2032 promotes the sustainable growth of Galway and regional centres, aligning services with population and economic growth, compact growth in urban settlements and optimising the use of infrastructure including public transport. With regard to investment in the bus network in Galway City, it is recognised in the RSES that *'investment in bus infrastructure and services will be delivered through Bus Connects and the relevant parts of the GTS'*. The RSES also recognises the importance of walking and cycling in facilitating modal shift - *'Facilitating modal shift to more sustainable transport options, including walking and cycling is a key element in promoting healthier lifestyles, better traffic management and assisting in mitigating climate change'.*

At a local level, it has been demonstrated that the Proposed Development is compliant with the principles of the statutory development plans of Galway City Council and Galway County Council. The BusConnect Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development is supported by GCDP through the following policies: Policy 4.3 - Public Transport, Policy 4.4 - Sustainable Mobility and Policy 4.6 Road and Street Network and Accessibility.

The resultant effects on the environment, including climate, air quality, noise and vibration, population and human health, habitats and flooding, have been identified, assessed and mitigated where required. The EIAR demonstrates that there will be no likely significant residual effects on the environment from the implementation of the Proposed Development, namely the reduction in traffic achieved through the implementation of sustainable transport and traffic management measures.

Consultation with members of the public, GCC and statutory bodies has been a valuable component of the Proposed Development undertaken throughout the design and environmental assessment process and has





contributed to significant and positive design changes. The design has been assessed in the EIAR and NIS of the project and is the optimal design to deliver on the project objectives.

Taking into account the conformity with all relevant planning considerations and the avoidance of disproportionate effects, the Proposed Development can be considered to be consistent with orderly development as well as the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

This Planning Report demonstrates that the BusConnect Galway: Dublin Road Proposed Development delivers on its objectives to:

- Enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by improving bus speeds, reliability, and punctuality through the provision of bus lanes and other measures to provide priority to bus movement over general traffic movements;
- Enhance the potential for cycling by providing safe infrastructure for cycling, segregated from general traffic wherever practicable;
- Support the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service, which supports the achievement of Ireland's emission reduction targets;
- Enable compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land in Galway City and environs, for present and future generations, through the provision of safe and efficient sustainable transport networks;
- Improve accessibility to jobs, education, and other social and economic opportunities through the provision of improved sustainable connectivity and integration with other public transport services; and
- Ensure that the public realm is carefully considered in the design and development of the transport infrastructure and seek to enhance key urban focal points where appropriate and feasible.

The Proposed Development will make a significant positive contribution to achieving multiple cross-cutting planning policy objectives across EU, National, Regional and at local planning level. The project supports the sustainable development of the GTS specifically relating to integrated planning and transportation solutions, sustainable mobility, enabling citizen participation to address climate action and will deliver a safer more efficient, low carbon, reliable and resilient rail network for communities today and into the future

Having regard to these considerations it can be concluded that the Proposed Development is therefore considered to be in accordance with the statutory planning policy for the area in which it is situated, at national, regional and at local level and that permission should be granted for the implementation of this Proposed Development.





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Planning Report Appendix 1 Local Policy





PLANNING REPORT SUB APPENDIX 1 – LOCAL POLICY





Sub Appendix 1: Local Policy

1. GALWAY CITY COUNCIL

1.1 Galway City Council Plan Policies and Objectives

Table 1 GCDP Policies and Objectives

Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
1.2	Strategic Vision for Galway City		The vision for Galway City is to be a successful, sustainable, competitive, regional city that creates prosperity, supports a high quality of life and maintains its distinctive identity and supports a rich cultural experience. A city that is environmentally responsible, mobilised to combat climate change and resilient to challenge. A city that can develop, attract and retain talent and skills and fosters innovation and creativity. An inclusive, diverse city where civic engagement is valued, and a shared vision is pursued through good governance and leadership. A city that offers sustainable and quality choices in housing, work, transport and lifestyle opportunities.	The Proposed Development will support this vision through the provision of enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure enabling a more efficient, safe, and integrated sustainable transport movement along this corridor, achieving high quality of life.
1.2	Strategic Goals		Apply the principle of sustainability and integrate the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for	The Proposed Development is compliant with the SDGs as it provides infrastructure that will support sustainable transport and will improve the safety of road users through the segregation of





