

2.3 Statutory Context

2.3.1 Planning Policy Context

- National Planning Framework

The Updated Draft Revised National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040 (November, 2024), envisages the population of Galway City and Suburbs to grow by 36,000 people or at least a total population of 122,000 by 2040, an increase of almost 40% from the recorded population in 2022.

A range National Policy Objectives support the development of this site:

- NPO 4 - Seeks to deliver 50% of the future population in the existing 5 cities, including Galway.
- NPO 8 - Deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the five Cities (including Galway) within their existing built-up footprints and ensure compact and sequential patterns of growth.
- NPO 14 - Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity, enhanced levels of amenity and design and placemaking quality.
- NPO 21 - The Government will support the LDA, in association with Local Authorities, to fulfill its statutory mandate to deliver a significant number of homes on State lands in major mixed tenure developments, with a particular focus on brownfield and infill urban sites in the five main cities and regional centres as a priority.
- NPO 22 - Provides that Building Height and Car Parking will be based on performance criteria that seek to achieve well-designed high-quality outcomes in order to achieve targeted growth.
- NPO 45 - Promotes increased residential density in settlements through site-based regeneration and increased building heights..

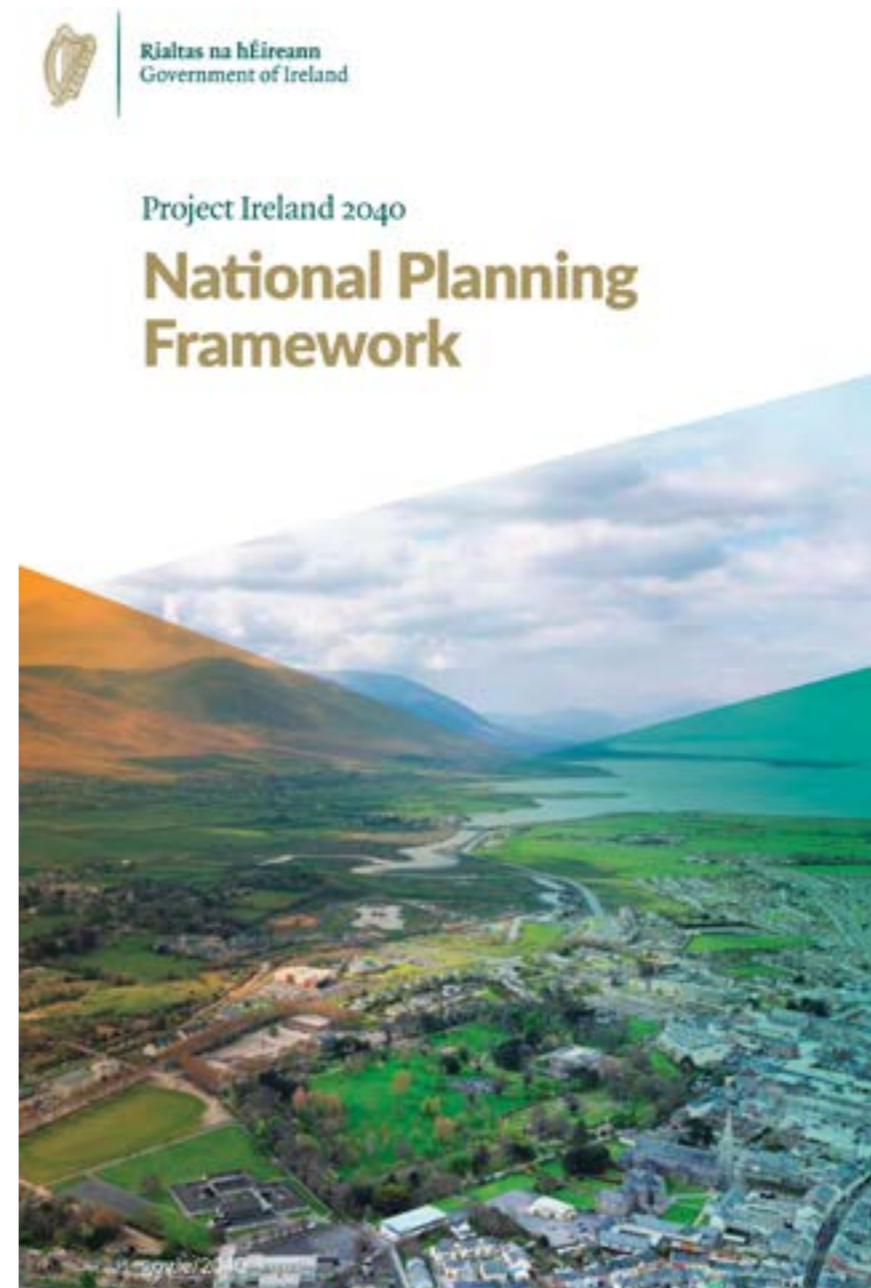


Fig. 29: National Planning Framework

2.3.1 Planning Policy Context

- Housing for All

- Housing for All (HFA) introduced by the Government and aimed to prevent homelessness, protect tenants and support social inclusion.
- The Government has approved revised housing targets in November 2024 for the period 2025 to 2030, aiming to deliver a total of 303,000 new homes across Ireland at an average of over 50,00 homes per year, with a pathway to achieve 60,000 homes annually in 2030 and thereafter.
- A revised Housing For All Plan and Action Plan are yet to be developed. There is a clear intent to increase supply through the LDA as a powerful driver of urban regeneration for affordable homes.
- The Plan outlines that the LDA will be an important source of affordable housing on public land.



Fig. 30: Housing for All

2.3.1 Planning Policy Context

- Regional and Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES)

- Galway City is located in the Northern and Western Region and comes under the Regional & Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region (2020-2032).

Key Points:

- RSES Supports the implementation of Project Ireland 2040.
- The LDA has an urgent focus within this document to manage state lands; to regenerate underutilised sites; and increase the supply of new homes.
- RSES identifies Galway as the largest regional urban centre in the north west.
- It includes a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for Galway City and environs.
- Promotes the redevelopment of the Dyke Road site as underutilised lands that are well served by existing and planned public transport (RPO 3.6.4 refers)



Fig. 31: RSES

2.3.1 Planning Policy Context

- Ministerial Guidelines

Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018)

- The Guidelines provide for a presumption in favour of buildings of increased height in our town/city cores and in other urban locations with good public transport accessibility.
- Parameters for building height are dependent on a set of development management criteria, which will be considered as part of any planning application brought forward.



Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for Apartments (2023)

The Guidelines look at public and private housing development that contain apartments.

- The Dyke Road site is classified as a 'Central and/or Accessible Urban Location' under the guidance.
- The Guidelines provide a clear planning context for appropriate levels of Car Parking; a Residential Mix; Dual Aspect Requirements; Apartment Floor Areas; and Other Design Standard.



Fig. 32: Ministerial Guidelines

2.3.1 Planning Policy Context

- **Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (January 2024)**

- Published January 2024
- Aimed to provide policy and guidance for residential development in both urban and rural settlements.
- This document replaces the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 and the accompanying Urban Design Manual.

Density:

There is clear direction on density with the site considered to fall within the site category 'city centre' site. Residential Densities of 100-250 units per ha shall be applied.

SPPRS:

SPPR 1 - 16m Separation Distances are promoted.

Policy Objective 5.1 - Promotes a requirement of 10-15% Public Open Space and provides for potential for a contribution in lieu.

SPPR 3 - Encourages the level of car parking in Galway City to be minimised, substantially reduced or wholly eliminated.

SPPR 4 - Looks at cycle provision at 1 space per bedroom + visitor.

Quality Urban Design and Placemaking:

4 Key Indicators to be Considered:

- Sustainable and Efficient Movement
- Mix and Distribution of Uses
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Public Open Space

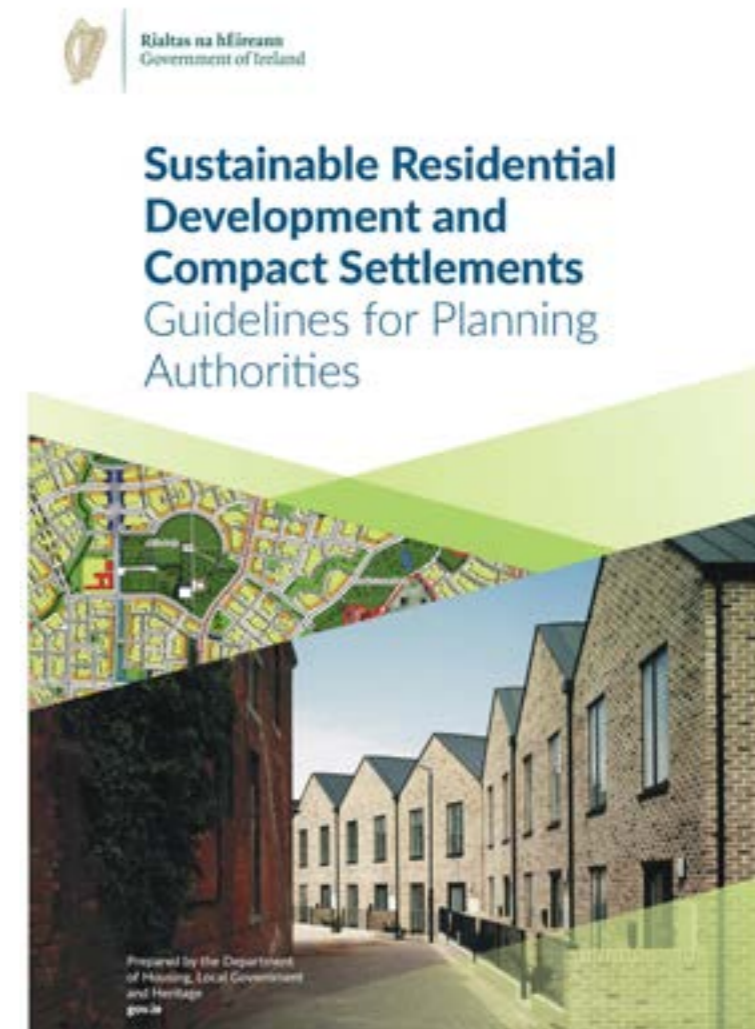


Fig. 33: Cover, Compact Settlement Guidelines

2.3.1 Planning Policy Context

- Census 2022
- Census 2022 figures have recently been published.
- A significant uplift in population of 7.3% within Galway since Census 2016 or 5,748