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			Sustainable Development particularly where they relate to the uses of land, buildings, water, energy, waste and through the encouragement of sustainable modes of transport and the integration of transportation with land use	road vehicles and active travel modes.
1.3.1	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG's)	Policy 1.1 United Nations Sustainability Goals	Through implementation of the Core Strategy and the policies and objectives of the Development Plan, advance the aims of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals	The Proposed Development is supported by the goals and targets set out in the relevant SDGs. It will provide for enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure, which will subsequently enable more efficient, safe and integrated sustainable transport movement in Galway City.
1.3.2	National Policy	Policy 1.2 National and Regional framework	Ensure consistency with the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) including the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) and support the achievement of the associated Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs)	The Proposed Development will support continued improved integration of transport with land use planning. The delivery of improved high-capacity Core Bus Corridors will enable and support the delivery of both residential and economic development opportunities, facilitating the sustainable growth of Galway MASP. The dedicated bus lanes proposed will improve bus journey times and reliability while the cycle lane and pedestrian infrastructure will promote modal shift from private car to active travel.
1.3.2	National Policy	Policy 1.2 National and	Ensure consistency with the National Planning Framework and the vision to	Proposed Development is supported by the goals of the NPF by delivering infrastructure that will facilitate high quality





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
		Regional framework	achieve the shared goals as expressed in the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs).	sustainable active travel and public transport networks. In doing so, the Proposed Development will facilitate an accelerated shift, and the urgent transition needed towards a low carbon and climate resilient society. The Proposed Development will allow for greater access to public transport and ensure a more attractive, liveable urban place for the local community living adjacent to the Proposed Development.
2.2	Climate Change International	Policy 2.1 Circular Economy	Support a successful transition to a circular economy where waste and resources are minimised in accordance with emerging legislation and national strategy including the Circular Economy Programme 2021-2027.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy, Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020 - 2025, as updated together with The Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy 2022- 2023 was considered. Circular economy principles and the waste hierarchy have been assessed within the EIAR. Refer to Chapter 17 (Waste & Resources) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
2.2	Climate Change International	Policy 2.2 Climate Action	Support through plan policy and objectives, the national objective of the legally binding path to net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of 2030; through implementation of 5- year carbon budgets, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, promotion of sustainable transport, use of renewable resources, improving energy efficiency and	The delivery of the Proposed Development will provide the transport infrastructure required to deliver sustainable transport options that will support the key actions set out in the CAP 2024. The Proposed Development will expand, enhance and connect to pedestrian and cycle networks and will assist in facilitating modal shift. It is clear that the targets set out within CAP 2024 are closely linked to the delivery of key transport infrastructure projects, such as the BusConnects Programme and therefore the Proposed Development.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			supporting nature- based solutions	
2.4	Integrating Climate Action into the City Development Plan	4. Sustainable Mobility and Transportation	Supports the integration of land use and transportation to encourage compact growth, shift to sustainable mobility and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.	The Proposed Development will provide a greater increase in sustainable mode share which will in turn lead to further reductions in GHG emissions and encourage compact growth. An estimated saving of 130 tonnes of CO ₂ eq (derived from the avoidance of use of virgin asphalt and its emission factor) has been accounted for in the Construction Phase. Refer to Chapter 8 (Climate) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
4.1	Sustainable Mobility and Transportation	Policy 4.1 General	Develop a compact city, where sustainable land use and transportation are integrated and where there is choice and accessibility to a range of transport modes, with increasing support for a shift to more sustainable modes in line with national aims on climate action and where safety and ease of movement is provided to and within the City and onward to the wider area of the MASP, County Galway and the Northern and Western Region. Support the implementation of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) which will advance the delivery and modal shift to more sustainable	The Proposed Development is supported by the National Sustainable Mobility Policy and the GTS. The Proposed Development as part of the BusConnects Programme is identified as a key project to help deliver Irelands climate commitments and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector. The implementation of the Proposed Development will contribute to modal shift towards sustainable transport options, it will expand, enhance and connect to pedestrian and cycle networks.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			modes of transport and also enable planned integration of land use and transport within the city and the greater MASP area in consultation with Galway County Council, NTA and TII and service providers	
4.2	Land Use and Transportation	Policy 4.2 Land Use and Transportation	Support and facilitate the integration of land use and transportation in order to facilitate compact city growth, supported by sustainable modes of transport that will encourage economic well-being and ensure the movement of people and goods in a manner that is sustainable, safe and provides ease of access for all, enhances quality of life and supports a reduction in transport related greenhouse gas emissions.	The Proposed Development will enhance the capacity of sustainable transport infrastructure as well as the efficiency of Galway's road network. The enhanced sustainable transport provision along the Proposed Development corridor can help to achieve greater land use densities that will promote compact sustainable growth.
4.3	Public Transport	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.	The Proposed Development will align with this objective as it will provide enhanced bus infrastructure enabling a sustainable transport movement.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
4.4	Sustainable Mobility - Walk and Cycle	Policy 4.4 Sustainable Mobility - Walk and Cycle	Support the Galway Transport Strategy proposals for a primary cycle network to facilitate safe and convenient medium distance journeys.	The Proposed Development aligns with the policy objective as it will provide segregated cycling facilities along the Proposed Development in both directions. These high-quality cycle lanes will be 2.0 m in width offering a high level of service and help to reduce dependency on private car use for short journeys. In addition, along the route, improvements and enhancements will be made to footpaths, walkways and pedestrian crossings.
4.5	Transport Demand Management Measures	Policy 4.5 Transport Demand Management Measures	Support and promote the use of smarter mobility and Intelligent Transport Solutions (ITS) to increase efficiency, safety and co-ordination across all transport networks.	The Proposed Development aligns with the goal as it will enhance interchanges between the various modes of public transport operating in Galway City and its wider metropolitan area, both now and in the future.
5.2	The Green Network	Policy 5.1 Green Network and Biodiversity	Support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2017- 2021 (and any subsequent NBAP) and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2021- 2025) and support the actions of the City Council's Heritage Plan 2016-2021 and Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 relating to the promotion of ecological awareness, biodiversity and best practices.	The Proposed Development align with this objective as the Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan 2014- 2024 has been taken in consideration. Refer to Chapter 12 (Biodiversity) in Volume 2 of this EIAR for further detail.
5.2	The Green Network	Policy 5.1 Green Network and Biodiversity	Support climate action through implementation of nature-based solutions that enhance biodiversity in the	The Proposed Development has used green infrastructure initiatives such as SuDS. SuDS measures were designed to attenuate runoff for any newly paved areas. Responses to risks





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			green network, including measures such as tree planting, SuDS, and the use of green infrastructure. Such measures will be informed by the Green Space Strategy.	from climate change on the integrity of the infrastructure has been considered both in the design and approach taken and the EIAR.
5.4	Control of Invasive Alien Species	Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance	Protect Local Biodiversity Areas, wildlife corridors and stepping stones based on the Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 and support the biodiversity of the city in the Council's role/responsibilities, works and operations, where appropriate.	The Proposed Development align with this objective as the Galway City Biodiversity Action Plan 2014- 2024 has been taken in consideration. It aims to protect the biodiversity and wildlife corridors. Refer to Chapter 12 (Biodiversity) in Volume 2 of this EIAR for further detail.
5.4	Control of Invasive Alien Species	Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance	Support the inclusion of natural features, such as trees, hedgerows, stone walls, ponds and the use of green design features and the incorporation of biodiversity measures in developments layouts.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as where existing trees, hedges, and / or plantings are removed from temporary acquisition areas, new planting and paving will be provided where possible in replacement of those removed. In general, unless not feasible or practicable, new plant species will match that of those removed. Refer to Chapter 12 (Biodiversity), Chapter 17 (Landscape & Visual) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details
5.4	Control of Invasive Alien Species	Policy 5.2 Protected Spaces: Sites of European, National and Local Ecological Importance	Protect the ecological integrity of statutory Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, refuges for fauna and Annex 1 Habitats.	The Proposed Development aligns as it will not result in any significant residual effects on designated areas. In addition to the EIAR, a NIS has been prepared for the Proposed Development. Refer to Chapter 12 (Biodiversity)