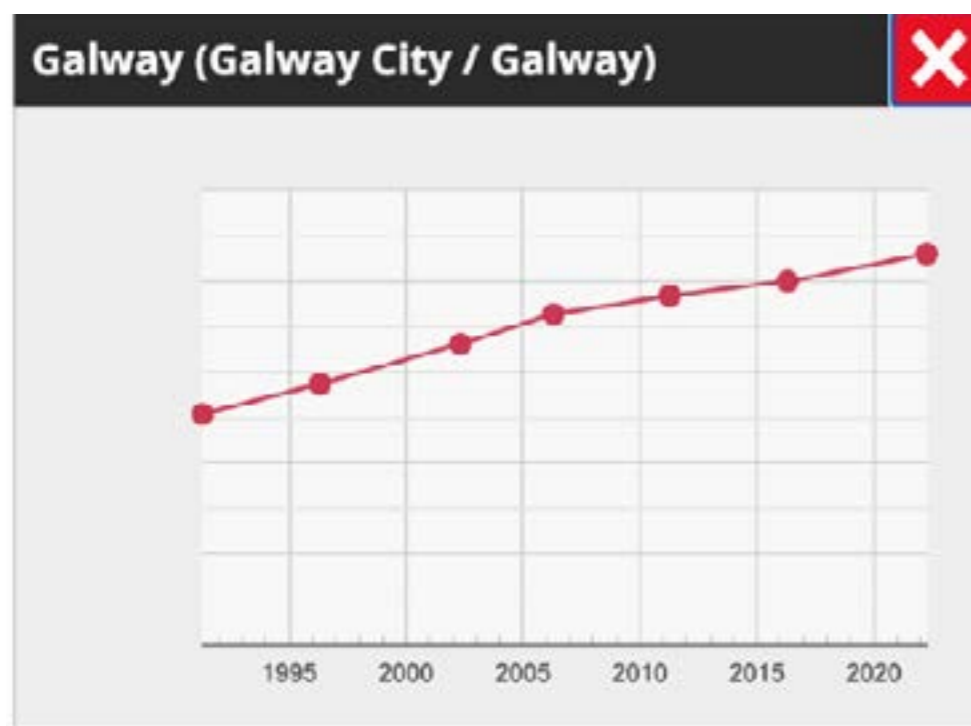


Fig. 34: Census figures



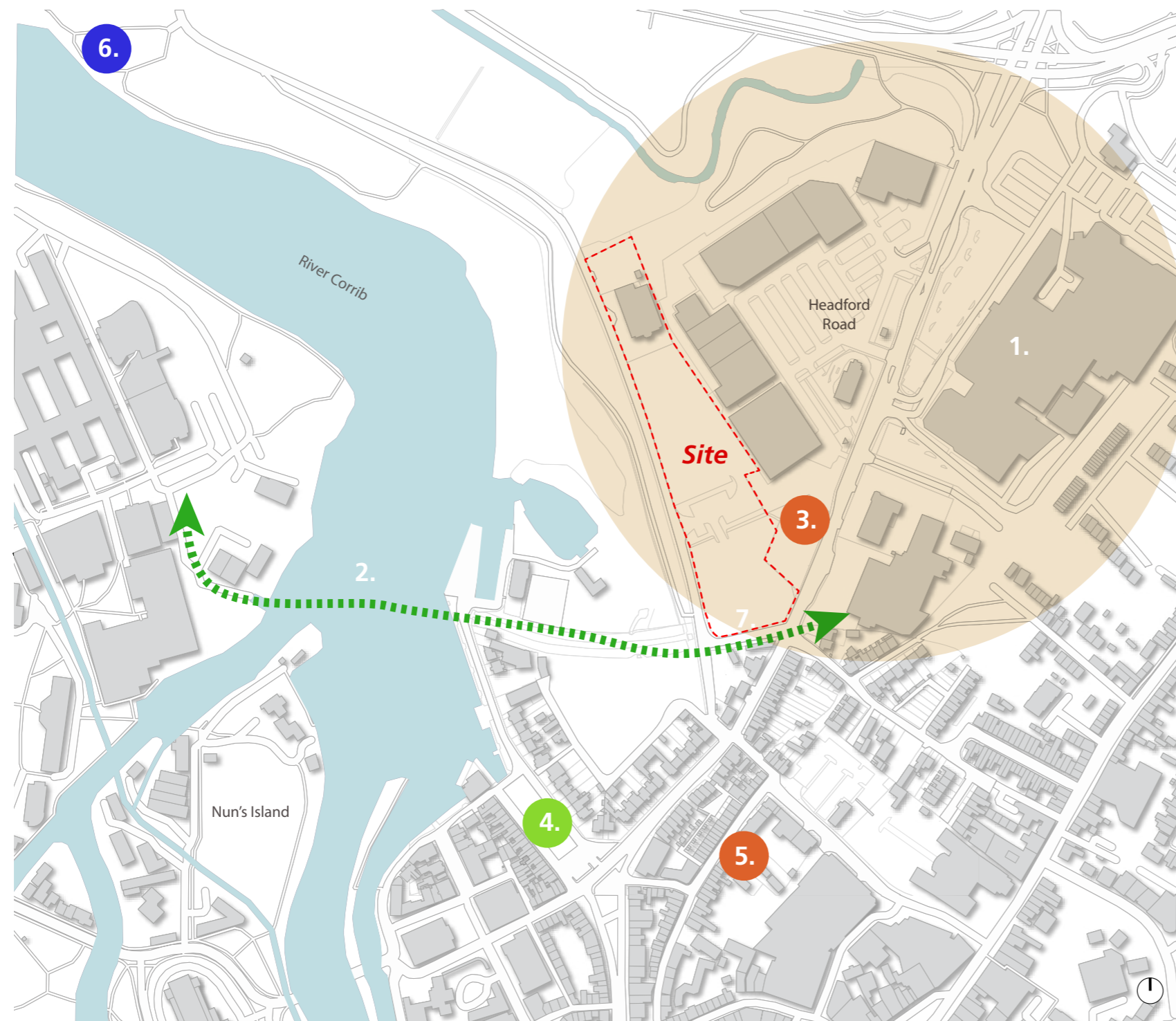
Fig. 35: Aerial view

City

Town	Census 2011	Census 2016	Census 2022	2011-2016 growth	2016-2022 growth
Galway City	75,529	78,668	84,416	4.2%	7.3%
Annual population change 2011-2016			Annual population change 2016-2022		
0.8%			1.2%		

Fig. 36: Census figures

2.3.2 Planning History



Subject Site

No recent planning history relevant to the site itself.

Ongoing & future projects within vicinity of the site:

1. Proposed/Future Headford Road LAP
2. Clifden Railway Bridge
3. Student Housing (272 beds), gym, 4 retail units, ESB enclosure, Headford road
4. Woodquay Park Landscape Upgrade
5. 27 duplexes / apartments at 33/35 St Brendan's Avenue, Woodquay
6. Irish Water Raw Water Intake on the east bank of the River Corrib 100m downstream of Quincentenary Bridge
7. BusConnects Galway Cross-City Link Scheme. ABP Reg. Ref. 314597-22

Fig.37: Planning History



Fig. 38: View of Site

2.3.3 Zoning

• Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

- A new Development Plan since January 2023.
- Site is predominantly zoned 'CI' Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial, which allows for the development of strategic regeneration and opportunity sites which includes for residential.
- A portion of the site to the north is subject to the 'RA' Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity Zoning.

Development Plan objectives include:

- Protected Views across the Corrib from Dyke Road
- Pedestrian Bridge over the River Corrib
- Recreational Amenity Greenway to the north of the site
- Inner City Access Route and Bus Routes along Headford Road
- Car Parking Symbol (This represents an indicative car parking objective)
- The Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 requires that any masterplan prepared for the Dyke Road site 'take cognisance of the integrated development strategy included in the framework plan (Draft Headford Road Framework 2009) for the area. See Appendix 2 of this report.

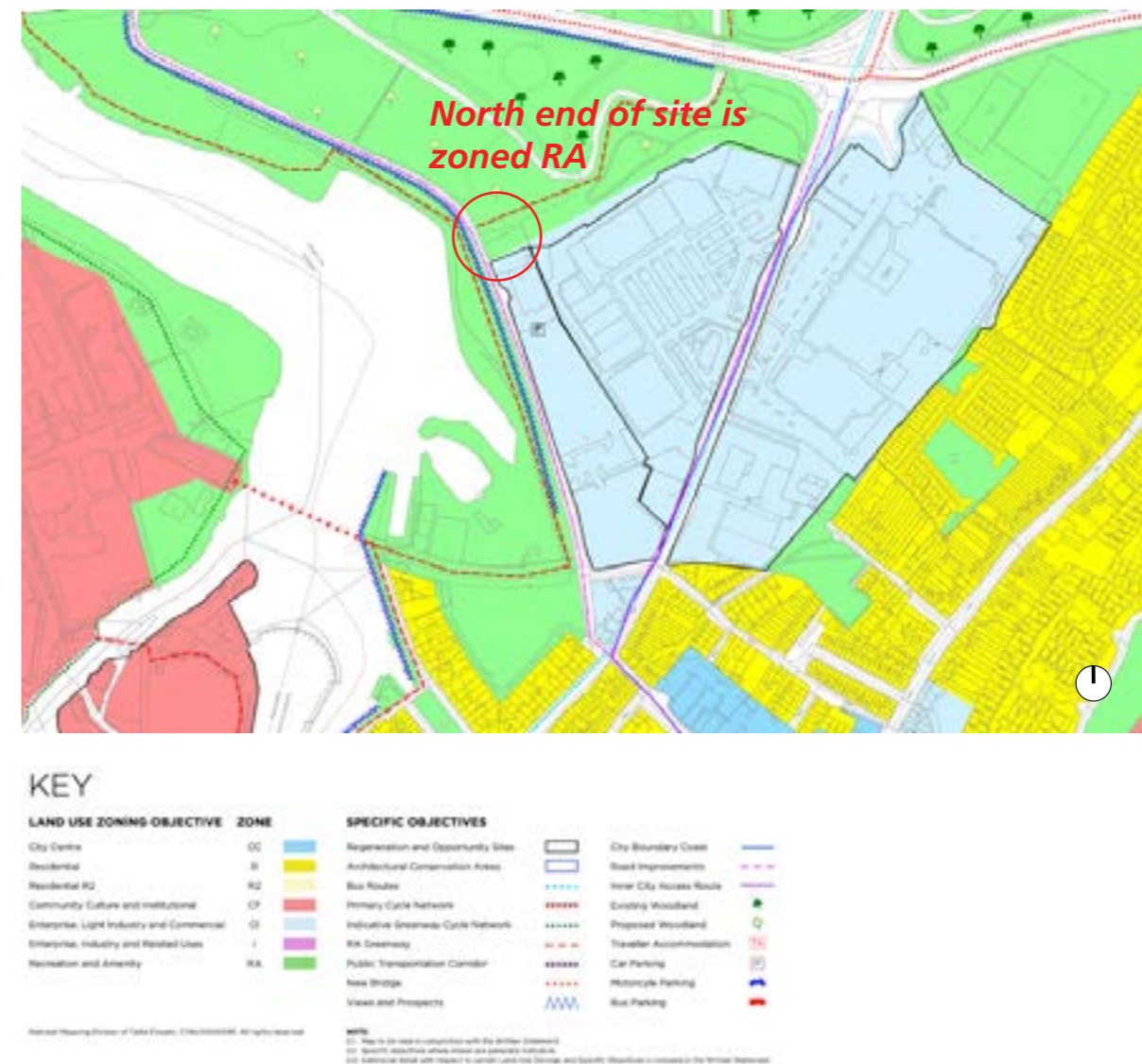


Fig. 39: Land Use Zoning, Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

2.3.3 Zoning

• Zoning Considerations

1. Strategic Regeneration/Opportunity Site

Aside from predominant use of Affordable Housing, the Regeneration / Opportunity Site designation encourages the following uses:

- (a) may include office/commercial use as well as provision of civic, cultural and arts infrastructure.
- (b) explore innovation and research uses allied to University of Galway with enhanced linkage to the university made possible with the proposed new pedestrian and cycle bridge.

In addition, a number of uses are considered appropriate to this site under the 'CI' zoning provision as follows:

Uses that are compatible with the zoning (permitted in principle)

include 'Retail', 'Specialist Offices', 'Childcare Facility' and 'Community and Cultural Facilities' (which may include but not limited to, outdoor recreation, indoor recreation, places of worship, educational facilities, arts and civic uses, medical facilities and amenity facilities).

- Innovation and research uses allied to University of Galway.

Uses that may contribute to the zoning (open to consideration)

include 'Small scale general industry', Service retailing', Offices, Car Parks, Waste management facility, public utilities.'

2. Draft Headford Road Framework Plan (2009)

- Requirement to be cognisant of the *Draft Headford Road Framework Plan (2009)*.
- This is a non-statutory document, never formally adopted but it is the most recent GCC vision for the site.
- This document identifies a requirement for a public/civic zone, a cultural



Fig. 40: Draft Headford Road Framework Plan (2009)

zone, retail/offices overhead, residential zone with café bar and restaurant frontage, a creche facility and local community facility.

3. Masterplan

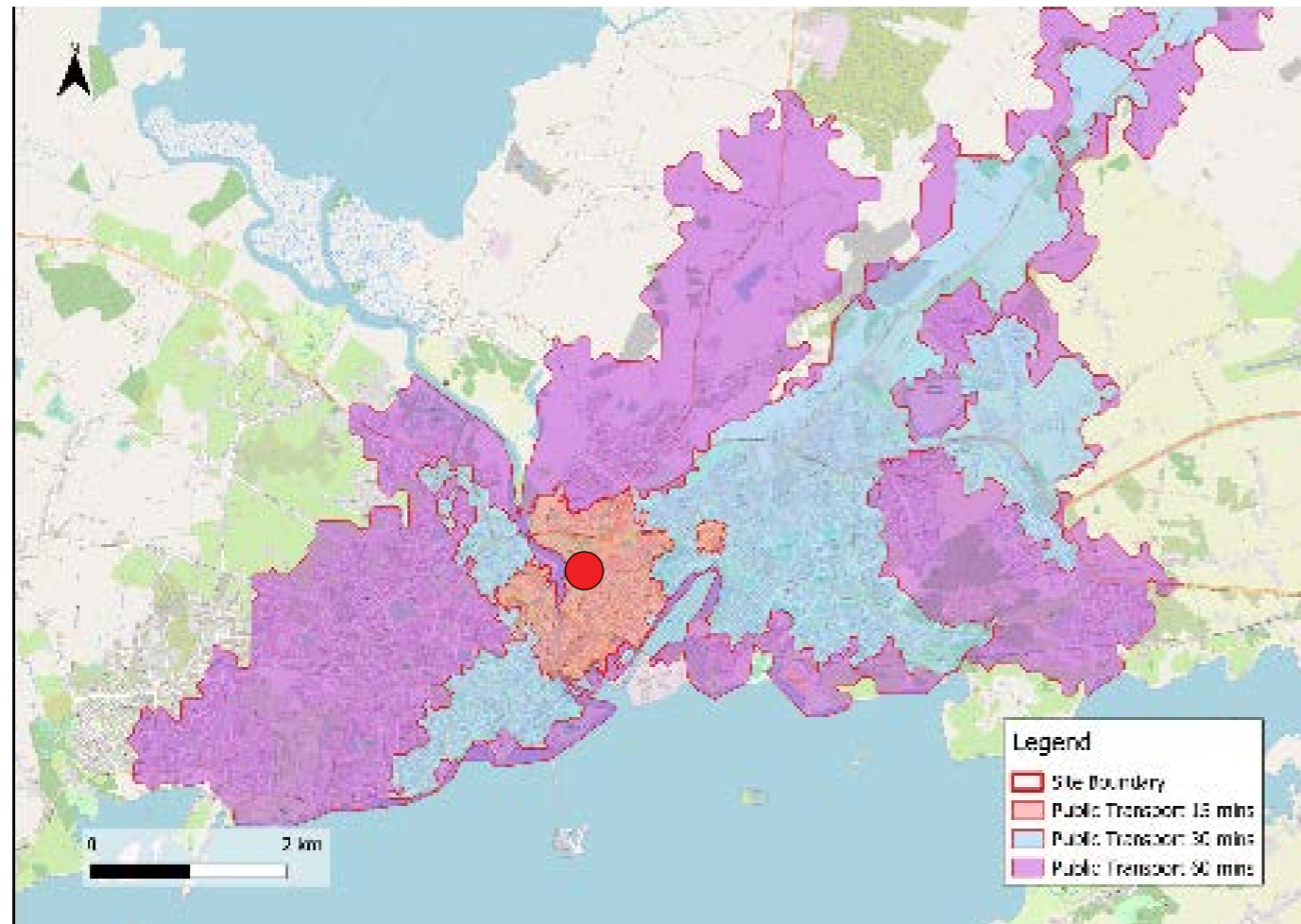
The Development Plan states that: "In the event that opportunities arise to progress development proposals to planning consent stage in advance of the adoption of a LAP, these proposals will include for a Masterplan which will take cognisance of the integrated development strategy included for in the framework plan for this area. The Masterplan will be required to have regard to guidance set out in Chapter 8. Flood risk assessment of the lands was undertaken including detailed modelling and identification of possible flood mitigation measures in 2012 and will be required to be reviewed in the context of the Coirib go Cósta Galway City Flood Relief Scheme."