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
				in Volume 2 of the EIAR and the NIS for further details
5.5	Blue Spaces	Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways	Protect and maintain the integrity of the coastal environment and waterways by avoiding significant impacts and meeting the requirements of statutory bodies, national and European legislation and standards.	The Proposed Development is in compliance with WFD and with mitigation measures put in place will not impact the coastal waterbodies status. Refer to Chapter 13 (Water) and Appendix A13.1 of this EIAR.
5.5	Blue Spaces	Policy 5.3 Blue Spaces: Coast, Canals and Waterways	Support the implementation of the recommendations of the River Basin Management Plan in relation to the protection of water quality of surface waters, groundwater and coastal waters	The Proposed Development aligns with this objective as it has considered the recommendation of River Basin Management Plan. Refer to Chapter 13 (Water) in Volume 2 of this EIAR for further details.
5.8	Open Spaces	Policy 5.9 Open Spaces: Public Realm	Implement the Public Realm Strategy for the public domain which contributes to the creation and maintenance of high quality and successful open spaces.	The Proposed Development will align with the objective as public realm works proposed will be undertaken at key locations with planting and street furniture provided to enhance the pedestrian experience.
8.2	Record of Protected Structures	Policy 8.1 Record of Protected Structures	Protect structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures, in accordance with legislation and DEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011.	The Proposed Development align with this objective as the DEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 was considered. Refer to Chapter 15 (Archaeological and Cultural Heritage) in Volume 2 of this EIAR for further detail.
8.9	Public Realm	Policy 8.8 Public Realm	Progress implementation of the Public Realm Strategy (2019) and	The Proposed Development has considered Public Realm Strategy (2019) and will provide nature- based SuDS solutions in the public





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			accompanying manuals including the delivery of enhancement projects and a typology of streets and public spaces that positively contributes to the city's environment and heritage	realm to enhance biodiversity and resilience to climate change.
9.2	Flood Risk Assessment	Policy 9.1 Flood Risk	Ensure any proposed measure designed to alleviate flooding/coastal erosion is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive, where appropriate.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective. A FRA has been undertaken and has helped to shape the design response. Design principles included exploring opportunities for sustainable urban realm and landscape design responses such as SuDS, species rich planting and reusing materials where possible. SuDS measures were designed to attenuate runoff for any newly paved areas. SuDS measures were designed to provide sufficient storage to ensure no increase in existing runoff rates.
9.2	Flood Risk Assessment	Policy 9.1 Flood Risk	Continue to protect the coastal area and the foreshore and avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of coastal erosion and/or would cause and escalate coastal erosion in adjoining areas.	Chapter 13 (Water) includes an overview of flood risk. Following implementation of the mitigation measures in Chapter 13 (Water) in Volume 2 of the EIAR and the SWMP within the CEMP (Appendix A5.1 in Volume 4 of this EIAR), there are no significant impacts predicted on any of the receptors in this study area during the Construction or Operational Phases. In addition to the above, further detailed information on flood risk is at Appendix A13.2 which includes a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).
9.3	Water Quality	Policy 9.2 Water Quality	Support the actions of the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 and future River Basin	The Proposed Development align with this objective as the River Basin Management Plan has been considered.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			Management Plan in order to promote and achieve a restoration of good status, reduce chemical pollution and prevent deterioration of surface, coastal and groundwater quality, where appropriate.	Refer to Chapter 13 (Water) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
9.3	Water Quality	Policy 9.2 Water Quality	Protect the city's groundwater resource in accordance with the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (SI No. 9 of 2010) or any updated legislation and limit any development which has potential to impact the objectives for protection, enhancement and/or restoration.	The Proposed Development has assessed the groundwater resource in accordance with the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC, as amended and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (SI No. 9 of 2010).
9.5	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Policy 9.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Ensure the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and sustainable surface water drainage management, wherever practical in the design of development to enable surface water run-off to be managed as near to its source as possible and achieve wider benefits such as sustainable development, water quality, biodiversity local amenity and climate adaptation.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as it provides measures to ensure no increase in existing run off rates from newly paved and combined existing / newly paved catchment areas. Drainage of newly paved areas will include SuDS measures to treat and attenuate any additional runoff. Refer to Chapter 13 (Water) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details





Section	n Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
9.5	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Policy 9.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Promote the use of green infrastructure e.g. green roofs, green walls, bioswales, planting and green spaces for surface water retention purposes as an integrated part of SUDS and to deliver all the ancillary benefits.	The Proposed Development has used green infrastructure initiatives such as SuDS. SuDS measures were designed to attenuate runoff for any newly paved areas.
9.8	Noise	Policy 9.6 Air Quality and Noise	Maintain air quality to a satisfactory standard by regulating and monitoring atmospheric emissions in accordance with EU policy directives on air quality and Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive (2008/50/EC) by promoting and supporting initiatives to reduce air pollution and by increasing the use of sustainable transport modes and developing urban woodlands, encouraging tree planting, conserving and creating green open space.	The improvements to sustainable modes provision as a result of the Proposed Development will facilitate a reduction in congestion, reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and associated air quality improvements along the Proposed Development, resulting in enhanced community wellbeing. Refer to Chapter 6 (Traffic & Transport), Chapter 7 (Air Quality) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details. The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as the Noise Action Plan has been considered. Once operational, there will be a Positive to Neutral direct impact along the Proposed Development due to a reduction in traffic volumes during both the Opening Year (2028) and the Design Year (2043). Refer to Chapter 09 (Noise and Vibration) and Chapter 04 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.





2. GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

2.1 Galway County Council Plan Policies and Objectives

Table 2 GCC Development Plan 2022 – 2028 Policies and Objectives

Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
6.3.3	Galway County Transport and Planning Study and Galway Transport Strategy	GCTPS 1 Galway County Transport & Planning Study and Galway Transportation Strategy	It is a policy objective of Galway County Council to support and facilitate the implementation of the Galway County Transport & Planning Study and Galway Transport Strategy across all modes of transport.	The Proposed Development will align with the objective as it has considered the Galway Transportation Strategy. The Proposed Development is to form a central route for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians along the Dublin Road.
6.3.3	Galway County Transport and Planning Study and Galway Transport Strategy	GCTPS 3 Sustainable Transport	The County will seek to support a variety of measures which will reduce car dependency for residents and will specifically seek to improve access to sustainable transport choices (including responsive and "flexible" modes) for those residents in rural areas of the County.	The Proposed Development will enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by improving bus speeds, reliability and punctuality through the provision of bus lanes and other measures to provide priority to bus movement over general traffic movements and reduce car dependency.
6.3.3	Galway County Transport and Planning Study and Galway Transport Strategy	GCTPS 4 Walking and Cycling	Support for, and enhancement of, existing and new walking and cycling networks as the "first choice" for shorter local journeys and to link settlements within the County and to Galway City.	The Proposed Development aims to provide enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure on this key access corridor, which will enable and deliver efficient, safe, and integrated sustainable transport movement along the route.
6.3.3	Galway County Transport and Planning Study and Galway Transport Strategy	GCTPS 9 Collaboration with Galway City	The Council will collaborate with Galway City Council as appropriate to bring forward transport proposals and measures which will enhance travel to and from Galway City in a manner which is compatible with the GTS and GCTPS, and where possible	The Proposed Development complies with the GCTPS by delivering infrastructure that will facilitate a high quality sustainable public transport network not only facilitating buses but also active travel in





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			maximises the benefits to both areas from this approach.	cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.
6.5.2.1	Walking & Cycling	Policy Objective WC1	Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure : To require the design of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards set out in the National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.	The Proposed Development will facilitate a transport infrastructure network that prioritises walking and cycling and a mode shift to public transport resulting in better air quality and reduced carbon emissions following the standards set in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and National Cycle Manual
6.5.2.1	Walking & Cycling	Policy Objective WC5	Traffic Free Cycle Routes : To provide, where possible, traffic free pedestrian and cyclist routes particularly where such routes would provide a more direct, safer, and more attractive alternative to the car	The Proposed Development will enhance the potential for cycling by providing safe infrastructure for cycling, segregated from general traffic wherever practicable
6.5.2.4	Public Transport	Policy Objective PT 1	Sustainable Modes of Transport: To encourage a modal shift from use of the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport.	The Proposed Development will provide the infrastructure necessary to enhance a sustainable transport network. Refer to Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details
6.5.2.4	Public Transport	Policy Objective PT 2	Development of Public Transport Infrastructure: To engage and work closely with the National Transport Authority and other relevant transport authorities and both public and private operators, in facilitating and securing improvements to and the expansion of public transport infrastructure and services in the County.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as BusConnects Galway Programme is the NTA's programme to greatly improve bus services in the Galway City and environs of which the Proposed Development is part. It has considered Smarter Travel, Galway Transport Strategy and the RSES.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
				Refer to Chapter 6 (Traffic & Transport) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
6.5.2.4	Public Transport	Policy Objective PT 3	County Bus Services: To support the National Transport Authority (NTA) and other stakeholders and community groups in improving bus service infrastructure.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as BusConnects is the NTA's programme to provide enhanced walking, cycling and bus infrastructure in the Galway region. The Proposed Development will deliver safe, segregated cycling facilities along the corridor as part of BusConnects. Refer to Chapter 6 (Traffic & Transport) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
6.5.3.2	Non-National Roads	Policy Objective NNR3	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets: Implement the national design standards outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2019) for urban streets and roads within the 50/60 kph zone.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as Chapter 6 of the EIAR (Traffic and Transport) has considered the permeability best practice guide and DMURS as part of the project. Refer to Chapter 6 (Traffic & Transport) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
7.6	Waste Management	Policy Objective WM1	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.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as the Connacht and Ulster Waste Management Plan was considered. Refer to Chapter 17 (Waste and Resources) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
7.6	Waste Management	Policy Objective WM2	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.	The Proposed Development have assessed within the EIAR the circular economy principles and the waste hierarchy. There are no residual impacts in relation to waste during the Construction and Operational phase of the Proposed Development. Refer to Chapter 18 (Waste & Resources) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
7.9.1	Air Quality	Policy Objective AQ1	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 (CAFÉ) 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).	The Proposed Development will provide improvements to sustainable modes, will facilitate a reduction in congestion, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and associated air quality improvements along the Proposed Development, in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive (2008/50/EC) and S.I. 180/2011 Air Quality Standard Regulations.
7.9.2	Noise Pollution	Policy Objective NP1	Galway County Council Noise Action Plan 2024-2028: 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.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as the Galway County Council Noise Action Plan has been considered. Once operational, there will be a direct positive and slight negative impact along the Proposed Development due to a reduction in traffic volumes during both the Opening Year