2.3.4 Transport Context

• Public Transport

The development site is currently well serviced by existing public transport. The nearest bus stops to the site are along Headford Road. Every bus route in Galway City passes through Eyre Square, which is within a 650m radius from the site. The NTA's final Bus Connects network redesign was published in December 2023. Both Dyke Road and Headford Road are included on the Galway BusConnects scheme. Route 7 is relevant to the development site with a regular 20-minute service on that route.

City Bus



A public transport accessibility study was carried out. As indicated on the map above, the site has a large catchment within a 60-minute public transport area, stretching to areas around Galway such as Knocknacarra, NUIG Campus, Roscam, and all the way north to Tuam and Headford.

Fig. 41: Public Transport (Various)

Commuter Train/Bus Services

Galway Ceannt Train Station is located approximately 700m from the development site.



Figure 5-4: Map of Galway Commuter Buses (Ref: Galway Transport)

Interface with BusConnects Galway



Both Dyke Road and Headford Road are included on the Galway BusConnects scheme. This section of the BusConnects scheme is the Cross-City Link (University Road to Dublin Road).

2.3.4 Transport Context

- Active Travel

Cycling accessibility of the development site is currently well served. Ireland's Cycle Connects Initiative proposes a hierarchy of cycle routes within Galway and its city, including Greenways, Primary, Secondary and Feeder routes. As part of Cycle Connects there is a proposed secondary route across the River Corrib connecting onto Dyke Road. Cycling is to be significantly encouraged as part of the development with large numbers of cycle parking spaces being included. Cycling and walking permeability of the proposed development has been greatly considered in the proposed layout.

Cycling

A cycling accessibility assessment was carried out using QGIS modelling for the development. The resulting map is shown in Figure indicating the entire Galway City and the greater Galway area out to Bearna, Clooniff and Thornpark all within a 30-minute cycle.

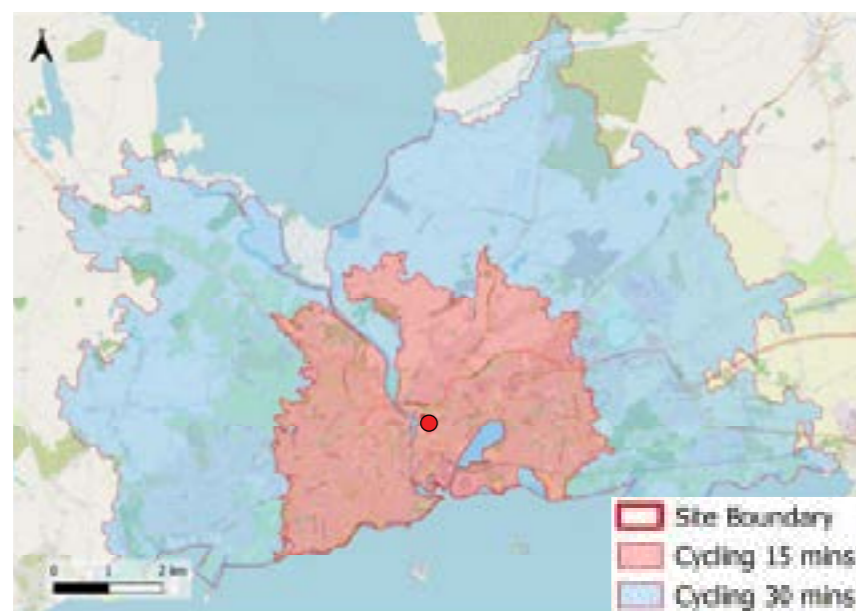


Fig. 42: Cycle Accessibility from the Proposed Development

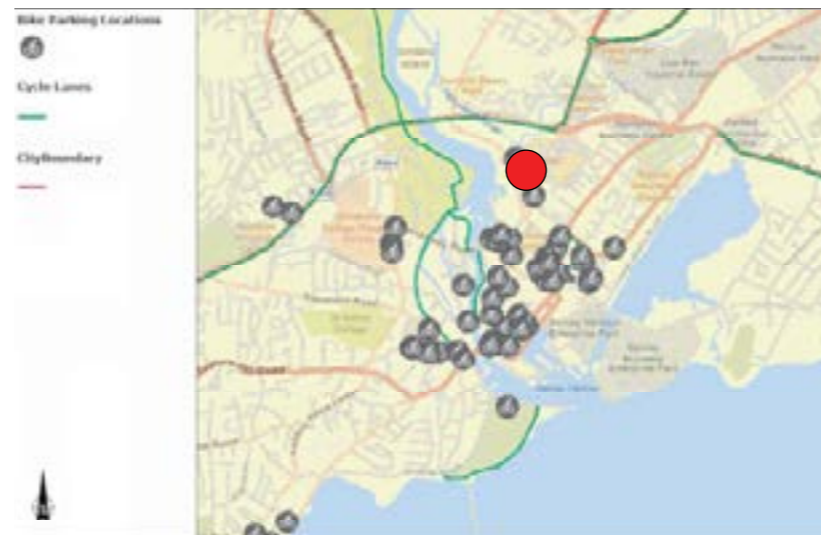


Fig. 43: Bikeshare Network



Fig. 44: Proposed Cycle Network



Fig. 45: Extract from Cycle Connects Proposed Cycle Network

Through discussions with GCC we understand cycle infrastructure is to be provided along the Dyke Road carriageway over the length of the site.

Clifden Railway Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

As part of Cycle Connects there is a proposed secondary route across the River Corrib connecting onto Dyke Road. To facilitate this, a pedestrian and cyclist bridge is proposed where the rail bridge once stood and reusing the standing piers. This project is led by Galway City Council. Due to the proximity of the two schemes, a safe connection will need to be proposed as part of the project progression.



Fig. 46: Clifden Railway Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

2.4 Design Constraints

2.4.1 Topography



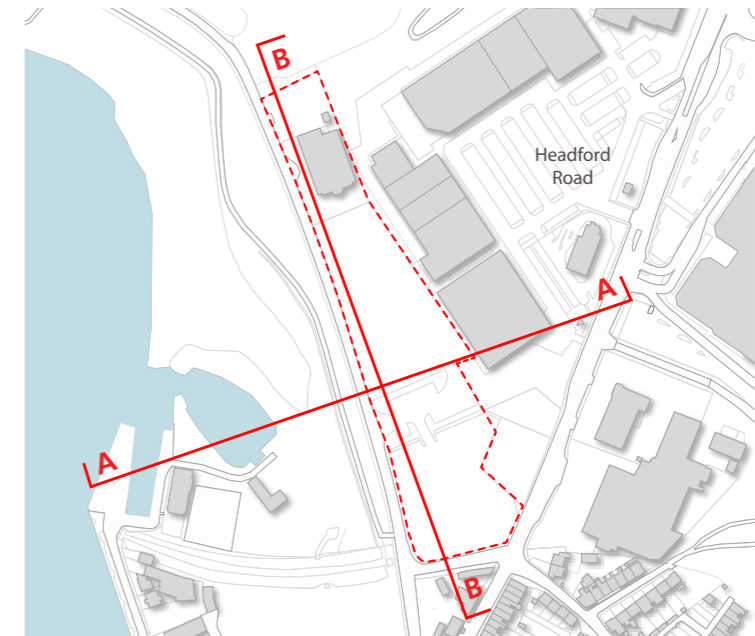
Site levels dropping to the north:

- 7 m (south)
- 5 m (centre)
- 4 m (north)