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
				(2028) and the Design Year (2043).
7.9.3	Light Pollution	Policy Objective LP1	Lighting Proposed Developments: To require that all developments shall ensure lighting Proposed Developments 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 Proposed Developments shall be submitted and agreed with the Planning Authority.	The Proposed Development aligns with this objective as Light Emitting Diode (LED) lanterns will be the light source for any new or relocated public lighting provided. The lighting design will involve works on functional, heritage and contemporary lighting installations on a broad spectrum of lighting infrastructure along the Proposed Development. All new lighting on the Proposed Development will aim to minimise the effects of obtrusive light at night and reduce visual impact during daylight and will be designed and installed in accordance with the requirements of the relevant National Standards and guides. Refer to Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
7.9.5	Major Accidents and Seveso Sites	Policy Objective MAS3	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.	The Proposed Development has assessed the major accidents and Seveso Sites as per the Major Accidents Directive. Refer to Chapter 19 (Risk of Major Accidents and Disaster) for further details.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
10.6	Natural Heritage and Biodiversity	Policy Objective NHB1	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.	The Proposed Development has taken in consideration the EU Legislation and National Legislation (Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and Wildlife Acts) while assessing the biodiversity of Designated Sites, habitats and species along the Proposed Development. Refer to Chapter 12 (Biodiversity) in Volume 2 of the EIAR.
10.7	Water Resources	Policy Objective WR1	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 freshwater 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.	The Proposed development align with this objective as it has considered in the assessment the River Basin Management Plan. A Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment was carried out on the Proposed Development (Appendix A13.1 in Volume 4 of the EIAR).
10.7	Water Resources	Policy Objective WR2	River Basin Management Plans: It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to	The Proposed development align with this objective as it has considered in the





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			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.	assessment the River Basin Management Plan. A Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment was carried out on the Proposed Development (Appendix A13.1 in Volume 4 of the EIAR).
10.10	Invasive Species	Policy Objective IS2	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 were 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.	The Proposed Development has prepared an Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP) where are included mitigation measures regarding the spread of invasive species. (ISMP in Appendix A5.1 – CEMP of this EIAR)
10.12	Trees, Woodlands, Hedgerows and Stone Walls	Policy Objective TWHS1	Trees, Hedgerows, Natural Boundaries and Stone Walls: Protect and seek to retain important trees, tree clusters and tree boundaries, ancient woodland, natural boundaries including stonewalls, 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 Proposed Developments developed are	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as the landscaping design has included proposed trees, hedgerows, native planting, ornamental planting, amenity grass areas and species rich grasslands, to enhance ecological value along the route. In general, new plant species will match that of those removed. Species selected shall be appropriate to the urban street environment and to the characteristics of the specific location. This measure is applied along the full length