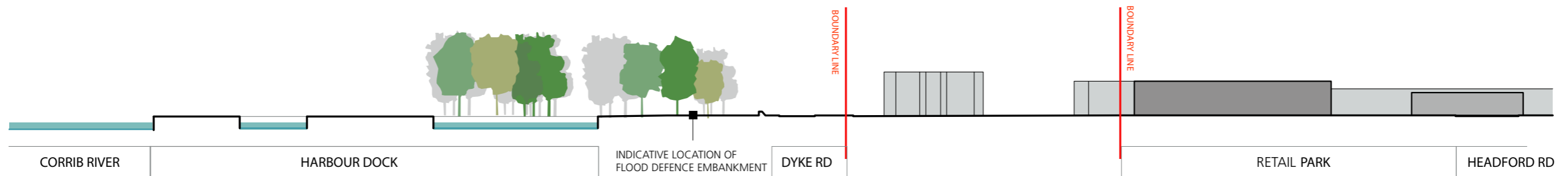
Fig. 47: Topography

2.4.1 Topography

- Site Sections



Section AA



Section BB

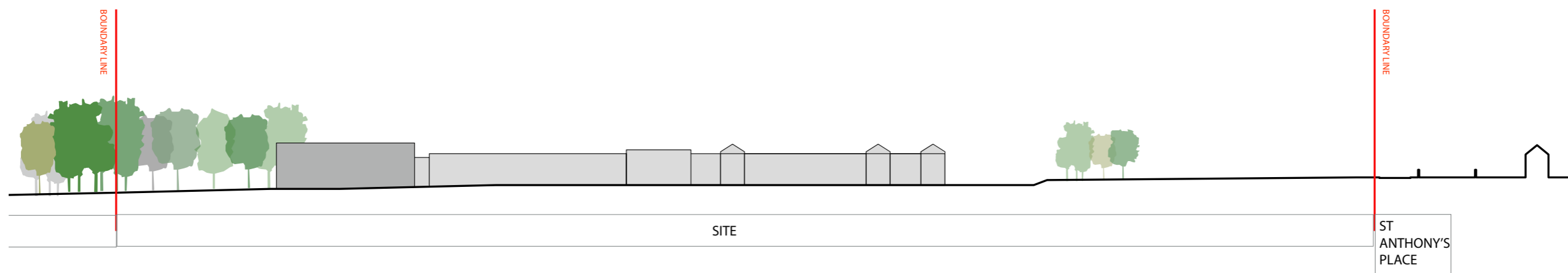


Fig. 48: Site Sections

2.4.2 Flood Risks

- Fluvial and Coastal Flood Risks

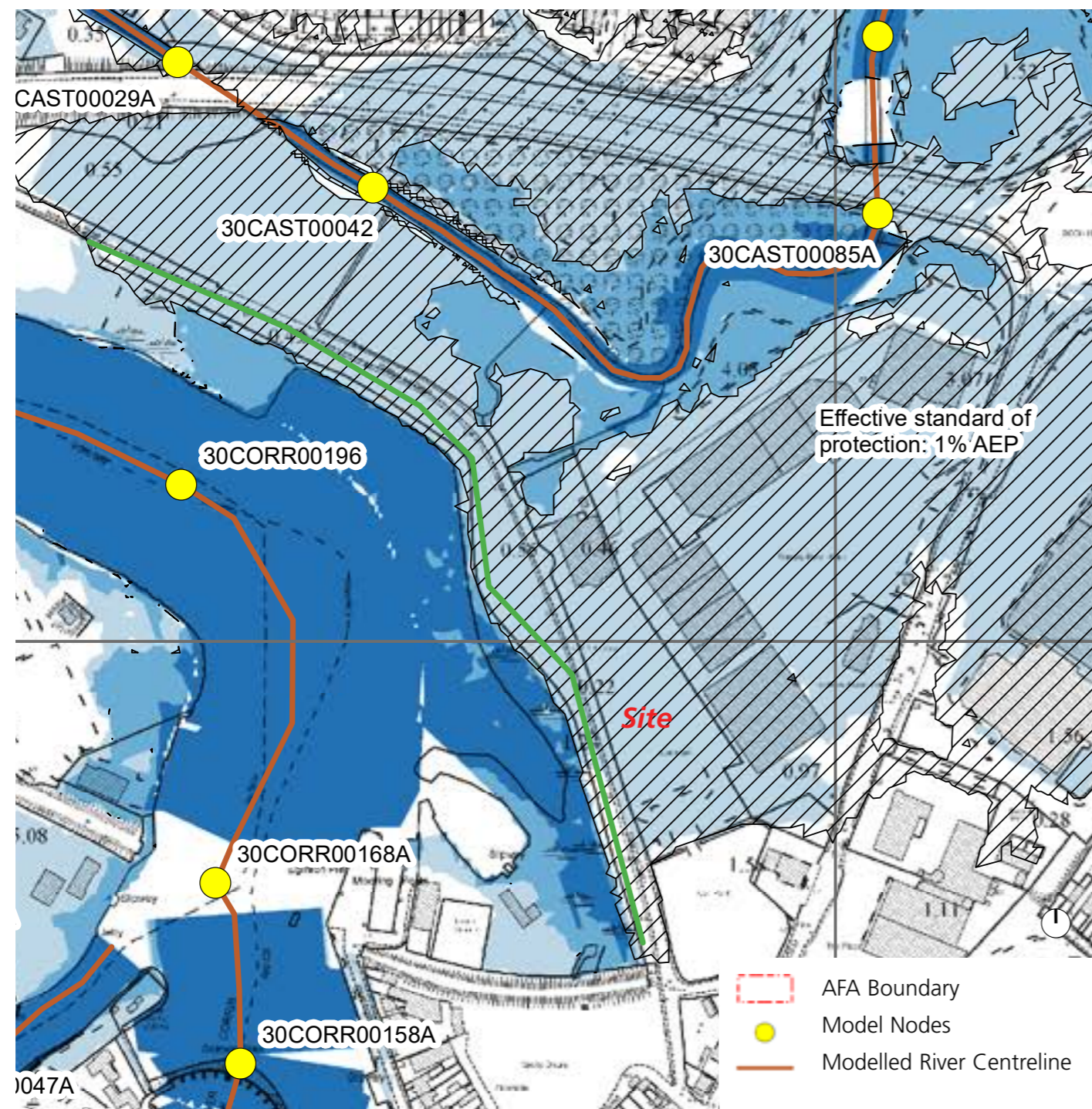


Fig. 49: Extract from CFRAM Map: W30GLW_EXFCD_F4_08 (December 2017) Western CFRAM Study

- The map opposite comprises a 'predictive' flood map, indicating areas expected to be flooded during a hypothetical or 'design' flood event with a given probability of occurrence.
- The CFRAM mapping indicates that the flood defence embankment on Dyke Road provides protection to the site up to the 1% AEP event water level (1-in-100-year return period event/Flood Zone A). The site is shown to be at risk of flooding during a 0.1% event (1-in-1000-year return period flood event/Flood Zone B).

Defence - Embankment



Defended Area

The site forms part of the Defended Area.



10% AEP Fluvial Extent

This layer shows the modelled extent of land that might be flooded by the sea in a moderate flood event. High Probability flood events have approximately a 1-in-a-10 chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year. This is also referred to as an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of 10%.



1% AEP Fluvial Extent

This layer shows the modelled extent of land that might be flooded by the sea in a severe flood event. Medium Probability flood events have approximately a 1-in-a-100 chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year. This is also referred to as an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of 1%.



0.10% AEP Fluvial Extent

This layer shows the modelled extent of land that might be flooded by the sea in a very extreme flood event. Low Probability flood events have an indicative 1-in-a-1000 chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year. This is also referred to as an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of 0.1%.

2.4.2 Flood Risks

- Fluvial and Coastal Flood Risks



Fig. 50: Site Picture.

- The Galway City Development Plan 2023 – 2029 includes a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the city. As part of this, a Justification Test has been undertaken which confirms the suitability of the site in principle for future development.
- As required by the SFRA, the detailed development proposals have considered appropriate finished floor levels and mechanisms for managing any residual flood risks.
- Green and permeable infrastructure, natural landscape and boardwalks have been designed as part of the flood strategy and will resonate with the natural landscape of the river.
- In addition, a wider City Flood Relief Scheme is being progressed by ARUP on behalf of GCC.

2.4.3 Built Heritage

• Archaeology and Heritage



Fig. 51: Archaeology and Heritage

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

• Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)

There are no ACAs in the immediate vicinity. The closest ACA is the City Core of Galway city which, at its nearest is roughly 370m southeast of the subject site. The ACA comprises the medieval core of Galway and is a mix of streetscape and buildings of many periods.

• Record of Protected Structures (RPS)/ National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)/Industrial/ Vernacular Heritage

There are no NIAH or RPS sites within the immediate vicinity of the subject site. The nearest concentration of RPS sites comprises a terrace of Residential Buildings, associated railings and two IHS tiles on St. Brendans Road roughly 230m to the south. The nearest NIAH site is Eglinton Dock (Reg. No. 30309003) which is located roughly 150m west of the subject site. The nearby Rivers/Waterways of Galway City, Including Bridges, Weirs, Walls, Embankment, Piers, and Other Associated Infrastructure is also listed on the Galway City RPS (RPS No. 8501).

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Sites and Monuments Records (SMR)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

2.4.4 Ecology

- Ecology: Site Ranked as Lower Value Habitats



Fig. 52: Ecology

As per the Galway Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2024 – the river Corrib is a main wildlife corridor. The River Corrib includes reed swamp and meadows along Dyke Road.

GCC are currently developing a revised Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030 (predraft consultation phase)

Terryland Forest Park is another local biodiversity area – containing young urban forest of native broad-leaf trees and pockets of wetland vegetation located on both sides of Terryland/Sandy River. – Habitats: Woodland, Wetland, River, Meadow, Pasture, Karst Limestone, Drystone Wall.

Habitats & Bats

The presence of low value PRFs on site indicate a low probability of bat habitation and/or usage.

The habitats within the Proposed Development site are all ranked as Local Importance (Lower Value).

Several habitats ranging from Local Importance (Lower Value) to International importance were noted outside of the proposed development area, however the site itself is ranked as being of low ecological value, as it is characterised as built environment.

2.4.5 Utilities

- Electricity

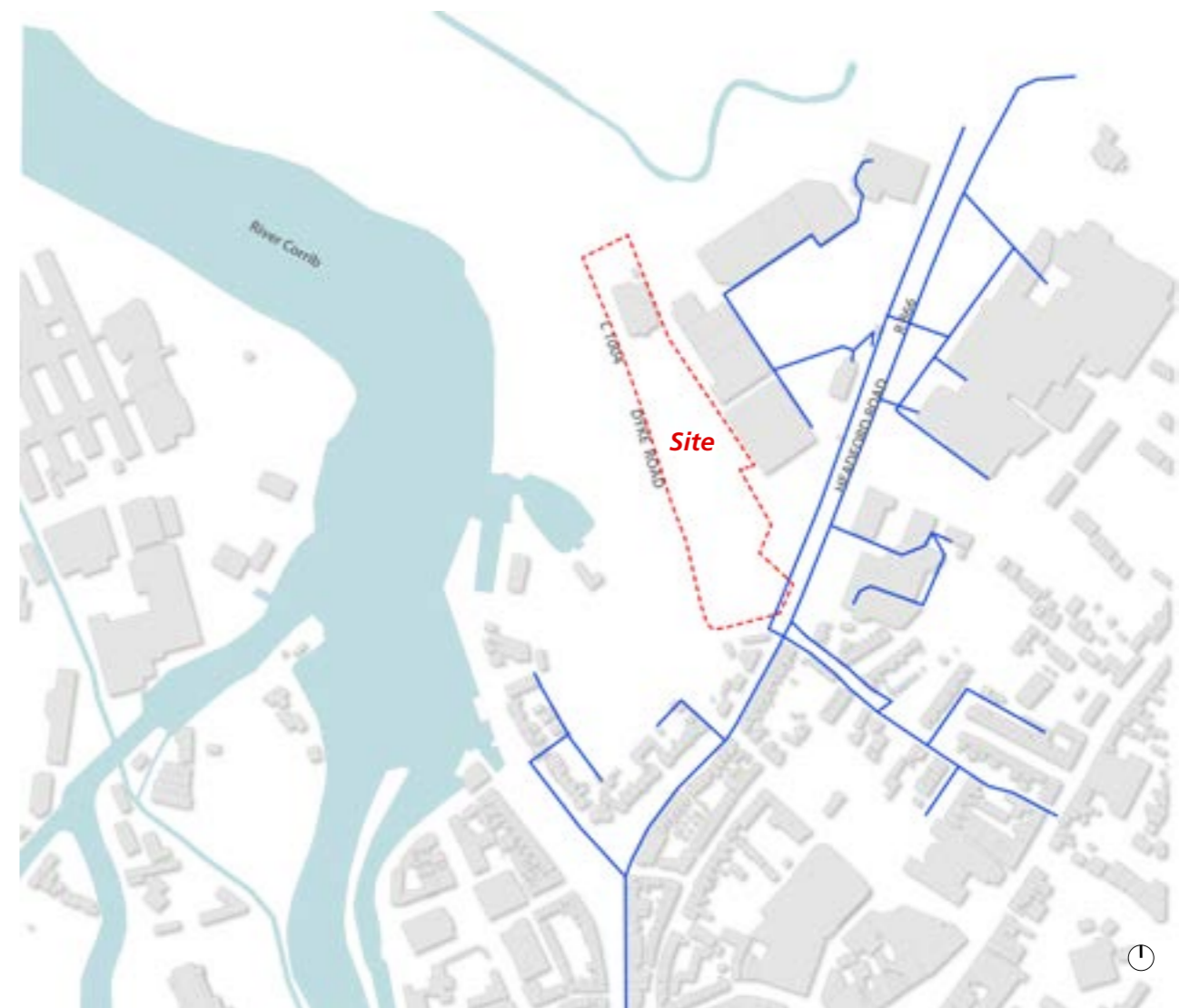


LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- ESB
- MV/LV(10KV/20KV/400V/230V) UNDERGROUND CABLE ROUTES
- LV (400KV/230V)OVERHEAD LINES

Fig. 53: ESB Infrastructure

- Fibre



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- EIR

Fig. 54: Fibre Infrastructure

2.4.5 Utilities

- Utilities: Gas



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- GAS PIPE

Fig. 55: Gas Infrastructure

- Watermain, Foul and Storm Water



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Gravity Foul
- Combined Foul
- Water Distribution Network
- Storm Water Network

Fig. 56: Water and Foul Infrastructure

2.5 Challenges and Opportunities

CHALLENGES

PLACEMAKING

Large retail park character; site bordered by blank facades and car parking.



MOBILITY

The site is currently car dominated; little space is given to pedestrians and cyclists.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

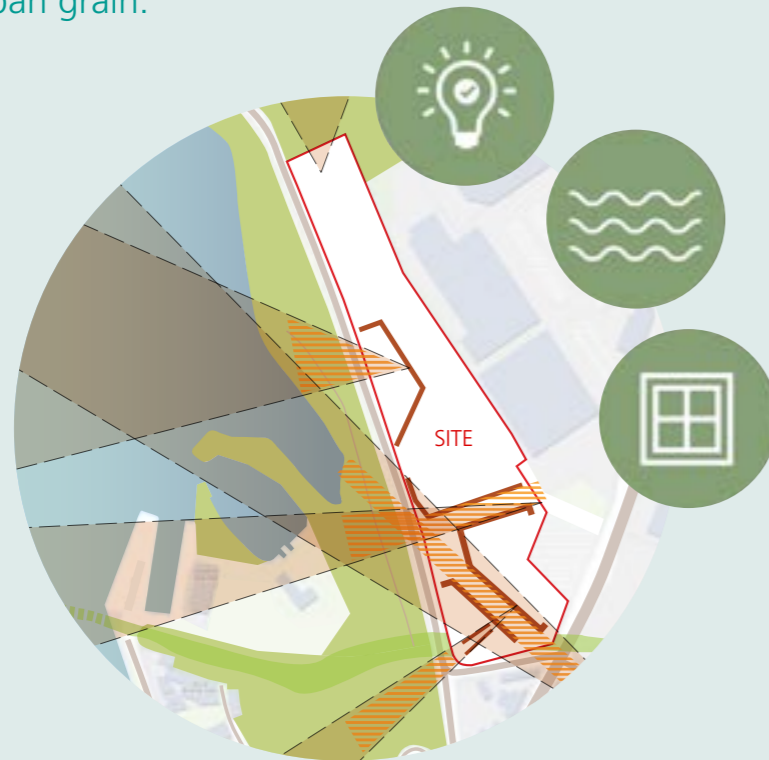
Part of the site is located within the floodzone, which requires careful planning, adherence to regulations, and robust mitigation strategies to ensure safety and minimise risk.



OPPORTUNITIES

PLACEMAKING

Create a new neighbourhood with a strong public realm and built form revealing the city landmarks and the river Corrib, with a fine urban grain.



MOBILITY

Give priority to sustainable modes of transport: pedestrian and cycle movements, as well as public transport and car sharing. Create high-quality, easy to read connections to the city centre, bus stops and immediate surroundings.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Natural Beauty of the River Corrib Landscape; Uninterrupted Views to the River; Green Infrastructure; The proposal will look at extending the river landscape into the site's open space.