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			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.	of the Proposed Development. Refer to Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) and Chapter 16 (Landscape (Townscape) and Visual) for further details.
12.5	Architectural Heritage Context	Policy Objective AH3	Protection of Structure on the NIAH: Give regard to and consideration of all structures which are included in the NIAH for County Galway, which are not currently included in the Record of Protected Structures, in development management functions.	There are two protected structures within the Study Area. The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as no protected structure is to be demolished as part of the Proposed Development within the GCC functional area.
12.6	Archaeological Heritage	Policy Objective ARC1	Legislative Context: Support and promote the preservation, conservation and appropriate management and enhancement of the County's archaeological sites and monuments, together with the settings of these monuments, having regard to the legislative, statutory and policy provisions relevant to the conservation of the archaeological heritage.	Following mitigation there will be no significant impact on the ACA's as result of the construction or operational phase of the Proposed Development. Refer to Chapter 15 (Archaeological and Cultural Heritage) in Volume 2 of the EIAR and Appendix A15.1 CHMP in Volume 4 of the EIAR for further details.
12.6	Archaeological Heritage	Policy Objective ARC4	Protection of Archaeological Sites: Protect archaeological sites and monuments their settings and visual amenity and archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, in the ownership/guardianship of the State, or that are subject of Preservation Orders or have been registered in the Register of Historic Monuments, or that	The Proposed Development will align with the objective as it will protect archaeological sites and monuments, and following the mitigation measures there will be no significant impact during construction or operation to identified archaeological heritage.





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			are newly discovered and seek to protect important archaeological landscapes.	
12.7	Cultural Heritage	Policy Objective CUH1	Cultural heritage : Protect and promote the cultural heritage assets and the intangible cultural heritage assets of County Galway as important social and economic assets.	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as it was designed to reflect the local character and context in order to make them seamless interventions in local settings. Mitigation and monitoring measures will include the reinstatement of boundary treatments and street furniture where they are to be retained in situ, removed or set back. Where possible they will be retained in situ. Proposed or reinstated boundary treatments are to be agreed with their respective owners to remedy or offset potential negative impacts on the character of the structures or streetscapes concerned. All stone walls are to be rebuilt along the Proposed Development boundary reusing the existing stone. Following the proposed mitigation, no significant residual impacts were identified during construction or operation to identified archaeological heritage. Refer to Chapter 15 (Archaeological and Cultural Heritage) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details
14.5	Integration Climate Action into the Plan	Policy Objective CC1	Climate Change: Support and facilitate the implementation of European, National and Regional objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as it makes public transport and active travel a key component to the solution as well as





Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			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.	exploring opportunities for sustainable urban realm and landscape design responses such as SuDS, species rich planting and reusing materials, where possible. The Proposed Development comprises transport infrastructure that supports the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service. The EIA assessment has been carried out according to best practice and guidelines relating to climate and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and in the context of similar large-scale transport infrastructural projects. Refer to Chapter 8 (Climate) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details
14.6	Flooding	Policy Objective FL2	Flood Risk Management and Assessment: Comply with the requirements of the DoEHLG/OPW The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and its accompanying Technical Appendices Document 2009 (including any updated/superseding documents).	The Proposed Development aligns with the objective as drainage is covered in EIAR Chapter 13 (Water). The increase in impermeable areas and also changes to traffic numbers - especially those displaced onto side roads have been assessed as part of the assessment. A Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out. Refer to Chapter 13 (Water) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.
14.6	Flooding	Policy Objective FL6	Surface Water Drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs): Maintain and enhance, as appropriate, the existing	The Proposed Development has used green infrastructure initiatives such as SuDS. SuDS measures were designed to



Section	Chapter Title / Sub-Heading	Bullet Point Objective / Policy No.	Paragraph / Policy / Objective	Proposed Development Response
			surface water drainage system in the County. Ensure that new developments are adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in all new developments. Surface water run-off from development sites will be limited to pre-development levels and planning applications for new developments will be required to provide details of surface water drainage and sustainable drainage systems proposals.	attenuate runoff for any newly paved areas. The WFD, River Basin Management Plans have been considered as part of the assessments / designs. Refer to Chapter 13 (Water) and Chapter 4 (Proposed Development Description) in Volume 2 of the EIAR for further details.



Planning Report Sub-Appendix 2 CPO Drawings



PLANNING REPORT SUB-APPENDIX 2 – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CPO DRAWINGS



